

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted by Eleven Jewell

Chapter 244-275

Chapter 244

When Aldor returned, Marshall entered the room with him.

Stella was shocked when she saw Marshall, "Mr. Moore, what are you doing here?"

"I've got an appointment with Keegan to discuss some work matters," Marshall was as gentle

as ever.

He continued, "You're... Waiting for Keegan to get off work?"

"Who wants to wait for him to get off work?" Stella pouted.

She did not want to discuss the bothersome matters between her and Keegan, so she changed. the topic.

"You two still have work-related interactions?"

"Sort of."

Marshall did not go into detail since it was work-related.

Aldor looked at the text message on his phone. Then, he lifted his head and said, "Mrs. Kane, please keep Mr. Moore company. I need to go to the conference room."

Stella waved her hand, "Go ahead."

As Aldor left, Stella handed Marshall a cup of tea, "Have some tea, Mr. Moore."

Marshall thanked her but did not touch the

"Do

cup.

you not like tea? Shall I make you some coffee instead?" Stella asked.

“There’s no need. It’s not that I don’t like tea; I often have it when I’m stopping myself from smoking. However, drinking too much of it leads to insomnia at night, so I’m controlling my intake.”

“You’re quitting smoking?”

Marshall nodded, “The doctor told me to.”

Stella seemed to agree with his statement, “Quitting smoking is good for your body. I heard Kee- My husband say your illness improved after staying abroad for a few years. Since you already have a weak constitution, you should quit smoking.”

Marshall was astonished, “Keegan told you about me?”

Stella was worried that he felt uncomfortable. She quickly said, “He just brought it up once. He didn’t go into detail.”

Marshall chuckled.

“Don’t worry; I don’t mind. After all, it isn’t a secret anyway.”

Stella initially wanted to change the topic. However, she could not stop her curiosity. She asked, “What illness is it?”

Marshall pointed at his head, “An illness here.”

Stella was shocked.

“Mental illness?” she asked.

Marshall was speechless.

He pursed his lips and said in a low voice, “Just some illness related to my head.”

Stella immediately felt awkward.

She laughed dryly, “You should’ve said it more clearly...”

Marshall could not help but chuckle, “Alright. I didn’t make myself clear enough.”

Stella scratched her head in embarrassment and asked with concern, “Then, has the illness been fully cured?”

”

“Almost. I occasionally get headaches, but it doesn’t affect my daily life.”

'It's such a shame. He's still so young, yet he spent so many years bedridden,' Stella thought.

"Take it slow, you'll definitely recover. You're so young and awesome. The best is yet to come.

Marshall was a little amused. It was his first time having someone console him this way.

'How do I put this? It's like she's an elderly person consoling a younger person when she's a few years younger than me,' he thought.

"How am I awesome?"

"You got so many certificates even when you were sick; isn't that awesome?"

Marshall was surprised. He asked warmly, "Did Keegan also tell you that?"

"He wouldn't tell me such things. I saw it on the website myself."

'Marshall's currently working at his friend's company, so I had looked up his information on that firm's website before. Even after combining some of the lawyers' resumes from that firm, their experience is still not as impressive as his. Marshall got a full scholarship for a Master's in law at a foreign university. He was a resident author of a top law journal company locally and abroad, has a lot of experience in legal aid, and was a legal counsel for some well-known cases. He was also one of the top ten most favorable bar exam lecturers, taught college students, and has an airplane, diving, and skydiving license... His experience from the past 30 years is way more exciting than what an ordinary person experiences in their lifetime. In hindsight, I may have hired a big shot in the legal profession,' she thought.

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"You looked that up?" Marshall asked in amusement. "That was compiled by one of my colleagues at the firm. It's somewhat exaggerated."

'While some of his activities may have been exaggerated, the journal articles and college degrees are all the real deal. Marshall is so outstanding that it's unreal,' Stella thought.

She smiled, "Since it's already written on the website, we'll consider it all real. If it isn't, work hard to make it real."

Marshall also smiled. "Alright. I'll do my best," he said and paused momentarily.

"I saw you deleted your Dusk Galaxy social media account."

Stella thought he was worried it would be difficult to get evidence for the lawsuit.

“I’ve saved all of the screenshots,” she said.

“That’s not what I’m saying,” Marshall pursed his lips. “There are other ways for you to clarify those untrue rumors; there was no need for you to quit social media.”

“What other ways? Sue her?” Stella smiled. “She didn’t explicitly say my name, so she could deny it even if I sued her. If I didn’t quit social media, everyone would say that I’m justifying my actions, no matter what I post. It only takes one mouth to create rumors, but it’ll take much more to clarify them. Since you’re a lawyer, you should know that better than me.”

Marshall was silent.

‘My so-called other way is just to let it be. Since she can’t sue them, she could just send them legal letters and wait for the issue to die. However, this approach doesn’t count as clarifying anything. Once these rumors take root in the public’s minds, it’ll be difficult for Stella to clarify the issue. After all, nobody will continuously pay attention to it. While Stella’s method of quitting social media is to inflict damage on herself and the opposition, it’s also the most effective and direct counterattack. Right now, nobody online cares if Kelly Harper’s interview is real. What they care about is that her so-called baseless exposé led to a voice actor with millions of followers quitting social media due to online bullying,’ he thought.

Marshall’s thoughts were the same as Felicity’s. They simply thought it was a shame for her to delete her social media account.

Meanwhile, Stella seemed optimistic.

“While I’ve already deleted my social media account, I will continue to sue whoever I need. To do this, I’ll need to trouble you, Mr. Moore.”

Marshall’s expression softened, “To be honest, I’ve been meaning to contact you for the past two days. I’ve submitted a request to the platform, and they’ve gotten back to me. This is the information on the key members’ identities. Take a look.”

He unlocked his phone and showed Stella a few screenshots.

Stella glanced at the photos and frowned. Then, she swiped to the next photo, and her frown grew deeper. When she finally swiped to the last photo, she had an intense frown and was silent.

Marshall sighed, “When I was investigating the matter, I’d already expected something like

this to happen.”

“Underage?” Stella was in disbelief.

The oldest mastermind behind the group which premediated the hate mail and online hate was 21, while the youngest was only 14.

Among nine of the key members, five of them were underage,

“Does this mean there’s no way to sue them?”

“It’s not that there isn’t, but they can’t be convicted even if you win the case. At most, you’ll only get them to write you a letter of apology and get compensation from their guardians.”

‘If the accused are minors, the situation will become tricky because the law is always extraordinarily forgiving toward minors. When these keyboard warriors are on the internet, they cyberbully strangers by cursing them with the most vicious words. Some of the victims suffer mental breakdowns, while some get depression. And the price these violent people need to pay is merely apologizing and giving compensation, simply because they have their protective shield of being underage. This is way too unfair!’ Stella thought.

She felt suffocated.

“Do you think they’ll realize their mistake just by apologizing?”

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Marshall could tell she was feeling conflicted.

“For the past few days, I’ve used the firm’s official account and contacted these people in private. I told them to delete their hateful comments and pin their apologies on Facebook. Then this matter will be considered settled in private. Otherwise, we’ll take the legal route. Guess what they told me?”

Stella looked at him and did not speak.

“Every single one told me to sue them if I can. Not only did they not delete their comments, they even edited my private messages and posted the edited photos on Facebook, claiming they were being threatened. They encouraged netizens who don’t know the truth to condemn me,” Marshall paused.

He continued coolly, “They don’t think they’re wrong at all, so how could they sincerely admit their mistakes?”

'How threatening could a mere apology letter be?' he thought.

"There's no way to convict them, but I can ask for compensation. When faced with this type of people, asking for compensation might work even better. However, our focus will definitely still be on adults. Also..." Marshall paused.

"Do you know Tammy Gull?"

Stella shook her head, "I haven't heard of this person. Why?"

"The person's name is registered under the name Tammy Gull. This person's IP address is in Rivera."

Stella was startled.

'This person is from Rivera, and their profile photo is one of Bella's private photos. So it really is too coincidental,' she thought.

"Could someone have purchased another person's information to register this phone number?"

"That's not very likely. Years ago, people were required to use their real names when purchasing phone cards and registering social media accounts. Besides, this account was registered last year and had even tipped others during live streams. This shows that there's payment information bound to this number. If the person had bought another person's information, they can't possibly have done this."

"So, what you're saying is either this person is using the account, or someone close to them is using it?"

Marshall nodded.

Stella thought for a while.

"This name doesn't ring any bells,' she thought.

Marshall said warmly, "If you can't think of anyone, so be it. Perhaps I'm overly concerned. This person might be a fan, and the profile photo is purely coincidental. This doesn't stop us

from suing this person."

Stella sighed in relief. When she thought of what Marshall had said just now, she said in a low voice, "Sorry for the trouble. I've even gotten you involved and verbally abused by these people."

Marshal laughed and said quietly, "It's normal to get scolded when one's in an attorney profession. Self-regulation is one of our required courses.'

"How do you self-regulate?"

Stella asked earnestly.

'I care too much about what people online say. At one point, I almost got depression because of the things these people said. To be honest, I also need to master this self-regulation skill,' she thought.

"It's really nothing," Marshall looked at her. Then, he said seriously, "The trick is to be shameless."

Stella was speechless.

"What kind of tip is that..."

Stella muttered and could not help but also laugh.

Suddenly she found Marshall to be rather interesting.

'He's funny and strong in his field of expertise. But, most importantly, he's gentle and approachable. How do I put this? He's too perfect. How could such a perfect person... Be friends with someone as bad-tempered as that bastard, Keegan?!' she thought.

Stella said what she had in mind, "When you were younger, did you lose a fight with Keegan and were forced to befriend him?"

Marshall laughed, "What makes you say so?"

"You're so good-tempered. How'd you end up being friends with someone like him?"

Keegan had just arrived at the door of the office. When he heard her words, his expression instantly darkened.

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Marshall had a softened expression.

"Keegan's outstanding. Not only is he outstanding in the eyes of the elders, but he's also outstanding in the eyes of his peers. During exams at school, none of us could be as good as him, no matter how hard we tried. Even at sports, he was also always better than us. He's good -tempered, patient, skilled at his profession, and treasures talent. You can see how much everyone trusts him from how his schoolmates came to help him when he started the company right after he graduated," he said in a gentle tone.

'Keegan's good-tempered? Keegan's patient? Do we both know the same Keegan?' wondered

Stella.

"You must have some kind of misunderstanding toward Keegan. So you're saying he's good tempered?"

Stella could not help but say, "Up till this age, I've never seen a person with a worse personality than his. He puts on a long face every time he's unhappy. He'll pick on your mistakes whenever you ask why he's unhappy. If you act like you don't see his expression and do not ask him about it, he'll stare at you the entire day and make you feel uncomfortable," she said as she mimicked his expression. She continued, "This is the expression. Doesn't he look like Squash from Plants vs. Zombies?"

Marshall could not help but smile.

While Stella was mimicking Keegan, she suddenly noticed Keegan standing by the door with a stoic expression. She shuddered and almost showed panic on her face.

Stella coughed and said guiltily, "Honey, your meeting ended already?"

Keegan threw her an icy side-eye, "If I didn't return earlier, how would I get to watch your superb imitation show?"

Stella was at a loss for words.

She pouted. Since Marshall was present, she kept quiet.

Marshall laughed, "Stella was worried that I'd feel bored, so she purposefully chatted with me for a while. It was just banter."

Keegan obviously knew it was banter, and he would not get angry over a single criticism from Stella.

'It's not like it's my first day knowing this woman. I just feel uncomfortable seeing Marshall helping Stella explain the situation,' he thought.

Keegan walked over and stood between Stella and Marshall. Then, he sat down next to Stella with a natural expression.

"Aren't we meeting in the afternoon? Why'd you come over this early?"

Marshall replied warmly, "Madam Chase is going on a picnic with some of her classmates this

afternoon, so she asked me to be her driver. I was worried that I wouldn't make it this afternoon; I dropped by because I needed to help her pick up some things."

Stella was puzzled, "Madam Chase?"

Marshall smiled, "My mother's last name is Chase."

Stella nodded.

'Marshall must share a good relationship with his mother. Otherwise, he wouldn't make such a joke,' she thought.

After the two briefly exchanged pleasantries, they got down to business.

'Keegan asked Marshall to look over at some contracts, presumably because they involved clauses that need to be interpreted by a professional attorney. The legal counsel team at the Vinci Rivera Group is impressive. I wonder if Keegan looked for his own friend because he doesn't trust them. I rarely ask Keegan about company-related matters, but over the years, I more or less know about them. In the Vinci Rivera Group's earlier days, they did foreign trade business. During Keegan's grandmother's days, the production levels were lower

domestically, so many products had to be imported.

