

Pursuing 311

Chapter 311 Crushing Defeat

The physics competition consisted of a writing test in the morning and a physics experiment in the afternoon. The writing test was fifty marks, and the experiment was also fifty marks. Thus, the total would be one hundred marks.

After entering the exam hall, Mavis took one look at the questions. A grin flitted across her lips. This time, I must make Sophie leave Bailey.

As she had gotten the questions in advance, she wasn't in a hurry. Slowly, she wrote down the answers she has solved earlier one by one. She didn't forget to glance at Sophie in her free time.

So what if Sophie is capable? It's useless. After getting the questions, I had to read a lot to find all the formulas needed to solve them. The questions are way too hard.

Sophie knew Mavis was looking at her, but that didn't stop her from answering the questions.

Indeed, the questions were extremely challenging. Sophie never had to use any scratch paper before this exam, but she was forced to use scratch paper this time.

The questions were answered one by one. She wasn't worried as she loved challenges.

The duration of the test was two hours. Some students gave up halfway. They couldn't even solve the first multiple-choice question. There was no need for them to waste time sitting there.

It was the same for Ysabelle, for she couldn't even solve any of the multiple-choice questions.

Why am I even here? To take a blow? Wait, isn't it humiliating if I end up getting zero marks?

Sophie worked hard to solve the questions until the test ended. Mavis, on the other hand, had already completed the test long ago.

After walking out of the exam hall, Mavis stayed and waited for Bailey.

When Bailey came out, she called his name. “Bailey, what do you think of the test? Did you manage to solve all the questions?” she asked in concern.

“That is none of your business.” Ignoring her, Bailey waited for Sophie outside the hall patiently.

When Sophie and Ysabelle came out, Bailey joined them, and went out together.

Bailey asked, “Sophie, how was the test?”

“It was all right,” Sophie answered.

“The questions were pretty hard. I don’t want you to suffer because of me—”

“Bailey, it had nothing to do with you. Don’t get nervous,” Sophie interrupted. Why does he think I’m doing this because of him? Tristan will fly into a rage if he were to hear Bailey’s words!

“Mm. Got it.” Bailey seemed disappointed as Sophie kept distancing herself from him.

One student called out, “Mavis, what is the answer to the last question? I couldn’t figure it out no matter how hard I tried.”

The last question was a complicated formula. Mavis spent a long time memorizing it.

“You won’t understand. Anyway, I’ll get first place this time. Don’t harbor any expectations,” Mavis announced haughtily.

After Mavis left, the student came to a stop.

“D*mn, is there a need to act that arrogantly? By the way, Sophie, didn’t you make a bet with Mavis? Did you solve the last question?” the student asked eagerly.

Sophie pulled out a piece of paper and wrote the solution down before handing it to him.

The student broke down when he realized that it was a complicated answer.

It would take him a long time to memorize the formula, let alone solve the question.

“Sophie, what happened to him?” Ysabelle got curious seeing how dejected the student got.

“Perhaps he had gotten a taste of utter despair,” came Sophie’s answer.

She never meant to deal him a blow, but some things just couldn’t be achieved no matter how hard one tried.

That afternoon, Mavis and Sophie were right next to each other for the physics experiment.

Mavis was brimming with confidence as she got to know the question in advance.

She couldn’t wait to see Sophie suffering a defeat later.

As expected, Sophie frowned the moment she took out the question paper from the envelope.

Delight coursed through Mavis’ entire being upon seeing Sophie’s reaction.

Back when she got to know the question, she found it extremely hard. Fortunately, she was able to get the question in advance and did a lot of searching to get the answers.

I believe Sophie cannot solve the question as she didn't get to prepare in advance.

It was the second time Bailey joined the physics competition, but he was still stunned to discover what the question was.

He knew that the physics competition was held to select one candidate to represent Chanaea in the international physics competition, but never in his wildest dreams did he expect the question to be this challenging.

He didn't have any clue where to begin.

Bailey's reaction merely convinced Mavis that Sophie could never solve the problem. Sophie can't solve a question that Bailey can't solve.

"Sophie, if you give up now and agree to leave Bailey, I won't pursue the matter," Mavis declared.

Sophie isn't a threat to me. All I want is for her to leave Bailey.

"Can you shut up, Mavis? Don't you know your breath stinks?" Sophie responded blandly.

Mavis fumed. "You're stubborn, huh? Let's see what you have!"

She's just pushing herself, that's all.

"Sophie, it's fine. Just do what you can. If you lose, I shall leave with you," Bailey told her. He had made up his mind to stick with Sophie no matter what the result would be.

"Really? I hope you keep your promise, then." Having said that, Mavis started the experiment.

Everyone had to do the same experiment, so it all depended on who could succeed in completing the experiment first and do a great job.

Mavis was already halfway through the experiment, but Sophie hadn't even started yet. Bailey tried a few times but failed. Beside them, Ysabelle panicked as she watched their actions.

She couldn't even understand what the experiment wanted, so it was impossible for her to offer any help to Sophie. Time was ticking, and there wasn't much time left. Nevertheless, Sophie still hadn't started her experiment.

That only prompted Mavis' smug grin to grow wider. She acts high and mighty all the time, right? How does she feel now, huh?

In the morning, most of the students managed to persist through the writing test. When it was time to do the experiment that afternoon, some students chose to quit and left after reading the question.

"Mavis is a psychopath. I can't believe she knows the answer to such a challenging question!"

"Don't you know who her father is?"

"You're right. At first, I thought Sophie is quite capable, but she's obviously no match for Mavis."

Ysabelle wanted nothing more than to refute their words, but she had nothing to retort. Finally, Sophie took action. Despite that, Mavis wasn't worried at all.

Doing the experiment was time-consuming. Even though Sophie managed to figure out the steps now, there was only less than one hour left till the end of the test. Thus, there was no way Sophie could complete the experiment in less than one hour.

When there were five minutes left, Sophie raised her hand. Everyone immediately shifted their attention to her.

Chapter 312 Slander

At the same time, Mavis raised her hand. She had just completed her experiment. She couldn't help but gaze at Sophie dubiously. What is she doing? There is no way she could complete the experiment. Did she raise her hand to give up?

The examiner came over to see Sophie's experiment. He asked her a few related questions that she answered readily. After hearing her answer and seeing the results of her experiment, the examiner couldn't help but be impressed. This time, I'll be able to represent Chanaea and bring glory to the country.

The examiner wrapped up with Sophie and went to Mavis. The latter completed her experiment simultaneously as Sophie, but hers was a bit lacking and ordinary compared to Sophie's.

After observing her experiment, the examiner also asked Mavis a few questions. She was able to answer the first few questions but failed to answer the last one.

Everyone was staring at her. Mavis had always assumed she was a genius. Her cheeks turned pink when she realized she couldn't answer the question.

The examiner didn't make things difficult for her and gave them their scores. After that, a few other students also completed the experiment. Alas, their results weren't as perfect.

The examiner looked at their results and gave them their scores. The final results would be released in half an hour. Everyone was allowed to return to their rooms for a short break.

Mavis' hands were trembling when she stepped out of the exam hall. The examiner seems extremely satisfied with Sophie's experiment results. If that's the case, the situation does not favor me. Perhaps I should get someone I know to ask about the final scores.

After watching Mavis leave in a hurry, Ysabelle giggled and commented, "Mavis keeps thinking she's a genius! It turns out that she's not as good as she thinks."

Bailey cast Sophie a look which was full of admiration. He only finished the physics experiment at the very end. Sophie completed her experiment earlier and answered all the questions perfectly.

