

Love Spell 581

Chapter 581

Zachary thought that spending 15 thousand to humiliate Carlisle was absolutely worth it.

Uninterested in Zachary's taunt, Carlisle sat on the bench and said to Jack, "Order, please."

Jack placed a menu on the table.

Carlisle pushed it toward Sharon and said, "Take a look and order whatever you want."

"N-No, I'll leave the ordering to you," Sharon said nervously.

She hadn't expected this Riverland University student to be the person impersonating her brother. She wondered why he would do that.

After all, he had paid her parents 200 thousand dollars enough to buy two houses in a small town—to acquire her brother's identity. She pondered if he was doing so for illegal purposes.

Carlisle did not bother with the menu and told Jack, "Just bring out all your specialties and add two vegetarian dishes."

Jack took the menu and headed to the kitchen, not even concerned about whether they could finish the dishes.

After paying five thousand to the patrons who sold their tables, Zachary instructed, "Waiter, bring all the specialties for my three tables as well."

The specialties at this diner were priced between four and eight dollars each, so ordering all of them would cost about 150 only.

Half an hour later, Carlisle's table was already set with his ordered dishes. The kitchen's efficiency was indeed impressive.

The table was filled with cheeseburgers, spaghetti, roast duck salad, fish and chips, grilled vegetables, stuffed bell peppers, pumpkin soup, roasted potatoes, and grilled chicken breast.

Sharon's mouth watered when she saw the array of delicious dishes. However, she didn't dare start eating until Carlisle and Wendell did.

Suddenly, her stomach growled loudly, betraying her hunger.

Wendell smiled and asked, "Hungry?"

"Hungry? Duh! Didn't he hear my stomach growling?" Sharon thought, but she still shook her head and blushed. "Not really," she said, her eyes fixed on the enticing roast duck.

Sharon glanced at Carlisle, who was outside on the phone and sighed inwardly, wondering how long the call would take.

As another five minutes passed, Sharon's hunger grew more intense. Finally, Carlisle finished his call and returned to his seat.

Sharon's spirits lifted immediately, and she was ready to grab her fork.

"I need to make another call," Carlisle suddenly said.

Sharon chugged all the water from her cup in frustration.

Noticing her discomfort, Wendell said, "Sharon's stomach is growling."

Carlisle looked at Sharon, slightly surprised.

Sharon lowered her head and whispered embarrassedly, "I didn't have breakfast this morning."

"Get started without me," Carlisle said before leaving with his phone.

With Carlisle's permission, Sharon quickly took a piece of roast duck for herself, saying, "I'll help myself then, Mr. Webb."

Carlisle had just finished a call with Gareth. Gareth had contacted the cyber monitoring department. After providing evidence of their website being hacked, the department finally relented.

Hank had successfully repelled the hacker attack and fixed the website's vulnerabilities.

When Carlisle returned to his seat, he noticed a missed call from Solomon Potter on his phone, so he returned the call outside.

"What have you found out?"

"Paradise Fishery is currently owned by six people. Yara Lyon holds 38%, Yosef Lyon's uncle, Charles Lyon, holds 22%, and Yosef's four brothers-Zeke, Salem, Darwin, and Levi-each hold 10% of the company.

"The four brothers were previously at odds, causing a mess in the company. Now the four stand united, giving them more influence than Yara in the company with their collective 40% stake in the company."

"What's the market value of Paradise Fishery?"

"About 1.5 billion."

Chapter 582

"Do Yosef's four brothers own other companies?" Carlisle asked, now understanding the issue.

Clearly, Yosef's four brothers wanted to take full control of the company but were limited by Yara's significant shareholding. Hence, their only option was to team up against her. If Carlisle wanted to help Yara out, he had to start with the four brothers first.

Solomon flipped through the documents on his desk, saying, "Yes, they do. Each of them has their own companies, and they're all publicly traded."

"Public companies, even better," Carlisle remarked, his eyes narrowing.

"Let me give Ms. Johansen a call first."

Hanging up the phone, Carlisle immediately called Selena.

"Mr. Zahn."

Selena's gentle voice came from the other end.

"Can our financial department manipulate the stock market?"

Selena replied in puzzlement, "Are you planning to take Alumni Network public, Mr. Zahn?"

