

I Love You, Miss Genius (Bonnie Shepard)

Chapter 602 - 700

Chapter 602

Bonnie rubbed her chin in thought before giving Orson a meetup time. "Let's meet at six in the evening at Colonial Cuppa."

"Sure thing. That works for me," Orson replied happily, "Thank you for asking Master Kieran out for me. I don't know how to repay you."

"I barely did anything. You don't have to thank me," Bonnie said smilingly, "All right, then. I'll see you tomorrow evening."

"Okay, sure thing." Orson could barely contain his excitement.

The following evening, Bonnie left at half past five. Immediately after, she received a call from Kay, who sounded excited, "Are you free now, Master? I'm considering visiting you and learning some shadowboxing."

Bonnie entered her car and answered, "I'm busy now, but you can practice by yourself first. I'll give you some pointers at your place once I'm free."

"Okay, then. I'll see you later, Master." Kay was understanding, as she knew how busy Bonnie usually was. Then, the former realized something and scratched the back of her head, saying, "Um, something strange is happening. Grandpa was on cloud nine today. He was acting mysterious, too. I wonder who he's about to meet."

Bonnie smirked but kept Kay on the hook. "It might be someone you know."

"Huh? Besides you, I don't know anyone else who can excite him," Kay said, realizing something was amiss, "Wait a minute, Master. Why do you put it that way? Do you know something I don't?" "I guess you can say that," Bonnie said casually.

Kay asked again, "Who is it, Master? Come on. Hurry up and tell me. I want to know who's capable of making Grandpa so excited."

"It's no one important. I'm sure your grandpa will tell you once he gets home." Bonnie smiled mysteriously.

Kay was desperate to know and would not miss the chance to discover the truth. She said cutely, "Master, just tell me who it is. Pretty please!"

Bonnie refused to give her the answer. "I told you it's nobody important. Okay, I need to go now."

When she hung up, Kay could only stare at her phone. The latter thought about it but still could not figure out who the mysterious person was.

When Bonnie entered Colonial Cuppa, she saw Harold, Yolanda, and Trina sitting inside. The older couple just so happened to see Bonnie, too. They remembered how humiliated they felt at Orson's art exhibition because of Bonnie.

The older couple's expression soured, and their eyes brimmed with resentment. "It's just our luck to keep bumping into Bonnie wherever we go!"

"I lose my temper the moment I see her. Ugh, how I wish I could make her disappear."

Trina heard her grandparents' complaints but did not join in. Instead, she watched as Bonnie approached. Then, Trina felt a flood of emotions. She kept comparing Bonnie's silhouette to Bonita's, whom she saw when the latter went on stage to give a speech during the press conference for the latest nanomaterial.

Even after paying close attention, Trina still wondered if Bonnie was Bonita. The more Trina thought about it, the more inexplicable it became. Trina began to pray internally, 'Please don't let Bonnie be Ms. Bonita! Please don't let it be true!'

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Chapter 603

To the three Shepards' surprise, Bonnie walked past them without a glance in their direction. It angered Yolanda so much that she reddened with fury.

"That bitch had grown more disrespectful. I can't believe she ignored us. Where are her manners?" She was about to chase Bonnie and give the latter a piece of her mind to vent her frustrations.

However, Harold pulled his wife back after she took just a couple of steps. "That's enough. We know who Bonnie is. There's no point getting into another fight with her. Remember why we're here and sit down quietly. Don't get into any trouble."

The Shepards were there to discuss collaboration with Colonial Cuppa's owner. It would bring a considerable profit to the family if they could secure it. Naturally, the partnership was much more important than confronting Bonnie.

Yolanda suppressed her anger when she heard her husband's words. She sat down heavily and took a moment to regain her composure before glancing across the place. She asked, "Where's the owner's son? We've been sitting here forever, yet we haven't seen him."

Harold checked his watch, saying, "You're right. He's taking too long. I'll ask one of the staff members."

"I'm coming with you." Yolanda approached the reception with her husband.

Harold asked the receptionist, "Hello there. May I ask where the owner's son is?"

The receptionist looked at them and responded, "The owner's son? He went out."

Harold added, "Do you know when he'll get back?"

"Not a clue, sir. Is there a reason you're looking for him?"

"We're here to discuss a collaboration with him."

The receptionist nodded in understanding. "Maybe you guys can leave first. I'll let you guys know once he returns."

He waved. "That won't be necessary. We'll just wait for him here. That's how we can show him we're serious."

"Oh, suit yourselves then." Then, the receptionist lowered his head and checked the bills, ignoring the older couple. "Thanks," Harold responded courteously before taking his wife back to their seats.

Yolanda took her seat and glared at the receptionist, displeased. "What's with his attitude? We're the Shepards, for crying out loud. He's nothing but a receptionist at a measly tea shop. How dare she treat us that way? I can't believe he looked down on us!"

"Hush. Don't let anyone hear you." Harold glanced at the receptionist. After confirming the latter did not hear them, he whispered, "We can't afford to take this tea shop lightly. Some big shot owns Colonial Cuppa, so you must watch your words. Don't offend anyone unnecessarily."

Yolanda pursed her lips. "I thought this was just a tea shop. How much of a big shot can the owner be?"

"I'm sure you don't know about this, but a rumor about this place has been circulating among the high society circle."

"What kind of rumor?"

"From what I've heard, a hugely important person supports this tea shop."

"Stop stalling and tell me already. Who are you talking about?"

Instead of responding to her immediately, he checked his surroundings first. Once he was sure no one was around, he waved at Yolanda.

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Chapter 604

Harold whispered, "Keep your voice down and lean closer. I'm about to tell you who it is."

Yolanda leaned in immediately. "Hurry up and tell me."

Trina was also curious. She dragged her chair closer and leaned toward her grandfather. "Yeah, tell us, Grandpa."

He looked into their eyes and said, "That person is none other than Master Kieran."

Yolanda and Trina's eyes widened in surprise. After all, Kieran was the best painter in the world. Acquiring her paintings was nearly impossible, and they were also remarkably expensive.

Yolanda and Trina never expected the measly tea shop to have the support of one of the most influential figures in the world. They were in disbelief. The former gulped and recalled the way she regarded the receptionist. Then, a subtle fear rose in the older woman's chest.

"I-It's a good thing you stopped me earlier, or I would've made a huge mistake."

Harold patted his wife's shoulder and comforted her, "Although it's a rumor, it has circulated among the high society circle for a long time. That's why I think there's some truth to it. Still, we don't have to be too nervous. We only need to play it safe."

Yolanda patted her chest as she began to sweat. She was still a little scared about her improper behavior earlier. She said, "I could've easily offended Master Kieran just now. If that happened, our family's status in high society would fall."

"I'm glad no one heard me earlier. It would've been a disaster if someone did and told Master Kieran about it."

The older couple had tried kissing up to Orson before. Although he was one of the most prestigious painters, he was much lower than Kieran in prominence and reputation. One would even say Kieran was in a different league from Orson.

Trina was shocked when she heard her grandparents' discussion. She said, "If that's the case, I should keep my mouth shut, too. I don't want to offend anyone important."

Harold felt satisfied that his granddaughter had realized it. He added, "In any case, we should always be extra careful."

Trina nodded. "You're right, Grandpa."

At that moment, they saw a chubby man in a suit with a badge that read "Manager." The short manager left the staff room in a hurry. Even with his short and stout build, he ran as fast as possible. It was as if he was about to miss out on something big if he ran any slower.

"Joe!"

The receptionist who served Harold heard the manager's yell and quickly ran over. "What's wrong, Mr. Bailey? Why are you in such a hurry?"

Bailey grabbed Joe's arm and questioned, "Where is she? Where's she now? You've been standing here for so long! Didn't you see anything?"

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Chapter 605

Joe did not know what his manager was talking about. He scratched his head and asked, "Who are you talking about, Mr. Bailey? Why are you so worked up?"

Harold and the others were curious as they watched.

'Who on earth are they looking for? Why is the manager so worked up? Considering how fast he ran, I thought his legs were about to break.'

Bailey grew agitated and began to sweat when he realized Joe did not understand him. The former paced back and forth restlessly, saying, "Who else can it be?! I'm talking about Master Kieran! The waiter just told me she's here. Where is she now? Where did she go?!"

Harold, Yolanda, and Trina were shocked when they heard the name. They exchanged skeptical glances.

'We're only here to discuss a collaboration with the owner's son. I can't believe we might have the honor of meeting Kieran herself! We must seize this opportunity to talk to her later!'

"M-Master Kiera is here?!" Joe was so panicked that he stuttered and trembled. He almost could not speak. "I-I have no idea who that is. No one told me anything about this person!"

Bailey smacked his thigh in frustration. "Gah, it's all my fault! How did I forget you're new here and haven't seen her before? You wouldn't have known if she was standing in front of you! It's my fault for not being meticulous enough!"

Joe had never seen Bailey so flustered. The former hesitated before finally whispering to his manager, "Mr. Bailey, should we check the security footage? That way, we'll know which private room Master Kieran is in."

Bailey smacked the back of Joe's head. "How dare you say that?! You can't peek at Master Kieran's whereabouts through the security footage. If the owner's son finds out, he'll skin you alive." Joe's head went numb. When he heard what Bailey said, he froze and asked, "W-Well, what should we do? Is there no other way?"

Bailey glanced at the hallway and realized nobody was there. He could not help but sigh. "What else can I do? I'll have to sit here and wait until she leaves. I hope she won't think I'm rude because I didn't welcome her earlier."

His uneasiness caused Joe to grow panicked and restless. The latter said, "I'll watch, too."

Meanwhile, Harold heard the entire exchange and thought, 'What are the odds? We're waiting here anyway. It seems that Bailey guy knows who Kieran is. We'll just have to

wait and see what she looks like. 'Then, we'll approach and butter her up. If we're lucky, we might make a connection with her. Since Kieran is well-known throughout Arcandor, our family's standing in Pyralis will skyrocket if we befriend her.' The rare opportunity to elevate the Shepards' standing was within their grasp. The trio had to hold on to it tightly and never let go.

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Chapter 606

Harold fantasized about meeting Kieran. He ran various lines in his head, trying to find the best way to butter her up without offending her.

He was still racking his brain when Trina said, "Master Kieran is more prestigious than Master Orson. Connecting with her will erase the humiliation we suffered from Bonnie and Master Orson."

Yolanda agreed wholeheartedly, "You're right. If we can kiss up to Master Kiera, we can flaunt it to them and restore our pride. Although Master Orson is a fantastic artist with plenty of fans, he is a poor judge of character for choosing to take Bonnie's side.

"We have no reason to entertain him anymore. Once we've connected with Master Kieran, we'll brag about it to Master Orson to humiliate him."

"That's the spirit, you two. You better bring your A-game. Whatever you do, don't drop the ball," Harold said as he watched Bailey. The former would not miss the chance to butter Kieran up. "Understood, Grandpa," Trina responded.

Yolanda echoed, "Don't worry about it. Since it concerns our family, I won't be able to forgive myself if I drop the ball."

Harold nodded, pleased with their responses. "Nicely said."

Afterward, the trio stared at the private rooms in the hallway, fervently guessing Kieran's room and wondering when she would leave. However, they were not the only ones eager to meet her. Orson was also waiting for Kieran. He even reached the restaurant several hours earlier than the designated meeting time.

Although he was an older man, he behaved more like a youngster. He stood before the mirror in the private room and adjusted his tie before touching up his appearance. He feared he was underdressed for the occasion. The last thing he wanted was for Kieran to think less of him.

Then, he looked in the mirror and reminded himself not to give up on his goal.

'Bonnie told me Kieran isn't interested in taking on apprentices. Still, Kieran hasn't met me in person. If anything, she only met me when I was three. Perhaps she no longer remembers me. That's why I must show her how capable I am now. I might have a shot at becoming her apprentice.'

Orson felt better once he thought of it that way.

'There's one thing, though. I've been waiting for Kieran for a long while now. I wonder what's taking her so long.'

With that in mind, he checked his watch and counted the time. He could not help but grumble internally, 'Come on, Kieran. Hurry up already. I've been waiting forever.'

Orson stood and sat repeatedly from anxiety when he heard sounds outside the door. His eyes sparkled, and his anxiety disappeared as he shot up from his chair and marched to the door. He could not wait for the person outside to enter. Hence, he opened the door and welcomed her.

"You're finally here, Master Kieran-" Orson froze, and his excited smile faded as he looked at the person before him. "M-Master Bonnie?! What are you doing here?"

He peered outside and checked the hallway, hoping to see someone else. He could not help but feel disappointed when he noticed Bonnie was alone.

"Where's Master Kieran? Is she busy? Is that why she told you to come here and pass on her message again?" Orson looked behind Bonnie again, unwilling to accept that she came alone.

However, he had looked several times, and Bonnie was still the only person there. He could keep up his smile earlier, but his enthusiasm had plummeted.

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Chapter 607

Bonnie pursed her lips, asking, "Are you disappointed to see me?"

Orson sighed, looking dejected. "That's not it. I'm just disappointed that Master Kieran isn't here. I've been looking forward to this day since you promised me I could meet her. I would even say I could die without regrets if I did.

"I even prepared myself for today. I was so nervous and excited that I couldn't sleep last night. Still, I didn't expect her to be a no-show." He grinned bitterly. Bonnie looked at him from head to toe. She noticed his suit and gel in his hair, knowing it was a big deal for him.

Orson looked nothing like an older man. Instead, he looked like a little boy who dropped his candy in the mud just as he was about to taste it. It was because he could not meet one of Bonnie's many identities. Bonnie chuckled helplessly and entered the private room. Orson caught up to Bonnie and asked, "Did Master Kieran tell you why she couldn't make it? Will I ever meet her?"

Instead of responding, she looked at the table and saw a sketchbook and art supplies Orson had prepared. She approached them and picked up a brush.

"Orson, let's forget about Master Kieran for now. How about I paint something for you? Are you okay with that?"

Orson realized she did not respond to his questions and felt he understood what Kieran thought of him. So, he sighed and set aside his disappointment. He said, "Well, one has to know when to quit. After all, it isn't my destiny to meet Master Kieran."

He composed himself and approached Bonnie, asking, "What do we have here? Do you know how to paint, too? Did you make this up to make me feel better, Master Bonnie?"

"I used to paint and draw whenever I got bored."

"All right, then. You can paint whatever you like. I'll watch and give you pointers when necessary." Orson put his hands behind him and stood beside her.

Bonnie glanced at him before starting to paint. Orson might have been impressed with her fighting skills, but no one had commanded his admiration like Kieran regarding art. So, he readied himself to show Bonnie the ropes.

Soon after, he realized Bonnie was more equipped to make a painting than he had thought. Moreover, she was so proficient that she resembled a master artist. He knew something was amiss.

That said, Orson did not disturb Bonnie. Instead, he patiently watched as she painted. The more he watched, the more uncanny it seemed.

His eyes widened, and he stuttered, "U-Um, how is your painting style identical to Master Kieran's?! N-Not even I can tell this painting apart from hers. It's almost as if she painted it herself."

Orson grew more excited by the second. He gazed at her painting and inspected it closely, thinking he could find the difference between Bonnie's and Kieran's.

Judging by her brushwork and art style, the painting was identical to Kieran's past works. It was a spitting image of the traditional master painter's.

Orson was at a loss when Bonnie finished. He bolted upright and looked at her with intense curiosity.

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Chapter 608

"A-Are you related to Master Kiera or something?!"

Bonnie chuckled and leaned over to put her signature in the corner of her painting. Meanwhile, Orson watched her every move. He noticed how familiar Bonnie's handwriting was, but even so, he could not see it well enough.

He only knew that she was signing her work. However, it finally dawned on him whose signature it was. "I-Isn't that Kieran's signature?!"

Orson was shocked. He trembled, and his jaw dropped as he froze for three minutes before looking at Bonnie from head to toe. Suddenly, he remembered a three-year-old Kieran. He had met her once at a party decades ago.

He began to overlap the little girl's features with Bonnie's. Ultimately, their features blended harmoniously, and they became the same person. He threw his head back and laughed heartily.

Orson smacked his forehead regretfully, saying, "What a crazy moment. It turns out Master Kieran was before me all along! How did I miss it? You're so gifted that it's only expected of you to ace everything you do.

"I should've known, yet I acted like a fool and naively thought you merely knew Master Kieran. My mind isn't as sharp as it used to be. I guess age has finally caught up to me."

Bonnie said smilingly, "I want to thank you for secretly watching over me when I was three. I had no idea someone wanted to kidnap me. I'm lucky you showed up, or my life would've been completely different." Orson waved and said, "It was nothing. There's no need to thank me for that."

After some thought, Bonnie said, "I'm sorry I kept it a secret from you for so long, Orson. Please accept this painting as my apology."

Orson accepted it gingerly. He loved the painting more with every passing second. He held it close to his chest and grinned from ear to ear, saying, "I can't believe I have Master Kieran's painting! I have no regrets now."

He remembered asking to be her apprentice but was rejected. When he gazed at Bonnie, she smiled back bitterly.

"That explains why you wouldn't accept me as your apprentice. After all—"

'After all, Bonnie has taken Kay as her apprentice. My relationship with Kay would have been jumbled if Bonnie took me in, too. Kay is forthright and might greet me as a fellow apprentice instead of a grandfather.'

Although Orson imagined it, he could not deal with a moment like that. He might even get furious and kick Kay's behind.

'I must hand it to Kay. She might be a troublemaker, but she can be smart when it counts. After all, I've wanted to be Bonnie's apprentice for a long time now. However, Kay has already become one before I could even ask!'

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Chapter 609

Bonnie noticed Orson's thoughtful expression and knew what was bugging him. She advised, "Don't overthink it. I'll still show you some pointers, even though I can't accept you as my apprentice. Technically, it's the same deal without the title."

Orson agreed, thinking, 'It's crucial to keep all the benefits within the family. It doesn't matter who gets to be Bonnie's apprentice as long as it's me or Kay. Also, Bonnie promised to teach me the art of painting. I was worried about going home empty-handed just now, but what I ended up with trumps that.' Orson slowly came to terms with what had transpired. Finally, his smile returned.

"You're right, Master Bonnie. It was all my fault. I should've known to see things from another perspective."

"It's okay. What matters is that you see it now." Bonnie checked the time and said, "It's getting late. Care to join me for dinner?"

Orson nodded. "Of course! It just so happens I have a few questions about painting. We can discuss it over dinner."

"Fine by me," Bonnie replied, leaving the private room with him.

Meanwhile, Harold and the other two Shepards continued to look for Kieran but still failed. Trina's brows furrowed as she said, "It's been forever now. Where's Master Kieran? Did the manager get the wrong information?"

Harold looked at Bailey, who was still sitting at the reception desk. The latter was sweating as he looked around, nervous and distressed.

Harold remarked, "Just look at how nervous the manager is. Do you think he's mistaken? Good things come to those who wait, so let's wait."

Yolanda nodded. "You're right. We must meet Master Kieran today. If she graces us with one of her paintings, our family's status will soar in the high society circle. If that happens, one of the head honchos may want to collaborate with us."

Since the older couple said so, Trina thought she should zip it. "Okay, I'll do as you say, Grandma and Grandpa."

Yolanda looked at her gratefully. "You're the best grandchild anyone could have."

A moment later, the older woman saw something out of the corner of her eyes, and her heart dropped.

"What's wrong, Grandma?" Trina was bewildered. Then, she followed her grandmother's gaze and looked at the hallway. Trina couldn't explain it, but a deep sense of fear rose within her chest when she saw Bonnie.

Trina said, "That explains why Bonnie's here. It turns out Master Orson's here, too."

'I've learned not to mess with Bonnie the hard way. If I want to stay in Pyralis, I better stay out of her way.'

Yolanda recalled people looking at her and her husband mockingly at Orson's art exhibition. Rage and resentment overwhelmed the older woman at that moment.

Yolanda sneered and said, "Look how smug Bonnie is next to Master Orson. It's like she's trying to show everyone they're friends. I know Bonnie well enough to say she's doing this on purpose. She knows we're here and invited Master Orson to dinner to rub it in our faces!"

The more she spoke, the more irritated she became. "That's it! I can't stand her snobby look. I'm going over to teach her a lesson."

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Chapter 610

Yolanda stood up, furious, as she motioned to march over to Orson and Bonnie.

However, Harold frowned and pulled his wife back down, saying, "That's enough. I know how despicable Bonnie is, but it's not the right time to teach her a lesson. Master Kieran is our priority. Don't lose sight of your goal over something petty. Don't you think it'll be easier after we get Master Kieran on our side?"

Yolanda listened to her husband's reasoning and calmed down a bit. "You have a point. Master Kieran is our priority. I guess I can teach Bonnie a lesson next time."

Then, they saw the manager leap up from the couch in the reception area. He then hastily marched toward Bonnie and Orson.

Judging by Bailey's anxious posture and demeanor, he could not wait to stand beside them. Meanwhile, Yolanda was dumbfounded, asking, "What's gotten that manager's panties in a bunch?"

"It must be because he's excited to see Master Orson," Harold answered. Then, he saw Bonnie and said through gritted teeth, "Do you think it's because of that good-for-nothing?"

However, what happened next proved him wrong. Bailey ran to the duo and addressed Bonnie first instead of Orson. He was so worked up that he stuttered, "Y-You're here at last!"

Bailey quickly suppressed his feelings and smiled. He explained, "The waiter informed me of your arrival when I was in the office earlier. When I heard the news, I abandoned my work and ran over to welcome you, but you were already gone when I got out.

"I didn't know which private room you were in and didn't dare to check the security footage. I also told the owner's son about your arrival.

"He was ecstatic and wanted me to ensure you stay. Would you mind waiting a moment? He's on a private plane here as we speak. He also said he'll buy you dinner tonight, ma'am. If he fails, he won't be able to sleep tonight."

Meanwhile, Harold and the other two heard everything Bailey said. The trio were shocked and confused by what they heard.

"Um, why is the manager so respectful toward Bonnie? He's showing her more respect than he did Master Orson. Did he also greet Bonnie first?" Trina paled, and a sinking feeling in her gut followed. Yolanda was just as puzzled. "You're right. I wonder why the manager did that."

"I'll find out." Harold suppressed his explicable feelings and smiled before approaching Bailey. "Can I please have a moment of your time, Mr. Bailey? I have some questions for you."

Bailey frowned and rejected him. "I'm busy serving a VIP now. I don't have time for your questions. Stand aside and wait for me. I'll get to you when I'm free."

Harold did not expect the manager to disrespect him like that. To make matters worse, Bailey did it in Bonnie's presence, infuriating Harold.

Harold urged, "It's just a single question, Mr. Bailey. It won't take long."

As Bailey wondered if he should tend to the older man, Harold instinctively glanced at Bonnie. Naturally, she knew what Harold wanted to ask. She waved at Bailey and said, "It's okay. You can tend to him. I'll just sit here."

Now that Bailey had permission, he followed Harold and stopped several feet from Bonnie. "We're far enough, sir. What is it you wanted to ask?"

Harold glanced at Bonnie before whispering to the manager, "Why are you so respectful to that girl? Is she somehow involved in Colonial Cuppa?"

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Chapter 611

Bailey grew impatient. "What does it matter to you if she's involved in Colonial Cuppa?"

"Um..." Harold was stumped as Yolanda and Trina came over.

After composing himself, Harold said, "Frankly speaking, she's my granddaughter. More precisely, she used to be. We disowned her long ago."

"Wh-what?! How dare you kick Master-" Bailey almost told the trio that Bonnie was Master Kieran.

'I need to keep it a secret. Still, I don't think anyone can blame me if I didn't. After all, the older gentleman's words were shocking. He had a prestigious master painter as a granddaughter, yet he kicked her out of the family. He must be crazy.'

"How dare you people disown her?"

"It wasn't our fault!" Harold sighed helplessly. "She was nasty and showed no respect for her elders. She was even mean to her sister. I'd even call her an animal for doing heinous things!"

Bailey could not tolerate Harold's earlier hassle. However, the latter had stepped over the line and insulted Bonnie too much. Bailey grew furious and yelled, "How dare you insult Master Kieran like that! Someone degraded her like this last time and ended up at the bottom of the sea!"

'Huh? Kieran? H-How's that possible?'

Harold and the other two froze. Then, they decided it was impossible, and Harold questioned, "Did you call her Master Kieran? Did you make a mistake?"

'I refuse to believe Bonnie is Master Kieran!'

Yolanda followed her husband's lead and said, "Yeah, are you sure she didn't trick you, Mr. Bailey? Bonnie loves making up stories, after all. She doesn't possess any remarkable talents. You must be more careful around her. Don't let her deceive you.

"You can salvage this before it worsens. Quick, tell the security guards to kick her out of this place and look for the real Master Kieran. You might lose your job if the owner's son returns and sees you showing such respect to an impersonator."

"Do you think I'm blind? Master Kieran has been a regular customer here for a long time now. Of course, I'd recognize her!" Bailey was so furious that he wished to throw the trio into the sea.

Harold and the other two saw his expression and digested the truth. They knew Colonial Cuppa put their staff members through a stringent training program. Furthermore, Bailey was the manager, and someone like Bonnie could never deceive him.

However, the trio insisted on Bonnie being a good-for-nothing who could not keep a job. Hence, they wondered how she became the most prestigious painter alive.

Harold whipped around and looked at Bonnie. He wanted to say something but was shocked beyond words. Even Yolanda and Trina were stunned. That said, the older woman had a tougher time accepting the truth.

'I've always looked down on Bonnie. There's no one I find more sickening and distasteful than her. I can't accept that she's the most prestigious painter in the world.'

Yolanda took a deep breath and marched over to Bonnie. The former stared at Bonnie, bewildered, as she questioned, "I-Is it true that you're Master Kieran?"

Bonnie casually glanced at her. "Does it matter? Also, it's none of your business. I don't know why you're questioning me."

"None of my business?" Yolanda's eyes widened in shock. She was so furious that she almost forgot to breathe. "If you're Master Kieran, you're obligated to serve your family. You must elevate the Shepards' status."

Bonnie chuckled and glanced at Yolanda sidelong.

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Chapter 612

"Who says I'm obligated to do anything?" Bonnie questioned.

Yolanda replied matter-of-factly, "Because you're a member of the Shepard family!"

Bonnie folded her arms and said, "I thought you disowned me. What does your family have to do with me?"

The older woman was stumped and did not know how to retort. Meanwhile, Harold glanced at Bonnie and tried to spin it around to benefit his family. "Bonnie, I'll give you a second chance and consider letting you rejoin the family if you behave."

Before Bonnie could respond, Orson said sarcastically, "You guys weren't like this when you disowned her. Now that you see her value, you can't wait for her to rejoin your family. You just want to use her for your benefit. You're the definition of shameless."

Under normal circumstances, Orson was silent and mature. He would not make such remarks unless necessary. The fact that he could not help but speak up for Bonnie showed that he was furious at the Shepards' boldness.

Harold reddened with anger when he heard Orson's scornful remarks. However, the former could only swallow his anger due to Orson's status.

"Master Orson, this is my family business. Maybe you shouldn't interfere."

Orson scoffed. "What are you going to do about it?"

He had always treated Bonnie well. After learning that she was Master Kieran, he became even more protective of her. He could never stand idly by while her so-called family picked on her.

On the other hand, Harold did not expect Orson to be so caring toward Bonnie. Since the older man could not argue with Orson, he returned his attention to Bonnie.

"Either way, our blood still flows through you, Bonnie. You'll always be a family member. Also, you're a woman, and those you have around you will eventually leave. What will you do if you don't have a family to support you when that happens? Won't you grasp the opportunity to return to us? You should think long and hard about it."

Bonnie responded decisively, "I'm sorry, but I'm uninterested in rejoining your family."

Yolanda raised her brow and barked, "We're giving you a chance, Bonnie! You should learn to quit while you're ahead!"

Bonnie smirked, and her eyes were full of sarcasm. "I've never asked you for a chance."

"Why, you little-" Yolanda clutched her chest and rolled her eyes, looking as if she could pass out anytime.

Trina hurriedly held her trembling grandmother. "Grandma, are you okay?"

Trina turned to Bonnie and said, "Grandma's old and fragile. Do us a favor and stop upsetting her."

Bonnie glanced at her sidelong. "Who are you to teach me how to handle my problems? You must be sick of studying at Pyralis University. If that's the case, I can help you with that."

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Chapter 613

Trina stopped talking immediately and began to sweat bullets.

'I just can't afford to offend Bonnie. She's too high above me now, and I can never act recklessly in her presence.'

"Bonnie, be reasonable. Trina is just "

Before Harold could finish, Bonnie casually interjected, "Drop it. I'll never change my mind. Also, let me remind you that you made an official announcement. You stated that I have nothing to do with the family, even if I thrived or suffered.

"So, will you make another announcement saying you regret your decision because you were a poor judge of character? Will you admit you've mistaken a valuable asset for a piece of trash? I wonder if that means you'll offer me a solemn apology.

"I refuse to believe you and your wife will publicly apologize to me. Are you sure you can do something that will refute your previous statement and humiliate yourself?"

Harold and Yolanda were furious. However, they knew she was right and that they could never do something like that. The older couple refused to bring shame to

themselves. However, if Bonnie wanted to rejoin the family and ask for their mercy, they would do it.

Bonnie said mockingly, "Don't count on me rejoining the family. I won't bat an eye, even if you put down your pride and bring the whole family to beg me."

She glanced at Bailey standing nearby and added, "Bailey, show them the door."

Yolanda quivered with rage and pointed at Bonnie. "You'll regret this, Bonnie!"

Bonnie smirked, her eyes filled with sarcasm. "Hmph, I don't know the meaning of regret."

The older woman held her chest. "You insolent little brat! What did we do to deserve an ungrateful scum like you?"

Bailey was displeased with how shameless the Shepards were. He scoffed and marched over to show them the door. He said sternly, "Please leave!"

Orson glanced at Harold and the other two smugly. "Why are you idiots still here? You're sure as hell not joining us for dinner. Since pride matters most to you, I doubt you can put it aside."

He sounded so sarcastic that it angered Harold, but even so, the latter could say nothing. He took his wife's arm and pulled her to the door while Trina lowered her head and followed. When she reached the door, something compelled her to glance at Bonnie.

Trina's former stepsister stood among people who respected and admired her. Trina did not know when it happened, but the gap between her and Bonnie grew too wide. The former knew she could never achieve the same things Bonnie could.

Yolanda and Harold were about to get into their car when they realized Trina was not with them. The older woman barked, "Trina, what are you waiting for?! Hurry up!"

Trina returned to her senses and ran to her grandparents. "I'm coming, Grandma!"

An hour later, the trio reached home.

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Chapter 614

Harold had called the rest of his family on his way home. They dropped what they were doing and rushed back home.

Vera recalled what Harold told her and was so skeptical that she could not accept the information. "Are you sure Bonnie is Master Kieran?"

Yolanda grimaced with anger when she heard Bonnie's name. The former replied in exasperation, "When have Harold and I ever lied to you?"

Vera did not know how to respond for a moment. Then, she grumbled, "Bonnie has done nothing but stir up trouble when she stayed with us. That brat has done nothing to make me happy. How is she suddenly the most prestigious painter? That's- How is that possible?"

Vera was not the only one thinking that. The whole family shared her sentiment and thought the entire thing was inconceivable. Still, they had to accept that Bonnie was Kieran.

Grant said, "How superior or prestigious Bonnie is now doesn't matter. Our blood flows through her. With that in mind, we must ask her to make us a painting. She won't reject us if we put aside our pride." Harold swept his gaze across his family before focusing on Gresham and Vera. "You two know Bonnie never listens to anything we say! That said, I won't leave it at that. We must do what we can. Maybe we can turn it around somehow.

"You two are her parents, so you're closer to her than we are. You probably stand a better chance of convincing her than we do. You should ask her to make us a painting."

Gresham froze as various emotions overwhelmed him. "I-I can't do that! I announced on Twitter that I'll never talk to her again."

Harold gazed at Vera and wanted to say something, but she shook her head and spoke first, "I can't do it either. Back in Pyralis University, I swore before everyone that I would stop bugging Bonnie. Her friend even recorded the whole thing."

The couple exchanged glances and sighed simultaneously.

Vera instinctively gazed at Harold, thinking, 'Gresham and I know how talented Bonnie is, but we're prideful. I can't bear groveling at her feet and asking for a painting.'

"Dad, you're esteemed and respected. Maybe you can do it."

'It's not like I haven't tried,' Harold thought, 'However, Bonnie has rejected me mercilessly. I can't set aside my pride and ask her again.'

"You two are Bonnie's parents. If you can't do it, what makes you think I can? Furthermore, you know just how sharp-tongued she is more than anyone. She has shamed us every time we meet her. "Bonnie can mock us again if we ask her for a favor. Anyone can set aside their pride if they feel like it, but leave me out. Bah! What's wrong with that brat anyway? Why would she keep her talents a secret? "I don't know why she never told us who she really was. We wouldn't have disowned her if we knew how spectacular she was."

Now that Harold brought it up, Vera felt uneasy and embarrassed. She said, "Bonnie did mention it to me last time. She told me she won an award for her painting and discussed how she could treat your condition. It's just that we never believed her."

She could not help but feel responsible for how things had turned out.

'Bonnie did lie to us multiple times. How was I supposed to know the truth from the lies?'

While the family conversed, Trina, who used to be the loudest among them, kept her mouth shut. She also did her best to hide in a corner, trying not to let the others notice her.

Fernanda was standing nearby and saw what she was doing. The former sneered and raised her voice, "Uncle Gresham, don't you find the whole thing strange?! What about you, Aunt Vera?"

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Chapter 615

Vera and Gresham were confused as they looked at Fernanda. One of them asked, "What do you mean?"

Fernanda pointed at Trina, cowering in the corner. "You thought everything Bonnie told us was a lie. Someone led you to think she's a rotten egg and a good-for-nothing. That person is Trina. She was heavily involved in that."

Trina paled, and her lips trembled. Still, she smiled awkwardly and said, "I know we've had our differences, Fernanda. That should all be in the past. Have I offended you recently? Why must you accuse me?" Vera did not overthink it. She was puzzled by what Fernanda had just said. The former asked, "She's right, Fernanda. Why are you accusing her?"

Fernanda glanced at Trina sidelong before looking back at Vera and saying, "You're smart and don't need me to spell it out for you, right, Aunt Vera? You only need to remember Bonnie and Trina's interactions to get your answer."

