

Kissed AOM 2061

Chapter 2061

The way Lucas called Melody 'dear' made Melody's heart flutter for a moment. They were so very close, so she worried that he would be able to hear her heart pounding. Stella found it difficult to enjoy her food at all when she saw Lucas and Melody acting all lovey-dovey.

After the main course was removed, everyone was served a glass of apple crumble. Stella mechanically scooped the content and put it into her mouth. She might as well be eating wax since every food tasted like one to her at that moment.

Beatrice was in a good mood, feeling that she had achieved her purpose for the day. Any woman with eyes and a brain would have given up when they saw how in love Lucas and Melody were with each other. "Miss Stella, you don't seem to have much appetite. Or is this apple crumble not to your taste?" Beatrice asked with a smile.

Stella came to her senses, immediately scooped up a large spoonful, and stuffed it into her mouth. "No, it's delicious! Ah-"

Her eyes were already teary when she raised her head again. She stuck out the tip of her tongue pitifully and spoke somewhat unclearly, "Lucas, it hurts so much..."

At that moment, Beatrice had already sent someone to get ice.

"Just close your mouth and talk less if it really hurts," said Melody sincerely, though her tone was indifferent. She could tell that Stella was pretending, but she did not bother to expose it. Lucas stood next to Melody, looking indifferent.

Stella felt even more wronged. Tears began to stream down her cheeks. "It hurts..."

"Alright, stop talking. Ice can numb the pain." Before Stella could continue to act pitiful, Beatrice sent someone to stuff ice into her mouth.

Stella was rendered unable to speak.

"Miss Stella, you're too careless. You even managed to burn your tongue while eating apple crumble."

Stella could not speak, but she felt quite displeased.

'This old lady really doesn't miss any opportunity to teach me a lesson, huh?' she thought.

The only thing she could do with ice in her mouth was to force a smile, making her look somewhat awkward and comical.

Lucas and Melody glanced at each other.

Melody shrugged and asked, "Do you want to take Miss Stella to the hospital?"

Lucas lowered his gaze and ignored her.

Melody snorted. The whole meal was quite tortuous to her, but she did notice that Beatrice did not seem to like Stella as much as she claimed.

"Lucas, take Melody back to the room once you're done eating. I'll keep Miss Stella company and have someone send her back later," said Beatrice. She then turned to Stella. "Miss Stella, are you feeling better? If you are, might you accompany me with a stroll through the garden?"

Stella still had half of an ice cube in her mouth, so she was not able to refuse Beatrice's invitation.

By then, Beatrice walked out. She did not even wait for her. Thus, she had to quickly catch up.

'She must be worried about Lucas! That's why she lured me outside to keep me away from Lucas!' thought Stella.

Stella felt even more unwilling to go out. She was confident that she would be able to win back Lucas' heart from Melody if she had another chance to be alone with him.

In the garden, Beatrice's demeanor completely changed; it was a stark contrast to the amiable demeanor she showed Melody.

"Miss Beatrice, is there something you want to talk to me about?" asked Stella politely.

Stella maintained proper courtesy toward Beatrice, but only she knew what she truly thought in her heart.

Beatrice smiled faintly, her vibe far surpassing that of Stella.

Chapter 2062

"I heard that you're quite famous right now," remarked Beatrice.

Many distinguished families frowned upon the entertainment industry, assuming it was filled with debauchery.

Stella immediately waved her hand and said with fake modesty, "No, I'm not really that famous. I'm just lucky, I guess."

She hooked a strand of her hair behind her ear. "Also, Lucas often helps me out in managing the relationship with the people in the industry. It's only through his efforts that I've managed to get to where I am right now. Madam Beatrice, rest assured that I don't really mix around with the people in my industry unless necessary. In fact, I spend most of my free time at home."