Carlisle then briefed Selena about Paradise Fishery's situation, confident that she was more capable of assisting Yvette than he was.

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After listening to Carlisle's explanation, Selena responded, "Mr. Zahn, manipulating the stock market is illegal and requires a substantial amount of money."

Carlisle said, "As long as it doesn't affect Aurora Holdings' operations, you can use the funds from the finance department as you see fit."

While Selena reminded him that such methods were illegal, she also hinted that it would require significant funds to operate, indicating they were capable of targeting these four companies.

Aurora Holdings had a solid financial, venture capital, and legal affairs team, allowing them to skirt the edges of legality in stock market maneuvers. Carlisle aimed not to bankrupt the four companies but to make them suffer a bit before negotiating terms with them.

"I'll convey your message to the finance department then, Mr. Zahn."

"Thanks."

Carlisle ended the call.

When he returned to his seat, he noticed a pile of discarded bones in front of Sharon, whose cheeks puffed out like a hamster's.

Sharon's eating demeanor reminded Carlisle of Wanda, whom he would meet the next day. He wondered if Wanda had lost weight, whether he would get a chance to talk to her, and what might happen if she didn't recognize him at all.

Carlisle's thoughts were scattered.

Noticing Carlisle lost in thought, Sharon placed a piece of roast duck on his plate and said, "Don't just sit there. Eat up! It's really good!"

Carlisle snapped back to reality, picking up the roast duck and chewing on it. It was crispy on the outside and tender inside, though it had gotten a bit cold.

"Sharon, can you say a few sentences in Caulitornan?" Carlisle asked while eating.

Swallowing the meat in her mouth, she asked in Caulitornan, "What do you want me to say?"

Carlisle managed to catch a glimpse of her meaning, so he replied, "Anything that comes to your mind."

"Alright!" Sharon responded.

Then, Carlisle spent over an hour learning Caulitornan. Aside from a slight pronunciation nuance, Caulitornan wasn't that much different from English. Hence, Carlisle picked up the intonation in no time.

When they finished eating, Carlisle could almost converse comfortably with Sharon in Caulitornan. However, he still couldn't understand some of the dialects she spoke.

Regardless, he didn't dwell on it. Since Howard's parents were both teachers, giving him an intellectual background, it shouldn't be a problem if he spoke Caulitornan more formally.

"I'm done. Enjoy your food," Carlisle said in Caulitornan.

His pronunciation was extremely accurate.

Sharon stared at him as if he were a freak, exclaiming, "You're amazing! My roommate tried learning Caulitornan for weeks but failed terribly. Yet you mastered it in just an hour! You must have a gift for learning. Shouldn't you be studying at Caltopia College?"

"You're too kind. I'm just an average student," Carlisle replied in Caulitornan.

He looked at the time and then turned to Wendell, speaking in English again. "We should go back to work now."

Chapter 583

When Carlisle and Wendell arrived at the company, Wendell went to the freight department while Carlisle returned to the storehouse, where some colleagues were napping at their desks.

Worried that he might disturb their rest, Carlisle wandered around the storehouse. Just as he finished his round, he saw Zoey entering.

"Ms. Miller," Carlisle greeted her with a smile as he approached.

"Take this cell phone. It contains all the calls and messages you've had with your relatives over the past year," Zoey said, handing Carlisle a knockoff phone that was badly chipped and had a screen full of scratches.

Carlisle checked the contacts and saw calls every few days, each lasting about ten minutes, along with hundreds of

messages.

"Are these forged too?" Carlisle asked in surprise, knowing that forging call records and messages required some high-end technology. Clearly, Zoey was a meticulous woman.

Zoey approached Carlisle, pinching his cheek as she teased, "Young man, you're now Howard Lawson. These are your genuine communication records. How can you call them fake?"

Carlisle swatted her hand away, took a couple of steps back, and frowned.

"Please keep your distance, Ms. Miller."

"Why? Are you afraid I might eat you up?" Zoey teased again, her gaze mischievous.

"Given your age and vigor, I do have some reason to worry," Carlisle smiled and responded, his tone light and joking.

He saw no need to be overly polite since Zoey was clearly disregarding formalities.

"I've done you a huge favor, and this is how you repay me?"

Zoey advanced, her gaze revealing her intentions.

