

Pursuing 201

Chapter 201 Not Joking

“Don’t worry. No one will get to harm her,” Mark could only comfort Sunny.

“If Mr. Tristan dares to bully her, I will show him the consequences even if I have to sacrifice my life in the process,” Sunny said while wearing a poker face.

“Hmm.” Presumably, Mark’s silence was an implicit acknowledgment of Sunny’s words.

Sophie was quiet on the way back. She leaned back in the seat with her eyes closed to get some rest.

“What’s wrong?”

Is she reluctant for me to interfere in this matter? However, Clayton is a ruthless man. I do not want her to have too many interactions with him.

“Nothing. I am very grateful for your help.” Sophie was not an ungracious person, after all. It was Tristan who was overthinking the situation.

“Okay.”

Tristan fell silent afterward. After the car was parked in the underground garage, and Sophie was about to get off the vehicle, he suddenly grabbed her hand.

Puzzled, she turned her head around to look at him.

He merely lowered his head, pulled her into his embrace, and kissed her for a long while.

Rendered out of breath because of his passionate kiss, Sophie gazed at him in bafflement.

“What’s the matter?”

“It’s nothing.”

Tristan could not help but sigh. It was too difficult for him to figure out what was going on in her mind, so he felt at a loss.

Huh, I wonder what is in her mind.

“Okay. I’ll head upstairs then. You should go back now.” She was genuinely exhausted and in need of sleep after dealing with Clifford.

“All right. Go on.”

The end-of-semester exam had also ended, so she could get some good rest in the upcoming days.

Sophie finally got out of the car and returned to Wisteria Apartments. On the other hand, Tristan sat inside the vehicle for some time before activating the car engine and leaving.

The following day, Mark’s agent, Jonathan Zales, met with Clayton in person.

Clayton was busy in the past two days because the hacker infiltrated Zales Corporation’s system.

His face darkened when he saw Jonathan appearing at the headquarters.

“You better have a good reason for coming here.” Although The Wheelers was generating a lot of profit for the company, Mark had not been an easy person to deal with, so Clayton was not fond of the latter.

“Clay, the thing is, Sunny’s hand got injured because of this incident. Therefore, Mark and the others decided to terminate the contract with the company.”

“Terminate the contract? Are you kidding me? The Wheelers flourished and attained their current success under my leadership. They are finally making a profit now, yet they wish to terminate their contract. What are you all thinking? Have your brains gone haywire?”

“Clay, isn’t it better for us to part on good terms since you despise Mark anyway. What do you hope to achieve by keeping The Wheelers within your control?” Jonathan had stayed by the band’s side from its establishment, so he knew how outrageous Clayton had treated them.

“Part on good terms? Jonathan, you’ve stayed by my side for so long, yet you dare say something like that? Don’t you feel that you are such a clown?”

Jonathan kept quiet.

“Clay, What are your conditions to allow The Wheelers to terminate the contract?” Jonathan had decided to stick with The Wheelers in the future.

He had guided that group of teenagers and genuinely cared about them since the band’s formation. Besides, he also firmly believed The Wheelers would have a bright future ahead in the music industry.

Therefore, he must side with The Wheelers no matter what.

“I will not consent to the contract termination, but since they are acting rebellious, all their ongoing albums and related projects will be temporarily paused to allow them some time to reflect on their actions.”

It was obvious to Jonathan that Clayton had decided to blacklist The Wheelers.

“Do all of you think you’re very successful now? Regrettably, I will not let you all do as you please while I’m still in charge.” Clayton snorted coldly.

Jonathan's face darkened, but he did not dare to act up in front of Clayton.

"Clay—"

Before he could finish the rest of his sentence, Clayton dismissed him.

"That's enough. You can leave now. Don't bug me with this matter ever again."

Clayton had indeed been caught up in a bad mood recently.

Jonathan wanted to speak further, but Clayton's assistant entered at that moment and whispered beside Clayton's ear, prompting the latter's facial expression to change drastically.

"F*ck! Who is that? Did I spend tens of millions on hiring those cyber security specialists to sit around and do nothing?"

What a bunch of trash!

Zales Corporation's system was hacked again, not to mention some of their classified information had been stolen.

"What are you doing? Aren't you the best hacker?"

The cyber security specialist did not dare to make a sound as Clayton chided him.

The cyber security specialist had been receiving an annual salary of over tens of millions from Zales Corporation, but that was the first time he had encountered such a troublesome hacker as that unknown hacker had been toying with him the whole time.

"Clay, they are too formidable, so there is really nothing I can do."

“Get lost!”

Clayton was unwilling to listen to the cyber security specialist’s nonsense at that moment.

“Clay, do you think Phantom may be behind this? We discovered Wings of Light’s territory previously, right? Could they be taking revenge on us?”

Clayton was stumped.

We’re in serious trouble if Phantom is really behind this. There aren’t many hackers with skills on par with Phantom in this world.

“All I did was pay Wings of Light’s territory a visit. Do they have to drive me to the brink of despair for that?”

Clayton was truly bewildered. Besides, he did not approach Wings of Light with hostility. He merely wanted to make them an offer to join his company.

“Try and contact people from Wings of Light.” Clayton sighed.

Perhaps I really shouldn’t have provoked someone as problematic as Phantom. They are not giving me any way out! If this torment drags on, I have no doubt I will die at a young age.

Clayton was finally able to get in touch with Butterfly after much difficulty.

Unfortunately, Butterfly repeatedly left them hanging, reluctant to provide them with a definite answer.

At night, Sophie went to Wings of Light. When Butterfly saw Sophie, she immediately brought the latter to check out her new computer in excitement.

“This computer is quite amazing.”

Butterfly uttered proudly, “Moreover, I have another unit with me, so you can take it back and try it. Do give me feedback promptly if you have any comments.”

That was a product developed by Butterfly’s family’s company.

The computer fully utilized local technologies, but the processing speed was remarkable, and the device had no significant inadequacy.

“Okay. Send the computer to Wisteria Apartments. I’ll try it out before discussing it with you.”

After that, Sophie went to sit at her table. She opened her computer and began repairing their system.

“Also, who are these people you brought into Wings of Light?” When Butterfly received Sophie’s call previously, she did not overthink the situation and merely arranged places for them to sit. However, Butterfly thought they all appeared menacing after meeting with them.

“It’s nothing. You don’t have to mind their existence. They are here just to protect you all.” Since Clayton managed to find out their location, Sophie had to take some precautionary measures. Although she had absolute confidence in handling Clayton, Sophie did not wish to put Butterfly and the others at risk.

“Phantom, aren’t you exaggerating? We don’t need these people to protect us. Although I may not be as skilled in combat as you, I am still capable of dealing with a few thugs.”

“We are not handling a matter as simple as dealing with a few thugs. This time, I want the Zales family to disappear from Jipsdale completely.”

Butterfly was rendered speechless.

She did not expect Sophie to utter such a bold statement. Nevertheless, judging by the latter's demeanor, Butterfly reckoned Sophie was not joking.

Chapter 202 We Will Be Together Forever

"All right, stop staring. I'm serious," Sophie uttered. She looks so crazy right now! Why is she staring at me like that?

"Fine! As long as it's something that you got your mind set on, I'll definitely support you. It's just the Zales family, after all. If you want to do it, then just do it!" Butterfly declared with hesitation.

In her heart, all that mattered to her was Sophie.

Every other choice was invalid to her.

"No need to reply Clayton. We'll just prolong his torment by a few more days." Sophie didn't really do much of anything aside from attacking his family's system. He's too much of a coward!

That assurance didn't put all of Butterfly's worry to rest. "I know how capable you are, Phantom. However, Clayton isn't easy to deal with, so you must be careful!"

As powerful as Phantom is, she's just an eighteen-year-old. Clayton, on the other hand, is a powerful man in Jipsdale. This won't end without hitches. Thoughts of concern swirled in her mind.

