

Pursuing 381

Chapter 381

“Did you not hear what I said earlier, Uncle Tristan? There are only a few days left, and I'd like to do reviewing with Sophie.”

Ysabelle felt exceedingly aggrieved.

I rambled for an eternity, but it didn't work at all? No matter what, we're related by blood. How could he treat me like this?

“If you really need it, I can hire a tutor for you. Don't worry! I'll definitely get you a good tutor.” Hah! I'll never allow her to have my woman all to herself.

At Tristan's remark, Ysabelle fell silent and gazed at Sophie forlornly.

Why am I so pitiful? Uncle Tristan must have been adopted, for he's not giving me any leeway despite the blood ties between us!

In the face of her doleful and adorable expression, Sophie tugged at Tristan's arm.

“All right, don't pick on Ysabelle anymore. Since she wants to stay here, just let her do so. There are only three days left until the university entrance exam anyway.” Besides, a tutor isn't what Ysabelle wants.

“Who do you choose between her and me?” Tristan questioned solemnly.

Both Felix and Ysabelle were struck dumb.

Whoa! What kind of question is that? Is he really jealous? I never expected him to ask such a question.

“My choice?” Sophie giggled.

“Sophie!” exclaimed Ysabelle. Please don't abandon me!

Likewise, Tristan's gaze remained fixated on Sophie as he waited for her to make her choice.

“Why should I choose? Can't I have both?” Sophie countered domineeringly.

They're not enemies, so I really don't want to answer such a question.

Once again, Felix was dumbfounded.

Well, I've learned something today. Who'd have guessed that she's a veritable expert in handling such a question? It's a piece of cake for her!

“Fine. You can stay here, but don't be a third wheel. Make an appearance when appropriate, but never do so when the time isn't right. Otherwise, I'll have someone pack your bags and send you home immediately!” That was already the greatest concession Tristan could make.

“Don't worry, Uncle Tristan! I'll never make an appearance when the time isn't right! But Uncle Tristan, are you saying you'll also be staying here?”

“Of course! How could I rest easy to leave you here alone?”

“Are you sure I'm the person you're worried about?” Ysabelle was exceedingly skeptical about that statement of his.

Hah! He'll never be worried about me!

In response, Tristan shot her a sidelong glance.

“Ysabelle, are you thinking that you don't need to fear me anymore because you've got someone backing you up now?” She seems to love doubting my words recently.

At once, Ysabelle shook her head.

“Of course not, Uncle Tristan! You're the person I fear most in this world. I'd never dare challenge your authority. Why are you still standing there, Felix? Hurry up and carry my luggage upstairs!”

I wouldn't be able to stay here anymore if Uncle Tristan changes his mind!

Words eluded Felix.

She only thinks of me when she needs me, huh? But on second thought, this is considered a good thing. At the very least, she thinks of me when something comes up.

He then helped to carry Ysabelle's luggage upstairs.

“Actually, Ysabelle, I performed pretty well in my university entrance exam. I should have no problems tutoring you. How about you stay at my house instead? I'll give you one-on-one tutoring. Don't worry. I'll do my best.”

Hearing Felix's suggestion, Ysabelle said nothing for a moment.

Thus, Felix continued, “Why, do you not believe me? Let me tell you that while Mr. Tristan ranked first in the entire country back then, I was only a few places below him, ranking fourth!” Naturally, Sean and Charles were both geniuses, so he only managed to clinch fourth place.

“No, it's okay. I still prefer Sophie tutoring me.”

Besides, I'm going to debut right after the university entrance exam, but I've still got a ton of unresolved problems. I must resolve them all in the fastest time possible.

Felix was quite disheartened.

“You'd rather choose Sophie instead of me? How can you be so cruel?” Sure enough, Sophie is a temptress, enticing both men and women!

“Can you please stop this, Felix? You're making me feel so awkward. All right, it's late, so go home quickly and rest!”

“It's late, so how about I stay the night here?”

“Sure! I don't mind you staying, but you can only sleep on the couch. Or if you're brave enough to share a room with Uncle Tristan, do so by all means.” After all, there were only three bedrooms in Wisteria Apartments.

Regardless, I definitely have no objections to that if he's not afraid of death.

“Can't I share a room with you?”

Ysabelle gaped at him in disbelief.

“How could you be so shameless, Felix? Are you flirting with me right now? How could you do this? You and my Uncle Tristan are of the same age!”

In all honesty, I should actually address him with the same measure of respect as I do Uncle Tristan.

Felix went silent, despondency washing over him.

I don't want to be her elder! I want to be her man, okay? I dream of that every single night!

“Okay, let's end this conversation here. Go and sleep!” Ysabelle pushed him out of the room. Seriously, what is he thinking?

After doing so, she swiftly slammed the room door shut.

Subsequently, her gaze traveled down and stilled on her chest.

“D*mn it! Why is my heartbeat racing? Don't tell me I'm sick?” Wasn't I perfectly fine earlier? What's with this sudden uncomfortable feeling? No, I've got to go to the hospital for a medical checkup when I'm free one day! My life has just begun, so nothing can happen to me!

Meanwhile, Felix was utterly heartbroken as he stared at the closed door.

I knew it. I didn't even get to express myself properly! The future of my love life is truly very much worrying!

By the time Sophie came out of the bathroom after taking a shower, it was already past three o'clock in the morning. She lay on the bed but couldn't fall asleep, perhaps because of jet lag.

Bored out of her mind, she took out her phone and went online.

No sooner had she gone online than she saw her few friends talking about Nicholas. The messages read:

I pity Nicholas Sable.

Yeah. It'll take at least two to three years for him to recover.

Say, who exactly did that to him?

No idea!

Out of the blue, one of them asked: Are you here, Phantom? Was it your doing?

Sophie was promptly taken aback. Crap! I came online at an inopportune time!

She replied: That was beyond my capabilities.

However, none of them believed her. One retorted: B*llshit! Who else would be capable of it if not you? Don't be so modest. Spit it out. It was you, right?

The other seconded: Hmph! It must have been her! Anyone who offends her will unquestionably find themselves in a living hell.

Finally, her remaining friend echoed: Exactly! She's a monster!

That rendered Sophie speechless. Are they seriously talking ill of me right to my face? They're going overboard!

Her fingers flew across her phone screen as she typed: It looks like the lot of you don't need me to help maintain your network security anymore.

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Following Sophie's remark, a barrage of replies instantly flooded in from her friends, reading: Haha, we were just joking! Our Phantom isn't that petty, yes?

Hear, hear! We were just fooling around! Our Phantom is adorable, beautiful, and kind!

Yes, exactly! You're definitely a kind matron!

Sophie queried: A kind matron?

I'm still a pretty young lady, okay?

Immediately, one of them declared: Haha, you're dead, Beast!

The other echoed: Phantom, Beast deliberately said that! He definitely did it on purpose!

Conversely, Beast explained: It was a typo, Phantom! All right, my wife is calling for me, so I'm going offline! The man known as Beast quickly made himself scarce.

Again, Sophie was stumped.

Well, well, well... It seems that I've got to teach him a lesson. How dare he call me a matron?

Nonetheless, she typed: Okay, let's call it a day. Inform me if Nicholas makes a move.

No matter what, Nicholas suffered a setback this time. When he gathers his wits about him, he'll undoubtedly realize it had to do with us.

Her friends assured: Don't worry. We'll be sure to keep an eye on him.

Sophie replied: Then, I'll be going to bed.

Thus, her friends responded: Okay. Bye!

Good night! Sleep tight, Cutie-pie!

Sophie was at a loss for words.