"I paid you for your service, Ms. Miller. Our relationship is strictly professional!" Carlisle said as he retreated until his back was against a shelf.

Halting her approach, Zoey narrowed her eyes as she observed Carlisle's alert demeanor.

"Your friend is there, isn't she?"

Carlisle was momentarily startled. It appeared that Zoey had figured out his intention, so he did not need to pretend otherwise. Without hesitation, he nodded in confirmation.

Zoey's smile grew confident.

"Is her name Wanda Thompson?"

Carlisle's expression shifted.

"You've seen her?"

Zoey, the Deputy Director of the Human Resources Department at 10KFresh, seemed to know more than expected. "My best friend works there as a housemaid. Wanda is currently under her care."

Zoey was indeed a close friend of Maisie Galen, Wanda's housemaid. They had known each other for at least seven years.

The housemaids at the rehabilitation hospital were allowed one monitored phone call each month to stay in touch with their family and friends.

When Maisie called Zoey last month, the security guard had stepped out for a cigarette, allowing the two to chat longer than usual.

During their chat, Zoey learned that Maisie was caring for Wanda, the heiress of Thompson Group in Riverland. Since Carlisle was also from Riverland, Zoey connected him to Wanda, understanding that he was there for her. Carlisle swallowed hard before asking, "Can you contact your friend?"

"I can if I want to. But why should I help you with that?"

Zoey put her hands in her pockets, a playful grin on her lips.

She still vividly recalled how Carlisle had swatted her hand away and mocked her age earlier. Who was the one begging now?

Carlisle was aware that his earlier comment had offended Zoey.

However, what was done was done, so he said straightforwardly, "Just name your price!"

Zoey's smile widened at Carlisle's words.

Tucking a strand of hair behind her ear, she said alluringly, "Well, I've been feeling pretty lonely lately..." Carlisle put on a fake smile and replied, "Wendell's fit physique will surely satisfy you. I'll talk to him for you."

Zoey was indeed an attractive woman. Not only was she naturally beautiful, but she also had a seductive figure that even a thick downcoat could not conceal.

Having lived through two lifetimes, Carlisle's mental age was beyond 40. If he were a playboy, he might have accepted Zoey's proposal. However, he wasn't that kind of man. Since he had given his heart to Wanda, he would always stay loyal to her.

Zoey continued flirting, "But Wendell isn't my cup of tea. I prefer a young, innocent man like you. What should we do?"

Chapter 584

"You're sick. You'd better see a doctor about it," Carlisle remarked, his expression cold.

He had been trying to play nice to strike a deal with her, but it seemed she thought she had leverage over him.

"I was just messing with you!"

Zoey chuckled, then continued solemnly, "So, what message do you want me to pass on?"

"Name your price first," Carlisle urged.

He couldn't understand Zoey's character, so he'd rather not owe her any favors.

Zoey blinked and said, "You've already given me 300 thousand dollars, so take this as a complimentary service."

"Business is business. I don't like being indebted to anyone."

"Alright then. 100 thousand!"

Zoey decided to ask for a high price since Carlisle insisted. She knew such a figure would be a piece of cake for him. Zoey had used her connections to investigate Wendell through the police system, but the result showed that his records were restricted. Even her contact, a high-ranking officer in the city hall, had no authority to access his profile.

Clearly, Wendell's identity was highly confidential. It was likely that he had served in special forces. Yet, despite his professional background, he was willing to work for Carlisle, a teenager.

Earlier that morning, Zoey had used her connections to investigate Carlisle, discovering that he was a businessman who had started from scratch and became the owner of several companies within two months.

Each of his companies had distinctive traits. Dragonaire Studio was an online game company. Although it had not launched any products yet, it had already secured a hefty 200 million investment. Meanwhile, Alumni Network had recently surged in popularity nationwide, particularly in universities.

Aurora Holdings was even more impressive. It boasted a talented team, including a top headhunter-Anthony Swanson. Their legal, finance, financial, and secretarial departments were all led by top professionals in their fields.

Zoey could foresee Carlisle reaching the pinnacle of the business world within the next decade.

She had intentionally teased him earlier to gauge his character. Clearly, Carlisle showed a level of maturity and composure beyond his years, remaining unaffected even by female advances. It was no wonder that he had established Aurora Holdings at such a young age.

