

Jojo and Coco's Unexpected Love By Aurora Summers

Chapter 181

Chapter 181 Giving Ava a Stink Bath

Joseph raised his head slightly since he found it amusing. 'She really is a dummy. Why's she so proud when her cooking skills are on par with the downstairs restaurant?'

Nathan understood Joseph's meaning and found it even more frightening. 'Don't tell me Joe is serious about this girl. It doesn't seem like he finds her a novelty. Well, I'd be happy to see him find his significant other if it happened a month ago, but now that Xavia is coming back... I don't think he has forgotten about her.'

Chloe left after delivering the meal. When she closed the door, she heard Nathan's words. "Xavia contacted me. She asked me why you didn't reply to her and if you're still mad at her."

Chloe's face stiffened slightly and she was struck dumb,

unable to pull herself away from the spot. She had never felt a strong desire to eavesdrop. Currently, she yearned to listen to Joseph's answer.

"Ms. Chloe, why aren't you going in?" Lucas suddenly opened the door of the neighboring office and looked at her in

confusion.

Chloe quickly straightened her body and avoided his gaze. "I just came out. I'm going back to work now."

Lucas felt it odd as he watched her scurrying away, but he made no comment.

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A few days later, after Emily had made up with her parents,

she went to visit Chloe. When Chloe noticed her best friend's haggard face, she knew very well that Emily had not had a happy life despite making up with

her parents. Previously, Emily was renting her own place. Now that her lease was up, she recently moved back home.

After a brief silence, Chloe's eyes lit up as she stared at the supermarket opposite them. "We can't let Ava off the hook so easily."

She could not be bothered by the things Ava did in the past to disgust her, but this time, Ava had deliberately tried to sow discord between Chloe and Emily. Even Emily's parents had gotten involved. It inevitably challenged Chloe's limit, and she could not suffer in silence any longer.

"Let's not bother. It's all over now." Emily shook her head.

"It'll be a good thing. She's too arrogant, and we must teach her a lesson." Chloe blinked at Emily before she entered the supermarket to buy some rotten eggs from the store

employee. She then headed toward the road Ava would take every day to get home.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, Ava stepped out of a luxurious car. Her face was seemingly plain but she had full makeup on. She even dressed up inconspicuously. She clearly wanted to put up a feeble and delicate front. The man in the car opened the car door for her. It seemed like he was relatively satisfied

with her.

"I enjoyed myself very much today. I hope to see you again." He appeared like a gentleman, behaving politely.

Great satisfaction engulfed Ava. She nodded at the man shyly. "It was an honor to have a chance to have lunch with you, Mr.

Max."

Max Lopez's family was based in Docwood City. Although **his** family's assets were ordinary, he had high prospects. He was also very handsome. Benjamin got to know the Lopez family through work and had set Ava up on a date with Max. The main thing was that Docwood and Aesper were two separate cities, so no one knew that Ava was previously engaged to Jake.

With passionate eyes, Max yearned to chat more with Ava when a charming figure suddenly dashed out of nowhere and knocked him away. He had just steadied himself and had yet to regain his wits when Chloe smashed all the eggs in her hands on Ava in one go.

The sticky yellowish liquid flowed down Ava's delicate

appearance before a pungent smell wafted off her body. Ava was blindsided. She raised her hand and touched it, her hand coming away full of yellow and sticky liquid. The passers-by were shocked at the sight and immediately took a few steps

back.

'D*mn! What is this?! It's yellow and smelly! Is it poop?!

Ava found it hard to breathe because of the pungent smell and stared at Chloe wide-eyed. Her mind went blank at the same time. People were holding up their phones to record what was happening, and there were a lot of passers-by.

'How dare this b*tch did this to me?!'

For the first time, Ava burst out into real, desperate tears. Chloe, I'm your older sister. Why did you do this to me..."

When Ava made that statement, Max regained his wits. He stared at the charming but wicked Chloe and scolded coldly,

frowning, "I don't know what happened between you and Ava, but regardless, what you did just now is out of the line."

The few stinky eggs seemed harmless, but Chloe schemingly used this method to humiliate another woman in public. It was much more serious than beating someone up.

Chapter **182** Stupid Sap

"And who are you? Why did you speak up for Ava?" Emily walked over and looked Max up and up. "Oh, I know... You must be another stupid sap who has been tricked by her."

Her bestie had charged forward and attacked their enemy, so of course, she could not retreat.

Max consciously assumed that she was talking about him, so his face turned livid and he fell silent.

Ava's tears were mixed with the stinky liquid of the eggs, and they were all over her face. As a result, she presented quite a ghastly scene. She roared, "Come at me if you dare! Don't vent out your anger on Mr. Max!"

Max glanced at her with complicated feelings. It seemed that Ava's move was effective.

Chloe smirked wickedly. 'She doesn't forget to keep up her good image even at this moment. Great!'

She cleared her throat and spoke loudly so more people could hear her. "Mr. Max, right? You said that I shouldn't do this no matter what happened. Well, I'd like to tell you what she did. I sincerely hope that you won't be tricked by her

"Firstly, we're indeed sisters but we have different mothers. When I was still together with my ex-boyfriend, she secretly seduced him several times before she successfully gained his heart. In the end, she dumped him when something went wrong with his business.

"Secondly, she didn't hesitate to give her body up to Adam with them.

"Thirdly, I moved out of my house because none of the Johnsons are nice people. That's why they raise a shameless girl like Ava.

"If you show favor toward her today, she'll try to get something out of you tomorrow. You'd better run if you want to live peacefully for the rest of your life."

“Shut up!” Ava screamed desperately and was about to rush over to hit Chloe. However, Emily had been staring at Ava all that while. She was ready to protect Chloe at any moment.

Emily then screamed with her head held high, “Do you dare swear you never did any of those things?! If you dare, you’ll be struck to death by lightning!” She vented the gloominess that had been bottled up in her for many days. She felt great and relieved at that moment.

