

I Love You, Miss Genius (Bonnie Shepard)

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Chapter 506

"You've got to be afraid of something?"

"I've been an orphan ever since I was young. I've got no family or friends. All I had to do was look after myself. What was there to be afraid of? If anything, I'm scared of failing my mission and having the rest of the troops laugh at me."

'This is the first time I've encountered someone this tricky. I have a hunch Keenan doesn't think of Bonnie that way. He is just trying to keep her safe.

'That's the only reason I'm letting someone as insolent as him keep breathing.'

"I've had it up to her, guys."

The more they argued, the worse her headache got. 'I think I know why Jim picked Keenan to take his place. He's quite a skillful fighter, but more importantly, he's as stubborn and headstrong as Jim.' "You don't have to stay in the same room as me when I'm sleeping, Keenan, nor do you have to guard my bedroom door. You can stay in the room next to mine or across the hallway."

"I can't do that. If we lived in different rooms, it would impede my ability to save you. What happens if you're in a pinch if I can't get to you in time? Is it because you don't believe in my integrity?"

Then, he raised three fingers and swore an oath. "I swear I won't harbor any dirty thoughts toward you. If I so much look funny at you, then may the Heavens send down a great thunderbolt and strike me so I may die a horrible death."

"That's not enough." Ivor chimed in, "You're not bothered by death. So, why would you be afraid of a thunderbolt? Or, for that matter, why would you be bothered by a horrible death?"

"Well. What would you have me swear?"

Ivor pondered on it and directed his gaze downward as he stared at Keenan. "Let's do this the right way. If you have dirty thoughts about Bonnie, then you won't be able to get it up anymore. How about that?" Keenan remained quiet for a few seconds.

"How's that the right way to do it?"

Holding her forehead, she rubbed her eyebrows. Her expression grew stern when she looked at Keenan.

"Keenan."

"Yes, ma'am!" He stood up straight and wore a solemn expression.

"I've never liked being followed. I believe he told you about it before you came here. Also, I only agreed to let you be my bodyguard because of him. Secondly, I didn't want to put you in a difficult position.

"Now that you know I put myself in your shoes, I hope you can do the same. I need you to give me some freedom and not smother me."

Bonnie used the classic

carrot-or-stick technique on Keenan. He wasn't as experienced as Jim, so he couldn't use such a persuasive technique. At the next moment, he yielded and gave in to her wishes.

"Alright, then. I'll live in the room next to you, but you must promise to inform me when something goes wrong."

"Don't worry about..." Before she could finish, Ivor's voice drowned hers out.

"Don't worry about it. I'm going to sleep right next to Bonnie on the same bed. She'll be fine."

She didn't know what to say for a moment there. "When have I agreed to it?"

"I made the call on your behalf."

After dinner, she returned to her room, closed and locked her door immediately, and then went into the bathroom to shower.

She was scrubbing her body when she heard a commotion outside. It sounded like somebody had gone into her room.

'Really? I know I locked the door.'

She was puzzled but swiftly wrapped a towel around herself and opened the bathroom door. At the next moment, she was stunned by what she saw.

Ivor was taking off his clothes while sitting on her bed. Then, he noticed her looking at him. Not only was he not guilty, he lied on his side and wagged his finger at her seductively, beckoning her to get close

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Bonnie was frozen to where she stood and gawked at him.

Her reaction was enough to damage his confidence. 'I unbuttoned my shirt, but I didn't remove it. It should've been massively sexy to ladies. So, why does she still look this disinterested?

'Should I have been sexier?'

At the thought of that, he moved to unfasten his belt.

"If you take it off, I'll ask Keenan to kick you out of the room."

"He's dead asleep. He won't be able to come here." He smiled and responded.

Then, she looked out the window.

'I knew it. It's opened. He climbed into my room through the window. That would've made some sort of sound. I was bathing, and even I could hear it through the shower.

'Keenan was the kind of guy who survived several life-or-death situations. I hesitate to think he wouldn't have noticed something was amiss.'

"What did you do to Keenan?"

"Nothing. I just put some incense in his room to help with sleep."

She didn't respond to him.

"Come on. Get over here." He wagged his finger at her again.

A cunning humor flashed in her eyes as she said, "Sure." With that, she walked toward him.

She was wrapped in nothing but the towel. The sight of it was enough to drive him crazy. Every cell in his body was screaming maddeningly, egging him on to do unspeakable things to her. "Close your eyes." She grinned from ear to ear.

His eyes sparkled at that. "Are you trying to kiss me? Is it because you'll feel embarrassed if I look at you?"

"Of course. I'm still just a girl at the end of the day. Hurry up and close your eyes. I just might regret it if you drag this out."

At the next moment, he did as he was told.

She stuck out a finger and hit his vital point on the nape of his neck.

Then, he fell to the bed and went limp.

"This might help you sleep, too." She whispered in his ear.

She looked at the unconscious Ivor and pondered. Then, she lay a blanket on the ground and hurled him onto it.

The following day, she opened her eyes and saw his resentful gaze. "You're mean. I can't believe you let me sleep on the floor alone."

"Haven't I put a blanket on the floor first? Also, you're the one who pulled some sketchy stunt first. You're the head of the Knight family, and yet you climbed the window and snuck into my room. Aren't you concerned that your family will mock and tease you if they discover this? Content

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"What's there to be concerned about? Grandma used to always chase Grandpa out of the room when they were young. He'd even punish himself to get into her bedroom.

"More to the point, he was the head

of the family too. Not only was he not embarrassed, but he boasted about it during the family dinner party. He said he bows down to no one except his wife. S

"He even said that men must obey their wives if they want what's best for the family. We were supposed to learn from him."

'Once again, he showed me how his thick skin is written in the Knights' genes and passed down to the next generation. I could use everything in my arsenal, and he still wouldn't have budged. I should zip it if don't want to be frustrated.' Content

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She was supposed to go to college today, but she didn't. Instead, she went to her research institute.

'Perhaps being the university president isn't half bad. I don't have to apply for an off day if I want to skip classes. I can just do it whenever I feel like it.'

She was burying herself in her research when Toby approached her, wearing a peculiar expression.

"What's the matter? Is something bothering you?" She asked. At the next moment, his expression grew even stranger. He looked like he was about to spill it, but he bit his tongue instead. "What in the world is wrong? Just tell me about it. It's just us here."

Toby wrestled with himself a little before finally telling her about it. "Try not to be alone when you go out later, Ms. Bonita. Someone might ambush you."

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"Hmm? What do you mean?" Bonnie squinted.

'Someone's trying to assassinate me. Are they closing in on me?'

Toby pulled out his phone. "See for yourself."

His expression was déjà vu all over again. Avril looked just the same when Sienna mobilized her fans to attack her.

'Has Sienna not given up on it? Is she stirring up trouble again?'

Then, she got curious and checked the Twitter updates.

'I knew it!'

About ten minutes ago, Sienna, who had gone off the radar for about a week, made a Tweet. She attached a picture of herself in it with a caption that read,

"Don't worry about me, everyone. I'm doing fine. I just needed some rest because I'm a little tired."

In the picture, she wore a mask and a bucket hat. Even so, it was impossible to cover the bruise on her face. Anyone would've been able to tell that she was beaten up. Just like that, her tweet was flooded with angry comments.

"What happened, honey? Why's your face all bruised up? That explains why you haven't been taking on gigs for days."

"Do you have to ask? I'm certain the homewrecker who seduced Orpheus did this. She's behind this!"

"How shameless! What has the world come to? Why's a homewrecker this overbearing?"

"We have to attack her together! It's time for us to unite under a common cause!"

Not long after, Sienna made another tweet.

"I feel I should clarify this. Bonnie has nothing to do with this. I accidentally hurt myself while I was shooting a scene."

"Come on. Don't defend the

homewrecker. You've been shooting

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nothing but romantic television dramas. You didn't have to be suspended in midair by the wires; nor did you take any role that involved combat scenes. So, why would you get hurt while shooting a scene?

"Even if what you said is true. No filming crew is going to let you get hurt in the face. More to the point, look at how bad the bruises are on your face."

"If this is Sienna's official explanation, then I'm sure the homewrecker threatened her."

"As far as I know, the homewrecker came from the countryside. So, how does it have the capability to be threatening Sienna?"

"That's because you only know part of the truth. Rumor has it that this Bonnie character has a sugar daddy who's supposed to be all-powerful and wealthy." "Ew! That's gross."

Bonnie stopped scrolling after the last comment.

Toby's brows furrowed when he noticed how quiet she was. "A-Are you okay, Ms. Bonita?"

She waved casually, unperturbed.

"Sienna's kind of smart. Her tactics

are better and smarter this time.

With that said, she better hope inet

doesn't go too far. Otherwise, I'd still teach her a lesson, even if the

Mcleod family begs me to forgive her."

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'This reminds me of when I went to the overseas conference. If the Mcleod brothers didn't put their lives on the line, she probably would've received her due punishment.

'Anyway, that's also why I got off her back and put the whole thing behind me. I wouldn't have forgotten and forgiven her otherwise.'

"What do you mean, Ms. Bonita?" Toby asked puzzlingly.

"It's nothing. Let's get on with our work."

After she dealt with Toby, she was about to dive back into her work when she heard Keenan's angry voice.

"Let me take care of this, Ms. Bonita."

She was a little curious, so she asked, "I'm all ears. Tell me just how you are going to handle this. Are you going to tell me you'll beat her to a pulp?"

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"Now, why would I do something so foolish?"

Bonnie heard Keenan's response and got invested in his answer. "Well. What are you going to do, then?"

He chuckled wickedly and said, "Back when I was on a mission in the rainforest, I came across some herbs that'd make all of its targets' hair fall off. I must only squeeze its saps into Sienna's food discreetly, and she'll turn into a baldy.

"I guarantee you that none of her hair would stay on. What's more, it'll even ruin her hair follicles. It wouldn't grow back for the next few years."

What he said painted a picture in her mind. In less than a second, she conjured up the image of a bald, hairless Sienna.

It was hilarious.

"What kind of herb are we talking about here?"

"It doesn't grow anywhere in the vicinity. You can only find it in rainforests, but I'm unsure about its name. I took some pictures. Here."

Pulling out his phone, he showed her the pictures he had taken.

She stared at it for a while. "I haven't seen anything like it. I will ask someone to get me some samples when I have the time."

"Are you going to do it yourself? That's a bad idea, given your identity. You don't use a sledgehammer to crack a nut. Let me do it instead." He thought she intended to squeeze the sap into Sienna's food. A burst of laughter escaped her. Then, she said, "I didn't think you'd know about this saying, too. Sienna is nothing but a clown. So, why should we go to all this trouble just to deal with her?"

"Well. What do you need the herb for, then?" He didn't understand it and scratched his head.

"I have plans for it. You just might know what it's for in the future."

'None of the hair removal products on the market are exactly effective.

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If the herb, he said, could remove hair and prevent its growth for several years, I could research and refine it into a natural plant-based hair removal product. It could be one of the minor researches for the institute.'

She was in the middle of her thoughts when a call interrupted her. Pulling out her phone, she realized Jim was giving her a video call.

"Sienna is at it again. Do you need me to handle it?" He asked directly.

"Her grandpas know my real identity. Would this happen if they knew how to deal with her? She was brilliant this time. All she did was make a Tweet to clarify her situation. She even wore a mask and a bucket hat.

"I'm sure her grandpas talked to her about this, but she would've claimed she was innocent and said it was her fans' fault." She analyzed the situation.

"So, are we just going to let it slide? You might be able to forgive and forget, but I can't do that. It's a shame I can't go to her place now. Otherwise, I would've found a chance to kidnap her and beat her to a pulp."

She couldn't help but feel helpless. "You're just the same as Keenan. What she did barely affected me. In any case, I'll handle it."

Then, she changed the topic at once. "When are you going to come back?"

"That's what I'm calling you for. My grandparents will celebrate their seventieth birthday, and I'm the only

grandson they ever had. My dade

asked me to extend my leave

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because I was never home. He

wanted me to organize their birthday

parties."

"This is a good thing! You're the only grandson. You have an excellent reason to organize it. It's not just that. You have to make sure you do a good job with it."

"But..." His brows knitted tightly. "I'm not that worried about what Sienna is doing as much as I'm worried about the fact that the person who wanted to assassinate you might pop up at any given moment."

Keenan patted his chest and said,

"Don't worry about it. You've got me by Ms. Bonita's side. Everything's going to be peachy. After all, I swore that no harm would befall her for as long as I breathed. Go ahead and extend your leave, Master Jim. You can extend it for a couple of years if you want."

"How dare you say that, you punk? Are you trying to replace me as Ms. Bonita's bodyguard?" he said exasperatedly.

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"Hehehe!" Keenan laughed brazenly. "Age is catching up to you, Master Jim. Perhaps you should retire earlier, get married, and have a couple of rugrats. You can count on me to keep Ms. Bonita safe!" "Listen up, you punk! I'll beat you up the next time I see you!"

Bonnie found their conversation quite amusing. She looked at Jim in the video call and said, "Keenan has a point, Jim! You're getting old, after all. What's more, you said so yourself earlier. You're the only grandson in your family. It's high time you have a couple of babies."

Jim didn't have a good comeback for that.

After that, they chatted for a while before she hung up.

"Come on. We're going to the mall." She looked at Keenan and said.

He got worried about the idea. "Do you want to buy something? Just let me know, and I'll buy it for you. Too many people are in the mall, and it's hard to tell who's who. What are we going to do if the person who wants you dead hides his men among the crowd?"

Her eyes were filled with humor. "Aren't you here to keep me safe? What's there to be afraid of? Don't you have any confidence in yourself?"

"I have absolute confidence in myself, but that's neither here nor there. You should just play it safe and avoid going to dangerous places."

"All right, then." She pretended to have accepted his explanation.

He was delighted to hear her response and sighed in relief.

'It looks like Master Jim wasn't entirely right about her. He told me Ms. Bonita is decisive and stubborn. Once she makes up her mind about something, no one can change her mind. However, it looks like she's very understanding. Master Jim must've been tricking me, then.'

He was in the middle of thinking when she said, "I need some bras and underwear. I'll tell you my cup size and hip size."

His jaws dropped straight to the ground.

"Are you okay? Why's your face this red? Are you sick?" She stifled a laugh and said.

Her stares embarrassed Keenan.

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Then, he thought about what she was asking him to buy for her, and he blushed. They felt so hot that smoke was practically coming out of his ears. "Um, I-I think I'll come with you and keep you safe."

She suppressed her laughter and walked ahead of him as if nothing happened.

He watched as she left. Then, he thought about how he noticed a sense of humor in her eyes. That was when it hit him.

'Master Jim didn't trick me. Ms. Bonita has lived up to her name. It took her nearly no effort to persuade me.'

'With that in mind, I think what she said earlier was true. Sienna is just a clown, as far as she is concerned. The actress was nothing more than an insect in her eyes. She simply

didn't care about Sienna. Content

belongs to

'If Sienna doesn't know what is good for herself and continues to bug her, all she has to do is wag her fingers, and she could ruin Sienna thoroughly.'

Once they arrived at the mall, he followed her into a jewelry store.

"Huh? Aren't you supposed to go to a lingerie store, Ms. Bonita?"

She giggled and said, "I was just messing with you. I can't believe you bought it."

He didn't know what to say to her at that moment.

"Alright. That's enough about jokes.

Jim's grandparents are going to have a birthday party soon. So, I want to surprise him by showing up at the party without him knowing. That's why I'm here to buy birthday presents for the old folks." She had planned on doing it for a long time.

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Jim had worked and sacrificed much for Bonnie-that was the least she could do for him. However, Keenan suddenly shouted, "You can't do that! It's too dangerous!" Bonnie patted Keenan's shoulder and said, "It's okay. You're here with me. I believe in your skills."

Keenan thought, 'There she goes again.'

Bonnie entered the store and started picking things, "This pearl necklace isn't half bad. That one over there looks good, too. Jim's grandma might like it." Ultimately, she chose a high-gloss pearl necklace. Each pearl was smooth, flawless, and gleaming. She told the saleswoman, "I'll take this necklace, please." The saleswoman rolled her eyes and insulted Bonnie, "Have you looked at the price? It's forty grand. Are you sure you can afford it?"

Bonnie frowned in response.

'This lady has been giving me dirty looks since I entered the store. From the looks of it now, it doesn't seem like she's underestimating me. There's something else to it.'

"Do you know me enough to assume I can't afford this necklace? How dare you look at me as if I'm a piece of trash? What's with the mocking tone? You have such a poor character."

The saleswoman looked at Bonnie disdainfully, arms akimbo as the former said, "Hmph! Did you just say I have a poor character? I can't be sure if you can afford this necklace. For all I know, you shamelessly got your money."

"It looks like you're itching for a beating!" Keenan was about to reprimand the saleswoman when Bonnie stopped him.

Bonnie asked, "I'm curious. Why did you say all those things, miss?"

Someone outside the door answered, "That's bold of you to ask. Everyone knows you earned your money by blackmailing Orpheus. You stole him from Sienna-now you're public enemy number one. I can't believe you dare to shop here. Your courage is commendable."

Bonnie turned and saw a lady who was not particularly beautiful but carried a costly handbag. Then, the former noticed the lady's dress. If Bonnie was not mistaken, the lady wore an outfit from Bohemian Boutique, which Tang Fusion Studios owned.

Bonnie asked, "Who are you?"

The young lady looked at Bonnie condescendingly and said, "I'm one of the Shermans."

After some thought, Bonnie questioned, "Which Sherman are you talking about?"

"Seriously?! You don't know that we're one of the wealthiest families in Pyralis? It looks like you only know how to seduce and steal other people's boyfriends."

"You said it," the saleswoman added.

'I think I know why this saleswoman is so harsh toward me now. She's one of those brain-dead fans of either Orpheus or Sienna.'

Bonnie remarked, "If my memory serves me right, Thaddeus is the only child the Shermans had. Of course, they did reconcile with their younger, long-lost son. When did they have a daughter?"

Kara Sherman stared at Bonnie in bewilderment and thought, 'I can't believe she knows about one of the deepest family secrets! Orpheus must've told her about it!'

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"Well, I'm not one of the main family members."

"Oh, I see." Bonnie nodded lightly. "So, you're just one of those insignificant branch family members."

"Ugh, what makes you think you have the right to look down on me? They're not going to sell you that pearl necklace, so scram! Find your necklace elsewhere!" Kara raised her voice so the onlookers could join in on humiliating Bonnie.

The latter looked at Kara indifferently and said, "Who do you think you are to call the shots around here? Does your family own the mall or something? You can't chase me out." Immediately after, she saw Kara and the saleswoman smiling weirdly. Kara lifted her chin and looked at the saleswoman, saying, "Go on and tell her if I have the right to do it."

"My pleasure," the saleswoman replied flatteringly before telling Bonnie, "The Sherman Group appointed the branch family Ms. Kara comes from as the top management of this fine establishment. "Are you seriously questioning if Ms. Kara can chase you out? If you continue disrespecting her, she can kick you out of the store or call security to kick you out of the mall."

Bonnie finally understood what was happening. She thought, 'That explains why Kara and the saleswoman have been so cocky toward me.'

"It looks like you're reluctant to leave. Fine, don't say I didn't warn you. Guards!" Kara called for at least a dozen security guards. "Kick this woman out of the mall! She's a shameless homewrecker who seduced Orpheus and even picked on my best friend, Sienna.

"My poor friend has a nasty bruise on her face because of this woman. Since the law can't prove you guilty, they can't do anything to you. If so, I'll punish you in the name of justice!"

Many people gathered at the store and heard Kara's claims. Some paid close attention to scandalous news and realized what was happening. They pointed at Bonnie and started muttering amongst each other.

Everyone else was clueless about the situation and became curious. Hence, they asked those who were up to date about it.

"Excuse me, what is going on here? Did that pretty girl do something wrong? Why's everyone scolding her?"

"How do you not know what's happening? Don't you check your phone? That pretty lady is the good-for-nothing that the Shepards disowned. They said she had a sugar daddy, who's supposedly an old rich

man.

"Now, that young lady has blackmailed Orpheus and even caused him and Sienna to break up. That's not all. Sienna has a big bruise on her face because of that lady." The more this woman talked, the more she wanted to punch Bonnie.

Soon after, everyone reprimanded Bonnie.

Kara glanced at the onlookers and was satisfied with how things had turned out. She addressed the guards, "What are you guys waiting for? Kick her out of my mall!"

"Yes, ma'am!" The guards approached Bonnie, intending to remove her from the mall.

Bonnie squinted at them menacingly while Keenan prepared to fight them off. He faced the guards at the front and charged at them. Before the onlookers realized what had happened, the guards had already fallen.

A thud echoed as they hit the ground, followed by grunts.

The remaining guards were shocked, wondering how Keenan was so good at fighting. They even suspected he was a professional fighter.

Kara and the onlookers were just as shocked as Keenan gazed at the other guards.

"Keenan, don't waste your time with them," Bonnie said, causing Keenan to stop.

He looked at her in puzzlement and asked, "Are you sure you want me to stop? They're—"

"It's okay. We'll just leave the mall and wait by the entrance. They'll beg us to shop here again in less than thirty minutes, especially that woman from the Sherman family," Bonnie said as she glanced at Kara coldly.

"Huh?" Keenan was clueless as to what Bonnie meant.

Kara crossed her arms and smirked at Bonnie. "Hahaha! Less than thirty minutes, huh? I'll be waiting. Let's see if your claims are true."

Since the onlookers had nothing better to do, they lingered for a while. Some even took their phones to livestream everything. After all, the incident concerned Orpheus, Sienna, and Kara. Of course, many people would want to watch the livestream.

When Bonnie exited the mall, she called Thaddeus.

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"I need a favor, Thaddeus."

"Come on, Ms. Bonnie! There's no need to call it favor or anything like that. Just give it to me straight. What do you need?"

"Does your family own Grand Meadow Mall?" Bonnie asked.

"We do. What's wrong?"

After Bonnie told him about everything that had happened, he said, "Kara has done it now. I'll make her pay! Give me a minute, and I'll be right there."

"You don't have to come here. A phone call will suffice." Bonnie did not want to trouble him too much.

Still, Thaddeus insisted, "That won't do! Not only are you my mentor, but you also found my long-lost brother. I can't stand idly by while someone from the branch family picks on you, on my territory, no less." "Okay, then. If you insist."

Twenty-odd minutes later, Kara swaggered over and told Bonnie, "You have three minutes left. Things aren't looking good for you. Everyone's recording this with their phones, y'know. Some are even livestreaming it."

"I thought you said we'd beg you to shop in our mall in less than thirty minutes. I'm standing here, yet you can do nothing to me."

Although Bonnie ignored Kara, the latter showed Bonnie her phone and said, "There are a lot of viewers waiting for your little show. Some even say you're bluffing to keep your pride and that you'll probably run with your tail between your legs when no one's watching."

"Look, people are even reminding you there are only a minute and forty-three seconds remaining. Hmm, here are some interesting results. Someone said your shamelessness knows no bounds. It's no wonder you seduced Orpheus."

As she read the harsh comments aloud, a sudden, furious voice echoed behind her, "Kara! How dare you kick my mentor out of my mall and humiliate her! I'll make you pay!"

The familiar voice made Kara turn around. Immediately after, Thaddeus slapped her so hard that she stumbled to the floor.

The sudden turn of events shocked everyone, even the livestream viewers. Meanwhile, Kara sat on the floor and held her cheek as she asked, "D-Did you just call her your mentor? What does that mean, Thaddeus?"

"You don't have the right to know what happens between me and her. Who gave you the right to kick her out of my mall? Our family is indebted to her, you idiot!" Thaddeus's roar showed just how furious he

was.

He was enraged by what happened to Bonnie and because Ivor saw the livestream. Ivor even called Thaddeus and asked for an explanation while the latter was going to the mall.

"What do you mean indebted?" At that moment, Kara saw her family car stopping at the mall entrance. Her parents darted out of the car and slapped her countless times, scolding her in the process.

"You fucking idiot! How dare you do something so stupid to Bonnie?! You must have a death wish. If so, jump off a bridge instead of dragging us into your idiocy!"

"Vince would still be homeless if Bonnie hadn't found him! The head of the family has decreed that they'll shun us from the family if we don't explain this mess to them."

Kara finally understood the truth, and an intense fear rose within her chest. Then, she recalled what happened earlier.

'That explains why Bonnie was so confident and unfazed the whole time. She even said we'd apologize to her and beg her to shop at our mall again.'

Kara's father, Stanley Sherman, looked at Bonnie miserably and asked, "How would you like us to handle it? My daughter was wrong, so you can criticize or even hit her however you want."

Bonnie glanced at Kara. "That's not how civilized people behave. I only want her to uphold her end of the deal. She and that cocky saleswoman will beg me to shop at your mall."

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Chapter 514

Stanley stomped on Kara and questioned, "Are you deaf? Hurry up and beg her to return to the mall now!"

"I-I'll do it now." Kara scrambled to her feet and groveled to Bonnie. "I-I didn't know any better. I should rip my tongue out for speaking to you that way."

She slapped herself and added, "You're the most esteemed guest at our mall. Please grace us with your presence."

All the resentment she had for Bonnie had disappeared.

'It's not like I don't want to resent her, but I simply can't! My family owes Bonnie a considerable debt because she found the head of the family's younger son. I might drag my family down with me if I rebel.'

The saleswoman almost pissed herself as she watched. She approached Bonnie tremblingly and mimicked Kara. The saleswoman slapped herself hard, causing her cheeks to swell instantly.

"Please forgive me, Ms. Bonnie! I didn't mean what I said. I was just "

Bonnie interjected, "Are you a fan of Orpheus or Sienna?"

The saleswoman stuttered, "Orpheus, ma'am."

"Are you his friend or something?" She asked again.

The saleswoman shook her head, not understanding why Bonnie would ask her that. The latter continued, "Why were you so confident that I seduced and blackmailed him if you're not his friend and know nothing about his private life? Do you have proof?"

The saleswoman uttered, "E-Everyone was accusing you, so I—"

"So, you blindly believed what people said about me?" Bonnie glared at the saleswoman, causing the latter to shiver.

Bonnie turned and gazed across the onlookers with their phones held up. She said, "Since so many people are watching, I'll reveal the unadulterated truth."

The onlookers exchanged glances, and the livestream viewers simmered down, waiting for Bonnie to speak. "You're all slandering me because of the picture Sienna tweeted. I'm part of the reason for the bruise on her face."

Her words shocked everyone. They thought Bonnie would deny everything and shift the blame. No one thought she would admit it. The onlookers and livestream viewers were puzzled. Sienna was also watching the stream. She was so nervous that her palms began to sweat.

Bonnie continued, "I was minding my business several days ago, and Sienna brought a group of people to surround me. She then slashed her knife at me, and I hurt one of her arms in self-defense." Everyone was even more shocked. They did not know that Bonnie had hurt one of Sienna's arms and why Bonnie would openly admit it.

"Do you know why I can still stand here and talk to you guys after I hurt her?" Bonnie's question piqued everyone's curiosity.

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Chapter 515

"It's because Sienna mobilized the army without authority. She did it to get back at me, a normal citizen. Her grandfather is a retired general. Once he heard about it, he punished her severely. If you don't believe me, I can always ask him to make an official announcement."

Bonnie's explanation was so earth-shattering that everyone's jaws hit the ground. The onlookers and livestream viewers broke into intense discussions about the revelation.

"S-Sienna mobilized an army without proper authority? How dare she do something like that, not to mention she did it to deal with an ordinary citizen!"

"Frankly, it doesn't matter if Bonnie's at fault. Sienna should've never done something like that."

"Sienna's grandfather even punished her. Who's the idiot that made us believe she slapped Sienna?"

"Wait a minute! Can't you guys see that Bonnie is tricking us? That's just her version of the story. She didn't back it up with any evidence. Will you guys just believe everything she said?"

A moment later, the former general, Leo, made an official announcement online, "I apologize for using the public resources. However, I feel the need to clarify something. I punished my granddaughter, Sienna. The fault is hers alone."

The onlookers could not believe what they saw.

"The former general represents our nation. If he's making a statement, that proves Bonnie wasn't lying. She's telling the truth."

"Although that's possible, we can't be sure. Perhaps Sienna tweeted her picture because she knew she'd been missing for a few days and wanted to tell us she was safe. Didn't she wear a mask and a bucket hat to hide the bruises? If she wanted to set Bonnie up, why would she try so hard to cover it up?"

As Sienna read the comments, she was glad Adele reminded her to cover some of her bruises. Otherwise, it would have been too obvious, and the public would have called her out immediately.

As the onlookers discussed the situation, a Maybach quietly stopped at the mall entrance. However, the car was so luxurious that it attracted much attention. Once the handsome and irresistible Ivor emerged from the vehicle, the crowd could not look away.

"Who's that? Is he some kind of big shot? Hey, I think his car is a limited edition Maybach!"

"Come on, pal. Is that the point here? The man is a big deal. Just look at his elegance. He can wipe the floor with all the young men in the entertainment industry. Only someone like Orpheus can match that guy's charisma."

"That man's drop-dead gorgeous! I think I have a nosebleed. Ah, I want to have his babies!"

"Save your breath, little lady. He's so elegant and dashing that he must already have a girlfriend. Why would you think you stand a chance with someone like him?"

"I guess you're right. I wonder what kind of girl can match his gorgeous looks."

Ivor strode over to Bonnie. Then, he removed his coat and put it on her, saying, "We're heading into autumn. You should wear thicker clothes, or you'll catch a cold."

Bonnie accepted his affectionate gesture because she knew he was trying to help her out of this mess by debunking the false internet rumors. Since that was the case, Bonnie decided to lean into Ivor and say, "All right, thank you."

"You don't have to thank me. Come on, let's go home," Ivor said as he extended his arm.

Bonnie raised her brow and smirked. Then, she took his arm and walked toward the car with him.

"Oh, they're together! What a perfect match! I finally believe Bonnie is innocent. Why would she ever leave someone like him for Orpheus? From now on, I'll fight anyone who claims Bonnie seduced and blackmailed Orpheus."

"Hey, do you think that gorgeous man is Orpheus's nephew?"

"Now that you've mentioned it, their brows do look alike. Orpheus's eldest nephew drives a limited edition Maybach, too. Does anyone know who that man is? Anyone?"

At that moment, one of the Pyralis University students stepped forward.

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Chapter 516

"That reminds me. That man was the representative of the Knight Group at Pyralis University's Scientific Research Competition."

It was a brief answer, but it was enough to cause a big reaction from everyone at the mall entrance and those watching the livestream. The discussion about Ivor's identity gripped everyone.

"Orpheus's last name is McKay. Going by that logic, his eldest nephew should also be a McKay. He's not a Knight family member, and there's no way he is one. Perhaps he's one of the top management staff in the Knight Group and is there to represent his company."

"You make some fine points. Also, that man could've driven his CEO's car here. After all, you guys are forgetting something. Orpheus found success in the entertainment industry all on his own. He would've had strong backing if he were part of the family. Why did he go it alone instead?"

Sometimes, there was a genius among the ordinary citizens. Someone would always speak the truth unintentionally.

"Is it possible that Orpheus took his mother's last name instead? That explains why his eldest nephew didn't share his last name."

The next moment, everyone searched for the Knight family tree diagram on the internet.

'Um... Orpheus's mom is a McKay...'

The general public, who had no idea about the truth behind the curtains, just like that, went into another heated discussion about the Knight family.

"Tee-hee..." Bonnie couldn't help but giggle.

"What are you giggling at?" Ivor turned and looked at him, intrigued.

She showed him her phone and said, "Look, these people are something. They managed to find out that your grandma's surname is McKay. Some even say that you're the CEO of the Knight Group." She was grinning from ear to ear. Looking at her, Ivor couldn't help but feel a warm, fuzzy feeling rising within him.

"I didn't know that you're into gossip."

"Are you going to tell me you don't love gossip?" She asked.

"No. I love you and nothing else."

She didn't have a good comeback for that.

"Buzz buzz buzz..." Her phone vibrated.

Ivor frowned, displeased.

'Who in the world is calling at a time like this?'

Fixing his gaze on the phone, he saw that it was Leo.

"How do you have his phone number?"

Bonnie knew he was probing her. "I saved his number after the whole incident with Sienna."

"Oh. So, that's why."

'I urge her to take her phone and check what big shots are in her contact list. As for Leo... She's not being serious. I'm pretty sure they've long known each other.'

"Hello?" She answered the call.

"Hey, there, Ms. Bonita. I gave Sienna hell for what happened earlier. I hope you won't hold a grudge against her."

"She's just a child throwing a tantrum. I'm not going to be bothered by it."

'That reminds me. Bonnie is just twenty years old, while my granddaughter is five years older than her. If anyone else had heard what she said, they would've found her disdainful. However, I know how right she is.'

'After all, Sienna might be older than Bonnie, but her achievements and status weren't near Bonnie's.'

"That's great, then. Here's the thing. Her twenty-fifth birthday is this weekend. I'd like to invite you to the party. I'll ask her to apologize to you formally in front of everyone."

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Chapter 517

Bonnie didn't like attending such occasions. Just as she was about to reject Leo, he continued.