Carlisle took out his phone and called Wendell.

Once the call connected, he instructed, "Arrange to send Ms. Miller 100 thousand dollars."

"Yes, boss!" Wendell replied.

Zoey received a call at the same time.

"They've arrived? That's early. Alright. I'm on my way back now!"

Zoey ended the call and, with a serious expression, said, "The representatives from Golden Happiness Group are here. I'm heading back to the HR Department now. You're on your own later, but I trust you can handle it."

Carlisle frowned. The representatives were supposed to arrive at four o'clock, yet they had arrived before two. He couldn't help but feel tense. After all, he was about to face a powerful conglomerate.

Aurora Holdings might seem formidable to ordinary people, but it was as insignificant as an ant in the eyes of real capital giants.

Chapter 585

When Zoey returned to the HR Department, she saw Damian Worthington and Mandy Reed standing at her office door.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Worthington, Ms. Reed," Zoey greeted them calmly.

Damian, the CEO of 10KFresh, was a thin elderly man in his 60s, dressed in a gray suit and trench coat.

Mandy, Zoey's superior, was a competent career woman in her 40s. She was dressed in a stylish winter outfit that conveyed elegance and sophistication.

"Zoey, have you prepared the documents I requested?" Mandy asked, smiling.

"Yes, Ms. Reed. I'll get them for you right away."

Zoey entered her office, retrieved some documents from her desk drawer, and quickly returned to Damian and Mandy.

Mandy took the document and skimmed through them.

"Who's Howard Lawson?" she asked, puzzled.

Zoey explained, 'Howard is an employee at Storehouse 8, where we handle the goods delivery for Maple Hill. Since the shipment is larger than usual this time, we brought in an additional warehouse manager to assist with unloading.'

Mandy continued to review Howard's file, her brows furrowing.

"He had a history of mental health issues?"

With a sympathetic expression, Zoey responded, "Howard's situation is quite unfortunate. His parents are both teachers, and he has been an exemplary student from a young age. However, just before the SATs, he developed a neurological condition.

"Fortunately, his aunt took him abroad for treatment, and he was cured. However, he isn't as sharp as he used to be after his recovery. It's difficult for him to learn new skills, which is why he was sent to Yorksle to find a job."

Mandy sighed after hearing Howard's story.

"Poor thing. He's almost the same age as my son!"

After finishing reviewing Howard's file, Mandy handed it to Damian and asked, "Mr. Worthington, would you like to take a look?"

Damian replied casually, "No. As long as you don't see anything wrong, I'm fine with it."

Damian had poached Mandy from another company and had worked for her for over 20 years. Thus, she had his complete trust.

"Alright. Let's meet them now. Zoey, please come with us.'

"Yes, Ms. Reed."

Half an hour later, the representative from Golden Happiness Group sat in Meeting Room 1, reviewing the delivery personnel's documents.

The representative was a woman around Mandy's age. She sat expressionlessly in the chairman's seat, her presence intimidating Mandy, Damian, and Zoey. A secretary with a cold and distant demeanor stood behind her

Zoey glanced at the woman's badge, which read: Janet Dalton, Employee ID 0038, Director of the Supervisory Department.

Zoey immediately tensed up. She didn't expect Janet, a veteran at Golden Happiness Group, to be present. No

wonder she had such a commanding presence.

Still, Zoey wondered why the supervisory department was involved. They were responsible for overseeing all departments within the company, so their authority was immense.

Zoey couldn't help but worry that Janet would notice something amiss. If Carlisle's cover were exposed, Zoey's future would be in serious jeopardy.

The thought made Zoey involuntarily swallow hard.

Noticing Zoey's subtle reaction, Janet observed her for a moment with an icy gaze.

"You seem nervous," Janet remarked.

Not daring to meet Janet's eyes, Zoey lowered her head and replied, "Your formidable presence is making me nervous, Ms. Dalton."

Rather than making up excuses, Zoey admitted her anxiety but turned it into flattery.

Janet's eyes narrowed.

"Is that so?"

Janet's gaze sent a shiver down Zoey's spine, causing her eyelashes to tremble uncontrollably.

Zoey questioned if Janet had spotted something amiss in the document.

