

Chapter 973 The Amito Group's New Strategic Partn...

In the branch office of Universe Group, most employees had already departed, leaving only the light in Loraine's office glowing.

Loraine, clad in a business suit with her hair neatly tied up, was rapidly typing on her keyboard. Her eyes were so piercing and chilly that it was impossible to guess she had been working overtime for several consecutive days.

Only those close to her could spot the fatigue delicately etched beneath her expertly applied makeup.

With the final keystroke, a hint of relief flickered in Loraine's eyes. She rested her hands lightly on the keyboard, allowing herself a moment of respite.

For the past few days, Loraine found herself in a bit of a fog whenever she tried to rest.

Despite her relentless efforts, certain thoughts she had purposely concealed persisted in surfacing occasionally, haunting her without relief.

She let out a sigh, massaging her temples in frustration as she tried to refocus on the project plan.

Apart from personal motivations, her extensive overtime was also due to her busy schedule.

Her presence at Zodiac was driven not solely by romantic pursuits, but also by her responsibilities as the president of the

Right now, she was drafting a bidding plan for a government department. In Zodiac, urban areas were expensive, while the suburbs remained underdeveloped due to the early focus on heavy industry. With Zodiac's prosperity, the suburbs naturally emerged as the prime area for development.

The Universe Group boasted a top-tier technology team with extensive experience repairing roads in rural areas like Woodshill. Despite its remote location, they had excelled in their work there. Loraine was confident that entrusting the project to the Universe Group would ensure its flawless completion.

Achieving a stronger bond with the Zodiac government would propel the Universe Group forward!

Yet, that proved challenging; in Zodiac, numerous influential clans held sway, their influence interwoven. Securing a foothold for the Universe Group wouldn't come easy.

At that moment, there was a soft knock on the office door. Cayson pushed it open and entered. He looked at her and let out a helpless sigh. "I knew you'd still be working, Lorrie. Do you realize how upset it makes me to see you pushing yourself so hard?"

With an embarrassed smile, Loraine replied by asking, "Why haven't you left yet?"

Cayson was aware that she was deeply involved in the bidding process, immersing herself in her work. Feeling both sorry for her and slightly annoyed, he said gently, "I was waiting to leave with you."

He glanced at the coffee in her hand, his brow furrowed, and said, "Let's go. I'll take you out for something to eat."

Loraine remembered the last time they ate out. She declined immediately. "I'm not hungry. You go ahead, I'll finish up here and head home soon."

Cayson, feeling a bit defeated but expecting her refusal, smiled and teased, "Are you sure you want to turn me down? I heard the government official overseeing the suburban development enjoys dining at a certain restaurant these days. It might be an opportunity for us to bump into him, which could really help with your current concerns."

Having led the Universe Group for many years, Cayson was well-versed in the challenges of expanding into new areas like Zodiac.

As he anticipated, Loraine was tempted by his suggestion. After a brief hesitation, she nodded and said, "Let's go now."

Seeing her determined and energetic expression, Cayson smiled affectionately and commented, "Are you going to go dressed like that? That place has a dress code."

Loraine looked down at her formal business suit and laughed awkwardly. "You're right. I've been too caught up to think about dressing up. Give me a minute. I'll go change."

Cayson nodded softly and sent a message. "I've sent you the number of the room I reserved. Don't worry, I need to change my clothes too. I'll meet you at the restaurant later."

He added, with no apparent self-interest, seemingly for Loraine's benefit, "This way, if we run into the person in charge, we can make it seem like a coincidental meeting during dinner rather than deliberately waiting for him, which might make him uneasy."

Though he had invited Loraine out under the pretense of work, Cayson viewed this as a date, an opportunity he wouldn't miss. Naturally, he planned to dress accordingly.

Loraine, finding his reasoning sound, agreed without hesitation.

Just as she was about to return to pick out her clothes, she realized she didn't have anything suitable for such an occasion. Since she wasn't going on a date with Cayson, it would be inappropriate for her to dress either too formally or too casually.

After a moment's thought, Loraine decided to head to a shopping mall to buy a new dress right away.

However, the moment she stepped into the shopping mall, Loraine's attention was caught by the news displayed on a large screen. "The Amito Group announces its new strategic partner is the Solar Company!"

