

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted by Eleven Jewell

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Chapter 116

Xianna was infuriated. "Which eyes of yours saw that I was introduced by her?"

"Weren't you the one who said to gift this jewelry to Mrs. Kane? You wouldn't be here if you were not acquainted, right?"

That one reply was enough to turn Xianna speechless. She pointed at the crowd, gritted her teeth, and said, "What a horrible shop this is. I'm going to expose you to the media!"

She then stared at Stella and hatefully said, "Just you wait, Stella!"

Stella held the check between her fingers, waved at her smilingly, and said, "Until we meet again."

Sophia silently cursed Xianna for being an idiot. As she was about to stand up for Xianna, she saw that Keegan was at a spot not far away. Her heart sank, and she followed Xianna as they both dejectedly left the jewelry shop.

"Mrs. Kane, would you like to look at the other jewelry?"

The manager politely asked.

The jewelry shop belonged to Vermont, and Keegan had patronized it together with Stella a few times until the manager knew them. Otherwise, they would not be able to stage the act together so cooperatively.

When all was said and done, she was only using Keegan's name to act all high and mighty.

"Please wrap up that small leaf engraved rosewood bracelet for me. I'm gifting it to someone."

"Alright, please wait a moment."

"Who is this for?"

Keegan's voice suddenly came from beside Stella's ear and freaked her out. She rubbed her ears as she impolitely replied, "It's for your grandmother."

Keegan remained silent.

Stella, realizing that her answer was a little aggressive, coughed and added, "Of course, I'm giving this to grandma."

"You've earned more than ninety thousand dollars' worth of commission, yet you're only giving grandma something worth around ten thousand?"

'He actually knew everything that has transpired just now.

'Asshole,' Stella thought.

"So what if it's ten thousand? I still bought it with my own ten thousand dollars without reaching out to you for money. Besides, grandma is not as calculative as you are."

Keegan took a glance at Stella. "Aren't you the one being calculative here?"

"I don't want to be calculative, but what else can you provide for me apart from money? Children? You don't want it. Marriage... Forget it. You don't care about it anyway," said Stella as she took the bracelet that was just wrapped up and headed outside. "I'm better off having

money. At least money can give me a sense of security."

Keegan, feeling heart-stricken, said, "Will having children give you a sense of security? Stella, if we can't even be sure that our marriage will last, don't you think that having a child will just be a burden?"

'If that's the case, isn't his child with Bella a burden as well?' Stella thought.

Stella could not help but ask herself, yet she could not broach the subject. After all, something left unsaid would create less embarrassment for oneself.

After being deep in thought, she cooled down and said, "You're right. A child will only be a burden. I'm lucky I'm not pregnant. That way, there's nothing to tie us down after the divorce, and I won't have to see you again."

Before leaving with big strides, Keegan pulled a long face and irritably said, "Glad you understand."

Stella was puzzled.

'Why is Keegan acting like a madman nowadays and getting angry for no reason at all?'

Keegan's pace was very fast. He was still fuming, especially after hearing Stella say, "I won't have to see you again." His anger and frustration from then were akin to a rock pressing on his heart.

"The word "divorce" is like her catchphrase as if this marriage is not important to her at all. 'She's always pestering me whenever she pleases, yet she sees me as an eyesore when she's not in the mood.

'Vermont is right; a wife shouldn't be too young. They have no patience at all.'

His sleeve was suddenly tugged at.

Keegan halted and stopped in his tracks. "What now? Are you biting your own words now?"

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There was no response from behind, but the tug at his sleeves remained. Keegan softly said, "Stella, stop messing around. This won't work on me."

He turned around as he spoke, only to lower his gaze soon after.

A little girl about the height of his thigh was pulling at his sleeve. Then, she softly said, "Mister, you're stepping on my flower."

Keegan did not say a word.

He lowered his head only to see his right foot stepping on a lily-shaped paper.

He bent over, picked up the paper flower, squatted, and handed it over to the little girl. "Where's your mommy?"

As the girl was about to speak, a man came running as he called the girl's name.

The little girl's father held her hand and left after he thanked Keegan.

Keegan looked around before he saw a familiar figure in the men's clothing store.

He went into the shop with a gloomy face and happened to see Stella picking out neckties.

The irritation that built up in his heart dissolved instantly.

Stella was of two minds about two neckties. She turned her head around and asked Keegan, "Which do you think looks better?"

Keegan pretended to glance calmly and indifferently said, "The one with blue stripes."

Stella placed the neckties at his neck for comparison and shook her head. "The blue one suits you, but not him."

Keegan's body stalled for a moment as his facial expression turned cold. "Him? Who is him?"

Stella, who was unaware of Keegan's change in mood, replied as she continued selecting. "Mr. Moore, of course. If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't know how long I would be stuck in the restroom. Since I don't know how to repay him, I thought I should give him a tie as a gift because we just so happened to be at the mall today."

Goodwill must be repaid eventually, but having a meal together was a little awkward. Besides, giving a gift would save a lot of trouble in comparison.

As she continued talking, Stella seemed to have recalled something. She lifted her head and asked Keegan, "Oh yeah, aren't you guys childhood friends? Do you know what style he likes?"

With a poker face, Keegan replied, "I don't know!"

"Does he usually like to wear dark-colored clothes or light-colored clothes?"

"I'm not sure."

Stella frowned and said, "You don't even know this much? So much for being childhood friends."

Keegan snappishly said, "I don't have a hobby of observing guys. Pick up your pace. Grandma is waiting."

He went ahead, ignoring Stella, as soon as he finished speaking.

He was afraid that the longer he stayed, the more he could not control himself from checking if she was just that dense.

Keegan had to wait for a full 20 minutes before he finally saw Stella coming down from the elevator and walking his way.

Baldwin drove over, picked up Stella, and drove out of the underground parking lot.

Still fuming from what happened at the mall, Keegan ignored her gaze since she entered the

car.

Stella was already used to Keegan's unusual temperament by now. Without a care, she took out a box from her bag and placed it on the passenger seat.

"Baldwin, this is for you. It's a brand recommended by a doctor friend of mine. He said this knee guard is specially for those like you who had their joint replaced. It can reduce the burden on the joints, and it can even be worn at any time. Please use it and see if it's a good fit for you.

Baldwin was at a loss for words. "That's very generous of you."

Stella waved her hands. "Grandma has totally been in your care. We, as the younger generation, would be at ease as long as you are healthy and could continue caring for her."

She shook a box as she said, "This gelatin and two boxes of facial masks are for Corrin. Remember to give these to her for me."

Keegan glanced at her. 'Turns out, she was buying gifts for other people. No wonder she was up there for so long.'

"Who else did you buy a gift for?"

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"Who else did you buy a gift for?" Keegan could not help but ask.

Stella loved sharing her shopping haul. So, when Keegan asked her, she could no longer hold the chatterbox. She shook open the bag and showed him one by one.

There was a pair of wear resistant gloves for the gardener, a massage tool for the housekeeper, a pair of new boots for the horse trainer, and even a small hairpin for Juno.

When she showed them to Keegan, Stella was so excited that she was completely oblivious to Keegan's peeved face.

It was not until when there was only one box left in the bag that she recalled something. She took out that box and said, "By the way, this is for you."

Keegan glanced at the box.

The logo on it belonged to a branded outlet where Stella had bought a tie just now.

Acting like he did not care, Keegan said flatly, "Why are you giving me a tie?"

"It's not a tie." Stella smiled and said, "When I bought the tie, the sales assistant told me there's a store promotion today. I just needed to pay another ninety-nine dollars during checkout to get this pair of socks! Didn't you say these socks are comfortable to wear? Its price is usually a few hundred bucks a pair, which is too expensive. But, I bought them for just ninety nine dollars. What a bargain! I specially chose dark blue, which can go well with any suit.... Keegan's face fell as soon as she finished speaking, and he threw the box back into the bag with a poker face.

"What are you doing?"

Stella was unhappy with his behavior. 'I bought him a gift even though he didn't bother to wait for me or help me carry the stuff just now. Yet, he's giving me this attitude!

Keegan ignored her and ordered the driver, "Go faster, Baldwin."

Stella cursed inwardly, 'What a moody, irritable bastard! What have I done to offend him?' Half an hour later, they finally arrived at Keegan's grandparents' home.

It was a villa built on the estate Keegan's grandparents had bought after making their first fortune. Inspired by the Italian Renaissance architecture style, it had a vintage and elegant lakeside gazebo.

The place stood out among the villas that had been built in the past years.

When Keegan's grandmother, Cordelia, started raising horses, she bought more than 200 acres of land behind the villa to build a horse farm and a garden. Maintaining her garden and playing with her horses were the activities she enjoyed daily. The old lady was living a blissful life.

Upon entering the house, Stella saw a Bentley without a license plate number parked outside. However, she thought that someone in the family might have bought a new car, so she paid no mind to it.

As Stella and Keegan approached the main hall after entering the house, they could hear the sounds of lively conversation and laughter.

It was only when they got to the entrance that they realized that there were two guests in the house.

One of them was Marshall, and the other was a man about the same age. It was a man with handsomely sculpted, aristocratic facial features. Despite having rose-red lips, broad shoulders, and a slender waist, he did not give off any feminine vibe.

When Stella and Keegan entered the hall, they found Cordelia merrily chuckling as she conversed with the man. It was

only when she saw Stella and Keegan did she gesture to introduce Stella. “She’s my granddaughter-in-law. Is she the person you’re looking for?”

The man stopped smiling and looked at Stella carefully.

Stella was puzzled, but she feared that it would be rude to ask questions. Hence, while nodding awkwardly at the man, she secretly nudged Keegan’s hand behind her using a finger, trying to ask him who that man was.

However, Keegan gave her an unexpected response by pinching her finger. In retaliation, she pinched the back of his hand.

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The man then turned his eyes away and smiled faintly. “Didn’t you say she’s your granddaughter-in-law? So, it must be her.”

Stella was even more confused until Marshall explained it to her. “This is Trevor Saun. The girl you saved in the restroom last night is his younger sister.”

Not only that, Trevor’s father, Wenham Saun, was actually Keegan’s late father’s ex-classmate. They had been close friends.

In order to get Jaylene—

Wenham’s youngest daughter treated for her illness, the Saun family had transferred most of the family assets overseas many years ago. It was not until recent years, when Jaylene’s health had shown improvement, did Wenham thought of settling down in his homeland. Therefore, the Saun family was planning to come back to Hustuabourg. However, there were still many things to wrap up, so Trevor and Jaylene returned to Hustuabourg before the rest of the family.

Last night, Trevor and Jaylene were supposed to attend that charity event together. But, something came up, so Trevor was late.

Jaylene, who attended the event alone, had an ailment episode in the restroom. And, right after she had been rescued, she was sent to the hospital. It was not until her condition had become stable did Trevor contact the hotel to look for her “savior”. With the help of the hotel manager, he reached Marshall and found out that the person who had saved his sister was the granddaughter-in-law of the Kane family.

As soon as Trevor’s father heard the news, he immediately asked Trevor to visit Cordelia. That was how things ended up the way they did.

Trevor was courteous. He immediately got up and thanked Stella. “Thank you for helping my sister last night. She’s been in poor health since she was a child. If it weren’t for yo

u, I can't imagine what would happen to her. I'd like to thank you on behalf of my family," he spoke to her softly.

After that, he took out a box and handed it to Stella. "Here's a small token of gratitude from our family. Please accept it. You can find my business card in it. Feel free to contact me if you need any help in the future. I'll do my best as long as your request is within my means."

'If I'm not mistaken, isn't that a Bentley's key case? When he said a "small" token, it can't possibly be the Bentley parked outside, right?' Stella thought.

The last time Stella had been rewarded for her good deed was when she had found her kindergarten teacher's wallet, and the reward was a candy.

This was the first time someone had thanked her in this manner, and she was caught off guard for a moment.

"Mr. Saun, this is too much. I appreciate your gratitude. But, please take this back."

Trevor said softly, "Before I came here, my dad specifically told me to send you a token of gratitude. If you refuse to take it, what should I tell him?"

Stella was caught in a dilemma.

Despite her love for money, Stella did not have the slightest intention of accepting a super-

expensive car as a reward. If the Saun family had given her something else, she would have accepted it.

Whenever Stella was presented with something great, she would feel overwhelmed and

undeserving of it. This fear was compounded by the worry that someone might accuse her of having a hidden agenda for her good deed.

After Stella had been declining the reward for a while, Cordelia finally intervened. "It's a token from the Saun family, Stella," said Cordelia. "Just accept it."

Keegan echoed impassively, "Just take it."

With no room for refusal, Stella accepted the gift. After that, Cordelia invited Stella and Keegan to take a seat beside her. The conversation between Cordelia, Marshall, and Trevor resumed effortlessly.

Despite being close to eighty, Cordelia possessed a keen mind and a sharp memory. She enquired about Marshall's well-being and Trevor's job. Her recollection even extended to memories from their childhood.

Stella learned from their conversations that Marshall had gone abroad seven years ago because of his health problem.

Stella found it hard to imagine Marshall as a weak person lying on a sick bed, considering his healthy appearance and physical fitness that was comparable to Keegan's, who had been working out regularly.

While Stella was staring at Marshall, she suddenly felt pain on her head. 'Keegan, you bastard! You pulled my hair?!'

She glared at Keegan and whispered, "What are you doing?!"

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Keegan twisted the strand of hair on his fingertips and nonchalantly said, "There's a strand of gray hair."

Stella looked down and saw that he really had a strand of gray hair in his hand.

She was so furious that she was at a loss for words. 'Isn't he aware that this is not the right time to pluck my gray hair? What is wrong with him? Is he sick or something?'