At the time, the new policy was introduced. Coupled with the husband and wife's diligence and boldness, they accumulated a lot of wealth within a few years through the import and export business. However, as the nation developed its economy, transportation, and ease of communication, many foreign trade channels from the earlier years could not adapt. As a result, the company's efficiency plummeted. And so, they started to seek transformation.

At the end of the 80s, radios, television, and other electrical appliances had just emerged. So not many local companies manufactured them. Since the price of the imports was not lowered, people could only afford a few brands. Keegan's grandfather had an idea and acquired an electrical company. He spent lots of money to hire professionals that specifically did independent research on developing and producing electrical appliances. The electrical appliances under the Vinci Rivera Group soon took over the market.

By the time Keegan's father, Quentin Kane, took over the company, it happened to be the beginning of a century. Quentin was much more far-sighted. He felt that it was bound to enter a fully intelligent machine era at some point in product development. And so, he entered the automation major during his schooling days. A few years after his graduation, he got Keegan's grandmother's support and transformed the company. That was how the Vinci Rivera Group today became the nation's industry leader in chips.

Meanwhile, Keegan carried over Quentin's ideas and continued his journey. Keegan's capable in this area. But merely being capable isn't enough in this company, especially when it's a company as complex as the Vinci Rivera Group. Keegan's grandfather and Quentin are similar in some ways. For example, they didn't forget their past relatives even after making their fortunes.

While Keegan's grandmother's lineage is the main people controlling the Vinci Rivera Group, there are still many collateral branches of the Kane family within the company. Keegan is not good at socializing and hates perfunctory conversations. He is different from those who stay in their offices all year round and only do business planning; he comes from a technical background and values research and development. As more money invested into research and development, more money came out of the collateral family's pocket. So Keegan wasn't that likable in the eyes of these shareholders.

But Chandler's different. He's more like a businessman; the company and shareholders come first. This led to Keegan not being as popular as Chandler despite him creating excessive profits for the company over the years. Those people don't trust Keegan, and neither does

Keegan trust them. Otherwise, why'd he ask his own friend to look at the contract?' thought Stella.

Stella was not interested in their conversation, so she sat in Keegan's office chair and scribbled around with a pen.

When Keegan was speaking, he glanced at her and saw her head down with a smile. He suddenly felt curious as to what she was drawing.

Stella was immersed in her drawing that she did not even notice when Keegan walked over. When Keegan lowered his gaze to look at the paper under her hand, he turned blue.

Chapter 248

There was a photograph of the two on Keegan's desk.

In the photograph, Keegan wore a suit as he sat in a chair, while Stella stood beside him in a red dress.

The man had an icy expression, while the woman had an alluring smile.

It was taken during the break time of their wedding photo shoot back then. The photographer thought the two made a beautiful scene, so he took a photo of them doing these poses.

The finished product looked good. It was also Stella's favorite photo. This photo was also the huge wedding photo framed on the wall of their living room.

Stella even deliberately developed a smaller copy and had it framed into a photo frame. Then, she sent it to Keegan's office. After Aldor signed the parcel, he placed the photo on Keegan's desk.

What Stella was currently drawing was that photo of them.

However, Stella drew herself beautifully, while the place Keegan stood had a dog. Besides that, Stella had a dog leash in her hand.

"What're you drawing?" the man's icy voice sounded above her head.

Stella replied in a serious voice, "A self-portrait. Does it look alike?"

Keegan gritted his teeth, "And the dog?"

Stella looked away a little guiltily, "I drew it on a whim. Since you don't allow me to have a pet. dog, you're not even allowing me to draw one?"

'Stella had been to drawing classes before. Since Rainee had always been very attentive to her education, Stella had attended various classes in her childhood, such as drawing, dancing, piano, and flute. She had even gone to harp classes for two years. While she did not last long in her classes, she has great talent. She's considered a jack of all trades, a master of none. For instance, professionals may find her current drawing passable at most, but an average person would find it incredibly picturesque. The dog in the drawing, in particular, has a look that. completely resembles me! How could I possibly believe her bullshit?!' he thought.

Marshall walked over when he saw the two "discussing" Stella's drawing. He glanced at it and blurted, "Why does the dog look so much like Keegan?"

"Does it?" Stella denied it. "I don't think it does. The dog isn't as good-looking as Mr. Kane."

Keegan was speechless.

Marshall noticed the odd atmosphere between the two, so he chuckled and said, "This is a pretty good drawing."

Stella smiled with her eyes, "See? Even Mr. Moore says it's good. Do you want to frame it? This drawing will be worth a lot of money if my worth multiplies someday."

She said as she signed her name and the bottom right corner of the drawing.

“One and only.”

Keegan twitched the corner of his lips.

“I’m afraid I won’t be able to see that day in my lifetime,” he said.

Stella cursed him internally.

‘Bad-mouthed bastard,’ she thought.

Then, she turned to Marshall, “Mr. Moore, are you two done talking?”

Marshall nodded.

“Then have lunch with me. I…” Stella paused momentarily and continued, “My husband’s treat.”

Keegan was at a loss for words. Since Stella had already said so, he obviously could not refuse. Just as the three walked out of the office, they bumped into Sophia.

She was holding a fruit platter and heading in their direction. When she saw them, she froze and immediately smiled, “Stella, Mr. Kane, Mr. Moore. Are you all leaving?”

Stella sized her up.

‘Just now, when Sophia got shoved by Maya downstairs, her knees smashed onto the ground. Her injury must be pretty serious, but she can still smile and bring us a fruit platter. I’ve really underestimated my little sister,’ she thought.

Marshall had never met Sophia, so he asked, “And this is…”

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Before Stella could speak, Sophia introduced herself in her stead, “Hello, Mr. Moore. My name’s Sophia. We met at the jewelry exhibition two days ago, but you probably don’t remember me. Mr. Kane is my brother-in-law, and Stella is my sister. I’m also classmates with Aurora, and I often hear her mention you.”

Marshall nodded and grunted. However, he did not answer, perhaps because he was not familiar with Sophia.

Sophia felt a little awkward. Then she said, “Keegan, this fruit platter is freshly cut. I’ll pack it up, and then you guys can eat it on the way. Mr. Hart said you didn’t have anything for breakfast.”

Stella raised an eyebrow.

Suddenly, she asked, "Sophia, what's your work position in the company?"

Sophia could not compute her words and answered out of reflex, "Operations Assistant."

"If you didn't say so, I would've thought you were a tea lady," Stella said indifferently. She continued, "Dad called me yesterday. He told me to tell my husband to take care of you. If you like being a tea lady, why don't I ask him to transfer you to the pantry?"

Sophia twitched the corner of her lips and forced a smile, "Stella, I was just helping someone bring these over since it was on the way."

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'Does she think I don't know which floor the company's operations department is on? At least your lie believable! Albert is very attentive to her. He put aside his pride and asked me for a favor for the sake of Sophia's job. It's a shame she's a disappointment,' Stella thought. However, Stella was not bothered to expose her lie, so she said coolly, "Dad is worried sick

because of your job. So put more effort into your job, and don't let his good intentions go to

waste."

Sophia clenched her fists as her expression changed. Finally, then, she muttered, "I understand, Stella."

After exiting the company building and getting into the car, Marshall said, "Your sister doesn't look quite like you."

"She's not my biological sister," Stella answered calmly. "My parents adopted her."

Marshall did not ask any more questions.

Stella asked, "Do you think I speak to her in a mean tone?"

Meanwhile, Keegan seemed to have found an opportunity to deride her finally. He glanced at her and said icily, "Aren't you always mean?"

Stella was speechless.

'Bastard! I'm not asking him, so why did he fucking cut in?!' she thought.

Marshall laughed and thought for a while.

“If some person appears in my life out of nowhere and takes away half of my parent’s love and the things that should’ve belonged to me, I probably wouldn’t be able to be magnanimous either. However, I wouldn’t make it as obvious as you did, it could easily lead to others criticizing me.

‘He’s a pro. I suffered many losses from Sophia before I finally figured this out, but Marshall caught on immediately. People like Sophia are the best at pretending to be weak. However, I made my dislike toward Sophia way too obvious, so Albert would always think that I was bullying Sophia. Every time we fight, Sophia’s always the one who gains benefits no matter what I say. It’s not always good to be blindly aggressive, sometimes, there’s the need to play little mind games,’ thought Stella.

Stella modestly asked Marshall for advice.

The two discussed away as if they were the only ones there. Meanwhile, Aldor watched as his boss’s expression gradually darkened.

“This is for the sake of the Kane family’s harmony and for the sake of me working lesser overtime, thought Aldor.

He coughed and interrupted their conversation, “Mr. Moore, what would you like to eat?”

Chapter 249

Marshall said, “How does Japanese sound?” Then, he turned to the two beside him, “What do you two want to eat?”

Stella said, “Sure. There’s a pretty good Japanese restaurant at Elias Street.”

“How about you, Keegan?” Marshall asked Keegan.

Keegan did not answer. Instead, he asked Stella, “I thought you didn’t like Japanese food?”

Marshall was a little surprised.

“If you don’t like Japanese food, we’ll have something else. I was just suggesting.”

Stella rolled her eyes at Keegan, “Nope, don’t listen to him. He doesn’t even know what I like. I love Japanese food.”

Keegan frowned as his gaze darkened. Then, he stopped talking and had a tense expression.

'Marshall loves Japanese food. I can tell from his extensive knowledge of Japanese cuisine. Besides that, his dining etiquette is incredibly elegant. Previously, we ate together at a cheap eatery in front of my college, but I didn't feel a thing. It was probably due to the environment at the time. Now we're dining at a Japanese with an elegant environment, and he's throwing me for a loop. He actually uses cutlery to peel shrimps!' thought Stella.

Marshall first used a fork to hold the bottom of the shrimp and remove it. Next, he used a knife to slit a small opening on the back of the shrimp. Then, he used a fork to take out the shrimp meat within. Finally, he used a knife to cut the shrimp meat into smaller slices before putting them into his mouth and savoring them.

The shrimp shells he had peeled were neatly placed in a row on the table.

'I used to think the actors on TV exaggerated the table manners of the wealthy. But it looks like all of it were real. In the past, I never thought the way I ate looked bad, but compared with Marshall, I'm like a person who fled from famine and had never seen food. I peel shrimps with my mouth, scoop caviar with a spoon, and downed the entire bowl of soup at once.....' she thought.

Marshall watched as Stella stared at the shrimps he had peeled in a daze. He laughed and said, "Is it really that unappetizing to eat with me?"

Then only did Stella realize she was openly observing him. She coughed and said, "That's not it. It just feels like I'm watching a tutorial."

Marshall laughed.

"I grew up in a family with a strict upbringing. There were rules for eating, sleeping, and everything. Once you get used to something, it's hard to change your habits," he said.

Stella smiled with her eyes, "It isn't. Get yourself a girlfriend who eats appetizingly, and you'll fix it after having meals with her for a few years. When Keegan and I got married, he ate noodles with a fork. Nowadays, he even uses his hands when eating fried chicken."

Right after she spoke, Keegan choked on his food and started coughing. He had a dark expression as he said, "I used my hands because you used my fork to dig the soil for your flowers!"

Stella defended herself.

"Didn't I get you a new one after that? But you still didn't use it."

'And she has the nerve to bring it up! How could I use a fork that costs nine ninety?! She's even saving money on this!' he thought.

The truth was, it was not that Stella was saving money. So she searched online for forks with the same designs as Keegan's. The one that popped up was the nine-ninety design. Besides, it looked the same as the original fork.

Stella only learned after the incident that Keegan's cutlery set was a custom-made design. One fork already cost a few grand.

Marshall asked curiously, "You grow flowers?"

At the mention of flowers, Stella felt particularly proud.

"I've grown dozens of species; our balcony is almost full."

Ever since Stella was a child, she loved gardening. She enjoyed the fresh scent natural plants. emanated.

"Have you grown Clivias before?"

"I have; there are two pots of Clivias at home. They grew their flower buds this year, so they'll bloom in a month or two.

Marshall said, "I've got a Clivia at home, but I don't know why its leaves suddenly started wilting and growing spots on a large scale. It won't seem to go away."

"Is it Anthracnose?"

"I'm not sure either. Does Anthracnose show these symptoms?"

Stella earnestly educated Marshall.

