

## Mr. Ford Is Jealous by Boat of Peaches Chapter 421

### Chapter 421

It was all Xavier's fault for flirting with Daisy, leading to her almost blurting out the truth. On the other hand, Xavier could tell that she and Ben were hiding something. Walking up to Ben, he asked, "What could be so important, Ben?"

"You may ask Mr. Ford that when he returns," Ben replied.

"You're such a bore," Xavier grumbled, but just before he was about to leave, he stopped in his tracks when he glimpsed a woman's figure in Weston's office. ... Guinevere Cohen? How did she get here so quickly?

He had just sent her home, too... And she had managed to come before he did? It could not be... With that in mind, he strode off toward Weston's office, catching Ben off guard. "Mr Ford!" He cried in an attempt to stop him, but it was already too late-Xavier had opened the door and stepped through the doorway, locking eyes with Stella, who could not hide her surprise in time.

"You?!"

Stella sprang to her feet as well. "Xavier Ford?"

Xavier stared at her for a while and straightened his neck tie.

Then, after a long while, he chuckled. "I didn't think that you were actually this impressive."

Stella had no idea what he was talking about, and simply frowned at him as he entered.

Ben simply could not hold him back. "Mr. Xavier, Mr. Ford will finish his meeting soon. If you would please step outside for a moment-"

"No, I think I'll stay here and have a nice chat with this little lady," Xavier said, cutting him short.

"Mr. Xavier..."

"What, do my words not carry weight now?" Xavier growled, wheeling on him right then. "You may be Weston's assistant, but I am a board member and your superior."

Though Xavier had always been a sorry excuse for a person, he suddenly seemed to carry a commanding presence, and Ben naturally had to yield. "Very well. I'll inform Mr. Ford right now..."

With those words, he gave Stella a long look, and she knew what he was trying to convey: improvise, because she was on her own now.

“Alright, you can stop looking at him now—in the end, I’m Weston’s uncle, and I have no reason to hurt you.”

Stella said nothing and returned to her couch, just as Xavier took a seat and studied her from

head to toe. “I certainly didn’t expect that Weston would be playing snooker with you the other day, and now he’s brought you to his office already... What is that magic you possess?”

“You should ask your nephew about that one,” Stella replied. Xavier laughed.

“Interesting response. Guess you at least have some degree of confidence.” Stella had no intention of continuing to entertain him, however, and simply got herself a drink while she resumed reading her script. Xavier frowned at her reaction, and knocked loudly on the table. “How did you get acquainted with Zeta Taylor?” “Met her at the hospital.” “Why were you there?” Xavier pressed.

There was a flash of disgust in Stella’s eyes just then, and knowing that she would not respond, Xavier changed to another topic. “How did you get acquainted with Weston, then?” “By coincidence,” Stella replied shortly.

“You might as well have kept quiet,” Xavier chuckled, realizing how stubborn and tight lipped Stella could be despite her soft, even-tempered appearance. Hence, he switched gears and instead asked, “Do you know who Guinevere Cohen is, then?” Stella splashed her drink right then.

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It was an almost insignificant gesture, but Xavier could see that he had managed to elicit a guilty response out of Stella, and was therefore grinning broadly. “So you do... And here I was wondering how you were strutting around without knowing who Guinevere is.”

Stella said nothing in return. Pursing her lips, she reached for a tissue to wipe the water splashed over the table. Xavier simply watched as she worked, having no intention of helping her at all. “To be honest, I have nothing to say about this since it’s normal for men to have an affair. Still, I could tell that you know enough to listen to advice, so I’m telling you now, don’t waste too much effort on Weston...”

“Are you trying to tell her what to do, when you can’t do the same to your own woman?” someone growled from the doorway just then. It was Weston, striding in through the

door, his eyes fixed on Stella, who averted her eyes by instinct when she spotted him. Noticing her unnatural response, Weston's gaze cooled immediately, and he promptly turned toward Xavier,

Getting the creeps from his nephew's glare, Xavier blurted, "What's with that look? It's not like I'm yelling at her or anything." "What are you doing here?" Weston was not about to bear with his nonsense. Promptly walking up to Xavier's face, he growled hostilely, "Nothing. I just want you to get out of here, right now." "Tut, tut. Yeah, I know that she's your baby..." Xavier, however, continued to tease Weston with an almost mocking edge in his voice. "However, you shouldn't go this far – I mean, do you even care about your own son as much as you care about her?"