He had to admit that Sophie was more talented than him. "Sophie, you're really good," Bailey praised sincerely. "You're not bad yourself," Sophie responded. Oh, boy! The question this time was too hard.

Mavis found an examiner who was her father's student. After asking about the results, she was informed that Sophie's score was higher than hers. She couldn't believe her ears.

"How is that possible?" she blurted out.

"Yes, she scored full marks. This is the first time I've seen someone score full marks on such a difficult exam! You did the tests yourself, so you know how challenging the questions were. Sophie is indeed a genius!" the examiner enthused. I can't believe a genius like Sophie exists! I've learned physics for years, but I'm not as good as her.

"Can you help me?" Mavis pleaded. She refused to admit defeat.

The man furrowed his brows. "I'm afraid I can't help you this time, Mavis. This competition is very important, so the higher-ups are keeping a close eye on it."

"You know my father has high hopes for me. If I can't represent Chanaea this time, he'll be disappointed!" Mavis tugged at his sleeve and pleaded.

"Mavis, I can't help you. Everyone knows how good Sophie was, so I can't interfere and change the results. Besides, Professor Sykes will be upset when he discovers you hatched such a plan," the man replied.

With that, he spun on his heels and strode away without looking back.

Mavis stood still. She still couldn't wrap her head around how things had turned out this way.

I refuse to believe that someone is more talented than me. If I didn't get to know the questions in advance, I wouldn't have solved them myself. Did Sophie get the questions in advance and waited deliberately until the very end to complete the experiment?

Resentment brimmed in Mavis' heart as she went to meet Sophie.

Sophie and Ysabelle were having milkshake when Mavis hurried over to them. Ysabelle immediately said, "Sophie, that woman is here to cause trouble again."

Ugh, what is wrong with Mavis? She can never outtalk Sophie but still comes over to get tortured verbally.

Without wasting time, Mavis demanded, "Sophie, do you know the questions in advance?"

Ysabelle gaped incredulously. What on earth is wrong with her?

"The questions were too hard. If you didn't know the questions in advance, there was no way you'd solve them yourself," Mavis didn't bother mincing her words.

"Mavis, do you have proof? What do you mean she can't solve them herself? Didn't you solve the questions yourself? Why? Are you saying that you got to know the questions in advance?" Ysabelle demanded. At once, comprehension dawned on her. "Oh, I know. Was that why you were so confident from the start? It turns out you got the questions in advance!"

Why would she say that if it wasn't the case?

"Shut up, Ysabelle! I'm asking Sophie, not you. This has nothing to do with you!" Mavis retorted. She wanted nothing more than to rip Ysabelle to shreds. Why is she everywhere? Can she stop making things difficult for me?

Mavis and Ysabelle didn't lower their voices, so the commotion immediately drew everyone's attention.

"What is going on?"

"The questions might be unbelievably grueling, but it is normal for Sophie to solve them all."

"I think something's wrong with Mavis' words. She said that no one could solve the questions unless they got to know the questions in advance. Some students managed to solve the questions. Is she saying that they have cheated in the test?"

"I suspect the one who got to know the questions in advance is Mavis herself. After all, we know who her father is."

"That's right. Someone must have insider scoop. Where is the organizer? We demand an explanation!" The students promptly started suspecting that the competition wasn't conducted fairly.

Never in Mavis' wildest dreams did she expect things to go out of control.

This shouldn't be happening. They should suspect Sophie, not me!

"No, I did nothing of the sort. I was capable enough to solve the questions. You're just being jealous of me!" Mavis replied hastily. She didn't know the other students would target her. "I won first prize last time, too."

"Perhaps you cheated the last time!"

The organizer came over and was informed of the entire incident. They decided to investigate the matter thoroughly.

Sophie glanced at Mavis.

That quick glance managed to give Mavis the creeps.

It should be the time to announce the results, but the mountain resort was in an uproar.

"Sophie, I suspect Mavis was given the questions in advance," Ysabelle said solemnly. How dare she slanders us when she was the one who got the questions beforehand? That's too much!

“Mm.”

“What should we do now?” Ysabelle asked. She refused to let the matter slip since Mavis dared to slander Sophie.

Chapter 313 The Results

The organizer of the physics competition had a powerful background. They immediately started the investigation after learning about the commotion. However, the results were simply unacceptable to them.

“What should we do now? I had no idea Mavis Sykes was the one who received the questions in advance.”

“If we don’t deal with it properly, we might offend Professor Reginald Sykes. He’s an expert whom we need to collaborate with in the future.” “How should we deal with the matter?”

“We can’t offend Professor Sykes, but someone must assume responsibility. Why don’t we blame Sophie? According to my investigation, she doesn’t have any strong backers. She’s the perfect scapegoat to take the blame.”

“I don’t think it’s a good idea. Sophie is really talented.”

“What should we do? Announce that Mavis Sykes cheated in the test?”

They discussed for over an hour in the conference room without reaching a conclusion. None of them could convince the other.

Nevertheless, they came out with a decision in the end.

They filed out of the conference room to see the students waiting outside.

Not all students managed to complete the final experiment, so the competition didn't concern them anymore. However, they were eager for gossip and gathered outside the conference room.

The students clamored over when the organizing team exited the conference room.

"We've investigated the matter thoroughly. Due to a mistake by our staff, the questions were leaked in advance. We've decided to cancel Sophie Tanner's results. The winner of the physics competition is Mavis Skyes."

A mocking grin flitted across Sophie's lips.

I was the one who received the questions in advance? What a joke.

Ysabelle grew flustered.

"What are you talking about? You're obviously covering up for Mavis. She was the one who received the questions in advance!" Ysabelle declared. That was the first time she had ever encountered something this unfair, so she couldn't calm down.

Bailey refused to believe the results too.

Did Sophie cheat? That's impossible. She's capable enough to solve the questions herself.

The happiest person to hear the results was none other than Mavis.

"The organizer has investigated the matter. Don't you trust them?" Mavis shot Sophie a haughty look. "Sophie, remember our bet? You need to keep your word. Pack up and scram right now. You're not allowed to show up anywhere near Bailey from today onward."

"Oh, dear. I can't believe that's the truth."

“Sophie is so corky, so I thought she’s good at physics.”

“No matter what, Mavis was still the winner of the previous physics competition. It means that she is the one who is truly talented.”

“Sophie is really shameless. Do you know how privileged she is? She never eats in the resort as someone will deliver her meals to her.”

“Yes. She must have a rich backer.”

“I don’t care if she has a sugar daddy, but why did she join the physics competition?”

“Some people just don’t know their place. They thought they could do anything as long as they have money.”

Everyone started talking bad about Sophie.

As Sophie didn’t say a word, Mavis grew increasingly smug.

No matter what, the organizer will side with me as they need to save my dad’s dignity.

“Are you sure I’m the one who received the answers in advance?” Sophie suddenly asked in a cold tone.

She knew people had to make choices sometimes, but it wasn’t right to put the blame on her.

Did they even check if I agree to be slandered?

The organizing team dared not meet her eyes.

She was just an eighteen-year-old girl, but her gaze sent chills down their spines.

"All right. Now that we have clarified the matter, we won't be pursuing it. You may leave now!"

"How could you!" Utterly frustrated, Ysabelle was about to burst into tears.

Sophie should win the first prize!

"Are you sure?" Sophie asked.

"Enough. Stop wasting time with them and just kick her out."

"Wait. You said I cheated, but you don't have any evidence. However, I have evidence showing that Mavis cheated," Sophie announced.

Do they think I will let them step all over me without retaliating?

"Sophie, can you stop? You cheated, and that's the truth. Slandering me won't change the fact!" Mavis sneered.

She wouldn't admit to cheating, for the organizer had already made their decision.