The secret squabble between the two attracted everyone's attention.

Trevor looked at the two of them and smiled. "The last time we met Keegan, we were high school students. I didn't expect that in a blink of an eye, he had already married a smart and virtuous beauty."

Stella smiled humbly, but what she thought was that Keegan finally had a discerning friend. "Stella is one of the most courageous ladies I have ever met," said Marshall.

He then told everyone in detail about how Stella had rescued Jaylene in the restroom last night. Stella did not find her rescue of Jaylene to be a particularly impressive feat. After all, retrieving an object from a toilet bowl with her bare hands was hardly a desirable task, especially if it was not to save a life.

Marshall recounted Stella's actions as if they were a tale of bravery. If she was not the main character in that tale, she would have thought that he was speaking of a different person; a

heroine.

Cordelia listened with immense pride and then started speaking highly of her granddaughter-in-law. The conversation shifted into a continuous stream of compliments for Stella.

Stella was happy at the beginning. But, when the conversation went further, she got embarrassed.

Keegan also looked at her with a cynical eye, as if he was questioning whether who they praised was the same person sitting in front of him.

As they chatted, Cordelia suddenly sighed, "When are you two going to give me a great-grandchild so that I will have no more regrets in my life?"

Stella wrapped her fingers and looked down without speaking.

Keegan showed no intention to discuss the subject either. He had been the one opposing the idea of having children in the first place, so it was no surprise that he was avoiding the topic.

In the end, Trevor broke the silence. "Young people have their own ideas. For certain things, it's best to let nature take its course." Then, he changed the topic. "Cordelia, I heard you have a few horses. I'm quite interested in equestrian sports myself."

When the topic shifted to horses, Cordelia's thoughts were instantly drawn away from her yearning for a great-grandchild.

Several of Cordelia's horses were strong and sturdy. Two of them had even won places in races. Whenever she mentioned those horses, she would talk as if they were her precious treasures.

Apparently, Trevor did not simply bring up the topic. He did know horses very well. Cordelia rarely met a bosom friend, so when they reached the exciting part of their conversation, she rose from her seat, wanting to take everyone to the horse farm for horseback riding.

"It's time for you to check your blood sugar level," said Keegan while stopping Cordelia's wayward decision.

Although Cordelia enjoyed having fun, she took her own well-being very seriously. "I'm not going, then. Take these gentlemen to look around with Stella and come back for dinner later."

When they arrived, the stable worker was grooming the horses.

Cordelia's horse farm was well-made, and the horses were well-bred and of strong physique.

As someone approached, all the horses in the stable eagerly poked their heads out of their stalls, except for one. That horse was a sleek black beauty with shiny hair and well-defined muscles. But, it did not stir. In fact, it turned its back on the approaching figure, Stella. Its name was Juno.

Stella took an apple and tried to entice Juno. "Juno, do you want an apple?" she called out, waving the fruit in her hand.

But, Juno simply swiveled its hindquarters around, presenting its rear end to her.

Stella was speechless. 'Like hell, Juno likes me!'

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"I've been busy lately, so I couldn't pay you a visit. It's not that I don't like you. Why are you angry?"

"Does it understand what you said?" Marshall walked up to her at some point.

Stella nodded. "Juno is definitely the smartest horse here. I remember one time I said that another horse was better looking right in front of Juno. Then, to my surprise, it deliberately spat the water it was drinking right at me. That shows that not only does it understand my words, but it also holds grudges worse than humans!"

Juno seemed to know that Stella was talking about it. So, it stomped its feet unhappily.

Stella quickly changed her tone to coax it. "Be good. I was just praising how good-looking you are."

Juno suddenly pivoted toward Stella. From five centimeters above its left eye, a scar crossed the eye, making it appear dim and distinct from its bright right eye. Despite this imperfection, the scar gave Juno a regal and intimidating appearance. It was like a warrior that stood out among thousands of troops, drawing attention.

Stella was startled by Juno's sudden move. However, once it took the apple away from her hand, it pointed its ass at her again.

Stella was at loss for words again.

Marshall smiled. "Looks like it does like you."

Trevor, who was standing not far away, had been watching them for a while. He turned to Keegan and asked, "This horse has a personality. Is it tamable?"

Keegan looked at Stella, who was talking to Juno with his half-closed eyes, and said flatly, "Piece of cake."

"Piece of cake?"

"We can have a match."

Trevor was a little eager to try. "How about two laps?"

Keegan said, "Pick a horse."

Trevor was a skillful equestrian. It was humble of him to claim that he was merely a hobbyist in front of Cordelia. He had actually participated in amateur equestrian competitions before and even won awards.

With a cursory examination of the horses in the stable, Trevor was able to identify which of them had the potential.

He quickly selected a maroon horse for the match. It happened to be the only one among the horses to have ever won a race.

Trevor took the horse and greeted Marshall. "Marshall, wanna ride two laps?"

Marshall waved his hand and said, "Nah, you guys do your best."

The horse trainer led Juno out. Juno stretched its muscles, and its coat looked particularly gleaming under the sun.

Keegan threw his tie and jacket to Stella after removing them. As he passed by her, he asked, "Who do you think will win?"

Stella snorted. "Even if you win, the credit goes to Juno!"

Keegan slightly pursed his lips and said nothing further. He got onto Juno, and once he pulled the reins, Juno trotted to the track.

"Since it's a match, there must be a prize," said Trevor.

“What do you want?”

Trevor smirked in high spirits. “How about the loser has to call the winner ‘big brother’?”

Stella was speechless. She thought, ‘What’s so great about that as a prize?’

Marshall explained, “They were born only five days apart, but Keegan has always refused to call Trevor ‘big brother’. I didn’t expect that Trevor hasn’t let go of this after so many years.”

Stella shrugged. “It’s just the kind of silly thing guys do.”

Marshall looked at her and was taken aback.

Stella smiled with a knowing look. “Don’t all guys just love being called ‘father’ by others?”

Chapter 122

Marshall chuckled, “Those were the days when we were in school. Now, we’re more mature.”

Stella internally rolled her eyes and thought, ‘Competing in a horseback riding race just to hear one call the other big brother? Hardly seems mature for two grown men in their early thirties.’

Keegan accepted the proposal in a fit of childish avidity. “Well then, you might have a new older brother today,” he said flatly.

Trevor smiled confidently. “Or maybe, a new younger brother for me.

As the whistle sounded, the two horses shot out like arrows.

However, it was not long before the maroon horse took the lead, steadily widening its distance away from Juno.

“It looks like Juno’s vision is still affecting its performance a bit,” said Marshall.

Stella pursed her lips. “Juno won’t lose,” she said in a low, determined voice. Her thoughts added, ‘especially with Keegan on its back.’

Keegan and Juno were made for each other. No one would understand Juno’s pride as a racehorse better than Keegan, and no one could handle it better than Keegan.

Marshall suddenly remembered something. "By the way..." He took something out of his pocket and handed it to Stella. "Are these yours?"

Stella turned and saw Marshall holding the earrings she had worn last night.

Marshall explained, "I found them in my car this morning. They must have fallen off when I dropped you off last night."

"They're mine. I thought I lost them." Stella took the earrings and thanked him. She thought, 'I should have brought the gift along with me when I came here, so I could just give it to him.'

"How's Aurora?" Marshall suddenly asked.

Stella did not bother about Aurora. She would even want to stay far away from Aurora. Hence, she said perfunctorily, "Maybe she's hanging out with her friends."

Marshall was surprised. "Didn't Keegan discipline her?"

"Discipline her for what?"

"Ms. Young was badly injured last night. She had three stitches on her arm. She's unable to complete her recent commercial projects, which led to increasing liquidated damages. Keegan was at the hospital last night, and I thought he would punish Aurora severely, given his personality. It seems unlike him to spoil her like this."

Stella slowly moved her fingers. Her attention was drawn to Marshall's mention of Keegan being at the hospital last night. She thought, "That's no surprise. He rushed to the hospital for Bella Young even though her injuries were minor. Now that she had three stitches, he must be extremely distressed. I can't believe that he could still rush back home in the morning and put up a show in his grandparents' home with me.'

Stella tried to convince herself that the only reason she had not gotten a divorce yet was Keegan's money. She reassured herself that when the time came, Keegan would become the CEO, and she would take her share of the money and leave. They would go their separate ways with no strings attached. Therefore, there was no reason to feel troubled by such matters. However, her sadness lingered. The thought of her husband accompanying another woman at the hospital when she was unable to reach anyone and desperately needed a next of kin signature weighed heavily on her heart.

"I don't know either," she replied to Marshall. Not wanting to embarrass herself in front of Marshall, she added, "It's getting a little too sunny here. Please excuse me." Her voice was strained.

She then hurriedly left the scene.

Meanwhile, the match had entered its second half. Juno, who was one lap behind, suddenly picked up speed.

It ran as fast as lightning, leaving behind only an afterimage of its motion.

Marshall had only seen a horse running at this speed in international-level races.

As Juno approached Trevor's horse, the latter felt pressured. So, it accelerated its speed as well. However, its earlier pace in the first half of the match had already taken a toll on its energy. Therefore, despite trying hard, it was eventually overtaken by Juno.

Juno carried Keegan through the finish line. With a triumphant roar, it proudly rose its front hooves in celebration of its victory.

Chapter 123

Trevor gasped for air as he took off his helmet. "Your horse must have taken performance-enhancing drugs!" he accused.

Keegan snorted and said, "Stop making excuses. Now, call me big brother."

Trevor smiled. "I admit my defeat, my dear big brother."

Keegan lowered his gaze and asked Marshall, who was nearby, "Did you get it on video?"

Marshall waved his phone. "Yeah, the quality's great."

Trevor's lips twitched. "You two are really childish!"

Keegan ignored him and spoke to Marshall instead. "Send me a copy."

Trevor was left speechless.

As he grabbed a bottle of water, Trevor asked, "Where's Stella?"

Keegan then noticed that Stella was no longer there, and his jacket and tie were left behind on the seat.

Marshall filled them in. "Stella said it was too sunny, so she went back to the house."

Trevor looked at the sky. It was cloudy today; the sunlight was not intense, and a dense cloud hovered above. It was about to rain.

Everyone could figure that it was an excuse Stella had used to leave the horse farm.

Trevor smiled and said, "Ladies are delicate. My sister needs an umbrella even on cloudy days."

Keegan pursed his lips and said nothing.

When the trio returned, Stella was helping with the dishes, and Cordelia beckoned them to wash their hands and get ready for dinner.

Cordelia enjoyed being around young people, especially when the two young men were someone she had watched grow up from a young age and had high hopes for. Therefore, she was so happy today that even her appetite for food was better than usual.

After dinner, they gathered for another round of tea with a conversation centered on their childhood memories. Stella, however, remained quiet and unable to join in. Under the guise of cutting fruit, she quickly excused herself and left the room.

After lingering in the kitchen for a bit, Stella was shooed out by Cordelia's housemaid for getting in her way. Not wanting to go back to the living room, Stella made her way to the rooftop, intending to spend some time there.

As soon as she arrived, she found Marshall already there, smoking a cigarette.

At the sound of her approaching, Marshall quickly stubbed out the cigarette. "I'm sorry. I didn't think that anyone would be up here," he apologized.

But, Stella just waved her hand. "We're outside. Feel free to smoke. It doesn't bother me."

Stella felt surprised when she saw Marshall smoke, as he did not seem like the typical smoker. With his elegant demeanor, one might have assumed that he was a well-behaved student who

refrained from smoking or drinking.

On the other hand, the handsome and aloof Keegan, who exuded a rebellious air, was actually a disciplined man who adhered to a strict routine and abstained from smoking and drinking.

Marshall smiled, but he did not light another cigarette.

"By the way," Stella began. "About me hiring you for a lawsuit, I was thinking maybe..." She was about to say, 'we should just forget about it.'

However, before she could finish her sentence, Marshall interjected, "I won't tell Keegan about it. It's confidential between client and lawyer."

Hence, Stella felt that she should not continue what she was going to say.

Marshall then suddenly showed her his cellphone, pointing out a Facebook profile picture. "Does this account ring a bell?" he asked.

Stella glanced at it and replied, "Of course, I know her. She's the most aggressive among those who have scolded me through direct messages."

The insults that the person had hurled at Stella were very harsh. The attack continued even when Stella blocked her, as the person would create new accounts with the same profile picture. There was no way Stella could forget her.

To make matters worse, that person even created a Facebook community targeting Stella and invited other haters to join in on the harassment.

For two months, Stella was bombarded with hateful messages from them. The constant barrage of negativity took a toll on her mental health, causing her to feel depressed. She could not help but wonder, 'Why do people like them have so much time on their hands to defame others on social media? If I let this slide, it will only fuel the arrogance of these haters.'

Marshall remained quiet for a few moments before he asked, "Do you have any feuds with Ms. Young?"

Chapter 124

Stella was caught off guard. She pursed her lips before she asked, "Why do you

ask?"

Marshall zoomed in on the Facebook user's profile picture. "The hand in this profile picture is Ms. Young's hand."

The profile picture of her hater was a photo of a right hand holding a cup of latte.

But, Stella still did not understand. The majority of her haters were Bella's fans, so it was normal that this hater used Bella's photo as a profile picture.

"What led you to that conclusion?"

“I got a friend to do a reverse image search and comparison using some tech. We could n’t find the picture anywhere online. Plus, judging from this photo’s angle, the lady holding the latte cup must have taken the photo and kept it to herself. And, when I got Ms. Young’s autograph last night, I noticed a mole between her thumb and index finger, just like the one in this photo. Her hands aren’t slim, so she must have used a hand double for close-ups when filming, which explains why there aren’t any close-up shots of her hand online.”

