

Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo

Chapter 171

The more he tried to ease up the tension between them, the more their relationship turned sour!

“What’s wrong?” Evan asked puzzledly when he returned home noticing how listless Davin appeared.

Davin stopped in his tracks to regard Evan. The longer he stared at him, the more dispirited he felt; he couldn’t help but lament, “Evan, can’t you just make sure things are in peace?”

Evan frowned at him in response. “What do you mean?”

“Do you have any idea how much of a hard time I’ve been going through? I’m worried sick about you! Y-You really owe me a sports car because of that!”

What nonsense is he talking about?

With a crease on his forehead, Evan eyed him skeptically.

“Evan, let’s talk about your relationship with Ms. Lane... Are you sure you aren’t interested in her in the least bit?”

“Of course I’m not!”

After a pause, Davin then braced himself and pressed on, “Do you really hate her, or you are shunning her on purpose?”

Evan went speechless as he narrowed his brooding eyes slightly.

“Evan, are you avoiding her, as well as all other women and all possibilities that might lead to a relationship, on purpose because you’re held back by something that’s been bothering you deep down inside?”

Davin was scrutinizing Evan’s face to see if there was any change to his expression as he audaciously finished phrasing his question.

He astutely caught the trace of intense misery that flashed in Evan’s eyes when he mentioned his issues.

Indeed, Evan had yet to move on from his past despite so many years have passed!

“Evan, that hoyden has already...”

“It’s getting late. You should go back home and rest.”

Obviously having no intention of elaborating on that topic, Evan interrupted Davin without hesitation before striding up the stairs.

Davin let out a sigh in silence while watching his back.

It seemed like the hoyden’s bite had left a deep marking in Evan’s heart.

Although that hoyden was no longer around, he wondered whether the bite mark was still there at the same place after so many years had passed.

Evan and that hoyden...

Evan and Nicole...

Sometimes, one had no choice but to resign to one’s fate.

...

When Evan returned to his study, he leaned back on the chair in a laid-back manner as he massaged his temples. After that, he took a cup of coffee from the desk and took a sip before placing it back.

“Evan, that hoyden has already...”

As Davin’s words were still resounding in his head, he fished out a cigarette with uneasiness and lit it. Amidst the mist of smoke, some fading memories of his past which he had dreaded to remember came flooding back.

He thought about the last encounter he had with her. At that time, she was like an abandoned doll, crouching sulkily beside a flower bed after she was being mocked.

Staring at her solemnly, he consoled her, “Don’t be sad because I’ll marry you in the future!”

“Really?!” She blinked her eyes which sparkled like stars.

“You bet!” He made her a solemn promise.

Instead of responding to him, she rose to her feet and gazed at him with a faint smile. On the next second, she started a round of giggle that was so infectious that it made him start to laugh too.

Next, his memories jumped to the part when he received the devastating news.

“Mr. Seet, the girl you have been looking for has passed away.”

“What?! No, it’s not possible!”

“It’s true. We found a tombstone on which there was a portrait. The girl in it looks exactly the same as the one in the photo you showed us.”

When Evan heard that, he felt as though something in his head just imploded and he refused to believe it until he went to the graveyard himself and saw the portrait on the tombstone with his own eyes...

At that moment, he finally realized how it felt to be heartbroken and how vulnerable he was when it came to life and death matters.

At that moment, he buried her in his heart, together with all his feelings for her.

From then on, he had deliberately avoided relationships and marriage by focusing his full attention and effort on building his career.

On her death anniversary four years ago, he experienced such intense grief over her demise that he decided to drink away his sorrow at a bar. Little did he know, he encountered Nicole on that fateful night...

With that thought in mind, he took a huge puff of the cigarette.

When the door to his study was suddenly opened, he quickly stubbed out the cigarette and threw it into the ashtray.

“How come you’re still up?”

As Juan was approaching him, he noticed the cigarette smoke lingering in the air. “Daddy, are you smoking?”

Evan pinched the cheeks of the adorable boy as he answered, “Look, it’s pretty normal for guys to smoke. I just had one.”

“Daddy, is something bothering you?”