"Mhm, I know. No need to worry about me. I'll be careful." Sophie was confident Clayton wouldn't be able to hurt her because no one knew she was Phantom. Even if I stand in front of Clayton, he won't know I'm the culprit!

"Mhm."

When Sophie arrived at Primo Mansion, Mark and Jonathan were discussing the dissolution of the contract.

“Clayton just isn’t willing to do it. Not only that, he didn’t even give us a chance to negotiate! He’s simply unwilling to terminate the contract. If this continues, it’ll have a very negative effect on the band.” It made Jonathan feel pretty resigned because there was no way to turn the situation around with how things had developed.

“Mhm, he’s not going to let us go that easily.” Sunny nodded. I knew this was going to happen. There’s no way Clayton’s going to let a money tree like us leave!

“What do we do now? Since the situation has turned out like this, will Clayton still be willing to publish an album for us?”

“His intentions are clear. He wants us to calm down.”

In their minds, Clayton telling them to “calm down” was another way of saying that he could blacklist them. Thankfully, their reputation was simply far too great for him to bury them willy-nilly.

“All right, that’s enough! What you all need to focus on right now is writing a new song. Mr. Tristan will handle the termination of the contract. He can take care of this! With him around, there’s nothing you all should worry about,” Sophie said.

“It’s not like we’re worried about Mr. Tristan. It’s just that Clayton is far too despicable!” Sunny felt like they were truly blind for having chosen a company like that.

“It’s fine. Mr. Tristan will simply be even more despicable,” Sophie said blandly.

Err... Is it really okay to talk about Mr. Tristan like this? Won’t he get angry?

She sat on the couch. “How about this? You lot will go on a vacation overseas and forget about what’s happening here. I’ll take care of things in the country. You just need to focus on preparing the new album. Leave the rest to us.”

“How can we just run away now, Sophie? No matter what happens, we must confront this issue personally!”

The whole band had the same thought.

“Isn’t it better if you all go overseas and relax? Can you all even write a good song if you’re tense all the time? I plan to form an entertainment company, and you lot are the singers I want to hire. However, I have very high expectations that you all can’t achieve like this.”

“What? Are you kidding me, Sophie? Are you doing it because of us? You can’t just form a company base on that reason alone!” Disbelief was written all over Sunny’s face.

“I’m serious. Do you think I have time to joke around with you all right now?”

“I don’t remember Tanner Group being that involved in the entertainment industry before.” He scratched his head, unable to understand why she did that.

“Not in the past, but that doesn’t mean it’ll stay the same in the future! You know Cecelia, right? She’ll join my entertainment company! As for you lot, just think about my suggestion. I won’t force you all to accept it! It’s your decision to make.”

“Are you serious, Sophie? You’re really not kidding us?” Mark asked with uncertainty.

“Since when do I joke with you’ll? Soon, I’ll be the CEO of Tanner Group. When that happens, I’ll form an entertainment company.” Many people around her wanted to join the entertainment industry. However, she couldn’t help but worry about them if they worked under someone else. Thus, she decided to open an entertainment company herself. However, she treated the matter like it was her hobby

“Forming an entertainment company isn’t an easy thing to do. Are you sure you’re up for the task?” Sunny was worried because the entertainment industry was a vast field that was mostly under the control of Clayton and Charles.

It didn't sound realistic to him when she said she wanted to form an entertainment company.

Sophie grabbed a cup of water and drank. "Don't worry. I am willing to take the risk."

"Mark, you guys..." Jonathan was starting to worry. Based on the band members' relationship with Sophie, he had no doubt that they would join Sophie's company if it were successfully formed.

His concern was focused on what resources a newly formed company could provide for the band.

The society they lived in was one where support determined success. Even if one were talented, one wouldn't be able to become famous without support and resources.

Resources were very important.

Mark nodded. "If you really do plan on forming an entertainment company, we'll join your company." Since singing together wasn't an option anymore, that kind of collaboration sounded like a good choice.

"That's right! We'll be together forever!" Sunny's eyes turned reddish. No matter what happens, as long as we can stay together, that's good enough for me!

"Very well. I shall make arrangements for your vacation overseas, then. What about you, Jonathan? What do you think?" Sophie disliked forcing people, so she also wanted to give him a choice.

"I'll follow whatever choice the band makes!" It was Jonathan's belief that The Wheelers would become internationally famous.

"Very well. In that case, all of you will go overseas. Leave the matters here to me. When you guys return after Christmas, it'll be time for your band to record a new album!" Sophie had already prepared everything.

All that was left was the band doing their best.

“Okay, we’ll listen to you.”

They believed in what she said because, despite her young age, she had a say in what happened to the band.

Additionally, they had no other choices at that point.

Even if Clayton were willing to let them go, no company would dare to make a contract with them within the country.

In that case, joining Sophie’s new company was a pretty good choice.

She stayed with them until very late at night to discuss the new album.

It wasn’t until Tristan called her that she had to pause her work.

So, she said to the band, “You all will leave the country tomorrow. We’ll talk to each other on video calls in the future.”

After that, she stood up knowing that Tristan was waiting for her outside.

There were still a lot of things that she needed to take care of in Jipsdale. She had to deal with all of it in record time so she could rush over to Harington and handle the matters there. After Sophie left the mansion, she saw many paparazzi standing outside. Thus, she put on her black hat and went straight toward Tristan’s car.

“Someone came out!” The reporters rushed over to her upon seeing her.

Chapter 203 Seductive

“Since you just left Primo Mansion, may I ask what’s your relationship with The Wheelers, miss?” asked a reporter blocking Sophie’s path.

Sophie furrowed her eyebrows, very displeased with the situation.

“Please answer our question, miss!”

“No comments!” Every time she had to deal with reporters and people like them, she would feel irritated. She would much prefer to have a brawl with someone than face the reporters in front of her.

“Are you the girlfriend of a member of The Wheelers? Who’s your boyfriend?” The reason the reporters were curious was that she was the first woman who hung out with The Wheelers.

“No comments!” Sophie continued to push the reporters away and entered Tristan’s car. The moment she was inside, he turned on the engine and drove away, leaving the reporters in the dust.

Upon taking off her hat, she took in a deep breath.

“What’s the matter? Are those reporters really that scary?” he asked.

The only thing she was afraid of was the reporters.

“Yeah, they are quite scary. That’s why I refuse to enter the entertainment industry. I don’t like other people paying attention to my private life,” Sophie answered. “Aren’t you the same? As the leader of Lombard Group, the media won’t dare to publish your picture. Even if you show up in front of the public, not many people know you’re the famous Mr. Tristan.”

“I just don’t like trouble!”

Along the way, Tristan drove very steadily. It had been snowing pretty hard for the past few days, making Jipsdale’s temperature drop a dozen degrees below zero.

There was a lot of snow on the ground too, so he had to be careful as he drove. "Jonathan went to see Clayton, right?"

"Mhm. Clayton refused to terminate the contract. There's no need to rush though," Sophie replied casually.

The matter was already quite difficult to deal with. If The Wheelers were just an average band, then the termination would've been a breeze. However, the revenue they were pulling in could keep a company afloat. There was no way Clayton would be willing to let them go.

"Oh yeah, Tanner Group's shareholders' meeting is about to start soon! How's your preparation?" Tristan asked. Transfix Cosmetics' current performance was there for everyone to see. If no accidents occurred, she would undoubtedly become Tanner Group's CEO.

"There won't be any accidents." She wouldn't allow anything to go wrong. As long as it was something she wanted, there was nothing she couldn't do to get it. "Oh, also, send me back to the Tanner residence, Mr. Tristan. My grandpa was discharged from the hospital today. I wanna visit him!"

Josiah was acting up again.

Just as he was getting better, he threw a tantrum that he wanted to return home.

Left with no other choice, Arius had to give in.

"Okay!" Tristan turned the car and parked it in front of the Tanner residence. Yet, Sophie didn't exit the car.