Vera became even more confused. A moment later, she instinctively glanced at Vera.

Fernanda's words had also spurred Gresham to think about everything more deeply. As far as the couple was concerned, their daughter had always been well-behaved and thoughtful.

Vera and Gresham had never considered how Trina contributed to Bonnie's mischief and wrongdoings. However, after some thought, they finally realized something was indeed wrong.

Whenever Trina and Bonnie are alone, Trina either falls from the stairs or gets scalded by a bowl of soup. Trina always blames Bonnie before anyone figured out what happened. Our daughter cries and questions Bonnie's motive.

'Then, Trina would ask everyone not to punish Bonnie and defend her by saying she didn't do it on purpose. I can see that happening a few times, but similar things have happened too often. It can't be mere coincidences."

Once Gresham and Vera realized it, everyone glared at Trina. She looked at everyone and gulped, her fear evident.

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Chapter 616

Before Trina could explain herself, Fernanda pointed at her and said disdainfully, "Trina's still a country bumpkin at her core. Although a wealthy family raised her, it didn't help with the despicable way she handled things.

"Bonnie's a different case. She attained impressive achievements because of our family's genes, unlike a certain brat from the countryside.

"Trina could exert as much effort as possible, but she doesn't have the family's blood in her veins. She will always fall short, no matter what she does."

Fernanda took a step closer to Trina, the former's eyes full of hatred. "It's all your fault, Trina! Your parents disowned Bonnie, who's nothing short of excellent, because of you! Otherwise, she would've used her talents to make us a painting. That alone could've elevated our status.

"However, that didn't happen because of you! I would've sent you back to the countryside if it were up to me. Then, you wouldn't have ruined us!"

Trina panicked when she heard they might send her back to the countryside. After all, she had gotten used to living a wealthy life and could not live a rural one. So, she tried to find a way to save herself.

She ran to her grandparents and kneeled, begging tearfully, "I didn't mean to do anything like that! It was all Bonnie's fault. She has always disliked me, and I even overheard her calling me a bastard. She said I carried the rowdy genes of country folks.

"Bonnie also called me filthy and thought I didn't deserve to breathe the same air she did. I-I tried to make her happy and befriend her, but she detested me because I was born from country folks. I-I tried everything I could, but nothing worked."

Vera and Gresham began to suspect their daughter to be a scheming punk when they heard Fernanda's explanation. However, they relaxed a little after Trina's spiel.

Gresham thought, 'I knew there was a reason for Trina's actions. If Fernanda's right, I would've learned about it long ago. Vera and I aren't fools. We wouldn't make such a ridiculous mistake.'

Immediately after, he and his wife noticed Fernanda rolling her eyes at Trina. "What a load of crap, Trina. Why would Bonnie remain connected to her countryside parents if that's true? I know her folks built the largest house in the village.

"They even have a farm to breed ducks and chickens. I heard they also own a fruit orchard. They're living the best life in the countryside, not to mention Benedict, your biological brother. He works at Tang Fusion Studios as Hamish's apprentice.

"I remember us being jealous of him and wondering how he got so lucky. Although he was a nobody from the countryside, he became an apprentice to one of the most exclusive fashion designers. "Bonnie probably used her identity as Master Kieran and pulled some strings for Benedict. Why would she help her country folks and brother so much if she looks down on you because of your origin?" The more Harold and the

others listened, the more regretful they felt. Bonnie had no blood ties to her family in the countryside, yet she treated them generously. The Shepards regretted disowning her and should have allowed her to stay instead.

That way, it would have been easier for them to use Bonnie's resources and connections to their advantage. However, Trina had ruined everything.

"Damn, it! What did we do to deserve such rotten luck?! We ended up with someone who destroyed our family!" Harold detested Trina.

'How I wish to skin her alive!'

Yolanda, who had always been affectionate toward Trina, also began to resent her. The older woman wished she could strangle her granddaughter.

Meanwhile, Vera and Gresham pitied their daughter after hearing her side of the story. They thought there must have been a reason their daughter did all those things.

Suddenly, they remembered how Trina deceived them. Then, they looked at her with profound disappointment.

Trina paled in intense fear, not daring to retort her grandfather. She was worried she would reveal her true colors.

'Why did this happen? Bonnie had always been ordinary and unremarkable. How did she suddenly become the most prestigious painter in the world?'

The Shepards had just learned about Bonnie's identity as Master Kieran, yet they already distrusted Trina.

Trina thought, 'If Bonnie is also Ms. Bonita, I'll be in serious trouble. If so, my family will surely disown me.'

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Chapter 617

The more Trina thought about it, the more she panicked. She could not help but pray internally, 'Dear God, please don't let my suspicions be true! Bonnie can't be Bonita!'

Please, grant me my prayer!' After praying, she thought deeply, 'Now that I think about it, Bonita carries the hope for Arvador's scientific research alone. Bonnie probably isn't the same person. Still, I must admit she's talented in certain

areas.

'However, she can't possess so many talents. She's already the miracle doctor and the most prestigious painter. Bonnie can't have enough time to become a scientific prodigy like Bonita, right? No human can do that.'

With that in mind, Trina felt much more relieved. It was like a weight had been lifted off her shoulder.

The Shepards noticed Trina's silence but did not push her to respond. Instead, they simply shook their heads and sighed. On the other hand, Fernanda was not about to let her off the hook. "Earth to Trina! Why aren't you saying anything? Are you speechless because I exposed your true colors?"

Trina lowered her head and continued to cry. "I-I know everyone thinks Bonnie is the most extraordinary person now. You consider me a nobody and feel I no longer deserve your care. Still, I told you all the truth. I can't help it if you don't believe me."

Vera had showered Trina with love for more than two decades. The former could not bear to see Trina crying so miserably, no matter what she had done in the past.

Vera said, "That's enough. We'll discuss how to deal with Trina later. What matters now is figuring out a way to convince Bonnie to make us a painting." Everyone fell silent.

After all, Bonnie was impossibly difficult to deal with. No one wanted to do this fool's errand. However, she was such a massive asset that it would be foolish to leave her alone. Someone had to do it. Whether or not they pulled it off was another story.

Ultimately, Grant led his wife, Carlee, forward.

"It looks like no one wants to do it. I guess we'll give it a shot. I can't say we treated Bonnie nicely when she was still a part of the family, but I dare say we weren't too nasty with her. She'll respect me and do me a favor if I put it nicely."

Harold immediately agreed, "All right! I'll leave it to you to ask Bonnie for a painting. You're doing the family a huge favor. I hope you don't let us down."

"I can't promise you that, Dad. I can only try. You can't blame me if she doesn't comply."
"Um-"

Harold was about to say something, but Yolanda interrupted, "You know how bizarre Bonnie can be. We should be grateful Grant and Carlee are willing to accept the challenge. Stop pressuring them. All we have to do is wait for an update."

Harold considered Bonnie's character and saw things from his wife's perspective. He said, "Okay, then. Go ahead and give it a whirl. I won't blame you if things don't turn out how we want them to." Grant nodded. "I understand, Dad. We'll wait for Bonnie at Pyralis University's entrance in the morning."

The following day, Bonnie and Avril headed to the university gate. The former listened to Avril excitedly talking about the fun things that had happened on campus during her absence.

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Chapter 618

All of a sudden, Bonnie heard a familiar voice.

"You're finally here, Bonnie. We've been waiting for you."

She turned around and saw Grant and Carlee marching over to her. She knew why they were looking for her but feigned ignorance nonetheless. She said dryly, "Is there anything you want?"

'Although I'm Bonnie's uncle, she talks to me in that tone. No wonder the others didn't want to talk to her. No one can stand her attitude.

'Still, she's Master Kieran. I shouldn't get mad over such a trivial matter. Bonnie alone holds the key to elevating the family's status. I must flatter her and ensure she's happy.'

At the thought of that, his smile grew wider. "Carlee and I are here to discuss something important with you, Bonnie."

Then, out of the corner of his eyes, he saw Avril sitting beside her. "Um, this is about our family. Can I have a private moment with you, Bonnie?"

Bonnie did not mind it. Furthermore, some things were better left unheard by anyone who wasn't a family member. So, she looked at Avril and said, "Will you excuse me? I need to have a word with them."

Avril considered Bonnie's capabilities and decided that these two weren't a concern. Then, she did as Bonnie said and left them alone. "All right."

Bonnie followed the couple and sat down before saying coldly, "Is this better? Can you say what's on your mind now?"

Her attitude made Grant quite angry, but he thought about how she was Kieran and shoved his anger deep. "Here's the thing, Bonnie. The family knows you're Master Kieran now. I came to talk to you about it. 'I knew they were looking for me because of that.'

"Aren't I sitting right here already? Just cut to the chase and stop beating around the bush."

Grant said directly, "I know you've never forgiven us for kicking you out of the family. However, are you seriously going to hold the grudge for this long? Your parents have long stopped blaming you. It's just a little hard for them to talk to you. That's why we came on their behalf.

"They're older than you. So, I hope you'll do your duty as a daughter and back down. Give yourself and your parents a chance to patch things up."

Bonnie scratched her ears absentmindedly and said casually, "Yeah, so?"

That wasn't an answer at all. For a minute there, Grant was stumped and didn't know how to proceed. Taking a deep breath, he monitored her attitude and tried to probe her, "I know you're upstanding and care a lot about family.

"We misunderstood you before. I think you intended to repair your relationship with your parents but didn't know how to take the first step. So, how about you make a painting for them? I'll take it back and show it to them. Once they see your painting, they'll forgive you for your wrongdoings."

Bonnie folded her arms and looked at him disdainfully. Her posture and her gaze carried a thick sense of sarcasm.

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Chapter 619

"Your intentions are so clear that I can see it from outer space. Do you honestly think I don't know what you're scheming at?"

Grant was so angry at how she retorted to him that he gnashed his teeth. However, Bonnie was a great asset to the Shepard family. So, he concealed his feelings and continued to convince her.

"You're misunderstanding me, Bonnie. We're doing this because we want you to repair your relationship with your parents. There's no other agency here."

"Are you kidding me?" She couldn't help but see the absurd irony in this. If Gresham and the others meant to welcome me back to the family, why didn't they talk to me themselves?

"With that said, I'll never agree to it even if they came here. As far as I'm concerned, they're no longer my parents."

"Who do you think you guys are? What makes you think you could just show yourself here and try to trick me? Where did you guys feel confident I would agree to your terms?"

What she said hit home. She had exposed his greed for fame and wealth. That was why his face turned red at once.

"You have no respect for your elders, Bonnie! It doesn't matter how much you achieve in life. It'll never change the fact that you're a rebellious and disrespectful punk."

"Pfft!" She couldn't help but laugh. Then, she leaned in close to him with humor in her eyes. "I reserve my respect for people who deserve it. Do you think you guys deserve to be respected? You guys are nothing but pieces of trash!"

"Who are you calling a piece of trash?!" His face turned even redder with rage.

"You responded to me. I guess you're it."

"Stop acting cockily and think so highly of yourself, Bonnie! I'm telling you..." Before he could finish his sentence, she cut him off.

"I don't need to hear it. You should hurry back to Harold and the gang and stop thinking about getting me to rejoin the family. Otherwise, I'll be forced to post what they said in the live stream onto the internet and play it on a loop."

"Also, I've asked someone to record everything you said earlier. We'll put all of it up on the internet and let people see how shameless you Shepards are."

At the next moment, his gaze followed where she pointed. It was true. Avril was waving her phone at them.

There was more. Avril even smiled widely and gestured to Bonnie that she got everything.

'She outsmarted me! What a cunning bitch!'

He was about to say something, but Carlee reached and tugged at his arm. "Forget it, Grant. Don't say anything. We must return to Dad, Mom, Gresham, and Vera. We have to come up with another plan. Arguing with her isn't going to work."

He mulled it over and thought his wife had a point.

Looking at Bonnie, he swallowed his anger grudgingly and said, "I can tell that you don't welcome us. I guess we'll be taking our leave, then."

She watched as they left. Then, she snorted lightly.

'Is that all they've got? How dare they stir up trouble with me? Just how much did they overestimate themselves?!

Avril monitored everything that was happening here. Now that Grant and Carlee had left, she hurried over to Bonnie's side.

"With this video in our hands, they'll never find you again. Their faces were so red just now. You've got such a sharp tongue, Bonnie. No one can ever overtake you if it comes to debating."

Bonnie shrugged helplessly. "Do you think I want it? I wouldn't have wasted my breath on them if they didn't bring trouble to me."

"You're right. They're the ones who started the whole thing in the first place. They deserve to be schooled!" Avril went over and took Bonnie's arms in hers.

"Say, there's a new barbecue joint near our university. How about we grab a bite there later?"

Bonnie nodded and said, "Sure."

The next day, she finished her breakfast in the Knight Villa and was about to go out. Then, Ivor stood up instinctively. "Where are you going? I'm coming with you."

"I need to take care of some business at the research institute. I'll be home soon, so maybe you shouldn't tag along."

When he heard that she'd be home soon, he decided against following her. "Alright, then. Safe travels."

"Okay." She responded lightly and waved, turning to him before leaving swiftly.

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Chapter 620

Ivor had just sat on the couch and was about to work with his laptop when his phone on the table started buzzing.

Picking it up, he realized it was a text from Eloise Gallagher, someone he hadn't seen in a long time.

"I'm back in Arvandor, Ivor. It's been such a long time since we last saw each other. Are you free to catch up on old times?" Reading this text took him back. He started reminiscing about Eloise.

'We used to hang out a lot when we were young. I haven't contacted her as much since I returned after studying overseas. Now that I think about it, it has been seven or eight years since I last saw her.

'If she had contacted me when I was single, I might've agreed to meet up with her out of respect for our old friendship. However, I'm with Bonnie now. If she sees me hanging out with Eloise alone, she might have the wrong ideas about us.

'It's not like I'm interested in Eloise in that way, but I have to start thinking like a married man now. I can't afford to do any wrong by Bonnie.'

At the thought of that, he composed his reply.

"This is a bad time. I'm busy."

He had just finished composing the text, but Eloise had sent another text to him.

"When we studied overseas, you left so quickly that you forgot to take some of your belongings. They're pretty important to you because you used to care about them very much.

"That's why I kept them safe for you. Now that I'm back in Arvandor, I thought bringing them to you was a good idea to you."

At the next moment, she sent him a picture.

It was a trophy from when he won a competition overseas. There were also some medals from his time at the basketball club and a black notebook.

All of these were souvenirs of the friends he made while he was overseas.

'I don't intend to meet with you initially, but she's returned these stuff to me. I guess I should take them back. After all, my friends and I fought hard to win these medals. They have a lot of sentimental value to me.'

So, he deleted his previously composed text and wrote a new one.

"Sure. Where are you? Send me a location."

"See you at Blue Jazz Eatery. I'll take the seat by the window." "Alright."

Closing his laptop, he took his coat and went out the door.

Once he left, Gunnar and Sydney came out of the corner.

"He took the bait."

"The first phase is a success. Now, we need to execute the second phase of our plan. We must inform Bonnie, but we can't let her find out it's us."

"That's easy as pie." She had an idea.

He asked, puzzled, "How did you come up with an idea this fast?"

"Follow me home. I'll tell you about it on the way." She said confidently.

Later, they arrived at home.

She glanced at the video game room and raised her voice on purpose. "I've heard that Ivor's childhood friend, Eloise, is back in the country. He left in such a hurry just now. Do you think he's meeting her?" "I think so. After all, they knew each other when they were very young. I'm sure they're very close."

"That's what I thought, too. They must've been close. Ivor wouldn't have left in such a hurry to meet her otherwise. Moreover, they went to Blue Jazz Eatery. That place is so romantic. I feel a tingling sensation just thinking about it."

"There's no need to be jealous of them, honey. I'll take you there someday. Say, I passed by the backyard and saw that the lilies had blossomed a few days ago. Let's go check it out."

"Sure."

At the next moment, they headed toward the backyard.

Flynn heard everything they said and solemnly emerged from the video game room. His brows were knitted tightly.

'Did Ivor go to meet up with his childhood friend? Well, then. What about Bonnie?'

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Chapter 621

'Will Ivor be unfaithful to Bonnie? I can't stand by and do nothing. I have to call her and tell her about this earth-shattering news.'

Flynn tried calling Bonnie several times, but she didn't answer. Frustrated, he scratched the back of his ear and couldn't help but grumble, "Come on, Bonnie. Hurry up and pick up the phone. If you don't, someone else will steal your fiance!"

He gave her several more calls, but she still didn't answer.

"Forget it. I'm not going to achieve anything if I just stay here. I should just go out there and search for Bonnie instead."

With that, he took his phone and hurriedly left the villa.

Sydney and Gunnar poked their heads out from the corner. Then, they looked at their son from their hiding spot.

Noticing that her husband was about to reveal more than half his body, she hurriedly tapped his shoulder.

"Be careful. Don't let Flynn see you."

At the next moment, he quickly hunched himself a little. "I am being careful. He didn't see me or anything. With that said, he looked so nervous. Do you think he went out to look for Bonnie?"

"Do you have to ask? Of course, he did. Just think about how he always followed Bonnie as if he were her sidekick. It would've been strange if he hadn't looked for her after he heard what we said." "You're such a smart lady, Sydney. We managed to let Bonnie know about this information without revealing ourselves."

Sydney cast her mind back to the dramatic changes that had occurred to her son ever since Bonnie showed up and felt an intense hatred rising within her chest. Her eyes were filled with a thick sense of menace immediately.

"I won't let Bonnie know peace. That's a promise!"

Flynn drove out of his house and went straight to Bonita Research Institute. He had just arrived at the door when he saw Bonnie. She just came out of the building for some fresh air.

"Screech!" He slammed on the brake and darted out of his car.

"Something terrible happened, Bonnie!"

She asked, confused. "What on earth happened? Why are you so shocked?"

He told her everything he heard from his parents, "I tried calling you earlier, but you didn't answer. So, I have no choice but to drive out here and find you in person."
"Really?"

She wore an inexplicable expression. She gave herself some time to take it in. Then, she composed herself and pulled her phone out of her pocket.

'He's right. There are several missed calls.'

"I must've missed them because I silenced my phone while in the research institute."

"W-Well, what should we do now? Do you think Ivor is going to do anything unfaithful to you?"

"Not a chance." She responded confidently. "I'm very certain that he won't do anything like that. With that said, I don't think the lady came in peace. I'll go over there and take a

look at her." He stuck out his hand, smacked his chest aggressively, and volunteered himself. "I'll go with you, Bonnie. That way, I'll rip that hypocrite on your behalf. You don't even have to do it yourself." 'Ivor announced on Twitter that he would get married at the beginning of the year. However, Eloise tries to get close to him nonetheless. What else is she, if not a hypocrite?'

"There's no need for that." She lifted her chin. Her eyes were filled with a natural assertiveness. "I know just how to deal with her."

He blinked and looked at her with unblinking eyes.

"If you don't need my help, then I'm not going to butt in. You just have to take me along and let me join the fun. I won't do anything except see the hot gossip unfold before my eyes."

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Chapter 622

"Nuh-uh. Snot-nosed kids shouldn't barge in on adult matters. Just go back home and stay there." With that, Bonnie snatched the car key from Flynn. "I'll be taking your car for a while." He was stunned for a moment. Then, instinctively, he responded, "Oh, sure. Go ahead and take it."

'Wait a minute. Didn't I just say I wanted to tag along with Bonnie and see how it unfolds? Did she just say she won't take me with her? How cold-blooded is that?'

When he knew what was happening, she had stepped on the gas pedal and drove away.

He watched as she drove off into the distance and said bitterly, "I just want to get in on the fun and watch some hot gossip unfold before my eyes. Why is it this hard to make it happen?"

He stared at how she left for a long time before tearing his gaze away. Then, he turned around and left.

'If Bonnie doesn't want me there, I won't follow her then. Might as well go home and play some video games. After all, I can never go wrong if I do as she says.'

On the other side, Ivor had arrived at Blue Jazz Eatery. His distant, elegant bearing and tall figure attracted attention when he stepped inside.

A couple of girls muttered, "What a stunning guy. Is he some sort of celebrity?"

"Nuh-uh. That guy's not a celebrity. I've spent many years in the entertainment industry and never seen someone like him. Do you think I would've missed out on someone as gorgeous as him if he's a celebrity?"

"I guess you're right. We would've been able to recognize that man at first sight if he was a celebrity. He's just so stunning. I wonder who was lucky enough to have someone like him as her boyfriend." At the next moment, the muttering ladies heard a crisp voice.

"I'm here, Ivor."

Both of them instinctively turned toward the voice. That was when they saw a lady sporting a head full of wavy curly hair and delicate makeup on her face. She looked exquisite.

That lady was none other than Eloise.

She called out to Ivor because she overheard both of their exchanges. Doing this would ensure everyone in the restaurant thought she was a couple with him, and that notion made her feel extraordinarily proud.

He heard her and located her swiftly. Then, he walked over and asked, "Where is my stuff?"

She immediately wore a saddened expression.

"We used to be so close, Ivor. Are you just here to retrieve your stuff? Aren't you going to reminisce the past with me?"

"I guess we can chat a little." Realizing he was behaving rudely, he pulled the chair out. Just as he was about to take a seat, she stood up from her chair.

"I was joking. I know how important this stuff is to you. So, I'll give them to you now. That way, you can chat with me without worrying about them."

Now that she had stood up, he had not taken a seat. Instead, he had waited for her to take him his stuff.

She was still wondering how to stage an accident when she saw a waiter coming her way out of the corner of her eye. Without a moment's hesitation, she deliberately rammed into the waiter.

"Eek!"

She let out a startled cry as a hint of sparkle flashed in her eyes. Adjusting the angle she fell, she positioned herself to tumble onto Ivor.

At the last possible moment, someone reached out and held her back.

She thought it was Ivor. A trace of tender shyness flashed across her face when she turned around and said affectionately, "Thank you, Ivor..."

Before she could finish, her eyes were met with an exquisite, flawless face before she fell into an abrupt silence.

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Chapter 623

'What a gorgeous lady! Who is she? How does someone this exquisite even exist? I'm a lady, yet I'm close to having a crush on her. That said, I'm more jealous of her than anything else.' However, she regained her composure and pretended to be polite. "Thank you, miss. I would've fallen to the ground if it wasn't for you."

She said that but was cursing at the lady who saved her.

'If this lady hadn't come out of nowhere and stopped me from falling, I would've fallen into Ivor's embrace. It's all her fault. She ruined my plan.'

It took Bonnie less than a second to see through Eloise's facade and peer into the latter's true colors. Her lips curled into a smile as she scanned Eloise from head to toe with a calm gaze. Eloise couldn't explain it, but Bonnie's stares unnerved her.

Before she could say something, she saw Ivor looking at Bonnie and speaking affectionately. It was the kind of tone she had never been on the receiving end of.

"What brought you here?"

Bonnie gave him a sidelong glance. "What do you think?"

All of a sudden, he was gripped with panic. He said hastily, "Let me explain, Bonnie. It isn't what it looks like!"

"I haven't even said anything. What's gotten your panties in a bunch?" She rolled her eyes at him. Then, she glanced at Eloise, who was in a daze.

Eloise noticed Bonnie's glance. So, she seized the opportunity to ask her the burning question.

"Wh-who are you? How do you know Ivor?"

Pursing her lips, Bonnie asked, "Well. How do you know Ivor?"

Eloise puffed her chest, trying to show Bonnie who was in charge. "I'm Ivor's childhood friend."

Bonnie couldn't help but chuckle. "Does being his childhood friend mean you get to lean on my fiance's chest? What's the matter? Are you trying to be a homewrecker here? Are you cooking up a scheme to steal him away from me? Is that how you're going to tear my family apart?"

At first, Eloise didn't know who she was. However, she was starting to see the truth about how Ivor reacted.

However, she could no longer contain her frustration and jealousy when Bonnie told her that Ivor was her fiance.

She might've harbored a deep hatred and animosity for Bonnie. After all, the latter stole the man she loved from her. She didn't let any of it show on her face.

Instead, she pinched her thighs fiercely while maintaining a calm demeanor. Her eyes turned red, and she immediately put on a pitiful look. "I-It was an accident. Didn't you see how the waiter ran into me earlier?"

"Moreover, Ivor and I used to be very close in the past. Here you are, trying to twist something harmless into something so wicked and accuse me of seducing him. Just how ruthless are you?" Everything she said was directed at Bonnie, but she kept glancing at Ivor instead. She wanted to see just how he would react to this whole thing.

To her surprise, he merely remained calm and completely unfazed.

Suddenly, she gritted her teeth and forced tears into her eyes. More and more tears streamed down her cheeks like a broken faucet. No one could've stopped them, no matter what they did. She looked as if someone had done a horrible thing to her. If they didn't know any better, some people would've thought Bonnie was incredibly mean to her.

Eloise's reaction reminded Bonnie of another hypocritical lady in her former family.

'Speaking of, I've met several hypocritical ladies. I've gotten so good at dealing with them, too. What's the big deal having to deal with another one of them? It's a piece of cake.'

She turned her head sideways and blinked at him innocently at the thought.

"Do you think I'm ruthless?"

He responded immediately, "How are you ruthless in any way? As far as I'm concerned, you have the kindest soul in the whole wide world. You're like an angel, bringing hope to the mortals.

"Needless to say, I'm the luckiest of them because I could make you mine for real, and they can't."

He was filled with such adoration for her as he spoke. His tone was nothing but affectionate.

Bonnie's face turned red when she met his gaze and heard his voice.

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Chapter 624

'Gee. He's gotten so good at romantic talks that he's making me shy. Anyway, I need to deal with this hypocritical lady. So, I can't afford to let it show now.'

Pointing at Eloise, she said pitifully, "You say that, but she claimed that I'm ruthless."

Ivor turned his gaze at Eloise. The affection he had shown Bonnie earlier was replaced with an indifferent coldness.

"We might've been close in the past, Eloise. However, despite our friendship, I won't tolerate you insulting my fiancée. From here on out, if you say anything disrespectful to her, I'll cut you loose." Eloise felt as if someone stabbed her through the heart. The pain was so excruciating that it suffocated her a little.

'I've been in love with Ivor for the longest time here. So, why would he speak up for another lady instead? He didn't use to treat me this way. It's too heartbreaking.'

Bonnie shook his arm and put her acting skills to good use. She deliberately spoke in an adorable tone, "Come on, she's a lady at the end of the day. Don't be so mean to her."

"The fact is that she only badmouthed me a little. It's no big deal. I only ask for an apology. Then, I'll let it go."

Waves of pleasurable emotions overtook him.

'This is the first time Bonnie had spoken to me in such an adorable tone. I know she's just putting on an act, but I can't deny that it has sparked an overwhelming sense of affection in me.' "Okay, then." He flashed her a loving smile. The way he looked at her suggested that he would've had his way with her right there and then if he could.

It wasn't his fault, though. After all, she was the one who flirted with him.

He gave himself some time to regain his composure. Then, he suppressed his anger before glancing at Eloise coldly. "Did you hear what my fiancée said? I want you to apologize to her now." Eloise was so furious that she almost ground her teeth to dust.

'However, I won't be able to meet with him again if I don't apologize to her.'

At the thought of that, she lowered her head. The reluctance and frustration in her eyes were unmistakable. She said softly, "I'm sorry."

Her apology was as hollow as they came.

Ivor's brows furrowed. His voice was cold when he spoke. "You could've been louder."

She clenched her fist and tried so hard to shove her anger down that the veins on her forehead popped.

She held her breath and was about to apologize to Bonnie again. That was when she heard the latter's voice, "Forget it. She has apologized to me. I'll be the bigger man and let her off the hook." 'Did she just say she's the bigger man?' Eloise's eyes widened in shock. 'She was the one who made me apologize to her earlier! How dare she claim that she was the bigger man now?' Ignoring Eloise's glares, Bonnie glanced at the steak and spaghetti on the table.

"Were you guys about to have a meal together earlier? That's great. I've been working the entire day and didn't have time to put anything in my stomach. Take a seat, everyone. Let's eat." Ivor's voice was frustrated and concerned, "What do I have to say to get you to take your meals promptly?"

"I got so busy that I forgot about them. I'm going to eat something now. So, it's going to be fine." She made him sit and gestured for Eloise to do the same.

"Um... Take a seat, Eloise. There's no need to feel shy. After all, you're our guest. We would've felt uneasy if you remained standing."

At the next moment, Eloise gritted her teeth. The calm expression she plastered on her face almost fell apart. Fortunately, she lowered her head and kept her roiling emotions hidden. "Sure. Okay."

The waiter served all the dishes once the three of them were seated.

Ivor leaned in close to Bonnie and whispered to her.

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Chapter 625

"Beautifully done, Bonnie."

Her lips curled into a smile as she gazed at him with approval. "You did well yourself. You reacted quickly and went along with my bit flawlessly."

Then, something occurred to him, and he spoke timidly. "Are you mad that I'm meeting Eloise privately, Bonnie? Let me start by saying that we might be childhood friends, but I have no feelings for her. Please believe me."

Turning her head sideways, she glanced at him. "Would you have been able to remain calm if this happened to you?"

The next moment, his eyes sparkled, and his face lit up. "You make me so happy, Bonnie. That means you're only getting this upset and jealous about Eloise because you deeply love me."

She raised her eyebrows and asked, "Are you trying to tell me that you met up with her because you were trying to get me jealous?"

"That's not it. Here, let me explain."

He proceeded to tell her the entire story. "I didn't want to meet with her, but she told me I left some of the stuff from my time overseas when I returned to Arvandor. She took them back for me. "Those things hold a lot of sentimental value to me, so I agreed to meet with her first."

Then, he leaned closer to her and deliberately breathed at her ear. "Now, I've explained everything to you. Are you still mad at me?"

Her lips curled into a grin. "Do you think I'm that petty? Relax. I was just messing with you."

It was as if a heavy weight had been lifted off his shoulder. He smacked his chest dramatically in front of her.

"You almost gave me a heart attack. I thought you were mad at me for cheating on you. The moment I saw you in the restaurant, I thought of all the possible kinds of punishment you'd put me through." Her grin grew wider at that. "You've got a rich imagination, Ivor."

Noticing that she wasn't mad, he felt a smile coming on.

"Do you think it's an imagination? It's my way of telling you that I love you."

She rolled her eyes at him, exasperated. "You've got such a smart mouth. When do you think you can fix this part of you?"

"Whatever I said, I said it with my heart and soul. Are you going to forbid me from voicing my true thoughts?"

"I'm done talking to you."

She turned her head sideways, and he hastily tried to soothe her.

Eloise stared at them.

'Both of them treated me like air. They just said whatever they want, even though I'm right here.'

She bit on her lips. She didn't even realize she was digging her nails into her flesh.

'It's not just I hadn't confessed my love to him while studying overseas. However, Ivor had always coldly rejected my approach.'

'I didn't want him to cut me off. So, I could only get close to him as a friend and stay by his side that way. I dared not let him know how much I still loved him.'

'I might've successfully become his friend after that. However, my love only grew stronger as time went by. Nobody knew just how much it killed me to shove it down deep.

'After all this time, I thought he'd finally reciprocate my love. What did I get in the end? He cast our friendship aside for this bitch.

'Gosh. I'm so furious with her! I hate her so much that I could grind my teeth to dust! How I wish I could rip her to pieces. But I can't do anything except sit here and watch them be lovey-dovey.'

She was in the middle of her thoughts when she saw what was happening before her eyes. At first, she was stunned. Then, her eyes were brimming with a burning rage.

Ivor treated Bonnie with this utmost affection, and he stabbed a piece of food and brought it to her lips, intending to feed her.

"Their grilled swordfish with herb butter is something else, Bonnie. Here, I made sure that there were no bones in this piece. Hurry up and taste it."

Bonnie and Ivor might've been a couple, but she still couldn't get used to acting this lovey-dovey with him. That said, she noticed Eloise gritting her teeth. Bonnie grinned.

'I'm sure this frustrates her very much. Very well. I'm going to end her wishful thinking once and for all!'

"Okay. Here I come."

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Chapter 626

Bonnie ate the piece of fish on his fork and said, "Mmm. It's tasty."

Ivor was ecstatic that she was playing along. His lips curled into a big smile. Then, he put more food on her plate and said, "These tastes great too."

She ate all of them gracefully while he stared at her with love. It was as if they were both enshrouded in a bubble.

Eloise was gnashing her teeth so hard that she could've broken them. Needless to say, her face turned red with fury. She had tried her best to swallow her feelings, but she just couldn't stand it anymore. In the end, she shot up from her seat.

Bonnie and Ivor heard the sound and looked at Eloise.

Bonnie feigned concern. "What's the matter, Eloise? Are you not feeling well?"

Eloise thought to herself, 'Exactly! Both my eyes and my heart don't feel well!' However, she forced a smile and pretended to be courteous.

"I'm fine. It has just occurred to me that I needed to handle some matters. So, I'll be taking my leave now. Enjoy the meal, guys."

Bonnie nodded in understanding. Then, she looked at Ivor. "Why don't you send Eloise back home?"

Signs of hope surfaced in Eloise's expression. She looked at him pitifully.

'I know Bonnie suggested it, and I have no idea what she's playing at. However, it means getting some alone time with Ivor. After all, nothing matters more than my love for him.'

He frowned. Just as he was about to say something, she spoke first. "I'll gladly take up the offer, then." With that, she turned to Ivor and said, "Thanks for sending me home, Ivor." He turned to Bonnie, who was staring at Eloise with a blank expression.

"Wait, I've changed my mind. After all, you guys are childhood friends, and you did try to take advantage of my fiancé earlier. What will I do if you succumb to your lust while driving? You might take your dress off and seduce him..."

Then, Bonnie took a brief pause before continuing. "I have faith in Ivor's character and trust that he'd never betray me, but he might see something filthy if you did something like that. That simply wouldn't do." Eloise could just cough up blood. 'I knew she wouldn't show me that sort of kindness. So, this is her game. She deliberately gave me false hope, only to pull the rug from under me and humiliate me.'

"I think you've seriously misunderstood me, Bonnie. If you still don't believe me, I can always swear an oath. I don't have "

Before she could finish, Bonnie cut her off.

"Sure, go ahead and swear an oath! Swear to the heaven that if you have any impure thoughts about my fiancé, then you'll be cursed with incurable sores with pus."