Suddenly, Mandy chuckled and added, "Ms. Dalton certainly has a commanding presence. Even with my years

of experience, I find it quite intimidating, let alone someone as young as Zoey."

"Enough with the flattery,' Janet responded, continuing to review the documents.

Although her face remained impassive, she was pleased with their comments. Their fear reflected her authority.

After a while, Janet noticed Howard's history of mental health issues. Instead of raising questions immediately, she quietly finished reviewing all the documents.

Once she was done, she requested, 'Please ask Howard Lawson to come here'

Zoey promptly called Janice, the storehouse team leader.

"Ms. Holland, please bring Howard to Meeting Room 1."

Chapter 586

"Yes, Ms. Miller," Janice replied.

zo later, Janice led Carlisle to the meeting room and knocked on the door.

Zoey stood up to open it and gave Carlisle, who appeared quite tense, a solemn glance.

Carlisle understood from her look that the representative was someone difficult to deal with.

"Ms. Miller," Janice and Carlisle greeted Zoey politely.

Zoey smiled and said, "I only need Howard here. Ms. Holland, you may leave now."

Janice nodded and left, her prominent belly noticeable. Zoey then led Carlisle into the meeting room. Carlisle, dressed in his uniform, fidgeted with the hem of his clothes, looking nervous.

"Howard, this is Ms. Dalton, the Director of the Supervisory Department at Golden Happiness Group," Zoey introduced Janet to Carlisle.

"Hello, Ms. Dalton," Carlisle greeted nervously.

Janet nodded and instructed, "Please take a seat."

Zoey then introduced Mandy and Damian to Carlisle and pointed to a chair, saying, "Please have a seat. Ms. Dalton needs to verify some information with you."

Carlisle took his seat, clearly anxious.

Janet took out her phone and dialed a number, but there was no answer. She dialed another number, and this time the call was answered.

Janet put the call on speaker, placed the phone on the table, and warmed her hands with her cup of tea.

"Hello? Who is this?"

A calm middle-aged voice came through the phone.

Zoey recognized it as Gideon's voice, and her heart began to race nervously.

Janet quietly pushed the phone toward Carlisle, signaling him to talk with his father.

Zoey's heart pounded. She had never imagined Janet would have Carlisle talk to Gideon over the phone. She wondered how Carlisle, a Cascadean speaker, could communicate with Gideon, a Caulitornan speaker.

"Old man," Carlisle called out, using the Caulitornan term for "father".

Gideon, who was teaching in class, was momentarily taken aback.

However, he quickly understood the situation and responded with a chuckle.

"Whose number is this, son? Aren't you working today?"

"My phone's out of battery, so I used a colleague's phone. Work isn't busy today, so I thought I'd give you a call. Are you busy right now?"

Listening to Carlisle's fluent, Caulitornan reminded Gideon of his son, and his eyes welled up slightly with tears. It had been three years since he last heard Howard call him "old man". Nevertheless, he knew that Carlisle was only temporarily impersonating his son.

"Busy as usual! I'm in the middle of a class right now. Call me tonight, alright?"

"Alright."

As soon as Carlisle responded, Gideon ended the call.

Zoey was stunned. She hadn't anticipated that Carlisle would know how to speak Caulitornan. Moreover, it sounded very authentic.

As she wondered whether Carlisle had learned it long ago or just that day, she quickly dismissed the thought, feeling rather silly. She figured that Carlisle must have learned it long ago. After all, who could master a dialect in just a day?

Janet retrieved her phone and asked, "Do you have your phone with you?"

Chapter 587

"Got it...."

Carlisle nodded and quickly pulled an old, off-brand phone out of his pocket.

Janet looked at Mandy.

"Let me see his phone."

Mandy took the phone from Carlisle and handed it to Janet. She scrolled through the messages and call logs.

After a moment, she returned the phone to Carlisle and asked, "What hospital were you treated at overseas?" "Sterling Medical Center."

"Any relapses in the past year?"

"Nope!"

Janet's questions matched the information in the records, so Carlisle answered them easily. Janet reviewed the records again without asking any more questions.

Carlisle, feeling increasingly uneasy, shifted in his seat. His expression showed signs of impatience. Zoey observed Carlisle's behavior closely and admired his acting skills.