"I've only invited young people from high society to the birthday party. I also sent an invitation to Benedict. I gathered that he wasn't just interested in fashion designs. He was also fascinated with rifles and armaments.

"That's why I'm going to have my men prepare some activities for everyone to have their fill of holding a rifle and shooting some targets."

Leo was prepared before he made this call. She couldn't help but waiver a little.

"Also, there's another important reason I'm asking you over."

"What is it?"

"The International Scientific Research Conference at Motrus is next month. I'm in charge of your safety on that whole trip. I need to discuss and firm up some security matters and deployment issues with you."

She was startled at what he said. "Are you going to lead the team yourself? Is that even necessary?"

Then, it occurred to her that the SR League received a quest from someone to assassinate her.

"Alright. I'll be there."

When she hung up the phone, Ivor asked, "Where are you going?"

"It's Leo. He wanted to make up for Sienna's mistake. So, he invited me to her birthday party this weekend. Do you want to come with me?"

His lips curled into a smile. Then, he took her hands and said, "I wouldn't be interested in it if it's someone else's birthday, but you did ask nicely. So, yeah, I'm coming with you."

'Uh... Forget it. I'm not bothered to explain it. It's pointless, anyway.

'What's more, I'm not ready to deal with it now. How the heck am I supposed to explain Motrus to him?

'It's the International Scientific Research Conference, and I represent Arvador. That means I have to go. Furthermore, it had always taken between ten and fourteen days.'

She was having a massive headache when Ivor's brow knitted tightly. He remained quiet for a long time before he said, "After Monday, I'll have to travel overseas on a work trip next month."

Her eyes sparkled at his words. "You're going on a work trip next month? When are you going?"

"I'm going on the eighth of next month."

She was overjoyed because she was also going overseas on the eighth of next month.

"I'm not sure how long I'll be away, but it will be between ten and fourteen days."

He couldn't bear the thought of being apart from her for that long. He wished so badly that he could take her with him.

However, he's the sponsor the nation appointed to go to Motrus with Bonita to attend the International Scientific Research Conference together. He couldn't afford to leak this sensitive information, so he hasn't told her anything since he was appointed.

"This is fantastic!" She couldn't hold down the thrill. She didn't notice how bitter Ivor looked until after she yelled gleefully.

"Do you want me to leave you alone so bad? You do know that I'll be gone for a long time. Don't you?"

"That's not it. You're overthinking it. It's just that the timing couldn't have been better. One of my friend's grandparents is having a birthday party. It's kind of far. So, I was going to tell you we must be apart for a period."

The fact was that Jim's grandparents were having their birthday party on the second of next month. The dates didn't clash at all.

"Are you telling me you would've left even if I was not on a work trip?" At the thought of this, his face was no longer filled with somberness. Instead, he was happy. "It looks like we're truly a match made in heaven. We're both occupied on the same day."

Her lips twitched a little. 'Fine. It doesn't matter what he says. All I have to do is ignore him. What matters is that it solves all of my problems.'

There was an art exhibition featuring Orson's paintings exclusively. It was held in Pyralis on Friday night.

Bonnie was invited to it. She had just arrived at the entrance when she saw someone familiar. She might've seen the man before.

"Huh? Isn't that Bonnie?" Some guy standing next to the man looked at her and said.

The man's name was Rhys Richards. When he heard Bonnie's name, he turned around and saw that it was her. At the next moment, his eyes sparkled. "You're right. It's her."

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Chapter 518

Titus Quinn mocked Rhys and said, "She's staring at you. Do you think she regretted turning you down when you confessed your love to her back then? Perhaps she wanted to be your girlfriend now." Rhys smacked the Land Rover next to him. "I didn't tell her I came from a wealthy family when I confessed to her. I think this car of mine must've caught her attention now."

"Isn't that commonplace, though? Every lady loved a wealthy man. You were too naive when we were in high school. You used to think you could win a lady's heart just by being pure.

"I don't want to say this, but you should've given her a pigeon egg diamond ring, and you would've had her in your arms now."

"I guess you're right." Rhys nodded in agreement.

"Come on. Let's go over there."

Rhys walked over to Bonnie and greeted her. "It's been a long time, Bonnie."

She still couldn't recall who he was. "Who are you? Have we seen each other?"

He swapped glances with Titus.

'No way in hell she forgot about us. She's doing this on purpose and playing hard to get. Then again, she is a beautiful lady. It stands to reason that she'd want to play it off cool. I get it. I'll play along, then.'

"Have you forgotten about us, Bonnie? We studied in the same high school. Your classroom was right next to mine. My name's Rhys, and he's my friend, Titus." "Rhys..." She mumbled. Then, it hit her.

'It's him. The guy from the next classroom confessed to me. I don't remember a thing about Titus at all, though.'

"Are you guys also here for Master Orson's art exhibition?" She asked.

"That's right! My dad is a big fan of Master Orson's paintings but couldn't come today. So, he asked me to come here on his behalf and take some pictures instead." He thought she posed the question because she, too, wanted to get in. After all, it wasn't like anybody could just waltz in. "I'll bet you don't have an invitation." "You're right. I don't," she said truthfully. That was because Kay had said she'd welcome her personally once she arrived. However, she still had yet to see Kay. 'I knew it. Bonnie is kissing up to me.' Rhys thought to himself.

"Well, then. You're welcome to come inside with us. They'll admit two guests with one invitation."

"Is it a bother?" She asked.

"Of course, it's not. Come on, let's go." Bonnie had just followed him inside when Kay came out of the restroom and ran toward the entrance.

"What's taking Master so long?"

'I guess I'll call her.'

However, nobody answered her after a long time.

'I guess I'll have to wait for her a little longer.'

Rhys kept rambling on while he took Bonnie inside.

"Have you been to somewhere this upscale before?"

"There are fruit and beverages over there. All of them are imported and expensive. It will cost you a lot to buy and eat these outside. Do you want some? I'll get them for you." However, his friendliness rubbed her the wrong way.

"It's okay. I'm not thirsty or hungry."

"So am I. Let's admire the paintings, then. Look at this piece. It's so nicely done. I heard that it costs millions of dollars. That's almost as much as my family makes." At the next moment, Titus gave him a big thumbs up.

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Chapter 519

Rhys revealed his family's wealth to Bonnie roundaboutly. In short, he was a millionaire! It would've been earth-shattering news if the school had known about it. "Hmm. Not bad, indeed." Bonnie nodded. "However, it's not as good as the painting Orson gave me back then."

'Look at the way she bluffed. What am I supposed to say now?' Rhys thought to himself.

Titus chuckled. "It's been a long time, Bonnie. It seems like you've learned how to make jokes now!"

She responded solemnly, "I'm telling you the truth. I didn't want it, but he insisted on giving it to me back then."

'Truth be told, I would've rejected Orson outright if it wasn't for the fact that he was old. After all, I can make my paintings if I wanted to.'

"Uh..."

Titus pulled Rhys aside and said softly, "Don't get me wrong, Bonnie is beautiful but a loudmouth. Perhaps you should forget about hitting on her, Rhys."

Rhys, however, didn't falter. "The way I see it, she's doing it on purpose. She wanted to get my attention, after all."

"I guess you could be right."

She noticed both of them muttering with each other and got bored. So, she headed toward the fruit and beverages section.

"What are you doing here?" Harold looked at her displeasingly.

She turned around impatiently and said coldly, "I'm no longer a part of the Shepard family. Like I said, if one of you harasses me, help me. I'm going to get Trina expelled from Pyralis University. I don't care which one of you does the harassing."

"Why, you..." He was so mad that his face and neck turned red.

Worried that her husband would be overly upset, Yolanda gently patted his back. "Is that how you talk to people, Bonnie? He's an elderly man, for Heaven's sake!"

She cast a cold gaze at the old lady. It was so petrifying that Yolanda's back was covered with sweat.

"I don't intend to waste my time on both of you. Let's just say Trina will be completely ruined if she's expelled from Ppyralis University three times. On top of that, the entire Shepards will become the city's-no, the country's laughingstock."

Both Yolanda and Harold were beside themselves with rage. They were about to say something, but she cut them off and spoke first.

"Make one noise, and I'm going to tear down the entire Shepard family."

Both of them zipped it immediately. They could only stare at her viciously, and it took them a long time to calm down.

"Forget about her. Master Orson is going to make an appearance soon."

As soon as Harold said it, Orson came downstairs, and the crowd huddled around him immediately.

"Come on. Let's go."

"Okay."

Then, Harold and Yolanda went before Orson with a big smile.

"It's been a long time, Master Orson. You still look as vibrant as ever!"

Orson ignored them and walked past them instead. Just like that, both of them became a laughingstock.

"Master Orson doesn't know them at all, but they thought so highly of themselves that they went before him and tried to kiss up to him. Good on them. All they've achieved was embarrassing themselves."

"I'd say that they brought it on themselves. After all, they overestimated themselves on this. Everyone wants to kiss up to Master Orson.

"Who do they think they are? I'm not trying to be mean here, but they don't even have the right to do this when there's a long line of people waiting to get close to Master Orson."

"Exactly. They might've ruined Master Orson's day with their actions."

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Chapter 520

Everyone berated Harold and Yolanda, who blushed.

Then, he gritted his teeth and stubbornly walked over to Orson.

"I guess you're so busy that you forgot about us, Master Orson. I'm the former head of the Shepard family. My name's Harold. You came to my birthday party. You greeted me, and we chatted a lot. Have you forgotten about that?"

"Hmph!" Orson grunted coldly. "I didn't want to start anything with you. That's why I ignored you and walked past you earlier. I didn't bet on you being so shameless that you even tried to converse with me!" "Well. I..." He was about to say something, but Orson cut him off.

"You Shepards have disowned Master Bonnie. What makes you think you can pretend to be my friend?"

Orson has seen many winters. He is usually mature, friendly, and understanding. He wouldn't have spoken so aggressively if he wasn't severely infuriated.

Harold was slack-jawed. His ears were ringing as well.

'Bonnie? Is that why Orson is treating me this coldly?'

"B-Bonnie has got you fooled, Master Orson. She only knows run-of-the-mill shadowboxing skills. She's far from being a master!"

"That's right!" Yolanda went along with her husband. "She has stayed in our villa for several years now. Don't you think we know better than anyone about her capabilities?"

"If her shadowboxing skills were so immaculate and worthy of becoming a master, then why wouldn't she have boasted about it to us much earlier?"

Orson continued to speak coldly. "She didn't boast about it because she prefers to keep a low profile. Do you think all youngsters are that superficial? Let me tell you guys something about geniuses and highly gifted people. They have every right to show off their capabilities but ultimately choose to maintain a low profile.

"If you aren't happy about what I said, look no further than Ms. Bonita. She's young, too, but she has never shown her true face in public or the media. Why do you think that is?"

It's because she's modest!" "U-Um... Bonnie is good for nothing. How could you compare her with Ms. Bonita, who's brimming with exceptional talents, Master Orson? Do you realize you're humiliating Ms. Bonita?" "Say what now?" Orson laughed heartily. "If Ms. Bonita is here and sees Bonnie's shadowboxing skill today, I'm sure she'll give her a big thumbs up and compliment her!"

They made such a big commotion that Bonnie was already monitoring their exchange from much earlier.

'Gee. I'd never give myself a thumbs up and pat myself on the back.'

Harold and Yolanda never counted on Orson having such a high opinion of Bonnie. However, they were very sure that Bonnie had little medical knowledge. For crying out loud, she even acquired it by dumb luck. She honestly couldn't do anything else!

"A word of advice, Shepards. Stay the heck away from me and disturb me no more. Otherwise, I'll forego courtesy and have both of you kicked out!" He said harshly. Then, he left with a cold, angry expression. Both Harold and Yolanda's brows knitted tightly. They turned and looked at Bonnie curiously.

At the same time, they heard the onlookers muttering about them. Quite a number of them exclaimed that they would do Orson a favor and find someone to kick the couple out of the exhibition. They might have thick skins but could not withstand this many people slandering them. Ultimately, they could no longer stand it and fled.

"What are you doing here?" Rhys rushed over to Bonnie's side.

"I'm just grabbing some bites." She said, poured herself a glass of juice.

Both Rhys and Titus pursed their lips at that.

'She said she didn't want it earlier. Gee. She could've just come clean and told us she had never been to such an occasion and tasted nice food and drinks. We wouldn't have made fun of her.'

Titus muttered to Rhys again. "Bonnie is such a glory hound, and she refuses to lose face, ever. I don't mean to be nasty, but you're a great man, Rhys. You can get any kind of lady you want. I think you have better give on her."

"It's true. I can have any kind of lady, but this is my first time seeing someone this beautiful. Have you ever seen someone as glorious and curvaceous as her?"

That stumped Titus.

'Now that I think about it, I've seen a lot of pretty ladies in my time. However, I've never seen one as exquisite as Bonnie.'

Bonnie was sipping the fruit juice when she saw Orson walking toward her from the corner of her eyes.

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Chapter 521

Needless to say, Orson was coming over to greet her.

That was when an uninvited guest appeared before him. "I didn't have an invitation, but here I am. I hope you won't about that, Master Orson!"

The man wore designer labels and held a rolled-up painting in his arms.

"Who's that? He seems familiar." Bonnie was talking to herself when she heard someone's voice beside her.

"He's Grandpa's rival, Kobe Fraser. If he's here, it means something bad will happen."

Turning sideways, she looked at Kay and asked, "Where did you come from?"

"I've been waiting for you for a long time, Master! How did you get in? Also, you should've said something to me. I kept calling your phone, but no one answered." Kay held her arms and kept shaking them non stop.

"Did you call me?" She pulled out her phone and checked it.

'I didn't turn off my phone, nor are there any missed calls.'

"Did you run out of credit?" Kay asked.

"Maybe you're right."

"I'll reload it for you."

"It's..." Before she could finish her sentence, Kay had already reloaded her credit on her behalf.

"There, it's done. I've reloaded a hundred and forty thousand dollars into your phone account. It'll probably last you a lifetime."

She didn't know what to say for a moment there.

"How much did you reload again? It's a joke. Isn't it?" Rhys gulped and asked.

"Is that so? Grandpa's painting goes for several million dollars a pop. So, what's so surprising here?" With that, Kay looked at Bonnie and asked, "Do you know this guy, Master?"

"Yeah. We went to the same high school."

"Oh." Kay's response was very brief. She wasn't interested in Rhys.

On the other hand, both Rhys and Titus were shocked to the core.

'This lady has just called Bonnie her 'master.' Moreover, is she Orson's granddaughter?! If that's the case, does that mean Bonnie didn't need our help to get into the art exhibition in the first place? Was this young lady supposed to get her in?'

At the next moment, Rhys couldn't help but lower his voice and asked Bonnie. "Is she Master Orson's granddaughter?"

"Why, of course." She responded.

Rhys and Titus swapped glances again. The shock in their eyes was unmistakable.

"How did you come to know her, then?"

"Back then, I saw Orson shadowboxing in the morning. His moves weren't quite precise, and I gave him some pointers. That's how I get to know both of them." She responded casually.

Both of them gasped sharply. 'Does that mean she knew Orson as well?'

"I think she's bluffing." Titus analyzed her words and said.

"What makes you think that?" Rhys asked.

"Come on. Just think about it. Master Orson is such a prestigious figure. Why would Bonnie, a nobody, come to know someone like him? With that said, I can believe that she knows Orson's granddaughter. "Just look at us. My father's a farm hand, but your family is wealthy. Didn't we get along quite fine?"

"I guess so. Perhaps she wanted to look cool. That could be why she took one step too far and deliberately said that she knew Master Orson."

Orson's face fell. If it weren't for preserving his reputation, he would've asked his men to chase Kobe out of his exhibition. "What are you doing here?"

"It's your art exhibition, Orson. I brought a painting with me so you could look at it and give me your thoughts."

He grunted coldly. "This is my art exhibition, yet you brought someone else's painting over. Are you trying to stir up trouble here?"

"Don't be mad, Orson. Why would I do something like that?"

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Chapter 522

Kobe might've said what he said, but he was here to stir up trouble.

"Really? Did you bring your painting here?"

He flashed Orson a cunning smile. "Of course not. You'll see."

With that, he asked his men to unroll his painting.

The moment Orson saw the tabby cat in the painting, he trembled. Then, he put on his glasses, pulled a magnifying glass, and inspected the painting immediately.

One of the guests didn't understand why Orson reacted the way he did.

"What's Master Orson doing?" Rhys asked.

Kay rolled her eyes and said, "You can't tell this painting's background. I don't get it. How did people like you sneak in here?"

"Well, I..." He stopped himself. Given who Kay was, he couldn't afford to throw a fit. "What's the deal about this painting, Kay?"

She didn't want to explain anything to him but did it anyway for Bonnie's sake.

"You know about Grandpa's painting. How is it that you don't know about the traditional master painter, who's even more prestigious than him?" Rhys mulled it over for a while before his eyes widened in shock.

"D-Do you mean the esteemed traditional master painter who loves drawing tabby cats?! Are you talking about Master Kieran Johnston?!" "Exactly. Now, you get it."

"Who is he supposed to be? What's so great about Master Kieran, exactly?" Titus was thoroughly oblivious to paintings. So, he was very curious.

Rhys explained, "He's one of the greatest traditional master painters in the world. He made his appearance seventeen years ago and astounded everyone.

"He made a painting based on a tabby cat, and it received critical acclaim from countless traditional master painters. His painting came to be sold for a hundred forty million dollars in an auction!" Titus couldn't help but gasp heavily.

"A-A hundred forty million dollars? Really? How could a painting go for that much money?"

Bonnie pondered and searched her memory. "I was still very young back then. I think the exact amount is forty million and seven hundred dollars."

Rhys and the others looked at her abruptly. "How do you know that?"

She didn't respond to him.

Some onlookers who knew about art huddled around the tabby cat painting.

"I think this is the real deal."

"You think? There's no doubt about it. This is the real deal. Just take a look at its brushes. It's like the cat is alive, especially its eyes. You can just see its soul in there. It's like I'm staring into the eyes of a real tabby.

"Also, look at the stripes on its body. Every stroke was defined clearly. It even moves when we shift the painting. No ordinary painter could've created such a masterpiece."

"It looks like Kobe took this painting to Master Orson's art exhibition just to mess with him."

Kobe grinned from ear to ear. Raising his hand, he stroked his beard. "Are you done inspecting the painting, Orson? Is the painting authentic? Is it Master Kieran's painting?"

"This is outrageous!" Kay puffed up her cheeks and said, "How dare he show Grandpa up with Master Kieran's painting? Grandpa might be a phenomenal painter, but Master Kieran's artistic talent is out of this world.

"People gave her the title of 'Divine Artist' for crying out loud. How is a mortal being like my grandpa supposed to compete with a deity?"

Bonnie's lips twitched uncontrollably. "You're making too big a deal out of Master Kieran. She's just a normal human being, like us."

"I didn't! She's just that good! Grandpa told me that he had the honor of meeting the Divine Artist. She was only three years old!" Kay's eyes were full of admiration when she said it.

Rhys and Titus were straight-up dumbfounded.

'Mamma Mia! Kieran was only three years old when she drew the painting. It was already worth a hundred forty million dollars. What were we doing when we were three years old? I think we're still busy playing with mud.'

Kobe was triumphant when he realized Orson hadn't responded to him for a long time.

"I spent eighty million dollars to acquire this painting, Orson. It's the real deal. You don't have to inspect it anymore. Also, a word of advice. You should just abandon your art exhibition while you're at it."

Orson was so mad that his face turned red. That's when he heard a delicate voice.

"The painting's a fake."

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Chapter 523

'Who is it?

'Who's speaking?

'Who's the young, fearless fool that dares speak so rudely before two prestigious figures in the world of traditional painting?'

Everyone was bewildered. They swapped glances and tried to check out the speaker. Among the crowd, Rhys and Titus were so frightened that their faces turned pale. Then, they took a step back simultaneously, trying to put as much distance from Bonnie as they possibly could.

That was right. Bonnie was the one who claimed the painting was fake.

Everyone was baffled. They didn't think she'd be this audacious and make such bold claims when the place was filled with influential figures.

'We have to stay away from her and put some distance as much as possible. We have to pretend that we don't know her. She's going to drag us down with her.'

'I have a net worth of a million and forty thousand dollars. I can be as cocky as I want on other occasions. However, I'm a nobody in a place like this.'

'I seriously wanted to win her heart, but I can't do that if I'm dead. I have to protect my family and my wealth now.'

"Who the hell said my painting is a fake?" Kobe's expression was as black as charcoal. He swept his eyes across the crowd sharply.

Both Rhys and Titus trembled when his gaze landed on them.

"I-It's her! She said it!" Rhys reached out and pointed at Bonnie.

"You did?" he glared at her menacingly. To his surprise, the young lady didn't flinch when she met his gaze.

'Who the hell is this young lady?'

Before he could investigate, he saw Orson walk over to her from the corner of his eyes. Then, his rival bowed and saluted her.

"You should've let me know you'd be coming, Master Bonnie. I would've welcomed you personally."

At that moment, everyone's jaw dropped to the floor, especially Rhys and Titus.

It came out of the left field for them. They dared not approach Orson because he was simply too high up. Now, however, he was showing their former high school fellow student this much respect. 'Are we dreaming?'

Both of them reached out and pinched each other's thighs without a moment's hesitation.

'Ow! It hurts!'

Bonnie nodded. "There's no need to stand on formalities, Orson."

"Of course I do. You're Master Arturo's direct disciple. More to the point, your shadowboxing skill is immaculate and flawless. You're just very modest. That's all. Otherwise, the entire world would've known who you are." His tone was brimming with admiration.

Everyone was dumbfounded again.

"Oh, my gosh! What did he just say? I can't believe this young lady is Master Arturo's direct disciple!"

"Also, Master Orson said her shadowboxing skills are immaculate and flawless. Was he serious? Will you look at how young she is?"

"I don't think he's lying! After all, it's Master Orson we're talking about here. Furthermore, didn't you notice how he addressed her as 'Master Bonnie?' He even bowed and saluted her."

Rhys and Titus's jaws dropped. Their eyes widened in surprise, too. Staring at her, they heard the onlookers giving her praise after praise. They simply couldn't process what they were seeing and hearing.

Kobe walked over. He looked at her and smiled, "Are you Master Arturo's disciple? That's neat. You're so young, though. Am I right in saying you're his latest disciple?"

"Anyway, it doesn't matter how much you excelled in shadowboxing. You're standing in an art exhibition here. This is not where you shine. Did you just say my painting is a fake?" "Yeah, I said it." She nodded and admitted to it.

"Intriguing. Everyone here, including Orson, doesn't think the painting is a fake. So, what makes you so sure about your claim?"

She maintained her composure and said leisurely, "It's no surprise that you couldn't tell that it's a fake. After all, there aren't a lot of Kieran's paintings left in the world. It's normal for you guys to miss out on some details because you don't have another authentic painting to compare it with."

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Chapter 524

"Oh?" Kobe raised his brow. "Judging by your tone, you must be insinuating you have an authentic painting of Master Kieran's."

"I guess you can say that," Bonnie responded casually.

That was when everyone lost it.

"Did she just say she has it? If that's the case, her net worth is easily more than a hundred and eighty million dollars!"

Rhys heard that. Then, he thought about how he had earlier boasted about his net worth of one million and forty thousand dollars to her. All of a sudden, he felt like such a clown.

Titus looked awful as well. After all, he kept badmouthing Bonnie the moment he met her. Worse, he looked down on her as well.

Now, however, it seemed as if he was the clown all along.

"Do you have it? A-Are you serious?!" Kobe was so shocked that he was stuttering.

Even Orson was staring at her with sparkling eyes.

'Master Kieran has only ever made a few paintings in her lifetime. Out of the few of them, only a couple of them were put up for auction. One of them was purchased by a wealthy foreign businessman, while the other one was purchased by the richest family in Pyralis, the Knights.

'Now, it seems Bonnie possessed Master Kieran's painting. Oh, my. I'm already in love with the painting now! I love it so much that I might rob it from her."

Instead of going down this topic, she walked over to Kobe's painting and pointed at the tabby cat. "Over here. The color isn't right on this tuft of fur."

"What do you mean?" He squinted and asked.

"There's something wrong with the stripes."

"How is it wrong?"

"The color of the stripes over here looks light when it should've been darker." The tabby cat in her hometown had been with her since she was very young. So, she remembered every single detail about it. "Heh!" He sneered. "What makes you think your words mattered? The way I see it, you're just trying to help Orson out. That's why you're spouting nonsense right now."

Orson's brows furrowed. 'Did Bonnie make this story up just to help me out?'

"Thanks for your help, Master Bonnie, but I honestly think this is the real..." "What's the matter? Don't you believe me?" She asked dryly.

Looking at her confident bearing, he thought she must know a lot about Kieran's painting. Moreover, he believed that she had been telling the truth all the while.

"That's enough, Bonnie. You're done here. Please leave." Kobe smirked and looked at her. The mockery in his eyes was unmistakable.

She looked back at him casually. "It's easy to see if I'm telling the truth. You've got a picture of the authentic painting on the internet. Why don't you just search for it and compare it with your painting here?" "I've got it right here, Master." Kay pulled out her phone and hooked it up to the big screen in the exhibition.

"Gee! I think you spoke the truth, Master. There's a slight difference in the color of the tabby cat's neck when you compare it with Master Kieran's authentic painting. It would've been nearly impossible to see it if you hadn't pointed it out."

Kobe's face fell for just a second. "The picture you searched might not have been the real deal. Also, the colors might change because of the flashlight from the camera. So, it doesn't accurately depict the genuine color."

"How shameless!" Kay pointed at him and yelled.

"I'm an elderly person, Kay. It won't do for you to speak to me in that way. If I didn't know better, I would've thought your parents did a poor job raising you. Hahaha!"

"Why, you... You old..." Before she could finish her sentence, Bonnie stopped her.

Bonnie stared at Kobe coldly and said, "Does this mean you're not going to admit that your painting is a fake until you see the real deal?"

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Chapter 525

"That's right."

'I'm very confident that my painting is authentic. After all, I spent a hundred and eighty million dollars to acquire it. There's no way I'd make a mistake.' "Fine. I'll bring the original painting here."

What she said sent the crowds into another shock.

Kay gulped and asked, "Did you bring Master Kieran's painting with you, Master?"

"Nuh-uh, but I know someone who has it."

"Who might that be?"

"The wealthiest and most powerful family in Pyralis. The Knight family."

Kobe couldn't help but burst out laughing at what she said.

"Of course, the Knights have it. However, do you honestly think they'll take it here just because you say so? Who do you think you are?"

The next moment, someone at the entrance yelled, "The Knights are here!"

'The Knights?! Really?'

Everyone turned their gaze toward the door unanimously. Floyd showed up with a dozen of the Knight family's top bodyguards.

"I recognize the emblems on their uniforms. It's true. They're the Knight family's fearsome bodyguards."

"I can prove it, too. The man at the front of the group is the assistant of the head of the Knight family. He frequently represented them in various events and outings."

Titus's eyes were widened in shock. He fixed his gaze on Floyd and said, "I know he isn't the head of the Knight family, but he looked so cool nonetheless! It will make me look good if I tell my friends that I met the assistant of the head of the Knight family!"

"You're right! He is the assistant of the head of the Knight family! I should take some pictures." Rhys pulled out his phone quietly. Before he could take some shots, he saw Floyd walking toward Bonnie and bowed at her respectfully.

"Mr. Ivor asked me to bring you the painting, Ms. Bonnie."

His hands quivered uncontrollably. The next thing he knew, his phone fell to the floor. It wasn't just him. Even Titus and the rest of the onlookers had similar reactions.

Bonnie looked at the painting in Floyd's arms, surprised. "How does he know that I need the painting now?"

Floyd smiled. "Mr. Ivor loves you more than life itself. Naturally, he keeps tabs on you and what you do."

Her lips twitched uncontrollably at that.

'Did Floyd pick up Ivor's speaking pattern or something? He also has a way with words. Ivor sent him to stalk me, but he said in such an unapologetic manner. On top of that, he managed to spin it so that it almost sounds like a confession of love.'

Then, she reached out and patted him on the shoulder.

"You've done well this time. He'll reward you handsomely when you report everything to him."

Floyd grinned from ear to ear, revealing his white teeth. "I owe it to you, Ms. Bonnie."

She didn't have a good comeback for that.

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Chapter 526

"Unroll the painting."

"Copy, Ms. Bonnie."

Floyd gave the order for the bodyguards to do so immediately.

Kobe knew that he'd be the joke the moment he saw Floyd greet Bonnie.

'This explains why she could tell my painting is a fake. It turns out she's extremely close to the head of the Knight family. Of course she could see Kieran's painting whenever she wanted to. Otherwise, she couldn't have been so sure that my painting was fake.'

After the painting Floyd brought was unrolled, everyone compared both of the paintings in the area that Bonnie pointed out. As expected, there was a subtle difference between them.

Similar thoughts ran through everyone's heads. 'Truth be told, no one would've been able to catch the difference unless they inspected it closely with a magnifying glass. How did Bonnie see it exactly?'

The art exhibition came to a close and Orson saw her out with a smile on his face.

"I'm very curious about something, Ms. Bonnie. I'd appreciate it greatly if you could clarify it for me."

"There's no need to speak so formally, Orson. Go ahead."

"Alright, then. I'll get straight to the point. I don't think you could've told that Kobe's painting was a fake, even if you stared at Master Kieran's painting every day.

"If I'm correct, this isn't about you gluing your eyeballs to Master Kieran's painting in the Knight Villa every single day. There's more to it."

Orson didn't form his theory out of thin air, either. After all, Kobe spent a hundred and eighty million dollars on it. His rival must've spent a long time studying it and only bought once he was sure the painting was authentic.

Moreover, she was able to see that Kobe's painting was a fake in less than a minute.

"That's why I deduced that you're very intimate with Master Kieran's works. D-Do you know her in person, Ms. Bonnie?"

She raised her delicate brows and looked at him.

'I didn't think Orson is still this logical and calm. It took him a short time to analyze the situation in this meticulous manner.' "Yeah. I guess you can say that."

Orson's eyes sparkled when he heard her response. "I have a rather crude request, Ms. Bonnie. I've admired Master Kieran for my entire life. Can you please put in a good word for me and tell her that I want to be her apprentice?"

That stunned her a little. "U-Um... This might be too..."

He was worried that she might turn him down. So, he added hastily, "The truth is that I have had the honor of seeing her once."

"You've seen me... Ahem... Her. You've seen her before?" She almost let the truth slip.

He was still gripped with excitement, and didn't notice the loophole in her words. He kept going. "Master Kieran has just shown her face once. I saw her at an auction seventeen years ago. She was merely three years old then.

"I just so happened to be sitting next to her. However, I didn't know who she was back then. I simply thought she was one of the bidder's daughters. Then, I saw her walking out of the venue all by herself. "She was just a three-year-old child, and no adults were accompanying her. She was about as old as Kay. I got worried that she might run into some problems if she went out alone. So, I tailed her. "As expected, there were two malicious thugs who followed her. They were going to kidnap her, but I ordered my bodyguards to subdue them.

"I still couldn't stop worrying about her after that. So, I continued to tail her to a candy store. The store owner wouldn't sell her candy because she was just a child. So, I stepped forward and bought the candy for her."

At that moment, she was staring at him, surprised.

"I seem to recall that someone bought me candies in the past. However, I didn't know that he subdued the thugs and kept me safe.

"I did learn some shadowboxing skills from Master Arturo back then, but I was still so young. It was nearly impossible for me to defend myself if the bad guys snuck up on me. Things might have gotten more complicated if he had not taken care of them.

Orson continued. "Once the auction started, I returned to the auction with Master Kieran. That was when I got to know that the insanely expensive painting was drawn by the same three-year-old girl. "Imagine my surprise when I finally found out about it! I wanted to be her apprentice back then, but I guess it just wasn't meant to be. I can't find her after the auction ended."

Then he sighed heavily. Evidently, he was feeling sorry for himself.

"With that said..." He added and looked at her with hope in his eyes. "I found out that you knew Master Kieran in person today. This must be the universe's way of letting me see her again. Perhaps it is my destiny to become her apprentice after all!"

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Chapter 527

Bonnie was in a difficult position.

'I probably would've taken Orson as my apprentice. After all, he did help me and kept me safe from the thugs. However, Kay is already my apprentice. Am I supposed to take her grandfather as my apprentice as well? Isn't that going to mess things up?

'I mean, is Kay supposed to treat him as her grandfather or a fellow apprentice?'

These thoughts culminated in a terrible headache. She rubbed the side of her head.

Orson saw her reaction and fell into deep thought.

'Is this a tall order for her? Perhaps she isn't as well acquainted with Master Kieran as I thought.'

"You should forget about what I said if I put you in a difficult position." He sighed heavily.

"It is quite difficult, but..." She added, "It might be impossible for her to take you in as an apprentice, but she could certainly show you some pointers."

"Really? Are you being serious now?!" He was as excited as a young man.

Kay was standing not far from them. She saw her grandfather's reaction and scratched the back of her head.

Then, she asked Rhys and Titus, who were standing next to her, "What are they talking about? Why is he acting like a child with her?"