No matter what Sophie said, she was wrong.

"Kick them out!" The organizer had already summoned the security guards.

Bailey stood in front of Sophie and Ysabelle in a protective manner so the security guards couldn't get any closer to them.

“What are you doing? Something shady happened behind the competition, but you refused to uphold justice. Do you think we are fools?” Bailey demanded. He still sided with Sophie as he trusted her completely.

Ysabelle was really touched by his action.

“Bailey, we are friends from now on!” she announced. Anyone who supported Sophie would be a friend of hers.

Mavis was disappointed to see that he was still siding with Sophie.

“Bailey, I shall give you one last chance. If you take my side, I can bring you along to the international physics competition!” she told him.

She loved him so much that she was willing to let bygones be bygones.

Bailey merely snorted. “I don’t have anything to say to you. You don’t respect physics at all and use despicable means to achieve your goals. I despise you.”

Mavis’ face turned ashen.

Is that what he thinks of me?

“Fine. I hope you won’t regret your decision.” She huffed and decided to ignore him.

“Let’s go, Sophie. There’s no point in joining such a competition!” Bailey grabbed Sophie’s wrist and pulled her along.

Right then, Tristan and Felix showed up. Tears brimmed in Ysabelle’s eyes when she spotted her uncle.

“Uncle Tristan! These people went way too far. They bullied Sophie and accused her of cheating!” she complained immediately.

Indeed, they had gone overboard.

Felix went to her and wrapped his arm around her shoulder to comfort her. “All right, everything is okay now. We’re here, so no one can bully you!”

That was the first time Ysabelle realized how comforting Felix’s presence could be.

“Whoever you are, please leave right now. You aren’t allowed to kick up a fuss here.” Someone from the organizing team grew suspicious to see them both here.

Chapter 314 Turn The Tables

Tristan walked over to Sophie’s side. It was fortunate that he had arrived in time, or Sophie would have had to deal with the situation alone.

Even though he knew she could handle it perfectly without him, he did not want to see her face the battle alone.

He wanted to be by her side and face it with her, no matter what the situation was.

“Leave? None of you are leaving today until this matter is resolved.” The coldness in his voice was sufficient to make others shudder.

The organizing team was at a loss for what to do upon hearing his words.

“What do we do? That person doesn’t look like someone we could offend.”

“Still, Professor Sykes is the one we need. We might have a hard time in the future if we offend Professor Sykes.”

At that moment, the organizing team had no idea how to deal with that matter.

“What do you want?” one of the members of the organizing team asked helplessly. He did not dare to offend either party.

“I want nothing. I just don’t like to be insulted.” With that, Sophie took out her laptop, logged into her account, and quickly hacked into Mavis’ social account before showing everyone the evidence.

“Mavis is the one who knew the question beforehand, and the person who gave it to her is the one who set the questions.”

The evidence was clearly laid before the crowd, and they even witnessed Sophie hacking into Mavis’ account.

“All right. Since you guys claimed I knew the question beforehand, then please show me proof,” demanded Sophie.

“Oh, my goodness. This is better than any drama I watch on television. I can’t believe Mavis knew the questions beforehand.”

“What an unexpected turn of events!”

Mavis gradually stepped backward.

She never expected Sophie could dig out the evidence and show it to everyone.

“No. It’s not mine! You’re framing me!” she yelled.

Meanwhile, Tristan praised Sophie in his mind, unable to keep his eyes off her. As expected of my girl, she's always so efficient in everything she does.

"Frame you? Do I even need to do that?" Sophie was utterly disgusted.

Meanwhile, the organizing team was dumbfounded by the situation. Of course, they knew Sophie did not cheat. However, they took Mavis' side because of her background.

Now that things had progressed to that point, they had no idea how to deal with the mess.

Just then, Reginald Sykes finally arrived.

Seeing that, Mavis rushed over and said in a pitiful tone, "Dad, I didn't cheat. They're slandering me. You've got to seek justice for me!" She still refused to admit defeat.

"Hello, Professor Sykes," greeted the organizing team as soon as they saw Reginald arriving. They were curious to find out how he was going to deal with the situation.

After studying the evidence on the laptop, Reginald gave Mavis a slap.

She cradled her face as she gaped at her father incredulously.

"Dad, what are you doing? Do you not believe me?" she questioned. It was the first time Reginald hit her in her entire life.

Reginald gave her a look of disappointment, uttering coldly, "Mavis, you've disappointed me. It's fine if you're not a genius in physics, but your behavior today is extremely humiliating."

He was utterly disappointed in his daughter.

No one else dared to speak now that Reginald had scolded Mavis.

“What are you doing? Apologize to your classmate now!” Reginald raged.

However, Mavis shook her head. “No! I’m not apologizing to her. I wouldn’t have done this if not for her. I like Bailey, that’s all. I just didn’t want to lose him.”

“Did she admit that she cheated?”

“This is unbelievable!”

“Mavis has always been an arrogant person, but I never expected she’d be a cheat.”

The students whispered among themselves, and it made Mavis cover her ears.

All her life, she was someone who always went up on the stage to receive awards. That, however, was the first time she received so much criticism.

“Apologize and come home with me. Stop embarrassing yourself here.” All Reginald cared about was his reputation.

To his dismay, Mavis shook her head indignantly. “I don’t want to. I’d rather die than to apologize to her.”

How could I apologize to Sophie? That’s ridiculous!

“I’m sorry, Mr. Northley. It’s my fault for not educating my daughter properly. I’d also like to apologize to Sophie on Mavis’ behalf,” Reginald said humbly, knowing no one could afford to mess with the four prominent families of Jipsdale. After all, it was indeed Mavis’ fault this time.

The organizing team shuddered as they watched Reginald apologize.

Professor Sykes is actually apologizing! Who on earth is the other person? Mr. Northley? Is he from one of four prominent families in Jipsdale?

They thought they had made the wisest decision earlier, never once expecting that would lead to them offending a more powerful person.

“We’re so sorry, Mr. Northley. This is our fault for not handling it properly. Please forgive us,” someone from the team apologized hurriedly.

However, Felix ignored them.

They’re going to pay for their actions today.

“I’m sorry, Mr. Northley. I’ll take her home and teach her a lesson.” With that, Reginald pulled Mavis out the door.

He had never been so embarrassed his entire life.

Suddenly, Tristan, who had been silent the entire time, spoke. “Hold on. This matter isn’t over. How could you leave just like that?”

His words made Reginald’s heart sink.

“Uh...” Naturally, Reginald did not dare to rebut. He could only turn to Mavis and demand, “Mavis, apologize now.”

Mavis was reluctant to do as asked, but when she saw the way Reginald was behaving, she knew the other party was not someone who could be offended.

Given no choice, she approached Sophie and said, “I’m sorry.”

“Professor Sykes, is this how you educate your daughter?” Tristan asked.

Reginald had never felt so humiliated in his life, but he did not dare to talk back. He only spat, “Mavis!”

His tone was extremely strict.

Hearing that, Mavis had no choice but to bow and apologize out of fear for her father.

“Mmm.” Sophie thought Mavis’ apology was only just acceptable.

“Don’t forget what you said. Whoever loses must not work in the physics industry ever,” Ysabelle piped up without holding back.

Hmph! Serves her right for being so arrogant earlier. She’s finally getting a taste of her medicine.

In the end, Mavis left with Reginald without a word.

As for her results, they were removed.

Meanwhile, the other students who spoke ill of Sophie earlier dared not utter another word when they witnessed how much authority the two men had.

The organizer hurriedly brought the trophy over and presented it to Sophie with both hands, saying, “Sophie, your performance today is extremely outstanding. There’s no doubt this trophy belongs to you.”