"I'll sleep here for a while!" The Tanner residence wasn't a favorite place of hers because there were a lot of people she didn't like there.

At that moment, she just wanted to stay there longer with him.

“Mhm, sleep then!”

As she slept, Tristan didn’t do anything else. He simply stayed by her side quietly and stared at her sleeping face.

It made him happy that she didn’t immediately go into the Tanner residence but wanted to stay with him instead.

This is a great improvement. As expected, I can slowly make my way into her heart. After all, the changes are already happening.

The car was pretty warm. At first, Sophie just wanted to rest for a while. In the end, she really fell asleep there.

By the time she woke up, it was already almost midnight.

“Why didn’t you wake me up?” she exclaimed. I don’t know why, but when I’m around him, I find it so easy to fall asleep. It’s like he has magic that can make me sleep very well.

“I couldn’t bear to wake you up when I saw how soundly you were sleeping. You should sit here for a longer while. If you go out right after you wake up, you may get a cold.”

“No, I need to go in right now. My grandfather may still be waiting for me because I told him I’ll be back tonight.”

Josiah’s personality was something she was very familiar with.

“Fine. Go in then!” Tristan unlocked the door.

Upon opening the door, Sophie turned back and saw him still staring at her affectionately. She felt her cheeks burning a little. “Be careful when you drive back!”

The slippery, snowy road wasn't safe for cars to drive on.

"Mhm, I know. You should go back early and rest. Don't talk to your grandfather until late at night. Also, let him know I'll be accompanying him in a couple of days," Tristan said.

"Mhm!" It was a tacit acknowledgment by Sophie that she knew him and the old man had an unspoken understanding.

After stepping out of the car, she didn't immediately enter the building. Instead, she walked around the vehicle and opened the driver's door, staring at him while standing outside.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

The outside was so cold that Sophie's ears had already turned red shortly after leaving the car.

However, the red wasn't caused by the freezing temperature. It was because she was shy.

Suddenly, she felt unwilling to leave him. It was an emotion unfamiliar to her.

Seeing her like that, Tristan couldn't hold back the demon inside his heart anymore. He hugged her waist, pulled her close, and kissed her lips.

"If the person you're meeting isn't Old Mr. Tanner, I wouldn't have let you go!" His voice was deep, and when it rang next to her ear, it sounded very seductive.

"I—" Following her desire, Sophie kissed him too. Then, she left before he could react to that.

Tristan felt like he was on cloud nine.

It really didn't cross his mind that she would take the initiative to kiss him. Something like that was something that would only show up in his dream in the past.

Yet, at that moment, it had become real.

Just as Sophie stepped into the building, Tristan called.

She pressed the answer button and put the phone next to her ear.

While she heard nothing from the other end, and she didn't say anything, she knew the call was connected.

"What do I do, Sophie? It's only been a minute, yet I already want to see you again already. Do you know that I am really happy that you're willing to take the initiative to kiss me? You don't need to say anything to fill my heart with glee. Even when I signed a contract worth billions, I never felt like this before. You really are different from me," he said.

"

It was an overwhelming feeling he couldn't resist.

"Mr. Tristan—" Sophie didn't expect her small gesture would move him so greatly.

"You should go back now!" Her ears were totally red. While she thought pretty highly of herself, she was a blank piece of paper when it came to love. Thus, she would occasionally feel helpless when facing him.

However, she knew he was different from her.

"Mhm, I know. We'll meet again tomorrow! I already can't wait for our next meeting!" Excitement could be heard in Tristan's voice.

"You should go back right now, Mr. Tristan. If your place is too far away, you can go back to Wisteria Apartments! Once you return, we'll video call each other!" Sophie was worried that he would spend the

night in his car alone. As comfortable and warm as his car is, spending a night inside must be pretty uncomfortable.

Before she said that, he did think about spending the night in his car. It seems like she knows me pretty well.

Chapter 204 Blushing

“Mhm, I know. I’ll go back now,” Tristan assured.

“Be careful on the road.” It was then Sophie hung up the call. It was getting pretty late. The more she talked to him, the later he would return to his home, which was why she stopped.

After hanging up the call, she realized Josiah really was still waiting in the living room for her.

“Who were you talking to earlier? Was it Tanny? Why don’t you invite him in since he’s already here? It’s not like we don’t have enough rooms here. It’s dangerous for him to go back in this weather!” the old man suggested.

“Why are you so naughty, Grandpa? Didn’t I ask you to stay in the hospital for a couple more days?” As Sophie spoke, her expression darkened. She didn’t forget why she was there.

He pretended as though he didn’t hear anything and turned to the butler nearby. “Isn’t Tanny a good kid?”

The butler could only nod.

It wasn’t unexpected that the old man refused to stay in the hospital for that long.

“It’s going to be the shareholders’ meeting in a few days, Soph. Are you confident?” Another reason Josiah didn’t sleep was because of that.

He found it hard to sleep soundly before that matter concluded.

No matter what happened, that was his sweat and blood. Thus, there was no way he could just ignore it.

“You don’t believe me, Grandpa? Since you already handed Tanner Group to me, you should let it go already. I won’t disappoint you,” Sophie assured. Is this why he didn’t want to stay in the hospital?

“Mhm.” There wasn’t much for him to say.

“All right, it’s getting late. You should go and sleep now. If you don’t, I won’t care about the company anymore.”

“I know you won’t do that, Soph.” Despite his words, he still went to sleep.

It wasn’t until Sophie accompanied him to the bed and covered him with a blanket that she stepped out of his room.

Morgan left the room with her.

“It’s getting very late, Ms. Sophie. You should rest early!” he said.

“Thank you for your hard work in this period of time, Morgan. You should rest early too!”

After that, she returned to her own room. It had been a while since the last time she lived there for a couple of days.

The moment Sophie arrived in her room, her phone rang.

At that point, she really wasn’t sure what to say. All she wanted was to rest early.

Before she could hang up, she heard Tristan say, "I miss you."

Despite the fact that it hadn't been long since they parted ways, it still made her heart race when she heard that.

Thoughts crossed her mind as she glanced at him. What's wrong with him? He's been teasing me often lately! Moreover, it has only been an hour since we left each other.

"It's getting very late, Mr. Tristan. I'm going to sleep now," Sophie uttered before ending the video call.

Sitting on the couch, Tristan couldn't help but chuckle when he saw how she acted. Why is she so adorable? I bet she's feeling shy! I didn't even say much! It was just an "I miss you!"

As for her, she was lying in bed, calming down. After a while, she patted her cheeks. "What's wrong with you, Sophie? He didn't really say anything special! Why are you even blushing?"

All she could think of at that moment was Tristan's face.

Then Sophie sat up and decided to take a bath before sleeping.

Ever since Sophie stepped into the building, Willow had been unable to sleep. Staring at her own hand, all she could think of was revenge.

When she saw Sophie entering the bedroom, she waited for a while. After making sure everyone was asleep, she grabbed a fruit knife and went to the second floor sneakily. Then, she stood in front of Sophie's room.

She was afraid of Sophie, but she refused to give up.

Sophie destroyed everything she had, so she couldn't just let her off.

No matter what, she wanted Sophie to pay the price, too.

When Willow turned the knob, she realized Sophie's door wasn't locked. Thus, she entered the room without any problem.

Upon discovering that Sophie was in the bathroom, she hid in an obscure corner. This time, I'll make you pay the price, Sophie!

There was nothing but hatred left in her mind. The only thing she wanted was revenge. Everyone in the family is on Sophie's side! No one care about me! In that case, there's nothing for me to be afraid of!

After Sophie exited the bathroom and dried her hair before getting in bed and playing with her phone. It wasn't until she was very sleepy that she pulled up her blanket and prepared to sleep.

Before she put away her phone, she saw Tristan sending her a message.

It was still the same "I miss you" message from before.

Sophie wasn't an exceptionally romantic person, so she replied: Mhm.