In fact, both of them saw it too. There were no words that could describe what they were feeling now.

Bonnie nodded. "Yeah. Showing you some pointers is fine, but I don't think she has the time now."

'It'd have to wait until after the International Scientific Research Conference. Then, I'll disguise myself as Kieran and meet up with him.'

"Okay! Just let me know after you've confirmed the time. I've waited for her for seventeen years. I can afford to wait a little longer." He might've said that, but he was very eager to see Kieran. The earlier, the better.

"It's decided, then. I have some matters to attend to. I'll be taking my leave now."

She was about to hail a cab when Rhys came over excitedly. "W-Where do you stay, Bonnie? I'll give you a ride home."

Titus pursed his lips. He was Rhys's best friend, and he could tell that Rhys was trying to elevate his social status by making connections with her.

"That won't be necessary. I'll just hail a cab." She was worried that Ivor might become jealous again if he saw it.

"It's no trouble at all. You're going to have a hard time hailing a cab at a time like this. Don't worry, I'll just drop you off at the neighborhood gates. I'll steer clear of your place."

Rhys thought he was being smart. 'I'm sure Bonnie didn't want me to send her back because she's worried that her family might see me and make things complicated.'

Bonnie looked at the street. What he said was true, there wasn't a single cab around here.

"Alright, then. Thanks for doing this."

"Come on, we're old friends. There's no need to be this formal. Alright. Hop in."

She opened the door and sat in the backseat, while Rhys and Titus sat in front.

"Where do I drop you off?" Rhys asked as he turned around.

"Lenfield Resort."

"Huh?" He blinked in response.

She thought he didn't catch what she said. So, she repeated herself. "Lenfield Resort."

Both of them exchanged glances and saw that they were both shocked to the core.

"D-Do you mean the newly developed neighborhood that's insanely expensive? Is that the Lenfield Resort you're talking about?"

"As far as I know, there's only one Lenfield Resort in Pyralis," she answered.

Both of them gasped in response.

After all, that's one of the most luxurious neighborhoods in Pyralis. Rumor has it that only the richest and most powerful people had a place there. They were in shock when someone knocked on the window at the driver's side.

"Who is it?"

Rhys came to his senses and lowered the window. His jaw almost dropped when he found himself staring into an exceptionally stunning face. 'How is it possible that someone this handsome even exists? We're all humans, but why do we look so different from each other? The universe isn't fair!' "Um... Is there anything I can help you with?"

Ivor said dryly, "I'm here for my fiancé."

"Huh?" Rhys was obviously stunned. "Why would you knock on my window when you're looking for..."

He hadn't even finished his sentence when he whipped his head around and looked at Bonnie.

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Chapter 528

Bonnie opened the car door and walked over to Ivor.

"Didn't you say you were busy and couldn't pick me up?"

"Did you buy that?" He chuckled before taking off his coat and putting it on her. She felt the warmth from his coat, but the truth was that his gesture warmed her heart as well. "Damn! Her fiance is stunning!" Titus's eyes sparkled as he stared at Ivor. "I mean it, too. I'm straight, but I'm willing to go home with him."

Rhys's lips twitched uncontrollably at that. Turning around, he realized his best friend was almost drooling over Ivor.

'He didn't even have any reaction when he saw Bonnie earlier. She's a beauty, too. Give him a good-looking guy and he slobbers over him. Could it be that he likes guys?' "It doesn't mean anything to have good looks. Bonnie could be his sugar mommy for all we know."

He saw Floyd, who showed up at the art exhibition earlier, walking over to Ivor.

"I've done everything you asked for, Mr. Ivor."

"Hmm. Well done."

Rhys gulped heavily before looking at Titus. "D-Did you see the way the Knight family's assistant addressed the handsome guy?"

"I-I heard it. H-He's treating the handsome guy the way he would a boss."

At the next moment, both of them gasped.

'Wait! Bonnie's boyfriend is the CEO of the Knight Group! How crazy is this? We have to tell our friends about this.'

Before long, they sent a group text to their high school friends.

"I've got some earth-shattering news!"

The moment he sent this text, everyone popped up in the group chat and composed their replies.

"What's going on? Are you getting married?"

"I think he got a lady pregnant before marriage."

For a moment there, he wasn't sure how he should respond.

"Stop with the wild guesses. This is about Bonnie, the girl from the class next to ours. Do you guys know who her boyfriend is?"

"Are you going to tell me that you snagged her?"

This particular text made his heart pound like crazy. He turned off his phone screen and poked his head out the car window. Looking at Ivor, he realized the man was holding Bonnie and leading her into a Maybach.

'If he saw that last text, he would've broken one of my legs.'

"Cut the crap!" he texted.

Worried that his friends might make another wild guess, he decided he'd get straight to the point.

"Her boyfriend is the CEO of the Knight Group!"

The group chat was silent after that. He felt proud that he had the privilege of knowing the truth before anyone else did.

Beep!

Beep beep beep!

The texts started to come in.

"Did you have too much to drink, Rhys?"

"That's right. Even if you did, you should know that some things can't be said."

"Look, you can make up anything you want. However, if this gets out and the head of the Knight family comes after us, we will tell him you made up this crazy story."

"Where's the group admin? Hurry up and delete all of his texts."

He didn't know how to respond. Now, he finally understood why Bonnie didn't bother telling anyone about this.

Meanwhile, Ivor asked Bonnie the question he had been wanting to ask.

"We've always kept Master Kieran's painting in a safe. Never once have we hung it up for display. So, how did you figure that Kobe's painting was a fake? How did you know it wasn't Master Kieran's authentic painting?"

"The error you spotted is such a tiny detail. Not even Orson or Kobe, who are both prestigious figures in the world of painting, could see it. So, how exactly did you pull it off?"

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Chapter 529

Before Bonnie could respond, he continued asking, "Do you know Master Kieran personally?"

She giggled and asked, "Just how many questions do you have, Ivor? It's just dumb luck that I saw that particular error."

"Oh. Dumb luck. I see." Ivor's lowered his eyes a little. His lush eyelashes covered his true feelings.

She could tell that he didn't quite believe her, but she couldn't be bothered to explain herself.

The next day, she went to the McLeod Villa with Ivor.

Many people were there today. Even Jordynn, who used to have a crush on Bonnie, was there. The moment she saw Bonnie, she gave the latter a weird look.

"Hmm. I think you look better when you're disguised as a man."

She proceeded to admire Bonnie's stunning face and fell into deep thought.

"What a shame. Why couldn't she have been a guy instead?"

She heard someone disagree with her. "I think Bonnie looks better when she's dressed as a lady. On top of that, she has this elegance that just accentuates her beauty." 'Who said that? Why's he fucking going against me?'

Turning around, she saw an extremely handsome man with a delicate face. Then, she paid close attention and realized who he was. It's Ezequiel Acosta, her childhood friend. "W-Where did your rugged looks go? Did you do something to your face?"

'He must've done something drastic, too. Otherwise, why would his face look so delicate?'

She wanted to see if it was real. So, she rubbed and pinched his cheeks. She couldn't find anything weird with it, though.

That wasn't all, either. His cheeks were smooth to the touch.

"W-What the hell happened to you, Ezequiel?"

He was very happy with her reaction. Casting a glance at Bonnie, he said, "Nothing. It's just Ms. Bonnie living up to her name as the miracle doctor and curing my rugged looks."

"She treated you?! Is it even possible to treat a face?" Jordynn was having a hard time closing her mouth because of how surprised she was.

Jordynn regained her composure. Then, she pinched his face again. She even walked closer to him and exhaled on his face before she continued rubbing it.

Her breath smelled so sweet that Ezequiel's blood almost froze. All he did was stand there as his heart pounded like crazy. His delicate cheeks had turned red as a result.

She hid her giggle behind her hands. Then she walked past him and turned around to look at him again, wishing they were in a relationship.

Ezequiel caught her meaning in less than a second and glanced back at her warmly.

Bonnie had walked off a short distance when she sensed that someone was following her. So, she spun around and saw Sienna reaching out for her.

"What do you think you're doing?" Her voice was both cold and menacing.

Sienna was so spooked by Bonnie's bearing that she felt a chill down her spine.

'I come from a family of military men, but I just can't help getting intimidated by her.'

She gnashed her teeth and shoved her displeasure down. "We're in my place. Do you think I'm so dumb that I'll do anything to you when there are so many people around us?" Bonnie nodded in approval. "I guess you're right. After all, you're no match for me. So, you wouldn't be so dumb to try to start a fight with me."

What she said ticked Sienna off.

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Chapter 530

However, there was more where that came from.

After all, Bonnie wasn't done talking. "That's why you tried to sneak up on me and attack me from behind." "Why, you..." Sienna pointed at Bonnie aggressively. She was so upset that she was shaking with rage.

Bonnie glanced at her nonchalantly and said, "Take my advice and stay away from me. I didn't destroy you because I respect your grandfather and his brothers. However, I'll do what needs to be done if you keep making me mad."

"Who do you think you are? Do you honestly think my grandpa has your best interests at heart? I mobilized the troops, and the authorities found out about it. That's the only reason they dished out such a severe punishment to me."

"Suit yourself. I couldn't give a damn about what you think happened. I said it once, and I'll say it again. Stay away from me. Otherwise, not even your grandpas could stop me from doing what is necessary." She brushed past Sienna as she left, causing her to stumble backward.

Turning her head around, she glanced at Sienna disdainfully. "You've truly lived a sheltered life. You lose your footing way too easily. Perhaps you should stop wasting time fighting with me and focus on working out instead."

Sienna almost lost control and roared at her. 'Damn it!'

She watched as Bonnie walked further away from her. Then, she gave chase to the latter. "Are you brave enough to have a match with me?"

However, Bonnie simply strolled on as if she didn't hear her.

"Heh! You better walk away! I thought you were kind of tough at first. Now, it's clear that you're nothing but a chicken!"

Bonnie stopped in her tracks when she heard what Sienna said.

"I'm aware you're trying to get on my nerves. With that said, I'm a guest at your birthday party. So, I guess I do have a duty to entertain you. After all, you're the birthday girl."

Sienna smiled confidently. The confidence in her eyes was unmistakable as well.

Not long after, both of them arrived at the shooting range.

Sienna wanted to humiliate Bonnie in front of everyone. So, she called every single party guest out. That included Ivor and Orpheus.

Orpheus was worried sick about Bonnie. "What are we going to do?! Bonwick has never had any practice shooting a rifle."

"How do you know that?" Ivor asked.

"We used to ask her to hang out at the shooting range all the time, but she never joined us. It's obvious that she isn't good at it!"

"Jeez! I think she let her emotions get the better of her this time! I know I'm a man, but I have to give it to Sienna when it comes to marksmanship. She's exceptionally skilled at it. I'd even say nobody her age is her equal."

"That's not necessarily true. She hasn't competed with Bonnie." Ivor had absolute confidence in his fiancée.

That stunned Orpheus. "What are you basing your confidence on?"

"She's Bonnie." His eyes, which were brimming with love, were glued to Bonnie as he spoke. Then he added, "She's my fiancée."

Orpheus wanted to throw up when he heard the last part of his nephew's sentence.

"You are so hung up on her, Ivor. You have to figure out something to back Bonwick up when she loses." Orpheus was worried. "Sienna will surely mock Bonwick when she wins. She'll do everything she can to make sure Bonwick doesn't recover from the humiliation."

Sienna raised her rifle, gave Bonnie a triumphant look, and opened fire on the shooting target 10 times.

Each of her shots hit the center of the target.

"Bullseye! You go, Sienna! That's nothing short of awesome! You're such a badass!" The young fellows who were kissing up to her cheered her on.

Then, someone sent word to Leo and the others.

Theo McLeod said, "Sienna is stirring up trouble again, Leo. I'm going to go over there and teach her a lesson she won't soon forget!"

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"No need," Leo said.

"But Leo, it's obvious that Sienna wants to embarrass Ms. Bonita!"

Leo took a sip of his tea and looked at Bonnie. "It seems you've forgotten that three years ago Ms. Bonita accurately shot the gun out of a criminal's hands."

"I remember, but Ms. Bonita only fired one shot. Perhaps it was just luck. But now it's different, and they must hit the target 10 times!"

As soon as Theo finished speaking, Sienna continued to shoot at the target with a gun in her hand.

Bang bang bang!

She fired another 90 shots, of which only three were 9 rings, one was an 8 ring, and the rest were all 10 rings.

"My goddess! This is too amazing!"

"Sharpshooter!"

"Sienna, you're so awesome!"

The crowd was passionate and excited. They looked at Sienna as if they were looking at a heroine.

Orpheus slapped his forehead. "It's over. Sienna's skills have improved again. Out of 100 shots, she hit the 10-ring with 96 shots. Is she human? Are you sure she's not a reincarnation of a sharpshooter?"

He noticed that Ivor was still calm.

"Why do you look so unconcerned? Do you think Bonwick can still win?"

Ivor nodded. "Hmm, she can."

"Because she's your woman?" Orpheus asked with a smirk.

Ivor grinned. The answer was obvious.

Orpheus rolled his eyes.

As she set the gun down, Sienna gave Bonnie a fiercely proud smile.

"Bonnie, you're not having good luck today, while I seem to have divine favor. Today, my performance has exceeded my usual level. I fired 100 shots, and 96 of them hit the 10-ring. It seems you are destined to lose today."

Bonnie's beautiful phoenix eyes showed no ripple of emotion.

"How do you know that I'm destined to lose today?"

"Haha! It seems you're not convinced! Bonnie, should I admire your courage or mock your ignorance?"

Bonnie remained calm and composed. She casually tucked away loose strands of her hair and spoke calmly, "Defeating you is easy, but playing like this is too boring. How about we make a bet?" Sienna burst into laughter as if she had heard the funniest joke.

Then, she shouted, "Bonnie, are you trying to make me laugh to death? With my high hit rate, you still want to beat me?"

Many people joined in the laughter and ridicule.

"Did you hear that? Bonnie said she could beat Sienna. Dream on."

"Yeah, it's just a dream."

"Haha, your words are too harsh!"

As these few people were mocking, they suddenly felt an icy gaze. They were terrified into silence as they turned around and saw Ivor's eyes cutting through them.

Orpheus observed all of this and had to admit that his father's choice of Ivor as the family head was not without reason. Apart from his father, only Ivor had such a compelling aura.

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Even his uncle, despite his seniority, was intimidated to the point where his hair stood on end.

Ignoring the crowd's ridicule, Bonnie calmly looked at Sienna and said, "Laugh all you want. You'll have time to cry later."

"Hmph! Fine, I'll bet with you. If I lose, I'll write my name backward!"

Sienna couldn't stand Bonnie's arrogant demeanor. Soon, she would see Bonnie in a pitiful state of defeat.

"Agreed, but that's not enough."

"What else do you want to bet on?"

Bonnie thought momentarily and said, "In addition to writing your name backward, from now on, you'll keep your distance whenever you see me."

"I don't need to keep my distance. How about this? Whoever loses will become the servant of the winner. How about that? Are you brave enough to play? If you're not, say in front of everyone here that you'll never flirt with Orpheus again."

'What an idiot!' Bonnie was speechless. She had explained her relationship with Orpheus many times. Yet Sienna still thought she was interested in him.

"Fine."

Sienna handed the gun to Bonnie. "Don't waste everyone's time. Delaying won't improve your shooting-"

Before she could finish the last word, Bonnie's gunshot interrupted her.

Bang.

Three points.

"Hahaha. I thought she was so good, but she only got three points. Isn't that pathetic? I could hit the target even with my eyes closed!"

"That's right. I thought Bonnie had some skill to challenge Sienna, but she's just blindly confident!"

"Don't keep shooting! It's so embarrassing! Come down quickly! Don't worry, we won't laugh at you. We'll just laugh loudly."

"Damn! You're so shameless! But you hit the nail on the head! Bonnie, come down!"

Theo and Roy watched anxiously and said, "Leo, let's go and help Ms. Bonita. We can't let these brats continue to insult and mock her."

"Ms. Bonita is focused on her research and has no spare time to practice shooting! These little brats are so daring to mock her. They wouldn't dare if they knew her true identity!"

Leo looked at Bonnie's calm face. His old eyebrows furrowed deeply as he stroked his beard.

"Don't rush. Let's wait and see."

"But Leo-

"Stop talking, and let's continue to watch. If it comes to the point where we need to intervene, I'll tell Sienna about Bonnie's identity and let her know the consequences of continuing to oppose Bonnie." Leo had long had this idea.

Even though Bonnie's identity was private and shouldn't be revealed, he feared that if Sienna kept acting this way, something terrible would happen.

"No! I have to go and bring Bonwick back! This matter started because of me. I can't just stand by and watch Bonwick be humiliated by them."

Orpheus was anxious to rush forward. However, as soon as he took a step, he was held back by Ivor.

"Wait a little longer."

"Wait? Until when?"

Ivor watched Bonnie with the same cold and mysterious eyes he had before. Looking at the determination in the girl's eyes, he did not believe Bonnie would lose.

As for that shot just now, it was probably just a careless mistake on her part.

While he was contemplating, Bonnie closed her eyes slowly and opened them wide, emanating a fierce determination from her eyes.

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She raised the gun and fired so fast that people's eyes couldn't keep up. Ears were buzzing, and each shot hit different positions.

However, no one dared to ridicule or mock her this time. With each shot, two words gradually appeared on the target.

"McLeod."

"Sienna."

That's right. It was Sienna's name written backward.

Not a single shot was missed, nor was any shot redundant. All shots were precise, perfectly displaying the three characters "McLeod Sienna" in front of everyone.

This marksmanship was akin to hitting the bullseye every time, made even more impressive by Bonnie's recent consistent shooting speed. Such marksmanship was superior to Sienna's. Everyone present was stunned by Bonnie's marksmanship. They stood there dumbfounded while staring straight at the target.

Someone swallowed nervously, followed by a chorus of gasps.

"My god! That's my Bonwick!"

Orpheus was utterly impressed. He had always admired Bonnie from the bottom of his heart, and now he was so impressed that he couldn't express it in words.

He patted Ivor on the shoulder. "Ivor, if you don't take good care of Bonwick, I won't recognize you as my nephew."

A smile tugged at the corners of Ivor's mouth, and his eyes focused on Bonnie. There was no room for anyone else.

"Don't worry, I stake my life on it. I'll keep her by my side for the rest of my life."

"Yeah, it's good that you're determined!"

Some were happy, and some were worried. Those who had flattered Sienna and spoken ill of Bonnie just now wished they could find a hole to hide in. "Good job!" Leo shouted and applauded.

Roy and Theo did the same.

Leo approached Bonnie and looked at Sienna. "Now that your name is written backwards, you should fulfill the rest of the bet."

"Grandpa!" Sienna protested unwillingly.

"What? Do you want to renege on the bet?" Leo's expression turned stern. "Every member of the McLeod family is upright and honest, a man of their word. Are you trying to go back on your word in front of everyone?"

"If that's the case, you can pack up and leave. We don't want descendants who don't keep their promises!"

Sienna could tell that Leo wasn't joking.

Of course, she didn't think her grandfather was doing this for Bonnie. Leo valued his reputation the most. She had just made a bet with Bonnie in front of so many people. If she broke her promise, his reputation would suffer.

Sienna gritted her teeth and looked at Bonnie. "I can fulfill the bet, but I hope you won't go too far."

Bonnie smirked. "Right now, you're my servant. You'll do as I say. What right do you have to negotiate with me?" "Hey-"

"Don't 'hey' me."

Sienna felt choked.

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"Remember, if you want to live comfortably in the future, start by behaving well. At least don't be arrogant in front of me. Otherwise, I'll show you what 'going too far' means."

Sienna was furious, but she still had to submit to Bonnie.

Watching the obedient Sienna, Bonnie placed her hand on Sienna's head, like she was petting a puppy. She said with a smirk, "Not bad. A wise person submits to circumstances. You can be taught." 'Endure! I must endure!' Sienna ground her teeth so hard it hurt.

"Alright, we've played enough for now, and everyone must be tired. It's time for dinner." Leo ordered the kitchen to bring out the food.

Ivor took Bonnie's hand. "Let's go over there."

"I'm a little hungry anyway." Bonnie walked toward the dining table with Ivor.

Adele approached Sienna.

Watching Bonnie and Ivor leave, she couldn't help but say, "Sienna, I think you might have misunderstood. They seem to be a couple."

"You've been in the entertainment industry. Can't you see through these acting tricks?"

"Acting? I don't think so. Mr. Ivor looks at Bonnie like she's his whole world."

"I think your eyesight is bad. I saw Orpheus constantly whispering to Ivor, probably begging him for help."

Sienna then analyzed confidently, "I also saw Ivor wanting to make intimate moves with Bonnie many times, but she awkwardly refused. If they were together, why would she react like that?"

"I overlooked that. But if it's as you say, and Bonnie always resists Mr. Ivor's closeness, then you're probably correct. They can't be a couple." Adele nodded in agreement.

As dinner began, Ivor kept peeling shrimp and removing fish bones for Bonnie. When he noticed her wine glass was empty, he promptly refilled it.

Sitting across from them, Sienna whispered to Adele, "See that? Bonnie rolled her eyes at him and gave him a look like, 'That's enough, don't overdo it. After all, I am Orpheus's girlfriend and will be your aunt-in-law someday.' It should be something like that."

"I see..." Adele felt something was off. Things seemed to be different from what Sienna had analyzed.

"You sound like you don't believe me. Just wait and see. They'll soon reach their limit with this act."

"How do you know?"

"Because I know Ivor. He's never been interested in women. Orpheus must have begged Ivor for help, so he reluctantly agreed."

While the two were whispering, Bonnie reached under the table. She pinched Ivor's thigh, then gestured with her eyes as if to say, 'Enough! There's too much food. How can I eat it all? Even if you want to show affection, there should be a limit.'

Feeling the pain in his thigh, Ivor felt sweet inside and looked back at Bonnie. He seemed to answer, 'Keep going. If you pinch me, it means you care.'

'Is that so?' Bonnie continued to exert force.

Ivor endured the pain until the vein on his temple bulged.

Sienna and Adele saw this scene.

"Look at the bulging vein on Ivor's forehead. I guess they can't keep up the act anymore."

"It seems like it."

"What are you doing?!" Bonnie gritted her teeth and blushed.

Ivor brought his lips close to Bonnie's ear and exhaled. "You've pinched me, and now you're leaving? Whoever pinches should comfort the other with a gentle massage."

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The more she rubbed his thigh, the more inappropriate it felt.

The man gripped Bonnie's hand and gradually moved upward.

"Don't go too far!" Bonnie glared at him.

"See, they can't keep up the act anymore. Look at Bonnie's eyes. She's almost devouring Ivor. And look at his expression, smiling but with hidden malice as he looks at Bonnie like he wants to devour her too." Sienna analyzed.

"I'm impressed. It seems you're right." Adele admitted she had misjudged. "You're quite sharp."

"Sharp enough, but mainly because I know Ivor. He's never been interested in women, so how could he like Bonnie?"

Bonnie suddenly pulled her hand back, and of course, Ivor also loosened his grip. Otherwise, Bonnie would have had difficulty escaping from his big palm.

"You have sauce on your mouth..." Ivor looked at the corner of Bonnie's mouth.

When Bonnie was about to wipe it off, she suddenly saw the man's handsome face coming closer. Then she felt his thin lips gently remove the tomato sauce from the corner of her mouth.

At this moment, Bonnie's heart raced to the extreme, and her pupils dilated. Her face flushed instantly.

In contrast to Bonnie's turbulent emotions, the surroundings were quiet enough to hear a pin drop. Everyone froze, watching Bonnie and Ivor.

After a few rapid breaths, Bonnie suddenly pushed Ivor away and stood up.

"Bonnie, I didn't mean to-"

Before Ivor could finish speaking, Bonnie slapped him across the face. It sounded exceptionally crisp.

"Ivor! You've gone too far!"

With an angry voice, Bonnie immediately turned and left.

Ivor slowly raised his hand, touched his face, and smiled.

They said love hurt, and it did. Although it hurt, it was a happy kind of pain. Ivor stood up to chase after her.

Adele turned to look at Sienna as if mechanically. "S-Sienna, d-do you still think... they're acting?"

Sienna was spluttering before turning to face Orpheus, who appeared pleased as he watched the couple leave.

Sienna didn't need to ask anyone else. She already had the answer.

Just as she had said to Adele, she knew Ivor well enough. He would never go this far, even if Orpheus begged him to act.

And from Ivor's earlier look at Bonnie, he appeared to be happy even after being slapped. He was completely unconcerned about the opinions of others. If this was acting, he deserved an award.

Bonnie left the McLeod residence in a huff and headed outside. She had not gone far when Ivor caught up with her.

"Bonnie!" Ivor grabbed Bonnie's hand from behind.

"Let go!"

"My Bonnie, let me explain. I did this for Uncle Orpheus."

"For Uncle Orpheus? It looks like it's more for yourself."

Ivor placed Bonnie's palm against his chest to allow her to feel his heartbeat.

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"Well, you know me best. I have selfish motives, but I can't help it. Every time I see you, I just want to be close to you. I remember every word you say. I've counted your eyelashes, felt your breath up close, and imagined countless times of making you mine.

"Bonnie, do you know how much I suppress myself? I can't help it. I'm afraid of hurting you, being too hasty, and making you unhappy. Sometimes, I feel like you're the bright star I look up to, something to admire from afar.

"But I don't want to accept it. So, give me a ladder, and I'll pluck you from the sky. I will cradle you in my arms and protect you with all my heart."

The man's voice was filled with deep affection, and his eyes were as deep as the sea. Besides her, there was no room for anyone else.

Bonnie had a soft heart and felt the man's sincerity. 'How could I not be moved?'

"But you shouldn't have done that to me in front of so many people."

"You're right. I did go too far! I deserve to be hit!"

Ivor took Bonnie's hand and slapped himself in the face as he spoke. It made an audible sound.

"Y-You're insane!"

Afraid that Ivor would use her hand to hit himself again, Bonnie quickly pulled her hand back.

Sensing the girl's subtle movement, Ivor's smile widened.

"Yes, I'm insane! I'm addicted to you. What can I do? Bonnie, since you're a medical expert, can you heal me? I feel like I'm beyond cure."

Bonnie considered herself capable of always remaining calm, but she could not withstand the man's sweet talk.

"You have lovesickness. I can't cure this."

"No! You can! Only you can cure my illness." Ivor held Bonnie's hands tightly and looked deeply into her eyes. "Bonnie, are you willing to cure me?" Bonnie felt she had no escape, locked in by such profound and unrepentant eyes.

Suddenly, various cheers erupted around them.

"Say yes to him!"

"Say yes!"

Bonnie suddenly snapped out of her trance and realized many people were watching the scene, and Orpheus was particularly enthusiastic. "Bonwick, say yes! My nephew is being so sincere!"

Sienna, who had come to watch the excitement, looked embarrassed.

"Bonnie! Say yes to him. He's a really good person!" Benedict also joined in the cheering.

Ivor smiled brightly. "Bonnie, did you hear that? Everyone is very optimistic about us. Trust me, and I'll take care of you for the rest of our lives."

"I..." Bonnie didn't know how to respond for a moment.

Sensing Bonnie's dilemma, Ivor didn't rush her but slowed his pace.

"Look into my eyes and answer me seriously."

She raised her eyes as instructed and met Ivor's gaze.

"Bonnie, do you dislike me?" Ivor asked.

She shook her head.

"Since you don't dislike me, you must like me, right?" Ivor asked again.

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'Does it really work that way?'

Bonnie thought carefully. Perhaps it wasn't like this with other people, but when it came to Ivor, maybe it was.

Bonnie's gaze toward Ivor became earnest.

"I've never been in a relationship because, to me, any relationship that isn't aimed at marriage is just a game. I don't enjoy such childish playacting. So, if you just want to date me, you should find someone else."

"No!" Ivor leaned closer to Bonnie's face. "I want to have children someday who will carry on our family tree. Do I look like I'm playing games?"

'Um... Is it really this straightforward? Skipping marriage and considering having children?'

Bonnie was somewhat speechless. "Also, I won't tolerate any infidelity. If you're with me, you can't flirt with others." "You've been with me for so long. You should understand me. If we talk about flirting, you're the expert, not me."

Bonnie raised an eyebrow. "You make it sound like I'm promiscuous."

"How could that be? It's those shameless people who try to seduce you."

Bonnie just smiled and didn't say anything.

Ivor switched from holding hands to putting his arm around her waist. "So, does that mean you're agreeing?"

"I'll agree now, but you might think I'm not modest enough. So, I want to consider it for a few more days."

Ivor's face showed a mix of helplessness and indulgence.

"You're like an angel sent from heaven, specifically to torture me."

When Bonnie noticed that everyone was staring at them, she became uncomfortable. Despite her mental toughness, Bonnie was still a 20-year-old woman in her first romantic relationship, and she could not bear the attention of so many people.

"Let's go back."

"Okay, I'll listen to my future wife."

"I said not yet."

"Okay, my future wife."

After she took a shower at night, he was sitting on her bed, smiling at her.

"Future wife, have you made up your mind? I think you shouldn't be so reserved. Come on, tonight, I'm yours. Do whatever you want."

"Sorry, I haven't decided yet. You can leave."

"Don't chase me away. I can help warm the bed for you. And I can also give you a massage. My massage skills are pretty good. If you don't believe me, lie down and let me give you one."

Bonnie's intuition told her that if she let Ivor massage her tonight, she wouldn't be able to escape from his clutches. He was a wolf who had been pent up for over 20 years, and she'd be left with nothing but bone scraps.

Before Bonnie could finish her thoughts, his strong hand had already fallen on her nightgown.

It seemed like he wanted to help her undress.

Bonnie pointed her finger toward the door. "Get out."

"Okay, I won't do anything." Reluctantly, Ivor withdrew his hand from Bonnie's body.

"If you don't leave now, I won't consider anything between us."

Ivor quickly got up from the bed, but he walked slowly while throwing her backward glances with a pitiful expression. He hoped she would change her mind.

Bonnie didn't call him back, and he ultimately left and closed the door behind him.

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Bonnie stared at the tightly closed door, unable to shake off the image of the man's pitiful expression.

"Haha!" She couldn't help but burst into laughter. Ivor looked quite cute in that way.

Boom!

Suddenly, thunder rumbled in the sky. It seemed like a heavy rain was about to pour down.

Bonnie walked to the window to close it. Just as she approached, she saw Keenan standing right below her window.

"Why are you here?"

"To protect you."

"It's fine to be in the next room. There's no need to stand under the window. Besides, it's about to rain heavily. You should go back."

"No, I've noticed footprints under your window these past few days. It was my negligence."

Hearing this, Bonnie glanced toward the doorway again. Ivor had been climbing up to her window for several days.

"It's not your fault. If anyone's to blame, it was a shameless person."

As Bonnie spoke, the rain poured down heavily.

"You should go back to your room. Be careful not to catch a cold."

"I won't. I used to get caught in the rain often and had never gotten sick. You don't need to worry about me."

This stubborn guy could not be stopped. Well, she would let him be. As the rain got heavier, he would leave on his own.

In the middle of the night, Bonnie was awakened by thunder. Listening to the sound of rain hitting the window, she knew it was pouring even harder now. 'Is Keenan still down there?'

Bonnie was worried, so she got up and went to the window. She saw that he had passed out and was drenched by the rain.

She brought him back to the room. He had a high fever, fluctuating between fever and chills throughout the night.

Bonnie had planned to take him to Jim's hometown today, but now it seemed she would have to go alone.

Jim's hometown was far from here. She took a flight at 6 a.m. and then changed buses until she arrived at Jim's district in the afternoon. After getting off the bus, Bonnie frowned. 'Damn it, I forgot which neighborhood I'm supposed to go to.'

At this moment, a BMW approached from afar. The Holden siblings, Kramer and Elsa, were in the car.

"Hey, can you drive faster? Jim's grandparents' birthday banquet is about to start. We won't make it in time."

The girl wore a light yellow knitted dress with delicate and cute makeup on her face. She dressed up like that to get more attention from Jim.

"Tsk tsk. You're always talking about him. Elsa, Jim has finally come home. If you can't seize this opportunity, you two have no chance. You should pursue someone else," Kramer Holden commented. "You're still a bachelor yourself."

"Hey! How dare you talk to your brother like this? I'm single because none of the girls in the district appeal to me, not because I can't find a mate."

"Oh! Then please, Mr. Handsome Kramer, what kind of girl can catch your eye?" After asking, Elsa noticed that her brother had been staring out the window for a while without moving. The car suddenly stopped.

"Ouch, my head! What are you doing, Kramer?"

"Ah! S-She's so beautiful! She's like the woman of my dreams. I've decided. I'm going to pursue her!"

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While Elsa was puzzled, she followed Kramer's gaze and saw the beautiful girl by the side of the road. It made her blush, and her heart beat faster even though. It was no wonder her brother was acting like this.

"Look at her. It seems like she's lost. Let me help her find her way!"

Kramer enthusiastically drove the car to Bonnie's side and rolled down the window.

"Hey gorgeous, are you lost? Where are you headed? I'm a local here, so I know every place well."

