

Heiress 671

Chapter 671

In an instant, applause thundered!

“Although Chairman Thompson didn’t give Celeste any houses or jewelry, he injected \$5 billion into the foundation! It is already a grand gesture!”

“A typical wealthy lady’s birthday banquet would usually consist of gifts like jewelry, but Chairman Thompson is so creative. This meant something important to Celeste! When word gets out, it will boost Celeste’s image and increase the popularity of the Thompson family. It’s a win-win situation!”

Under the stage, Nigel, Lance, and Asher sat at the same table.

“Ahem... What kind of technology and anti-aging methods did this old geezer use behind my back?

Why isn’t he showing signs of aging?”

Lance muttered with jealousy and asked Asher, who was sitting beside him. “Asher, what’s your

father’s skincare routine? How does he manage to look so young? Come on, tell me the secret.”

“He must have put on a little makeup,” Asher smiled humbly.

These two friends had been competing about their appearance for decades!

“Oh! I knew it!”

Lance suddenly inched closer, winking. “Which makeup artist did your father hire? The result is quite natural. Can you introduce them to me?”

Asher was speechless.

Listening on the side, Nigel could not help but feel amused.

The Thompson family sat at one table, happily clapping at this moment.

Amelia watched as her mother held back tears of joy on the stage. Suddenly, she could not hold back and cried silently.

“Amelia?”

Mila sat beside Amelia and noticed that the latter was crying. Panicking, Mila hurriedly took some tissues and passed them to her under the table, asking softly, “Why are you crying, darling?”

“It’s nothing... It’s nothing, Aunt Mila.”

Amelia took the tissues and wiped her tears, saying in a trembling voice, “I’m just so happy for Mom.”

Mila’s heart warmed, and she gently stroked Amelia’s silky hair.

In their complex family, the other kids, including Bella, still kept a distance. Only this youngest child

treated her like a real mother.

Although Mila did not mind the others, it still warmed her heart.

“Yeah, you should be happy.”

“Actually... I’ve always thought that Dad didn’t care much about Mom.”

Amelia wondered what had gotten into her tonight, with many emotions flooding her mind. “I’m also the

most useless daughter.

Your daughter is the future First Lady of Sentania, and Bella was not only a goddess in the jewelry

industry, but she could also manage the hotel for Dad. But I don’t know anything. I could only drag all of

you down.”

“Amelia, don’t think like that.”

Mila felt upset and hugged Amelia. “Your father had told us many times in private that he hoped you,

the youngest daughter of the

Thompson family, could be a carefree and pampered lady at home.

To him, his children’s accomplishments are not important. What matters is that you all have a happy

and smooth life. Also, your father loves you and your mother. Although he doesn't say it, it doesn't mean he doesn't love you. We need to judge by his actions, right?"

Listening to Mila's words, Amelia leaned on her shoulder, nodding with tears in her eyes.

Soon, several prominent guests presented their gifts, all valued at millions of dollars.

In front of the richest family in Hatchbay, anything less than that would make them look like fools.

"The next gift is from Christopher Iverson, the fourth son of Group's Chairman!"

Just as the emcee's voice fell, a spotlight shone on Christopher.

Everyone subconsciously glanced at the Thompson family's table including Bella. She slightly turned her head, curiously looking at Christopher, who remained calm and composed.

"He prepared a gift privately?!"

Charles' gaze darkened as he gritted his teeth. "He's so calculative.

He's always thinking about pleasing the Thompson family and showing off!"

"What's the point of it?"

Chapter 672

James casually sipped his wine, disdain underlying his eyes. Christopher always loved to be a

smartass, but he doesn't understand that he can't do things in excess. Yes, he could please Bella, but

he didn't know he had offended Dad. In the Iverson Group, Dad still has the final say."

Charles sneered. "Hmph, let him continue simping! He will eventually end up with nothing!"

Indeed, Lance's expression darkened at this moment. His jaw was tense as he glanced toward

Christopher.