Since Marshall was the type of person who was open to learning, he would carefully listen when others were speaking and ask questions from time to time. A positive interaction like this would make the speaker feel at ease.

Stella spoke in detail about every aspect of the Clivia plant, from its growth habits to the frequency of watering and fertilizing it and ways to control its various diseases.

Meanwhile, Keegan sat beside them and could not join the conversation.

'Previously, when she wanted a divorce, she still watered the flowers when she ran away from home. Why didn't she have this much to tell me?' thought Keegan.

"Based on the things you said, it should be Anthracnose..."

However, Stella did not dare to conclude since she had not seen the plant.

“Why don’t you bring the plant and show it to me whenever you’re free? Then, if that’s inconvenient, you could snap a photo too.”

“It’s not inconvenient; I’m just worried I’ll trouble you.”

“What’s there to trouble?”

‘If you feel bad, you could give me a discount for the lawyer’s fees,’ she thought.

However, Stella could not say so because Keegan was also present.

She said, “It’s nothing. You’re Keegan’s friend.”

Chapter 250

Keegan was speechless.

‘Vermont’s also my friend, but I don’t see her hesitating when she rips him off,’ he thought.

He studied Marshall carefully.

‘I suddenly realized... Marshall is pretty good-looking,’ he thought again.

The more Keegan thought about it, the more uncomfortable he felt. So after that, he did not speak during their meal.

However, Stella seemed unaware of his emotions. She was all smiles as she ate and chatted away with Marshall.

Keegan paid the check and went outside. Stella was talking to Marshall while they stood at the curbside.

“Mr. Moore, where are you heading? We’ll give you a ride there after this,” Stella said in a slightly warm and gentle tone.

Since they all came in a car, Marshall would have to hail a cab if the two of them left.

Marshall handed her a few mints he had taken from the counter just now. Then, he smiled, “There’s no need. I have something to do nearby, so I’ll just walk and stimulate digestion.”

Then, he saw Keegan walking over, “You and Keegan should get back soon; it’s getting late.”

“Alright, then. Let’s get in touch when you have the time,” Stella did not insist. She bade him goodbye and got in the car.

Marshall waved at the two through the mirror. Then, the car slowly drove away.

Stella handed Keegan a mint, “Do you want one?”

Keegan had a tense expression and did not take the mint.

Stella did not bother asking more questions.

“Who knows what got on this lunatic’s nerves again? I already noticed his unhappy expression when we were eating just now. I wonder who upset him again,’ she thought.

Keegan watched as Stella heartlessly chewed on her candy. Suddenly, he felt annoyed for no

reason.

He asked quietly, “How’d you and Marshall meet?”

Stella’s hand froze. Then, she said coolly, “Didn’t I tell you before? I was consulting a lawyer for my friend and coincidentally met him.”

“The first time he met you was at the hospital, right? Were you helping your friend consult a lawyer at the hospital? You even made up your name. So, Stella Jewell, which few sentences from your mouth are genuine?”

Stella’s expression darkened, “What do you mean?”

“Stay away from Marshall even if we get divorced. Don’t get any ideas you shouldn’t have toward him, he’s not someone you should taint.”

Stella paled.

‘Who does this bastard think I am? Even if I find a new man after we get divorced, there’s no way I’d find one of his friends. Have I gone insane? Especially that tone of his; it’s a warning tone tinged with disdain,’ she thought.

Stella felt heartbroken and embarrassed.

‘In his eyes, am I the person who looks for her next man when I haven’t even gotten divorced? Even desperate, I wouldn’t go for Keegan’s friends. He doesn’t care about me, nor have his friends. I’m only extra attentive toward Marshall because he’s involved in the lawsuit. These friends of his only speak and tease me out of courtesy and for the

sake of Keegan. They look down on me, and I know this better than anyone else. I don't need Keegan reminding me repeatedly!' she thought.

Stella suppressed the anger and hurt within. Then, she said in a hoarse voice, "You're overthinking, Mr. Kane. I'm only kind to Mr. Moore because I'm cooperating with you so that you can get the 10-billion-dollar inheritance division. Once we get divorced, and I get the money, I won't spare you and your friends a glance."

Keegan's expression changed.

'What's with her attitude?' he thought.

However, Stella was not done talking. She continued with an icy expression, "By the way, didn't you want to know why Mr. Moore and I first met at the hospital? The truth is, the day at the hospital was also the day we both agreed to get our divorce. I didn't go because my mother was critically ill, not because I didn't want a divorce."

Keegan's hands trembled as he turned to her in shock.

Chapter 251

"Mr. Moore was taking photos on the rooftop, and I mistakenly thought he was secretly taking photos of me. I snatched his phone away, and this is the first meeting you speak of! You're making accusations at me, but have you ever respected our marriage yourself?"

Stella's pent-up anger had almost dissipated, but Keegan's words once again stirred frustration she had experienced today.

up

the

"Other husbands respect and love their wives, but how about you? Maya went to your company and caused trouble. Yet, you were worried that you'd take things too far, causing you to lose

your support and damage your reputation. And so, you asked me to come and made me the scapegoat. You let me become the bad person and take the blame while you get the good reputation of someone who treasures his old employees. How cunning of you."

Keegan's expression darkened, "In your heart, I'm a villain who shirks my responsibility to a woman?"

Stella was furious, so she said without thinking, "You're not only a villain, you're practically not a man! You don't want a child, yet you're not telling your family. You passed the buck of being infertile to me, so I have to drink that disgusting decoction daily. I'm even being treated as a sinner for taking contraceptives. Which part of you resembles a man or a husband?!"

Keegan's expression darkened even more. He looked so furious that Aldor did not even dare to breathe too loudly.

'Mrs. Kane must've gone mad! How'd she dare to speak to Mr. Kane this way?!' he thought.

He hurriedly defended Keegan, "Mrs. Kane, what happened today was my fault. I took the liberty and called you, so Mr. Kane was uninformed."

Stella sneered, "You don't even dare to admit it now."

Aldor was speechless.

"Mrs. Kane, I'm telling the truth. Mr. Kane doesn't know..."

Keegan cut him off, "Stella, you've gone through over ten years of education, yet getting

have pregnant is the only thing you have in mind? Do you think you can keep everything you right now once you have a child? If this is your intention, let me tell you. I will never want to have a child with you for the rest of my life!"

Stella seethed with anger.

'What a fucking load of bullshit! I was saying he passed the buck of being infertile to me. Now, he's secretly changed the narrative to me wanting a child because I have ill intentions. He's easily pushing my buttons,' she thought.

Stella sneered, "Let me also tell you something clearly. I'd rather give birth to a litter of pups for a dog rather than have a baby with you!"

Keegan went purple in the face, "You're simply unbearably vulgar!"

"Eye boogers blind you; you can't tell the good from bad!" Stella glared at him. Then, she turned and said to Aldor, "Stop the car! I want to get out!"

"Mrs. Kane, please calm down. Mr. Kane didn't know about it. Besides, the pregnancy matter-

"Stop the car! Let her scam!"

Keegan cut Aldor off. He rarely used coarse language like “scram” unless he was utterly enraged.

Stella added fuel to the fire, “Did you hear him? He asked me to scram. I need to be observant. Otherwise, how will I earn that 10 billion from Mr. Kane?”

Keegan’s gaze looked like he wanted to rip her to shreds. Aldor kept quiet and quickly pulled over. Stella got out of the car. Then, she disappeared into the crowd without turning back. Since Keegan’s anger remained unappeased, Aldor felt unusually awkward.

He apologized quietly, “Mr. Kane, this is my fault. I took the liberty to contact Mrs. Kane. I was worried she wouldn’t come, so I didn’t tell her what happened over the phone.”

‘Stella was not remotely prepared when she came to relieve the situation; that’s why she’s so angry,’ thought Keegan.

He replied icily, “Did you think we could walk away from company matters by relying on a woman to protect the company? So what if she did jump? If I had backed down today, in the future, every person who gets dismissed with follow suit. If all of them came to the company and did the same thing, am I supposed to back down every time? Since I dared to do so, I’m not afraid of being criticized by others! You’ve worked for me for many years, yet you still don’t understand this?”

Aldor paled, “My apologies.”

Keegan closed his eyes tiredly and stopped talking.

Felicity had followed the film crew to Hampford, so Stella had nowhere to go. So she went around and eventually went to Rotona Pinnacle Hospital.

For the past few days, Stella had been frequenting the hospital. So naturally, this led the nurse to wonder and ask if she had gotten into a fight with her husband.

Stella gave the nurse a vague answer. She said that she did not have much to do for the few days and wanted to spend more time with her mother.

Then, the nurse did not ask any more questions.

It was boring at the hospital. Stella helped the nurse clean Rainee’s body and occasionally massaged it. Other times, she just sat around.

past

“To be honest, sometimes when I see Rainee lying there half-dead, I’ve considered following the doctor’s advice and pulling the plug. It’ll let her pass on peacefully. It’s

been years, and her organs are severely damaged. Even if she were conscious, she wouldn't live long and only suffer. However, I don't have the heart to do it. When Rainee's still around, whenever I'm sad, I can still find solace as I sit by her bed. If she's gone, I'll truly be alone in this world Rainee had spent her entire lifetime on Albert. Even though they quarreled constantly, she knew that she loved her husband.

Rainee grew up in a well-off family. If she had listened to grandpa back then and married someone with similar family background, she probably would've lived a much easier life. However, she chose Albert. She endured grandpa's discontent and started a business from scratch with Albert. Even though she suffered a lot, Albert still did not love her the way he

loved himself. Rainee probably never imagined that the man she deeply loved would give up on her treatment the moment she got into an accident. Thankfully, she wasn't conscious; if she were conscious, she would've been so furious with Albert's heartlessness,' thought Stella. While Stella was deep in thought, Lena suddenly called her. She was a little shocked but accepted the call.

"Do you have a TikTok or Facebook account?"

Chapter 252

Stella knew very well that Daniel did not pick her because of her acting skills.

She did a good job, but there were a lot of other actresses who could do better than her. They had their fanbase and were more popular than her too. She just did not stand a chance among them.

Daniel had no reason to pick her.

Stella kept quiet for a while before she pursed her lips and said, "Because I'm new, not signed by any agency, don't cost a fortune, and can act for a bit. I matched all your criteria for picking a cast, and I'm the perfect candidate for you to stand against capitalism. You don't have to use anybody you don't like on your own set, and you won't have to worry about offending any company if anything goes wrong with me."

Daniel was stunned. He could not remember the last time he worked with a sharp actress like her.

Stella's face was just too deceitful. It would always mislead people into thinking that she was just an ignorant woman.

Not only her but many actresses around her age and as beautiful as her were like that too.

They could gain a lot of fans by just looking pretty, and fame came too easily for them. So, they failed to find out their real values and finally made themselves the victims of market competition.

However, Stella was different from those people. She knew that it was not mere luck that her the role. She was way smarter than that.

Daniel asked her, "Why did you still sign the contract if you already knew?"

got

Stella said without hiding anything. "I need this job. Besides, I like the script very much too." A look of approval flashed across Daniel's face, "Kelly is why Ibelia got replaced. We got into a disagreement while picking the cast. I had veto power, and I didn't pick the right person. She got unhappy with me, but I wasn't bothered by that. However, Ibelia was caught in some scandals sometime later."

"Are you saying that Kelly was the one who exposed Ibelia?"

Daniel scoffed. "Who else could it be? It's not her first time doing something like this. She would spend a lot of money to expose our competitor's actors to sabotage their viewership. Also, she would cheat her way into getting the TV station to air her show before her competitors. There's no limit to what she would do if anything stopped her from making money or didn't go her way."

However, Stella thought otherwise. She figured that even though Kelly was a very goal-driven person, she only wanted money. So, she only got Bella into that show because she wanted the long-term dividend she could earn from social media like Bella.

Even though Ibelia was not as popular as the social media stars, her performance was outstanding. She also had a very good reputation among the viewers before the scandal broke

out

Ibelia would never be able to achieve something like that if nobody backed her. So, there was just no reason for Kelly to cross someone like her just to change the cast.

"In short, Kelly is an extremely petty and egotistical person. There's no way she'd let things slip after what you've done to her. I'm afraid she will do everything she can to put you down if she ever finds out that you're Dusk Galaxy. Even I wouldn't be able to keep you around if she had anything on you."

Stella said, "I'm married. Does that count?"

Daniel wanted to roll his eyes. "Do you think you're in a soap opera? Who cares if you're married or not?"

"Tsk." Stella clicked her tongue. "My manager said that I have the face of an idol."

Daniel knew that Stella was not afraid. She also did not care at all after hearing what he said.