Mr. Tristan: Okay, go to sleep now!

That concluded their conversation, as she didn't reply after that.

She closed her eyes and started sleeping.

It wasn't until Willow confirmed Sophie had fallen asleep based on her calm breathing that she walked out from the obscure spot. Her movement was light, and it didn't make a sound.

“Where should I cut her? You’re pretty because of your face, right? It’s because of your alluring appearance that all you know to do is seduce men! I wonder if those men still go after you if I cut your face?” Willow approached the bed and leaned over.

In her hand was the sharp fruit knife.

It was new because she bought it to deal with Sophie specifically.

A smug smile was seen on her face because she could finally get her revenge.

The fruit knife was only a hair’s breadth away from Sophie’s face. Willow was feeling excited and joyous as she stared at the defenseless Sophie.

When she plunged the knife toward Sophie, the latter grabbed her hand with open eyes. Sadly, Sophie’s beautiful eyes were filled with an icy look at that moment.

Willow tried to pull her wrist away. No, this is impossible! Shouldn’t she be asleep already? This is my best chance!

“Do you have a death wish?” Sophie questioned.

Despite Willow’s desperate struggle, she couldn’t break free. Impossible! There’s no way I’ll fail!

“The one who has a death wish is you! Why can’t you just die, Sophie? If you die, the Tanner family will finally belong to me! Once you die, everyone will acknowledge my existence! I fell in love with Clayton first! You don’t have the right to snatch him away from me!” Bitterness and hatred had consumed Willow whole.

Sophie tactfully grabbed the knife and kicked her down the bed.

As a result, Willow fell onto the floor and cried loudly.

She was so loud that Sophie found it annoying, so the latter grabbed a nearby towel and stuffed the former's mouth with it.

Willow's eyes widened. How can she do this to me? This is the towel that the housekeepers used to clean the place up today! How could she just stuff that into my mouth?

Chapter 205 Punishment

"Why are you crying like you're a pig being slaughtered? It's just attempted murder. You're getting bolder and bolder, Willow!" Sophie uttered nonchalantly.

"Do you really think you're my opponent? Why is your memory so bad? You should know there's no way you can win against me, yet you keep trying. What do you think I should do with you right now, hmm? Should I hand you over to the police?" A troubled look appeared on Sophie's face.

Willow shook her head desperately. No! Don't hand me over to the police! I don't want to go to the police station!

"Forget it! It's getting pretty late. I can't let the whole family suffer with you." Then, Sophie grabbed a rope and tied her up before throwing her into the bathroom.

"Reflect on your actions here, and we'll have a nice chat tomorrow. Otherwise, don't blame me for what I'll do!" When she finished speaking, she even yawned.

Since there wasn't any heater in the bathroom, the temperature inside was really low, so much so that it made Willow tremble from the cold.

Sophie didn't give a crap about her and went back to sleep.

Thus, Willow was forced to spend a night in a cold, wet bathroom.

The next morning, Charmaine went to her room to invite her to breakfast. When she didn't see her there, she immediately went looking for her.

"What's going on? Wasn't she in the house last night? Why did she disappear?" Yale had given up all hope on Willow.

With Tristan's support, he had no reason to choose anyone but Sophie.

"I also don't know. She's been feeling pretty unwell recently. You know her hand was injured because of Sophie, and women like to look beautiful, so..." Charmaine replied.

"All right, that's enough. She should be in the house. Quickly, Dad's about to wake up, but the breakfast is not ready yet!" He needed to head to the company soon because things were getting busy as year-end was coming.

"Breakfast is ready long ago! Just eat." She was still worried about her daughter.

Even after everyone came to eat breakfast, Willow was still nowhere to be found.

When she saw Sophie, she couldn't help but ask, "Did you see Willow, Soph? It's like she disappeared into thin air!"

"Ah, Willow, is it? She's in my bathroom!" Sophie didn't feel like she should hide that.

After all, it was only a matter of time before she needed to deal with it.

"What? What's going on?" Josiah was shocked upon hearing that. "Why is she in your room?"

He was aware that the sisters weren't close enough to sleep in the same bed.

“Last night, she tried to use a fruit knife to ruin my face. Thankfully, I caught her in time. I was afraid of affecting everyone’s sleep, so I tied her up and threw her into the bathroom first.” She thought she was doing a favor for everyone since there was no reason to create so much noise during the night.

“What?” Charmaine couldn’t believe her ears. Without delay, she asked a few housekeepers to follow her into Sophie’s room. When she opened the door, she saw Willow lying there, with her limbs tied up and her mouth stuffed with a towel.

The moment Willow saw Charmaine, tears streamed down her cheeks.

As Charmaine pulled the towel out of her mouth, she spoke. “What’s gotten into you, Willa? Why are you doing this instead of listening to me? Didn’t I ask you to stay as far away from Sophie as possible? Why are you so stubborn?”

Willow immediately cried when her mouth was free.

She tried to cry very loudly to show everyone how aggrieved she was.

However, she couldn’t make a sound after staying inside the bathroom for a whole night.

“Quickly, take her away and give her a hot shower! Help her change into a new set of clothes!” Charmaine was extremely worried. Sophie is too merciless! No matter what happens, Willow is still her sister!

After the housekeepers did as she asked, she brought Willow downstairs.

The second Willow’s line of sight landed on Sophie, she wanted to tear the latter into pieces.

However, Sophie only shot a glance at her sister for her to behave.

“What’s going on with you, Willow? Your recent performance has been extremely disappointing! Sophie is still your sister. How could you hurt her?” Yale roared.

Hearing that made Willow feel really aggrieved.

In the past, her father had always been standing by her side.

Yet, at that moment, he was on Sophie's side.

Willow wanted to explain, but she still couldn't speak. The cold she had gotten due to what happened last night was too serious.

"Apologize to Soph right away, Willow! Don't you know this is a criminal offense?" Josiah gazed at her disapprovingly. Why is she acting like this at such a young age? "I think she should be sent to the countryside for a period of time!" His idea was to let the people there reform her.

"Dad, Willow is still young!" Charmaine argued.

"Not anymore. It's because you've been spoiling her that such a thing happened! You must take responsibility for what has become of Willow!"

"I know, Dad..."

"All right, that's enough, Grandpa. I'm willing to let this matter go for your sake. However, should this happen again, I won't let it slide," Sophie informed.

Her grandfather had just recovered, so she didn't want him to get too worked up.

That was why she locked Willow up in the bathroom all night as punishment.

"Mhm." Josiah nodded. Even though both of them are my granddaughters, the difference between them is too massive.

Grabbing Charmaine's hand, Willow hoped her mother would defend her. In her family, her mother was the only one who was willing to stand by her side.

However, at that point, Charmaine didn't have the guts to say anything.

The biggest reason Josiah didn't immediately send Willow to the police station was that he was concerned about the family's reputation.

Otherwise, she really would've been in a lockup already.

"Let's eat breakfast together, Sophie! Aren't you heading to Transfix Cosmetics in a moment?" Josiah spoke again, completely ignoring Willow.

No one paid attention to Willow as she stood there.

Sophie continued to eat her breakfast, unwilling to spend another second of attention on a crazy person. There's definitely a loose screw in Willow's head!

Tightening her fist, Willow felt extremely aggrieved. It seems like no one cares about what happens to me!

Charmaine was too busy taking care of Josiah as he ate breakfast, so she didn't have time to pay any attention to her daughter.

Seeing that no one was giving her even an ounce of attention, she returned to her room silently and cried miserably. This is fine. I swear I'll pay back everything they did today with interest! Those who look down on me now will suffer in the future!

It wasn't until Josiah finished his breakfast that Charmaine brought breakfast for Willow. It broke her heart to see her daughter's swelling eyes.

Approaching her daughter, she comforted, “What happened today is your fault, Willa. No matter how much you dislike Sophie, you shouldn’t have done something like that to her!”