"That's enough," said Beatrice with a haughty smile. "I was just asking. You didn't need to explain so much! In fact, I don't have any biases against actors or actresses. After all, my granddaughter-in-law, Melody, is now a very talented actress herself. I'm eagerly waiting for her film to be released!"

"By the way, did you notice the interaction between Lucas and Melody just now? They are a very loving couple, and no outside interference from any misguided women can affect their relationship."

The phrase 'misguided women' was obviously aimed at Stella, but she pretended not to understand. "Madam Beatrice, I'm not sure I understand what you're getting at..."
"You're a smart girl, Miss Stella. Many things in life can't be forced. I called you here to talk about this, hoping you won't get caught up in unnecessary complications."

Beatrice could not have made it more clear, but Stella continued to act as if she did not understand.

She widened her eyes innocently. However, despite being an actress, her performance then appeared terribly amateurish in Beatrice's eyes.

"Madam Beatrice, I think you've misunderstood. Lucas and I are good friends, and I have a great relationship with Melody as well. Really!" She nodded eagerly to emphasize her sincerity. Perhaps someone else might have believed her, but Beatrice certainly did not.

Beatrice had seen through Stella, but she merely smiled faintly. "Miss Stella, I wanted to give you a way to back out with your pride intact, but it seems like you don't appreciate the gesture at all. Anyone with eyes can see you're wishing to steal Lucas away from Melody.

"I warn you now: If you insist on stealing something that isn't yours, the cost won't just be a hurt tongue. Don't blame me for stepping in on Melody's behalf if you insist on doing something disagreeable." The Riveras' garden faced a stretch of floor-to-ceiling windows in the living room, offering them a perfect view of Lucas and Melody.

After eating, Melody would usually take a stroll in the garden to aid digestion. However, she could not do that then since Beatrice and Stella were there.

Lucas was sitting with her on the living room sofa, engaging in a conversation that seemed somewhat disconnected. Despite Lucas' cold expression, his actions contradicted his demeanor.

His fingers once again toyed with Melody's hand. In a low voice, he remarked, "Why are your hands so small?"

Melody attempted to pull her hand back but without success. "Hmph! My hands aren't considered small among girls, okay? It's just that your hands are so big..."

Although Melody grumbled, she remembered they were still acting and refrained from pulling her hand back from his palm.

Lucas' hands were indeed large, dry yet warm. His one large hand could hold both of her hands. His fingers were slender with distinct joints. She thought they would be perfect at playing the piano.

Melody lowered her head, earnestly staring at his large hand. She had forgotten that her flushed ears were perfectly within Lucas' view.

Finding it amusing, Lucas reached out with his other hand and touched the tip of her ear. Melody jumped up in shock and became even more flustered.

"W-What are you doing?"

Chapter 2063

Lucas rubbed his fingertips, the lingering soft sensation from Melody's ear still not fading. He was not sure what was happening, but he felt like he was not done enjoying it. "Sorry. I accidentally touched it when I raised my hand," he said.

Melody glanced at his serious face suspiciously. "Is that so?"

Lucas' eyes darkened at the way she was scrutinizing him. "You think I did it on purpose?"

Melody remained silent. "Does he think I'm that presumptuous?"

Lucas did not even spare Stella a single glance throughout the entire time.

Stella kept looking over at him, thus appearing absent-minded to Beatrice.

"Go ahead and stare at Lucas all you want, Miss Stella, but he'll never be yours, no matter how much you look at him."

Stella snapped back to reality, awkwardly smiled, and resumed playing the victim. "Madam Beatrice, it seems like no matter how much I explain, you've already made up your mind about me, so why don't we leave it to time? Time will tell whether I'm innocent or not. Melody is also working in the entertainment industry now and often attends social events. Rest assured that I'll take care of her then."

Beatrice, unwilling to beat around the bush, retorted, "My granddaughter-in-law doesn't need others to take care of her. I've said my piece today. I hope you'll take my advice. The relationship between Melody and Lucas isn't something you can come in between. Has Lucas ever given you a meaningful glance after looking over at him so many times? Go back, Miss Stella. We've been walking for long enough, and I'm tired."