Ava appeared shell-shocked as her head buzzed. She then blacked out immediately after that. Seeing this, Max wanted to go and support her. However, Chloe reminded him, “It’s difficult to get rid of the stench of rotten eggs, just like how it’s difficult to get rid of the stench of wretched people. You won’t be rid of her unless you peel off a layer of your skin.”

Max immediately retrieved his extended hands.

With a chuckle, Chloe left with Emily. Yeah. They left without calling 911 for Ava.

Chloe had asked Samuel about doing this before she came here. It was not illegal to throw rotten eggs at others. At most,

she would be rebuked and educated. She did not know if Max would call 911 for Ava or not.

After saying goodbye to Emily, Chloe hailed a cab to return to the villa. Joseph was wearing a white shirt and suit pants,

slowly opening a can of food for Toto in the yard. The dog wagged its fluffy tails vigorously, its saliva dripping onto the ground.

When Toto heard Chloe’s footsteps, it barked several times to welcome her home. After that, it turned back around to stare at Joseph eagerly.

‘Well... it’s indeed just for show.’

Joseph tilted his head and looked over. His tall nose bridge, coupled with his handsome and aloof facial features, made a beautiful arc. Every part about him was impeccable. But in the next second, his face split into a disdainful expression. “What is that smell?”

Chloe took a sniff of her hands and answered awkwardly, “Rotten eggs.”

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Joseph was flabbergasted. He then grabbed a large box of wet tissues from inside the villa and threw it at her without hesitation. “Wipe yourself clean before you enter the house.”

“Oh... Okay.” She finally got rid of the smell on her hands. Joseph then ordered her to take a bath. When she stepped out of the shower, she was clean. Her wet hair draped over her shoulders casually, and her delicate collar bone was exposed by her round-neck nightgown. She blinked innocently. “Is it okay now?”

Joseph stated expressionlessly, “Spill it.”

“What?”

“What were you doing with rotten eggs?”

Ordinary people would have nothing to do with such a thing. Chloe was not afraid of telling him the truth, so she described the incident to him in a few words. Knitting his brows, Joseph pursed his thin lips tightly in disapproval.

‘She could have asked Lucas to do that kind of thing. Why did she take it upon herself to do it?’

But before he could say that, his phone on the table vibrated. It was a call from Tyson who worked at the police station.

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Score 9.5

Chapter 183 It’d Be a Pity if It Was True

Joseph's brows went up as he glanced at Chloe, who appeared nervous. He then picked up his phone and walked toward the backyard. Chloe frowned as she stared at his back as he left. She then took out her phone and texted Emily

[I think Ava filed a police report.]

[How shameless! She has done so many shameful things. Isn't she afraid of being exposed?]

[But she didn't leave any evidence.]

[What should we do now? Will officers be coming to take us away?]

When that scene came to mind, Emily was filled with a tinge of fear. [I think we'll be fine. Joseph has a relative working at the station. He just called Joseph. I guess he's asking Joseph about the incident.]

At most, that incident could be considered a civil dispute. Since she and Ava had familial ties, she assumed she just needed to apologize to Ava in public to resolve this. She did not mind apologizing to Ava.

Hearing that, Emily relaxed. After chatting a bit, they ended the conversation.

Soon, Joseph returned and stared at Chloe gloomily. A tinge of strangeness dawned on his handsome face. "Did you throw rotten eggs at Ava on a main street?"

"I did... Did she file a police report?"

"Yes."

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And it was more than that. Ava was currently hospitalized with a coma. There was a demand for a psychological damage compensation fee of four million. If Chloe failed to pay amount, she had to apologize to Chloe on the Internet via a live broadcast.

Chloe inevitably rolled her eyes. 'How greedy! She actually has the balls to demand four million dollars.

"Should I go and apologize to her?"

"No, I'll get a lawyer to deal with this."

"Huh?" Chloe widened her eyes. "Are you going to ask Samuel for help?"

"Otherwise?" Helplessness engulfed Joseph. "Please be

smarter about it if you want to teach someone a lesson next time. What you did today may seem harmless but powerful. Have you ever thought about the cost that comes to deal with the aftermath?"

"Yes, I did. I think apologizing to her is the smallest price to pay. I just need to say a few words. It's fine." Chloe made up her mind and said seriously, "I'll say sorry to her. It's too expensive to hire Samuel to do this."

She decided to do that now and wanted to go upstairs to change her clothes and leave. Unexpectedly, her slippers were wet from the water in the bathroom. She slipped and inevitably fell toward Joseph. The latter reacted fast and quickly supported her.

At the same time, Chloe sought out support since she wanted

Ava's date had been right beside her. There was no other **way** out except pretending to faint to avoid a fatal humiliation and awkwardness.

When she saw that Benjamin was back, she eagerly sat up on the hospital bed.

"Daddy, how did it go? When is Chloe going to say sorry to me in public?"

"She refused to apologize."

Great excitement dawned on Ava. "So, does that mean she agreed to pay me 4 million as compensation?"

'Is she that rich? I should've asked for more.'

Karen did not have the heart to disappoint Ava, so she did not know how to expose the truth after being hesitant for a long time. Benjamin vented all his fury out at the side and

demanding Ava stay far away from Chloe in the future.

Chloe was a curse.

After waiting for an entire afternoon, Ava only received \$35. She collapsed on the bed as if she had suffered an invisible slap, her face was burning with shame. She then clenched the bed sheets tightly and became furious. "Daddy, I'm going to the South today."

The Lopez family was very satisfied with her but Max had been scared off because of that b*tch Chloe. Two of her marriage prospects had been ruined. If she could not deal with Chloe, she could at least bully Chloe's old folks. It would be for the best if they were dead. If not, they would suffer greatly.

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The warmest season of the year descended on Aesper City.

Chloe took Toto for a walk in the morning. When she got

home, she was all sweaty. After taking a bath, she fished out a pair of breezy shorts and paired them with a light, thin shirt. She wore her thick black hair in a bun. The getup made her appear pure and young.

When Joseph saw her straight and symmetric legs as well as the large part of fair skin that was exposed on her upper body, his face inevitably sank. "Are you planning to go to work in that?"