Chapter 206 Her Heart Melts

Without uttering a single word, Willow stared at her mother with a stubborn look.

“You’ve rarely been ill-treated since you were a child. Sophie did go a little overboard today,” Charmaine comforted.

It broke her heart to see Willow fall sick and lost her voice after staying in the bathroom for the entire night.

“You should eat something before sleeping. I’ve already called the doctor, so just stay at home for these couple of days.”

Josiah was already pretty unhappy with Willow when she didn’t attend the final exam. If she went out of the house under the current circumstances, it would only piss the old man off even more.

Willow nodded. That was the only thing she could do for the moment. Once I recover, I will start anew. I refuse to believe that I can’t beat Sophie!

It wasn’t until Charmaine saw her daughter eating breakfast that she headed downstairs.

When she saw that Sophie was about to leave with her bag, she called her out.

Hearing her mother’s voice, Sophie stopped and glanced at the woman. What does she want? Is she trying to stand up for Willow? It would make sense since both of them had been on the same side.

“Soph—” There were a lot of things Charmaine wanted to say, but the moment her eyes met her daughter’s cold gaze, she swallowed all her words.

That was how her daughter was like.

Logically, she should've been the closest to her youngest daughter, yet Sophie always looked at her with that cold gaze, making it difficult for her to love her daughter.

"Soph, you see, your sister simply lost her rationality for a moment there! Please don't take it to heart, okay? She got terribly sick after staying in that cold, damp bathroom all night! That's enough of a punishment, don't you think? Please just let her go!" Knowing that Sophie had always been a ruthless person, Charmaine couldn't help but worry for Willow.

Sophie raised her eyebrow. "Don't worry. Since Grandpa said that the chapter is closed, I'll stick to that!"

That was a promise she was still willing to fulfill.

Even though we're mother and daughter, we've reached a point where there's nothing much for us to talk about anymore. With no other choice, Charmaine said, "All right. Go and do your things then."

It was the only way she could think of to hide the awkwardness hanging in the air.

Sophie didn't pay attention to her mother's attitude and left the Tanner residence.

Upon watching that scene, a housekeeper couldn't help but say, "Ms. Sophie is crossing the line here. No matter what, you're still her mother! How can she treat you with an attitude like that?"

She just couldn't watch it any longer. "In the end, Ms. Willow is still better. Daughters should act more like her. Even after Ms. Sophie becomes successful, she still won't treat you well, Mrs. Tanner. That's not just my opinion. That's a fact. In the end, Ms. Willow will be the one who'll take good care of you!"

Hearing that assessment, Charmaine agreed in her mind. Yeah! So what if Sophie is capable? We're not on the same side. Even if she becomes successful in the future, she won't care much about me

and my interest!

“Take good care of Ms. Willow and let the doctor check up on her later! I heard there’s a really good scar removal medicine in Anglandur, so I’ll ask people to find it!” She wasn’t willing to let Willow’s hand stay ruined and would do her best to get the best scar removal medicine.

“All right, Mrs. Tanner. I’ll check and see if the doctor has arrived!” The housekeeper preferred Willow. At that point, she treated Willow as her own daughter, which was why she cared greatly about Willow’s matters.

When Sophie exited the Tanner residence, Tristan was already waiting outside. Even on a snowy day, his silver car was still dazzling.

She approached the vehicle, opened the door, and fastened her seatbelt after going in. It was then she noticed he had been staring at her.

“What are you looking at? Is there something on my face?” she asked. Even if there is, he shouldn’t be staring at me like this! I can feel my cheeks getting hotter...

“It’s nothing. I’m just feeling very grateful that the world has blessed me with a woman that I really like,” Tristan flirted.

That rendered her speechless. Where did he learn such a corny line? I’m really surprised.

“All right, let’s go!” Sophie requested. It’s about time for me to head to Transfix Cosmetics! These few days will be our final sprint to the finish line.

Staring at her reddened ears, he couldn’t help but chuckle.

The line he used was something he came across when he was scrolling his phone earlier. There was no way he could’ve said something like that in the past. For some reason, he wanted to try it in the

morning, so he did.

To his surprise, it gave him an opportunity to see Sophie's ears getting red.

Throughout the ride, Tristan was in an extremely good mood until he reached Transfix Cosmetics. It was then he felt slightly sullen because he wished they could've stayed together a little longer. However, it couldn't be helped because even Lombard Group would get very busy at the end of the year. Otherwise, he would've insisted they stayed together longer.

"I'll be leaving now!" In the end, Sophie spoke up when she saw the longing look on his face. They were both busy people, after all, so they couldn't stay together all the time.

"Don't you want to go to Lombard Group with me, Sophie?"

"No!" she rejected. Why would I want to go to Lombard Group? I have things to do! Tanner Group may not be comparable to Lombard group right now, but that'll change in the future.

"Alright then!" Tristan was at a loss for words. Why did I ask her that question? I'm just humiliating myself! "In any case, don't wear yourself down too much since your holidays have just started. Remember to call me if you have time!" It made his heart ache to see her, a senior who had yet to graduate, taking care of so many complicated things.

"Okay. I'll be going up now!" Sophie was going to be late if she dragged on.

"Mhm, go ahead! I'll watch you go up from here." He still didn't want to leave.

"Come on, Mr. Tristan. Stop acting this way or I'll feel burdened!" As she spoke, she couldn't help but smile faintly.

That faint smile was enough for him to do anything she wanted.

"Come over here!" Tristan gestured for her to come closer with his finger.

It was as if she was guided by something, she actually listened to him and stood in front of him. He hugged her waist and kissed her on the forehead. "If you come across anything that you can't handle, you must remember that you always have my support, okay? I'll always be here waiting for you twenty-four-seven no matter what happens."

"It's not like Transfix Cosmetics is a hell where no mortals ever return after stepping in there, Mr. Tristan. Please don't exaggerate. Anyway, I really need to go now! Time's ticking!"

"Mhm!" Tristan finally let go of Sophie's waist, which was pleasant to the touch.

It felt so nice that he didn't want to let her go.

When she turned around, she saw Wilma leading a couple of hotties from Transfix Cosmetics.

They all greeted her when they saw her turning around.

"You're here, Ms. Sophie!" Wilma spoke with a smile.

Indeed, they were standing there watching the romantic scene unfold earlier. Hence, when they were noticed by Sophie, they felt slightly awkward.

"Mr. Tristan is so handsome, Ms. Sophie! Staring at him makes me feel like my heart is melting!"

"Ms. Sophie is good-looking too, okay? The two of them look like they are the main characters from a tv show!"

"Even the main characters in those shows are incomparable to Ms. Sophie in terms of appearance! Our Ms. Sophie is so beautiful that she's probably better looking than everyone in the entertainment industry!"

Chapter 207 Lots Of Attention

Wilma shook her head and said, "Let's head inside, Ms. Sophie!" Since the others were acting like they were Sophie's hardcore fans, she decided to approach Sophie directly.

"Mhm," Sophie didn't want to waste more time there and went into the building with the pretty ladies.

As all of them worked in a cosmetic company, Wilma had asked them to learn how to put on makeup. To her, that was a very basic request.

Yet, Sophie still looked better than all of them without makeup.

Tristan's car remained in the same spot until he was no longer able to see her figure.

Sitting inside the conference room, Sophie was pretty satisfied as she flipped through the reports on the profits Transfix Cosmetics had made for the past month.

After all, a month ago, Transfix Cosmetics' reputation was still in shambles. Yet, in just a single month, the company is already doing pretty well.

"What do you think we should do to secure our victory, Ms. Sophie?" Wilma knew about the bet between Sophie and Tanner Group.

It was her hope that Sophie would continue to lead them. That was why she wanted to ensure that the company's performance was excellent.

"All of you are already doing a great job," Sophie praised satisfactorily.

It made her happy that the people she chose didn't disappoint her.

In response to that, Wilma let out a sigh of relief.

