

## **Pursuing 361**

### **Chapter 361**

“Charles isn't an annoying person. It doesn't matter even if he's Winter's brother. As long as he didn't do anything that upset me, it's fine.”

Charles would naturally be biased toward Winter. He was her elder brother, so it was understandable.

He merely mentioned it briefly, but she immediately understood what he meant. How impressive! She can read the situation so well all the time.

“You don't need to put up with anyone. Just tell them off as long as you're not pleased, okay?” He still did not want her to feel aggrieved even if it were him.

“Okay.”

Tristan adored her whenever he saw her behave obediently.

How can two such different personalities coexist within one person? When she's cold, she will not even acknowledge her closest kin. But when she's obedient, she can melt my heart completely. This girl is really my precious love.

“Why are you looking at me like that?” The look of obsession in his eyes made her feel uneasy.

Tristan bent down and kissed the corner of her lips.

“I can't help myself!”

Although he did not want to gaze at her with naked desire in his eyes in such a setting, he always failed

to control himself whenever he was with her.

When Sophie heard what he said, she immediately felt shy.

Despite her efforts to stop herself from looking so shy, her cheeks kept blushing.

Tristan didn't even say much! He merely said that he can't help himself, so why am I overreacting here?

Even her ears and cheeks were burning.

When Tristan saw her reaction, he could not help but laugh and kiss her forehead.

Ysabelle was jealous when she saw their interaction.

Sitting there, she chewed on some nuts.

It was not her intention to witness such a passionate scene. Initially, she planned to speak to Sophie, but she ended up seeing that spicy exchange.

How can there be such a vast difference between the two of us? When can I meet someone whom I like?

Ysabelle sighed.

"Felix, am I ugly?" Ysabelle was starting to doubt herself.

Felix instantly raised his head when he heard that.

"What are you talking about? How can you be ugly? You're gorgeous!"

"If I'm gorgeous, why isn't anyone pursuing me?" If someone is pursuing me, I would still have a choice. However, there's absolutely no one approaching me! This is too pathetic.

When Sean and Charles heard what she said, they laughed and exchanged a meaningful glance.

Felix glared at them.

"That's because they are blind! All right, stop overthinking. You're about to take your university entrance exam soon, right? You'll meet all sorts of boys when you enter university!" consoled Felix.

What a joke! How can I ever let Ysabelle find out that I've eliminated all the guys who intended to pursue her? What would she do if she found out? I don't even dare to imagine it.

"Charles, you have so many girlfriends, so analyze this situation for me! Why don't I have any luck with guys?"

Ysabelle was still unconvinced by Felix.

"Do you really want to know?" asked Charles matter-of-factly.

Ysabelle nodded immediately.

"Looks like even our little Ysabelle wants to date someone!" exclaimed Charles. "We watched you grow

up, after all. Time flies! Even that little girl from the past is already thinking of getting into a relationship!"

Felix is really a coward. Look at Tristan! In comparison, Felix is so pathetic.

"Of course! I'm at the age to start dating, right?" Ysabelle stared at Charles eagerly.

Felix pulled Ysabelle aside.

“Don't listen to his nonsense! Even though he's got so many women around him, have you seen him with a girlfriend before? Has he genuinely fallen in love with any girl before? How can you listen to advise from people like him?” Felix panicked.

He must not let Charles lead Ysabelle astray.

Charles became unhappy when he heard what Felix said.

“What do you mean, Felix? Do you have something against me? You're too much!”

Even if he had a lot of women around him, there was nothing he could do.

He just wooed all of them because he did not want them to feel sad.

It was not his fault at all.

Felix snorted disdainfully.

A rare smile appeared on Sean's face. “All right, Charles. Felix is right. You shouldn't teach her the wrong things.”

Everyone knew that Felix was the reason why Ysabelle could not get into a relationship. However, she must not find out about that now.

“Even you are saying those things about me! Looks like there's no point in continuing this friendship! None of you understand my reasons!” Charles was speechless.

He just did not want those women to feel too lonely.

Since they also possessed something that he wanted, he would naturally go along with them.

It was a mutually beneficial situation, so he could not be faulted.

At nine the next morning, Tristan brought Sophie to the court. Since it was the first day of the trial, she had specially taken leave from school.

“Mr. Tristan, why don't you go back first? I can just stay here alone.” Sean and the rest should be arriving soon.

“It's fine. I don't have anything important happening today, so I'll just stay here with you.” Since this matter involved Clayton, he could not let her stay there alone.

When Tristan held Sophie's hand, she turned around and glanced at him.

Ever since she got to know him, he would arrange everything so well whenever they were together.

There was no need for her to worry.

Before entering the court, they bumped into Clayton and his legal team.

He had brought quite a few people with him as if that would bring him a greater sense of security.

Sophie was satisfied when she saw him coming as instructed.

“Good Morning, Mr. Zales!” greeted Sophie. However, he deserved everything for he had dug his own grave.

"Can't we settle this on our own, Ms. Tanner? You can just raise any terms you want! There's no need to stir up so much trouble," said Clayton exasperatedly.

Things had not been going well for him recently.

He could not sleep for the entire night because he did not know what awaited him the next day. It was a torturous feeling.

Tristan glanced at Clayton.

"If you dared to beat Sunny up like that, you'll definitely need to pay the price. See you at the trial!"

Unwilling to waste any more time with him, Tristan brought Sophie into the building.

Clayton stared at their backs.

"F\*ck!" He was on the brink of rage. "You'd better perform well for this lawsuit. Otherwise, don't even think about going home!"

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"Clayton, it's not that we don't want to give it our best but we're going up against Sean!"

Everyone in the legal industry knew about Sean, and he had won every case of his.

In the face of such an opponent, it didn't matter how many lawyers they had.

"What? You guys are a bunch of incompetent trash!" Clayton roared.

Tristan then brought Sophie in. True enough, Sean was already inside. When they went in, he was organizing his documents.

Sunny was also there.

Although his injury had almost healed, he remained hospitalized because of his hand.

Sophie approached Sean and uttered politely, "Thank you, Sean."

Sean stopped what he was doing and lifted his gaze toward Sophie. "No worries! It's just a small case."

Indeed, it was a simple case for him.

"Good luck!" Tristan patted Sean on the shoulder.

In response, Sean looked at him in bafflement. What is he doing? I didn't even see him acting this way when I was working on the major lawsuit for Lombard Group back then.

"Thank you, Sophie." Sunny was incredibly grateful to Sophie for everything she was doing for him.

"Actually, I..."

"Sunny, don't worry about it. No one can bully anyone close to me. So what if the bully is Clayton?" Sophie responded.

In fact, even if they were to come up against Nicholas, she would still make him pay.

Shortly after, the trial began.

There really wasn't much suspense in the lawsuit. As a result, the trial ended within an hour.

Clayton was said to have beaten up the other party, and the judge delivered the verdict accordingly.

He was guilty of assault by beating!

He was even ordered to compensate Sunny.

However, Sunny only demanded that Clayton pay him a nominal sum. Due to how everything played out, Sunny ended up on the list of trending searches on the internet. On the other hand, Clayton became the joke of Jipsdale.

Besides, Clayton was ordered to apologize to Sunny by issuing a public apology.

Needless to say, Sophie was satisfied with the outcome.

When they exited the court, there were reporters all over the place. As expected, they went after Sunny for interviews the moment they saw him.

One reporter asked, "Sunny, why did you only want him to pay you a nominal sum? You were hospitalized for quite a while! You should've demanded more from him!"

"What I want isn't money. Instead, I wanted justice!" Sunny smiled.

His smile was filled with warmth.

Prior to that, Sunny never smiled much, so that was the first time the reporters had seen him smile.