Eloise's eyes widened with shock. She glared at Bonnie with murderous intensity.

"U-Um... I should take my leave now. Let's meet up again, Ivor."

It took everything she had to suppress the impulse to reach over and rip Bonnie's face off. Then, she turned around and left with a reddened face.

Bonnie glanced at Eloise and couldn't help but make fun of her. "This childhood friend of yours just can't take a joke."

He continued to put more food on her plate. "Just ignore her and focus on this delicious meal instead."

"Okay."

After the meal, both of them went back to the Knight Villa. Bonnie took a shower and lay down on her bed. She was ready for a good night's sleep when someone suddenly knocked on her door.

It didn't take her long to figure out who was standing outside. So, she responded leisurely, "Come in."

The door swung open. It was Ivor. "I'm here to redeem myself, Bonnie."

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Chapter 627

Bonnie was puzzled. "Redeem yourself?"

Ivor sat by the bed, his eyes filled with affection. "Yeah. I met with Eloise because I wanted to get my stuff back. However, I did meet up with her privately behind your back. So, I want to redeem myself by giving you a massage."

"Haven't I told you that I don't blame you for what happened?" Then, something occurred to her, and she stared at him. "Oh, I get it. Are you going to take advantage of me during the massage?"

He couldn't help but chuckle. "Do I look like someone like that? I'm just worried that you're tired because you came all the way to catch me in the act today."

She stared at him for a while before saying, "Alright, then. I'll believe you this once."

Then she lay down on the bed. "Get on with it."

Taking off his shoes, he climbed onto the bed and started massaging her shoulders gently.

"How does it feel? Am I hurting you?"

Her eyes were lowered while she wore a look of relaxation and pleasure. "It isn't half bad. Keep going."

"Alright."

At first, he was giving her a proper massage. However, he started having funny thoughts after he smelled the sweet scent of her hair.

She came to realize that there was something weird about the way he massaged her. In fact, he was starting to do it somewhat erotically.

She shot up from the bed and gripped his hands, which were touching places where they shouldn't have.

"Didn't we agree that you wouldn't take advantage of me? So, what do you think you're doing?"

He looked at her innocently and held her.

"Isn't it normal for me to feel turned on when my hot, beautiful wife is lying before me?"

She rolled her eyes at him. "Don't offer it if you can't do it. Also, don't even think about changing a perfectly normal massage into something else halfway through." Ivor was about to say something when she continued again.

"I was occupied with my research for the whole day. I'm worn out, and I'm trying to get some rest. Hurry up and go back to your room. Stop bugging me."

He looked at her eyes, which were filled with exhaustion, and stopped speaking further. "Sweet dreams, honey."

She yawned sleepily. "Goodnight."

The next day, Ivor and Floyd were on their way to the company when he asked, "Are there any fun places that Bonnie and I can go, Floyd? I'm talking about the places suitable for a short getaway." "Fun places?" Floyd pondered on it.

Before long, he had an idea, and his eyes sparkled.

"You could always take Ms. Bonnie to the hot springs, Mr. Ivor!"

"Hot springs?"

"That's right! There's a private hot spring in Verdant Valley Retreat with amazing vibes. Any couple that went there came back with their relationships stronger than ever. Needless to say, they became much sweeter to each other, too."

Floyd was single. It took Ivor by surprise that he'd hear something like this from Floyd. So, he looked at his assistant strangely.

"Listen to yourself. Why do you know about this place so much? Have you been there?"

Floyd felt a little embarrassed. He explained quickly, "No. I've never been there. I don't have a girlfriend. Who am I supposed to go to the hot spring with? I'm using my cousin and his wife as references."

"They used to show such little interest in each other that everyone thought they were about to get divorced. Then, they went away on a leisure trip to the hot spring, and she came back pregnant. She gave birth to a chubby baby."

"Now, they're as sweet as honey. Both of them are very clingy to each other, too. They can't even bear to leave each other for a second."

"That sounds magical." Ivor rubbed his chin gently, contemplating.

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Chapter 628

"Things between my cousin and his wife became much better after they went to the hot springs. It's up to you if the same happens to you and Ms. Bonnie. Hehehe..." Ivor scanned Floyd from head to toe with a strange look. He thought about it and said, "Make arrangements for me. Bonnie and I will be there in a couple of days." "Copy that, Mr. Ivor!" Floyd was excited. It was as if he was the one who was taking his girlfriend there.

Meanwhile, Eloise had returned to Gallagher Villa and threw a fit there. Once she was done taking out her frustrations, she pulled out her phone and called Sienna.

"I'm back in Arvador, Sienna. Let's meet up sometime."

"Sure thing, but I've been a little busy recently. So, you'll have to wait until I have the time."

"That's fine. Go ahead and do your thing. After all, I'm at Arvador most of the time. We can always meet again." Eloise paused briefly before she continued, "Actually, I have something I need to discuss with you now. Are you free to talk?"

"Of course. I'm all ears."

"I heard that someone called Bonnie was horrible to you recently. Listen, we're close friends. So, I'm definitely going to make her pay for treating you that way!"

Sienna couldn't help but frown when she heard Eloise bring up Bonnie. She stopped her friend immediately. "That won't be necessary."

"Are you saying that because your grandpa is right beside you?"

"No. I mean what I said. I'm fine with catching up on the past with you. So, I'm going to find some time for that and let you know as soon as I do. However, you should stop poking your nose into that particular business."

"Gotcha. That's it, then. Goodbye." Eloise hung up her phone and didn't think much of what Sienna said.

'Sienna must've reacted that way because Leo was standing next to her. After all, Leo is very strict with her. I can totally understand it if she didn't dare accept my help when he's around.

'It's okay, though. If Sienna doesn't want to do it, then I'll do it myself and make her fans ruin Bonnie's reputation!'

At the thought of it, her eyes were filled with an eerie glow.

Then she made a call to someone else. "I hope you can dig up every picture and video clip of Orpheus and Bonnie as soon as possible."

"Roger that."

Before long, she saw what she wanted to see. Picking out some of the more provocative pictures, she sent them all to Sienna. Then, she sent several texts.

"I'm sure you don't know about this, Sienna. Bonnie has seduced Orpheus from a few years ago."

"I know you told me not to butt in, but I just can't stand it when my best friend is hurt like this."

"Leave it to me. I won't let you suffer for nothing."

At the next moment, she sent another picture to Sienna.

It was a picture of the moment when Orpheus and Bonnie had a barbecue. Orpheus had gotten drunk and Bonnie took him to a hotel.

"Look at what Bonnie's doing, Sienna. Just how slutty is she? It's like she can't live a day without sleeping with a man! I'm willing to bet that she seduced Orpheus back when you and him were still together." However, Sienna was so busy with film shooting that she missed out on these pictures and texts.

Eloise took her silence as consent to what she was going to do. All of a sudden, she grew more reckless.

First, she hired someone to forge some pictures of Bonnie flirting with some perverted business owners.

Then, she added these pictures to her previous findings. She also put in some video clips and uploaded all of them to the internet.

Lastly, she hired internet trolls to create heated discussions about it.

Before long, this topic made the trending search in the blink of an eye. Bonnie was in for wave after wave of insults and rebuke.

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Chapter 629

The next day, Bonnie had just woken up when she received Orpheus's call.

"We're shooting a fighting scene now, Bonwick, but the director wasn't sure if what we shot was good enough. He asked me to give you a call and ask you to come over since you're the original author." "Sure thing. I'd just woken up, though. So, give me a minute. I'll be there once I've changed." Slipping out of her bed, she went over to the bathroom to freshen up.

He chuckled. "It's okay, Bonwick. Take it easy. We can always shoot other scenes while we wait for you."

"Alright." She responded and hung up the phone.

Half an hour later, her car pulled over by the film set entrance. The director himself came outside to welcome her.

"You're finally here, Ms. Bonnie. I need some pointers. What should I do to capture the flawless and impactful scene from the original novel? We shot a few of these scenes, but I just can't get the feel right. It fell short of my expectations."

"Have them reenact the scene again. I need to see it before I can offer suggestions." She sat down behind the cameras.

"Okay." The director barked orders to everyone in the film set with a megaphone. "Ready yourselves, people. Get yourself into your roles. The cameras will be rolling in five."

The actors and actresses went to the side to prepare themselves mentally.

Some of the extras glanced at her and started discussing her.

"Is she the most famous and successful author in the literary industry? Is she Jane? She's so young and beautiful."

"You said it. Her writing style is so mature that I used to think that she was an old lady. I didn't think she'd be younger than I am."

"She could've earned money using her exquisite looks, but she chose to rely on her talent instead. I have to say that I envy her very much."

They were in the middle of the discussion when they saw Orpheus giving Bonnie breakfast.

"You came here as soon as you woke up. Did you have breakfast? This place has some very nice bagels. Why don't you have a taste and tell me if you like it?"

Bonnie did come here in a hurry without having breakfast. She took it and said, "I appreciate that."

The director also saw it and added, "He's right, Ms. Bonnie. Go ahead and have your breakfast. I'll ask them to hold on for a few minutes."

"That's fine." She proceeded to finish her bagel in several bites. "Return to your positions and reenact the scene, everyone. That'll help me see the whole thing before giving suggestions." "Okay, Ms. Bonnie."

The actors and actresses responded in unison and started the shooting.

With that said, everyone was a little nervous when they were acting in front of her. That included Orpheus as well. They wanted to show her their best.

She saw how nervous they were, and couldn't help but tease them a little. "Why are you guys this nervous? Do I look fierce or something?" Everyone directed their gazes at her.

'She's so extraordinarily beautiful that there were no words that could describe how gorgeous she is. Why would she look fierce at all?' 'We just want to give it our best when she's around.'

"Relax. Just think of me as a normal staff member. I know I'm the original author, but everyone plays a role in bringing the characters to life.

"I'm here to make things run smoothly. So, it's important that you guys relax and act the way you would normally. That's the only way I could spot the issue. It'll be easier for you guys to do your jobs once we resolve it. Wouldn't you agree?"

Everyone began to relax and focus on acting after her comforting words.

She saw the whole scene and proceeded to provide some suggestions.

The director adjusted the scene according to the issues she pointed out. As expected, it streamlined the entire shooting for that scene, and they finally got the feel right.

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Chapter 630

"This is incredible! You're amazing!" The director gave Bonnie a thumbs up. "We needed you after all, Ms. Bonnie. I'm grateful that you showed up when you did, Ms. Bonnie. Otherwise, I would surely have lost the last few strands of hair on my head."

"You did a marvelous job as well. The casting and the props were very close to the original novel." Bonnie gave him an approving look.

The director's face turned red when Bonnie complimented him.

"I'm happy that you're happy with it, Ms. Bonnie. I'll keep doing better."

"Don't push yourself too hard. Just do as you were." She smiled gently and stood up. "I need to use the restroom. You can go ahead and shoot the scenes yourself. I'll make more suggestions when I return." He nodded at once. "Loud and clear, Ms. Bonnie."

She nodded slightly in response and went to the restroom. As she was about to leave, she heard some mutterings in the hallway.

"These internet discussions have to be fake. How could Ms. Bonnie be someone like this?"

"That's right. I'm sure some of the netizens were jealous of her talents and defamed her on purpose! That's it. I won't allow anyone to insult Ms. Bonnie this way. I have to log in and defend her." "You guys better stay out of it. The original poster managed to dig up this many video clips and pictures. So, there must be some ounce of truth in there. You guys might get into a heap of trouble if you intervene!"

"In all honesty, I think Orpheus is a little too sweet on Ms. Bonnie. Do you think there may be something between them?"

They were discussing it intensely when they heard Bonnie's voice next to them.

"Are you guys talking about me?"

All of them were rooted to the spot. Their faces fell the moment they saw her pop up before them. The extra who started this discussion was so startled that she dropped her phone.

Bonnie bent down to pick up the phone. Then, she saw the pictures and video clips, as well as the berating comments.

She couldn't help but raise her brows. "Someone really fumbled the Photoshop on these pictures."

Everyone was shocked. Not only did Bonnie remain calm when she saw her own scandalous news, but she joined in on the discussion.

"Aren't you the least bit upset when you saw these discussions, Ms. Bonnie?"

"Yeah. They defamed and slandered your good name. That's too much. We should find the people who started these false rumors and send them to the police. Do they honestly think the internet is a lawless wasteland? How could they just do whatever they want?"

"Hear, hear. Being a keyboard warrior is as good as being a piece of trash!"

Instead of responding to their questions and comments, she handed the phone back to its owner.

"The shooting for the next scene is about to begin. Come over when you guys are ready." With that, she left the hallway and went to the studio.

Everyone watched as she left and couldn't help but gasp in admiration. "Ms. Bonnie truly lives up to Jane's name. She's completely unfazed."

"I would've fallen apart a long time ago if I were in her shoes. How could she have remained this calm? I have to hand it to her, Ms. Bonnie is kind of a badass."

"That's enough of this topic. Hurry up and get ready for the shooting. Otherwise, the director is going to let us have it."

Bonnie entered the studio and had just sat on the chair when she saw Orpheus approaching her with his phone. The anger in his eyes was unmistakable. "Did you see everything they wrote on the internet?"

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Chapter 631

"I've seen it." Bonnie's expression remained calm, as if she were talking about something insignificant to her.

Orpheus had already guessed who was behind this vile situation.

"Is it Sienna? I noticed that about 70 percent of the people cursing you are her fans!"

As he spoke, he handed his phone to Bonnie. Those curses instantly caught her eye.

"It seems that the previous incident was true. Sienna is pitiful. She suffered so much injustice but don't dare to speak up."

"This despicable woman not only seduced Sienna's boyfriend but also had connections with other men. If you count them all, there may be even hundreds of men involved here. She's so shameless. Isn't she afraid of getting diseases?"

"She's promiscuous. How could she possibly be afraid of diseases? The biggest victim in this whole thing is Sienna. When I think back to Sienna's pale and haggard appearance before, my heart aches." "Sienna can't speak up. As her fans, we must not stand idly by and watch her suffer injustice. We must unite and seek justice for Sienna."

Bonnie silently read a few comments without expression, then said, "It wasn't Sienna who did this. Someone is deliberately instigating trouble between her and me."

Orpheus looked puzzled and asked, "But didn't she target you before? How can you be so sure that she didn't do this?"

"I don't know how to explain this to you right now, but I said it wasn't her, so it wasn't."

Bonnie looked at the director, who was ready for the next scene, and said, "The next scene is about to start, you should go prepare. I'll continue to watch."

Orpheus looked at Bonnie with disbelief. "After such a big incident, you're still here focusing on filming? Aren't you going to do something about it?"

Bonnie scoffed. "It's just a bunch of clowns. Does it matter if it's solved now or later? My task today is to watch you all finish shooting these scenes. I won't bother with anything else."

Orpheus gave Bonnie a thumbs-up. "Your mental fortitude is so good that it's almost abnormal."

Bonnie chuckled lightly. "Alright, stop babbling. Hurry up and get ready for the shoot."

"Okay," Orpheus responded, not paying any more attention to the matter. He picked up the script and rehearsed his lines again.

Meanwhile, Bonnie continued to watch the film. She didn't even want to bother with the drama happening on the internet. To her, dealing with such matters was simple, so why bother wasting her energy on it? The most urgent task was to resolve the filming.

Sienna came out of the recording studio only to find her fan group filled with messages. It was all about Bonnie's overwhelming scandal on the internet.

Her fans kept mentioning her on Twitter, saying they would help her seek justice.

"Sienna, if you're being bullied, just speak up. We won't let you face it alone."

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Chapter 632

"Yeah, Sienna, you still have us. We are your strongest supporters. Whatever you want to do, we support you."

"Sienna, don't worry. This time, we must make that despicable person pay a heavy price. We won't let her off so easily."

Anger welled up in Sienna's chest when she looked at the messages from her fans and the insults directed at Bonnie in the fan group.

She would have been delighted to see such a scene in the past, before she discovered Bonnie's identity and that Bonnie had no relationship with Orpheus.

But now, insulting Bonnie like this was like asking for trouble.

As Sienna thought about this, she noticed several unread messages on Twitter. With a light tap of her fingertips on the screen, she saw Eloise's message, only to realize that all of this was Eloise's doing! She immediately dialed Eloise's number without hesitation, but the other party didn't answer.

As Sienna listened to the automated message on the other end of the phone, she felt as if her chest was on fire. She called four or five times in a row, but it was the same each time. Eloise's phone was temporarily disconnected.

Sienna was so furious that she almost smashed her phone, but she also understood that getting angry wouldn't solve anything. Hence, she decided to resolve Bonnie's matter first. She immediately logged into her account to clear Bonnie's name.

She posted, "I have seen the rumors on the internet. I declare that the circulated videos and photos are all false. I hope everyone can remain rational and not harm innocent people because of lies. "Moreover, I have interacted with her for a while and know she is different from the person described by the marketing account. I demand the

marketing account delete the posts immediately. Otherwise, they will be held responsible!"

As soon as this clarification message came out, Sienna's fans erupted in anger.

"What's going on? Why is Sienna speaking up for Bonnie? Is there another story behind this?"

"Sienna, if you're in trouble, just blink twice. Don't worry, we'll stand up for you!"

"Come on! Hang in there! We must not bow down to the bad guys or compromise. We support you."

"Everyone, hurry up and support her. We must let more people see Sienna's grievances. This will determine whether or not we can bring Sienna to justice."

After publishing the message, Sienna sat on the couch with her phone in her hand.

But after seeing the comments from her fans, she was fuming. She had already tried her best to clear things up for Bonnie, but this group of fans didn't understand her intentions. They intensified their insults toward Bonnie instead!

Eloise finally called her back.

"Sienna, why did you call me so many times? Is there something important you need to talk to me about?"

Hearing Eloise's seemingly ignorant tone, Sienna was instantly furious, and the hand holding the phone tightened even more.

"Eloise, didn't I tell you that I don't need you to do anything? Why did you interfere? Did you post those pictures and videos on the internet? Delete those posts immediately, or you will regret everything you did today!"

Thinking that Sienna was so angry with her because her grandfather was around, Eloise didn't care.

"Sienna, I understand. I will delete those things."

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Chapter 633

Eloise thought she was helping Sienna out by saying those things for Leo to hear.

Sienna detected the nonchalant tone in Eloise's voice and emphasized her words with a firmer tone.

"Eloise, Bonnie's identity is far from simple. I advise you to stop immediately, lest things escalate to a point where they cannot be salvaged. Even the heavens won't be able to save you then." If Eloise still didn't understand, then she was beyond redemption.

Eloise replied very nicely, "Sienna, I understand your meaning. There is no need to say more. I will delete those things."

Sienna frowned, unsure if Eloise believed her or not. 'She should, right? After all, I made my point very clear.'

Sienna reminded her again, "You'd better follow through. Don't dig your own grave."

"Got it, Sienna. If there's nothing else, I'll hang up now." Eloise thought that she had put on enough of a show in front of Sienna's grandfather.

"Okay," Sienna responded indifferently. Just before hanging up, she spoke up again.

"Remember what I said, don't take it lightly."

"Got it, Sienna," Eloise quickly responded.

After hanging up the phone, Eloise looked at how public opinion online was fermenting precisely as she had imagined. A sinister smile crept onto her lips.

Upon hearing Sienna's words, she did not stop. She escalated the situation further by hiring more internet ghostwriters to comment as she wanted, pushing this matter even further.

Meanwhile, Ivor watched as people online spoke ill of Bonnie, his eyes barely containing his restrained anger.

With a voice as cold as ice chips, he glanced up at Floyd and asked, "Have you finished investigating everything I asked you to?"

Floyd quickly nodded. "Yes, I have."

Ivor slowly stood up from the sofa, a storm brewing in his eyes. "Let's go."

"Yes." Floyd quickly caught up with Ivor's pace.

Outside the abandoned factory, an exceedingly miserable-looking man with a bloated face crouched on the ground, covered in bruises. The head bodyguard was interrogating him.

"You received a transfer yesterday afternoon. Who gave you the money?"

Carlton Benson swallowed hard. He could not control his trembling, looking at the hoard of bodyguards surrounding him.

"I-I don't know who gave me the money?"

The head bodyguard heard this and flexed his fingers, making a cracking sound.

"Wasn't the pain just now enough to make a lasting impression?"

As he spoke, he approached Carlton slowly.

Just as the man's fist was about to strike, Carlton was so frightened that he almost wet himself, retreating in panic.

"I'll talk! Don't hit me!"

Seeing the other party pause, Carlton hurriedly explained. "The money was transferred to my account through multiple anonymous accounts. I don't know who sent it."

"You don't know who sent the money, but you dare spread rumors about others on the internet?"

"I was just greedy and reluctant to let go of the ten grand. That's why I did what they said. I promise, I won't do it again. Please, have mercy on me. That's not what I intended." The head bodyguard looked at him with a smirk.

Carlton kept pleading, "Please! Please spare me! I was just being used by someone else."

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Chapter 634 -

Chapter 634

"Do you know who the person you spread rumors about indiscriminately is?"

Carlton shook his head, "I don't know!"

Before he could finish speaking, someone kicked him in the face.

"You dare to touch my woman? Are you tired of living?"

As a businessman, Carlton had attended the Knight family's events and had seen Ivor in person.

Hence, he immediately recognized the richest man in Pyralis. Waves of shock surged through him, and he was filled with horror. "M-Mr. Ivor?!"

Ivor's thin lips curled slightly, but his eyes were frosty.

"Yes, you've got some eyesight."

Carlton finally realized the extent of the influential figure he had offended. He quickly crawled to Ivor's feet and repeatedly begged for mercy.

"I-I'm sorry, Mr. Ivor. I was blind and foolish. If I had known she was your wife, I wouldn't have dared to do this, Mr. Ivor!"

Ivor stood opposite him, his gaze piercingly cold. "As long as you cooperate with me to expose the mastermind behind you, I'll consider sparing you." "Whatever you ask, I'll tell you everything." Carlton trembled uncontrollably.

Carlton responded to all of Ivor's inquiries concerning hiring online ghostwriters and transferring money.

After finishing, Carlton cautiously glanced at Ivor. "Mr. Ivor, I've told you everything I can. C-Can you spare me this time?"

Ivor cast a cold sideways glance at him.

"Shut up and wait quietly. Once we find out who's behind the scenes, then I'll deal with you."

Carlton felt like crying. His regrets were beyond words. He shouldn't have been greedy for that ten grand in the first place.

He had now offended such an unapproachable figure and had implicated himself in the process.

While they were talking, Floyd suddenly approached and whispered something in Ivor's ear.

Ivor raised his gaze to look at him. "Are you sure?"

Floyd nodded, his tone full of certainty. "The evidence is conclusive."

A pensive look flashed across Ivor's eyes. "Go to the Gallagher residence."

"Yes."

Floyd and Ivor left the abandoned warehouse together.

At the Gallagher residence, Chester and Sharron Gallagher were drinking tea and chatting.

Suddenly, the butler rushed over and whispered to Chester, "Sir. Mr. Ivor Knight is at the door and wants to see you."

Chester was taken aback, a hint of surprise flickering in his eyes.

"Ivor? Did he say why he's here?"

While the Gallagher and Knight families had been working together recently, Chester was the one who visited Ivor to discuss issues. Chester felt a little taken aback because this was Ivor's first time visiting them.

The butler shook his head and replied, "Mr. Ivor didn't say... and I didn't dare to ask."

Chester thought it made sense and quickly instructed the butler, "Quickly invite him in!"

"Yes."

The butler quickly left, and Chester instructed the nearby servants, "Make sure everything is clean and prepare some good tea and fresh fruits. Maybe he's come in person to discuss a major business deal with the Gallagher family!"

Chester was thrilled by the idea. However, he couldn't help but question how important it was for Ivor to look for him in person.

The more he thought about it, the more excited he became.

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Chapter 635

A maid knocked on the door cautiously upstairs.

"Ms. Eloise."

Eloise's voice came from inside, "Come in."

With much excitement, the maid opened the door and said, "Ms. Eloise, I have a huge piece of good news for you."

"What news?" Eloise asked casually before lowering her head and watching the online public opinion.

She felt that whatever news the maid had was not as important as teaching that despicable Bonnie a lesson, so she didn't pay too much attention.

The servant quickly said, "M-Mr. Ivor is here."

"Ivor is here?!"

Eloise was stunned for a moment. She rushed over, grabbed the maid's shoulder, and asked, "Are you sure? Ivor is downstairs?"

The maid came to tell Eloise when she saw Ivor approaching because she knew Eloise liked him, "Absolutely. Your parents are currently downstairs entertaining Mr. Ivor. Ms. Eloise, you should hurry down to take a look."

Eloise smiled. She thought Ivor must have felt that what happened last time was too much. So, he came to her house to apologize and gain her forgiveness!

The more Eloise thought about it, the wider her smile became.

She walked to the closet and took out some clothes, trying them on in front of the mirror.

As she tried on the clothes, she didn't forget to ask the maid behind her, "How do I look in this outfit? Is it nice?"

The maid immediately flattered, "Miss, you are beautiful no matter what you wear."

"Forget it. This one doesn't highlight my figure well. I won't wear this."

Eloise rummaged through the closet and quickly found a white lace camisole and a tight-fitting skirt.

After changing, she ran back to the mirror for another look.

The low-cut camisole accentuated her bust, and the tight skirt cinched her waist tightly, making her figure alluring. With a touch of lipstick to brighten her complexion, she looked perfect. The flattery from the maid rang in her ears again.

"Miss, you're so beautiful, and your figure is impressive. Mr. Ivor will be amazed when he sees you like this.

Eloise was elated by the praise, her eyes brimming with confidence.

"Today, I must completely conquer Ivor and let him know that I am his best choice."

The maid cheered her, "I believe in you, Miss!"

"Do you even need to say it? With my charm, I can definitely win over Ivor."

Eloise checked herself in the mirror again, ensured everything was perfect, and then hurried downstairs.

She slowed down when she reached the stairs, swaying her slender waist gracefully toward Ivor.

Sharron frowned when she saw her daughter approach them.

"Eloise, we have guests at home. Why did you come down dressed like this? Go change quickly."

Chester's expression also darkened when he saw Eloise's attire.

"Do as your mother says. This is really inappropriate."

Eloise deliberately leaned down to pick up a grape and put it in her mouth, her seductive gaze occasionally looking in Ivor's direction.

"Dad, Mom, it's the 21st century now. Why are you still so conservative? Many people dress like this nowadays." While smiling at Ivor, she said, "Ivor, don't you agree?" Ivor glanced coldly at her and pursed his lips without responding.

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Chapter 636

He had always acted this way, and Eloise didn't mind. She sat down beside him.

"Ivor, aren't you usually busy? How come you have the time to see me? But you've come at the right time. The chef is cooking in the kitchen now. Stay and join us for a meal. I'll go tell them to prepare some items you prefer."

Hearing Eloise's words, Chester followed suit, "Yes, Ivor, the dishes will be ready soon. Let's have a meal together."

Ivor subtly distanced himself from Eloise, exuding an aura of coldness.

"Eating isn't necessary. I came here because I have something I want to discuss with Eloise."

Hearing this, Eloise was overjoyed. 'I was right! Ivor came to apologize to me and gain my forgiveness.'

When Eloise thought about it, a slight flush came across her face, and her eyes gleamed with coyness.

"Ivor, this matter isn't urgent. We can discuss it after we eat."

Although she hoped that Ivor would apologize to her and say nice things, there was no need to rush. After all, having a meal with Ivor at the same table was also delightful.

"Eloise, after what you did, how could you ask me to have a meal with you?" Ivor threw a document folder in front of Eloise. "Take a look for yourself."

Eloise's attitude somewhat shifted as she sensed something unfavorable about what was in front of her. She hesitated, unwilling to open it.

"I... Ivor... What do you mean by this?"

"Open it." Ivor looked at her expressionlessly.

Unable to refuse, Eloise reluctantly took the folder and opened it.

Her face changed, and a hint of panic flashed in her eyes when she saw the first page about hiring online ghostwriters to attack Bonnie. However, it was only momentarily, and she forcefully concealed that expression.

As she continued to read, she became increasingly alarmed. Eloise felt like she was in agony. But she also knew that she had to play dumb.

"Ivor, what is this you're showing me? I don't quite understand."

Chester vaguely realized something was wrong. "Eloise, let me see that document."

Afraid of being found out, Eloise pretended to be calm and handed the document to Chester. Chester took the document and quickly noticed something was amiss.

Sharron, who was standing beside him, also noticed.

"Weird? How come there's 50 grand that flowed out of our subsidiary company?"

Although 50 grand was not much for the Gallagher family, it was a large sum for a small company.

Chester and Sharron both turned their gazes to Eloise.

"Eloise, what's going on with this money? Did you do this?"

Eloise put on an innocent expression, "Mom, Dad, I don't know what's going on with this."

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Chapter 637

Ivor looked at Eloise and said in an icy tone. "Finding out about this matter is quite simple. Just investigate which account the funds from this subsidiary company flowed into, and everything will become clear." Eloise's face became white, and her fingers clenched.

Sensing the gravity of the situation, Chester immediately said, "I'll send someone to investigate right away."

"No need." Ivor took out another set of documents from Floyd.

"I've already investigated for you. The account where the funds flowed into is this one."

Chester carefully examined the documents for a few moments. The account where the funds flowed into was under a name he had never seen before.

Chester looked at Ivor, puzzled. "Ivor, what does all this mean? Why are you holding onto these things, and why did you come to find my daughter? What exactly happened?"

Ivor's face didn't change, but his tone was chilling.

"Since last night, my fiancée has been under attack on the internet. I've already found out that someone deliberately led to it. Later I found out that the IP address that bought the internet ghostwriters to attack my fiancée is from the Gallagher family!"

They instantly focused their sharp gazes on Eloise.

"Eloise, how do you explain this?"

They believed that the statement and evidence provided by Ivor were not groundless.

A hint of guilt flashed in Eloise's eyes, but she soon suppressed that guilt again and transformed it into a thick grievance.

"Mom, Dad, I'm innocent. I didn't do it. You know me, how would I do something like this?"

Tears filled her eyes as she spoke, and she glanced at Ivor with a pitying sniffle.

"Ivor, I admit that I had feelings for you and I wanted to be with you. But since you already have a fiancée, I gave up. My conscience wouldn't allow me to be a homewrecker.

"Although it's hard for me to let go, I guarantee with my integrity that I would never do such dirty deeds."

Hearing Eloise's tearful words, Chester and Sharron gradually began to believe their daughter and spoke up to support her.

"Ivor, why don't we investigate together again? Perhaps there's a misunderstanding in all of this?"

"Yes, I don't think Eloise would do such a thing."

Ivor knew Eloise wouldn't readily admit to it, so he was prepared.

"Floyd, bring that person here."

"Yes," Floyd responded and quickly brought up a well-dressed man.

He was Kerry Patel, the Gallagher family's subsidiary company manager.

Ivor looked at Kerry and spoke indifferently, "Mr. Kerry, tell us everything you know."

Kerry wiped the sweat from his forehead and glanced secretly in Eloise's direction.

Eloise immediately noticed Kerry's gaze and inwardly panicked, but she calmly shot him a warning look.

"What are you looking at me for? This matter has nothing to do with me."

Upon hearing Eloise's denial, Kerry became anxious.

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Chapter 638

"Miss... you... how could you..."

Chester looked at Eloise, then at Kerry.

"Mr. Kerry, stop beating around the bush. Just say what you need to."

Kerry took a deep breath, knowing that Eloise wouldn't protect him, so he recounted the entire process of Eloise coming to him.

"Ms. Eloise came to me and asked me to transfer 50 grand to an account..."

The more Eloise listened, the more sweat trickled down her back. By the end, her clothes were soaked with cold sweat, and even her palms were sweaty.

She was getting increasingly frightened, and she yelled at Kerry. "Don't you dare shift the blame onto me! This is clearly your negligence. So much money went missing, and not only do you refuse to admit your fault, but you also try to blame me!"

"Miss, you're being heartless! You were the one who instructed me to do this. How can you try to pin it on me now? Yes, you're the pampered heiress with an exit strategy for everything you do.

"But I'm different. I'm a man, the pillar of my family. I have elders and children to support. If I lose this job, my whole family will be in trouble!

"And I got to this manager position by working hard. How can you dismiss all my efforts and hard work with a casual remark?"

Eloise naturally couldn't admit to this matter. She glared fiercely at Kerry, her eyes filled with a strong warning.

"Don't give me these excuses. You're just trying to frame me. This is your negligence. It has nothing to do with me. You just wait to be fired!" Kerry didn't want to make things look so ugly, but Eloise had pushed him to his limit. Taking a deep breath, he took out his phone from his pocket. "Miss, I knew you wouldn't admit it if something went wrong. Luckily, I made a recording in advance. Let's listen to it together."

"A recording?!" Eloise's heart trembled, and waves of panic surged in her chest.

'This scoundrel Kerry dared to record me secretly? Could he be bluffing? No, I have to remain calm until the very end.'

"Just because you say so, doesn't mean you can threaten me. Why should I admit to something I didn't do?"

Kerry shook his head in resignation, scrolled to the recording, and turned up the volume.

In the recording, their conversation quickly played out.

Eloise: "Transfer 50 grand to the account I designated. I'll compensate you for the vacancies."

At this point, Kerry's voice was hesitant. "Miss, that's 50 grand. Have you obtained Mr. Chester's consent? What if it's traced back to us later? I can't bear that responsibility." Eloise's tone was domineering. "I'm the heiress of the Gallagher family. Everything in the Gallagher family belongs to me. Do I need his consent for a mere 50 grand?"

"Do as I say, or I'll kick you out of the company and make sure you can never make it in this city again."

Kerry could only reluctantly agree. "Okay, Miss, but I have to make it clear. If this matter is exposed, you have to speak for me in front of Mr. Chester. This job is very important to me, and I can't afford to lose it."

Eloise: "Got it. Why are you so long-winded? Just do as I say."

After listening to the recording, the living room fell silent.

Chester never expected that his daughter would do such a despicable thing. His face alternated between pale and flushed.

"Eloise, have you forgotten all the principles we taught you since childhood? I never imagined that your heart would become so dark that you could stoop to such vile acts!"

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Chapter 639

Sharron was pissed off, too. She glared at Eloise, wanting to say something, but she could only let out a heavy sigh of disappointment.

