

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted by Eleven Jewell

Chapter 276-300

Chapter 276

Stella furrowed her eyebrows. "If Arthur wants to see Keegan, I could just bring him over. Since we both work in the morning, no one would be home. Who would take care of him if you were to send him here? Arthur's mature in age, and if accidents were to happen, won't I be the target for complaints?"

She whispered in a low voice. "Keegan's just like us. What part of him is so good to look at?"

Albert

was not satisfied and reprimanded, "What are you trying to say? Have you forgotten the time you returned to your great-grandparent's home when you were young? Arthur, who loved you the most, would give you the best of everything. Won't you fulfill his last wish since his days are already limited? How will this trouble you since you're living so well? Besides, even if Keegan has gone to work, you are still idling at home, right? How would I answer your aunts and uncles if you disagree? Pass the phone to Keegan so I can talk to him."

'He made a promise even before calling, and yet he blames me? Rather than Keegan, it would be much better to speak to me. Keegan's more vicious with his words and is very particular. Would he even agree to let a stranger in if it would negatively impact his lifestyle?'

Stella then thought, 'Fine. I'll let Keegan have the phone. Maybe his vicious tongue could make Albert back off.'

She then passed the phone to Keegan. "My father wants to speak with you."

Keegan glanced at her and took the phone. Stella could not get to sleep as she sat beside Keegan, waiting for him to reject Albert viciously. Keegan waited for Albert to finish rambling before he said indifferently, "Alright. I'll arrange for someone to clean up the guest room.'

Stella could not believe what she had heard. She waited for Keegan to hang up before asking, "Why did you agree?"

Keegan returned the phone to her. "Can I even reject it when your father has it all planned?"

'Bullshit! Has he already forgotten how many times he had heartlessly refused? What's going on with Keegan today?'

Stella pursed her lips, only to speak up after a long while, "You allowed him to come. If his being here aggravates you, you'll have to accept the consequences yourself. Don't complain to me since I never agreed to it."

Keegan's lips twitched as he said, "Are you heartless? Who do you think I did this for?"

Stella curled up in her blanket, closed her eyes, and mumbled, "I didn't want you to agree. I'll at most get scolded by father since this is not the first time anyway."

Keegan suddenly recalled the incident at the hospital, where Stella came home with a slap mark on her face after seeing Albert. It was all because Albert discovered Dahlia had not received the two boxes of white truffles.

'Albert would only treat her nicely when I'm around. Her days with the Jewell family might not have been as easy as I had imagined.'

His tossing and turning finally annoyed Stella, and she went outside with the blanket to turn in for the night.

Keegan took out his phone and pondered for a long while before he messaged Felicity, [What did Albert do to Stella?]

Felicity was in a game when she received the message. Her hands accidentally jerked, causing her to miss, and the opponent defeated her.

The teammates scolded her. "Are you trying to act like a newbie? You stole the jungle and bottom lanes, yet you missed when the enemy was right in your face? Why fight for the mage role when you don't even know how to use it?"

"Aren't you just throwing the game by picking Angela?"

"Your trashy plays wasted my chance for a rank-up!"

"I can't believe I joined a newbie team! Quickly surrender so I can start the next game!"

The corners of Felicity's mouth twitched. She turned on the mic and verbally retaliated. "I wanted to help pick the heroes since I was the first to pick, yet no one replied on their microphone. Did I smear your family name by picking a mage? How attractive is the middle lane for everyone to steal it? Don't you dare spit at me if you don't even know how to check the bushes as Yaria! The opponent jungler had already stolen several minion waves from their middle lane. Yet, our jungler was only leisurely farming in the jungle while

hitchhiking as Yaria. Are you even trying? Rank up? Go rank up somewhere else! Get s
tuck in the Silver Order, you newbies! I'm not surrendering!"

Felicity was muted by the game when she lashed out in anger.

All her teammates were flabbergasted. She responded in kind to all their remarks by cu
ssing at them respectively.

Only after releasing her anger did she reply
to Keegan, [Mr. Kane, why don't you ask your wife directly?]

The current her was in awe, yet afraid of Keegan. She could only avoid offending him as
much as possible.

Keegan bit his lip. [She's asleep.]

'Why can't you ask her tomorrow?' Felicity silently cursed. 'How strange for Keegan to
message just to ask about Stella.'

[Stella's father favored male over female and had always been brooding over her mothe
r's inability to bear another child due to her weak constitution. He never gave Stella the
attention she deserved. It was still bearable when her mother was still around. After her
mother was met with bad luck, the family business was in a crisis. The first thing on her
father's mind was to set her up in an arranged marriage.]

[What despicable man would refrain from taking a beauty like her as their wife? Stella's f
ather couldn't care less about the spouse's age difference or their previous affairs. As lo
ng as they can help him tide over the difficulties in his business, he would marry her off t
o older men. It's good that she met you though you aren't perfect...]

Having slipped her tongue accidentally, Felicity paused and became cautious. She only
continued after noticing Keegan's silence. [Anyway, it's gotten better since the marriage
these past few years. He's afraid of you, and he'll treat Stella slightly better just for your
sake.]

Felicity, having gained courage after writing all that, asked, [Mr. Kane, will you really giv
e

Stella a billion dollars after the divorce?]

Keegan's vein twitched.

'Damn it. Just how many people did she inform about the divorce?'

Keegan maintained his poker face. [No.]

Felicity immediately panicked. [Haven't you signed the divorce papers? You're not fooling anyone.]

Keegan coldly replied, (When have I mentioned I wanted a divorce?)

[What?]

[Don't let Stella know I looked for you. Otherwise,] Keegan paused, [I can end the copyright as quickly as having you signed on for it.]

'Keegan was the one to pull the strings for the copyright sale? Why did he help me in the dark?' thought Felicity as she pondered over the past. He framed her for stealing the rings, and she was sent to the police station. After returning, her boss immediately told her that someone wanted to buy the copyrights to her work.

'Everything was going too fast then. Now that I think about it, good and bad things normally don't come consecutively. Is Keegan trying to compensate me? What would Keegan get out of all this?'

In a moment of epiphany, Felicity came up with a weird guess. 'Could Keegan be doing it for Stella?'

If Felicity was jailed, Keegan would not get anything out of this, yet he contracted her scripts, giving her a tidy sum. The only difference was that Stella had to move back with him.

'He created such a huge fiasco so that Stella would return home on her own? This has to be a joke...'

Chapter 277

'Albert has such good timing. Stella didn't have to work that day, and Albert just had to do something like this.'

"Good morning, Mrs. Kane." Stella heard several people greeting her as soon as she woke up and went downstairs. She was shocked and almost slipped.

There were some domestic helpers cleaning the house, and Stella had no idea when they arrived.

The glass table in the living room was spotlessly clean, and the huge wedding photo looked as good as new too.

Everything in the house looked so pristine, just like when they first got married and moved in.

'I don't understand what Keegan's doing.

'Not only did he agree to let somebody else live here, but he also told them to clean the house as if it mattered.'

Nonetheless, Stella was pleased because she did not have to do anything.

Keegan came down from upstairs just after Stella poured herself a glass of water.

He had a suit on, and he purposely styled his hair. He walked down as he fixed his sleeve.

Keegan's body proportions were perfect. He was six feet one, and his legs were three feet seven. The suit that he was wearing made his legs look even longer.

Stella swept her glance over his starched slack silently before she gulped and said, "Why are you going to work so late today?"

Keegan glared at her. "I'm not going to work."

'Then why are you wearing a suit?'

Before she could ask that question, Stella heard Keegan speak again. "Change into something nice. I'll wait for you in the car."

Stella paused. "Where are we going?"

"Your dad wants us to pick your great-grandfather up."

Stella was speechless.

'I thought they were going to send him over. Why do we have to pick him up now?'

The Jewell family had a lot of visitors when Stella's great-grandfather fell sick. Rainee did not have a good relationship with her relatives, so Stella only met them a few times. Obviously, they did not like her.

She would not want to meet those people if given the option.

The last time Stella saw them was during the new year when Albert insisted she join them for dinner. Keegan did not like to socialize, so Stella went alone.

Stella could still clearly remember the looks her relatives gave her that day.

Albert was the first person to graduate from a university in his family. He gave a lot of money to his family to build roads back home after that, so he was highly respected in the Jewell family.

Albert was a role model to almost everyone in the Jewell family. Some of his relatives settled down in the city with his help too. Even though some of them stayed in their old home, they would send their kids to study in the city, hoping they would become another Albert.

Stella and her cousins did not have a big age difference, so their parents' favorite thing to do

was to compare

them with each other whenever they all gathered to celebrate an occasion.

Some parents would feel superior if their child scored well, but the children who did poorly would not even have the mood to eat without their parents having to nag them.

However, Stella was the best child among them, and she had always been.

She was brilliant, and Rainee spent a lot of time and effort in her education. Stella would already know everything in the Year Two syllabus when her peers were still in Year One. So she would consistently score very well because of that.

Rainee liked to show off. After flaunting Stella's results, Rainee would ask Stella to play the piano and flute in front of everyone.

Her relatives were less privileged than her, so the things that Stella learned were out of reach for them. That was why what Rainee did made them very mad.

Every child was a parent's best-loved one, and they simply could not bear to see Stella being in the limelight every single time.

So, their relationship with each other worsened as time passed.

Not only did Rainee invite almost a thousand people to a meal in her old home during the year when Stella got accepted into Trinity University, but she also organized a concert for three days straight. All of her relatives boiled with anger.

Chapter 278

After that, Rainee got into an accident, and Stella got married to Keegan right after she graduated. She came from such a prestigious university, yet she became a housewife instead. So, her relatives took the chance to get their revenge.

One of Stella's cousins scored higher than the minimum score required to get into Calton University. Calton University was second only to Trinity University and was one of the leading universities.

Her relatives brought it up during a gathering, and one mentioned what happened when they were young. That person said Stella was very good at studying, yet he used her as an example to tell the children there that it was no use for a girl to be so knowledgeable because she would end up being a housewife if she did not have a broad vision.

One could already imagine how furious Stella felt at that time.

She lost all her appetite after reminding herself of those people.

Keegan was already waiting in the car when Stella finished changing.

Keegan drove a Lincoln that day. He rarely drove that car.

Aldor could tell how confused Stella was, so he explained, "There's a bed in this car, and it'll be more comfortable for an older person to sit on."

'How thoughtful.'

Stella looked at Keegan.

'I'm sure that this isn't his idea.'

"Get in now."

Keegan urged Stella before she got inside.

He drove out of the neighborhood and asked Stella, "What have you been doing these days? Why do you leave the house so early and come back so late?"

"Work, of course. Didn't you see how popular Jurisdiction is? The director likes me very much. and wants me to be in a few more episodes."

Aldor got interested when Stella mentioned Jurisdiction.

"My mom has been watching this show too. She was frightened after the first episode, especially by the part you acted in. She told me that the actor looked so good. I said that you're a girl and she didn't believe me. She only started complaining that the actress in the second. episode didn't look as good as the one in the first. The second actress just couldn't act as well as you. She even learned how to surf the internet just to comment that she wants to see you in the show again on the official Facebook page of Jurisdiction. She isn't very good with spelling, and she even accidentally typed some

banned words that got her account suspended. So, she's wondering if she should just call the TV station now."

"Your mom's so interesting." Stella smiled and said, "This isn't a drama. We can't keep using the same cast."