When he saw Sophie, his eyes widened, and his mouth twitched!

The emcee pushed Christopher's gift onto the stage with a cart, carrying with it everyone's attention.

Celeste looked at Wyatt hesitantly. "Should we uncover it? It's a little token from Christopher."

Wyatt had his arm around Celeste's thin waist as they unveiled the red cloth covering the gift.

Instantly, Wyatt's expression changed. He raised his eyes and discreetly glanced in Christopher's

direction.

The guests also gasped in admiration when they saw the gift, almost comparable to the shock they felt

when they saw the dress Sharon designed.

Bella's brows furrowed, feeling surprised.

She thought, 'This is a 17th-century porcelain vase made by the Royal

Pottery. This antique could easily be treasured in the national museum, and it would start at a minimum

of \$30 million at an auction!'

Christopher presented such an extravagant gift to Celeste on her birthday, and its value was even

higher than Lance's gift. Thus, he was embarrassing his father on purpose.

Christopher had no deep connection with Celeste. They had merely met a few times. There was no

need to go to such lengths. Instead of being Celeste's gift, it was more like an attempt to please Wyatt

with this opportunity.

As she thought about this, Bella pursed her lips and shook her head lightly.

When her gaze swept to the right, she was suddenly stunned. At some point, Justin disappeared.

Bella's heart skipped a beat. She immediately looked around searching for that lean and strong figure.

M'Madam Celeste."

At At this moment, Christopher walked to the stage and bowed po

Ththen he said gently, with a humble smile, "This is a gift from 17th-century porcelain vase carefully

crafted by the Royal Pottery wishish long-lasting joy and laughter upon you and Chairman

Theompson.”

Celasia was stunned for a moment. “Thank you, Mr. Iverson. This gift is too precious. I appreciate your thought.”

“It is indeed too precious. I would have thought it was my birthday instead!” Wyatt teased half-jokingly.

Christopher adjusted his glasses as a glint of darkness flashed across his eyes.

“17th century!”

“This is a priceless antique!”

“Christopher never showed himself in public at the Iverson family’s events before, but he made his first appearance tonight with such a grand gesture. How impressive!”

“But his gift was \$1 million more expensive than Chairman Iverson. Is this appropriate?”

It was not!

Lance Iverson’s face had turned green.

However, they did not know that this seemingly inappropriate gesture was actually intentional.

This was just the beginning. The Iverson family members had more uncomfortable days to come.

At this moment, the emcee shouted, “The next gift is from Mr. Justin Salvador, the president of the Salvador Corporation!”

Chapter 673

Bella uncontrollably sat up straight. Her heartbeat quickened, and she stared at the stage attentively.

Camilla was the closest to Bella, immediately noticing the fluctuation in her emotions. She narrowed her eyes.

The crowd’s attention shifted from Christopher to the stage.

“Haha! It’s my grandson. It’s my grandson’s gift!” Nigel patted Asher on his left and Lance on his right excitedly.

Nigel knew his grandson would make a move. How could Justin let that scheming punk from the Iverson family steal the spotlight?

“Lance, looking at your son’s actions, does he fancy Anna too?” Nigel asked, raising his eyebrows.

“Anna?”

“Ahem... It’s Bella’s nickname. It’s an old habit of mine.” Nigel blurted it out habitually.

Lance pursed his lips, revealing nothing on his face. “My fourth son was used to fooling around outside.

I really don't know what he's thinking."

"You don't know?"

Nigel chuckled teasingly. "On Celeste's birthday, your youngest son presents a 17th-century antique worth over \$30 million. Isn't he trying to earn Wyatt's favor? It seems your son really likes Bella."

"I'm not too sure about the affairs between these youngsters." Lance's smile was a bit stiff.

"Although you say so, let me still give you a word of advice."

Nigel casually leaned backward, raising his brows smugly. "Bella will definitely end up with my grandson. I suggest you comfort your son. There are plenty of women in the world, and with his good looks, he could find someone more suitable. Don't waste his precious time on a woman out of his reach."