"That's right! Clayton is really despicable! How dare he beat you up so badly!" The Wheelers' fans had gathered there when they heard about the outcome of the lawsuit.

At that moment, a lot of people at the scene were cheering Sunny's name.

Sunny saw them and halted in his tracks to greet them. "Hi! Go home, everyone! This matter is finally over. I promise everyone I won't be as impulsive anymore in the future! I'm terribly sorry for the fact that everyone had to worry about me!" With that, he bowed and apologized.

Hearing those words, countless fans were sobbing at the scene. How is our idol so thoughtful and mature when he's only nineteen? This is all Clayton's fault!

"We love you, Sunny!" the fans shouted.

"Don't worry, Sunny! This is only the beginning. From now on, The Wheelers' fans will boycott Zales Corporation."

Sunny bowed again and said, "Thank you for the love you've shown me, everyone. I won't let you guys down." He bowed once more before putting on his face mask and getting into the car with the security's help.

Seeing that Sunny had left, the reporters approached Sophie to interview her.

"Ms. Tanner, you've gotten justice for Sunny this time around. Are you satisfied with how everything played out?"

Right when all the reporters thought Sophie wasn't going to answer the question, she paused in her tracks, turned toward the camera, and said into the microphone, "I was merely seeking justice on behalf of Sunny! Also, I'm sure everyone here knows what's right and what's not. From now on, I hope that Mr. Zales would leave all the artists from TS Entertainment alone! I don't wish to see any of my artists getting harmed!"

Upon hearing how protective she was of the members of The Wheelers, The Wheelers' fans started chanting her name as well.

After all, the eighteen-year-old girl had just defended their idol's dignity.

If not for her, none of them would've known about what happened.

“Sophie! Sophie! Sophie!” the fans chanted.

Clayton came out of the court and felt utterly helpless when he saw how everything had turned out.

At that moment, he just wanted to leave silently.

However, the reporters quickly went up to him and surrounded him when they saw him coming out. Naturally, they wanted to interview him, too.

“Mr. Zales, what do you think about how things have turned out? Will you still give the members of The Wheelers a hard time in the future?”

“Mr. Zales, please answer our question. Also, Sky Media's artists are asking for their contracts to be terminated. What are you guys going to do about it?”

“Will the other entities owned by Zales Corporation face identical problems?”

Clayton brought his security guards along, so they blocked the reporters.

Clayton didn't want to answer any of the questions. At that precise moment, he just wanted to leave as soon as possible.

Although the security guards were able to block the reporters off, they couldn't control the agitated fans. A lot of the fans were throwing eggs and rotten vegetables at Clayton.

All of a sudden, the scene turned chaotic.

The people around Clayton tried to provide him cover, but there were just too many fans around.

Consequently, they were all covered with eggs and rotten vegetables.

While doing that, the fans shouted, "Boycott Sky Media! Boycott the bloodsucking capitalists!"

"Are you all right?"

Right after Wilbur asked that question, an egg landed on Clayton's face, and it was flowing down his face.

Clayton wiped it away, but his expression was extremely gloomy.

As a matter of fact, he was on the verge of losing his temper.

Right after that, he spotted Sophie, who was in the car, and their gazes met. He wanted nothing more than to rip her to shreds. I wouldn't be in such a pathetic situation if not because of her! This is all her fault. How dare she do this to me?

Sophie sneered when she saw the mess he was in. You wanted trouble with me, right? Let's see if you're capable of handling me!

"Let's go!" Sophie said to Tristan, who was driving.

Naturally, Tristan saw the stare-down between Clayton and Sophie. It seems like he hasn't learned his lesson yet.

"The car is here, Clayton. Hop in!" Wilbur immediately brought Clayton into the car. The moment Clayton got into the car, he lost his composure.

"What were you guys doing?" he scolded. He had never been so embarrassed before.

"We did our best, Clayton. Those fans are crazy!" That was all Wilbur could say in response.

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Obviously, Clayton was enraged. F\*ck! I've never been in such a pathetic state before. I'm an influential man in Jipsdale, but the fans had just humiliated me. The worst thing is that I can't even take my revenge because there were too many of them. I don't even know who threw the egg at me. I can't possibly take revenge on everyone, can I?

"Clayton, this is all Sophie's fault. Don't worry. We'll surely go after her," Wilbur said.

Although they couldn't find the fans, they could definitely find Sophie.

"Shut up! That's enough. Don't look for Sophie now. She's the reason I'm in this mess," Clayton ordered. I can't afford to let things escalate further. Otherwise, I'm doomed. Those sly foxes in Zales Corporation hate me now. If this continues, I'm going to lose badly in the upcoming election.

"What? Are we just going to let Sophie get away with this?" Wilbur asked.

"I doubt Tristan will be interested in her for long. When they eventually break up, I'm going to teach her a lesson," Clayton replied. She's only acting arrogant because Tristan is backing her up.

"Yes. That's right. It doesn't take long for men to get sick of their women. I bet he's just toying with her," Wilbur agreed. Men are all the same, no?

With that, Wilbur passed some napkins to Clayton.

Right then, Wilbur received a phone call from the headquarters.

"Bad news, Clayton! They're holding a shareholders' meeting at the headquarters without informing us!

What are they up to?" Wilbur didn't expect such a thing to happen.

“What?” Clayton was in disbelief. I haven't even settled my problems at hand, and yet, another problem arises!

“What should we do now, Clayton?”

“Let's head back to the headquarters at this instant,” Clayton instructed. Are they kidding me? I'm the CEO. How can they hold a shareholders' meeting without my presence?

“But Clayton, I don't think it's appropriate for you to show up at the shareholders' meeting in this state.”

“Sh\*t! Let's go back first. I need to get changed.”

“Clayton, do we have time for that?”

“What do you suggest we do, then?” Clayton asked. I can't possibly show up at the shareholders' meeting in my dirty clothes. I'll become a laughingstock!

“Clayton, let's just go to a mall nearby to buy some clothes. I don't think you have time to take a shower now, so perhaps you can just wipe your body clean,” Wilbur answered. We don't have much time to spare.

“Okay,” Clayton answered. Oh no, what else can I do?

Meanwhile, Tristan and Sophie brought Sunny to the hospital.

Up until then, Sunny still couldn't believe what had happened that day.

“All right. That marks the end of the matter, so you can finally rest now. Return to the band soon,” Sophie uttered. He should be able to rest properly now, right?

“Sophie, I'm so satisfied with what happened today,” Sunny said. Finally, that arrogant man got the punishment he deserves.

“Yes.” Although Sophie knew how excited he was, she chose to respond calmly.

After all, it was only the beginning.

Her goal was to tear Clayton's reputation into shreds.

“Rest well, okay? I have some things to attend to. I'll go first,” Sophie said.

The university entrance exam was just around the corner, and her homeroom teacher was looking for her. Hence, she needed to go back to school.

Besides, she received a few phone calls from Victor prior to that, so she had to drop by Tanner Group.

In reality, she wasn't much of a go-getter, and she just wanted to live a carefree life.

However, it seemed as though everyone had things for her to do.

In that case, she had no choice but to carry out those tasks one at a time.

“Okay. You may leave first. After all, you've been kept busy for the past few days. Go home and take a good rest. Don't worry about me. Arius said my hand is fine.”

“If you need anything, don't hesitate to call Mark,” Sophie said.

Sunny didn't have any family in Jipsdale, so he only had a caregiver attending to his needs in the hospital.

It was also rather inconvenient for Sophie to take care of him.

"Don't worry about me. Mark visits me every day. Besides, the hospital has everything I need. The caregiver is very attentive too!" Sunny replied. I can't seem to do anything right. All I do every day is get into trouble, and others will have to help me clean up the mess I make. Frankly, I feel bad for them.