She objected: Don't call me Cutie-pie, okay? It's such a cheesy nickname! How could they call me Cutie-pie?

“Sure, Your Majesty. I'll call you however you wish.”

That had Sophie at a loss for words.

Never mind. They all have a screw loose. She went offline, not in the mood to continue yakking with them.

When she woke up the next day, Tristan already had Susan come over early in the morning to prepare breakfast.

Hence, by the time Sophie and Ysabelle woke up, they were greeted by the sight of a tableful of breakfast fare. Tristan, on the other hand, was already sitting at the dining table, reading the

newspaper.

“Come and have breakfast,” Tristan urged, putting down the newspaper in his hand upon seeing that they had awakened.

“You two go ahead. I'm going for my morning run. I'll eat when I come back!” Sophie had already changed into sportswear.

“Seriously, Sophie? We're finally on holiday, yet you want to go for a morning run? What's wrong with you?”

Ysabelle really couldn't fathom it. Isn't it nice to just stay home and rest?

“You need to go running as well.”

Since she's about to debut, she must have great stamina. And I've already asked the planner to draft out an exercise plan for her.

Ysabelle's lovely eyes went wide.

"I've got to go running as well? You might as well kill me!" I'm already thin, but I still need to go running? She continued whining, "If you're dissatisfied with my figure, Sophie, I can go on a diet and lose weight. I'm serious! I can skip dinner. I'm willing to do anything at all, but please don't ask me to exercise."

The young lady shook her head resolutely.

I can't exercise! Frankly speaking, I'm just not the kind of person who can exercise. If she were to ask me to do so, I'd die for sure!

"That won't work. If you want to debut, you must be in tip-top condition. Otherwise, how will you remain standing after performing a concert? Don't worry. I'll be exceedingly strict with you after the university entrance exam."

Hearing that, Ysabelle teetered on the verge of crying. Did she just say "don't worry?" Looks like I have plenty to worry about when she's going to be strict with me!

"Must you be so cruel to me, Sophie? I know you love me the most. Please don't ask me to go running. I beg you."

I'll die.

Just then, Tristan got to his feet.

"Wait for me. I'll change and go running with you." Without saying much, he had already left to change.

"You two go ahead. I'll pass."

If there was anything in the world Ysabelle was averse to, it was running.

“Anyway, I've already notified you. The plan will be implemented after the university entrance exam.” Sophie wasn't adamant about her tagging along that day. Instead, she would give her some time to get used to the idea.

After Tristan changed and came downstairs, he left with Sophie to go running.

Ysabelle sat at the dining table alone, misery inundating her.

What bad news! How could I possibly be happy when I received such bad news first thing after waking up early in the morning?

Meanwhile, Sophie and Tristan headed straight to Jipsdale Premier High to run after leaving Wisteria Apartments.

Upon seeing that they were students, the guard at the gate allowed them entry without asking any questions.

The two of them went to the soccer field and started running.

Tristan had been exercising all along, so he wasn't the least bit averse to running.

His speed was moderate, mainly because he was matching Sophie's.

Sophie's primary purpose of running was to keep her body in good shape, so she kept her speed modest too. Even after running five laps, they were still as relaxed as ever.

They also had excellent control over their breathing.

“You're serious about having Ysabelle go running?”

Ysabelle's lifestyle was actually quite unhealthy. Everyone in the family had been hoping that she'd

exercise, but she hated it so much that she refused to do so no matter what.

“If she wants to debut, exercising is imperative!”

Running is effective in training one to regulate one's breathing.

Tristan was silent for a moment before he asserted, “Be strict, and don't go easy on her!”

This time, Sophie was the one who fell silent.

She eyed him dubiously.

If Ysabelle were to hear this, she'd probably cry. Is he really her biological uncle? He doesn't consider her feelings at all!

“Why are you looking at me like this? I only said that for her own good. Since she wants to debut, she naturally has to make all the preparations.”

The entertainment industry is not someplace she can do as she pleases. As a member of the Lombard family, she must succeed in whatever she chooses to do, no?

At Tristan's remark, Sophie nodded in agreement.

Indeed, being strict with her isn't a bad thing. Since she chose to embark on this path, she must persevere. Otherwise, no one will be able to help her.

The two of them ran ten laps on the field before Sophie stopped. Then, they sauntered on the field.

“By the way, put everything else aside first. Focus on the university entrance exam.” No matter what, the university entrance exam is a crucial moment for the students in Chanaea, so she still has to focus.

“Got it!”

“But then, you don't need to be anxious either. I believe that you can do it!”

Tristan's comment had Sophie momentarily tongue-tied.

“I've never been anxious in my entire life, Mr. Tristan!” Honestly speaking, I've never known how it feels to be anxious.

“How arrogant!”

Tristan found her confident demeanor incredibly adorable.

“Let's go back and have breakfast!” Sophie felt she had gotten enough exercise after walking two laps.

“Sure!”

The two of them headed back side by side. They both had striking appearances, so the scene of them walking together was unbelievably pleasing to the eye.

When they returned to Wisteria Apartments, Sophie took a shower and changed before coming out. By then, Tristan was already seated at the dining table, waiting for her.

“Aren't you going to the office today, Mr. Tristan?”

The day of the university entrance exam is still a few days away, so it's better for him to go to the office.

"I'll be making a trip over in a while. Come here and have breakfast first. Why, do you not want to see me?" In truth, Tristan was planning to leave after having breakfast with her.

"No! Why would I not want to see you? I would love to see you every minute of my life!" Sophie answered with a smile.

Sometimes, having a boyfriend means one would have to appease him so that he doesn't get too dejected.

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Only after hearing that answer from Sophie was Tristan somewhat satisfied.

When they had finished eating breakfast, Sophie walked Tristan to the door.

"All right, go on to work. Don't worry. I'll be studying at home." I'm sure nothing would happen.

Pinning his eyes on Ysabelle at the side, Tristan ordered, "Be good. If you misbehave, I'll send you home tonight."

At once, Ysabelle frowned.

Why is he always targeting me? When had I ever misbehaved? He obviously has an ulterior motive! He just wants to be alone with Sophie, so he keeps finding fault with me.

"Uncle Tristan, I've always been good, okay?"

"All right, hurry up and go to work!"

"Okay. I'll take you both out for dinner when I come home tonight. Listen to me, and don't go out these few days."

Ysabelle was entirely flabbergasted.

Is this the kind of so-called boyfriend who acts like a father? It's like he wants to have control over everything.

Ysabelle finally relaxed after her uncle left.

“Sophie, I think there's really a need for you to reconsider your choice. This boyfriend of yours isn't quite up to par!”

How could he control everything she does?

At that precise moment, Sophie's phone rang.

She took a look at it, only to see that it was a call from Eustace.

Her brows knitted together, but still, she answered the call.

“Sophie, I know you're sitting for the university entrance exam soon, and I shouldn't be troubling you at this time.”

“Just cut straight to the chase.” He has already phoned me, so isn't it superfluous for him to say such a thing now?

“Where are you right now? I'll come over and pick you up, for the problem is rather tricky.”

As the captain of the SWAT team, Eustace felt exceedingly embarrassed to seek help from a young girl again and again, but he couldn't do anything either when it involved a life-and-death situation.

“I'm at Wisteria Apartments right now. Just come over.” Sophie couldn't bring herself to turn him down.

After hanging up the phone, she went to change.

Ysabelle instantly followed her.

“Are you going out now? Didn't Uncle Tristan forbid you from doing so? What are you going to do? And can I tag along?”

There isn't much time anymore, so it doesn't make any difference even if I don't study. Going out to have fun is more important!

“Sorry, but I can't bring you along this time. Stay home and study instead.”