"She doesn't understand. She's just watching it as if it's a drama. Not only someone her age,

but my co-workers and I would watch it too during our break time. Even Mr. Kane watches it."

Keegan kept quiet.

Stella gazed at Keegan. Then, she leaned closer to him and asked, "How was my acting? Did I embarrass you?"

She was breathing just a few inches away from him, and Keegan suddenly remembered how she looked when she held a knife against that man's chin.

She was so crazy and alluring. There was just something about her that could not be described in words.

Keegan gulped. Then, he looked away and said flatly, "It was fine."

Stella's lip curled. "It's so difficult to hear you praise someone."

Keegan looked a little annoyed. "Actually... it was pretty good," he said after some time.

After not getting a response from Stella, he turned his head and looked at her, only to find that she already had her headphones on and was resting with her eyes closed.

Unfortunately, Stella could not hear the compliment that he had spent so much time working himself up to say.

Keegan got upset.

Aldor had a hard time holding his laughter back, so he turned up the radio's volume to protect his boss' dignity.

In the Jewell Residence, everyone in the family already knew that Sophia got accepted by the Vinci Rivera Group.

All the relatives gathered together because Stella's great-grandfather was discharged, so they talked about it.

The Vinci Rivera group was known by almost everyone in the country. Not only was Sophia a part of such a famous enterprise, but she also became the spokesperson for a project.

Lydia Night, one of Stella's relatives, wanted to take this chance and brag about how her son passed an interview. Yet, Sophia took the spotlight away from her.

Chapter 279

The Vinci Rivera Group was the core of the advanced technology sector in the country, and the professional requirements of working with them were extremely high. So, they worked with some of the best local universities to specifically train the students as the future workforce to meet their demands.

They needed a few people to promote their new campaign, and Sophia happened to be one of the chosen ones.

Firstly, the university she graduated from was one of the universities the Vinci Rivera Group was interested in. Secondly, Sophia was an online celebrity and influential among university students. She used to be an orphan, yet she joined the Vinci Rivera Group after she graduated. Her life story is pretty motivating for most people.

Sophia graduated in the same year as Lydia's son. Even though her university was not as good as Calton, she managed to get into such a good company. She even became the spokesperson for Vinci Rivera before her probation ended. There was just no way that Lydia could be okay with it.

"I'd never expect Sophia to be the most successful person in the Jewell family. She got to work in a good company like this right after she graduated. She has a bright future ahead of her."

"The blind fortune teller back in our old house used to say that she would someday excel in life. How right he was!"

"What does this have to do with that fortune teller? Her father's the reason why she could achieve something like this."

"What about Stella then? She got into an even better university, and Rainee just couldn't stop bragging about that. But what happened? Not only did she choose to be an art student, but she got married right after she graduated. What a shame."

"I think she's acting in one of the online shows now. Haa... She even made herself look like a freak on it. Isn't her mother-in-law very wealthy? Why does she still need to work?"

"I

guess she prefers spending her own money. Albert called her and said he wanted to send the old man over for a few days, yet she kept finding excuses to reject him. I'm pretty sure this is because she can't make any decisions in the family, and she's just a nobody."

"She came from such a good university, yet she married right after graduating. What's the point of even studying? Look at Sophia. She got into a large corporation. She'll be well-respected by her husband's family when she gets married because she has her own career."

Sophia was delighted to hear those things.

Even though she knew her relatives only said some of those things to flatter Albert, she still felt very good about herself. After all, before Rainee got into that accident, they had only praised Stella.

Sofia spoke softly after being satisfied listening to their compliments. "Uncles, aunties, that's not right. Stella values the family more than me, and I'm only working because I don't like spending money that's not mine. My dad spent so much money and effort on me, and I just can't let him down."

Sofia made it sound like she was putting a good word in for Stella, but she was actually belittling Stella by saying that Stella didn't have a dream to chase to make herself look better.

"Sophia's such a good kid. Just look at how many clothes she buys for the old man these days. He couldn't stop smiling while praising her to me."

Lydia finally found the chance to interrupt them. "Sophia, you haven't worked here for a month yet, right? How did you receive your salary so soon?"

Sophia glared at Lydia and then smiled faintly. "Auntie Lydia, it's only been half a month, and I didn't receive any payment at all. The money I used to buy my great-grandpa's shirt came from my scholarship and the money I earned from working part-time. Dustin's so good at studying. I'm sure he received a good amount of scholarship, too, right? What did he buy for you?"

Dustin never spent anything on her. Lydia's face twitched. She cursed at Sophia inwardly while saying in a flat tone, "O-Of course. Dustin's a good kid."

Stella heard everything as she stood at the door. Her relatives did not let her down. She could hear them chatting from the other side of the wall, and even the pedestrians could listen to what they were talking about.

She was about to turn around and leave, but Keegan grabbed her wrist and rang the doorbell. Very soon later, a teenage girl came to open the door. She was shocked to

see the couple that looked like superstars as she could not recognize them. "Who are you looking for?"

Stella knew who that girl was. It was Sarah Jewell, Lydia's daughter. Sarah was still going to high school. She was very skinny and looked very scared when she met anybody. She looked nothing like her mother, and Jewell once gave her tuition.

Stella smiled. "Sarah, we're here to pick up great-grandpa."

Sarah only came around after hearing that. "Stella?"

Chapter 280

Sarah ran back into the house and shouted, "Stella's back! She's here!"

Lydia scolded her after seeing her over-the-top reaction. "So what, if she came back? Did you have to shout? Is this your first time meeting her?"

Then, she saw Keegan entering the room while holding Stella's hand.

Everyone went silent.

'Didn't we say that we'll send great-grandpa over later? Why did she come with her husband?'

Keegan had never attended any family celebrations in the Jewell family. Dahlia thought that the Jewells was a massive family from the countryside, and she was afraid they would not know the standards of a marriage ceremony, so she did not invite any of them to avoid embarrassment.

A lot of people there had yet to meet Keegan.

Even though all of them criticized Stella for getting married right after graduating, they were actually jealous of her.

The Kane family of Rivera had achieved so many things that they were on a level that could never be reached by most people.

Did somebody say that Stella could not make any decisions in the Kane family and that she was just a nobody?

Keegan's presence immediately shut a lot of them

Of course, the look on Sophia's face was the worst among them. However, she quickly recollected herself as she approached them and said, "Hello, Stella, Keegan. What brings you here?"

Before she could open her mouth, Stella heard Keegan say, "My wife takes her family very seriously. Her great-grandpa had just recovered from being sick, and she purposely asked me to come here and pick him up in a car with a bed so that he could be more comfortable on the way to our home."

Sophia was speechless.

Stella gazed at Keegan, shocked.

'Is this guy helping me?'

However, Sophia's face looked ugly. Even though Keegan spoke flatly, his words sounded a little sarcastic. The fact that he said Stella took her family very seriously also seemed like he was purposely talking back against what Sophia had just said.

"Stella's so considerate." Albert was delighted by Keegan's visit as he quickly said, "Stop standing over there. Come on in."

"Dad," Keegan said before continuing, "There are a lot of things in the car. Would you get someone to get them?"

After a few minutes, several people unloaded many gifts from the car in front of everyone.

There were some very expensive teas, imported and organic yogurt, saffron worth a few hundred for less than an ounce, several boxes of wild eleuthero, and plenty of other rare things that cost a fortune and even the Jewells had never heard of.

Not only were Stella's relatives shocked, but Albert was also very surprised by the generous gifts.

"These... these are too expensive."

"Stella said that she doesn't meet her great-grandpa often, so she has to treat him very well. These are really not that expensive. She can probably earn everything back by shooting just one episode of her show."

Chapter 281

Stella was speechless.

Everyone there went quiet too.

Those things were worth at least a few million, yet Keegan made it sound like they were not enough.

And, he purposely mentioned that Stella was the one who bought them just to tell Sophia that Stella did not ask him for money.

Sophia was certain that Keegan had heard what she and her relatives said just now, so he only said those things to target her.

It did not matter if Stella really bought those gifts or not, but the fact that Keegan was willing to accompany her to be there said a lot about their relationship.

All the relatives that were looking down on Stella did not dare to say anything anymore.

Lydia felt very good after looking at how Sophia was embarrassed. Then, she added fuel to the fire.

“Albert, you’re such a fortunate man. Just look at how many things Stella and her husband brought here today. I guess Keegan is like your son now.”

Albert felt very proud that Keegan made his way there. His face glowed as he humbly said, “I appreciate the gifts, but all I want is for them to be happy together.”

Lydia’s eyes sparkled as she suddenly turned to Sophia. “Sophia, how much do you make in Vinci Rivera?”

Sophia was still mad as she glowered at Lydia after hearing her question. “Aunt Lydia, I signed a non-disclosure agreement, so that’s something I can’t tell you.”

Lydia was not bothered. “We’re your family, not outsiders. Do you think we’re going to tell everybody else about it?”

Sophia trembled with rage.

She knew that Lydia only asked her to make her look bad. Stella had just bought so many expensive things back home, and she would never be able to afford them even though she earned a lot more than she did.

“It’s better for a girl to find herself the right husband. I’m afraid that someone won’t be able to spend her partner’s money even if she wants to,” said Lydia.

Even though Stella did not like Lydia or agree with what she said, she was amused by the fact that Sophia could not find a word to refute Lydia.

She just could not figure out what Keegan did to make him act like a decent human.

Albert immediately tried to make things less awkward for Sophia. "Sophia, why don't you check on your great-grandpa and see if he's done changing? Tell him that Stella has come to pick him up too."

"Sure," Sophia responded with a long face before going upstairs.

Lydia felt really good. Then, she said to everyone else, "I have good news today. My son, Dustin, passed the interview at Calton University."

Everybody there smiled without saying anything.

They did not ignore her because of how badly she wanted to show off her son. Otherwise, they would have plenty of other reasons to dislike her.

Rainee bragged about her daughter because Stella was undoubtedly the best among them.

However, not only did Lydia flaunt her son's achievement, but she also put others' children down.

Her relatives would not be bothered by just that, but she did something even more bizarre.

Chapter 282

There was a tradition in the town where a family would hold a big banquet with friends and relatives once their child was accepted into college. The guests would also give the kid their best regards for their future.

That was why when Stella was accepted into Trinity University, Rainee hosted a banquet with eighty-eight tables at their old home. She did not charge their relatives and friends a single cent. It did not matter if any of them made snarky remarks toward her and Stella because they were jealous. She still boasted her daughter's achievements to everyone she saw.

Lydia, on the other hand, started telling everyone that her son was having a celebration the second his high school admission letter arrived in the mail. She even asked the guests to donate what they could to have a feast. However, when the time came, they found out that Lydia had only set up a few tattered tables on the front porch. She then asked everyone to enter the house to eat.

When they entered her house, they discovered that the decorations were lacking. Even a funeral looked nicer than Lydia's place. It was clear that she did not want to spend any money. And, she only cooked up a massive pot of stew to satisfy their hunger.

Lydia had used the leftover radishes and cabbages that their shop could not sell in the stew. There were only a few pieces of meat in it too. She had received more than 100 thousand dollars from the donations, yet she had the audacity to serve a pot of stew. It was an embarrassing sight since they obviously could do better. Aside from Albert Jewell, Lydia's family was the second richest in the Jewell family.

She owned tens of acres of orchards and earned millions of dollars a year alone. Her husband was a very hard-working and capable man who worked as a warehouse manager in Albert's company. He made hundreds of thousands per year. Yet, even with this much money, their family still asked for donations from their friends and relatives.

