

Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo

Chapter 526

“Nina, you’re so MEAN!”

Seeing Maya’s face flushed with anger, Nicole rushed over to check on the children.

After hearing an impassioned reiteration of what happened, Nicole chided Nina sternly.

“But Mommy, that’s not fair! Maya hit me! Why aren’t you scolding her as well?”

“Maya, you can’t just hit people,” said Nicole exasperatedly. “Apologize to her right now!”

“I WON’T! Humph!” Maya stomped up the stairs, her arms akimbo.

Nina feigned a kick at her retreating figure, still displeased at Maya’s behavior.

“That’s enough, Nina. Off to bed with you.”

“You’re not being fair, Mommy!” said Nina with crossed arms. She then went upstairs in a huff.

Seeing that the children had finally returned to their rooms, Yoda sighed. “Well, well. Nina certainly has your temper.”

Nicole turned around and glared at him incredulously. What nonsense! Nina is cold and arrogant, so who do you think she got that from, genius?

“Is that so? Yet why do I feel like she got her arrogance and aloofness from you instead?”

“Really, now? Alright, why don’t we have a few more that behave like you instead?”

Have more kids? I already have four children whose personalities are enough to drive me up the wall, thank you very much!

“P-piss off!” sputtered Nicole.

“Alright, alright,” said Yoda, putting his hands up in mock defeat. It was time for him to leave anyway.

With a smirk, he turned on his heel and left.

Unbeknownst to them, Juan and Kyle had been observing the whole exchange from upstairs.

“Although I can’t hear all of what they’re saying, Yoda can indeed speak, right? I wasn’t lying,” Juan whispered.

“It seems like we need to look into this properly,” said Kyle thoughtfully.

“Are you hoping that Yoda is Daddy?”

“Yes, but I really hope he isn’t actually that ugly.”

It was already the next morning by the time Levant came out of the hospital.

He managed to ascertain that it was Zackery Williams who somehow took it upon himself to drug the wine. Levant seethed with a hatred that could grind bones to ash.

“That presumptuous idiot! Who gave him the permission to act?”

Levant clenched his fists in anger and gave the chair a mighty kick.

The manager shrank, not daring to breathe. Under his breath, however, he cursed Zackery Williams with all his heart.

“Find him, and bring him to me!” roared Levant.

“Mr. Levant, I tried to this morning. But his place was empty! It’s like he vanished into thin air!”

Upon realizing that Levant ended up in the hospital, Zackery fled and went into hiding.

The manager sighed inwardly. Given Levant's penchant for ruthlessness towards himself, he shuddered to think of how anyone else would be treated. If anything, Levant would be utterly merciless towards them too.

For that very reason, the manager still felt that his life was more important than the promise of a generous reward. Forget it. I'm going to wait for him to calm down before saying anything, he thought.

"He vanished, you say? He should consider himself lucky then! Otherwise, I'll have him ripped to shreds!" roared Levant.

The manager lowered his head, afraid to even meet Levant's gaze.

He knew that there was another reason behind Levant's anger. Levant had received word that Nicole had escaped unharmed and promptly left for Imperial Garden with Yoda.

But she had drunk the wine, so there was no way that she wasn't affected at all. The fact that she had since slipped away without even being rushed to the hospital was suspicious enough.

There was only one possible explanation. Which man had gotten lucky with her?

Levant exploded in anger as he thought of this. He raised an arm and swept everything on the table onto the ground. A resounding crash was heard as the objects fell.

The possibility of someone soiling the woman he loved was not something he took lightly. I'm not going to let this slide, he vowed.

"Find a way to get me all the surveillance tapes from Amazon Hotel."

"Yes, Mr. Levant."

Back at the Seet Group, a storm was brewing. It was no thanks to Adam's manipulation, of course.

Davin knew that it wouldn't be long before all hell broke loose.

He sat in the president's office, staring straight at the sky outside the window in a daze.

He sighed to himself. Honestly, some people are built for the roles they're assigned to. Sadly, I'm not one of those built for leadership.

Sheila was also worried about this. If someone had really made a grab for power, Davin would end up as the joke of the century.