Ysabelle was thunderstruck, aggrievement flooding her.

“Why are you leaving me behind again? Sophie, why do you always have so many secrets?”

Aren't we best friends? Why does she have so many things I can't know about?

“Ysabelle, I really have something to do this time, and I truly can't bring you along.”

Although Ysabelle yearned to go with her, the former didn't dare say anything further as she took note of Sophie's solemn expression.

“Okay, then. Be careful going out alone. Be safe, okay? Also, you must come home before Uncle Tristan returns.”

“Okay, I will.” Sophie didn't want Tristan to worry either.

After changing, she went downstairs to wait for Eustace.

As expected, no sooner had she gone downstairs and reached the entrance than Eustace arrived.

Swinging open the car door, Sophie got into the vehicle.

“The situation is extremely urgent, so I had no choice but to come here and seek your help. I'm really sorry for always troubling you.”

“It's okay. Just cut straight to the point.”

“The thing is, a leader recently went missing. I can't disclose his identity to you right now, but his identity is very unique. His existence is crucial to Chanaea's future.”

It was precisely because the matter was critical that Eustace had to resort to seeking Sophie's help.

“We've already employed various methods, but we failed to track his location.”

Everyone was in a panic then, and he only rushed over because he abruptly thought of seeking help from her.

“Got it.”

Don't worry, for I won't ask any questions I shouldn't be asking. I'm the kind of person who always knows my limits and boundaries.

Eustace drove to an exceedingly isolated place.

When they arrived, even the man himself underwent a strict body search before he was allowed entry.

“Sorry, but a body search is mandatory due to the gravity of the matter.”

"It's okay. Such a procedure is nothing unusual for this kind of place. I don't mind."

Sophie grew a touch impatient after being checked several times, but she still held her temper in check.

After all, she was there to help that day, not to make trouble.

Having gone through level after level of examination, she finally met with Danny and the others.

The instant Danny caught sight of her, it was as though he saw a ray of hope.

"Quick, come here and help me have a look, Sophie! I've already used all the methods you taught me, but I still can't pinpoint a location."

Right then, he was really at the end of his rope.

Therefore, Sophie's presence was a ray of hope to him.

"What are you doing, Eustace? Don't you know how confidential this matter is? How could you bring a little girl in?"

Just then, a man in military fatigues appeared in front of them. He appeared disgruntled beyond words about Sophie's appearance.

"I was the one who brought her here, so I'll definitely bear the responsibility," Eustace riposted unceremoniously.

“What's wrong with you now, Eustace? We're all working together, hoping that we can unite and collaborate so as to find him as soon as possible. But you actually brought a little girl in. Do you still have any regard for the rules and regulations?”

Still, the man in military uniform continued tearing into Eustace, unwilling to listen to reason.

Since he's an officer of the law, he has to abide by the rules and regulations.

“Sophie is incredible, Captain Zeldon. She'll surely be able to help us!” Danny couldn't help chiming in.

He doesn't know anything, so he should be worried about being proven wrong later when he's saying such things.

However, the man, Zachary Zeldon, merely snorted.

“How could you, a snot-nosed blondie, be any better? And what's wrong with your team? I thought you guys have always thought of yourself as amazing. Yet, you're now pinning your hopes on a little girl?”

Eustace was wholly speechless.

“Just ignore him, Sophie.” He proceeded to lead Sophie over.

“What's the meaning of this, Eustace? I'm talking to you!” Zachary barked, not showing any intention of letting the matter slide.

Indeed, our workload has been too heavy recently. But even so, we can't pin our hopes on a little girl!

“Can you please shut up? You're really noisy.” Sophie loathed listening to him prattling incessantly, for she found it all too annoying.

In a flash, mortification swamped Zachary when he was chastised by a young girl, and in front of so many people to boot.

Meanwhile, the members of Eustace's team inexorably burst out laughing.

"What's the meaning of this, Eustace? Do you want to fight me?"

When have I, Eustace Sheppard, been afraid?

"If you want to fight, I'll naturally humor you. But let me warn you that you're totally wasting time now." Every minute counts at present, yet he's still delaying things here. How immature!

"How dare you!" Zachary was livid. "I don't believe that a little girl like her can resolve the problem so many people have tried and failed to unravel!"

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"I don't care whether you believe it or not. That's your problem and it has nothing to do with the rest of us."

Eustace didn't even bother to show him any respect.

"Bring Sophie in, Danny. Stop wasting time here."

"Yes, Captain Sheppard." Danny led Sophie in at once.

Eustace completely ignored Zachary while the latter simmered with anger.

You will become a laughing stock if you continue throwing a tantrum here.

"I heard Captain Sheppard has recently solved several big cases in a row, Captain Zeldon. Do you think it has something to do with this young lady?"

Initially, the capability of both teams was comparable.

Recently, however, Eustace and his squad had been so efficient that they solved several major cases in a row, thus earning the approval of the higher-ups.

Zachary glared at his subordinate who asked that question.

"What are you thinking? Solving cases depends on capability. What does that have to do with a little girl?" Having unwavering faith in his prowess, he never took anyone seriously.

"As the saying goes, Captain, there would be no fire without smoke. Our teams were evenly matched in terms of capability, but now they are much better than us. How can there be no reason behind that at all?"

Zachary was about to leave but changed his mind after hearing what his subordinate said. Instead, he found a stool and sat down, curious to see what trick Eustace had up his sleeve.

Danny brought Sophie into the room filled with high-tech gadgets.

"Well? Have you ever seen these things before? Do you know how to use them?" Though Sophie was technologically savvy, those were the most cutting-edge devices. She, as an ordinary high school student, may not be familiar with them.

Sophie turned to glance at him.

"Are you looking down on me, Danny?"

These old things? I'd already seen them two years ago.

Danny scratched the back of his head. "That's not what I meant. It's just that these devices are new, and we only got them a few days ago. Even I'm unfamiliar with them, so I'm worried you might not know how to use them. It's great if you do."

I didn't mean to underestimate her!

Sophie ignored him and found a spot to sit down.

"Have you managed to track down anything?"

The higher-ups must regard this case with great importance, given the missing person's political position.

"We managed to find some leads, but they ultimately amounted to nothing. The last time he appeared was ten days ago, and we haven't been able to find anything since then. He seems to have disappeared from the face of the earth." Our opponent is formidable.

Danny gave Sophie all the case's documents.

The great leader's name in the documents had been redacted and replaced with initials.

"See if you can do something, Sophie. We haven't slept for several days, but we still could not locate him."

There's nothing we can do now. We have to at least locate him first if we want to make progress.

"Okay. Let me see."

Sophie sat down before the computer and switched it on.

"D*mn! Did you just break into our system right in front of me?"

This young lady is really something.

“Stop talking, all right? I work better in silence.”

Danny fell silent immediately.

Now's not the time to anger Sophie. As long as she can locate him, I'll do whatever she wants me to do. A person can't just disappear without a trace. He must have been taken away. But who took him? That is the million-dollar question.

Sophie tried several methods, all of which yielded nothing.

Danny waited by her side anxiously, hoping that Sophie could solve the problem soon. However, he soon became discouraged when he saw that all her attempts were futile. She tried various different methods, but none of which amounted to anything.

Don't tell me even Sophie can't solve this! If that's the case, the great leader is doomed.

At that moment, Eustace entered.

Danny dared not say a word upon seeing his captain's arrival.

This should be my job, but now I can't help even if I wanted to. I feel defeated.

“Still no clues?” Eustace asked Danny, who was standing at the side.

The latter could only shake his head in response.