"How long can you be an idol? You've got to give up the idea of being a talentless idol if you want to be in this industry for a long time. An actress is supposed to be good at acting. One can only be popular on social media because of their persona. The more perfect the person's persona is, the worse she'll end up if anything goes wrong."

Everything that Daniel said to Stella since the audition was from the bottom of his heart.

He gave Stella a chance, but he knew he had other intentions too. So, he immediately called her up as soon as he discovered that Kelly was investigating her.

To be honest, he had high expectations for Stella apart from those purposes because he could see the genuineness in her eyes while she was acting.

Chapter 253

It had been very long for Daniel since he saw that passion in a young actor's or actress's

The way that he spoke made him sound like a lecturer, and Stella felt warm and funny listening to him.

eyes.

"I wasn't planning on just getting fame at all. I'm not trying to let my fans decide whether I can get into a relationship."

Daniel was speechless.

"Didn't she say that she's married? So why does she want to get into another relationship?"

Daniel kept those questions to himself as he said, "Just be careful. Make sure to call me whenever you're caught in trouble. You'll start working next week. Don't let me down."
Stella smiled. "Sure, Mr. Wood."

Kelly got so stressed out after getting bashed by the netizens. She would think somebody texted her to scold her whenever she heard a notification sound from her phone.

She spent so much effort on the online drama she invested in. She even got Bella to make a guest appearance. However, she got nothing in return.

She begged everyone she could to promote her new drama, but none of them wanted to associate themselves with her after how she forced a popular voice actress to quit the internet.

She shifted her attention to Bella after seeing how the drama's viewership worsened every day. So, she called Bella up and asked her to promote the drama. That way, she could at least minimize her loss.

Bella was not stupid. She knew she would just be drawing fire to herself if she did her that favor.

However, Bella figured that Kelly could still be useful to her, so she agreed to help. Then, she asked obliquely, "Ms. Harper, you posted something about a new production team. Is a new drama coming?"

Kelly replied, "Yeah. It's planned to be aired this year, so we've got to start preparing for it now."

"What drama is it? Why is it so urgent?"

"The Palace, I've told you about it."

Bella's face immediately darkened. 'It's Daniel's drama!'

The Palace received much attention as soon as its story was published. The production team had been recruiting actors and actresses after it was given the green light.

Bella's income relied on her internet fame, but she wanted more. She hoped there would be at high-quality drama for her to prove herself, so she could stop being an internet star.

The Palace was exactly the drama that she was looking forward to.

However, Daniel was very particular in picking the cast. She recommended herself to him, but her messages had yet to receive a reply. Daniel did not like what she did. He did not care how

powerful her background was, so he ignored her completely.

After that, Bella heard that Kelly had become the assistant director of this drama. So she decided to have a go at Kelly.

They worked with each other before and shared a good relationship too. Kelly loved to be buttered up. Bella knew she could still get a role in The Palace if she could make Kelly happy. After all, Kelly was one of the investors in that drama.

She spent so much money and effort on Kelly just to find out that she was so useless. She did not even have the right to speak in the group chat.

Bella was furious when the cast for the queen was set. So she hired somebody to and finally kicked her out of the drama. She thought that her chance was finally there. So, she lbelia expose

spent some money to boost her popularity on the internet before the production team made any public statement.

She even told the internet that she would be a part of the cast. However, the drama was going to begin shooting, and she had no idea about it!

Chapter 254

Bella tried to calm herself down as she asked softly, "Didn't you tell me that there was a vacant role just a while back? How did you find someone to fill that role in such a short time?"

Then, Kelly said, "I recommended you to Daniel when we auditioned for the queen. I was sure he would sign you. You're such a good candidate, and you're pretty famous too. However, Daniel suddenly brought a girl from nowhere to the audition, and he immediately got very interested in her. He wouldn't listen to my opinion. In the end, he ended up signing an amateur with no experience. I have no idea what he's thinking!"

"An amateur?" Bella's face turned ugly. "What's her name?"

"It's..." Kelly thought for some time before she continued, "Ste... something, I think. I can't remember. I haven't met her before, and she did not mention that she acted before on her resume either. However, Daniel decided to use her right after the audition. Honestly, I don't think she can act better than you. I wonder if that woman is Daniel's secret lover."

Bella sulked without talking.

Kelly knew that she was at fault. After all, she was the one who made huge promises to Bella, telling her that she could get her a role in the drama.

She just did not expect Daniel to be such a difficult person. Even though she was the assistant director, she had no say in picking the cast.

After that, she tried to make Bella feel better: “Daniel is such a stingy person. The salary he offered is low. I heard that the actress is making less than thirty thousand per episode. How could he get a good actress if he minimizes the cost? I’m pretty sure that you can easily earn ten times more than this by taking other dramas.”

Bella laughed indifferently.

‘Who told her that I wanted the money? I only wanted to be a part of this drama because of Daniel’s good reputation, and I’m trying to step my game up.

‘Kelly is so useless! I wouldn’t blame her if she weren’t so confident about getting me the role.

‘How could she tell me that there’s no spot left for me after how much money and effort I spent on her just to make her happy?

‘I’m sure that Daniel did not make that decision recently. I’d probably only find out about this after the drama is aired if I didn’t ask her about it.’

“Ms. Kelly, it’s not about the money. I like Daniel as a director, and I’ve always dreamed of working with him. Could you ask him if he can give me a chance to prove myself? I’ll take the job no matter how little he will pay me.”

What Bella said put Kelly in a hard position. “I don’t think I can help you with this. The main sponsor is very fond of Daniel, and he gets to make the final decision for everything at the set. I can’t interfere with it at all. However, I think you should ask Mr. Kane for help. The main sponsor of The Palace is Elegant Media, and I heard that Mr. Kane is a very good friend of the boss of Elegant Media. I’m sure Daniel wouldn’t dare to disobey what the main sponsor has to say, no matter how assertive he is.”

Bella’s eyes sparkled as she asked, “Ms. Kelly, how trustable do you think this rumor is?”

“To be honest, I haven’t met the boss of Elegant Media myself. However, nobody in Rivera dares to cross the Kane family. You should utilize the trump card you have in your hand now.” Bella looked hesitant.

“That’s it. Think about it yourself. I have something to do now, bye. Remember to forward my message.”

Bella fell silent for a while after hanging up. Then, she dialed Keegan’s number.

However, it was not connected Keegan was talking to somebody else on the phone.

It was rare that she would call Keegan Normally, Keegan would contact her because he did not like her calling his personal number.

Even though Keegan did not say much after what happened at the Lake Villa, he started seeing Bella alone a lot lesser

Keegan would talk to Wein directly about work without going through her.

Many of her sponsors pulled back after the accident too Even though a lot of drama

production teams were interested in her, they were all unpopular Keegan also stopped finding jobs and sponsors for her

She was not professionally trained to be an actress, and she did not have a strong background too Even though she was relatively famous then, she could not be compared to the real deals dominating the internet. She needed one or two dramas of superb quality to turn herself into an A lister

However, Keegan stopped helping her, and it made her very restless

Then, she looked at Wein and said. "Make a call to Mr. Kane and ask if he'll be free for dinner tonight I have something to talk to him about."

Chapter 255

Wein nodded. However, Bella stopped him as he was about to call Keegan. "No, don't that. Instead, tell him I got hurt on set and ask him to come over."

Wein was shocked. "Mr. Kane will know you're lying when he comes here."

say

it like

Wein had only met Keegan a few times, but he could tell that Keegan was not the type of person who could be easily fooled. He felt very strange at Keegan's relationship with Bella too. Keegan would give Bella a lot of support, yet it was nothing like other rich men wanting to date a star.

Keegan only visited Bella at work a few times, but he cared about her a lot. He would always be there immediately whenever Bella got hurt, just like after the accident and what happened at the charity event.

Bella was just fine, yet he would still be very worried.

Wein could not figure out what Keegan was up to. Besides, he was Bella's manager. He did not. want Bella to be too close to him.

Bella was a star now, and she could become an A-lister and have a bright future if she just focused on her career. Besides, Keegan was married, and Bella's career would be completely ruined if anybody knew about what was happening between them.

However, that was just what he thought. He could only try to keep Bella's name clean as he could not make any decision for her.

"Just do as I say. I'll take care of the rest."

So, Wein had no choice but to dial Keegan's number.

Keegan had been in a bad mood for a few days.

Everyone in the office could tell.

Even though he always looked aloof, he would nod in response if anybody greeted him.

But he kept frowning when he talked to his employees as if they were his worst enemies. They became very cautious while reporting to him because they feared that Keegan would take his anger out on them if they made a mistake.

Even though Keegan had never mixed his personal feelings with work, the look on his face was terrifying.

Aldor poured Keegan a cup of tea after walking the guest out. Then, he said softly, "Mr. Kane, Memorie Baker introduced new desserts recently. Should I buy some for Mrs. Kane? She likes their desserts, right?"

Keegan kept quiet.

Aldor continued, "Mrs. Kane likes their cakes very much."

Keegan frowned. "What do I care?"

'All she does is get on my nerves."

Aldor said, "Ms. Aurora took the cake Mrs. Kane ordered last year."

Keegan's finger paused. Then, he pursed his lips and said, "Why are you so free? Don't you think you're talking too much?"

"I'll get back to work now, then." Aldor kept his mouth shut.

He heard Keegan's voice when he was about to leave, "Get something from the bakery. It'll be good to stuff them in her mouth and shut her up."

Aldor was speechless.

Keegan received a video from Vermont as soon as Aldor set his foot out of the room. Then, he saw Stella's gloomy face, which was full of blood.

Chapter 256

Stella was wearing a red camisole dress in that video while "dismembering" a body emotionlessly.

The drama was meant for the general public, so it did not look very gory. The body that she dismembered could not be seen on screen either. But her expression looked simply terrifying. She seemed so emotionless with her cold eyes. Blood splattered on her and streamed down her cheeks while she dismembered the corpse. Her face looked brutal yet alluring-

The doorbell suddenly rang.

She got up and washed her face before draping a jacket over her shoulders. Then, she sprayed some perfume on her to cover the smell of blood on her body. She even wore lipstick before opening the door.

She cared about her appearance very much.

The dark and emotionless look on her face disappeared as soon as she faced the deliveryman. She took the parcel with a smile while thanking him in a soft voice.

The deliveryman heard a noise from the house, so he tried to look inside. Then, Stella sighed and said, "I got a new puppy, and it keeps peeing everywhere. I locked it in its cage, and I guess it's not very happy about it."

Her voice sounded very hoarse as if she were a man trying to sound like a woman. It sounded nothing like how she usually would. It almost seemed like she did that on purpose.

However, her actions and demeanor were very feminine.

Then, the deliveryman said, "You've got to teach it well. You should take it to the place it urinated on and beat it, so it can recognize its mistake. It'd understand after you do it a few times. Even a child needs to be punished for him to learn his mistake, let alone a dog."

Stella nodded knowingly. "You're right."

In the living room behind her, there was a tied-up man with his mouth stuffed. The man opened his eyes widely in fear. There was a pile of blood in front of him, and it seemed to tell him what had happened there not long ago.

The man tried to get the deliveryman's attention, but the sound of the television was too loud. The deliveryman could not hear him at all.

Stella even gave the deliveryman a box of desserts before she shut the door.

She took off the wig after the deliveryman left. She was bald, and her eyes looked sharp. Then, she lifted the edge of her mouth and squatted beside the tied-up man. She held a knife against his chin and smirked. "I told you to be good. Why won't you just listen?"

Her voice sounded just like a man's.

Keegan pursed his lips. He stared at the strange yet familiar face on the screen as his heart quivered.

Then, Vermont called him. He came around and picked up his phone. "Your wife looks like she's very experienced in dismembering a body. You should watch out," Vermont said.

Keegan instantly hung up on him.

So, Vermont pushed the door open and came inside. He was already in the lobby when he sent Keegan that video.

He sat at the coffee table as soon as he came in. Then, he smirked. "Jurisdiction is airing now. Your wife is in the first story of this drama. She acted as a trans serial killer. Everybody on the internet is looking her up now to find out if she's a man or a woman."

The screenwriter of Jurisdiction knew what he was doing. It was difficult for a law drama to catch everybody's attention on the internet, so he came up with a bold plot to start the story.

Chapter 257

The story in the first episode of Jurisdiction retold the case of a transgender live host who became a serial killer, which caused a sensation in Rivera a few years ago.