"Kramer!" Elsa rolled her eyes at Kramer. "You're scaring her. She doesn't even know you."

He felt a sense of unease. 'Indeed! We don't know each other. My overly enthusiastic demeanor might frighten any ordinary girl. Oh no, what if she runs away?' Then he heard Bonnie's calm and composed voice. "You're a local? Are you familiar with this place?"

Kramer stared at Bonnie. What surprised him was that this girl didn't seem to be afraid at all. Could she be inexperienced and naive, so she had no worries? "Yes, where are you headed? Don't worry, my sister is also in the car. We're good people."

Good or bad, Bonnie wasn't afraid at all. If she encountered a bad person, the one who should be afraid was the bad person.

"I don't know exactly where I'm going."

Bonnie's answer made Kramer pause. "You don't know? Then..."

"Do you know Jim Ray?" Bonnie asked.

Kramer was stunned for a moment, then glanced at Elsa.

"Why are you looking for Jim?"

Hearing this answer and seeing their reactions, Bonnie guessed that they probably knew him.

This wasn't too surprising. After all, Jim was well-known both domestically and internationally. The locals in the county town would surely know a celebrity like him.

"Today is the joint birthday celebration for his grandparents. I came to wish him."

Elsa scrutinized Bonnie with a look of jealousy. "You don't even know Jim, right? I don't know how you found out about the birthday banquet, but you better come clean. Are you trying to get to know my Jim and seduce him?"

She deliberately emphasized "my Jim" to declare that Jim belonged to her and not to try anything with him.

"Elsa, you're too harsh. Don't make baseless accusations if you don't know the truth, okay?"

Kramer was afraid that his sister would anger Bonnie and make her leave.

"Kramer! Don't be fooled by her fox-like face. She doesn't even know where my Jim lives. Obviously, she doesn't know him. She doesn't know my Jim but wants to attend the birthday banquet. Doesn't this reveal her ulterior motives?"

"Elsa! You're going too far! Clearly—"

"Wait a minute!" Bonnie interrupted their argument. "It's getting late. Can you take me there first? I'll pay for the ride."

"Wow!" Elsa asked, "Did we promise to take you?"

Facing Elsa's hostility, Bonnie smirked, "If you take me there, won't you find out if I really know Jim or not?"

"I don't want to take you there. If I do, you'll seduce my Jim."

"Haha!" Bonnie laughed. "So in your mind, Jim is just a shallow person who judges by appearance?"

"You're the shallow one! My Jim is discerning and wise, with keen eyesight. He can see through everything at a glance."

"If that's the case, why are you so afraid to take me there?"

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Chapter 540

Bonnie was using psychological tactics.

"Who's afraid? I-"

"Since you're not afraid, then open the door."

Bonnie's words almost choked Elsa.

"Alright, alright. Elsa, stop messing around. Whether this lady knows Jim or not, her intentions are good. She came all this way to wish Jim's grandparents a happy birthday." Kramer opened the car door for Bonnie and let her in.

"Hmph!" Elsa turned her head away in anger. "If Jim gets angry later, let's see how you handle it."

"Jim and I have grown up together. We're like brothers. How could he possibly get angry?"

"Fine! You're siding with her! You value a girl over your sister!"

Jim's house was in the center of the county town. The town was small, and Bonnie quickly arrived at the hotel where the birthday banquet was held.

Elsa couldn't wait to rush into the hotel as soon as she exited the car. Upon seeing Jim, she immediately turned into a fangirl.

"Jim, I'm here!"

"Oh, Elsa, come inside. Where's your brother?" Jim asked.

"He's parking outside." Elsa's face showed apparent displeasure when she mentioned her brother.

"What's wrong with you? Did you fight with your brother?"

"He's not my brother! He was seduced by a witch halfway through his journey. He listened to everything that witch said and even helped her argue with me."

"Witch?"

"Yes! She even claimed to know you. I think she's lying. She just wants to use my brother to get to know you and seduce you."

As Elsa spoke, she saw Bonnie walking in from the doorway with her brother.

"That's her, that witch!"

Jim was curious and looked toward the entrance. Upon seeing Bonnie, his body shook suddenly. Then he swiftly passed by Elsa with an almost frantic speed.

Elsa watched in astonishment as Jim hurried past her, feeling a sense of panic rising within her.

'Is this witch really that powerful? Just by standing at the door, she managed to lure my Jim away?'

Elsa wished she had stopped her brother from letting Bonnie into the car.

Kramer was slow to react as he watched Jim rush over. 'Isn't Jim too enthusiastic today? Didn't we just meet at the hospital a few days ago?' Before he could figure it out, Jim was already in front of him.

"Jim"

Jim's urgent voice cut him off. "Why are you here?"

Bonnie smiled. "It's your grandparents' birthday. Wouldn't it be rude of me not to come?"

Jim was deeply moved. "But it's dangerous for you to come like this!"

"It's okay. I've been safe all the way."

Suddenly, Jim remembered something and looked behind her abruptly.

"Where's Keenan? Where is he? Don't tell me you came alone!"

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Chapter 541

The tension in Jim's voice made it clear how much he cared about Bonnie.

Elsa anxiously tugged at her brother's sleeve and said, "Kramer, I've never seen Jim so concerned about someone. Could it be that they're in a relationship?"

Kramer sighed deeply. "If that's the case, I can only wish them well."

"Kramer!" Elsa stomped her foot in frustration.

"Alright, stop bothering me. They're both outstanding in appearance and talent. They're indeed quite a match."

Bonnie told Jim about Keenan's situation.

Jim gritted his teeth and said, "That brat. I chose him as your bodyguard over many other elites because of his exceptional ability and temperament. But he ended up causing such trouble and making you come here alone."

"It's not entirely his fault. He was too worried about me, so he stood under my window in the rain."

"Don't defend him. Negligence is negligence!" Jim said it sternly. "Once the birthday banquet is over, I'll escort you to Pyralis. After that is the International Scientific Research Conference, so we need to prepare in advance."

Bonnie smiled. "You don't need to be so tense. Look at how furrowed your brow is. Anyway, let's not talk about this. Where are your grandparents? I haven't congratulated them yet."

"Oh, look at me, making you stand at the door for so long. Hurry inside. If my grandparents find out you're here, they'll be thrilled. They've been wanting to meet you for a long time." "Ah!" Jim suddenly stopped and patted his forehead. "Look at me. I got so excited that I forgot everything. Your identity is special, so I can't tell my grandparents about it." Bonnie shrugged. "They're your grandparents, your closest relatives. It's fine to tell them."

Jim thought for a moment. "Let's forget about it. They're old, and their hearts aren't too good. If they get too excited-"

"Then we'll find another opportunity to tell them later," Bonnie suggested.

"Yeah, that's the only option."

Watching Bonnie and Jim chatting and laughing, Elsa puffed up her cheeks in annoyance. "I've never seen Jim chat with a girl like that."

"Me neither. It seems like Jim and her do have that kind of relationship," Kramer said with disappointment.

Elsa was even more upset. "I was the one who met Jim first!"

After saying that, she started walking toward Bonnie.

"What are you doing?" Kramer grabbed Elsa.

"None of your business!"

As Elsa approached, Bonnie was congratulating Jim's grandparents.

The elderly couple liked Bonnie more and more as they looked at her. "Jim, is this the granddaughter-in-law you found for us? The girl is lovely!"

"Grandpa, you've misunderstood. She and I are not what you think we are. We're just good friends."

Kramer followed Elsa over, and the two heard Jim's words, which made them happy.

"I knew it. It's all a misunderstanding. My Jim doesn't fancy superficial and vain witches like her. But I'm different. I never covet Jim's money. I only care about him as a person."

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Chapter 542

Kramer didn't quite agree with Elsa's words. "How do you know she's only interested in Jim's money?"

"Because I'm a woman. You wouldn't understand."

Elsa saw Bonnie take out two gift boxes. "Let's see what she gave as gifts. Judging by her shabby appearance, it probably isn't anything good."

Kramer felt that Elsa's words were unreasonable. "She came specifically to congratulate them. The thought counts more than the gift. Does it make a difference what she's giving?" "Why do you always take her side? She's the one trying to steal your future brother-in-law!" Elsa stomped her foot in frustration.

'Future brother-in-law?' Kramer shook his head silently. He had asked Jim about it before, and discovered that Jim only considered Elsa a friend.

Naturally, he had kept this a secret from Elsa out of concern for her feelings. Furthermore, telling Elsa would not make a difference. She would just keep going after him. After glaring at Kramer in annoyance, Elsa went to Bonnie.

Seeing Jim's grandparents about to set the gifts aside, she quickly said, "Ms. Bonnie specially picked out these gifts for you. Why don't you open them and take a look?"

"Well..." The elderly couple exchanged glances. Opening gifts in public was considered impolite.

Knowing their concerns, Elsa continued persuading, "Ms. Bonnie is a good friend of Jim's. She doesn't mind at all, right? Ms. Bonnie?"

Bonnie shrugged indifferently. "Go ahead and open them."

Elsa rolled her eyes, thinking Bonnie was pretending to be calm.

Everyone was curious about what Bonnie had brought and gathered around.

Jim's grandmother, Margie, opened the wooden box first, and there was a pearl necklace in it.

Elsa and the other guests had expressions of disbelief. "These pearls are so big! And each one is perfectly round. How much is this worth?"

"I work at a jewelry store. Normally, a good-quality pearl around 10 millimeters can sell for several thousand. These are at least 15 millimeters, and every pearl in this necklace is perfectly round and has excellent color. With this quality... it's probably six figures."

"My goodness! A six-figure pearl necklace? This... is way too extravagant!"

Elsa took a deep breath and thought, 'Wow, a six-figure pearl necklace! Is this Bonnie that wealthy?'

Kramer felt a bit sad. "Who is she exactly? Could she be the daughter of a wealthy family? Come to think of it, her accent sounds like someone from Pyralis. Could she be the heir of some wealthy family in Pyralis? If so, I won't stand a chance with her."

Some guests shifted their attention to the box that Melvin, Jim's grandfather, was holding.

"Take a look at what's in your box."

"Yeah! Open it up quickly."

Everyone was eager to see what the other gift was.

Elsa was curious, too. She craned her neck to see.

"Alright, alright." Melvin's hands shook slightly. After taking a deep breath, he finally opened the box.

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After opening it, successive gasps could be heard. This was because lying in the box was a whiskey of extraordinary quality. "This whiskey looks rare," a liquor-savvy uncle remarked after a while.

Bonnie nodded. "I heard from Jim that Grandpa Melvin likes to drink, so I had someone acquire this for him."

"Shouldn't the value of this whiskey be the same as that pearl necklace?" Kramer couldn't help asking.

"What do you know?" The uncle retorted. "With this size and such perfect preservation, it can't be measured in terms of money."

"W-What does that mean?" Kramer was a bit confused.

"It means this kind of whiskey is priceless. It's not something ordinary people can buy."

The entire banquet hall fell silent. Only the sound of breathing could be heard.

Melvin handed the gift back to Bonnie. "Ms. Bonnie, this gift is too precious. I-I can't accept it. And that pearl necklace, we can't accept it either."

Bonnie turned to Jim, who understood and looked at his grandparents.

"You should accept them. This is her heartfelt gesture. She came all this way. Won't it be disappointing if she had to take it back?"

Although Jim was younger, his words carried weight in the family.

"Alright, since you said so, we'll accept them."

After Melvin accepted the gifts, he quietly asked Jim, "Who exactly is your friend? Why is she so extravagant?"

"I can't say now. It's inconvenient. I'll tell you after the banquet ends."

"Okay."

Halfway through the banquet, Elsa went up to Bonnie, and Kramer approached Jim.

Elsa no longer considered Bonnie a gold-digger. However, her gaze toward Bonnie was more hostile, seeing her as a rival.

"Hey, are you from a wealthy family in Pyralis?"

Bonnie shook her head and said, "No."

"Don't lie to me."

Elsa was convinced Bonnie must be. Otherwise, why would she be so extravagant?

"I acknowledge that you have better looks, background, and disposition than I do. But so what? I have a good academic record and even placed second in our county's literary competition.

"My Jim is not superficial about looks. Also, my Jim and I grew up together, so he will choose me in the end, not you."

After a sip of juice, Bonnie smiled at Elsa and said, "Good luck, strive to become Jim's wife soon, and give him children."

Elsa was speechless. She had prepared many strategies before coming over, but none could deal with Bonnie's unconventional tactics.

Kramer's gaze shifted from Bonnie to Jim.

"Are you and Bonnie not in a romantic relationship?"

"Of course not."

Kramer observed earnestly before coming to a firm conclusion.

"Seeing you like this, you're not lying." Then, he felt delighted. "Do you think I have a chance to pursue her?"

Jim had guessed his friend's interest in Bonnie when Elsa mentioned the events on the road.

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Chapter 544

"No chance."

Kramer's heart felt like it was pricked. "Um... you're being too straightforward, aren't you?"

"I don't want you to waste your time and energy."

"Where do I fall short? Is it because her family is wealthy?" Kramer asked.

"It has nothing to do with that."

"Then why did you say that?" Kramer suddenly realized something, "Are you saying she already has a boyfriend?"

Jim nodded, then spoke seriously, "That person is outstanding-so outstanding that I trust him with my life. While she may appear to be a deity to the rest of the world, I see her as a normal girl capable of pursuing happiness.

"I hope she can live an ordinary and happy life, marry, and have children like everyone else."

The more Kramer listened, the more confused he felt. "W-What are you talking about? What deity? Who is she, exactly? Why does it sound like she's very formidable? Is she a celebrity?"

Jim realized what he said earlier was inappropriate. "You don't need to take it too seriously."

Kramer scrutinized Jim. "No, you're hiding something from me."

Jim averted his gaze. "What could I be hiding from you? Stop thinking nonsense."

"No, no, no! I know you very well. You're hiding something from me. You better come clean. Otherwise, I'm calling all our old classmates over tonight to get you drunk. Let's see if you'll spill the beans!" "You've called Mitchel Young and the others, too?"

"What do you think? You've come all this way. Our old classmates definitely won't let you off. Don't refuse tonight. Let's have a barbecue together!"

Jim felt awkward and looked toward Bonnie.

Bonnie noticed this and walked over. "What's the matter?"

"I'm going to gather with some friends tonight, but you-"

"I'm fine. You can go."

After a moment of hesitation, Jim looked at Kramer. "Apologize to them for me. I can't make it."

Protecting Bonnie was the most important thing of all.

"Hey, Jim, you're not being a good friend! We've all come from far away, wanting to gather with you, but you're making excuses."

Kramer spoke while glancing at Bonnie out of the corner of his eye, sensing that Jim's decision not to go was most likely due to her.

This made him feel strange. Jim claimed he and Bonnie were not in that kind of relationship, so why was he so concerned about her? Even if they were in a romantic relationship, wouldn't it be excessive to miss a reunion out of concern for a girlfriend?

Upon reflection, he concluded that Bonnie's identity was unique, which was why Jim acted in this manner.

"Sorry." Jim furrowed his brows into a knot.

"Hey " Kramer took a deep breath and held it. He was suddenly inspired and looked at Bonnie. "Ms. Bonnie, why don't you come with us?"

"This won't do!" Jim vetoed, "The nights here are lively and full of people. What if there are bad people?"

Bonnie smiled. "What's there to fear? Don't we have Jim Ray, the king of combat? Besides, I also want to go. Since I've come all this way, wouldn't it be a loss if I didn't have some fun?"

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Jim could tell that Bonnie was being considerate. "Alright, since Bonnie said so, let's go together tonight."

Kramer became increasingly curious about Bonnie's identity. He planned to dig deeper and find out who exactly Bonnie was tonight. He wanted to know why she made Jim so nervous. They went to the barbeque area at night.

Jim handed the freshly grilled meat skewers to Bonnie and said, "You can eat now."

"Okay, thank you." Bonnie took them.

Mitchel put his arm around Kramer's shoulder and whispered, "Who's this girl? Isn't she Jim's girlfriend?"

"I asked, and he said she's not."

"Is he lying to you? Look how nice he is to this girl. Have you ever seen him treat other girls like this?"

"Jim wouldn't lie to me."

"Hmph!" Elsa became more annoyed the more she looked at Bonnie. She couldn't understand why Jim treated Bonnie so well and sat close to her.

Bonnie decided to ignore Elsa's jealousy and leave the next morning, regardless of what happened tonight.

After eating and drinking for a while, Bonnie asked, "Where's the bathroom?"

Jim stood up. "It's a bit far. I'll take you there."

At this moment, Elsa volunteered, "Let me take her there. It's inappropriate for a man to accompany her to the restroom."

"That's right!" Mitchel pushed Jim back into his seat. "What's a big man like you doing following her to the restroom? Besides, you still haven't answered my question earlier. What kind of person is Ms. Bonita?" When Ms. Bonita was mentioned, all the old classmates immediately stopped eating and looked at Jim.

Bonnie suppressed a smile and followed Elsa out.

Elsa was sulking the whole time but couldn't hold it any longer. "Hey! Do you really not have any feelings for my Jim?"

Bonnie had long guessed the reason for Elsa's volunteering.

"I already have someone I like."

Elsa stared at Bonnie. "Really?"

Images of Ivor's handsome face flashed through Bonnie's mind. Thinking about it, she couldn't help but smile.

"He's quite good. I plan to give it a try with him."

A woman understood women the best. Elsa had been carefully observing Bonnie's expressions and tone when speaking, which reminded her of how she looked at Jim.

"Is it not my Jim?"

Bonnie stopped in her tracks and gave Elsa a comforting smile.

"I've said it before. You can completely trust me. He and I are friends, and colleagues too. We work together, so our relationship is naturally closer. But it's not the kind of relationship you think." "Okay, I believe you."

Just as Elsa finished speaking, she was stopped in her tracks by someone who suddenly appeared.

"Hey, pretty lady. It's boring late at night. Why don't we hang out together?"

Elsa's legs became weak with fear.

"Who are you people?" Bonnie stared vigilantly at the group surrounding them.

These people appeared to be thugs, but it was possible that they were disguised assassins sent to kill her, posing as thugs to lower her guard.

"Hey! Look at that. There's such a beautiful lady here, even prettier than the actresses on TV!" The leader exclaimed. He had a head of rose-red hair and a dragon tattoo on his neck.

Elsa's face turned pale. "Don't mess around! My brother is friends with Jim Ray, the king of combat known worldwide! If you dare to touch a hair on my head, I'll have my Jim beat you all up!"

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The gang of thugs burst into laughter upon hearing this. "Did you hear that? She said she knows Jim."

"Hilarious! Little beauty, let me tell you, Jim is my brother. You won't be able to call him, but I can. Hahaha—"

Seeing that they didn't believe her at all, Elsa became even more anxious.

At this moment, the leader suddenly grabbed her clothes.

"No, don't!" Elsa was about to resist when she saw Bonnie swiftly kick the man's leg.

Crack.

That was the sound of the leg bone breaking.

The leader immediately fell to his knees and winced in pain.

Watching Bonnie handle the situation so effortlessly while the thugs groaned in agony, Elsa's worldview was suddenly overturned.

"So powerful!"

Elsa suddenly remembered what Bonnie had said earlier. She mentioned being colleagues with Jim. Could it be that she was also involved in protecting Ms. Bonita? Otherwise, how could she have such impressive skills?

"You little bitch!" The leader glared at Bonnie viciously, then pulled out a dagger.

The others also drew their weapons upon seeing this.

Elsa's fear skyrocketed.

Bonnie turned to Elsa. "Go, quickly."

"But what about you?"

"Don't worry about me. Although they have weapons, they can't deal with me right away. You go first. Find Jim," Bonnie instructed as she took the initiative to attack.

Elsa eventually clinched her teeth, turned, and ran.

"That bitch is running away!" Someone shouted.

"Stop her!"

Elsa stumbled in fear, almost falling.

"You think you can hurt people right in front of me? No way!"

Bonnie acted quickly. She snatched a cell phone from one of the attackers and smashed it against the head of the person reaching for Elsa.

The cell phone landed squarely on the back of the person's head.

"Ahh!" The man collapsed to the ground.

"How amazing!" Elsa exclaimed again. She got worried watching Bonnie being heavily surrounded.

Bonnie was indeed formidable, but it's hard to fight against multiple opponents, especially when they're armed.

'No! There's no time to waste. I have to hurry back and find my Jim!'

Jim lost interest in the food after realizing Bonnie had yet to return. He continued to look in Bonnie's direction.

Mitchel saw this and teased him, "Jim, you must be lying to Kramer, right? You and Bonnie are in that kind of relationship. Otherwise, why are you so nervous about her?" Kramer also joined in. "Yeah. Jim, you've changed. You've learned to lie now."

Jim would have shot back, but he was too agitated and distracted to joke with them.

"You guys go ahead and eat. I'll go take a look."

Just as Jim stood up, he was stopped by a few of his friends.

"You can go, but you have to confess. Just admit that you and Bonnie are in a romantic relationship, and we'll let you go."

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"That's right. Jim, you better confess quickly. Even if you two haven't developed that kind of relationship yet, it's probably close." "Hurry up! Hurry up!"

Jim glanced at his watch. It had been over 20 minutes, and something didn't seem right.

"Sorry!" With great strength, Jim quickly pushed aside the group of friends who blocked him.

Kramer and Mitchel exchanged glances. By looking at Jim's serious expression, they were confused and sensed something serious had happened. "Jim, what's going on?"

"I" Jim was about to speak when Elsa rushed over in a panic.

"Something's wrong!"

Jim heard this and smashed his palm on the table. Leaping up, he quickly made his way to Elsa.

"What happened? Where's Bonnie? Wasn't she with you? Hurry, tell me!"

Jim gave the impression that he was about to devour someone, which terrified Elsa so much that she nearly passed out.

Elsa had known Jim for a long time, but she had never seen him so angry. Even Kramer and the others were overwhelmed by Jim's aura.

They finally understood that Jim wasn't just their old classmate and friend. He was the true king of the world of combat.

"Speak up! Where is she?!" Jim grabbed Elsa's arm and shook her urgently.

Elsa felt so intimidated that she was unable to think clearly.

Kramer hurried over. "Jim, calm down. You're scaring Elsa. You need to calm down first."

"Calm down? How can I calm down? If anything happens to her, I'll never forgive myself." Jim clenched his fists tightly, making cracking sounds.

This statement, this aura, once again stunned everyone. 'Is it that serious?'

Kramer vaguely guessed something and then suddenly looked at Elsa. "Don't just stand there. What exactly happened? Where's Bonnie?" Elsa swallowed hard, then managed to calm down a bit.

"On our way back, we were stopped by a dozen thugs with knives. Bonnie asked me to run back and inform you, so I—"

Before she could finish her sentence, Elsa saw Jim dash off like the wind.

Kramer waved his hand and said, "Hey, let's go! Let's go save her!"

"Okay!"

The group hurriedly followed.

When they arrived, Jim was already fighting. He was punching people one after the other. Each blow left the goons on the ground, inconsolable and sobbing.

"Um, do we still need to go help?" Mitchel asked weakly.

Kramer replied, "Help with what? Clean up the bodies?"

Although Kramer's tone was calm, he was amazed.

They used to joke about and sometimes fight with their buddies, but now he was covered in goosebumps watching it unfold.

As he stared blankly, he heard Bonnie's calm voice.

"It's okay. Jim can handle it on his own."

Kramer turned to look at Bonnie.

He was surprised to find that she was unscathed after facing thugs armed with knives. It seemed she was pretty skilled herself.

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Chapter 548

"Ahh!" With a loud cry, Jim threw the final person out of the way. Then he stepped on the man's chest.

"Speak! Who sent you to assassinate her?"

The thug spat blood and quickly begged for mercy, "It's a misunderstanding! We just thought she looked good. No one sent us!"

"Not talking, huh? Then I'll keep hitting until you speak!" Jim raised his fist again.

Bonnie spoke up to stop him, "Stop hitting for now."

With just one sentence, Jim's descending fist halted.

Bonnie walked over to Jim's side. "When I fought them, I realized they had no martial arts training, just random attacks. Assassins wouldn't be like them."

Jim also noticed this. "But it's also possible that those assassins hired them to test you."

Bonnie rubbed her chin. "You make a valid point."

Elsa tugged at her brother's sleeve as she watched. She asked, "Brother, what are they talking about? What assassins? And why does Jim listen to Bonnie like she's his boss?" 'Boss!' This word stirred up a storm in Kramer's heart. His eyes burned as he stared at Bonnie. 'And her name starts with Bon!'

Not long after, the local police arrived.

"Who reported the case?" Captain Larson walked over and asked.

"It was me." Elsa pointed to the thugs lying on the ground and said, "It's them. They attacked us."

Captain Larson looked at the thugs sprawled all over the place, as well as the scattered weapons on the ground, and inhaled sharply. 'Who could beat these people up so badly?' "They were "

"It was me who beat them." Jim turned to look at Captain Larson.

"Jim!"

Captain Larson was shocked. He hadn't expected this incident to be related to their local celebrity, Jim Ray. He had to take this matter seriously. "What exactly happened?"

Jim glanced at Bonnie, then explained, "I suspect they're from an international assassin organization."

What? Captain Larson blinked and said, "These are just a few thugs. How are they related to an international assassin organization?"

'Assassinate who? Assassinate Jim? Which organization with a death wish would go and try to assassinate Jim? How could that be possible? 'Since it wasn't an assassination attempt on Jim, then who's the target?'

Captain Larson's gaze fell on Bonnie.

He wasn't sure if it was his imagination, but it seemed like Jim's gaze lingered on this girl for a few seconds longer while speaking to him. 'This girl seems extraordinary. Could she be a big shot from a wealthy family? Did an assassin organization target her for kidnapping and ransom?' "Captain Larson, can I have a word with you?" Jim invited Captain Larson to the side.

Then Kramer and the others saw an incredulous expression on Captain Larson's face, as if he had just heard some earth-shattering news.

Jim said solemnly, "You must investigate this matter thoroughly. I suspect these thugs have ulterior motives, perhaps not as simple as they appear." "Alright! I will investigate thoroughly! No one will be allowed to harm Ms. Bonita!"

After saying that, Captain Larson walked up to Bonnie and saluted her respectfully.

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Elsa and the others were utterly perplexed by what they were seeing.

"W-What the heck?" Mitchel asked the question everyone wanted to ask.

Kramer wanted to respond, but he only had speculative guesses. He didn't dare to speak recklessly.

Captain Larson handed Bonnie a pen and a piece of paper.

"Can you give me an autograph?"

Bonnie was already used to it. "Sure."

She took the pen and gracefully wrote her name on the piece of paper.

'What beautiful handwriting!' Captain Larson was impressed and thought, 'Truly worthy of being Ms. Bonita! Even her handwriting embodies the pinnacle of calligraphy!'

In no time, Captain Larson finished up and took the thugs away for interrogation.

When Bonnie turned around, she saw Kramer and the others looking at her with inexplicable gazes.

Jim came to Bonnie's side. "Let me escort you back."

"Don't you want to continue barbequing with them? I'll just go back by myself."

"Your safety is more important." Jim worried that once he left Bonnie, someone might secretly target her.

Bonnie glanced at Kramer and the others. "What about them?"

Kramer stepped forward and said, "It's okay. W-We'll accompany you back together."

"All right then."

Finally, Bonnie returned to Jim's home with everyone escorting her.

After watching Bonnie enter the room, Kramer dragged Jim out.

"Quick! Tell me honestly! Who is Bonnie?"

Elsa, Mitchel, and the others all listened intently.

Jim frowned. "Well..."

"Stop beating around the bush! I'm asking you, is she-" Kramer took a deep breath and glanced back at Bonnie's room. "I-Is she Ms. Bonita?!"

'What?!' Elsa's eyes widened. 'How could someone like Ms. Bonita appear in our remote little town?'

Mitchel and the others were all speechless with shock.

After a moment of silence, Jim said, "This matter must not be leaked."

Everyone gasped at his confirmation.

"S-She-" Elsa pointed at Bonnie's room, unable to complete a full sentence for a long time.

Mitchel even pinched his thigh.

Kramer took a deep breath and exhaled heavily.

"I knew it. I had my guesses, but the truth was so shocking that I didn't dare to speculate recklessly. I could nearly confirm it when those thugs showed up, and I observed your response."

Kramer's heart remained unsettled.

"My goodness! Ms. Bonita! The leading scientific figure in our country! I never thought I would have the honor of meeting her in my lifetime, let alone grilling meat and drinking beer with her. This is enough to pass down to my descendants!"

"Me too." Mitchel nodded in agreement.

The others joined in, too.

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Chapter 550

Early the following day, Bonnie walked out the door after getting ready. Kramer and the others were standing in a line in the yard. "What's this? What's going on?"

Jim walked over to Bonnie and chuckled. "They want to shake hands with you."

Bonnie asked, "Did you tell them?"

"They figured it out themselves."

"Alright then."

Jim nodded to Kramer to signal them to proceed. This got them extremely excited.

"Come on, everyone. Don't startle Ms. Bonita." Kramer organized them calmly.

It was pretty lively that morning. After breakfast, Bonnie flew back to the Pyralis with Jim.

The following itinerary was crucial. It was time to bid farewell to Ivor.

"I'm leaving." Bonnie went downstairs with her suitcase.

Ivor frowned. "I don't want to let you go."

"It's just for a dozen days or so."

"You're so heartless."

As he spoke, Ivor hugged Bonnie's waist.

Seeing the man reluctant to let go, Bonnie didn't struggle and let him hold her.

"Let me smell your scent again." Ivor buried his face in Bonnie's neck and inhaled the unique herbal fragrance on her.

"Are you a dog? What scent could I possibly have?"

"No, you have a scent. I want to imprint it in my heart deeply. And I've also left my scent on you. When we meet again, I'll check carefully for any other lingering scent on you. If there is " Ivor's eyes narrowed, emitting a dangerous gleam.

Sensing the man's drastic change in mood, Bonnie became even more speechless. He changed at the drop of a hat.

"What will you do if there is?"

She felt the arm around her waist tighten. But she also clearly felt the man's restraint, afraid of hurting her.

"I'll make that person suffer a fate worse than death." Ivor's voice was icy.

Bonnie was silent before pushing him away.

"What about you? You attract many girls with your charming face wherever you go."

Ivor smiled and asked, "So, are you jealous?"

"Don't change the subject."

She turned slightly away from Ivor because his dazzling smile caused her heart to beat uncontrollably faster.

"Okay, I won't change the subject. I'll answer your question seriously."

Ivor spoke in a deep voice while staring at Bonnie with unwavering eyes, "I, Ivor, swear that I'll never let those women surround me. I will keep myself pure for you, Bonnie."

The man was just too sincere-so sincere that it was hard not to believe. As time passed, Bonnie felt her face getting hotter.

'Oops! If this continued, I'm afraid he'll see through me.'

Bonnie lightly coughed to relieve her emotions.

"What purity? You're already 25. Don't tell me you've never touched another woman."

Ivor pushed her down to the sofa, with his muscular chest pressing down on her. Their noses were practically in contact, as the man's attractive face was inches away. Bonnie heard the sound of her heart accelerating. She didn't know if the sound was hers or his.

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Chapter 551

"Wh-what do you think you're doing?"

Ivor smirked and stared at her with lust in his eyes, saying, "You don't believe that I've never been with a woman, right? Since that's the case, maybe you should take me for a spin and see for yourself." Bonnie blushed when she felt his member pressing against her. "You're such a pervert!"

He twirled her hair and said, "That's right, I am."

"Get away from me, or I'll beat you up!"

Ivor chuckled at that.

"What's so funny?"

Ivor leaned in and whispered, "You're so shy that it's adorable."

Bonnie shivered slightly and sighed before shoving him away. "You're stepping over the line, Ivor!"

"That's where you're wrong. I've already removed the line."

Bonnie rolled her eyes and remarked, "You're the most shameless man I've ever met."

"That's why I'm also the man who has taken advantage of you the most, right?"

Bonnie looked at him to show how much she did not want to answer that question. Instead, she said, "I'm running late and don't have time for you. I need to go."

She dragged her suitcase and headed outside, but Ivor chased after her and said, "I'll give you a ride."

When he stepped outside, Floyd stopped him. "Mr. Ivor, we must hit the road now, or you'll compromise the itinerary. We can't afford to make Ms. Bonita wait for us."

'Floyd's right. I have to forget about sending Bonnie to the airport.'

When Bonnie reached the airport, she wore a flat cap and mask to cover as much of her face as possible. Bonnie also had an army of men surrounding and protecting her. Anyone who looked their way instantly knew what was happening.

The onlookers either regarded her with curiosity or admiration.

"Look, it's Ms. Bonita! I finally get to see her in person. It's a shame I'm far away and can't see her well."

"You should appreciate being able to see her at all. You wouldn't have been able to see her without the International Scientific Research Conference, yet you wish to see her up close. Keep dreaming." "He's right. Who do you think Ms. Bonita is? What will we do if bad guys take advantage of us approaching her? Anyone can sneak through the crowd to harm her."

"Ohh, I want to take some pictures of her!"

This year's International Scientific Research Conference was held on an unprecedented scale. Hence, the entire proceedings would be live-streamed on the official Twitter account.