"Okay. I'll head back first," Sophie said.

Right then, Tristan went up to Sunny and tapped his shoulder. "Get well soon!" Tristan had always been a man of few words. He only said that because Sunny was Sophie's friend.

Before leaving, Sophie went to the restroom.

When the men were left alone, Sunny said worryingly, "Mr. Tristan, I have to be honest with you. Although I'm very satisfied with what happened today, I'm still worried about Sophie."

Ultimately, Clayton was a vile man. Since he had just suffered a setback, he was surely not going to let them off the hook so easily.

Hearing that, Tristan couldn't help but laugh. "It appears you don't know Sophie at all! At this moment, Sophie is capable of beating ten Claytons. Don't worry, okay? Either way, she still has me. As long as I'm around, I won't let anyone harm Sophie."

Sunny heaved a sigh of relief when he heard those words. "Mr. Tristan, I know I haven't been nice to you in the past. Now that I've heard those words, I think I can finally accept you as Sophie's boyfriend," he said. Mark likes Sophie a lot, but there's nothing much he can do about it. After all, that's just how relationships are. It's between the two of them. As long as Sophie likes him, nothing else matters.

"It's all right. Your acceptance changes nothing."

"Must you respond that way? I'm trying my best to be friendly. Why must you say that in response?"

Tristan couldn't help but burst out laughing when he saw Sunny's angry expression. Actually, this boy is still very innocent.

Sophie was shocked when she returned and saw the two of them chatting away happily. What's going on? Sunny never liked Tristan.

"Okay! Let's go." Tristan put his arm over Sophie's shoulders and led her out of there.

"Why were you two so happy? What did you guys talk about?" she asked.

"Well, Sunny just accepted the fact that I'm your boyfriend!"

"Does his acceptance matter to you?"

"Of course! Why not? When a man likes a girl, he'll surely hope to get approval from the people around her," Tristan answered. If her friends don't approve of me, wouldn't she get influenced as well? Moreover, I don't like people saying no to me.

"Okay, then!" Sophie replied. Who would've thought that he's just like other men? Yet, I like it.

"By the way, Clayton should have his hands full after this. Just ignore him for now," Tristan advised. She's about to sit for the university entrance exam, so she needs to get ready for it, right?

"Also, have you decided where you want to go after the exam?" he asked. She should be good enough to go to any university she wants. However, as a senior, she still needs to focus on her studies.

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"Not yet." Sophie considered Jipsdale University but was still unsure if that was what she wanted.

"It's okay. You can think about it first since we have time." There was no point in hurrying."

“Okay.”

Since the homeroom teacher had phoned several times, Sophie decided to head to school and go straight to his office. “What's up, Teach? Is there something you want to talk about?”

“Here's a form for you; it's a recommendation. Are you interested?”

“To which university am I recommended for admission?”

“Jipsdale University!”

The school was only provided with one opening, and the principal decided to offer it to Sophie.

“I'm not interested.” Since Sophie knew she was capable of qualifying for the university, it was only natural that she would sit for the university entrance exam.

“What? Are you sure? You don't have to make up your mind now, Sophie. Think about it or discuss it with your family first,” advised the teacher because of how rare the opportunity was.

“Okay.” Sophie said nothing else but returned to her class instead.

“Do you know why Teach wanted to see Sophie?”

“I heard it was because of the recommendation. As the top student in our school, Sophie will no doubt be the one to get it.”

“I'm so jealous! We had to try our hardest just to get a chance to be enrolled in the university, while she made it look like a walk in the park. How can life be so unfair?”

“Give me a break. Stop complaining, will you? I'm sure you'd get recommended too if you were the number one student in our school. Since that's not the case, there really isn't any point in complaining, is there?”

It was every student's dream to get recommended, but not everyone was qualified for such a privilege.

“You sure sound fine with it.”

“Why shouldn't I? If not Sophie, somebody from Senior Class 1 would surely get recommended instead; at least Sophie's one of us. I don't see any problem with that,” stated one of Sophie's classmates, who had always disliked those from Senior Class 1 for looking down on them. What I wouldn't give to see the looks on their faces when they learn that it was one of us who got the recommendation!

“You're right. They like to think they're better than us, so let's see how they like it when we prove them wrong.”

Meanwhile, the students of Senior Class 1 were also discussing the recommendation when one of them suddenly ran in and announced on the podium, “Do you guys know who just got recommended?

It was Sophie Tanner of Senior Class 8.”

Willow's heart almost skipped a beat when she heard the name. Why does Sophie always seem to get whatever others desire without breaking a sweat?

“What? How's that possible? It should've been one of us, so how did someone from Senior Class 8 get recommended instead?” questioned one of Willow's classmates. We're better than those in Senior Class 8, aren't we?

“How can the school be so unfair? Something about this smells fishy.”

Bailey could not help but chuckle when he heard the other students. “What makes you think you're qualified to say something like that? Sophie got the highest score on the exam, so what right do you

have to compare yourselves to her?" There's no one in the school more qualified to get the recommendation than Sophie.

When the others saw that Bailey, the student who scored the second highest, had no problem with the school's decision, they immediately ceased the discussion.

After all, it was not as though they would be next in line even if Sophie were to give up the recommendation.

After glancing at Bailey, Willow packed her things and took a leave of absence to go home.

She had been feeling unwell from the moment she heard the news.

Ysabelle immediately approached Sophie when her classmate returned to class.

"You got recommended for admission to Jipsdale University?"

"Yeah."

Right after hearing that, Ysabelle leaped for joy.

"You're awesome, Sophie! I've never met anyone as impressive as you are. How are you so calm right now? Do you know how many of us dream of going to Jipsdale University?"

"What sort of reaction are you expecting from me, exactly?"

To that question, Ysabelle responded by shaking her head. "Forget it. You've always been collected."

"I don't plan to accept the recommendation."

“Why?” questioned Ysabelle with a face full of bafflement. It's such a great opportunity! Why would anyone say no to it?

“You could be sunbathing on the beach while others sit for the university entrance exam! Don't you want that?” Ysabelle did not understand why her classmate would want to take the exam like everyone else.

“I've worked so hard to prepare for the exam, so, of course, I'm taking it. Otherwise, I would've wasted my effort, wouldn't I?”

“Did you really work hard, though?”

Ysabelle was sure that Sophie could complete tests meant for postgraduates already. Compared to her, we probably look like kindergarteners.

“What does that mean? Of course, I did.” Being questioned like that, Sophie could not help but wonder if she had not put in enough effort.

“Forget it. It's not as if I'll ever understand what it's like to be a top student.” Ysabelle thought she should just get back to the grind.

That evening, Sophie had dinner with Josiah, who was thrilled when he heard about the recommendation.

“Jipsdale University is the absolute best in Chanaea, so I hope you consider enrolling in it.”

“I'm not, Grandpa.”

Even Morgan was stunned when he heard Sophie's response. “This is a great opportunity, Ms. Sophie. Why would you want to give it up? Many students in Chanaea would do anything to enter the university.”

"I want to take the university entrance exam first. That way, I'll have more options."

Willow boiled with anger as she listened to the conversation.

"Okay. Whatever makes you happy. Even if you sit for the exam, I'm confident you'll qualify for Jipsdale University anyway," stated Josiah. Either way, Sophie can enroll in the university if she wants to.

Charmaine had an idea when she learned of the opportunity Sophie was offered.

"Soph, since you're not going to accept the recommendation, why not let Willow have it?" The mother was thinking even if Willow planned to join the entertainment industry, her daughter could be an artist with an impressive educational background as a graduate of Jipsdale University.