The announcement was too prominent to be overlooked by Loraine. Loraine paused, taken aback by the news. The Amito Group had long been partners with the Cruz family. She wondered why they had decided to partner with the Solar Company instead.



Chapter 974 A Chance Encounter With Kaley

Knowing Marco was the president of Solar Company, Loraine tried not to dwell on him too much.

However, this report really moved her, reminding her of his accomplishments.

He was the guy behind the Bryant Group's success in Vagow, and he also ran an international company as CEO.

Solar Company, based abroad, had entered the local market and was growing steadily. They established themselves in Vagow's competitive market by teaming up with the Universe Group.

The company was also making significant strides in Zodiac and was even competing with the Cruz family.

Loraine watched the news for some time, then snapped back to reality and chuckled at herself.

Despite Marco's achievements and success, she broke up with him.

While the Universe Group wasn't as prestigious as the Solar Company, she never underestimated herself.

She was facing tough times but remained undeterred in her goal to elevate the Universe Group to new heights.

Loraine regained her composure, and headed to the high-end clothing section.

Spotting Loraine, a shop assistant came over and, noticing her attire, asked what she was looking for.

Loraine took a moment to think, then quickly told the shop assistant what she was looking for. With a big smile, the shop assistant guided her to a section and said, "This dress is simple yet elegant. It suits you perfectly."

The dress was indeed simple and unpretentious, exactly what Loraine needed. She appeared quite pleased with it and asked for the dress. Trying it on, she realized it was too large. She asked politely, "This dress is a bit loose on me. Do you have a smaller size? I have an appointment and I need to dress appropriately for the occasion."

Loraine's pleasant demeanor and friendliness prompted the shop assistant to compliment her, saying, "Miss, you are slim and look like a model. Just a moment, please. I'll check for you."

Loraine smiled and nodded, then waited quietly in a corner. At that moment, feeling relieved yet tired, she might have gone home if Cayson hadn't mentioned the possibility of meeting the relevant government official.

Soon, the shop assistant returned with a dress in hand. "Could you please try this on?" she suggested.

Loraine thanked the shop assistant before taking the dress and heading into the dressing room.

Just as she entered, two people emerged from behind a clothing rack.

One was Kaley, who looked at Loraine with visible resentment.

She was out shopping and hadn't expected to see Loraine. Why hadn't her grandpa kicked Loraine out of Zodiac yet?

The other person was Carlotta Ruiz, Kaley's best friend from a



famous family in Zodiac. Carlotta knew Kaley despised Loraine. With fake concern, she told Kaley, "Loraine must be going on a date, buying a new dress and all. Kaley, she's always picking on you, but this time it's just too much." Carlotta added after a brief pause, "You can't tolerate her anymore."

"She might be going to a wrap party. I've heard they've just finished shooting my uncle's movie," Kaley responded, feigning innocence.

This comment seemed to infuriate Carlotta even more. "I can't believe she dares to even appear on set," Carlotta muttered angrily. "This role should have been yours, but she took it from you. And she hasn't shown any remorse for her actions. Kaley, you're too soft. Don't let her walk all over you. I couldn't stand it if I were you."

Carlotta put on a concerned face and said, masking her delight with a frown, "I can't stand to see you wronged. I'll always have your back!"

Kaley glanced at her, feigning gratitude. She responded with a hint of embarrassment, "Never mind, it's not important. Veronica tried to teach her a lesson, but it backfired. And now, my uncle's mad at me."

"Veronica is an idiot. Unlike him, I won't cause you any trouble," Carlotta assured her.

She abruptly stopped speaking when the dressing room door opened.

Loraine emerged looking absolutely stunning.

Taken aback and upset, Carlotta stared at her, unable to deny Loraine's beauty. Vincent was smitten with her. This sleek, chic dress would surely turn her into a darling of the media.

Carlotta quickly regained her composure and looked at Loraine



with disdain. "This slut," she sneered.

Kaley felt a pang of jealousy when she saw Loraine.

But Loraine didn't notice them. She admired her reflection in the mirror, pleased that the dress fit perfectly.

The sales assistant complimented her effusively. A smile spread across Loraine's face. She paid for the dress and headed to the restroom to touch up her makeup.

However, someone followed her into the restroom. Preoccupied with her thoughts, Loraine was oblivious to the looming presence.