Even Patrick Muir, who had tried to protect Davin at the expense of several large projects, would not be spared. The Muir Group would incur losses of their own.

Sheila felt that it wasn't wise to let her troubles consume her that way. She then drove to Imperial Garden to discuss countermeasures with Nicole.

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"What do you think, Nicole?"

Nicole was stumped too. She deliberately made Yoda prune the shrubs near them so he could listen in on the conversation with Sheila.

After all, this concerned the company he so painstakingly built.

Yoda stood there and listened to Sheila's woes. He was upset about the situation as well, thinking that Davin was slacking off. It wasn't as if Davin had no way out.

"Sheila, go on and have your tea. I'm going to change."

"Alright," said Sheila, taking a sip.

Nicole gave Yoda a wink. Motionlessly, he stood up and followed her, carrying a large plant in his hands.

As soon as he caught up, Nicole immediately asked him what he planned to do.

“If you keep concealing your identity like this, the Seet group is really going to suffer,” she said ruefully.

Yoda pursed his lips and replied, “Yet Davin really needs a push. I think he needs to be taught a lesson.”

“And how do you plan on doing that?”

Before Yoda could answer, he heard a loud cough from behind him.

He turned around to see both Juan and Kyle glaring at them both, arms akimbo.

“Why are you two here?” asked Nicole, clearly puzzled by their sudden emergence.

“It’s the weekend, of course we’ll be at home!”

Crap! I had completely forgotten about the kids! Nicole looked at Yoda with mild panic in her eyes.

Kyle folded his arms and appraised Yoda coolly. “And who are you really?”

Juan chose not to mince his words. “You’re Daddy, aren’t you?”

Yoda stared at them impassively, before replying, “You can only find out if you fulfill my conditions.”

“What conditions?”

Yoda crouched and whispered something into the boy's ears. Surprisingly, they were a little happy to hear about his request.

"One lesson for Davin Seet, coming right up!" said Kyle enthusiastically.

"But I can't bring myself to play tricks on Uncle Davin like that," replied Juan hesitantly.

"Well, just assume he's the enemy!"

"But is he an enemy?"

The two children then made their way back to their room as they discussed what had to be done.

"But why did you ask the kids to teach Davin a lesson?" asked Nicole to Yoda.

"We know that Levant will act, but we're unsure of how big a commotion it will be. If Davin is to lead the Seet Group in his current state, how is the company going to pull through?"

"Well, if you want him to change, I might have a suggestion." As Nicole said this, her eyes sparkled with a hint of mischief.

He turned to look at her with curiosity.

Nicole giggled. "Well, give him a good scare!"

Scare him?

Evan was taken aback by the suggestion. "Well, I suppose we can try..." he said, trailing off.

Meanwhile, the real reason why Nicole invited Sheila and Davin over for dinner was to discuss the Seet Group's affairs properly. Things were going according to plan, for now.

Sheila, having learnt of this, immediately phoned Davin.

"He said he'll come over, Nicole," she said after a brief call.

"That settles it then. I'll have the kitchen prepare dinner."

Juan and Kyle who were lurking close by shared a look. The boys knew that this would be an unpleasant prank but hoped that their uncle would forgive them for this minor transgression.

"Are you two ready?" asked Nicole.

"Relax, Mommy. Just make sure you sit next to Ms. Sheila and have Uncle Davin sit with us."

"Very well."

Davin drove straight to Imperial Garden and parked his car in the garage. He had barely walked two steps towards the door when he suddenly tripped over.

It was a close shave, but he managed to stop himself from falling. He straightened himself shakily and warily looked around the compound, hoping to find what tripped him.

"That's odd. What the hell was that?"

With that, he suddenly felt his vision go dark and crumpled to the ground.

Some time had passed when Davin awoke. The first sight that greeted him was Juan and Kyle, perched at the edge of his bed.

“You’re awake, Uncle Davin! Here, have some water.”

Davin took the glass from them gratefully and lifted it to his lips. Immediately, he spat the water out.

Sputtering, Davin asked, “What on earth is this? It’s so bitter!”

Little did he know that the boys had added a little nail-biting deterrent to the water. It was odorless, but extremely bitter all the same.