So, when Lydia told everyone that her son was accepted into Calton University, no one said a thing because they knew that she was trying to cheat them of their money. Seeing that no one was congratulating their family, Lydia took it as them being jealous rather than feeling embarrassed for herself.

She glanced around the place, and her gaze fell upon the fourth daughter-in-law of the Jewell family. "Elaine! How did Hayden do in his second exam?"

Elaine did not want to converse with Lydia, so she blandly said, "I didn't ask."

"How could you not ask about your son's results? Examinations are important. Hayden did poorly in last year's exam. He must have had some improvement this year-round, right? I mean, even my baby, Dustin, had gone for an interview. Shouldn't Hayden be getting interviews right now too? Or... Did he not do well in his exams again, and he didn't tell you guys?"

An ugly expression appeared on Elaine's face. 'Is this what a decent human being should say? It's fine if you want to boast about your child, but there's no need to bring others down!' she thought.

Elaine tried to suppress her anger. When she saw Stella, she suddenly knew what to say." Hayden has his own opinions, unlike Dustin, who needs you to do everything for him." She

then paused for a while before she continued, "Lydia, remember when Stella got her acceptance letter? Rainee threw such a huge banquet with more than eighty tables. She event invited a famous live band. Now that Dustin has been admitted into grad school, I'm expecting more than 100 tables for his celebration since he is the first in the Jewell family to get into grad school. I hope you're not cooking another pot of radish stew to fool us this time."

Lydia was a little embarrassed when Elaine mentioned the past. "What did you say? I fooled you? I was just trying to be a low-key person. Look at how Stella got married right after her graduation. She and her mother are a joke to the Jewell family," she said sullenly.

Stella's expression darkened before someone grabbed her hand. Keegan rubbed the back of her hand intermittently and said, "I don't get it, Aunt Lydia. Why is it a joke? Is Stella marrying me so funny to you?"

Lydia froze. She was so focused on Elaine that she forgot to look around before she spoke. Lydia had always said it's better to marry well than to get good results. In her perception, that only applied to her daughter. Now that Rainee's daughter was the one who got to marry into a well-known family, she started becoming jealous.

Lydia was not scared of Stella or Albert. If they were the only people there, she would have talked even louder just to let them hear it. However, it was different with Keegan. He was not from the Jewell family and did not even spare them a glance when he and Stella got married, which meant he was not going to give Lydia any face.

Chapter 283

"T-That was not what I meant..." Lydia stammered.

"What did you mean then, Aunt Lydia? My wife married me at a young age. She woke up every morning to prepare breakfast and clean the house. She worked hard to care for me and the house day and night so that I could focus on my work. Tell me, why is she a joke?" Keegan widened his eyes and said.

Stella stayed quiet. She could not believe her ears. She was blushing from Keegan's lies. Stella only woke up when it was noon, and the meals she prepared were inedible. The only thing she was diligent at was shopping and buying stuff with his credit card. From Keegan's point of view, she was ungrateful to have wanted a divorce.

Lydia's face was flushed, and she did not utter a word for a long time. On the other hand, the corners of Elaine's lips curled with excitement as she watched Lydia get schooled. 'Hah! You deserve that, bitch,' she thought.

In the end, Albert said, "I don't understand why someone as old as you would act like a three-year-old."

Lydia finally calmed down after that.

After a while, Sophia helped Arthur down the stairs. The old man was nearly ninety years old, and his body was quite strong. However, he had a hunchback and wrinkles all over his face. The clothes on his body looked brand new. Members of the Jewell family must have bought it for him earlier. Arthur looked clean and energetic.

The old man glanced around the place, and his gaze fell upon Keegan. He then stared at him carefully. Albert wanted to help the old man, but Arthur waved his hand and rejected his help.

“Grandpa, this is my son-in-law, Keegan. I showed you a picture of him before,” Albert said. His voice was much louder than usual since the old man was partially deaf.

“How old are you?” Arthur asked.

“Thirty,” Keegan pursed his lips and said.

The old man frowned and muttered, “You just got married at the age of thirty? What’s the matter with you?”

Keegan was at a loss for words. Everyone there broke into a cold sweat after hearing Arthur’s words. Stella almost let out a laugh, but Keegan’s face looked serious.

Albert was afraid that Keegan would get angry, so he hurriedly explained, “They didn’t get married this year, grandpa. They’ve been married for several years now. Times are different, grandpa. Kids nowadays marry late and have children late as well. There are many people in their thirties who aren’t married yet.”

After Albert said that, he whispered to Keegan, “He’s getting old, and he’s a bit confused.” “You’re the one who is confused!” Arthur then said in dissatisfaction, “Stella is still so young. Why did you throw her into the lion’s den? What kind of a father are you?”

Keegan stayed quiet. Before he could recover from the first wave of insult, he was already receiving a second wave. “This old man is nuts. We’re never going to get along. Ah! I shouldn’t

have agreed to let him stay with us...’

Chapter 284

Arthur’s insult was mainly aimed at Albert. Stella then felt that he wasn’t a confused old man. Albert smiled apologetically and said, “Keegan treats her very well. Stella is blessed to have married him. How is she in a lion’s den?” The old man snorted and did not speak again.

Keegan’s appearance was rare at the Jewell residence. Albert wanted him to at least stay for a meal. Initially, Keegan and Stella planned to pick Arthur up and leave, but Albert insisted on them staying. After having lunch with the Jewells, they rested there for a bit before driving the old man back to their place. It was already 3:00 or 4:00 p.m. when they got in the car.

Stella asked her great-grandfather if he wanted to lie down for a while, but the man wanted to

He said he could not see from the window if he lay down. Stella thought that it was funny, but she obeyed his wishes.

Arthur had lived in his hometown all his life. But now, he was in Rivera, the farthest place he had ever traveled. Aldor intentionally slowed down to let him take in the view. Arthur's golden eyes were fixed on the slowly receding scenery outside the window. The rows and rows of buildings in Rivera looked magnificent.

Arthur looked at the road for a long time and said, "The place is developing really well. There are so many skyscrapers here."

Stella suddenly felt sad and whispered, "You can stay here longer if you like."

Arthur smiled and joked, "I didn't expect to have such a blessing at this age." As he said that, he suddenly put his hand into the pocket of his coat, rummaged it for a long time, and took out a piece of Ferrero chocolate. He handed it to Stella and whispered to her like a child, "I found this in Sophia's room. She said it's chocolate, and it's super delicious. But, I can't eat it since I have no teeth left. Can you eat it and tell me if it's any good?"

Stella was taken aback. She did not really have any impression of her great-grandfather since she did not return to her hometown often. When she was younger, she only stayed there for a day or two and left in a hurry. The only thing she remembered was that her great-grandfather took out a paper bag from his coat, put his hand into it, and handed her a piece of candy. The candy was much more unpalatable than the ones she ate at home. It tasted like artificial sweetener, but her great-grandfather had asked her if it was good. So, she ate the piece of candy and said yes. Arthur then smiled so hard that Stella could not even see his eyes.

Now that they had met again, Stella noticed that her great-grandfather looked even older than before as his hair turned gray. However, when Arthur took out the chocolate from his coat and handed it to her, it reminded Stella of her childhood. And, it was a bittersweet moment for her.

Seeing the expectant expression on Arthur's face, Stella took the piece of chocolate and unwrapped it. The chocolate had been in his coat for too long, and it had already melted slightly by the warmth of his body. Stella said nothing about it and lowered her head to take a bite "It tastes wonderful," she said softly.

Arthur's eyes curved into a smile as he said, "I'll get you a few more later so that your father won't seem biased."

Keegan tilted his head and looked at the two with a thoughtful expression. The old man caught his gaze and immediately covered the chocolate in Stella's hand. "It's not for you!" he said.

Keegan was speechless while Aldor burst out laughing. He immediately suppressed his laughter when he met Keegan's narrow eyes and continued to drive in a serious manner. Keegan had asked two servants from the company to come and take care of the old man. When Stella was not busy, she would bring the old man to visit the scenic spots in Rivera. Keegan would tag along occasionally, but he was usually busy with work. So, it was difficult for him to find the time to join them. Moreover, even if he did spare some time, the old man did not want to see him.

Every time he joined them, he was asked to carry a bag or run errands like buying drinks. At the same time, Stella was not allowed to help him out.

Whenever Arthur was dissatisfied with what Keegan did, he would say, "Oh, the city folk.... They're just not good enough. They can't do anything right. When I was young, I chased your great-grandma down the street with a pig in my arms. The widows in the village blushed when they saw me."

Whenever Keegan got mad, the old man would say, "The city folks sure have a bad temper. No girls from our village would ever want him, even if he's the last man alive. Even if he does end up getting married, his wife would surely run away with another man."

Keegan then realized that he was not supporting Stella by bringing Arthur to stay with them; he was just making his own life difficult.

Chapter 285

After Aldor had reported his work that day, something came to his mind. "By the way, during our meeting today, Mr. Ray called and said that this year the chamber of commerce will be held on a cruise ship. He even sent an invitation. Mr. Ray said I have to update him about whether you would show up. Are you going, Mr. Kane?"

"No," Keegan replied without lifting his head.

Aldor nodded. "Okay, I'll call Mr. Ray right now."

The chamber of commerce underwent a massive change a long time ago. They cared more about how big the event was going to be rather than the content. They even had a cruise ship this time around.

'Hold on. A cruise ship?' Keegan paused and called for Aldor, who was about to leave his office. "Wait. Leave the invitation here."

Aldor was surprised. "Are you going to the event, sir?"

"Didn't she always say that she wanted to take a cruise? I'm going to take her on the cruise so that she would at least experience it once," Keegan said lightly.

spent

Aldor raised his eyebrows. 'Mrs. Kane went to Europe on a cruise ship two years ago and half a month there. She even sent Mr. Kane dozens of photos at a time every single day she was there. But, Mr. Kane never replied. They had only been married for half a year at that time, but I never felt the honeymoon phase between them. I even thought he did not care much about his newlywed wife.'

'One time, Mr. Kane suddenly acted a little strange. Every time he heard his phone ring during a meeting, he would immediately pick it up to look at it. At first, I thought Mr. Kane was waiting for a message from a client. But, he would frown whenever a client texted him.'

'Three days later, Mr. Kane suddenly received a video of Mrs. Kane feeding dolphins, and his brows instantly relaxed. Then, I realized that Mr. Kane's abnormal behavior was caused by his wife not sending any pictures in those two days.'

'Mr. Kane has such a good memory. How could he forget that his wife had already been on a cruise ship?'

Aldor did not dare to ask Keegan about it, nor did he dare to tell him that Stella had gone on a cruise before. So, he acted ignorant and left the office.

The cruise for the chamber of commerce was going to start from Rivera. They would pass through two cities and finally return to Rivera. The itinerary lasted for two days and one night.

When Aldor told Stella about it, she quickly lost interest. "It's all business activities. There's no point in me being there. Don't you guys have many beautiful secretaries in the company? Just ask one of them to accompany Keegan."

'It's April, and the weather is neither hot nor cold. The cruise is so not going to be fun,' Stella thought.

"I'm afraid we can't do that, Mrs. Kane. Only single people bring their secretary or assistant to participate. Others bring their partners. Mr. Kane is a married man. Rumors are going to spread if he brings a secretary. You wouldn't want that, would you, Mrs. Kane?"