"Isn't it pretty?" Chloe twirled in front of him. She looked fair and charming. Any expression she made was bewitching and seductive.

Of course, an exceptional lady of her caliber was attractive. However, Joseph did not want others to enjoy her charms. His expression became ice-cold. "Put on a different shirt."

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Chapter 184

After waiting for an

“But why?”

“It’s too sexy.”

Chloe was flabbergasted. She solemnly inspected her clothes for a few minutes before she stated, “No. It’s just a plain old shirt.”

“Change it. Keep your current identity in mind. You represent more than yourself now.”

Chloe yearned to retort back at him, but it was time to go to work. Hence, she reluctantly returned to her bedroom to change into a boyfriend-style top. The long hem of her shirt covered her pants so now it looked like she wore nothing else other than her shirt. It seemed ordinary, but this was attractive to men.

A frown appeared on Joseph’s face. “Who are you trying to seduce?”

Chloe disobeyed him this time around. She put her hands on her waist and retorted, “What do you mean by normal or strange clothes? You’re just being prejudiced against me. It’s useless no matter what clothes I put on!”

Joseph’s slender sharp eyes turned dark. He got up from the sofa and forced her into a corner step by step. Soon, his tall figure towered over her. “Hmm?”

Chloe’s bravado faded. She chuckled. “No, I’m just trying to explain it to you. People have the freedom to wear what they want to wear in today’s society. There’s no need to argue

about it. All the girls dress up like this.”

Joseph tried his best to recall but he could not come up with images of other women as he had largely ignored other

women. But he decided to not argue with her today because of the recent softening of her attitude. He would have time to slowly make that right in the future.

They went to Fairlight together. After the morning meeting, Joseph called Nathan. "Why do women always dress in such revealing clothes? What's going on in their minds?"

Nathan, who was much experienced in this matter, swallowed the food that the woman beside him was feeding him. "It's because it's pretty."

"Is that the only reason?" Joseph tapped the space bar on his keyboard. "Isn't the reason to seduce men?"

"No, it's not. Women put on makeup sometimes and buy pretty clothes to make themselves happy or to compete with other women in terms of charm. It's like how men like to compete with each other in terms of wealth. Women like to compete in terms of their prettiness." Nathan made a rational analysis before he teased Joseph, "Did you and Coco have a tiff?"

Joseph lifted his chin and snorted indignantly, "She doesn't have the guts."

"Well, why are you suddenly asking about this then?"

"It's none of your business. What's the most effective way to resolve this issue?"

"Simple. Take her out shopping and pick some styles that you're satisfied with. Women are happy when they get new clothes, and you get what you want at the same time."

Joseph's finger hovered over the spacebar. He fell into deep thought. 'That is a good idea.'

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At four o'clock in the afternoon, Wendy gathered all the employees of the marketing department and made an announcement. "Ladies and gentlemen, I have an announcement to make. I'm starting my maternity leave

tomorrow and will be away for a month and a half. Ellie and Chloe will be taking over my tasks. Chloe will be responsible for your daily, weekly, and monthly reports."

Everyone nodded to express their obedience. "Ms. Wendy, remember to invite us to your baby shower. We'll prepare great gifts for you!"

"That's right. Get a nanny and relax during this holiday. I heard that women should get plenty of rest after delivery or else their bodies will become weak."

"I understand. You guys have to complete your task seriously. I won't worry as long as you don't infuriate Ellie and Chloe."

Wendy had worked for Fairlight for many years and always held the role of a senior. Although she was generally stern, she always took care of her others. Hence, her colleagues liked her.

However, Ellie Miller raised a sarcastic comment. "It's good **if** they don't anger me, but Chloe just got here. She knows nothing."

Wendy knew that Ellie was bitter over this, so she tried to persuade her patiently, "Chloe hasn't worked here for long but she has the experience of leading a team abroad. Plus, she

has a lot of unique ideas. You guys can learn from each other.'

With a sneer, Ellie shot a side-eye at Chloe. Her palm-sized face looked beautiful and pure, but her clear and pretty eyes brightened with a malicious glint. 'At most, Chloe's just a

fresh graduate. She has led a team? Wendy must be trying to fool us.'

Wendy handed a completed proposal to Chloe and Ellie in an attempt to bring them closer. "Help me deliver this proposal to Mr. Joseph's office. I'm sure you don't need me to tell you what to do, right?"

"Yes, we know what to do."

Chloe was closer to Wendy than Ellie was, so she accepted the document. A tinge of dissatisfaction flashed through Ellie's eyes as she stood at the side. When they knocked on Joseph's door and walked into his office, Ellie suddenly snatched the document from Chloe and went forward, smiling

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"Mr. Joseph, I'm sorry to take up a few minutes of your time. This is the proposal brought up during last week's meeting. Please take a look and see if any amendments need to be made.

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When Chloe met Ellie's gaze, she saw the envy in the latter's eyes. She sighed softly and placed the document in front of Joseph again before saying in an all-business tone, "I'd like to keep the proposal in view. You can listen to my explanation while flipping through it. This way, you can get the most content in the shortest time. I'll try to save you as much time as possible."

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He hastily straightened his back, feeling a surge of energy as he picked up the document. But as soon as he opened the folder, he frowned deeply and put it

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Chapter **185** Take Chloe Out Shopping

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Chloe yelped and went forward to inspect the situation, finding a loose paper clip glued to the interior of the folder.

Chapter **186** The Elusive Opportunity

Ellie was visibly prepared as she forcefully pushed Chloe aside. "I told you to thoroughly inspect everything before coming here. Why didn't you listen?"

Chloe was bewildered. “I did inspect it...” Although she had carefully checked the contents of the plan, there was clearly something stuck to the file with glue, which naturally should have been noticed.

‘Wait a minute...’ Chloe suddenly noticed something and took another look at the folder. It was not a paperclip, but a sharp-ended safety pin!

Ellie’s expression turned flustered and concerned. “Mr.

Joseph, this is due to her carelessness. I have a first aid kit in my office. Let me fetch it and help you bandage the wound.”