“I think there's nothing we can do this time, Captain Sheppard.” Although Danny didn't want to admit it,

it had been more than ten days since the great leader went missing.

Things are not looking good for him.

Eustace did not speak. Instead, he watched Sophie quietly as she worked.

I can only place all my hopes on her. I won't admit defeat until the last moment.

Danny had no choice but to wait as well.

Captain Sheppard and Sophie haven't given up yet, so how could I?

"Is there anything I can do to help, Sophie?" No matter what, I am still a professional. Our chances of success would be greater if I lent a hand.

However, Sophie shook her head.

"You can't help much." She was merely stating an objective fact and had no intention of belittling him.

Danny opened his mouth but said nothing in the end.

He felt rather defeated when there was nothing he could do to solve such a crisis.

Though he had always been a hard worker, there were still some things that one could not accomplish just by putting in the effort.

I have tried my best, but nothing works in the end.

“Step outside for a break, Danny.”

Danny has been in the room since the incident took place. He needs a break. In fact, breakthroughs may sometimes occur with a change of scene.

“I want to stay here.”

No matter what, I want to learn. I've never even seen some of the methods Sophie used. How can I not seize such a fantastic opportunity to learn?

Sophie no longer paid him any mind. Instead, she devoted herself wholeheartedly to the task at hand.

She had even turned her phone off when she entered the room.

Thus, when Tristan returned to Wisteria Apartments and did not find her there, he made several attempts to call her but was repeatedly greeted by the notification of his calls going straight to voicemail.

Ysabelle stood aside, not daring to say a word.

Tristan flung his phone onto the couch in a fit of rage.

“Do you not know where she went, too?”

Ysabelle shook her head at once.

How would I know?

Ysabelle felt aggrieved after being yelled at.

“Don't be too worried, Uncle Tristan. Sophie might be back soon.” He's making me nervous, too!

Tristan sat on the couch, and Ysabelle was about to join him when the man yelled, “I let you stay here so you could keep an eye on Sophie. Is this how you do it? You have no right to sit! Stand over there!”

Sophie, who was so close to sitting down, could only retreat silently after hearing her uncle's cruel words.

“Do you have to be this harsh, Uncle Tristan?” Since when did he ask me to keep an eye on her? I came up with ways to stay here by myself.

Tristan shot daggers at her.

In response, she lowered her head and pretended not to notice her uncle's glare while twiddling her fingers.

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He's so mean, but I can't say anything! I'm going to complain to Sophie that Uncle Tristan has been treating me poorly when she returns. I'm going to tell her everything!

Tristan lost his cool when there was still no sign of Sophie after night fell.

Ysabelle, who had previously remained calm, started panicking as well.

“Why hasn't Sophie come home, Uncle Tristan? She has been out for eight hours now. Could something have happened to her?”

“Shut your mouth!”

Ysabelle shook her head. “I don't mean to jinx her, Uncle Tristan. I'm just really worried. Why don't I go out and look for her?”

No matter what business she has, it shouldn't take her this long!

"Get back here!" Tristan barked, rendered speechless by his niece's absurd idea. Jipsdale is huge. How is she ever going to find Sophie?

Ysabelle was on the verge of tears.

"I'm so worried, Uncle Tristan! I can't just stay here without doing anything!"

"That's enough! You don't have to go. I'll ask Felix to find her." Initially, he did not want to use his connections, but she had never disappeared for such a long time. To make matters worse, she was

unreachable.

There was no way he could possibly remain calm.

Ysabelle nodded at once.

That's right, Felix is good at tracking people down. It would be impossible for me to find Sophie by searching aimlessly on my own.

Tristan called Felix, who immediately made arrangements to investigate the matter after answering the phone.

He soon found out that Sophie had left with Eustace.

"Sophie left with Eustace, Mr. Tristan. We'll be able to find Sophie when we find Eustace."

Tristan became all the more uneasy upon finding out that Sophie had left with Eustace.

"I can't believe Eustace!"

Tristan felt the urge to teach Eustace a lesson.

She can be with anyone but Eustace! The man is surrounded by criminals and evil people! She'll get hurt if she's not careful!

"So, have you managed to get in touch with Eustace?" Tristan asked directly.

Felix shook his head.

"You're so useless!" He can't even handle this trivial matter?

"You, of all people, know that Eustace is a special agent, Mr. Tristan. His whereabouts cannot be traced by civilians!"

"Are you trying to say you're a normal civilian?"

Felix fell silent in defeat.

Why am I so unlucky?

"Okay. I'll send someone to find him right away." Looks like Mr. Tristan is adamant about finding Sophie no matter the cost.

"Remember to avoid my father!"

I can't let Dad know about Sophie's presence yet.

"All right, noted," Felix said meekly.

What else can I say? I am forced to complete whatever task Mr. Tristan assigns to me.

Ysabelle, who had been listening to the conversation, asked, "What do you mean by that, Uncle Tristan? Aren't you serious about Sophie? Why can't Grandpa know of Sophie's existence?"

Sophie is my best friend. I will not allow Uncle Tristan to hurt her.

"Let me warn you, Uncle Tristan. You can't hurt Sophie. If you do, I'll... I'll sever ties with you!" Ysabelle thought hard for several moments before concocting such a threat.

Tristan looked at her as though she was stupid.

"To be honest, Ysabelle, I'm beginning to wonder if you were adopted. Judging by your IQ, how is it possible that you're a Lombard?"

"How can you say that, Uncle Tristan?" That's so insulting!

"Don't let your grandpa know about Sophie, or you'll regret it!"

Dad is a handful, and I don't want to cause too much trouble for Sophie. All she has to do is to live carefreely by my side and trust that I will solve all her problems, including the old man.

Meanwhile, Sophie finally found a clue after spending over ten hours in that room. Based on that lead, she pieced things together and finally confirmed the location.

"It's here. Go have a look! However, I'm not too sure about it. It's possible that no one will be there when you arrive."

Danny and Eustace, who had been by her side the entire time, turned to the screen.

“Are you sure, Sophie?”

Sophie nodded.

“This is the only place I can find!” She was actually eighty percent sure, but she did not want to get their hopes up.

“All right, got it! Gather the squad, Danny. We'll set off immediately!” Eustace ordered.

Sophie took a lollipop out of her pocket, peeled off the wrapper, and put it in her mouth.

Danny went out at once to gather his men.

Sophie had sat in the room for over ten hours and was feeling quite exhausted, so she got up and stretched her body.

She looked up at Eustace upon noticing that he was still there.

“What's wrong? Is there anything else?”

“Nothing. I'll take you back in a while.”

“That's okay. You should prioritize rescuing the hostage!” I can go home on my own.

“Thank you, Sophie.” She did us a big favor this time!

Sophie turned her head out. “Don't mention it.”

Danny had already gathered everyone when Eustace walked Sophie out.

Zachary and the others had been waiting outside. They stood up at the sight of the commotion.

“Could they really have found the hostage, Captain Zeldon?” murmured one of Zachary's subordinates.

Zachary gazed at Eustace skeptically.

Being Eustace's rival for years, Zachary naturally knew that the former was a cautious person. There must have been news for him to mobilize such a large operation.

“Have you found a clue, Eustace?”

“What does it have to do with you?”

“Why are you so petty? This doesn't affect you alone. Someone's life is at stake.”

Danny snorted.

“That wasn't what you said earlier. If you don't believe us, why bother coming with us?” he said bluntly.

“This matter concerns the great leader's life, Captain Sheppard. Let's stop quarreling and go together.” Zachary was forced to restrain his temper.

The urgent matter at hand must be prioritized.

Eustace nodded. “All right. I'll let you tag along this time, but don't you ever underestimate others again!”