'You worry too much, Aldor. I wouldn't even flinch if Keegan stood in front of me with ten secretaries in his arms,' she thought.

Stella was still trying to reject the invitation when Arthur came out of his room. Then, Aldor had an idea. "Mr. Jewell, do you want to go on a cruise ship?"

As soon as Arthur heard about the cruise ship, he immediately came to his senses. "Does the cruise ship have multiple floors like the ones we see on TV?"

Aldor nodded. "A two-day and one-night cruise with free boarding and lodging. We'll also stop in two cities. Do you want to go, sir?"

Arthur's eyes lit up. "When are we going?"

Aldor smiled and looked at Stella. "Mr. Jewell wants to go, Madam."

Stella was speechless. "What kind of assistant did Keegan hire?!"

The cruise ship set off in the afternoon the next day. Aldor drove Keegan back after lunch to pick up Stella and the old man.

Stella looked listless. On the other hand, Arthur was very excited. They passed a shopping mall on the way, and he even insisted on buying a pair of swimming trunks.

Chapter 286

The three had to persuade Arthur not to buy the swimming shorts. Keegan glanced at Stella, who could not stop yawning, and frowned. "Did you really have to shoot the drama all night yesterday?"

Last night, Stella told him she was going to the set to film Jurisdiction. Keegan thought she would return after a while, but she did not return until it was 5:00 am.

Stella yawned again and again on their way to the cruise ship. "Do you hear yourself? We can't film night scenes in the day, can we?"

Before Keegan could speak, Stella put on her earplugs and said, "I'll take a quick nap. Wake me up when we arrive." She then closed her eyes after she said that. Keegan did not say a word and frowned in dissatisfaction. He had pushed back so much of his work just to accompany her, she only wanted to sleep.

yet

When Stella woke up, they had already arrived at their destination. The cruise ship that they were about to board suddenly appeared in front of her eyes. It was as tall as a six or seven – story building and looked about 500 feet long to the naked eye. It was more magnificent than the one she had taken on a previous European trip.

As soon as Arthur got out of the car, a server on board came over immediately and thoughtfully provided wheelchairs for the elderly. Initially, the old man insisted that he would go on the ship himself, but when he looked down, he realized that he was afraid of heights. His legs turned into jelly, so he quickly sat in the wheelchair.

Many people had already gathered on the ship, and someone came over to greet Keegan as soon as he entered the place.

Stella was so sleepy that she got the room key and told Aldor to take good care of her great-grandfather because she wanted to sleep in the cabin.

By the time she woke up from her sleep, it was already dark. Stella lifted the curtains and saw that the sun was about to set. The sea was dyed orange-red by the sunset glow. It was sparkling under the light, looking beautiful.

A few fish jumped out of the water from time to time, which made Stella hungry.

The last meal she had was when she was on set. She fell asleep when she got home and had not had a single bite since then.

'It's six o'clock now. Are they not serving us dinner yet? Keegan is such an unreliable guy. Why didn't he come up and call for me?' Stella thought and freshened up briefly before leaving the cabin.

The deck lights were bright. People were dancing and playing board games in the lounge. The place looked lively.

Stella looked around, but she could not see Keegan or Arthur. Just as she was about to call Keegan's number, she saw Marshall.

"Mr. Moore?"

Marshall was chatting with a friend when she called out to him. He was a little surprised when he saw her. He then looked around and said, "Are you here alone?"

"I took a nap in our room earlier, and I couldn't find Keegan when I woke up. Have you seen him anywhere?"

He was here with Vermont just now. I'll bring you to him."

Stella waved her hand and said, "Do you know where the food is? I'm super hungry at the moment."

Marshall was taken aback for a second. He chuckled and warmly said, "Come with me."

Dinner was served a little later than usual because of the party on the deck. Lunch was served earlier, but Stella missed it because she wanted to sleep.

Marshall led Stella to the back kitchen, where the head chef was preparing the food for the evening. When he saw the two in the kitchen, he wanted to shoo them away.

However, Marshall explained their situation. The chef did not speak their language, but Marshall knew many languages. Although Stella could not understand what they were saying, she knew that their conversation was going well as she saw the head chef nodding repeatedly.

After that, the chef brought them deeper into the kitchen and gave them a pan and some ingredients. Stella was confused.

Chapter 287

'Seriously?' Stella thought.

Out of awkwardness, Marshall scratched his forehead with his finger and said, "I tried my best to negotiate with them, but they said they don't have any food because it's not mealtime yet. They did say they could give us the ingredients if we wanted to cook for ourselves, though." "No way. I'm here to have fun on the cruise, and I still have to cook my own meals?"

"I'll just wait for mealtime."

Unhelpfully, her stomach grumbled right after she spoke.

Stella smoothed out her clothes, as she was slightly embarrassed. Then, she said, "Let's just leave."

"Wait," Marshall said as he took off his suit. "Can you help me hold this for a while?"

Stella was confused, but she took his suit from him.

Marshall folded up the sleeves of his white shirt. He then added water to the pan that the chef had given him and swiftly lit the stove.

Stella was astonished. "You want to cook something yourself?"

Marshall nodded. "Is spaghetti fine?"

Stella wanted to nod too, but she came to her senses and quickly shook her head. "No, no. You don't need to cook. Why would I ask you to cook? Mealtime is almost here. Let's just wait for a while."

"It's two hours away."

here with you in

Marshall dropped the spaghetti into the pan as he spoke. "I came all the way here with search of food. I would feel bad if you went back on an empty stomach."

Stella regretted asking Marshall for food. 'I should've just kept quiet. We're all here to have fun. It's unreasonable to let him cook for me.'

Marshall noticed that Stella was fidgeting uncomfortably, so he tried to distract her by talking to her.

"I always wanted to ask. How did you and Keegan meet?"

Sure enough, Stella's attention was diverted.

"We met on a blind date."

They did, in fact, meet on a blind date, but that was not the first time Stella had laid eyes on Keegan.

The first time she saw him was when she and her mother got into a car accident.

After the crash, the car was flipped to the side. Rainee was thrown out of the car while Stella was trapped inside. She was unable to move.

Before the emergency responders could reach the scene, Stella passed out due to her excessive bleeding.

In a daze, she felt someone breaking the car window, unfastened her seatbelt, and dragged her out of the car.

She peered through the blurriness to take a glance, and it was at that moment, that Keegan's face was ingrained in her brain.

That was why, when she went on the blind date later on, she almost immediately fell for him after realizing that it was Keegan.

Since he saved her life once and looked exactly like her ideal type, it was natural for Stella to be attracted to him.

"The fact that Keegan was willing to help a stranger proves that he can't be too bad of a person.

When Keegan asked for her hand in marriage, she quickly made her decision only after a few seconds of consideration.

At the time, her friends who knew about it tried to advise her against it.

They told her not to decide so hastily and that she was too young. Getting married right after graduating without any social experience would put her at a great disadvantage.

Moreover, they told her that she barely had time to get to know Keegan. It would be too rash to entrust him with the rest of her life just because he saved her once.

But, rebellion was always a quality that was deeply rooted in human nature. So, everyone's disagreement only made Stella even more determined to prove that she made the right choice. In her heart, Stella secretly kept a score of Keegan. She hoped that one day, she would collect enough merit points for Keegan to show him off to her friends, and prove that she was right for liking Keegan.

Keegan was good-looking; +10 points.

Keegan was bad-tempered; -1 point.

Keegan had a nice voice; +100 points.

Keegan came home late without calling her; -10 points.

Chapter 288

Keegan got her a birthday gift; +10000 points.

Keegan's first love was not her; -100 points.

Keegan called out another woman's name when he had a fever; -10000 points.

Keegan did not like her; -100000 points.

In the end, after all of the adding and subtracting, disappointment was the only thing left in the equation.

Marshall did not look at Stella. He gently stirred the noodles in the pan and said, "You were only twenty-something at the time. Why did you want to get married so early?"

Stella was reluctant to talk about the complicated matters that took place in her family. She jokingly replied, "I've never gotten married before, so I wanted to see what being married is like."

Marshall smiled. "What is it like, then?"

Stella sneered and said, "Not as fun as being single."

Stella did not want to go further on this topic. Hence, she steered the conversation away and asked, "Mr. Moore, do you have a girlfriend?"

Marshall replied calmly, "Given how my body is, if I get a girlfriend, I would be in her getting better partners."

way

of

Stella thought he was referring to his illness before and asked, "Didn't you recover from it?" Marshall did not reply. Instead, he pulled up his shirt, and Stella instantly went silent. From his wrist and above, vast areas of hideous burn marks were scrawled all over his body, like lumps entrenched on his entire forearm. It was a startling sight.

Stella's heart wrenched, and she averted her gaze.

Marshall calmly pulled his sleeves down again and smiled. "I must have scared you, he spoke lightly.

Stella had just realized that the way she averted her eyes was somewhat impolite and quickly apologized. "I'm so sorry..."

"It's okay," Marshall replied airily. "I get shocked at the sight of it too."

Stella took a moment to calm herself and quietly said, "I wasn't scared. Just dismayed..."

She paused for a while before she continued speaking in a soft voice. "Did it hurt... when it happened?"

Marshall went still for a few seconds.

He scooped the spaghetti out of the pan with a strainer, poured the pasta water away, and put the

pan back on the stove. Then, he lightly buttered the pan in a few circular motions.

After a while, he replied, "It happened a long ago. I don't really remember anymore."

Stella said, "It's better that you don't. Then, it won't hurt you as much."

Stella just realized that each time they met, Marshall's shirts were always carefully buttoned up to the first button, and his sleeves always covered his wrists.

The weather in Rivera was not considered hot, but the temperature was relatively high under the direct midday sun. Last time, when they had a meal together in front of the school, Stella was sweating under the rays, yet Marshall was still firmly covered up from head to toe.

At that time, Stella thought that since Marshall was a lawyer, he would pay more attention to keeping an appropriate appearance. She would have never thought that he was trying to cover up his scars.

'I shouldn't have babbled about girlfriends, then Mr. Moore wouldn't have to open up about his scars,' Stella thought.

Stella was still upset, but Marshall was done cooking the spaghetti. He placed some of the spaghetti in a bowl and gave it to Stella. "Try it," he said.

Stella took the bowl from him and had a mouthful. "It's super-duper tasty." Stella gave him a thumbs up.

Marshall smiled and said, "Come on, let's go to the dining room."

Stella meant it when she praised Marshall's cooking skills. 'His carbonara spaghetti is better than the ones I make.'

Respectfully, Stella finished everything in her bowl.

When she had finished eating, Marshall wanted to clear the table for her. However, Stella did not dare to trouble him any further, so she took the initiative to carry her cutleries to the kitchen herself and washed them up.

When they left, it was already dark outside. Marshall said, "Nobody is in the theater now. They might be on the deck. Let's go there together."

Stella nodded.

Right after they came out, Stella unexpectedly spotted an unwanted guest. "Why is she here?" Stella frowned.

Chapter 289

Marshall followed Stella's gaze to see Bella cheerfully chatting with someone else.

It was windy on the deck. Yet, despite being quite chilly, Bella's outfit was rather revealing.

She wore a long light gray sleeveless mesh dress. The dress complimented her well, as the bright lights on the deck illuminated her dress with a soft shine. She had an eye-catching glow. Bella had put effort into her makeup. Her long hair was in a loose updo with strands of her bangs strewn in front of her forehead, which made her seem quite graceful. With the addition of Bella's professionally curated facial expressions as an actor, even Stella, who disliked Bella, had to admit that Bella looked pretty that night.