The suspect was sexually assaulted and domestically abused by their stepfather when they were younger. They then decided that they hated men and longed to become a woman. The suspect was good-looking and very smart. After graduating, they worked in a prestigious company, and their life gradually got on the right track. However, their stepfather showed up one day and asked them for money. He made a fuss in their

company and spread pictures of them cross-dressing everywhere. The human resource team then felt it was not a good look on their company, so they fired the suspect. The suspect's colleagues then started to draw a line between them due to this matter, even though they had a good impression of them in the beginning.

The stepfather was a gambler. He had sold all his belongings and racked up a lot of debt. The man even dug up his dead wife's grave to get her wedding ring and sold it for money. The suspect could no longer stand being abused, so they smothered their stepfather with a pillow and killed him. His death did not arouse any suspicion since he had an alcohol addiction, and people thought he died from alcohol poisoning.

The suspect found the kill to be thrilling. After laying low for some time, they then committed their second crime. The suspect turned themselves into a beautiful live host on the internet and began to seek out their next victims. They would get acquainted with the other party and make an appointment to meet them offline. They then killed their victims and grabbed hold of their wealth to maintain daily expenses.

The victims were all smothered by a pillow, just like the suspect's stepfather.

The suspect would then dismember the victims and cook their remains. It was cruel and inhumane. Everyone thought that the killer was a vicious person, but when videos of the court trial got leaked to the public, there was a wave of heated discussion on the internet. The suspect looked rather shy and pretty. They were soft-spoken and did not look like a murderer at all.

with a

Stella was so good at acting that she depicted the suspect's manic state well. In addition to that, she was extremely attractive, especially when she held the other actor's chin.

up knife. The program director knew exactly what to do to capture the audience's hearts.

The show was a hit on all platforms in just a few hours of airing, and people started looking up the case online. No one expected the program to be so popular. The show's official trailer exceeded 10 million views in just half an hour. Half of the hundreds and thousands of commenters asked about updates for the next episode, while the other half asked for Stella's social media accounts.

At the same time, Vermont's film and television group was blowing up all over the industry. People were amazed by how such a low-cost law drama would achieve such high ratings after only airing the first episode. They started to ask around to know more about the actress and planned to get ahold of her. Vermont felt suffocated. 'She's not someone that could be won over by a contract,' he thought. To Keegan, he then leaned

over the desk and half-jokingly said, "Sign your wife over to me, and i guarantee you that in three years. Wait, no, in two years, I'll make her a superstar."

Chapter 258

"Okay."

Vermont was taken aback at how Keegan agreed so quickly. "Wait. Really?"

"Yeah. The signing fee will be one billion dollars," Keegan said flatly.

The corners of Vermont's lips twitched. "Why don't you sign her on?"

"Isn't that illegal? Since she's under contract."

Vermont stayed quiet. He knew Keegan would not do that, so he was just casually asking. It was unlikely that Stella would be an actress if she was under the Kane family. Suddenly, his phone beeped. Vermont looked down and said in surprise, "Stella's Facebook account is verified now!"

In addition to Stella's page for her voice-acting persona-Dusk Galaxy, she also had a personal Facebook account that she uses to record her daily life. Previously, the account was named 'Keeper of Mars', where she posted recipes and videos of her cooking. Occasionally, she would post selfies of herself on the page.

very

Vermont complained that her selfies only captured a third of her beauty. Her face looked delicate, and she did not need to turn on the filters like other internet celebrities. If he had not seen Keegan scrolling her page and looking at her pictures, Vermont would probably not have recognized Stella.

Before this, Stella had been diligently updating her account. But she no longer posted much on there. Occasionally, she would help repost missing people notices and links to donations for those in need. It had been half a year since Stella last updated her profile.

Now that her profile has been verified, Stella changed her username to her own name. She then reposted the latest promotional post of Jurisdiction with an excerpt from "The Ballad of Mulan" stating, "The he-hare's feet go hop and skip,

The she-hare's eyes are muddled and fuddled.

Two hares running side by side close to the ground,

How can they tell if I am he or she?"

page. Soon,

Not long after, the official account for Jurisdiction pinned her repost on their thousands of comments appeared under the post as Vermont refreshed the screen.

[AAAAHHHHHHH! NO WAY! THE PERSON IS A SHE!!!

[KILL ME PLEASE]

[OMG, WHAT?! My bias is a SHE?! I still love her tho!]

[Her gender doesn't matter! She's a great actress!]

[I think I'm gay.]

[There were no voice actors in the show's credit. How could she have spoken in such a deep voice? She must be a fake. The main must be a he!!!!]

Vermont watched helplessly as Stella's account gained tens of thousands of followers in a matter of minutes. 'What?! Our actors and actresses had never gained so much popularity so quickly, even after we promoted them.' From Vermont's point of view, the increasing number of followers on Stella's page represented the soaring amount of money about to enter the bank.

The show even made it to the top of the entertainment charts. However, there were still a few posts regarding Bella, stating that she looked like an alpha when she was in masculine clothing.

Chapter 259

Bella played a guest role, disguised as a man, in Kelly Harper's new show. She had paid people to talk about it on Facebook. She was different than Stella. Stella was beautiful, even without makeup. Her facial features were defined. Her brows and eyes created a sharp look with only some minor touch-ups.

Furthermore, Stella was much more presentable than other actresses. Most female stars were reluctant to shave their heads because it would highlight their features and expose their flaws. This was true even for those with beautiful faces since some angles were unflattering. But Stella looked flawless. Her buzz cut and her sharp brows created an indisputable look.

Bella, on the other hand, had a clean look. The reason she gained popularity was because of the roles she played. Keegan had recommended her to play several parts that fit her image, but as far as appearances go, Bella was not considered a beauty in the entertainment industry.

Her flat features made it difficult for her to style her hair and makeup. She knew about her shortcomings. She had always played it safe regarding her looks, even on the red carpet.

This was the same when it came to her cross-dressing as a male. Her hair covered her big forehead, and her makeup looked similar to when she was a female. Her acting skills were also fairly average, and she did not exert alpha male energy.

The comparison of the two was tragic, especially since the entry was posted after Stella's entries. Bella's fans were embarrassed to brag about it, so they logged off after a short while. Vermont looked up at Keegan and saw the guy typing with a frown. He was curious and started to lean over to see what he was typing. As soon as he did that, Keegan put away his phone and looked back coldly. "Is there anything else you wanted to talk about?" His words clearly indicated that he wanted Vermont to leave.

Vermont did not feel the embarrassment of being caught red-handed. Instead, he sat on the desk, played with the Newton's cradle there, and said, "Carter sent me a text message today, saying that we will get together later. He specifically asked me to remind you to bring Stella since she had helped Lena a lot and he wanted to thank her."

Keegan pursed his lips when he heard that. Under Vermont's gaze, he reluctantly picked up the phone and called Stella.

Stella was playing with Juno at Cordelia's residence. She had been coming to the old place for several days now. Every time Stella went there, she brought food that she knew Cordelia liked. She even asked Baldwin to help deliver it to the old lady while she played with Juno at the racecourse and memorized her lines at the same time.

Stella was afraid that the old lady would get angry if she saw her, so as long as Cordelia did not say she wanted to see her, she would not go forward. She even brought her own lunch box to

Save some time.

It was the same today.

Stella was lying on the lawn, basking in the sun with Juno when Shea called to tell her that Jurisdiction was quickly becoming a hit. The popularity of the film helped her make a mark in the industry. It was beyond her expectations and was something to be happy about.

After posting on Facebook, she went on to braid Juno's mane.

When Keegan called, Stella was asking Juno to pick a hair accessory. The two had been fighting like cats and dogs about which hair accessory suited Juno. Juno was a

very opinionated horse. There was no forcing her into doing something she did not like, so in the end, Stella compromised and put a green hair clip in her hair.

Juno trotted around the guardrail twice, her head high, looking very proud. Stella thought that it was cute and funny. 'What a strange aesthetic. That green hairclip does not look good on her,' she thought.

Stella looked down at the caller ID, answered it, and hung up before the caller could speak. Keegan froze for a moment when he heard the line beeping. He could hardly believe it.

Chapter 260

Stella immediately hung up on Keegan after picking up his call, even though they were not in a quarrel. Vermont did not dare laugh. "Maybe she accidentally pressed the 'end call' button? Try again."

Keegan called Stella for a second time, and the same thing happened. She answered the call and hung up right after. Keegan's face darkened after it happened again a few more times.

Vermont coughed lightly and said, "Let me try." Within seconds, the call was connected." Hello?" Stella's voice sounded soft.

Vermont glanced at the person next to him, who had a sullen face, and said, "Stella, someone is treating for dinner tonight. Are you gonna come

"I can't believe you're willing to treat me to a meal," Stella joked. Vermont was famous for being on the receiving end of dinner treats. He would only treat someone else to dinner when he wanted something from them.

"Oh, it's not me. Cater wanted to treat you to dinner since Jurisdiction is a big hit."

'Lena had invited me for dinner before, but I rejected her invitation. She probably realized that I wouldn't go because we weren't very familiar with each other. So she asked Carter to invite me through Vermont... Stella thought about it for a while and asked, "Where and when?"

"Text me where you're at, and I'll pick you up."

"No, that's fine. I drove today."

"Then... you come and pick me up. I'm at Nine Avenue."

'Is he short on gas?! Stella thought. After hanging up the phone, Stella said goodbye to Baldwin and drove from Cordelia's residence.

When Baldwin went to inform Cordelia about Stella's departure, the old lady was eating the pelmeni that Stella had brought. Stella had wrapped each of the pelmeni by hand to show that she was sincere in apologizing to her. Her cooking skills were average, but the pelmeni were wrapped very well. Stella had sent several boxes of homemade pelmeni to the old lady, and she had been enjoying them for days.

Chapter 261

"Mrs. Kane has just left, Madam," Baldwin said softly to Cordelia.

"About time! She stayed here for days, yet she did not eat a single thing in this house. It was like I was abusing her or something!"

"Mrs. Kane was afraid you'd get mad if you saw her," Baldwin replied.

"If she's scared of making me mad, she should give me a great-grandchild right away!"

"She's still young, Madam. I'm sure she'll change her mind after a few years."

"I won't be here to see the baby if she waits any longer!"

"Your health is at its peak, Madam. You still have a long life to live."

"I can't believe you're on her side now after she bought you a massager." Cordelia glanced at him as she said this.

Baldwin let out a low chuckle and replied, "You're not really angry with her, are you, Madam? Otherwise, you would've prevented me from opening the door for her. If she does get pregnant, Mr. Kane would be terrified since he doesn't know about the surgery yet..."

Cordelia did not say a word. She glanced at Baldwin, and he immediately shut his mouth. cautiously. The old lady wiped her mouth with a paper towel and said in a calm tone, "How is Jackson?"

"He had just returned to the company. I heard from the employees that he had changed quite a bit. He's doing his job, and his attitude seems much better. He even sent some people over to deliver some products. It seems that the past few months have not been in vain, and he seems to understand your painstaking efforts now."

"If he really understood why I did what I did. He wouldn't have waited so long to come to visit. I know he still hates me."

Baldwin did not say a word.

Jackson was a bad apple in the company back then, but Cordelia was not about to give up on him. So she got mad and sent him to the branch company with the worst working environment. Keegan had also been at the company but went there voluntarily for his college internship.

Few people knew about this since Keegan was a very lowkey apprentice there. The branch in the West did not know Keegan's identity since he acted like any other ordinary intern. He even stayed in the collective dormitory for the employees.

At that time, the water supply system was not perfect yet, and the conditions were much worse than they are now. Keegan had stayed there for nearly half a year. When he returned, he had a skinny figure and tanned skin.

Keegan's time there was fruitful. The branch had grown to what it is today because Keegan often went around and made targeted adjustments to the development plan when he was there.

Tough times created strong men. Cordelia left Jackson in that company so that he could reflect on himself and be more like Keegan. However, the old lady's efforts seemed like they were

going to be pointless.

Chapter 262

When Stella arrived at Nine Avenue, she quickly saw Vermont and the six-foot-tall Keegan, who was standing beside him.

She immediately wanted to just step on the accelerator and leave. But Vermont was constantly screaming out there. He wore a pink suit, looking like a walking butterfly. He was chasing her car while shouting. Stella stopped the car because she found it very embarrassing.

She then lowered the window. Vermont held onto the window frame as he panted, "Stella, we're the tallest in this street. Didn't you see us?"

Stella calmly said, "You dressed up like a celebrity who came here for street snaps. You're too handsome. I thought you were someone else."

Keegan glanced at Stella. "I bet she didn't say what she meant."