Lance was stunned. He could only smile dryly.

On the side, even Asher's expression changed, curling his lips discreetly.

Old Master Nigel was truly unpredictable. He must have been a man of character and charisma in his youth.

In the shadows, Christopher's handsome face darkened. He had expected Justin to give something,

but not with such a high profile! It was beyond his expectations.

At this moment, the emcee carried another tray covered with a red cloth to the stage and placed it on the display table.

Christopher heard sturdy footsteps coming up from behind him. He turned around with a cold gaze, only to see Justin calmly stepping into the spotlight in front of everyone.

“Madam Celeste, this is my gift to you.”

Justin stood still beside Christopher, looking as beautiful as a sculpture. “Happy birthday. May your day be filled with joy, surrounded by loved ones and precious moments.”

He carried himself in a dignified and courteous manner, presenting the image of an exceptional young man.

Nigel beamed brightly. No matter how he saw it, his grandson was much better than Christopher

Iverson!

Bella glanced at Justin with complicated feelings. Right now, she was more curious about the gift he had chosen for Celeste.

Christopher stood out with an expensive and unique antique. His gift would be the best of all if there were no surprises.

What treasure could Justin present to surpass Christopher's?

"Mr. Salvador, thank you for your wishes. We're honored that you and Old Master Nigel could make it to my birthday celebration." Celeste responded gracefully.

Wyatt smirked as he looked at Justin. Although he did not show anything on the surface, he felt quite dissatisfied deep down.

This rascal once hurt his precious Bella!

With that history, how could Justin have the audacity to show face at the Thompson family's event?

Chapter 674

Justin must be so thick-skinned to show up here.

"What I prepared is not anything expensive, but I prioritize sincerity over its worth. My gift represents my sincerity. Madam Celeste, I hope you will like it." Justin had a humble attitude.

Bella propped her chin up, staring at Justin as she raised an eyebrow.

He was usually cold and distant, almost never showing such an approachable side.

What a good actor!

“Since you say so, let’s take a look.” Wyatt acted as if he was doing Justin a favor.

Celeste smiled bitterly. Wyatt had carved his hatred for Justin into his bones.

Secretly observing Wyatt’s expression, Christopher only felt like laughing.

It was futile, despite how hard Justin tried to butter up Wyatt. Since Justin had deeply hurt Bella before,

it meant making the whole Thompson family his enemy.

That mistake was as severe as the sky crashing down. It was irreversible.

Celeste and Wyatt uncovered the red cloth together. Lying silently in a transparent glass box was a

golden crown embedded with pearls.

Instantly, Celeste’s eyes widened. Her heart raced rapidly, and her eyes reddened.

“Celeste? Celeste? What’s wrong?” Noticing her abnormal behavior, Wyatt held her warm hand and

asked gently.

Celeste returned to her senses. Tears shone in her bright eyes. She calmed herself down and revealed

the happiest smile ever seen on her face tonight.

“Wyatt... I really like Mr. Salvador’s gift... I really like it.”

Her soft voice reached every corner of the hall through the microphone. Everyone heard her sincere exclamation.

The Thompson family members were shocked, including Bella!

Bella did not understand. The crown only had good craftsmanship. It did not use rare materials and looked like a prop in a film set. How did it manage to win Aunt Celeste's heart?

"Celeste, I don't understand..." Wyatt was confused.

Celeste was not in a hurry to explain. Her eyes shone as she suppressed her excitement and looked at

Justin. "Mr. Salvador, where did you find this crown?"

"It's a long story. I found it from a retired prop maker."

Justin answered with a serious expression. "He had been keeping this crown in his collection. I offered a high price to buy it from him, but he refused. Then, I expressed my intention to make it your birthday gift. He was touched and gave it to me for free. I was lucky to get it."

As his words fell, Celeste was so excited that tears shone in her eyes. She asked, "Was it Mr.

White who worked on the set of the crown?"

Justin nodded. "Yes."

Bella covered her mouth, almost unable to suppress her urge to cry.