“Nope.”

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“Did you have a fight with Mommy?”

After a moment of contemplation, Evan shook his head and replied, “Nope.”

“If that’s the case, why did Mommy say that you are her nemesis?”

Evan frowned at what the little boy said.

He reckoned Nicole must have spoken that out of spite because she was pissed with him for using Zane to compel her into giving up Juan’s custody.

However, he decided to make up something to answer Juan because he couldn’t let him know the true reason. “Your Mommy must have meant that as a joke.”

“Daddy, it’s not easy for Mommy to raise me up. She’s gone through a lot of suffering and she once even sold her blood just to make money. For her effort of nurturing me into such a healthy and adorable kid, could you please treat her nicer?”

There was a trace of imploration in Juan’s clear eyes.

Meanwhile, suspicion flickered in Evan’s pupils.

She sold her blood...

As a woman who was cruel enough to abandon her own kid, could she have done such a huge sacrifice for Juan?

He wondered why she had not left Juan with him since she had done that to Kyle.

Wouldn't it have been better for her to just leave both kids to him so that she could have total freedom?

Sometimes, he really found it hard to figure her out.

"Daddy, can you promise me that?"

Juan tugged the sleeves of his shirt in a coquettish manner.

Evan, whose mind was pulled back to reality because of him, nodded. "I promise you."

"How about you and Mommy take me to the theme park this weekend?"

"This weekend..." Evan's voice trailed off with some hesitation.

He recalled the last time he brought the kids on a trip together with Nicole. Thinking about the time she lashed out on him at the dessert place, he was worried he might regret his decision to go on another trip with her this time.

"Daddy, please just say yes because Kyle is dying to go to the theme park too. We were so envious of our friends when they told us about their trips with their parents."

"Let me think about it first. Now, it's late and it's time for you to go to bed."

"Daddy, just say you will take us to the theme park. I'm begging you... I'll go to bed right away if you promise..."

At last, Evan succumbed to his pestering by agreeing to take them to the theme park.

“Daddy, let’s do a pinky swear.”

Looking at Juan’s eyes which were brimming with anticipation, Evan stretched out his pinky finger and twined it around Juan’s.

“Well, you should go to bed now.”

Smiling, Juan crawled to his lap and wrapped his arms around his neck to plant a kiss on his lips. “Daddy is the best dad in the world!”

Staring at Juan in astonishment, Evan’s cold and stern face broke into a faint grin.

Juan was indeed right to point out the fact that Nicole had really given him an incredibly adorable and obedient son.

Therefore, he should give her credit for that.

When Juan scrambled back to his bedroom, he couldn’t wait to share the good news with Kyle.

“Daddy has agreed to bring us to the theme park together with Mommy!”

“Really?! That will be a golden opportunity for us to help them patch things up.”

Yet, they failed to come up with any viable plan after racking their brains for some time.

Juan suggested, “Let’s hold a meeting with Nina and Maya tomorrow. I’m sure we will be able to think of something with more people contributing.”

“Sounds good to me.”

The next morning, the kids headed downstairs to enjoy breakfast after waking up.

As usual, Maya was the first one to appear at the dining table. She couldn't help but salivate at the sumptuous spread of food which was served.

When Juan and Kyle took the seats opposite her, she cast a glance in the direction of the staircase before she asked the boys in an undertone, "Is Nina here?"

"I didn't see her on my way here."

"I don't think so because she seems to be in the bathroom."

After getting the confirmation from the boys, a flicker of light shone in Maya's eyes as she reached her chubby arm over to Nina's plate from which she grabbed a prawn and put it down on her own plate.

She paused to think for a second before sneaking the largest slice of pizza off Nina's plate and stuffing it into her mouth.

While she was chewing, she picked up Nina's glass of milk and poured it into her own glass.

Watching the scene, Kyle and Juan glanced at each other. "She must be famished," Juan sighed.

When Kyle heard him, he took a prawn from his own plate and offered it to Maya but to his dismay, she refused to accept it as a person of backbone.

"Kyle, I have enough to eat. In fact, I only took Nina's food because she bullied me last night."