'Does this old lady think she can ask me to come and go as she pleases? I'm not her servant!' thought Stella.

She clenched her fists tightly, wishing she could burn all the flowers in the garden.

When they returned to the living room, Lucas and Melody were huddled together, discussing something on the iPad.

"Grandma, you're back. Would you like to have some freshly brewed tea?" asked Melody.

Beatrice instinctively offered a smile upon seeing Melody. "Did you brew the rose tea you like for today as well?"

Melody nodded docilely. "Lucas also likes it, so I thought I'd make him drink more."

Stella approached again. "Melody, let me have a taste too. The rose tea must be something special since Lucas likes it as well. I remember he used to hate floral tea so much." However, nobody gave her the chance.

Lucas' attention was completely focused on Melody, who was seated next to him. He would constantly either run his fingers through her hair or pinch her small hand.

Melody could not refuse his touches since they were still playing the act of a loving couple.

Stella felt a sense of frustration deep inside; she could not do anything while Beatrice was present. Just a moment ago, she confidently claimed to be good friends with both of them, but she could not find a way to join their conversation at all. It was quite a slap in the face.

Chapter 2064

Finally, not wanting to be humiliated anymore, Stella made up an excuse and bade the Riveras farewell.

Beatrice did not bother keeping her. Lucas just lifted his chin, signaling a servant to see her off without any attempt to persuade her to stay.

Melody looked at Beatrice, and then at Lucas, thinking that it would be rude to have a servant see Stella off. However, when she raised her head, she saw Stella glaring at her fiercely.

Melody furrowed her brow when she sensed the hostility coming from Stella. 'Why is she looking at me like that? Forget it. I was thinking of seeing her off, but I don't want to be alone with her now. Who knows what tricks she might pull on me again?'

After Stella left, Beatrice had her maid take her back to her room. Lucas and Melody also returned to their rooms since they no longer had to act.

Melody sat on the sofa in the bedroom, assuming a possessive posture without leaving any space for Lucas.

Lucas glanced at her, then proceeded to unbutton his cuffs, take off his shirt, and casually toss it onto the table in the walk-in wardrobe. Every action of his seemed to be telling her that he was not happy. Just a moment ago, Melody was intimately leaning on him downstairs. The moment others left, she immediately distanced herself, claiming the entire sofa.

'Does she not want me to get close to her at all? She's quite the dedicated actress. She's the gentle Missus Rivera publicly, but behind closed doors, she can't wait to keep me at arm's length. She's behaving as if I'm poisonous!' thought Lucas.

"You won't be able to find your clothes when it's time to wash if you throw them around like that," grumbled Melody.

She then stood up. Although her tone was disdainful, her actions showed that she was going to help tidy up his clothes so that the servants could pick them up together for laundry later.

However, Lucas blocked her path. He smirked sarcastically at her before asking, "In what capacity are you tidying up my clothes for me now? As my wife? Or should I still address you as Miss Melody?" "What do you mean by that? If you don't want me to touch your things, just tell me."

Melody bit her lip, a subconscious expression of feeling wronged. She should not have meddled and helped him at all. She knew she should not feel this way, but she could not help it!

Lucas had never uttered a harsh word to Stella before. When it all came down to it, Melody felt like she did not have the same respect from Lucas as Stella did.

Just a moment ago, everything was fine downstairs. However, Lucas completely changed his demeanor the moment Stella left.

'What was I thinking? I shouldn't have crossed that line in the first place. I was the one who made the mistake of thinking he might have some genuine feelings for me...'

Between the two of them, there was a clear agreement. When no one else was around, Lucas was just Lucas, and she was merely Melody, not Missus Rivera.