Bella was taken aback. She quickly took out her phone and googled "The Crown." It turned out to be a TV

series twenty years ago, which had a burst of popularity once premiered on the TS Channel.

The actress who acted as the queen in the series was Celeste. She had also made a name for herself

through this series and became famous. The TS Channel even designed a stage for Celeste to dance in the

Queen's costume, earning her fame and praise.

That classic image of the enchanting queen Celeste portrayed in

the series, she wore this very crown. How beautiful!

"Oh... I understand now..." Bella's gaze looking at Justin, turned soft.

His rascal had won this round. It was a total sad clown.

No matter how much Bella disliked Justin, she had to admit

that he prepared was sincere and thoughtful..

He wrote it off in a casual tone, but Bella understood how much

time and energy he had spent to obtain this it was a heartfelt gift.

Chapter 675

To say that she was not moved at all would be a lie.

Wyatt quietly listened on the side, deeply touched. The way he looked at Justin was no longer as hostile as before. "Justin, thank you. Your gift was well-prepared, and I could feel your dedication.

Good work."

"Chairman Thompson, you flatter me."

Justin...

Wyatt had called him Justin!

Oh, this exhilarating feeling Justin felt! It was as if he had finally gained approval from his wealthy father-in-law after enduring years of disdain in his pursuit of Bella's hand!

Justin might even have trouble sleeping tonight.

Seeing Justin turn the tables and even receive Wyatt's praise, a surge of anger rose in Christopher's heart. He was always calculated and excelled at winning people's hearts, but he unexpectedly lost on a mere gift.

It was unbearable!

"Also, I have another gift, a token of goodwill from my grandfather and me."

Justin smiled. "Representing the Salvador Corporation, we will donate \$3 billion to the Celeste Charity Foundation for charity work."

The crowd was stunned!

\$3 billion!

The Salvador Corporation donated such a generous amount!

Wyatt's sharp eyes brightened, and he nodded his head in approval.

Although Justin was a scum, he certainly knew how to handle things properly. Compared to the \$5 billion Wyatt injected, Justin only donated \$3 billion, which showed his courtesy of not stealing the host's spotlight.

Immediately, Justin overtook Christopher.

Listening to his grandson's words, Nigel revealed an approving smile -and gave Justin a thumbs up.

Nigel had planned to donate later, but now his grandson has saved him the trouble.

Seeing an opportunity, Lance raised his hand and chuckled. "I'll donate too! It'll be lower than Wyatt. \$4 billion, how about that?"

The crowd applauded. "How generous!"

Since the Salvador family made a donation, the Iverson family, holding the same social status and wealth, could not stay silent.

Otherwise, they would be embarrassing themselves.

"Thanks, bro!" Wyatt smiled and waved at Lance.

A few billion dollars was nothing in the eyes of these behemoths. They threw it around like throwing a ball!

"Did Dad donate \$4 billion to the Thompson family's foundation?"

What a loss!" Charles mumbled in dissatisfaction.

"In Dad's eyes, if the \$4 billion could restore the image that

Christopher lost, then the money was well spent." James looked at

Christopher's pale face and let out a mocking smile.

After presenting the gifts, Christopher and Justin both walked down the stage.

"Mr. Salvador, I didn't expect you to be so cunning and strategic. It must have been hard work."

Christopher adjusted his gold-rimmed glasses as a sinister glint appeared in his eyes. "I'll give it to you

this time, but only this time.”

“Be mindful of the words you choose, Mr. Iverson.”

Justin slightly raised his chin, appearing handsome and arrogant. You did not give it to me. You lost to me.”

“Justin Salvador.” Christopher gritted his teeth, and his eyes turned red. He could not bear to hear the word “lost.”

Chapter 676

“But have you considered why you still lost against me despite being well prepared?” Justin’s eyes remained composed, and he gave a beautiful yet cynical smile. “Even if I resorted to playing mind games, it’s all to win Bella’s favor. On the other hand, your intentions seem far from innocent. Despite knowing that Mrs. Iverson was feeling unwell, you insisted on bringing her to the banquet tonight. Just by doing that, you’ve set yourself up for failure.”