Willow immediately got excited when she heard her mother, for it would be difficult for her to enter the university with her ability.

"What?" inquired Sophie with an eyebrow raised. What does that mean?

"Charmaine, the school will recommend somebody else if Sophie doesn't accept. She can't just pass the recommendation to anyone," voiced Josiah, who did not think Willow would qualify for Jipsdale University.

"Dad, I'm just trying to help Willow!" Charmaine did not think she was wrong for making the suggestion since Sophie would not accept the recommendation anyway.

Naturally, Willow felt aggrieved as well.

"You're all biased against me! I don't even know what I did wrong to deserve this." With that, Willow turned around and went upstairs.

Meanwhile, Sophie and Josiah exchanged looks, unsure what trick Willow was trying to pull then.

When Sophie walked out of the Tanner residence, the ring on her ring finger began to emit a strange light once again.

However, Sophie simply glanced at the ring and ignored it. What is Nicholas up to this time?

## Chapter 365

In Anglandur, Nicholas sat on a couch with authentic leather while a scary-looking snake wrapped itself around his arm.

Alex, seated by Nicholas' right side, was already used to his boss' vagaries.

"Boss, Tristan will be in Anglandur tomorrow." Since he learned of the relationship between Tristan and Sophie, Nicholas hated Tristan to the bone.

Tristan is coming to Anglandur? At that moment, the indifferent Nicholas finally spoke. "Alex, if Tristan no longer exists, Sophie will be less resistant to me, won't she?"

The snake in Nicholas' hand then flicked out its tongue, which he swiftly pinched before revealing, "I wanted to make my move in Chanaea last time. Unfortunately, I was interrupted."

Alex broke out in a cold sweat when he heard the man. That was Tristan's territory. Who knows what would've happened had Nicholas made his move back then?

"Make the necessary arrangements. I'm not greedy; I only want his hand now that he's in our territory." Nicholas wanted Tristan to pay for stealing Sophie from him.

"Yes, Boss."

Even though Tristan was strong, Nicholas was no pushover either.

It was hard to tell which of the two would come out on top, especially in Anglandur. Nicholas looked forward to the next day and wondered if Sophie would come with Tristan.

It had been a while since Nicholas last saw Sophie, so he missed her. “Do you think Sophie will come too? If she's with him, you have to be careful not to hurt her. Do you understand?”

Unsure of what to say, Alex could not help but be convinced that women were nothing but trouble. Why can't Boss just focus on his business? Why must he put so much effort into pursuing a young woman? To make things worse, she doesn't even like him.

“Boss, if Old Mr. Sable knows that Sophie's coming to Anglandur, I'm afraid things will get difficult for us!” Alex worried that Nicholas and Javier would have a fallout.

“Nonsense! Not even he is allowed to hurt Sophie!” insisted Nicholas, which got Alex even more concerned.

At that moment, Alex realized why Javier disliked Sophie so much. As expected, that young woman is nothing but trouble.

Meanwhile, in Chanaea, Sophie exclaimed, “What? You're going to Anglandur tomorrow?”

She had a bad feeling when she heard where Tristan was going. That's Nicholas' territory. He's not about to forgive Tristan after what happened to him in Chanaea last time.

“Yes. There are some matters at the branch office that requires my attention. Don't worry! I'm only going to be there for two days. Be good while I'm away, okay?”

“I've always been good!”

Sophie then wondered if it was safe for Tristan to go to Anglandur alone.

Even though she knew Tristan could hold his own against Nicholas, the fact that Tristan would be in Anglandur, Nicholas' territory, still worried her.

After all, the man would have the upper hand in his own territory.

“Who will you be going with?”

“Maybe Felix. Why? You don't want me to go?” Tristan was somewhat glad to see the concerned look on Sophie's face.

“Yes. I don't want you to go!” replied Sophie while looking into the man's eyes. She did not want Tristan to take the risk even if the odds of him being in danger were a thousand to one.

In response, Tristan wrapped his arms around her.

“I didn't expect to see this side of you, but I like it very much! How I wish I could just take you with me!” Tristan could not bear to leave Sophie behind.

“I'll go with you then!” uttered Sophie in all seriousness.

“Really? Are you sure?” Tristan knew the university entrance exam was just a week away, and he did not want to disturb Sophie's studies.

“Do I look like I'm joking?” Since Sophie did not want Tristan to go alone, she decided to tag along. To

her, that was better than missing the man while he was gone.

“Okay, we'll go together!” Tristan was sure Sophie did not need the exam to prove anything, so he thought it would be a good idea for her to relax for two days.

Besides that, he was glad Sophie wanted to go with him. It's nice to know that there are times when she just doesn't want to be separated from me.

Felix sighed helplessly when he heard that Tristan was bringing Sophie along. "I don't think I'll get used to this. You're just going away for two days, Mr. Tristan. What's there to worry about?"

"Well, you don't have to get used to it! Just remember to be careful when you reach Anglandur." Sean could not help feeling that something was off. Sophie isn't one to be clingy; she should be focusing on her studies since the university entrance exam is near. Besides, Tristan will only be away for two days.

"You don't have to worry, Sean. It's not as if you don't know how capable Mr. Tristan is. I doubt there's anyone in this world who can hurt him easily. Heck, Sophie is probably the only one who can." To Felix, love was something capable of hurting people. However, seeing how close Tristan and Sophie were, he did not think Sophie would harm his employer.

"Just do what I say and be careful, okay?" Sean had always been cautious. Even though he could not tell exactly what was wrong then, he was convinced that something smelled fishy.

"Okay, I got it." answered Felix helplessly.

He was always tasked to handle different situations with Tristan, so naturally, he knew how heavy his responsibility was.

"Stop worrying, Sean. Mr. Tristan should be fine," assured Felix. It's not as though this is Mr. Tristan's first time going to Anglandur. Besides, nobody would dare lay a finger on him because we have our forces there too.

"Nicholas is not to be underestimated," reminded Sean, for it was only natural to think of Nicholas when talking about Anglandur.

"He's indeed powerful in Anglandur, but we've always minded our own business. I don't think he'll try anything."

Even though Tristan and Nicholas had had conflicts of interest over the years, the two remained in their own lane.

“You don't have to fret because I won't let anything happen to Mr. Tristan,” promised Felix.

“I just hope you won't become a burden to Mr. Tristan at critical moments.” The group did not expect Felix to be of much help.

After being rendered speechless for a while, Felix questioned, “What is that supposed to mean? I'm not that useless, am I? I mean, I think I'm pretty capable.”

It was true that Felix was the weakest among the four, but he always did his best whenever the situation called for it.

“Of course not. In fact, you're the most useful one,” replied Charles sarcastically, which made Felix jump to his feet from the couch.

“Forget it. I'm done talking with you lot. All you do is make fun of me.” Felix did not appreciate getting picked on like that.

“Just be careful, okay? Wouldn't want you to get hurt.” The four had always been close, so they did not wish to see any of them harmed.

Waving his hand, Felix responded indifferently, “Don't lose sleep over it because nobody in this world can hurt me.”

The man had complete confidence in himself.

Chapter 366

“To be honest, if I didn't have so much to deal with, I really would have liked to go with them,” Sean confessed.

He was still incredibly anxious and had the feeling that something would happen.

It was the same feeling that he had experienced when Tristan went to Horington.

“That's enough, Sean. You don't need to worry anymore, really. I feel like you're overthinking it. Trust me. Nothing will happen,” Charles reassured.

He had been in the industry for so long and had met all kinds of people, not to mention encountered all kinds of situations.

Sean raised a glass of red wine. “Okay. I really hope that's the case.”

He truly didn't want any of them to get hurt.

