

## **Pursuing 331**

### **Chapter 331**

Meanwhile, Sunny and the others didn't leave because they hadn't received Sophie's call.

"Mark, is Sophie in trouble? It shouldn't take her longer than three or four minutes to ride the elevator. Why hasn't she called after so long? We should go up and check on her," Sunny uttered worryingly.

"Give her a call first." Now that Sophie is officially dating someone, the situation will become awkward if we go up and end up meeting Mr. Tristan there.

"Why? Wouldn't it be easier to go upstairs directly and check on her?" We've been waiting here for half an hour.

"What if Mr. Tristan is there?" Mark glanced at Sunny. The latter was still young, so it was normal for him to consider a matter from fewer perspectives.

Sunny was rendered speechless this time.

"Are you all right, Mark?" Undeniably, Sophie has rejected him, so he must be feeling anguished.

"I'm fine. Seriously. It is common for everyone to experience rejection. You all don't have to feel so worried about me. I am quite tough."

There are so many other options out there for me. I am Mark Wheeler, after all. If I wish to, I can make girls offer themselves up to me with a flick of my finger.

"Shut up, Sunny!" Another one of the band members was at the limit of his patience.

Sunny was still young, and he had always hung out with them. He didn't have any dating experience, so it was a given for him to be clueless about how it felt to be lovelorn.

Mark was behaving in a typical manner as someone caught up in unrequited love. They would try their best to pretend they were fine in front of others regardless of the circumstances, and they didn't want others to sympathize with them.

"All right, then." Sunny had no choice but to take out his phone and call Sophie.

Sophie was feeding Tristan when her phone rang. Hearing the ringtone, she put down the spoon in her hand before picking up the phone.

"Have you all gone back?" Sophie had completely forgotten about her promise to call Mark and the others.

"What the h\*ll are you doing, Sophie? Didn't you say you would call us once you reached? Why haven't you called after so long? I was about to rush upstairs, thinking something bad might've happened to you," Sunny immediately jabbered away after hearing her voice.

"I'm sorry. I forgot about that. I'm fine, so you all should go back and get some rest."

Sophie patted her head. What's wrong with me? I tossed this matter to the back of my mind right after I saw Tristan when I returned home just now. Honestly, his presence is affecting me too much!

"This is unacceptable, Sophie. I reckon you don't even care about us. Is that it? All you had to do was to call and update us about your status, yet you'd forgotten all about it. What's keeping you busy?"

Sunny couldn't believe Sophie had failed to remember what she had promised while they had waited so long for her to call.

She glanced at Tristan, who was still lying on the couch.

Instantaneously, a hint of guilt rose within her.

Truth be told, she did not do that on purpose, but the moment she laid her eyes on Tristan, all she could think of was him.

Taking in her demeanor, Tristan immediately got up from the couch and took the phone from her.

“She's hanging out with me, so she wasn't free to call you guys. What's the matter? Do you have a problem with that?”

He wasn't pleased because his quality time with Sophie was being interrupted.

“Tristan? Why are you at Sophie's home? What are you trying to do? I'm warning you. Don't try anything funny. Otherwise, I won't let you off the hook.”

Sunny suddenly had the urge to leap out of the car. This Tristan has crossed the line. What is he doing at Sophie's house so late at night?

“It's nothing out of the ordinary even if something were to happen between a couple, right?”

“You—” Sunny was so pissed he was about to lose his mind.

Sophie was exasperated. What is he doing?

Then, she grabbed the phone from him.

“Sunny, I'm really sorry for forgetting about that. You all should go back now. We'll talk again on another day.”

“Sophie, I need to tell you this. Tristan is not a nice person. You should ask him to leave as soon as possible.” How can she allow a man to be at her home so late at night?

“Okay. I got it. You all should go home now.” She hung up the call after saying that.

On the other end of the call, Sunny put down his phone and glanced at the screen in utter disbelief after he heard the beeping sound coming from the speaker.

“What the h\*ll!? I can't believe she hung up on me. What should we do, Mark? Tristan is at Sophie's home. Let's go upstairs too. I'm worried about leaving them alone inside the same house at this late hour.”

Upon listening to Sunny's complaint, Mark drove away at once.

He could rest assured knowing Sophie was safe.

As for the other aspects of her life, he figured she should manage on her own now that she was an adult.

Although they were her friends, they shouldn't meddle too much in her way of living.

“Mark—” Sunny wanted to speak further, but upon noticing Mark's expression, he didn't dare to utter another word. Perhaps Mark is feeling the worst right now. This is all Tristan's fault. If he hadn't shown up, Sophie would've become a couple with Mark. Unfortunately, things did not pan out as we had hoped, so Mark is left alone now. What exactly is love?

Meanwhile, after Sophie ended the call, Tristan hugged her waist from behind and rested his chin on her shoulder.

“Mark still hasn't given up on you?”

“Mr. Tristan, they are my best friends. They kept me company and provided me with all the support I needed during the lowest point of my life. Therefore, the bond between us will remain regardless of what happens.”

“I understand that.” Tristan had no intention of comparing himself to them.

“As for Mark, I trust he'll get over this sooner or later. Besides, if I did like him, we would've become a couple a long time ago. If that's the case, you won't be in the picture.”

She was implying to him that the sequence of people showing up in her life was not a deciding factor in romance, so he didn't need to worry.

“Yeah, I know that too.”

Tristan was aware of all the theories and principles, but he couldn't help feeling insecure.

Under normal circumstances, the female in a relationship would be the one who felt insecure. Unexpectedly, in their case, he was the unconfident one.

“I just care too much about you.”

In fact, he had never considered Mark his love rival because he knew Sophie had never harbored romantic feelings for Mark.

Tristan tightened his hold on the girl in his arms, as if she would vanish before his eyes if he let go of her.

Sophie responded by turning around and pecking him on the lips while standing on her tiptoes.

On Friday, at a quarter past three in the afternoon, a group of students discussed the recent big news in the entertainment field after their first class ended.

“Did you all know? The Wheelers terminated their contract with Sky Media.”

“It's been so long since we last heard any news about The Wheelers. I like them a lot. Their songs are amazing.”

“I heard they signed with a new company and are about to release their new album.”

“Did you all know Sophie established the new company?”

“What?”

“Willow, are you aware of this?” Sophie set up an entertainment company? This is such a reckless move. Are members of The Wheelers planning to ruin their careers?

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“Have you ever thought about joining the entertainment industry now that Sophie's running an entertainment company? I think you'll be successful if you become a celebrity, especially with your good looks.”

“Yeah! I sincerely think you're suited for the entertainment industry, Willa! You'll definitely be one of the most stunning individuals in the industry if you do join.”

“Also, Sophie's entertainment company belongs to the Tanner family. If you enter the company, you'll no doubt gain lots of resources that'll help make you famous! If you can't marry into a rich family, you should consider working in the entertainment industry. It's easy to earn money there, don't you think so?”

A few of Willow's sidekicks suggested her the same thing.

Willow was slightly moved when she heard that.

“If you do end up in the entertainment industry, you have to bring me in with you, all right, Willa? I want to go too. I can play a supporting role for you.”

“Me too, Willa!”

Hearing them saying that made Willow think she would definitely become famous.

She believed that as long as she was incredibly famous, she could marry into any rich family she wanted.

“Don't worry. If I do join the entertainment industry, I'll be sure to bring you all with me.”

Just as Willow was visiting the restroom, she met Sophie and Ysabelle in the corridor.

“Come over here, Sophie. I have something I want to discuss with you,” Willow uttered in an arrogant tone.

Ysabelle shot a glance at Willow. Ugh... This woman is everywhere. Why do we keep bumping into her?

When it came to Willow, Ysabelle had very little patience. “Can you stop it already, Willow? We don't have time to talk nonsense with you here. Sophie is a very busy woman.”

“I just want to talk to my younger sister. What does that have to do with you? Who do you think you are?” Willow was annoyed that an outsider like Ysabelle was trying to get in between her conversation with her dear sister.