Sighing, Kyle walked over with a test report. “You’ve injured your head and caused some damage to the brain. Whatever you eat and drink in the future will be bitter.”

Davin took the report and had a closer look. “Impossible! How did I get brain damage from that? I only slipped!”

“You’re up? Hurry, dinner’s getting cold!” called Sheila from the doorway. Her expression was grim.

Davin got up and walked towards the dining room without a word. A fall can do this to my taste buds? Yeah right.

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Davin entered the dining room and walked over to his seat. The kitchen had prepared a feast for them that night. Eagerly, he picked up his fork and sampled a piece of beef. All it took was one bite, and he spat that out immediately as well.

It was horrendously bitter.

Davin sampled the fruit on the platter next to him, only to be met by that same bitterness in his mouth.

Refusing to give up, he grabbed the beverage Juan was about to have and took a swig from the bottle. Still, the bitterness assaulted his senses relentlessly. After a while, he groaned dejectedly. "Christ, is my life not bitter enough already? You've gotta be kidding me."

He looked at Sheila and Nicole briefly before speaking. "Did the doctor say when my sense of taste will return?"

"No, but he did mention something else. You didn't just lose your sense of taste, but he also warned us that you might experience some hallucinations."

"What do you mean by, 'hallucinations'?"

Davin was astonished at the revelation, staring at the two women dumbfoundedly. Suddenly, he saw Maya creep over to the potted plant, spoon in hand, only to begin shoving dirt into her mouth in large gulps.

"Maya, you can't eat soil!"

Maya only grinned at him and continued anyway.

"Nicole, aren't you going to say something? Your child is eating dirt, for god's sake!"

Nicole clenched her fists and pretended not to notice. She had a charade to continue.

"What do you mean? She's sitting right here, eating her food. What is this nonsense about dirt?"

"She's right there, by the bonsai plant!"

He turned over to look at her again, only to see that Maya had disappeared.

Davin felt panic course through his veins. Was that a hallucination?

Maya then wiped her mouth clean and promptly returned to her spot at the dining table.

Davin looked at her in surprise. "Maya, did you eat dirt just now?"

Maya shook her head and pulled a face. "Of course not! Dirt can't be eaten!"

Davin's face fell after hearing Maya's response.

He sat there, frozen in his seat as he tried to process what happened. When he looked up, he saw Nina sneaking over to a pillow on the sofa. She opened it and took out the fluffy white cotton, eating it with relish.

"Nina, stop! You can't eat that!"

Kyle rolled his eyes and replied, "What's wrong with eating shrimp?"

He then shelled another shrimp and put it on Nina's plate. "Here, have some more!"

Kyle behaved as if Nina was actually sitting there.

Davin was completely flabbergasted.

Am I truly hallucinating?

He refused to believe it, and made his way towards the sofa.

Nina had run away before he got there. Davin grabbed the pillow and opened it again to find nothing but cotton inside. Unbeknownst to him, Nina had already finished eating all the marshmallows hidden inside.

The pillow in his hands fell to the ground with a dull thud.

“It’s over, I’m no longer right in the head!” yelled Davin.

Juan quietly helped him back to the guest room and asked him to have a proper rest. Davin could no longer think about eating after this whole debacle.

He just lay there on the bed, wide-eyed. Davin’s face was a mask of astonishment.

“My sense of taste is gone. My brain isn’t working right, so what do I have left that’s worth living for?”

Davin sighed audibly, contemplating the meaning of his life. Suddenly, he sat up, realizing that something was off. Smoke filled the room, and a deep voice resonated.

“If you don’t want to live, you’re more than welcome to join me.”

There was something familiar about that voice. He rubbed his eyes and opened them again to find Evan standing in front of his bed, staring at him coldly.

“This is a hallucination, right? I can’t possibly be seeing Evan right now!” muttered Davin in a panic, his voice trembling.

“Davin Seet! You keep slacking off at work, and you only know how to enjoy yourself without giving back. I’ve come to take you with me!”

“Evan, is that really you?”

Davin blinked and rubbed his eyes. Even with all the smoke in the room, there was no mistaking Evan’s cold and arrogant face, yet it was different this time. He looked paler, and his body emanated a chill that made Davin’s blood run cold.