His attitude just now made everyone uncomfortable.

Zachary glanced at the young woman beside Eustace and no longer regarded her with contempt.

"I'm an uncultured man, young lady, and I hope you don't take what I said to heart. I will surely treat you to a meal in the future if the opportunity arises," said Zachary, chuckling sheepishly.

Words eluded Eustace.

Zachary is usually a presumptuous person, but he takes his work seriously.

"You are welcome," Sophie said apathetically.

"See Sophie out, Danny!" She might not be able to get out on her own.

"That won't be necessary. I can manage on my own." Since I could get in, I could also get out without a problem.

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"Sophie, you should let Danny walk you out!" Eustace sounded concerned.

"That's right, Sophie. I'll walk you out right now. It won't take more than a few minutes."

How can we let her walk out alone?

With no further protest from Sophie, Danny escorted her to the main gate.

"Sophie, I'm really sorry. I'm supposed to send you home, but I can't do so because duty calls."

Cognizant that they were in a hurry to go on a mission, Sophie would never have allowed him to do so.

“Apologies are not needed. You can go back now.”

Sophie hailed a taxi and left right away.

“Sophie is really amazing!” What's wrong with our captain? How can he not recruit such an exceptional person to the team?

By the time Sophie returned to Wisteria Apartments, it was already ten at night.

No sooner had she punched in the code for the door and opened it than Ysabelle sprang forward from the couch.

“Sophie, where did you go? Do you know how worried I was?” Ysabelle was on the brink of tears.

“Something came up. Didn't I tell you earlier about it? Why are you still so worried?”

“You've been gone for so long and we couldn't reach you, so how can we not be concerned?”

We were worried sick, all right?

After throwing Tristan a glance, Sophie gently nudged Ysabelle aside. Oh no, he sure looks angry right now.

“I just went running some errands, and the place required me to turn off my phone. That's why.”

Tristan was rendered speechless.

While all of us were filled with anxiety, she was just running errands?

“Why didn't you call? Don't you know that we would be worried?”

“I forgot, as I was in a rush. I'm sorry. I promise not to make you worry the next time.”

I really didn't mean it. It's just that the place Eustace brought me to can't be revealed to others.

“Where in the world did you go? Felix couldn't find you anywhere,” Ysabelle questioned, unable to control her emotions.

“You even sent Felix to look for me?”

“Don't overthink it. We were just worried about you.”

“Mmm-hmm, I know.”

I admit it's my fault for disappearing for such a long period.

“All right now, all that matters is that you're fine. I was so worried I couldn't even drink any water.” Ysabelle then poured two glasses of water; one for Sophie and the other for herself.

Nevertheless, Ysabelle's reaction still made Sophie guilty.

“I'll make it up to you by buying you drinks the next time we go out.”

“No, do it now. I have yet to have my dinner!” Famished, Ysabelle couldn't wait for another day.

“Have you not eaten too?”

The usually calm Tristan hasn't had his dinner, too? I lost contact with him for about ten hours, that's all.

"Yeah." Obviously, I haven't eaten.

Even since he got to know her, he lost the ability to maintain his composure.

Anything that was related to her would affect him in one way or another.

"Why are you so stubborn? Didn't I tell you to wait at home for me?" In the end, she still chose to

disobey and head out.

The situation was too urgent to be ignored.

"I promise this will never happen again. Are you satisfied now?"

"Is Eustace and the others in some sort of trouble?" It's never good whenever Eustace is involved.

"Mmm-hmm, but I can't tell you much about it. I hope you understand." She couldn't say much as the information was classified.

"I do. Nonetheless, since you intend to compensate Ysabelle, I'm entitled to something too, as I was also given a scare."

He obviously didn't want to miss out on any benefits now that she had returned.

Otherwise, the few hours he spent worrying would have been a waste.

His words ignited a glint of amusement in Sophie's eyes.

“So, what is it that you want?” Fine. I'll try my best to satisfy whatever request he has.

“I've yet to decide what I want. Why don't we have dinner first, and I'll tell you about it later.”

“Okay. Coincidentally, I'm hungry too.” She didn't manage to eat due to how busy she was earlier.

Having had nothing since noon, she was truly famished.

“I planned to visit Sunny today, but couldn't make it in the end. I wonder if his hand is doing any better.”

As he was recuperating in the hospital recently, Sunny didn't participate in any of The Wheelers' marketing activities.

“With Arius around, what is there to worry about?” If Arius can't manage the situation, no one can.

“That's true.”

We'll have to wait till tomorrow to visit Sunny at the hospital.

After learning that they were going out for a meal, Felix drove out to join them.

Are you kidding me? After all the effort I put in, I'm not going to miss out on Sophie's treat.

Once they arrived at the restaurant in Tristan's car, Ysabelle—upon opening the door—was greeted by the sight of Felix waiting for them.

“Felix, what are you doing here? Sophie didn't mention that she was giving you a treat, so don't you feel embarrassed for inviting yourself?”

How shameless can he be?"

"It's just a meal. I'm sure Sophie won't mind at all, right?"

"Would you leave if I told you that I do?" Sophie teased, causing Felix's lips to twitch.

"Sophie, do you really want to embarrass me in front of everyone?"

"Why shouldn't she?" Tristan threw the question back at him, rendering the latter speechless.

Forget it. What else can I say? The realization that no one cared about him devastated Felix.

"Sophie, look at how pathetic he is. Why don't you let him join us?" That was how Ysabelle was. Even though she loved to bully Felix, she would be the first to waver whenever she saw his pitiful expression.

"Mr. Northley, I was just kidding. I hope you don't mind."

Felix immediately shook his head.

"Not at all. Why would I? As long as you're treating me to a meal, you have the liberty to say whatever you want."

"Felix, how can you be so spineless?" Ysabelle couldn't help but criticize him. It's just a meal. Is he really that desperate?

"What does it mean to have one? Will it fill the stomach?"

Ysabelle chose to ignore him instead.

He deserves to be bullied for being so annoying all the time.

As the group arrived at their private room, Felix announced, "I have some wonderful news to share.

Nicholas is miserable right now."

"Who's Nicholas?" Ysabelle asked curiously, as she had no idea who he was.

"How miserable is he?" Sophie inquired in a nonchalant tone.

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She was fully aware of the circumstances Nicholas was in, but didn't feel an ounce of sympathy for him.

In fact, she felt that he deserved it for provoking her for no reason.

It went without saying that he had to pay the price for doing so.

"It was on the very night that we left. He was engaged in a brutal battle with his arch-rival who seized upon his weakness and beat him to a pulp. As of now, the Sable family of Anglandur will need at least two to three years to recover their previous strength."

"Mr. Tristan, why aren't you giving any reaction to the news?"

"What kind of reaction were you expecting? If his mortal enemy didn't take action, I would have dealt him an equally devastating blow!"

"That's true. He didn't know any better after behaving with impunity for such a long time! He's always so arrogant. I wonder who he pissed off to get himself into such a situation."

“The problem is that he doesn't even know who did it to him. I like the person who did this to him, no matter who they are.” Tristan let out a chuckle.

Upon hearing Tristan's comment, Sophie pretended to fiddle with her phone.

There's no way I can tell him that I'm the one he likes at this point in time!

“Okay, can we talk about something else already? This topic is so boring.” Ysabelle was clueless as to who Nicholas was, let alone care about his pathetic predicament.

“Okay, whatever you say.”

Since Ysabelle showed no interest in the matter, Felix decided to change the topic.

“Ysabelle, have you thought about where to go after your university entrance exam?”

As the exam was two days away, it was time she gave the matter serious thought.