“Sister? When did you ever see Sophie as your younger sister? Having an older sister like you is like having a stroke of bad luck around!” Sharp-tongued as ever, Ysabelle's words managed to make Willow scowl.

Just then, Sophie finally said, “Just tell me what you want.”

Willow hesitated briefly, but when she saw how Sophie was acting, she knew her chance would slip away if she didn't speak her mind right then and there. “I heard you're opening an entertainment company. I'd like to join your company. I'm sure I'll be famous if I become a part of the entertainment

industry.”

“My goodness, who gave you the confidence to be this shameless? Do you think you're exceptionally beautiful or something? I can't believe you don't feel embarrassed saying that while looking like... this,” said Ysabelle. I knew there was no way she was being nice to Sophie for no reason.

Upon hearing that, Sophie couldn't help but glance at her.

Then, she rejected, “My company can't sign a contract with you.”

Fury surged within Willow. “You!” The money she's using to open her entertainment company belongs to the Tanner family anyway. So why can't I join?

However, when she recalled she was the one asking for favors, she had no choice but to stifle her emotions.

“Sophie, no matter what, we're still sisters. And sisters are supposed to help each other out, no? What's the problem with helping me? I'm not asking for much. I just want to be a part of your company.” She didn't think that her request was anything too outrageous.

“Why should I help you?” Sophie couldn't help but raise her eyebrow.

I can't believe she has the audacity to ask me for help.

Hearing that, Willow knew she had to lower herself, for there was nothing else she could do. “I know what I did in the past was wrong, Soph. Will you fulfill my request if I apologize to you?”

“Our company has certain standards when it comes to choosing who to hire. You don't meet that standard,” came Sophie's reply.

“Why don't I meet your company standards? I look attractive, don't I?”

Sophie snorted, amused. “Do you think having a pretty face is all it takes?”



“Of course. There are plenty of people in the entertainment industry whose sole competence is being attractive, isn't it?” Willow didn't think she was worse than those people.

“It's time for class, Sophie. You should stop wasting time talking nonsense with her. Let's go.” Ysabelle held the belief that it was pointless to talk to someone with no self-awareness.

“You can't do this to me, Sophie. Didn't you open your company with the Tanner family's money?”

“Sorry to disappoint you, but I used my own money to open the company. That's why I won't let you in.” With that, Sophie turned around and left with Ysabelle.

Willow's hand curled into a tight fist. How shameless! I can't believe she said she used her own money. There's no way she has that much money! Does she think I'm stupid? There's no way that money doesn't belong to the Tanner family.

With that thought in mind, she became even more determined to enter the entertainment industry.

Willow was still unhappy even after returning home.

When Charmaine saw how her daughter looked, she asked caringly, “What's wrong? Why do you look

so down? It's nearly time for your university entrance exam. You should put away all your thoughts and focus on that.”

“Do you know Sophie's opening an entertainment company, Mom?” Willow replied with a question of her own.

Charmaine shook her head.

There was no room for her involvement in Tanner Group's matters, so she had no idea what Sophie was up to.

“Right now, the most lucrative job in the world lies in the entertainment industry, Mom. One can earn tens of millions just by filming a show,” Willow explained.

“What do you mean?” Charmaine was confounded.

“Mom, I want to join the entertainment industry and take part in a television show or even a movie. I'm going to enroll in a film school instead of college.” If becoming a celebrity was the only way for her to marry into a rich family, then she would not hesitate to choose that path, for that was her only goal in life.

“Film school? Your grandfather won't agree to that.”

“This is my own matter, Mom! I want to decide for myself.”

Charmaine was speechless.

“You're the only person who still supports me, Mom. You must have my back. Once I become successful, you won't have to be angry anymore.” Willow was aware of her mother's lack of status in the family.

Her words moved Charmaine. “Fine. Since this is your choice, I'll definitely support you unconditionally.”

No matter what happens, Willow's my only support. So what if Sophie's amazing? She doesn't care about me or even sees me as her mother!

Willow requested, “Then, can you talk about it with Sophie? I'm not asking for anything else. I just hope I can join her entertainment company.”

Hearing that, Charmaine hesitated for a moment before saying, “How about you sign a contract with another company, Willa? It's not like you don't know Sophie's temperament. If she's unwilling to do something, no one can change her mind. Don't worry, I'll find you a very good agency.”

“Okay! Don't worry, Mom. I'll definitely give it my all this time. I won't let you down! I'll make sure those who look down on me no longer have the chance to do so. One day, I'll squash them under my boots.”

“I believe you! Don't worry, I'll be sure to support you with all I've got when the time comes. I still have some money on me.” Once again, Charmaine chose to stand on Willow's side.

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After attending two weeks of classes, Ysabelle was exhausted. As such, when she arrived at school very early in the morning, she simply slumped on the table.

Noticing that her friend was acting sluggishly, Sophie approached Ysabelle's table and knocked on the surface. “What's wrong? Are you feeling unwell?”

“No. I'm just feeling very tired. We've been attending classes for almost two weeks straight without a single day of rest, right? When is this going to end?” Ysabelle very much hoped the university entrance exam was tomorrow so she would finally be free. “I think it's ineffective for this to keep going. The teachers had reviewed everything we should review.”

Sophie patted her friend's head. “It's only been two weeks of no rest, yet you're already at the end of your rope. When you enter the entertainment industry in the future, you'll need to go months without rest. What will you do then?”

“How are those two things the same? Studying isn't something I like, but singing is. I'm fine with not taking any vacation if it means I can do something I enjoy.”

“All right, come on, just get up already. Once the classes are over, I'll take you to watch Mark and the others record their new album at the recording studio.”

In truth, Sophie had planned to let her friend follow Mark then. However, they were in the last semester of their senior year. She didn't want to get in the way of Ysabelle's education, so she had been delaying that from happening.

When Ysabelle heard that, her eyes sparkled.

"Can I really watch them record their songs?" She grabbed Sophie's hand excitedly.

"Yes, really," Sophie replied.

Thanks to Sophie's promise, Ysabelle remained ecstatic throughout the whole morning.

When the last class ended, she packed all her books and scampered to Sophie. "Everything's prepared! Let's go."

Sophie got up from her seat and left with Ysabelle.

Just as the two of them stepped out of the classroom, they saw a girl standing at the entrance. The girl mustered her bravery and introduced herself to them. "Hello, Sophie. My name's Emily Caldwin. I heard you're opening an agency. Can I try getting in?"

Sophie was usually a pretty cold and unapproachable person, so when Emily spoke, she did so carefully.

Sophie's gaze landed on Emily as she examined the latter. Hmm, she seems pretty charming, especially her eyes. They look pure. "I haven't started my company yet, so I don't plan on signing a contract with anyone at the moment. As such, for now, I can't promise you anything."

Emily's family situation was pretty standard, but she had always been interested in acting. Sadly, she never found the opportunity to break into the industry until she heard about Sophie's company. "Please sign a contract with me, Sophie. I promise you won't regret it!"

"Let's leave this matter for later." Upon saying that, Sophie started walking away with Ysabelle.

Emily was rooted to the spot, stunned. Is it not possible after all? Am I really supposed to give up on my dream? I've tried approaching plenty of agencies already, but none of them were willing to accept me.

After buying a bunch of food from The Crown, Sophie and Ysabelle headed to the recording studio.

When they arrived at the studio, Mark and the others were already in the middle of recording their song.

Ysabelle watched them perform from the side with curiosity. When Mark noticed they had arrived, he finished recording a part of the song before stepping out of the recording room with his members. "I thought you two were busy. How do you have time to come over here?"

"We're here to supervise you!" Sophie spoke with a smile as she pulled out the lunch she had bought with Ysabelle for them.

Sunny was overjoyed when he saw their lunch was from The Crown.

"You're too generous, Sophie!" As he praised, he grabbed a piece of meat and munched on it.