Joseph nonchalantly wiped the blood off his finger with a tissue as if it was a minor inconvenience and turned his gaze to Chloe. “Did it prick you?”

“No, I recall when Ms. Wendy handed me the folder, it didn’t have this item on it, and I hadn’t used any safety pins. However, it’s still my mistake, and I’m sorry.”

“When you make a mistake, you should acknowledge it immediately instead of trying to make excuses and shift the blame!” Ellie scolded Chloe.

After speaking, a trace of undisguised satisfaction appeared on Ellie’s face. She relished the thought of reporting this incident to Ms. Wendy upon her return and getting Chloe fired. The marketing department would then be hers to rule.

However, Joseph remained expressionless as he stared **at Ellie**. “And who are you?”

Ellie saw this as her chance to make a favorable impression. She approached him, attempting to win his favor. “Mr. Joseph, I’m the team lead of Marketing. In lieu of Ms. Wendy’s absence, as she’s about to go on maternity leave, I’m in charge and will be handling department responsibilities.”

“You’re in charge?” Joseph sneered, his penetrating black eyes seeing through her ulterior motives. “Then why did you bring Chloe here?”

Ellie’s forced smile froze on her face, and she awkwardly replied, “Ms. Wendy asked me to take care of her.”

“If that’s the case, you can leave. Chloe can stay here alone.”

“Mr. Joseph, she has only been here for a few months, and she lacks the necessary skills. It won’t work—”

“I believe in Chloe.”

With just one sentence, Ellie's words choked in her throat. She felt unwilling and resentful as she begrudgingly walked out, her plans disrupted.

Chloe stayed behind to wrap up the discussion about the project and asked, "So, are there any areas that need to be changed?"

"The theme's meaning is too shallow and not directly related to finance. We can delve deeper into this direction."

"All right, anything else?"

"That's all."

"Okay then. I'll be leaving now," Chloe glanced at Joseph's hand and paused. "I'll go downstairs and get you a Band-Aid."

Joseph intertwined his fingers in front of his chest and put on a casual, faint smile. "Go ahead," he said. This opportunity had to be given since the dumbass wanted to show concern for him.

Chloe nodded and headed downstairs to the convenience store, where she ran into Ellie. Noticing the Band-Aids in Chloe's hands, Ellie sarcastically remarked, "Don't think that because Mr. Joseph didn't reprimand you that you can advance the ladder. Don't blame me for not warning you, but that extraordinary man is not someone you can get close to. It's best to abandon such notions."

Chloe felt uneasy hearing Ellie's words and responded with a hint of impoliteness, "So you think I can get close to him just by giving him Band-Aids? That sounds pretty easy."

"I'm advising you out of kindness. Don't overstep your boundaries."

"Thanks but you can rest assured. I'm not interested in him."

In the past, it might have been worth fighting for, but now, what's the point of fighting? Even if she wanted to escape, she could not.

After paying at the front desk, Chloe turned around with the Band-Aids in hand and left. Her tall and slender figure created a beautiful sight amid the bustling building, catching the eyes of 95% of the opposite sex, or even higher.

Ellie stomped her foot in frustration. Ms. Wendy would start her vacation tomorrow, and Chloe's good days were about to

come to an end.

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Chloe delicately applied the Band-Aid to Joseph's injured finger as her eyebrows furrowed slightly. They were so close that he could see the tiny fuzz on her cheeks.

"Better be careful not to get it wet. Infections can happen," she advised earnestly.

Joseph found this somewhat amusing. It was just a minor injury that would heal by tomorrow.

Noticing his silence, Chloe grew suspicious. "Don't tell me it's hurting."

"It does. Maybe a kiss from you will make it feel better," Joseph teased.

Chloe scratched her ear in astonishment, her eyes widening. "Are you serious?" Does the epitome of masculinity actively seek to degrade himself and invite humiliation?

Joseph looked at her shocked expression, his smile brimming with playfulness. "Well, why don't you seize this hard-earned opportunity while you can?"

'Hard-

earned opportunity, my ass!' Chloe could not help but burst into laughter. Yet, as she looked at the alluring and maddeningly handsome face before her, a thought crossed her mind. Maybe, just maybe, she would not lose out if she gave him a kiss. In fact, she might even gain something. Why pass up on a good deal?

After a brief internal struggle, Chloe set aside what she was holding and slowly approached Joseph.

Chapter 187 Final Breath

Joseph grew impatient with Chloe's tortoise-paced approach. Not wanting to waste any more time, he bent down, closing the gap between them, and their bodies pressed tightly

together. With a firm grip on her chin, he urged her to respond actively.

In a fleeting moment, an intense intimacy enveloped them. Joseph found himself unexpectedly drawn to this sensation. It was as if he had discovered a newfound craving, a fatal attraction to such intimate exchanges. Particularly in recent times, his desire to connect with her on a more profound level had been steadily growing.

In a hazy state, Chloe opened her eyes and found herself gazing at the magnified, dashing face before her. His long eyelashes softened the cold gleam in his eyes, and his large hands cradled her gently.

Chloe could not help but wonder if her eyes were deceiving her. At that moment, she sensed a shared intensity in the kiss, as if Joseph, too, was caught up in the whirlwind of emotions. A whimsical thought crossed her mind—could Joseph hold a hint of affection for her?

Thinking of this, she could not help but burst into laughter. It was ironic how moments ago she had told Laura that she had no interest in him, yet here she was entertaining such

thoughts. Attraction, she realized, could be both deadly and irresistible.

The kiss ended the second Chloe started laughing. Joseph shot her a dissatisfied glance before retrieving his coat and making

his exit. A flush of crimson spread across Chloe's face, and a wave of confusion washed over her. Oh no, could he be angry?

She hastily got up, determined to chase after him, but her unsteady steps almost caused her to stumble. Her body felt weak as if she were a flimsy puppet on strings, devoid of strength. It reminded her of how succubi in TV dramas would drain people's souls.

Chloe trailed behind Joseph until they reached a shopping mall.

"Choose anything you fancy."

"You...want to buy me clothes?" Chloe could hardly believe it.

"What else do you do at a shopping mall besides shopping?"