Stella's pupils dilated the instant Xavier mentioned Weston's son, just as Weston paused and toward her in reflex. Even so, she promptly turned away from him, unwilling to listen to the men's conversation. "You shouldn't be here," Weston growled right then. "Don't force me to make you leave." "Why do you always get so short-tempered when it comes to this lady?" It was only then that Xavier rose to his feet reluctantly, and sighed at length as if seeing through Weston. "Do you even know where I've been?"

"Not interested." Weston was not bothered to spare him another glance, instead quickly walking up to Stella and tried to reach for her wrist...

But she avoided his touch without a word.

She had zero interest in involving herself with the men's discussion, especially when it involved Guinevere and the son Weston had with her.

Both those things only showed her status as a mistress who must never be revealed to the public's eye.

Weston could tell what he was thinking, and his gaze darkened, projecting killing intent for an instant.

Meanwhile, Xavier was still continuing behind him, "It doesn't matter how much you want to fool around outside your home, but can't you at least pay some attention to your kid? Guinevere has just started working again, and Zack is so young. He needs you and Guinevere

"Are you done? Why don't you be Zack's daddy if you care so much?" "Watch your mouth!"

Xavier might usually be a half-baked person, but even he snapped at Weston's words right then!

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## Chapter 423

Xavier was aware that things had cooled between Weston and Guinevere, but he did not expect Weston to be so callous toward Zack.

Walking up to Weston then, there was a stern look on his face as he growled, "I am your uncle, and even if you've lost your mind over some woman you have on the side, you're the only one who loses in the end."

Despite her silence until now, Stella could no longer bear to listen to their conversation, especially with the way they spoke of her.

Scowling, she took a deep breath and rose to her feet. "Since you two have so much to say, finish it in one go. I'll leave you two to it." With that, she shook off Weston's hand and left right away. Xavier's lips curled up mockingly as he watched her leave. "See? Treasure her, and she'll forget her place and get obsessed with getting ahead of you. I'm telling you, you don't have to go so far with women like her—"

Before he could finish, Weston had punched him squarely in the face. Unable to react at all, blood flowed profusely from his nostrils and splatter on the floor, while he was sent wobbling, almost falling over. When he finally came to his senses, he glowered at Weston. "Are you f\*cking crazy?!" However, Weston quickly seized him by the collar and slammed him against the wall behind. "This is your last warning. Don't spout that nonsense in front of her-I'm not kidding here, dear uncle."

His eyes were charged with killing intent, and Xavier stiffened from his glare even before he felt fury. He had never seen Weston acting so out of control, and over a woman at that! To him, Weston always seemed to be born detached-on the day Guinevere was wheeled into the delivery room, the whole family was waiting outside, but Weston was somehow calmer than everyone else.

From that moment on, he knew that Weston was born to be a businessman, because he had no vulnerabilities and was innately aloof. But at this very moment, he well and truly felt that Weston was projecting every single emotion a person comes across in life.

"You're really..." he began, but Weston released him before he could finish.

"There are things I don't have to go into detail about," Weston said, straightening his sleeves with a frightening look on his face and staring down at him. "You're smart-figure it out yourself."

Xavier straightened himself in response and spat out a blotch of blood. "Funny, I didn't think

you're that far gone. What the hell did she..."

Weston shot him an icy glare before he could finish.

Abandoning his sentence right then and feeling solemn now, Xavier growled, "I'll remember that punch."

"Whatever," Weston replied casually, pulling a tissue from his desk and wiping his fingers he was a clean freak, and he certainly would go the extra mile with Xavier's blood being literally on his hands. Xavier's gaze cooled as he did so. "So, you're not showing your uncle any respect at all?"