“Thank you all for your hard work. When the annual meeting rolls around, I’ll give everyone a bonus,” Sophie announced.

“This is our job, Ms. Sophie.” Wilma knew there was no way Sophie would mistreat those who worked earnestly.

Still, she was grateful because she was happy to have a boss like her.

It was then someone knocked on the conference room door.

“Come in.” Wilma frowned. Who’s interrupting us right now? Don’t they know I’m having a serious meeting with Ms. Sophie?

When the door opened, Wendy poked her head in first.

The moment she saw Sophie’s face, she blushed.

Then she served a cup of coffee to Sophie. “This coffee tastes really good, Ms. Sophie. A relative of mine bought it from overseas. Give it a try.”

Ever since what happened on Jinrich Island, Wendy had been trying to repay her gratitude to Sophie. However, that chance didn’t surface at all until Sophie showed up at the company for the meeting.

That was because Wilma had been using video calls to communicate with Sophie, even when Transfix Cosmetics was in trouble. Finally, Wendy had her chance.

Seeing how Wendy was acting made Wilma smile.

“All right, you should leave now. Ms. Sophie and I still have some matters to attend to.” Wilma spoke. Why are my subordinates all so cute? She has been completely captivated by Ms. Sophie. It’s amazing how charismatic Ms. Sophie is. She can capture the hearts of both sexes!

It wasn't until Wendy left the conference room that Wilma said, "Do excuse her, Ms. Sophie. She's still young."

"It's fine. She's cute." Even though Sophie was younger than Wendy, she described the latter as cute.

That amused Wilma a little.

"In any case, we only have three more days. In these last three days, Transfix Cosmetics will have to complete the final sprint to the goal." Sophie suddenly changed the topic.

Upon hearing that, Wilma became serious as she grabbed her pen and paper before recording everything Sophie said.

The moment she heard the advertisement Sophie had in mind, she became very excited. Ms. Sophie is simply awesome! Only someone like her can come up with a plan like this.

"I'm on holiday now, so I have more time to help out. Call me if you're facing any problems." Sophie then stood up.

"You're leaving Ms. Sophie?"

"Mhm."

At one in the afternoon, Tristan called Sophie.

At that moment, she was playing a game at Wings of Light's headquarters.

No one would expect that the invincible Phantom would want to do nothing but play games in Wings of Light.

“Don’t you think you’re playing too many games, Phantom? You should be taking on more jobs instead of doing that,” Butterly grumbled.

“I’m not interested.” Sophie is not short of money.

Thus, whether she wanted to take on a job depended on her mood.

At that moment, she didn’t find the available jobs interesting enough, so she found no reason to accept them.

“You! I have no idea what to do with you.” The clients specifically asked for Phantom, so if she didn’t want to take on any of the jobs, Butterfly had no choice but to reject them.

“Every single member of Wings of Light is the best of the best. It won’t be interesting if they only ask for me,” Sophie responded.

All members of Wings of Light were handpicked by her, so their abilities were more or less on the same level as hers.

“That’s right! Our abilities may be comparable to yours, but you’re the famous one! When people hear your name, they’ll put their trust in you,” Butterfly replied.

That’s fair enough. Before Wings of Light was formed, and I was all by myself, I really did get a lot of attention.

“Now that your final exam is over, are you really not going to take on a job even if it is just for fun?”

“Those aren’t fun.”

Those requests really didn’t rouse Sophie’s interest at all.

At that moment, the silver ring on her finger glowed.

Her eyebrows furrowed. It's been so long since the ring glowed. Here I thought they'd forgotten about my existence! I didn't think they'll contact me today.

"What's the matter?" Butterfly was a little worried when she saw the dumbfounded look on Sophie's face. It had been a long time since she had seen her boss like that.

"It's nothing."

Concurrently, a man was scowling in a skyscraper located at Anglandur.

"The signal was disconnected," his subordinate informed.

The man slammed his fist on the table. "Continue to contact her!"

Does she think she can run away? Nothing in this world that I fancy can escape my grasp! With a feverish glow in his eyes, he ordered, "Tell her that if she still refuses to come back, Arius will die!"

Do you think you can escape me, Sophie? Once I catch you this time, you'll never be able to run away again! His fists tightened.

At Jipsdale's international airport, Arius bade Sophie goodbye. "Remember to take care of yourself after I leave, okay?"

If he had a choice, he wouldn't want to leave. However, the people in Anglandur had been urging him to return.

"Remember, after your university entrance exam ended, come visit me in Anglandur. Believe me, you're a genius doctor. If you're willing to come, you'll be a legend in the medical world." He was worried his words wouldn't get through to her, so he had to emphasize again.

“Arius—” Sophie was sick of listening to the same thing over and over again.

“I promise you, after my university entrance exam ends, I’ll go to your medical association and give you a chance to persuade me.” The only reason she said that was to shut him up.

“That’s a promise, then.”

Even though the broadcast had already called for boarding, he was still rather unwilling to leave.

“Just go already!” Sophie urged.

“Did he look for you, Sophie?” Arius asked because he knew the person looking for her wouldn’t give up that easily.

Chapter 208 Am I Presentable Enough

At the thought of the signal at Wings of Light previously, that man’s threatening expression flashed across Sophie’s mind.

“What’s wrong? Did he really contact you?” Arius could not help but worry when he noticed the look on the woman’s face.

“I’m fine. Don’t worry. I can handle this.” Sophie was sure that she would be able to deal with it no matter what the other party wanted.

She did not fear anything.

“Sophie, why don’t you come to the medical association with me? He wouldn’t dare to try anything funny there. Besides, you might not be safe anywhere else.”

“Arius, I’ve already told you that I’m not afraid of him at all. Don’t worry about me,” Sophie replied calmly. “I’m no longer the same Sophie from before.”

No one would be able to bully her.

However, that was not enough to soothe Arius’ worries.

Sophie pushed him toward the boarding gate and said, “You’d better get going. Otherwise, the plane is going to leave without you.”

“No matter what, please remember to be extremely careful! If there’s anything, call me at once. I’ll rush back to save you at all costs.”

“All right. Are you going in now? Otherwise, it’s more likely that I would be the one saving you instead!”

That’s not funny! Arius shot the woman a glare.

“Sophie, you’re really ungrateful. I’m worried sick about you, and yet you can still joke about it? Can you have some empathy?”

Arius was feeling exasperated that everyone was so worried about Sophie, but she did not seem to care at all. It seemed a little too much.

In the end, the man had no choice but to leave reluctantly.

Sophie turned around and saw Tristan standing there.

He had just arrived after parking his car.

“Has he gone in already?”

As Arius and Sophie had been through a lot together, Arius' presence in Sophie's life still bothered Tristan slightly.

"Yup. He just left."

"Let's go back then!" Tristan held Sophie's hand and was about to start walking back when the woman said, "It seems like you don't really like Arius."

"Yup, you're right. I'm not very fond of him. More accurately, I'm not fond of all those men who have bad intentions toward you," Tristan answered honestly before continuing, "I saw how the two of you were so reluctant to say goodbye to each other just now, and honestly, I'm not very happy about it. All right, let's go!"

Sophie was speechless when she heard that.

Reluctant to say goodbye to each other?

Seriously?

Was he really referring to me? Unbelievable!

It was snowing outside the airport. Sophie noticed that the weather was rather extreme that year as it had been snowing for almost half a month already.

She zipped up her down jacket.

Noticing the woman's actions, Tristan wrapped Sophie in his arms and asked, "Are you cold?"

Why did she have to send Arius off? Was she worried that a grown man like him would lose his way? That was absolutely unnecessary.

“Mr. Tristan, why do you dislike Arius so much? He’s a really nice person.” Arius was Sophie’s best friend, and she just couldn’t understand why Tristan disliked him so much.

“Really? How nice? Is he nicer than me?”

After hearing what Tristan said, Sophie understood what was going on at once. The man was behaving in that manner because he was jealous.