'He and Miss Stella have known each other since childhood, while I've only known him for a few months. Of course he'd care about her more than me. What right do I have to be so presumptuous?' Melody took a deep breath, swallowing all of her grievances. After all, it was not like his heart would go out for her.

"Sorry, I've overstepped. I shouldn't have involved myself in these matters. Thank you, Lucas, for the reminder. Even though I am an actress now, I still can't compare to you when it comes to acting. Your acting is so natural and effortless. It's like you can go in and out of character as easily as breathing. Truly...you get out of character even faster than getting into character. I should learn from you."

Although she was speaking with a smile on her face, Lucas could not help but feel like her words were dripping with sarcasm.

"What are you trying to say?" He took a step forward, attempting to hold Melody's hand as he did before, but she avoided him.

Chapter 2065

"I don't know your past as well as Miss Stella does, nor do I have a clear understanding of what you do every day, so I'd appreciate it if you could ask Edmund to send me an overview. Otherwise, we might be exposed when we perform in front of Grandma the next time. That... would be troublesome."

Lucas' face darkened. "You'll know everything about me if you put in a little effort on caring about me, but you're right. There's no one else here now, so we don't need to put on an act anymore. You stay here. I'll go to the study to go over some documents."

Lucas walked away without even looking back. Melody turned and picked up her script. It was as if she pretended not to hear the sound of him leaving until she was only left with herself in the room and the gradually fading scent of Lucas.

Both of them busied themselves with their own tasks, but only Melody knew that she was zoning out while pretending to read the script. Her mind was a mess, thinking only about Lucas.

'Nothing good ever comes out of marrying somebody out of your league,' thought Melody. It was exactly what she was experiencing at that moment.

She found it somewhat ironic. After all, she was the one who was secretly catching feelings for Lucas. He did not do anything wrong at all.

Not only had he not done anything wrong, but he had helped her a lot by lending her money to get her out of her plight.

'He hadn't done anything wrong. He just... He just doesn't like me...' thought Melody.

Most importantly, the two of them were worlds apart. He came from one of the wealthiest, prominent families in the country, while she was a nobody.

Melody set the script aside and hugged her knees sadly. To Lucas, she was just a hired actress, yet she was fantasizing about whether he might develop feelings for her.

'This isn't right,' Melody admonished herself. It was like waiting for a ship that would never appear at the airport. It was best if she stopped deluding herself with thoughts she should not even have in the first place.

She would have enough money to pay him back once she got paid for acting in 'War Song'. Plus, once the year was up, she could rely on her own skills to support herself. At least then she could stand tall in front of him.

"Come on, Melody, you can do it!" she told herself.

Melody composed herself, picked up the script, and began to focus on it.

Meanwhile, in the study...

Lucas maintained the same posture for a long time. He could not understand why Melody's temper was more unpredictable than the summer weather. She could change from being happy to being angry in the blink of an eye.

'She treats me like the best thing in the world whenever Grandma and Stella are around, but all that changes the moment they leave. It's as if she can't wait to get rid of me,' thought Lucas.

He could not quite pinpoint when he started noticing Melody's subtle emotions. He only knew that her indifferent demeanor made him feel at a loss for what to do.

"What does she really want from me?" he asked himself.

Lucas, usually decisive in business, felt a headache for the first time due to relationship matters. To complicate matters, Melody was ignoring him, and he found himself unable to focus on anything.

It seemed like he hoped Melody would always maintain the same demeanor they had when performing in front of Beatrice. He wanted to touch her whenever, wherever, and savor the fragrance of her hair without reservation.

After realizing the change in his own feelings, Lucas narrowed his eyes and contemplated for a long time.

Chapter 2066

Late at night, when Lucas returned to the room, Melody was already asleep, holding the script in her arms. After Lucas covered her with a blanket, he got onto the bed and fell asleep as well. Lucas left for the company early the next morning. Not long after, Melody got out of bed.