However, Sophie merely glanced at the trophy and smiled without accepting it. “Please give it to someone else. It’s pointless for me to accept a trophy from such an unfair competition.”

Chapter 315 Coming Of Age Ceremony

The organizer froze to the ground with the trophy in his hands as he was at a loss for what to do next.

Suddenly, Tristan wrapped his hand around Sophie's shoulder. Then, he took the trophy and released it, letting it shatter into pieces as it hit the ground.

"Since you people cannot organize a physics competition properly, then someone else should organize it in the future," he commented.

After all, there are a lot of people who studied physics in Chanaea.

"Mister..." The organizing team was about to say something, but Tristan would not listen to another word of it.

Soon, the four of them just walked away.

Seeing that, Bailey, too, left.

Just like that, the country's most well-known physics competition had become a joke thanks to Mavis' antics.

At the same time, the organizing team's months of effort had gone to waste.

"Bailey, who's that person with Mr. Northley?" inquired the organizer, dissatisfied with Tristan's words earlier. This is the most respected competition in the country. We can't lose the right to organize it.

Bailey glanced at the organizer and answered, "That's Mr. Tristan, the most famous person in Jipsdale. Tsk, tsk... You guys are dead meat."

He had no intention of making their lives easy when he thought of how the organizing team treated Sophie earlier.

“What?”

At that moment, the organizing team was utterly devastated.

Felix was already someone they could not afford to mess with.

They never expected Felix’s backer would turn up as well.

Alas, it was too late to regret that.

In the meantime, Sophie and Ysabelle led Tristan and Felix back to their rooms to pack their things. As they were leaving with their luggage, the organizing team finally caught up to them.

However, none of them dared to say a word when they saw Tristan and the others walking out.

Just as the group was about to step out of the resort, the organizer finally mustered his courage and said, “Mr. Tristan, we were truly unaware that Ms. Tanner was your girlfriend. Perhaps, this is all a misunderstanding. Ms. Tanner is really talented. If she could represent Chanaea in the upcoming international physics competition, she’ll definitely be able to get into the International Academy of Physics.”

“The International Academy of Physics?” Tristan paused in his tracks.

Seeing Tristan finally showing interest in his words, the organizer explained enthusiastically, “That’s right. The purpose of this physics competition is to pick someone to enter the international physics competition. If the representative is one of the top three winners of the competition, he or she will be able to enter the International Academy of Physics in the future.”

However, Tristan ignored the organizer and turned around to ask Sophie, “Do you want to enter this academy?”

Hearing that, the organizer instantly shifted his gaze to Sophie.

To his horror, Sophie answered casually, “Hmm... I guess but I haven’t decided if I want to go.”

Her words left the organizer dumbfounded.

This is a great opportunity! How could she not make up her mind yet?

“Ms. Tanner, this has all been a misunderstanding. Please join the competition. You’re really talented in physics. It’ll be a waste if you don’t enter the academy.” The organizer was desperate to make Sophie change her mind for he did not want to lose the right to organize future physics competitions.

“I can still enter the International Academy of Physics even if I don’t join the competition,” said Sophie confidently. “All right. Let’s go. I’m famished!” she said.

It was her first visit to Summerbank, and she had yet to enjoy the local delicacies.

“Okay,” agreed Tristan.

As soon as he heard her words, he could think of nothing else except to take her out for good food.

Hence, Tristan paid no more attention to the organizer and left with the others.

Frustration flooded the organizer’s heart.

“What are we going to do now? We’d probably still stand a chance if it was someone else, but this is the famous Mr. Tristan we’re dealing with.”

His subordinates did not dare to say anything.

It was an ironic situation. After all, everything that happened earlier was the fruit of their decision. Yet, no one dared to speak when they were faced with a challenge.

At the end of the day, choices were very important in determining the future.

Previously, they sided with Mavis because they thought they could not afford to offend Reginald. What they did not expect was that their choice had resulted in them offending a person whom even Reginald himself feared.

It was not until the group of four arrived at a restaurant in Summerbank and took their seats that Sophie asked, "Why are you guys here?"

"I missed you. That's why I came." Tristan had no other reason. All he wanted was to see her sooner.

"Oh."

"Uncle Tristan, can you hold back a little? Where did your cold front go?" asked Ysabelle.

No wonder Sophie doesn't find him aloof.

"Wow. Mr. Tristan, I didn't know you were such a romantic person," commented Felix, rubbing his arms as if to prove his point.

Tristan immediately shot them a look.

How dare these third wheels speak nonsense here?

Even so, his glare did not scare Felix and Ysabelle. They were, after all, just joking.

Soon, the four of them ordered their food and patiently waited for them to arrive.

"Felix, I need you to look for people who can replace the competition's organizing team," instructed Tristan.

He was not joking about getting them changed.

How dare they bully Sophie? Were they planning to keep up with that if I didn't turn up?

"Got it," answered Felix.

Chanaea was a country rich with talents.

Besides, with Lombard Group backing the country, it would not be a problem to find a few physics professors.

"You're making the right decision. These people were blatantly bullying her and weren't rigorous in academics at all. They basically accused Sophie of cheating just because Professor Sykes is Mavis' father," continued Felix.

No one's backer is as powerful as Sophie's. Those people were total snobs.

"There's no need for all that trouble," Sophie finally said. Though the organizing team was rather disappointing, she did not think her friends needed to go through all that trouble for her.

"Don't worry, Sophie. It's no trouble at all. We're from the same industry. We can't let anyone get bullied for no reason. They have to pay the price for bullying you," assured Tristan.

Similarly, Felix had already viewed Sophie as one of them.

Hence, no one was allowed to bully her.

“Exactly! Don’t worry. I won’t let your bullies live a peaceful life,” promised Felix.

“All right, then.” That was all Sophie managed.

If that’s the case, I’d better not say anything.

Once they returned from Summerbank, Sophie and Ysabelle started their final semester of senior year. Naturally, weekly and monthly exams started flooding in.

Thus, Sophie and Ysabelle had been working hard ever since they returned from Summerbank.

Tristan, too, got busy making preparations for Sophie’s birthday after returning from the trip.

It was Sophie’s first birthday since they got to know each other.

Hence, he regarded it with great importance.

Meanwhile, Felix and Charles shook their heads in exasperation as they watched Tristan busying himself with the preparations.

“Mr. Tristan, it’s just a birthday. Do you really have to put in so much effort? How long have you been preparing this?”

“It’s Sophie’s coming-of-age ceremony.”

“Coming-of-age ceremony?”

“Oh... So, that’s the main point.”

“So, what are you planning to do on that day, Mr. Tristan?” one of them asked. After all, Sophie could do whatever she wanted once she was an adult.

Chapter 316 No Birthday Celebration For Me

“Do I have to report to you about what I’m going to do?” Tristan gave the others a look. Do they think I’m a pervert or what?

“Well, you don’t need to report to us.” Sophie is such a beauty. There’s no way Mr. Tristan can hold back anymore!

Even though they did not persist with the questioning, they were sure that Tristan would undoubtedly do something at Sophie’s coming-of-age party.

Sophie’s eighteenth birthday also meant a lot to Josiah. During dinner, he said, “Soph, it’s your birthday soon. I want to hold a birthday party for you.”

For Josiah, Sophie’s eighteenth birthday was an important occasion. It had been a long time since she came back from Horington. He wanted to let everyone know that his granddaughter had returned home.

Upon hearing that Josiah was planning to hold a birthday party for Sophie, Willow felt even more indignant.

When Willow had her eighteenth birthday, Josiah was far from being so enthusiastic. They merely had a simple family dinner together.