“Maybe she was hired by the organizers to take part in the play,” Marshall guessed.

There was a huge theater on the cruise that held three plays daily. It was possible that Bella was one of the performers.

“Are the organizers rich enough to hire her?”

The theaters on cruises would normally hire professional teams of play actors or orchestras to perform. It would be a markdown if someone of Bella’s status came to perform here.

While she was speaking, Vermont quipped from behind her. “I told you Stella was on the deck. It’s not a big cruise! There’s no way she would have swam back to shore, right?”

Stella turned around to see Keegan walking toward her with a long face.

Once he was in front of her, he gripped her wrist and pulled her closer to him.

“Wandering off as soon as you’re awake. Aren’t you scared of falling off the deck?”

‘Bastard, shut your mouth if you have nothing good to say!’ Stella thought to herself.

Stella pulled her arm back and gave him a side-eye. “Even if I do fall, I don’t need you to scoop me back up.”

Keegan glanced at her and calmly said, “Even if I don’t scoop you back up, I still have to pay for someone to do it since I spent so much money marrying you.”

Stella’s heart fluttered, and she thought to herself, ‘Something feels strange about what he said. He doesn’t sound like he’s mocking me. He sounds rather helpless.’

“Marshall, where have you been?”

Vermont suddenly inquired.

Stella thought that Marshall would tell them the truth as it was. Instead, he replied, “I went back to my room, and I met Stella on my way out.”

Stella gave Marshall a confused look.

‘Why didn’t he tell the truth? Is he worried that Keegan might get the wrong idea?’ thought Stella.

Keegan’s eyes swept back and forth between Stella and Marshall. Once again, he pulled Stella by her arm and said, “Let’s go.”

“To where?”

Keegan did not answer, but he brought her back to the room.

Aldor had just finished placing food on the table when he saw that the two of them were back. He said warmly, “Mrs. Kane, you slept through the day, and you didn’t have any lunch. Mr. Kane was worried that you might be hungry when you woke up, so he left you some food. I’ve had them heat the food up for you. Please see if the food is up to your taste.

Keegan glanced at Aldor. “You’re so talkative.”

Aldor smiled and said, “Enjoy your meal.”

Being aware of the situation, Aldor tactfully left the room.

The room was filled with the aroma of the food. Varying from Pairin-Union cuisines to Hustuabourg dishes, each dish was placed in a palm-sized container, and there were more than ten dishes on the table. Stella caught the munchies just from the scent. But, she was already full, so all she could do was stare.

“What are you staring at?”

Keegan handed her a set of cutleries and asked, “Did the hunger get into your brain?”

‘How do I tell him that I’ve already eaten?’

‘Why did Mr. Moore lie? We had nothing to hide, but his lie made it hard for me to explain the situation to Keegan,’ Stella thought.

Seeing her dawdling without making a move for a long while, Keegan frowned and said, “Do you want me to feed you?”

Stella immediately hurried over to take the cutleries from Keegan. “I wouldn’t dare to.”

Keegan gave her a glance and stayed silent.

Stella pushed and flipped her food around with the cutleries and barely had a few bites, even after a long while.

Chapter 290

“Is the food not good?” Keegan noticed Stella’s unusualness.

“No, it’s quite tasty.” It was rare for Keegan to be nice for a change, and Stella was aware of that. However, she was too full to eat anything, so she murmured quietly, “I’m just not that hungry.”

Apparently, Keegan did not believe her. “Maybe you’re too starved, and you’re worried that you’ll wolf down your food and embarrass yourself in front of me with your terrible table manners?”

Seeing that Stella was silent, Keegan replied with a straight face. “I’ve seen the way you insisted that I take your pants off for you to go to the toilet when you were drunk. Would I care if you have embarrassing table manners?”

The corner of Stella’s mouth twitched at his statement.

“Can you not talk about something so disgusting while we’re eating?”

Keegan stopped his actions and replied, “Isn’t this Mama Fly’s line?”

‘I’m already too full to eat, yet this bastard is making things worse by reminding me of the joke I told him before. I’ve lost my appetite.’

Stella reluctantly ate half a bowl of porridge and asked, “Where’s my great-grandpa?”

“He went gambling.”

“What?” Stella had almost jumped out of her seat. “Why didn’t you stop him?”

Keegan replied calmly, “He seemed like he was having fun.”

“But, you can’t just leave him like that. What if he loses?”

The people on the cruise were all wealthy. Even though the casino there operated for entertainment purposes and the leverage used for gambling worth relatively little to them, it was still considered a huge wager for regular people. They used real money for gambling.

‘Great-grandpa has spent all his life living in his hometown. The biggest gambling scene that he played was probably poker games with the old folks in the countryside with tens of dollars as leverage.’

‘He must have never seen big gambling places like this. He would be distressed if he loses.’

Keegan, on the other hand, was not worried at all. “Luck seemed to be on his side. Plus, if he really loses a game...” Keegan paused to look at Stella. “Just deduct it from your one billion. dollars.”

'Losing money is a small matter. I'm just worried that great-grandpa would be upset or angry if he lost money.'

Thinking of that, Stella told Keegan that she was full and wanted to watch out for Arthur. Keegan grimaced at the sight of the barely-touched food and said, "I'll bring you there."

The fifth floor of the cruise was the entertainment area, which was completed with chess rooms and all sorts of board games.

When Keegan brought Stella there, Arthur was enthusiastically gambling with a group of people.

They were playing Craps, a dice game that involved betting on the outcome of the dice roll. Everyone had a certain amount of chips piled up, but only Arthur had nothing in front of him.

The dealer was rolling the dice, and Arthur's expression was bitter as he locked his eyes on the swift hands of the dealer. It was as if he wanted to pry them open.

'Oh no, it looks like he lost a lot of money,' Stella thought to herself.

As the dealer stopped rolling the die, the gamblers placed their bets one by one. Stella quickly went forward and called, "Great-grandpa!"

Arthur turned around, and upon seeing his great-granddaughter, he immediately smiled." Stella, you're awake!"

Stella then tried to pull him away. "How about I visit the deck with you?"

"Wait, I'm playing one more round."

'He must be trying to get back the money he lost,' thought Stella.

Stella was worried that all the gambling might get to his head. So, she responded, "I thought you wanted to swim. There's a pool on deck, and Aldor prepared a pair of swimming trunks for you."

Arthur was immediately intrigued. "Then, let's go!"

After taking a few steps, however, he stopped in his tracks. "I have to cash these in first." "What?"

Arthur took a fistful of chips out from his pocket and placed them on the table.

Chapter 291

Arthur proceeded to take out another handful of chips from his other pocket, and another from the pockets of his trousers. He even had a pile of chips in his undershirt pocket.

Stella watched as Arthur pulled out chip after chip from his pockets like a cartoon character until a small mountain of chips was piled up in front of them.

Stella was stunned and looked at Keegan, who was unfazed. "I told you, his luck is not too bad.

'Not too bad? It looked like he hadn't lost a game for the whole afternoon!" Stella screamed internally.

After tipping the dealer and paying for other surcharges, the chips had added up to a little over one million and seven hundred thousand dollars.

Stella suddenly felt jealous, as the amount was more than what she earned from acting. 'If I had known, I would have gambled along with great-grandpa!"

Stella was interested in Arthur's technique of winning money from gambling. She kept asking him about how he guessed correctly every single round.

Arthur told her wisely, "Young people should be more grounded. Don't think about earning money using dishonest ways."

"But, why do you gamble yourself?"

Arthur replied solemnly, "I'm just an old man. It's not a big deal if I lose. I have a few plots of good land at home that can sustain me until the day I die. It's different for you youngsters. Once you get addicted to gambling, your whole life gets thrown away. Gambling is a scam. The casino wouldn't let you walk away with their money that easily."

Even though Arthur's words made sense, Stella still felt as though he had double standards.

Stella turned her head to Keegan and whispered, "Do you think he cheated?"

"Maybe," Keegan nodded.

"What do we do?"

Keegan glanced at Stella. "Tell the dealer about it, and ask him to check the security cameras. If all else fails, we hand great-grandpa in ourselves. At his age, he won't be locked up for long. They would release him in a few days.

Stella stifled a smile. "You think I'm crazy?"

The casino on the cruise was illegal in the first place. Even if Arthur did cheat, they would settle the matter privately. If they reported this to the police, the casino would also face charges.

Keegan was just messing with Stella.

When they got out, most people were gathered on the deck. It was a lively scene outside. Aldor accompanied Arthur to go play by the pool while Keegan tended to his business partners. In the meantime, Stella was surrounded by the wives of those business partners and

was forced to socialize with them.

Since the jewelry exhibition, the news about Cordelia favoring Stella had spread among the wives. That was why when Stella made an appearance, no matter what they thought of her, they were still quite friendly toward Stella.

Even so, this was not the same type of friendliness they had toward Bella.

Toward Stella, it had undertones of prudent flattering; toward Bella, it was more out of curiosity, like how people would gather to look at a monkey that had accidentally made its way into the crowd.

Stella clutched onto her wine glass, and she looked unhappy.

Then, one of the wives spoke to her. "Mrs. Kane, your performance in the mini-series a while ago was fantastic! What made you want to act in it?"

Chapter 292

"The 'Jurisdiction,' right? My kid would stay in front of the television once he finished school. He said it was a task given by the school. After watching it, they have to write a review about it. I also joined them and watched a few episodes. If you didn't say anything, I wouldn't have thought that it was Mrs. Kane."

Regardless of whether the compliment was sincere or fake, the show "Jurisdiction" was viral. Stella chuckled and said, "I was just helping Mrs. Lowe. Her unit was in charge of the show, and they couldn't find an actor. She saw that I looked decent, so she allowed me to substitute. I merely acted freely."

"Saw that I looked decent..." This form of posing immediately made the madams unwilling to speak further.

How could Stella be considered as only decent? Her face would even be considered a blessing. from God. Thankfully, Keegan had married her. Otherwise, everyone would have felt a sense of danger. Just with her face, she would not even need to curl her fingers, and men would have liked her with a single glance.

Mrs. Chapman glanced at Bella and suddenly laughed. "Actually, in regards to acting, we amateurs can only watch it for entertainment. Only a professional can see the nuances of it. A professional would be able to know if you can act properly with just a single glance, right, Ms. Young?"

Stella furrowed her brows and glanced at Mrs. Chapman.

'Why is it her again? The last time, Keegan had only won a bit of money from her. How long does she want to hold a grudge after all this time?' Stella thought.

Bella said gently, "I am doing this to pay the bills. I'm not really considered a professional." "You are too humble, Ms. Young. No one in the entertainment business can call themselves a professional if they aren't considered a professional. Although Mrs. Kane said that she acted freely, you can also give a comment or two freely. Everyone can also freely listen to it for fun." After Mrs. Chapman finished speaking, she smiled while she looked at Stella. "You don't mind that, right, Mrs. Kane?"

Stella was cursing the motherfucker deep down, but the control of her facial expression was perfect. She smiled lightly and said naturally, "I don't mind. I would like to hear what comments the 'professional' has for me."

Bella then said, "Then, I'll boldly say a few words. Please don't get angry if I have said anything bad, Mrs. Kane. This is just business, nothing personal."

Stella twitched the corner of her lips. "Up to you."