It tasted as amazing as he thought.

"Expensive food is indeed tasty! This is so good! You should come and supervise us every day, Sophie!" He liked a supervisor like her.

The other members couldn't help but comment, "You're such a glutton!"

"You lot have some nerve calling me that. Look at yourselves. Look at how much you're enjoying it, too. We're all more or less the same, all right?"

Ysabelle found their interactions to be endearing.

Together, they all sat and ate lunch with each other.

After their meal concluded, they began their discussion.

"I think this part has a bit of an issue, Mark. The chord in this section isn't good. It needs alteration."

"I think so, too." Sophie agreed because she noticed the same problem when she listened to it earlier.

Grabbing the score, she made some changes to it with a pencil before showing it to everyone. "What do you all think about this?"

Mark hummed the changes she made and found them to be smooth and pleasant to the ear. "We should change it to this, then."

Ysabelle was envious as she watched the band work seriously. I wonder when I could launch my own album with my own songs in it.

Just as that thought flashed into her mind, her phone rang.

When she saw that it was Tristan, she promptly went out to answer the call. "What's the matter, Uncle Tristan? We're in the recording studio right now. Can't you call Sophie's phone? I don't know, she's pretty busy at the moment. I don't think she has time to talk to someone on the phone."

After the call ended, Tristan felt somewhat depressed. Lately, Sophie had been spending all her time with The Wheelers, making him, her boyfriend, feel ignored.

When Felix noticed his expression, he couldn't help but ask, "What's the matter? Are Sophie and Ysabelle with Mark and the others again?"

In truth, he felt pretty threatened by The Wheelers because all five band members were quite handsome, and he was worried Ysabelle would fall for their charming looks.

Most importantly, she liked singing, so she would naturally have a lot to talk about with them.

Felix couldn't help but sigh. The Wheelers sure have a magical charm to them!

Then, he asked, "Won't Sophie affect Clayton's profits if she enters the entertainment industry so openly like this, Mr. Tristan? Clayton's not an easy opponent to deal with. Considering how he treated The Wheelers back then, will he really let this slide when he sees how The Wheelers are doing now?"

"Of course not. Clayton loves to pull strings in the dark." Tristan was quite aware of how Clayton operated. "Send a few men to protect Mark and the others."

Hearing that, Felix couldn't help but comment, "You're protecting your own love rival, Mr. Tristan? Aren't you being too gracious? This is my first time hearing something like this!" If he were in Tristan's shoes, he wouldn't have been that charitable.

Shooting a glance at him, Tristan replied, "He's not a love rival. Sophie never liked him, so why would he be a rival?"

"Are you really that certain, Mr. Tristan? They say familiarity breeds fondness. Just because she didn't like him before doesn't mean she won't in the future, especially when they've been spending so much time with each other. Most importantly, I think Mark has a lot of secrets. The fact that we can't even figure out his identity is in itself extraordinary."

"Do you think Sophie's the type of person who fools around?"

Fools around? How did Mr. Tristan come up with that? Felix pondered.

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Besides, do you think anyone's going to abandon someone as amazing as me?" Tristan asked.

Speculations ran through Felix's mind when he heard that. That's hard to say! If it's someone else, they may hold onto you tightly. However, when it comes to Sophie, nothing is certain. She's a difficult person to grasp.

"I'm not wasting my time talking to you anymore. I'm heading over to pick them up," Tristan informed after checking the time and realizing that Sophie's and Ysabelle's class at half past two was about to start soon.

Hah. He acts as though he isn't worried, yet he's in such a rush. Felix said, "I'll go with you, Mr. Tristan. It's been more than a week since I last saw Ysabelle, too."

He really did quite miss her.

"No, you're not. You need to check this case first!" Tristan proceeded to hand him a folder before leaving.

Once again, Felix was left in the wind. Mr. Tristan's so mean! Not only did he force me to do his job so that he could meet his girlfriend, but he also forbade me from seeing the person I like!

"Mr. Tristan—" Before he could get any more words out, he received a reply in the form of the door slamming shut.

It was already two in the afternoon, so Sophie had to leave. Otherwise, she would be late. Therefore, after she talked about a few more things with The Wheelers, she stepped out of the studio.

"I'll send you two back." Mark followed her out. While his band needed to rush the album's progress, he knew it wasn't easy for someone to hail a taxi in that area. As such, he was worried about the girls' safety.

"No need. We can ride a taxi back to school. You should return to the recording."

"Then I'll walk you both out. I'll return after seeing the two of you leave in a taxi," Mark insisted.

Sunny couldn't help but sigh when he saw that. He still can't let it go, huh? What a shame. Mark and Sophie would make for a good couple if not for Tristan's existence. This Tristan is... Ugh... Even I have no idea how to make of this situation.

When the girls and Mark walked out of the studio, they saw Tristan's car parked at the side of the road.



Mark didn't say anything when he saw Tristan.

"Since someone's already here to pick you up, I'll be heading back upstairs now." Mark left before Sophie could say anything.

Seeing him like that made Ysabelle's heart ache.

"Mark's so pitiful, Sophie. He must really like you," she commented. Sadly for him, his love won't come to fruition.

"Let's not talk about this anymore." Sophie believed nothing was certain when it came to feelings.

Tristan opened the door for the girls when he saw them. "Get in. Otherwise, you two won't make it in time."

Ysabelle sat in the back while Sophie sat in the passenger seat.

"I thought you were busy? Why do you have time to drive here?" Sophie was aware of how busy Tristan should be lately. After all, Lombard Group had a big case not too long ago. Many people were trying to get a slice of the pie.

"It's not easy to hail a taxi here, so I've decided to act as your chauffeur." No matter how busy he was, Tristan believed he should take some time to accompany his girlfriend.

Sadly, it seemed that his girlfriend didn't need his company. There were times when he felt he was just a pretend boyfriend.

"Thanks!" Sophie expressed her gratitude politely.

Hearing that made Tristan feel even worse. Isn't it natural for a girlfriend to order her boyfriend around? Why is she still treating me so politely?

While Ysabelle couldn't observe the couple's expressions from behind, she could feel her uncle's helplessness from their conversation. With a girlfriend like Sophie, I guess it's hard not to feel helpless sometimes.

Soon, the car arrived at Jipsdale Premier High's entrance with only five minutes left to spare before the class started.

"We'll be heading inside now." With that, Sophie strode into the school.

"Don't you think Uncle Tristan is rather pitiful, Sophie?" Ysabelle asked.

Sophie stopped in her tracks and turned back to look at her friend. "What makes you say that?"

"You should talk to him for a bit. No matter what, he did come all the way to pick us up and send us here."

"All right. You head in first, then. I'll be with you soon."

Ysabelle nodded. Now that's more like it!

Thus, she went into the building while Sophie returned to Tristan. As expected, the man was still there.

"Why did you turn back? Isn't your class supposed to start soon? Aren't you afraid of being late?" Tristan had stayed because he wanted to stare at her a little longer.

"Are you feeling unhappy, Mr. Tristan?" Sophie asked.

"What makes you say that?" A bit of joy danced in his heart. Has my girlfriend finally noticed how I feel?

"Because Ysabelle said so."

Her words rendered him speechless for a second before he replied, "No, I'm not angry at all. Why would I be? It's not like you did anything to evoke that particular emotion in me."

He's obviously infuriated. Sophie couldn't help but gave him a hug. "Don't overthink it. I'm just too busy lately."

All the rage in Tristan's heart vanished instantly when he got that hug.

He hugged her back tightly. "To be honest, I don't like how busy you are. You're so occupied with The Wheelers lately that you don't spare any time to come see me."

"I was there to supervise them, all right? They are my employees now, so I have to take responsibility for them."

"But I need you to take responsibility for me, too."

"Relax, I will."

"All right, then. You should head inside now. I'll come and pick you up later."

"Got it!"