“Grandpa, there’s no need for that. I don’t like this kind of occasion,” Sophie replied. Instead of a celebration, it would feel more like an annoyance for her.

Josiah fell silent. He also knew Sophie did not enjoy such an occasion.

“What do you want, then? This birthday marks your coming of age. It should be something special!” he probed. How long has it been since I last celebrated Sophie’s birthday? I’m looking forward to it.

“Grandpa, I have everything I need. All I want is for you to be good. That will make me happy,” Sophie answered.

Josiah was rendered speechless momentarily.

Turning to Morgan, Josiah asked, “Morgan, am I not been behaving?” Goodness, I’ve never been this docile before!

Hearing that, Morgan broke into a grin. “Ms. Sophie, Old Mr. Tanner has been very obedient lately.”

“Well, that’s good to know,” Sophie replied. Things were already back on track at Tanner Group. Furthermore, Victor had proven to be a trustworthy person. She only went to Tanner Group occasionally after leaving the company in his hands.

After all, Sophie was still a student. Handing over Tanner Group to Victor was the only way to put all the employees at ease.

Yale, who had kept silent all this while, eventually spoke up.

“Soph, it’s pointless for me to stay idle at home. Why don’t you let me return to the company? I can do anything you ask.” Of course, Yale wanted to go back to the company. Otherwise, the meager dividend he received was not enough for a spendthrift like him.

Sophie lifted her gaze to him.

“What do you want to do when you return? Or you can just tell me which position you want.”

Upon hearing Sophie’s question, Yale immediately uttered, “How about the position of general manager? I think I can still do a good job as the general manager!”

Sophie glanced at Josiah.

How could Grandpa have a son like him? Still, he's my father. It's just that his intelligence is something else...

"You can't be the general manager! By the way, I think you should stay at home. There's no place for you at Tanner Group," Sophie admonished Yale. Tanner Group is on the up. I won't let him ruin it.

"You! Sophie, I'm your father. How could you talk to me like that?" Yale was offended by her remarks. He continued, "See, Dad? This is the result of you pampering her unconditionally. She has become so arrogant and insolent now!"

"Come on, Yale! Please have some self-awareness. In fact, you have no place in Tanner Group," Josiah rebuked him. I won't feel at ease even if he's just an ordinary staff, let alone the general manager.

Yale was at a loss for words.

Not one trusted him.

"You all think I can't do it, don't you?" Yale asked as he looked at everyone in the dining room.

Josiah and Morgan were in a conversation, whereas Charmaine pretended not to hear the question.

At that moment, Willow naturally did not dare to say anything. She just bowed her head and continued eating.

Seeing their lack of reactions, Yale threw his fork in a rage and stormed off.

I can't stay in this house anymore.

“Oh, right! Grandpa, it’s almost time for the university entrance exam. I won’t come back for the time being. Call me if you need anything. Or you can ask Morgan to take you to Wisteria Apartments,” Sophie said.

She had been staying there for a while because of Christmas. It was time for her to go back.

“Are you going back now?”

Upon hearing that Sophie was returning to Wisteria Apartments, Josiah lost his appetite suddenly.

Nevertheless, when Josiah thought of the other family members’ attitudes in this house, he felt that it would be better for Sophie to go back.

He had no objections to whatever Sophie did as long as she was happy.

“Anyway, Sophie, the day after tomorrow is your birthday. Let’s celebrate it before you go back,” Charmaine suggested. Even though she knew she had no right to say anything, Sophie was still her own flesh and blood.

“No need for that. I never celebrate birthdays anyway,” Sophie replied.

“You...”

They treated Sophie badly in the past. Nevertheless, Charmaine wanted to make up for her mistakes. Why doesn’t she give me a chance to make amends for it?

“Grandpa, I’m leaving now!” After bidding Josiah goodbye, Sophie went to her room to pack her things.

Since she did not bring back many things, it was easy for her to pack up.

After she finished packing, Sophie walked out with her suitcase.

Josiah wanted to see her off downstairs.

“Grandpa, you don’t have to see me off. Tristan is waiting for me outside.”

“All right. Senior year is tough. The last semester is even worse. You must take good care of yourself, okay?” Josiah wished he could go to Wisteria Apartments and look after Sophie personally. Unfortunately, he would only be a burden to her with his current condition.

“Okay. I got it.”

When Sophie came out of the Tanner residence, she saw Tristan’s car parked outside.

Tristan immediately got out of the car and opened the trunk when he saw Sophie carrying a suitcase. After putting it into the trunk, he opened the passenger seat’s door for her to get in.

Sophie stayed quiet on the way back.

Seeing Sophie like that, Tristan felt a bit sorry for her.

“What’s wrong? Did they give you a hard time at home?”

Sophie shook her head and replied, “How could I let myself go through that again?”

If it were my former self, I would just stay quiet and put up with their nonsense. Nevertheless, no one dares to mess with me now.

“Well, that’s true. However, you mustn’t put up with their mistreatment. Otherwise, I’ll be heartbroken.”

Tristan meant every word he said. He did not want to see her suffer anymore.

“Okay.”

“Thank you.”

With Tristan on her side, Sophie could finally relax.

She did not dislike this feeling at all.

When the duo returned to Wisteria Apartments, Sophie received a call from Mark.

The two of them discussed The Wheelers’ new album for a while.

In the end, Mark finally asked, “Sophie, it’s your birthday the day after tomorrow. Let’s have a meal together! The band members miss you dearly.”

“I don’t celebrate birthdays,” Sophie replied. Don’t they know that?

“It’s just a meal. Who said anything about celebrating your birthday?” Mark retorted.

Tristan could not help but feel heartbroken upon hearing that Sophie did not celebrate birthdays.

What was the reason that made her refuse to celebrate her birthday?

Chapter 317 Coming Of Age

“Let’s talk about it later!” Sophie uttered. When she was part of The Wheelers in the past, they would enjoy a meal together on her birthday. Sophie was not that particular about celebrating her birthday.

"It's settled then. I'll make arrangements right away," Mark said. The situation was not the same as before. Although it was just a simple meal, The Wheelers had a large fanbase. Hence, they had to find a quiet place for their get-together.

"All right," Sophie replied. "I'll pick you up from school the day after tomorrow. You'll have to skip the self-study session at night," Mark reminded her.

"Sure!" When Mark hung up the phone, Sunny immediately probed, "How was it? Did Sophie agree to it?"

Mark nodded in response. "Seriously, Mark, we all know that you like Sophie. She's becoming an adult soon. Why don't you confess to her?" Sunny suggested. He knew how much Mark liked Sophie.

"Sunny, do you think Sophie will like me?" Mark asked. I do like Sophie, but what about her? She only thinks of me as her buddy. If I confess to her rashly, I might ruin our friendship.

Sunny shook his head. "Mark, give yourself a chance no matter what! Just tell her that you like her."

Regardless of the outcome, one should have no regrets after the confession.

"Most importantly, I don't think Sophie is a pretentious person. Even if she doesn't reciprocate your feelings, she won't cut ties with us!" Sunny added. Our relationship throughout the years must have meant something to her. Right?

"I mean it, Mark. Give yourself a chance. Anyway, I don't like Mr. Tristan. Who is he to want to take Sophie away from us?"

Sunny felt displeased whenever he thought of Tristan's attitude.

What right does he have to keep control of Sophie? She belongs to us. We all know how kindly Mark treats her.

“That’s right! Mark, it’s not easy to fall in love with someone. Don’t worry about the outcome and let Sophie know about your feelings for her. Then, she can decide for herself.”