Kyle was stunned to hear her response. "Are you sure you don't want the prawn?"

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Kyle put the prawn back to his plate after Maya nodded at him vigorously.

Shortly after that, they heard a string of footsteps coming from the direction of the staircase. In a swift move, Maya took a swig of the milk and put down the glass before stuffing the prawn into her mouth.

At the sight of Nina making her way over to the dining table, she deliberately covered her mouth with both hands and turned around. After some frantic chewing, she stretched her neck and swallowed the prawn.

When Nina sat down at the dining table, she frowned at her own plate before turning sideways to observe Maya's plate.

"Seems like the breakfast today isn't as generous as other days," she grumbled bewilderedly.

"I think the portion is the same." Maya stared at her with an unruffled look when she continued, "As a foodie, I think the food is enough. You're going to turn yourself into a fat pig if you think the food is not enough."

To both Juan and Kyle's surprise, Maya was very calm and convincing when she was lying.

The boys exchanged a glance in silence before burying their heads in their plates, trying hard to suppress the urge to laugh.

They agreed that it was about time for Maya to execute her revenge after having been given an earful by Nina over the past few days.

Nina rolled her eyes at her and retaliated, “You’re the fat pig.” With that, she put an end to their dispute and started digging in after taking a sip of the milk.

Maya felt delighted secretly.

She made up her mind to sneak more food from Nina’s portion tomorrow. Nina needed to have a taste of being starved so that she would stop criticizing her.

All of a sudden, Juan adopted a serious attitude when he stared at the rest of them. “I have something important to share with you all—this coming weekend Daddy and Mommy are bringing us to the theme park. Now, let’s try to come up with a plan to help them patch things up. We will have a meeting tonight to share our thoughts.”

As soon as he said that, Nina snorted presumptuously, “Why should we help Mommy patch things up with that jerk when she clearly deserves a better man?”

“Other men might be better but they aren’t our Daddy. So, we should do our best to make sure Daddy and Mommy stick together.” Maya stared at Nina earnestly.

“Maya, you might see him as your Daddy but he might not treat you as his own. Isn’t it obvious when his own sons went to a prestigious kindergarten for the rich while both of us went to a cheap kindergarten? Also, didn’t you say he is a jerk too?”

Suddenly, Maya agreed that Nina had made a good point. “So, should we get a man who treats us nice to be our Daddy?”

“No!” Kyle was the first to voice his objection. “Mommy can only be with Daddy!”

Staring at the girls somberly, Juan insisted, “Exactly. Daddy and Mommy are a good match to each other. What if the new guy turns out to be a jerk?”

“Evan is a jerk! Nobody can be more of a jerk than him!”

Nina put down her glass of milk and glared at Juan resentfully.

Before Juan could get back to her, a sonorous and deep voice came, “Don’t you think you need to have a good reason to call me a jerk?”

The kids spun around and found Evan standing somewhere nearby, watching them with a stern look.

Considering that it was not Nina’s first time to label him a jerk, he was really curious as to how he had offended the little girl before.

Dauntlessly, Nina got to her feet and marched toward Evan with her eyes laden with a grudge. “You’re a jerk because I say so,” she snapped angrily.

With that, she let out a snort before storming her way upstairs.

What kind of reason is that?

It isn’t right for her to judge a person totally based on her own preference.

“You guys shouldn’t be like her, do you understand?”

“Yes, Daddy. Same for you too.”

With a chortle, Evan replied, “I’ve always judge a person...”

“Mr. Seet’s always judged a person based on his own prejudice. For example, if he decided that someone has a dubious character, the person would be deemed as having an ulterior motive no matter what the person does. Am I right?”

Crossing her arms in front of her chest, Nicole stared at Evan intently.

Evan could understand what she meant having thought about the remarks he had made about her before.

“I do have a preconceived opinion on a certain someone but I don’t think it’s prejudicial because it’s the truth.”

Nicole sneered, “Time will reveal all. Also, we will see whether Nina’s opinion on you is sensible or otherwise as time passes.”

“Well, let us wait for the answers then.”

“Great!”