Stella thought to herself, ‘So, he asked for Bella’s autograph last night just to get a closer look at her hand.’

Stella was not dull-witted. She immediately asked, “Are you saying this is Bella’s secret account?”

“It’s either her or someone close to her. How else would a stranger have access to her private photos?”

However, Stella knew for a fact that only Felicity and now Marshall knew her identity as Dusk Galaxy. It was very unlikely that Bella would know about it. Hence, Bella could not have done it due to the feud between them.

The only possible explanation was that Bella had been holding grudges against Dusk Galaxy over the previous film project involving the both of them. The film was a huge success. Dusk Galaxy’s dubbing had enlivened Bella’s role. However, at the same time, it had also stolen the limelight away from Bella.

‘So, she incited her fans to cyber bully a voice actor for months just because her limelight was stolen?’ Stella thought, ‘As someone in showbiz for many years, doesn’t she know the consequences of cyberbullying? How can she be so vicious?’ Stella could not help but wonder, ‘What the hell does Keegan like about her?!’

“If Bella is behind this, do we have a chance of winning the lawsuit?” Stella asked Marshall.

“Even if she’s the one using that account, it’s very likely that the registration information isn’t hers. If you sue her, her PR team will just find someone to take the blame,” Marshall replied truthfully.

Stella was disappointed. “So, the cost of cyberbullying is this low?”

“The law can’t control morality,” Marshall said with a pause, “But, if we don’t fight back, the behavior will only escalate.”

Stella was quiet for a moment before she declared, "I'm going to fight this to the end. Even if I

can't win the lawsuit, it'll still affect her popularity."

Marshall smiled. "I'll do my best."

"Do I need to pay for any legal fees right now?" Stella just remembered about the payment.

Marshall smiled and said, "There's no rush. We can discuss that later when the process is further."

Stella nodded and suddenly remembered the gift she wanted to give to Marshall. She hurriedly said, "Wait here. Don't leave just yet!" Then, she ran out of the room in a hurry.

The things Stella and Keegan had brought with them had been put away by the housemaid. After searching for a while, Stella finally found the bag that held the tie she wanted to give

Marshall.

She quickly opened the bag for a quick look, then she rushed back to the rooftop and joined Marshall.

Keegan, who was looking for Stella, caught sight of her. When he was about to call out her name, she ran upstairs as if she was being pursued.

'How rash! She doesn't change a bit even after years of marriage.' He then pursed his lips and followed her.

Stella returned to the rooftop and found Marshall still there. She approached him and presented the gift she had bought for him. "Mr. Moore, thank you for your help last night. I don't know how I could express my gratitude. So, I saw this at the mall today and bought it for you. I hope you like it."

Marshall was momentarily taken aback before he chuckled. "I have a surprise for you, too," he said.

As he spoke, he pulled out a brand-new mobile phone and handed it to Stella. "I noticed that your phone was broken last night, and I happen to have an extra one at home. So, I brought it for you."

Stella quickly declined. "There's no need for that. It's too expensive." She did not want to be in anyone's debt.

“It’s still much cheaper than a tie,” Marshall replied. “I didn’t see you with a phone today, so I assume you haven’t bought one yet. It’s too inconvenient to not have a phone in this day and age. You can take and use this phone before you buy a new one. When you do purchase a new one, you can return it to me. Otherwise, I’ll be uncomfortable accepting such an expensive gift from you.”

With just a few sentences, Marshall gave Stella no room to refuse.

‘All I wanted was to return his favor with a gift. Why am I getting more in return?’

“Okay,” Stella took it and handed him the tie. “I’ll treat you to dinner next time.”

“Alright,” replied Marshall.

Keegan, who was watching them chatting and laughing from afar, felt a pang of envy as he looked at the brand-new phone in his hand. He left the scene with a sour expression.

Meanwhile, Cordelia was tired. She became sleepy not long after tea time. When Marshall and Trevor noticed it, they excused themselves, saying they had some errands to attend to.

Cordelia did not ask them to stay. Instead, she asked Keegan to see them off.

After Trevor and Marshall left, rain started to fall. It was forecast that there would be heavy rainfall at four o’clock. It was not safe to drive on the mountain roads in the rain. So, before the rain got heavier, Baldwin started driving to send them back.

On the way, Keegan’s face was even darker than when he came, while Stella was in no mood to entertain him.

Instead, she took out the new phone that Marshall had given her from her bag. It was the same brand as her old phone, but not the latest model. Therefore, she trusted Marshall’s explanation that he simply had an extra phone.

After inserting her SIM card into the new phone, she turned it on and started cloning data from the backup file.

“Where are my socks?” Keegan suddenly asked.

Stella glanced at him inexplicably and pointed to the bag next to him. “They’re inside this bag.”

Keegan rummaged through the bag but to no avail. "They're not here," he said with an unsmiling face.

Stella put down her phone and took the bag. She went through its contents, but the socks were nowhere to be found.

"How is this possible? I put them in here myself..." she muttered.

As she gazed at the bag again, it dawned on her that it looked a lot like the one she had given Marshall. 'Oh no, did I accidentally put the socks in that bag?' she thought.

She nervously looked at Keegan, whose face was grim, and cleared her throat. "Hey, I think I might have given the socks to Mr. Moore by mistake," she said.

As soon as she finished speaking, Keegan's face turned grave, and his eyes were blazing with anger. "Those were mine!" he growled through gritted teeth.

Chapter 125

Startled by his outburst, Stella thought, 'It's just a pair of socks. Does he really have to make a big deal out of it?'

"I didn't do it on purpose," Stella tried to explain. "The two bags looked so similar, and I didn't realize I put the socks in the wrong one."

Keegan's face remained cold and stern. "Call and ask him to bring them back," he commanded.

Stella frowned, "How am I supposed to do that? I've already given them away. It's just a one-hundred-dollar pair of socks. I can't just ask Mr. Moore to return them."

"If you knew that once a gift has been given and it's not proper to ask for it back, then why did you give away a gift meant for me?" Keegan snapped.

She felt like Keegan was just looking for an excuse to start a fight with her.

'He's been giving me this attitude since we were at Cordelia's residence just now. It's not really about the socks. He's just using them as an excuse to mess with me.'

Baldwin was still inside the car with them, so Stella had to bite her tongue and respond calmly, "I really didn't mean it. It's just a pair of socks. I can buy you another pair if that's what you want."

Keegan was even more angry at her perfunctory attitude. "Is this just about buying new socks? Do you even take this seriously?"

Stella's anger exploded. She no longer cared about Baldwin's presence and shot back, "Yeah, right. You're the only one who didn't take it seriously. Otherwise, why didn't you keep it when I gave it to you? I was thoughtful enough to get you a gift, but you acted like you were annoyed. Who the hell knows if you really want those socks?! Now they're gone, and you're blaming me? I don't think this is really about the socks. You just want to pick a fight with me!"

Keegan's hands were trembling in rage. "You're the one who made a mistake, yet you think your action is justifiable."

Stella glared at him. "I shouldn't have bought that damn pair of socks just to let you find fault with me!"

"Baldwin, pull over!" said Keegan and Stella simultaneously with stern faces.

Stella turned and said in hatred, "No need to chase me out of the car! I'll get off myself!"

"When did I say that I was going to chase you out of the car?" said Keegan. His face was purple with rage.

This gave Stella a chance to bring up the past. "You're really forgetful, Keegan Kane. You must have forgotten it right after you kicked me out of your car last time!"

Keegan's temple twitched as he said, "Stella Jewell, that's enough! I haven't even held you accountable for selling that bag!"

Stella retorted, "Do it, then. I can just pay you back the money. I'll feel troubled if you don't." Baldwin, who was driving, could no longer listen to their bickering. "Mr. and Mrs. Kane, both of you need to calm down. This is just a minor issue, and there's no safe place to pull over with

the heavy rain outside."

Stella snorted. "Compared to the time he kicked me out of the car in the rain, this is nothing!"

"Stella Jewell!"

Seeing that the two were about to argue again, Baldwin raised his voice. "Mr. and Mrs. Kane, if you keep quarreling, I will have to call Madam."

At the mention of Cordelia, the two finally stopped arguing and fell silent. They turned to the opposite sides of the car, wishing that they could be far away from each other at that moment.

When they reached the Kane residence, Keegan disembarked from the car and slammed the door shut, not uttering a word.

Stella grumbled under her breath, "Crazy bastard." Then, she turned to Baldwin and said, "Baldwin, could you give this to Cordelia for me?" Baldwin noticed that Stella was holding the car keys that Trevor had given her.

Back at Cordelia's home, Cordelia had already gone to bed, so Stella could only ask Baldwin, Cordelia's most trusted assistant, to pass on the keys. "Mrs. Kane, Madam has asked you to keep the car, so you may keep it," Baldwin said.

"But, this is too expensive," Stella replied. "Mr. Saun is only being generous because of his friendship with the Kane family, so that car should be considered a gift for the Kane family."

Baldwin smiled and replied softly, "But, aren't you a member of the Kane family? Why can't you accept it as it is?"

Chapter 126

Stella found herself at a loss for words.

She could not reveal to Baldwin that she and Keegan were going to divorce soon.

"Mrs Kane, please keep the car keys since Madam has said so. As for the reciprocal gift for the Saun family, Madam will handle it."

Eventually, Stella failed to return the car keys. She could only hold onto them for now.

Back at the Kane residence, Keegan had already gone upstairs. Maya helped pick up the things and asked, "Madam, is everything okay with Mr. Kane? He looked like he was in a bad mood when he came back."

Stella, who was still fuming, replied flatly, "He's acting crazy. Don't pay him any mind."

Maya was taken aback for a moment. But, by the time she regained her composure, Stella had already gone upstairs.

Fortunately for Stella, Keegan was not in the master bedroom. Otherwise, she would have been forced to sleep on the less comfortable bed in the guest room.

Stella quickly undid her hair, grabbed two fresh sets of clothes, and headed to the bathroom. The powerful flow from the showerhead cascaded down and enveloped Stella from head to toe in a warm embrace, creating a relaxing experience.

As she stood under the stream of water, Stella could not help but think, 'That jerk sure knows how to enjoy life. There's even a jacuzzi in this bathroom. It would be the perfect place to soak and unwind. But, filling it takes a good ten to twenty minutes. I just don't have the patience for that.'

She smoothed her hair to the side of her shoulders, pressed a pump of shampoo, foamed, and gently rubbed her scalp.

Typically, those from Hustuabourg with fair skin possessed lighter hair color, but Stella was an exception. Her raven-black, full mane was as soft as seaweed when it was wet, and when paired with her delicate facial features, she was a true embodiment of a mermaid's beauty.

The bathroom door was abruptly pushed open just as Stella was rinsing the foam from her hair, causing her to startle and reach for a bath towel in a hurry.

As a result, her feet slipped, and she lost her balance, tumbling forward.

Keegan tried to catch her, but she grabbed him first, and both of them tumbled to the ground.

Keegan hit the floor with a thud, landing on his back. Stella, who was still naked, ended up on top of him, and her knees hit the floor. Although the fall was jarring, Keegan served as a cushion, softening the impact for Stella.

Keegan rubbed the back of his head, and his face darkened with anger as he ground his teeth. Did you do that on purpose, Stella Jewel?" he growled.

"I did that on purpose?!"

"Who's at fault here?" Stella spat out as she stood up, wrapping the towel around herself. "I

was taking a shower. What were you doing barging in without even knocking?"

Keegan sat up, and a scowl was on his face. "I came here to grab a towel. How was I supposed to know that you were taking a shower if you didn't bother to lock the door?"

"You should have knocked on the door when you heard someone inside!"

Keegan glanced at her, and he naturally said, "This is my house. Why would I knock on my own bathroom door?"

Stella was furious. She cursed inwardly, 'Just what kind of a jerk is he?!'

Perhaps he was not satisfied with releasing his anger as Keegan took a bath towel, looked at her from top to bottom, and said impassively, “Why bother covering up such an unattractive body?”

Enraged, Stella grabbed the nearest object and hurled it at Keegan, shouting, “Go to hell, Keegan Kane!”

However, Keegan was quick to react, slamming the door shut. That object hit the door and shattered on the ground. Only then did Stella realize that the object she had thrown was the expensive bottle of essential oil she had splurged on. It hit her hard, causing her face to redden with a feeling of heartache.

‘Keegan Kane, you heartless bastard! How could I have ever been foolish enough to fall for someone like you?’ Stella snarled inwardly.

Chapter 127

As soon as Stella came out of the shower, she received a phone call from Felicity.

Felicity’s excited voice rang through the phone “Stella, they accepted my script!” She exclaimed.

“Wow, that was fast!” Stella was surprised.

Despite having only revised the manuscript the day before, Felicity’s submission had already been accepted without a hitch.

“I know, right?” Felicity replied. “I thought they’d ask for revisions when I submitted it this morning, but they just called to say they accepted it and want me to sign the contract next week.”

Stella secured her damp hair with a claw clip and asked, “How much will you sell it for?”

“That hasn’t been decided yet,” Felicity replied. “But, the general market price for a first series is around a million.”

“And, will you be the screenwriter if the drama is filmed?” Stella continued.

Felicity explained, “Unfortunately, film production companies tend to hold onto the copyrights before they make any decisions. As for when it will be filmed, it can be unpredictable and often depends on availability. For established writers, filming usually begins within two years of signing a contract. However, for less well-known writers like myself, there’s no guarantee of a film opportunity, even after the copyright has expired. So, I shouldn’t count on being its screenwriter.”