"Respect is earned." "Fine!" Xavier laughed. "I didn't take you for such a hopeless romantic, but I should remind you your wife and child were at the hospital, and Zack's fever had yet to break while you were here, messing around with a mistress in your own office. Do you even care how serious this would be to the company if word of this gets out?!" Impassive, Weston threw the tissue on his desk and asked, "Do I look like I give a damn?"

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### Chapter 424

Utterly callous, Weston slowly continued, "And here I thought you had eyes everywhere, that you knew that I never married Guinevere."

Xavier's face fell and he stared at Weston in disbelief.

Weston chuckled at his reaction, his eyes conveying zero warmth. "Oh, dear uncle... Did you really think you're the only one in the world who could plant moles?"

Feeling as if everything he had done turned out to be futile, Xavier glowered, but soon laughed out loud after a long while. "I've never thought about fighting you in that way. Hell, wouldn't you have destroyed me already if I didn't have something up my sleeve?" Clapping at Weston, he continued, "That said, even if you're not married to Gwen, she's still living in your house and the only thing you don't have is your marriage certificate. Don't blame me for not warning you—be careful, or if I get something against you, things would get ugly. Don't you agree?" Despite the years of equilibrium they had maintained on the surface, both of them were clearly aware of the reality between them.

Even if they were family during collaborations, the slightest amount of profit would still drive a wedge between them. Naturally, there must be no mishap during vital moments such as splitting the family estates, or it would be a complete defeat for one of them.

In the end, a glowering Xavier left Weston's office, and Daisy looked up at him in reflex. "Mr. Ford..."

Although he had come to flirt with her, she was now completely gone from Xavier's mind coolly shrugging off her greeting, he did not even look in her general direction.

Daisy did a double take and watched as he left, never once sparing her a glance even as the elevator doors closed behind him. Even so, Daisy knew that she was just a passing fancy Xavier. Was there any type of woman he had yet to encounter, when he was so infamous for his womanizing ways?

It was why she had always told herself to doubt the man's sweet nothings, but for some reason, she felt somehow disappointed when Xavier completely ignored her. Still, she quickly tidied her messy emotions to focus on her work again.

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Standing in his own office, Weston was staring in the direction of the breakroom. Striding inside, he found Stella packing her things, looking like she was going to leave. He took her hand and asked, "Getting annoyed after waiting for so long?" Stella pulled her hand out of his grasp. "You're done talking with him?"

Weston's face was twitching a little, and he reached out to hold her cheeks, preventing her from looking away. "Don't bother yourself with what others say. Just leave everything to me,

and I'll deal with it."

"How are you going to deal with it?" Stella laughed in irony. "Moreover, he's not wrong."

Sighing, Weston rested his forehead against hers. "How many times do I have to tell you? You're not a woman I'm keeping on the side, while Guinevere and I are not what you think."

Stella merely felt indignant at his words, and she took a step back. "I'm an adult. Don't try to trick me as if I were a child."

Weston paused, watching as she packed up and prepared to leave before catching her by the wrist. "Where are you going?" "Home. You're done, aren't you?"

Weston's expression eased since her words somehow cheered him up. "There's no rush. Don't you want a tour of my office?"

Stella was surprised, and disbelief showed in her eyes. A tour around his office, given who she was? Was he not afraid that Guinevere would find out? She said as much, and Weston quickly frowned. "Like I said, it's not what you think between me and her. I'll deal with everything in time, so believe me-I'll give you what you want, but now's simply not the time."

Stella, however, refused to believe him.

He was sweet and tender before too, and she had unwittingly fallen for it. But now, she had learned her lesson.

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### Chapter 425

Stella had already decided that she would not get hurt as long as she did not have expectations.

Now, she would not be interested even if Weston gave her the indisputable truth, because she was no longer the Stella Sealey from the past.

Everyone in the secretaries' offices stood up the instant they saw Stella leave Weston's office, and stood in a row to greet Weston despite their surprise.

"Mr. Ford..."