Simultaneously, Vera sat in the Shepards' villa and watched the grand event through television. She sighed and looked at Trina with unreserved disappointment, saying, "I was counting on you to win the competition and get into Bonita Research Institute.

"You were supposed to make your dad and me proud and make the family look good. I'm stressed about your future, Trina."

Trina was already depressed, but after hearing her mother's words, she lost her appetite. The former could only clench her fist under the table to hide her frustration.

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Chapter 552

Gresham puffed his cigarette and stared at his daughter in disappointment, just as his wife did. He felt so let down that he could not be bothered to say a thing.

"Hmm?" Vera uttered as she squinted at the television showing Bonita's silhouette.

"What's wrong?" Gresham asked in puzzlement.

"Don't you think Ms. Bonita's silhouette is somewhat familiar when the camera is this far away?"

Gresham looked at the screen and looked at Bonita, his frown deepening the longer he stared at her. Even Trina stared at the screen, thinking, 'I saw Ms. Bonita when I attended the press conference for the latest nanomaterial, but I stood far away from her. The camera just zoomed in on the TV. I must say, Ms. Bonita's silhouette does look familiar.'

"Are you saying her stature reminds you of Bonnie?" Gresham asked bluntly. Then, he mocked, "The world is full of coincidences. It's not that weird for people to share a similar stature. That said, Bonnie doesn't compare to Ms. Bonita."

Vera nodded in approval. "I guess you're right."

She watched the television again and said, "Ms. Bonita is so young. She looks almost the same age as Bonnie. Every parent would die to have a daughter like Ms. Bonita. I envy her parents! If only I birthed a child who's also the country's backbone, I'd have no regrets. I'd be so proud."

Gresham grew upset when he heard Bonnie's name. "That's enough. It's pointless to say such things now. Reality is often disappointing. Bonnie is nothing short of a rebellious, pathetic prick. It's a good thing we disowned her. Otherwise, I'd be pissed off whenever I see her."

Vera was just as furious as her husband. She said, "Fine, I'll drop it."

Trina looked at her parents' expressions and thought, 'What a relief. I might've embarrassed them, but Bonnie will always be worse than me.'

Bonnie noticed Leo, the team leader, still had not moved an inch. Puzzled, she asked, "It's almost time to leave. Why aren't we moving?"

He replied, "We're waiting for an important figure."

"Hmm? Who's that supposed to be?"

"I didn't receive news about this until yesterday. It seems the higher-ups arranged for the representative of the nation's economy to appear."

Bonnie frowned. Before she could figure it out, she heard a familiar voice, "Grandpa, it's me! Let me in!"

It was Leo's granddaughter, Sienna. He reprimanded her, "What are you doing here?!"

She glanced at Bonnie and explained, "I wanted to come with you guys to protect Ms. Bonita."

Leo looked at Sienna strangely when he heard that.

"Come on, Grandpa!" She held his arm and shook him. "Please let me tag along. I'm a strong fighter. I'm sure I can help. Also, I think you know how much I admire Ms. Bonita. I need a chance to get close to her.

"Don't you think there's a chance she might like how forthright I am? She might even want to be my best friend!"

The more she spoke, the stranger Leo's gaze grew. She added, "Pretty please, Grandpa!"

He reprimanded her again, "Knock it off and go home now!"

"Come on, Grandpa!"

"Take her away, men."

"Grandpa!" Just like that, she was dragged away from the scene.

'This isn't the last they'll see of me. I'll find a way to board the plane. Fortunately, I thought of a backup plan before coming. Since Grandpa has forbidden me from following him, I'll have to resort to it.' Leo apologized to Bonnie, "I'm sorry Sienna's stirring up trouble again."

"It's no problem." She waved in response.

Suddenly, she heard another familiar voice, "Sorry, I'm late."

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Chapter 553

Bonnie's eyes widened in surprise. She did not need to turn around to know who it was. Simultaneously, she knew who Leo was referring to when he mentioned the representative of the nation's economy. On the other hand, Jim lost his composure and let his emotions show. His eyes darkened as he repeatedly looked between Bonnie and Ivor, his heart pounding.

'Why is he here?!'

Leo smiled at Ivor and said, "No apologies necessary. The traffic is pretty bad right now."

He glanced at Bonnie and thought, 'I used to think Ivor doted on her because he knew about her real identity. Now, I know that isn't the case.'

Ivor nodded at the older man before facing Bonnie. "We meet again, Ms. Bonita."

'I can't explain it, but I felt like I knew her when I saw her at the latest nanomaterial press conference. Now that I'm standing before her, that feeling is growing stronger.'

Bonnie did not look at Ivor but could sense him staring at her. She wondered if he was suspicious of her.

"Let's move," she said as she stepped forward. However, she was so distracted that she did not watch where she was going and stumbled.

"Watch out!" Since Ivor stood closest to her, he reacted swiftly and held her arms. Her skin spurred that familiar feeling again. This time, it was so strong that Ivor instinctively tightened his grip. "Thanks for that." Bonnie withdrew her hand and quickly avoided staring into his eyes.

Jim asked concernedly, "Are you okay?"

"I'm okay. I just didn't look where I was going, that's all."

"All that matters is that you're fine."

"All right, let's move."

Ivor watched as Bonnie left, his frown deepening as he gazed at his hand that had just grabbed Bonnie's arm. He thought, 'It's tingling, but I've only felt that way with Bonnie.'

He was in the middle of his thoughts when he sniffed his palm. Immediately after, his eyes sparkled as he thought, 'There's something so damn familiar about this faint medicinal smell. Could it be?' Ivor gazed at Bonnie, who continued to walk away. Then, he smirked and strode toward her.

Meanwhile, the Shepards continued to watch the television. Their jaws hit the floor when they saw Ivor on the screen. Vera said in disbelief, "Wh-what is happening? Isn't that the same punk who helped Bonnie? What's he doing with Ms. Bonita?"

Gresham stopped smoking immediately. He was anything but calm and collected as he focused on the screen unblinkingly. Meanwhile, Trina balled her fists and gritted her teeth.

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Chapter 554

Trina had a good idea of who Ivor was when she met him at Pyralis University's Scientific Research Competition. After all, he sat at the Knight Group's seat. Still, she was unsure as he could have been just a representative and not a higher-up.

Buzz, buzz! Buzz!

Gresham answered his phone, "What is it, Dad?"

Although he asked that, he knew why Harold was calling. The latter replied, "Why else would I be calling? Aren't you watching the live broadcast? It's a big day, Gresham. The whole city-no, the whole nation is watching!"

All of Arvandor watched the show. After all, it was rare for Bonita to appear in a live broadcast.

Harold questioned, "Why is that punk standing beside Ms. Bonita?"

He was curious because he had seen Bonnie and Ivor on multiple occasions.

"Well..." Gresham wished he knew the answer. "M-Maybe he's just a staff member or something."

It made sense since Ivor was not the only one there. There were many staff members with Bonita, too. Either way, the father and son could not think of other reasons. They also did not believe Ivor was a big shot. If that were the case, Bonnie would have boasted about it.

Harold nodded in approval and responded, "I guess you could be right."

Gresham stared at Ivor through the television screen. After some thought, he said, "Dad, we disowned Bonnie. That's what you and Mom wanted for a long time. Now that she no longer has anything to do with us, why does that punk's identity still matter to you?"

"What are you insinuating, Gresham? Are you trying to blame your mother and me for kicking Bonnie out of the family?"

"That's not it, Dad. I'm just stating a fact. Bonnie will never rejoin our family even if we—"

Before he finished, his father interjected, "That'll never happen! I'll never let her rejoin the family, and I've clarified it during the family meeting. She's a good-for-nothing who has disrespected her elders and is a pathological liar.

"She's the reason our family became a laughing stock! Bonnie has no place in this family. I won't tolerate her presence. I'll still forbid her from returning even when I die!" Harold hung up and texted the exact words he told his son to the family group chat.

Bonnie had just taken her seat in the first-class area when Ivor sat beside her. She turned to him and asked, "Can I help you with anything?"

"Yes, you can." He gazed at her.

Bonnie kept her composure and replied, "What do you need? Also, you can sit across the aisle."

Jim stood guard but looked at the duo from the corner of his eyes. Then, Floyd quietly approached, stood beside Jim, and whispered, "Something's off about Mr. Ivor today. I feel he's trying to get close to Ms. Bonita."

"Really? I didn't think that."

"Look closely, Jim. He's sitting unusually close to Ms. Bonita." Floyd grew worried. "Do you think Mr. Ivor is moving on from Ms. Bonnie and trying to win Ms. Bonita's heart?"

Jim's lip twitched, and he gave himself time to regain his composure before asking, "What makes you say that?"

"You wouldn't know it, but Mr. Ivor loves talented women. He finally fell in love with Ms. Bonnie after being uninterested in women for so long. That's because Ms. Bonnie is incredibly gifted. Ms. Bonnie is excellent, and I'm impressed with her.

"Still, Ms. Bonita is unbelievably magnificent. Ms. Bonnie can't compare to someone like her. I fear Mr. Ivor might have a change of heart and fall in love with Ms. Bonita instead. Come on, Jim. I consider you my brother. Can you please tell me what Ms. Bonita looks like? Is she as beautiful as Ms. Bonnie?"

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Chapter 555

"Um, I'd say the two are equally beautiful."

"Are you serious? Is Ms. Bonita that pretty?" Floyd whined. "How's that fair? Typically, the smart ones don't look too pretty or handsome. On the contrary, those with good looks are usually naive and gullible."

"I didn't expect Ms. Bonita to be intelligent and gorgeous. I wonder if any man will be worthy of her. I always thought Ms. Bonnie was brilliant and beautiful. However, Ms. Bonita might have her beat. "What'll I do now? Ms. Bonnie is such a lovely woman, too. I want her to marry Mr. Ivor. Although Ms. Bonita is excellent, she-" Floyd was so stressed that he wanted to pull his hair out.

Jim glanced at him and said, "There's nothing to worry about."

"How can I not worry? You're Ms. Bonita's bodyguard and Ms. Bonnie's good friend, right? So, which would you prefer Mr. Ivor to end up with?" Floyd asked solemnly.

Jim shrugged. "I'm fine with either."

Floyd's eyes widened in shock.

Meanwhile, Bonnie stared at Ivor. Although she told him to sit across the aisle, he showed no signs of moving. Instead, he remained beside her and said, "I wanted to have a deep discussion about the latest nanomaterial."

"What do you mean?"

"My company has integrated it into our production, but we're running into severe hiccups." Ivor proceeded to tell her every detail.

She carefully listened to everything he said before answering, "The truth is that this iteration isn't perfect."

"It's imperfect? What do you mean?"

"I mean it literally. Although no technology is perfect, we won't stop trying to perfect it. We'll keep improving it over time. That's how we make breakthroughs in science. It's also my way of telling you that my institute is researching the latest nanomaterials on a more advanced level."

"I hope it'll allow us to refine it further. Naturally, such research takes a long time. You'll be disappointed if you're expecting a breakthrough anytime soon."

Ivor watched as she spoke sternly. She might have hidden her passion for her work well, but he could still feel it.

Bonnie could feel him staring at her. She asked, "What's wrong? Did I say something weird?"

"Of course not. I can't help but think you live up to your reputation. You exude such supremacy and are far more professional and extraordinary than any scientist I've met."

"There's no need to compliment me like that. I just so happen to be okay in this field."

Ivor chuckled. "You just blew your horn without realizing it, Ms. Bonita. I wonder what the scientists I mentioned would think if they heard what you just said."

"I've never tooted my own horn. I was just stating the truth."

"Stating the truth, huh?" Ivor clapped in response. Suddenly, he leaned closer to her and said, "Honestly, your tone reminds me of my friend's. I swear I thought you two were the same person." Bonnie's heart skipped a beat.

'Sheesh! I would've exposed my real identity if I wasn't resilient enough.'

"Really?" She pretended to be bored by this particular topic.

"I think you know her too." He continued to monitor her expression.

'I might not have been able to catch her mistakes since I talked to her, but my gut tells me the truth is as I have imagined.'

"Do you mean Bonnie?" She asked casually.

He said smilingly, "Exactly. You two are so similar to each other that it piques my interest. What's your relationship with Bonnie?"

"We're friends."

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Chapter 556

"That's all?" Ivor was surprised.

This time, Bonnie went on the offensive. Instead of answering his questions, she asked, "What else can she and I be to each other?"

Ivor squinted at her silently.

Then, she added, "If you're curious about my connection with Bonnie, you can always ask her."

"I did."

"Oh? What did she tell you?"

"Her lips are sealed."

Bonnie leaned into her seat and said, "If that's the case, maybe you should stop pursuing this matter, Ivor. Everyone has secrets, and they're not meant to be shared. She might not have wanted to tell you about it, but it's not necessarily because of a lack of trust.

"It might be because she doesn't want you to shoulder her secrets alone. It'll be highly impolite and disrespectful if you keep digging. Wouldn't you agree?"

Ivor imitated her by leaning back into his seat. "You're something else, Ms. Bonita. Not only did you shut me up, but your explanation was also flawless."

Instead of responding, Bonnie shut her eyes and rested, hinting at him that he could leave. However, Ivor was so thick-skinned that he stayed. "I believe you and Bonnie go way back, Ms. Bonita. Do you think we'll get married?"

Bonnie sighed inwardly, thinking, 'Is there no end to this?'

She opened her eyes to look at him and say, "I do scientific research and don't have time to delve into romantic matters. So, I hope you forgive me for being unable to answer such a question." "Well, do you think Bonnie loves me?" Ivor pressed.

She could not stop her lips from twitching. Ultimately, she threw the question back at him, "What do you think?"

He nodded solemnly. "I think she does. Bonnie is so madly in love that she'll marry and be with me forever. I'll even say she wants to have my babies."

Bonnie gnashed her teeth as she thought, 'Ugh! I have to control myself!'

"Really, now?" She asked.

"Absolutely!" Ivor nodded. Then, he leaned in and whispered, "Here's a secret for you. You can't tell anyone about it."

"What is it?"

He grinned wickedly. "Bonnie might seem serious, but she's incredibly affectionate in my arms every night. She'll do anything I ask her to do."

Although Bonnie sighed as discreetly as possible, Ivor caught it. He could not help but burst into laughter. "Hahaha! I'll invite you to our wedding. You have to be there!"

She could not be bothered to respond. She shut her eyes again and turned to the side to sleep. When she woke up a while later, the plane had touched down at Motrus. She and the others had just exited the plane when Sienna followed.

"I'll show Ms. Bonita what I'm made of. She'll see me in a different light and make me her personal bodyguard."

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Chapter 557

Sienna naturally had the skills to pinpoint Bonnie's hotel room since the former was an army member. However, Sienna could not go in because Jim stood guard at the door while Floyd appeared as she was

trying to find a way to sneak in.

"It's been a while since we sparred. Would you mind?" Floyd asked.

Jim frowned and turned to look at the door.

Floyd continued to persuade him, "Come on! It'll be fine. There are multiple parameters around her room. Security is so tight that not even a fly can enter. It won't take long, either. Twenty minutes, tops."

As Jim pondered whether he should do it, Bonnie's voice sounded from inside, "Go ahead. I'll just take it easy here."

"All right, try not to come out if you can. I'll be back quickly."

"Okay, sure."

Sienna dared not poke her head out until the duo left. She thought it was an excellent opportunity and checked both sides of the corridor before darting toward Bonnie's room. Sienna was in a military uniform, which was why the staff in the surveillance room thought nothing of it.

Bonnie had just opened her suitcase and gathered some clothes. She wanted to shower when she heard someone knocking on the door.

'Who could it be at this time of day?'

Before she could open the door, Sienna had already barged into the room. The latter lowered her head and said, "Please forgive me, Ms. Bonita! Leo is my grandpa. I genuinely admire you, but he wouldn't let me tag along."

"I had to resort to sneaking into your room. I swear I come in peace. I only wanted to see you in person and keep you safe!"

Sienna realized how quiet it was. She slowly raised her head and finally saw who was standing before her. "Bonnie?! What are you doing in Ms. Bonita's room?!"

Bonnie was just as surprised to see Sienna. The latter noticed Bonnie's silence and surprise. So, Sienna proceeded to form a theory, "Oh, I get it. You admire Ms. Bonita as much as I do. You snuck in to establish a connection with her, right?"

Bonnie chuckled. "I must say, you're as self-righteous as ever."

"Don't deny it, Bonnie. I know it's just as I said. I never expected us to have the same idea. Let's make a bet and see which of us gains Ms. Bonita's respect first." Sienna raised her chin proudly. She was confident Bonita would be interested in someone as talented as her instead of Bonnie.

Typically, Bonnie was above such tedious bets. Sienna looked so confident that the former was interested in participating in the bet. "Sure, I accept your challenge. Still, I must clarify something before we start. What will you do if you lose?"

"If I lose, you can do whatever you want to me."

Bonnie raised her brow and remarked, "That's a pointless bet. We already made the same bet last time."

Sienna asked through gritted teeth, "What do you want me to do?"

"Hmm, let me think. Hah, I got it!" Bonnie raised her brows. "If you lose, you can no longer act arrogantly. Also, you can never use your identity as the only granddaughter of the McLeods to benefit yourself." "When have I ever done those things?" Sienna was furious.

Bonnie shook her head. "How pitiful. You don't even know what kind of person you are."

"What did you say?!"

"Am I wrong?" Bonnie said coldly, "If you never used your identity for self-benefit, how did you summon the troops to try to outnumber me?"

"I looked into you a little more. Three years ago, a minor celebrity fell in love with Orpheus, and you misused your background to ban her from the entertainment industry. You even ruined her reputation. Also, you tore a guy's family apart seven years ago because he said you're not that pretty."

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Chapter 558

"Well, I" Sienna did not expect Bonnie to investigate her so thoroughly.

The latter asked, "Do you think Ms. Bonnie would choose you if she hears about the heinous things you've done?"

"I-It's not what it seems! That minor celebrity you mentioned sought me out several times. She was a hypocrite who turned everyone against me because she thought I wouldn't retaliate. Also, that guy you brought up said nasty things to me. Was I wrong to teach him a lesson?"

'Although Sienna might be telling the truth, the punishments she gave them don't fit the crime. I didn't agree to her challenge on a whim. Instead, I'm trying to help her for Leo and his brothers' sake. That is if she can still be helped.'

Bonnie said, "I don't care whether or not you admit your wrongdoing. I only care if you agree to my terms."

"Fine, I agree!" Sienna said through gritted teeth, "What'll you do if you lose?"

"I won't." That was how confident Bonnie was.

'Ugh, I hate it when Bonnie's this confident. That's how she looked when I had a match against her in the shooting range.'

After some thought, Sienna said, "If you lose, you must drop your terms."

"Sure thing." She responded casually.

"I have one more term."

"Let me hear it."

"We'll do it the other way around this time. If I win, you have to listen to my every order."

The still-carefree Bonnie said, "Whatever floats your boat."

"Hmph! Keep acting tough. You'll regret it someday!" Immediately after, she heard a flurry of footsteps outside the door.

"Quick, someone has broken into Ms. Bonita's room!"

Sienna shivered and opened the window, ready to jump out. Before doing so, she turned to look at Bonnie and asked, "Aren't you going to leave?"

"Go ahead. I'm not in a rush." Bonnie crossed her arms and glanced at Sienna.

The latter remarked, "I've never met anyone so committed to their act. I hope Grandpa's troops arrest you. Then, you won't even have the chance to meet Ms. Bonita, and I'll win the bet." "How long will you keep yapping? Just leave already," Bonnie said smilingly.

Sienna scoffed and leaped out of the window.

Bang!

Leo barged into the room with his troops. "Where's the intruder?"

Bonnie giggled. "There's nothing to be worried about. A friend of mine was just fooling around."

'Is that it? No, my gut tells me it's more than that,' Leo thought.

"Are you sure? Should I have my men search for the intruder?"

"Everything's fine. Return to your posts. I'll give you guys a holler if I need anything."
With that, she yawned.

"We'll get out of your hair, then." Leo nodded and then ordered his troops, "Dismissed."

Once they marched out of her room, she took her bathrobe and headed to the bathroom.

Knock, knock, knock.

Someone was at her door again.

'Who is it this time?'

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Chapter 559

"Who is it?"

"It's me."

'That's Ivor's voice. What's he doing here at this time of night?'

"Give me a minute." Bonnie straightened herself up and put on her mask and cap before opening the door.

Ivor looked at her with humor in his eyes. "Must you hide your looks at night, Ms. Bonita? No one else is around, so you can take those off. Don't worry about me. I won't tell anyone what you look like." Bonnie thought, 'I can't explain it, but I feel naked when he smiles and stares at me.'

"It's not that I don't trust you. It's just a force of habit." Then, she changed the topic. "Can I help you with anything?"

Ivor glanced inside and said, "Yeah, can we talk inside?"

After some hesitation, Bonnie nodded. "Sure, come in."

"I appreciate it, Ms. Bonita." Once inside, Ivor opened his bag and set up a chessboard.

"What are you doing?"

He sat down and looked at her, saying, "I heard you like playing chess. So, how about we have some fun?"

Bonnie's eyes widened in surprise, and she knew he was trying to suss her out. She asked, "Who told you I like playing chess?"

"I can get such information if I set my mind to it. However, you must forgive me for not telling you who informed me. After all, I must protect my informant's privacy," Ivor replied calmly. "Don't just stand there. Come and have a match with me."

Bonnie did not respond or approach him. She thought, 'Everyone has a unique play style in chess. I'm confident he'll see through me after playing.'

"I'm sorry, but I'm exhausted. I'd rather rest." She yawned to sell her act better.

"That's too bad. I'll get out of your hair, then. After all, we have the conference tomorrow." Ivor lowered his gaze. The ceiling light shined on him, masking his emotions and accentuating his sense of mysteriousness.

Suddenly, he gasped and grunted.

"What's wrong?" Bonnie looked at him and noticed that he had nicked his finger on the corner of the chessboard. It was a pretty deep cut, and blood oozed from the wound.

"Hold on while I get my medkit." Soon after, she sanitized his wound and bandaged it.

"Try not to get it wet, or it might get inflamed."

Ivor withdrew his hand and absentmindedly looked at his bandaged finger before gazing at her with mesmerizing eyes.

"Why are you staring at me like that?" Bonnie felt goosebumps all over, uncomfortable because of his gaze.

Ivor showed her his finger and said, "I didn't think you'd have any medical knowledge, Ms. Bonita."

At that moment, she realized Ivor had purposefully nicked himself. However, she was too late.

'I knew it! Ivor would've never carried a broken chessboard with him. He must've intentionally broken it to test his theory about my identity. Argh! What's wrong with him?! I can't believe he did that for something like this. He should've broken his arm instead, that fool!'

The more Bonnie thought about it, the more exasperated she became. She used all her willpower to stop herself from rolling her eyes at Ivor.

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Chapter 560

"I'm afraid you've overestimated me, Ivor. I know almost nothing about medicine. I simply wrapped your finger in a gauze. Anyone can do first-aid." "Although you say that, you did it so proficiently that I can hardly consider you an amateur."

"You're too kind, Ivor." Bonnie handled the situation so calmly that he could not keep digging into her secrets even if he wanted to.

"I'll see you tomorrow," Bonnie said, plainly sending him away.

"Good night." Ivor left. When he left, he saw Floyd looking at him with bitter concern. The former asked, "Why are you looking at me like that?"

Floyd wanted to speak but bit his tongue. However, he looked aggrieved.

Meanwhile, Ivor wondered why his assistant looked like that. "Floyd, give it to me straight."

"Um, Mr. Ivor..." Floyd glanced at the shut door and said, "Ms. Bonita is nothing short of incredible. If she's seeking a boyfriend or husband, people would be lining up at her doorstep to the North Pole. "B-But you're already committed to Ms. Bonnie. Granted, she might not be as talented as Ms. Bonita, but she's among the most outstanding people alive. Not only are her chess skills perfect, but her medical skills are also top-notch.

"Also, Ms. Bonnie partakes in street racing events. Don't forget about her floral arrangement skills, not to mention she's Master Arturo's favorite student. She has fantastic fighting skills, too. She knows and excels at so many things that I can't name them all.

"Most importantly, Ms. Bonnie is modest and has never flaunted her skills. You don't meet people like her every day. Please don't fall in love with Ms. Bonita and leave Ms. Bonnie."

"Is that what you were concerned about?" Ivor could not decide if he should laugh or cry. He added, "That was such a good speech that you earned yourself a ten-day paid leave. You can take a break when the conference is over."

"Huh?" Floyd was confused, wondering why his boss would suddenly give him a paid vacation.

"Um, I'm grateful for that, Mr. Ivor. Still, Ms. Bonnie is "

Before he could finish, Ivor interjected, "What if I told you Bonnie is Ms. Bonita?"

"Eh? Say what now?" Floyd was six-foot-two and burly, but he looked funny staring at his boss in puzzlement. Finally, he said, "Th-that's not a good joke, Mr. Ivor."

Ivor stroked his chin and said, "I guess you're right. It isn't a joke at all."

As he walked away, Floyd froze in a daze. Soon after, Jim approached and patted Floyd's shoulder, asking, "What's with that blank expression?"

Jim's voice broke Floyd's train of thought. The latter turned stiffly and looked at Jim. "M-Mr. Ivor said Ms. Bonnie is Ms. Bonita."

Jim looked at the departing Ivor in the hallway and then glanced at Bonnie's room door. After some thought, the former said, "You're getting your panties in a bunch over something that doesn't concern you. "It doesn't matter if we're talking about Ivor, Bonnie, or Bonita. People like us don't get to poke around other people's business. We only need to tend to our duties as bodyguards and assistants." Jim's words cheered Floyd up immediately. The latter said, "You're right. I'm just an assistant, and it's best to let them deal with their personal issues. I shouldn't have to concern myself with such things."

Bonnie was enjoying her beauty sleep the following morning when a commotion outside woke her. She heard Sienna's voice through the door, "I'm here to protect Ms. Bonita, and that's my sole purpose here, Grandpa. Please, you have to let me stay."

'It looks like Sienna got caught.'

After freshening up, Bonnie left her room.

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Chapter 561

After leaving Bonnie's room last night, Leo could not shake the feeling that something fishy had happened. He had honed his senses over the past several decades as a member of the army, and it told him that something had happened.

'I'm certain the person wearing the military uniform entered and escaped through the window.'

He checked the security footage and compared it meticulously. That was when he discovered his daughter had barged into Bonnie's room. He then ordered his men to gather the rest of the footage to search for anyone suspicious.

A minute ago, his men sussed Sienna out. Leo ordered, "Take her away and send her back to Pyralis!"

"No! I refuse to go back!" Sienna struggled. "Please, I can't go back now, Grandpa! I made a bet with Bonnie and can't return to Pyralis empty-handed!"

"Hold it right there." He raised his hand and the army men holding his granddaughter stopped.

"What did you just say? Wh-Who did you make a bet with?"

Sienna gritted her teeth and told her grandfather everything that happened last night. "That's the whole story, Grandpa. I can't afford to lose my bet with Bonnie. If I do, she'll have total control over my life."

Leo's jaw hit the ground. Although Sienna was worked up, he looked at her like she was a moron. Sienna continued, "Grandpa, if you want me to take responsibility for my actions, you'll have to reprimand Bonnie, too. I wasn't the only one in Ms. Bonita's room last night.

"Bonnie was there, too. If you send me back to Pyralis, you'll have to do the same to her, or it won't be fair!"

Leo sighed and massaged his temples.

'I used to be proud of Sienna because she was talented. However, she looks more like an idiot as the days pass. She doesn't even know Bonnie's playing her like a fiddle.'

As he felt disappointed in his granddaughter, Bonnie appeared from behind him and said, "Leo, she's your granddaughter. I don't think she meant any harm. Let her stay."

Sienna whipped around and saw a masked Bonnie. The former's eyes sparkled instantly as she exclaimed, "Ms. Bonita!"

'Finally, I get to meet her! She also just spoke up for me!'

Leo looked at her granddaughter staring at Bonnie admiringly. His headache worsened at that moment.

'Although Sienna might've been talented, she's overhasty and set in her ways. She needs someone to mold her into a more well-rounded person, and Bonnie is doing just that.'

"If that's what you wish, I'll let her off the hook." Leo approached Bonnie and whispered, "My granddaughter isn't pleasant to have around. I appreciate you taking the time to whip her into shape."

"You got it, Leo." Bonnie only agreed to it because Leo and his brothers sacrificed their lives to protect her three years ago, not to mention that generations of McLeods had guarded the nation's borders. They made significant sacrifices to keep Arvandor safe. Bonnie was impressed with their loyalty to the nation.

Sienna placed her hand over her heart and approached Bonnie. The former said solemnly, "You can count on me, Ms. Bonita. No one can touch you while I'm around!"

Bonnie asked, "Are you sure you want to risk your life to protect me?"

"Of course I am!" Sienna replied firmly.

Bonnie pressed, "You might not know about this, but someone sent a task to SR League to assassinate me. Although no one has accepted the task, anyone would be brave enough to take it for a handsome reward."

"There are too many criminals who fear nothing, not even death. That's why I'm certain Motrus is a dangerous trip. That's also why the higher-ups sent your grandpa to protect me during this conference. "If you're here, and the hitmen try to kill me, you'd be in danger. Now that I've explained the facade of the trip, do you still want to protect me?"

Sienna smacked her chest and looked even more solemn than before. She looked like she placed her life on her oath, "I, Sienna McLeod, the granddaughter of the former general Leo McLeod, swear to guard you with my life."

"If anyone dares to lay a finger on you, they'll have to go through me!" She uttered each word thunderously and mightily.

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Chapter 562

Bonnie raised her brow and looked at Sienna with approval.

'Now that's what a McLeod is supposed to look like! It proves I was right in thinking she's not beyond help. At least she's faithful regarding the nation.'

"All right, then. You'll protect me while we're here."

Sienna almost cried tears of joy when she heard Bonnie's response. "D-Does that mean I've earned your respect?"

'Perfect, I won the bet against Bonnie!'

Bonnie noticed Sienna trying to suppress her triumphant laughter and guessed the latter's thoughts. Bonnie remarked, "I understand you've done many heinous things in the past. Worse, you even mobilized the army to attack a civilian a while ago."

Sienna panicked. "Th-there's a reason for that. You see—"

"It doesn't matter. You must own up to your mistakes, regardless," Bonnie said sternly.

Sienna balled her fists and sighed. "You're right. I have a reason, but Grandpa already lectured me about it. I admit I went overboard."

Bonnie nodded in satisfaction. "What matters is you learn from your mistakes. That's the most we can ask from anyone. I hope you change and improve so you never repeat your mistakes."

"I'll do as you say, Ms. Bonita!" Sienna decided never to do anything to shame Bonita or her family.

Bonnie responded, "Good, you'll earn my respect when you do that."

"I appreciate the opportunity, Ms. Bonita!" Sienna looked at Bonnie gratefully, overjoyed by the turn of events.

"Poor Bonnie. It looks like you lost the bet this time.'

The International Scientific Research Conference commenced in the afternoon. Soon after, Bonnie found herself surrounded by prestigious scientific researchers. All of them were asking for clarifications on several matters.

Ivor stood beside her like a knight protecting a princess. Not long after, a lady in a green gown approached him timidly. "Excuse me, can I chat with you over there, mister?" Bonnie heard the woman's voice and instinctively turned to Ivor. Immediately after, Bonnie noticed Ivor turning to look back at her, and she quickly whipped back around. Ivor noticed it and grinned. Then, he looked at the woman in the green dress and said, "I'm sorry, but I'm busy right now. Maybe you should chat with someone else." The lady bit her lip gloomily. "Um, I just wanted to chat with you a little. I won't."

He withdrew his gaze and ignored the woman. He turned and faced Bonnie, asking, "Do you know why I rejected her?"

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Chapter 563

Bonnie thought, 'That has nothing to do with me, let alone Bonita!'

Still, she responded, "Go on. Tell me why."

Ivor grinned, his blue eyes sparkling affectionately as he stood beside her. He lowered his gaze to meet her eyes and raised his brow slightly, saying, "That's because I promised the love of my life that I'd never get involved with any woman who shows interest in me. I told her I'd save myself for her."

Bonnie peered into his eyes and noticed his intense admiration for her. Time seemed to freeze as they stared into each other's eyes. It felt like they were the only ones on Earth. Although Bonnie looked calm, her heart raced.

Then, a tall and handsome man approached her. "Hello there, Ms. Bonita."

The man had blonde hair and blue eyes. He handed her a bouquet of roses and looked at her adoringly. However, it caused Ivor's expression to turn sour.

Before Bonnie could respond to the blonde man, Ivor stood between them and said in fluent Motrusian, "She's allergic to roses."

"Oh, forgive my ignorance. I'll buy her some other flowers, then."

"That's okay. She doesn't need any."

The blonde man was no fool. He knew Ivor was trying to fight with him over Bonita. The former asked, "What makes you say that?"

Ivor stared at him blankly. He was taller than the blonde man by several inches, and his eyes were cold. Ivor also exuded an imposing demeanor, enough to drive fear into the blonde man's heart. Soon after, the blonde man submitted to Ivor. The former did not even realize that he had begun sweating until he stepped back.