Eloise admitted to the matter, knowing that further denial would be meaningless now that it had been revealed.

"Yes, I did it. I just couldn't stand Bonnie!"

She looked straight at Ivor as she spoke and suddenly burst into laughter. As she laughed, tears rolled down her cheeks. Her laughter and tears made her look particularly frenzied.

Chester was about to speak up to stop Eloise's behavior. But before he could, Eloise's voice rang out again.

"Ivor, I've known you for so many years, and we studied abroad together. You know that I like you, but you never gave me a chance. I waited, hoping that one day you would like me back. But what happened? Y-You fell in love with someone else!"

At this point, Eloise's tone was filled with resentment.

"I just don't understand. What's so good about Bonnie compared to our many years together? Calling me a mistress? I say she's the mistress!"

She thought, 'I wanted to teach Bonnie a lesson, to let her know how formidable I am. I wanted her to leave the person I liked. Who knew it would be exposed so quickly?

'Ivor came to question me in person for that despicable Bonnie! The love I had persisted in for so long was just a joke.'

Eloise thought that speaking from the heart like this would arouse Ivor's sympathy and pity. But to her surprise, Ivor just glanced at her and then looked at Chester.

"Mr. Chester, does she represent the attitude of the entire Gallagher family? She slandered my woman and is now blatantly insulting her, clearly indicating a complete break with the Knight family."

Only now did Chester realize how important Bonnie was to Ivor. He quickly spoke up, "Ivor, Eloise is ignorant. Don't take her words seriously. Normally, she's quite obedient. I don't know what got her to do such a thing.

"As her father, I feel very ashamed of raising her so poorly. But, even though she's my daughter, how can she represent the entire Gallagher family? Let me put it this way, as long as I'm here, the Gallagher family listens to me, not her!"

Ivor didn't respond. His handsome face remained tense. Chester knew that Ivor wouldn't easily forgive Eloise or spare the Gallagher family.

After careful consideration, Chester's face turned even more somber. He let out a sigh, stood up from the sofa, and firmly slapped Eloise across the face.

"You wicked girl, apologize to Ivor right now! Say you won't do this again."

The stinging sensation spread across her face. Eloise covered her face, crying as she complained to Sharron.

"Mom! Look at Dad. He hit me. He actually hit me because of an outsider!"

Sharron not only ignored Eloise's grievances but also scolded her harshly. "Serve you right! Who told you to do such a foolish thing?"

When she realized that no one was assisting her, Eloise fled upstairs while covering her face tearfully.

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Chapter 640

"Eloise!" Chester shouted.

Ignoring Chester's call, Eloise returned to her room and slammed the door shut. Following that, heart-wrenching cries were heard from behind the door.

Chester felt helpless with his daughter. He had a splitting headache. "Ivor, I'm sorry. My daughter is completely out of control and disgraceful."

When Ivor looked at Chester, there was a hint of indifference in his eyes.

"Mr. Chester, considering the long-standing relationship between our two families, I can stop here for this incident. But let this be the last time. My fiancée is my bottom line. If such a thing happens again, don't blame me for being ruthless."

Chester repeatedly assured Ivor, "Rest assured, Ivor, I will discipline Eloise properly and prevent her from causing trouble for you again. I apologize to you on her behalf."

"Hmm," Ivor responded indifferently, slowly standing up. "If there's nothing else, I'll leave now. There are still matters in the company to attend to."

Chester also stood up. "Ivor, let me walk you out."

"No need," Ivor responded curtly.

"In that case, take care on your way."

Without responding, Ivor strode out of the Gallagher residence.

Sitting in the Maybach, he looked at Floyd and calmly instructed, "Clear all the negative news about Bonnie on the internet. If those marketing accounts dare to post secretly, immediately block them without any room for negotiation."

"Yes, boss." Then, Floyd asked, "What about Carlton, the one Eloise hired to smear Bonnie?"

"Send him to prison." Ivor would not spare anyone who bullied Bonnie.

"Yes." Floyd turned the steering wheel and cautiously glanced at Ivor through the rearview mirror. "Boss, did you forgive Eloise so easily?"

Floyd knew this wasn't what Ivor would normally do, so he had to ask.

Ivor curled his lips slightly, but there was a chill in his eyes. "Forgive her? Do you think that's possible?"

Floyd was puzzled. "So, what do you mean...?"

"What Eloise needs to do, I've hinted to Chester. I don't need to take action myself. He will naturally know what to do. If he doesn't, then we'll see. In any case, I absolutely won't let Eloise off so easily for tarnishing Bonnie's reputation."

Eloise hid in her room, her eyes swelled up as though from a bee sting. After crying enough, the more she thought about what happened in the living room, the more resentful she became.

A raging fire burned in her chest as if it were about to burn away her sanity.

At this moment, the door to the room was suddenly opened with a spare key, and Chester walked in.

"Get on the live stream now to apologize to Bonnie. You must let everyone on the internet know your sincerity."

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Chapter 641

"Apologize to Bonnie on the internet? Why, Dad? Hasn't Ivor already left? Why do you have to force me like this?" Tears almost blinded Eloise's eyes. She grabbed Chester's hand, filled with sadness. "Dad, please spare me. I know I was wrong, I really do."

Chester sighed heavily and shook off Eloise's hand helplessly. "Even if you know you were wrong, it's useless. Because it's not me who wants to punish you, it's Ivor."

"W-Why?!" Eloise looked anxious and puzzled. "H-Hasn't he already left? And he didn't mention anything about asking me to apologize to Bonnie on the internet before." Chester let out a heavy, cold snort from his nose.

"Do you think that he would forgive you so easily? If that were the case, why would he bother coming here in person to discuss this matter with us? He's waiting for our response now.

"If we don't satisfy him enough, he will cause trouble for us. So, you must make a public apology!"

Eloise bit her lip so hard that she tasted blood.

"I thought he would overlook my mistakes considering the decades of friendship between our families. I didn't expect him to go this far for that wench!"

She hated Bonnie to the core and wished she could tear her to pieces and strip her of her tendons and bones.

"What's done is done. No matter what we say now, it's useless. You must do as I say, or else the entire Gallagher family might be implicated because of you," Chester commanded in an uncompromising tone, leaving no room for negotiation.

Eloise knew the seriousness of the situation. She had to grit her teeth and agree, even if she was unwilling.

"I... un... der... stand..."

At 6 p.m., Eloise started a live stream with her account to publicly apologize to Bonnie and explain the incident to netizens.

As netizens learned the truth, shock and anger swept through the comments section.

"Your scheming is too vicious! You completely forced Bonnie into a dead end!"

"I never expected her to be the one behind this, and shamelessly use Sienna's power to attack Bonnie. It's despicable!"

"Yes, she used Sienna's fans like fools. Thinking back to the things I said about Bonnie, I now feel like strangling her."

"Although Bonnie and Sienna had some conflicts before, Sienna clarified the situation twice, proving that Bonnie is not that kind of person!"

As Eloise looked at the comments filled with insults, her eyes gradually reddened. Eventually, fearing that she would lose control in front of the netizens, she hastily ended the livestream.

When the screen went completely black, she couldn't restrain herself. She roared angrily, waving her arms vigorously and sweeping all the cosmetics off the table violently. Bang! Clang!

The floor instantly became a mess. Despite this, Eloise still didn't feel relieved.

The image of Bonnie's triumphant appearance kept haunting her mind. The more she thought about it, the tighter her fists clenched, unconsciously sinking into her palms. Her eyes were filled with intense hatred.

"Ah! Bonnie, you bitch! I absolutely won't let you off!"

...

At the McLeod Villa, Sienna was about to go to the recording studio. Before she could leave, a servant came up and reported, "Ms. Eloise is outside and wants to see you."

Thinking of Eloise's recent foolish actions, Sienna's face darkened.

"Let her in."

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Chapter 642

"Yes."

The servant quickly left and brought Eloise in.

When Eloise saw Sienna, she ran up to her and grabbed her hand.

"Sienna-"

Before she could finish her sentence, Sienna harshly shook her hand off.

Eloise wore a look of confusion and bewilderment. "Sienna, what's wrong with you?"

"Why are you asking me what's wrong? Instead of asking me, you should reflect on how stupid your actions were!"

Sienna looked at Eloise as if she were mentally challenged.

Approaching slowly, Eloise grabbed Sienna's hand again and tried to please her. "Sienna, I know you're angry because of what I did to Bonnie."

Sienna's expression softened slightly at these words. Eloise seemed aware of her mistakes, which meant there was still hope for her. However, what Eloise said next stunned her.

"I should have planned more carefully. I revealed my hand too easily. That way, I wouldn't have been discovered by Ivor, and I could've easily sent that bitch Bonnie to hell! But unfortunately... I miscalculated."

Seeing the twisted hatred on Eloise's face, Sienna's eyes flashed with immense anger. She forcefully shook off Eloise's hand.

"You're such an idiot!"

Eloise also became annoyed. "Sienna, we're best friends. How can you treat me like this?"

"We're not friends anymore. Don't come to me in the future." Sienna's attitude was extremely persistent.

Eloise looked incredulous. "S-Sienna, are you breaking off our friendship?"

Sienna's voice was icy cold, with a complete lack of emotion.

"Yes! I'm breaking off our friendship, so don't bother coming to me again."

"Why?" Eloise was filled with confusion and disbelief.

She didn't understand why Sienna suddenly became so firm in her attitude towards her.

'Is it because of Bonnie? But it shouldn't be, right? Bonnie is our common enemy!'

Just as Eloise was thinking this, she caught a glimpse of Leo and the others walking in from outside.

Seeing them, the reason behind Sienna's sudden change in attitude toward her became apparent.

No wonder Sienna suddenly treated her so poorly. It turned out that Sienna knew her three uncles were present and had put on a show before them!

With this realization, Eloise understood Sienna's actions and didn't blame her anymore. Eloise's expression became much calmer.

"Sienna, I understand your difficulties now. Since you're not in a position to speak, I'll leave first. Contact me when you have time, and we'll sit down and have a good chat." Sienna was speechless at her words.

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Chapter 643

'Didn't I make it clear enough? What did she mean by understanding my difficulties? And what was inconvenient to talk about? Do we have anything left to talk about? Is there a hole in her head?' "Eloise, wait, you need to explain this to me," Sienna was afraid that Eloise would misunderstand her, so she hurriedly caught up.

However, Eloise looked like she had already seen through everything. "There's no need to say anything, Sienna. Let's chat another day when you have time."

Sienna watched Eloise's departing figure with a speechless expression. 'What is her problem?'

When Bonnie got home from the set, she saw Ivor sitting on the sofa using his laptop. He wore a plain white shirt and was staring at the screen thoughtfully. Beneath the neatly ironed fabric, faint traces of muscular lines could be seen.

A phrase immediately popped into Bonnie's mind. 'Trouble follows where beauty goes.'

She couldn't deny that this man had the charm. With this thought in mind, Bonnie lifted her gaze and met the man's deep eyes.

Leaning his chin on his hand, Ivor's eyes held a hint of amusement. "Honey, do you like it?"

Bonnie casually stared at Ivor from head to toe, then nodded. "It's quite nice."

Ivor arched an eyebrow and moved gently away from the sofa toward Bonnie.

"It feels pretty good, too. Want to try it out?" he suggested, closing the distance between them.

Bonnie calmly took two steps back. "Playing rogue in broad daylight at home, aren't you ashamed?"

A smirk tugged at the corner of Ivor's lips as he continued to advance toward Bonnie.

"You said it yourself, we're at home. What's there to be ashamed of?" he retorted.

Bonnie rolled her eyes in exasperation. "I think you can't go a day without making suggestive remarks."

"This isn't suggestive," Ivor shook his head earnestly. "These are words of affection."

Bonnie couldn't be bothered to respond and simply turned around, sitting down on the sofa.

"Did you handle Eloise's matter?" she asked casually.

Initially, she planned to deal with Eloise after finishing the work on the set. However, she saw a recording of Eloise publicly apologizing to her on the live broadcast when she logged on to Twitter after work. She immediately guessed that it was Ivor's doing.

"It was me," Ivor's expression darkened at the mention of Eloise. "For her spreading rumors about you, having her publicly apologize on live broadcast is just a light punishment. If there's a next time, I'll make sure she pays a heavy price."

Bonnie smirked and nudged Ivor's arm with her elbow.

"It's nice to have someone solve problems for me. Having a fiancé doesn't seem too bad after all."

"Of course," Ivor wrapped his arm around Bonnie's slender waist dominantly. "My woman can't be bullied by anyone."

Bonnie smiled but didn't say anything. Although she found the man's words somewhat childish and ridiculous, she felt a warm sensation in her heart.

After dinner, Bonnie had just settled down in bed to watch videos when Ivor walked in.

"Honey, pack your things quickly. We're going to the hot springs tomorrow."

"Hot springs?!"

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Chapter 644

Bonnie sat on the bed and said, "This is so sudden. Why didn't you notify me so I could be prepared?"

"It's not sudden. I had arranged it long ago. Just pack your things and follow me. If you don't want to pack, I can do it for you. It's hot now, so bring some light clothes and sunscreen," Ivor said as he opened Bonnie's closet and started packing for her.

Bonnie watched as Ivor was about to open the drawer where she kept her delicates. She quickly got out of bed, ran to the closet, and stopped him.

"I'll pack myself. There's no need for you to help me. You go pack your stuff."

Seeing Bonnie's hurried movements, Ivor smiled faintly when he realized.

"Alright, you pack. I'll go to my room to pack my things."

"Yeah, go ahead." Bonnie waved her hand. She then lowered her head to organize the clothes she needed.

Ivor watched Bonnie for a bit while standing motionless, and then he reluctantly turned away and left the room.

Ivor and Bonnie left early the following day and made it to Verdant Valley Retreat before lunchtime.

As Bonnie took in the stunning environment, she couldn't resist pulling out her phone and snapping several photos. "The scenery here is really nice."

Seeing Bonnie taking photos, Ivor shamelessly stood in front of her camera. "Honey, take a few shots of me too."

"I'm taking pictures of the scenery. What are you doing butting in?" Bonnie said, but she still raised her phone and took two pictures of Ivor.

"Done, take a look. How are they?" Bonnie immediately showed him the photos on her screen.

"Not bad at all. Honey, you're really good at taking pictures."

"Stop flattering me." Bonnie glanced around and noticed several cars queuing up behind them.

She turned back to Ivor. "This isn't a parking spot. Go find the parking lot, and I'll wait for you at the entrance."

Ivor also saw the scene and nodded immediately. "Okay."

Bonnie watched as Ivor drove away and walked to the retreat's entrance alone.

Not long after, a harsh brake sound echoed in her ears.

A conspicuous red Ferrari performed a beautiful drift at the entrance of the retreat before coming to a steady stop.

A golden-haired young man got out of the Ferrari, accompanied by two lackeys.

The golden-haired man, Wallace Atkins, walked with a swagger.

"Have you guys encountered any high-quality girls lately? Recommend them to me. There are only a few good-looking ones in Verdant Valley, and I'm already tired of them," he said.

His lackey, Peter Turner, scratched his head helplessly. "You never like the ones we find. The last time we recommended some to you, you didn't like any of them."

Wallace frowned and immediately showed a disgusted expression. "The ones you recommended to me? They were all subpar! You guys better keep them for yourselves." Peter shrugged. "There's nothing we can do. The ones we can find are limited."

"Forget it, I'll find them myself. Only the ones I like fit my taste," Wallace said while wandering around.

At that moment, his other lackey, Miguel Arroyo, suddenly spoke up excitedly.

"B-Boss, I-look, there's an e-exceptionally beautiful girl at the retreat entrance!"

Wallace looked skeptical. "If there were any exceptionally beautiful girls at Verdant Valley, I would have found them already. How could I still be waiting until now?" He followed Miguel's gaze casually.

When he saw the person standing at the entrance, his eyes widened in astonishment and filled with intense admiration.

"T-This...this is indeed an exceptionally beautiful girl! Come on, hurry up and follow me over."

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Chapter 645

Wallace walked up to Bonnie and gazed at her flawless face with a look of infatuation.

'So beautiful, incredibly beautiful!'

From a distance, Bonnie's beauty gave her a foggy charm, but now that he was closer, Wallace realized that her beauty was indescribable.

A hint of displeasure flashed in Bonnie's eyes when she glanced at Wallace and noticed his unwavering gaze fixed on her.

"Is there something you need?"

Wallace's heart began racing as her clean, crisp voice hit his ears like running water. Regaining his senses, he looked at Bonnie with eager anticipation.

"Miss, are you here alone? I'm a local here. Do you want me to show you around and be your guide?"

"No need." Bonnie turned her head away, clearly showing her unwillingness to engage with him.

However, Wallace wasn't offended. After all, even when a beautiful woman was angry, she was still lovely.

"Why not give it a try? I can take you to the best places in Verdant Valley. You'll like it."

Bonnie did not respond and glanced at him indifferently.

A group of individuals walked by them at that moment, and they couldn't help but talk excitedly about what they saw.

"Isn't that Mr. Wallace? It's been a while, and he's become even more handsome."

"He's rich, good-looking, and the girl he's chatting up is so lucky. I envy her."

"Isn't Mr. Wallace's family the richest in Verdant Valley? And he's so handsome. Even if it's just for fun, I'd be willing."

The crowd's voices reached Wallace's ears, boosting his confidence even more.

"Miss, did you hear what they said? Would you consider being with me? Given my family background, I'll treat you well."

Peter and Miguel chimed in persuasively as his wingmen.

"Miss, you'll not lose out being with Mr. Wallace."

"Yeah! Not only can you enjoy the best, but you can also buy designer bags and jewelry worth five or six figures without hesitation."

"Mr. Wallace is rich, handsome, and matches you perfectly. You two are simply made for each other."

Bonnie watched Wallace persistently and thought for a moment before speaking. "I have a boyfriend."

Upon hearing this, Wallace burst into laughter.

"Miss, people tend to use that excuse to reject someone. Under normal circumstances, I wouldn't bother pestering someone who rejects me. But you're different. You're so beautiful. If you don't give me your number, I probably won't be able to sleep tonight."

Bonnie's eyes flashed with impatience, clearly showing she didn't want to waste more time with Wallace.

"I have a boyfriend. He's better than you in every aspect and much more handsome."

With that, she turned to leave, but Wallace immediately blocked her way.

"Since your boyfriend is so great, why don't you call him over for everyone to see? It just so happens that I want to see what kind of man is better than me and much more handsome than me!" When Ivor returned to the parking lot, he saw his wife surrounded by a man with golden hair and a group of people.

His eyes immediately narrowed. He immediately took out his phone and dialed a number.

"Bring some people over for me."

Bonnie squinted. She didn't want to resort to violence, but this golden-haired man's repeated harassment was getting on her nerves.

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Chapter 646

Seeing Bonnie remain silent, Wallace thought she was considering his offer.

"No need to think about it. Just give me your number, and I'll take you to have some fun."

"Are you crazy?" Bonnie rolled her eyes in exasperation and started to walk away.

Wallace, whose patience was wearing thin, was about to step forward to stop her. But all of a sudden, he could hear screams.

Bonnie was stunned to see the scene before her.

She witnessed Ivor exuding an imposing aura as he approached, wearing sunglasses and with dozens of bodyguards behind him. The scene and the momentum were spectacular beyond words.

Ivor walked up to Bonnie and took off his sunglasses gently, causing the surrounding crowd to scream.

"Wow, he's so handsome! My heart can't take it!"

"Oh my god, he looked like he stepped out of a romance novel."

"Yeah, I bet even romance novels can't fully replicate his charm."

As Wallace noticed Ivor getting closer, he began to feel trouble brewing.

"W-Who are you?"

Ivor squinted his eyes, emitting a chilling aura. "You're hitting on my woman. Who do you think I am?"

He walked over and firmly wrapped his arm around Bonnie's waist.

Seeing this grand scene and Ivor's domineering action, Bonnie couldn't help but twitch her lips. "Why did you bring such a big entourage?" Ivor let out a faint snort. "Someone was trying to steal my woman. Can't I bring people over for a show of strength?"

Bonnie gave him a big eye roll in response. "Must you be so childish?"

"Never mind whether it's childish or not." Ivor scanned the surroundings before continuing, "At least the effect is good, isn't it?" For a moment, Bonnie didn't know what to say. She remained silent for a moment before responding. "As long as you're happy."

"Of course. As a man, how could I not assert my dominance?" Ivor held Bonnie tightly and spoke with a hint of visible resentment.

"It's just that my honey is too beautiful. Wherever she goes, someone tries to hit on her. If I could, I'd like to take you back and lock you up, so only I could see you."

Bonnie patted his hand to signal him to ease up. "Sure, then let's see if you're capable of keeping me locked up."

Watching them chat as if no one else was around, Wallace's anger surged. "Be sensible and let this lady go. I'll take her away."

Ivor squinted his dark eyes, his tone laced with a cold chill. "I think you're looking for trouble."

Wallace laughed heartily, "You say I'm looking for trouble? I think it's you! Do you know who I am? You dare to snatch a woman that I'm interested in?"

"Oh?" Ivor's tone rose slightly. "I'm curious. Tell me, who are you?"

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Chapter 647

"Hehe, you don't even know who our boss is."

Peter sneered before revealing Wallace's identity, "My boss's father is the famous building materials tycoon in Verdant Valley, Julio Atkin. My boss is Julio's eldest son, Wallace Atkins." Peter's introduction greatly satisfied Wallace. He lifted his chin and took a closer look at Ivor.

"What do you think? Are you scared now that you've heard my dad's name? Be smart and hand this lady over. If you do, I'll let bygones be bygones, and you won't have to worry about anything." Ivor raised his eyebrows knowingly. "So you're Little Atkins's son."

Upon hearing the term "Little Atkins," Wallace fumed.

"My dad has a terrible temper, and you dare to call him Little Atkins? You're finished!"

With that, he took out his phone from his pocket. "I'll call my dad right now and tell him there's a fool here calling him Little Atkins. Let's see what happens to you!"

"No need for you to call. I'll do it myself." Ivor flipped through his contacts, found Julio's number, and dialed it.

Wallace burst into laughter. "Hahaha... calling my dad? Do you have my dad's number? And you're going to call him yourself?"

He clutched his stomach and laughed uncontrollably. "Oh, I can't take it anymore. You're about to kill me with laughter."

Ivor ignored him. When the call connected, he calmly said, "Your son is trying to snatch my woman. You deal with it."

Hearing Ivor's words, Wallace laughed even harder. His laughter was even more exaggerated than before.

"Haha... y-you're acting like it's real. I almost believed it. But too bad-"

Before he could finish, the phone in his hand started vibrating like crazy. Looking down, he saw that it was a call from his father, Julio.

'Strange, why would Dad choose to call at this exact moment? Did the man really contact Dad?

Wallace looked suspiciously in Ivor's direction.

He had attended numerous business meetings with his father. If the man in front of him were truly a figure that could make his father bow down, his father would introduce him and warn him not to provoke him. But after careful consideration, he realized he had no impression of this man.

This meant that the man in front of him was just a nobody, with no possibility of having his father's phone number, let alone any contact with his father.

Wallace's expression returned to normal, and he calmly answered his father's call.

"Dad"

Before he could say another word, he was met with Julio's furious roar.

"You brat! Can't you stay out of trouble for one day? How dare you try to steal a woman from Ivor Knight? Apologize to him immediately, and then come back to face the wall for reflection!" "I-Ivor Knight?!" Wallace gulped heavily, and his eyes widened in disbelief.

"Dad, i-is he the president of the Knight Group?"

"That's right. Apologize to him immediately and beg for his forgiveness, or don't bother coming back!" Julio hung up the phone after finishing speaking.

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Chapter 648

Wallace's face became pale. At that moment, he felt overwhelmed with despair, not knowing what to do.

Seeing Wallace's change in expression, Bonnie looked at Ivor with confusion. "Do you really know his dad? You're not just bluffing, are you?"

Ivor smirked and pulled Bonnie into his arms. "It's just a small matter. Do you think I need to bluff?"

Bonnie sighed, "Your network as the head of the Knight Group is no joke."

Warmth filled his eyes that only appeared when he faced Bonnie. "Now you know how powerful your fiancé is, right? As long as I'm here, no one can hurt you." "Well... you do have many good qualities. It would be even better if you weren't so mouthy." Bonnie lightly touched her chin, giving a serious assessment.

The smile on Ivor's face widened. "Didn't I tell you? These are all heartfelt words from me to you, and they can never be changed."

"Here we go again." Bonnie rolled her eyes helplessly.

This man could be very serious when he was serious, but he could also be very childish.

Peter watched Bonnie and Ivor chat while Wallace stood there dumbfounded.

In a low voice, he asked Wallace. "Boss, why are you just standing here? Hurry up and let Mr. Julio deal with this ignorant guy!" Wallace was afraid that Ivor would hear him, so he reached out and knocked Peter's head hard.

"Shut up! Stop talking nonsense."

His voice was too loud, quickly attracting Ivor and Bonnie's attention.

Ivor's eyes darkened, and his voice became as cold. "Why are you still standing there? Didn't your dad tell you what to do?"

Wallace shivered, clutching his phone, and slowly approached Ivor. "Mr. Ivor, I-I'm sorry. Please forgive me. I-I know I was wrong, and I won't dare to do it again next time." Ivor glanced at Wallace coldly and said with an even colder tone, "There's going to be a next time?"

Wallace immediately raised his hands to assure him, "N-no! Mr. Ivor, I-I promise, there won't be a next time. I swear, such a thing will never happen again."

His body trembled violently as if he could pee himself at any moment out of fear.

Ivor looked at Wallace's appearance calmly without the slightest change in his expression. "Your behavior just now scared my fiancée. Bring your people to apologize to her."

"Yes, yes..." Wallace nodded, shouting to his two henchmen behind him, "Did you hear that? Hurry up and apologize to Mr. Ivor's fiancée."

Without daring to say anything further, Peter and Miguel exchanged a glance and quickly apologized to Bonnie.

"We're sorry, Miss. We were blind and offended you. Please forgive us."

"Miss, we're sorry. Please give us another chance to change."

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Chapter 649

Bonnie crossed her arms and glanced at Ivor with her peripheral vision.

"I don't want to deal with this kind of nonsense. You handle it."

"Alright." Ivor indulgently agreed.

He looked at Wallace, his eyes sharpening again. "I can forgive you this time because your father cooperated with me. But if there's a next time, I'll let you experience being blind." Wallace nodded repeatedly, afraid that if he hesitated, Ivor would come after him.

"I-I understand, Mr. Ivor. I-I promise, there won't be a next time. T-Thank you for not holding it against me."

Ivor stared coldly at him for several moments. "Get lost."

"Yes, Mr. Ivor, we'll leave immediately!" Wallace quickly waved to his lackeys, disappearing from Ivor and Bonnie's sight at the fastest speed possible.

Ivor just merely glanced at them before averting his eyes. He then grabbed Bonnie's hand and headed toward the hot spring retreat.

"Honey, are you tired? Let's go relax in the hot spring."

"Okay." Bonnie stretched lazily. "Sitting in the car all morning, I feel a bit stiff. Soaking in the hot spring should help."

"Yeah, I've already arranged it. Let's go straight in." Ivor led Bonnie through the long corridor to the innermost hot spring room.

Bonnie was stunned by the scene before her when the door was pushed open.

"When did you prepare all this?"

Fragrant, luscious flowers encircled the hot spring room in front of her, and the pool water gave off a light mist that gave the impression of being in a dreamlike fairyland.

"I had Floyd arrange it on our way here." Ivor looked at Bonnie, his eyes filled with tenderness. "Do you like it?"

Bonnie nodded in agreement. "Yes, it's quite nice."

Getting Bonnie's approval made Ivor inexplicably happy.

"Then you go ahead and soak. I'll go prepare the essential oil massage for you."

"Essential oil massage?" Bonnie gave him a meaningful look. "You're not plotting something again, are you?"

Ivor looked innocent. "Honey, an essential oil massage is a specialty of Verdant Valley Retreat. I thought since we're here, we should experience it. If you don't want to, it's fine, I won't force you." Bonnie scrutinized Ivor for a moment. Seeing his serious expression, she believed him somewhat.

"Then go prepare, I'll start soaking."

Ivor's eyes gleamed with a sense of accomplishment. "Okay, I'll go now."

Watching Ivor leave, Bonnie removed clothes from the cabinet and changed them before entering the hot spring.

The water temperature of the hot spring was just right, making her feel comfortable.

She lowered her eyes, her delicate face filled with enjoyment.

Ivor returned with the essential oil and couldn't help but feel victorious at the sight.

"Honey, you look so beautiful like this."

Bonnie opened her eyes slowly and shot him a sidelong glance.

"So you mean, I only look good like this? I don't look good in any other way?"

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Chapter 650

This was a make-or-break situation. If the answer wasn't satisfactory, it might result in some serious consequences. "You just look exceptionally good today." Ivor lowered his voice to make it more magnetic as he walked up to Bonnie.

"Here we go again," Bonnie muttered. She had become somewhat immune to Ivor's sweet talk.

Ivor smiled but didn't say anything. He prepared the essential oil and then called Bonnie to come up.

"Honey, lie down on the recliner. I'll give you a massage."

Bonnie also felt she had soaked enough in the hot spring, so she got out and decided to experience the essential oil massage Ivor had specially prepared for her.

After changing into a clean set of clothes, she lay on the massage table. Suddenly, she turned her head and glanced at Ivor.

"Just massage, no funny business."

Ivor assured with a smile, "Honey, I am a gentleman. Don't you trust my character?"

"Haha." Bonnie laughed coldly, clearly not buying Ivor's words.

Ivor didn't mind and rubbed his palms together, warming them up before gently massaging Bonnie's smooth back.

"Honey, how's the pressure? Is it okay?"

Bonnie relaxed in the chair with a satisfied expression.

"Not bad, keep going."

Although she allowed Ivor to do this, he might take advantage of her. However, she must admit that the massage was quite comfortable. Ivor's technique was good, neither too light nor too heavy, making her feel like she wanted to doze off.

While Bonnie felt comfortable, Ivor felt tortured.

Bonnie's skin was soft and silky. Sometimes, the scent of her body drifted into his nostrils, causing his heart to race and making him want to take her as his own.

His hands began to act recklessly.

At first, Bonnie didn't mind, but as Ivor's actions became more audacious, she couldn't take it anymore. She grabbed Ivor's wrist and stood up from the chair. "You just claimed to be a gentleman. What are you doing now?"

Ivor's expression remained innocent. "To other women, I am indeed a gentleman, but you are my fiancée. If I still act like a gentleman towards you, wouldn't I be a hypocrite?" Bonnie laughed at Ivor's words. "So you're playing games with me here?"

"How is this a game? It's an expression of love for you." Ivor said, and then his big hand seized Bonnie's waist.

"Honey, I really like you, so much."

Bonnie was rendered speechless upon meeting Ivor's intense gaze, and her cheeks flushed.

"T-These words... You've repeated them in my ear countless times. Aren't you tired? My ears are getting calloused from listening."

"Of course not. I want to express my feelings to you all the time, so you know how much I love you." Ivor stared at Bonnie's plump lips, his eyes showing obvious desire.

Taking advantage of Bonnie's unpreparedness, he tentatively kissed her. Since Bonnie did not resist, he increased the intensity a bit.

Starting lightly, but then getting heavier and heavier... It was as if he wanted to devour Bonnie whole.

The man's actions caused Bonnie to let out a soft moan unconsciously.

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Chapter 651

Ivor stopped and looked at Bonnie, asking, "Are you okay?"

She took the chance to step back. She blushed as she said, "You're in no position to ask me that. Why do you have to be so intense? Are you that eager?"

"I'm sorry, but I just can't control myself when I'm with you." Ivor's brows furrowed.

Bonnie noticed he wanted another kiss and quickly stopped him. "That's enough. You've hit your quota of reckless actions today."

'I felt his energy earlier, screaming to be unleashed. We can't keep going at it, or we might cross the line.'

Ivor composed himself and suppressed his passion. He smirked when he saw how embarrassed Bonnie was. "All right, I'll stop. Do you still want me to massage you with essential oil?"

"Forget about it." Bonnie looked like she had seen through his plots. "I don't even have to ask to know you're trying to take advantage of me again. Just stay here and calm yourself down. I'll take a rinse in the hot spring. You can join me once you've controlled yourself."

Ivor feared he might lose control and upset her. So, he took a break on the deck, saying, "Sure, go ahead and hop into the hot spring."

Bonnie leaned on the edge of the spring and closed her eyes. It was quiet, and a hint of the sweet scent of roses lingered in the air. It made for an exceptionally tranquil and relaxing environment.

After relaxing in the hot spring, Bonnie and Ivor left for lunch near the hotel. Then, they held hands and walked back. Bonnie could feel the warmth in her fiance's palm, making her uneasy because they were not just holding hands. Their fingers were intertwined.

"Maybe we should stop holding hands. You're making me feel a little tense."

"Bonnie, we're engaged. We'll be doing much more intimate things once we get married. You have to overcome this. Take this chance to get used to holding hands. I'm sure it'll grow on you in no time." Bonnie had always been honest with her feelings and herself. Since she had decided to entrust herself to Ivor, she agreed with his values, including what he had just said.

"Oh, okay. We'll hold hands like this and take baby steps with the rest, okay?"

Ivor smiled. "Okay."

When they reached the room, Bonnie wanted to nap when she saw Ivor fiddling with something. She sat up and peered at him, asking, "What are you doing?"

Ivor subtly shifted to block her view. He said, "Go ahead and sleep. Don't worry about me. I'll take you somewhere when you wake up."

Bonnie raised her brows and asked, "Are you doing something to surprise me again?"

"Yeah, it's a surprise. You probably shouldn't look this way anymore. You might ruin the surprise." Ivor openly admitted it before lowering his head and continuing to fiddle with something.

Since he had said that, Bonnie stopped looking and lay down on the bed again. "I'll leave you to it, then. I'll get some shut-eye now."

"Okay, go ahead. I'll wake you once I'm ready," Ivor responded, lowering his head to ensure he did not forget anything. Once he had packed everything, he zipped his bag and prepared the other things. As the sun set, Bonnie woke up from her nap and yawned. She was shocked to see Ivor still fiddling with something.

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Chapter 652

"Where are you taking me, and why did it take you this long to prepare?"