“The Seet Group is being destroyed by you, and yet you dare address me?” roared Evan.

“Evan, please, I really can’t do this—”

“Then I’ll take you on a trip to hell!”

Suddenly, he saw a vision of a hot and barren landscape doused in fire being displayed on the wall near him. Davin witnessed men struggling to make it across, only to be scorched by the raging flames. The images were enough to leave him drenched in a cold sweat.

“Evan, I can’t go with you now. Not yet! Our parents need me, and the company needs me!”

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“Are you certain you can handle both our parents and the company?” queried Evan.

Davin hesitated, and the people in the sea of fire howled sorrowfully.

There was a heaviness in his heart, for it seemed as if he was destined to walk through that fiery plain next.

Davin pondered over his options again. Granted, taking care of his parents and running the company seemed like an impossible feat, but it was a walk in the park compared to the gruesome scene that played before his eyes. He’d rather not be burnt to a crisp.

He steeled himself, and with determination, answered, “I can do it, Evan. I know I can.”

Evan paused to give him one final, hard gaze, and vanished.

As the smoke in the room subsided, Davin sat on the bed with a blank look on his face.

There was a knock at the door, and Juan came running in. “Are you going to stay here for a bit, Uncle Davin? Till you get better?”

Davin shook his head dumbly.

“Should I ask someone to drive you back to the Seet Residence then?”

“No, I’m going to work.”

“To work?” asked Juan, an incredulous look on his face.

“Yes, there’s a whole pile of work waiting for me at the office.”

Davin put on his shoes and strode out of the room, stopping only to pat Juan on the head.

After a brief exchange with Nicole, he drove to the Seet Group headquarters.

As the car sped on the road, the fog in Davin’s head gradually dissipated. “Illusion or not, my brother went through hell for the Seet group. I can’t let him down”, muttered Davin to himself.

His parents weren’t getting any younger. It was time for Davin to take charge and prove that he was a grown man with a spine.

Juan and Kyle looked at the food on the table and sighed. “To fake the bitterness, we injected the fruit with anti-nail-biting treatment. Everything would’ve tasted bitter regardless of what he ate.”

Sheila smiled and stroked their heads. “Well, that seemed to have worked! That look on his face when he left was really something. I think he finally saw some sense. In the future, your Uncle Davin will be a changed man.”

After Sheila had left the room, Kyle folded his arms and looked at Yoda coolly.

“We have fulfilled your requirements. Can you tell us who you are now?”

The three other children looked at him curiously, expecting an answer.

Yoda only smiled and said, “Well, I am Yoda.”

Kyle asked, "Are you Daddy, Yoda?"

"Well, that's for you to find out."

"But you promised to tell us after we taught Uncle Davin a lesson!" Nina huffed, unsatisfied by his response.

Juan, on the other hand, found this interesting. "Is this a test? Just you wait, we'll find out whether you're Daddy or not!"

"Alright then!" Yoda looked satisfied at Juan's fervor. For them, this could be a form of training.

Just then, Nicole walked downstairs. "I'm going out."

Yoda eyed her figure-hugging dress and replied, "I'll go with you."

Since his cover was blown and he couldn't pretend to be mute anymore, Yoda decided to start speaking in front of the children too. Nicole pondered over this briefly. "I think you should stay here with the kids," she said.

"Mommy, we're fine. We don't need a babysitter."

"Yes, Mommy. The butler is here anyway!"

"Let Yoda go with you, we'll feel reassured."

"Yeah, Yoda can protect you."

Seeing that the children were all in consensus, Nicole could only agree.

As Yoda drove out of the compound, he asked Nicole where they were going.

"To see Sylphiette at a café."

"Sylphiette?" Yoda thought she was going to meet Levant, dressed up like this.

“Yes. She called me just now. She said she knows a bit about my background, and I have questions to ask her in person.”

After they reached the venue, Nicole and Yoda marched straight to the booth Sylphiette was in.

Sylphiette wore a pink dress, keeping her makeup and accessories simple. The way she dressed now was a far cry from the prestige Ms. Lane had.