That’s ridiculous!

“Arius and I are just friends.” That was the first time Sophie clarified their relationship with Tristan.

It was a fact that both of them were just friends.

They were friends who would be willing to sacrifice their lives for each other.

Perhaps not everyone would believe that such friendships existed in the world, but it was true that Arius and Sophie were friends who would give up their lives for each other.

Tristan was very happy when he heard Sophie’s explanation. To him, that meant that he had become more important to her!

Otherwise, she wouldn’t have bothered to specially explain the situation to him.

“All right. Got it.”

Sophie could feel an obvious change in the man’s mood and was rendered speechless once again.

Does he have to be so happy?

When the two of them met again in the evening, Tristan gave Sophie a bag.

“What’s this?” It’s not a special occasion. Why would he give me a present?

“These are tea leaves given to my grandpa by his friend. Please let Old Mr. Tanner try them. If he likes them, I’ll get more for him.”

“Oh.”

So, it’s a new tea for Grandpa to try.

“The shareholders’ meeting is tomorrow. Are you nervous?”

“Do I need to be honest?”

“Of course. We are together now, so you should always be honest with me.”

“I’m not nervous.”

It’s just a shareholders’ meeting. What’s there to be nervous about?

Tristan could not help but laugh out loud at the woman’s response.

That’s right!

Isn’t that the kind of person she is?

Things that bothered others always seemed like nothing to her.

At that thought, Tristan held her face and said, "How did I get myself such a precious darling?"

Sophie slapped the man's hand away and replied in a displeased manner, "What are you doing?"

When Tristan saw the sharp gaze in the woman's eyes, he let go of her at once.

"I'm just happy that I have such a treasure by my side."

Even though Sophie seemed to be hiding many secrets, Tristan did not mind. All he wanted was for her to continue staying by his side.

He was sure that she would let him in on her secrets eventually.

"Oh, right. It's Old Mr. Quigley's birthday celebration tonight. Should we go and take a look?"

"Winter's grandpa?"

Sophie did not have a good relationship with Winter.

"What do you think? Shall we drop by for a while? My sister is dying to meet you." Sarah had been nagging Tristan to introduce Sophie to her.

"I see!"

If that was the case, Sophie did not mind going.

"I've already met your family, and I'm not asking you to meet a lot of people. It's just Sarah. Is it OK?"

As Sophie had left something behind at the Tanner residence, Tristan personally drove her back to retrieve it.

“Do you want to come in? My grandpa has been talking about you lately.” Sophie had promised her grandfather to bring Tristan to visit him. Since they were already there, Sophie felt that it was a good opportunity to do so.

“Can I?” Tristan had wanted to visit her family earlier, but Sophie’s attitude made him feel like it was not time for him to take that step yet.

Even though Sophie’s grandfather was the most important person to her, and Tristan had already met him previously, it wasn’t the same as paying him a visit at her house like now.

“Of course, it’s all right if you don’t want to. Let’s forget it.” After all, Sophie had only brought it up because they happened to be there together, and she remembered that Josiah had wanted to see Tristan. It was just a nice coincidence.

“Why wouldn’t I not want to meet him! I would gladly do so!”

“All right then!”

Sophie opened the door and got out of the car before waiting in the snow for Tristan to park his car.

Tristan stood in front of Sophie after getting out of the car. He was dressed in a well-pressed white shirt, a sky blue sweater, a custom-made suit jacket and a pea coat.

“How do I look? Do I look presentable enough?” Tristan asked seriously while looking at the woman.

Chapter 209 Tristan In Jipsdale

Sophie took a step forward and reached up to adjust his collar.

She drew back to get an overlook of him and a satisfied smile stretched across her lips.

“How can that be? You look pretty!”

Can pretty even be used to describe men? Whatever. That’s not important. The important thing here is I’m about to meet her grandpa officially.

“I was rushing today, so I didn’t bring anything with me.” Tristan was annoyed with his carelessness.

How can I go empty-handed to meet Old Mr. Tanner for the first time?

“Mr. Tristan.”

“What?” Did I say something wrong? It’s like a rule to bring something to a meeting with their significant other’s family. No one should go empty-handed the first time. I know I’m right about that.

“No, really. You don’t have to bring anything. All you have to do is be there. My grandpa really likes you. He’ll be more than happy to see you in person.” I’m sure of that, at least.

“All right.” I know Old Mr. Tanner likes me. That is all the more reason I can’t disappoint him.

Tristan reached for her hand. His large hand completely engulfed hers.

Sophie didn’t expect he would reach his hand back for hers with her standing behind him. However, she quickly snapped out of it and followed him into the house.

The minute Tristan and Sophie entered the house, the housekeeper spotted Sophie and immediately greeted, “You’re back, Ms. Sophie! Old Mr. Tanner and the rest are having BBQ. Go on in.”

Josiah didn’t know Sophie would visit at such a time, so he was secretly having a BBQ.

Nobody dared to stop him. That was why the housekeeper was looking at Sophie like a savior.

Old Mr. Tanner is too stubborn.

“All right. I got it.”

Sophie’s pace quickened. Grandpa is still recovering, so he can’t eat whatever he wants.

“Grandpa, didn’t I tell you before that you can only eat bland food?” This person is getting older by the day, but so is his stubbornness. He is not like this before.

Josiah’s head jerked at Sophia’s voice. He saw Tristan and Sophie standing in front of him.

Josiah instantly had a smile on his face the minute his gaze landed on Tristan.

“Tanny! Come and sit! Have BBQ with me. It’s the best food to have in winter.”

“Give me a minute, Old Mr. Tanner. Let me wash my hands first, and I’ll join you,” Tristan answered with a smile.

When Yale saw Tristan, he immediately got up and crossed the room over to him.

“Soph, bring Mr—” It’ll probably make Tristan feels unwelcome if I call him Mr. Tristan after Dad calls him Tanny. “Oh, bring Tanny to wash his hands. You definitely need more people to have a BBQ. The more, the merrier.” Yale tried to play host.

Willow was sitting on the other side of the table, watching the entire scene silently. It was an unpleasant sight to her.

See that? Even my father is fawning over that man. Is he really more powerful than the Laird family? So Sophie has easily gotten what I'd been struggling for once again.

Charmaine noticed the change in Yale's attitude, so she hurriedly went to grab two extra sets of cutlery and set them up on the table. Sophie led Tristan to wash his hands, then took a seat.

Josiah was in the seat beside hers while Tristan was on her other side.

"It's cold outside. Have a hot drink first."

Josiah had the housekeeper pour some hot tea for them.

Sophie took a sip of hot tea. I didn't feel even a tad bit cold on the way here since Tristan's car was a high-end model.

"It's almost Christmas, Tanny. Do you have any plans? If you have nothing going on—"

"Grandpa, he's busy," Sophie cut off Josiah hurriedly. She knew her grandfather would be like that, so she instantly cut him off.

It's Christmas. Of course, he has to celebrate it with his family. How can he celebrate it with us?

Josiah wasn't happy with Sophie's interruption.

What is up with Sophie? I was just asking.

"All right, Old Mr. Tanner. Have some vegetables."

Tristan scooped a spoonful of grilled vegetables onto Josiah's plate.

"I'll come and visit you during Christmas."

Sophie was feeling some regret at asking Tristan to come with her to meet with Josiah.

Willow didn't speak much as they ate. She ate silently at the side while sneaking a few peeks at Tristan.

This man is so handsome. Mason can't even compare to him. If... If I have this man in my grasp, will Sophie suffer? She has never brought a man home before. So I guess this man is important to her. It's frustrating to watch him care for Sophie even while eating. It was like how a father takes care of his daughter. How can anyone not be jealous of the way he treats Sophie?

Charmaine caught Tristan's every move.

I used to think this Tanny guy that Dad calls wouldn't have such a prestige status. However, now that I'm looking at him, he looks elegant even while eating. It's rare for someone to eat BBQ so slowly and gracefully.