A spark lit up in Chloe's eyes, and she playfully blinked at him. "Well then, I won't hold back."

"But there's one condition."

"What condition?"

"The clothes you choose must align with my aesthetic standards."

Confidently, Chloe patted her chest with her small hand. "No problem at all!" In such a large shopping mall, it would surely be possible to find several pieces of clothing that both of them would be satisfied with. After all, Joseph had a good sense of fashion in his daily attire.

She stepped into a clothing store, her eyes scanning the racks with keen interest. The attentive salesperson would occasionally steal glances at the tall man seated in the lounge area, then proceed to shower Chloe with compliments,

highlighting her good fortune. **Not only** did she have a handsome boyfriend, but his demeanor and style exuded affluence.

With an air of composure, Chloe gracefully dismissed the praise. "Just good taste," she casually remarked.

In the dimly lit bar, it was easy to be attracted to Joseph at first sight. Mistaking him for someone else was indeed understandable. Certain individuals possessed a natural magnetism that commanded attention without any effort. Icarus, undoubtedly handsome himself, could not hold a candle to Joseph's magnetic allure when they were placed side by side.

Chloe carefully selected five or six items and presented them to Joseph for his input. His gaze landed on a dress with an open back, and he promptly dismissed it. "Not this one," he remarked.

"I think it looks pretty good," Chloe responded, perplexed.

The observant salesperson quickly grasped the situation and swiftly fetched a series of more conservative styles. "Sir, how about these? This miss has a stunning figure and fair complexion. These outfits would truly accentuate her beauty."

Joseph cast a brief glance at the selection, noting that most of the garments extended to below the knees. He nodded approvingly and said, "Excellent. We'll take them all."

The salesperson was momentarily taken aback, her excitement evident in her wide grin as she hurriedly replied, "Certainly, sir. Please wait just a moment."

She had struck gold! This was a significant achievement for

her, one that would bolster her sales performance for **the** next six months!

Chloe was slightly taken aback and asked curiously, "Was it Grandpa who asked you to bring me here?"

"No."

"You volunteered?"

Joseph opted **to** ignore her question, leaving it unanswered.

Chloe understood his response and, without hesitation, rushed into his arms, giving him a tight bear hug. “Jojo, you’re so good to me. You’re the most handsome, richest, and most generous man I’ve ever met!”

When she was with Jake before, he would buy her gifts on special occasions, but it paled in comparison to the unrestricted indulgence she experienced now. Deep down, only one word echoed in her heart: satisfaction!

Joseph gently propped up her chin with one hand and playfully twirled a strand of her hair with his finger. “Am I better, or is Icarus better?”

“There’s no comparison!” Chloe exclaimed with sincerity and excitement, holding his hand tightly. “Icarus is a friend, but you’re my god!”

Joseph’s lips twitched slightly. Why was he feeling a tinge of embarrassment?

Chloe chuckled, freeing herself from his embrace. “I’m going to look at the shoes over there. You stay here for a bit.”

“Sure.”

As Chloe ventured off to explore the shoe section, a man entered the store accompanied by two women. “What brings you here, Joe?”

Joseph calmly raised his eyes to Nathan and then cast a brief glance at the women flanking him. He could not resist making a sarcastic remark. “Take care not to indulge too much and choke on your final breath.”

TT

Nathan replied with a smirk, “Even if I were to vanish into thin air, I’d still leave behind an air of charm and elegance.” He gestured for the two lovely ladies to pick out clothes while he sat down, craning his neck to survey the surroundings. “Did you bring Chloe with you?”

Chapter 188 Hope You’ll Pick Me Up, I Miss You

Joseph remained silent, elegantly crossing his legs and scrolling through financial news articles on his phone.

Nathan interpreted the silence as confirmation and let out a sigh. “So, you’ve really decided to go serious with Chloe?”

Joseph continued to ignore him.

“Are you certain about this? It’s a matter of long-term commitment. Don’t leave Chloe in limbo while still holding onto Xavia. That’s not cool, mister womanizer!”

Nathan had gathered information about Chloe’s family situation from Samuel, and based on their first encounter, he was convinced that Chloe’s father was not a good person.

“You rotate partners every day. What right do you have to lecture me?”

Shaking his head, Nathan replied, “My arrangement with my women is consensual. It’s not the same.”

“Ah yes, you’re a noble one.”

Nathan had no clever comeback for that remark. He continued in a serious tone, “I’m not joking around with you. Xavia reached out to me yesterday. She has a plane ticket for next Friday. It’s time for you to make a choice.”

Upon hearing this, a mocking expression crept onto Joseph’s sharp features, and his voice took on an icy tone. “You suddenly fancy yourself a mediator now?”

Nathan sighed, rubbing his forehead. “I’m doing this for your own good.”

“I’m capable of handling my own affairs.”

With that, Nathan stopped saying anything further. Matters of the heart were far more complex than business dealings. When two women were involved, if things took a turn for the worse, one would have a hard time dealing with the consequences.

“I had my eye on these shoes first. You’re familiar with the concept of ‘First come, first served,’ right?”

“You’ve practically bought out half the store. What harm is there in letting me have these shoes?”

“I already stated it clearly, first come, first served. Don’t try to guilt-trip me.”

The sound of an escalating argument reached their ears, prompting Joseph and Nathan to exchange a glance before walking further into the store. Once inside, they witnessed Chloe and another woman engaged in a fierce dispute over a pair of crystal high-heeled shoes, both adamantly refusing to back down.

When the woman caught sight of Nathan, she coquettishly pleaded, “Nate, I really like these shoes. Can you buy them for me?”

“Come on now. Be a good girl and choose a different style. I’ll reimburse you,” Nathan sweetly coaxed the woman.

“No, I don’t want to. I want this pair.”

Chloe could not help but roll her eyes. “You have so many things you like. Let me remind you once again, I saw these shoes first, and I’ve already decided to buy them.”

Joseph, crossing his arms, paid no attention to the woman and addressed the salesperson directly, “We’ll take them.”