“I plan to study at the Central Conservatory of Music. What do you think? Would my dad agree to it?” All this while, her dad hoped that she would go to Jipsdale University.

“It doesn't matter. Regardless of the choice you make, you have my support,” Felix declared proudly.

“The problem is your support is entirely useless!” Ysabelle retorted in exasperation. “I've decided to make singing my career, and nothing can change my mind. So, I want to study something related to music in university.”

All this while, she had never given her future much thought.

But now that she had made up her mind, she would chase her dream regardless of how hard the path ahead was.

"All that matters is that you know what you want. As for the rest, don't be too hung up on them," Sophie

suggested affectionately as she patted Ysabelle on her cheeks.

"Really? Sophie, do you think I'll be able to succeed? There are plenty of people who love to sing but failed, so what makes me any different?"

"All that matters is that you have me!" Sophie replied in a domineering tone.

Felix was annoyed.

Why does she always have to steal my lines?

"Mr. Tristan, can you keep your girl under control?" She looks as if she's going to steal my girlfriend.

"How can you blame someone else for your own incompetence?" Tristan didn't see anything wrong with Sophie's behavior. Why should I interfere? I fully support her in whatever she wants to do.

Words eluded Felix.

Forget it. Mr. Tristan is undeniably the perfect boyfriend. Whatever Sophie does, he would think it's right. Perhaps he even finds her fart fragrant.

Ysabelle was naturally moved by the outpour of support from her friend.

"Sophie, you truly are my destiny!" If she hadn't gotten to know Sophie, she wouldn't have learned to be so brave.

After all, her father was extremely scary to her.

Truth be told, both men were irritated by how the two ladies were interacting.

Nonetheless, Felix didn't dare express his anger.

As for Tristan, he pampered Sophie, so he would allow her to do anything she wanted.

As time went by, dinner became supper, and Felix continued to be the subject of bully among the group.

The next day, Sophie slept till eight in the morning and woke up to see Ysabelle watching the video she sent her.

Cognizant that the latter intended to get into the Central Conservatory of Music, Sophie sat down to listen to her sing.

Even though Ysabelle had a melodious voice, it still needed some work before being considered professional.

Ysabelle subsequently stopped at the sight of the approaching Sophie.

“Sophie, what do you think of my singing? Can I make it?” Compared to many other candidates who received professional training, an amateur like her was naturally at a disadvantage.

“I've highlighted your strength many times—a good voice that stands out. Having said that, there are still issues to be fixed.”

The remarks disheartened Ysabelle.

“Tell me what I should do.”

“Don't worry about this yet. Once the university entrance exam is over, I'll get you a teacher to help you.”

“That's wonderful, Sophie. Thank you!” She has already planned everything for me.

“Ysabelle, to be honest, it's not easy for you to study at the Central Conservatory of Music because the professional examination is over. Without the results from it, there's no way you can get in.”

Despite Ysabelle's passion, she had not taken into consideration all these matters. Upon hearing Sophie's words, she was utterly dejected.

She's right! Why didn't I think of all these? And yet, I was still filled with excitement the night before.

“Ysabelle, don't let it discourage you!”

“Do I really need to repeat a year?”

“Repeat? Are you sure?” Her results in cultural studies are good enough. Repeating will just be a waste of time.

“But the Central Conservatory of Music is the only place I want to study at,” Ysabelle insisted stubbornly.

“My suggestion would be for you to enter Jipsdale University first. In the meantime, we can hire a teacher to coach you.”

There really isn't a need to repeat a year.

“Let me think it through first.” Even though she knew Sophie had her best interests at heart, she now had her own opinions.

"I plan to go to the hospital now. Do you want to come along?"

"Are you going to see Sunny?"

"Mmm-hmm."

"Of course I'm coming with you." Not wanting to stay back and let her imagination run wild, Ysabelle decided that it would be better to go out and get some air.

With that, the two ladies had breakfast at The Crown and packed some for Sunny and Arius before hailing a taxi to the hospital.

"Sophie, it's been a few days since your last visit. Have you been busy with the upcoming university entrance exam?"

"Not really, but I was occupied with something else. Anyway, how's your hand?"

His hand was her greatest concern for the past few days when she wasn't able to visit him.

As he tried to move his wrist, Sunny realized its flexibility had returned.

"Professor Gullifer is really amazing. With him around, any problem can be solved."

Coincidentally, Arius heard those words while entering the ward.

"It's true that I'm amazing, but you'll lose both your hands if you don't take better care of them."

Chapter 388

The embarrassed Sunny scratched his head.

“Don't worry. I'll definitely not act recklessly next time.”

The recent incident was my fault. My hasty actions put everyone in deep trouble.

Arius patted Sunny on the shoulder.

“It's normal for young men to be impulsive, but the next time you get into a fight, bring Sophie with you —she's really formidable.”

If Sophie had been there, he wouldn't have lost so badly.

Nonetheless, Arius' words elicited a glare from Sophie.

“You should keep your big mouth shut. Since there's nothing else, it's time for you to pack up and return to Anglandur!”

Other than getting on people's nerves, he's no longer of any use here.

Feeling offended, Arius lashed out, “Sophie, why are you so ungrateful? When you needed me, I flew over here without any hesitation. But now that you don't, you chase me out just like that. How can you do this to me?”

Don't take advantage of me just because we're friends!

“I don't see any problem with that. Isn't your mentor pestering you to return? I think you should hurry up and go!”

I'm telling him to go back for his own good! Given how busy he is with his research in Anglandur, going back earlier will allow him to get back to making contributions to society.

“The more you want me to return, the less I'm inclined to do so.”

After all, having gained significant experience at the research institute over the years, I'm more than capable of starting my own institute right here. Furthermore, there are already plenty of investors who are interested in supporting me.

“Sophie, do you think that I'll do equally well in Chanaea if I decide to return for good?”

He longed to return, for Anglandur wasn't his home, regardless of how wonderful it was.

“Are you serious?”

This wasn't the first time she heard Arius mention it.

He must really want to come back if he's asking this question.

“I've been giving the matter some thought recently. If I were to set up my own research institute here, I'm sure I can achieve plenty.”

“Good. It looks like your mind hasn't been corrupted by capitalism yet.”

To be aware of the need to return after achieving success is something to be proud of.

“You have my support no matter your decision.”

Arius couldn't resist breaking into a smile.

“Sophie, to be honest, that's the most touching thing I've ever heard you say to me.”

Arius was moved by her words.

“Don't feel sad. Just remember to let me know if you need anything.”

Sentimental words were never her style.

“Of course. If I were to really come back here, there's no way I'm letting you off!” I'm definitely not passing up the valuable resource that she is.

“By the way, which university are you planning to go to? If you intend to join the International Medical Association, it would do you good to enter a university in Anglandur,” asked Arius.

Otherwise, it would be tiring to go back and forth.

“I have yet to come to a decision.”

“Is it because of Tristan? Sophie, I don't think you should ever let anyone stand in the way of your future.” Regardless of how exceptional Tristan is, he's still just a man.

“Arius, Tristan is now my boyfriend. Considering that he has included me in his plans for the future, how can I disappoint him?”

“But your life has just begun and your future is filled with possibilities. Why do you insist on tying yourself down to this crooked tree?”

Ysabelle's lips twitched at the comment.

Since when has Uncle Tristan become a crooked tree? If he heard of this, Arius would be doomed.

“Girl, why are you staring at me that way? Do you have a crush on me?” asked Arius—unable to help his narcissism—when he saw the look Ysabelle was giving him.

His response stumped Ysabelle, who had never seen such an egoistic person before.

Thereafter, Arius struck a pose to express his self-deluded attractiveness.