Ivor glanced at him coldly as he left. When the former turned around, Bonnie had already walked away.

"Wait, where are you going?" Ivor strode across the hall, looking elegant as he soon caught up to her.

Bonnie felt hopeless as he continued to bug her. She said, "Stop following me around. I have to use the restroom."

"What a coincidence. That's where I'm headed, too."

It just so happened that Sienna, standing not too far from them, saw what happened. She muttered, "Hmm, Ivor is showing interest in Ms. Bonita. Is he trying to hit on her?"

Sienna was shocked by this epiphany. Then she sneered and uttered, "Well, Bonnie can't compare to Ms. Bonita. It's only normal for Ivor to give up on Bonnie and go to Ms. Bonita. I'd do the same if I were a man."

'As for Bonnie, I guess I'll see her misery sooner rather than later. After all, she'll lose the bet and her boyfriend.'

"She deserves it for going against me."

When Bonnie exited the restroom, she saw Ivor waiting for her at the door.

'What is he doing here?! Why is he so clingy?'

Suddenly, Ivor stepped forward and said, "There's something on your mask, Ms. Bonita."

The next thing she knew, he reached for her face.

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Chapter 564

Bonnie's eyes widened in surprise as she flinched backward to avoid Ivor's hand. An inch more, and he would have removed her mask. Bonnie scolded, "You've overstepped your boundaries, Ivor." Ivor gazed at her and said, "You misunderstood me. There's something on your mask, and I was trying to wipe it off."

She pursed her lips and left.

"Wait, Ms. Bonita!" Ivor yelled and chased after her.

"Stay away from me," she said as she picked up her pace. Suddenly, she heard a thud, followed by a grunt. She turned and saw that Ivor had fallen to the floor, clutching his belly in agony.

The veins on his forehead bulged from the pain. He even began to sweat and turn pale. Bonnie raced to him and asked, "What's wrong?"

Ivor answered through gritted teeth, "M-My stomach hurts."

"Is it appendicitis?" Her brows knitted tightly.

"I-I don't know."

It looked critical, and Bonnie dared not waste a second. She grabbed Ivor's wrist and checked his pulse. He smirked when he noticed how proficient he was. "So, you do have extensive medical knowledge." His voice did not sound strained. Instead, he sounded healthy. Then, Bonnie realized what had happened. She thought, 'He pretended to be sick!'

Ivor tore off her mask before she could loosen her grip on him.

"Hey, you—"

"I knew it. It's really you." He smiled at her and grabbed her wrist. Soon, memories flooded his mind, explaining everything.

For instance, Bonnie knew about the press conference date for the latest nanomaterial. She also said she wanted to give them the development rights to the nanomaterial.

She also had lunch with the professors from Bonita Research Institute. Ivor even remembered Jim working as Bonnie's bodyguard in the Knights' villa to protect her. Many more instances were shrouded in mystery, but finally, everything was explained.

"Why'd you hide it from me?"

Bonnie helplessly replied, "Was it ever worth mentioning?"

"What do you mean? You're Bonita, for crying out loud!"

"So what if I am? The public would praise me as a science prodigy above everyone, but I consider myself a scientific researcher who loves science. I'm the same as those who pour their heart and soul into their jobs. I'm nothing more, nothing less."

Bonnie blew her horn so effortlessly that Ivor could not help but feel ashamed of himself.

Ivor said, "I've always been called the business genius of my time. What's more, I confidently wear that title. However, I feel immensely inadequate compared to you."

Bonnie disagreed, "I don't think that's true. We're just different. Given your qualities, you can afford to look down on people. There's no need for you to be modest and underplay your achievements. It isn't your character to do so.

"On the other hand, I dislike attention and the hassle it brings. I only want to focus on my work. You don't need to compare yourself to me," Bonnie's words cheered Ivor up instantly.

The latter remarked, "Yeah, but you're the genius who surpasses all of Arvandor. Your words easily commanded my respect and admiration."

Then, he cupped her cheeks and said, "What will I do, Bonnie? I think I'm falling deeper in love with you by the second!"

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Chapter 565

Ivor stared at Bonnie lovingly, and she felt a warm sensation rising within her chest. It coursed through her veins and melted her heart. After finally breaking free from his affectionate approach, she said, "There are people around."

"Oh, right." Ivor rose and pulled her into a room.

Sienna was far away from them and could not see Bonnie's face. She only saw Ivor pulling Bonnie into a room and closing the door.

'This can't be happening! Ivor just took Ms. Bonita into a room without anyone noticing. I wonder if they're doing unspeakable things to each other.'

Once Sienna calmed down, she thought it could be possible. She always thought Bonita was timid and innocent. Even so, she was still a woman, and Ivor was an excellent man who could win any girl's heart. Sienna grinned and thought, 'It looks like Bonnie will lose her boyfriend soon. Hahaha!'

Ivor pinned Bonnie to the door and kissed her passionately. She was in a daze before finally returning to her senses and pushing him away. "Did I say you could kiss me?"

"Yeah, you did." Ivor stared at her affectionately.

Bonnie was puzzled. "When did I do that?"

"All the time. I'm sorry." Ivor apologized sincerely. "I couldn't help it. Like I said before, you're a drug I can't get enough of. My self-control goes out the window whenever I see you. I can't help but want to do things for you."

The more he spoke, the more speechless Bonnie became. As far as she was concerned, he was a starving wolf, and she was his prey.

"Bonnie, I'm thrilled. Each of your identities is more breathtaking than the other. I can't get enough of you. Ugh, I wish I could make you mine and that you'd take my last name right now." He leaned into her and motioned to kiss her again.

However, Bonnie did not let it slide this time. She slipped away and said, "You forgot that I never agreed even to be your girlfriend. Maybe you should learn to quit while you're ahead. You can no longer kiss me without my permission."

"Well, can I kiss you again?" Ivor approached again.

Bonnie stepped back and frowned as he continued approaching. He said, "I want it now. Will you let me kiss you now?"

"No way!" Bonnie took another step back.

"Please accept me, Bonnie. You'll break my heart if you don't."

"That's enough, Ivor!" She stopped and pushed against his chest. "There's a limit to how much you can take advantage of me. I still haven't settled my score with you for tricking me into believing you were sick "How dare you demand kisses? You're the furthest thing from a business genius now. You look like a perverted street thug instead."

Ivor was unbothered by Bonnie's words. He said, "I don't need to pretend to be a genius before the woman I love. I'm just a man who should act boldly on his impulses. What kind of man will I be otherwise?" Bonnie argued, "And they say women are unreasonable. It looks like you're no better than a woman yourself, Ivor. I can't believe you're so self-righteous even though you're taking advantage of me."

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Chapter 566

While Ivor and Bonnie debated, they heard someone knocking on the door.

Jim coughed and said, "Ms. Bonita, Professor Auguste is here."

When Bonnie frowned, Ivor sensed something was amiss. He could not help but ask, "What's the deal with this professor?"

"Nothing, really..."

"Don't lie to me, Bonnie. I hope you can start telling me the truth." Ivor held her shoulders and stared into her eyes.

She was about to make up an excuse and brush it off. However, she could not lie to Ivor when she saw his eyes. "Fine, here's the truth. Auguste has always considered me a thorn in his side, especially after I developed the latest nanomaterial.

"After that, I consolidated my status in scientific research. Subsequently, I squeezed Auguste out of first place. That's why I believe "

Ivor interjected, "Are you suspecting he sent someone to post a task with the SR League?"

"How do you know about that already?"

"Leo told me." Ivor's demeanor turned imposing when he thought about how someone was trying to kill Bonnie.

Knock, knock, knock!

Jim knocked again. "Uh, if you're too busy, I'll tell Professor Auguste you can't meet with him yet."

When Bonnie opened the door and came out, Jim looked at her as if to ask if Ivor had his way with her. Once she figured out what that look meant, she turned away in exasperation. She could not be bothered right now.

"Where's Auguste?"

"Ahem!" Jim cleared his throat to moderate the awkwardness. "He's in the main hall. Come on, I'll take you there."

As she followed Jim, she noticed Ivor walking beside her. She knew the latter was worried Auguste might do something to hurt her.

Bonnie whispered to Ivor, "Relax. Auguste won't do anything rash with so many people around, even if he's the mastermind behind the assassination task."

Ivor argued, "You might be wrong. Auguste can always try something sneaky, even if he can't do anything so openly. We must stay vigilant against his craftiness. Like I said, you mean more than life to me. I can't afford to let anything happen to you."

Bonnie retorted, "Will you knock it off with those corny lines?"

"Okay, fine," Ivor said with a big smile.

Judging from his expression, Bonnie knew she had wasted her breath. She should have known telling him to quit was pointless. Soon after, she entered the main hall and saw Auguste chatting with someone. The latter noticed her as soon as she entered. "Bonita, it's been a while!"

He smiled and went for a handshake, but Ivor shook it before Bonnie could. Ivor said in fluent Motrusian, "I know you. You're Professor Auguste, right? I heard a lot about you. It's an honor to meet you finally, sir."

Auguste would have considered that rude if it were anyone else. However, he felt there was something unusual about the man before him. Auguste knew he could not afford to take Ivor lightly. "Who might you be, mister?"

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Chapter 567

Bonnie answered, "He's the CEO of Knight Group, located in Pyralis. He's also the representative of Arvador's economy."

Ivor's titles surprised Auguste. The latter could sense the young man's imposing air and readily accepted it.

"So, you're the richest man in Pyralis. Your reputation precedes you, Mr. Ivor," Auguste said as he gazed between Bonnie and Ivor. "Pardon my curiosity, but you two seem pretty intimate. What's your relationship?"

"Professional," Bonnie replied dryly, causing Ivor to frown.

'I know she answered him that way because she needs to consider the bigger picture. Still, I'd be lying if I said that didn't hurt me. I'll have to snatch her away and make myself feel better tonight.' "Are you sure?" Auguste squinted at her.

Bonnie remained casual and revealed no hints about her relationship with Ivor. She said, "If you're asking me about my personal life, you'll have to excuse me for not answering. After all, I'm pretty busy." Auguste chuckled. "Forgive me for crossing the line. I was looking for you to congratulate you on developing the latest nanomaterial and becoming the most prestigious scientist in the world." Bonnie stared at him grimly and said, "I thought you'd be upset."

"Why would you say that?"

"That title belonged to you before I came into the picture. However, the title is firmly within my grasp now that I've developed the latest nanomaterial."

August knew she put it that way to probe him. He countered, "It doesn't matter which country made a scientific breakthrough. Your unbelievable discovery of nanomaterials benefits Arvador and the world." "Well said!" Bonnie clapped. "I was a little petty just then. I just learned that someone has hired the SR League to assassinate me. Someone from my government even asked me if I offended anyone. After much consideration, I eventually thought of you, Auguste."

A pin-drop silence hung over the room as both parties observed each other cautiously. Ivor was the only one smiling at Bonnie.

'She just stirred a massive storm yet remains calm and collected. Her intelligence and bravery are extraordinary.'

It took everything in Auguste to suppress his feelings. Suddenly, he burst into laughter, "Hahaha! You just love making jokes, Bonita. Why would I do something like that?"

Bonnie smiled and said, "Exactly! I brushed it aside the moment I said it. I told them you're among the most experienced and prestigious scientists worldwide. There's no way you would do something like that." "All that matters is that you believe me, Bonita." Auguste checked his watch and said, "Would you look at the time? Please excuse me. I have some matters to attend to."

He forced a smile and left. Immediately after he turned, his expression grew grim. His assistant, Tyree, leaned in close and whispered, "Did she figure us out, Mr. Auguste? Why else would she ask something like that?"

"That might not be the case since our plan is foolproof. Also, they're preparing for tonight's operation as we speak. Bonita probably made a guess when she said all that."

"Then, should we proceed with tonight's operation? I fear the Arvandorians will suspect us if something happens to Bonita tonight."

Auguste nodded. "Your worries aren't unfounded. As for tonight's operation, send someone to monitor her as planned. We'll decide what to do when the opportunity arises. Also, send some men to tail Knight Group's CEO."

Tyree was puzzled. "Why would we do that, Mr. Auguste?"

The latter sneered. "I have a hunch they're more intimate than Bonita said."

"Understood, Mr. Auguste. I'll carry out your orders at once."

The first day of the conference was not that formal, and it ended before dusk.

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Chapter 568

Bonnie stared at Ivor. He would not get off her bed, no matter what. What made matters worse was that he opened his bathrobe so she could see his body. Although she looked composed, she still struggled to look away.

Bonnie asked, "Don't you have your own room?"

"I do, and I'm resting in it now."

"Rest here all you want." Bonnie opened the window and motioned to leap out of it.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm bored. I'm going for a walk."

Ivor marched over and stopped her from jumping out. "We're on the third floor. Give me a minute, and I'll come with you."

He knew she wanted to jump out the window because she wanted to stroll around as Bonnie and not Bonita. If she went out as Bonita, she would put herself at unnecessary risk and attract a massive crowd. "I'm not waiting for you. Bye!"

However, Ivor held her arm and did not let go. "If you don't wait for me, I'll jump out and walk with you in my robe."

Bonnie glanced at him, thinking he looked seductive in the bathrobe. If he went out like that, he would drive other women crazy, and they would look at him lustfully. The thought of that bugged Bonnie. She said, "Hurry up then."

Ivor could not help but grin. "All right, I'm ready. Let's go."

"Ugh, finally."

The duo left the hotel and strolled along the foreign streets.

"You didn't have dinner just now. Is there anything you want to eat? I'll buy anything you want." Ivor glanced at the nearby bakery and said, "I bought from this bakery the last time I visited. Their bread is fresh and delicious."

Bonnie did not feel hungry until after he brought it up. She suddenly realized she had not eaten anything during the conference because she had been wearing a mask the whole time. After some thought, she replied, "Sure, I'll have something from there."

"Stay put."

"Okay."

"Don't wander off."

"Gotcha."

"Just look for me in the bakery if anything happens."

Bonnie palmed her forehead and said, "Do you think I'm a defenseless child? I started practicing kickboxing with my master when I was three."

"Okay, okay. I know you're tough, honey. I'll stop worrying." Ivor spoke to her intimately, looked at her longingly, and left.

Bonnie saw a long bench nearby and sat there. Suddenly, she sensed movement behind her, and her instinct told her that the approaching footsteps were after her. The person was sure-footed, too, undoubtedly a fighter.

Bonnie silently clenched her fists and focused her mind. Once the person was close enough, she whipped around and threw a punch at the person.

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Chapter 569

Bonnie's punch was about to land, but she stopped at the last second when she recognized who it was.

Sienna was frightened as she gulped and stared at Bonnie's fist. It was just an inch away from the former's face. Sienna could not help but feel impressed with Bonnie's reaction speed and the force behind her punch.

Simultaneously, the former was awestruck because Bonnie stopped her punch so quickly. After all, one had to master the art of combat fully to do that.

'Bonnie has attained such mastery. Setting aside our differences, she deserves to be a Grandmaster.'

Bonnie frowned and asked, "What are you doing here? Don't you know it's dangerous to sneak up on someone?"

Sienna felt exasperated when she heard that.

'That's bullshit! Sneaking up on people isn't dangerous. Bonnie's the only one who can make it dangerous!'

"I wanted to come and greet you when I saw you. Must you be so exaggerated? If I didn't know any better, I would've thought you were worried someone was out to kill you."

Bonnie raised her brows, thinking, 'Although she didn't mean it, she's got me there. I did think a hitman was closing in on me.'

"You came over just to greet me? I didn't think we were on speaking terms. Why would you waste your time doing that?"

Sienna crossed her arms, looking triumphant. She said, "You're right. I didn't have time to greet you. I'm here to tell you that I've already earned Ms. Bonita's respect and started working for her. You lost the bet, Bonnie."

Bonnie stifled a laugh and asked, "Are you sure? I heard Ms. Bonita was displeased with your past. She gave you another chance to change and learn to admit your mistakes. The fact that you're Leo's granddaughter helped, too."

"H-How do you know all that?!" Sienna's eyes widened in surprise as she stared at Bonnie.

It might not have been classified information, but ordinary people should not be privy to it. Bonnie deliberately kept her on the hook by saying, "Take a guess."

'Ugh, I just hate it when Bonnie's this arrogant!'

"Th-that's all well and good, but..." Sienna gazed past the bakery and smiled triumphantly again. "Don't celebrate just yet, Bonnie. I'll do my good deed of the day and let you in on a secret."

"Oh? What would that be?"

Realizing that Bonnie had taken the bait, Sienna kept the former curious by saying, "This secret is one of the most important things you'll ever hear. It's about your love life. Still, I'll only tell you if you beg me." Bonnie yawned and returned to the bench to sit. She leaned back on it lazily and checked her phone. Her casual demeanor angered Sienna.

"Hey! What are you doing?! This secret is huge for you. I guarantee you'll regret not begging me to tell you about it!"

Bonnie raised her gaze at Sienna and uttered indifferently, "Woah."

Then, she returned her attention to her phone.

Sienna sighed aggrievedly and patted herself on the chest, thinking, 'I can't take it anymore. Bonnie's killing me!'

"Are you acting this way because you don't believe what I'm saying?!"

Bonnie responded without looking away from her phone, "I believe you. After all, you wouldn't have come to talk to me if it weren't important."

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Chapter 570 -

Chapter 570

Sienna roared, "If you believe me, why aren't you even worried?!"

Bonnie replied casually, "That's because you're more agitated than I am. I don't have to beg because I know you'll lose patience and tell me about it."

'Dear God, please strike Bonnie down with thunder! I've had enough of her. If we weren't outside, I'd scream!'

"Fine, you win! Still, your smugness will disappear once I tell you what it is. Ivor has fallen in love with someone else." Sienna stared at Bonnie. The former could not wait to see Bonnie break down in despair and sorrow.

On the contrary, Bonnie glanced at her casually and said, "Gee, where's the rest of the information? Who did he fall in love with?"

'Gah! Keep pretending! Let's see how long you can keep it up, Bonnie!'

"I saw Ivor and Ms. Bonita flirting with each other during the conference. He even dragged her into a room-they were there for a long time. Hahaha! They were alone, too. What do you think they did inside?" After some thought, Bonnie said solemnly, "Maybe they were discussing work."

"Hahaha! Stop lying to yourself, Bonnie. Are you trying to make me laugh?" Sienna cackled.

"Watch out!" Bonnie immediately pushed her aside.

"What's wrong with " Before Sienna could finish, she saw a masked man holding a knife and slashing at where she stood a second ago.

Then, more masked men jumped out of their hiding spots. Sienna scrambled to her feet and stood beside Bonnie, asking, "Are they your enemies?"

Bonnie tied her hair back and said, "He attacked you earlier. I think they're your enemies."

"That's a load of crap! Why would I have enemies?"

"Why do you sound surprised? You're always so cocky. I'm confident you have enemies everywhere."

"Fuck you, Bonnie!" Sienna could not stand it any longer. "Why can't they be your enemies?"

Bonnie nodded in approval. "That's possible since I have such a strong sense of justice. There might be some lowlifes who disagree with my moral code." "Pfft..." Sienna scoffed. "You're the typical double standard kind of person!"

Meanwhile, the group leader reported the situation to his superior, "I've got two girls in front of me. One is Leo's granddaughter, and I think the other is our real target."

When Sienna heard that, she smirked at Bonnie and said, "It looks like they're after you. Well, have fun. I won't stay here and help you."

Sienna motioned to leave when Bonnie yelled after her, "Run, Sienna! Tell your grandpa to send someone here now!"

"Ugh, seriously?!" Sienna was furious and wished to beat Bonnie up.

Initially, the men were uninterested in Sienna. However, they glared at her when they heard what Bonnie said.

The leader ordered, "Don't let her leave! We're bagging both of them!"

Sienna stomped and glared at Bonnie, thinking, 'Well played.'

Bonnie smiled at her and said, "It looks like we're destined to die together now."

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Chapter 571

"Fuck that!" Sienna rolled her eyes at Bonnie. Then, the former gazed at the leader of the masked assailants. "I'm not her friend. I even detest her. Let me go, guys. I promise not to tell my grandpa about it. Also, I don't think he'd send his men here for a nobody."

"That's enough horsing around! Go get them, guys!"

Sienna began to fend off the men while cursing Bonnie inwardly. After all, it was the latter's daily.

'These guys are insane! I told them I'm not Bonnie's friend and even said I hated her. Don't they know that the enemy of my enemy is my friend? That said, I'm on their side!'

Meanwhile, Ivor was paying for his purchases at the bakery counter when another group of masked assailants barged in. One barked, "He's Bonita's boyfriend! Get him!"

Ivor's expression turned cold as he glanced outside the bakery. As expected, he saw Bonnie fighting out there. He knew he had to defeat the masked men before him to help her. Soon after, an intense fight broke out in the bakery.

"Ugh!" Sienna was kicked so hard that she flew backward. One of the masked assailants slashed his knife at her. As the knife was about to cut Sienna, Bonnie stood in the way and grabbed the man's wrist before twisting it.

The man let out a gut-wrenching scream as he released his knife. Bonnie kicked the knife upward and then caught it. She then stabbed the masked assailant. "Sienna, I'll clear a path for you to run! Get your grandpa!"

Sienna was surprised, saying, "When did you grow a conscience?"

Bonnie frowned. "They're here for me. You have nothing to do with this. You don't need to die over this."

"I guess you're not so bad after all!"

"Now!" Bonnie slashed a few more masked assailants, finally creating an opening for Sienna. "Run, now!"

Sienna had been waiting for that moment. She had always prided herself on being an incredibly talented woman in a family of militants. If she could not take the chance to escape, she could no longer be proud of herself.

After escaping the group of masked assailants, she turned and looked at Bonnie hesitantly. Sienna was unsure if she should call her grandfather.

'I don't want to do it since Bonnie and I have bad blood. She's the reason my reputation is ruined. Gah! I'll think about that later! I need to get the hell out of here now!'

She fled and heard someone yelling, "Quick, the girl's making a break for it!"

"Forget about her! We must seize Bonita first!"

Sienna froze in confusion as she slowly turned around. Her eyes fluttered in shock as she gazed at Bonnie.

'I know what I heard. The masked assailant called her Bonita. Is Bonnie Ms. Bonita? How is that possible?!'

Suddenly, a flood of memories filled her mind. At that moment, she had an answer to everything that had puzzled her before.

"That explains why Grandpa defended her. No wonder she was in Ms. Bonita's room last night. Also, Ivor's actions make more sense now. I-I was the butt of the joke all along." Then, Sienna thought about the bet she had made with Bonnie. The former could not help but smirk at herself.

Meanwhile, one of the masked assailants reported, "Sir, she's too formidable! We can't subdue her and keep her alive! I fear Jim or Leo will be here for backup if we drag it out any longer."

After some thought, a menacing light flashed in the leader's eyes. He said, "Do whatever you need to do. Remember, we must take Bonita alive! Our boss has questions for her."

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Chapter 572

"You got it, sir!"

Although Bonnie managed to fend them off earlier, things became trickier when they stopped pulling their punches. She had just sent one of them flying when another came at her with a knife from behind. She might have been fast, but she could not react in time as he was too close.

"Get out of there, Bonnie!" Sienna charged at the masked assailant wielding the knife and tackled him out of the way.

"Sienna?!" Bonnie was surprised to see Sienna there. The former thought Sienna was long gone. Bonnie did not think Sienna would turn back, let alone risk her life to save her.

Various emotions overwhelmed Sienna as Bonnie stared at her. The former yelled, "You're getting distracted! Watch out behind you!"

Bonnie whipped around and kicked the assailant, sending him flying. A moment later, she stood back-to-back with Sienna so that they could defend themselves and deal blows to their adversaries more efficiently.

Bonnie asked, "Why'd you come back?"

Sienna pursed her lips and said, "I sure as hell didn't return for your sake."

"Then, what prompted you to turn back?"

"I'm from a military family. The McLeods have sworn themselves to a duty to protect the borders of Arvandor since my great-grandfather's time. We'd never compromise anything or anyone beneficial to our nation. You're Ms. Bonita, one of our nation's pillars. Naturally, I must protect someone like you!"

Bonnie smiled as she listened to Sienna's speech. The former said, "It looks like I made the right choice by giving you a second chance."

It did not please Sienna to hear it, but she had no comebacks.

"Bonnie!" Ivor dashed out of the bakery.

Bonnie gazed at him when she heard his panicked voice. Her eyes reddened as soon as she saw him. Ivor was no longer the elegant and graceful man he was minutes ago. Instead, his clothes were a mess, and his hair was disheveled. Worse, there was blood on his white shirt.

Bonnie knew he was worried sick about her. That was why he willingly got hurt if it meant subduing his adversaries and getting to her quickly. "Hurry up and run, Ivor!"

Ivor responded coldly, "What are you talking about? I can't run like a coward and leave you alone!"

Bonnie pursed her lips, heartbroken when she saw how disheveled he was.

"Hey, can you two quit being so lovey-dovey? I can't hold them off alone!" When Sienna said that, one of the masked assailants kicked her.

"You kicked my fucking breasts again! I'm a woman, for fuck's sake! They weren't big, to begin with. Are you trying to make them smaller? If any one of you kicks my breasts again, I'll kill you!" Sienna cursed as she scrambled to her feet. She then fought more recklessly because she was furious.

Bonnie rejoined the fight, and a few moments later, the group leader received some news. He asked, "Jim and his reinforcements are close?! We can't afford to drag this out any longer."

He pulled out his pistol and shot at Bonnie.

"Watch out!" Ivor never stopped watching Bonnie's back. Thanks to that, he saw the gun in time and quickly pushed her away. Bang!

The bullet went right into his chest.

"Ivor!" Bonnie yelled at the top of her lungs. Her body stiffened before she came to her senses and darted toward him.

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Chapter 573

Blood seeped from Ivor's bullet wound in his chest. Although his white shirt had bloodstains before, it was not drenched in red. It was a frightening sight. He staggered backward and slowly began to bend down.

"Ivor!" Bonnie's eyes reddened as she yelled at the top of her lungs. As she was about to reach him, several masked assailants stood in her way. She was prepared to kill them all.

"Back off! Anyone who stands in my way will die a horrible death!" Bonnie roared as she emitted a ferocious air. Suddenly, she kicked the assailant closest to her, and he flew before crashing to the ground and spitting a mouthful of blood.

His fellow assailants charged at Bonnie, but she quickly dealt with them. They sustained deep cuts after she snatched one of the knives and slashed at them.

In mere moments, the ground was littered with bodies as blood-curdling cries echoed. The smell of blood was evident. Bonnie saw nothing but Ivor leaning on the wall and trying to stay alive. A gust of wind blew past Bonnie as blood dripped from her knife and fell to the floor.

She looked like the devil incarnate. Her combat prowess was horrifying, striking fear into anyone who looked at her. Meanwhile, Sienna felt a profound sense of astonishment, and her eyes were full of shock. 'I've long known how formidable Bonnie is, but she's nothing short of a ferocious demon now. I must say, she has surprised me again.'

It took several seconds for Sienna to compose herself, grit her teeth, and fight off one of the masked assailants charging at her. She fought like hell to get close to Bonnie.

'Yeah, that's Bonnie, the person I detested the most. However, that doesn't change the fact that she's also Ms. Bonita. I've sworn to protect Ms. Bonita with my life. That's why no one will lay a finger on her as long as I'm alive!'

Sienna held onto that thought and fought vehemently through her adversaries. Finally, she reached Bonnie and stood back-to-back with her.

Sienna said, "G-Give me a minute. I-I'll make an opening for you to run to Ivor." The fight had drained Sienna so much that she was panting.

Bonnie kicked back a charging assailant before worriedly glancing in Ivor's direction. His eyes were shut, and his face was pale. He was not moving, either.

"Okay, let's do this together. Ivor has sustained a mortal wound, and we can't afford to waste time here."

Sienna nodded solemnly, tightened her grip on her knife, and charged into the group of masked assailants. "Argh! I won't fail my family! I will slaughter every last one of you!"

Bonnie followed her lead, slashing at her adversaries as quick as lightning. Soon, the masked assailants fell to the ground, their blood seeping into the pavement.

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Chapter 574

Ultimately, Bonnie and Sienna slashed their way through the masked assailants and made their way to Ivor. "Ivor," Bonnie uttered worriedly.

He looked so frail that she felt a lump in her throat. Her eyes reddened as she lifted him to rest on her lap. Then, she grabbed his cold fingers and called out to him repeatedly, "Ivor? Ivor, come on, wake up. Look at me, please."

Remorse, guilt, and sorrow filled her heart. She began to tear up as these emotions overwhelmed her.

Meanwhile, Sienna stood nearby, defending them from the remaining assailants. She even formed a perimeter and kept them safe in the middle.

Bonnie fought back her tears and treated Ivor's wound as best she could while calling out to him, "Ivor, I'm here. Hurry up and open your eyes. You must look at me, or I'll give you the silent treatment for the rest of your life."

Her voice began to choke up, and tears rolled down her cheek. "Wake up, Ivor. You have to wake up. I'm begging you, Ivor. Look at me, please!"

That was the second time she had ever felt this helpless. The first time she felt this way was when her parents fell severely ill. Bonnie was too young back then and had no way of helping them. They would have died if Ivor's grandfather did not show up.

As boundless darkness consumed Bonnie, Ivor's eyes fluttered slightly. Then, he slowly opened them and saw her worried eyes. He revealed a pale and weak smile, saying, "B-Bonnie? Cough, cough! I-I'm so happy to...see you so worried about me."

Bonnie sighed in relief when she saw Ivor regaining consciousness. He still had his wits about him, too. She leaned over and ripped out a part of her clothes to wrap it around his bullet wound, which was still oozing blood.

"Don't speak or move. I'll stop the bleeding."

"Cough cough... Sure." He gazed at her affectionately.

Once Bonnie stopped the bleeding, she struck his vital points to alleviate his pain. However, Ivor's wound was too severe. He did not stay conscious for long before his eyes slowly shut again. Bonnie noticed it, and her heart dropped. She held his hands tightly and said, "No, you can't fall asleep, Ivor. I need you to look at me."

Ivor could not bear to hear Bonnie so heartbroken. So, he struggled to open his eyes again. He looked overwhelmed with exhaustion but still treated her with love. "You're silly, Bonnie. I'm just tired and need some rest. Are you denying me that?"

The more tender he sounded, the more guilty she felt. After all, he would not have gotten shot if he had not tried to protect her.

Bonnie fought back her tears and shook her head, saying, "No, I won't let you close your eyes! You won't die on me. You must hold on, Ivor. Do you hear me?"

"Okay, I'll do as you say, like always," Ivor rubbed the back of Bonnie's hand, saying, "If I die, you'll marry someone else. Why would I let something like that happen?"

"You should read the room, you dummy. How are you sweet-talking me at a time like this?"

"Y-You're my fiancée. Of course, I want you to stay happy. I-I can't let you feel sad. N-Not even for my sake." Ivor's eyes brimmed with affection.

Bonnie was captivated by them, so much so that she could not look away. The couple stared into each other's eyes when they suddenly heard Sienna's heavy panting. Sienna said urgently, "Take Ivor away now, Bonnie. I can't hold them off much longer!"

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Chapter 575

Bonnie turned and saw Sienna sweating profusely. The latter had reached her limits. Bonnie said, "Hold on, Sienna. I'll take Ivor away now."

She helped Ivor up and led him to a corner.

'Ivor is too weak. I need to get him treated now. I can't waste another minute. I must get us out of her as soon as possible.'

"Okay, just hurry up." Sienna felt her limbs burning whenever she swung her knife or kicked someone. However, she had her family's gritty determination. Her tenacity pushed her to fight, even if her body screamed in agony.

Bonnie did not waste another second. She held Ivor's weak body and left as quickly as possible. After just a few steps, the leader of the masked assailants saw them. "They're trying to get away! Let's see how far they can get!"

Bonnie heard the man's voice and turned to look at him, only to see him and his henchmen charging at her and Ivor. They had pistols and other weapons, too.

Her expression turned grim, and she feared the leader might shoot Ivor again. So, she stood before Ivor and yelled, "Sienna, I need help!"

"On my way!" Sienna dealt with two more men before making her way to Bonnie. "What's wrong?"

Bonnie calmly replied, "I know you're running on fumes, so I'll entrust you with Ivor. Take him away, and let me handle these clowns."

Sienna's eyes widened in surprise. She looked at Bonnie before turning to Ivor. "Wait a minute, Bonnie. It's my job to protect you. What'll I do if I get him to safety and something happens to you?" Bonnie glanced at the pale Ivor with a trace of uncharacteristic affection. She said, "He matters most to me. You can protect me by keeping him safe. I'm also a better fighter than you. I'll last long enough for Jim and your grandpa to arrive."

Sienna disagreed with that, but considering their current predicament, she could only do as Bonnie said. The former gritted her teeth and took Ivor from Bonnie. "Fine, then. You better hang in there and stay safe, or Grandpa will let me have it."

"Sure," Bonnie replied. Then, she glanced at Ivor affectionately before patting Sienna's shoulder. "I'm counting on you to keep him safe."

Sienna glanced at Bonnie's hand on her shoulder and felt emotional. "All right, leave it to me!"