Ivor turned to look at Bonnie mysteriously and said, "You'll find out soon. I'm almost done, so go and change into a coat. We'll hit the road once you're ready."

Bonnie glanced at the black rucksack lying before him. She could not help but grumble, "Where are we going? Why must I wear a coat?"

Although she was perceptive, Ivor had prepared various surprises for her. She had no idea where he was about to take her.

"It's cold at night. You'll catch a cold if you don't wear one. What will we do then?" Ivor said while rummaging through a rucksack. He then handed her an apricot-colored coat. "This should do. It'll go well with your outfit today."

Bonnie stopped asking questions and put on the coat. Then, she realized Ivor was wearing a short-sleeved shirt. "Aren't you going to wear a coat? What'll we do if you catch a cold?"

"I'm a tough man who doesn't need coats or umbrellas." He smiled.

Bonnie's lips twitched as she said, "Suit yourself."

Ivor put the rucksack on his back and took another bag before turning to Bonnie and asking, "Are you ready? We're leaving now."

"I'll go tie my hair back and freshen up first. Give me a minute." She entered the room and came out soon after, saying, "All right, let's go."

As the couple walked, Ivor suddenly stopped and said, "Hold on. I think I left something important behind."

Bonnie turned to look at him. "What was it?"

"It's a secret," Ivor responded as he put down the bag. "Stay put, and I'll be back before you know it."

"Sure." She stood where she was and waited. Then, she looked at the bag on the ground and became curious. However, she did not check its contents.

'Since Ivor said it's a surprise, I'll see it eventually. He also spent a long time preparing. If I opened the bag and checked it, I would spoil the whole thing.'

Bonnie looked away and played with her phone. She waited for a long time, but Ivor still did not return. After checking the time, she realized he had been gone for more than ten minutes.

'Our hotel room isn't that far. Ivor shouldn't be gone for this long. Did something happen?'

Bonnie frowned and tucked her phone away before walking toward the hotel. To her surprise, Ivor was chatting with a group of women. Although he was not the most social guy, he looked like he was having a good time with them.

Ivor was even smiling. He was friendly and gracious to the women, too.

'Huh? He's being way too nice to them. It's a far cry from his usual self. Ivor typically stays away from women.'

Bonnie stayed silent for a while before calling his phone and asking, "What's taking so long? Where are you?"

Ivor gazed at the women before him and felt a headache coming on, causing him to rub his brows. The young women were the daughters of a few of his business partners. Ivor had always had a good relationship with their fathers, too.

The last thing he expected was to run into their daughters. They even greeted him just now, so he had to treat them well. Hence, he had to stay and chat with them. That said, Bonnie had called him. Ivor knew she would be furious because he had made her wait so long, especially if he told her he had been chatting with other women.

'I shouldn't complicate things. I should make up an excuse instead of telling Bonnie the truth.'

"Bonnie, I ran into someone in the parking lot. I'll finish chatting with them soon. Just give me a minute, and I'll be there before you know it."

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Chapter 653

"You ran into someone, huh?" Bonnie raised her brow. "Are you sure?"

"Yeah, I'll come over soon." Ivor hung up the phone and glanced at the young woman before him. "Excuse me, ladies. My fiancée is waiting for me over there. I have to leave now. I'll see you later." The women waved at him, and one of them said, "Of course, Ivor. We'll leave you to it."

"Okay, then," Ivor replied dryly and turned around. He picked up the things he returned to get and walked ahead. To his surprise, he bumped into Bonnie as he turned a corner.

She smiled at him and said, "I thought you said you ran into someone in the parking lot. What are you doing here?"

Although she smiled, it was ingenuine. On the contrary, she looked a little frightening.

'She must've seen me chatting with those girls earlier. That's why she's looking at me like that.'

Ivor could not help but panic. He froze and was about to explain himself, but Bonnie spoke first, "Let me guess. You ran into some women. They wore red, blue, and pink dresses. I bet they were pretty, too." When Ivor met her humorless gaze, a chill ran down his spine. He trembled as he grabbed her hand and admitted his mistake. "I'm sorry, Bonnie! I shouldn't have lied to you. Please forgive me." Ivor apologized twice,

fearing Bonnie would get mad. However, she shook his hand off and put on a poker face, saying, "I want you to explain why you lied to me."

"All right, I'll explain everything. Please don't get mad at me." Ivor was worried Bonnie would ignore him out of anger, so he spoke cautiously, "Those girls are the daughters of some of my business partners. I'm pretty close to them and couldn't just ignore them. That's why I chatted with them. I was worried you'd get mad, so I lied to you. I'm sorry, Bonnie. I shouldn't have kept the truth from you." Bonnie stared at Ivor for a long time. Finally, she said, "I can understand that. Also, I'm not that sensitive and don't need you to look out for my feelings every second of the day. That said, I hate lies and deception."

"If something like this happens again, you must tell me the truth, or I'll be furious." Her tone and expression were solemn. It seemed like it was a big deal for her.

Ivor noticed it and put his hand up to swear, "I promise to never lie to you again."

Satisfied with his answer, Bonnie glanced at the bag in his hand. She decided to drop the matter and ask, "Did you get your things? Can we go now?"

Although she might not have said much, it was evident she had forgiven Ivor. He felt like a weight had been lifted off his shoulder.

Ivor held Bonnie's shoulder, feeling so nervous that his palms were sweating. "You looked so solemn that I thought you were pissed off for real. I was racking my brain for a way to soothe you." "Do I look like someone who's that petty?" Bonnie raised her chin slightly and glanced at him. Then, she repeated, "Don't ever lie to me again."

"Don't worry. I've burned my promise into my mind. I'll never forget it," Ivor said solemnly.

Bonnie smiled. "That's enough. Stop being such a sweet talker, and let's hit the road."

Ivor felt relieved when he saw her smile. "All right, let's go."

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Chapter 654

Ivor's Maybach tore through the streets. An hour later, they arrived at the top of a hill near Verdant Valley Retreat.

Bonnie exited the car and took in the fabulous view of the seemingly unending meadow and boundless starlit sky. A sense of wonder and surprise appeared in his eyes. "What a beautiful spot. It's like I'm in a fantasy movie."

"I knew you'd like it here. It looks like my time and effort was well spent." Ivor walked to Bonnie's side and looked at her. His eyes were affectionate as he admired her delicate face, illuminated by the gentle moonlight.

'I love her like no one else. Here we are, surrounded by marvelous sceneries on all sides. I'm swelling with gratification and happiness. I just know Bonnie and me will stay happy forever.' Bonnie glanced at the meadow before her. She finally realized why Ivor took such a long time to prepare at the hotel. "Were you planning on camping here to enjoy the view at night?"

Ivor chuckled. "Smart as always, Bonnie. Still, you only got half of it right."

"Only half?" She was puzzled. "What's the other half, then?"

Ivor put down his rucksack and unzipped it. Then, he removed parts of a tent and began putting them together. "Not only will we enjoy the view, but we'll also witness a glorious sunrise here."

"Sunrise?" Bonnie swept her gaze across the spot and nodded in approval. "Yeah, this is a nice spot to enjoy the sunrise."

A hint of triumph flashed across Ivor's eyes. "I have good taste, huh? You loved every spot I picked whenever we hung out or went on trips."

Bonnie could not help but giggle when she saw how much he resembled a little boy waiting to be praised for doing a good job. "Fine, you have good taste."

Her compliment made Ivor feel much happier than when he secured a collaboration worth millions. A while later, he said, "Okay, I've built the tent. Go in and see if you like it."

"Sure." Bonnie got on all fours and crawled into the tent. It was spacious and even had a transparent top for them to look at the starlit sky while lying on their backs.

"It's nice and comfy. Do you want to take it for a spin?" Bonnie asked. However, she did not get a response for a long time. She could not help but frown and get out of the tent. "Ivor? Where are you?" No one was in the meadow. A moment later, her brows knitted as she called out, "Ivor?!"

Bonnie raised her voice, but he still did not show up. As she was about to call him on her phone, she heard his charming voice from behind, "Turn around."

When she turned, her eyes widened and glistened with pleasant surprise.

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Chapter 655

Countless fireflies covered the valley and surrounding forest. They swirled in the night sky and made a marvelous sight that even the stars could not match. Bonnie simply could not look away. The fireflies flew out of the jar Ivor held. Bonnie was so surprised and moved that she struggled to describe her feelings. She asked, "When and where did you get these fireflies from?"

"I told you I have a surprise for you. Naturally, I had them prepared much earlier." Ivor took another jar and bragged, "Do you want to see more of them? I have another jar here. I caught all of these for you myself. What do you think? Am I awesome, or am I awesome?"

Ivor bragged so much that it made Bonnie giggle. "Geez, you'll never change, Ivor. You'll always be a kid."

'Did he honestly catch these fireflies for me? How old does he think he is? He's usually so imposing and bossy around other people but that's not apparent now.'

"I can't help it," Ivor said helplessly and sighed. He approached Bonnie and held her shoulder. "I look at you and have these impulses to do things that'll make you happy. I'm spending all my childishness on you."

"Ivor, you're not only immature but also smart-mouthed." Although Bonnie said that, her grin was wider than ever. "Still, I love how thoughtful your gesture is."

"That's what matters the most." Ivor took her hand and led her to the tent. "Let's go inside and see how it feels to lie down and enjoy the night sky."

'Ivor has been preparing for tonight since he reached Verdant Valley Retreat. I don't think he has rested, either.'

With that in mind, Bonnie could not help but worry. "You've been working on this all day. Now's a good chance for you to take a break."

Ivor was overjoyed to hear that. "Bonnie, are you worried about me?"

She tugged at his arm and blushed, asking embarrassedly, "Are you going to keep spouting nonsense? Do you have something better to do, or do you want to lie down?" Ivor smirked when he saw her blushing. "Of course, I want to lie down. Ladies first."

"Okay," Bonnie replied and crawled inside.

Then, Ivor entered and lay down beside her. The couple took in the boundless night sky when Ivor held her hand and intertwined his fingers with hers. "Are you happy, Bonnie?" "Very much so," Bonnie responded. Then, she figured it was not enough to convey her feelings. So, she added, "I'm thrilled."

'He took a long time to prepare for tonight's surprise. My initial response wasn't sincere enough.'

"So am I." Ivor turned and pressed his head against hers. "My days spent with you are always full of endless happiness."

Although Bonnie did not know how to sweet talk, she did not push him away or insult him—that was more than enough to show that she shared Ivor's sentiment.

He must have realized her thoughts because he boldly leaned closer and kissed her cheek. "I'm so lucky to have you, Bonnie."

She blushed so much that even her ears reddened.

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Chapter 656

"Stop it, Ivor. I know that already. Although it might not bother you, I've heard that one too many times."

Ivor smiled and chuckled before leaning closer to her. He whispered, "We just started our relationship, yet you're already tired of it? Well, too bad because I'll tell you how

much I love you for the rest of my life." Bonnie might have thought he sounded childish, but a wave of love and affection rose within her. She slowly smiled and said, "Is that your way of saying I'll be stuck with you forever?"

"I'm afraid so. You're the only one for me, Bonnie. You'll be mine for eternity." Ivor's voice brimmed with affection and solemnness. Moreover, he consistently proved his words with his actions.

Bonnie turned to Ivor, her eyes full of confidence as she replied, "Yeah, we'll be together forever. Nothing can split us apart."

It was her first time saying something like that to Ivor. He was overjoyed when he heard it. "You make me love you more just when I think it's impossible."

"There you go again with the sweet talk." Bonnie could not handle him sometimes. She turned away and closed her eyes. "It's getting late, so hurry and grab some shut-eye. Otherwise, we'll oversleep and miss the sunrise."

"All right, good night, Bonnie." Ivor turned to his side and rested his hand on her waist.

Bonnie instinctively motioned to pry his hand off, but something stopped her. Then, she withdrew her hand and left his hand around her waist.

Ivor noticed it and smirked, his eyes full of intense humor.

'She's so adorable.'

At six in the morning, the sun rose slowly into the sky. Bonnie glanced at Ivor beside her, sleeping like a log. She lightly smacked his cheek and said, "Hey, Ivor, wake up. Don't forget, we're here to watch the sunrise."

However, Ivor had woken up moments ago. Now that Bonnie was calling him, he pretended to have just awoken from his sleep and opened his eyes slowly. "Ahh, seeing you first thing in the morning is wonderful."

Bonnie's lips twitched. "It's so early. Can you please not start the day with something so corny?"

'I just can't with him, sometimes.'

"I can't control myself around you." Ivor chuckled. Then, he sat up and looked ahead. The morning sun rose over the peaks in the distance. Thin layers of mist enveloped the mountains, painting a surreal beauty.

"Bonnie..." Ivor could not wait to share his thoughts after seeing the beautiful scenery. However, he was stunned when he turned to look at her.

The gentle sun shined on Bonnie's face, casting a hazy look on her. Ivor felt he was dreaming and that everything, including his beloved fiancée, would disappear when he woke up. The thought of it startled him.

Before he knew it, he pulled Bonnie into his arms and said, "Bonnie, promise you'll stay with me forever. Don't leave, okay?"

Ivor held her tightly as if it was the only way to appease his unease.

Bonnie was puzzled by what he did. "Aren't I standing beside you now? I don't recall talking about leaving you, either. What's gotten into you?"

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Chapter 657

Ivor relaxed his grip on Bonnie and stared at her affectionately. He said, "As far as I'm concerned, you're a gift from heaven. You've given me so much happiness without doing much. All I have to do is look at you to fill my heart with gratification.

"That's why I'm worried heaven might reclaim you someday. If that happens, I can't see you anymore. I-I can't lose you, Bonnie."

Ivor's eyes reddened, and his charming voice sounded uneasy. His fear of losing her was evident.

Bonnie felt his profound unease and hugged him back. She patted his shoulder and soothed him, "You're the most fearsome businessman in the industry. Where's your unwavering confidence and resolution? Does being with me unravel your confidence this much?"

She could sometimes feel Ivor's lack of security whenever he was with her. However, Bonnie was not the best at being in a relationship, and she did not know what to do to make him feel better.

Ivor pressed his forehead against Bonnie's, saying, "It's because I love you too much. I'd shrink you and put you in my pocket if I could. That way, I can take you anywhere with me. Also, you're such an incredible person that countless guys flirt with you

wherever you go. I fear someone will steal you from me if I let down my guard for even a second."

Bonnie was surprised that he was so vulnerable inside when he had always appeared strong before others.

'Frankly speaking, I'm partly responsible for that. Ivor has taken the lead and prepared all these surprises, while I've only been on the receiving end. I never give him anything. Maybe that's why he doesn't feel safe, even though we're together.'

With that in mind, Bonnie held his hands and said, "I understand that, but I hope you can have more self-confidence. I've always trusted in my taste. If I love something, it's because it's the best thing ever, including you."

"Would I have started having feelings for you if you weren't incredible or tough enough? I wouldn't have fallen for you if you didn't love and adore me. Also, you think I'm unique and irreplaceable. "You probably don't know this, but the feeling's mutual. You're the one for me, and I won't break up with you for another guy without a good reason. Stop feeling uneasy, Ivor. I'll never leave you." Although Bonnie was not good at sweet-talking, she knew she had to muster her courage and tell Ivor how she felt. That was the only way she could ease his restlessness and worries. Ivor felt so moved by her speech that he did not know how to respond. He simply held her tighter. His trembling hands were the only answer Bonnie needed. She chuckled when she noticed it. Then, she rested her head on his shoulder and said, "Do you want to know something? No one has taken any time or effort to prepare something like this for me. So, I'm happy you're willing to do all of this for me. Thank you, Ivor."

"You're so silly. We're a couple, which means you don't have to thank me. I belong to you, and I did all this because it's my duty as your fiance. Also, I'm more than happy to prepare surprises for you." Ivor stared at her, his eyes brimming with affection.

His words filled Bonnie's heart with warmth. She said smilingly, "You've surprised me so many times. Since that's the case, I've also prepared a surprise for you."

Ivor's eyes sparkled, thinking, 'I didn't know she prepared something for me.'

"D-Did you really prepare a surprise for me? How intriguing. I wonder what it could be." He looked like he could barely contain his excitement.

Meanwhile, Bonnie pursed her lips and said, "Close your eyes."

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Chapter 658

Ivor guessed the surprise, making his eyes sparkle even more. "Are you going to kiss me, Bonnie?"

"There you go again with your imagination." Bonnie rolled her eyes in exasperation. "Just close your eyes, or I won't give you your surprise."

Ivor hastily replied, "Okay, fine! I'll close them now."

Although he said that, he quipped, "If it's a kiss, I want you to say it aloud. Don't be shy."

She could not help but giggle. "Cut the crap and close your eyes now!"

"All right, I'll close them for real this time," Ivor said as he slowly shut his eyes.

"No peeking!" She reminded before turning around and rummaging through her bag. Soon after, she found the exquisite jewelry box in it. She took it and turned to face Ivor, who had his eyes shut. She was pleased with his obedience.

Bonnie smiled as she took his hand in hers. Then, she removed the ring from the jewelry box and put it on his ring finger.

Ivor felt the cold sensation and realized what she had given him. He could not wait to open his eyes and look at it. However, Bonnie still had not told him to open his eyes. So, Ivor strained and suppressed his excitement.

He asked tremblingly, "C-Can I open my eyes now?"

She replied, "Go ahead."

Ivor trembled slightly. He was a little afraid to open them for a moment.

'I'm frozen with fear. What if it's just a dream, and it'll disappear when I open my eyes?'

Realizing he was motionless, Bonnie patted his shoulder and asked, "Why aren't you opening your eyes? What are you waiting for?"

Her voice gave him the strength to open his eyes and gaze at the ring. Although Ivor had already guessed it was a ring, he was ecstatic when he finally saw it. He drowned in inexplicable happiness and could not stop smiling.

"Bonnie, am I dreaming? Is this real?" He had no words to describe his excitement. Waves of ecstasy washed over him. Nothing could compare to the happiness he felt at that moment.

"Of course, it's real. For the record, I'm standing right here. How's it a dream?" Bonnie traced Ivor's finger and stopped at the ring. She rubbed it with an uncharacteristic affection in her eyes.

"I designed this ring just for you the materials, sketch, and final production-everything. You must cherish it and never lose it, Ivor."

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Chapter 659

"Don't worry, Bonnie. I'll keep it safe because it's a gift from you." Ivor looked at the ring, his face brimming with affection. "This is the happiest I've been despite receiving countless gifts." He stared into Bonnie's eyes affectionately. "I love it, Bonnie."

The way he stared at her made her blush, making her rosy cheeks look particularly tempting. Ivor stared at her and fell into a daze. Then, he leaned in and cupped her face, asking, "Can I kiss you?" Bonnie blushed even more when she took in his masculine scent. "You can if you want to. Why'd you ask? You've never been this polite with me before."

Ivor was ecstatic. Without a moment's delay, he lowered his head to kiss her. To his surprise, Bonnie grabbed his collar and kissed him first.

His eyes married, and he kissed her even more intensely. Instead of just kissing, they looked like they were competing to see who could kiss more passionately. The couple kissed for several minutes. When they stopped, Ivor felt like he wanted more.

"Bonnie, you're just too good to be true."

Bonnie regained her composure. She said, "Can you please stop being so corny? You're giving me goosebumps."

Ivor held her waist and said, "I told you several times already. I can never help myself when I'm around you." Bonnie pushed him away and said, "All right, time is ticking. Let's pack up and head back."

"We're in no rush. Floyd's on his way to pick us up. We can take our time packing. He should be there when we return to the hospital, which is perfect." Ivor smiled, crawled back into the tent, and started packing.

As they cleaned the tent, Bonnie noticed Ivor scratching his back occasionally. She frowned, lifted his shirt, and saw red marks all over his back. "You have a lot of mosquito bites. Do you want me to apply some ointment for you?"

Various hills surrounded Verdant Valley Retreat, which was naturally teeming with mosquitoes or insects. That was why she brought a self-made itch relief cream before she came here. Since the itching was unbearable, Ivor accepted Bonnie's offer, "All right, thanks."

He removed his shirt and lay down in the tent. Bonnie took the cream and gently applied it to him. Her fingers were so soft that it reminded him of a cat's paws. Ivor would feel a tickle on the inside whenever she touched his back, making him want to do unspeakable things to her.

When Bonnie finished applying the cream, she checked to ensure she got all the spots. She said, "All right, you can get up now."

"Okay," Ivor replied and stood up in the tent. Suddenly, he started removing his pants.

Immediately after, Bonnie covered her eyes and exclaimed, "Wh-what are you doing?! Are you going to act like a pervert in broad daylight?!"

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Chapter 660

Although it was broad daylight, no one was around them. However, Ivor was too daring and reckless. Bonnie might have gotten used to his actions, but his impetuosity still shocked her. Ivor looked at her innocently as if it was not a big deal. "My legs got bitten, too. I need you to apply some cream down there."

Bonnie's lips twitched as she looked at his legs.

Ivor noticed her silence and deliberately stepped closer. "Don't doctors treat men and women? How does this bother you if you're a doctor?"

"You're so good at twisting facts to your advantage, Ivor. I wonder how you do it daily." Bonnie rolled her eyes at him. "I'll do one of your legs at most. You can do the rest yourself." "Which one of my legs are you going to do?"

Bonnie realized it was a double entendre and felt exasperated. Then, she smacked his bottom with her cream-covered hand. "Do you still want to do this?"

Ivor knew not to push his luck, so he stopped teasing her. "Of course I do. Thanks, Bonnie."

"What a smart-mouthed punk!" Bonnie felt helpless, but she still carefully applied some cream to his leg.

'I can't let my guard down around him!'

Several minutes later, Ivor got up and continued to pack. Then, Bonnie noticed a Maybach approaching from a distance. She turned to Ivor and said, "Hurry, Floyd's almost here."

Ivor swiftly stuffed everything in the bag before zipping it up. He raised his brow at her and asked, "I'm done packing. What do you think? I'm quick with my hands, huh?" "Are you a child? Why do you feel the need to tell me that? Is that your way of asking for compliments?" Bonnie did not know what to do with Ivor.

He replied firmly, "I did a good job. Of course, I'll tell you about it so you praise me. That'll raise my confidence and spirits!"

Bonnie played along and spoke to him the way she would a kid, "Fine, you're the best, Ivor. No one is as good as you."

Ivor smiled. To say he was happy would be an understatement. "You're so good to me, Bonnie. You did what I said and praised me." Bonnie sighed and tried to stop herself from hitting him.

'Wait a minute. I just found out Ivor lacks a sense of security in our relationship. Praising him more might help remedy this issue.'

The couple were still chatting when the Maybach parked nearby. Floyd exited the car and took everything from Ivor before putting them in the trunk. "Are we going home now, Mr. Ivor? Ms. Bonnie? Or do you want to stroll around the valley?"

Ivor looked at Bonnie and asked, "What do you think? Do you want to walk around? Do you think it's a good idea to stay here longer?"

'Our relationship made great strides after one night. If we stay here longer, we might end up making a baby here, just like Floyd's cousin and his wife did.'

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Chapter 661

Bonnie rubbed her brows and yawned. "I don't want to walk anywhere. Let's just go home and rest. So many things happened last night." "All right, we'll go home if that's what you want." Although Ivor felt slightly disappointed, he still held her hand and walked to the car.

Then, he took her arm and said warmly, "You're tired, right? Here, lean on my shoulder and get some shut-eye. I'll wake you up when we're there." Bonnie did not argue. She leaned on his shoulder and got comfortable before slowly closing her eyes. "Thanks, Ivor."

"You don't have to thank me." He leaned in and said affectionately, "I'll do anything for you."

Bonnie grunted and smiled in response. Ivor patted her shoulder and softly said, "I'll let you sleep now."

"Mhm," Bonnie responded and fell asleep in no time.

Several minutes later, Ivor noticed she was sound asleep. He said hushedly to Floyd, who was driving, "Go slowly and avoid any bumps you see."

"You got it, Mr. Ivor." Floyd slowed down and drove steadily for the rest of the journey. They did not even run into any bumps along the way, allowing Bonnie to sleep throughout the trip.

It was almost noon when they reached Pyralis. However, Bonnie still felt a little tired from the trip. So, she returned to her room to sleep again.

Meanwhile, Ivor went to his study to review the documents that had accumulated during his two-day absence. He was reading the documents when he noticed the ring Bonnie had given him.

Ivor knew he was too distracted to continue working, so he stopped and recalled the moment she put the ring on his finger. He smiled, and his eyes sparkled.

'Bonnie gave me this ring. She even made it herself. I can't help but love it more every time I look at it.'

At that moment, Floyd entered the study with more documents and saw Ivor's expression. The former grew curious and asked, "Why do you look so happy, Mr. Ivor?"

Ivor had a heartfelt smile as he showed his assistant the ring. The former deliberately asked, "What do you think about my new ring?"

Floyd checked it out and said, "That's not bad. I'd say it's pretty fashionable."

Ivor's grin widened as he wiggled his ring finger and added, "Aren't you curious how I got it? You should ask who gave it to me."

'Mr. Ivor looks so proud and excited about it. It won't take a genius to figure out who gifted it to him. On the other hand, he looks so happy. Maybe I shouldn't rain on his parade.'

Floyd humored his boss and asked, "Who gave it to you, Mr. Ivor?"

Ivor lifted his chin at Floyd, his eyes filled with triumph. "Bonnie gave it to me, of course."

'As expected, it's a gift from Bonnie.'

Floyd said smilingly, "Congratulations, Mr. Ivor. You've been trying to win her heart for so long. Now, you can finally reap the benefits of your efforts. Since she gave you that ring, you have a big place in her heart."

Ivor rubbed his ring fondly. He was satisfied with Floyd's response. "Now that you've mentioned it, you can start referring to her as my wife."

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Chapter 662

'I've wanted everyone in the villa to refer to Bonnie as my wife for a while now. However, I know she wouldn't want that. I've been suppressing my urges, but she gave me this ring. That means she'll be bound to me forever.

'It's only a matter of time before everyone starts referring to her as my wife. I believe she wouldn't mind if I get it started now.'

Floyd chuckled and said, "We should've been referring to Ms. Bonnie as your wife long ago, Mr. Ivor. Maybe I should tell everyone else in the villa to do the same."

"Not yet. I want you to start doing it first. I'll observe Bonnie's reaction and see how she takes it. If she doesn't object, you can tell everyone else in the villa to do the same."

Ivor did not think Bonnie would mind it too much. Still, he wanted to be cautious since it was better to be safe than sorry. She might feel uncomfortable if he botched it. Moreover, Ivor had always been extra careful when it came to Bonnie.

"Understood, sir," Floyd replied.

Ivor nodded and lowered his head to stare at the ring. "She designed this ring for me, Floyd. Hey, does it remind you of Finley, the international jeweler?"

Floyd checked the ring and said, "It does. Ms. Bonnie could be a fan of Finley, right? That must be why her design is similar to Finley's. After all, Finley always decides on the current trends in jewelry design. "Many foreign youngsters revere her. Even renowned jewelers try to imitate her. I reckon Ms. Bonnie took inspiration from Finley's work while designing the ring for you."

Ivor was initially suspicious of the ring's origins, but after thinking about Floyd's words, Ivor decided that his suspicions were wrong.

"It doesn't matter what style Bonnie adopted when she designed it for me. I love it because it's a gift from her."

The day rolled on, and dinner time arrived. Ivor put some food on Bonnie's plate and ensured no bones were in her branzino. There was even a plate of peeled prawns on the side. Before passing her the dishes, he checked twice to ensure he did not miss out on any bones or skin.

"Here you go, Bonnie."

She did not turn them away and instead passed Ivor some ribs, saying, "Let's eat together."

The adoration in his eyes was unmistakable. "All right, let's."

At that moment, the couple looked adorable and loving. Even the housekeepers could not help but smile and internally give their blessings to Ivor and Bonnie.

It just so happened that Sydney visited Ivor's villa for some business. She was outside the dining room when she saw the couple. She gritted her teeth menacingly.

Meanwhile, Gunnar was behind Sydney and saw her stop. He asked in puzzlement, "What's wrong?"

"Look for yourself. Bonnie looks proud because Ivor dotes on her. I can't stand how pleased she looks right now." She glared at Bonnie as she spoke. The former looked fierce, wishing she could rip Bonnie to shreds.

Gunnar noticed his wife seething with rage and patted her shoulder. He tried to soothe her, "Simmer down. It's not worth compromising your health over someone so insignificant. Let's focus on finding ways to drive her and Ivor apart and kick her out of the family."

As luck would have it, Flynn heard what his father said.

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Chapter 663

Instead of showing himself, Flynn remained hidden in a corner and continued to eavesdrop on his parents. Meanwhile, Sydney did not know her son was nearby. She was too busy thinking of a way to teach Bonnie a lesson.

Then, she thought of something and squinted, grimly saying, "Let's contact Eloise. We'll team up with her and deal with Bonnie together."

Gunnar recalled the young lady posting an apology on the internet a while ago. He could not resist frowning. "Although she didn't do much, the incident was exaggerated. It barely rippled out in the end." "Don't be so sure of yourself." A grim light flashed in

Sydney's eyes as she sneered. "I've known Eloise since she was a little girl. She won't give up that easily, especially after Bonnie publicly humiliated her. "Eloise won't let Bonnie off the hook. If I'm right, Eloise is probably plotting to run Bonnie as we speak."

Gunnar's eyes sparkled when he heard that. He replied, "That would be perfect. If that's the case, we might not even have to contact Eloise. We'll just wait until she puts her plans in motion. Then, we'll support her from the shadows."

"With our help, Eloise will corner Bonnie. Bonnie won't have a chance to reclaim herself this time."

"You're right. We don't have to contact Eloise. We can always help her from behind the scenes." Sydney smirked menacingly. "I can't wait to see Bonnie's miserable look when we kick her out of the family." The older couple saw Flynn emerging from his hiding spot a moment later. He strode toward his parents and grabbed their shoulders to pull them out of the villa. When the trio reached a gazebo, Sydney freed herself from her son's grasp and frowned.

"What are you doing, Flynn?! Why'd you drag us out here?"

Gunnar knew why his son did that but feigned ignorance and said, "Tell us why you brought us out here, Flynn."

"Are you seriously asking me that?" Flynn's eyes were rageful when he recalled listening to his parents' plot against Bonnie. "I knew you schemed to drive a wedge between Bonnie and Ivor last time. "I've been waiting to talk to you two since then. Fortunately, their love is so strong that it withstood your little schemes. I thought I'd let it slide, but you're still so hung up on it. You two want nothing but the worst for her."

"You're doing the wrong thing. Listen to me and stop obsessing over Bonnie, or you'll regret your actions sooner or later." Sydney never expected her son to speak to her and her husband that way. She was so shocked that she could not respond. 'Flynn has always been cocky. He was worse out there, too. No one could control him.'

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Chapter 664

'Flynn was obedient to Gunnar and me when he returned. He'd still listen to everything I said and never argued. Now, he's speaking to us, his parents so rudely. I've doted on Flynn since childhood. I can't believe he's talking to me like this for Bonnie's sake!'

The more Sydney thought about it, the angrier she became. Her breathing became rapid, and her face reddened.

"Did Bonnie put a spell on you or something? Why are you standing up for her now? You realize you're going against your parents, right?"

'We're doing what we do for his sake, yet he's speaking up for an outsider. Flynn is pissing me off!'

"What do you mean by that, Mom? Bonnie impressed me with her capabilities and character-nothing else! I'm not the only one she has impressed, either. Give her time, Mom and Dad. I believe you'll be impressed with her, too."

Flynn thought his parents misjudged Bonnie. Hence, he tried his best to persuade them otherwise.

However, Sydney's expression darkened. "Bonnie's character and capabilities impressed you, huh? Hmph, you must be under her spell, then. Did you forget how she almost got you kicked out of the country? She even threatened to forbid you from returning for a decade!"

"Has anyone else treated you so poorly? You have her to thank for all your sufferings, yet you're sticking up for her. You must have a screw loose. That's why you don't know what you're doing now!"

"I know what I'm doing. You and Dad are the ones who are clueless!" Flynn wanted to tell them Bonnie's true identity to show them the truth. However, Bonnie had forbidden him from doing that, so he could only bite his tongue.

Meanwhile, Sydney stared at her son. She knew he would take Bonnie's side, no matter what. With that, a deep sorrow replaced the rage she felt in her heart. Sydney could not help but tear up.

"Flynn, you used to be so obedient and understanding. Are you even the same well-behaved and considerate son we once knew?" She thought back to Bonnie's despicable face, and a profound hatred flashed in her eyes.

"It's all Bonnie's fault! You wouldn't be like this if it weren't for her! She has warped your mind. You've had the worst luck in life, my poor son. I wonder if there's still hope for you, Flynn." Suddenly, Sydney clenched her fist, and her expression grew grim. "I swear I'll never tolerate Bonnie's presence in our family! I won't quit until we've kicked her out of the family!" Gunnar's expression stiffened as he said, "You have my support,

dear! Flynn is our only son, yet Bonnie turned him into this sorry mess. Of course, I won't let her get away with it!" Flynn grew anxious. He could not believe that his parents insisted on teaching Bonnie a lesson. "Aren't I doing well now, Mom? What in the world are you two talking about?" "Save your breath, Flynn. We've long wanted Bonnie out of the Knight family and Arvandor. You can say whatever you want, but it won't change our minds," Sydney said firmly.

Naturally, Gunnar took his wife's side. "Your mom's right. We've decided not to settle until we ruin Bonnie for manipulating you. We'll never accept someone as vicious and heartless as her to be a family member."

Flynn saw his parents' stubbornness and clenched his fists. He sighed, trying to suppress his frustration. Ultimately, he could not stand it, wanting to tell them everything.

"You two keep saying you want to kick Bonnie out of the family and Arvandor. Well, do you know who she is? H-Here's the truth. Sh-she's the pillar of the scientific research world. She's Ms. Bonita!"

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Chapter 665

A pin-drop silence hung over the trio. Gunnar and Sydney froze at the sudden revelation.

'Mom and Dad's reactions are reasonable. After all, I froze like them when I learned Bonnie was Bonita. I was in disbelief, too. That said, after getting over my initial shock, I had nothing but profound respect and admiration for her.'

