

Pursuing 441

Chapter 441

Sophie fell silent. He's right. I have a lot of secrets, but he had never once asked about them. Instead, he would just observe in silence.

With that thought in her mind, her heart clenched.

"I'm sorry!" she said. Do I make people worry about me a lot?

"You've never wronged me, so don't apologize to me. I'm just glad I met you," he replied. It's such a blessing to have met these members of The Wheelers. We're like-minded people. Few people in the world can experience this. I've at least done something I truly love for the past few years, and I've done a pretty good job to boot.

"Okay," she responded.

"Don't let the others know about this first. I don't want them to worry about me." Mark knew his departure was inevitable. He then added, "After I leave, see if you can find a new lead vocalist."

What's going to happen to the other members of The Wheelers if the band is disbanded? All these years, they've been following him around. Once he leaves, what's going to become of the rest of them? Even at this moment, he's still thinking on behalf of others. I guess that's just how he is. Although he looks unapproachable, he cares a lot about those who are close to him. Sophie's heart was filled with bitterness when she heard Mark's words.

"I'm still here, am I not? Do you think I won't be able to solve that?" she uttered.

"Perhaps you should consider becoming the lead vocalist for The Wheelers. That would be the best outcome," Mark uttered sincerely.

Regardless of her gender, Sophie was very passionate about rock music.

“Mark, you know how much I hate entering the entertainment industry!” Sophie liked her existing lifestyle a lot. She loved music, but she didn't want to make it her career.

“There's no hurry. After all, I'll still be around for the next twenty-odd days. Think about it, okay?” Mark didn't force her into making a decision right away.

With that, he said, “Okay, then. That's that. I need to go and rehearse now. I'm going to cherish our concert this time around because this is the first time the six of us are doing it together.” Mark had been looking forward to having all six of them performing together for a long time.

After Mark left, Sophie was rooted to the spot. Me? The lead vocalist of The Wheelers? Am I capable of that? I still have so many things to accomplish!

Meanwhile, Clayton was filled with anxiety because there was nothing he could do to overcome the situation he was in.

“Clayton, our current situation is terrible. If this carries on, we won't be able to have control over what happens during the shareholders' meeting!” Wilbur didn't want to say anything discouraging, but that was the truth.

Due to the situation they were in, they were at a disadvantage.

“I know!” Clayton didn't even have the energy to lose his temper anymore.

Naturally, he knew they were in hot water.

“You guys are all from prominent universities, aren't you? Can't any of you figure out a solution for the situation we're in?” Clayton spent a fortune to hire an enormous group of people. However, none of them could save him when he needed them the most.

Upon hearing that question, no one in the conference room dared to say a single word because none of them knew how to overcome the issue.

"Just leave." Having already lashed out at them, Clayton just wanted to be alone so he could think.

His subordinates rushed out of there the moment they heard that.

In fact, Clayton had been terrifying the past few days, and no one dared to cross him because none of them wanted to end up being cannon fodder.

Even if they were to lose their jobs, they could always find a new one.

However, the same concept didn't apply to their precious lives.

Wilbur, however, stayed behind. I can't leave him alone!

"Clayton, don't worry too much about it. Since it has already happened, all we need to do now is look for a solution. No matter what, you're still Willow's fiancé. Perhaps you should look for Sophie," Wilbur said. After all, she's the one who caused everything to happen.

Indeed, Sophie was their key to solving all the problems.

"Don't you think I know that? It's just that Sophie doesn't bother entertaining anyone! To make matters worse, she's not even on good terms with Willow," Clayton replied.

"Their relationship doesn't matter. At the end of the day, they're still sisters. She can't possibly hang her own sister out to dry, can she? Why don't you just marry Willow?" Wilbur suggested.

"Marry Willow?"

The thought of Willow disgusted Clayton. That woman doesn't deserve me!

“Clayton, we just need to get past this hurdle. After this, you can have any woman you want!” Wilbur said.

“That's right!” Clayton answered. Let's just get through this first and deal with whatever is to come in the future later.

“Where's Willow? I haven't seen her over the last few days. Where did she go?” Clayton was weirded out. Willow was always pestering me, wasn't she? Why has she gone missing now that she's my fiancée?

“I'll look into it!” Wilbur answered instantly. He was willing to do whatever was necessary to solve the problems at hand. Although Clayton was hot-tempered, he was paying Wilbur very well.

Three days later, Felix went to the psychiatric hospital. When he got there, Willow was cowering in a corner, shaking. The people here are horrifying!

When she saw Felix, she instantly crawled toward the man and grabbed his pants.

“Mr. Northley, I was wrong, and I'm sorry! Please show me mercy! Please let me go. I promise I won't commit the same mistake again in the future!” she begged.

