

Chapter 14

Times Hotel was the most luxurious hotel in Eastcliff. It had a total of nine levels and every level represented different degrees of affordability. If one were to book any of the levels, the higher he went, the more respectable his social status was, because he would have to spend a higher fee on it. Even for the first floor of the hotel, which was the cheapest, one had to own at least tens of million in order to gain access.

As for the venue of the birthday celebration of Old Master Cunningham, Eric Cunningham, it was held at the third floor of Times Hotel. Although it was only at the third storey, all the Cunninghams were thrilled to attend the celebration because other than Eric himself, the rest of the family had only ever been to the second floor of the hotel before. In fact, Eric himself was not qualified to book the third level, and he only managed to do it with the help of a big shot. Therefore, he made the effort to invite all his relatives and friends in order to show off to them.

Sasha went to the third floor of the hotel together with her parents. The atmosphere inside the ballroom was lively with a hubbub of chatters. Her father, James, used to enjoy a very respectable status in the family but now, no one there actually cared about his presence. Further inside the ballroom, Eric, who looked high-spirited, was seen having small talks with the guests all around him. He was flanked by his son and grandson, Jason and Charlie, who looked proud and gleeful.

With a sigh, James found a random table and took a seat. Just shortly after he sat down, a contemptuous voice came, “Hey, Uncle James, you guys are here!”

Four of them turned toward the source of the voice and saw Charlie heading their way, looking triumphant. After glancing at the four of them, Charlie exclaimed in an exaggerated tone, “Why isn’t my brother-in-law who lives off his wife here? I don’t reckon he will possibly miss this sort of occasion, won’t he? After all, he has never come across the dishes prepared tonight in his entire life. I’ve even prepared some doggy bags for him to bring home some of the food later!”

As soon as he made that statement, the guests around him burst out laughing at once while Sasha and her family looked annoyed. During a dinner Matthew had attended years ago, he took a doggy bag to pack up all the leftovers at the table. His behavior had since become the laughing stock of everyone up until now, and Charlie would always bring it up whenever he met Sasha and her family.

Feeling their faces burning, Helen and her family cursed Matthew in their hearts, blaming him for bringing them such a huge embarrassment.

“Charlie, you must be joking. Is that live-in son-in-law even allowed to be here? Even if he is allowed in, I don’t think he can be seated, can he?” A girl who dressed lavishly walked over—she was Charlie’s younger sister, Lily Cunningham.

Lily was quite a beautiful girl herself but she was still a far cry from Sasha. Therefore, she had always been jealous of Sasha’s appearance, who she hated to the core.

“Lily, I don’t think you know our brother-in-law well enough. If he’s allowed in, he will do anything to get himself seated, no matter how humiliating it is, because he’s great at freeloading!”

“Charlie, you’ve misunderstood me. What I meant was, even if he’s allowed in, he can only be one of the waiters who is going to serve the dishes later!” With a chuckle, Lily continued, “Can a waiter be seated to enjoy the dinner with us?”

The guests around them immediately burst into an uproarious guffaw while Charlie even doubled up with laughter. “Lily, you’re very thoughtful indeed. Why didn’t I think of that? Sasha, is Matthew one of the waiters tonight?”

Lily sniggered and chided in, “I remember Sasha is having her birthday today too. Sasha, your husband isn’t here yet. Has he forgotten about your birthday?”

Looking sullen, Sasha gritted her teeth and remained silent. James, Helen and Demi all carried a bleak expression as they secretly cursed Matthew viciously in their hearts. At that juncture, a gentle voice came from the entrance of the ballroom, “I might forget my own birthday but I will never forget Sasha’s birthday for the rest of my life!”

All the guests averted their gaze to the entrance and found Matthew, who was dressed in a suit, striding into the ballroom with a bouquet of flowers in his hands. Ignoring everyone else at the ballroom, he headed straight to Sasha, got down on one knee and handed the flowers to her. “My dear, I’m sorry for being late!”

Matthew was a good-looking man to begin with, but he just didn’t have time to spruce up his appearance prior to this. This time, he made an effort to dress up before he came. The immaculate suit he was wearing really accentuated his charm. His Prince Charming-like entrance brought flutters in the hearts of many girls at the ballroom.