Bella's gaze scanned Stella from top to bottom before she said, "Mrs. Kane's form is mediocre. This can be seen during the scene when she receives a parcel in the film. Her back is not straight. Of course, Mrs. Kane is not a professional and doesn't have any physical training, so that's normal. Another would be the control of her emotion. Like our acting teacher once said, she is too emotional. The expression when she cries and laughs are all intuitively expressed. For Mrs. Kane's role, she should act more subtly so that the impact would be better. Lastly, it would be the design of taking off a shower cap. It's too deliberate. Actually, there is no need to

use that framing to present them. With just a glance, they would know that it was all an act. It's just too fake."

For every point she said, the expressions of the madams would change a little. When she finished her speech with "It was too fake," the madams' hearts were all strung high and were secretly observing Stella's expression.

Regardless of whether Bella's comments were on point, her criticizing Stella's acting performance in front of her face was already a pretty brave move.

Bella had finished speaking. But, she seemed slightly upset and nervously said, "Mrs. Kane, the way I speak is straightforward, but it's only toward the scenes you performed. You won't get angry, right?"

"No." Stella lightly raised the corner of her lips. "Ms. Young's comments are very relevant. I am humbled, and I can see that Ms. Young has quite the understanding in acting."

Bella gave Stella an odd look. She had already spoken very outrageously, yet Stella was not angry?

She pursed her lips and said, "I can't really consider it an understanding. It's just that I have merely performed more. Practice makes perfect."

Stella had an "I see" expression on her face and asked for advice 'humbly', "Then, Ms. Young, you should have obtained quite a lot of awards for acting skills, right? You starred in so many films, so which award has the most weight and from which film?"

Bella's expression froze, and her fingers tightened into a grip. The films that Bella starred in were numerous. Every year, the broadcasting list would have one of her films on them, but she would never be a part of the one receiving the awards. She did not even qualify to be nominated.

However, things were different now. In the past, prominent celebrities fought by comparing their awards. At the same time, minor celebrities compete by seeing who has the most roles. and the highest grossing rate. The ones with the highest numbers would earn more money. So, who would still concentrate on learning to act?

Chapter 293

If they had spoken privately about not having any awards in their acting career, Bella would not have felt that she was embarrassing herself. She initially did not pursue the path of a professional actress. But, the numbers on her films broadcast would leave other same-generation actresses in the dust. She was very confident of her own commercial value.

However, Stella had stabbed her right where it hurt and directly hit her Achilles heel with one swing. Seeing her not responding for a long while, Stella smiled through her eyes. "Ms. Young, why aren't you speaking? Is it because you have so many awards that you can't think of one with the heaviest weight on you?"

Bella squeezed out a smile and said, "I don't really care about these vain credits. If the masses think it's good, then it's good. Each judge has a different opinion on acting, so you can't just use awards to weigh the ability of someone's acting."

"Oh," Stella nodded her head. "I instead feel that the judge's insights are quite spot on since they have achieved excellence in their respective fields to have the right to sit at the judge's panel to grade others. If a professional can't even stand an actor's performance, it is most likely that the person doesn't know how to act. If someone can't even act, what right do they have to comment on whether someone else's acting is good? Truthfully, it sounds like the person is taking the long way to earn embarrassment."

Bella's face was pale, and she could not say a word for a long while. If the words she had said were direct, then Stella had stripped her of any dignity to the point of almost cursing her in front of her face. Yet, she could not retaliate her words.

Stella had enough of Bella's expressions and yelled, "Ah." Then, she said apologetically, "Don't mind me, Ms. Young. I'm not targeting you. It's just that we are discussing it, and we can mention it casually. You won't get angry, right, Ms. Young?"

She remembered the words that Bella had said clearly and used her words against her word for word accurately.

'Trying to play the calculative bitch? Who doesn't know how to play that role?' Stella thought

to herself.

Bella's expression was stiff, and she could not say much for quite some time. In the end, Mrs. Chapman continued, "We already said it's just a casual talk. You are such a stickler, Mrs. Kane. Ms. Young is not from an acting school background." After she said that, she paused. "Ms. Young, didn't you prepare an event for everyone?"

Stella glanced at her and thought, 'Wasn't she the one who boasted that Bella was at professional? When she is at a loss, she says she doesn't have an acting school background? Everything good and bad is all up to her interpretation.'

Mrs. Chapman was quite the bitch of a person and still had a close relationship with Dahlia. Stella did not want to interact with her and was worried that it would get her into a mess. So, she did not speak any further.

She was also a little bewildered. For a mere hundred thousand dollars, was there a need for Mrs. Chapman to hold a grudge for so long? She even helped an actress who she did not like to speak out. It was indeed out of her imagination.

Stella assumed that this incident had ended. She was not the type of person to cause trouble. If Bella did not purposely try to rile her up, she would be too lazy to bother with her. As a person, if Bella had been better than her in all fields, it would probably stir her spirit to compete and make her want to have a showdown with Bella until the end. Yet, Bella had nothing spectacular to show for herself. She was only devious. Stella was too lazy to go against her because it was unbecoming of her.

She glanced at the stilettos under Bella's feet. The suspicions that she buried deep down, started to surface again. She did not know how Bella got on the cruise, but Bella definitely had an event to perform in. However, it was not a play but a piano recital.

The piano was already prepared on deck with a band to accompany her. It seemed legitimate. Bella first did a speech to roughly thank whoever had invited her and et cetera.

She was still considered a famous actress, and her looks were quite pretty. She wore a tulle skirt with princess braids. Sitting there, she looked like a princess with an air of regalness.

Bella first did a soundcheck, followed by nodding lightly to the accompanying band. Her fingers then swiftly flew across the piano keys. The melodious sound slowly spread out. Under the effects of the sea, night, and piano, the song became especially pleasant.

After the song ended, applause continuously came. Bella stood up and elegantly bowed to everyone and thanked them.

The men surrounding her shouted, "Another one. Once is not enough."

Chapter 294

"Yeah, we are not done enjoying it, yet the song ended. Another song!"

Some even commented, "It was like a song from the heavens."

Stella endured it for a long time to avoid saying something to critique it. She was slightly thirsty and turned around to see a water bottle in Keegan's hand. She then went over to him.

The moment she reached him, she asked, "Mr. Kane, are you going to drink that bottle of water?"

Keegan glanced at her and said, "No, I'm not drinking it."

"Then, I'll be taking this away," Stella said as she took the bottle in his hand. She twisted it open and drank it all by herself. Keegan was at a loss for words.

Bella enjoyed the praise from every direction. After a while, she smiled lightly and said, "Today is a gathering for the businesses of Rivera. The main characters of tonight are all the misters and madams present. I can't be the only one who hogs all the glory. How about this? Let's get a madam to be a representative. We can perform a four-handed duet. Is there madam who would like to perform with me?"

any

The madams looked at each other and did not say anything. It was not that everyone did not know how to play the piano. Many of the madams were born from noble families, and they had learned a little about how to play the piano. However, most of them had not touched a piano for years.

Moreover, they had to sit with Bella to play the piano, not to mention that Bella was younger and quite beautiful. As much as the madams had their upkeep looks, there was a difference in age in the end. No one wanted to be compared to a celebrity on such an occasion. Hence, they all refused.

"Mrs. Kane, why don't you go?" Mrs. Chapman opened her mouth again.

Her blade was pointed directly back at Stella again. "You are the youngest among us. You would be the most suitable to be the representative."

Thankfully, Stella had swallowed her mouthful of water. Otherwise, she would have spit in Mrs. Chapman's face. Once Mrs. Chapman had opened her mouth, the other madams also agreed. "Yes, Mrs. Kane is young. Younger people have better memories and faster reflexes."

"Mrs. Kane, you should be the representative and show everyone what we are made of," another chimed in.

"Mrs. Kane, you look like the type who would be proficient in anything, whether it is in education or music."

The madams did not want to be compared to Bella. Since someone recommended a candidate, everyone would push her to the edge. As for whether Stella could play the piano or would she embarrass herself was none of their business.

The mood was brought out, and Bella naturally said, "Mrs. Kane, may I have the honor of inviting you to perform with me?"

Everyone looked at Stella and waited for her answer. Stella gripped the bottle, and her expression was ugly.

She said, "Ms. Young could play quite well by herself. Having two people would require coordination. In reality, it could easily cause errors. I think we should forget about it."

Bella heard what Stella said and knew that Stella did not know how to play the piano. Hence, Stella had found an excuse to refuse.

Bella then graciously said, "That's okay. This isn't a competition. It's mainly to set the mood. If Mrs. Kane feels that it would be hard to coordinate, you can choose a song that you are good at. As long as I can support you, you can play however you like."

Chapter 295

Stella had an uneasy expression, "Wouldn't I be taking advantage of you? What if the song I choose is something you aren't familiar with? Wouldn't you be at a loss? Let's forget about it."

The corner of Bella's lips twitched, and she thought, 'Just to give herself an excuse, she would really dare to say anything.'

She could now confirm that Stella did not know how to play the piano. Otherwise, she would not have refused time and time again. Stella had made a fool of Bella just now, so how could Bella let her off that easily? The more she did not want to come, the more Bella tried to invite her.

Bella smiled and said, "You can choose at your own ease. I will definitely be able to follow your tempo. Mr. Kane would definitely look forward to your performance."

Stella looked at Keegan and whispered, "Do I really need to go?"

Keegan glanced at her and replied, "Up to you."

Stella was slightly upset and said, "Then, I humbly oblige."

As she went and left with Bella, Vermont said, "Bella's piano skills are at grade seven. She can play any regular song well. Are you sure she would be fine?"

Keegan opened the bottle of water that Stella had just drank and took a sip. Only then did he say, "At most, she would embarrass herself since she is used to that."

Vermont raised an eyebrow and did not speak further. Bella handed the manuscript to Stella when they sat before the piano.

"Mrs. Kane, you can choose a song.

Stella flipped through it and finally stopped at one of the pages. Then, she said, "This one."

Bella looked and found that it was “Croatian Rhapsody.” The song was challenging to play, and the chord change was swift. Moreover, the strength required for each finger when pressing on the keys differed. Hence, it would truly test the performer’s basic skills.

Bella had practiced herself, but her sense of strength was not sufficient. During the climax portion, she seemed soft and lacked the grandeur the original composition had. Yet, it was enough to go against Stella. Everyone was not a professional, and the song was chosen by Stella. So, the person who was unable to perform would be the embarrassed one.

“Mrs. Kane, you sure you want to play this?” The excitement in her voice could not be hidden.

Stella nodded her head. “This one, since they are all roughly the same.”

‘Roughly the same? There are drastically different. There are clearly easier songs, such as “For Elise,” at the front of the manuscript. Could it be that she didn’t even understand the manuscript and was just guessing?’ Bella thought.

“Alright, since Mrs. Kane is so sure about playing this, then I will play this one too,” Bella made a gesture and said, “After you, Mrs. Kane.”

Stella shook her head. “You should go first. I need to familiarize myself with the tempo.”

Bella twitched her lips and smiled. “Then, I’ll go first.”

Her fingers found the correct keys and went down smoothly. Stella merely heard a few notes and knew that Bella was unfamiliar with the song. However, she seemed very confident on the surface. Her speed was also controlled within the range she could handle. Although there were no missed keys, the whole mood shown was worse than the original. However, everyone present was being courteous, and they all applauded and praised her.

When Bella had finished playing the first stanza, Stella quickly followed.