Stella was a little disappointed.

Felicity, on the other hand, remained optimistic. "Getting it sold is a huge step forward. I'm young and not in a rush. Someday, the dramas of the scripts I write will be broadcasted on major TV channels!"

Stella's smile returned. "And, when that day comes, hot actors and actresses, as well as award winning talents, will all want to be a part of your dramas!"

Felicity added, "And, I'll make sure that you're my leading actress, making you a superstar that even Keegan would want to impress."

Stella's grin vanished. "Don't mention him. I'm still mad at him."

Felicity picked up on Stella's tone and softly asked, "Did you two have another argument?"

Feeling wronged, Stella could not hold back and shared the details of what had happened with Felicity.

After relating the story, Stella added, "Is he really upset about a pair of socks? I don't think so. He was just trying to pick a fight with me. I was so foolish. Why did I even buy him those socks in the first place, just for him to find fault with me?"

"Wait a minute," Felicity interjected. "Did you say the lawyer I introduced you to is Keegan's childhood friend and the good-looking guy who helped you last time?"

Stella nodded. "Small world, right?"

Felicity was quiet for a moment and then asked, "So, you gave Keegan's socks to his childhood friend?"

Stella corrected her. "No, I put them in the wrong bag by mistake."

"Could it be that Keegan was jealous?" Felicity asked.

"Jealous my foot! He can't possibly think that Mr. Moore is interested in me. Besides, he doesn't even like me. Why would he be jealous? He was just looking for an excuse to start a fight! I bet he was unhappy at the thought of having to split his wealth with me after our divorce, so he is deliberately messing with me!"

Before Felicity wanted to say something, Stella received another phone call.

"It's Keegan's mom. I'll have to answer it. Let's catch up soon." Stella quickly hung up Felicity's call and took a deep breath before answering Dahlia's call. Her tone was obedient as she answered. "Hi, Dahlia. How can I help you? Are you looking for Keegan? I'll call him for you."

"I'm looking for you," Dahlia said in a clear and cold tone.

"You're looking for me?" Stella's eyebrows lowered in confusion. "What do you need?"

"Did you and Keegan visit Cordelia today?" Dahlia asked.

It did not surprise Stella that Dahlia knew their whereabouts since Dahlia had many people at the Kane residence to keep her informed.

So, Stella did not dare to keep it from Dahlia. "Mr. Moore and Mr. Saun were there to visit Cordelia, so she asked us to keep them company."

"That's all?" Dahlia asked.

"Yes, we just had a meal," Stella answered, avoiding any mentions of Trevor gifting a car to her as a token of gratitude, as the matter involved Aurora. She could not understand why Trevor had not mentioned anything about Aurora when he came to thank her. But, she did not want to get herself into any trouble, so she kept the question to herself.

Dahlia went straight to the point. "I heard Mrs. Chapman say that you're pregnant. Is that why Cordelia wanted to see you?"

Stella was taken aback. She had not expected Dahlia to call her for this.

"Mrs. Chapman probably misunderstood. I'm not pregnant," Stella explained.

Dahlia did not seem to buy it. "Mrs. Chapman said you and Keegan both admitted that you were pregnant. How can this be a misunderstanding?"

"When I said, 'I will let everyone know when I have some good news,' Mrs. Chapman must have misunderstood." Stella tried to clarify. However, she said in her mind, "There's nothing to tell since there won't be any fucking good news!"

Stella added, "Besides, how could we possibly hide such big news from you, Dahlia?"

"Maya said that you haven't been taking the fertility drink on time recently. What happened?" Dahlia continued her line of questioning.

As a mole planted by Dahlia, Maya was certainly useful. Any updates about Keegan and Stella would quickly be reported to Dahlia.

Stella could only find herself an excuse. "A while ago, the hospital informed me that my mother was not in good condition, so I accompanied her in the hospital for a few days. During that time, I couldn't take the fertility drink on time, but I've been taking it regularly since I returned."

Stella could not tell whether Dahlia believed her.

Dahlia pondered for a moment before she said, "I'll pick you up tomorrow for a check-up."

Stella's temple twitched. "But, I just had a check-up two months ago. And, my period just ended. It's impossible for me to be pregnant." She added silently to herself, 'Keegan hasn't even slept with me for the past three months. The heck if I can get pregnant!'

Dahlia said, "Even if you're not pregnant, it won't hurt to make sure that everything is okay. The doctor previously mentioned that your uterine wall had poor elasticity, and that you've been taking the fertility drink for quite some time. It's time to see if it made a difference."

Stella desperately wanted to say, 'Why don't you take your son to the doctor instead? Maybe he's the one who is sick.' But, she held back and simply said, "Okay."

Despite her reservations, Stella saw this as an opportunity. If the test results came back normal, she could use it as leverage to convince Dahlia, and she could stop taking that fertility drink.

The smell of that fertility drink had always made Stella nauseous.

Just as Dahlia was about to end the call, she suddenly asked, "By the way, do you know why Keegan locked Aurora in the bathroom all night? What could Aurora have done to make him so angry?"

Stella was taken aback and cautiously inquired, "Did you just say that Aurora was locked in the bathroom overnight?"

Chapter 128

Dahlia did not answer Stella's question. Instead, she asked, "You didn't know about what happened to Aurora?"

Stella was taken aback. "I visited my mother after the banquet last night and had no knowledge of what happened afterward, apart from Mr. Snyder sending Aurora home."

Dahlia was troubled. "I'm not entirely sure what happened either. Aurora came back crying this morning and said that Keegan had locked her in a restroom overnight, but she didn't tell me about it clearly. I thought you might know something since you were at the banquet last night."

Stella was shocked. "Keegan actually locked Aurora in the bathroom all night! Is he insane?! But, it couldn't have been for my sake. I'm not that self-absorbed."

When she remembered Trevor thanking her at Cordelia's house, Stella realized that Trevor must have known about the incident since he did not seem concerned about how Jaylene was trapped in the restroom.

Trevor had remained silent on who was responsible for the incident, likely because Keegan had taken it upon himself to punish Aurora.

This could be seen as a form of explanation for the Saun family. It had sought retribution for Jaylene and, indirectly, Stella.

Stella looked confused and said, "I don't have any information either. Keegan didn't tell me anything. How is Aurora doing? Is she okay?"

"She's fine. She just got a minor cold," replied Dahlia. "She took some medicine and is now sleeping."

Stella thought to herself, 'Serves her right!' But, she pretended to show concern. "Let me call Mr. Snyder to check. He was there last night, so he should know what happened."

Dahlia declined Stella's offer and said, "No need for that." She instead made an appointment with Stella for a check-up tomorrow. Apparently, Dahlia did not want to involve outsiders in the household matter.

The next morning, Stella woke up to find Keegan gone from the Kane residence, leading her to assume he had spent the night in the study.

When Maya was babbling about Keegan skipping breakfast again, Stella rolled her eyes and thought, 'Come on. He's an adult. How could he possibly starve himself?'

As Stella was about to leave, Maya handed her a lunch box and said, "Madam, please take this to Mr. Kane. He's been having a bad appetite lately, possibly due to his stomach problems. I made him some porridge, so make sure he eats it while it's still warm."

Stella was reluctant. "There's no need for that. The company has its own cafeteria."

"Unfortunately, the cafeteria food is heavy on oil and salt, which isn't good for Mr. Kane's delicate stomach. He's also been dining out frequently for business events and eating on an irregular schedule. It's only a matter of time before health problems arise if he keeps this up," Maya explained.

"It's not like he's a child who is not aware of his own health," Stella grumbled but still took the lunchbox. "I'll deliver it this time, but starting tomorrow, you'll have to do it yourself," Stella said.

Stella sighed in frustration and thought, 'Why do I have to be the one to deliver this lunchbox? Don't I have any dignity? I haven't even cooled down from the last argument.'

Stella took a cab instead of driving because she was going to meet up with Dahlia. She would have to undergo several tests in the hospital later.

But, before that, she went to the Vinci Rivera Group building, where she arrived a little too early. The janitors were still cleaning up, and the entrance had just opened.

Stella was reminded of the argument she had with Keegan the day before. She did not want to call him, so she gave that lunchbox to the security officer and asked him to deliver it to Keegan on the upper floor.

However, the security officer said, "But, Mr. Kane is not here."

Stella was caught by surprise. 'Maya said Keegan had received a call at around six o'clock before rushing here. Why did the security officer say that he is not here?'

At that moment, Dahlia's call came in, and she asked how long it would take for Stella to arrive.

Stella did not have time to think about Keegan's whereabouts and said, "Right away." She instructed the security officer, "When he's here, deliver this lunchbox to him and tell him it's from Maya."

After that, Stella quickly got into a cab and rushed to meet up with Dahlia.

As soon as she arrived, a Maserati pulled up, and Dahlia lowered the window and said flatly, "Get in."

Stella nodded and got into the car primly.

Dahlia was wearing a dark brown shirt and black pants. Her hair was shoulder length, curled naturally, and neatly styled.

Chapter 129

Stella thought to herself that if she saw Dahlia as a stranger on the street, she would have assumed her to be an office lady around her own age. Despite knowing Dahlia's actual age, Stella still found her to appear very youthful.

However, despite her youthful appearance, Dahlia was not an easy mother-in-law to deal with. Her constant pressure on Stella to have children was unbearable.

When the car started, Dahlia asked flatly, "You need to go for the CBC test later. You haven't eaten anything, right?"

Stella nodded.

Dahlia then asked, "Does Keegan know that I'm taking you for a medical check up?"

Stella replied, "No, I haven't told him."

In fact, Stella and Keegan were still in a state of disagreement, and she was determined not to be the one to reach out first. She thought, 'It would be a defeat for me if I talked to Keegan first. No way!!'

Dahlia did not say anything else after that.

Soon enough, they arrived at the Kindred Soul Hospital, a renowned private hospital in Rivera known for its high fees but excellent medical facilities. Many wealthy individuals, including celebrities and business leaders, were regular patients there.

Unlike the general hospitals in city areas, the human traffic was not heavy. Hence, patients like Stella, who came here for routine checkups, did not have to queue when registering at the

counter.

After the consultation, the doctor gave Stella a list of tests that she needed to undergo later.

Stella came out with the list and said to Dahlia, "You can just wait here, Dahlia. I have to undergo these tests in the opposite building. I'll come to you after I finish."

Although Dahlia wanted to accompany Stella, she received a phone call and had to answer it. So, she reluctantly agreed and let Stella go alone.

Stella underwent a blood test and urine test, and then she finally arrived at the ultrasound

room.

The ultrasound room was busy as usual, and Stella had to wait for a while before her name was

called.

After a thorough examination, the young doctor asked, "Have you had surgery before?"

"I had a minor surgery for an injury I got from a car accident a few years ago. Is there a problem, doctor?"

The young doctor pondered for a moment before he said, "Surgery for an injury from a car accident?" He appeared uncertain and finally added, "Let's see what your attending doctor has to say later"

With that, he printed out the reports of the test results, signed it, and went on to the next patient

Stella took the reports and studied them for a while, but she could not fully comprehend most of the items listed. Although several items showed no abnormality, the ultrasound result indicated an uneven echo. She had no idea what it meant.

By the time Stella had undergone all the tests, an hour had almost passed.

Dahlia, who had grown restless, called Stella to inquire about her progress.

Stella told her, "It's all done. I'm on my way back now. I'll be there shortly."

"Great. Please bring me a bottle of water when you get here," Dahlia requested.

However, the vending machines were only found in the inpatient department. Hence, Stella, who was already going downstairs, had to return to that department to buy a bottle of water.

Just as she was fetching a bottle of water, she suddenly saw Keegan coming out of the elevator.

He had a headband in his hand, which was something only a female would wear, and behind him was his assistant, Aldor.

Aldor was the first to see her and said, "Madam?"

Chapter 130

Only when Aldor called out to Stella did Keegan notice Stella.

She stood there emotionless, casting a glance at the headband in Keegan's hand and then at Keegan himself.

Tightening his grip on the headband, Keegan pursed his lips and approached her. "What are you doing here?" he asked.

Stella said nonchalantly, "Don't worry. I'm not stalking you." She held up the test reports she was carrying and said, "Your mother asked me to come here for a medical check-up."

Keegan's expression changed upon hearing that. His eyes narrowed in a frown. "She's here with you?"

"Yes," Stella answered.

Keegan kept furrowing his brows. His strange reaction did not go unnoticed by Stella, but she was not in the mood to decipher it. The mere sight of Keegan at the hospital so early in the morning had already put a damper on her mood.

'Who else could it be in the hospital that is important enough to make Keegan rush to the hospital at six in the morning and hold a headband?' She sneered inwardly, thinking she had done her best to control her anger.

"Mr. Kane, carry on with what you're doing. I'm leaving now," she said. She did not even bother to look at Keegan before turning and walking away.

But, Keegan quickly grabbed her wrist and said, "Wait." He handed the headband to Aldor and whispered, "Buy her the exact same one." Then, he pulled Stella out of the inpatient

department.

After the both of them stepped out of the elevator, Stella, who had been holding back her anger, suddenly bit Keegan on the wrist.

Keegan felt a sharp pain and let go of her.

Looking at the deep bite mark on his wrist, Keegan gritted his teeth with a grim expression. 'Stella Jewell, did you catch rabies from a dog bite?!"

"You're the one who's bitten by a dog!" Stella shot back before realizing that she had called herself a dog. With a mixture of anger and embarrassment, she added, "Keegan Kane, our relationship is purely contractual. Aside from the times when we have to put on a show for appearances, please refrain from any physical contact with me at all other times!"