Time would show that what he thought of her was prejudicial and prove that he was truly a jerk to his daughters.

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By the time the truth came to light, both her daughters would see Evan as a jerk and they would start criticizing him until he had nothing to say to excuse himself.

Merely thinking about how deflated he would look when the time came was enough to put Nicole in great spirits.

“Mommy, are you done with Daddy? It’s time we go to school.”

“Let’s go then.”

After Nicole left with the kids, Evan made his way to the dining table to find it contained nothing but some remnants of food. Then, he entered the kitchen and soon walked out with a begrudged look. As he found nothing left, he wondered whether Nicole had calculated the portion accurately to make sure the food was only enough for the kids.

“Mr. Seet, are you heading to the office without having breakfast?”

“I’m gonna skip it.”

Blake was confused when he looked at Evan who was leaving the house with a sullen face. Why didn’t he have anything for breakfast?

Was he not hungry? If that was the case, why did he even enter the kitchen?

By the time Evan drove his Maybach out of Hillside Villa, Blake was still speculating. In his opinion, Mr. Seet must have decided to skip the breakfast out of spite because his mood was spoilt by the argument he had with Ms. Lane.

Because of that, Blake decided to have a talk with Ms. Lane when she was back and advised her not to be so harsh to Mr. Seet. Wouldn't it be nice if they could get along with each other well?

...

Evan's phone rang when he was on his way to the office.

A glimmer of astonishment flashed in his eyes when he saw the caller ID. Excitedly, he picked the call up.

"Evan, are you in the middle of something?"

"Grandpa, I'm free to talk."

"Your parents and I are on the way back to the country and we will be reaching Hillside Villa in another one and a half hour. Will you be free at noon?"

"Grandpa, I'm going back to Hillside Villa right away to welcome you!"

"Your work should be your priority. Don't let the company's operation get affected because of me."

"Grandpa, don't worry because there won't be any issue."

After ending the conversation with his grandfather, Evan immediately made a U-turn and sped toward Hillside Villa.

In the meantime, Nicole just returned home after sending the kids to the kindergartens. Before she even entered the living room, she spotted Evan's Maybach making its way back.

Did he forget something?

Her curiosity was piqued. Just as she stepped foot in the living room, her pace came to a stop when her attention was caught by Evan's voice at the back.

"I have something to tell you."

Nicole's heart gave a lurch, dreading that he was going to broach the topic of the custody of the kids.

She followed him to the study upstairs where he stared at her and said in a fairly polite tone, "Ms. Lane, I'm going to receive some very important guests here so I would like to..."

"I will move out."

Nicole supposed some woman he was after would be here. If that were the case, her presence would indeed bring him inconvenience.

She bumped into Zane again on her way back. As her father had made his stance very clear that he would not go easy on her, she expected more trouble looming ahead.

Although Evan was involved in the matter, it was, after all, their family affair. At the same time, she reckoned it was about time she settled the scores with the people from her family.

Stunned by her quick response, Evan continued, "What about the kids..."

“I will take Nina and Maya with me. As for Juan and Kyle, I respect their decisions. They are free to stay or go with me.”

It had never occurred to Evan that she would say that. Tightening his grip around the teacup, he opined, “In fact, you should understand that it might be better for Juan to stay.”

Was this his indirect attempt at fighting for Juan’s custody?

Nicole countered decisively, “Mr. Seet, I told you I will respect the boy’s opinion. If Juan is happy to stay I’m not going to stop him but it doesn’t mean I will give you his custody.”

Evan’s pensive eyes turned bleak slightly in response. He decided not to demand more because it was enough of a surprise that Nicole actually allowed Juan to stay.

On the other hand, he should take his time to handle Juan’s custody matter.

“My guests will be here in another half an hour...”

“I’ll pack up my things and leave right away.”

Evan was surprised to see that she was willing to leave so readily considering that she had fought so hard in order to stay back then.

Looking at her back when she left the study, he actually thought there was something fishy.

When Nicole finished packing her stuff and left the mansion, she heaved out a sigh of relief.

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Hillside Villa might be luxurious and comfortable, but it didn't change the fact that she was living under someone else's roof, and it kind of felt uneasy.