The speed of her fingers falling was obviously faster than Bella’s. Her finger movements were smooth and swift, with every pressure the fingers applied differing. She was able to show the power and softness through her fingertips. Unlike Bella, who showed intensity by using her arms to crash on the keys.

A thin layer of sweat started to build on Bella’s nose. Her gaze was captivated by the swift dances of Stella’s fingers. Then, she accidentally pressed the wrong key. With this false key, her whole tempo was messed up, and her finger movements started to lose control.

Stella, instead, was not affected. Her melody was smooth, like a flowing stream. It was unstoppable with an air of grandness. She also played faster the more she played. In the end, Bella was utterly unable to keep up, and her expression was pale. With trembling hands, she watched Stella with a face of concentration and continued playing the piano.

Chapter 312

Keegan pursed his lips. Moments later, he finally said, "I was wrong about her."

"Mrs. Kane isn't someone who holds grudges. If you apologize properly and coax her, she'll surely forgive you," said Aldor.

Keegan was speechless.

'She doesn't hold grudges? The bitemark she left on me last night because I took her blanket still hasn't gone away. There isn't a woman who holds grudges more than her,' he thought.

Keegan returned the phone to Aldor. "Get someone to keep an eye on Bella. Don't let her get hurt or stir up trouble before the agreed time. If she breaches the contract, I'll take back the things the same way I gave them to her."

"Understood."

Just as Aldor walked out, Stella sent Keegan a text message.

[Grandpa asked if you're coming home for dinner tonight.]

Keegan glanced at his unfinished work. Then, he closed the file and replied.

[Yes.]

When Keegan returned, Arthur was unusually enthusiastic. "Keegan, you're home?"

He squinted as he smiled. The creases on his face were all squeezed together, making him look amiable and comical.

Keegan was a little flattered and answered.

Then, he glanced at the untouched dishes on the dining table and explained, "The roads were a little congested."

"This is a big city, so traffic jams are normal. I spent the whole day preparing all these so that you can have a warm meal when you come home. Hurry up and wash your hands."

This time, not only was Keegan confused but Stella was also bewildered.

'When I came home from work today, grandpa was already busy in the kitchen. I even got kicked out when I went inside to help. Grandpa made me call Keegan home for dinner. And, he didn't even let me touch the food when it was ready and insisted on waiting for Keegan to come home and have dinner with us. Throughout grandpa's stay here, I saw with my own eyes how much he disliked Keegan. So, today really is a rare occasion,' she thought.

After Keegan had returned from washing his hands, Arthur asked him to sit down. Then, he personally opened the pot of soup and filled a bowl with chicken soup for Keegan.

"Drink it while it's hot."

Stella naturally went over with her bowl to get some soup. However, Arthur slapped her hand away the moment she touched the ladle.

"This isn't for you."

She was baffled.

She said in a displeased tone, "I helped you pick some onions. Am I not even entitled to some soup?"

Arthur said, "Didn't I make another soup? Go have that one. I purposefully made this one for Keegan."

Keegan was a little surprised. However, he could not help but smile when he saw the jealousy

on Stella's face.

"Hurry up and eat it while it's hot. It won't taste good when it's cold," Arthur urged from the side.

Keegan did not quite like chicken soup. But, since Arthur had made it himself, Keegan did not want to let his kindness go to waste. He grabbed the bowl and took a sip.

Arthur gazed excitedly at Keegan with his yellowed eyes. "How is it? Is it good?"

Keegan took only a sip and frowned. "The taste is a little funny."

"I threw in some cramp bark. It won't taste funny if you down it in one go. Hurry and eat it."

Keegan could not take the pressure from Arthur, so he fought back his discomfort and

finished the bowl of chicken soup.

Then, Arthur immediately grabbed the empty bowl and filled it again for him, "Here. Have another bowl."

Keegan frowned and felt reluctant.

"I'll have the soup after eating something," he said.

"Its effects won't be as good when it gets cold. Hurry up and eat it while it's still hot."

.

Chapter 296

Their surroundings were silent, and only the sound of water and the piano melody wafted by their ears.

Unlike Bella, Stella did not concern herself too much with what she wore. She was afraid of the cold, so her skirt was paired with a white coat. As for her hair, it was brushed into a simple low ponytail. The bangs on her forehead scattered across her face when she lowered her head to play the piano. Her pursed red lips had a chilly presence that made her stand out. She was breathtakingly beautiful.

Marshall watched her silently while the wine glass in his hand was unconsciously gripped tightly. Vermont was shocked when he heard it from the side.

There was only one line in his mind currently. 'How many more surprises do you have hidden for your majesty?'

Only Keegan had watched the whole thing calmly. Stella chose this song, and truthfully like she said, she had an advantage. Stella would practice this song using the piano in their music room at home. At the start, she could not play the song fluently. One could say that she was on par with Bella. However, she would practice this song every time she went to the music room. In the beginning, it was terrible to the ears. But, after practicing for a long time, she showed improvement and, in the end, wholly mastered it.

Even after she had mastered the song, she would still practice it every time she entered the music room. Keegan's ears were about to fall off from hearing it, so he could not help but ask her, "Why don't you switch to another song?"

In the end, she answered that the song was the most suitable for showing off. And today, she had indeed shown off. He told Stella that she was sly as her attitude toward practicing the piano was not right. On the other hand, Stella said in a serious manner that she did not need to know every song that could be played with the piano. She only

needed one extraordinary piece that was sufficient to amaze the crowd. Her abilities could have been better, but she had a lot

of nonsense.

Keegan remembered the past incident, and the corner of his lips curled up for a moment. The crowd erupted into thunderous applause when the final piano key was played.

As Bella wished, the song had definitely amazed everyone present. Even the people who had studied the piano for tens of years could not help but give a compliment. In contrast, Bella had all sorts of colors on her face as she flushed. Her confident posture was gone,

and only paleness was left on her expression.

Stella pretended to be gracious while she smugly said, "Ms. Young, why didn't you play in the end?"

The corner of Bella's lips twitched, and she thought, 'Did I not want to play? Could I even keep up if I did? Stella, you bitch!'

Bella took a deep breath and smiled forcefully. "You played wonderfully, Mrs. Kane. I was the inferior one."

Then, Stella decided to be an utterly manipulative cunt. She said, "You're the first person to praise that I played well. When I had piano classes in the past, my grades were always at the

bottom. But, I did get the upper hand today since I chose the song. Thank you, Ms. Young, for purposely playing a few wrong keys to concede to me."

Bella almost spat out blood when she heard that. 'What breed of a bitch is Stella? Bella thought.

Even for those who did not know how to play the piano, it was apparent that Bella could not keep up with Stella's speed. To say it was modesty was ultimately not to help her save face; it was to embarrass her! Bella had said it with so much confidence, and yet, in the end, Stella simply chose a song, and she could not keep up with the latter. So, she could not argue against it at all.

Bella took another deep breath and said with much difficulty, "You're too modest, Mrs. Kane." Stella then said, "Do you want to play another song? I get to choose a song just now. So, this time, you can choose."

But, how could Bella possibly dare to play together with Stella again? If they continued, she would just be taking a detour to embarrass herself further.

Chapter 297

“Maybe next time.” Bella forced a smile. “I’m a little off my game today.”

Stella felt unfortunate as she said, “That’s too bad.”

Although she said that, she did not look like she meant what she said at all.

Bella knew if she stayed, she would be a laughingstock. So, she said she wanted to change her clothes. She used that as an excuse to leave.

Stella tutted to herself, ‘I gave her a chance, but she didn’t take it. If we were to play one more song, I would be the one crying.’

After she walked lightly back to Keegan, Vermont then came to her and complimented her, Stella, you’re awesome. I can’t believe you can play the piano so well.”

Stella put on an act successfully. Without thinking, she bragged, “It was alright. Actually, I haven’t been playing the piano for a long time. I’m quite rusty.”

”

“You can play the piano so fluently even when you’re rusty. Your basic skills are really good, then.”

Stella waved her hand and said, “It’s just so-so.”

“Stella, can you play ‘Por una Cabeza’?”

“‘Por Una Cabeza’ is actually much easier to play compared to ‘Croatian Rhapsody’.”

“Ahem, Ahem…”

Keegan coughed softly as he glanced at Stella.

Stella got carried away with her bluff and did not get Keegan’s hint. So, she continued, “It’s just a piece of entry-level music. Anyone who knows how to play the piano can play that song.

Vermont’s eyes sparkled. “Then, go play ‘Por una Cabeza’. I got my eyes on a lady. Play that song to entertain me, and I’ll go find her to tango.”

Stella was then speechless.

She coughed and said, "Someone is playing the violin right now. This song sounds better when it's played using a violin."

"It's cooler if you play the song personally. Stella, whether I can get a girlfriend or not depends on you now!"

Stella was speechless again.

'I can't play "Por una Cabeza". I can barely play it while looking at the music sheet. It's considered pretty good if I don't embarrass myself. How can it look cool?"

She had bluffed too much and could not take it back now. Stella looked with appeal at Keegan.

Keegan looked like he was having a good laugh. He looked as though he was asking her to continue her bluff.

Stella did not dare to bluff anymore. She thought, 'I can't cover up my lies if I continue to bluff. 'So, she played weak and touched Keegan's palm with her finger.

Keegan looked at her pitiful face. After that, he finally showed her mercy. "Don't get us involved if you just want to play around with a girl. It's too embarrassing."

The corners of Vermont's mouth twitched. "I fell in love and broke up like a normal person. How is that playing around?"

"Did any of your relationships last longer than three months?" Keegan coldly glanced at him." If we manage to help you get the girl, and you break up with her and then go missing after you get bored with her, what do we do if she comes to us?"

Vermont choked. He said after a long pause, "Who doesn't want to just get a partner and settle down? It's just that I haven't met the one."

After he said that, he then sighed and said to Stella, "Stella, are you really the only child? Do you really not have any sisters? I'm not asking for much. Someone like you will do."

Keegan was speechless.

Stella did not wait for Keegan to speak. She ruthlessly undermined Vermont. "Mr. Snyder, your number of ex-girlfriends can form a football team. Even if I have sisters, I wouldn't dare to introduce them to you. Men need to have self-respect. You can't just find an honest woman and settle down after you're done playing around. What did honest women do to deserve this?" Vermont was left speechless.

'Did Keegan marry her because she has a sharp tongue like him?

'These two assholes are perfect for each other!'

Keegan looked at the woman beside him, who pushed her luck. He pinched her waist as he beckoned her with his eyes to tell her to stop.

Only then Stella kept her mouth shut.

After Vermont had left, Keegan said, "You need to have boundaries when you lie. Are you really not afraid of being exposed and embarrassing yourself?"

Stella bent her eyes and replied, "What's the big deal? It's just embarrassment. I'm with you anyway. You're the one who'll be embarrassed."

Upon hearing that, Keegan was left speechless.

Chapter 298

Coincidentally, a few bosses came to chat with Keegan. So, Stella went to the pool to find Arthur.

The old man did not stop having fun. After he had won some money in the casino, he then went to the swimming pool to have a breath-holding contest with a bunch of young people. When Stella got there, Arthur had already won one round. He was flicking his finger on a young man's head who had just lost the contest to him.

Stella was speechless.

She incredulously asked Aldor, who had been sticking around with Arthur, "How long did he hold his breath for?"

"Over thirty seconds."

Stella was confused.

"He won the contest just by holding his breath for over thirty seconds?" Stella then thought, 'These male office workers are so weak.'