Daisy did not expect Weston to lead Stella outside himself to the public's eye, even holding her hand as he did.

There were many moles in the company, especially those who belonged to Guinevere. In fact, Daisy had only presumed Stella to be Weston's mistress at best, and that they had not gotten past the honeymoon stage for the moment. Naturally, she never imagined that Weston would show zero inclination to hide her while so many were watching.

While he was not introducing her to everyone, he had a hand around her waist, looking utterly possessive that anyone who saw them understood what he was conveying. "Mr Ford..." Daisy began, approaching Weston just then. "Is there anything you need?" Sparing her a glance, Weston said, "Don't let frivolous individuals enter my office as they like.

Daisy did a double take and turned pale initially, thinking that he was talking about herself... only to soon realize that Weston was talking about Xavier. She quickly nodded. "Yes, Mr. Ford..." Ben arrived soon after, a report in his hand as he hurried toward them. Still, he stopped nearby when he saw them. "Mr. Ford, there are still certain matters that require your attention..." Weston in turn glanced at Stella. "Which do you prefer, to continue your tour around my office, or to wait for me downstairs?"

Ben was left staring dumbly at him.

Giving Stella a tour around the office building? Was that not inappropriate?

Though he did not say that out loud, Daisy also looked up toward Weston and Stella in response, clearly thinking the same thing but not having the guts to say it out loud. After all, it appeared that Weston loved the woman named Ella Steele very much, which left Daisy feeling a little indescribably awkward-she had been working under Weston for years, but she had never seen him being so tolerant toward any women.

Even Guinevere was treated as a respected guest at best!

That begged the question: who on earth was Ella Steele?

Nonetheless, Stella shook her head, refusing the tour right then. "I'll wait downstairs." Weston could read her mind, and so simply patted her head. "Sure. Try to pass the time on your own."

"Yeah," Stella replied shortly and got into the elevator, and Weston only turned away after the doors closed.

Ben began to report to him when he suddenly paused, and instructed, "Send something over to Guinevere and Zack."

While Ben appeared taken aback, Weston continued, "So that they don't cause a fuss." Ben promptly straightened. "Yes, Mr. Ford." |

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Downstairs, Stella had gotten into Weston's car and started reading her script again, when she nonchalantly glanced outside the window to find a familiar figure. Roger Sealey. She almost opened the door by instinct to call out to him, but quickly stopped when she remembered her situation.

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### **Chapter 426**

The car windows were tinted, meaning that Stella could see outside, but anyone out there could not see her.

Even so, she felt anxious, worried that she had been spotted.

After all, she had no idea what Roger would do if he found out that she was with Weston.

She threw up her hands to cover her face, only to soon realize it was stupid and lowered them.



That was when she noticed Roger carrying a backpack and heading inside an office building. Stella glanced at the signboard upfront-it was a networking company that had a decent reputation, but what was Roger doing there? Suddenly getting a foreboding feeling, she whipped out her phone and called Roger. She watched as Roger took out his phone, watching the screen and allowing it to ring for a while before deciding to hang up. Stella gasped, and quickly texted him: [Where are you?] Roger's reply came immediately. [At school, in class.) He lied to her!

Scowling, Stella texted back: (What class are you having?) Roger did not bother to text back this time. Putting away his phone, he headed straight into the office building.

Stella was going to get out of the car and chase him down, but the sight of Weston in the distance, stepping out of his own office building, was enough to make her stop and watch as Roger entered the building.

Weston entered the car soon, and upon seeing that she was looking everywhere but him, he

grabbed her chin so that she looked at him. "What's caught your interest?" he asked.

"I saw Roger," Stella replied.

"So?"

"He went into the office building opposite yours. I have no idea what he's doing..."

Weston seemed to know about it. "It's just a small networking company which is on the rise lately. He's graduating soon, so it's normal that he would be interested in companies like those."

"But I thought he would be studying abroad..."

"I thought he didn't want to go?" "He does." Stella sighed-she knew Roger best. "That's because he wants to be independent. I honestly don't know what to do... If he ruins his future over that, I have no one but myself to blame."