Charles raised his own glass to clink it with Sean's.

“It clearly is. You shouldn't force yourself too much, Sean. Your workload is already so intense. How about you rest for a while? Maybe you can let go of everything and completely clear your head. Go ahead and take a vacation,” he suggested.

Sean couldn't remember how long it had been since he last took a break.

In any case, it had been ages.

“Forget it. As if I have the time to take a vacation,” Sean scoffed. He shook his head. To him, holidays were unnecessary.

Ever since Ysabelle found out that Sophie was planning to go to Anglandur with Tristan, she had expressed her desire to follow as well.

"I want to go with you guys, Sophie. I don't want to be here alone. I'd be so bored and lonely on my own," she complained.

She had felt so isolated back when she hadn't met Sophie.

To tell the truth, it was her biggest fear.

Since Sophie was only going for two days, she didn't even bring a suitcase with her. All she took was a black backpack.

Inside, there was a set of clothes for her to change into.

"I don't think you should go. They're going there for work. Why would you follow them there?" She had the feeling that it wouldn't be a safe trip.

That being the case, there was no way they could take Ysabelle with them.

Ysabelle sat on the couch with a teddy bear in her arms.

"Am I really not allowed to go, Sophie? It's the weekend, anyway, and there's only a week left until the university entrance exam. I keep doing the same practice questions over and over again every day," she protested.

Anyone would get bored doing the same thing day after day. Not to mention, she didn't feel like it was very productive.

"Be good. If you really get bored, then look for Mark and the others. Once the university entrance exam is over, I'm planning to let you debut. You still have a lot of things to study," Sophie reminded. She had already planned out Ysabelle's future.

Seeing that Sophie truly didn't intend to bring her along, Ysabelle could only pout and respond, "Okay! In that case, have fun while you're there. Remember to get me a gift when you come back."

Sophie was rendered speechless.

Why would a pampered girl like her need a gift? She can have anything she wants.

“What do you want?” Sophie asked.

“I'll take anything you get me. Don't worry. As long as it's from you, I'll like it,” Ysabelle replied with a smile.

Sophie enjoyed seeing how carefree Ysabelle was.

Truthfully speaking, she liked easy-going people like Ysabelle, who had nothing up their sleeve. Interacting with people like that gave her no pressure at all, which allowed her to be at ease.

“Okay.” Sophie had always been more than happy to fulfill Ysabelle's requests.

“To be honest, Sophie, if you were a man, I would have fallen for you. There's no way I would have let Uncle Tristan have you,” Ysabelle stated.

Unfortunately, that was only wishful thinking.

Sophie caressed her head. “Even though you're a girl, I like you a lot.”

Upon hearing that, Ysabelle felt as if her heart was melting away.

She pressed her hand against her chest. “Do you know how fatal you can be, Sophie? I'm begging you. Don't say things like that to me. I'll fall in love!”

Whenever she was with Ysabelle, Sophie's laughs were all genuine.

No longer was she the same ice-cold person.

Ysabelle always said that she was incredibly lucky to have met Sophie.

Honestly speaking, though, Sophie thought she was fortunate to have met Ysabelle as well.

The reason why Tristan was going to Anglandur was because of an urgent matter in the company. Thus, they were going there using his private jet.

“You seem to be very rich indeed, Mr. Tristan,” Sophie joked when she saw the private jet in front of her.

“Do you want one, too? I'll buy you one if you do,” he offered.

Immediately, she shook her head. “Are you joking? Why would I need a private jet for?”

“Trust me, Sophie. If you had nodded your head, I really would have given you a private jet,” Tristan declared. He did have that kind of power, after all. He would give Sophie anything she asked for.

She stared at him and could tell from the doting look in his eyes that what Felix had said was true.

“Seriously, Tristan, I don't need a private jet. Don't you dare get me one,” she warned. There was no need for her to have one. It wasn't like she knew how to pilot it.

Tristan held onto her and said, “Come on. Let's board the plane.”

“Okay.”

As Felix watched Tristan tugging Sophie into the plane, he felt his heart shatter into a million pieces.

Why am I always the one getting hurt? I want a sweet romance, too.

After he boarded the plane, Felix wanted to sit with them. After all, it would be way too boring to sit alone.

However, before he could even take a seat, Tristan shot him a cold look.

Felix felt rather dejected.

Am I not allowed to even sit with them? We're on a plane. It's not like they can do anything.

He decided to let it go.

Either way, he was meant to be alone.

Thus, Felix silently went to take a seat at the side.

"Wouldn't Felix get bored sitting there alone?" Sophie couldn't help but sympathize with Felix when she saw how pitiful he was.

"What's so pitiful about it?" Tristan didn't feel the same, though.

He took a few grapes on the table, which had been washed beforehand, and brought them to her mouth.

"Eat some fruits." When he saw that she had no intention of opening her mouth, he added, "Don't worry. I washed my hands earlier."

Then, Sophie opened her mouth and bit into the grape.

“How's it? Is it sweet?” he asked.

She continued chewing on the grape. In a moment of carelessness, some of the juice flowed out from the corner of her mouth.

Sophie immediately moved to grab a tissue.

Despite that, before she could even wipe the juice off, Tristan had already wiped it away for her.

“Tristan!” she exclaimed while throwing him a glance.

How could I have been so careless? I must have looked so unattractive just now, she lamented.

“It's fine. You looked really alluring just now,” he reassured.

Sophie was at a loss for words.

What on earth was alluring about that? I clearly embarrassed myself.

He took another grape and tried feeding it to her. Sophie, on the other hand, was blushing from embarrassment and shook her head.

“I can eat on my own,” she stated.

Him doing that would make her feel uncomfortable.

“One last grape,” he insisted.

Sophie had no choice but to open her mouth and bite down on the grape. She also happened to “accidentally” bite his finger while she was at it.

Does he really have to act so deliberately? she wondered.

At first, she intended to punish him. However, from the looks of it, that wasn't a punishment in Tristan's eyes at all. Instead, it was a form of teasing.

## Chapter 367

After all the time I've waited, Sophie is finally in my territory.

It was a wonderful opportunity for Nicholas.

Previously, he didn't do well in Jipsdale. However, at long last, she was in his sphere of influence.

Thus, he was going to do everything he could to prevent her from leaving, no matter what.

He wanted her to stay with him forever.

Suddenly, the word “forever” sounded very romantic to him.

Nicholas had come to a realization. As long as she was willing to stay, he would give her everything she wanted willingly, even marriage.

Alex suggested, “I'll take care of the arrangements at Norham, Boss. I don't think you should go. If Old Mr. Sable finds out—”

“I'm warning you, Alex. You better not tell my dad anything. Right now, you're working for me. Don't forget that. If you can't even keep that in mind, get out of my face.” Nicholas had been very dissatisfied with Alex's performance lately.

In the end, Alex shut up.

Indeed, Javier was the one who instructed Alex to monitor Nicholas by working for him.

It was a difficult task, but there was nothing Alex could do about it.

Then again, everyone in the world had their own difficulties as they tried to go about their lives.

However, he believed he would probably die at the hands of Javier and Nicholas.

When Tristan's plane landed at Norham's international airport, it was raining. The weather in the city hadn't been pleasant lately.

Soon after he descended from the plane, he speedily took off his coat and put it on Sophie because she mentioned she was feeling cold.

She protested, "You don't need to—"

"Just wear it!"

A staff member approached them with umbrellas. Tristan grabbed one, opened it, and escorted her out of the airport.

Felix grabbed one, too. Is Mr. Tristan doing this on purpose? There are still more umbrellas to be used! There's no need for the two of them to share one together. Doesn't that make it easier for the rain to splash on them? I wonder what he's thinking. Is that what people in love are like? Trying to stay with each other at all times? Whatever, it's none of my business.

