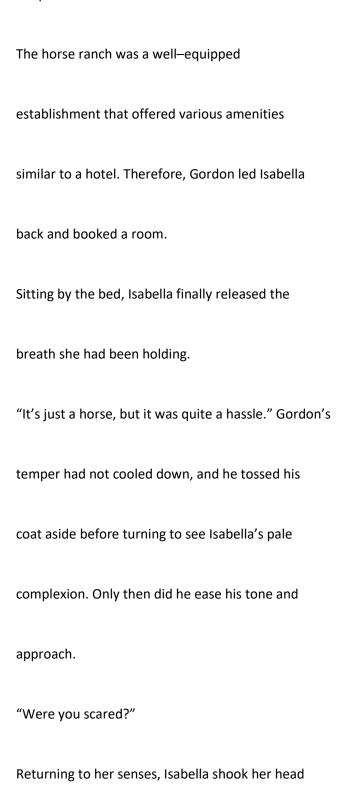
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and ran her fingers through her hair. "No. I just felt a

bit embarrassed."

Gordon let out a chuckle and sat down beside her,

getting a close-up view of her profile.

At first, Isabella was startled and then had to face

such an awkward scene, so her face was currently

pale but had a hint of blush. Her lips had regained

their rosy hue, making her incredibly enticing.

Gordon thought that since she hadn't objected to

being called his girlfriend earlier, she probably

wasn't repulsed by him, so he summoned his

courage and moved in to kiss her.

Meanwhile, Isabella was lost in her thoughts but

suddenly sensed someone approaching from her

side and instantly reacted. Her cheek felt cold,

which stimulated her to instinctively scramble up from the bed.

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Gordon hadn't expected such a strong reaction

from her and felt a little embarrassed. He muttered

in a somewhat irritable tone, "What's wrong? Can't I

give you a kiss?"

Clenching her fists, Isabella was so furious that her body was trembling. "Mr. Dunkstein, do you think it's appropriate for you to kiss me?"

Gordon furrowed his brows. "What do you mean?"

"If you think it's no big deal to kiss me, then you're treating me like I'm a hostess. But if I remember

correctly, I never took a penny from you." Isabella's

tone turned cold, her previous docility and compliance gone. Her words left no room for compromise.

Gordon felt guilty and somewhat remorseful, but his tone was still impolite. "I'm not treating you like a hostess. You're being too sensitive."

"If that's not the case, then please maintain an appropriate distance. I consider you a friend because I thought you were worth befriending.

Don't make me regret my judgment!" Her body was

tense, and she struggled to contain her
embarrassment. She gave him an accusing gaze
and managed to make Gordon feel slightly guilty
with just a few sentences, feeling like he had

indeed been too careless with her.

He awkwardly licked his lips while glancing at

Isabella. When he saw she wasn't going to back

down, he stood up with some discomfort. "Alright. I

admit I was wrong, okay?"

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Isabella pursed her lips and remained silent.

Running his hand through his hair, Gordon used all

the patience he had over the last twenty or so

years to coax her, "Don't be so tense, okay? My

buddies are still outside, and it would be

embarrassing if we got into an argument."

At the same time, Isabella didn't want to sever their

relationship either. It was just that she was instantly

overwhelmed with anger just now and couldn't

control herself. Now that she had calmed down, she wasn't that angry anymore. "It's fine. Just be more careful next time. I'm not someone who clings on to such matters."

Gordon watched her closely with his hands in his pockets and teased her, "You say you're not angry, but you're being so formal with me. Are you really

not mad?"

Isabella relaxed a bit and didn't want to be overly dramatic. "I'm not mad. After all, you've put down. your stance as a high–profile individual to become my friend."

"I have a name, and it's Gordon Dunkstein. Don't keep calling me 'Mr. Dunkstein.' You're not one of those people out there selling themselves, so why

bother learning to act like them?" The young man rolled his eyes, sounding a bit annoyed. After releasing her temper, Isabella thought she had made herself clear and relaxed. Then, she called out to him, "Gordon." The young man's mood instantly brightened, and he grabbed her hand. "That's how it should be. I'll bring you-" Before he finished speaking, there was a knock on the door. Gordon clicked his tongue and frustratedly made his way to open the door. Upon opening it, he was about to throw a fit, but the person didn't enter the

room. "Are you Miss Symons?"

Somewhat puzzled, Isabella went to the door and replied, "Yes, I am. What's the matter?" "Mr. Gates is inside the private room on the third floor and invites you and Mr. Dunkstein over." "We're not going." Gordon rejected it without even considering it. The waitstaff's smile froze, and he turned to Isabella. "Mr. Gates has reserved seats for you. You should head over and check it out." The Gates Family had a firm position within Imperia's forces, so Gordon couldn't afford to offend Simon. Even Gordon's father was nothing to the Gates, but Gordon was simple-minded and didn't consider that fact, making him unafraid to

offend others.

Moreover, Isabella couldn't afford to offend Simon either, and since he had personally invited them, they had no choice but to agree to it. "Mr. Dunkstein and I will be right there. Please tell Mr. Gates to wait for a moment." The waitstaff politely left. Gordon slammed the door shut with a bang and gave Isabella an angry stare. "What's the meaning of this?" Walking over to him, Isabella patted his arm. "You probably offended Mr. Shaffer because of me just now. If you refuse their invite again, it might lead to further misunderstandings." She pursed her lips, feeling somewhat

embarrassed. "You brought me here to have fun,

but I've caused you trouble. I feel bad about it, too."

Not expecting her to be so considerate of him,

Gordon felt a little smug, but he put on a tough

facade and rebuked, "So what if I offended them?

There's nothing to be scared about."

His main concern was that Simon seemed to be

paying special attention to Isabella, and he was

concerned that the other had the same intentions.