Sasha looked flummoxed as she did not expect that Matthew would attend the event, let alone making his entrance in such a manner. As she was under the accusatory stares of many earlier on, Sasha was under enormous stress. However, when she saw Matthew at that moment, her nerves which had been tense for such a long time were starting to relax for some reason. Tears which had welled up in her eyes trickled down at that instant.

Her resolution and tough appearance became vulnerable and dissolved all at once in front of Matthew, who felt a throbbing pain in his heart at the sight of her tears. Rising to his feet, he mustered up the courage to hold her hands and drew her closer to him in a domineering manner. “Please don’t cry.” Matthew muttered, “I promise I won’t let you go through anymore suffering for the rest of your life.”

Sasha remained silent. At that point in time, she was enveloped by a sense of security which she had never experienced before. Although Matthew held her hands rather abruptly, for some reason, she actually felt reluctant to retrieve her hands.

Suddenly, Charlie let out a chuckle and raised a sarcastic remark. “Hey, isn’t this my brother-in-law? See, my guess is right. He will surely be here when there’s something he can freeload!”

Amidst an uproarious laughter of the guests, Lily glimpsed at Matthew and asked snidely, “Matthew, your suit looks nice. Where did you rent it from?”

Grimly, Charlie interrupted, “You wore a rented suit here? Matthew, I really don’t know how to spell it out for you. We should be earnest and down-to-earth in life, because trying too hard to pursue vanity is never a good thing!”

James and his family too glared at Matthew furiously. They wondered why he deliberately chose to make his appearance in a rented suit at this moment. Was he trying to bring more disgrace to their family?

“Why are you here?” Helen challenged furiously.

“I’m here to celebrate Sasha’s birthday,” Matthew replied.

“Celebrate?” Helen snapped icily, “You rented a suit to celebrate your wife’s birthday at someone else’s birthday celebration? Matthew, don’t you think you’re being shameless for doing that?”

Once again, the guests around them burst out laughing. Yet, Matthew looked unperturbed as he told Helen in a soft voice, “Mom, I’ve already prepared a birthday celebration dinner for Sasha!”

“You’ve prepared a celebration for her? Where is it? Why can’t I see it?” Helen challenged him in a frigid voice.

“It’s on the ninth floor,” Matthew said with a faint smile.

“The ninth floor?” While everyone else was in a trance, Lily was the first to let loose a guffaw. “Hey, Sasha, did you hear that? Matthew has prepared a birthday celebration dinner for you on the ninth floor!”

“Ha ha, how interesting. Matthew, you’re even more bold than how I imagined you to be!” Charlie remarked.

“Alas, someone is clearly living his life in an illusion.”

“How embarrassing it is to have such a husband!”

While a deluge of criticisms was aiming at Matthew, Helen and her family looked ominous.

“Matthew, can’t you be more sensible?!” Helen reprimanded him angrily.

“What wrong have I done?” Matthew asked in an innocent tone.

“You said you’ve prepared a birthday celebration for Sasha on the ninth floor, is that right?” Helen raised her voice and continued, “Very well. Now, bring me to the ninth floor and show me what you’ve got!”

“Mom...” Sasha looked shaken. The ninth floor of the hotel was not accessible to any random person from the streets. Anyone who acted rashly and disturbed the big shots who happened to be there would only end up badly.

“That’s right!” Someone from the ballroom chided in, “Yes, Matthew, we’ll believe what you said if you bring us to the ninth floor now!”

With a look of composure, Matthew said with a faint smile, “It’s not the right time to go there for the time being because the celebration isn’t ready yet. Let’s head upstairs when everything is ready!”

“Matthew, you’re getting so good at telling lies now that you’ve even convinced yourself, huh?” In between laughter, Charlie piped, “Well, Mr. Larson, we’ll be patiently waiting for your birthday celebration to be ready soon!”

All the guests roared with laughter while they eyed Matthew disdainfully. The ninth floor of the hotel was a place where even Old Master Cunningham had no rights to access. Who would believe that Matthew had made a reservation there?