At a glance, one could tell that she had fallen on hard times.

When she saw Nicole, Sylphiette did not stand up. It was a calculated decision, as she didn't want to come across as someone in need of a favor. “Ah, you've arrived. Have a seat.”

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Nicole also decided to forego all formalities and promptly sat down. Sylphiette's gaze landed on Yoda, who took his seat next to her.

“If I hadn't taken a closer look, I would've thought it was Mr. Seet! Where did you find this hideous creature, Nicole?”

The look on Sylphiette's face was one of barely-concealed disgust.

“My choice of companions does not concern you, Sylphiette. Why don't you tell me why you're here?”

Nicole was not in the mood for idle chit-chat and decided to go straight to the point.

Sylphiette picked up her coffee and took a sip. “The coffee here is quite good, Nicole. Your parents also met in a café back then.”

“Get to the point.”

“Don’t you want to hear about your parents’ relationship? It’s quite the tale; there are twists and turns and surprises.”

Sylphiette glanced at Nicole again before putting down her coffee cup with a sigh. “Alright, as you wish. But first, call Davin and have him release my father.”

Nicole was stunned.

Zane was the culprit who murdered Davin’s grandmother. How could he be expected to let Zane go so easily?

Besides, she couldn’t bring herself to ask. Nicole knew that it was selfish to expect sacrifices for her own personal gain.

“Sylphiette, I can promise you other things. This, however, is something I cannot do.”

Yoda’s gaze was thoughtful, but he was pleased that Nicole stuck to her principles.

“I have no other requests.” Sylphiette refused to budge, and her expression turned icy. “My father helped your mother out of compassion. I think you should extend the same courtesy and ask for him to be released. Consider this a debt repaid.”

“I know nothing of this debt you speak of, Sylphiette. I can handle other requests, though. Like money, for example.”

“Money?”

Sylphiette looked impassively at Nicole. “Do you think I need money?”

Oh, give me a break! Given your current state, are you still pretending to be rich? thought Nicole.

“You’ve really let yourself go, based on how you’re dressed today. Whether or not you need money, I suppose you know better. Don’t forget that your mother is still depending on you financially,” retorted Nicole coldly.

Sylphiette’s face instantly sank, and she clenched her fists.

If she won’t let my dad go, so be it. Squeezing some money out of her wouldn’t be so bad, right? It’s just that I don’t know how much Nicole can spare.

“These are secrets that concern your background. How much are you willing to pay for this?”

Nicole considered the offer. She wasn’t sure of how much Sylphiette knew. If I spend such a large sum on barely any information, isn’t that a waste?

“Well, I’ll pay according to how valuable your information is. How does ten thousand sound, for each bit?”

“A paltry ten thousand? Are you treating me like some kind of beggar?”

Sylphiette looked at Nicole as if she were a miser, but also considered Nicole’s position.

Evan was killed in a crash, and she has nobody to rely on. The Lane Corporation still had to be run, and on top of that, Nicole had four kids to take care of. It was possible that Nicole couldn’t afford to pay much, to begin with.

Wasn’t she just laughing at me for being strapped for cash? Talk about the pot calling the kettle black here, mused Sylphiette.

“How much do you want?” Nicole asked.

Sylphiette snorted coldly. “Information this valuable costs one million and not a penny less.”

“One million? You have some nerve—”

Before she could continue, she was interrupted by Yoda. “Mrs. Seet, a million is nothing. Just agree to it.”

Sylphiette raised her eyes to look at him. She hadn't expected that ugly creature to speak on her behalf.

Yet why was he being kind to her for no reason?

He is obviously trying to take advantage of my beauty. How utterly revolting!

Sylphiette thought about this briefly. There was no harm in using him to gain more wealth, after all.

"Nicole, even your subordinate thinks it isn't too much. Your hesitance is unbecoming, and I can't even compare you to a subordinate at this rate. Is information about your past worth so little to you?"

She got up, her graceful figure swaying as she walked towards Yoda. Draping an arm across his shoulder, she said, "You think one million for a piece of vital information isn't expensive, yes?"

Her red lips parted lightly, and her restless hands gently stroked Yoda's ear in a sultry gesture.