"He's an adult. He can choose for himself," Weston countered, though he sounded like he was backing Roger's decision.

That in turn left Stella annoyed. "He's not your younger brother-of course you'd say that. Can you say that if Zack were to give up on his dreams just to make a living in the future? Can you say the same when that happens?"

Weston frowned right then, because it hurt him that she would compare Roger to Zack. "It's two completely different things. That's a poor comparison." "Of course not. That's

your son, and your family would go all out and stop at nothing to help him fulfill his dreams.”

“That’s not what I mean…”

Weston rubbed between his brow and took her in his arms. “You’re being impatient, and he’s just going to rebel harder if you get impatient with him. You used to be young like him, and you know that the more you try to stop him from doing something, the more he’s going to fight against you.” “No, he’s different.” Stella shook her head, her gaze dropping as she said miserably, “He just wants to ease my burdens in the future.”

“He’s not burdening you now.” “I know…” Stella buried her face behind her palms, suddenly feeling a little weary. “For me, I would be very happy if I could see him persevere and take the path he wants, and not be compelled by circumstances to give up on what he wants.”

## **Mr. Ford Is Jealous by Boat of Peaches Chapter 427**

### **Chapter 427**

Having tasted the pain of being forced to give up her dreams, Stella did not want her only family to have to go through the same thing.

Right now, she could be dancing or playing the piano on a grand stage. Instead, she was here, staying at Weston’s side as a secret mistress and having to meet her worst enemy every day while she led a soulless life.

Weston seemed to see through her then, and gently kissed her forehead in sympathy. “Like I said, say yes and I can give you anything you want.”

Stella pursed her lips and forced a smile, but kept quiet. She would be leaving Weston in a year—if she said yes now, things would be complicated when she leaves.

The opportunity she had won from Bradley Lane was different because she had done it by her own strength. However, if she were to take what she wanted by using her relationship with Weston, she would become the very kind of person she had always held in contempt.

Looking up pleadingly in his arms, she asked, “May I go home for the night? I want to talk to Roger.”

Weston’s embrace slowly tightened, however, and while he did not refuse her directly, the air around them seemed to cool, making it obvious to Stella that he was not happy with that arrangement.

She hence kept quiet for a long while, and said quietly, "I'll do anything you want... But today, just for a day... Let me talk to him, please?"

Her eyes became slightly red and teary-these days, she seemed to have learned what worked best against Weston, and she was getting adept at it.

On the other hand, Weston did not want to think if her tears were real even as he watched her. In fact, she had already left him down in the dumps anyway, and he was helpless whenever he saw her like this.

Sighing quietly, he said, "You have one night. Settle it right away—I don't want you to waste more time on Roger when we have only one year." "Okay," Stella replied with a quivering voice.

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Since Roger was busy at the moment, Weston sent her directly to his apartment. She would have refused if Roger was there, and even though they knew that he was not, she looked around to make sure no one saw her after she alighted.

Then, she told Weston, "You should go. I'll ask your chauffeur to pick me up after I speak to Roger."

Weston kissed her cheek. "Come to me if you're having problems."

Stella nodded, and Weston drove off.

Entering the house, Stella wondered what she should do, and headed to the market to buy some food ingredients for the dishes Roger liked.

The female owner of the store she used to frequent greeted her when she saw her. "Long time no see! I thought you and your family moved!" "No, I just went on a business trip." "I see..." the woman said. "Your brother hasn't been here for ages either. I thought you two have gone somewhere else to buy ingredients these days!" She sounded a little accusative, but Stella took no offense, before suggesting casually, "Roger usually doesn't cook, so he may be eating at the campus cafeteria..." The woman grumbled, "No, I used to see him come by since he cooks on the weekends. I haven't seen him lately, though it really has been a while."

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### **Chapter 428**

Stella picked a few ingredients, paid up, and headed home.

She looked visibly troubled as she remembered what the woman had told her, just as she knew that no one had come home for a while the leaves of the potted plants were curling up and withered, indicating that no one had watered it for days.