While I still have things to settle with The Wheelers, it has indeed been a while since I spend time with him. I feel like I'm not doing a good job as a girlfriend. Sophie felt a little guilty when she thought about that.

After the first class ended, a discussion about Willow came up. It had been a while since students in Senior Class 8 talked about her.

"Willow is awesome! She actually got into Sky Media!"

“That's right! Sky Media was the one who initially made The Wheelers famous! They're considered one of the most powerful organizations in the entertainment industry!”

“Willow will no doubt become famous working for them!”

“Don't you have your own agency, Sophie? Willow's your sister, so why didn't you let her join your company?” a bold girl in the class asked.

Having no intention of answering that question, Sophie sprawled on the table and slept.

Just then, Willow passed by Senior Class 8.

She never expected Clayton would want to take her in. Sky Media is a big company! I'm certain I'm going to be famous! Once I enter film school, he'll invest in me and cast me as the female lead of a television show! I bet Sophie didn't want to hire me because she was afraid I'd become popular!

“You're amazing, Willa! I can't believe you managed to get into Sky Media! I'm so jealous!”

“Yeah! I bet your sister didn't want to sign a contract with you because she's afraid you'll become more famous and outstanding than her!”

Willow's sidekicks intentionally raised their voices so that the students in Senior Class 8 would hear them.

Ysabelle couldn't bear listening to that nonsense anymore and snapped, “Do you have a loose screw in

your head? Are you seriously saying Sophie is jealous of Willow? What does she have that's worthy of Sophie's envy? Who do you lot think she is? So what if she got into Sky Media? TS will no doubt crush them!” Willow's a nobody! So why should Sophie sign a contract with her?

“What a joke! Anyone here will tell you that their first choice would be to join Sky Media if they plan to enter the entertainment industry! Tell me, which company do you think they will they pick if they have to choose between TS and the prestigious Sky Media? How can a company that isn't even operational yet be compared to an industry icon? Has TS even made anyone famous yet? It's just an insignificant project of Sophie's! There's nothing amazing about that. As for Sky Media, they have elevated plenty of people into celebrities. There are tons of first-class stars, bands, and idol groups in their company!”

“That's right! Sophie may be an excellent student, but she's incomparable to Mr. Zales in terms of running a company! Everyone knows he's an entertainment mogul in Jipsdale. There's no one in this world that he can't make popular!”

“I think so, too! Besides, The Wheelers are way too ungrateful! Sky Media was the one who made them famous, yet they wanted to break their contract with the company.”

“Sophie being capable of taking The Wheelers under her wing means she's no different from them. They may think they're amazing, but they've truly offended Sky Media this time. I bet their new album will flop hard!”

“That's right! Sky Media's new five-man idol group's about to release its new album. You all ought to know that each of the members has their own publicity and a lot of fans. There's no way The Wheelers can win against them!”

“So what? They're just an idol group. That's not impressive at all, considering they're only relying on their pretty faces to succeed.” Ysabelle couldn't bear listening to those insults anymore because she was The Wheelers' die-hard fan.

Thus, she couldn't allow anyone to speak ill of them.

“You know nothing!” the fans of the five-man idol group retorted.

“All right, that's enough. Stop wasting your breath on these people,” Sophie interjected. I know The Wheelers only want to focus on making music. The final result doesn't interest me that much. Besides, I believe in them.

"I'll make you regret your words, Sophie! I'll make sure that your decision not to sign a contract with me will be your biggest loss!" Willow didn't want to hold her emotions back anymore as she had been too aggravated recently. This time, I will fight back!

With disdain shining in her eyes, Ysabelle spat, "Why are you so shameless, Willow? I think your biggest failing is your inability to realize what you're really capable of. How can a person like you become famous?"

"Is that so? We'll see about that!" With that, Willow left with her head held high and her sidekicks in tow.

Meanwhile, Sophie couldn't be bothered to waste any more time on Willow.

"Say, do you think The Wheelers' upcoming album will become popular?" Even though Ysabelle seemed confident in the band earlier, she started worrying about them after she thought about the situation.

After all, they all lived in a world where publicity determined everything. If each member of the five-man idol group has their own following, then it may be difficult for The Wheelers to defeat them.

"Relax, just believe in them. They can pull through. We just need to sit back and let their music do the talking," Sophie replied.

In the following days, the five-man idol group had been doing things that put them on the trending list every day.

When their fans learned they were about to release a new album, they cried about wanting to buy it.

As for The Wheelers, no one had heard anything from them. They simply focused on recording their songs every day without bothering about what was going on in the outside world.

"How about we get the band on the trending list too with money, Sophie?" Ysabelle suggested.

They weren't lacking in funds, and it was still important to create hype before the release of the album.

“We'll talk about that again a few days later. They have been busy lately, so much so that they only sleep for two or three hours a day. They're tired enough. So there's no need to bother them with these trivial matters,” Sophie replied.

Ysabelle fell into deep thought. That's true! Each member of The Wheelers has a particularly high standard for their album's quality. Even though some of their songs already sounded perfect, they still wanted to rerecord them just to achieve a better effect. They're really hardworking. I liked them in the past because their songs are really good. Now that I get to spend time with them, I have learned just how seriously they treat music. Being able to spend time with people like them really makes me happy.

Even though Sophie didn't have much free time as the university entrance exam was nearing, she still made time to visit The Wheelers.

Finally, the release day for The Wheelers' new album had arrived.

After they uploaded the album to the internet, the song Crazy, which was written and composed by Sophie, went viral. It instantly topped the major music charts despite the album having no promotion at all.

As for the five-man idol group under Sky Media, even after the company had hyped the group's album days before the release, the results were still underwhelming compared to The Wheelers' sales.

“What do we do, Mr. Zales? We've spent a ton of money on Freezewave's album! Even though we hired that stylist from Koandria and their theme song was composed by Mr. Valentine, the album still lost to The Wheelers! What do we do now?” an assistant of Clayton informed.

Sky Media had poured pots of gold into the promotion of Freezewave's album, yet the album still failed to achieve its goal.

Naturally, Clayton was very displeased with the result. "What the hell are you all doing? Why is this the result after so much money is spent?"

The assistant didn't dare to utter a word in retort.

Then, they suggested, "How about this, Mr. Zales? We'll do a channel-stuffing!" That was the only way they could think of. No matter what, we can't lose!

"Channel-stuffing?" Clayton hesitated.

However, when the image of The Wheelers acting smugly popped into his mind, he nodded.

"All right, do that then. Remember to be extremely careful with this. If anything goes wrong, you're fired." Frustration was evident in his voice.

The assistant then left to complete their task.

Sitting in the office alone, Clayton threw the folder beside his hand to the ground. What is going on lately? It feels like ever since I crossed Phantom's path, my life has become tumultuous. The company keeps having issues, and even my most profitable asset, Sky Media, has become like this. I refuse to believe that all of this has nothing to do with Phantom.

"I just wanted you to join me, Phantom! Is it really necessary for you to mess with me like this? Once I capture you, I'll make sure you suffer greatly!" Initially, Clayton had planned to get Phantom to work for him.

However, now that things had come to this, all he wanted was to tear Phantom into pieces. I have spent a lot of money to hire the best detective around. So, no matter what, I'll make sure Phantom is brought to light this time!

Sophie was in Tristan's office when the result came out. Naturally, she was happy to see how well the album was doing. I knew it. Regardless of the circumstances, good music will never always triumph



Seeing how happy she was, Tristan pulled her into his embrace. He was jealous.

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"Are you really that happy?" Tristan grumbled. What's so amazing about the album topping the music charts? If I enter the entertainment industry, I can do it too.

Putting down her phone, Sophie smiled. "Of course I'm happy! As I expected, good music won't get buried. Mark and the others are worth it!"

The fact that her company's first album and the title track for it managed to reach the top spot was an excellent achievement worthy of celebrating.

Additionally, that was just the beginning. She believed the other songs would become just as famous in the following days.