Melody had a lot of scenes to film this morning, so she had to get up early to have a cup of black coffee to reduce the swelling, or her face would be swollen when the first scene started shooting. Despite Shaun repeatedly insisting that she looked good even without makeup and could go to the movie set barefaced, Melody was not willing to slack off. Being a newcomer, she wanted to present herself in the most perfect way to everyone.

She never thought she could become an actress, but she genuinely fell in love with acting. She enjoyed giving her all to portray another person. Standing in front of the camera, she could forget all the troubles -whether it was the pile of debts or emotional distress.

"Alright, let's go! Three cameras at once, action!"

Shaun and the producer watched Melody through the lens.

It was a scene in the rain. Despite Melody apologizing repeatedly in the morning for her slightly swollen face, Shaun tirelessly reassured her that as long as she appeared on camera, it would be okay since her acting would do all the talking.

"Oh my, I haven't seen such a talented actress in many years," exclaimed the producer while pulling out a cigarette.

For those in their line of work, working through the night was a common occurrence, and nicotine was needed to stay alert sometimes.

Shaun's expression showed obvious satisfaction; encountering such a promising talent was as rare as winning the lottery.

"I agree. More importantly, she's not just acting. It's like she's the female lead herself whenever the cameras are pointed at her. Hey, don't smoke! Mister Lucas said Melody doesn't like the smell of smoke." Upon hearing Lucas' name, the producer awkwardly twisted the cigarette in his hand, his habit overcoming his craving. He actually felt more at ease knowing that Melody-a promising actress-had someone like Lucas supporting her. After all, non-professional actors and actresses might end up a flash in the pan, something they did not want to see happening to Melody.

Moreover, it was Lucas, a solid backing. Melody's future seemed boundless.

"Okay, cut. First take!"

As soon as the camera stopped shooting, someone approached to wipe the rain off Melody, and she was ushered by the other people to check the previous shots.

The producer could not help but smile and ask, "Has anyone counted how many times our leading lady has nailed Shaun's shots in one take? Passing other directors' shots in one take is easy, but passing Shaun's shots in one take is difficult. Consistently passing Shaun's shots is even more challenging, but Melody did it! Her scenes were shot quickly, accurately, and efficiently, sparing everyone from unnecessary stress."

"That's why we all love shooting scenes with Melody!"

Everyone laughed, earning Melody's bashful smile. She still felt a bit uncomfortable in such situations. She was unsure about what to say, but she always found the right balance.

"Hey! Here comes Miss Stella with coffee deliveries again!"

Everyone knew Melody's personality and was aware of the influential figure behind her. She did not feel like socializing with everyone, and who could force her to do so? The atmosphere became livelier as Stella brought more things to the set.

Everyone was shooting at the same film studio. Whenever Stella-who claimed to be good friends with Melody-was free, she and her assistant would bring a bunch of things over and ask everyone to take good care of Melody.

The same routine was happening on that particular day.

"Oh my, isn't Mintz a cafe only found in Chamery? Miss Stella actually brought us coffee from so far away?"

"It's just Mintz. I'm sure the manager will deliver the food and drinks to Miss Stella if she wants it," joked someone from the crowd.

Stella walked up to Melody. She then leaned against her shoulder affectionately and smiled.

"Well... I've known the manager since our early years abroad. He sent it to me as an exception because he's my friend. If you have time, please go support Mintz. Consider it as supporting my friend!" Stella portrayed herself as approachable.

"Don't worry, Miss Stella. I'll definitely visit Mintz the next time I'm in Chamery!"

"Pfft, even the A-list celebrities have to wait in line to get into Mintz. What makes you think you can get in? Miss Stella is just being polite to us! Her friends don't need us, mere working folks, to support them!" At this point, Stella gave a subtle signal with her eyes, instructing her assistant to take the people downstairs to have coffee and desserts.

This made Melody feel awkward. It was as if there was some unspoken social rule she was not aware of. While Stella had never shown the kind of look that seemed to want to devour her, her feigned friendliness only made Melody more uncomfortable.