The salesperson nodded. With a hint of embarrassment on her face, she turned to the woman. “I apologize, miss. Can you please consider returning those shoes? We have other styles in our store that are equally beautiful. Let me show you some alternatives.”

“Nate, I thought you adored me. Since you two know each other, why don’t you let me have these shoes? Why be so stingy...” The woman naturally saw Chloe as someone of her kind, someone who accompanies these young “princes” for pleasure. Since their statuses were equal, why should she give in to Chloe? We shall see who would receive more favor.

Chloe took a deep breath, observing the woman tightly clutching onto the shoes, her grip causing the shoes to deform. At that moment, her eagerness to make the purchase waned. Joseph, too, noticed the situation, and his icy gaze swept over Nathan, resembling a chilling blade.

Nathan trembled, causing the smile on his face to instantly vanish. He forcefully snatched the high heels from the

woman's hand and shouted coldly, "Are you deaf?! Can't you understand what I just said?!"

The woman froze, tears streaming down her cheeks, but her stubbornness remained. "Nate, how could you say such things to me... I'm your favorite little sweetheart."

"Get lost, get lost! Don't bother me."

Little sweetheart? He referred to any attractive girl as his little sweetheart.

The other woman beside her tugged at her sleeve and forcefully pulled her away. Seizing this opportunity, the salesperson swiftly packaged the shoes and handed them to Chloe.

On their way home, Chloe joyfully linked her arm with

Joseph's. Even though he had not uttered a single word during the altercation, she could sense that he was on her side.

Suddenly, he received a text from an unknown number. The content was information regarding a flight with two lines attached to it.

[Hope you'll pick me up. I miss you.]

*

During Ms. Wendy's vacation days, Chloe became busy. Time flew by, and before she knew it, a week had already slipped

away.

On a particular Friday, Chloe followed her routine of waiting until most of her colleagues had left the office before heading upstairs to find Joseph and leave together. Just as she stepped out of her department, a janitor discreetly pulled her aside, giving the impression that she had something significant to share.

“Miss, did you provoke someone?”

Chapter 189 Are **You** Jealous?

Chloe’s face registered astonishment as she responded, “No. What did you hear?”

She had briefly worked alongside the janitor when she first joined Fairlight but had since transferred to the marketing department. They would occasionally exchange a few words when they crossed paths in the company, gradually becoming acquainted with one another.

“One of your department colleagues has been badmouthing you in the restroom for several days, and it’s the same person every time.”

A shadow of concern crept over Chloe’s face as she inquired, “Do you happen to know the name of that person?”

“I heard others calling her Ms. Nelly or Kelly or something like that,” the janitor replied.

Chloe’s mind quickly made the connection - the marketing department had only one person with a name that sounded like that, Ellie Miller.

Coincidentally, as Chloe made her way to Joseph, she crossed paths with a high-level executive from another department who gave her a thumbs-up and a smile. “Good going, Chloe! On your way to see Mr. Joseph again?”

She forced a smile, her body tensing slightly. “I’m just heading to the rooftop for some fresh air.”

“Don’t be shy. Ellie already spilled the beans. You’re pursuing Mr. Joseph, always heading upstairs to find him after work.

TI

Your boldness is admirable but let me give you some friendly advice, there’s a limit to everything. Don’t bother Mr. Joseph too much and risk getting fired.”

In Fairlight, there was no shortage of women who fancied Joseph, but only a few had the courage to take action. First, they were well aware of their worthiness, and second, they also knew that Joseph was not an easy person to deal with. While there were no explicit rules, the employees understood that office romances were not encouraged within the company.

Considering Ellie's attitude toward Chloe, it was clear that the situation was far from being as euphemistic as it appeared on the surface. In the eyes of others, Chloe's behavior was not seen as courageous, but rather a display of her lack of emotional intelligence.

"To be honest with you, I recently had a minor conflict with Ellie. She has recently turned to making snide remarks about me. As a high-level leader such as yourself, it's important to be cautious about attracting unwanted attention. If someone with ulterior motives were to hear these potentially fake rumors from you, it might reflect poorly on your reputation."

The executive pondered for a moment, lost in thought. Chloe remained silent after conveying her point. She chose not to elaborate any further. This time, she genuinely went to the rooftop, not in search of Joseph, but to gather her thoughts. and prepare to call him, arranging a meeting in the

underground parking lot.

When she dialed the number, it was Lucas who picked up the phone. He cast a glance at the woman conversing with Joseph not far away and felt a tinge of guilt as he responded, "Ms. Chloe, please head home first. Mr. Joseph is still in a meeting."

"Should I still head home for dinner?"

A momentary silence ensued as **if** Lucas was consulting Joseph. Finally, the response came, "Mr. Joseph says he'll join you home for dinner."

After hanging up the phone, Chloe frowned at her phone. Her woman's intuition was telling her that something was about to happen.

Upon arriving at the villa, dinner was already prepared,

punctually served at eight o'clock. Chloe cast a glance at the darkening sky outside the window and furrowed her brows. Joseph had a good sense of time. They had known each other for some time now, and he had never been late before. This was the first time.

It was not until ten o'clock that Joseph returned. Chloe keenly noticed the faint creases on his impeccably tailored suit, as though someone had been clinging tightly to his arm. Her eyes flickered with a mixture of curiosity and suspicion, and the first person that came to her mind was Xavia Larson.

“Let’s eat,” Joseph said as he tossed his suit onto the sofa. He closed his eyes and massaged his temples.

“The food’s gotten cold. I’ll heat it up,” Chloe offered, making her way to the kitchen. “Did you have a lot to drink during your meeting? Would you like me to make you some hamburger soup?”

“No need.”

As they sat at the dining table, Chloe noticed Joseph ate very little, barely touching the dishes in front of him. Curiosity got the better of her and she asked, “Did you eat already?”

“I don’t have much of an appetite today,” Joseph said lightly, setting down his cutlery.

“In that case, you should go to bed early today. I’ll take Toto for his night walk.”

Joseph looked at her with his charming eyes. “Are you showing me concern?”

“Shouldn’t I? We share the same roof. What’s wrong with caring about each other?”