Then he opened his umbrella and followed behind them from a distance because he didn't want to be tortured again.

Outside of the airport, there was already a car waiting for them. Tristan escorted Sophie to the vehicle, opened the door for her, and sent her in. After that, he shut his umbrella and entered the car.

Felix followed in, too. "Are we going to the hotel first, Mr. Tristan?"

"No. Since Sophie's with us, I've already asked for the Norham mansion to be cleaned. We'll be staying there. As comfortable as a hotel may be, it can't beat living at one's own home."

"Okay, then!" During their previous visits, they would only stay in a hotel instead of the mansion, even when their visit lasted for a week.

Despite their current trip only being two days long, Tristan had already asked for the rooms to be cleaned.

How he treats her is so different from me, Felix lamented.

Sophie interjected, "Mr. Tristan, there's no need—"

"Relax! It's not just because of you. I just think it's not convenient staying at a hotel this time." His explanation was meant to alleviate any burden she felt.

Additionally, she also needed to revise for her exams, even in Norham.

"All right, then," she replied. Well, he had already made the arrangements. There's no point in me rejecting his plan now. It's best if I just refrain from saying anything.

The two cars headed straight for Tristan's mansion in Norham.

When they arrived, more than a dozen housekeepers and bodyguards stood on both sides of the path leading to the building.

The number of bodyguards didn't put Sophie's worries to rest. Nicholas knows Tristan's coming. There's no way he'll let it slide. Even worse, Anglandur is Nicholas' territory. It'll be too easy for him to annihilate someone here. I don't think these many bodyguards are enough!

"What's wrong?" Tristan approached her and held her waist when he noticed she was blanking out.

His voice snapped her out of her thoughts, and she shook her head. "I'm fine! It's possible that I'm just a bit tired. The flight lasted for hours, after all."

"Mhm. You should take a bath, eat food, and sleep." Naturally, his heart ached after he heard her mention she was tired.

After Tristan introduced Sophie to the butler, Micah Brown, he brought her to the master bedroom upstairs.

"Go and take a shower. I've already asked others to prepare clothes for you. After your bath's over, we'll have a meal together. Then, you just need to rest here. I'll accompany you for a stroll once I return tonight." He felt apologetic about not being able to stay by her side.

"I think I'll only take a bath. You two need to head to the company in a bit, right? I'll join you! I want to see the world, too." Regardless of what he said, she was too fretted about his safety to leave his side.

As Tristan pinched her cheek, his concern for her grew. "What's the matter? You've been acting odd this time. You can tell me what's on your mind, you know?"

"I'm fine! Don't overthink things."

"Mhm. Go and shower now. I have things to discuss with Felix." They came to Norham for work, after all, so it was only natural he was pretty busy.

"Okay!"

After Tristan exited the room, Sophie pulled out her phone and logged in to a hidden account before contacting her friends in Anglandur.

Someone wrote: So, you're finally willing to visit Anglandur, Phantom.

Another asked: Yeah! Tell us why you're in Anglandur, Phantom. Is there something you need us to help you with?

She couldn't help but chuckle at the people getting excited in her chat window. Then she replied: Yes, there is something I need your help with.

That account of hers had remained inactive for quite some time.

Her worry for Tristan was the thing that pushed her to reactivate it.

One of the people wrote: Tell us what you need!

That was followed by another message: Yeah! As long as you ask for it, I'll even be willing to assassinate the president of Anglandur!

Sophie responded: It's nothing that outrageous. Why would I desire the death of the president? I just need you all to protect someone for me.

Someone replied: Consider it done! What's your relationship with this person? I've never seen you care so much about another individual before.

Sophie wrote: It's someone I like who's totally devoted to me. Sophie felt merry when speaking about Tristan.

One of the people replied: What? You already have someone you like? Doesn't that mean I don't have a chance anymore?

Another chat member retorted: When did you ever have a chance? You never had that opportunity, to begin with, okay?

Reading the messages, Sophie messaged: All right, that's enough. I'm sending the information to you lot now. I'll treat you all to a meal when there's a chance. A file on Tristan was then uploaded from Sophie's phone to the chat.

Someone argued: What do you mean by "when there's a chance?" Your visit to Anglandur this time is the best opportunity for us to share a meal together.

Sophie: Maybe next time. I still have matters to attend to. She didn't want to leave Tristan's side.

Another person replied: Don't ignore us for your boyfriend, Phantom. He's just a man. There's no need for you to follow him around the clock. Besides, he's useless! Otherwise, he won't need you to protect him.

## Chapter 368

Sophie: He doesn't need my protection. I'm the one who can't stop fretting about him.

Liking someone meant not wanting to see them hurt.

She wouldn't be able to forgive herself if Tristan was injured because of her.

That was followed by a reply: All right. Let us handle this matter. The other members in the chat were confident they could prevent Tristan from any harm.

Sophie then logged off, which was why she didn't see their reaction after they received Tristan's info.

Immediately after that, someone wrote: D\*mn. Did you guys see who Phantom's lover is? I'm shaking right now. It's Mr. Tristan!

They were in a state of utter disbelief.

Someone responded: What the h\*ll? Does he really need our protection? Actually, does anyone even dare to hurt him?

Another person replied: That's because you didn't see who's trying to hurt him, which is Nicholas Sable! Why are the people around Phantom all so extraordinary?

After a brief moment, someone texted: All right, since Phantom asked us for help, let's just do our best. Their bond with her was so deep that they were willing to give their lives for her.

Another person agreed: For sure. As long as Phantom needs something done, I won't say no to it.

After Sophie left the bathroom, she saw dinner had already been prepared.

Micah was worried she wouldn't enjoy the local food, so all the dishes were from her country.

"Give this a try, Ms. Tanner. If you dislike it, I'll ask the others to change it right away." It was the first time he saw Tristan bring a woman to the mansion. The fact that she would very likely one day be the lady of the house prompted him to pay extra attention to making her happy.

"Thank you. This is well enough. I'm not picky," Sophie replied tenderly.

Her demeanor satisfied Micah greatly. She's not overly humble or even a little arrogant. As expected of Mr. Tristan, he really does have a good eye. Even his girlfriend is excellent.

"You may leave now, Micah," Tristan ordered.

"Very well, Mr. Tristan." Before the butler left, he glanced at Felix. What is Mr. Northley doing here? Why does he have to join the couple's meal? He should've gone to the hotel!

He had to keep those words to himself because he was a professional butler. Still, he shot a subtle begrudging glance at Felix.

When Felix caught that, he wondered if he had done something reprehensible. I'm only here for a meal! Why is he looking at me like that? Do I not even have the right to eat? Are single people really that unwelcoming?

"Let's eat!" Tristan noticed Felix's intention to say something, but he didn't ask what was on the latter's mind because he really didn't want to listen to him talk at the moment.

In the end, Felix still blurted, "Am I interrupting you two, Mr. Tristan? It's not like either of you can do anything about it right now, so my presence here doesn't count as a disturbance!"

Tristan resisted the urge to admonish him. Why must he be so blunt?

"It's me who's disturbing you two, Mr. Northley. I'm sorry," Sophie apologized profusely.

After all, she was the one who insisted on following them on their business trip.

Felix promptly shook his head in response to Sophie's apology. "You mustn't say that, Sophie, because I'm scared for my life when you do." What kind of joke is this? What gave her that impression? Has she not noticed the expression Mr. Tristan is making right now? If she keeps running her mouth, I think Mr. Tristan will just ignore my dignity and throw me out of the house! I'm pitiful as is! I really hope she'll stop it already. If I can turn completely invisible right now, I will. That'll be the best in this situation.