Stella pretended to be very close to her-leaning on Melody's shoulder-and joined in looking back at the shots they had just taken.

"Shaun, no one bullied Melody today, right?"

Shaun, being astute, had long realized that the friendship between the two was not as genuine as Stella made it out to be. Thus, he simply asked Melody to sit on the other side so as not to feel uncomfortable being leaned on by Stella.

"Melody is in the zone now, acing every scene. Who would dare to bully her?"

The corners of Stella's lips immediately turned down when she heard that. "Is that so? You didn't go easy on Melody just because she's a newcomer, did you? Melody doesn't need any special treatment from you, you know..."

Melody could not help but glance at Stella, wondering what she meant. Was she implying that Melody's ability was so low that Shaun had to lower his standards?

Stella shrugged, still wearing that annoyingly fake smile on her face.

Shaun's expression suddenly turned serious. Regardless of any grievances between them, they should not be brought into his work.

"Stella, maybe you've been in too many mediocre productions? Most directors wouldn't casually treat their own work as you implied."

Stella's face stiffened, and her smile almost slipped off.

'Who does he think he is? How dare he mock my work to protect Melody? Does he think he can disrespect me just because he has some skills? Hmph!' thought Stella.

At that moment, Stella's assistant stepped in to ease the awkwardness and promptly led her to the other side where the crew members were.

"Miss Stella, the desserts from Mintz are really delicious. Thank you for thinking of us!"

Stella immediately replied with a smile, "I'm glad you like them. To cater to more people's tastes, I had my friend prepare the classic ones. Actually, there are a few special ones too, but since this is all of your first time trying them, I thought it's safer to let everyone try the fail-safe flavors!"

She spread her hands, and the slightly regretful expression made the crew members feel that she was a kind-hearted person.

"Ah! You're so beautiful and kind-hearted, Miss Stella. We're so glad we get to work with you in the same film studio!"

The crew members kept praising Stella.

Stella nodded happily. "I'm also very happy to work with everyone. But please take good care of Melody. I apologize in advance if she makes any mistakes. Please forgive her and be more understanding of her for my sake."

Chapter 2068

The crew members who were standing at a distance whispered to each other.

"Why is it always Miss Stella buying things? Is Miss Stella doing it for her? Shouldn't Melody be paying for all that stuff?" "Well, maybe she thinks we don't deserve to eat her food! Not everyone is as respectful and treats us well as Miss Stella."

"But it's not right to always let a good friend spend money... That's really inconsiderate."

"Tsk, ts, ts! Who can argue with that?"

That was not the first time Stella had come over to Melody's film set. Every time, she would either bring coffee or smoothies along with high-end desserts. Her method of winning over people's hearts was quite appreciated by the crew members.

Melody often heard the crew praising Stella, addressing her as 'Miss Stella' enthusiastically while not being as warm toward her, the female lead.

Melody did not really care. For her, acting was ultimately just a job to earn money. Nonetheless, compared to other jobs, she did enjoy this one more and was more invested in it.

The crew members were likely to work with her only once and would never see each other again, so she saw no need to expend effort in trying to please them. If Stella enjoyed doing these things, then she would let her do it. Melody did not mind either way.

After confirming that her scenes were flawless, Melody changed into a fresh set of clothes and settled in her seat to read the next scene. She could not care less about the other things that were going on around her.

Stella's repeated performances were consistently ignored by Melody, and how could she tolerate that? After all, so much money had been spent.

A crew member who looked like a pig had already gone back for the third round of desserts. One would think he had not eaten for a whole week.

Stella, watching the crew member voraciously devouring the desserts in front of her, felt a wave of disgust but maintained a caring expression. "Do you want more of the desserts? You look like you've been starving for a long time. Doesn't the production team provide you with enough food? Take your time eating, and be careful not to cho-"

Before she could finish her sentence, the staff member choked and coughed. Stella silently stepped back.