Keegan saw the hint of disgust that flashed in her eyes when she lowered the car window.

Stella's lies came so easily now. But it certainly worked for Vermont.

Vermont narcissistically tidied up his hair. He winked at Stella. "I'd be one of the top celebrities if I were in the entertainment industry, right?"

"You'd do better than that. You'd be a lady killer. You'd lead a new age of beauty."

Vermont was happy as he said, "Great minds think alike!"

"To be fair, Stella is increasingly pleasing to the eyes. She's gorgeous, good at acting, and very

Sweet.

'Come to think of it, Keegan's a little ungrateful. He has such a beautiful wife, but he doesn't treat her well. And he always quarrels with her."

Keegan did not know that his best friend was starting to switch sides just because Stella buttered him up.

Vermont opened the car door. Keegan naturally sat in the front passenger seat.

Stella looked at him. "Mr. Kane wants to save on gas too?"

Without answering her, Keegan asked a rhetorical question. "Is the Bugatti nice to drive?"

Stella was speechless.

I'd been driving the Bugatti to Cordelia's place for the past few days. Keegan sent the car for service today. That's why I didn't drive it. But he obviously knew my whereabouts."

Chapter 263

She rarely drove the Bugatti because the car was too expensive. She was afraid that she would crash the car.

And the car was too nice. There were only a few of those cars in Rivera. Whenever she drove that car, someone would immediately recognize that it was Keegan's car. It would reach Aurora. Aurora visited Keegan many times, but she never got to borrow this car from Keegan to drive it. If she knew Stella drove the car, she would probably complain about it to Dahlia.

She did not want all these unnecessary troubles back then. That was why she rarely drove Keegan's car.

But she suddenly got over it recently.

'We'll get divorced eventually anyway. Why don't I just enjoy things that I should?

"That shithead Keegan slept with me for three years. My youth is worth more than a stupid car.

So, not only did she start driving the car, but she also even specifically drove downtown to look cool.

Stella could have done more if Keegan had not sent the car for service.

But she shamelessly and calmly said, "So-so. I was afraid its engine would stop working because it was sitting too long in the garage."

Keegan did not bother to reply to her quibble.

'I recently learned how this woman always has something clever to say. She'll just argue with you even if she's being unreasonable.

'She isn't gentle, sensible, virtuous, and well-behaved at all!!

They were going to move on from this topic, but Vermont said, "It's a supercar. Its engine can only last long if you drive it often."

Stella raised her hand and held her thumb up. "A connoisseur!"

The corners of Keegan's mouth twitched. He glanced at Vermont. 'Whose side is this guy on?'

Vermont was not on anyone's side. He was on the side of money. It would be perfect if he could watch some fun while making money.

Now that Stella was warming up to him, he leaned on the front seat and tilted his head forward. "Stella, when are you planning to sign with an agency? Can you prioritize Neon Nebula? Resources will be made available if you sign with us. I'll immediately give you the 'A'

contract."

Chapter 264

Neon Nebula had four contracts: S, A, B, and C. 'A' contracts were typically given to people the company would focus its resources on. The company was relatively optimistic about these actors who had good commercial values. The revenue sharing was comparatively higher too. 'B' and 'C' contracts were less attractive. New talents would usually sign in these contracts with the company. But of course, people who signed 'B' and 'C' contra

cts would occasionally stand out. Then they would be promoted and given the 'A' contract.

'S' contracts were very rarely given out. This kind of contract would be given to famous actors who received various awards. These actors were very popular nationally. Some were even handed the company's shares and bonded with the company for an extended time.

Since Neon Nebula's establishment, it had only given out one 'S' contract. She was a very impressive senior actress. When she was thirty years old, she had already received awards from various categories. She had made her mark in the film and television industry. But unfortunately, those whom God loved died young. Two years ago, she died of an illness. Otherwise, Bella would not be able to become the leading lady of Neon Nebula.

Stella thought of signing a contract with an agency. It was purely incidental that she got the role in The Palace. Normally, it would be challenging for someone to get a role in a great show without a capable agency.

Neon Nebula was very popular in recent years. Vermont was a social butterfly. He could get all kinds of resources. If Stella were to sign a contract with him, she would not need to worry about not getting a role in a show. But she did not want to sign with Neon Nebula. And Bella was the only reason for that.

Setting aside their personal beef, Stella could clearly tell that Bella wanted a change. Bella had been frantically testing the waters this year too. She was also given an 'A' contract, and her viewing rate was impressive. Even if Stella came across a good show, if Bella wanted it, Vermont might not be able to help Stella get the role in the show, even if Vermont preferred

her.

'I'd rather sign a rookie contract with another company. Because it'll at least be fair competition there.'

She half-

jokingly said, "If I were to sign with your company, I'd want to become the leading lady. Are you willing to dismiss your company's current leading lady?"

Vermont was sharp too. He instantly understood what she meant. "Are you talking about Bella? You don't have to worry about her. Her contract is expiring soon. I don't think she's planning to sign a new contract with me."

Stella was surprised. "Ms. Young has such high commercial value. Are you willing to just let her go?"

Chapter 265

"I've tried to convince her to stay too. Her condition to renew the contract was to get an 'S' contract. I can increase her cut. But she still needs to be better to get an 'S' contract. It's fine if we can't come to an agreement. In the show she was on, as long as the actor or actress looks decent, he or she could be famous too. I can just make another star. It's just a matter of time."

Vermont and Keegan hated to be controlled.

Bella was indeed famous. But she had poor self-awareness. She became increasingly arrogant as she grew famous in recent years. She was not classically trained, and she was also not really talented. After she became popular, Vermont thought of making her a superstar too.

He even paid good money to hire a good teacher in the country to train her in acting. But Bella's heart was not in improving her acting skills.

She personally took up some endorsement deals with some minor brands to make money. She mentioned that she could not attend the lessons because she had to attend events. Those

acting classes cost over a hundred dollars per lesson, and she had only been to them twice. On top of that, she was not serious at all during those classes.

The teacher was not strapped for cash. He agreed to teach her because he was doing his friend a favor. He immediately resigned when he saw Bella's lousy attitude.

"Bella doesn't even want to improve herself. She just wants to be popular and exalted by her fans. Yet, she wants to pressure me to get an 'S' contract?"

"She's just an actress who can be easily replaced. She can leave if she wants to."

Stella glanced at Keegan.

"His old love is being roasted by his best friend. Why isn't he reacting at all?"

Chapter 266

Anyway, if you want to sign with an agency, you must prioritize me. If you receive all the awards like the lady back then, you will not only be our leading lady, but you can even kick me out of the company and become the boss yourself."

Stella smiled. She teased him, "I should be more reserved then. You guys will only be willing to make me a good offer if I play hard to get."

Her reply was ambiguous, but Vermont was in no hurry either. "There's still plenty of time. There aren't many companies that can compete with Neon Nebula in the country. I'm also close to Keegan. I believe I can make Stella join my company."

While they were talking, his phone rang.

Carter and the others were already waiting for them in the restaurant. He urged his companions to get there quickly.

Their conversation ended abruptly.

Carter booked a room in The Deli. The Deli was considered the best restaurant in Rivera. Their food and environment were excellent.

Food lovers from all around the world came all the way here to taste their food. This showed how popular their dishes were.

Guided by the waiter, they walked to the room. When they opened the door, Stella realized that not only Carter and his wife were there, but Trevor was also there.

A girl was sitting beside Trevor. She looked like she was around Stella's age. She had Parisian-Union style makeup and had a "hime" haircut. She looked like she went for tanning, with her healthy, bronze skin tone. She looked quite pretty.

When they entered the room, the girl's head was tilted as she talked to Trevor with a smile.

While Stella was wondering who the girl was, she heard Vermont say, "Molly? When did you come back?"

Molly? Why does this name sound so familiar?"

you

The girl said, "I came back two days ago. I was going to have a meal with my friend today. But I happened to see Trevor. So, I stood my friend up and came to eat with you all."

She glanced at Stella as she said that. She then greeted Keegan. "Keegan, it's been a long time

since we met."

She intentionally did not address Stella.

Just as Vermont was about to speak, Keegan beat him to it and introduced Stella, "This is my wife, Stella." He then lowered his voice to tell Stella, "This is Marshall's cousin, Molly."

'So, this is the Moore family's favorite descendant who people had been talking so much about.

Molly and Marshall looked a little alike. But Marshall looked more exquisite.

Molly's features were dazzling. She had a small gap between her eyes. It made her look aggressive.

Stella greeted her politely. "Hi."

Molly did not stand up. She raised her eyes and sized Stella up. She smiled as she said, "You look quite different from what Aurora described. You have quite a good facelift."

She blurted that out spontaneously. Whether she was speaking bluntly or insinuating something, it was quite uncomfortable to hear what she said.

Stella frowned. 'If I hurriedly deny it, it'll make me look like I care too much about this kind of comment. It'll make me look like I have something to hide.

'If I ignore it, it'll also seem like I agree with it.'

While Stella was thinking about how to reply to Molly, Lena faintly said, "She has a perfectly symmetrical face. Her face has Golden Ratio features. Her facial muscles contract normally. The existing technology couldn't give such a perfect facelift.'

Her response implied that Stella was born with this face and did not have cosmetic surgery.

Molly glanced at her. "I was just joking. Mrs. Lowe, you took it too seriously."

Lena looked indifferent as she said, "I'm pragmatic. It's just my professional habit."

Molly sneered. "Your occupation is to look at dead people. You can even tell for a living person?"

Stella thought, 'I'm certain that this Molly is truly rude! If someone talks about my occupation like that, I'll definitely be unhappy.'

However, Lena was not angry. She merely gave her a glance and said, "Underneath the skin, we're all the same. There's no difference between a dead person and a living person."

Molly furrowed her brows as she glanced at her. Molly was the most arrogant and overbearing among the younger generation of the Moore family. She always spoke tactlessly and never considered the feelings of the listener.

Vermont was worried she would not shut her mouth and ruin everyone's spirits, so he quickly changed the subject, "Aren't you from forensics? Do forensics also need to touch corpses?"

Lena said, "If there is a need, I will need to touch them, but there is usually the coroner to do it. We also need to go over there to dissect bodies when it's busy."

"Dissect?" The corner of Vermont's lips twitched. "Then would you still be able to eat your meals?"

"Why wouldn't I be able to eat? It's just work," she replied.

Vermont turned to Carter. "Lena's hands touched a corpse, and she used it to grab food for you. Are you still able to eat?"

At this moment, everyone was looking at Carter. Even Lena was watching him and waiting for him to answer. From Stella's point of view, Lena's occupation was very cool, but this field was quite a niche. They needed to interact with the dead all day, which was seen as ominous for businessmen.

Carter lifted his gaze and slowly observed everyone. He then said slowly, "You would still eat the food even if the cook made the food with the hand he wiped his ass with, right?"

Vermont was speechless. He replied through gritted teeth, "Who wouldn't wash their hands after going to the bathroom before cooking?"

"You know it's common sense, then why did you ask this pointless question?" Carter responded.

Carter put his palm on the back of Lena's hand and lightly patted it, "Dead people can't talk, but she can communicate with the corpse." No one knew what he was thinking, but Carter chuckled and turned around to ask Lena, "If I die one day, could you dissect me yourself? It feels like it would be quite a romantic thing to do."

Everyone was at a loss for words. The sentence was a little bone-chilling, and Vermont could not help but say, "Do you have a misunderstanding about romanticism?"

Lena pulled her hand back and gave Carter a sidelong glance before saying coldly, "No."

Carter saw she was angry and softened his tone. "It's just a joke. Don't be angry, okay?"

As he said this, he started to cough. Lena saw this, and her expression grew anxious. Compared to Zane, Carter's physical health was not considered well. Although he was the older brother, he was very frail when he was born. It was a defect brought from the womb. Hence he had never stopped his medication throughout the twenty-something years.

Chapter 268

After having a cold, an average person would recover in a few days. On the other hand, Carter might have symptoms so severe he has to stay in the hospital, so they cannot blame Lena for being so nervous.

Thankfully, Carter merely coughed a few times and stopped. Lena then said, "Where's your medication?"

"In the car," he answered.

"I'll go down and get it. You can entertain everyone first," Lena told him.

Carter nodded his head in reply. When Lena had left, Trevor opened his mouth and said, "Lena cares for you a lot. Why did you scare her by faking your cough?"

Carter gave two low chuckles with a gentle expression before saying, "Once she starts to care for me, she wouldn't remember about the thing I made her about."

angry

Vermont clicked his tongue and said, "Schemeful."