Flynn believed his parents would start treating Bonnie differently after what he told them. Suddenly, Sydney palmed his forehead and asked worriedly, "Why are you spouting nonsense? Do you have a fever?" 'God damn it. I broke my promise to Bonnie and told my parents the truth, yet they still don't believe me.'

Flynn felt helpless as he moved away from his mother's hand. "I don't have a fever. I told you the truth. Bonnie is Ms. Bonita."

"Jeez, your mind is nothing but mush now." Sydney shook her head in distress. She turned to Gunnar and said, "Our son's condition has worsened. Should we get a psychiatrist to look into it? Otherwise, our only son will be ruined."

Gunnar sighed. "I can tell his condition is worsening by the day because of Bonnie. We have no time to lose. Let's get him checked now, or he might become worse than he already is."

The older couple discussed their son's nonexistent mental illness as he stood there. Flynn grew so upset that he almost jumped. Instead, he said agitatedly, "Mom! Dad! I wasn't lying! I-if you don't believe me, you can ask Grandpa about it. You'll learn the truth if you talk to him!"

He was so worked up that he told his parents everything. Still, they merely leaned close to each other and whispered among themselves, ignoring their son.

Flynn was furious as he strode across the gazebo toward the living room.

"Since that didn't work, I'll go in there and tell Bonnie about your plot! I'll tell her to keep her guard up around you guys. The last thing I want is for you two to ruin her life."

Sydney heard her son's words and turned to Gunnar. The couple exchanged worried looks before catching up to Flynn and standing in his way. Sydney grabbed her son's arm and said, "Your dad and I decided this long ago, Flynn. You can't mess up our plans!"

She turned to the bodyguards standing far away and exclaimed, "Hey, I need help! Take my son away!"

The two bodyguards heard her and marched over. They held Flynn's shoulders, and he struggled fiercely. He was so agitated that his face reddened. "Let me go, damn it!"

Sydney rubbed her brows in frustration and waved at the bodyguards. "Take him back to the car. We're going to see a psychiatrist now."

"No! I won't go! I'm not crazy, so why should I go?!" Flynn's fury grew, but the bodyguards had subjugated him. His struggles were futile.

Flynn added, "Do you even consider me your son?! How can you not believe me? You even told the bodyguards to catch me! Order them to let me go, now!"

'I didn't want to do this, my dear boy, but your mind is screwed. That must be why you're taking Bonnie's side. I can't let you ruin our plan. I wouldn't do this if there were another way.'

"We're going because of your condition, Flynn. There's something wrong with your head, and we can't afford to wait to fix it. All you need to know is that we're your parents. We have your best interest at heart. Be a dear and cooperate with us, okay?"

Flynn was on the verge of a meltdown as he said, "H-How many times must I repeat myself, Mom?! I'm not crazy!"

Standing silently on the sidelines, Gunnar seized the opportunity to reach into his son's pocket and snatch his phone away.

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Chapter 666 -

Chapter 666

"Cooperate with the psychiatrist when we're there, Flynn. Do what they tell you to do, and you'll return to your normal self before you know it."

'I thought Mom and Dad were bluffing when they said they'd send me to a psychiatrist to get my head checked,' Flynn thought, 'At most, they'd keep me here for several days before letting me out.' However, his father had taken his phone, showing they were serious. Flynn quickly said, "W-Wait, I'll do as you said and won't tell Bonnie your plan. Don't send me to a psychiatrist!"

'There's nothing wrong with my head-I'm perfectly sane. There's no telling if the doctor will pronounce me a psycho once I get submitted. I can't go there.'

Sydney shook her head. She did not believe her son. "Sweetheart, listen to me. It's harmless to get your head checked."

Gunnar helplessly added, "Listen to your mom. It doesn't matter if you're sane or not. It doesn't hurt to get checked. Maybe a trip to the psychiatrist will get you back on your feet."

Flynn gave up and looked to the skies, thinking, 'I can't get through to them. I'll have to play ball. That's the only way I'll escape this mess.'

"All right, I know you guys don't believe a word I said. How about I swear an oath instead? God will curse me with a childless future if I tell anyone about your plan."

"You piece of shit!" Gunnar was furious as he smacked the back of Flynn's head. "Do you think that's acceptable?!"

Both parents' hearts softened as they ordered the bodyguards to let their son go.

"Understood," the two bodyguards responded simultaneously and stepped back.

Gunnar approached Flynn and asked disbelievingly, "Will you keep it a secret, or are you bluffing?"

Flynn nodded firmly. "Yeah, there's no need to tell anyone, after all."

"That's great, sweetie. You finally see the truth and understand that everything we do is for you." Sydney was delighted that her son had regained his senses and took their side.

Gunnar looked grateful, saying, "All that matters is that you see the truth. You must know everything we do is for your sake, son."

Then, the older couple noticed a strange look on their son's face as he glanced at the living room. Flynn looked mesmerized as he said proudly, "I won't tell Bonnie anything because she's intelligent. None of the women who craved Ivor could outdo her, much less trouble her.

"Indeed, Eloise is tough, but she's a nobody compared to Bonnie. She should feel lucky that Bonnie isn't interested in holding grudges. Otherwise, Bonnie could've crushed Eloise like a bug!"

Sydney and Gunnar sighed heavily. They thought Flynn had finally begun to see reason. However, it seemed he had just become crazier.

'Bonnie has done a number on our son's psyche. Is there a chance our son Flynn will regain his sanity?'

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Chapter 667

Several days later, Bonnie went to the university after finishing her work at the research institute. She had just reached the gate when she heard a piercing voice, "Hey, Bonnie! You've skipped school for several days now.

"Do you think you own the university? You can't come and go as you please! I worry about you. Why are you skipping classes if your life depended on it? You might not be able to graduate at this rate." Bonnie turned and saw Selina and two girls standing across from her. One of the girls in a yellow dress stifled a chuckle while looking at Bonnie disdainfully.

"Selina's right. You take this university for granted because you got a perfect score on the SATS. People who disrespect the university will never graduate. Not even the standard universities can tolerate your actions, not to mention a prestigious university like ours!

"You're supposed to be the best scholar here. If you don't graduate, you'll become one of the biggest jokes here."

The other girl in a black dress added, "You're so undisciplined. You can keep dreaming if you think you'll graduate. Also, I wonder where you got the guts to compete for a guy with the prettiest girl on campus." Selina smirked when she heard what her friends said. She even felt pleased with herself.

Bonnie raised her brow when she saw Selina's reaction. The former asked leisurely, "The prettiest girl on campus? Do you mean Selina? Is that an appropriate title for her? After all, she's no longer the prettiest girl on campus."

The girl in black was stumped, not knowing how to retort. It took a while for her to return to her senses. Then, arms akimbo, she said coldly, "You might look a tad prettier than Selina, but that doesn't make you the prettiest girl on campus. It's not just about the looks but also inner beauty.

"You always talk back to the professors and have multiple disciplinary issues. Do you think you're equal to Selina?"

The girl in black thought Bonnie would feel humiliated. However, the latter did not show an ounce of shame. On the contrary, Bonnie smirked mockingly. "Oh, really?"

The girl in black lifted her chin and said disdainfully, "That's how it has always been! You're just a bimbo who just happened to look pretty. Selina might not be as beautiful as you, but she trumps you in all other aspects."

Instead of responding to the girl, Bonnie smirked at Selina and asked, "Where did you find such incompetent friends? That's twice now she's called me prettier than you." Selina's heart dropped. Bonnie's words made her grimace with anger and embarrassment.

The girl in black was wide-eyed as she grabbed Selina's eyes and explained, "Th-that wasn't what I meant, Selina. I-I was just trying to say she's worse than you. I didn't know she'd twist my words that way." "I know what you meant, Maisie. Don't worry about it. Bonnie's trying to drive us apart, but I won't fall for her petty tricks," Selina said through gritted teeth. Although she said that, she still subtly glared at Maisie.

Maisie even relaxed when she thought Selina was not mad at her. The former said, "That's right. We're friends, and no one can drive a wedge between us so easily."

Bonnie knew the truth but said nothing. Instead, she just grinned.

Selina almost let her true feelings show when she saw Bonnie's mocking grin.

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Chapter 668

Fortunately, Selina took a deep breath and suppressed her anger. She was able to maintain her usual gracefulness. Even so, a subtle tell in her expression hinted at her anger.

"Bonnie, you've skipped so many classes. Do you think you can still graduate with your poor attendance? I wonder why the former university president keeps taking your side. Still, that doesn't change the fact that you skipped classes.

"All the professors keep your attendance records, so you can't argue it away. You can't just come and go as you please when you're a student at a prestigious university. If you keep acting recklessly, you'll find that not graduating is the least of your problems.

"If the university takes it seriously, they might even expel you. You'd have wasted your time attending this university."

Bonnie smiled and said casually, "I appreciate your concern, but I'm afraid you'll be disappointed. None of what you said will happen to me."

"Why are you still acting tough?!" Selina scoffed. "You'll cry when you can't graduate or get expelled!"

"Oh, wow." Bonnie shrugged. "Let's wait and see what happens."

"Why, you little-" Selina sighed. Then, she heard a familiar voice beside her.

However, the voice was not directed at her. Instead, it was directed at Bonnie, "Why aren't you going into the campus, Bonnie?"

Everyone glanced at the person speaking and saw Coleman strolling toward them. He stood beside Bonnie, turned around, and saw Selina. A moment later, his expression grew grim as he asked, "Is she stirring up trouble again, Bonnie?"

Selina did not want to leave a wrong impression on the man she admired, so she hastily explained, "I-I wasn't being mean to her. She has skipped too many classes, and I just wanted to greet her." Of course, Coleman did not believe a word she said. He looked at Bonnie and asked, "Is that true?"

Bonnie glanced at Selina and said sarcastically, "Hmm, it's true. She came to greet me but wasn't friendly about it. I can't say I blame her, though. After all, you're why she's being an ass to me." "Huh?" Coleman was puzzled as a sense of curiosity flashed in his eyes. "Why are you blaming me? I didn't do anything."

"Are you serious?" Bonnie glanced at him. "She likes you and treats me like her love rival because of how close we are."

Coleman instinctively looked at Selina. She blushed when she met his gaze, saying, "I-I'll admit I like you a lot, but I did nothing to Bonnie. Please don't misunderstand me."

Coleman frowned, not knowing how to respond.

'I've long known Selina has a thing for me, but I don't feel the same about her, so I've never discussed it with her. Still, I didn't expect Bonnie to be so forthright about it. Bonnie just opened a can of worms.' Bonnie noticed Coleman's silence and thought, 'I need to tell him something else. After all, we're close friends.'

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Chapter 669

"Although Selina might like you, I feel obligated to tell you something because we're good friends, Coleman. She's exceptionally vengeful and will hold on to the tiniest grudge for a long time. Then, she'll exact revenge when the time is right.

"If she can't have you, her love for you might turn into hatred. That's when she'll resort to extreme measures. For your safety, I advise you to stay away from her."

Selina had tried her best to suppress her anger for Bonnie. The former tried her best to give Coleman a good impression but could no longer hold herself back after hearing what Bonnie said. Selina roared at Bonnie, "That's utter bullshit, Bonnie! Shut your trap!"

Bonnie shook her head at the vicious-looking Selina. "Tsk, tsk, tsk. Look at her, Coleman. She's a raging shrew, and you're too gentle to be with someone like that. I'm trying to tell you to stay away from her." Coleman trusted Bonnie, saying, "All right, I'll do as you say."

"Wonderful." Bonnie looked at him with satisfaction, reminiscent of how a teacher would look at their student. "Let's go to the lecture hall together."

"All right, I'm coming." He caught up to her and left the gate with her.

Selina watched as they left, her eyes full of resentment. She balled her fists, wishing to pounce at Bonnie and rip her to shreds.

Meanwhile, Maisie and Skylar, the girl in the yellow dress, noticed Selina's grim expression. They could not help but badmouth Bonnie.

"That girl is too much! How dare she talk about you like that in front of Coleman? Bonnie has shattered whatever good impression Coleman has on you, Selina."

"Bonnie said all that because they're good friends. I hate her guts! She has never had anything pleasant to say."

Selina listened to them while glaring daggers at Bonnie. The resentment in the former's eyes grew increasingly intense, so much so that she emanated a menacing air. "Just you wait, Bonnie. I'll never let you off the hook."

The university executives' meeting occurred at half past two in the afternoon. Bonnie sat at the conference desk and swept her gaze across the room. After ensuring everyone was present, she asked, "How are the preparations for the university exhibition going?"

The third professor on her left stood up and said, "Everything is going well, Ms. Bonnie. The preparations are underway."

Bonnie responded, "Pass me the relevant information."

"Right away, Ms. Bonnie." He quickly handed her the file.

Bonnie flipped through the pages and carefully read them. She looked solemn as she turned the pages quickly-as if she were speed-reading the entire file. She had already moved on to another page when an ordinary person would still be reading the first few lines.

The top management personnel and professors did not know what she was doing. Soon after, some professors muttered, "Ms. Bonnie is reading so fast. Do you think she can read everything on a page quickly?"

"Do you think she's putting on airs to fool us?"

"I don't think so. Maybe Ms. Bonnie has a special way of reading files. Let's not speculate unnecessary things."

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Chapter 670

"You're right. We don't have to make wild guesses. We'll know if Ms. Bonnie has read every word when she talks about it soon."

"Yeah, we should wait for her to finish reading first."

Then, Bonnie closed the document and said, "I've gone through the exhibition's content and planning. It's solid work, except for the exhibits themselves. We'll have to work on those."

The professor from earlier asked, "What's the issue with the exhibits, Ms. Bonnie? I've done it how we've always done it. I don't recall making any changes."

"Don't worry too much, and hear me out." Bonnie smiled leisurely. "You said you followed the old ways without making changes, correct? Well, that's where the problem lies. There are 225 exhibits.

"Most of the exhibits comprise the university's collection, no less. That means the students have seen them before and will have difficulty finding them attractive. Indeed, you've made a satisfactory arrangement for the exhibition this time. I praise you for that.

"Still, I promised Russell I'd elevate the university's standing to another level. It's the first exhibition since I took over his position, meaning I'll have to break the norm and show the students a whole new experience.

"I'd like to hear some ideas, so let's brainstorm and bring our thoughts together to organize an exhibition that'll turn heads."

The professors exchanged glances with the top management staff and began conversing softly. Soon after, a professor presented his idea, "I have some pretty cool proposals, Ms. Bonnie. Would you care to hear me out?"

She looked at him and gestured for him to continue. "Go on."

"We can allow the students to bring collections from their respective families. Then, we can loosen the rules for the families who donated to the university. They can enroll their children in the university more easily than the other families.

"In turn, it'll allow more students to attend our university. It'll be a win-win situation for the contributing families and the university. With that in mind, they'll be more cooperative."

Bonnie nodded and proceeded to adopt it immediately. "That works for me. I must say, that's a fantastic idea. I'll leave it to you to organize it, then. I believe you'll do an excellent job."

The professor smiled humbly, "I appreciate your faith in me, Ms. Bonnie. I'll do everything I can to ensure I do it well."

"Perfect. Indeed, I have plenty of faith in you." Bonnie smiled, delighted with the professor's idea.

Meanwhile, Reece felt displeased with himself.

'That's such a good idea. Why didn't I think of it? Not only does Professor Jay have a chance to shine, but he also gets a compliment from Ms. Bonita. There goes my chance to show her my worth. What a shame! I wonder if I'll have another shot.'

At that moment, Bonnie glanced at her assistant and gestured for him to distribute an envelope to each professor and top management staff.

Once everyone had received an envelope, she said solemnly, "I trust you're no strangers to those envelopes. These are anonymous letters the students have put into my mailbox."

Everyone's hearts raced, feeling nervous.

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Chapter 671

"What did the students say in these letters, Ms. Bonnie? Why are there so many of them?"

"Yeah, I thought we did well with the student affairs. Are the students unhappy with us? I've never seen so many letters."

"It's a first for me, too. I'll have to reflect on the parts I didn't do well."

The professors and upper management were pretty worked up over the anonymous letters. So, Bonnie looked at them and said, "Stay calm, everyone. It isn't about you. These letters are about the issues concerning the cafeteria. Read the letters first, and I'll tell you the specifics afterward."

"Okay, Ms. Bonnie," everyone responded unanimously, lowering their heads to read the letters.

Once everyone finished reading the letters, Bonnie said, "These students are concerned about the hygiene and freshness of the food and ingredients. I'm sure you know we've outsourced our cafeteria to Stardust Empire.

"None of our staff participated in it. If this many students are complaining about the food, it means it has become a serious issue. If we ignore it, it'll compromise the university's reputation. That's why we must send someone to investigate."

Bonnie raised her brows and swept her gaze across the room. "Now, who's willing to take up the task?"

The top management staff and professors exchanged glances. Then, they lowered their heads in embarrassment. Bonnie could not blame them for reacting that way, either. After all, the Robsons supported the Stardust Empire.

The Robsons were one of the wealthiest and most powerful families in Pyralis. None of the professors or management staff would survive offending them, so no one wanted to take on the task. Suddenly, Reece stood excitedly, saying, "I'll look into it, Ms. Bonnie!"

Although he was happy to grab the opportunity before anyone else could, he cursed the others internally.

'What a bunch of fools. It's a wonderful opportunity, yet no one wants to grab it. If they don't, I'll use it to my advantage and show Ms. Bonita what I'm made of.'

As far as he was concerned, the other professors and management staff were fools for not taking up the task. On the other hand, they thought the same of him. They were curious about why he looked so excited.

Meanwhile, Bonnie knew most people would not dare take up the task. Despite that, Reece shouldered the arduous task and put himself at risk, which pleased her immensely.

"It's a risky task, Reece. I must commend your bravery in stepping forward. Don't worry. The university won't let your efforts go to waste. After all, it's a considerable challenge. The university will reward you handsomely once you've succeeded."

Reece waved, looking dignified as he said, "I don't need a reward, Ms. Bonnie. I work for the university, and it's only right that I do my job and share your burden."

It was shocking enough when he agreed to investigate Stardust Enterprise. However, he was kissing up to Bonnie by refusing a reward. That was much more shocking than anything else.

The others thought it was strange as Reece had always thought the worst of Bonnie. He had been a thorn in her side, too. Hence, the others wondered why he changed and began to treat her so nicely. Reece looked like he was trying to prove himself, which confused the others.

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Chapter 672

"I disagree with that and must give credit where it is due. You will receive a reward for your troubles. That said, I'll leave this task to you, Reece." Bonnie had always observed her principles regarding such things.

Reece noticed Bonnie's adamant tone and decided not to argue. "Leave it to me, Ms. Bonnie. I'll get to the bottom of it. I won't disappoint you."

"Perfect." Bonnie smiled faintly and stood up. "That's all for today. The meeting has been adjourned."

Soon after, everyone exited the conference room. Adan was walking in the hallway when he remembered Reece's bizarre actions. He could not help but call out to Reece, "Hey, I need to have a word with you." Reece turned and followed Adan to a corner, asking, "What's up?"

Adan ensured no one was around before saying, "I thought you used to hate Ms. Bonnie. Why are you suddenly trying so hard to please her now? You seemed a little exaggerated just now. It was so unlike you, Reece. You're not the Reece I know. Are you an alien or something?"

Reece rolled his eyes at Adan. "That's nonsense. If you want an explanation, I'll give it to you. I did what I did for the university and Ms. Bonnie."

Adan looked at Reece from head to toe. "N-No, something isn't right. You must've found out something! Come on, tell me what made you change so drastically."

Reece raised his chin, feeling proud to know something Adan did not.

'Everyone in the conference room looked at me like I was a fool earlier. They're the ones who are the fools. They missed out on a chance to show Ms. Bonita their worth.'

The more he thought about it, the more he swelled with pride.

"What are you talking about, Adan? Please stop being so suspicious." Reece checked the time and said, "Okay, that's enough chit-chat. I need to get to the task Ms. Bonnie entrusted to me." Adan was puzzled as he watched Reece leave.

'Did someone put a spell on Reece or something? He isn't acting like himself.'

When afternoon arrived, Bonnie left the university and stood at the side of the road. Then, she saw a familiar Maybach pulling up beside her. The car window was lowered halfway, revealing Floyd's smiling face. "Ms. Bonnie, please get in."

Bonnie glanced at the empty backseat and asked, "What are you doing here alone?"

He could not help but tease her, "Do you miss Mr. Ivor already?"

Bonnie raised her brow and leaned closer to stare at Floyd. "Good on you for becoming bolder. What's wrong? Has Ivor given you less work? Is that why you have the time to make fun of me?"

A bead of sweat rolled down Floyd's forehead as he said, "N-Not at all, Ms. Bonnie! I wouldn't dare! Ahem! Mr. Ivor told the kitchen staff to make your favorite dishes for you. He said you must taste them and told me to pick you up. As for Mr. Ivor, he can't make it because he's busy."

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Chapter 673

Bonnie gave him a sidelong glance and got into the car. "Drive."

"Y-Yes, Ms. Bonnie!" Floyd stuttered and sighed in relief.

'She so imposing and frightening! I should watch my mouth and refrain from teasing her next time. Ms. Bonnie's demeanor resembles Mr. Ivor's. I'll struggle to continue working for them.'

An hour later, Bonnie reached the Knights' villa and entered the living room. She saw Ivor and asked, "Floyd told me you were busy today. How are you home before me?"

"I quickly finished my work to have dinner with you," Ivor responded warmly. Then he turned and told the housekeepers to take something off the wall.

Bonnie was curious about what it was. She approached Ivor and saw the housekeepers removing Kieran's painting from the wall.

Ivor watched them take down the painting and reminded them, "Be careful packing it up, and don't bump it into anything."

"Understood, Mr. Ivor," one of the housekeepers responded respectfully before packing the painting into a box. He was cautious with it, too.

Bonnie asked, "Why are you taking it down and keeping it?"

"The university is hosting an exhibition soon, right? Someone informed me to contribute part of my collection. I chose Master Kieran's painting because I thought it fits perfectly." "Oh, so that's what you're doing," Bonnie said nothing further, but her gaze lingered on the painting.

Ivor noticed it and asked, "What' is it? Do you like the painting?"

"Uh, it's not about the painting so much as the tabby cat in it. It reminds me of the one I used to have when I was a child." Bonnie's eyes showed a hint of uncharacteristic warmth when she mentioned the cat. "I had a tabby cat throughout my childhood and considered her family. I know cats don't live forever. I was a teenager when she passed away. I couldn't help thinking about her when I saw the painting. "I've always thought about how wonderful it would be if cats could live longer. That way, I'll always have company."

"Oh, that's why you look like that." After some thought, Ivor said, "If the cat in this painting means much to you, I'll give you the painting once the exhibition ends."

Floyd was standing on the sidelines when he heard his boss's words. His eyes widened in shock as he said, "I thought you loved that painting, Mr. Ivor. It's also precious to Mr. Sigmund. He has only ever loved the clay teapot and this painting.

"I fear he'll raise hell if he finds out you're giving it to Ms. Bonnie. I understand you dote on her, but isn't this a little too-

Before he could finish, Ivor interjected, "Bonnie's a part of the family. It wouldn't make a difference which one of us has the painting. Does it matter who it belongs to? I think Grandpa will see reason once he learns why I did it. He won't complain."

Floyd thought it made perfect sense. "Pardon me for speaking out of turn, Mr. Ivor."

"It's okay." Ivor waved before turning to Bonnie, saying, "I'll give you the painting soon. Don't worry about Grandpa. I'll talk to him."

'It's my painting, so he doesn't need to give it to me. I can always make another one for myself. Still, it's Ivor's way of showing his love for me. I guess I should turn him down in a nicer, more roundabout way.'

"I don't need it. I just thought the tabby cat looked nice, and it reminded me of my cat when I was little. That's all. You can put it back on the wall after the exhibition. I'll look at it whenever I feel like it. You don't have to give it to me."

Ivor leaned closer to Bonnie and whispered flirtatiously, "What will you do if I still want to give it to you, Bonnie? You must take it, and I won't take no for an answer."

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Chapter 674

Bonnie rubbed her ears, which tickled from Ivor's breath. She calmly stepped back and said, "You're so unreasonable. You can't force me to accept your gift." Ivor took the chance to get closer, his eyes brimming with affection. "You're right. I'm unreasonable. You can't turn me down if I tell you I'm giving you something." Bonnie crossed her arms and stared at him. "Really? Well, I'll still refuse it."

He thought she was embarrassed to receive the gift, so he tried a different approach. He grabbed her arm and shook it gently, saying, "Come on, Bonnie. It's my way of showing I love you. Just take it. Pretty please?"

'He's in his twenties but acting cute with me. It doesn't make me feel weird. On the contrary, he looks innocent and pitiful. I'd feel like a jerk if I rejected him.'

Bonnie sighed helplessly. She could not help but speak in a softer tone, "I mean it, Ivor. You don't have to give it to me because I can just walk over here and look at it. Also, you said we're family, and it doesn't matter who owns the painting. That's why I'll let you keep it."

"Hmm, you have a point."

'Everything in the villa, including me, will belong to Bonnie. If she won't take the painting, I'll keep it safe for her and ensure she can see it whenever she wants. I can always use it as a clever excuse to see her again if I miss her. That way, she won't suspect a thing.'

"Okay, then. I'll keep it for now. If you decide you want it, I'll give it to you in a heartbeat."

Bonnie sighed in relief internally when she realized Ivor was no longer adamant about giving her the painting. "Okay, we'll just leave it here. After all, I can't put it to good use if you give it to me."

"Anything you say goes, Bonnie." Ivor held her hand and led her to the dining table. "It's time for dinner. Let's taste our new chef's cooking."

Bonnie nodded and said, "Okay."

Three days later, Pyralis University hosted its exhibition. Bonnie stood before the tabby cat painting and reminisced about when she first brought the cat home.

'She was an intelligent cat. She could understand most of what I told her, and she would keep me company whenever I felt sad or depressed. She offered me solace in her own way. So many years have passed since then, and I've yet to find another equally intelligent cat. My tabby cat will rest in my memories forever. She'll live on in my painting, too.'

Bonnie fell into a trance as she stared at the painting. Suddenly, she heard an unfriendly voice from behind.

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Chapter 675

"You're a university security team member, Bonnie. Since they've entrusted you with keeping that painting safe, you'll have to ensure it does not come in harm's way. People are about to arrive, and you can't afford to make a single mistake.

"After all, you can't pay for it if it gets lost or something," Selina spoke in a highly unfriendly tone as she stared at Bonnie.

The latter smirked and gazed into Selina's eyes, saying, "Don't worry. I might lose interest in you, but I won't lose the painting."

Selina grunted and mocked Bonnie, "Hmph, confident, are you? Watch out, or your confidence might be your undoing. When that happens, you can't return from it."

,

"Thanks, but I don't need your concern." Bonnie raised her chin. "I'm just that confident in myself. If I say the painting won't go missing, it won't."

Selina was stumped. She gritted her teeth, wishing to rip Bonnie to pieces. "Don't celebrate just yet. If you end up losing the painting, the university will expel you."

"Again, I don't need your concern. If you have time to poke your nose in my business, you should use it worrying about yourself."

Immediately after, Bonnie's phone rang. She looked at it and saw Terry's name.

'He wouldn't call me if it weren't urgent. Did something go wrong at the research institute?'

With that in mind, Bonnie answered the call, "What's wrong?"

Terry immediately replied, "It's about the augmentation research for the latest nanomaterial. We ran into some severe issues here."

Bonnie glanced at Selina sidelong before looking away and saying hushedly, "I can't speak now. Give me a minute. I'll find a place to talk." "Understood, Ms. Bonita," Terry replied and waited for Bonnie on the call.

Meanwhile, Selina watched Bonnie leave and then gazed at the painting, which was worth a fortune. Suddenly, a terrible thought crossed her mind.

'I can steal the painting and make the Knights think Bonnie screwed up. Then, they'll punish her severely. Better yet, they might kick her out of Pyralis and ban her from returning for the rest of her life.'

'Still, the university might be able to track it back to me if I do that. If that happens, I can't escape the Knights' wrath.' Selina was wrestling with her thoughts when she realized something vital.

'The university needs to safeguard the privacy of every collection from the various families. That's why they formed a security team of students instead of installing security cameras. That means I just have to tread carefully, and no one notice.'

Although she thought about it that way, she was still conflicted. Then, she saw Coleman approaching in his university uniform, looking stunning and elegant.

Adoration filled Selina's eyes as she stared at him. She blushed and waved to greet him, "Hi, Coleman. Are you—"

To her surprise, he walked past her before she could finish her sentence. In the past, he would at least greet her and smile out of courtesy. However, he regarded her as a stranger now.

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Chapter 676

Coleman was only treating her like this because of what Bonnie said about her in the past.

'Damn that bitch! I'm going to mess her up real good this time!'

Selina turned around and looked at the painting in front of her. The hesitation in her eyes had been replaced by a newfound resolution.

'Oh, Bonnie. Let's see if Lady Luck will look after you and get you out of the mess this time!'

Meanwhile, Bonnie had just returned after her phone call. She found a bunch of people huddled around the painting she was supposed to guard.

She had just approached the crowd when one of them let out an ear-piercing scream.

"Look, guys. That's her. That's the lady in charge of Master Kieran's painting!"

Everyone turned to look at her.

Bonnie looked at the wall, only to find that Master Kieran's painting was nowhere to be seen. There was only an empty space where it had been.

'Did someone steal the painting while I was away?'

She was in the middle of her thoughts when a slightly younger professor walked over and looked at her sternly.

"What the heck is wrong with you, lady? You know you're supposed to guard this important painting. So why did you leave without informing anyone? Now, someone has stolen the painting. How are you going to bear the responsibility now?"

Reece had followed the crowd here. When he saw the way Benton was lecturing Bonnie, he spoke up for her at once.

"You can question her all you want, Benton, but do you have to look so vicious when you're at it? Perhaps you should let her speak. She could've left her post due to an emergency. Have you thought about that?"

Reece shook his head and thought, 'Benton is nothing but a common professor. How dare he speak to Bonnie in this way? He's going to piss his pants when he learns that she's the university president. 'Furthermore, she has another much more prestigious identity! She's none other than the pillar of scientific research in Arvandor-Ms. Bonita!'

Benton looked at Bonnie again and questioned her sternly, "I'm going to give you a chance to explain yourself since Reece stood up for you. So, why in the world did you leave your post without permission?" She thought, 'Well, I left because I needed to deal with the augmentation research for the latest nanomaterial. There were some issues with the research component. But I can't just say this out loud in front of everyone.'

Realizing she was not saying anything, he assumed she was trying to think of a lie out of this mess.

'This has confirmed my suspicion. Bonnie must've stolen Master Kieran's painting herself.'

"What are you waiting for? Hurry up and answer my question."

She pursed her lips and spoke in a nonchalant tone. "I needed to deal with an emergency earlier. That's why I left."

Selina scoffed. "What emergency was it? How could anything be more important than Master Kieran's painting? You were supposed to guard the painting, but I think you stole it and hid it away."

"After all, this is Master Kieran's painting. There are only two of her paintings on the market now. It's priceless, too."

"You're just a bumpkin. Do you expect me to believe that you weren't the least bit tempted by its insanely high value?"

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Chapter 677

Selina was making a lot of sense. The story would be plausible if Bonnie were not Master Kieran herself.

Bonnie was about to say something when Selina spoke again.

"I saw the way you were looking at the painting. You were watching to see if anyone was walking past you. I was wondering why you were acting so suspiciously, but I never expected you to steal the painting for yourself."

Avril had heard about the incident and rushed over. She overheard Selina accusing Bonnie and was shaking with rage.

Avril quickly shielded Bonnie. "Stop accusing Bonnie without any evidence. She'd never do something like that!"

'What a bunch of morons! Do they have any idea who Bonnie is? How dare they accuse her?'

Avril might've sounded righteous and angry, but that didn't stop some of the onlookers from cackling.

"Why wouldn't she do something like this? She's a penniless bumpkin. Of course she would steal the most expensive painting in the world."

"Exactly. In fact, I think she's the only one who dares to do something like this."

"She's a thief! Ugh. How sickening!"

Everyone continued to belittle Bonnie.

Benton heard all of it and looked at her furiously. "The university's collections aren't the only exhibits here. A lot of them are from prestigious families. All of them respected our university for its standing.

"Now, you've gone and lost one of the most important paintings in the world. Do you have any idea what kind of damage it'd do to our university's reputation? Not to mention the wealthy people and organizations involved who funded the university.

"This isn't something a mere student can afford to bear, Bonnie. Take my advice and admit that you stole the painting. Then, I want you to return it. That way, I can ask the university to take it easy on you." The crowd surrounding them grew bigger by the second, and the mutterings were relentless.

"Bonnie was never a serious student. She wouldn't even listen to the professors. I must say, I'm not surprised at all that she'd resort to grand theft."

"Exactly. She has skipped classes for days. The moment she actually showed up on campus, she made such a huge mess. After all, Master Kieran's painting was worth so much. It's probably enough for a hick like her to live comfortably for the rest of her life!"

"She's a shame to the university. I really hope they expel her."

Everyone was mocking Bonnie, thinking that she had to have stolen Master Kieran's painting.

Reece was so agitated by it that he wished he could tell everyone about her real identity right then and there.

Avril was feeling the same.

Both of them cast a worried glance at Bonnie, only to find that she was nonchalant about everything that was happening around her. She was completely calm and unfazed. 'That's right. Is Bonnie supposed to be stumped by a trivial matter such as this? In fact, I don't even have to speak up for her. All I had to do was wait for her to handle it.' Bonnie could sense that everyone's eyes were glued to her. She put on a casual smile.

"How are you all sure that the painting was stolen?"

Everyone exchanged glances, and silence hung over the crowd. They stared at her, looking for any signs that Bonnie was bluffing, as well as signs of guilt.

However, she remained standing, unperturbed. There was nothing but calmness on her face.

Selina's heart skipped a beat. "What do you mean?"

Bonnie responded confidently, "I went away to deal with an emergency. However, I was worried that someone might steal the painting while I was away. So, I hid it somewhere safe." Selina detected the sarcasm in Bonnie's tone, and her face quickly turned miserable.

"You should've said something sooner, then. All of us were thinking you stole it. Now that you said you simply hid it, hurry up and take it out."

"There's no hurry here. Stay put. I hid it somewhere far away. Give me some time, and I'm going to get it now." With that, she walked in the opposite direction of the exhibition. Selina watched as Bonnie left. She couldn't help but sneer.