Their encouragement moved Mark. “Hmm, let me think about it.” I have never told Sophie how much I like her. So, I should give myself a chance! Even if it doesn’t work out in the end, I’ll have no regrets after confessing to her.

Sunny immediately stood up from the couch and uttered reassuringly, “Mark, do you need our help? Feel free to tell us if you need us to do something. We’ll cooperate with you no matter what.”

Mark shook his head.

“It’s fine. This is between me and Sophie. You guys shouldn’t interfere.”

Anything could be helped apart from matters concerning love.

When Sophie hung up the phone, Tristan grabbed her hand from behind and dragged her to the couch.

“Was that Mark?” he asked.

The moment Tristan first saw Mark, he knew that the latter liked Sophie.

However, he did not think Sophie would reciprocate Mark’s feelings.

All along, Tristan was only concerned about Sophie’s opinion.

He could not care less as long as Sophie did not harbor that kind of feelings for Mark.

“Yes. He asked me to have dinner with them the day after tomorrow,” Sophie informed.

Besides, I have something to discuss with them. It's good to have a meal together.

"Why don't you want to celebrate your birthday?" Tristan probed.

I've been preparing for so long, only to hear that she doesn't want to celebrate her birthday. I deserve to know the reason why at least!

"There's no reason. It's just that I don't have the habit of celebrating my birthday."

Seeing the disbelief on Tristan's face, Sophie broke into a smile.

"I mean it. There isn't a particular reason. It's just a habit. Besides, you know I don't like boisterous events," Sophie explained to her best.

"Don't worry! Just celebrate your eighteenth birthday with me. I promise it won't be noisy," Tristan reassured her.

He had never been a fan of rowdy events.

The two of them were on the same page in this regard.

Sophie remained silent.

"Is there a gift you want?" Tristan had thought long and hard about the present for her coming-of-age ceremony. Perhaps due to his overthinking, he could not make the final decision.

Suddenly, Sophie was in the mood for jokes. "I want the stars in the sky."

"The stars in the sky?" Tristan asked earnestly.

Seeing his reaction, Sophie did not dare to continue joking.

"I was just kidding," she admitted.

"Sophie, even if you aren't joking, there's no way I can pluck the stars for you!"

Tristan had to admit that there were things in this world that he still could not do.

Tristan pulled her into his arms.

"My little Sophie has finally grown up."

Even though they had not known each other for long, Tristan always felt like he had waited for ages.

Sophie remained silent for a moment. She never felt any difference after turning eighteen.

Then, she spoke up. "Mr. Tristan, I guess I won't be thinking about getting married for a while."

I'm only eighteen. This is just the beginning of my adult life.

Holding Sophie's hand, Tristan planted a kiss on the back of her hand. "I know."

We haven't known each other for long. How could I ask for your hand in marriage right now?

"Don't worry! I won't force you to do something you don't like. In fact, I won't let you do it as long as you have a sliver of hesitation," Tristan promised.

Sophie was rendered speechless. Isn't it too unfair for him to treat me like this?

“But I think your family really wants you to get married! After all, you’re-”

Tristan cut her off abruptly. “No one can force me to do anything I don’t like to do.”

Not even my family has that kind of power over me.

She was moved by Tristan’s determination.

Reaching out her hand, Sophie gently touched his perfect jawline.

“Mr. Tristan, why are you being so nice to me?” Sophie probed. She did not know how to repay him for his kindness.

“Of course, I have to treat you nicely. You have so many suitors. If I don’t treat you well, what should I do if you leave me for someone else?”

Despite being confident that he was the most suitable man for Sophie, Tristan could not help but feel threatened by the number of suitors around her.

After all, unlike everything else, no one could control matters regarding love.

Tristan spoke up out of the blue. “I want to be there when you have dinner with The Wheelers!”

“You guys aren’t cut from the same cloth. Why do you want to hang out with them?” Sophie probed, feeling curious.

“No, I’m cut from the same cloth as them. As long as they’re your kind of people, they’re my people too!” Tristan retorted.

You're the standard!

Meanwhile, Ysabelle was also struggling with what gift she should give Sophie for her birthday.

Ysabelle really liked the gemstone Sophie gave her on her last birthday.

"Felix, what gift do you think Sophie would like?" Ysabelle had been struggling to find the perfect present for a while. She had not settled on a gift even though it would be Sophie's birthday the following day.

"I don't know either," Felix replied. How would I know what a girl likes?

Chapter 318 What Is Wrong

Ysabelle rolled her eyes at him and scoffed. "Felix, I finally understand why you don't have a girlfriend. How can you get a girlfriend with such an attitude?"

He doesn't understand anything about women. Felix had pushed off a bunch of important things to go shopping with her. He was speechless that he could still get disliked after doing that.

He fumed. "There's a birthday every year. If you can't get a good present this year, there's always next year." Ysabelle glanced at him. He's really useless.

She had gone to all the stores but still did not know what to buy. Soon, it was Wednesday and Sophie's birthday. Early in the morning, Josiah instructed Morgan to pass his gift to Sophie. Sophie took the bag Morgan handed over skeptically.

"Ms. Sophie, Old Mr. Tanner said that this is the only thing he can give you, so you must take it." Josiah wanted to go big on Sophie's eighteenth birthday. However, she did not like such events, so he did not force her to do it.

“Okay, I understand. I’ll give Grandpa a call.” Sophie did not look at what was inside as she shoved it into her backpack. “Morgan, please go home now! Grandpa can’t have no one by his side.”

“Okay, Ms. Sophie. Happy birthday.” Morgan looked at Sophie dotingly. His heart ached for her.

“Thank you.” After Morgan left, Ysabelle asked, “What did your grandfather give you?”

It seemed like a document! Sophie shook her head. “It’s fine. Let’s go! Class is starting soon!”

Upon seeing her like this, Ysabelle could not help but stick out her tongue. It’s her birthday! Why does she still go to school? They walked toward the school building.

“Sophie, it’s your eighteenth birthday today. What are you doing?” Ysabelle asked curiously. Ysabelle had celebrated her eighteenth birthday on the cruise, so she was curious how Sophie would celebrate hers.

“I’m planning to have dinner with Mark and the others! Do you want to join us?” Although she did not celebrate her birthdays, she did not mind if others wanted to celebrate them with her.

“Of course,” Ysabelle replied excitedly.

Ysabelle was distracted during class the whole day.

Finally, school ended. Sophie told her class teacher that she would not attend the tutorial at night.

Then, Ysabelle and she walked out of the school. Once they reached the entrance, they noticed Mark and the others were already waiting outside in the car.

Tristan’s car also arrived when they came out.

“Sophie, whose car do we get on?” How do they choose between Mark and Uncle Tristan?

“You can sit in your uncle’s car, and I’ll sit in Mark’s. You guys can just follow behind us.”

Ysabelle was not close to Mark and the others, so it would be strange for Sophie to let the former sit in their car.

Ysabelle immediately grabbed Sophie’s hand.

“I am not going.” Is she kidding me? If I let her sit in Mark’s and the others’ car instead of Uncle Tristan’s, I’ll have to look at his cold face! I don’t want that!

“What’s wrong?”

Ysabelle noticed Sophie looking at her and said, “Sophie, do you not know how much Uncle Tristan likes you? Do you think he wants to see you with Mark and the others? You should get in his car!”

“Mr. Tristan is not such a petty person!”

With that, Sophie opened Tristan’s car and stuffed Ysabelle into it before getting in Mark’s and the others’ car.

Willow was behind them the whole time and saw the two luxury cars coming to fetch Sophie.

This made her feel extremely uncomfortable, but there was nothing she could do.

“Willow, it’s your sister’s birthday, right?”