Keegan cast a sideways glance at Stella. "All I did was grab your wrist. What about the time when you got drunk and kissed me against my will? Isn't that sexual harassment?"

Stella retorted in disdain, "I never forced a kiss on you, Keegan Kane. Be careful with what you say, or I might sue you for defamation."

Keegan smirked and took out his phone. With a few quick taps, a notification suddenly sounded from Stella's phone in her pocket.

Stella checked her phone and saw that Keegan had sent her a video clip. She glared at him with suspicion. "What did you send me?"

Keegan smirked and said, "Play it and see for yourself."

Stella frowned. After staring at him for a few seconds, she played the video clip.

Immediately, her face went pale.

The video showed a drunken woman wearing only a bathrobe, sitting on a man's lap. She

grabbed his chin with one hand and forced him to face the camera. With a grin, she said, "I've spent so much money; I might as well keep a souvenir."

Chapter 131

In the video, the drunken woman lowered her head and planted a kiss on the man's lips. She then attempted to remove the man's clothing, but her efforts were in vain after a lengthy struggle. Finally, turning her attention to herself, she easily removed her bathrobe. Once the belt was loosened, the bathrobe slid off her shoulders.

At this moment, the man quickly intervened by raising his hand and grabbing the phone, causing the screen to shake before the video abruptly ended momentarily.

The bold woman in the video was no other than Stella Jewell, who had forced a kiss on Keegan.

Stella's eyes widened. She tried to grab Keegan's phone, but he was quick and dodged her attempt. Then, holding his phone high, he smirked and asked with an indifferent gaze, "Trying to destroy the evidence?"

Fury filled Stella's face as she spat, "How dare you take advantage of me, Keegan Kane? You filmed me while I was drunk. How could you be so shameless?"

Keegan laughed at Stella's attempt to twist the truth. "Take a look at who was filming, Stella."

Stella snarled inwardly, 'The hell I would reason with you after seeing my embarrassing self in that video.'

Stella said unyieldingly, "Even if I was the one who filmed it, I was drunk, and my behavior was out of control! You, on the other hand, were sober. So not stopping me is one thing, but keeping the video is another. You shameless bastard!"

Stella's attempts to provoke Keegan into deleting the video failed, as he only chuckled and responded, "Since I'm already being labeled as shameless, I might as well take it to the next level and share the video on social media for all to see."

As he began editing a post on his phone, Stella could no longer hold back and rushed to grab the phone.

However, Keegan had the advantage of his height. He easily held the phone above her reach. Even if Stella jumped, she could only reach his wrist.

Seeing that Keegan had almost finished editing the post, Stella got even more anxious. Desperate to stop him, she wrapped her hands around his neck and jumped, attempting to hit his chin with her head. But Keegan lowered his head at the last moment, and Stella ended up striking his nose instead. Blood immediately began to flow from the injury.

Stella was shocked. Before she could react, a cold voice came from behind, "What are you doing?"

She turned to see Dahlia approaching them with a stern expression.

Dahlia quickly tended to Keegan's bleeding nose with a handkerchief as soon as she reached him. Then, she scolded Stella, who was still standing there in shock, "What are you waiting for? Call a doctor!"

Stella finally snapped out of it and quickly called for medical assistance.

Keegan tilted his head back. It took some time for his nosebleed to stop. He looked pale, possibly due to blood loss.

Keegan smirked and said, "Play it and see for yourself."

Stella frowned. After staring at him for a few seconds, she played the video clip.

Immediately, her face went pale.

The video showed a drunken woman wearing only a bathrobe, sitting on a man's lap. She

grabbed his chin with one hand and forced him to face the camera. With a grin, she said, "I've spent so much money; I might as well keep a souvenir."

Chapter 132

Dahlia scowled, "Am I conservative now? Come on! There's a limit even to having fun. There are tons of eyes on the Kane family. When she acts inappropriately, and it gets around, we'll be plagued by rumors every day. People will think this is what the Kane family is all about!"

Keegan's head ached while he was listening to Dahlia's nagging. He turned to Stella and said, "Get me some water."

Stella handed Keegan the water she had just bought. He grabbed the bottle, unscrewed the cap, and took a couple of gulps. Dahlia noticed his pale complexion and stopped her rant. Instead, she asked, "What brings you to the hospital so early in the morning?"

"I'm here to visit a friend," Keegan answered briefly. He then asked, "Why did you bring Stella here for a check-up? Wasn't she just checked two months ago?"

Dahlia composed herself when the topic shifted. "It's just a routine check-up. She's been taking that fertility drink for a while now. I just want to see if it had any effect. Mrs. Valle's son got married last year, and now her daughter-in-law is almost due. You two have been married for three years now, and still no kids. So I'm just more concerned than you two are."

Obviously, Dahlia was implying Stella was at fault.

Keegan remained nonchalant. "It's not something that happens overnight. The fertility drink hasn't done anything even after all this time. So maybe she's not getting pregnant because she's taken too much of it."

Stella did not know what to say. 'It's true that I don't want to take that awful fertility drink. But I can't believe Keegan would say that! How shameless! The hell I can't get pregnant when he's the one refusing to sleep with me!'

Not only would Keegan spend nights with her only once a couple of months, but he would also deliberately avoid her ovulation period. So even if Stella was fertile, it was pointless without his cooperation.

Dahlia got angry. "What do you mean she can't get pregnant because of taking too much fertility drink? I went through a lot of trouble to get it. Who am I working so hard for? I wouldn't have to go through all this effort if she were fertile."

Seeing that mother and son were about to quarrel, Stella tried to calm Dahlia, "Please don't be upset, Dahlia. I'll make sure to drink the fertility drink on a schedule. Here, have some water."

But Dahlia pushed Stella's hand away and said coldly, "I must've been meddling too much. From now on, you two can handle your problems. I don't want to waste my time and energy only to be criticized later."

With that, Dahlia stormed out of the room with a stern face.

As soon as Dahlia left, Stella stopped pretending and said flatly, "Call Aldor to pick you up. I'm leaving now."

Keegan's face darkened. "You're gonna leave me after what you've done to me?"

"It's just a nosebleed. It's not like you've lost a limb. What do you expect me to do? Babysit you?"

Keegan's face darkened, "Don't you have any sense of guilt? Who was I just speaking for?"

"I have plenty of guilt. We're getting a divorce, but I still have to put on a show for your family and endure your mother's insults and false accusations against me!" said Stella.

Keegan's remarks hit a raw nerve with Stella. Or perhaps, she had been bottling up her emotions for a long time. Once she found an outlet, she could no longer contain herself.

She added, "And now, you have a nosebleed, and someone is worried about you. She even got angry at me on your behalf! What about me? I was in a car accident and couldn't even reach you. Can you imagine how I felt when the nurse asked me why my family wasn't there with me in the hospital? I couldn't help but wonder. If I had died that day, would anyone even come to collect my body?"

Keegan's anger dissipated as he asked, "Why didn't you tell me about the car accident when you called me that day?"

Stella smirked, thinking, 'So he knew.'

"What difference would it have made? Would you have left Ms. Young for me?"

Keegan fell silent.

Stella was disappointed that Keegan did not even bother to lie to her.

"Good," Stella said with a smile. "That just confirms I made the right decision."

Chapter 133

Keegan looked at her confusedly.

Then, Stella took her wallet out of her bag and said flatly, "However, I'm not as heartless as you. Even though I'm the reason you were hurt, it was you who provoked me first. So, I'll pay for your medical bills. However, there's nothing else I can do if you think it's not enough. This is everything I can afford to pay you before the divorce."

After that, she handed him a signed check. Keegan looked at it and saw twenty thousand

written on it.

Keegan's face turned ugly as he tore the check in half. "Stella Jewell, cut it off!"

Stella looked at the torn check on the floor and said calmly, "I'll just take it as you accepted it. As for the divorce, I hope you can settle everything as soon as possible. I don't think I can hide that I'm infertile from you any longer."

Stella's shoulders dropped dispiritedly as soon as she left the hospital.

She felt so awful because nothing went her way at all.

She knew that she had done something wrong. Clearly, she did something wrong. Yet, she took it all out on Keegan for no reason.

However, she just could not get over how Dahlia mistreated her.

Stella gazed downward at the back of her hand and saw a very long and thin scratch. It came from Dahlia's ring when she brushed her aside just now.

Dahlia had never liked her. Even though she hid her hatred toward Stella very well, she could tell how much she despised her just by the look on her face.

Neither Stella's character nor her family background matched Dahlia's expectations.

Besides, Stella never contributed anything to the family despite getting married to Keegan for many years. Dahlia just could not find a reason to like her. How protective Keegan was of her also contributed to their conflict.

Stella wondered to herself. 'Do all mothers hate it when their sons get too close to their wives? Or is this just happening because Dahlia lost her husband when she was still so young, so she's very possessive over her son?'

Even though her relationship with Keegan was not exceptionally good, she could feel Dahlia would hate her a little bit more whenever Keegan defended her.

That scratch mark was a perfect example. The scar would not be so deep if Dahlia did not do that on purpose.

Keegan could never keep himself out of what happened, as he was why Dahlia hated her so much!

In the Jewell residence.

Albert was eating, with his family in the dining hall when his phone suddenly rang.

He picked up the call and said with a bright smile, "Mr. Anne, why are you calling me at this

hour? Have you eaten?"

"Cut the crap! Albert Jewell, do you know what your good daughter did?! You're so shameless for making us pay for you!"

The smile on Albert's face disappeared as he said in a deep voice, "Mr. Anne, what are you talking about? What did my daughter do?"

"Quit pretending!" Henry was still very mad. "My daughter has always been very sensible. However, she spent thirty million dollars on a bangle when she went out with your daughter, Sophia, yesterday! She even used my company's money! I confronted her about it, and she told me she only did that to stand up for your daughter and that the bangle can't be returned! I have more than a hundred employees on my payroll. I'm really curious about what your daughter did until Xianna had to spend thirty million just to make her feel better. Do you think this is logical?"

Sophia's grip on her fork got tighter as she sat opposite Albert.

Chapter 134

The look on Albert's face turned ugly. "Mr. Anne, I have no idea that this took place. I'll ask my daughter about it. I'm sure that it's just a misunderstanding."

"Misunderstanding? What could it be? My daughter explicitly told me that Sophia instigated her to do it. I'll give you two options now. Think of a way to return the bangle or pay me back the money! Otherwise, you'll be in big trouble!"

Then, Henry hung up the phone.

Albert's face darkened as he put down his phone. Then, he lifted his head and asked Sophia, "What happened? A bangle that cost thirty million?"

Sophia cursed inwardly at Xianna before telling Albert about what had happened that day. Obviously, she omitted the part where she hinted to Xianna to buy that bangle.

"

Then, she said pitifully, "I admit that I wasn't thoughtful enough. I shouldn't have followed Ms. Anne into the shop when I knew that Stella didn't like me. That shop belongs to Mr. Snyder, and he's a very good friend of Stella's husband. Mr. Anne did not dare to offend Mr. Snyder or the Kane family, and that's why he blamed me for everything. Who do you think I am to decide what Ms. Anne should spend on?"

The woman sitting beside Sophia handed her a piece of tissue as she consoled her, "This isn't your fault. Why would she spend thirty million on a bangle just to prove something?"

That woman was Albert's secretary, Hylda White. She was the person walking with Albert when Stella bumped into them at the basement parking previously.

She had her loungewear on as she sat on the seat that supposedly belonged to Rainee, as if she was Albert's wife.

Albert frowned and glared at her. "What's the point of talking about this now? That man clearly just wants my daughter to pay for what his daughter bought!"

"Why do we have to listen to him?" Hylda scoffed. "Who does he think he is to make us clean up his daughter's mess? He only got what he has today because his sister chose the right husband! He really thinks he's something just because people address him as Mr. Anne!" "You're such an ignorant woman. I still need Henry's help to get me that piece of land in Northon, and the bid hasn't even started yet! He'll probably ditch me if I don't get this right for him now. I can't miss out on a project that's worth billions again."

Hylda was puzzled. "Is Henry willing to give somebody else such a profitable project?" Albert sneered. "Of course not. However, he's unable to get himself involved. His brother-in-law is the head of this project, so he can't be a part of it due to legal reasons."

Albert gifted Henry presents worth more than ten million just to secure that project. However, Henry just could not get enough!

Hylda furrowed her brows. "What should we do then? Thirty million is not a small amount. Do we really have to pay up?"

Albert was not willing to do that at all. So, he picked up his phone and said, "I'll give Stella a call and ask if she can get Mr. Kane to help us out."

Hylde lifted the edge of her mouth without saying anything.

Stella's phone rang as soon as she got into the car.

She did not feel like picking it up after seeing Albert's name.

She knew that Albert would only call her if something bad happened.

However, she also knew that Albert was tenacious, and he would only stop calling once she picked up.

So, she had no choice but to accept the call, "Hello, dad."

"Stella, are you okay? Why did it take you so long to pick up?"

"I was in the washroom and couldn't answer my phone. Why did you call?" Stella lied.

"It's nothing serious. Are you with Keegan now?"

"He's at work. You should call his office's number if you're looking for him."

Chapter 135

"No, I'm not. However, I have something to ask you."

'What is this about?' Stella thought to herself.

"Stella, are you close with Mr. Snyder?"

"No," Stella said instantly without hesitating.

She was not lying when she said that. But, more specifically, she was not close with anyone in Keegan's social circle.

That was because Keegan rarely brought her to meet his friends. Perhaps he only did that because he knew their marriage would not last, so he did not want to spend too much effort to let her blend in.

'Why would he suddenly be interested in Vermont?'

Stella knew the answer to that very soon after.