"Have some more, Mr. Tristan. I'm at my limit." He had been taking care of me during the entire meal. I didn't even see him eat much. This is my home, so I should be the one taking care of him not the other way around. It's embarrassing that he's even taking care of me here.

"Okay."

Tristan put another piece of meat into his mouth and slowly chewed on it.

Josiah's mood brightened as he watched how Tristan treated Sophie.

"You have to come over and have a drink with me when I'm all better, Tanny!" It's been so long since I can drink my fill.

"Sure, Old Mr. Tanner," Tristan promised.

Mason would put on airs in front of Dad, but Tristan was sincere with Dad.

Yale's admiration for Tristan increased after observing him.

After the BBQ, Sophie took out the tea Tristan brought for Josiah.

"These tea are from Mr. Tristan, Grandpa."

Josiah loved drinking tea. He had the butler keep the bag of gifts with his other teas when he noticed the outer packaging was an ordinary box.

Willow's jealousy faded when she saw the ordinary gift.

That's right! How can someone be perfect? The only reason he treats Sophie so well is his lack of power. None of those plutocrats are true gentlemen. Gentlemen don't exist.

Charmaine's attitude dialed down after she saw the box.

So the way this person carries himself is just a front? Isn't it embarrassing to send this kind of gift to an elder right before Christmas?

When only Yale and Charmaine were the only ones left in the room, Charmaine asked, "What's wrong with you? You've met all kinds of people before. How can you be so hospitable to a man like that?"

Charmaine felt as though Yale was a stranger during the BBQ.

"What does a woman like you know? Do you know who he is? He's the all-powerful Mr. Tristan of Jipsdale."

Chapter 210 Repulse

“What did you say?” Charmaine couldn’t believe what she had just heard. “He’s that Mr. Tristan who everyone fears in Jipsdale?”

I know a mere woman like me has no chance of meeting a big shot like Mr. Tristan. One has to be deaf if they have never heard of Mr. Tristan’s name before. Everyone who wishes to make a name for themselves in Jipsdale will know Mr. Tristan, much less the Tanner family that runs a business.

“Yes, but keep it to yourself. I’m still clueless about Mr. Tristan’s intention with Sophie. No matter what relationship they have, it’s beneficial to the Tanner family. Even if Sophie is only his lover.”

Everyone in Jipsdale wants nothing more than to get acquainted with Mr. Tristan.

“A lover? With her attitude, there’s no way Sophie will accept being only his lover. I think you shouldn’t put all your hopes on her. I can’t believe Mr. Tristan will gift such an average present with his status. That means he doesn’t regard Sophie with importance.”

Yale shot her a glance.

“Mr. Tristan’s thoughts and intentions are not something you and I can guess. All you have to do is don’t cause any trouble. As for whatever that is happening between Sophie and Mr. Tristan, that’s up to them.”

If Sophie is Mr. Tristan’s girlfriend, all it takes is one nod from Mr. Tristan, and the Tanner family’s business will soar to greater heights.

“Oh, right. Watch Willow for me. I don’t want her to embarrass me. It’s almost the end of the year. There’ll be more and more gatherings, and the topic won’t be pleasant if it’s about her.”

Yale used to place all his eggs in one basket. However, he started to realize that was a mistake.

“Are you giving up on Willow?”

"Say, if we give Willow to Mr. Tristan..." If the Lombard family can't accept Sophie's past, what about Willow's? Willow at least has a cleaner past than Sophie.

Yale frowned at the suggestion but shook his head at the end.

"Let's not go there. There is no way Mr. Tristan will look kindly at Willow's attitude. You'd better not act rashly and do something stupid." It'll be a huge loss for us if the outcome is undesirable.

"All right."

Charmaine didn't dare to start anything after knowing that man was Mr. Tristan. Everyone knew Mr. Tristan could be merciless.

Willow, who was eavesdropping behind them, heard everything. Her mouth was agape at the news she heard.

"Oh my goodness! That man is Mr. Tristan?" She couldn't help but exclaim in shock. Yale scrunched his brow at Willow.

"I know you've been through a lot recently, Willow, but everything that happened was your own doing. Now that you know Sophie's boyfriend's identity, you better behave yourself. Otherwise, the Tanner family can't protect you from him."

I heard Mr. Tristan was a man that regarded the people he cared about with importance. Now that Sophie is his girlfriend, surely he'll take her side in everything.

Sophie went upstairs to retrieve the thing she had forgotten to take. As she was coming down the stairs, Willow stood in her path.

"Is it because of Mr. Tristan? You're only with him because he's Mr. Tristan." Willow couldn't accept it. She couldn't bear to watch Sophie have everything she ever wanted.

"That's none of your business," Sophie returned.

Seeing Tristan standing not far away, Sophie walked up to him.

"Let's go. Aren't we attending Old Mr. Quigley's birthday banquet?" Sophie walked past Willow without sparing her another glance.

Willow clenched her fists tightly. She's too much. How dare she ignore me! I'm the one who has everything, but how did things turn out like this?

Yale and Charmaine exchanged a glance after they heard that Tristan was taking Sophie to Walter's birthday banquet.

Mr. Tristan sure cares a lot for Sophie. Or he won't personally take her to attend Old Mr. Quigley's birthday banquet. The Lombard and Quigley families are close. Both families are among the four other reputable families. Others can't even get an invitation to the banquet even if they want one.

"I'll be leaving with Sophie, Old Mr. Tanner. Old Mr. Quigley's banquet is about to start." It'll be rude if I'm late to an elder's banquet.

Old Mr. Tanner waved his hand for them to leave.

"Go ahead. Take her to see the world and meet some people. It'll be good for her since she'll be taking over the Tanner family in the future. Even though the Tanner family can't compare to the Lombard

family, we still have to put in the effort to raise our younger generation." It'll be good for her to see what the upper society is like.

"Grandpa, what are you saying?"

Willow couldn't take it anymore when she heard Sophie was attending Walter's birthday banquet.

“Can I go too, Mr. Tristan?”

Willow still wanted to be a part of the upper society no matter how down and out she was. She figured she would be part of it one day.

“What nonsense are you spewing, Willow? Do you think anyone and everyone can attend Old Mr. Quigley’s birthday banquet?” Yale wanted to go too, but he understood he was not qualified. None of the Tanner family members did.

“Grandpa, I want to go. Didn’t you always say I’m narrow-minded? I want to see the world of rich people. That way, I won’t do stupid things anymore. There’s nothing bad about it. Besides, if Mr. Tristan can take Sophie with him, I’m sure he can bring me too. Is this a difficult task for him?” Willow cast an innocent look at Tristan.

Sophie was close to punching Willow in the face.

“I don’t want that! I’ll be disgusted if I have to go with her.” Sophie tugged on Tristan’s hand and left.

What is she thinking? She wants to trick Tristan.

Tristan nearly burst into laughter at her insult, but he managed to keep it in check.

How can my Soph be so adorable?

Willow didn’t expect Sophie to humiliate her like that in front of Tristan.

“Mom! Look at her—”

Willow wanted support from the others, but Charmaine didn’t dare to say anything this time.

“Willa, don’t cause a fuss. Don’t you know what kind of event that is? What will you do if you go there? You don’t know anyone there.” Sometimes there’s a reason for families to marry another of the same status. This is the exact reason. Even if Sophie is willing to bring Willa, what will Willa do there? She doesn’t know anyone there. No one there will befriend someone below their status.

“Enough. I’m tired and heading upstairs now. Oh, Willow! If something just doesn’t belong to you, it’s pointless even if you fight for it.” Hasn’t she done enough? Only I’ll believe her nonsense.

Charmaine was not amused.

“I have something to deal with at the office, so I’m going up too.” Yale didn’t want to deal with Willow.

Willow could only watch Tristan lead Sophie away toward the society she wanted to be a part of, and there was nothing she could do about it.