“That’s right! Aren’t you going to celebrate with her?”

“I didn’t know your relationship with her was that bad! Who’s the person fetching Sophie?”

Willow felt irritated hearing her classmates' questions. Sophie had become the center of attention now. What about her? She had nothing.

"I don't know!"

With that, she left to take a taxi.

This is too much! The driver from home used to fetch me previously! What about now? I can only find my way home. Did they all give up on me? I'm the hope of the Tanner family! How can they do this to me?

At that moment, it was raining heavily. However, Willow did not have the habit of bringing an umbrella and was drenched.

"Ah!" Willow could no longer control her annoyance and let out a scream.

Everyone near her was studying at Jipsdale Premier High and witnessed the scene.

They were all whispering.

"Do you think Willow has gone crazy?"

"That's right! Since Sophie came back, she was no longer the center of attention."

"I heard she was the one who framed Sophie five years ago! That's why Sophie had no choice but to leave Jipsdale and go to Horington!"

"Really? I can't tell! She always pretends to be a nice person!"

“Such people are the most disgusting ones!”

There were people talking bad about her in the rain.

Willow flagged down a taxi and left as fast as she could.

Meanwhile, after getting in Mark’s car, Sophie realized he was the only one in the car.

“Where are the others?”

She thought everyone would come and fetch her!

“They all left to prepare!” Mark would definitely not tell her that Sunny and the others wanted them to spend time alone.

As there was a downpour, Mark drove slowly.

“Mr. Tristan and a few other friends are coming. You guys won’t mind, right?” As they were all her friends, she could not split herself into two to spend time with them.

“Not at all!”

No matter what Sophie did, he was fine with it.

They chatted for a bit. When Sophie was with Mark, she felt extremely relaxed.

Meanwhile, Ysabelle regretted getting in her uncle’s car. The atmosphere was rather cold.

“Uncle Tristan, are you okay? Don’t worry. Sophie likes you! She only treats The Wheelers’ members as friends!” Ysabelle immediately voiced her opinion.

“That’s enough! Stop talking! You talk too much!”

He obviously knew the relationship between Sophie and The Wheelers.

However, he still wished that she would choose him at any time!

That must be a man’s possessiveness!

Mark and the others had been in the entertainment industry for many years, so they naturally had many high-end places to choose from.

However, they decided to go to Star Club, as they did not want anyone to bother them!

They stopped right outside Star Club. As it was raining heavily, Star Club had arranged for their staff to help their customers by shielding them with umbrellas.

Just as Mark stopped the car, Tristan’s car arrived too.

He opened the car door and took the staff’s umbrella. Then, he walked toward Mark’s car and opened the door.

Sophie shot a confused look at Tristan, who was standing outside.

“What’s wrong?”

We recommend you read these novels after this one. Please check them out we hope you will like them

Chapter 319

“There's too much water outside. Come. Let me carry you over.”

As it was a downpour, there were puddles on the road.

“It's fine.”

Sophie was about to get out of the car. Tristan passed the umbrella to Ysabelle, who was standing by the side. Then, he carried Sophie up.

Although Sophie was surprised, she wrapped her arms around his neck to prevent herself from falling.

Ysabelle was speechless.

Did I come here to hold an umbrella for them? My shoes are wet too!

She pursed her lips. I don't have it easy! I'm also a girl! Why does no one carry me in their arms?

Mark got out of the car and saw that Tristan had already carried Sophie into the club's main hall.

When Sunny walked out, he saw Tristan carrying Sophie.

He instinctively shook his head.

What's wrong with Mark? Didn't I ask him to cherish the opportunity? How can he pass such a good opportunity to Tristan?

Mark and Ysabelle walked in.

Sunny immediately walked over to Mark and whispered, “Mark, what's wrong with you? How can you pass such a good opportunity to someone else?”

“Okay. As long as it's for Sophie's good, everything is okay.”

“Nonsense! You can't be so calm. You have to grab hold of this opportunity, okay? We have prepared everything for you. Don't worry. After dinner, we will help you find an opportunity,” Sunny promised Mark with confidence.

“Sunny, you better not do anything rash! No matter what happens, I'll do whatever I see fit.” There were many things he had to consider. It was not a simple thing.

“You shouldn't be like this. Do you know? Men shouldn't be so hesitant. You have to be brave and confess to her. It's no big deal. If you fail, we are here to drink with you.”

Sunny wanted Mark to confess so that Sophie would be with them forever.

“What are you guys talking about? Who's going to confess?” Ysabelle was right beside them, so she heard their entire conversation.

Is Mark going to confess to Sophie? It seems that they have been planning for quite some time.

Although she liked Mark a lot, she was still on her uncle's side.

Upon hearing Ysabelle's question, Sunny did not say anything.

“Who's doing the confession and to whom? You must be hearing things. Today is Sophie's birthday. Aren't we all here to celebrate her birthday?”

There was no reason for Sunny to tell Ysabelle anything.

After all, Ysabelle was Tristan's niece.

Although she liked Mark, he was only an idol to her. Comparing the two, it was obvious whose side she would be on.

Therefore, he could not tell Ysabelle anything, or else it would not work out.

“Okay. It's almost time. Everyone is also hungry. Let's go in and eat,” Mark said.

“Mr. Tristan, you can put me down.” Sophie felt slightly embarrassed that she was being carried by Tristan in front of everyone.

Tristan glanced at Mark before putting her down.

A man's intuition told him that Mark was about to make a move tonight.

At that moment, Felix and the others showed up.

Felix immediately walked to Ysabelle's side the moment he arrived.

“What happened? Why do you look unhappy?” He instantly noticed Ysabelle was unhappy.

“No, I'm not. Today is Sophie's birthday. I'm really happy.”

“Would you be showing this expression if you're happy?”

“Okay. Let's go in and eat,” Tristan interrupted their conversation.

He still had something prepared for Sophie after dinner.

Thus, they should not waste too much time here.

They walked toward the private room.

As Sunny had said, the dishes had been ordered and served.

Upon seeing that Tristan and Sophie were sitting together, Sunny immediately ran over to take the other seat beside Sophie. He said to Mark, who was standing at the side, "Mark, come and sit here. Didn't you have something to discuss with Sophie? It will be more convenient for you to sit here."

Mark could not reject Sunny, as the latter was too enthusiastic. He sat beside Sophie.

Seeing that, Ysabelle was speechless.

They're definitely up to something. Mark is really going to confess to Sophie. If I didn't know anything, I wouldn't feel so bad now.

However, she had already heard the conversation between Mark and Sunny.

Now, every action of theirs seemed to have been planned.

Ysabelle threw Tristan a sympathetic glance.

Isn't Uncle Tristan a poor thing? Why is there always someone after Sophie?

Sunny and Sophie had been friends for a long time, so he knew about her taste. Therefore, the food prepared was all ordered to Sophie's taste.

Sunny said with a smile, "Sophie, Mark ordered all these dishes today. Do you like them? Look, Mark knows about everything you like. Even after you have been away for so long, he has kept everything you left behind. Aren't you touched?"

Sophie glanced at Sunny.

“Sunny, what's wrong with you today?” His actions were too strange.

What does she mean by what's wrong with me? Can't she see how well Mark has treated her? All the other members have witnessed it.

Tristan was speechless.

It seems that Mark is going to confess to Sophie today. Why doesn't he think about whether she likes him? If she really likes him, how could they not end up together after such a long time?

Hearing others talk about how well Mark treated Sophie made Tristan feel rather uncomfortable since he did not play a part in Sophie's past.

No matter how powerful he was, he was not able to turn back time.

Therefore, the only thing he could do was to do things properly in the present.