Albert said, "Sophia told me she met you when she was shopping in a jewelry store with her friend yesterday."

Stella squinted and said flatly, "Yeah, she did. What about it?"

"You know her friend spent thirty million on a bangle, too, right?"

"Yeah." Stella said before she said sarcastically, "Ms. Anne has excellent taste. I heard that the bangle was the best one that the shop had. "

Albert kept quiet for a while before he said, "Ms. Anne doesn't want that bangle anymore, but she's unable to return it. I heard that the shop belongs to Mr. Snyder, and he's a friend of Keegan, right? Could you do me a favor and ask him if he can let Ms. Anne return it?"

'She spent thirty million just to show off for a few seconds. I guess she's regretting it now that she can finally think clearly.' Stella thought to herself.

Stella did not expect that Xianna would ask for Albert's help.

There was just no reason for her to help them since she plotted it to happen.

"Dad, you're a businessman too. It's common knowledge that one can only return the goods if it's defective. All businesses would close down if every customer like Ms. Anne could return something just because they changed their minds."

"You're right, but I'm sure you can work something out. Would you let Keegan know what happened so he can talk to Mr. Snyder about it? I'm sure that it wouldn't be very troublesome for him to do so."

Stella did not want to help, so she lied, "Okay then. I'll talk to Keegan about it. However, I can't guarantee if Vermont would do him this favor or not."

Albert was relieved. "Mr. Snyder is such a good friend to Keegan. I'm sure that he will."

The call became awkward after the conversation ended, so Albert tried to keep it going, "How's your mother recently?"

"She's fine." Stella paused before continuing, "However, the doctor told us to talk to her about the past more often to stimulate her. You should go over and chat with her when you're free because you're the person that my mother cared about the most."

Albert said perfunctorily, "I can't find time at all these days. I'll pay your mother a few days later when I'm on leave."

It was not Stella's first time listening to Albert's nonsense. His last visit to the hospital was a year ago, and he only went there to pose because one of Stella's grandfather's friends wanted to see Rainee.

Albert was a heartless and cruel man. However, Stella's grandfather was a very good judge of character. There was no way he would allow his daughter to marry someone like him.

Something popped into Stella's head after she hung up before she dialed Vermont's number.

Vermont was bored out of his mind in a regular meeting when he saw an incoming call. He was shocked at first but became very energetic right after. Then, he grabbed his phone as he stood up. He said with a straight face, "Carry on. My client's calling me."

Chapter 136

"Hello, who's calling?"

Stella heard Vermont's serious voice through the phone. He did not sound as flirtatious as he usually would.

Stella wondered, "I thought he had my number, no?"

'Did he not save it?'

She quickly responded without dwelling on that thought, "I'm Stella."

Vermont was surprised as he said, "Oh, it's you. How may I assist you?"

Stella became a little awkward after hearing how straightforward Vermont was. However, she knew she had no time to waste as she got straight to the point, "There's something I hope you could help me with."

Vermont laughed. "Are you sure? Keegan is so much more capable than me.'

He implied that Stella should have asked for her husband's help instead.

Stella responded without trying to hide anything, "We're fighting, and I don't really feel like talking to him. Besides, you're the only person who can help me with this."

Vermont got curious. "Fighting? Because of what? Tell me more about it."

Stella was at a loss for words.

She just could not figure out why Vermont would be interested in the reason why she was fighting with Keegan.

“It’s nothing serious. He’s throwing a fit because I accidentally gave the socks that I bought for him to Marshall.”

Vermont repeated what she said, “You gifted Marshall socks?”

“Yeah. He did me a huge favor at the banquet, so I bought him a tie as a token of appreciation. However, I accidentally placed that pair of socks in there.”

“Oh,” Vermont said expressively, “Keegan is just being unreasonable at this point. It’s just a pair of socks anyway.”

Stella was not trying to continue this topic with him. She knew that Vermont was Keegan’s childhood friend. He would let Keegan know what she said if she were to tell him more.

“Mr. Snyder, let’s get back to business. I need your help.”

Vermont became friendlier after Stella told him what he wanted to know. “There’s no need to be so polite with me. Just let me know what it is.”

Stella paused.

‘I

guess not only Keegan can change his mood in a second, but everyone in his circle can too.’ Then, she briefly told Vermont about what happened in his jewelry store yesterday and the favor Albert asked.

Vermont already knew what happened yesterday. He even watched the surveillance cameras’ footage on purpose.

very

They got that bangle from an auction in Uscus for about twenty million before he gave it to his mother as a gift. However, his mother did not want it because she thought that it looked tacky. It was something that he would not wear, so he put it on sale in his shop for thirty million.

The bangle had been in the shop for half a year before the manager told him it was finally sold. He only stopped wondering who would be so foolish to buy such an expensive bangle when the manager told him that Keegan’s wife helped him sell it.

He was very shocked after watching the cameras' footage. He thought he was already very shameless for making a profit out of the bangle, yet what Stella did was worse.

Stella just would not stop giving him surprises. He had no idea why he would think that Stella was just a trophy wife.

"Are you telling me to accept Ms. Anne's request to return the bangle?"

Stella chuckled. "I would be talking to Keegan now if that's what I wanted."

She was not very close to Vermont, and she knew he would never do her this favor when such a huge amount of money was involved. However, things would be different if Keegan talked to Vermont about it instead.

Stella was very smart.

Vermont loved to deal with smart people. So, he smiled faintly and said, "What do you want me to do then?"

Stella smirked. "Mr. Snyder, I guess you made a huge profit from that sale, right?"

Vermont had no idea what Stella was thinking, but he responded humbly like a businessman would, "Just enough to cover my cost."

'What an evil businessman.' Stella inwardly cursed before she said, "I guess Ms. Anne is considered one of your top VIPs since she bought such an expensive piece of jewelry from your shop, right? Don't you think you should publicize such a huge sale like this and give back to your customers to maintain a profitable relationship with them? It would only cost you a little to promote your business effectively. I think it's a pretty good marketing idea."

Vermont immediately understood what she meant.

Chapter 137

Stella wanted him to widely advertise the sale and let every person in the upper-class society know about it.

Henry was a person that cared about what other people would think of him very much. He would never want them to laugh at him for returning the bangle.

"This is unbelievable. Stella's plan is just perfect. Albert would stop pestering her if Henry gave up the idea of returning the bangle himself. Even I've never done such an evil thing before!"

After not hearing any response from Vermont, Stella asked tentatively, "What do you think?"

"Stella, did you major in public relations?"

Stella did not know what to say.

"I was in the theater department."

Vermont licked his lips. "In my opinion, you should've ventured into public relations. I would spend a fortune just to hire you."

Stella took it as a joke. "So, what's your thought on this?"

"It's wonderful. The manager talked to me about the marketing campaign a few days ago, and

I think this is a very good opportunity to promote my shop. I'll get it done now." Stella sighed in relief. "Thanks."

Then, Vermont said playfully, "I should be the one thanking you. I wouldn't know how much longer I have to keep that bangle in my store if it weren't for you."

Vermont gave a call to Keegan right after he hung up.

He had no choice. Their love life was just so much more interesting than work.

Keegan saw Vermont's call as soon as he left the hospital.

He declined it without hesitating because he was still mad about what had happened not long ago.

There was no way that Vermont would give up, so he called Aldor instead.

Aldor had no choice but to pass his phone to Keegan.

Keegan grabbed the phone with an angry face. "This better be something important!"

"Your wife called me."

Keegan paused.

"What did you say?"

Vermont smirked. "I said that Stella called me just now."

Keegan's nose hurt again when he heard Stella's name. It reminded him of that check as he

said angrily, "Why would you tell me that?"

"Don't you want to know why she called me?"

"No!"

Keegan was about to hang up.

Then, Vermont immediately said, "Henry wants to return the bangle, and she asked me for a favor!"

Keegan paused. "She did?"

"Yeah. She told me her father threatened her to return the bangle no matter what while crying her heart out. I can never bear to see a woman acting like this, so my heart went soft and agreed to help."

Keegan looked indifferent. "Get lost if you're done with your story!"

"Tsk." Vermont clicked his tongue. "Why wouldn't you believe in such an emotional story?"

Keegan believed Vermont when he said that Stella asked for his help, but not the part when he said that Stella cried her heart out.

'That woman's heart is made of stone. She would never cry in front of an outsider like Vermont to complain about her family problems.'

Chapter 138

Keegan said sarcastically, "I would probably believe it if you said that she beat you up and threatened you to help her."

"Stella looks so skinny and feeble. Does she really hit you?"

Keegan's nose started to hurt again.

"Are you going to tell me or not? I'm going to hang up now!"

Vermont stopped fooling around and told him about what happened truthfully.

"Stella is ruthless. I heard that Albert is tendering for that project in Northon, and he's risking more than half of his wealth on it, hoping that Henry would pull some strings for

him. Henry is a petty man who would stop helping Albert if he could not make things go his way. In that way, Albert won't be able to secure that project. Stella isn't his only daughter. Why would she do this to her father?"

Keegan did not say anything.

Albert gave Stella enough reasons to hate him for her whole life after how he wanted to give up on treating Rainee not long after the accident.

What Stella would do to him was nothing compared to that.

"Ah? Why aren't you speaking?"

Keegan frowned. "Why didn't you ask her if you're so curious?"

Vermont paused.

"Why did you get so mad whenever I talked about Stella? It's just a pair of socks. Get over it."

"Who told you about the socks?" Keegan froze.

"Stella, of course." Vermont squinted. "Are you really that angry just because she accidentally gave that pair of socks to Marshall?"

"You talk too much!"

Keegan's face turned cold. 'Damn this woman. Why would she tell an outsider about it?!

Vermont got very happy after getting the reaction he wanted. He asked, "Do you think I should do her this favor?"

"It's your decision. Why would you ask me?"

Keegan did not want to talk to him anymore, so he hung up.

"Tsk." Vermont clicked his tongue and called the jewelry store manager.

Stella went to the recording booth. One of her friends asked if she could make a guest appearance as a female character in an animated show.

She received no response after the audition, so she agreed to help as she had nothing to do.

She knew this friend when she just started dubbing. The friend's name was Robin Keef, and everybody would call him the "Chief." He was also one of the best voice actors in the industry.

However, he stopped working in the TV drama scene these two years as he started focusing on his new animated show business that he started with his friends.

His own company also produced the show he asked Stella to participate in.

It was purely a favor as Stella's character would only appear in a few scenes.

Stella saw many people in the main hall as soon as she arrived.

Everybody there dressed in their unique style, and all looked very young.

Stella came to give them a flower basket when they had just started the company. She was about to go around and walk to the recording booth upstairs after gazing at the hall.

However, somebody called her before she could do that. "Registration's over here!"

Stella froze. "Registration?"

A young lady said enthusiastically, "Yeah. Everyone's here, Chief. You can only take part in the interview after registering here."

'Wow. This man really used his name as a selling point for recruiting. No wonder many young students are here early in the morning.'

Stella was not surprised that the young lady would think that she was just one of the students because of how crowded that place was. Besides, Stella had a ponytail and was dressed in casual clothes. Even though she was wearing a mask, she still looked very young. Her young- looking and delicate features looked exactly like a student who had just graduated.

Stella wanted to tell the young lady that she did not come for the interview, but she handed her the registration book directly. Then, the young lady saw the scar on the back of her hand as she was about to give her the pen. The young lady was shocked. "I'll fill it in for you since your hand is hurt. What's your name?"

Stella kept quiet.

The problem with Stella was she would have a hard time refusing someone if that person was very friendly to her.

When the lady was all set to start writing, Stella only said, "I'll do it myself."

Chapter 139

The young lady would not stop talking when Stella filled in her information.

“Your eyes are so beautiful. I thought you were an actress when I saw you coming through that door. What school are you from?”

Stella responded flatly, “Trinity University.”

“Trinity? We come from the same university! I’m studying I.T. Are you in the theater department?”

“Yeah,” Stella said before she added, “I graduated many years ago. So I’m much older than all of you here.”

The lady smiled, and both of her canine teeth appeared. “I wouldn’t know at all if you didn’t tell me. You look so young. Should I address you as my senior?”

“Just call me anything you like.”

Then, the lady said softly, “Have you tried voice acting before? I was thinking of going to the recording booth for an audition later. I’ve only done this online for fun, and I don’t even know what a recording booth looks like. However, I wrote that I have a year of voice acting experience while registering. Do you think they would be able to tell?”

Stella was amused. She thought that the lady was timid and bold at the same time, so she got interested in her.

Then, she said, “Most people bluff on their resume. They won’t be able to say anything if you’d just act calmly and composed during the audition later.”

“How do I do that? I’ll definitely get nervous if I see Chief.”

Stella pointed at a man who just came inside and said softly, “What do you think of that guy?” The lady turned around and saw a man about six feet tall. However, he looked very rugged and huge. He even had tattoos on his arm as if he was a gang leader.

“A little intimidating.”

The lady said truthfully.

“What do you think Chief looks like then?”

Robin had never revealed his face on the screen, but his voice was just magnetic and lovely to listen to. The best comment he had received about his voice was that a woman could get pregnant just by listening to his voice.

So, the lady thought he had got to be a very handsome and attractive man with a voice like

that.

The lady answered without hesitating, “Just like one of the hottest men alive.”

Stella handed back the registration book to her and waved at that man. “Chief!” she shouted. The man with tattoos came to her with a smile. “You’re early. I thought I’d had to wait for you.

The lady’s face became tense. She could not accept the fact that the man who looked like a gang leader was whom she referred to as one of the hottest men alive.

‘His voice doesn’t match his appearance at all. I can’t believe that this is how he looks like...’