Roger was supposed to be home everyday even if he had classes in the morning. The house was also close enough to his campus, just as he used to cook for himself often.

The store owner's words reminded her that Roger had gone for an interview without telling her... was he hiding even more from her? Or did he have other plans?

It was past nine when Roger reached home. As he put down his keys and turned on the lights, he entered the living room and was taken aback to see a person on the couch.

"Stella?"

He was hesitant, but walked up to her after changing out of his shoes, and saw that it was indeed Stella, asleep on the couch.

There was a flash of delight on his face. Worried that he would disturb her sleep, he gingerly crouched in front of her, wanting to carry her to her room.

The instant he touched her, however, Stella opened her eyes and saw him."... You're back." She yawned drowsily as she sat up, while Roger sat beside her. "Why didn't you tell me if you were coming back?" he asked, before remembering her text and call in the morning. "Oh, wait-you did call me."

Stella stared into his eyes. "Yes. You didn't answer, and texted back saying that you were in class."

Seemingly feeling guilty, Roger averted his eyes. "It's an important class, and I forgot to call you back after that..."

Stella's expression soured right away, but though she wanted to ask why he would lie, she could not say those words at the sight of his evasive gaze.

"You should eat. I made some of your favorites," she said with a sigh, before remembering something. "Wait, did it get cold already?"

Roger followed her to the dining table to find it covered in scrumptious dishes, and a troubled look appeared on his face. "I've already eaten, Stella..."

Stella did a double take. "Oh, nevermind then..."

Still, Roger could not bear to let her effort go to waste. "We can eat it tomorrow once we reheat it."

“But it won’t taste as good...”

“It’s fine. Your cooking is the best.” Stella smiled as she put away the dishes, while Roger asked, “What about you? Have you eaten

yet?”

“I have.” with that, Roger helped Stella put the dishes into the fridge and quietly helped her with housework. However, he flinched inwardly when he saw Stella take a watering bucket to the potted plants on the balcony. Still, he acted casual and walked up to her. “Now I feel like a murderer for forgetting to water them.” Stella stroked the leaves of the plants in turn and giggled. “How poor is your memory? You’d see them on the balcony everyday when you leave for class and come home. It must have been a week since you last watered them?” Feeling a little guilty, Roger mumbled, “I’m not as attentive as you are.” Stella smiled but said nothing despite feeling disappointed inside.

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### Chapter 429

Even now, Roger was unwilling to tell the truth.

However, Stella also realized that she was hiding a lot of things from Roger as well.

When did they begin to keep so many secrets? Since neither of them had been home for a while, they cleaned it up before settling on the couch to watch a movie together. It was the usual family comedy they liked to watch, and the novel gags never seemed to get outdated despite the movie lacking actual meaning.

However, Roger’s phone rang halfway through, and he got to his feet. “I’m turning in, Stella. I’m sleepy and there’s still class tomorrow...” He barely finished when Stella glowered. “Are you going to class, or to an interview?” Roger froze at her words, and he wheeled on her, asking, “What?” “Are you going to class, or to work at some networking company?” It took Roger a long while to realize what she was talking about. “How’d you find out?”

Putting the TV remote on the coffee table, she turned to look at him. “Were you going to hide it from me forever if I hadn’t exposed you?”

“That’s not it, Stella...”

“Didn’t we agree that you’d study abroad?” “You decided that yourself! I never said yes.” “But you obviously wanted to!” Stella exclaimed, unable to understand why Roger had changed his mind. “Why do you have to be so stubborn?” “Like I said, I’m an adult, and I want to make my own choices,” Roger growled, his temper flaring already. “What is

wrong in trying to share your burden?" "I don't need that," Stella replied. "Have you ever thought about how much you'll regret," "I won't." Roger properly cut her short. "Never."

Stella sighed heavily then-nothing good would come out of continuing to argue, so she asked, "How did your interview go, then?" Roger's eyes flashed, and he suddenly looked up at Stella. "They gave me an offer, but I'm going to turn them down-don't worry, I was there this morning to reject it."