Bonnie shoved her and ordered, "Go! Now!"

"You got it!" Sienna quickly slipped into the corner with Ivor.

One of the masked assailants noticed it and told his leader, "The CEO of the Knight Group and Leo's granddaughter got away, sir. Should I send someone to chase them down?" "I've prepared for that. What matters is catching Bonita."

His henchman nodded. "Understood, sir."

The leader glanced at the street across from them coldly. He barked, "Move in on her now! Leo and Jim are almost here."

"Copy that." The henchman joined the foray and tried to seize Bonnie with his fellow henchmen.

She was standing among the masked assailants. Her knife flashed as swiftly as lightning as she fended them off. No one could get close to her and could only attack from a further range. Even so, Bonnie held them back. Suddenly, a figure darted toward her from behind as she was about to take a short break.

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Chapter 576

Bonnie's eyes looked menacing. She quickly turned over and avoided the masked assailant's sneak attack. Then she lifted her feet and launched them at his chin.

Crack!

She heard the sound of his chin bones cracking and he was kicked away. He crashed to the ground and began wailing miserably.

She gave him an icy, sidelong glance. Just as she was about to look away, a figure darted at her from her right.

Her cold eyes were reflected on the edge of the knife. Clenching her fist, she dodged and smashed the man's face fiercely.

"Gah!" He screamed as he fell to the ground.

She thought the man was out of the fight. Little did she know that the assailant shot up from the ground just as she turned around. He picked up the knife from the ground and

slashed at her shoulder. She felt the rush of air and ducked instinctively. However, her body was at its limit, and she could not get out of the way in time.

The knife missed her shoulder, but it tore along the flesh of her arm and made a deep cut.

All of a sudden, her arm was covered with blood, and her eyes reddened with fury. "Die!"

Bonnie kicked him squarely in the chest. The assailant's eyes rolled upward, and he passed out instantly.

The henchman standing next to the leader of the group became frustrated.

"Ms. Bonita is too difficult to handle, sir. Jim and Leo will arrive if we don't take her away now. We won't be able to explain ourselves to the client then."

"Don't you think I'm aware of that? The point is, our client wants her alive..." The leader smirked wickedly as an idea suddenly struck him. "Heh, I've got it. Why don't I just shoot her feet? Let's see if she can still act tough with her foot gone."

He raised his pistol and aimed at her calf.

Bonnie sensed danger and saw him out of the corner of her eyes. She was startled and intended to duck out of the way. However, the other henchmen had caught her and held her still, and she felt helpless and frustrated.

'No! I have to stay safe and see Ivor again. I can't let them take me away,' she thought as she looked for a way to escape. However, the leader quickly opened fire. Bonnie could only watch as the bullet tore through the air toward her foot.

At the last possible moment, someone shoved Bonnie aside.

Whiz!

The bullet flew right by her calf and buried itself into the wall behind her.

The next thing she knew, a team of fully armed men huddled around her, forming a perimeter,

The leader of the masked assailants was agitated. He knew the army men were here to protect Bonnie.

'We've lost our advantage. We can't stay here any longer.'

He glared at her momentarily before waving in frustration. He barked, "Fall back!"

"Let's see how far you'll get, you wretched thugs!" Leo barked.

Before long, the masked assailants were surrounded by a team of men wearing combat uniforms. Then, they were subdued. Jim ran to Bonnie and saw the injuries she had sustained. His eyes turned red immediately. He clenched his fists so hard that they made cracking sounds.

"Are you okay? I'll take you to the hospital now."

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Chapter 577

Bonnie wasn't doing so well, but she could only think about Ivor. Her voice carried a somberness that she had never heard before.

"I'm fine, but Ivor sustained a bad wound trying to protect me."

Jim was stunned, but he knew how much Ivor cared about her.

"Where is he now? Our cars are right outside. We can send him to the hospital now."

"We were in a dire situation. So, I asked Sienna to take him to safety first." She stood upright slowly and pointed at the corner. "They went that way. Let's look for them."

He looked at her pale face and couldn't help but try to persuade her, "You're not doing so well, Bonnie. You should just stay put. I'll bring some men with me and look for them. You have my word that I'll bring Ivor back to you in one piece."

"No!" She said sternly, "I won't rest until I've seen that he's safe with my own eyes."

Bonnie headed over to the corner hastily. Her body language was enough to show she was worried sick.

He sighed and took off after her. They had just arrived at the intersection when they saw a figure running toward them.

The surroundings were too dark, so they couldn't tell who it was. Jim took a swift step forward and stood before Bonnie. Even his men were standing by solemnly for a potential threat. However, Bonnie had excellent vision.

It might've been dark, but she could see who the figure was. "That's Sienna."

Shoving Jim aside, she ran over to Sienna. Once she was close enough, she realized that the latter was covered in blood and panting heavily.

"What are you doing here alone? Where's Ivor?"

Sienna met her worried gaze and clenched her fists. "We were on our way out when a group of people charged at us from nowhere and took him away from me."

"W-What did you say?" Bonnie looked downright terrifying as she clenched her fists hard.

Sienna gritted her teeth and took a deep breath. "I failed to keep my promise. I've humiliated myself. If you want to punish me, I'll take it."

"I know you did everything you could." Bonnie took a deep breath, attempting to suppress her distress and rage. She calmly ordered Jim, "Send all our men to track down Ivor. I want him brought back to me in one piece!"

"Copy that." Jim turned around to her bidding.

Then he looked back at Bonnie, only to see the concealed distress in her eyes. He wanted to soothe her but couldn't think of anything to say to her. All Jim could utter was, "It's not safe here. Let's just go back. She looked at the boundless darkness before her. Then, she reluctantly tore her gaze away. "Yeah. Let's go back."

'I'm worried about Ivor. I don't want to go back if I can help it, but Jim is right. It's not safe here. I might not care about myself, but I must think about the others.

'Also, these guys took Ivor away because they're after me. Standing here wouldn't help anything. I might as well go back to the hotel and use whatever connection I have to track him down.

'Maybe I could wait for these guys to contact me and talk about terms. Then, I'll bring a team to save Ivor from their clutches!'

Jim knew that she was pretending to be calm. It was akin to the calm before a storm. Bonnie might look fine, but a ferocious storm could occur.

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Chapter 578

'The only thing I can do now is give Bonnie some space to work through her feelings,' Jim thought, 'Given the current situation, soothing her won't help her.'

This was the first time Sienna had seen Bonnie this riled up.

'She doesn't let her worries and agitation show, but I can feel how anxious she is. She is Ms. Bonita, after all. Her calm demeanor is extraordinary.'

Several days had passed since Ivor's abduction. Bonnie had exhausted all her connections to track Ivor down, but she turned up with nothing. Even Jim and Floyd sent their men out, but none returned with good news.

It was heart-wrenching. Bonnie was so worried about Ivor that she couldn't eat. It had only been a few days, but she had grown much skinnier.

Jim and Bonnie were sitting at the dining table. He watched as she moved her food around halfheartedly. He sighed and said, "You have to eat something. How else will you keep up your energy?" She sighed even louder than he did. "Forget about it. I've lost my appetite. Take it away."

She pushed the plate away, which he pushed back to her. "Have some of it, Bonnie. How will you search for Ivor on an empty stomach?"

"I mean it. I've lost my appetite." She shook her head.

Instead of persuading her, he said, "It looks like you're in love with him."

That stunned her. She pursed her lips but didn't respond. It was a silent admission.

'Ivor used to cling to me all the time. It's not like I hated him for doing that, but I didn't like it, either. Sometimes, I thought I'd never have peace until I shook him off. I don't find it peaceful now that he's no longer by my side. Instead, my heart feels empty, as if something's missing.'

Jim had always known she'd eventually succumb to Ivor's relentless attempts to win her heart. He couldn't help but sigh hard. She looked so distressed that he tried to soothe her.

"Ivor is a decent man. I'm sure the universe will look after him and ensure his safety. Also, if those guys decided to abduct him, then it means they weren't after his life. There's something else that they want. That means that he's probably safe for now."

She nodded in approval. "I'm aware of that."

Then, something occurred to her, and the anxiety she had just suppressed resurfaced.

"It's just that I feel this weight in my heart. It'll always be there until I know that Ivor's safe."

He tried to comfort her again. "You're overthinking it. He'll be fine."

She sighed gloomily, her eyes undecipherable.

Sienna came in through the side door and saw the look on Bonnie's face. She felt a pang of guilt. Taking a deep breath, Sienna readied herself mentally before she walked over to Bonnie.

"Like I said, it's my fault that Ivor was abducted. Don't worry about it, Bonnie. I'll make amends for my mistake. I won't return to Arvador until I track him down!"

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Chapter 579

Bonnie smiled slightly at how serious Sienna looked. "I appreciate it."

She meant it from the bottom of her heart, too.

Sienna's face turned red. Coughing lightly, she turned her head.

"Did I ask for your appreciation? Let me clarify something, Bonnie. I'm only doing this because you're Ms. Bonita. Furthermore, I was the one who lost him. The way I see it, they've taken more than Ivor. They've also robbed me of my pride.

"They wouldn't have been able to pull it off if I weren't exhausted from the previous fight! That said, I still failed. So, I have a responsibility to get him back."

Bonnie stared at her profoundly and stood up. Then she patted Sienna's shoulder.

Sienna went stiff for a second before she asked, "W-What are you doing?"

Bonnie responded firmly, "You have my respect now, Sienna."

That reminded Sienna of her bet with Bonnie. She was stunned for a while before she returned to her senses. Suddenly, she felt pissed off and smacked Bonnie's hand away. "Y-You played me for a fool because I didn't know the truth!"

Then, she thought deeply, 'When I made a bet with her, we agreed that whoever won Bonita's respect also won the bet. Then, I found out she was Bonita. What was the point of the bet, then? She had me wrapped around her finger the whole time. Our bet was nothing but a joke.'

The more Sienna thought about it, the angrier she got. She scoffed and said, "All right, I've wasted enough time on you. My point is that I'll bring Ivor back safe and sound. So, you can go ahead and stop worrying about it!"

Sienna then turned around and made her way out of the living room.

Jim watched as she left, his eyes filled with humor. "Sienna might seem like a hothead at first, but deep down, she's a decent lady."

Bonnie nodded in approval. "Exactly. All she needs is guidance, and she's well on her way to becoming a pillar of society."

Jim looked at her, visibly stunned. "I didn't expect you to have high hopes for her!"

"Do I?" She shrugged. "I'm just stating a fact here."

Sienna had just exited the living room and was standing at the door when she saw Leo. "What are you doing here, Grandpa?"

Then she glanced at the living room. "Have you been eavesdropping on our conversation, Grandpa?"

He glared at her and asked, "What do you mean by eavesdropping? Is that the way to talk to your grandpa? You guys were so loud. Do you think I need to do something that shady?"

She thought about it and muttered, "I don't think I spoke particularly loud in there."

He heard her, but he ignored her remark. After all, that wasn't what he cared about. What grabbed his attention was the attitude she had shown Bonnie. "It looks like you've moved from your petty squabble with Ms. Bonita."

He thought, 'I'm just glad Sienna finally sees what's more important.'

A hint of uneasiness flashed in her eyes. "She's Ms. Bonita. I can't keep hanging on to our petty differences. That'll make me small-minded."

He stared at her. He was wise, and it didn't take him long to see through his granddaughter. "Are you sure you let go of your differences with her because she's Ms. Bonita? Is there no other reason at play here?"

His questions had hit home. She, too, was asking herself the same question.

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Chapter 580

'Did I decide to let go of my petty differences with Bonnie because she's Ms. Bonita? No. That's not true at all.

'Bonnie simply possesses maturity and talents that I can never hope to match. I've been arrogant my whole life. I never thought anyone was better than me. That all changed when I met Bonnie. 'She has achieved so much. That's not all, either. She might be talented and have many skills, but she never flaunts them. Instead, she's modest about them. I can't compete with her on that alone.' Sienna's mind wandered back to all the arrogant things she had done because she considered herself talented.

'I didn't think much about it before. Looking back, I realize how absurd and immature I've always been. I was ignorant. It's no wonder Bonnie was able to play me like a fool.

'Maybe I'm nothing but an ignorant child to Bonnie. That could explain why she hasn't held any of it over me.'

Various thoughts flashed in Sienna's mind. After working through them, she finally saw her real feelings. She smiled at Leo. "I've let go of it, Grandpa, but I didn't do so just because she's Ms. Bonita. It's also because of who she is when she's Bonnie."

'This is what I've been waiting for.' Reaching out, he patted his granddaughter on the shoulder, his face filled with love.

"Judging by your expression, I think you've thoroughly thought it through and come to terms with it. Ms. Bonita is a fine example for you to follow. Learn what you can from her."

She couldn't help but ask him, "Do you think I stand a chance to be better than her?"

He glanced at her and stroked his chin gently. "Do you want me to tell you the truth or sugarcoat it for you?"

She knew what he meant. "I-I guess you should sugarcoat it, Grandpa."

He responded swiftly, "There's no way you'll ever become better than her."

'That means the truth is the opposite of what he said. Grandpa's trying to say that I still stand a chance to overtake Bonita and become better than she is! I didn't think Grandpa had such high hopes for me and believed in my capabilities.'

The thought of it made her feel overjoyed. Even her eyes were sparkling with hope now. "Well, what about the truth, Grandpa? Can you tell me the truth?"

He glanced at her again and said, "The truth is that you can live ten times as long, but you'll never catch up to her achievements."

Sienna remained quiet.

'Ugh... I shouldn't have asked him at all.'

A couple of weeks later, Bonnie was standing on the roof of a skyscraper as she cast a glance at the milling crowds on the ground.

Strong, chilling gusts of wind blew past her, lifting her long hair and her sleeves.

She might've been skinny and frail, but she remained sure-footed in the face of the howling wind.

Although she looked tough, there was this sense of miserable loneliness about her.

Jim, who had just come to the rooftop, saw how she looked and felt disheartened. Worried that he might disturb her, he walked to her side slowly.

"The International Scientific Research Conference is over. We have to return to Arvador."

She looked at him, her eyes still filled with distress.

"Any leads on Ivor?"

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Chapter 581

Jim let out a barely perceptible sigh.

"The people I sent out have done their best to find him. Even the higher-ups have dispatched numerous people, but there are still no leads."

Bonnie frowned but remained silent.

Memories of the days with Ivor by her side involuntarily surfaced, making her sad. However, she didn't show this. Her long lashes quivered a little but concealed every emotion in her gaze.

Even though Bonnie didn't say anything, Jim could still feel the sadness lingering over her.

"If Ivor sees you like this, he will feel very upset."

Hearing Jim's words, Bonnie felt startled.

Ivor used to hold her hand and console her whenever he noticed she was in a poor mood. His eyes were full of care for her.

She had to cheer up and get over her depressive state, as Ivor was so kind to her and wouldn't let her suffer even a little.

With this in mind, Bonnie's dim phoenix eyes became brighter.

"You're right. Even if I'm feeling sad, it's useless. It's better to pull myself together and think of more ways to find out about his whereabouts."

Jim felt happy seeing Bonnie brighten up.

"You're thinking in the right direction. Should I prepare to return to the city next?"

Bonnie responded indifferently, "Yes, go ahead and prepare."

"Okay."

Jim quickly left. Little did he know that as soon as he left, Bonnie's phone would vibrate.

Her eyes narrowed at the message on the screen as she glanced down. Her hand holding the phone tensed.

"He is with me. You must come alone."

The message ended with an address on an island.

Bonnie rubbed her phone to calm her emotions. She had anticipated that these people would come asking for trouble.

She just didn't expect them to wait for half a month, which showed remarkable patience.

Bonnie went downstairs to head to the address. However, when she reached the bottom of the stairs, she noticed Jim busy in the room. She abruptly stopped.

If she told Jim about this, he would not let her take the risk. But saving Ivor was crucial, and she had to figure out how to get past Jim.

Sensing her gaze, Jim turned around and met Bonnie's eyes. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

Bonnie calmly turned away.

"It's nothing. Go ahead and pack up, and I'll tell you something later."

Jim didn't bother to pack his things and stood up.

"Are we keeping secrets from each other? Just say what you have to say. Why beat around the bush?"

Bonnie continued, "Actually, I want you to have a drink with me."

"Drink?" Jim was a little surprised. "Why so sudden?"

Bonnie sighed lightly, feigning sadness.

"I've been feeling very depressed lately. The more I think about it, the more I realize the validity of what you said. Ivor would be unhappy if he saw me like this. So I want to have a drink and wait for him to come back in the best condition possible."

Jim nodded. "It's good that you've come to terms with it. It's just drinking, right? I'll accompany you! Wait here, and I'll bring over a few bottles of aged wine from the cellar."

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Chapter 582

"Okay," Bonnie replied, "I'll get some snacks to go with the drinks."

Jim quickly returned and found a large number of snacks arranged on the table. Bonnie herself made some, while others were in takeout boxes.

Placing the wine next to the snacks, Jim smiled and asked Bonnie, "Why did you prepare so many? Is someone else coming?"

"No, just the two of us." Bonnie sat down across from him. "Since we rarely drink, let's drink heartily."

After opening the bottle of wine, Bonnie poured glasses for herself and Jim and then raised her glass.

"Today, we must drink until we are thoroughly wasted! Cheers!"

Jim rarely drank alcohol, so he could protect Bonnie. But Bonnie could not get in trouble now that Leo and the McLeod family's elite forces were protecting her. Furthermore, Bonnie had been feeling terrible lately, and she had not eaten properly in several days. She wanted him to accompany her for a drink, so he would. He believed those negative feelings would be forgotten after a restful night's sleep.

With this in mind, Jim raised his glass and clinked it against Bonnie's. "Cheers!"

After finishing the wine from the cellar, Jim was drunk and slumped onto the table. Except for a small blush on her cheeks, Bonnie showed no signs of drunkenness. "I can't go on. I need to sleep for a while." As soon as Jim's voice fell, his head dropped with his eyes closed, and he fell asleep.

Seeing this, Bonnie stood up from her chair and shook him. == "Jim, Jim..."

Jim didn't respond at all.

Bonnie stood quietly and confirmed that he wouldn't wake up. She quickly walked to the window, jumped down, and slid down the wall to the ground.

To avoid being seen by Leo's people, she quietly left through the hotel's back door. But as she walked a short distance, she faintly heard footsteps behind her. 'Someone is following me?'

Bonnie paused, became more alert, and cautiously moved forward. The footsteps trailing after her never went away.

Bonnie darted into a small alley ahead, concealing her figure and peeking out with half of her head.

Before long, a figure appeared in the alley.

"Eh? Wasn't she just here? Where did she go?"

Sienna looked around but couldn't see Bonnie. She felt puzzled. After all, she shouldn't have lost sight of Bonnie so easily.

But the fact was that Bonnie disappeared before Sienna could react. Her anti-surveillance ability was truly terrifying and worthy of admiration.

Bonnie's voice suddenly sounded in Sienna's ear. "Why are you following me?"

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Chapter 583

Bonnie's sudden appearance took Sienna aback.

After regaining her composure, she stood with her hands on her hips. "What do you mean? Is this road your private property?"

Bonnie remained silent. She looked deeply at Sienna for a moment before turning away and quickly walking in the opposite direction. Sienna followed closely behind, sticking to her like glue.

Hearing the footsteps behind her, Bonnie's eyes flashed with a hint of helplessness. She had to stop and turn around to look at Sienna.

"Where I'm going next isn't suitable for you. Stop following me and go back quickly."

Sienna raised her chin defiantly and refused to admit defeat.

"Who said I'm following you? This road is the route I have to take. Who are you to stop me?"

Bonnie would have surely seen through Sienna's intentions and might have teased her a bit. But now, she was solely focused on seeing Ivor as quickly as possible and had no time for idle chatter. "If you keep following me, I won't hesitate to knock you out."

Seeing Bonnie's urgency to leave, Sienna couldn't help but speak her mind bluntly.

"Bonnie, don't think I don't know. You deliberately got Jim drunk so you could go see Ivor. Tell me honestly, did the people who kidnapped Ivor send you a message? Did they ask you to come alone?" Bonnie frowned, impressed. The one who understood her the best was her enemy.

Sienna took Bonnie's silence as an admission.

Her tone showed a hint of resentment when she said, "I know you're worried about Ivor, but you're a significant figure in the scientific community. If something were to happen to you, what would the people of our country do?"

"Now that I know about this, I won't let you leave alone! And don't even think about knocking me out. I'm prepared. If you make any move against me, I'll run. I may not be able to beat you, but you can't catch me either."

Bonnie pressed her temples. "Just get to the point. What do you want?"

After a few seconds of silence, Sienna looked up at Bonnie. "I want you to take me with you."

Bonnie immediately refused. "No, the condition they proposed is for me to go alone."

"That won't work either." Sienna spread her arms in front of her. "If you don't let me go with you, I won't let you go alone."

Seeing Sienna's determination, Bonnie reluctantly nodded in agreement.

"Fine, you can come with me. But when we're close to the destination, you have to hide."

Sienna nodded. "I know. Don't worry, I won't joke about Ivor's safety. After all, protecting him is also my responsibility when we become a family."

Bonnie felt a bit amused, realizing that Sienna was concerned about Ivor since he was Orpheus's brother.

"But you and Orpheus are no longer in a relationship."

"So what? In the end, he will still be mine." Sienna proudly raised her chin, exuding full confidence. "I saw a fortune teller before. The fortune-teller said that Orpheus and I were destined to be together, so I am his unavoidable fate no matter what."

Bonnie twitched her lips, finding it hard to say anything more for a moment.

"All right, let's go together."

"Okay," Sienna responded and took the lead.

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Chapter 584

"I'll take the lead. That way, I can shield you if there's any danger."

"At the moment, there shouldn't be any danger. You can go wherever you want." Bonnie didn't want to say more at this point. Sienna turned to look at Bonnie but didn't say anything. She withdrew her gaze and continued walking ahead.

The two walked for a while with Bonnie following behind Sienna.

Bonnie suddenly shouted, "Sienna, I just noticed that someone seems to be running over there. Hurry up and check it out." Sienna furrowed her brows and followed Bonnie's line of sight in the opposite direction.

"Could we be under surveillance?"

"I don't know. I didn't get a clear look at the person before he ran off."

"I'll go check. Remember to stay close behind me and don't fall behind."

"Okay."

Sienna cautiously walked deeper into the narrow path, but the further she went, the deeper she frowned.

"This is a dead end. Bonnie, did you misread it?"

Bonnie narrowed her eyes. She seized the opportunity, raised her hand, and delivered a karate chop to Sienna's neck.

Sienna's body stiffened. With her remaining strength, she turned her head and looked at Bonnie incredulously.

"Y-You ambushed me. How shameless!"

As she spoke, her whole body collapsed to the ground.

Bonnie sighed helplessly. "It's just as you said, you had been prepared. So even if I wanted to knock you out, it wouldn't be so easy. But when you're unprepared, it's easy for me." After dealing with Sienna, Bonnie arrived at the address left in the message. It was a large private villa by the sea.

There was also a hint of hidden danger in such a rugged environment.

Any ordinary person would be hesitant to approach the villa, but Bonnie walked calmly toward it. Her steps were composed and determined. It was as if nothing could affect her. Arriving at the entrance, the guards raised their guns and aimed them at her.

A hint of a smile appeared on Bonnie's lips, though it didn't reach her eyes.

"What's this? Didn't you invite me here? Do you want me to leave?"

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Chapter 585

As soon as the words fell, the sound of clapping echoed in her ears.

Bonnie followed the source of the sound and saw a masked man walking out of the villa.

She narrowed her eyes and calmly assessed him before saying, "Mr. Auguste. Why are you hiding when you were the one who invited me here?"

The masked man paused, then tilted his head back and laughed. Then he raised his hand and slowly removed the mask.

Indeed, the face under the mask was exactly as Bonnie had guessed-Auguste!

"You truly live up to your reputation as Ms. Bonita. Your eyes are sharp, and nothing can escape you," Auguste said with a smile.

"I didn't come here to listen to flattery." Bonnie's tone was blunt and to the point. "Where is Ivor?"

Auguste maintained his smile. "Ms. Bonita, don't be in such a hurry. As two leading authorities in the scientific community, shouldn't we catch up a bit?" "Catch up?" Bonnie glanced at him indifferently. "I don't think we're that close, are we?"

Auguste's smile remained unchanged.

"I've always considered you a friend, Ms. Bonita. But now you're saying we're not close? Isn't that a bit hurtful?"

Bonnie lightly scoffed, "Friend? Really? Pardon my ignorance, but I've never seen anyone treat their friends like you do."

Auguste couldn't keep up his facade.

"I didn't expect you to not only have great research achievements but also be so eloquent," Auguste commented, looking somewhat embarrassed.

He didn't say much more and quickly made a welcoming gesture. "I believe you're eager to see Mr. Ivor. Please."

After giving him a cursory glance, Bonnie brushed past him and stepped inside.

Auguste watched her back, a cold glint flashing in his eyes.

"Close the door."

With a creak, the gate slowly closed, cutting off everything outside.

In the alley, Sienna gradually recovered. She felt the pain in her neck and inhaled sharply.

Sienna cursed angrily after recalling what had happened. "How dare you, Bonnie? I've fallen into your hands three times and I'm fed up with it. Just wait. I'll settle these scores with you sooner or later." Though angry, Sienna understood that Bonnie's safety was the most important thing at the moment.

'Who knows what the other party might do if she hadn't gone alone?'

Sienna had to rush back and inform Jim and her grandfather.

A few minutes later, Sienna arrived at the hotel. Seeing Jim passed out on the table, she hurried over and shook his shoulder anxiously.

"Jim, wake up. Quickly."

She called several times in a row, but Jim didn't respond.

Sienna bit her lip and looked around. Finally, she went to the kitchen, fetched a large bowl of water, and poured it on Jim.

Splash!

The cold water made Jim shudder involuntarily and snapped him out of his drunken stupor.

He wiped the water off his face and frowned when he saw Sienna standing in front of him with a bowl.

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Chapter 586

"What are you doing?!"

Sienna put her hands on her hips and glared at him impatiently. "What else can I do? Ms. Bonita has run away!"

Jim's heart skipped a beat, and he abruptly stood up. "Where did she run off to?"

Sienna rolled her eyes at Jim.

"You're supposed to be her bodyguard, yet you're lying here drunk like a pig."

Jim was anxious. "Can you stop with the nonsense? Just tell me where she went!"

Sienna was irritated. She glared back and said, "What's with the hostility? She disappeared, and you have no clue. It's your negligence. Why are you taking it out on me? Do you think I'm your punching bag?" "Watch it-"

Jim was frustrated. 'Is Sienna really this stubborn? Nothing gets through to her.'

Sienna refused to back down. "What? Am I wrong?"

Jim's expression darkened, but before he could speak, he saw Leo walking in.

"What are you arguing about? What happened?" Leo asked.

Jim glanced at Sienna and replied coldly, "Ms. Bonita is missing, and Sienna knows her whereabouts but refuses to tell me!"

Sienna rolled her eyes at him again.

"With your attitude, do you really think you can get any information from me?"

Jim frowned and said, "Do you even know how important Ms. Bonita is to all of us in Arvador? It's a critical moment. Can you stop talking about these trivial matters?" "Alright, let's stop arguing!" Leo quickly stepped between them to stop the argument.

"Sienna, tell me quickly, where did Ms. Bonita go?"

"She knocked me out, so I don't know where she went."

Jim and Leo's faces changed. Before Jim could ask Sienna for more information, she lifted her chin triumphantly.

"But don't worry, Grandpa. When she knocked me out, I grabbed her sleeve and secretly planted a tracker on her," she said smugly.

Leo patted her shoulder approvingly. "Well done! You truly are my granddaughter!"

"Of course. If I didn't have any outstanding qualities, how could I be called a genius?"

She then thought, 'Indeed, I excel in various things and deserve to feel proud. It's just that I was constantly overshadowed by Bonnie.'

'But I won't bow down to Bonnie because I'll work twice as hard and surpass her one day.'

Jim said with relief, "Since you've placed a tracker on her, what are you waiting for? Open your phone and track her location. I'll immediately bring people over." "Hmph!" Sienna scoffed disdainfully. She quickly took out her phone and located Bonnie's position.

"Got it! She's on a nearby unnamed island."

Jim leaned over to look and quickly informed his subordinates to gather.

Leo also didn't waste any time and informed the members of the McLeod family to prepare.

Everyone had assembled in just over 10 minutes, and a group headed toward Bonnie's location in a mighty procession.

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Chapter 587

After a brief pause, Auguste started to speak again.

"Ms. Bonita, did you see that?"

Bonnie turned her head to look at him, and her voice was calm. "See what?"

"With your esteemed presence, my humble villa has become much more vibrant and full of life," Auguste said with a grin.

Bonnie's impatient eyes seemed to blaze. "Enough nonsense. Where is Ivor?"

Auguste replied with a smile, "Ms. Bonita, there's no need to rush. I have excellent tea from Arvandor here. Please have a seat, and let's have a nice chat. As for Mr. Ivor, I'll send someone to invite him over later."

She had no better option but to sit opposite Auguste patiently, although Bonnie was anxious about Ivor's situation.

With a wave of his hand, Auguste's subordinates quickly brought tea and placed it on the table. Auguste handed a porcelain cup to Bonnie.

"Ms. Bonita, please."

After taking the cup, Bonnie hesitated, as if thinking of something.

Augustus understood her concern and immediately explained, "Rest assured, Ms. Bonita, there's no poison in this tea."

Bonnie lightly traced her fingertips over the cup with a mysterious expression, then handed it back.

"I'll have you try it to know for sure."

Auguste took the cup and drank it all in one go, then showed the empty cup to Bonnie.

"Now, Ms. Bonita, do you believe there's no poison in this tea?"

Bonnie nodded with a faint smile. "Alright, I'll trust you this time."

Auguste instructed his subordinates to bring another cup, poured tea into it, and handed it to Bonnie again.

This time, Bonnie didn't refuse. She took a sip, and then asked, "You went to such lengths to abduct Ivor before. Now you've lured me here. What exactly do you want?" Auguste put down his teacup and smiled again.

"Ms. Bonita, you're quick-witted. Then I won't beat around the bush. I heard you've been working on an upgraded version of the latest nanomaterial. How's your research going? Have you come up with a new plan?"

Bonnie smirked lazily and leaned back on the sofa. The chilling gaze in her eyes had already seen through everything.

"So that's why you didn't choose to kill me directly but had someone bring me here. You wanted to steal my research results."

Auguste's smile became somewhat stiff.

He moved his mouth as if to say something, but Bonnie's voice rang out again before he could speak.

"Mr. Auguste, although I always thought you were a cunning person, your achievements in science are undeniable, and you have indeed made great contributions to the progress of human society.

"But now you are trying to steal others' research results. Such behavior is truly shameful to everyone in the scientific community!"

Bonnie's words made Auguste's face turn ugly. But just for a moment, he quickly suppressed all emotions and gave Bonnie a cold smile.

"What do you mean by stealing your research results? Aren't these results all mine? When did you ever research them?"

A hint of anger flickered in Bonnie's eyes, but she restrained herself.

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Chapter 588

"Mr. Auguste, you've taken the phrase 'shameless' to the extreme!"

Auguste shrugged indifferently.

"Say what you want. When the upgraded version of the latest nanomaterial is out, the world will only know it as my research achievement. They will only remember me, Auguste. You will remain completely unrelated to this achievement."

Bonnie glanced at Auguste and asked calmly, "If I give you the research materials, what will happen to me and Ivor?"

"Of course, I'll let you both leave safely."

Bonnie raised her eyebrows even higher. "Are you really so kind-hearted?"

Auguste confidently patted his chest. "Is my reputation as a leading researcher not enough?"

With a tinge of sarcasm, the corner of Bonnie's mouth curled upward. "Reputation as a leading researcher? What value does your reputation hold if you're capable of such despicable acts?"

Auguste couldn't hold back Bonnie's continuous mockery, and his tone grew heavier. "Ms. Bonita! Don't forget, you're at my mercy now. Would you perhaps think about your own circumstances before speaking to me in this manner?"

Bonnie was unaffected by his words and remained calm, "Is that so? Are you sure you're not the one seeking my help? Asking me for the research materials for the upgraded nanomaterial?"

Auguste's eyes looked intense. "So what if I am? Now, your fate and that of Mr. Ivor are in my hands. I can do whatever I want."

"Haha."

Hearing her cold laughter, Auguste's face stiffened even more. "What are you laughing at?"

Bonnie spoke slowly and calmly, "If you wanted us dead, you would've done it already. Why waste time talking to me? Aren't you also seeking my help?"

August felt Bonnie looked down on him as if he were an ant to her. His face was practically purple.

Ignoring Auguste's reaction, Bonnie stood up from the sofa and said, "I don't have time to waste with you. Let me see him immediately, or I won't say another word." Afraid that he wouldn't be able to get any information out of her, Auguste had no choice but to call over Tyree.

"Tyree, take her to see Mr. Ivor."

"Okay." Tyree appeared and gestured politely to Bonnie. "Ms. Bonita, this way, please."

"Okay." Bonnie followed Tyree to the third floor of the villa.