“It’s the weekend, so the traffic’s pretty good. I got here some time ago.”

Chief handed her a cup of coffee. “Let’s go upstairs and have a look.”

Stella nodded. She thought of something before she left as she turned around and smiled at the lady. “You’re not as nervous anymore, right?”

The lady kept quiet.

‘Nervous? My dream has just been crushed! However, why does his voice sound so good?’

She wondered if she should continue fangirling over Chief or just give up when she saw him talking just now. She thought she would do much better if Chief kept his mouth shut during the audition later.

She looked down and was about to put the registration book back. She was starstruck when she saw the name written on the last row.

Name – Dusk Galaxy...

‘Dusk Galaxy!’

‘What the hell? That girl was actually Dusk Galaxy!’

Chapter 140

Chief was a few years older than Keegan. He was already married and had a daughter old enough to attend kindergarten.

He was the reason why Stella started voice acting in animated shows. They worked together plenty of times, and he even taught her some pronunciation techniques.

He was like a big brother to Stella. In other words, he was a senior who helped her kickstart

her career.

Stella had a short script and got everything done by the afternoon.

Chief was very happy with the final work. He stopped Stella from leaving as soon as they stepped out of the recording booth. "Give me a second. My wife booked us a table at The Fresh Diner. I'll take you there later."

"It's fine. I live around here. I'll just eat at home."

Stella was about to sneak out as she spoke, but Chief grabbed her wrist and glowered at her. "Why is it so difficult to eat with you? Are you scared that I'll kidnap you?" he asked.

"It's not that..."

"Let's go then! Otherwise, my wife will think that there's something fishy going on between us if you don't dare to show up."

Stella kept quiet.

"Okay then."

She knew very well that what Chief said was not true at all.

Chief's wife was a history teacher. Stella had met with her before, and she was a very refined and elegant person. Chief was so obsessed with her, and there was just no way that his wife would think that way.

In fact, Chief wanted Stella to voice act for the female lead in this animated show. Chief even talked to her about it, and she agreed to participate too. However, another shareholder recommended his girlfriend, a rather famous voice actress, to be the female lead.

Chief only had a verbal agreement with Stella without any black-and-white contract, so he could not find any way to reject that shareholder's request. He could not get over the fact that he had ditched Stella. So, he kept asking Stella for a meal to apologize, but she would never be able to make it.

He only brought his wife up because he did not want to be rejected again.

The Fresh Diner was a shop that specialized in grilling fish and lamb. It was a big space without private rooms, and the entire place smelled like smoke.

Chief was unlike any other famous voice actor who would participate in variety shows after getting famous. Instead, he had never shown his face publicly. He would not participate in any events related to his job other than privately meeting some of his real friends in the industry. That was also why his fans found him very mysterious. He gained even more fans.

Stella once asked him jokingly after getting close to him if he was just scared that his fans would not be able to take it if they knew that he looked nothing like his voice.

Obviously, Chief denied her assumption and said that he was very happy with how manly he

looked.

He did not want to show his face because his appearance was not his tool for making money, and his child was already old enough to attend school. In addition, he was worried that the media would affect his family and child badly if he kept exposing himself to their cameras. He loved his job very much, but he did not want his job to affect his personal life.

Stella admired him very much for that.

It was rare for a man who was so successful in his career to care about his family so much.

It was around one in the afternoon, and a lot of people were dining there. Robin's wife, Susan Payne, came earlier, but she was in the queue for quite some time too. She only sat down for a while before Stella and Robin came. Susan waved at them as soon as she saw them from afar. "Stella, over here."

Stella smiled and walked in her direction, "Susan, long time no see. You look even prettier now.

Susan liked Stella very much. Stella was gorgeous, yet she was never stingy with her compliments. That was one of the traits that Susan liked about her.

"Your sweet tongue has never changed. Have a seat. Robin kept saying that you guys would be here in a minute, yet I waited for almost an hour. Did he force you to work overtime again?" "I'm innocent!" Robin said.

Stella smiled, "I'm only making a cameo appearance this time. He has no right to make me work overtime."

She handed Susan a bag as she spoke. "I bought some pastries for your child on the way here." "Are you returning the favor just because we're buying you this meal?" Susan took the bag from her anyway. "Are you both hungry? Should I order some appetizers first?"

Then, she said softly, "I have another friend coming in a while. I'm just thinking if we should wait for him before ordering."

Stella paused. She immediately felt uncomfortable as she was not expecting another person to join them.

That was because she knew she would not know the person, and it would be very awkward for her to eat with them.

However, she responded anyway, "It's fine. I'm not hungry yet."

Chief noticed how uncomfortable she was, so he explained, "He used to be my classmate, and he's sort of a director now. I heard that you're interested in venturing into acting previously. However, I don't really expose myself to that field, so I'm unfamiliar with anybody in that circle. I suddenly thought of this old friend that's close to me, so I wanted you both to meet each other. If by any chance he has a good role, he could give you a shot at it."

Felicity was the only person who knew that she wanted to be an actress. She was a diehard fan

of Chief, and she remembered how Felicity pestered her just to get the Chief's number. 'It has got to be Felicity who told him about this.' She thought to herself.

Stella sighed and raised her glass. "Robin, here's to you."

She was very glad that Robin tried to help her.

"Stella, it's still too early for that."

Chief teased her but took the glass from her anyway.

The three started chatting happily soon after, as Robin and his wife were easygoing. They would argue occasionally, but Chief always took a step back for his wife. Their married life made Stella very envious of them.

The director only arrived when they finished two bottles of beer.

Chief had been staring at the door from just now. He shouted as soon as he saw the man they were waiting for, "Daniel, over here!"

Chapter 141

'Daniel? Why does that name sound so familiar? And he's a director too. It can't be him, right?'

Stella turned around hesitantly, and she was shocked.

The director that Chief talked about was the same as the one who directed the show she went for the audition, Daniel Wood!

'Sort of a director?!'

Just how impressive was Daniel in the industry? Let's put it this way; all the dramas that he directed did not have a score lower than seven on the most demanding critic application in the country.

Any dramas with a score of seven or more would be selected as must-watch! The lowest score his drama had was 7.8!

Stella could not help but feel a little nervous as she was going to eat with Daniel unexpectedly, not to mention that it was a private meeting.

Daniel was surprised to see Stella too. Then, he walked toward them naturally and greeted Robin and his wife.

Stella found out that Daniel was Chief's senior from their conversation. They had been very close since studying in the same school, and Susan was a cousin to Daniel's wife. Daniel introduced Robin and Susan to each other, so they got even closer to each other after that.

"Daniel, allow me to introduce you to a junior of mine. Her name is Stella Jewell, and she's pretty famous for voice acting. Do you remember Dusk Galaxy that I'd always tell you about? That's her. She's pretty and has a nice voice too. Not only that, but she's also good-tempered. Stella, this is my best friend, Daniel Wood. Please get to know each other more."

Stella was actually a little awkward. She figured Daniel recognized who she was, judging by his reaction. She thought it would not be appropriate for her to be too straightforward with Daniel since he did not bring it up, so she stretched her arm out and said, "Hello, Mr. Wood. My name is Stella Jewell."

Daniel did not shake her hand. Instead, he nodded indifferently.

Stella was shocked as she slowly retracted her hand that was left hanging in the air awkwardly.

Susan noticed something was not right. However, she did not dwell on it as she said, "Let's order some food. I'm sure we haven't eaten anything at all here. Let's eat and talk since we're all hungry."

"Yes, absolutely. Let's eat and talk."

Daniel appeared to be very introverted compared to how friendly Robin and Susan were. Perhaps it had something to do with his profession, or he was just naturally reserved. The fact that there was a stranger like Stella at the table could also be why he did not want to talk much. Stella felt very awkward. It was embarrassing for her to barge into the room during the audition. Perhaps Daniel still could not get over that.

Chief was a very talkative person, so the meal did not appear to be too boring with him there.

He only started to get into business after drinking more beers.

"Daniel, you know very well that I don't easily ask other people for a favor. However, there's something that I really hope that you could help me with."

Daniel smiled. "Are you going to spill your guts to me after drinking some beers?"

"Tsk." Chief clicked his tongue. "Do you even know what the alcohol content is in beers? I'm very sober."

He pointed at Stella as he spoke. "You've met my friend here. She's a graduate of the theater department of Trinity University. That's a very prestigious university, and everybody knows it. You should consider casting her if you have any suitable role for her in the future. I guarantee that she won't let you down!"

Daniel took a sip of his tea. He only spoke after pausing for a moment. "You know me. I don't talk about work when I'm eating."

Chief frowned. "We're brothers, not outsiders. Why are you acting so inflexible? I wasn't asking you to abuse your power. I just wanted you to give her a chance if you can. I'm sure she can do much better than those boring actresses you recruited."

"I recruit most of the actors and actresses publicly. Anyone who matches the criteria is free to join the audition. However, I would like the people who join the audition to just mess with others to give up that idea and stop wasting everybody's time."

Chapter 142

Stella frowned. She felt like Daniel was implying something by saying that.

Then, Daniel spoke again, "Let's dig in. We should talk about something unrelated to work now that we finally get to eat together."

Chief wanted to say something, but Susan tapped him lightly under the table. So, he gave up the idea.

Stella felt very bothered throughout the whole meal.

Chief went to settle the bill while Daniel went to the washroom after everyone ate.

Daniel came out of the washroom and saw Stella standing in his way.

He paused for a second before saying flatly, "Excuse me."

Stella cut to the chase and said, "Mr. Wood, what were you trying to say before we ate just now?"!

Daniel glared at her. "Ms. Jewell, I'm sure you know very well what I meant. Why do you have to ask me?"

"What do I know?"

Stella was ridiculed. "You said some people would go to the audition just to mess with others. Why did you say that? Do you think I used my connections to arrange this meal today, and I'm immoral for doing so? Or did you say that because you're not happy that I barged into your room on the audition day? I can apologize to you for barging in. It was indeed my fault, but I only knew that Robin invited another guest to join us before you arrived."

Daniel did not feel like listening to her nonsense. He said flatly, "I don't care. Please move aside."

Stella took a deep breath. Her good temper had finally reached its limit.

"Still, you've got to clarify it to me! What did I do to mess with other people?"

She was already embarrassed once during the audition. She did not care how Daniel would look at her, but there was no way that she would take the blame for something she did not do! Also, she could not allow Daniel to be unhappy with Robin and Susan because of her.

Daniel was shocked. Then, his expression became infuriated. "Ms. Jewell, you should apply for other roles since you think that my show offered too few scenes. There's no place for a big shot like you in my production team!"

“When did I say that?” Stella frowned. “I’ve never even read the script. Why would I think that my role has too few scenes?”

Daniel paused. “What? You didn’t receive the script?”

Stella shook her head. “Nobody called me up after the audition ended.”

Daniel thought that something was not right. He took his phone out and kept scrolling before he showed Stella a few screenshots of a chat. “Isn’t this you?”

Stella looked at the profile picture and handle. It was the same as her WhatsApp profile, but she never sent anything like that.

The crew sent her the script on WhatsApp and asked her if she would be willing to sign the contract in the screenshots.

However, ‘Stella’ told the crew that she had too few scenes. She also mentioned that her salary was too low and wanted more money and scenes. She was also very arrogant. Not only did she complain about her part, but she also kept criticizing the script by saying that it was garbage. Daniel was the original screenwriter for that show, and it was only right for him to be mad after reading the conversation.

Stella read everything in one go before she said in a low voice, “I can assure you that this person is not me. This conversation took place two days ago at night. I broke my phone two days ago and only got a new one this afternoon. So it’s impossible for me to chat with other people during this time.”

Stella reached for her phone. It was a new phone, and there were just a few chats on her WhatsApp. She was not lying.

Daniel frowned. After keeping quiet, he said, “The role you auditioned for is already taken. The contract was signed this morning.”

Stella paused but came around very quickly. She realized that someone had set her up, and it was probably the one who had taken her role.

She knew that showbiz could be very dark, but she was not expecting to encounter something like this in her first audition.

Chapter 143

Stella could not help but feel disappointed. “Why didn’t you say you were a voice actor during the audition?” Daniel asked. Stella shook her head and said, “Because there was simply no need to mention it. No matter how far I’ve made it in the voice acting industry, I’m still a rookie in acting.”

'Plus, such experience may not benefit my career as an actor. On the contrary, it may even hinder my future development in the field since my previous achievements may overtake my current,' Stella thought.

Daniel stared at her for a while, wondering what she was thinking. Then, after a long time, he said, "Let's keep in contact. What's your number?" Stella was taken aback when she heard that. "I have to give Robin something for introducing you to me," Daniel said lightly. Stella stayed quiet.

'There was no need to make it so obvious...' she thought. Daniel had asked for her number but did not give her his. Clearly, it was going to be a one-way contact. The only reason he wanted her number was to deal with Robin.

After dinner was over, Stella went back to the Kane residence. Although she remained calm on the surface when Daniel told her that the role had been given to someone else, she was devastated.

Stella used to fantasize about achieving great heights in her career after her divorce and slapping Keegan right in the face. However, now that she thought about it, it was a stupid dream.

'How big does an actor have to get to be considered successful? Till they're on the big screen? I can't even secure a small role right now.' For a woman who got married as soon as she graduated, things were not as easy as she imagined. The competition in the acting industry was fierce. It did not matter if they cheated their way up to the top; all that mattered was that they reached it.

Keegan had kept Stella in captivity for a long time, which caused her to be simple-minded. Hence, she did not expect someone else to take her role.