Then he winked at Keegan. "You see that? Learn from it."

Keegan was too lazy to be bothered by him. Instead, he asked Carter, "Do you still have the red wine I gifted you last time?"

Carter was slightly stunned. Vermont then said, "Didn't you hate drinking alcohol? Carter gave you one last year, and you didn't want it. I even had to stuff it in your car."

Keegan glanced at Stella. "My wife likes it. She can drink almost a full bottle by herself."

Stella almost spit out the tea she had in her mouth. The red wine Carter had gifted was the same bottle opened on the night Keegan was discharged before she gave Keegan a shower. It was true that Stella liked to drink red wine, but Keegan had mentioned that specific bottle of wine of all bottles. She felt like Keegan was toying with her.

"Carter, if there's extra, give me a few bottles too."

any

Carter smiled gently. "It's self-brewed in a friend's winery, so I don't know if there's this year. I'll help you guys ask when I revisit."

"Their reputation is that good? This makes me quite curious." Trevor then asked, "Where did your friend open his winery?"

"It's not really a winery. It's his own vineyard, and he built an ornamental garden. He brewed his own wine for his own amusement. If you're interested, Mr. Saun, I can take you to look around next time I go."

Before Trevor could speak, Molly interrupted, "If you want to go to a winery, it's better to go and see the ones in France. The smaller workshop operations done domestically lack any flair. She turned around to smile. "When I was studying abroad, I knew a friend. Their family is in the red wine business, and they have dozens of winery estates. Their business scale is huge, and their technology is also mature. The view from their estate was exquisite. If you're interested, I can book a slot with him, Trevor."

Carter chuckled lightly. "Ms. Moore had been studying overseas for far too long that her eyes are fixated overseas. Hence her impression of local business is still behind a dozen years."

Although red wine is not the main beverage consumed locally, the development in the field is up to date. There are numerous matured red wine chateaus across the country. If you get the chance, you can go and have a look to broaden your horizons. Another thing, France, which is famed for its red wine culture, does not have the best quality and quantity of wine. You can look to Italy for that "

Chapter 269

Molly's expression was slightly stiff. The way Carter undermined her did not leave her with much dignity. Vermont was somewhat surprised and gave Carter a glance.

From his perception, Carter was a very gentlemanly person. Knowing him for so many years, Vermont rarely saw him fight with someone. Carter's relationship with Molly was alright too. Could his words now be because of Molly's attitude when talking to Lena earlier?

The mood was suddenly awkward. Trevor gave a light chuckle and said, "Actually, I've been overseas so many years and never been to a winery in France. If there's a chance, I'll go and take a look."

Then Molly's expression turned for the better. She kept looking for topics to discuss with Trevor.

Stella was slightly bored, but then a deshelled prawn suddenly appeared on her plate. Stella froze for a moment and gave an odd look to Keegan.

'Is this bastard trying to poison and murder me?' she thought.

Keegan could tell what she was thinking, and he gave her a sidelong glance. "The The Deli are delicious."

prawns from

Stella took an opposite stance on purpose. "My favorite part is to suck on the What flavor is left when you have deshelled the prawns?"

prawn

shells.

Keegan's movements froze, and he moved the prawns away. Then he passed the prawns on his plate over. "Suck it then."

Stella was at a loss for words.

'What kind of asshole is Keegan?' Stella cursed in her heart.

Trevor's gaze fixated on Stella, and he observed her for a long time. Then, he suddenly said, ' Mrs. Kane, you study performance, right?'

Stella nodded her head.

"No wonder!" He gave a laugh. "When I was scrolling through some videos, I saw the scene you acted in. I was scared by the footage of you holding a knife. It was spectacular."

"1

Being directly praised by someone made Stella slightly embarrassed. "It's mainly due to treating it as a short video, so the requirements were less strict. Hence, I could perform freely."

"How did you make the male voice?" Trevor continued to ask.

Stella was shocked. "How did you know that was my voice?"

Trevor smiled. "I didn't know. I merely asked it on a whim, but from what you said, it truly must be your voice."

Stella was speechless. At this moment, everyone else at the table was looking at Stella. Although Vermont knew she was Dusky Galaxy, he was still shocked. He was a fan of Dusky Galaxy. Besides the radio series she did early in her career, which he could not find any information about, he had seen almost all the animations she had voiced.

Dusky Galaxy made her name in her field using her domineering woman's voice. Although she could change into various other voices, she was most famous for this voice. It was also why so many have looked for her to voice main female leads.

He had never heard Dusky Galaxy voice a male voice before. If it came to acoustic sound, Stella's voice skill was unmatched.

"Have you considered debuting in acting?"

Vermont was immediately alarmed. "Even if she debuts, it would be at my side. Don't you even think about it."

Trevor said slowly, "Ms. Young from your company has occupied most of your finer resources. Being signed to you could not even guarantee she would acquire any resources. We're different. We're a new company, and the first batch of artists would get the best regardless."

Chapter 270

Vermont's lips twitched. "There's an order to this, okay? Line up properly."

Trevor took out a business card and handed it to Stella. "I hope I can have the chance to cut in

line."

Stella could not determine whether he was joking or serious.

She took the business card and glanced at it. It read Elegant Media.

Vermont could not stand it and said, “Mrs. Kane, don’t believe in his sweet talking. In terms of cunning businessmen, if Keegan is second, Trevor would definitely be first. He’s ruthless and very mean!”

The corner of Keegan’s eye twitched. “You shut up!”

Stella then pushed the business card back. “I appreciate your generous invitation, Mr. Saun. However, I currently don’t have any intention to sign.”

your “No problem. You can keep the business card. Anytime you come around to it, I welcome call anytime. Of course, not only business but personal affairs are also fine. The Saun family owes you huge gratitude.”

Since he had said so, Stella could only accept the business card. Trevor had returned to the country for so long, yet they had never been able to gather properly. Today was one of those opportunities. There were a few bottles of alcohol present. As the designated driver, Stella did not touch any alcohol. The others had more or less drunk some alcohol. No one knew if Trevor did it on purpose, but he kept toasting Keegan. Keegan, who could not hold his liquor, started to flush after a few cups.

Stella initially wanted him to drink less but swallowed her words as they were about to escape her mouth. When would she be able to kick the terrible habit of being worrisome?

After a few rounds of drinking, the room was filled with the smell of alcohol. Stella felt a bit suffocated and made the excuse of going to the washroom. She reached the balcony and thought that the ventilation was much better.

Stella took out her phone. Felicity had previously sent her a few screenshots and comments ten minutes ago. The new account had broken the records of a million fans.

Felicity had sent [Stella, why not give some fan service for the milestone of a million fans?]

[The internet had exploded like that, but you’re not online.]

[The account needs to be active, so you should slowly grow your familiarity with the fans.]

Stella picked a few pictures from her phone and sent them to Felicity. [How about any of these?

]

[No! You shouldn't use filters. Just take a picture with soft lighting. After you take it, send it to me, and I'll help you fix it.] Felicity replied.

Stella opened her camera app. She was worried one wasn't enough, so she took quite a few pictures and sent them to Felicity.

"Mrs. Kane." Behind her, Lena's voice came. Stella turned around, and Lena gave a bottle of

yogurt to her. "I originally only wanted to invite you. I didn't know so many people would come. Regarding the filming incident, I'm very thankful for it."

Stella shook her head. "Mrs. Lowe, you're too kind. Zane had helped me before. This is just considered me returning the favor."

Lena kept quiet for a moment and spoke in a low tone, "Are you and Zane... very close?"

"We're actually not really close, but I have heard rumors about him."

"Your impression of him is quite bad, right?" Lena asked.

Stella smiled as she shook her head.

"I haven't seen him more than a few times. I don't have the right to judge his character based on a few baseless rumors."

Lena did not speak, and it was unknown what she was thinking. After a while, she said, "The effect of Jurisdiction's broadcast is great. The producer wants to let you shoot a few more episodes. The price can be raised a bit more."

Chapter 271

The effect of Jurisdiction's broadcast was beyond expectations. Besides the story's merit, this was mainly due to Stella's interpretation of the character. The producer clearly knew this and naturally wanted to shoot a sequel to it. The rate still had space for negotiation.

Stella thought about it and said, "I can help you shoot a few more, and I still wouldn't need any paycheck. However, I need you to help me do something."

Lena was surprised, "Me?"

Stella nodded and leaned in to whisper two sentences into her ears. Then, she asked, "Is that okay?"

Lena looked at her thoughtfully. After a long while, she said, "Sure."

A breeze flowed through. A waft of soft fragrance rushed to their noses.

Lena furrowed her brows. "This floral fragrance is odd."

"It's devil's snare." Stella gave the few stalks of flowers on the balcony a look. She said quietly, "It's not good if you inhale too much."

'This store is too much. They even put this type of flower on the balcony. They seem to not be afraid that the guests would ingest it,' Stella thought.

"You seem to know a lot about this flower. You knew what it was just from a glance," Lena noted.

"I planted some at home. Devil's snare is quite beautiful. It's just that they're poisonous, so you need to be diligent when keeping them," Stella said as she scrolled through her phone. She tapped open the picture of her dual-colored devil's snare that had bloomed.

Lena was utterly amazed. "It's quite pretty."

"If you like them, I can gift you a few later." Both of them chatted while walking back. Just as they reached the corridor, they heard a voice.

"Carter, are you nuts? What did you mean just now?" It was Molly's voice. Her tone was slightly angry, but she tried to suppress her volume.

Carter pushed her hand away and tidied his attire. His expression was laid back. "Ms. Moore, have a little self-respect. I'm a married man."

Molly sneered. "Why are you pretending in front of me? Didn't you marry the coroner just to get back at me? Why? Did you put too much emotion into your act? You would let me lose face just for her?"

Stella was speechless.

'What's this shocking news?' Stella thought.

She discreetly glanced at Lena. She had a nonchalant expression, but the hand holding the yogurt tightened, and her knuckles were white. She could not leave, yet she could not stay, which made it awkward.

Instead, Carter had a lackadaisical expression and sneered out, “Ms. Moore, you might have

held yourself on too high a pedestal. We’re all grown-ups. If you like each other, you stay. If you don’t like each other, you break up. What’s there for me to take revenge on you for? It’s just the truth.”

Molly

could not believe his words. “The wedding band on her hand. It was the one you used to propose to me. Aren’t you doing this purposely for me to see?”

Carter’s body froze, and his expression fell. Then, he chuckled, “It’s just a ring. However, I felt it would be a waste if I threw it away. You sure like to fantasize, Ms. Moore.”

Molly grew frustrated. “It better not be! You better keep your mouth shut tight about our thing in the past. If my reputation is affected, you won’t get away happy!”

When her sentence ended, they heard a flurry of footsteps from afar. Molly probably left.

Stella licked her lips and wanted to say something to ease the awkwardness. Then she saw Lena just walk ahead.

Carter was still tidying his attire when he saw Lena suddenly appear. He was stunned for a bit, then naturally walked over to hold her hand.

“Your hand is cold.” He softly rubbed her fingertips. He then put them in his palm to warm them. “Why did you go to the balcony?”

Lena did not refuse and said softly, “I went to discuss some stuff with Mrs. Kane.”

Carter turned around to give a look, and Stella hid.

Carter gripped Lena’s hand tightly. As they walked, he asked, “What did you talk about?”

“Mrs. Kane showed me the flowers she planted. They were gorgeous.”

“You like them?”

“Mhm.”

“Then, we should plant them.”

“No, your parents wouldn’t like them.”

“Who cares if they like it? As long as you like it.”

Lena thought about it. "Then, I'll plant one pot of them. I'll put them on the balcony of the study."

Carter closed in to peck at her cheek. He then whispered, "As you wish."

Stella's emotions were conflicted. If not for the scene she saw just now, the two would be a match made in heaven. Yet, for some reason, after seeing that scene, the lovey-dovey act tasted like poison and burned her throat.

She stayed outside for a while and then entered the room. As a result, she discovered that Keegan, the idiot, had drunk himself into a drunken stupor.

Vermont was not better off, but at least he could still speak normally. It was understandable that the others were drunk, but was Molly not outside arguing with Carter just now? How did she end up in Trevor's arms?

Stella and Vermont used all their strength to put Keegan in the car. The three of them left first. Molly got into Trevor's car. Stella initially thought they would have more development in their relationship but did not expect Trevor to change his ride after the vehicle left not long

after. He got into a Ferrari and got his driver to send Molly home.

Just as he got into the car, he was given a document. A male voice said, "All the information for Mrs. Kane since birth."