When they reached the corner room on the left, Tyree stopped.

"Mr. Ivor is right here."

With a shaking hold on the door handle, Bonnie walked up carefully. Then she took a deep breath and pushed the door open with force.

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Chapter 589

She held her breath, afraid of seeing something unpleasant.

Fortunately, Ivor's condition wasn't as terrifying as she had imagined. His wounds had healed gradually, though he was still lying on the bed with his eyes closed. It indicated that Auguste had provided him with good treatment during this period.

Bonnie slowly approached Ivor with heavy footsteps. The moment she held his ice-cold fingertips, her eyes reddened slightly. However, she soon realized something was amiss.

She turned her head and glared at Auguste

"You injected him with anesthesia?"

Auguste wore a face of innocence.

"Ms. Bonita, it's not my fault. Mr. Ivor is too formidable. My men couldn't contain him, no matter what they did. I had to take this precaution to prevent his wounds from tearing due to excessive struggle." Bonnie gave him a strange half-smile.

"So, should I thank you then?"

"You're welcome." Auguste pretended to be generous. "After all, both of us are experts in the scientific community, and helping each other is only natural."

Bonnie nodded in agreement.

"Since you took such good care of Ivor, I will assist you in developing the most recent nanomaterial data."

Auguste's eyes lit up with joy. "Are you really willing to do that?"

Bonnie nodded earnestly. "Of course, you just said we should help each other, right? But this repayment seems a bit small for you. I also want to give you another reward." Amidst Auguste's excitement, a hint of doubt lingered in his heart. "What reward?"

Bonnie smirked. "Haven't you noticed any discomfort yet?"

Before Auguste could react, he felt an intense itch crawling up from the soles of his feet, making him unable to resist scratching.

However, as soon as he began to scratch, it was as though he had set off a switch; the intense itching overcame him, and all he could do was moan.

Scratching himself while casting a resentful gaze at Bonnie, he asked, "When did you poison me?"

Bonnie casually raised an eyebrow. "Guess."

While struggling to endure the increasingly intense itching sensation coursing through his body, Auguste recalled everything Bonnie did after she entered. Suddenly, he caught onto something and looked at Bonnie with shock and anger.

"Did you poison me when we were drinking tea?"

Bonnie didn't respond, essentially confirming it.

No matter how hard he tried to tolerate it, Auguste could not bear the itching all over his body. "Ms. Bonita, I didn't expect you to be so skilled in toxicology." Bonnie responded casually, "There are many things I'm capable of that you don't know about."

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Chapter 590

"Damn-"

Auguste barely uttered a word before the itchiness engulfed him, leaving him no choice but to stand in place and scratch incessantly. Tyree and the other masked individuals all pointed their guns at Bonnie. "She drugged Mr. Auguste and must be captured!"

Everyone echoed, "Yes!"

As they approached, Bonnie immediately made a gesture to stop them.

"Don't rush. Let me kindly inform you that no one in this world besides me can cure the poison in Mr. Auguste. If you make me unhappy, Mr. Auguste will be in trouble."

Despite the bloodstains on Auguste's body from scratching, he refused to bow down to Bonnie. "Do you think your words can threaten us?"

Bonnie smiled. "I believe you've heard of the famous Arvador physician, Dr. Fanelli Bonaldi, right?"

Auguste felt a sense of foreboding.

"I have, but what does she have to do with this?"

Bonnie's smile widened.

"You just mentioned my expertise in toxicology. Now, why would I bring up Dr. Fanelli Bonaldi? Can't you guess my intentions?"

Realizing Bonnie's implication, Auguste's eyes widened in shock and disbelief. "You... could it be... you..."

He was too stunned to continue. Never in a million years did he expect Bonnie to be Dr. Fanelli Bonaldi.

Bonnie remained calm. "Judging by your reaction, you must have heard of Dr. Fanelli. So, do you think anyone else in the world can cure the poison I administered?"

With each word Bonnie spoke, Auguste and Tyree's faces grew darker.

Glancing at them lightly, Bonnie continued, "Of course, you can try your luck with other doctors, but with your current condition, you'll be itching unbearably within an hour. Even if you scratch yourself, it won't help.

"You'll have to ask your subordinates to scratch you. And in the end, there's only one outcome for you-scratching yourself to death."

Even though Auguste didn't want to believe what Bonnie was saying, he was forced to accept it as his body began to respond violently.

"So, what do you want?" Auguste gritted his teeth.

He would have been more cautious if he had known Bonnie was so clever.

"My conditions are simple. Let us go, and I'll have the antidote sent to you later."

Auguste frowned while weighing whether Bonnie's words were worth believing.

Tyree suddenly spoke up, "Mr. Auguste, she's a cunning fraud. Don't believe her! We should capture her, torture her severely, and I believe she'll hand over the antidote."

Auguste had been unsure whether to believe Bonnie's words, but he thought Tyree made sense. He looked at Bonnie with chilling hostility.

"You're right. We should capture her, torture her severely, and force her to give up the antidote!"

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Chapter 591

Tyree and the masked individuals raised their guns and closed in on Bonnie.

Standing motionless, Bonnie watched them converge on her from all directions. Nevertheless, she looked fearless.

She said nothing until Tyree was about to approach her to grab her.

"You can arrest me, torture me, and interrogate me for the antidote. But you'll find it hard to extract any useful information from me, even after days of torture. Mr. Auguste, your time is limited, with only one hour left..."

She glanced at her watch and continued, "Oh, no, my mistake. Five minutes have already passed, so you have fifty-five minutes left. Do you think you can endure it?"

"How dare you "

Auguste barely had time to speak before the unbearable sensation of itching surged over him, tormenting him relentlessly.

He couldn't alleviate the sensation, whether he tried to scratch or not. In the end, he fell to the ground and rolled around in agony.

"Ah! Ah! Ah!"

Auguste's voice of agony echoed throughout the villa.

"Mr. Auguste!" Tyree shouted anxiously before running over to help Auguste get up from the ground.

"Are you okay?"

Auguste's forehead was covered in cold sweat and turned extremely pale. He finally realized the severity of the poison Bonnie had administered.

He gritted his teeth and asked, "If I let you and Mr. Ivor go, will you give me the antidote?"

Bonnie nodded. "That's right! And I can swear in the name of my academic title that once we leave safely, I'll have the antidote sent to you. You should know that I always keep my promises, unlike some people with useless reputations."

Auguste's face contorted as if he were constipated. But the discomfort caused by these words was dwarfed by the agonizing itching sensation in his body.

It felt like he was being eaten alive by ants, unable to live or die. Without exaggeration, this itching sensation was driving him almost insane.

Tyree looked at Bonnie with intense hostility. "Bonnie, do you think you're noble after resorting to these tactics?"

"I've never claimed to be noble, but even so, I would never stoop to stealing someone else's research achievements."

Tyree was immediately silenced. He knew he couldn't argue with her.

Seeing that Auguste was on the verge of collapse, Bonnie didn't bother to continue arguing with Tyree. She stood up from her chair and strolled to him.

"Mr. Auguste, I think you're about to give in. Make a decision quickly, and let's not waste each other's time."

Sweat-soaked, Auguste fixed his intense gaze on Bonnie for a long moment before taking a deep breath.

"Fine! I'll let you go, but once you're back, you must send me the antidote immediately."

Tyree didn't expect Auguste to agree so readily and wanted to interject. "Mr. Auguste, are you sure you want to do this? What if—"

Before he could finish his sentence, Auguste's roar cut him off.

"If I don't do this, do you want to watch me die? Or have you been coveting my position, hoping for my early demise?"

Tyree was unsure what to say, and finally lowered his head in silence before speaking softly, "I wouldn't dare."

Watching Tyree retreat to the corner, Mr. Auguste waved his hand to his subordinates nearby.

"Let them go."

"Yes." The subordinates responded in unison and quickly stepped aside to make way.

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Chapter 592

Seizing the opportunity, Bonnie walked to the edge of the bed and helped Ivor up.

She held his broad hand and placed it on her shoulder. Feeling the man's breath, Bonnie felt a sense of unprecedented relief in her heart. "Ivor, hang in there. I'll take you home."

The two of them walked toward the gate, and none of Auguste's subordinates dared to come forward to stop them.

After walking for a while, Bonnie suddenly heard the roaring sound of a helicopter in her ears.

Looking up, she saw the emblem of the military on the helicopter.

"Mr. Auguste, we've been tricked. Look, she didn't come alone!" Tyree shouted angrily.

Auguste looked at the helicopter circling overhead. He pointed frantically toward Bonnie and Ivor with intense anger.

"Damn it! They dare to deceive me! Go after them! Capture them! I want them torn limb from limb!"

"Yes!"

The subordinates quickly surrounded Bonnie and Ivor.

Bonnie didn't expect such a turn of events. Seeing the people approaching, she grabbed Ivor and ran forward without a word.

The people behind them pursued them relentlessly.

Bonnie struggled to drag Ivor along and didn't even turn to look back.

When the footsteps behind them slowed, she cast a tentative glance back. Seeing them gradually distancing themselves from the pursuers, Bonnie couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief.

She suddenly slipped under her feet when she turned her head, and her whole body tumbled downward.

But even so, she couldn't care less about herself, still worrying about Ivor.

"Ivor!" She instinctively shouted.

Ivor appeared to hear her call as he fell alongside her. His eyes, which had been shut, opened. He extended his long arms at the perfect moment, drawing her firmly into his arms so she was engulfed in his body.

Feeling the man's protection, Bonnie felt warm inside, as if tears were about to well up in her eyes.

The two of them tumbled and rolled together down to the ground.

"Umph!" A muffled groan escaped the man's lips, sounding painful to Bonnie's ears.

"Ivor, are you okay? Are you hurt?"

Bonnie nervously grabbed Ivor's hand to check if he was injured.

His large palm extended to grasp her hand, and a genuine affection filled his gaze. "I'm fine, absolutely fine. Don't worry."

Bonnie looked at Ivor. Although his tone was relaxed, she still felt a bit worried. She carefully checked if Ivor was bleeding. "Really? Nothing at all?"

Ivor seemed to think of something, deliberately letting out a soft sigh. "Oh."

Bonnie quickly looked at him nervously. "What's wrong?"

Ivor pointed to the location of his heart.

"Everything else is fine, just this, something feels off."

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Chapter 593

Seeing him press down on the spot where he was shot before, Bonnie became even more nervous.

"Did you hurt yourself trying to protect me? Unbutton your shirt and let me see."

As she spoke, she reached out to pull Ivor's clothes. Just as her fingertips touched the buttons, he held her hand.

"Silly girl, I'm just too happy. This heart of mine is beating so intensely because of your worry for me."

Bonnie looked into Ivor's eyes, filled with deep affection, and blushed. "I think you're deliberately saying these things to scare me!"

"I'm not scaring you, I'm genuinely happy." Ivor hugged Bonnie tightly. "Bonnie, did I pass the assessment? Can you agree to me now?"

Ivor's captivating gaze made Bonnie uneasy, causing her ears to flush red. She turned her head away.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

Seeing her avoid the question, Ivor's hand tightened around her waist.

"Bonnie, can you stop torturing me like this? Tell me the answer quickly, can you agree to me now?"

Bonnie raised her eyes and looked closely at Ivor's handsome face.

Although he had recovered, his pale complexion showed visible signs of fatigue. Recalling the time he had devoted to her beyond measure, her heart suddenly softened. "Okay, I agree."

Ivor's eyes instantly lit up, his excitement hard to express. He tightly hugged Bonnie and was unwilling to let go.

"Hahaha! Bonnie, you're finally mine!"

His voice was loud and exuberant. He seemed to want to tell the whole world that Bonnie was his woman.

Ivor was loud enough that Jim heard him on the helicopter.

Jim looked down and watched Bonnie and Ivor tightly embrace each other. He smiled joyfully.

Just then, a voice came through his earpiece.

"Mr. Jim, we have surrounded this place. What should we do next?"

Jim's smile faded slightly, and he ordered in a deep voice, "Capture them all. Anyone who resists, kill them on the spot!"

As he spoke, he paused momentarily, then continued, "Make sure to capture Auguste alive!"

With that, a fierce look appeared on Jim's face. 'Anyone who dared to harm Bonnie will not be let off lightly! By letting him live, I will personally make him experience hell on earth.'

In the bushes, Bonnie noticed many heads poking out of the helicopter, and a hint of embarrassment appeared on her face.

"Why are you shouting so loudly? Afraid others won't hear you?"

Ivor admitted frankly, "Yes, I'm afraid others won't hear me, afraid they won't know I have such a good wife."

Ivor's shamelessness left Bonnie speechless, her cheeks burning even redder.

"Shameless."

"Yeah, I'm shameless."

Ivor took advantage of Bonnie's unguarded moment and pounced on her.

"After all, what is more important than having a wife?"

Feeling the thick breath of the man enveloping her, Bonnie's cheeks reddened even more while her small hand pressed against the man's broad chest. "Everyone's watching. What are you saying?"

Ivor smiled.

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Chapter 594

"This is outrageous to you? I want to do something even more outrageous."

Bonnie hesitated, but before she could react, she felt his moist lips.

Realizing what he was doing, Bonnie tightened her grip on Ivor's collar.

Sensing Bonnie's tense body, Ivor gently patted her shoulder.

"In this situation, you should enjoy it, relax, and don't be nervous."

Although Bonnie thought Ivor was being shameless, she had to admit he had a point. After all, they had officially confirmed their relationship, so there was no need to be coy. Since Ivor had taken the initiative, she couldn't fall behind.

With this in mind, Bonnie wrapped her arms around Ivor's neck and fiercely kissed him back. Her response made Ivor even more excited, and he lost himself in kissing her passionately. Jim blushed on the helicopter. He quickly issued a command. "Everyone, lift your heads and don't look down."

The subordinates on the helicopter all followed the order except for Sienna, who was stubborn and insisted on peeking down.

As she watched, she smiled. After watching for a full ten seconds, she withdrew her gaze.

Then, she jumped off the helicopter with a parachute and rushed into the villa to start a massacre. Bonnie and Ivor continued to kiss passionately, unaffected in the slightest.

After dealing with everything, they returned to Pyralis.

Ivor stepped out of the car first and held Bonnie's arm gently as she got down. "Be careful."

Bonnie pushed away his hand, "Do you think I'm a fragile vase?"

Ivor shamelessly said, "You're not a vase, you're my treasure."

Bonnie's lips twitched before she rolled her eyes at him. "I don't want to talk to you so much."

She looped her arm through Ivor's and supported him forward. "Let me support you, after all, you're injured."

Ivor wouldn't miss any opportunity to take advantage of his future wife. Hearing Bonnie's words, he leaned toward her shoulder.

Although he was taking advantage of her, he also cared about her situation.

"Honey, am I pressing too hard on you?"

Bonnie's eyes looked helpless, "If you want to lean, then lean. I'm strong, not as weak as you think."

Ivor chuckled. "Yes, my wife is a strong woman. Every part of her is strong but only one place is the softest." Bonnie staggered. Just now, she saw the man's gaze passing over her chest.

"Your mind is in the wrong place. I advise you not to speak, or I can't guarantee that I won't knock you over."

Ivor smiled. "I think it's your mind that's in the wrong place. I'm not talking about that, but the internal part, your heart." Bonnie could tell that Ivor was being deliberate. If it weren't for his injury, she would have thrown him to the ground. "Shut up!"

Ivor immediately made a gesture to close his mouth with his hand. "Okay, since my wife won't let me speak, I won't speak."

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Chapter 595

With smiles of relief, the staff watched the sweet scene behind them.

"It seems that Mr. Ivor and Ms. Bonnie have reached a new level in their relationship."

"This is truly a cause for celebration! I'm so happy for Mr. Ivor."

"Yes, Mr. Ivor has been pursuing Ms. Bonnie for so long, and finally, he has seen the light at the end of the tunnel."

...

The whole villa was filled with a festive atmosphere as blessings poured in.

In the evening, Bonnie prepared a table full of dishes, all of which were Ivor's favorite foods. Leaning on his chin, a hint of satisfaction shone in his eyes while Bonnie bustled in the kitchen. "This feeling is nice."

Bonnie glanced at him but didn't respond to his remark. Instead, she pushed a bowl towards him. "Let's eat."

Ivor leaned back in his chair and stared straight at Bonnie.

"Honey, I'm injured. Can't you feed me?"

Bonnie glanced at him. "I remember you're not that delicate and fragile."

Ivor shrugged and looked innocent.

"But I got hurt for someone. Oh well, since you're unwilling to feed me, I'll eat by myself."

With that, Ivor clumsily picked up his cutlery. After struggling to pick up a piece of vegetable, it fell back onto the table.

Then he tried again, but the same thing happened. The food dropped back onto the table.

Watching the whole process, Bonnie took a deep breath. She recalled how he had risked his life to protect her. So, his request for her to feed him wasn't too much.

Reluctantly, she picked up a piece of meat with her fork and brought it to his lips. "Eat."

Ivor knew Bonnie's patience was limited, so he didn't hesitate. He took the meat from her fork and savored it, his eyes filled with satisfaction.

"The dishes you feed me are always delicious."

Ivor also picked up a piece of fish and removed the bones before offering it to Bonnie.

"Honey, you should eat, too."

"Mm." Bonnie didn't refuse and started eating.

After a few minutes, Ivor suddenly spoke up. "Honey, let's get engaged again."

Bonnie was stunned. She was unsure of what Ivor was up to.

"Engaged again?"

Ivor nodded. "Yes, engaged again. What do you think, honey?"

Bonnie furrowed her brows lightly and asked, "But didn't we already get engaged before?"

"Yes, we did. But that engagement ceremony was too hasty, with only family present. This time, I plan to hold a very grand engagement ceremony and invite everyone in our circle in Pyralis. Then, I'll choose a date for our wedding after we get engaged."

"It's just an engagement ceremony. Is it necessary to be so extravagant?"

"Is this considered extravagant? I plan to buy an island when we get married and plant all the flowers you like on the island. Wouldn't that be a romantic thing to do? It will be a memory for a lifetime." "Won't you be tired of it?"

"This is a major event in life. What's there to be tired of? Don't you think it's something to be happy about?"

Bonnie pursed her lips and pondered momentarily before saying, "Let's skip the engagement."

Upon hearing this, the light in Ivor's eyes gradually dimmed, and his smile faded.

'Didn't Bonnie agree to be with me already? Why wouldn't she want to get engaged again? Is it because she's only reluctantly with me because I saved her? It seems I need to work even harder to win Bonnie's heart.'

Just then, Bonnie spoke with determination. "Why not just get married right away?"

The dimness in his eyes vanished instantly, replaced by a radiant glow.

"W-What did you say? Are you saying you want to marry me right away?"

Ivor was so excited that he stammered, which made Bonnie smile.

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Chapter 596

This man always radiated dominance in front of outsiders, but now he seemed as childish as a kid.

Seeing Bonnie remain silent, Ivor asked again, "Honey, are you serious? You're not joking with me, right?" Bonnie raised an eyebrow lightly and said, "Do I look like someone who would joke about such a thing?"

Ivor excitedly lifted Bonnie from her chair and spun around with joy.

Bonnie held onto his shoulders. "Stop spinning. I'm getting dizzy."

Ivor exclaimed, "I'll call Grandpa right away to choose a date for us."

He quickly brought Sigmund over and informed him of Bonnie's willingness to marry him. Sigmund was also delighted and immediately took out a calendar to look for a good wedding date. "The most suitable time for the wedding is early next year."

Ivor became anxious immediately. "Early next year? That's still several months away. Aren't there any sooner dates?"

"A wedding is a major event. It can't be rushed." Seeing Ivor's impatient look, Sigmund teased, "Back then, when I arranged this marriage for you, you were completely unwilling. Now, you're in a hurry." Ivor replied confidently, "That was then, and this is now."

He then turned to Bonnie, took her hand, and said, "Honey, Grandpa said we have to wait until early next year. Are you not anxious? I'm sure you're very anxious, right? How about we get married today? We can have a simple wedding ceremony tonight."

Bonnie replied, "Didn't you say you wanted to prepare a grand wedding? It's already evening. Are you sure you want to rush into marriage like this?"

Ivor looked crestfallen and pleaded with her, "Well then, during this time, please don't run away."

Upon hearing this, Bonnie's expression turned stern. "Ivor, what do you think of me? If I agree to marry you, I will be wholeheartedly devoted to you. But there's no point in getting married if you don't trust me, even on the most basic level."

Ivor immediately became nervous and apologized, "Honey, I'm sorry. Please don't be angry."

Sigmund only smiled. The men from the Knight family would often spoil their wives, and the women would stay by them forever.

After soothing Bonnie, Ivor immediately began drafting the invitation list.

"Honey, who do you want to invite? Do you need my help?"

Bonnie pondered for a moment. "There are quite a few people I want to invite. I'll handle it myself."

"My poor wife." Ivor walked behind Bonnie and started massaging her shoulders.

Bonnie smiled and began thinking about whom to invite. 'Heath Rice and his family are definitely on the list. Then there are my disciples, the president of the Gemstone Association, Kay Steele...

'Of course, my seniors and kickboxing master would be invited without question. Russell and Elliana Barker... Who else...? I needed to think carefully and not forget anyone.'

In the study, Ivor was making his guest list when suddenly, there was a knock on the door.

He paused and said, "Come in."

His aunt and uncle entered the study. A hint of surprise flashed in Ivor's eyes.

"Uncle Gunnar and Aunt Sydney, what brings you here?"

The couple glanced at each other. Then Sydney stepped forward and asked, "Ivor, we heard that you're going to marry Bonnie?"

A gentle smile appeared on Ivor's face. "Yes."

Sydney furrowed her brows, looking somewhat hesitant.

"I don't think Bonnie is suitable for you, to be honest. So, I found a different match for you. She's impeccable in terms of family background, looks, and talent. She's many times better than Bonnie. Would you like to meet her? Maybe you'll hit it off?"

Ivor frowned. "Are you trying to arrange a blind date for me?"

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Chapter 597

Listening to his increasingly serious tone, Sydney's heart skipped a beat. She smiled awkwardly and said, "It's not a blind date. It's just a simple meeting. So you can get to know each other." Ivor maintained a severe expression and responded, "Aunt Sydney, I will only marry Bonnie in this lifetime. Apart from her, I don't want anyone else. So please don't meddle."

Sydney's expression turned unpleasant.

"Ivor, is it appropriate to pamper her like this? Are you not worried about spoiling her if you continue to treat her this way?"

Ivor raised an eyebrow and countered, "By your logic, does that mean you don't want your husband to treat you well? Or are you jealous of my wife?"

Everyone desired to be pampered and well-treated by their spouse. Sydney was no exception. After hearing Ivor's words, she couldn't help feeling envious. Then, she turned her head and directed her anger toward Gunnar.

Even though Sydney didn't say anything, Gunnar immediately understood her meaning. Instantly, cold sweat beaded on his forehead, and he hurriedly defended himself.

"Honey, am I not good enough for you? I buy you anything you want and listen to whatever you say. You're my everything! I've already given you everything I can. Will you stop looking at me like that?" Sydney's lips curled up in satisfaction. "That's right."

Seeing the smile on Sydney's face, Ivor chuckled. "Aunt Sydney, look at how well Uncle Gunnar treats you, and how much he spoils you. So why can't I treat my wife the same way?"

Sydney's mouth twitched, but she couldn't utter a word.

"Aunt Sydney, if there's nothing else, you can go home. I have some work to attend to." Ivor knew Sydney had nothing more to say and gave her a way out.

After all, Sydney was his uncle's wife.

Sydney smiled and replied, "Then we won't disturb your work. You focus on what you need to do."

She then walked over, grabbed Gunnar's sleeve, and pulled him away.

Sydney became increasingly angry as she paced back and forth in the living room at home.

"I just can't understand. Besides her pretty face, what does Bonnie have to offer? The Knight family is wealthy and influential. Ivor can get any other outstanding young lady. Why does he have to settle with Bonnie?"

Gunnar stood up, pulled her to the sofa, and patted her back to calm her down.

"If it doesn't work out, we'll think of another way. Don't get angry. What if you ruin your health?"

Sydney didn't respond; her brows furrowed as she pondered feasible solutions.

Then, she thought of something, and her eyes lit up. "Do you remember Mr. Gallagher's granddaughter, Eloise Gallagher?"

Gunnar quickly said, "Yes, I remember. That girl and Ivor were childhood friends, and they got along well. Everyone thought they would end up together. However, after she left to pursue her studies overseas, they rarely contacted each other."

"Yes, that's her! I heard she had a crush on Ivor back then and has remained single all these years. If she found out Ivor is marrying someone else, what would she do?"

Gunnar understood her meaning. "You mean, you want to use her to break up Ivor and Bonnie's relationship?"

"Exactly." Sydney nodded, "If she came back, Ivor will definitely choose her."

Gunnar always supported his wife wholeheartedly. "I'll find out her contact information."

"Well, let me know when you find out, and I'll contact her myself."

A sinister smile appeared on Sydney's face.

The reason she hated Bonnie so much was entirely because of her son. The fact that he was expelled from Arvandor because of Bonnie was still vivid in her memory. However, Bonnie eventually relented and allowed her son to return to the country.

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Chapter 598

Still, she was unable to control her rage. Bonnie had impacted her son's mind, as he began to follow her every other day like a lackey. She didn't understand at first, but then she realized that Bonnie must have impacted her son's thoughts.

"Damn Bonnie! I swear that I will ruin your marriage with Ivor. I must watch you being driven out of the Knight family!"

The next day, the Knight Group announced on its official website that Ivor and Bonnie would be married early next year.

This news generated an uproar as soon as it was released. Nearly a thousand comments were updated in just a few minutes.

Amidst the comments, an account with a certified badge suddenly appeared in the comment section.

Famous basketball celebrity Johnnie Hinton commented, "Congratulations to the two soon-to-be-wed couples. Wishing you a hundred years of happiness."

As soon as this comment appeared, netizens flocked to comment under Johnnie's account.

"I didn't expect the renowned basketball celebrity to have such a close relationship with the Knight family."

"Indeed, it's the Knight family, the wealthiest family in Pyralis! Look at their connection!"

"Sigh... when will I be able to be friends with the big shots?"

While netizens were discussing fervently, another account with a certified badge suddenly appeared in the comment section.

Pan, President of the Gemstone Association commented, "I will personally offer a pair of top-quality diamonds for the wedding."

"Wow! What brings in the president of the Gemstone Association?"

"My goodness, to see two of my favorite big shots together in my lifetime, I can die without regrets!"

"Tsk tsk, incredible, truly incredible."

However, what shocked netizens even more was yet to come.

Quenton Hill, the tea master, also came forward. "A beautiful love is like a pot of good tea, still fragrant after a thousand brews. I hope the two of you will walk hand in hand and always remember your original intentions."

Soon, Russell and Elliana Barker sent their blessings. One was the former president of Pyralis University, and the other was the President of the Pyralian Pianists Association. They wrote, "There's nothing more to say. You two are a perfect match."

The most exclusive fashion designer, Hamish Evans, followed closely. "Congratulations! All your wedding dresses and accessories will be entrusted to me."

Netizens were startled when these big shots, rarely seen by the general public, started appearing one after another.

"I'm stunned! Within a day, I saw so many living big shots active here."

"Who would've thought to see so many big shots on the Knight Family's page, I feel like I've also joined the upper class."

"Hey, you! Your feeling is an illusion. Who are you to join the upper class?"

"Damn, I'll fight you with my knowledge of the upper class."

Amidst the shock and argument, several more accounts with certified badges arrived.

Bonnie's fellow disciples in the kickboxing world also chimed in. They commented that they would present grand wedding gifts to the couple.

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Chapter 599

As the big shots kept coming, netizens were shocked to numbness.

"A-Are these big shots real or fake? I'm completely mystified."

"They all have certified badges, how could they be fake? I'm so glad I woke up early to check Twitter today, or I wouldn't have seen such a spectacle."

"Yes, all thanks to the lucky person marrying the Knight Group's president."

"I'm curious! What does the person marrying President Knight look like?"

"As a woman, tears of envy stream down my face."

The comment section kept refreshing, all in awe of the appearance of these big shots. However, the following comment that appeared shocked netizens even more.

Master Arturo commented, "Old folks don't talk much. I'll just say congratulations to express my feelings."

The netizens were even more enthralled when Master Arturo himself appeared to bestow his blessings in addition to the prior big shots.

"Oh my god, even Master Arturo, who rarely posts on Twitter, has come. We have to thank Mr. Knight's announcement, or we wouldn't have seen so many big shots gathered here." "Who would've thought? I'm so shocked I can't even speak."

"My mouth is gaping. My mom thought there was something wrong with my mouth and wanted to take me to the hospital. Who can understand my pain and shock?" Finally, another official account appeared.

It was the research institute of Ms. Bonita. "Our entire team wishes the two of you a long and happy life together, never to be apart."

The appearance of so many big shots had already shocked netizens. Now, the blessing from Ms. Bonita's research institute caused an even greater stir.

"Oh my god, even Ms. Bonita's research institute has come to give their blessings! The Knight family's connections are so vast. This is truly astonishing!"

As this comment came out, soon there were skeptical voices.

"Don't you guys think these big shots appearing are not just because of the Knight family? Although the Knight family is the wealthiest family in Pyralis, they've had many events in the past. But we haven't seen these big shots flocking like this. Could there be other reasons?"

"You make a good point. I remember when Gunnar Knight was married, it didn't cause such a stir."

"If it's not the Knight family, then could it be the new bride of the Knight family? Could her identity be extraordinary?"

"Stop kidding, that would be too far-fetched, right? She's so young, how much achievement and status could she have? How could these big shots come out to offer blessings because of her?" "You make sense. So who could it be? Who has such great abilities to gather all these big shots together?"

"Who knows?"

Just as everyone was speculating about Bonnie's identity, someone noticed that the renowned King of Combat, Jim, personally tagged Ivor's Twitter account and gave his congratulations. "Congratulations to the two of you for finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel after so much hardship and getting married. Congratulations."

Jim's appearance prompted netizens speculating about the identity of the lucky person about to marry into the Knight family to come out and express their views.

"Um... excuse me, I have a bold guess. Could it be... Ms. Bonita is the one who's marrying into the Knight family?!"

"You're really stretching it, aren't you? Ms. Bonita is busy with the lab. How could she have the time to talk about marriage?"

"I think you need to see a doctor. I'm a psychiatrist, do you need an appointment?"

"That guy just now really has an extraordinary imagination."

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Chapter 600

"I don't think it's impossible at all! Although Ms. Bonita is a legend in the Arvador research field, Knight Group's CEO is also outstanding. He's the man that every woman in Pyralis dreams of marrying. Maybe they hit it off and decided to get married?"

"Yeah, who can say for sure when it comes to relationships?"

As everyone expressed their opinions and debated, Trina Shepard became pale. Her hand gripping the phone tightened. She was 80 percent sure that Ivor was the president of the Knight Group.

Of course, this was just speculation. Trina couldn't be fully sure without a definite answer.

She suddenly recalled seeing Ivor and Ms. Bonita's silhouette at the airport when she accompanied her parents to a symposium. Ms. Bonita looked very similar to Bonnie.

'Is Bonnie actually-

She shook her head vigorously and muttered, "That's impossible. How can that useless Bonnie be Ms. Bonita? It must be a coincidence. All of this is just a coincidence."

Suddenly, she remembered Bonnie's acquaintance with Jim, and her face turned paler. Although Trina was unwilling to admit it, if Bonnie were Ms. Bonita, everything would have a reasonable explanation.

However, Trina had no way to verify the truth. If she could, she wanted to rush to Bonnie right now and ask her everything.

However, to avoid getting kicked out of Pyralis University again, she had to be careful not to act irrationally in front of Bonnie.

On the other hand, if Bonnie told her she was Ms. Bonita, she wouldn't be able to bear this shock. Hence, she could only silently pray that Bonnie was not Ms. Bonita.

Because of the appearance of various big shots on Twitter, storms had been stirred up. Bonnie didn't have time to care because she had received phone calls non-stop. Just as she hung up one call, she received another from Heath.

"Bonnie, congratulations! You and Mr. Ivor are finally together. Am I the first one to call and congratulate you? How do you feel? Are you excited? Happy? Touched?"

Bonnie sipped her water. Too much speaking made her throat almost hoarse. "Um, do you want to hear the truth or a lie?"

Heath didn't understand why Bonnie asked this. "Of course, I want to hear the truth!"

"Let me see." Bonnie glanced at her phone, "You are the 189th person to call me. You'd probably be 200th if you were a little later."

Heath's eyes widened, "189th? I used my family's Twitter account to send you blessings and called you immediately after. I didn't expect to be so far down the line. Bonnie, your social connections are amazing."

"It's okay," Bonnie said indifferently.

"Tsk tsk... you're showing off. It's breaking my little heart."

"Okay, thank you for your blessings. If there's nothing else, I'll hang up. I don't want to talk anymore, or my throat will be ruined."

"All right, let's meet up another day then."

Just as Bonnie hung up the phone, Ivor grabbed her waist. "Honey, I'm happy today. Finally, I announced that you're mine. From now on, you won't be able to escape from me."

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