Although his performance was convincing, she still decided to help him.

"Is there a thorn in your chair? Can't you sit still for a minute?" Zoey scolded.

Carlisle immediately stopped fidgeting and lowered his head without saying anything.

Janet kept her head buried in the documents, but she watched Carlisle's expression from the corner of her eye. She thought Carlisle's behavior was normal. After all, any employee would be nervous in front of the company's top

executives.

Janet then asked, "Who recommended him for the job?"

"Mr. Gabin, the storehouse manager. He and Gideon were classmates."

Zoey shifted from her stern demeanor to a softer tone.

Janet nodded before turning to Carlisle.

"The storehouse must be busy. Get back to work!"

Carlisle looked relieved. He got up and headed for the door.

"Ms. Dalton, he hasn't signed the confidentiality agreement yet!" Zoey reminded.

Janet frowned.

"Did I say he passed the screening?"

Carlisle paused briefly at the door but then quickly left without turning back. Zoey bit her lip and remained silent. "Ms. Stafford, come with me," Janet said as she got up.

She left the meeting room with her secretary, Avaline Stafford. After walking around the company, they finally arrived at Storehouse 8.

The storehouse was bustling with activity. Storehouse employees picked items from lists while workers packed and sealed boxes. Carlisle held a checklist in his hand as he skillfully picked items from the shelves.

Avaline muttered, "Ms. Dalton, isn't this a little excessive? This is a complete waste of time..."

She couldn't understand why Janet was personally checking out the delivery people. It was one thing to do background checks, but now she was discretely observing them. It almost seemed like she was investigating a

criminal.

"Where is your professionalism?" Janet spat.

Avaline pouted and fell silent.

Janet continued, "Work has to be done seriously. I have never made a mistake and will not allow myself to make one!"

After watching Carlisle for a few more moments, Janet finally turned to leave. Avaline followed her.

"Can we get him to sign the confidentiality agreement now?"

"The screening process isn't over yet..."

Avaline secretly rolled her eyes. She wondered how long the screening would take and if people tended to become more paranoid with age.

It was 4:00 pm at Caltopia College.

Sharon had just finished playing tennis with her classmate. While resting on a bench next to the court, she received a call from an unknown number.

Sharon immediately answered the phone in a cheerful tone.

"Hello, are you calling to buy a hair clip?"

"Hello, I'm Norton Dixon, the general manager of Aqua Grace Accessories," said a gentle male voice on the other end.

Sharon's eyes widened.

"Aqua Grace?"

Chapter 588

Aqua Grace was the manufacturer of the hair clips that Sharon had been selling. This was inspired by Patrick's suggestion, which she thought was a good idea.

She had already decided to visit Aqua Grace over the weekend to discuss becoming their ambassador. She planned to leverage her status as the endorser of Caltopia College's Alumni Network.

Now that the general manager of Aqua Grace had personally contacted her, she felt like she was dreaming.

"That's right. We noticed that you've been selling our pearl hair clips. Where did you get them?" Norton asked.

"I... I got them from a friend..." Sharon replied nervously.

Norton smiled.

"No need to be nervous. Listen, we'd like to invite you to become our agent. You can get our products at the lowest prices!"

Sharon's eyes widened as she cautiously asked, "What's the lowest price?"

"For example, the lowest price we offer for the pearl hair clips you sell is 2.80 dollars each."

"2.80 dollars?"

Sharon stood up in disbelief. She had been getting them for 5.20 dollars each and making a profit of 1.80 dollars per clip. Last month, she had made over 300 dollars selling them.

If she could get them at the lowest price, she could make 4.20 dollars per clip, a significant increase in profit.

Sharon felt her heartache at the thought of lost profits.

"So, do you want to be our agent?" Norton asked.

Sharon nodded enthusiastically.

"Yes! Of course!"

The opportunity to make money was right in front of her, so she had to take it.

"Great. Drop by our office after school with a guardian to sign the contract."

"Guardian? I..."

Sharon hesitated. She was about to say that she didn't have a guardian at Yorksle but quickly caught herself. Wendell had reminded her to say that her brother was working at 10KFresh for the next three days.

"Is there a problem?"

Sharon composed herself and replied, "Not at all. I'll bring my brother with me after school."