Chapter 272

Trevor took it and flipped through a few pages. Stella's background was simple from her birth to her education and her marriage to Keegan afterward. The content was clear and detailed. Every detail was recorded, such as the hospital she was born in, the schools she attended, the clinics she visited when she was younger, and even the car accident six years ago.

There were pictures of her from her youth until the present.

Trevor pressed his fingers against his lower lip and frowned.

His personal assistant asked out of curiosity, "Mr. Trevor, why do you suddenly want to investigate Mrs. Kane?"

Still flipping through the pages, Trevor said indifferently, "I'm considering signing her. That's why I'm looking into her background."

'Does signing an actor require a full history background check from her youth to the present? The recently signed actor didn't go through such a thorough check. Is it more discreet because it's Mrs. Kane?'

Trevor, having skimmed through the thin file a few times, finally raised his eyes. "Help me check Albert and Rainee's background as well. I want it as precise as possible."

"Alright."

Trevor's phone started ringing just as the conversation ended.

When he lowered his head and looked at the caller, his expression softened and connected the

call.

"Brother, when are you coming back?"

Trevor smirked, "I'm on the road and almost home. Why? Are you afraid to be at home alone?"

"Who's afraid? If it weren't for father being afraid of you getting drunk and wanting me to monitor you, I can't be bothered."

"I'm drunk. Can't you cover for me?"

"I'm not helping! Do you think father is that easy to fool? He'll punish me if he finds out I'm helping you too."

She muffled her cough as she finished speaking.

Trevor's expression tensed up slightly. "Are you coughing? Did you catch a cold?"

"No, Rivera is too dry. My throat has been uncomfortable for the past two days."

"Turn on the humidifier and drink more water. I'll reach home in a moment. Do you want to eat something?"

"I'm not hungry. Auntie made dinner tonight. You'd better come home quick. Father would ask questions if he doesn't see you when he video calls."

"Alright, I'll be right home soon."

After hanging up, Trevor asked his assistant, "Xavier, is it possible to arrange cloud seeding?"

Xavier's eyes twitched as he replied, "Mr. Trevor, this isn't overseas. Cloud seeding requires approval from the Meteorology Department and various other departments."

To think the words "too dry" would make him consider cloud seeding. Only one person in the world would dote on his sister to such an extent.

"If that's the case," said Trevor as he scratched his chin, "tomorrow onwards, send some men to spray mist around the house for a few days."

'That would still require a Street Activity Permit.'

Xavier noted internally, 'This might be a good deal. Worse comes to worst, we just need to donate a sum for street maintenance. I believe they'd be more than happy to issue the permit.' Vermont helped Stella lie Keegan down on the bed and sat beside him, exhausted and gasping for breath.

It was never a good idea to drink with Keegan. Whenever he drinks, he'd have to be carried back. He was such a big man, yet his alcohol tolerance was even weaker than a woman's.

Stella unbuttoned a few of Keegan's shirt buttons when she saw Vermont about to go downstairs. She immediately caught up and said, "Mr. Snyder, let me send you back."

Vermont waved his hand. "I just hailed a car just now. It should be here any moment."

After Vermont left, Felicity sent an edited picture to her.

"Pretty girl, post this on Facebook."

Felicity did not do a lot of editing on Stella's face. She simply changed the contrast, and the effect looks better already.

Stella had just finished sending the message when she heard the sound of something dropping on the floor from upstairs.

She hastily ran up the stairs and pushed open the door, only to see Keegan sitting on the floor with a frown and an empty look on his face. His head had hit the floor, and there was a red bruise.

Stella reprimanded him, "You deserved it." She squatted down, lifted a finger in front of Keegan, and moved it left and right. "Keegan, can you hear me?"

Keegan, still with a frown, stared at her. His eyes showed his confusion while he pressed his lips tightly.

Chapter 273

He was like that whenever he was drunk. Others either fell asleep with their head tilted or became roaring drunks. Keegan, however, belongs to the third kind. His brain couldn't function when he was drunk. He could fool others as if he weren't drunk, but his brain was already muddled inside.

Keegan's low alcohol tolerance was only known by close friends. He would try to avoid attending any business meetings involving alcohol, and Aldor would help him out if it was unavoidable. With his drinking capacity, he might otherwise get cheated out of his company in his drunken haze.

"Who are you?"

Keegan massaged his temples and asked in a soft tone.

Stella frowned. "Can you even lose your memory from drinking too much?"

She squinted and took advantage to tease him. "My good son, do you not recognize your mother?"

"Mother?"

"Yes."

'What a good catch! I've suddenly gotten myself a grown-up son!'

She took out her phone and was about to record some evidence but had second thoughts when thinking about the consequences of humiliating Keegan. She ended up not recording when Keegan suddenly held her wrist, "Stella?"

'Damn. He sobered up quickly?'

Stella raised her head, only to see Keegan had the same quizzical expression from just now, still not fully awake.

"My head hurts."

He frowned and lowered his head the next moment to place her hands on his forehead as he lightly rubbed it.

Stella felt peculiar.

'Why is drunk Keegan so...obedient?'

"You're drunk. That's why your head hurts."

Stella wanted to pull her hand away, but Keegan's grip was firm.

"No. My head hurts from being mad at you," Keegan said matter-of-factly.

Stella's lips twitched, and she replied, "Am I even capable of doing that?"

Still with his eyes closed, Keegan said hoarsely, "You always... make me frustrated. You want to divorce me, want to argue with me, but I'm most frustrated when you ignore me."

Stella was startled and asked softly, "Why are you frustrated when I ignore you?"

Keegan, with his eyes shut, did not reply.

Stella lowered her head to look closer and saw that Keegan had already dozed off.

She heaved a sigh. 'Why would you say something that would make me feel concerned?'

At Lake Villa, Bella looked anxious. "How is it? Did anyone pick up the call?"

Wein shook his head. "Aldor said Mr. Kane had an important dinner, and we should without him."

go

ahead

Bella frowned and asked, "Did you say it exactly as I told you to?"

"Yes."

Bella gritted her teeth. "It's probably Aldor's doing!"

She almost got her way the last time Keegan was drunk at Lake Villa. Unfortunately, Aldor came rushing in at the last moment and took Keegan away.

Since then, Keegan intentionally alienated her.

Thinking about the past made Bella gnash her teeth in hatred. 'Aldor must have played a part this time as well. This hateful guy has foiled my plans so many times!'

She was still distraught, yet Kelly had to call right at this moment, asking for help to share something on Facebook.

Bella said with a straight face, "I'll do it another day, Kelly. You're already aware of the situation. We couldn't get onto the hot search's listing."

Chapter 274

The hot topic list for entertainment was hogged by Stella and Jurisdiction today. The hot

topics tag Bella

bought became the subject of ridicule. Not long after it was listed on the hot search list, she got someone to take it off. Naturally, Kelly did not see the effects of the advertising, so she called again.

Bella could not be bothered with her antics since she had her own issues to deal with.

"Please just help to repost again. Even a little more exposure is fine. Oh, right. The woman acting in Jurisdiction from the hot search was the new actress Daniel signed for the role of the Empress."

Bella's face slumped. "What did you say? Stella's the new actress Daniel picked?"

"That's her. Why? From your tone, is she your acquaintance?"

'It's not just acquaintances. We practically know each other!'

Bella's face turned ugly.

If other actresses were to take the role, she could easily change them out. But now that Stella had accepted the role in The Palace, it would be a little trickier.

When Keegan gave her the voice-acting role in Honor of the Deities, it was under the condition that she rescinds the lawyer's letter.

She was blacklisted online because of the chain crash incident. Wein got a lawyer to settle the issue but was stopped by Keegan before the case could be settled.

That not only gave her the voice-acting role in Honor of the Deities, but also two regional endorsements for two big brands.

Most of the blackmail materials were dug up by Stella. Otherwise, Keegan would not have given her so many materials to make her drop the lawsuit.

It was impossible for Bella to let Keegan switch out Stella now that she was acting in The Palace. Keegan would not possibly let her wife lose such an opportunity just for her, after all.

Not hearing any reply on the other end, Kelly did not question further. She reminded Bella to repost and then hung up.

Bella thought hard, and a person who could help her suddenly came to mind.

She dismissed Wein, flipped open a book, and dialed the number written inside.

The phone rang for a while before it was connected. She spoke in a low voice, "It's Bella ..."

Trevor got out of the bath, poured himself some water, sat on the sofa, and picked up the file to go through it again.

His phone rang not long after. He picked up and replied indifferently, "What is it?"

"Mr. Franklin called. He said to switch out the actress for one of the roles."

Trevor sipped his tea and asked, "Who does he want to switch out?"

"The actress playing the Empress. He wants to change it to Bella."

Trevor paused for a moment. "Whose idea was this?"

"It looks like it was Mr. Kane."

"Keegan?" Trevor frowned. "Are you sure?"

"Hearing from Mr. Franklin, it's definitely him."

Trevor scowled. He replied after some time, "Tell him to find me himself if he wants the actress changed."

The Palace was aired in a lowkey manner on the 19th of April, without informing the media outlet or news of release on any entertainment platform. The crew members were made to sign a confidentiality agreement, and no one was allowed to upload pictures, videos, or sound records from the film set.

If found out, one would have their contract canceled, kicked off the crew, and made to pay up to three times of liquidated damages.

The opening ceremony was a success, and it was also the same day Stella met the show's male and female leads.

Chapter 275

The male

lead was Finn Jone, an excellent actor who had won numerous accolades, and the female lead was Leia Coleman. They looked younger than her, yet their eyes exposed their maturity.

They may not be old, but their eyes resembled seasoned performers with a lot to tell and were full of hope. It was not a feeling Stella could put into words.

Unsure if it was because of the higher-ups, the shooting had accelerated since the opening ceremony. According to a cast member, Daniel wanted to rush the show for Thanksgiving release, and the higher-ups may cut down on medieval shows next year. If progress was slow and the policy changed next year, the show may get cut, and the release may be delayed indefinitely. A delay of two years will have a huge impact, not to mention indefinite delays.

Stella may not have much screen time, but it was quite spread out. Usually, she would be called over by Daniel if another actor was shooting a scene and her role had a part in it. That was why, except for the uncomfortable headdress, other inconveniences are still acceptable.

No matter the role, the performers Daniel picked had to always be in good shape.

Stella's articulation was good, but her expression was not as good as the others. Despite that, Daniel was a willing teacher, and Stella was a keen learner, making her improvement obvious.

Compared to the hectic life Stella was leading now, Keegan, as of late, was somewhat depressed. Nowadays, Stella woke up earlier and came back later than him, not giving the couple a chance to speak with each other. On occasions when she came home early, she would yawn and quickly shower as if trying to sneak away.

Stella had reached home after nine again tonight: She took a bath and half-dried her hair before lying on the bed. She used to check on her phone before sleeping but had stopped doing it nowadays.

Keegan loudly flipped through a book, making Stella furrow her brows. She pulled out a pair of earplugs and an eye mask from the drawer to drown out both senses.

'This asshole had never been in bed before eleven in the past. Recently, why is he here whenever I lie down? Most importantly, he would flip the book back and forth instead of sleeping. So noisy!'

Seeing her drowning out light and sound and seeming impatient, Keegan's mouth couldn't help but twitch. He was about to put down the book and turn off the lights when Stella's phone rang. Seeing Stella not move, Keegan took out one of her earplugs and forced the phone beside her ear. The shrill noise instantly woke Stella up.

She took off her eye mask and was about to lose her temper when Keegan said indifferently, "Your father."

Stella pursed her lips and took the call.

"Stella, are you asleep?"

'It's so late. Anyone would be woken up by this.'

Stella still pursing her lips before she replied, "Not yet. Is there anything you need, father?"

"Your great-grandfather was recently discharged from the hospital and insisted on staying at your place for a few days to see his great-grandson-in-law. Are you at home tomorrow? Can I fetch him over tomorrow?"

Stella immediately became wide awake.

Her great-grandfather, Arthur Jewell, Albert's grandfather, was eighty-seven this year. Before she joined the cast, Albert had called, saying Arthur Jewell had come to the city to receive treatment for possible enteritis and would be staying in the hospital for a few days. She spared some time to visit him at that time.

Many from the Jewell family came to pay a visit, encircling the bed. Stella did not stay long and left quickly.

Stella had a bad relationship with her relatives. She rarely returned to her great-grandparents' home and rarely saw Arthur. Even when she married, Arthur never attended the wedding because it was too far. 'Why would he take the initiative to stay at my place now of all times?'