With those words, Justin walked away. Christopher’s breath was ragged as he gazed hatefully at Justin.

The banquet unfolded in a lively and joyful atmosphere.

Justin felt extremely happy to have achieved an initial victory. He decided to step outside for a smoke to reward himself.

He did not walk far from the banquet hall when a delicate call reached his ears, tugging at his heartstrings.

“Justin!”

His chest tightened, and he swiftly turned around. Bella was swiftly approaching him.

Her clear, bright eyes sparkled with hope. Her silky hair was swaying lightly with the wind, and her red lips exuded a seductive charm.

Justin felt an impulse surge within him to pull her tightly into an embrace and kiss her.

In they could hear each other’s erratic breathing. There were no words exchanged, just silence. The

tension in the air was almost palpable. In the blink of an eye, Bella stood before him. Their gazes met, and

Bella was the first to break the silence. “I didn’t expect you to prepare such an unexpected gift for Aunt Celeste tonight.” She lightly coughed.

Her beautiful eyes sparkled, and she continued. “I could tell that among all the birthday gifts, the one

she liked most was the crown prop you gave her. It even overshadowed all the gifts I gave her.”

Justin’s complexion suddenly turned pale, and he quickly explained, ” I’m sorry, Bella. I just thought that

Madam Celeste would like the gift very much. I didn’t think it through.”

He continued to apologize, “I’m really sorry. I never had the intention of stealing the limelight. You’re

Madam Celeste’s precious family, and the gift you gave her must be her favorite.”

“Hey, can you stop apologizing to me for no reason? How many times do I have to say it? I hate it when

you keep saying sorry to me makes me feel like I bully you all the time!”

Bella frowned impatiently and pursed her red lips. “I just want to thank you for your gift.”

Justin was shocked. He could handle it when she scolded him, hit him, and threw tantrums at him. But

when she unexpectedly said ” thank you”, he found himself at a loss.

“It’s been a long, long time since I felt this happy, especially about Aunt Celeste.” Bella smiled

contentedly. “So, no matter what, I have to express my gratitude.”

“In your heart, family will always be the most important. That’s great.” Justin gazed affectionately.

“You used to be important to me too.” Bella’s heart trembled at the thought. A myriad of emotions

surged in her chest.

“By the way, Bella, come with me.” Justin grabbed her hand. “I also have a gift for you.”

Chapter 677

Justin led Bella through the deserted corridor with hurried steps, like two lovebirds trying to elope together.

Bella gazed deeply at Justin’s broad back, which gave her a sense of security. Her breath got heavier, and she could feel her palms sweating.

At this moment, there was an undeniable slight flutter in her heart. At the same time, she could not help but resent herself for liking him. Not only for all the past incidents but also now, simply from holding his hand. It was infuriating! He seemed to be getting off too easy!

Ignorant of Bella’s internal turmoil, Justin remained delighted as he led her to the entrance of a luxurious suite.

Flustered and embarrassed, Bella forcefully pulled her hand away. Her face turned ablaze, and she angrily said, “Justin! What is the meaning of this?! How dare you treat me like some easy girl? Do you think I wouldn’t dare call my brothers here to chop you pieces right now?”

Justin was taken aback by her sudden outburst.

But, seeing that she had misunderstood, he flashed a wry smile. Where's this coming from? The gift I wanted to give you is stored inside."

Bella's eyes widened, and she pursed her lips tightly. Her cheeks were flushed with embarrassment.

"While I can handle your brothers teaming up against me, I would like to leave them with a better impression." Justin's eyes darkened slightly. He leaned closer and teased her.

"Hypothetically, even if I wanted to be naughty, you're the only person I would take home"

I would never go back to that 'home' of yours, not even if you beat me to death! Enough is enough!

Bella became increasingly embarrassed as she listened, and she turned her head away to avoid looking at him.