"You need to be careful of Clayton. He's a petty man. Since The Wheelers used to belong to him, I doubt he'll let it slide after seeing the band doing so well. The Wheelers is unquestionably a profitable band, and losing a money tree like that no doubt makes Clayton uncomfortable," Tristan warned.

"I know. You don't need to worry about me." It wasn't Sophie's first time dealing with Clayton, after all.

"If you need anything, you must tell me about it, okay?" Tristan wanted to aid her in her battle against Clayton.

"Sure. If I need anything, I'll let you know."

After Sophie returned to school from Lombard Group, she attended an afternoon's worth of classes. When the classes were over, Ysabelle immediately approached her.

"What's wrong?" Sophie promptly realized something was off when she saw her friend's expression.

"Clayton's going overboard, Sophie! He's clearly trying to damage The Wheelers' reputation!"

“What happened?” Sophie was asleep for the whole afternoon, so she had no idea what was going on.

“Take a look yourself!” Immediately afterward, Ysabelle handed over her phone for Sophie to see.

As expected, Clayton had made his move on The Wheelers. People started talking about how the members of The Wheelers used to consume narcotics.

That was very bad because the entertainment industry had zero tolerance for anything related to gambling, drugs, and prostitution. Even though it was just a baseless rumor, it had already affected The Wheelers' spot on the charts.

“Currently, Freezewave's sales have exceeded The Wheelers'! Even worse, the situation is still escalating!” Ysabelle was furious. “Clayton's such a despicable man! He's willing to do anything to achieve his goal! What should we do now, Sophie? I wonder how the band's holding up. We should go check up on them. Anyone's mental state will collapse if they encounter such a thing.”

“Hold on.” After returning the phone to Ysabelle, Sophie pulled out her own phone to call Jonathan.

“Take care of them. Ignore everything else. You can also confiscate all of their phones if need be,” she ordered.

“This matter has severely affected The Wheelers, Ms. Tanner. It must be the work of Clayton because

he's jealous of how well the band is doing. Right now, public relations is very important. We're a new company, so our public relations team's no match for Clayton. There's nothing I can do on my end, too.” Jonathan wasn't a naïve idiot. He had been in the entertainment industry for many years, so he knew how deadly Clayton's tactics were.

“I got it. In any case, just leave this matter to me. All you need to do is to take care of them.”

Sophie's words didn't put Jonathan at ease, as he was genuinely scared of Clayton. "What can you do, Ms. Tanner? Clayton's an entertainment industry mogul! It's as easy as lifting a finger for him to blacklist someone."

"What you all need right now is to calm down. The battle has only just begun and you're throwing in the towel already? How are we going to continue if that's the kind of mentality you have?"

"All right then, Ms. Tanner. If you're unclear about anything, let me know." That was all Jonathan could say.

After all, Sophie was only eighteen years old. He believed she had no idea about the darkness lurking underneath the entertainment industry. Some people cannot be offended. Once they are, they'll make sure to plunge whoever offended them into endless agony. Clayton is someone like that.

After the call ended, Jonathan confiscated The Wheelers' phones.

"What are you doing, Jonathan? We're not greenhorns, you know. Why take our phones away? Is it really necessary?" Sunny protested.

"All you guys need to do right now is to calm down. Although it's true that our title track is popular right

now, there's still a long road ahead. Sophie's still young. You all can't make her worry." Jonathan's words rendered Sunny speechless.

Fine. I'm not that addicted to my phone, anyway. I don't mind if it's taken away from me. Sunny grumbled inwardly.

It seemed that the band members were willing to accept anything whenever Sophie was mentioned.

Meanwhile, after Sophie hung up her phone, she called the manager of TS' Public Relations Department.

It cost her an arm and a leg to hire the department manager because that person knew how to handle stuff like that in the entertainment industry.

“Don't worry, Ms. Sophie. I'm already taking care of the matter. I won't let you down.” The manager had saved many celebrities before, and she could do it again.

“Tell me if you need anything.” Sophie had no reason to doubt the manager's ability as she would never hire someone she was skeptical of.

Thus, she believed the manager would be able to handle the matter.

“All right, Ms. Sophie. If there's nothing else, I'll carry on with my work now,” the manager replied.

There were always two sides to a matter.

While The Wheelers were being vilified, they had also gotten a massive amount of publicity.

Ever since the rumors broke out, The Wheelers had remained trending for days. As long as the truth came out in time, their other songs would surely become popular as well.

“Is everything really going to be okay, Sophie?” It was the first time Ysabelle encountered something like that, so she had no clue if they were going to pull through.

Most importantly, TS was far too young compared to Sky Media. They never thought about vilifying their competitors before.

Just then, Willow arrived with a smug grin on her face. “Did you see the news, Sophie? That's the band you signed a contract with!”

The Wheelers is suffering a crushing defeat under Freezewave's boots right now. Hah! What a useless company TS is. Thank goodness I didn't sign a contract with the company back then. Otherwise, my future would have been doomed.

“What does it matter to you? Why are you here again? Do you crave for attention that much?” It seemed that whenever Ysabelle saw Willow, her battle spirit would soar.

“No, I'm not here for that. By the way, Clayton's treating me very nicely! Even though I haven't even entered a film school yet, he's already letting me star in a web series! Not to mention this web series is adapting a very popular novel.” The reason why Willow was there was that she wanted to show off and laugh at Sophie. “You know, Sophie, there's no need to keep throwing your fortune into the trashcan like this. It's your hard-earned money, after all. I think you should just disband TS. With Sky Media around, there's no way TS can survive in the entertainment industry!”

Ysabelle couldn't help but roll her eyes. This d\*mn woman! Can she stop acting loathsome for once?

“Is that so? In any case, you don't get to say what'll happen to TS! In fact, you should pay more attention to yourself so that you won't get sold out.” While Ysabelle had no idea why Clayton brought Willow in, she was certain he had a hidden agenda for doing so, especially when he specifically sought Willow out. I can't believe she still had the gall to show off in front of me and Sophie when she knew nothing!

## Chapter 337

“A hidden agenda? What kind of hidden agenda could I possibly have? Sophie, I know what you're doing. you're trying to drive a wedge between us because you're jealous of me. I won't believe you.”

I'm sure Sophie said that because she's afraid that I'll become more famous than her. Of course, Clayton signed the contract with me because I'm talented! Why does he have to spend that much money if that isn't the case?

“Sophie, you've got to stop spouting nonsense just because you're jealous. People will look down on you for that, you know?” Willow said with disdain.

“D\*mn, what's wrong with you? Are you suffering from persecutory delusional disorder? Do you really think you have what it takes for Sophie to be jealous of you? Why would anyone be jealous of you? Are you telling me that she's jealous of your stupidity?” Ysabelle snapped after she couldn't take it anymore.

“Come on, let's go. Don't waste time talking to her.”

Sophie had to make a trip to TS at once.

“Okay.”

With that, Sophie and Ysabelle left, leaving Willow behind.

There was no way Willow would listen to anything Ysabelle had to say at that point in time.

Then, she took a taxi and went to Sky Media since she still had matters to talk to Clayton about.

All she could think of at that time was to become famous and make Clayton fall for her.

He signed the contract with me because I hold a place in his heart, right? If he's that fond of me, how can I possibly let this opportunity slip by?

When she reached Sky Media, however, the receptionist wouldn't even allow her to go to Clayton's office.

“What's the meaning of this? I'm one of the artists under Sky Media. I want to see Mr. Zales! Is there a problem with that?” Willow was enraged. They're clearly looking down on me!

“I'm sorry. Hundreds of women wish to see Mr. Zales every day. We can't possibly let them all in.”

It was such a daily happening that the receptionists had gotten used to it.

Do these women really think they can seduce Mr. Zales just because they have somewhat decent looks?

“You—”

In that instant, Clayton walked out with a group of people.

Willow dashed toward him the moment she saw him.

“Clayton, do you mind helping me out? There are a few things that I can't figure out.” The woman

immediately put on a pitiful look the moment she saw him. The arrogant air she had put on a second ago disappeared almost instantly.