"Don't stare at him anymore, Tristan. Otherwise, I'll get jealous!" As expected, the instant Sophie said that, Tristan shifted his gaze away from Felix.

To express his gratitude, Felix bowed his head in her direction. "Thank you, truly."

"Let's eat! Of course, if you're not hungry, you can prepare for the emergency meeting first!" Tristan exclaimed. They weren't in Norham for vacation, after all.

Without delay, Felix dug in. Fine! I'll just keep my mouth shut and eat quietly!

In the end, Sophie couldn't resist the urge to laugh. Felix's quite cute. What's rare is that, even though he's the son of a rich family, he genuinely loves Ysabelle. She's always his number one priority. I wonder when she'll notice it. Even though she looks forward to falling in love one day, she fails to consider the people around her and that one of them may be who she's looking for already. That's cute, too.

Upon detecting her laughter, Tristan inquired, "What are you so happy about?"

"Nothing!" She shook her head and resumed her meal.

Meanwhile, when Alex told Nicholas that Sophie had gone to Tristan's private mansion, Nicholas started smashing objects in his house.

"D\*mn it! D\*mn them all to hell!" The fact that Sophie and Tristan were spending time together at Tristan's mansion was something he couldn't tolerate.

Facing Nicholas' wrath, Alex didn't even dare to peek. What could he say at that point?

"What should we do next, Boss?" He asked because he still needed to let Nicholas lay out their next move.

Whatever Nicholas asked for, his subordinates must comply.

That way, even if anything did cock up, and Javier came asking what went wrong, they could claim they had nothing to do with it.

"Kill Tristan!" Nicholas barked like a mad dog.

A look of insanity swirled in his eyes. How dare that b\*stard get so close to my woman! I cannot let this slide! It doesn't matter who tries to snatch my possessions away. I will not forgive them!

“Are you really asking us to kill Tristan, Boss?” Alex had a good reason to be skeptical and hesitant about the objective. After all, Tristan was an incredibly powerful and influential figure. If he were dead, catastrophe would soon follow.

When Nicholas saw Alex's expression, he smashed his glass on the latter's body.

“What do you mean by that?” Nicholas growled arrogantly. “Are you saying I can't kill him? Who do you think he is? Someone untouchable?”

“That's not what I meant, Boss! I'm just worried...” Alex was sincerely concerned that things would spiral out of control.

“Stop yapping and do as I say! My decision is final!” The notion of consequences didn't cross Nicholas' mind even once. All he cared about was taking Tristan's life. “You better make sure everything goes smoothly. If I hear even a single mistake, your \*ss is grass!”

Alex was rendered speechless. He actually wants me to kill Tristan! This is going to be an arduous mission.

“One more thing! Don't hurt Sophie! If you even so much as touch her, I'll make your life a living hell!”

That really dumbfounded him. Sophie's a fighter on par with Boss! Since she's here too, will she stand

by and do nothing while we try to kill Tristan? How exactly do I ensure she remains unharmed while we duke it out with Tristan and his forces? This is clearly an impossible mission!

“Boss, I—”

“You can leave now.” Before Alex could finish his sentence, Nicholas was already asking him out. The latter had closed himself off from any differing opinions.

With a sigh, Alex left. He was already used to Nicholas' perverted demands after staying by his employer's side for years. I guess I have to do my best to fulfill his wish. But, still. What about Old Mr. Sable's request?

## Chapter 369

Old Mr. Sable already knows Sophie's here, and he had asked me to do something, too. I can't help but feel helpless getting stuck between this pair of father and son. No matter who I offend, I'm done either way. Alex lamented in his mind.

At seven in the evening, Tristan brought Sophie to his branch company in Norham.

Before they left, Micah provided a bottle of hot water to Sophie.

"Drink some hot water on your way there, Ms. Tanner. The weather here is quite cold!" he advised.

Anything related to Tristan was something he cared deeply about because he had been taking care of his employer's life in Norham.

"Thank you." Sophie had a lot of respect for the old butler. As long as the elderly she interacted with weren't particularly difficult to handle, she would treat them with deference.

Micah opened the car door, waited for the couple to enter the vehicle, and closed it.

Earlier, what he really meant was that she should stay and rest properly.

However, it wasn't like he couldn't understand youngsters' desire to stay close to their lovers all the time. Besides, that was a sign the couple had a healthy, intimate relationship.

That was why he didn't voice any opinion about it.

"I'll be leaving Mr. Tristan in your care, Mr. Northley. Be careful!" the butler reminded as Norham was

very different from Jipsdale.

"You're not a spring chicken anymore, Micah! You should head back to rest. There's no need for you to fuss about us. With me around, no one can harm Mr. Tristan," Felix assured. What's going on with everybody during this trip? It's not like we don't have a footing here.

As the car drove to their destination, Tristan held Sophie's icy hand.

"Are you feeling cold?" he asked. Rainy weather was a common occurrence in Norham. Thus, the temperature in the city was pretty low.

"I'm okay!" she replied.

After pulling her hand into his coat, he placed it against his chest. As she felt his heartbeat, she stared at him.

"I don't think this is comfortable for you, Tristan," Sophie knew her hand was cold.

"Not at all. It's quite the opposite."

"All right, then." His rebuttal made her feel embarrassed to keep rejecting his offer.

A thought then suddenly crossed her mind. Wait, isn't there an air conditioner in the car? This man's so crafty!

Felix, who was in the passenger seat, smirked. Mr. Tristan's really trying to be lovey-dovey with her

whenever possible. It seems like he has become addicted to that feeling.

Half an hour later, they arrived at the Norham branch company. Normally, it would've been devoid of people by then.

Yet, the building was still brightly lit.

No employee dared to leave.

They were afraid they would be implicated in the disaster.

When Tristan arrived, the general manager of the branch company greeted him cordially with a bunch of other high-ranking officials. "Welcome, Mr. Tristan!"

After glancing at the general manager, Tristan found himself despising the former's efforts. There's no need for him to put on this pretense. If he had poured all his attention into the company, this mess wouldn't have happened.

The general manager followed Tristan when he saw his employer leading Felix upstairs. Even though the weather was cold at the moment, sweat was forming on his forehead.

Tristan's shrewdness was legendary, after all.

When Tristan and Sophie arrived at the conference room, she stopped at the entrance.

"I think it's best if I wait outside for you instead of joining your company meeting." She suggested it because she was aware a meeting like that would more likely than not involve top-secret information.

Thus, she found no reason to accompany him inside.

"It's fine. If you're not interested in listening during the meeting, you can just sit by my side and play your games." Tristan was worried she would get bored waiting outside on top of her safety.

“Okay!” Without any other option, Sophie followed him inside and sat next to him. Then she put on her earbuds. Regardless of what he said, she still wanted to avoid disturbing the meeting.

Soon, the conference room was crowded with people.

“So, is there anything you want to say about the matter?” Felix was the one to speak first. This is the most loathsome incident that has occurred in Lombard Group since its founding. I wonder what he has to say for himself.

The general manager's voice was trembling as though he was on the verge of tears. “Since the start of my employment here, I've been doing my best every day. As for the incident, I...”

If Tristan held him responsible for the mishap, he was screwed.

“Even though I didn't accomplish any stunning achievements over the years, I worked hard, Mr. Tristan! I beg you. Please have mercy on me!” He didn't have the nerve to run because, to his knowledge, escape was impossible.

“You worked hard?” Tristan's deep voice reverberated in the room.

The instant those words escaped his mouth, the room fell into an uncomfortable silence. People even started breathing carefully.

“You allowed such a huge blunder to happen, yet you have the gall to say that to my face? Do you think I gave you tens of millions every year so that you can evade your responsibilities?” he interrogated.