"Oh dear! How careless of you! Hurry, drink some coffee. That'll make the food go down easier. You can take your time eating. There's plenty more!"

The crew member felt embarrassed after he had recovered a bit. He gave a sincere smile at Stella out of gratitude. "Sorry you had to see that, Miss Stella. I pulled an all-nighter last night and hadn't had anything to eat, so I'm really starving."

Stella nodded while comforting him, "I understand. But no matter how busy you are, remember to eat something. You wouldn't want to fall ill with stomach problems, now do you?"

"You sound like you have experience with that, Miss Stella."

Stella covered her mouth and giggled delicately. "Not really. It's just..."

She walked behind Melody and wrapped her arms around her shoulder as though they were very close friends. "A mutual friend of Melody and I used to have stomach issues, so I also learned something from that experience. Young people often don't take their health seriously, so please take this food as thanks for taking care of Melody. She's just starting out in the industry, so she feels very nervous sometimes. Remember to remind her to eat on time. I don't want her to end up with stomach problems either!"

"Wow. You're really good to your friends huh, Miss Stella? Melody's lucky to have a friend like you in the industry!"

Everyone sighed with genuine admiration. They could not understand why a newcomer like Melody would have such good luck.

Melody always appeared indifferent, not even bothering with superficial efforts, yet she happened to be best friends with Stella. Stella took care of everything for Melody, and everyone could not help but feel like she was living a charmed life.

Melody, however, found it amusing. 'Stella seemed to be addicted to acting,' she thought with a smirk.

Instead of feeling triumphant, Stella felt like her efforts to provoke Melody were in vain when she saw her smirk.

Chapter 2069

'Why does it feel like she doesn't care after I've put in so much effort and money into provoking her? Does she not care at all about how others criticize her at all?' thought Stella. According to what she had heard, the crew members often complained privately that Melody lacked basic social skills.

Ha! Stella understood the greed of those people the most. It was just that Melody had not allowed them to take advantage of her, so they spread gossip about her everywhere. Nonetheless, Melody's indifferent demeanor made Stella feel quite furious.

'That b*tch only managed to get this job because of her connection with Lucas, so what gives her the right to act all haughty?'

Suddenly, Stella's phone rang. She picked up the phone but did not answer immediately.

The ringing irritated Melody, and she unconsciously raised her head. "Miss Stella, your phone is ringing. Aren't you going to answer?"

Stella bit her lip, her gaze awkwardly shifting from the displayed name on her phone to Melody. After some hesitation, she finally answered the call.

"Hello?"

Melody had no interest in eavesdropping on her, but Stella intentionally answered the call in her presence so she could naturally hear her talking over the phone.

"Oh, you're planning to bring some food over to me? It's okay. I'm not hungry! Yeah, Mintz made a lot of food for Melody's crew this morning, and I had some of them too. Yeah..." Melody knew who was on the other end of the phone.

"You don't need to buy it for me. I'm really not hungry. Oh, by the way, let me check if Melody has eaten. Otherwise, you can bring her some food. Wait a moment, let me ask. Melody—"

As Melody looked up, she saw Stella's exaggerated smiling face, with the other hand theatrically covering the receiver.

'Is that necessary?' thought Melody

"Melody, Lucas said he wants to bring me some food. Have you eaten? Do you want him to bring you some as well?"

'As well?' Melody was no fool. She knew exactly what Stella was implying by those two little words. However, instead of being angry, she was just annoyed. 'Why does she always have to drag me into their affairs? I've already decided to leave after paying off my debts. Is that not enough?'

The more annoyed Melody felt inside, the calmer her expression became. She shook her head and said, "I've already eaten, so no thanks."

Stella immediately put on a wounded look and coquettishly said into the phone, 'Melody said she's already eaten. What a pity. Well, I guess there's no need for you to come over anymore. I'll let you carry on with your work, then.'