“Gosh! I can't believe such a shameless person actually exists!”

“Oh, please! You've seen all kinds of people the moment you started working here. What's the point of still getting worked up?”

Initially, Clayton was annoyed to see Willow and planned to ignore her, but when he thought about Sophie, he repressed his impatience and concealed it with an amicable smile.

“Sure, but I'm a little busy at the moment! How about this? Wait for me here, and I'll explain it to you a little later,” he said with an exceptionally gentle tone.

“All right. If that's the case, I won't bother you for now. Go on. I'll wait here.” Extremely pleased with how Clayton treated her, Willow threw a triumphant glance at the receptionists.

At a loss for words, the receptionists could only roll their eyes in annoyance.

She's obviously a vixen! What does Mr. Zales see in her anyway?

Alas, Willow waited for two whole hours, but Clayton still hadn't returned as promised.

The few receptionists couldn't hold back their laughter.

Wasn't she so smug before this? Where's her arrogance now? I bet Mr. Zales has completely forgotten that she's waiting for him!

Willow looked at her phone as she thought about calling him. However, she was worried that she would disturb his work and end up upsetting him.

He must've forgotten about me because he's too busy.

She hadn't even had lunch as she remained at the same spot, waiting for Clayton. Although she wanted to leave, she was concerned that he might be back after she left.

"Miss, I think you should leave," said one of the receptionists, who couldn't bear watching anymore.

Willow glared at the receptionist.

"Mind your own business! You're jealous of me, aren't you? What right do you have to ask me to leave when Clayton told me to wait here?" Willow was dead-set on staying. I don't care! I'm going to stay here and wait for him! No matter what it takes, I must let Clayton know about my feelings for him. I don't care what price I have to pay. As long as I can get married to a rich man, all the ridicule and mockery I suffer right now would be worth it!

Entering the entertainment industry was only her stepping stone to marrying into a wealthy family.

That was why she agreed to sign the contract with Clayton without hesitation when she found out that the latter had the intention of doing so.

"Suit yourself. I'm not the one who's wasting my time, anyway," said the receptionist, ignoring Willow after that.

In actuality, Willow wasn't the only one who came to Sky Media and waited for Clayton. Countless people waited to meet him every day.



Most women who came were charming, as they thought they could put their looks to good use and win the man's favor.

However, it was merely wishful thinking.

Almost every woman dreamed to get married to a rich man.

However, after seeing so many women like Willow waiting for what turned out to be nothing more than a damp squib, the receptionists finally understood that not everyone was fated to get married to a wealthy man.

Meanwhile, Sophie and Ysabelle had arrived at TS.

TS was situated on the most bustling street in Jipsdale. The land was extremely expensive there, and the rent was ridiculously high.

It was Ysabelle's first time going there, so she was surprised when she saw how big the building was.

“Sophie, you'd better be honest with me. Where did you get all this money from?”

Words eluded Sophie when she saw her friend's exaggerated reaction.

What's wrong with me having some allowance?

“It's not exactly a lot of money. Besides, these are necessary investments for the artists of TS. I want the public to be envious of them.” That was why in terms of substantial resources, she must give her artists the best experience imaginable.

Ysabelle couldn't help giving Sophie a thumbs-up.

“Sophie, do you really think I can do it?” Ysabelle asked. Ever since she dreamed to become a singer, she had never wavered. She had always put in efforts to improve herself. Even if she was the daughter of the Lombard family, she never thought of using her status to achieve her dreams.

However, when she saw how The Wheelers were slandered despite the success of their album and the popularity of their song, she was no longer sure if she had what it took to become a celebrity.

Most importantly, she wasn't sure if she could handle such matters.

Sophie stopped in her tracks.

“I can help you with anything, but first, you've got to convince yourself mentally. If you think you can't do it, you won't be able to succeed even if I provide you with the best team and resources.” That was the truth. Although Ysabelle was Sophie's best friend, she couldn't help Ysabelle if the latter didn't believe in herself.

Ysabelle nodded.

“Okay. I get it. Don't worry. I'll take the time to think it through and decide if I really wish to become a singer.”

Sophie wasn't fooling around.

TS Entertainment was truly professional.

Sophie was about to go upstairs to look for the manager in charge of public relations when she bumped into Mark and the others who had walked out of the training room.

“Why are you here, Sophie? Are you here to reward us for our hard work?” Sunny asked excitedly when he saw her.

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Jonathan knew Sophie didn't want Mark and the others to know about the matter, so he still had their phones with him.

Thus, Jonathan didn't know what to say when Sunny asked such a question.

Right now, the Public Relations Department is still handling the matter. It's their first time dealing with such matters, so I wonder if they can handle it properly.

As the manager of The Wheelers, he was genuinely worried.

Even so, there was nothing he could do.

"Yeah, I'm here to see you guys. You've worked hard lately!" Sophie changed the topic.

Sunny walked to her side.

"Since you're here to reward us, why didn't you bring anything delicious for us? You should bring tasty food with you every time you come to see us!"

Something's not right. Our album is selling like hotcakes right now, but she didn't bring us anything tasty.

"Okay then. I'll treat all of you to a nice meal later. What's next on your schedule?" she asked Jonathan.

With that, Jonathan reported The Wheelers' upcoming schedule to her.

"Okay. Please carry on."

"Guys, wait for me. I have to talk to Ms. Tanner in private," Jonathan said to the members of The Wheelers.

“Jonathan, what do you need to say to Sophie that we can't know about? You're our manager, aren't you? So, what you do must have something to do with us,” said Sunny after sensing something was wrong.

Our career is going smoothly right now, but at the same time, I feel restless. How is it possible for Clayton to sit by without doing anything when we're so successful? There's no way he'll let us off the hook so easily.

“What are you saying, Sunny? It's nothing important. We're on the top of the major music charts right now. You saw it yourself earlier, didn't you?” Jonathan, panicking, spoke nervously.

Sunny didn't know how to respond.

Yeah, he's right. We topped the music charts this morning, so I guess I'm overthinking things. No matter what, Clayton is a big shot in the entertainment industry too. He won't mess with our band on purpose, right?

Worried that they were going to find out soon, Jonathan could only say to Mark, “Mark, bring them to the car and wait for me there, okay?”

Mark nodded and left with the other four members.

Worry filled Jonathan's face the moment The Wheelers left.

“Ms. Tanner, we can't let this go on any longer. If we don't do anything about it, things will really get out of hand!” Ms. Tanner's still young, so there are a lot of things she doesn't understand.

“Jonathan, I told you. All you need to do is take good care of them. I can handle this. Just trust me on this, will you?”

I've hired the best PR manager out there. Before we found out about this, my PR manager has already come up with a set of solutions to deal with it.

"I trust you, but I think you don't understand what Clayton's really like. Right now, the band from his company and our company have released an album at the same time. Besides, our band's album is a bigger hit than his. Given how despicable he is, he will definitely not let this slide."

Although he used to work for Sky Media in the past, he didn't like Clayton since the latter was too ruthless.

They wouldn't be able to deal with him at all.

"I get it. I'm going to see the manager of the PR department now. I assure you that all of this will be over tomorrow. Besides, the next few songs of The Wheelers will definitely be a hit too."

Seeing how calm Sophie was despite everything that was going on, Jonathan didn't know what else to say.

Am I really too timid?

However, he had been the manager of several celebrities. Therefore, he knew how bad the situation could get better than anyone else.

Nevertheless, when he saw the confidence in Sophie's eyes, he couldn't help believing that she could really do it.

"All you need to do now is to comfort every single one of them. They still don't know about it yet. It's best to keep it that way. But even if they did find out, I'm sure they can handle it."

Since she had worked with The Wheelers for a long time, she understood their personality.

"Okay!"

Jonathan then went out to meet Mark and the others. When they saw him, they didn't say anything. Only when Mark was alone with Jonathan did the former finally ask, "So, what exactly happened?"