Aldor coughed softly and said, "Mr. Jewell introduced himself as the great-grandfather of Mr. Kane before the contest."

Stella was left speechless again.

'So, he didn't win the contest. He made others throw the game by using Keegan's name.'

Stella laughed. 'He didn't feel that he won the contest dishonorably at all. He looks pretty happy.

'He's really a child at heart. The older he gets, the more childlike he gets.'

Arthur had been having fun the moment he got on the ship. After a while, he finally got tired after playing with those young people.

Stella told him that she would accompany him back to his room and rest. Arthur was a little reluctant to leave as he said, "But, there's a buffet dinner."

'He's still thinking about eating at this point,' Stella thought.

Stella said, "I'll tell them to leave some food for you."

"Will they listen to you?"

"They'll listen to Keegan."

It seemed like Arthur finally realized one good thing in his great-grandson-in-law. He reluctantly said, "He's somewhat useful."

Stella thought to herself, 'I think I might've inherited my heartlessness trait from my great-grandpa. He benefited from Keegan, but he took it for granted.'

Arthur was really tired. He excitedly woke up very early in the morning after he heard that he was going on the cruise ship yesterday.

Stella covered Arthur with a quilt. He fell asleep very quickly after he asked Stella if they had

chicken mushroom stew and whether did they use free-range chicken to make the stew.

When she walked out of the cabin, the fireworks were already set off.

She had not watched fireworks so closely for many years in the city. Stella unavoidably stayed there a little longer.

She even took her phone out to take a video and sent it to Felicity. She then sent a message: [The everyday life of a rich wife.]

Felicity replied to her with a thumbs-up emoticon and a text. [You're just showing off wealth. How shameful!]

Stella laughed for quite a while. (I'll bring you here to have fun after the filming is done.)

your

While she was waiting for Felicity's reply, Bella's voice could be heard from behind. "Stella, you're really proud, aren't you?"

Stella turned her head and glanced at her. "Proud of what? Of playing the piano better than you? Ms. Young, did you come to me to seek attention because you couldn't afford to lose?"

Bella was unhappy abruptly. "You're really shameless. Did you think that Keegan didn't want to divorce you because he likes you?"

Stella seemed like she had heard something amusing. She smiled as she said, "Why? You've been pregnant for many months, yet Keegan is still unwilling to marry you. So, did you get so impatient that you came here to snap at me?"

"You want us to get a divorce. But, I simply won't do that. It's just a child. And, I still have to suffer after you give birth to it. When the time comes, Keegan will take the baby back and have me raise the baby. He'll probably praise me for being gracious. He'll feel very grateful to have me. But, whether I will raise the baby as if the baby is a dog or a cat, it'll depend on my mood." Bella was so angry that the corners of her mouth twitched. "Are you insane?"

Stella did not bother to talk to her. She then turned around and wanted to walk away.

Bella realized that her plan had failed. She then violently grabbed Stella's wrist. "Stella, don't talk like you don't care. Why don't we make a bet? Let's see who Keegan would save if both of us fell into the water."

She pulled Stella's wrist and tried to jump into the water as she said that.

Chapter 299

Stella did not expect Bella to act so insanely. Luckily, she reacted quickly and managed to grab the guardrail in time.

But, Bella was very strong. She seemed as though she would not give up until she could pull Stella down into the water. Stella realized that she could not free herself. So, she kicked Bella.

'Get off!' Stella thought.

Bella was then kicked into the water out of fear by Stella.

Mrs. Chapman suddenly screamed behind Stella. "Help, somebody. Someone fell into the water!"

Her voice instantly alerted everyone on deck.

“Who dropped into the water?”

“I think it’s Ms. Young.”

“Oh, my god. She was just fine a while ago. How did she fall into the water?”

“Mrs. Chapman said she saw Ms. Young arguing with Mrs. Kane. Then, she heard the sound of water splashing after a short while.”

“Are you saying that Mrs. Kane pushed her into the water?”

“I didn’t say that.”

People were talking about the incident on the ship.

When they saw Keegan, everyone kept quiet.

Keegan came forth from the crowd. He then saw Stella standing next to the guardrail, expressionlessly looking at the rescuer dragging Bella onto the lifeboat.

He pursed his lips and walked forward to grab Stella’s hand. Stella froze for a moment. She pressed her lips and remained silent.

The seawater was exceptionally cold. Although Bella did not drown, she was freezing.

She wore a gauze dress in the month of April to be in the limelight. After she got wet, her clothes were all sticking to her body. Her body curves could be seen clearly.

The men at the scene looked awkward. But, they would periodically glance at her body.

Marshall took off his jacket. He then walked forward and put it on Bella.

Bella’s eyes were red as she said in a hoarse voice, “thank you.”

The doctor on the cruise ship came forward to examine Bella. He said that she was in a state of shock. She was fine other than that.

After the doctor had left, Bella brought up her emotions. Just when she was about to speak, Stella suddenly stepped forward and grabbed her hand. She said with a face full of remorse, “I told you to grab onto my hand tightly just now. Why did you loosen your grip? Luckily, you’re fine. Otherwise, I wouldn’t be able to explain this to everyone.”

Bella looked confused.

Keegan sized them up and faintly said, "What happened?"

"1"

"Ms. Young drank too much. She was standing shakingly next to the guardrail. And, when the ship jerked, she lost her balance and flipped over the rail. I wanted to grab her. But, she released her grip and fell into the water. My wrist is so painful from her pull."

Stella played the coquette when she said the last sentence. She even pulled up her sleeve to show Keegan as she said that. There was an obvious circle of finger marks, and someone had clearly pulled her wrist.

Keegan unconsciously frowned as he looked at the circle of finger marks.

Bella did not expect that Stella would distort the truth. After she realized what was happening, she immediately denied it. "No!"

Keegan glanced at her. "No, what?"

Bella instantly kept quiet when she saw the anger in his eyes.

'I've already lost the opportunity to explain first. If I say that Stella pushed me into the water now, not only would Keegan take her side, but he'd also even think that I'm falsely accusing Stella.

"The ring of finger marks on her wrist is the best proof,' thought Bella.

Bella hated Stella very much. She lowered her eyes and softly said, "I didn't want to release my grip. But, I was afraid that I'd pull Mrs. Kane down into the water. That was why I loosened my grip. I'd be very guilty if Mrs. Kane fell into the water."

Stella raised her eyebrows.

'If Bella could act so well like she did in real life, people wouldn't criticize her so much.

'If I didn't speak before her, she'd definitely cry and blame everything on me.

'When that happens, everyone would blame me. And, I won't even have the chance to explain myself.

'Although I did kick her down. But, she asked for it.

'She's so brainless. She filmed too many shows. I can't believe she'd put on such an act.

'She even wanted Keegan to save her. Keegan can't even swim!'

Stella was stunned for a moment.

'Bella knew Keegan for so many years. How could she not know that Keegan can't swim?' Stella thought.

Stella doubtfully sized Bella up. She then stared at Bella's belly.

"The baby inside her stomach is her most valuable bargaining chip. Bella knows she's pregnant. So, why the charade?"

'When Aurora pushed her during the charity gala back then, it was actually quite a nasty fall. But, incredibly, she seemed okay after that.'

'My classmate was extremely careful the first three months when she was pregnant. Bella is pregnant with a golden child. Why is she not afraid of miscarriage? Stella thought to herself.

And so, the farce had ended just like that.

The crowd on the ship was still talking about it endlessly. Stella did not want to stay there and listen to them. So, she went straight back to her room.

After a short while, someone knocked on her door.

Stella thought that it was Keegan. So, she reluctantly walked forward to open the door.

However, after she opened the door, she saw Marshall.

"Mr. Moore?"

Marshall raised the bag in his hand and said, "I asked the doctor for some medicated oil." He then pointed at Stella's wrist and added, "Rub some on it. It'll get better quicker."

Chapter 300

"It's just a minor injury. It'll be fine even without medication. Sorry for troubling you." Although she said that, she still welcomed him into her room.

She put the clothes on the couch aside and then asked Marshall to sit. "Mr. Moore, is plain water okay with you?"

Marshall nodded. "Sure."

Stella then poured a glass of water and gave it to him.

Marshall opened the bag. He took out the medicated oil from the bag and handed it to her. "Rub some oil on your injury."

Stella then took the oil. She bent her eyes as she thanked him. She immediately opened the bottle of oil and softly rubbed the oil on her wrist.

Marshall looked around the room before he asked, "Where's Keegan?"

Stella stopped moving for a moment. She pursed her lips as she said, "I'm not sure."

When the security personnel on the ship accompanied Bella back to her cabin, she pulled Keegan to tell him something. After she got back to her room, Keegan then gave Stella an excuse to go out.

'Where else can this piece of garbage go other than going to Bella?' Stella said internally.

She rolled her sleeve up a little. The color of one part of her inner forearm skin was different from the color of the other parts of her skin. It was slightly darker and not very smooth.

Marshall stared at it for a while before he asked, "Is that a birthmark on your arm?"

"This? It's not a birthmark. This is a burn wound from back then." She had a birthmark. But, it was not on her arm.

She paused for a moment after she said that. She obviously thought of the burn wounds on Marshall's body. 'My burn wound is nothing compared to the huge burn scar on Marshall's body. She thought and figured that she should not speak too much about it.

Marshall, however, was not bothered. He asked, "How did you get burned?"

It was not something that Stella could not talk about. So, she said, "A few years ago, my mother and I got into a car accident. My mom was hurt very badly. She's still unconscious in the hospital now. But, I was only hurt a little. This is the wound I got from that accident."

She downplayed that incident. She was still haunted by that accident when she thought about.

it now.

She was going to return to the university that day. Initially, Albert's company arranged for a driver to fetch her. But, the driver suddenly had something to do. So, he could not fetch her.

Rainee was about to go out and do something. So, she drove Stella.

It was a rainy season in September. But, because a lot of schools reopened during that period, and there were many cars on the road. The traffic congested along the way. So, Rainee drove the car very slowly.

The road condition started to turn better at the ring road after they went through the viaduct. Rainee was constantly talking to someone on the phone along the way. Stella was wearing an earphone and listening to music while chatting with her friends.

A truck suddenly switched lanes at the corner. And, Rainee subconsciously turned the steering wheel to the left. Then, she drove her car into another lane and collided head-on with an oncoming taxi. Rainee's car rolled over twice and overturned on the ground.

Stella was trapped in her seat, and she could not move. Meanwhile, Rainee was thrown out of the car.

After Stella was rescued and sent to the hospital, she was unconscious for many days. The police came to ask her some questions not long after she woke up.

The investigation report showed that Rainee's car brake failed. It might be due to her frequently stopping the car during traffic congestion that day. And, they also found some antidepressants in the car. They thought that Rainee had depression when she drove. Hence, they suspected that she might have caused this accident deliberately.

No matter how Stella explained to them that her mother was fine at that time, no one believed her.

She wanted Albert to get a lawyer to prove her mother's innocence. But, Albert thought that if they clarified in court that Rainee did not have depression when she drove, it would mean that she was fully capable. The consequences would then be extremely serious.

If she had depression at that time, it would mean that she was a person with limited disposing capacity. They could then go for civil mediation with the victims. And, they would be able to pay lesser compensation.

Only kids would care about justice. Adults would only do what was in their best interest.

Two died, and one was wounded in the accident. In the end, they only needed to pay over one million dollars in compensation. That was the first time Stella felt that Albert was a cold-

hearted

person.