“I know I'm good-looking, but you had better not fall for me, as I'll never fancy you.”

By then, Ysabelle was so grossed out that she was on the brink of puking.

“Don't worry. I'll definitely never have feelings for you.” Who would ever develop feelings for a peacock?

“What do you mean? Don't you think I'm handsome?”

“Uncle Tristan is way more handsome compared to you,” Ysabelle replied candidly.

Even though Uncle Tristan isn't really nice to me, he's still my relative. Arius had better not cross the line.

“You... Sophie, look at how rude your friend is. You should teach her some manners.”

Sophie gave him the side-eye.

“Can you stop it already? If there's nothing else, you should pack up and go.” Regardless of his plans for the future, I'm sure he still has to tie up loose ends in Anglandur first.

“Fine. I know you don't like the sight of me. I'll leave and get out of your way.”

“Okay, let me know when you're leaving.”

“Don't bother. Just focus on your university entrance exam. That aside, have you joined HF University's private student recruitment program?”

As only local universities recognized the university entrance exam, Sophie had to take the test for the private student recruitment program if she intended to study overseas.

"I'm not interested in going."

Arius was at a loss for words.

Others have difficulty passing the exam, whereas she shows no desire to even take the exam. What's wrong with her?

"No matter what, the International Medical Association is a fantastic place to gain experience in. You should consider it!"

Meanwhile, it was the first time Sunny heard about how smart Sophie was, making him feel as if he never really knew her at all.

She's so amazing, and yet, keeps a low profile.

"What is it?" Sophie asked when she noticed Sunny staring at her.

"Sophie, I'm surprised to hear about how amazing you are!"

While Sophie didn't know how to respond, Arius broke out into a smile.

"But of course. You have no idea how awesome this girl in front of you is." Arius was filled with pride.

"Sunny, regardless of who I am, I'm still that same person you know," uttered Sophie.

Sunny nodded in acknowledgment.

With so many outstanding people around him, he suddenly felt useless.

Should I try to get into university too?

“Sophie, if I go back to high school now, would I become a laughing stock?”

A long time had passed since he last went to school, making him wonder if it was still possible for him to enter university.

His question stunned Sophie, for she never expected him to be interested in going to university.

“Are you for real?”

Sunny nodded.

“Of course. Though I'm already nineteen, so it might be a little late, I still feel like I should learn something.”

“I see! Okay then. It's not a problem at all. Once you're discharged from the hospital, I'll arrange twelfth-grade tuition for you.” As long as one is willing to learn, there's no such thing as being too late.

Ysabelle gaped in shock.

What has gotten into Sunny? Why does he want to go to school all of a sudden?

Chapter 389

When Sophie met Mark later that day, she told him about Sunny's thoughts.

“Is that fine with you?” she asked Mark. He was the leader, after all.

"It's fine by me. I think it's great that he wants to learn. Learning something new will definitely benefit him." Mark was rather supportive of Sunny's decision.

"Okay. I'll make the arrangements for it right now."

"Let me do it, Sophie. You should focus on your university entrance exam and become a top scorer." Mark believed Sophie had the capability to do so.

"It's fine. There isn't a conflict of interest between these two matters!"

"Do you want to have dinner together?" Mark offered. They hadn't enjoyed a meal together for a long while.

"No, thanks. Grandpa wants me to go home." It had been a while since Sophie had spent time with Josiah. Since Josiah had requested for her to go home, she would have to do so.

"Oh, is that so? In that case, send my regards to Old Mr. Tanner for me. I'll visit him next time!"

"Sure!"

That night, Tristan and Sophie arrived at the Tanner residence together.

Since Sophie was coming home, Josiah had the chef cook many of Sophie's favorite dishes.

Everyone in the kitchen had been busy throughout the afternoon.

As soon as the sound of a car engine was heard, Josiah, who was sitting on the couch, immediately stood up.

"Is Sophie back? I'm going outside to take a look." Jeez, this girl hasn't come home to visit me for such a long time.

Morgan instantly went over to help Josiah out.

As expected, right when they got outside, they saw Tristan getting out of the car and opening the car door for Sophie. Then, Sophie exited the car.

"Ms. Sophie's getting prettier by the day!"

"That's true. Of all the children, Sophie looks like her grandma the most!" This was also one of the reasons Josiah doted on Sophie so much.

"I agree."

Sophie walked to Josiah's side and held his arm to support him. "Why did you come outside? It's so hot out here. Isn't it best for you to stay inside and rest?" Didn't I already promise to come home and have dinner with him?

"I just wanted to see you sooner! You didn't visit me for such a long time, so I was wondering if you had forgotten about me."

Josiah was old, so he was unsure how much longer he could continue to act willfully.

"What are you talking about, Grandpa? How can I forget about you? I went to Anglandur with Tristan for the past two days, and I just got back," Sophie replied.

"Sorry, Old Mr. Tanner. I was occupying her time," Tristan explained smilingly.

Josiah responded with a smile, "Is that so? I thought this girl didn't want to see me!"

As long as Sophie was by Josiah's side, he would constantly be in a good mood and have a smile on his face.

Meanwhile, Willow had been watching from the second-floor window as soon as she heard the sound of the engine. An extremely twisted expression was on her face at the moment.

Everybody must have high hopes for Sophie, huh? Won't it be perfect if she couldn't attend the university entrance exam?

Just then, Charmaine knocked on the door before entering the room. Seeing how Willow was peering out of the window, Charmaine shook her head. "Willa, you shouldn't act like this. You'll get a world of your own as well if you keep working hard!" Willow has been acting strangely recently. She really can't continue acting like this.

Seeing that Charmaine had come upstairs, Willow returned to the couch beside her and sat down.

"Mom, do I really have a future?"

"I heard Mason had gotten surgery, and his legs had recovered! Look..."

Willow's heart ached when she heard Mason's name.

"Stop mentioning his name, Mom!" No matter how thick-skinned Willow was, she wouldn't be shameless enough to see Mason at such a time.

Back then, I was the one who decided to give up. Besides, Mason had never loved me. He won't love me even if I go back and see him! So what's the point of talking about this right now?

"Willa, you can go back and try. You saved his life, after all." Charmaine genuinely thought Mason was a good choice. Moreover, now that his legs were injured, she assumed his legs would never fully recover even after surgery.

If that were the case, then he would not have much of a choice.

“Mom, are you making me return to Mason's side because you think no one else wants me?” Willow asked, unwilling to accept the reality. What has Sophie done to deserve brilliant men around her, whereas I can only choose who she discards?

Charmaine sighed. “Willa, I know you're ambitious, but it's impossible for you to find someone better than Mason under such circumstances.”

There was no doubt Charmaine wished Willow would have better choices. But wishing was pointless.

Willow gritted her teeth. I can't accept this.

“All right, now. It's time for dinner. Let's go downstairs together,” said Charmaine. Dad will be angry if we don't go downstairs soon.

“I'm not hungry, Mom. I'll pass on dinner today.”

“Don't be like this, Willa. You can't be so short-sighted in life. I'm sure you know who Sophie's boyfriend is. If you can mend your relationship with Sophie, maybe he can lend you a hand in the future.”

Hearing that, Willow was rendered speechless. She asked in confusion, “Would he help me? In his eyes, Sophie is the only person who matters to him. He would never lend me a hand.” Besides, I know how much Sophie hates me.

“That's why you have to mend your relationship with Sophie. At the end of the day, you two are blood-related.” Charmaine believed Sophie wouldn't be so heartless.

Although Willow didn't like the idea of doing so, she understood that it was her only chance.

Hence, she followed Charmaine downstairs reluctantly.