Jonathan laughed it off. "Mark, you're overthinking things. What can possibly happen? None of you have done anything you shouldn't have, so no one can have anything against you."

"Jonathan, I'm not a kid anymore. You've never taken our phones away from us before. Just tell me. No matter what happens, I can take it."

Jonathan was at a loss for words.

Mark's too smart. If he wasn't a singer, I'm sure he'll definitely become a scientist or something.

"Tell me. I won't say anything to them."

With that, Jonathan related the whole incident to him.

"That's all. You don't have to worry about it. Let's leave it to the PR department to handle the rest."

"Okay. You should bring them back and get some rest. I'll go talk to Sophie." No matter what, Mark was the leader of The Wheelers, so he had to help Sophie shoulder the responsibilities too.

He knew Sophie was having a meeting with the PR department when he got back to TS, so he waited outside.

Ysabelle saw him return. Seeing the expression on his face, she knew that he had heard about what happened.

"Don't worry, Mark. Sophie said she knows what to do."

It's not a big deal. Even if Sophie can't deal with it, I could always look for Uncle Tristan. He'll surely help.

"I'm fine. Would you like a cup of coffee? I'll go get one for you," Mark offered. Ysabelle didn't enter the conference room with Sophie, so she was waiting for Sophie too.

"No, no. I'll go," Ysabelle volunteered.

Without waiting for Mark to say anything, she dashed toward the pantry.

Mark was overwhelmed by guilt.

It's all our fault. None of this would've happened to Sophie's new company if it weren't for us. She's just a young lady. She didn't need to bear any of this.

The meeting lasted for more than an hour.

"Don't worry, Ms. Tanner. I'll make sure to deal with this perfectly," said Xandra Yandell, the manager of the PR department, smiling.

No matter what happened, Xandra always had a smile on her face.

"I trust you. If I didn't, I wouldn't have hired you." No one other than the members of Sophie's company knew that the manager of TS Entertainment's PR department was Xandra, who had disappeared from the entertainment industry for three years.

In the past three years, countless entertainment companies tried scouting for her.

Sophie, on the other hand, effortlessly discovered Xandra and managed to get the latter to willingly work in TS Entertainment.

"Ms. Tanner, remember to prepare for a grand celebration dinner after this is over!" Xandra said confidently.

So what if the opponent's Sky Media? Hah! They're no match for me!

Sophie couldn't help giggling when she saw Xandra's carefree demeanor.

"Xandra, this is what I like about you!" Xandra had never let anything get to her.

"Likewise." If it hadn't been for Sophie, Xandra wouldn't have reappeared in the entertainment industry.

## Chapter 339

Ysabelle immediately stood up when she saw people coming out of the conference room.

However, there was no sight of Sophie.

"Oh dear, I hope she's all right. I must admit the problem at hand is rather tricky. If she can't settle it, I can always ask Uncle Tristan for help." Worrying about Sophie, Ysabelle unknowingly babbled on and forgot that Mark was behind her.

Turning around and seeing Mark's emotionless face, she became a little embarrassed.

"Mark, I didn't mean anything else by that. It's just..." Ysabelle tried to explain herself but was stuck for words.

How should I say it? It just sounds wrong no matter how I put it!

"It's fine. You don't need to explain anything to me." Mark's response was brief. His attitude toward people had always been aloof since he did not see the need to connect with them. Sophie was an exception.

Sophie spotted Mark as she exited the conference room.



He should know about it, right? Well, given his astuteness, it's very likely that he must have sensed something was amiss.

Sophie approached Mark.

Before she could say anything, Mark consoled her, "Sophie, if this is too tough, just let it go. It's our dream so we will work on it ourselves. There's no need for you to suffer for us."

"Mark, I'm also a part of The Wheelers, all right? Moreover, since TS Entertainment is my company and now that the band is managed by us, how can I just leave you all in the lurch? Unless you don't trust me to be able to handle this matter?"

Mark never thought of it that way. It was not that he did not trust her; he was worried that she would be hurt fighting alone.

"I just don't want any one of us to cause you to have a difficult time," Mark said concerningly.

Sophie laughed. "Don't worry! Nobody can hurt me. The pitiful one will be Clayton." Sophie would not let anybody who dared to touch her people off easily.

"Well, you better go back now. They'll start to be suspicious if you're gone for too long. Don't let any of the members feel burdened." Sophie did not want Mark to think too much and thus quickly ended the conversation.

"Okay." Mark did not say anything more. Seeing how confident Sophie was, he did not want to sound too discouraging.

Meanwhile, The Wheelers were supposed to appear on a few music shows for publicity but had since been canceled due to the scandal.

Like a cat on hot bricks, Jonathan was extremely anxious.

Now that The Wheelers were denied publicity opportunities, were they really doomed this time?

“Mark, don't worry too much. Even if we fail this time, I'm sure there'll be another opportunity.” Jonathan tried to comfort Mark, although it sounded more like he was comforting himself.

Judging from the current situation, it was virtually impossible for them to turn the tables.

Leaning against the window, Mark stared blankly at the scenery outside. He had not spoken a word since parting with Sophie.

Having been in the entertainment industry for so many years, he had seen all sorts of stuff. As a result, he was not a person who would lose sleep over incidents like this.

The truth was, he was not afraid of failure.

But this time was different. Sophie was involved, and that spurred his desire for this project to be successful.

This was their first collaboration ever since Sophie left.

It would be a lie to say that Mark did not care about the project at all.

On the other hand, in comparison to the dire state The Wheelers were in, Freezewave was having a field day.

They participated in a few big music shows, and their album even climbed to the number one spot on the best-selling chart.

The Freezewave members were elated with how things were panning out for them.

“I was thinking about what was so great about The Wheelers and why everyone was fussing over them. Turns out they're not all that at all.”

“Yeah! It's all their fans' doing; they have over-immortalized them.”

“All right, you'd better shut your mouths. Just look at yourselves. You think you're any better than them?” As the conversation among the members went on, Clayton's face blackened. “All of you listen right up. Did you think you achieved all these results because of your abilities? No. All these were made possible because I used money. So you all better behave yourselves these few days and don't get into trouble.” Clayton directly bruised their ego.

I used money to manipulate the charts and they thought it was due to their own credit? Where did they even get the confidence? Freezewave is a bunch of freaking losers.

The Freezewave members were not happy with how Clayton talked them down.

Nonetheless, he was their financial backer; they could only swallow their displeasure in silence.

Clayton returned to the company to find Willow still waiting there.

“Clayton, what took you so long to come back? I've been waiting here for the whole afternoon,” Willow whined with a pitiful look in her eyes. Fearing that Clayton would come back any moment, she ordered delivery for dinner and did not dare to step away, not even to use the restroom.

Clayton furrowed his brows. Clearly, he did not want to deal with Willow right now. “Willow, as a student in your senior year, you should be studying now. Why did you even come here?”

“I'm sorry, Clayton. Am I bothering you?” Willow did not understand why there was a sudden change in his mood.

Clayton did not feel like responding to Willow. The past few days had been tough on him.

Earlier on, Clayton left with a group of people, leaving Willow to wait for a few hours there. Yet, instead of showing concern, all he did was question why she was at the company.

Willow was upset but there was nothing she could do.

She decided to leave in case anyone saw them and decided to make a mockery out of her.

In the evening, Tristan and the rest were having dinner at Blossom Garden. The four of them were waiting for Sophie and Ysabelle even though they were all busy people.

“Mr. Tristan, Sophie has been very busy lately, huh!” Felix could not help but complain. When Sophie got busy, it meant that Ysabelle was busy as well. It was challenging for him to find an opportunity to meet Ysabelle because of this.

“I'm afraid so.” Tristan was pretty upset too.

They finally managed to sort out their relationship after so much hardship. Yet, so much had happened right after they got together that she hardly had the time to pay attention to him. So how could he not

be upset?