He would stay by Sophie's side and make sure he didn't regret it in the future.

“Sunny, that's enough. Let's stop with the nonsense. Everyone should be hungry, so let's eat first.” Mark cast a glance at Sunny.

Didn't I already tell him not to interfere in this matter? It was Sophie's birthday. There was no need to make things awkward with so many people around.

Sunny was a little depressed. Didn't I say all these to help create an opportunity for Mark? The enemy is too strong, so why can't we use some tricks? Also, we didn't hurt anyone, did we?

“Let's eat. Aren't you hungry?” Tristan put some food on Sophie's plate and quietly ate his.

It was as if Sunny's words had not bothered him in the slightest.

Sunny felt even more anxious. Does Sophie really like Mr. Tristan?

Chapter 320

Seeing how meticulously Tristan took care of Sophie, Sunny could not help but blink a few times at Mark in disbelief.

What the h*ck are you doing, Mark? I pulled all the stops in trying to give you this opportunity. Why can't you get your act together and do something?

“Mark, why don't you give Sophie some crayfish? It's her favorite!”

Having noticed that Mark had barely moved a muscle, Sunny decided to give him a nudge.

“You like crayfish?” asked Tristan.

Sophie nodded. She had always liked crayfish.

Tristan immediately got up and brought the plate of crayfish to Sophie. He then put on some gloves and began shelling the crayfish for her.

Sunny was rendered speechless at this

The others also looked on, wordlessly.

This was definitely Tristan's style.

“I can't possibly finish all of this myself.” Sophie did like crayfish, but she was not about to finish an entire platter on her own.

“It's all right. If you like them, feel free to eat more. I'll happily shell them for you,” said Tristan, not finding the deed troublesome.

Tristan was not too fond of crayfish, given how it was truly a hassle to eat. He did not like having to shell them. However, since it was Sophie who liked eating them, it was a completely different story.

One could easily tell that Tristan was not used to shelling crayfish. His movements were awkward and quite stiff.

When Sophie looked down, she saw that the crayfish on her plate gradually began to pile up.

Sophie was quite touched by his gesture.

He's willing to do all this for me so publicly in spite of who he is? I think any woman would be touched by this!

Meanwhile, Sunny got even angrier.

What the h*ck is Mark doing? I've already nudged him into action, but he still hasn't gotten the hint! In fact, Tristan has pounced on this opportunity instead!

Mark had, in fact, not said anything at all. He merely concentrated on his own meal, still maintaining his usual reserved demeanor.

He behaved as if this situation had nothing to do with him at all.

“This has got to be the first time I've seen Tristan shelling crayfish. Oi, Tristan! If Lombard Group goes under, I'm sure you'd find a job shelling crayfish!” said Felix in jest.

“That's true! I also like crayfish, Tristan! Why don't you shell some for me?” asked Charles with a playful wink.

They both knew that Tristan fancied Sophie, but they had never imagined that his behavior was going to be so drastically different.

“Since you like it so much, why don't you have some?” Sophie then handed over some of the peeled crayfish to Charles.

While he had indeed said he liked crayfish, he dared not receive what Sophie held out to him.

“Hehe, I'm just joking! Mr. Tristan shelled these for you! How can I have them?”

He was not willing to risk his life over a few pieces of crayfish.

“You really don't want any?”

Charles immediately shook his head. He was just joking, after all. He did not have the guts to act on it.

“I've really had enough, Mr. Tristan.” Sophie asked Tristan to stop because her plate was already quite full of tiny morsels of fish.

“Very well.”

Seeing that Sophie did have plenty of crayfish on her plate, Tristan finally stopped.

Sophie then gave Tristan a large piece.

“Have some too. You needn't take care of me all the time,” said Sophie. She was an adult who was perfectly capable of tending to her own needs.

“Sophie, I'd really like some barbecue ribs. Can you pass me some?” Sunny could not take it anymore. He needed to make himself more visible.

“Sunny, will you just quit it?” quipped Sophie with a disapproving glare. After all, this table had an automatic conveyor belt to transport dishes in one loop.

Sunny looked at her in disbelief.

“Sophie, do you not like me anymore? You've never spoken to me that way before! Besides, you've always been responsive to my requests in the past!”

Sophie was annoyed at this.

I've always treated you like a friend!

Mark then gave Sunny some ribs while also giving him a pointed look.

“Do you need more? I can pile more onto your plate if so. Just be quiet and enjoy your meal.”

Sunny bit his lower lip with an incredulous look on his face. I'm doing this for your sake, Mark! Why are you treating me like this?

However, seeing the stern look on Mark's face made Sunny rethink his actions. He decided to hold his tongue instead and focused on his food.

Ysabelle giggled, seeing the way Sunny behaved.

“What are you laughing at? What's so funny?” huffed Sunny, both embarrassed and annoyed.

“It's nothing. I just think you're so cute like this!” replied Ysabelle with a giggle.

Felix, on the other hand, was not happy to hear Ysabelle praise Sunny.

“But he's so childish! How is that cute?” asked Felix. He suddenly felt alarmed seeing that.

“Hey, who are you calling childish? When was I childish? I'm very mature, all right? You're the one who can't tell left from right!” said Sunny with a huff.

Felix was initially going to ignore him. He's just a brat who hasn't quite grown up yet.

“I'd suggest keeping your distance from him,” said Felix into Ysabelle's ear. “His questionable mental state is quite contagious.”

“Felix, how could you say that? Don't you think Sunny is quite cute this way?” Although he seemed immature, it did not make Sunny any less childish.

“I don't think so. I also think that calling a man 'cute' isn't a good thing either,” retorted Felix. Why did he

need to approve of another man's behavior anyway?

Throughout this entire meal, Mark felt a little awkward because of Sunny's behavior.

However, Sophie and Tristan seemed to be unaffected by this.

After dinner, Sunny was determined to create an opportunity for Mark to confess his feelings for Sophie.

No matter what, Mark has already made preparations for tonight. He has to confess to her, regardless of the outcome. Otherwise, all this would've been for naught.

Having seen the way Sophie and Tristan interacted with each other, Sunny had a sinking feeling that Mark did not stand a chance.

As such, Sunny deliberately unlocked his phone and dialed Sophie's number.

"Sophie, can you meet me outside? I need to talk to you."

"What is it? Can't you come inside and talk?" asked Sophie suspiciously.

"Sophie, what's gotten into you? Why would I seek you out if I didn't have anything to say? Would it hurt if you came out for a bit?" asked Sunny, audibly disgruntled.

"Fine. I'll come out." For some reason, Sophie had always been tolerant of Sunny's behavior.

Although they were both close in age, Sophie had always treated Sunny as she would a younger

sibling, perhaps due to her own maturity.

As Sophie went to see Sunny, Ysabelle immediately went to speak to Tristan.

"Uncle Tristan, Mark is going to confess his feelings to Sophie. Aren't you going to keep an eye on them?" Regardless of what happened, Ysabelle was rooting for her Uncle Tristan. "I think you should go! You do know that Sophie doesn't see Mark the same way. What if—"

"There isn't a what-if," replied Tristan matter-of-factly, interrupting her. "If Sophie fancied Mark, they'd have been together ages ago. I doubt they'd have waited so long to be together."

Tristan was absolutely certain about this.

"Uncle Tristan, do you not care the slightest? After all, Sophie did spend quite a bit of time with them in the past." Ysabelle had no intention of gossiping, but she was worried that Sophie and Mark would end up together.

“I trust Sophie. Besides, she's an individual. She has the right to spend time with her friends.”

Tristan could not behave selfishly and forbid Sophie from meeting friends of the opposite sex, just because he had feelings for her.