Seeing how long it took Willow to come downstairs, Josiah didn't bother lecturing her. Is this girl serious? She's one year older than Sophie, but everything she does is unsatisfactory.

Josiah didn't wish to be biased, yet he had no choice. He couldn't get himself to spoil Willow since she had always acted this way.

“Since everyone's here, let's eat.” Josiah finally spoke, not wanting to waste more time.

Tristan sat on the right side of Josiah and immediately handed the latter the fork, allowing the elder to eat first.

Sophie ignored Willow and Charmaine. Instead, she ate her meal quietly.

In this household, Sophie only treated Josiah sincerely.

Nonetheless, such an atmosphere made Josiah uncomfortable.

“Soph, the university entrance exam is just around the corner. Do you have any plans since you gave up the spot as the recommended student for immediate admission?” Charmaine asked with concern while eating.

Charmaine had never been a loving mother.

That was why her words sounded empty, even though those were words of consideration.

“Mm-hmm,” Sophie responded half-heartedly.

Although Charmaine felt uncomfortable, she couldn't say anything since Josiah was present.

Besides, Sophie also had Tristan next to her to support her.

Willow sneered.

Sophie's heart is made of stone. It will never warm up, no matter how hard one tries.

Chapter 390

“Soph. No matter what your decision is, you will have my full support. I shouldn't be a factor in your consideration.”

If she wanted to join the International Medical Association, she should do just that.

“Grandpa, please don't worry. I know what I'm doing.”

Josiah knew that Sophie would not listen to him. The girl had had a mind of her own ever since young, and he never had to worry about her.

“I'm glad to hear that. I just hope that you and Tanny are happy and well. That's enough for me to be content.” Really, nothing else is more important than that.

“Grandpa, don't worry. I'll take good care of Sophie.”

“It's important that the two of you take care of each other. Sophie is still young. If she does anything inappropriate, you have to tell her directly and not take it to heart.”

The truth was, it was difficult for Josiah not to worry.

“Sophie is quite perfect in almost every way.” Sophie was a smart girl who tend not to worry others.

Tristan had a gentle gaze in his eyes as he looked at Sophie.

When Willow noticed that, she felt extremely jealous.

She was jealous that Sophie had a man who loved her wholeheartedly while she had nothing at all.

After the meal, Tristan played chess with Josiah while Sophie watched quietly by the side.

Tristan was a highly skilled chess player, while Josiah was already old, and his mind was not as agile as before.

As such, the latter was unsure about his next move.

Unbeknownst to him, Tristan did not even show his true abilities. He had held back as he did not want the elderly man to feel embarrassed.

"This is no fun. I need to use the restroom. Sophie, take over the game for me." Josiah put down his chess piece before standing up and heading toward the restroom.

Sophie was speechless.

Nonetheless, she still went and sat in Josiah's seat before moving a chess piece without much contemplation.

"It seems like people do get more childish as they age. My grandpa wasn't such a sore loser last time."

The move made by Sophie turned the situation around instantly.

Tristan looked at the chessboard and fell into deep thought.

Is there even anything this girl is not good at?"

“Did you learn it from Grandpa?”

“Yeah. Grandpa taught me how to play chess when I was a kid.”

“It seems like the student has surpassed the master,” Tristan praised.

The two of them carried on chatting, and when Josiah returned, the game was still ongoing.

As the old man watched from the side, he had a newfound understanding of his granddaughter's abilities.

“Grandpa, do you want to continue playing the game yourself?” Sophie asked after noticing how engrossed Josiah was in the game.

“No, no. I'm already old, and my skills have deteriorated. You should carry on playing. Make sure you win Tanny.”

As far as Josiah was concerned, it would not be his loss as long as Sophie won.

“Grandpa, don't worry, she has already defeated me,” Tristan said with a smile.

The atmosphere was pleasant and harmonious as the family members enjoyed each other's company.

It always seemed to rain on the day of the university entrance exam, and that year was no exception. On the first day of the university entrance exam, Sophie saw that it was pouring outside when she

woke up in the morning.

After packing what she needed for the exam, she glanced at the time and saw that it was only eight o'clock. As such, she lay on the couch and started playing games on her phone.

A while later, Ysabelle had also finished packing. When she came out of her room, she saw Sophie playing games while lying on the couch. That was the first time she had seen someone in such a relaxed state right before the exam."

"Sophie, have you taken your ID card?"

"Yes!"

"How about your examination pass? You won't be able to enter the examination hall if you don't have it with you."

"I have it."

Ysabelle took a deep breath. What should I do! Why am I feeling so nervous?

As she had taken countless examinations ever since young, she could not believe that she was still feeling nervous.

When Felix noticed that, he could not help but feel amused. "Ysabelle, you don't have to be so nervous. It's just the university entrance exam. It's all right even if you fail. I'll take care of you."

Ysabelle shot him a glare and said, "Felix, how can you say something like that early in the morning?

Would it kill you to wish the best for me?"

I'm not going to fail! After all, I've studied so hard for so many years!

"Let's go. It's almost time." Students would usually reach the examination venue earlier for major examinations like that. Besides, given the heavy rain outside, no one knew what the situation would be like.

“Let's just wait a little longer.”

“Who are we waiting for?” Tristan asked, feeling confused. Isn't everyone who's supposed to be here already here?

The thought had just flashed into his mind when there was a knock on the door.

“Who's that?” Felix had no idea who would be at Tristan's apartment at that time.

He walked over to open the door.

When the door opened, they saw all the members of The Wheelers standing there. All of them were wearing black face masks.

“Oh, my God! Why are you guys here?” What are they doing here?

Sunny was the first to dash into the room.

“Sophie, we're not late, are we?” They were actually there to cheer Sophie on. After all, there was no way they would miss such an important moment.

“All right. Since you guys have already seen me, you can leave now,” Sophie said helplessly. It's just the university entrance exam. Why are they making such a big fuss about it?

Mark and the other members of the group walked over.

“We'll wait for you outside! Since the other candidates also have supporters waiting for them outside the venue, we'll be your supporters!” Sunny said excitedly.

It was his first time having such an experience, and just the thought of it was exciting.

“Are you sure you want to do that?” Don't they know how insanely popular they are? If they appear at the examination venue, there would surely be a big commotion.

“Of course! Is there a problem?” Sunny was still basking in his excitement.

“Can I ask you not to go? If you guys are there, it would certainly cause a commotion. Given the heavy rain outside, it might even cause casualties. It would be a disaster if that happened.”

The university entrance exam was an important turning point in the lives of most people, and Sophie did not want their futures to be affected because of her.

“Don't worry! We'll just wait inside the car.” Mark was aware of the band's influence.

As a public figure, he naturally did not want to affect the other students. However, he really wanted to stay by Sophie's side. How could I be absent at such a crucial moment in her life?

“That's right! Sophie, just go for your exam without any worries. We promise not to create any trouble,” Sunny guaranteed.

“You are the one who worries me most.”

Sunny felt a little dejected when he heard that.

“I won't ever act so recklessly again. Really! So don't worry.”

“All right. It's time to go.” Tristan picked up Sophie's bag and asked everyone to get ready to leave.

The group left the house and set off for the examination venue together.

Sophie and Ysabelle were taking their examinations at Jipsdale Premier High, which was just a ten-minute walk away. As it was the day of the university entrance exam, there were many parents sending their children to school. As such, a crowd had already formed outside Jipsdale Premier High.

The Wheelers wanted to drive in, but as there was no space for the car to enter, they could only turn back.

“Good luck, Sophie!”

There was so much tenderness in Mark's voice that Sunny could feel a sting in his eyes when he heard that.

Poor Mark!