“You should really keep her in check, Mr. Tristan. What's a girl doing wearing herself out like that?” Felix continued to lament.

Tristan immediately shot him a deadly look. “Felix, are you telling me how I should manage my relationship with my girlfriend?”

Felix kept quiet but silently grumbled in his heart.

It's not as if I like to be nosy. I couldn't care less about your matters with Sophie. But you got to put yourself in my shoes and understand my predicament! There has been no progress between Ysabelle and me; you can't blame me for being anxious!

"In all seriousness, is Sophie able to handle this case? She may be a smart girl, but sometimes you still need the experience. Don't forget Clayton has been in the industry for a long time. The man's a sly old fox! It's not as if we don't know what he's capable of," Charles commented while lighting a cigarette.

"All right. The girls are coming soon; you shouldn't smoke," Tristan quickly dismissed the topic and gestured for Charles to put out the cigarette.

It was Charles' turn to be speechless.

"Mr. Tristan, aren't you spoiling them too much? They're not even here yet." Charles remembered Tristan used to be a smoker himself. Even then, Charles did not continue to argue as he proceeded to stub out the cigarette.

"Whatever it is, if you need help, just let me know." Sean had been quiet until now. He never liked joining discussions, and that day was no exception either.

"I also wish Sophie would allow me to help her, but whenever I ask her, she always insists she's doing fine," Tristan lamented with a resigned look on his face.

"So why did you choose to fall in love with such a super independent girl anyway? You won't feel any sense of accomplishment from being with her, you know," Felix could not resist chiming in again. He was still sore about how Tristan was not letting his relationship progress.

"Felix, is this how a man should talk? I didn't know you needed to derive your sense of achievement from a woman." Tristan snorted defensively. What a joke. Since I went through so much to win Sophie's heart, how can I let anyone talk about her like that? Not on my watch!

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"All right! I was wrong. I shouldn't have talked." There was nothing he could do. No matter what others said, Tristan would not listen anyway.

At that moment, the door opened. Sophie and Ysabelle entered together.

“Felix, what are you talking about again? Are you speaking ill of Sophie?” After Ysabelle stepped in, she pulled a chair, sat down, poured a glass of water, and drank it. She was parched.

“Ysabelle, is that how you think of me?”

“Yes,” Ysabelle was rather rude as she replied without hesitation, making one want to smack her.

Tristan pulled a chair for Sophie and handed her a glass of water after she sat down.

Sophie was thirsty too and had two sips.

“Sorry for keeping everyone waiting so long.” As it was not easy to deal with the problem with The Wheelers, she had to be there personally.

“What are you saying? We didn't wait long anyway,” said Tristan.

Charles kept quiet. Didn't we wait here for an hour? How is that not a long time? Forget it. Regardless, I'm okay with anything as long as Mr. Tristan is happy. After waiting for so long, I can finally have a meal.

“Sophie, do you need my help?” asked Sean, who was able to help out in the matter as he was best at handling lawsuits.

Charles took a glance at Sean. What is this brat thinking? Why did he suddenly offer to help?

“I do. Thank you.” Sophie was being frank too. She had planned to sue Clayton the next day and would need a lawyer. “Any lawyer from your law firm will do. I don't want to trouble you with such a case.”

“Don't mention it.”

She just asked for Sean's help. Why doesn't she need my help then?

Tristan felt slightly disappointed, not knowing how to describe his dismay.

After the meal, everyone headed home respectively.

On the way back, Sophie noticed Tristan was not in a good mood.

“What's wrong? Are you angry? I don't think I have done anything to make you mad!”

One would wonder what kind of girlfriend she was upon thinking about how she could not tell he was angry.

“You are willing to accept Sean's help, so why wouldn't you let me help you then?”

“That's because he's a lawyer.” Is it necessary to be mad about this too? There's no need for it at all.

“Just because he's a lawyer? But I can help you in other ways too. For example, I can deal with Clayton.”

“Mr. Tristan...” Sophie had no idea what to say anymore. “I'm being serious. If I need your help, I will surely ask you, but someone from the Public Relations Department is already taking care of this matter. You...”

Such a thing was bound to happen sooner or later when she decided to establish an entertainment company.

There was no point in setting up a company if she needed his help with everything.

“Hmm? What about me?” Tristan didn't think there was anything wrong with him.

My request is not too much to ask for, right?

Sophie held his hand.

“There, there. Stop being mad, okay?” This was the most she could do.

He sighed.

Naturally, Tristan couldn't say anything else at that.

Seeing his girlfriend behaving like this, he could only suck it up regardless.

There was still more chances to teach Clayton a lesson anyway.

After returning to Wisteria Apartments, Sophie lay on the couch immediately and didn't feel like moving.

Tristan took out a honeydew from the fridge and sliced a few pieces for her.

During dinner earlier, she didn't eat much.

As Sophie looked at the sliced honeydew, the corner of her lips curled upward without her realizing it.

He was a guy who would still take good care of her no matter how mad he was.

Without a doubt, she was pretty lucky to meet a man like him in such a turbulent society.



“Thank you.”

“I don't wish to hear those two words. I would be happier if you could change them to something else.”

“To what? Love you?”

Sophie had a sudden urge to mess with him.

Upon hearing those words, Tristan felt excited and immediately sat down next to her.

“Can you say it one more time? Make it a statement and not a question,” suggested Tristan.

At his remark, Sophie burst out laughing.

The way Tristan behaved now was adorable.

“What do you want me to say again?” Sophie acted dumb as she wanted to see more of his current expression.

Tristan then pulled her into his arms and placed his head on her shoulder.

“You meanie. How could you be so cheeky? You know very well what I want to hear, don't you? Since you do, why can't you say it right away? Are you happy to see me sad?”

Sophie was rendered speechless.

Everything's my fault then.

“All right, all right. Please say it one more time.”

Seeing him like that, Sophie inched closer and whispered in his ear, "Love you."

Finally, he heard what he always wanted to hear.

Tristan was overwhelmed with joy.

The excitement was far greater than when he managed to sign deals worth millions.

He pinned her onto the couch and kissed her passionately, making her feel his deep love for her.

He could do nothing about her except coax, love, and pamper her.

No matter how much he had done, he only wished for her to stay safe and sound by his side.

Sophie felt dizzy from his kisses.

It turns out the infamous Mr. Tristan is so easy to please.

The way he behaved made her feel very sorry for him.

She wondered how he could be so humble in front of her.

Meanwhile, Clayton thought Sky Media had done an excellent job. Besides, The Wheelers were entirely crushed by him for now.

How dare they wish to remain in the entertainment industry after leaving Sky Media? Do they really think I am that big of a pushover? Well, it's not that they can't leave. If they had left the entertainment industry for good and did not stand in my way, I could have lived with that.

Feeling smug, Clayton exited Sky Media with his assistant.

Suddenly, Sunny stood in their way.

“Clayton, you are truly despicable and shameless. I have never met someone as outrageous as you.” After Sunny finished talking, he threw a punch.

They had finally managed to leave and reunite with Sophie.

Yet, Clayton wanted to ruin all of it, so how could he put up with it?

“Sunny, have you lost your mind?” Clayton's assistant immediately grabbed Sunny.

As Sunny used to be like a school bully, there was no way Clayton's assistant could hold him still.

Clayton was not a pushover too.

“Let him go,” said Clayton to his assistant.

“Clayton.” His assistant had no idea what Clayton was thinking.

“Since he wants to start a fight, I shall have a round with him.”

With that, Clayton took off his coat right away.

Sunny glared at Clayton.

“Clayton, I will make you pay today.” As soon as Sunny said that, he made a move.

Clayton was the successor to the Zales family; naturally, he had learned how to fight.

Moreover, his skills were better than Sunny's. In a split second, Sunny was beaten to a pulp.

Still, Sunny refused to give up. He wrapped his arms around Clayton's waist and tried to hit the latter

against the wall.

No matter what, there was no way he would let Clayton off easily.