"Madam, it's time to take your medicine," Maya interrupted. Stella could already detect the familiar smell of the decoction without turning to look at her. Maya put the medicine bowl on the table and opened a pack of maple candy on the side. "Mrs. Kane sent over a box of maple candies. They're very sweet and can help counter the bitterness," she said.

Stella sighed in response. It was always a battle to take her medication. When she thought of what Dahlia had said in the hospital earlier, she decided to down the decoction. Maya was surprised.

'Eww,' Stella said to herself. She put the bowl down and drank a few sips of water to subside the bad taste. "I'm going to take my medicine on time now, Maya. You don't have to report every detail to Mrs. Kane anymore."

||

The expression on Maya's face changed. "I don't know what you mean, Madam."

Stella glanced at her and said, "Didn't my mother-in-law ask you to come and take care of us because she wanted to ensure that I took my medication on time? I assure you I'll do precisely

that. As for other things, such as Keegan and I arguing or even having sex, there's no need for you to report them back to her. These matters are between my husband and me. I don't care if you were sent here by my mother-in-law. This is an invasion of privacy. What's more, your current salary is given by the Vinci Rivera Group. You should know that my husband has the final say. Remember who you're working for. If you can't carry out such a simple task, I wouldn't mind asking my husband to hire a new housemaid."

Maya's face turned ugly. "Mrs. Kane sent me here to do her bidding. You have no right to do so, Madam."

Stella smiled and said lightly, "There are ten thousand ways for me to get rid of you, Maya. It's just that I rather us not go through it. All my mother-in-law would do is stay mad at me for a couple of days. But you? Six types of insurance, one housing fund, a high salary, and flexible leaves. Where will you be able to find a job that has such a huge payout in Rivera at this age, huh? I heard your husband was laid off a while ago, and your son just went to college. So... I'm guessing this job must be very important to you right now."

Chapter 144

Maya was shaking with anger. Stella had been too kind and gentle for too long. Everyone thought she was a weak little bunny. But she was, in fact, a lion who was ready to bite back. 'How would I ever stand out from the crowd if I continue being an obedient bunny?' she thought.

'So what if Dahlia sent her here? She's just a housemaid. Keegan doesn't even bat an eye at her. I'm bound to be the lady of this house if I can secure my place as Keegan's wife. She won't even be able to secure her job!'

Maya was unhappy, but she did not dare to provoke Stella again. She had every right to fire her. Maya lowered her head and said in a hoarse voice, "My apologies, Madam. I won't do it again."

Stella did not eat dinner that night. Instead, she went to her room and hit the sheets. Keegan's return was unclear to her, but she was alone in her bedroom when she woke up the next day. She asked Maya about it and found out he came home at around 11:00 p.m. last night. 'He must have spent the night in the study and left early in the morning,' she thought.

Stella did not care about Keegan. She even felt that it was better if he did not return. The villa was big and comfortable; there was lots of space for pets. But Keegan disliked animals. Stella knew they would get into a fight if she adopted some cats and dogs because he would probably throw them out when she was not at the house.

Suddenly, her phone rang after she had washed her face. Stella saw that it was Albert and did not plan to answer the call. Instead, she left her phone upstairs and went down to have breakfast.

When Stella went up, she saw the trending headlines on the internet.

[Mysterious Woman Spent 30 Million Dollars on Rare High-Quality Platinum Bracelet; Merchant Gave Hermes Bag as Gift]

[Just In: Mysterious Lady Suspected to Be the Daughter of Henry Anne]

The comments read [What does a 30-million-dollar bracelet even look like?] Another person commented [I'll never understand what it's like to be rich]

'How much did Vermont spend to be in the top searches? There are nearly ten top search recommendations about this matter. Plus, I can't believe that cheapskate actually gave Hermes bag.'

her a

Soon, the initial shock disappeared as the internet revealed that the bag was only at an entry-level price. It was merely thirty thousand to forty thousand dollars, which was not worth mentioning compared to the 30-million-dollar bracelet.

'Okay, he's still the cheapskate I thought he was. But he did the most to spread the news. People are already talking about Xianna buying the 30-million-dollar bracelet after one night. Dad must have called because he saw the news.'

Stella played outside with the neighbor's dog before calling her dad back during breakfast. Albert was as anxious as a parent who had lost his child. Henry had called him at 5:00 in the morning to scold him, saying that he was playing dirty tricks and that he would not let him go so easily.

Only then did Albert realize the gravity of the matter. He did not even bother to wash up as he

hurriedly called Stella to ask if Keegan had talked to Vermont about it.

Chapter 146

All the words that came out of Stella's mouth were uttered seriously. Albert even began to wonder if he was overthinking it. Finally, after pondering for a moment, he whispered, "Didn't you see the headlines today?"

"

"What headlines?" Stella asked blankly. "I just woke up and saw that you called. I had no time to look at anything else. Why? What happened?"

"Mr. Anne's purchase of the platinum bracelet is on the news," Albert replied with a sullen face. "Isn't it normal for such an expensive piece of jewelry to make the news?" Stella did not seem to understand the severity of what was going on. "What's the problem?"

"How will Mr. Anne get a refund now that everyone knows about it?" Albert frowned. "Why don't you ask Keegan to talk to Mr. Snyder again? Ask him if it's possible to say that there was something wrong on the manufacturing side and that they need to take it back."

'How could I possibly ask Keegan to do such a shameless thing? He never thinks about what it's like for me,' Stella sneered.

"I'm afraid I can't do that, dad. You asked me to talk to Mr. Snyder about the matter, and I did. He agreed. Now that Mr. Anne is trending on the internet and feels embarrassed to return the product, you want the seller to lie about the bracelet's quality? Would you agree to that if you were Mr. Snyder?"

"I helped you to save your friend's face and allowed him to return the bracelet, but now you're asking us to lie? Vermont is not dumb. He would never agree to be taken advantage of. God, I can't even bear to ask Keegan about it."

Albert was getting a little nervous. "Why can't you do it? We're family. Shouldn't we be helping each other at times like this? Didn't I work hard to let you marry into the Kane family? Do you not care about this family anymore now that your life is better?"

'How dare he say that! Not only did he work his way through the Kane family, he even wiped out the entire company that he and mom built. All the leading people in the company workforce left within two years. He wanted me to marry into the Kane family because he needed the money to rebuild the company that was destroyed in his hands. He searched high and low for a sponsor cum husband for me way before I finished my studies. It did not matter if the person had a bad reputation or if he was much older than me. All that mattered was that

got

the money. He was willing to give her daughter away for his interests!'

he

'He doesn't even remember what I had to go through to get him the money for the company. Now that he's in need, I'm the one who's being an ungrateful and vicious b*tch?' Stella suddenly felt ridiculous for thinking that Albert was capable of change.

"Was what I did all these years alongside Keegan not enough, dad? When have I yet to try my best to fulfill your requests? No matter how difficult you were, I never uttered a single word of complaint. On the contrary, I'd tell myself, 'Oh, but he's family. There's no harm in helping.' But what about you? Did you ever think how hard it was for me to be your perfect little princess?" Stella took a deep breath, and her voice trembled as she continued, "Keegan and I almost got a divorce not long ago."

"What?!" Albert raised his voice. "What happened? Why did you guys almost get divorced?"

"Do you remember the last time you asked me to talk to Keegan about the production line?" Stella sniffled. "I lied about not talking to him because he got very mad at me. He said that I was selfish and overreaching. We had a big fight over this. If grandma hadn't stopped him, we would have been separated by now. Keegan and I don't really have a deep emotional foundation. There are some things that I can't talk about too much with him. I can't anger him any further, dad. Dahlia already didn't like me because I couldn't get pregnant..."

Albert seemed to be moved by Stella's sincerity. But, on the other hand, Keegan, who was having a meeting, suddenly felt a chill down his back.

Chapter 145

Stella did not answer Albert's calls. Finally, after more than an hour, Albert asked someone to remove the search entry, but a new one popped up after the old one was deleted. The trending searches on the matter were like a ticking time bomb; there was no way to suppress it.

Albert paced back and forth when he thought of what would happen to him if he did not settle the problem. "Is she still not picking up?" Hylde put a cup of warm milk on the coffee table and asked. Albert frowned, shook his head, and said, "No, she's not."

Hylde glanced at the time and said, "She should be awake by now. Is she not answering on purpose?"

"But she has no reason not to answer my calls."

"Maybe she felt guilty and dared not pick up," Hylde snorted coldly. "I mean, you called and told her to ask Keegan to talk to Vermont yesterday. Don't you think it's too much of a coincidence that something like this happened today? 'Merchant gave Hermes bag as

a gift.' He only gifted her the bag two to three days after her purchase. Who does that and parades it around on a flag?"

Albert frowned. He also found the whole incident strange but believed Stella had no reason to do so. "You're overthinking. Stella is the only heiress in our family. Why would she want to sabotage her own family? What benefit would she reap from it?" Albert pursed his lips and said.

But Hylda dismissed him, "Don't forget who gave birth to her. She is just as ruthless as Rainee Spade. Did you forget how she questioned you the last time we met in the parking lot? If she knew what happened back then, she would rather die in honor than live in disgrace with that personality of hers. You say she's the heiress of the Jewell family, but she's also the daughter-in-law of the Kanes. If Keegan becomes Vinci Rivera's successor, she will be the lady of the family. Do you really believe she would want anything to do with the Jewell family then?" Albert's face darkened. He had clearly thought about that as well. Stella had not been close to him since she was a child. Their relationship became worse after what happened between him and Rainee. It was only when she got married to Keegan that there was an apparent change in their connection.

However, in the past two years, Albert had felt that Stella was gradually getting out of his control; she became more dismissive of his requests. He even wondered if she had found out something that she was not supposed to. 'If she is really going to be the lady of the house in the Kane family, what would become of me?'

Just as Albert was thinking about it, his phone rang. It was Stella.

He signaled Hylda to be quiet and answered the phone.

"Hey, dad. I just woke up and saw that you called." Stella's voice was a little hoarse; it indeed sounded like she had just gotten out of bed. "I was about to call and tell you that Mr. Snyder agreed to do it."

Stella managed to stop Albert's suspicion of her with one sentence. "He did?"

"Well, Keegan came home last night and told me that he had to go for drinks with Mr. Snyder to get him to agree. He came home when it was well past midnight. I wanted to tell you there

and then, but I was afraid of disturbing your sleep. So, I decided to call you first thing in the morning. Who knew that you'd be the one who called me first."

"Mr. Snyder said he would ask Mr. Anne to return the item with the shopping invoice. He also explained to the manager that a refund would be issued if there were no problems with the goods."

Chapter 147

Albert heaved a sigh of relief, and his attitude toward Stella began to soften. "I'm sorry for making things difficult for you," he said softly.

"We're a family, dad. I'll do my best to help with anything I can, but I really can't do this. You could ask Mr. Anne to try and return it. Mr. Snyder had already agreed. I'm sure he'll keep his promise. Don't you think?"

"I'll think of another way. By the way, two boxes of oysters from New Zealand just arrived at my doorstep. I'll have someone deliver them for you and Keegan to enjoy later. So just be happy together, and I'll have one less thing to worry about.

"Thanks, dad."

'Oysters for Keegan to enjoy? I'd rather feed it to the dogs!' Stella thought. Before she hung up, she added, "Oh, right. Dad, I persuaded Ms. Anne to think carefully about her purchase. But she was with Sophia that day, and you know girls... She gave her a few words of praise, and she was soaring through the air in no time. It would be fine if it were someone else, but you better be careful around Mr. Anne since you have a mutually beneficial relationship."

Albert sighed and said in a deep voice, "Okay, I have to go now. Bye."

"You don't actually believe in her nonsense, do you?" Hylda could not help but ask as soon as the phone disconnected. Sophia, who had been listening on the side, turned green, knowing that Stella had turned on her. She hurriedly tried to defend herself by saying, 'Dad, if Stella did not tease Xianna that day, she wouldn't have bought the bracelet. It's clearly Stella's fault. She must have known that Xianna would fall for it. I even saw her accept a commission from the store...'

"Shut up!" Albert yelled with a gloomy look on his face. "I told you to proceed cautiously, but did you listen to me? No. Why did you even take Xianna into the store if you already saw Stella there? Did you do it on purpose? Don't think I don't know you, Sophia."

Sophia's expression was ugly. She wanted to refute, but Hylda quickly pulled her aside and handed Albert a glass of water. "Calm down, Albert," she said. "There's no use in pointing fingers at this point. Why don't we use this time to think about the next step to solve this?"

"The next step? Is there even a solution to this?" Albert snarled. "We can't possibly buy the jewelry ourselves, can we? It's 30 million dollars, for god's sake! Not thirty thousand! If that Mr. Anne can't handle this, all our efforts will be in vain."

Suddenly, something flickered in Hylda's mind. "We can't buy the jewelry, but we can certainly sell it!"

“Who would want to purchase it?” Albert questioned with a frown.

Hylde smiled and whispered something in Albert’s ears. His expression changed, and his widened. “Do you really think that it would be feasible?” he hesitated and asked.

“You won’t know until you try it out. If not, do you want to spend 30 million dollars?”

“Okay. I’ll discuss it with Mr. Anne.”

eyes

The boxes of oysters from New Zealand arrived at Stella’s doorstep that afternoon. They were extremely fresh, but Stella did not like seafood, especially shellfish. Keegan, on the other

hand, loved seafood. In the past, Stella would have saved it for him; but she would not show any kindness to that cold man.

She put the two boxes of shellfish in the car and drove to their old residence to give one box to Cordelia. She then brought the other box to Vermont’s workplace. Stella did not like owing anyone anything, especially those close to Keegan. Thus, she decided to gift him the oysters to express her gratitude.