Desperation was heard in the general manager's voice. “I was wrong, Mr. Tristan! I know what I did wrong, truly!”

“That's enough! Save your breath and turn yourself in at the police station!” That was all the mercy Tristan could grant him.

The general manager rapidly kneeled. "I beg you, Mr. Tristan! If I do that, I'm done for! I can't go to prison! I still have my family, my children! Please, Mr. Tristan! Spare me!"

"You should turn yourself in, Roderick. If we're personally handling your punishment, I'm afraid you'll be in for more suffering," Felix reminded.

Escaping the consequences was never an option for the general manager after his blunder caused Lombard Group to lose so much money. "Mr. Northley, I—"

"Get the security guards to drag him away!" Tristan found no reason to waste his time on the general manager any longer.

A few security guards entered the conference room and escorted the general manager out.

The other high-ranking officials began sweating bullets after they witnessed that scene. No one dared to utter a word.

After that brief interruption, Tristan shifted his attention back to the meeting. "Now, what do you all think we should do to salvage this disaster? Now that this branch company has lost its general manager, those who think they're capable are free to give it a try."

The high-ranking officials exchanged glances with each other.

No one dared to volunteer.

In response to their silence, Tristan slammed the folder in his hand on the table.

"Is this how you all operate?" He thought two days would be enough to solve the crisis, but the problems in the branch company ran deeper than he had previously expected.

Felix was experiencing a headache as well. These people...

“Lombard Group doesn't keep wastrels on the payroll! If none of you have the ability to manage this issue, you're all fired!” What Tristan wanted were talented people, not those who sew their lips shut whenever there was an obstacle.

“I'd like to try, Mr. Tristan!” A woman sitting at the other end of the table stood up.

Upon hearing a woman's voice, Sophie lifted her head. She's brave! These old foxes didn't even have the nerve to muster a word, yet she said she wanted to give it a shot. Interesting!

## Chapter 370

Someone finally speaks up. She looks pretty young, though. Still, Tristan nodded. “What's your solution to this problem?”

The others shot a glance of disdain at the woman. They didn't believe a newcomer could devise a brilliant plan and that she was just playing to the crowd.

“My name's Ophelia Summers, Mr. Tristan. May I use the projector?” Ophelia had been preparing for that moment ever since the incident.

At last, her chance was at hand.

“Mhm,” Tristan replied.

Sophie quit her game as she was interested in Ophelia.

Upon her arrival at the computer connected to the projector, Ophelia inserted her USB into the device.

She proceeded to present a detailed analysis of the catastrophe and shared her solutions with everyone.

When her presentation ended, anyone could hear a pin dropping on the ground.

Sophie gazed at Ophelia with praise. She's pretty good.

“Very well. From now on, you're this branch company's general manager. Felix will be here for the next few days. Should you have any questions, you may direct them to him,” Tristan informed. Sure,

aspects of her ideas may be immature, but she's talented. There's no doubt she'll be able to run the branch company like a well-oiled machine.

“What's the meaning of this, Mr. Tristan? Are you asking me to stay here?” The sudden declaration shocked Felix.

“You'll have to work a little harder for the next few days. Ophelia's still young, after all. She'll need your help.”

“Thank you, Mr. Tristan.” Ophelia's gaze glimmered with excitement.

On the other hand, Felix felt speechless.

However, he had no right to object. Even if he protested, Tristan would still insist that he undertake the task.

At the end of the conference, the other high-ranking officials were displeased with Ophelia becoming their leader. However, Tristan was still present, so they kept their mouth shut.

“I'll make myself clear today. If anyone opposes this decision, you're free to leave right away. Don't give Ms. Summer trouble,” Tristan warned. I should replace these high-ranking officials, too. Those who're incompetent should clear their desks and let capable individuals take their place. Lombard Group doesn't tolerate unqualified personnel.

More than a dozen high-ranking officials kept their silence in front of him with lowered heads.

After they left, Ophelia approached Tristan. "Thank you for giving me this chance, Mr. Tristan. I promise I won't let you down."

"You were the one who seized this opportunity. I didn't hand it to you." If she were incapable, then any chance she received would be meaningless.

"You'll be following Felix from now on. Ask him any question you want." Tristan was basically appointing Felix as her mentor.

"Okay." Ophelia appeared exceptionally docile when she smiled. However, the fact that she could still devise an incredible solution to a complex issue meant she was anything but an amateur.

"All right, let's leave." It was getting pretty late as it was already ten at night.

Upon removing her earphones, Sophie stood up.

As Tristan pulled Sophie's chair away, Ophelia curiously inspected her. Even though there's no expression on her face, she looks stunningly beautiful. Some people are so attractive that they'll wow others and draw their attention just by standing there. No wonder Mr. Tristan keeps her by his side, considering how amazing she looks.

At the same time, Sophie glanced at Ophelia.

It lasted only for a second before she left.

It wasn't her first time getting gawked at. She had long gotten used to it.

"Well, you better do a good job. Now that you're technically my mentee, don't embarrass me, all right?" Felix notified.

Without delay, Ophelia nodded. "Don't fret, Mr. Northley! I won't disappoint you and Mr. Tristan's expectations. I promise I'll give it my all!"

She felt good saying that. After all my hard work, I finally obtained the opportunity to shine.

"I'll meet you here at nine in the morning. Remember to be punctual. I abhor tardy individuals." Felix promptly left with Tristan and Sophie.

Ophelia's heart was racing. One day, I'll get everything I want! I can do it!

On the way back, Sophie remained unusually quiet. Holding her hand, Tristan asked, "Are you tired?"

She turned to him. "No."

"Sorry I asked you to keep staying by my side."

"It's fine! I don't sleep that early back in Jipsdale, anyway. Relax." Even though she was conversing with him nonchalantly, she was actually on high alert.

She discovered someone had been stalking them ever since their departure from the branch company.

"Chin up, okay? There will always be small fries trying to take my life, but they aren't getting it that easily!" Of course, Tristan had also noticed they were being followed.

"Yeah! You should relax, Sophie. Mr. Tristan's scorned by many, so plenty of people are always trying to snuff his light out. However, as long as I'm around, you can put your anxiety about his safety to rest." Felix thought she was worried because she spotted something.

With a nod, Sophie replied, "I know!"

Halfway through their journey, an unlicensed car kept attempting to derail them.

A dangerous glint reflected in Tristan's narrowed eyes. They have some nerve to force us to stop!

The driver was familiar with situations like that as his clients were all prominent figures. Thus, he started driving more cautiously. "No need to fret, Mr. Tristan! This car has been modified to be as indestructible as possible!"

"Investigate who it is, Felix!" Tristan's voice was terrifyingly cold.

Immediately after, Felix contacted someone on the phone.

Hugging Sophie in his embrace, Tristan kissed her forehead when he noticed her lack of expression. "Just be at ease. As long as I'm around, I won't allow you to be hurt by anyone."

That d\*mn Nicholas! He really is coming after us! It must be him. No one else would dare to attack us this openly. Sophie nodded, her fist instinctively tightened. "I know."

Bang!

The unlicensed car ended up colliding with theirs.

Both vehicles were forced to stop at that.

Their car was mostly fine as it was heavily modified.

Meanwhile, the unmarked car's head had been smashed in.

"Drive!" Tristan barked. If we leave the car now, there's no telling what danger may be lurking in the darkness. It's best that we leave immediately.

"All right, Mr. Tristan." Hastily, the driver took them away.

The rest of their journey back to the mansion was uneventful.

“Let's go! You should rest first. Don't worry.” Tristan escorted Sophie back to her room before serving her a cup of hot milk.