Tideview Manor has never been my home. Bella, I never had a home."

Justin's voice shook, and his gaze instantly became dim.

A pang of pain struck Bella's heart.

the future, wherever you are will be home to me. But if that's not

possible, I would rather wander through life endlessly." Justin choked

on his bitter words.

Bella slowly shifted her gaze to his eyes. Her gaze resembled that of

a sick person, exhausted and numb from the torment of a painful

illness.

With just one look, Justin felt a stab in his heart. He was

overwhelmed with regret.

He was too impatient and acted hastily. Even if he genuinely

regretted it, he should not have expressed it like that. He didn't know until today

that Bella despised hearing those words the most.

Bella suddenly asked, "You were once in the military, right? Soldier in

the peacekeeping force."

Justin sensed something ominous and was about to respond when

Bella interrupted him.

"During those years, you had indeed experienced a hard journey. But

you did it for someone else. You know deep down in your heart that it

certainly wasn't for me."

'Oh no... It's over...' Justin felt both anxious and flustered. His thin lips trembled, he felt his throat tighten, and he struggled to speak.

Just then, the door clicked open.

Both of them were caught off guard. It significantly alleviated the awkwardness and embarrassment.

"Mr. Salvador! Young Madam! It's really you!" Ian stood at the doorway, smiling. "I vaguely heard the two of you talking. I didn't see you come in after a while, so I opened the door to check."

Bella and Justin stood there and stared at him.

Seeing the awkward atmosphere, Ian broke into a cold sweat. "I didn't disturb you, did I?"

"Not at all," Bella said coldly. She lowered her gaze and swiftly entered the room.

Justin pursed his pale lips and followed behind her.

Ian was about to enter the room when Justin shut the door right in his face.

With a cold tone coming through the crack of the door, he uttered two words, "Stay here."

Ian quickly stood at attention and said, "Yes, Mr. Salvador!"

Chapter 678

As soon as Bella entered the room, she noticed an antique collection box. It was crafted from high-quality ebony and was sitting elegantly on the coffee table. With her discerning eyes, she could tell from the box alone that it contained something extraordinary inside.

"What a beautiful box." Bella sighed, her gaze fixed on it.

"Don't just look at the box. Open it and see what's inside." Justin walked slowly to her side. His attention was completely focused on her captivating beauty.

Carrying a mix of confusion and anticipation, Bella wiped her slightly moist hands on her skirt.

Justin noticed this adorable gesture of hers, which made him flutter with delight. It warmed his heart.

Bella opened the box cautiously. The scene of a stunning fusion of delicate pink and ethereal azure unfolded before her eyes. The color on the flame-glazed porcelain were so beautiful that it was unreal.

“Wow!” Bella exclaimed, covering her red lips with both hands.

In Wyatt’s private collection, there were countless pieces of jewelry and antiques from around the world. But there were no antiques from the 13th century. The appearance of this porcelain seemed to fill that void. Bella was overwhelmed with excitement and joy.

Justin said with a faint smile, “I came across this three months ago from a collector in England. I thought you would love it. After some negotiation and a bit of persuasion, he agreed to sell it to me.”

‘It was worth it.’ Justin thought.

The moment she revealed her joyful smile, all the weariness from the effort and challenges he faced to acquire it dissipated.

“Beautiful... It’s so beautiful.” Bella murmured softly, her almond eyes shimmering with delight.

As she was not wearing gloves, her hands could only encircle the cup, not daring to touch it.

“It’s yours now. Feel free to touch it as you like.” Justin’s gaze radiated a gentle and tender warmth as he moved behind her. Slowly and cautiously, he lifted his arms and grabbed her hands, pulling her

close against his warm chest.

With a composed breath, he firmly but gently took hold of her hand from behind. Bella sensed his warm breath flowing through her hair and into her ear. A wave of warmth from the depths of her heart made her entire body and ears turn red.

As their hearts raced, their shadows melded together. The air s to carry a subtly intoxicating, sweet scent.