A touch of melancholy graced Joseph’s handsome face as he extended his large hand, gently caressing Chloe’s head. “Good girl.”

After Joseph headed upstairs, Chloe noticed that he had left his phone behind. She picked it up, intending to bring it to him. While making her way up the stairwell, the phone suddenly vibrated, indicating a new text message.

Curiosity got the better of her, and she glanced down,

realizing that the phone was unlocked, granting her access to the message. The sender’s name caught her attention – Xavia.

[Joseph, thank you for sending me home. The medicine helped, and I’m feeling much better now. Goodnight.]

Chloe froze, her long curled lashes veiling the emotions in her eyes. Her beautiful face remained expressionless, giving no indication of what she was feeling. After a lengthy pause, a scoff escaped her lips. If it was a first love, then it was a first love. Why bother pretending to discuss business?

She knocked on Joseph’s bedroom door and handed him his forgotten phone with a calm expression. “You left your phone

downstairs. Oh, and Xavia sent you a message. Don’t forget to reply.”

Joseph, wearing a white t-shirt after a refreshing cold shower, had slightly damp, neatly styled black hair. He appeared

ered relaxed and approachable like he had shed some of his usual dignified, cold demeanor. If it were not for his eyes, he could almost pass for a male college student.

Upon hearing Chloe's words, Joseph's eyebrows arched slightly. "We ended things a long time ago."

"If it's truly over, then it's over. But sometimes old flames can reignite, you know?" Chloe replied. Her intention was to speak kindly, but her tone could not help but carry a hint of sarcasm.

"After all, first loves are often seen as rare and elusive, occupying a special place in our hearts."

Under the glare of the lights, Joseph squinted, a hint of a smile playing on his lips as he pulled her confidently into his embrace. "Are you jealous?"

Chapter 190 Was That a Confession, **Jojo**?

These particular words immediately struck a nerve with Chloe, causing a surge of sensitivity within her. "No... No! Don't be absurd. You and I are simply colleagues with a superior-

subordinate relationship and are only roommates at best. Why would I be jealous?!"

Unwilling to admit she had feelings for him, she vehemently denied it.

Joseph sighed helplessly, his voice laced with rare patience. "Xavia returned to the country today and insisted on meeting me at Fairlight after getting off the plane."

But halfway through, Xavia had fainted and Joseph left after taking her to the hospital.

"Nonsense. You definitely went out for a meal together!"

"No, we didn't."

"Then what's with the wrinkles on your sleeves?" Chloe pouted, assuming an attitude resembling a wife interrogating her husband. However, she seemed unaware of her own behavior.

"Xavia pulled on my sleeves when she fainted."

"Swear it!"

Joseph grasped hold of her ear and spoke in a drawn-out tone, "Are you pushing your luck?"

“I was just joking. You have no sense of humor. I’m going to take Toto for a walk now. You should go to bed early,” Chloe

pleaded. She managed to break free and hurriedly descended the stairs, her footsteps noticeably quickening.

While walking the dog, Chloe had a half-hour voice call with Emily. Emily’s senses sharpened like a hawk spotting its prey when she learned about Joseph’s first love returning. “She didn’t come back earlier or later, but precisely after you two got married. She’s most likely back to stir up trouble. Stay alert and don’t let her take Joseph away. I’m still counting on your support!”

“If she doesn’t come back, does that mean Joseph and I will end up together?”

“Why not? Even something as outrageous as getting a marriage certificate happened. Have some confidence in yourself.”

Chloe muttered softly, “But he doesn’t like me, and I don’t like him either.”

Emily paused, then spoke seriously, “I’m certain that Joseph has feelings for you. For example, if he didn’t care about you, when telling you about where he was tonight, he wouldn’t have bothered.”

“Is that true…” Did he say it because he cared about her? Ripples stirred in Chloe’s heart, and she inexplicably felt a sense of joy.

“Come on. He’s the young and promising president of

Fairlight. He’s wealthy and handsome. Women from Aesper to Docwood are lining up to pursue him. Why would he bother telling you these things when he could be spending that time making more money? Why would he have nothing better to do than proactively share those matters with you?”

“But…”

“Don’t ‘but’ me. The same goes for you. I know you. You have feelings for Joseph too.”

“No! That’s not true!” Chloe reflexively refuted.

Emily did not hold back as she pierced through with her words, “You claim not to have feelings for him, yet your demeanor when he meets his first love betrays your true emotions. Why did you become so gloomy and sullen, resembling a resentful woman?”

Caught off guard by Emily’s observation, Chloe could not deny the truth in her best friend’s words. Reluctantly, she faced the reality she had been avoiding. Wh

y did she allow herself to act like a resentful woman, questioning Joseph in such a grumpy manner and even demanding that he swear?

Emily heard Chloe's silence and continued, "Actually, it's only natural to develop feelings for someone you spend a lot of time with. Even a dog managed to capture your heart, let alone a remarkable man from Aesper."

Chloe contemplated Emily's words while stroking Toto's fur. The thought of not seeing Toto for even a day tugged at her heart, reminding her of the attachment she had developed.

Joseph had good looks, and he had been remarkably supportive of her. It was natural to develop some positive feelings toward him. Chloe had always been a fan of good looks, and she would often have a positive impression of any handsome stranger. However, the initial fascination would usually fade after a few days. With Joseph, it was probably the same, except his appearance was exceptional, so this sense of

novelty lasted a bit longer.

"If you have feelings for him, go for it. Don't wait until it's too late and regret it. Okay, I have to go now. I'm still working overtime at the office. Take care."

Chloe pondered Emily's advice as she made her way home

with Toto by her side. The following morning, as she sat beside Joseph in the car, her eyes wide as she asked, "**Will** you be back home on time today?"

"I will."

"Oh." She casually flicked her bangs and asked, "Did the first love return to the country for something important?"

"I'm not sure, and besides, she's not my first love." Joseph's answer was straightforward, indicating that he had not spent much time with Xavia yesterday.

Curiosity getting the better of her, Chloe leaned closer and inquired, "Is she your ex-girlfriend?"