Now that Evan was not forcing her to hand over Juan's custody, Nicole was more than happy to rent a house outside and take a break from him. At least she could settle her troubles first before planning for the days ahead of her.

"Nicole Lane, you shall have your turn to shine one day!" she encouraged herself confidently.

An hour later, Evan stood respectfully before his grandfather, Russell Seet, in the living room. The elderly man's face was carved with deep wrinkles, all living proofs of the harsh times he had experienced throughout his long life.

His eyes were still clear and energetic like that of a young man, and his gaze was so sharp like it could see through the soul of a person.

His mien exuded an age-old vibe of wisdom due to his extensive experience in the business realm. Evan wouldn't be where he was today if it weren't for Russell's teachings and grooming. Hence, he has utmost respect and love towards his grandfather, who occupied the most important spot in his heart.

"You managed Hillside Villa well, Evan."

"Thanks, Grandpa. You can stay here for as long as you want if you like it here."

“Oh, no! There’s no way an old man like me could live together with you youngsters especially after you’re married. How constraining is that, be it for you couples and old people like me.”

“Grandpa, I would really love to have you stay with me forever. I don’t have to get married, anyway.”

“Nonsense! Which man doesn’t want to get married? Do you know that I purposely come back to plan for your wedding?”

Now Evan was confused by his words, and he turned to his parents in bewilderment.

Jonathan looked calm as usual, but Sophia had on a very radiant face. “Your grandfather heard that your relationship with Ms. Lane is going strong, so he wants to meet her himself. Where is she now?”

“Mom, there’s no such thing! She and I are not in a love relationship.”

“Oh, come on! Don’t be shy. Davin called us days ago and even told us to prepare to attend your wedding once we return. So why are you still hiding from us?”

Davin told them that?

Evan’s eyes narrowed, and he finally understood what Davin had meant when he told Evan he owed him a luxurious car.

No wonder he’s so happy to let Nicole move in. No wonder he’s so concerned about me being in love with Nicole or not.

“Mom, you believe Davin’s words? He just wants his sports car, that’s why he lied to you.”

Sophia was stunned in her place. “No way. Dave may be a jokester, but when it comes to important news like this...”

Sophia’s voice faltered, and she immediately took out her phone to call Davin.

“How is your brother’s relationship with Ms. Lane?” Sophia had switched on the loudspeaker for everyone to hear.

“Oh, mom. I’m just about to tell you this; these two quarreled again! You can’t imagine how many challenges there are in their relationship, and how much of an emotional strain it was for me to keep worrying about them. Anyway, considering how much work it needs for me to keep them together, maybe you should buy me a ship after you get me my car. For now, you and dad can buy yourselves flight tickets and have a long holiday overseas. Once you’re back, I guarantee-”

“Guarantee that you will be skinned alive and beaten half to death before sending you off to manage our branch office in I Nation,” Evan cut him off immediately.

On the other end of the phone, Davin was stunned in his place when he heard Evan’s voice. He then took his phone away from his ears and checked the caller ID. Hmm? It is my mom’s number. But why did I hear Evan’s voice instead?

“Davin, I can get you your car and ship, but now you better come over to Hillside Villa. We need to have a good talk first!”

Hillside Villa.

Mom’s back?

With a panicked expression, Davin wanted to hang up the call when he heard a deep voice sounding from the other side of the phone. “Davin, I would like to see you too.”

“Grandpa? You... you’re back too?”

“Yes. We’ll talk later. Come over right now.”

After ending the call, Davin had a hard time breathing and his head spun with the lack of oxygen as images of his mother’s wrath flashed before him. My goodness! I’m dead this time! What should I do now? How can I make up for it?

After spending some time brainstorming, Davin came out with a plan. He had to go somewhere first before going to Hillside Villa and execute his plan.

Yes, that should work. Hopefully, it’s enough to save my ass.

Russell sighed in disappointment. “Evan, have you really not given any thought about your marriage?”

“There’s no hurry for that, grandpa.”

Hearing that, Sophia started to nag at her son again.