Melody really did not want to continue listening to their forced and artificial conversation, so she stood up, took the script, and went to find Shaun.

"Shaun."

Shaun was eating from the lunchbox with his left hand and replaying the previous scene on the computer with his right hand. He had always been meticulous. Even scenes that were shot perfectly the first time need to be repeatedly checked in post-production as he strived for something beyond perfection.

He was not surprised to hear Melody's voice. He glanced at her and asked, "Hey, Melody. Have you eaten? If not, you can have some of the food here."

Shaun had ordered some food for the crew, but Melody had no appetite. She waved her hand. "It's okay. I've eaten a little just now. But I'd like to discuss this scene with you."

"I know. The scene at the dock with the foreigner, right? I thought you'd have some questions about it." Shaun hastily took a few bites of his food and set it aside. "Why don't you tell me what you think first? What kind of person is the female lead in your eyes?"

Chapter 2070

Melody honestly told Shaun what she thought. Since joining the production team, she completed a few scenes. Every time, she thought she had touched the core of Athena, the female lead character's name in the movie, but the next scene would tell her otherwise.

"Athena...is a very complex character. I thought she was just a pure and ordinary high school girl, but these scenes told me otherwise. She's strong, imaginative, and courageous, so I believe she'll behave boldly when she meets a foreigner for the first time."

Shaun laughed approvingly at Melody's serious analysis. "You've analyzed everything correctly, but think about it. Can't a lively and youthful high school girl be shy of meeting a foreigner for the first time? Shyness doesn't necessarily mean timidity, right?"

Melody nodded thoughtfully. "So, when I'm acting..."

"Melody, follow your gut. You're the female lead, not me."

Shaun's guidance opened Melody's mind. She realized that Athena was to be portrayed by her, and the charm of the female lead existing beyond the script should come from her.

'Why did I think that Athena's initial encounter with a foreigner had to be hesitant and timid? She could be shy, curious, or cautious as well!' thought Melody.

Stella stood not far away, watching Melody and Shaun passionately discussing the next scene. She could see appreciation and satisfaction in Shaun's eyes as if he had truly discovered a promising talent, causing him to feel gratified.

Stella's jealousy burned even stronger in her heart. That role should have been hers! She should be the one bantering with Shaun, not Melody-who seemingly came out of nowhere! Melody did not deserve any of this.

Suddenly, Stella's gaze shifted to the script lying quietly on the chair. It was a script specifically for the female lead, with Melody's name written on the cover in colored pens.

"Hmph, I'll make sure you pay for this. You think you're talented? I'll show you what real talent is. I'm going to expose your true colors to everyone, and they'll regret choosing you as the female lead!" A sinister smile of inevitability appeared on Stella's face as she took the script.

"Huh? Where's the script I left on the chair?"

When Melody returned, intending to add some new notes to the script to enrich her character during acting, she was surprised to find it missing. She became anxious.

She was the only Athena in the movie, and her script was exclusively provided for the entire cast. Any modifications were supposed to be made to accommodate her. In other words, she could not use anyone else's script either if she could not find her script.

The rest of the team began searching anxiously. "Didn't you go to discuss the scenes with Mister Shaun just now? Didn't you take it with you?"

Melody shook her head anxiously. "I took the script from the previous episode. I didn't take the one for the next episode. I clearly left it on the chair. Maybe someone took it by mistake?"

At that point, a crew member could not help but comment, "How can you misplace something as important as the script? Mister Shaun will scold us if we can't find it! Ugh! It's so annoying. Being a lowly assistant must be the unluckiest job in the world!"

His complaint was clearly directed at Melody.

However, Melody placed her script in its proper place. It was not like she tossed it around, so how could she have anticipated it disappearing? She was also very anxious about losing the script. Another girl nearby tugged at his sleeve and said, "Oh, shut up. Nobody wants something like this to happen. Let's find it quickly."