"Yes."

"How many relationships have you had?"

"One."

Chloe shrugged, feeling somewhat disinterested. "First one, huh?"

When an ex cries, the current one is bound to lose, especially when it was the kind of first love that most men can never forget in their lifetime.

Joseph looked deep into her eyes and asked, "And what about you? How many relationships have you had?" With such a

sweet mouth, it was impossible for her to have never been in a relationship.

"The same as you."

"Was that loser I met in the restroom your first?" His brows furrowed, displaying his clear disgust.

"Don't say that. He was the campus heartthrob back in college.

The atmosphere inside the car turned frigid.

eyes narrowed, and a cold chuckle escaped his lips. "Did my comments about him hurt your feelings?"

It was unclear where Chloe found the courage, but she blurted out, "I was merely defending Jake. You and Xavia went out together."

Upon hearing her words, Lucas in the driver seat involuntarily gasped. 'Ms. Chloe is so bold!' he thought.

"Don't twist the facts."

Chloe laughed in exasperation. "So I'm the one twisting the facts? It's clear that you have no regard for my feelings and that I hold no place in your heart!" She realized she may have crossed a line and swiftly attempted to amend her words. "Sob, sob. I've fallen in love with a heartless man. I'm so pitiful and miserable. I have to endure this suffering and keep it all to myself."

Joseph's lips twitched. "If I didn't have you in my heart, I wouldn't have bothered explaining myself to you at such lengths last night."

As the words fell, the car fell into a hushed silence as their eyes locked in a gaze.

Chloe's almond-shaped eyes sparkled with clarity and innocence. Suddenly, she burst into laughter, revealing a row of perfectly aligned, pearly whites. "Was that a confession, Jojo?"

Joseph felt a small lump rise in his throat as he faced her passionate and sincere gaze. Uncomfortably, he averted his gaze and replied, "You're overthinking it."

"No, you do have feelings for me," Chloe said. Although she was talking to him, it gave people a feeling that she was talking to herself. "Why don't you just admit it? Love should be boldly expressed!"

Before he could respond, she pressed on, "I also have a good impression of you!"

She was not naive. She had noticed the changes in him. It was just that she had never considered it from that angle.

At this moment, his reaction confirmed her suspicions. Joseph's face sank, his long legs crossed lazily, and his cold gaze bore into Chloe. "Just a good impression?"

'Isn't she supposed to be so deeply in love with me that she can't imagine her life without me?'

Chloe lightly touched her nose, casting her eyes downward to conceal the fleeting sense of guilt. From a side glance, she looked like a wounded little white rabbit. "Of course not. I'm

worried that my love for you is too overwhelming and will only cause you to resent me. So, I can only reveal a glimpse of my affection, like the tip of an iceberg."

Since getting to know this guy, her acting skills had become even more refined. It would be a shame if she did not venture into the entertainment industry.

Joseph raised his chin slightly, exposing his smooth and well-chiseled jawline. He sneered, "You're just trying to hide the obvious."

Lucas, driving in the front seat, was left speechless. 'Seriously, Mr. Joseph? It seems to me that you're the one trying to cover up the obvious.'

"Hehe." Chloe wrapped her arm around Joseph's and rested her head on his shoulder. "Jojo, when did you start liking me? Or rather, when did you develop a good impression of me?"

"Shut up."

"Can't I ask? How unforthcoming of you." Chloe pouted. Were you captivated by my good looks? What a coincidence, so was I by yours. Luckily, I was clever enough not to believe that you're impotent. Otherwise, we might've missed each other! Ah-

Chloe's words were abruptly silenced by an unexpected kiss. Her eyes widened as she stared at the magnified handsome face before her. This man was unbelievably good-looking, but

How many times had they kissed in front of Lucas?!

'This is so embarrassing!'

Joseph had only intended to silence her incessant chatter, but her lips held an addictive allure, each touch leaving him yearning for more. Her tender resistance, flushed countenance, and faint whimpering sounds captivated him. Though aware of her playful resistance, the more she held back, the stronger his desire to conquer her became as he yearned to exert his dominance upon her.

If Chloe knew what Joseph was thinking, she would surely

have bristled with rage. She was not playing hard to get.

Rather, she fretted over the possibility of their colleagues witnessing them upon their arrival at Fairlight.

As fate would have it, just as one hoped to avoid something, it would inevitably occur.

Looking through the car window, she saw Ellie driving a Volkswagen toward them, also heading to the underground parking lot. Chloe quickly reacted and tried to push Joseph away. Unfortunately, he was too strong, and her rejection proved fruitless. She gritted her teeth, and a faint taste of blood filled her mouth.

Joseph suddenly opened his eyes, anger flashing across his face before delving deeper into their passionate kiss. Overwhelmed, Chloe struggled to catch her breath. Fortunately, Ellie did not notice them, and Joseph finally released her.

Chloe cast him a resentful gaze, her petite face blushing intensely. It was more like a spoiled gesture than a complaint when she said, "We almost got caught by a colleague."

Just

as she finished speaking, she quickly covered her mouth. ' Goodness, why did my voice sound so...'

Joseph calmly adjusted his tie and smirked arrogantly. "What difference does it make if someone sees?"

"But if someone sees us, there will be gossip."

"I'll fire those who spread rumors."

Chloe was speechless. 'Sure. You're the boss, you make the call.'

Chloe successfully clocked in and entered the office, placing her sandwiches on her desk. She planned to grab a cup

of

water first and savor the sandwiches slowly. As she passed by her colleagues, she noticed their strange gazes. She furrowed her brows. 'Is Ellie backstabbing me again?'

"Chloe, why is your mouth swollen..." a colleague sitting next to her workstation questioned, clearly perplexed.

She froze for a moment and hastily reached into her drawer to retrieve a small mirror.

*

'D*mn it! My lips are all swollen because of that b*stard!'

Chloe forced herself to appear calm. "It's nothing. I ate something spicy last night."

"Are your lips swollen from kissing a man?" snidely remarked Ellie, who happened to pass by.

Act Fast: Free Bonus Time **is** Running Out!