That naturally left Stella confused. "Why did you do that? Don't you want to work there?" "I discovered later on that Weston Ford is one of its shareholders," Roger replied icily. "I refuse to have anything to do at any company where he holds influence."

In fact, that was why Roger would be willing to get an interview at a small company despite his outstanding abilities. He was clearly above their paygrade, but Weston had his finger in every pie, and trying to escape his influence was basically impossible, which in turn reduced

Roger's options considerably.

On the other hand, Stella was left looking troubled and speechless by his explanation, while Roger walked up and put his hands over her shoulders. "Right now, all I want is a stable job, and then we'll leave together-so that we won't have to see him ever again."

In the end, Weston was a never-ending nightmare for Stella.

Roger did not have the power to avenge her at the moment, but at the very least, he would not allow her to be threatened by him-there was no chance.

Stella felt her temples throbbing. Unsure what to say, she looked at her brother's serious visage, and eventually leaned her head on his shoulders silently.

## **Mr. Ford Is Jealous by Boat of Peaches Chapter 430**

### **Chapter 430**

After a while, Stella said, "Did it cross your mind that you'd just end up an average Joe, earning an average salary if you start working so soon? That you won't be able to fight back if something happened to me? On the other hand, if you further your studies abroad, your options are limitless-and you wouldn't be constrained because you prioritized short-term profits."

She continued, "For example, if you somehow end up working at the company you interviewed for, you'd be under Weston's control. There is no choice for you but to run at that point, and if he really found me, do you think you can stop him with you being as you are now?"

Roger's eyes twitched and slowly turned red, and seeing that he was shaken and his stubbornness slowly crumbling, Stella pushed on. "Right now, I don't need you to relieve my financial burden—we have our savings, and I'm doing just fine. That's why you don't have to pressure yourself. Just focus on your own future and keep climbing, as long as there are opportunities open to you!" "You're a big boy now, Roger. Try to look forward, and not just at what's in front of you."

Stella's words were soft, and yet it struck Roger like a hammer, clearing his head.

It was true—he had been naive. He believed that staying with his sister was good enough, and it had never crossed his mind that even if he did, he was incapable of protecting her.

"But I don't want to go so far away... It's going to take a long time before I can come home." "It's just growing pains." Seeing that his tone had softened and knowing that he was caving, Stella spoke to him sincerely, "I can't stay with you forever anyway." Roger clenched his fist right then. "Why not?! We only have each other!" Stella laughed. "Now, now, you're sounding just like a child. Weren't you insisting that you were an adult just a moment ago?"

Roger turned silent right then and said nothing else.

After a long while, he asked, "I need to think about this, okay? Give me time." Stella nodded, since it was a big deal for Roger, and she should give him space since he was actually thinking rationally and not catering to his own whims.

"As long as you keep a calm head, I'll support you in whatever decision you make."

Roger looked up, taken aback—he was under the impression that she would insist that he study abroad.

Stella seemed to read his mind then, and smiled. "I just don't want you to regret a choice you made in the heat of the moment for the rest of your life."

"Stella..."

Roger suddenly could not decide on what to say, and simply walked up and rested his chin on

her shoulder—she barely reached his shoulder in height, but he was reliant on her as he had been as a child.

Patting his head, Stella then asked, "You hadn't been home for a while, have you?"

Roger promptly straightened, his gaze suddenly evasive. "I'm sleepy. Going to bed." "Hey! Explain yourself!" Stella promptly chased after him. "Don't try to run!"

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Later at night, Stella returned to her own room and lay in bed, knowing now that Roger would rationally think about his own future. It was certainly a huge relief to her mind after solving the issue.

She stared at the ceiling of the room she was so familiar with, and remembered the constant nightmares she had for a long time since losing that child a year ago, after she and Roger arrived at Fern City.

Tossing and turning in bed, all she saw was the bloody puddle of flesh that used to be a person,

She closed her eyes now, but the familiar scene she imagined would appear did not appear at