"I'll notify the security guards. Just let them know, and they'll take you to my office."

Norton breathed a sigh of relief.

After hanging up, Norton looked at Janet.

"Ms. Dalton, who exactly is Sharon to you?"

Aqua Grace was a mid to low-end manufacturer of hair accessories. The brand wasn't very well known, but the company was quite large, with annual sales in the millions. Norton had once worked under Janet alongside the founder of Aqua Grace, and the company's success was due in part to her influence.

"Some questions are better left unanswered," Janet said before taking a sip of her coffee.

Back at 10KFresh's Storehouse 8, Carlisle had finished his chores and was helping the movers load the trucks. He

chatted amiably with them, seamlessly blending into the work environment.

At 5:30 pm, half an hour before the end of his shift, Carlisle returned to the office to take a break.

"Did you sort out your problem?" asked Janice.

Carlisle shook his head.

"Not yet."

"Did something happen?"

Janice's grip on her pen tightened, worried that it might affect her as well.

"No. I think they're still watching me," Carlisle said, trying to sound relaxed as he took a sip of water from a disposable cup.

In reality, he was slightly anxious.

Janet was very meticulous. If she decided to dig deep, he wouldn't be able to withstand her scrutiny.

Just then, his off-brand phone rang. Realizing it was Sharon, he answered in Caulitornan.

"Is class over?"

Sharon marveled at Carlisle's ability to learn as she heard his impeccable accent.

"Yeah. Can you accompany me to Aqua Grace after work?"

"Aqua Grace? What's that?"

"It's the company that makes the hair clips I sell. They've invited me to be an agent, but I need a guardian to sign the contract with me."

"Got it. Wait for me at the school gate."

Carlisle hung up the phone.

Chapter 589

Aqua Grace had suddenly offered to make Sharon an agent and insisted that her guardian sign the contract. Not only was it abrupt, but Sharon was already an adult with full legal capacity and civil rights. She didn't need a guardian to sign a contract.

Carlisle figured it had to be Janet's last test. The fact that Sharon had contacted Carlisle indicated that she hadn't slipped up. Once Sharon signed the contract, Carlisle figured that his evaluation would probably be over.

At six in the evening, Carlisle finished work and hailed a cab to Caltopia College. 10KFresh was only a mile away, but it was rush hour. Thus, the busy streets were packed with cars, and the traffic was incredibly congested.

What should have been a half-hour drive took more than an hour. Carlisle fidgeted in the back seat while Sharon waited nervously at the school gate. She called Norton to explain why she was late. Norton assured her that he would only be leaving at 9:00 pm.

After hanging up, she noticed a taxi pull up a short distance away. Carlisle jumped out of the cab, still in his work clothes.

"How much do I owe you?"

"12 bucks!"

Carlisle reached into his pockets, and his face fell. His wallet was in his jacket, which he had left at the office. Except for two cell phones, he was penniless.

The cabbie sensed Carlisle's predicament and frowned.

"You don't have any money on you, do you?"

"I forgot to change out of my work clothes. My wallet is in another jacket," Carlisle admitted.

The burly cab driver got out of the car and grumbled, "Aren't you here to meet someone? Get them to pay up!"

Carlisle pulled out Howard's phone to call Sharon. Before he could dial, Sharon tapped him on the shoulder, wearing a smile.

"Howard, did you forget your money?"

"Perfect timing. Pay the driver for me, will you?"

"How much?"

"12 dollars."

Sharon pulled a worn red wallet out of her backpack and handed Carlisle a hundred-dollar bill.

"You'll need money for the ride back. Take this."

Carlisle took the money. He noticed Sharon's pained expression and couldn't help but laugh.

"I'll pay you back tomorrow."

"Sure," Sharon said, her face lighting up with a smile.

Carlisle paid the driver, and after giving him the change, the driver drove off. Just then, Carlisle had a revelation.

"Shouldn't we have just taken the cab to Aqua Grace?"

"Howard, are you really going to pay me back tomorrow?"

Carlisle, caught off guard, patted her head affectionately.

"Don't you trust your brother?"

Carlisle's loving gesture brought tears to Sharon's eyes. It reminded her of when her real brother used to pat her head. She hadn't seen him in three years and wondered when he would recover and return home.