“Justin, you...”

Bella’s rosy lips parted slightly when she felt a subtle pressure on her back. Justin leaned forward and pressed against her. His muscular arms tightly embraced her slender waist, drawing her close to his chest.

“Bella, you can scold and hit me later,” he said, holding her in his embrace without uttering another word.

The birthday banquet had reached its climax, and it was time for the dance.

As the main character of the night, Celeste danced with Wyatt amidst the melodious music. It was a

scene that evoked admiring smiles. from the surrounding guests.

As Wyatt was born into a prestigious family, he had mandatory lessons in social dancing.

Despite his age, he gracefully outshone the younger gentlemen on the dance floor.

With Celeste's background in singing, dancing, and acting, she showcased her exceptional talent too.

The duo's performance was a magnificent display, captivating everyone's attention.

Some guests brought dance partners, while others sought companions out on the spot.

Laughter and joy filled the dance floor, creating a delightful atmosphere.

James naturally danced with his wife, Coral. As for Ryan's dance partner, there was no one else aside

from Carrie.

Chapter 679

Carried stuttered, "I... I don't... I don't want to dance."

Initially, Carrie sat comfortably on the sofa in the corner. She was sipping juice and enjoying a slice of

cake.

Little did she know that Ryan would insist on dragging her onto the dance floor!

Carrie had seen her parents and Bethany dance, but she felt it was not for her. Besides, she never

expected to be the center of attention in such a setting.

“It’s okay. I’ll teach you slowly, Carrie.” Ryan bent down, placing his hands gently on her shoulders, patiently coaxing her.

“Ryan, I don’t want to.” Carrie lowered her head, looking pitiful. There was a little smear of cream still on her lips. “Everyone here can dance so well, but I can’t, and I’ll embarrass you. Besides, I don’t like crowded places. It makes me anxious.”

Ryan’s eyes narrowed, feeling an indescribable discomfort. The second statement was what truly hit his heart.

He genuinely cared for her. However, his excitement often led him to get carried away, causing him to overlook her social anxiety and autism.

“Ryan, are you mad at me?” Carrie felt anxious as she observed his silence. She shuffled her feet awkwardly.

Ryan quickly kneeled in front of her, revealing a devilishly charming face that could enchant the world.

Using his fingertip, he wiped away the cream from the corner of her lips and licked his fingers.

“Mmm! So sweet!”

Carrie's rosy cheeks instantly turned red, and she shyly clenched her delicate fists. "Why did you do that? It's... It's so dirty."

"Why would it be dirty? You're sweet and fragrant all over, Carrie." Ryan's charming eyes sparkled sincerely. He firmly held her cold hand, covering it.

Carrie's heart raced like a startled rabbit. "Really?"

"Of course, when have I ever lied to you?"

When Ryan locked eyes with Carrie, a mischievous thought crossed his mind. He smirked and asked,

"You've been sitting quietly all night.

How about letting me teach you to dance?"

"I'm really clumsy." Carrie confessed, lacking confidence.

"It's okay. I'll teach you slowly." Ryan leaned in close to her ear warm breath teasing her earlobe. "Just

like when I taught you to k

"Ah!" Carrie turned crimson, letting out a surprised exclamation at the unexpected analogy.

Ryan playfully gave himself a light smack on the mouth. "Stay focused! Be serious, you pervert!"

On the other side, the Thompson family's gathering was equally lively. Sasha was in high spirits, holding a glass of red wine and dancing with Amelia.

Surprisingly, Mila was dancing with Asher, leaving Ralph dumbfounded!

"Mom! If you want to dance, you could either ask Dad or me. Why are you dancing with Asher?" Ralph looked at his mother helplessly as she gracefully danced with Asher.

However, it had to be acknowledged that when his mother danced, she not only looked youthful but also radiated elegance. One could imagine how remarkably beautiful she must have been twenty years ago.

"I wouldn't want to dance with you. You're so clumsy and awkward.