'Heh heh. Does she think stalling will give her enough time to locate the painting? I've hidden it somewhere remote. No one else but me could find it.'

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Chapter 678

'Bonnie is going to return empty-handed and everyone's going to look down on her again!' Selina thought to herself.

After some time, Bonnie returned to the exhibition with a rolled-up painting in her hands.

Selina saw it and immediately scoffed. 'Bonnie truly knows how to put on a show. I'm sure this is a fake. That's why she kept it rolled up and didn't show it to everyone here.

'That doesn't matter. There are so many people here. So, she has no choice but to unroll the painting eventually. The moment she does that, she'll be kicked out of the university for good.'

She was in the middle of her thoughts when Bonnie asked someone to hang the painting up on the wall.

Selina directed her gaze at it, intending to take pleasure in Bonnie's misery. To her surprise, Bonnie had brought back an identical painting!

'This can't be right! I stole the original painting. How could she have tracked down the painting so fast? It has to be a fake.'

Selina swept her eyes across the crowd. Aside from her, everyone looked calm and unperturbed. None of them mentioned anything unusual about the painting.

'Is it possible that none of the professors can tell that the painting she brought back was a fake? Or, is it because they never even thought of it that way? Fine. I guess I'll have to give them a nudge.' "Say, Professor Benton. Don't you think there's something funny about this painting?"

"What do you mean?"

"I can't quite put my finger on it, but I can't shake the feeling that something's different about it. After all, we're talking about one of two of Master Kieran's original paintings. Let's not even forget the fact that the Knight Group gave it to the university.

"It's better that we play it safe and have the other professors appraise it."

Benton thought it over and found her suggestion valid. So, he asked some of the students to bring other professors over.

Later, quite a number of professors came and appraised it. All of them came to the conclusion that there was nothing wrong with the painting.

Selina was panicking now, her eyes brimming with utter disbelief.

'H-How could there be nothing wrong with it? Haven't I just stolen the original painting and hidden it in a remote corner? Could it be that Bonnie managed to find it?

She needed to know if her theory was correct. So she slipped out of the crowd and hurried over to the hiding spot.

Bonnie saw her leave and followed her quietly.

After both of them were gone, Benton accidentally brushed against the painting. Lowering his head, he looked at it.

'Huh? That's weird. Why is the paint still wet?' He thought, 'It's almost as if it was just painted recently... How does that make sense, though?'

Meanwhile, Selina raced over to the garden. She checked her surroundings to make sure that no one was there before she lifted the painting from the flowerbed.

She examined it meticulously and did not have the foggiest clue what just happened.

'What's going on here? How is it that this painting looks exactly the same as the one Bonnie just showed up with?

'I plucked it off the wall with my own hands. So, I'm certain that it's the original painting. However, the professors appraised the painting Bonnie brought over and found nothing wrong with it, either. 'Where did it go wrong, exactly?'

She was in the middle of her thought when she heard a sarcastic voice from behind her.

"I knew it. You stole the painting."

It was a familiar voice, too. Her entire body trembled at it. She gave herself a second to relax before she turned her neck stiffly.

The moment she saw Bonnie, she was shocked beyond words. It was all she could do to prevent herself from stumbling onto the ground.

"Y-You... W-What are you doing here?"

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Chapter 679

Bonnie stared at Selina coldly and walked briskly toward her. Then, she tore the painting away from the latter.

"You did it because I dethroned you as the prettiest student on campus. On top of that, you're trying to get back at me for badmouthing you in front of Coleman. Have I got that right?"

Selina thought about how Coleman was treating her coldly. Just like that, she no longer felt that she was in the wrong. Instead, she spoke in a self-righteous tone.

"It sounds like you know how badly you messed it up. After all, you're a good-for-nothing hick. What makes you think you have the right or means to steal my man from me? Do you honestly think you could do it?"

Folding her arms across her chest, Bonnie shook her head gently.

"It looks like I did the right thing when I warned Coleman. It's not just that. I really should've told him everything much earlier, so he'd stay far away from you.

"After all, you're such a vengeful, wicked, and petty-minded lady. You would've ruined Coleman if you guys really ended up together."

"Shut your trap!" Selina roared furiously.

'She's nothing but a despicable and uncivilized rube. That makes her worse than me in every possible way. What right does she have to be making such cutting remarks about me?'

"You're the one who should shut up, Selina." Bonnie stood calmly. Then, she looked at her from head to toe before shaking her head again.

"Seriously, Selina. You just... I'm sure of it now. You don't deserve him."

"Shut up! I'm telling you to shut the hell up. Do you hear me?!" Selina shrieked in an ear-piercing voice. Bonnie's words cut into her so deeply that she could no longer hold herself back. Swinging her arms, she darted after Bonnie menacingly.

Bonnie didn't move a muscle. Just as Selina was within range, she raised her hand and grasped the former's wrist with ease.

"Tell me, Selina. What would Coleman think of you if he saw your vicious, horrifying face right now?"

She was slack-jawed for a long time, but she couldn't think of anything to retort to Bonnie.

Selina was in a daze when her mind traveled back to all the moments she had pitted herself against Bonnie. The fear within her grew with each passing second because she realized that she was simply no match for Bonnie.

'Sometimes, knowing when to retreat is its own victory. I better run away for the time being. I'll come up with a different plan to deal with her when I'm back home.'

"I'll admit it. You won this time, Bonnie. However, there's no reason to think you'll win again next time. Don't celebrate your victory just yet. We'll see who's the last one standing!" Selina glared at her coldly, lifted her chin, and was about to leave.

"Hold it right there!" Taking a step forward, Bonnie stood in Selina's way.

"What makes you think there's going to be a next time? You dared to steal a painting owned by the Knight Group just so you could exact your revenge on me. Have you ever thought about how it's going to end for you if they find out?"

"W-What's going to end for me?" Her eyes got shifty.

She was so nervous that she stuttered. Then, something popped into her mind, and she questioned Bonnie coldly, "Don't make this about me. What about you, huh? You replaced the real painting with a fake. How is it going to end for you?"

"Fake?" Bonnie couldn't help but laugh. "The professors have appraised it and concluded that it was the real painting. What right do you have to be calling it a fake?"

Selina pointed at the painting in Bonnie's hand furiously and said, "That's because I know for a fact that the real painting is here!"

The humor in Bonnie's eyes intensified. "If you're so sure about it, then you should take this painting over to the professors and tell them that the one on the wall is a fake. Tell them that the original painting is with you."

Selina was stumped. For a moment there, she simply couldn't think of anything to retort to Bonnie.

At that moment, she was akin to an insect at the heart of Bonnie's palms. She could hop all she liked, but she could never jump out of Bonnie's grasp.

The realization intensified her hatred and resentment toward Bonnie. She wished that she could rip the latter to pieces right there and then!

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Chapter 680

However, there was nothing Selina could do but glare at Bonnie.

Bonnie met Selina's hateful glare and remained unfazed.

"You're such a rotten soul, Selina. You have no place at Pyralis University. Tomorrow, the university will announce that you are expelled."

She said it in such a casual tone that Selina was infuriated.

Pointing at Bonnie, she said in an angry tone. "Do you think I'm going to be expelled because you said so? Who do you think you are? The former university president might've taken your side on certain things but that doesn't mean you can do whatever you want!"

"You might've been able to expel Trina, but that's because she was a moron with rotten luck. The fact that she crossed a line with the former university president didn't help either.

"That's where I differ from her. My grades are infinitely better than hers. And the Pearson family is way more powerful than the Shepard family. What's more, my family made a lot of donations to this university. Do you think they're going to expel me that easily?"

"Well, you can always wait for the news tomorrow."

With that, Bonnie turned and left.

Selina watched as Bonnie left. An intense hatred surfaced in her eyes slowly as her face contorted with a deep-seated rage.

'Does she honestly think the university's going to expel me because of what she said? I'm not a fool. I can tell she's just trying to intimidate me.

'Fine. I'll wait for it. I'm going to show up on campus and make her eat her heart out tomorrow!'

The next day, Selina asked the maid to bring her freshly-ironed clothes.

Suddenly, her phone buzzed.

'It's so early in the morning. Who could've texted me?'

She picked up her phone, bewildered. Then she turned on the screen.

Her face turned pale. Her lips were trembling uncontrollably from the shock.

'A-Am I actually expelled from Pyralis University? Are these notifications the real deal? Or, are they actually an elaborate prank?'

She refused to believe it and proceeded to read them several times.

Once she confirmed that these were official messages from Pyralis University, her body shook uncontrollably, and she almost stumbled.

Her face was extremely pale when she sat by the side of the bed slowly. Her mind couldn't help but travel back to what Bonnie told her yesterday.

'She asked me to wait for the official news today. Pyralis University actually expelled me on this very day.

'I don't get it. Why would she have this kind of power? I wasn't even given a chance to defend myself.

'More importantly, the former university president is in the hospital now. So, the entire university is under the rule of a new president. Is Bonnie connected to him in some way?'

She couldn't help but think of Bonnie's enchanting looks. Her deep-seated hatred for the latter grew much deeper.

'She must've used her looks to seduce the new university president and made him listen to her every whim!'

The longer she thought about it, the angrier she got.

'I can't leave it like this. I have to investigate thoroughly and find out if Bonnie is having an affair with the new president. I'm going to dig up dirt on them and expose their shameless actions to the public.'" Meanwhile, Bonnie was approaching a villa. She was

holding a food container in her hand and was about to go inside when she heard Ivor's enraged growl.

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Chapter 681

Bonnie stopped in her tracks at once. Her brows couldn't help but knit tightly.

'I've rarely seen him this furious. What on earth is happening in there?'

Ivor stared at the irreparably damaged painting with menace.

"I've reminded you guys over and over again. You have to keep the painting somewhere safe. How did it end up in this mess?"

Floyd hung his head and spoke in a cautious tone. "I-I reminded them about it as well. However, the person in charge of the painting had a high fever last night.

"He must've been very sick because he forgot to store the painting somewhere safe. What's worse, it rained the whole night last night. That's how the dampness in the air got to it and damaged it."

Ivor took a deep breath and rubbed his brow aggressively. For a moment there, he was at a loss for words.

That was when Bonnie walked into the villa. She looked at him and realized that he was still gripped with anger. "What's going on? Why are you this furious?"

He didn't want her to worry about this kind of stuff. So, he sidestepped her question and said, "It's nothing. I was just lecturing a staff member who didn't know how to follow my orders."

"This isn't like you at all. You have never been this upset over something so trivial. Hurry up and tell me everything. What on earth happened here?" Her eyes were filled with skepticism. Obviously, she didn't believe a word he said.

"It's not a big deal. Really. It's just that the past couple of days haven't been easy. That's why I lost control of my temper." He had decided he'd take the secret to his grave and

not tell her about it. 'She has enough stuff to worry about every day. I don't want to add to her burden by bugging her with my stuff. I know her research institute is conducting research on the latest nanomaterial. That alone is enough to keep her hands full.'

"Just a couple of bad days?" She looked at him skeptically. "What happened in the past two days?"

He breathed out and smiled. Then, he reached out and pulled her into his arms.

"You haven't been visiting me for the past couple of days. I missed you so much that I can't eat or drink anything. Do you think I'm going to have good days in that state?" She rolled her eyes at him hard.

"I haven't seen you for a couple of days, but it seems you're still very smart-mouthed."

She might've said that, but she still found it hard to believe his explanation.

"Are you sure that that's the real reason and not anything else?"

"Of course it is. Why would I lie to you?"

Ivor knew she was highly intelligent. He was scared that she might see through him. Then, he saw the food container in her hands and changed the topic immediately. "What'd you bring, Bonnie?"

She went along with him. "I made you some cold soup. Just as well, too. It'll help cool you down."

A big smile formed on his face.

"I guess we're really soulmates then. I was just throwing a tantrum, and here you are, serving me cold soup. You're such a peach, Bonnie."

Raising her brow, she said, "I think you got it wrong. I didn't mean it'll cool down your temper. I mean a certain passion of yours instead."

For a moment there, he didn't quite get it.

"A certain passion? What do you mean?"

She glanced at him and said, "Well. You tend to be handsy when you see me. Then, you'll be having trouble controlling yourself. That's why I think it's better to think ahead and introduce you to some cold soup before you lose control of yourself and do the unthinkable to me."

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Chapter 682

The humor in his eyes grew deeper.

"You always accused me of thinking about nothing but sex. The way I see it, though, you're even worse than me. I didn't even catch your meaning until later. This proves just how pure-minded I still am." "Hahaha. Yeah. That's what you are. Pure-minded." Her lips twitched in response. "You're always feeling me up and talking about making babies with me, but yeah, you're pure-minded. No doubt about it." Reaching out, he pulled her tightly into his arms and pressed his body against hers.

"Haven't we discussed this already, Bonnie? You just can't blame it on me. I can't control myself every time I see you. A cold soup wouldn't be able to fix this. It's going to take more than that to put out the flame in my heart that's always burning for you."

Even Floyd couldn't help but rub his arms when he heard something so corny. He gestured at the surrounding staff, signaling for them to leave with him.

The staff caught his drift and followed him out of the hall with him.

She glanced at his arms, which were wrapped tightly around her waist, and squirmed a little.

"Look at yourself. You're doing it again. Hurry up and let me go now. I'm not comfortable talking like this."

He had no choice but to loosen his grip on her a little. "Is this better?"

She shook her head. "Not at all. Let me go."

He held her tighter. "I think you know how much I love you, Bonnie. Do you think it's possible for me to let you go willingly?"

"Are you sure you're not going to let me go?" A hint of cunning flashed in her eyes. "Are you certain that you can't do anything about your tendency to feel me up?"

He shook his head and responded firmly, "I'm certain. There's nothing I can do about it. Look, I'm not a saint. How do you expect me to hold myself back and not kiss someone

I love?" Her lips curled, and she smirked wickedly. "I know of a way that could put an end to it."

She actually piqued his interest. "What is it?"

Then, she pulled out rows of silver needles from her pocket.

"All I have to do is jab you with a couple of needles. I guarantee that you're not going to have any urges for an entire year. How about it? Do you want to give it a shot?"

At first, he was stunned. Then he came to his senses and took a quick step back.

"You're talking about something that's going to make you happy for the rest of your life, Bonnie. Don't do anything rash."

"Have faith in my medical knowledge. You have my word that nothing's going to happen." Then, she approached him with a wicked grin. "Come on. It won't hurt at all. I'll be gentle. Scout's honor!" She was inching closer to him with the silver needle. All Ivor knew was that the hair on the back of his neck stood up.

"Come on, Bonnie... I mean it. Don't do anything rash, not when it comes to medical stuff."

"You should stay calm. I'm doing this for you. There, there. Just stay put and let me jab you with a couple of needles." Her smile grew wider as she gripped the silver needle and brought it to his skin.

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Chapter 683

Ivor's body went stiff and his eyes closed instinctively.

Bonnie stared at him. He was completely frozen with fear. Tucking her silver needles away, she threw her head back and laughed heartily.

He heard her crisp laughter in the air and opened his eyes slowly.

She was laughing her heart out before him. Every burst of laughter that escaped her captivated him.

His eyes were slowly filled with gloom.

Taking brisk steps toward her, he pulled her into his arms and pinched her nose, punishing her. "You're becoming more mischievous, Bonnie. How dare you scare me with the needles?"

"And you completely bought it. Who would've known?" She was laughing so hard that she was having trouble breathing.

He had looked like he was about to go to war. It was simply hilarious.

Ivor grunted and smirked in response. "Go on. Laugh while you can. I'm going to make sure you're laughing harder in a second."

"What are you talking about?"

Suddenly, she had a bad feeling about what was going to happen next. Then, she started squirming, trying to break free of his clutches.

Before she could succeed, he started tickling her intensely.

Tickling had always been her weakness. Now, he was tickling her so much that she kept laughing hard. She couldn't have stopped it if she wanted to.

"Stop...! Cut it out, now."

He actually started tickling her more intensely until they ended up on the couch.

She didn't realize it until he finally stopped tickling her, and she came to her senses. What was more, he was pinning her on it and staring at her with a certain eagerness in his eyes. She felt uneasy being stared at like this. Her face blushed slightly, accentuating her beauty.

"What do you think you're doing? Hurry up and get off me. Don't act like a pervert in broad daylight!"

"We're engaged, Bonnie. I'm not acting like a pervert. I'm your future husband." He pressed down on her as he spoke.

She pushed against his chest. "I seriously have no idea how you can keep twisting facts to your advantage. Get off me."

"It has been a couple of days since I last saw you. I just want to be close to you a little. Don't treat me so coldly."

He stared at her with unblinking eyes. He looked so pitiful that she felt bad for rejecting him.

She pursed her lips. The way he was looking now softened her heart a little. She simply couldn't bring herself to push him away.

'I guess he's right. It has been a couple of days since we saw each other. It's only normal that he wanted to get close to me a little.'

She decided not to push him away. Instead, she spoke with reddened ears. "Well. This is as far as you get. You're going to stay like this quietly and get up in a minute. You can't do anything else."

"That's hardly enough for me." Ivor pressed his forehead against hers. His voice was so deep and charming that it sounded downright seductive. "I was planning on kissing you. I won't do anything more than that. How about it?"

Rejecting him would've been an impossible task. She had no choice but to close her eyes with a reddened face.

"Hurry up and get it over with."

At the next moment, she could feel his masculine breath approaching her.

He was only an inch away from the lips he had been seeing in his dreams.

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Chapter 684

All of a sudden, Bonnie's phone, which was in her pocket, started ringing.

The crisp ringing tone threw their romance out the window. Bonnie's head started to clear. Her face was still slightly red when she reached out and pushed against his chest. "Get up. I have to pick up the call."

Ivor understood that someone like her had to pick up every call. After all, they could be emergencies. So, he stopped messing with her and propped himself up with his arms.

Pulling out her phone, she saw that it was a call from the research institute.

She frowned slightly and answered it. Her voice was instantly colder. "What is it?"

She was on the phone for about a minute before she hung up the phone. Turning around, she said to him, "There's an emergency at the research institute. I need to go now. Don't forget to finish the soup." He stood as well. "Do you need me to give you a ride?"

"It's okay. I drove here." She waved at him with her back turned to him and marched out of his villa.

He watched as she left and recomposed himself.

Then, he went to the study. He saw Floyd, who was waiting by the door, and said, "Let's talk inside."

Floyd nodded. "Copy that, Mr. Ivor."

Both of them went into the study.

Ivor sat on the chair, his stunning eyes were plagued with somberness. "Do you have an update for me? Can anyone restore the painting?"

Floyd shook his head. "The painting conservators said that the tabby cat painting is damaged beyond repair. It's virtually beyond salvation."

Ivor rubbed his brow again. Sighing wearily, he wracked his brain for a solution.

Floyd was trying to figure it out as well. Then, he frowned. "Mr. Sigmund is going to be discharged in several days. He treasures the painting above everything else.

"I'm afraid we'll have a hard time explaining everything to him when he comes back and finds the painting missing."

"I'm aware of that. I know him well enough to know that he's going to raise hell when he finds out about it."

That was what Ivor was worried about the most. The more he thought about it, the worse his headache became.

"Well. What are we going to do now? How about we find another master painter to imitate this particular painting? We'll get through Mr. Sigmund first and think about the future after that." Floyd suggested.

Ivor gave him a sidelong glance. "Do you think anyone could just imitate Master Kieran's work? More to the point, it wouldn't feel the same even if we found someone who could do it. Grandpa is highly intelligent. I'm sure he can tell that it's a duplicate."

He was still searching for ideas in his mind as he spoke.

All of a sudden, something came to his mind, and he said, "I've asked you to track down another one of Master Kieran's paintings. The one that someone else had bought. Do you have any leads on it?" Floyd responded, "Rumor had it that a wealthy businessman purchased it. So, I managed to locate the buyer's address and wanted to go there and ask him about it.

"By the time I contacted them, however, they said someone else bought it at an insanely high price. We're still investigating who's the new buyer right now."

Ivor frowned. His phone, which was put on the desk, started to ring.

Looking at the phone, he noticed it was an unknown caller. Then, he hesitated for several seconds before answering the call.

"Hello. Who's speaking?"

"Hi, Ivor. It's..."

It took him less than a second to recognize Eloise's voice. Then he hung up on her without a second thought.

Several seconds later, she was calling him again.

She made no less than a dozen calls before he decided enough was enough. His eyes were filled with coldness when he moved to block her number. Before he could navigate to the option, however, she sent him a text.

"I have the painting you're looking for, Ivor."

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Chapter 685

Silence hung over the study when Eloise sent him another text.

"If you want the painting, then you'll meet me in Whispering Pines Barista at 5 p.m."

His grip on his phone tightened when he read the text. His face grew grim as well.

Floyd saw the changes in his boss's expression. He couldn't resist and asked, "What's the matter, Mr. Ivor?"

"See for yourself." Ivor tossed the phone to him. "Eloise sent these texts to me."

Floyd lowered his head and read a couple of messages. He then furrowed his brow.

"Something's off. This stinks to high heaven, Mr. Ivor. Your painting was just damaged not long ago, and yet she got wind of it in no time.

"Clearly, she has been monitoring you closely. Now, she's even asking you out. Do you think she's going to try something sinister, Mr. Ivor?"

"I thought about it. It's certainly possible. That's why you're going to meet up with her in my stead. You'll find out what it is she wants." Ivor was not planning to meet with Eloise himself.

"Huh?" Floyd was shocked.

Then something came to his mind. He hesitated a little before saying, "She obviously wants to meet with you, Mr. Ivor. Are you sure things are going to work out if I go instead? What am I going to do if she doesn't even let me see the painting?"

Ivor's frowns grew deeper. "Just go ahead and meet up with her. You can come back and tell me if it doesn't work out. I'll figure out something then."

"Copy that, Mr. Ivor."

Ivor's phone started buzzing again. Lowering his head, he looked at it and saw another text from Eloise.

"I'll only talk about the painting with you and you alone. If you send someone else in your stead, I'm going to leave immediately."

Judging by her tone, she wasn't in the mood for negotiation.

Ivor rubbed his eyebrows and sighed wearily. He glanced at his assistant and said, "Forget about it. I have to do it by myself. She made it very clear that she wants to see me." "Understood, Mr. Ivor." Floyd responded.

Then he thought to himself. 'In fact, I half-expected Eloise to state explicitly that she wants to meet with Ivor.'

'After all, she did all of this just so she could see him. So, why would she let him send someone else to talk about the painting?'

Ivor sat on his chair as Bonnie's image came into his mind. Looking at Floyd, he reminded him, "Don't tell Bonnie about this. Got it?"

"Understood, Mr. Ivor. My lips are sealed. I'll never let Ms. Bonnie find out about this from me. That's a promise." With that, he made the gesture of zipping his lips.

"Okay." Ivor responded faintly. Then he lowered his head and continued to go through some documents.

It was still early. So, he'd finish up his work before meeting Eloise.

Later, he showed up at Whispering Pines Barista at 5 p.m., as promised.

Eloise was sitting by the window. She saw Ivor, who was as stunning as he was enchanting. She couldn't help but look mesmerized.

'This is the man I fell in love with. He's just so handsome and incredible.'

'What a shame, though. He doesn't belong to me now. Instead, he has fallen head over heels with someone else!'

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Chapter 686

She clenched her fists as she thought, 'Ivor's here. I can't let him see me this pessimistic. I have to shove these bleak feelings down!'

Eloise took several deep breaths. In a matter of five seconds, she pulled herself together and became calm.

Once she had composed herself, she called out to him in a sweet voice. "Over here, Ivor."

He heard her voice and looked at her. Then, he walked briskly over.

Sitting across the table, he cut straight to the chase. "Out with it. How much will it be for you to part with the painting?"

His voice was both cold and sharp.

Gritting her teeth, she stared at him. "Don't you think it's a little hurtful for us to be talking about money, Ivor? I know you need the painting now. All you have to do is tell me you want it, and I'll gladly give it to you."

He wasn't moved in the least. "So, it's not about money, huh? Well, then. Why don't you name your terms?"

She had shoved her bleak feelings down. However, what he said yanked them back to the surface.

"Did it slip your mind that we used to be super close? We could've taken our relationships to the next level. So, why are you making things hard for me now?"

He frowned, and a hint of impatience flashed across his eyes. "I have other matters to attend to. I don't have time for this nonsense. Just out with it. What are your terms?"

His tone was so indifferent that it finally ticked her off. She shot up from her seat.

"Is it because of Bonnie? Are you worried that she'll get jealous of me? Is that why you're treating me so coldly?"

"You used to be so elegant and distant, Ivor. We could only look at you, but we could never reach you because you were so far above us.

"Now, however, you're turning into whatever you are right now for the sake of Bonnie. Do you think she's worth it?"

"Are you done with your crap? Can we go back to the reason we're meeting here?"

'Ivor is clearly not going to listen to anything I say. If nothing I say could change his mind, then I'll have to switch tracks.'

"I'll give you the painting and won't take a single cent from you. With that said, I don't think you'll listen to me and break up with Bonnie.

"So, I only have one term. I want you to sleep with me for one night. After this, I won't pester you anymore, nor will I try to come between you and Bonnie again." Then she pulled out a hotel room key card and set it down before him.

"I'll be waiting for you at Caesar Hotel tomorrow. If you want the painting, be there at 9 p.m."

He glanced at the key card on the table and smirked sarcastically. "Is this what you think of me, Eloise? Am I the kind of person who'd trade a painting with his body?" She bit her lips, and her eyes turned red.

"I know you're not that kind of person, but I've loved you for a long time. I just want some closure. Furthermore, I'm only asking you to sleep with me for one night. That way, I'll be able to realize one of my dreams, and you'll end up with the painting you crave. Both of us need this. It's a fair trade."

His eyes were filled with coldness.

"It has never occurred to me that you're such a shameless lady. You stooped so low and resorted to such despicable tricks just so you could have me."

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Chapter 687

Eloise's face turned pale. Staring at him, her body couldn't help but tremble. She was stumped and wasn't sure what to say. "I-Is that what you think of me, Ivor? How could you say that about me? I love you. That's all. What did I do wrong?" "What does that have to do with me? Do I have to reciprocate your love just because you have a crush on me?"

Ivor thought she was completely absurd. He glanced at her the way he would a lunatic.

She clenched her fists in response. However, she relaxed them again. She spoke softly and tried to convince him again.

"I'm aware you don't care about me, Ivor. However, don't you care about your grandpa? He loved that painting more than anything else. I know he's in the hospital, and he's going to be discharged soon.

"If he learns that his favorite painting is missing, he might be so upset that he might end up in the hospital again. Are you going to be so heartless that you'd let him suffer like this?"

"If I can't find Master Kieran's painting, then so be it. I've tried my best. So, I believe that Grandpa will understand my efforts. However, if he learns that I got the painting through such dirty means, he'll only get more upset.

"Give it up, Eloise. I'll never grant your request."

She was bitter about the cold, unfeeling way he treated her. Staring deeply into his eyes, she said, "It's a fair trade, Ivor. I hope you can think long and hard about it. Don't just deny it like that."

"There's nothing to think about here," he said nonchalantly, rising from his chair.

"I'll pay you any amount of money within reason. However, I'll never grant this particular wish of yours."

With that, he turned around and left the coffee shop, leaving her alone.

She watched as he left, her mind still replaying his cold, unfeeling attitude toward her. In the end, she couldn't hold it in anymore.

Picking up the coffee mug from the table, she smashed it on the floor bitterly.

"Ahhh! Why does he have to put me through this? Why?"

'All I want is to have someone I love by my side. What did I do wrong? What gives everyone the right to treat me that way? 'This isn't acceptable! I won't let things end this way!'

Back at Bonita Research Institute, Bonnie was standing before rows of test tubes, monitoring the experiment.

All of a sudden, her phone started ringing from the desk.

It was especially ear-piercing against the peaceful silence in the research institute. She couldn't help but frown.

'How did I forget to put my phone in silent mode?'

Putting down the report in her hand, she walked over to her phone and picked it up. She hesitated for a couple of seconds when she saw it was an unknown number before answering it.

"Hello."

Eloise's cold voice could be heard on the other end of the phone.

"Where are you right now, Bonnie?"

She recognized the voice and knew who was on the line.

"Eloise?"

Eloise lifted her chin proudly and said, "That's right. It's me!"

Fiddling with a pen, Bonnie asked leisurely, "Did the sun rise from the west today? Why are you calling me?"

"I'm calling you because I have business with you, of course," Eloise said in a self-righteous tone. "I'm waiting for you at Whispering Pines Barista. Come find me. I need to talk to you." Bonnie pursed her lips.

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Chapter 688

"Who do you think you are? Why do I have to see you just because you said so?"

Eloise frowned. "I mean it when I say I have something important to discuss with you. Are you coming?"

"Heh!" Bonnie scoffed.

"Why, you little-" Eloise felt almost suffocated. 'She's such a bitch. How is she even worse than Ivor?'

"If you're trying to pick a fight, you should direct your efforts at someone else. I can't afford to waste time on you. Ciao."

Bonnie was about to hang up the phone when she heard Eloise speaking hastily. "D-Don't hang up! I'm trying to talk to you about Ivor."

"Ivor?" Bonnie raised her eyebrows. "If I want to know something about him, I can always ask him. I don't need you to give me any input."

Eloise almost screamed into her phone when she heard what Bonnie said. However, she had no choice but to swallow her anger.

"Aren't you concerned or curious about what I have to tell you?"

"Not at all." Bonnie's voice carried a hint of nonchalance. "Didn't you hear me? I'll ask Ivor myself if I have any questions for him. I don't need you to tell me anything."

Eloise clenched her fists so hard that she could hear them crackling.

"A-Alright. Tell me! What's it going to take for you to come here and talk to me?"

Bonnie's lips curled. A hint of cockiness flashed in her eyes. "If you want me to go there, then you're going to have to beg for it. Make it sound convincing while you're at it, too." Eloise couldn't hold herself back anymore. She ended up screaming into her phone, "You're over the line, Bonnie!"

Bonnie spoke slowly in an indifferent tone. "Is that a no? Well. I won't push for it. You can forget about talking to me."

"Hey!"

'I need her help to execute my plan. She's being impossible right now, but I simply have no choice but to do as she said.'

She chose to comply with Bonnie's request.

"Please, Bonnie! I'm begging you. Is this good enough for you?"

Bonnie's raised her eyebrows and asked, "Huh? What are you begging me for? Can you be more specific?"

Eloise gnashed her teeth and took a deep breath. Then, she roared at her phone, "I'm begging you to come over here so we can talk about Ivor. This has got to be good enough!"

"Hmm... You sure seem serious about it. I guess I can free myself from my packed schedule and meet up with you for a while."

Bonnie smirked, took her car keys, and walked out of the research institute.

Eloise stared at her phone and gnashed her teeth so hard that she could grind them to dust. 'What a bitch! What a shameless bitch!'

Half an hour later, Bonnie walked into the coffee shop and saw Eloise by the window.

She walked over, sat across the table, and asked dryly, "Out with it. What is it you wanted to talk about?"

Eloise proceeded to give her a brief rundown about Ivor's painting. "Now, his painting is irreparably damaged. Not even the painting conservators could restore it. There's only one more of Master Kieran's paintings left in the world, and I have it.

"Sigmund is going to be out of the hospital soon. I'm sure he's going to go into a fit of rage when he finds the painting missing. I'm willing to do you a favor and give you the painting, but I have a term."

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Chapter 689

"Oh?" Bonnie stared at Eloise calmly. "Go ahead and tell me about it."

Eloise then took out a bottle of pills and pushed it to Bonnie's side of the table.

"Spike his food with this pill and let him sleep with me for one night. After that, I'll give you the painting."

Bonnie laughed out loud.

"Geez, Eloise. Are you this much of a whore? If you're really craving men, then how about I get you ten of them? Will that be enough?"

"How about a hundred men? I can guarantee you that all of them are excellent men and have a lot of experience under their belts. What do you say?"

Eloise gritted her teeth as her face reddened. "Quit saying these things to rile me up. That's not who I am at all."

"Really?" Bonnie's lips curled into a smirk. "If you aren't looking for someone to sleep with you, then why do you keep trying to steal my man? Why do you want my man to sleep with you?" Eloise's face looked miserable when she saw how sarcastic Bonnie was. She clenched her fists, trying to hold herself back. In the end, however, she shot up from her seat.

"I've only ever wanted Ivor and no one else! I'm doing this because I want closure for my long-time love for him. What did I do wrong, exactly?"

Bonnie clapped her hands while flashing a sarcastic grin.

"You found a new way to justify stealing my man away from me. Did you come up with that to lessen your guilt?"

"Why, you..." Eloise could only glare at Bonnie while she stood.

"Oh, pardon me. That was rude of me. After all, why would you feel guilty at all? You're so shameless that I'm sure the concept of guilt means nothing to you." Eloise started huffing as though she was going to erupt.

Bonnie chuckled. Then, she stood up from the seat slowly. "I'll be taking my leave if that's all you have to say. I'm a busy lady. I don't have time to listen to your crap." Eloise's face turned grim when she saw how unfazed Bonnie was. She roared at the top of her lungs, "Don't you care about Ivor, even just a little? Don't you love him at all?"

"He's at his wit's end over the damaged painting. Now, you have the chance to help him, and yet you're reluctant to do this tiny little thing for him. I can't help but wonder if you really love him or his powers and influence?"

Bonnie's face grew solemn when she heard what Eloise said. A darkness began to gather in her eyes, as if foretelling the coming of a storm.

"I won't stop you if you're trying to get yourself killed. However, let me give you a fair warning. Don't show yourself to me again. Otherwise, I'll show you a fate that's worse than death.

"I've been patient with you before because I'm generous enough not to get mad at you. However, my patience has come to an end. If you keep appearing before me, things won't end well for you. That's a promise!"

Eloise was startled by Bonnie's imposing bearing. She was rooted to the spot for a long time.

It took her a while before she came to her senses and looked at Bonnie viciously. "You'll regret this, Bonnie!"

"That's absurd. You're going to regret it, Eloise. Not me." Bonnie looked at her the way she would a clown.

Eloise was infuriated by how nonchalant Bonnie looked. She was so furious that her entire body started quivering with rage.

"Both you and Ivor are going to regret this! I'll make sure you regret treating me this way!"