"Sharon..."

At that moment, Sharon's classmate walked out of the school. It was the long-haired girl who had been teasing Sharon at the hotel.

Her name was Sophia Jackson, a Yorksle girl from a wealthy family. She was stylishly dressed and wore expensive perfume. She was with Patrick. Both had seen Carlisle pat Sharon on the head.

Patrick seemed calm. After a day of thinking, he agreed with his father's idea. As the child of a government official, venturing into business could be problematic.

Patrick felt that being promoted to general manager of Thompson Group would be an accomplishment in itself. But to marry Shein's daughter would be like owning half the company.

Patrick had taken some time during lunch to look at Wanda's photos. In just two years, Wanda had transformed from an ordinary-looking girl. She was the definition of a glow-up. He thought that he'd be a breathtaking beauty in another two years.

"Sophia, Patrick..." Sharon greeted them smilingly.

Patrick, now less interested in Sharon, smiled back.

"Sharon, I thought you said you didn't know him."

They had just seen Carlisle pat Sharon on the head. It wasn't a casual gesture that mere acquaintances would make. Patrick was beginning to think that Sharon wasn't all that special. She might even be a bit of a flirt.

"Sharon, you didn't tell me you had a boyfriend! Yesterday, you pretended not to know each other. Just wait till I get my hands on you!" Sophia said with a pout.

Blushing, Sharon quickly clarified, "Don't be silly. He's not my boyfriend. He's my brother, Howard Lawson." "Really?"

Sophia looked at Carlisle excitedly.

"Your family's genes are amazing. It's one thing for you to look good, but your brother's handsome too."

"He looks younger than Sharon. Do you really think he's her brother?"

Patrick laughed.

"Yeah, Sharon. Are you lying to me again?"

Carlisle glared at Patrick

"If you're so good at guessing ages just by looking, why don't you work as a fortune teller? So ordinary and yet so confident. You're like a fortune cookie..."

Sharon couldn't help but laugh.

She would've taken Patrick's side without hesitation if the same thing had happened earlier. But after spending some time with Carlisle, especially after he gave her a head pat, she had begun to see him as her brother.

Carlisle had a clean-cut appearance, but he didn't hold back when it came to insulting someone. He even used colorful Caulitornan phrases he had learned from Sharon.

"What does being a fortune cookie mean?"

Patrick frowned.

Sharon stifled a laugh and gave Carlisle a stern look.

"Hey, there's no need for insults."

"That was an insult? I wasn't picking a fight."

Patrick's face darkened.

Patrick hadn't done anything to Carlisle, but since yesterday, it seemed like Carlisle had a grudge against him. Carlisle seemed like a maniac to him.

Carlisle smiled and shrugged.

"Well, I'm picking a fight now, aren't I?"

"This is ridiculous," Patrick said flatly.

"This isn't Riverland or Caulitorna. You're in Yorksle now. There are people here you shouldn't mess with!"

"Hey, can you two stop fighting?" Sophia interjected, stepping between them to diffuse the tension.

Patrick's eyes landed on Carlisle's 10K Fresh uniform, a sneer forming on his lips.

"Didn't you say you were a Riverland University student? Why are you working in Yorksle? Or perhaps you never went to Riverland University and just lied about it for your ego?"

Carlisle was at a loss for words. He even considered backing out. His current identity was as Sharon's brother, Howard, not as Carlisle of Riverland University. He had claimed to be a Riverland student the day before because he hadn't expected to run into them again.

Patrick's grin widened at Carlisle's silence.

"If you're a working man, just stick to that. Be honest and humble. Pretending to be something you're not is just pathetic."

"Patrick, that's enough..."

Sharon couldn't take it anymore and stepped in to stop Patrick from mocking Carlisle any further.

"You all know me. I rarely get into conflicts and hardly ever talk to people, but he's been challenging me at every turn. I can't just stay silent."

Carlisle remained calm.

"Sharon, let's go. Someone's waiting for us.

Sharon nodded and led Carlisle to the bus stop. Just then, a bus to Aqua Grace arrived, and they boarded.

Sophia whispered, "Is he really Sharon's brother?"

"Why don't we find out?"

Patrick scoffed.

"How?"

"I have a cousin who works at 10KFresh. I'll give him a call."