Catching criminals suits you better. Dancing isn't your thing!" Mila teased as she twirled with Asher.

Ralph shrugged indifferently. "Even if I dance well, what's the use? It won't help me catch criminals. Do you think dancing for them will make them surrender on the spot?"

Mila countered with a smirk, "If you could really do that, it would be great. It would save us from using knives and guns. Just scare them to death on the dance floor!"

The mother and son bantered, bringing continuous laughter to the crowd.

Meanwhile, Roza sat alone in the corner, sipping her drink. She watched the joyful and warm family, and her eyes gradually reddened with tears.

“Ms. Walker.”

Lost in thought, Roza quickly lifted her gaze. Axel appeared out of nowhere and stood in front of her.

He wore a sunny smile and extended his right hand like a fine gentleman.

Chapter 680

“May I have this dance?” Axel asked as Roza stood up gracefully. She placed her slender hand in his palm.

“Of course,” she replied.

Under the soft glow of the lights, Axel furrowed his brows. The glint of tears in Roza’s eyes caught his attention. Unconsciously, he tightened his grip on her hand, causing her heart to skip a beat.

Instinctively, she tried to pull her hand away.

“What’s the matter? Are you having second thoughts?” Axel raised an eyebrow, his tone growing more serious.

“No... But why are you grabbing my hand?” Roza expressed her discontent.

“If I don’t grab your hand, then should I grab your foot instead?” Axel found her question amusing and playfully teased her.

“You...!” Roza intended to retort, but to her surprise, he grabbed her slender waist and smoothly spun her around.

Her vision spun, and in the blink of an eye, she found herself with Axel to the rhythm of the music.

“Were you crying earlier?” Axel asked in a hushed tone as he wrapped his hand around her waist. He gazed into her slightly reddened eye

“Who was crying? I was just tired, yawned a couple of times, and tears came out.” Roza dismissed his question, trying to appear tough as she tried to cover up the truth.

“Oh. I might have misunderstood.”

“What do you mean you might have? You definitely misunderstood!” Roza responded with frustration, clenching her teeth. “Your eyesight isn’t even that great! Otherwise, you wouldn’t have crashed into my car.”

“Oh, I forgot to tell you something,” Axel said casually.

“What is it?”

Axel turned gracefully as he spun her around. “After you left, I reported the incident to the traffic police.

They have confirmed that the accident was entirely your fault, Ms. Walker.”

Furious, Roza glared at him while nervously biting her lips.

“By the way, the insurance company will reach out to you tomorrow.

You don’t have to compensate me for mental stress. Just fix my car.”

With a playful grin, Axel moved closer to her, his face near her blushing cheeks. “Save yourself the money.”

‘Ugh! How could such a shameless man exist in this world?’

Roza roared in her heart, wanting to crush his feet with her high heels!

Since the beginning of the dance, Christopher remained by his mother’s side without stepping away.

However, his eyes continuously scanned the entire venue in search of Bella’s presence.

Yet, Bella was nowhere to be found. Justin was also missing!

Christophe couldn’t help but feel anxious. There was a feeling of pressures commis chest that made it difficult to breathe.e.

"Christopher, you don't need to worry about me. Go quickly and find Bella."

Sophie was in a clear state of mind and looked at her son with a "T

know that you have liked Bella for a long time. Go and dance with her.

It's a great opportunity."

"Don't linger around and not like me. Go on."

"Mom, you're overreacting. I'm more than happy to stay here with

you.

Christopher knelt to comfort his mother, smiling gently. "There's

plenty of time for me and Bella."

"Christopher!"

Christopher abruptly looked up, his gaze turning icy.

Sophie recognized the familiar face, and it sent shivers down

her spine. Trembling, she quickly moved into her son's comforting

embrace.

“Christopher! Come out! I need to talk to you” Lance demanded

a stern and angry gaze.

Christopher confronted his father with acuit and sinister tone. “Dad,

are you getting so old that you have lest your eyesight? Your wife is Fight here. Are you glaring at me

because youcam see?”