Bonnie had had it. She couldn't take the lady before her anymore. She grabbed Eloise's collar, used her five-foot-seven height to her advantage, and lifted the latter off the ground.

"I warned you a minute ago, Eloise. Do you think I would've tolerated you for such a long time if it weren't for the connection between the Gallagher family and the Knight family?" When Eloise saw Bonnie's menacing gaze, she felt as if she had been sent to hell.

"L-Let me go now! Let me "

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Chapter 690

Before Eloise could utter the last word, Bonnie brutally flung her to the floor.

"You'd better behave, Eloise!" She then turned around and left.

Eloise felt the strange glances from the people around her and wished she could be on the other end of the earth right now.

'Damn, that Bonnie! How dare she humiliate me?! This isn't the end of it. I'm going to make her pay!'

Back at the Knight Villa, Floyd was counting down the time. He was pacing back and forth, feeling agitated.

"Mr. Sigmund is going to come home from the hospital soon, Mr. Ivor. But we still haven't found a solution for the damaged painting. What do we do?"

He was already picturing how the old man would throw a fit. It gave him goosebumps.

Ivor frowned, a faint layer of worry could be seen in his eyes. "We'll have to tell him the truth. There's no other way."

'I didn't want it to end like this, either. However, this was how things were going now. I simply couldn't figure out a better way to resolve this mess.'

Floyd scratched the back of his head furiously, trying to figure out a way out of this for his master.

"I've said it before, and I'm going to say it again. We could find a fake painting to soothe Mr. Sigmund first. Once we buy ourselves more time, we can think of a way to get it from Ms. Eloise and swap out the fake painting."

Ivor shook his head. "It won't work. Like I said, Grandpa can tell the real painting from a counterfeit."

"Well, what are we going to do, then? I can already imagine how furious Mr. Sigmund will be when he finds out his precious painting was damaged beyond repair!" Floyd's face was plagued with distress. However, getting agitated wouldn't help at all. All they could do now was pray that Sigmund wouldn't be too upset when he found out about the truth.

Just as they were both at their wit's ends, Alfred rushed inside and called out to his master.

"Mr. Ivor... Mr. Ivor..."

Ivor turned around and saw that his butler was covered in sweat. He couldn't help but ask, confused, "What is it? Why are you in such a hurry?"

Alfred patted his chest and gave himself a moment to catch his breath before he said, "S-Someone sent us a painting."

Ivor felt a headache coming on when he heard the word 'painting.' He couldn't help but speak in a gloomy tone. "I'm not in the mood to care about other paintings now. Just put it in the storage." He assumed some family sent them the painting in an attempt to gain favor with them.

Now, all he wanted was Master Kieran's painting because no one else's could get him out of the pickle he was in.

Alfred realized his boss's indifference toward the new painting and got so worked up that he couldn't speak. His face was covered with sweat.

Ivor noticed that there was something unusual about Alfred, and asked again, "What's the matter? Is there anything else?"

Alfred finally said it out loud. "B-But, the guy said it's Master Kieran's painting!"

"Huh?" Ivor trembled. "Are you sure?"

"I have no idea, but that's what the guy said..."

Alfred wasn't particularly well-informed in this area. All he knew was that his boss was looking for Master Kieran's painting. As soon as he got the news that someone sent them the painting, he came rushing to inform his boss about it.

"Show me the painting." Floyd quickly stepped forward, took the painting away from Alfred, and unrolled it.

Ivor cast a glance at it. He was stunned when he saw the tabby cat in the painting.

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Chapter 691

The new painting was exactly the same as the original painting on the wall.

Floyd stared at it for a good while before he asked abruptly, "Do you think Ms. Eloise asked her men to send this painting to us, Mr. Ivor?"

Ivor was inspecting the painting's style as well as the signature at the corner. Everything checked out.

From the looks of it, this was indeed Master Kieran's work.

However, he continued to stare at it. Being the perceptive guy that he was, he discovered some anomalies with the painting.

"The stripes on the tabby cat in this painting are a little different from the one Eloise purchased. Moreover, there aren't any signs of age in this one. I believe it was made recently." Floyd was stunned. Then, something occurred to him, and his eyes widened. "C-Could it be that Master Kieran just made this painting for us?"

Ivor pondered it, then shook his head.

"I've only ever known Master Kieran from her reputation, but I've never interacted with her, nor have I seen her in person. Why would she give me her painting for no good reason? "Also, rumor has it that she faded into obscurity after she made a name for herself at three years old. She hadn't appeared before anyone in the world.

"There's another rumor that she has long passed away. Otherwise, she wouldn't have vanished without a trace, just as her reputation was at its peak."

Floyd grumbled, "You said so yourself, Mr. Ivor. It's just a rumor. As we all know, most of the rumors are unfounded.

"There's a chance that Master Kieran is still alive and well. It's just that her passion doesn't lie in painting. She could've dabbled in another career or industry, for all we know."

"It's certainly possible." Ivor walked over to the wall and hung the painting as he spoke.

"In any case, we're out of the pinch now. I want you to keep an ear out for Master Kieran's whereabouts. If you find any useful information, remember to inform me immediately. She has done me a huge favor. intend to thank her in person."

Floyd nodded and said, "Alright, Mr. Ivor."

Half an hour later, Bonnie walked into the living room. The first thing she saw was Ivor, who was sitting on the couch.

The distress in his eyes had vanished. The usual serenity took its place instead. This meant that the issue that had haunted him previously was resolved.

Her lips curled slightly as she walked over.

He heard her footsteps and raised his head. He was stunned when he saw her. "Aren't you supposed to be working in the research institute at this time of day? What are you doing at home?"

She shrugged helplessly. "Your worst fan ever insisted on talking to me in a coffee shop. She wouldn't quit bugging me if I didn't go. I can't even work on my research, for heaven's sake. I didn't have a choice. So, I met up with her."

His eyes narrowed, and the intense coldness in them was unmistakable.

"Did Eloise actually get in touch with you? It looks like she hadn't learned her lesson."

He glanced at Floyd and said, "Floyd-"

Before he could finish his sentence, she cut him off. "What are you doing? She's nothing but a clown. Do you have to make such a big gesture to deal with her? She isn't worth your attention, either." His brows were still knitted tightly, and the coldness in his eyes was still intense.

"You say that, but I can't stand idly by while you are being picked on."

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Chapter 692

Bonnie pressed down on Ivor's shoulder and made him sit.

"No one can ever pick on me. I didn't get mad at her because of the connection between the Gallagher family and yours. So, I didn't want to make the whole thing too awkward. If she's not going to cherish the opportunity I gave her, then I will not tolerate her anymore.

"My patience has reached its limit. If she shows up before me again, then I'll let her know the meaning of regret!"

The coldness in Ivor's eyes faded and was replaced with a tender affection.

"I guess you're right. My concerns are a little redundant. After all, you're a tough cookie. This is nothing but a piece of cake for you. I don't really have to do anything." She pulled a long face on purpose before looking at him solemnly.

"Didn't you promise that you'd tell me everything, big or small? Didn't you also promise that you wouldn't hide anything from me? Now, look where we are. If you're going to keep something as trivial as this from me, then how am I supposed to trust anything you say?"

"I'm sorry." Ivor apologized to her sincerely. "I didn't mean to keep it from you. It's just that you're so busy with your work at the research institute. I didn't want to burden you with my problems. I'm sorry, Bonnie. Will you please stop being mad at me?"

She scoffed gently in response.

"I want you to promise me, then. You can't hide anything from me. It doesn't matter if it's big or small. You have to tell me everything. Can you do it?"

Worried that she might be upset with him, he nodded and agreed to it at once.

"Of course I can, Bonnie. From here on out, I won't hide anything from you again."

"Okay." She nodded, satisfied. "Well, you're quite sincere with your apology. I think I can forgive you."

The moment he heard that she had forgiven him, it felt like a heavy weight had been lifted off his shoulder.

"You're the best, Bonnie."

She gave him a sidelong glance. "You won't get so lucky every time. If you break your promise again, you'll find our conversation very different from the one we're having now." "Gotcha." He smiled at first. Then, something must've occurred to him because his smile faded. "Speaking of, what did Eloise tell you when she met you at the coffee shop?" "Nothing, really." Her tone was so calm that it bordered on indifference. "She asked me to drug your food so you'd sleep with her for a night."

"How shameless!" He barked.

'It was bad enough that Eloise said something so shameless in front of me, but she also said the same brazen nonsense to Bonnie.

'Poor Bonnie. She's had to listen to such indecent stuff. It could've sullied her kind and beautiful soul.'

"It's okay. Everything's over now. It's certainly not worth it for you to get upset over something so trivial," she said.

Then, she caught the painting out of the corner of her eyes and asked purposefully, "Hmm? What's the matter with this painting?"

Ivor followed her gaze and looked at it. He explained, "Someone sent us this painting earlier. The guy said it's genuinely Master Kieran's work. I checked it out myself. He told the truth. "But, I did find an issue. This painting doesn't seem to have been around for very long. There's a possibility that it was made very recently."

A subtle hint of humor flashed in her eyes. "You truly have some sharp eyes."

Rubbing his chin gently, he mulled it over before saying, "Rumor has it that Master Kieran has moved on to a better place. However, I suspect that she's actually alive and well."

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Chapter 693

Bonnie's lips twitched involuntarily.

'Aren't I living and breathing? How did the rumor get twisted so badly that I've died?'

Ivor noticed that she didn't respond to him, but he wasn't bothered by it.

Instead, he continued to voice his theory, "Then why hasn't she shown herself before the public if she has been living among us? Also, why didn't she make more paintings? This is the odd part I can't get behind."

"What's so strange about that? Perhaps she wanted to do something else later in life. That could be why she didn't make a living off her paintings."

'It's true, though. Painting has always been a hobby for me. Actually add piano, computer science, and the other stuff to the list too. All of those are just hobbies that are meant for my betterment. 'My one and only true passion lies with scientific research.'

It was a casual response, but it managed to draw his attention. "Judging by your tone, you seem to know Master Kieran well."

She responded calmly, "That's not it. I'm just taking a guess. Isn't that what happens most of the time?"

"I guess you have a point." He didn't dwell on what she said. "However, I can't seem to figure out something."

"What is it?"

"I'm not connected to her in any way. So, why would she give me this painting for no good reason?"

She gave him a calm glance and couldn't help but tease him. "Perhaps she admires your excellent looks."

Raising his eyebrows, he asked, "Are you jealous?"

"Do I seem that petty?" She rolled her eyes at him.

"Just admit that you're jealous of her, Bonnie. There's no need to feel shy. I'd totally understand that."

'There he goes with his smart mouth again,' she thought.

"You might be onto something there, though. Master Kieran could've fallen for me for real. This won't do. I can't sell my body for a mere painting. I have to return it to her and tell her that I don't have feelings for her."

'I know how men can be narcissistic sometimes, but I've never seen someone as in love with himself as he is.'

She was so speechless that she could only roll her eyes.

"Don't you need the painting badly now, though? As luck would have it, someone gave it to you in the nick of time. So, you should keep it for yourself. Why send it back to someone who gave it to you in the first place?"

"Furthermore, I think she's just trying to establish a connection with the Knight family. That's all. She must've given you a gift, so it'd make it easier for her to talk to your family."

A hint of bewilderment flashed in his eyes. Looking at her, he asked, "How do you know that that's what she planned?"

She continued to make up stories without so much as a flinch. "I'm just taking a wild guess here, but it makes sense. Think of it this way. Master Kieran is the most prestigious traditional master painter within the circle. She's got moxie as well as her pride.

"Even if she did have a thing for you, do you think she would've rashly come between us when she knows I'm your fiancé? How is she different from a lowly homewrecker, then? Do you think someone as prestigious as she would do something like this?"

The more he listened to her, the more it made sense. So, he nodded. "Now that you put it that way, I must've read too much into things."

Pouting her lips, she said, "You did."

"That's enough with this topic." He sat next to her and rested his arm on her shoulder. "Let's think about what we're going to have for dinner instead."

"Dinner? There are a lot of choices here." Putting up her fingers, she started counting. "We've got catfish, lobster rolls..."

She proceeded to name more than a dozen dishes while he wrote all of them down on a note.

He passed her the note and asked, "Is this enough? Do you want more dishes?"

"That'll be enough." She looked at the list of dishes on the note and fell into deep thought.

'It's a good thing the chefs in the villa are good at cooking a small, but delicate portion. There are so many dishes here. We wouldn't have been able to finish them otherwise.'

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Chapter 694

"Alright, then. Stay put. I'm going to ask the chef to make these dishes for dinner."

"Alright."

Ivor stood up and headed to the kitchen.

She watched him as he left. A warm, fuzzy feeling rose within her chest. 'It feels good to be appreciated and valued by my partner.'

The next day, Bonnie had just walked to the gate of Pylalis University when she heard a nervous voice from behind her.

"Bonnie. Hey, Bonnie! Hold on for a second. Wait for me."

She stopped in her tracks and turned around. The first thing she saw was a man carrying a baby racing toward her.

Once he came before her, he wore a big, fat smile on his face.

"Oh, my. I finally found you! Do you know how long the baby and I have been waiting for you?"

She had a sense that the man before her was a little not right in the head. So, she subtly took a couple of steps back.

"Who are you? Why were you waiting for me?"

The man became agitated at once when she didn't recognize him. His face reddened as he smacked his chest and pointed at the baby in his arms.

"It's me, Niko Hicks. I'm your boyfriend, and this is our son. You were pregnant with him for ten months before you gave birth to him! How could you forget about us? I-Is it because we're meeting you here, and you find it humiliating?"

There were a lot of students heading into the university for classes. The moment they heard what Niko said, they stopped for a juicy bit of gossip.

Bonnie saw how a crowd began to gather around her out of the corner of her eyes. Then she looked at the man and the baby in his arms calmly.

"I don't know you, and I certainly didn't get pregnant for ten months and give birth to any child. If you're going to keep defaming me, I'm going to press charges."

Niko clutched his chest and stared at her, seemingly heartbroken.

"It's bad enough you don't want to reconcile with me, but are you seriously this heartless that you'd abandon your own son? Do you have any idea how we had to scrape by ever since you left us? I have to work during the day and look after our son at night. That's why I'm ridden with illness at such a young age. Our baby son is too young to be skipping meals, but I just can't afford it. That's why he keeps getting sick as well.

"There were a lot of times I thought about giving it all up, but then I would wonder something. Is it possible that you abandoned us because you didn't have a choice back then?"

"Then, I'd get to thinking that I have to find you. We have to reunite, support each other, and get through these harrowing times together. Now that I've finally found you, I realize you've been living a wealthy life without caring about me or our son.

'What's worse, you're pretending to not recognize us! N-Never have I thought that you're this heartless!'

Niko spoke with such emotion that it sounded genuine. He looked at Bonnie in a heartbroken manner before glancing at the baby in his arms. Then, he was so devastated that tears fell from his eyes.

His feelings were so strong, and his accusation was so serious, that the surrounding crowd started to have immense sympathy for him and an untamable rage for Bonnie.

"Men don't typically cry unless they're really heartbroken. Bonnie is truly awful for turning him into a sobbing mess."

"Where did she find the strength to abandon her own son? Is her heart made of stone?"

"This is a new low. Nothing she has done in the past holds a candle to this. She's so ruthless. I'm telling you, she has just opened my eyes."

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Chapter 695

Bonnie heard the crowd's muttering. Her lips curled, still unfazed. Then, she folded her arms across her chest and stared at Niko sarcastically.

"I must applaud you for your acting skill. How much did your client pay you for this? I'll make it double... Scratch that, I'll pay you 10 times as she did. Then, I'll send you back to her so you can put up a similar performance to her all day long. What do you think about that?"

Niko looked like he was beside himself with rage. "You're accusing me of putting on an act? I'm a man and I have my pride. That's it, Bonnie. If you humiliate me any further, I'll jump into the Robinson River. You won't be able to see us ever again!"

She giggled in response. Lifting her chin, she gestured in a certain direction.

"Why would you mention somewhere as far as Robinson River? There's a river nearby. Go ahead and jump in it. No one's going to stop you."

He froze where he stood.

'I was just saying it. I was never going to do it. Normally, the ladies would've come over and pacify me when I say something like this.

'I didn't count on this lady being this tough. Isn't she worried about it at all? What am I supposed to do now? Do I seriously have to jump in the river?'

Noticing that Niko wasn't saying anything, she raised her brows and said, "Do it now! Why aren't you jumping into the river? Are you scared? It doesn't take much to make you hesitate. It looks like you aren't that determined to do it, after all."

Before Niko could say anything, the onlookers started chastising Bonnie.

"That's too much, Bonnie! What does it take to make you stop? Are you honestly trying to get them killed?"

"Exactly. He's holding a baby, for heaven's sake. Are you hoping they'll off themselves so you'd be free of responsibilities?"

"How could someone as heartless and ruthless as her exist?"

Realizing that everyone was speaking up for him, Niko couldn't help but get thrilled.

He had to strike the iron while it was still hot. So, he glanced at Bonnie again. At the next moment, he went down on his knees with the baby in his arms.

"I know the last thing you want is to see us here, Bonnie. I'm also aware that you would much rather both of us die so you could get rid of us.

"However, our son is still so young. We're the ones who brought him to this world. We can't just snuff the life out of him like it's nothing. Please, Bonnie. Come back home.

"We'll be reunited if you return to our side. I believe we could overcome any obstacle the future might present before us as a family."

Bonnie chuckled. She glanced at Niko the way she would a clown.

Meanwhile, Trina could see Bonnie surrounded by the crowd from a distance.

'I thought my eyes were tricking me earlier. But, it's really her! Why is there such a big crowd around her? What did Bonnie do this time?'

She walked over, patted one of the student's shoulders, and asked, "What just happened? Why's everyone gathered around here?"

This student proceeded to tell Trina everything.

"Are you serious right now?" Trina blinked. At the same time, her chest swelled with great joy.

'At first, I thought Bonnie was Ivor's fiancée. It had haunted me for so long that I couldn't eat or sleep well. It was such a mental torture. I can finally rest easy.

'Now that Bonnie has done something this outrageous, it's impossible that she's the fiancé of the wealthiest man in Pyralis.'

"I saw the whole thing," the other student said. "How could she do something so despicable and downright wicked?"

"Sigh. Aren't you aware that she has already done a lot of outrageous stuff on campus? What's one more?"

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Chapter 696

"I guess you're right. She's so rotten that such things aren't beneath her at all. I really ought to know better."

"Exactly. She's rotten to the core, to begin with. It's not that strange that she pulled off this stunt."

Trina swept her eyes across the place, searching for the best seat to see this debacle. Then, she waved at the student who had been chatting with her. "I need to head over there."

Once she was standing in her desired spot, she pulled out her phone and started recording the moment.

'Hehe... How could I have kept this juicy bit of drama to myself? I have to show it to the entire Shepard family. Let them see just how wicked she is! That way, they'll stop blaming me for what happened to her.'

Meanwhile, Bonnie calmly looked at Niko, who spoke so much that his throat was parched.

"Are you done with your little show? Don't you think it's time for you to leave?"

He realized that she wasn't going to budge at all. However, he had to keep the show going.

So, he said stubbornly, "You might not have wanted to come back to our side, but can you quit humiliating me? You're the one who backed me into the corner. What man would want to expose his ugly history in front of so many people?"

"Also, our son is my flesh and blood. Why would I use him for an act?"

A smile formed on Bonnie's face. Raising her eyebrows, she stared at Niko.

"Are you sure the baby is yours?"

"W-What are you trying to say?" A hint of panic traced his face.

It only lasted for a fleeting moment, but Bonnie was perceptive. She caught it and said, "Idiot! Your client has wasted her good money on you."

That stung him a lot. However, he needed to keep up the act. More importantly, he still hadn't gotten the money from his client. So, he could do nothing but swallow his pride. "Bonnie. Honey. How could you..."

"Shut up!" Bonnie squinted and looked at Niko coldly. "It's not going to end well for you if you call me 'honey' one more time. I guarantee it."

She wasn't fierce, but her authoritative tone was enough to overwhelm him. She looked so imposing that he was scared witless.

After a brief pause, she spoke dryly. "Didn't you just claim that the baby belongs to both of us? Let's do a DNA test right now. I'll go with you if he's really my son."

"If the opposite turns out to be true, then you'll have a lot of time to think about how many years you'll be spending in jail for slander and defamation."

The moment she brought up the DNA test, a hint of panic flashed in his eyes again. He quickly shielded the baby in his arms and shook his head at once.

"I-I won't let you do it. That's going to traumatize our baby too much. If he grows up and finds out that his mother insisted on doing a DNA test, I'm sure it's going to do a number on his psyche. I-I'll never allow you to do such a thing."

"You won't even do a simple DNA test. So, how are you going to prove that he's my son? Perhaps you're just a human trafficker, and that poor baby is just some hapless victim that you nabbed somewhere." "I-I'm... Uh..." Niko stammered for a long time, but he failed to explain himself.

Gripping the baby tightly, he prepared himself to run. 'Maybe I should just escape. She's too tough and cunning. I just can't win with her!'

She realized that he was thinking about running away. However, she didn't give him the chance to do it. Taking brisk steps toward him, she leaned close to his face and stared him down.

"Go on! Why aren't you saying anything? Are you worried that everyone knows you're a trafficker? Is that why you didn't dare to say anything else?"

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Chapter 697

Niko was so startled that he shrieked, "Monster. That's what you are, Bonnie. You're a monster! Not only did you abandon us, but you're accusing me of being a trafficker!

"If that's how you're going to be, then I guess I'll just get out of here. Will that satisfy you?"

He held the baby tightly in his arms and was about to tuck his tail and run.

Bonnie reacted swiftly and yanked at his collar. She said sarcastically, "Where do you think you're going? You have yet to tell us the truth. Yet, here you are, thinking about running away. Do you think you could just insult me and get away scot-free?"

"Y-You're so heartless and cruel. I'll just forget that I've ever known you!"

He knew that he couldn't afford to play games with her. Now, he was overwhelmed with panic that he couldn't get away. So he squirmed about while he spoke. However, he simply couldn't break free.

Bonnie scoffed coldly. She was about to say something when she heard an ear-piercing voice.

"Where's Bonnie? I know she studies at this university. Do any of you know where she is?"

Everyone followed the voice and turned their gazes at it. There was a middle-aged couple heading toward them from the side of the road.

The middle-aged women were nothing short of ferocious. She looked so fierce that she could eat anyone alive.

"Hey, she's looking for Bonnie. Is it possible? Is this the start of another juicy bit of gossip?"

The crowd nosily scanned the middle-aged couple from head to toe.

Someone in the crowd shouted loudly, "Bonnie is right here!"

Nobody knew who yelled it out loud. By the time everyone turned their gaze over, the person was gone.

The woman heard it and headed to the center of the crowd. She recognized Bonnie the moment she laid eyes on her. She seemed unable to hold in her rage and charged at Bonnie ferociously. "Bonnie. You bitch! You tore my family apart! Just die already, you shameless home wrecker! Die!"

The middle-aged man saw what she was about to do and ran over quickly. Then, he held her by the waist and pulled her back.

"Didn't you promise me that you're just here to see what she looks like, honey? You said you wouldn't make a scene."

"What did you say?" The middle-aged woman sneered. The way she looked at Bonnie suggested that she'd much rather tear the younger woman to pieces.

"You quit your job for this bitch and showed no concern for both of our kids, just so you could spend your days with this home wrecker. We used to be happy, but we're a mess now.

"Let me go. I'm going to teach her a lesson she won't soon forget. Otherwise, I can't let go of this hatred that's burning in my heart."

"That's enough!" The man roared at his wife. Then, he turned his gaze and looked at Bonnie with deep affection.

"I'll take care of my wife, Bonnie. Don't worry about it. I won't let her pick on you."

Bonnie glanced at Niko before she turned her gaze at the middle-aged couple, who seemingly popped out of nowhere. Then the coldness in her eyes intensified. "Geez. Who are you guys?"

The middle-aged woman pointed at her and screamed, "Are you playing chicken now that I caught you? What a bitch. You look like a decent girl, too. I can't believe how wicked you are on the inside to commit something so despicable."

Bonnie raised her sharp eyes at the woman. "I dare you to take another shot at me. The moment you do, I'm going to rip off your foul lips."

For a second there, the middle-aged woman was startled. Then she recovered quickly and continued to scream at Bonnie.

"What has the world come to?! Did you hear her, everyone? She's the shameless home wrecker here, and yet she wants to hurt me. I'm the wife here, for crying out loud.

"Does the law mean nothing to you, Bonnie? Also, why isn't someone from the university here? They're the ones who allowed someone so morally corrupt to be their student." "Silence." Bonnie stared at her coldly. Her patience had come to an end.

"I will not! What are you going to do about it, huh? Are you going to bite me? Let's see just how tough you are, you shameless home wrecker!" The middle-aged woman grew cockier by the second.

'Clearly, she's doing this on purpose. She's goading me to hit her. After all, if I did it in front of the crowd at the university gate, word might get out, and I'd certainly make the newspaper headlines tomorrow,' Bonnie thought to herself.

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Chapter 698 -

Chapter 698

Bonnie crossed her arm and regarded the middle-aged woman with nothing but sarcasm.

"If a dog bites me, would I have to bite back? This crazy dog might have rabies for all I know." "W-Who are you calling a crazy dog?" The middle-aged woman's face turned red from rage.

Bonnie responded nonchalantly, "Well. You answered me. So, I guess you're it."

"Why, you little..." The middle-aged woman knew she couldn't win against Bonnie. So, she started to get the onlookers to verbally attack the latter instead.

"Look at me, everyone. I'm just a common housewife, and yet I have to suffer such humiliation! I can't even keep my husband with me.

"I wouldn't even use conditioners that are worth more than a hundred dollars. My intention was to save as much money as possible. That way, maybe my husband would love me more. Little did I know... I can't believe that he..."

All of a sudden, tears started streaming down her cheeks.

As far as the others were concerned, this was the final straw. The onlookers started lobbing insults at Bonnie.

"Bonnie has got a messed up private life. Nothing is beneath her, I guess."

"I have good reasons to believe that she's constantly skipping classes for days because she went away to do some wicked stuff."

"Of course she did. Why would so many people look for her today if she didn't do it?"

Meanwhile, Trina had been recording the entire scene with her phone while he stood at the corner. She almost couldn't hold herself back and burst into laughter. 'Hahaha! This is just phenomenal. Is this my lucky day or something? How is it that I managed to capture not one, but two embarrassing parts of Bonnie's life?

'Now, I've gotten enough footage. I can share it in the family WhatsApp group and show everyone Bonnie's true color.'

She uploaded the video to the family chat group. All it took was a couple of texts from Trina and the entire family went mad.

Normally, the family chat group was silent. However, it was flooded with texts in less than five seconds.

Gresham wrote, "Damn, that Bonnie. She could've spent her time more wisely. Instead, she chooses to dabble in immoral stuff!"

Grant wrote, "This is outrageous! There's a lesson for the young people in our family here. Don't do anything Bonnie would do. Otherwise, you'll be kicked out of the family! Go ahead and become a beggar, for all we care!"

Harold's text read, "It's a good thing we made the wise decision and disowned this bastard much earlier. Otherwise, she would've brought shame to our family right here and now."

Now that the old man mentioned disowning Bonnie, all the Shepards couldn't help but think back to the fact that she was Kieran, the master painter.

'Back then, all of us felt pity that we missed out on someone we could benefit from. However, it was fortunate that Bonnie turned down the offer to rejoin their family. 'Otherwise, we'd be humiliated so greatly that we'd never recover from it.'

Vera sat on the couch while she watched the clip. She couldn't help but sigh. "How is it that Bonnie became worse? Who could've kept her in line, I wonder?"

"She has gone ahead and ruined her reputation at such a young age. What's going to happen to her if she keeps going down this path?"

Gresham, who was sitting next to her, uttered coldly, "We've disowned her for a long time. She's not one of the Shepards anymore. So, why do you care about her? So, what if she's actually Kieran herself? She's still the same piece of garbage. No one could've saved her!"

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Chapter 699

Selina was glancing at Bonnie, who was surrounded by the crowd. She was deriving pleasure from the latter's misfortune.

'I heard that something happened to Bonnie. That's why I came all the way here. And, boy, was it even more magnificent to witness the moment with my own eyes.

'If everything goes well, then Piralis University will expel her very soon. After all, she's just so despicable and morally corrupted.'

At the thought of that, her grin grew wider. Raising her eyes, she looked around and saw someone. Her eyes glinted immediately.

"Hey, Coleman! What brought you here?"

He responded to her nonchalantly, "Yeah."

She realized that he was treating her with the same coldness he did before and bit her lips in frustration.

"Haven't you always thought Bonnie was the best lady around? Well, look at her now. She's shameless and morally corrupt. She doesn't deserve your love at all!" "Shut up!" An uncharacteristic rage filled his face.

She couldn't help but feel like someone stabbed her in the heart when she saw how angry he was.

"Obviously, someone tried to frame her for something she never did." He gave her a cold look, his eyes bearing a warning. "Don't say anything unless you're sure of it." She gnashed her teeth at that, her eyes brimming with anger and resentment.

"The truth lies before you, Coleman. How are you still speaking up for her? Why would these people stir up trouble with her if she hadn't done anything wrong?"

"I told you, she's not as pure-hearted and harmless as she seems. Wake up, Coleman. Don't be fooled by her anymore."

"Like I said earlier, Selina, shut up. I know her character very well, and I believe wholeheartedly that she could never do something like this," he said confidently. She clenched her fists in response. She was gnashing her teeth so much that she almost ground them to dust.

"I'm just looking out for you, Coleman, but you never listen to me. Fine, then. Just wait and see. Pyralis University is going to expel Bonnie before you know it!"

He ignored her altogether. Then he walked away because she was too noisy and irritating.

Selina watched as he left. Her face grew grim and was contorted with jealousy. 'Just wait and see. Everyone who has ever placed their faith in Bonnie will regret it after today!'

The middle-aged couple were fighting with each other fiercely. Niko, on the other hand, was holding the crying baby in his arms. He was supposed to leave earlier, but even he joined the duo and lobbed insults at Bonnie.

Meanwhile, Bonnie simply watched on as the three of them continued to put on a show. She was unfazed. Nothing they said could affect her in the least.

Later, the trio's throats were parched from their incessant shouting. Turning around, they saw how unperturbed she was and were furious at that. She was just infuriating.

They knew that this was going nowhere. So, they exchanged subtle glances and decided to switch tracks.

The middle-aged woman took the lead and charged at Bonnie like a mad woman, intending on yanking the latter's hair.

"You tore my family apart, you bitch! I'm going to teach you a lesson right here and now!"

Bonnie narrowed her eyes and remained standing where she was. "Come at me. We'll see who's the one teaching a lesson soon."

The middle-aged woman sneered. "Honestly, I've never seen any home wrecker as arrogant as you are. You ruined my family and abandoned your own. Is there nothing beneath you? I'm going to do the world a favor and show you your place!"

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Chapter 700

However, the middle-aged woman had just taken a couple of steps forward when her husband yanked at her hand.

"That's enough! Are you trying to bring more shame to us? Hurry up and come home with me."

Then, he looked at Bonnie guiltily and said, "I'm sorry, Bonnie. I shouldn't have let my wife come all the way here to humiliate you. Don't worry about it, though. I'll take her away and get out of your hair now." The middle-aged woman heard what he said and stomped her foot out of frustration. She was so mad that her face turned red.

"Take me away? You wish! I'm not going to leave until I've taught this bitch a lesson. Let me go, right now!"

Her husband continued to persuade her. "Will you knock it off? We can talk about all of this back home."

"You think I'm a fool and don't know about it, but I do. You're only soothing me for the sake of that bitch. You're going to take me back first. Then, the two of you are going to cook up a plot to deal with me! Well, tough. I'm not going to give you the chance."

She began scratching and clawing at her husband. She looked so savage that it perfectly encapsulated what a dog with rabies would look like.

In the end, her husband couldn't stand her anymore and slapped her heavily.

"Didn't you hear me? I said, knock it off! We're going home now. Stop making things hard for Bonnie. I'm going to teach you a lesson if the university expels her because of the mess you made today!" She covered her face and stared at him in disbelief. Then, tears began rolling down her cheeks.

"I-I'm your wife. I-I was there with you when you were at your most miserable! H-How could you slap me because of this bitch? Aaaargh! I'm going to make you pay."

The middle-aged woman and her husband started hitting each other, giving rise to a sight that was simply too hard to watch.

Meanwhile, Niko held the baby in his arms and pretended to stop him. "Stop it, you guys. Stop it right now."

The trio's little show was so successful that the onlookers started discussing it more intensely.

"I can't believe he slapped his own wife for Bonnie's sake. This is too much. It isn't a stretch for me to call her a monster."

"Look at him, guys. Bonnie has seduced him so well that he has lost his sanity. What a shameless homewrecker. She has done a lot of harm to a lot of people." "The likes of her should just die off. If they were left to run free in our society, they're going to put more people through hell."

The moment someone made that last comment, the crowd grew infuriated.

"Yeah. Someone as morally corrupt as Bonnie should just die."

"Just die already, Bonnie..."

More voices rose in the air, each of them angrier than the last. Eventually, their voices grew so loud that the top management staff in the university got wind of it. They called for an emergency board meeting to discuss how they were going to move forward with the case revolving around Bonnie.

About ten minutes later, they came up with a conclusion. They had to expel her from the university.

More than half of them agreed with this decision. The other half was still waiting to see how the situation would develop. They couldn't make up their minds just yet. Reece was also a part of this meeting. He smacked the table and stood up to reject the decision.

"I know Ms. Bonnie very well. There's no way she'd do something like this. There must be another side we're not seeing here. We should investigate the matter before we draw a conclusion. Otherwise, we'll have rashly expelled our president."

One of the top management staff stood up and objected to his statement. "The truth lies before us. What's there to investigate? The students saw everything. How are we supposed to command their faith if we don't expel Bonnie?"

Another staff member chimed in, "Furthermore, the majority agreed to expel her. The decision has been made. You should just take a seat, Reece."

Realizing that they were hell-bent on expelling Bonnie, Reece got so worked up that he smacked the table and roared, "I don't care what you guys say, you can't expel Bonnie! If you do, I'll fight against you to my last breath. I'll become your worst enemy!"

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