This time around, she had really learned her lesson.

“Let go!” Felix was irked when he saw Willow grabbing onto his pants.

Willow was stunned for a while.

“What the heck are you doing? Who do you think you are? How dare you grab my pants?”

Willow immediately snapped out of it and let go of his pants.

"Don't worry! I'm here to take out you today. However, remember not to mess with someone you can't afford to mess with. Once you get out, you should watch your tongue. Otherwise, you know what I'm capable of doing to you," Felix said.

Before bringing her out of there, he wanted to lay down the rules.

"Okay. I know. Don't worry. I'll keep my mouth shut." At that point, Willow wouldn't dare to offend him anymore.

"Also, here's a reminder. Clayton isn't a good person, so you had better not marry him." Felix was being

merciful by telling her that.

"I've been gone for so long! Didn't Clayton come looking for me?" she asked. I'm his fiancée, but he didn't even bother to look for me when I'd been missing for three whole days!

Hearing that, Felix couldn't help but laugh. "Are you really that stupid? Did you really think Clayton was into you? Do you not have a shred of self-awareness?" It seemed as though Willow was really that clueless.

"I—"

"Don't ever covet something that doesn't belong to you. Do you really think men in the elite society are all blind?"

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Willow was devastated.

How could he say something like that to me? Am I that unworthy?

“What are you trying to say? How am I not qualified? I work hard, have good results, know how to draw, and even have a pretty face!”

Felix was speechless.

“In your eyes, is Sophie the only one who's fit to be in high society? Can the Lombard family really accept her past?”

If I don't qualify, what does Sophie have that makes her different?

“Since you insist on bringing up the past, do you really think Mr. Tristan isn't aware of what you've done?”

Willow fell silent.

The matter happened so long ago. How can he have any evidence?

“Let me tell you, all of us are well aware of what kind of person Sophie is. Your malicious words are not welcome here. If you don't keep this in mind, we won't be so forgiving next time!”

Before leaving, Felix ordered his men, “Send her back to the Tanner residence!”

Upon Willow's return, she changed into a different outfit, but her face remained just as sullen.

The look on her face subsequently gave Charmaine a fright.

“Willa, aren't you supposed to be on a trip with your friends? What's with that look on your face? Tell me, did something happen? Say something, Willa! Why are you keeping mum? The way you're behaving is scaring me!”

Charmaine was on the brink of tears.

She was fine before the trip. Did something go wrong?

“Mom, have I been deluding myself all this while? Was I never cut out for high society to start with?”

“What makes you say that? Are you arguing with Clayton, or did he bully you?” If Clayton was the reason, there was little she could do.

“Willa, I know what a proud girl you are, but with someone like Clayton, you have to be able to swallow your pride, all right?”

Getting married into high society isn't a walk in the park.

“Clayton doesn't like me at all!” Why didn't he show any concern when I was gone for a few days?

“Willa, does it really matter? Do you think your dad loves me?”

Charmaine's reply left Willow speechless.

Mom's right. Feelings aren't important as long as we can achieve our desires. Everything else doesn't matter!

Just then, Willow received a call from Clayton, and she wiped the tears off her face before answering.

“Hello, Clayton. What is it?”

After a pause, she continued, “Okay, I got it. I'll be right there.”

As this was Willow's only opportunity left, she had no choice but to see Clayton at his request.

I can't let this chance go to waste. Or else, I'll have nothing left!

Upon her arrival at Zales Corporation, Clayton's assistant came to receive her personally.

"Welcome, Ms. Tanner, Clayton has asked me to pick you up."

Willow was caught by surprise, as this was the first time Clayton demonstrated how important she was to him even though they haven't been together for long.

Thereafter, the assistant ushered her to Clayton's office and opened the door to let her in.

"Clayton has something important to discuss. I'll let the two of you have some privacy." With that, the assistant shut the door behind her.

"Clayton, you wanted to see me?"

"Willow, let's get married!" Clayton proposed, holding up a ring.

Willow was taken by surprise.

"Get married?"

I haven't even gone to university, and we're talking about marriage?

"Clayton, talk to me. Did something happen? Even if we're going to marry, there's no need to rush!"

She was still young after all.

"I just feel like it all of a sudden. Why? Are you reluctant to do so?"

Willow shook her head immediately.

“It's not that. I just don't know how to tell my family. Grandpa went ballistic over my last engagement.”

If we were to get married outright, I'm worried that...

“Willow, what do you think your Grandpa will give you? Will he leave you with all the Tanner family's assets?”

Clayton's candid words caused Willow to bite her lower lip.

He's right. Grandpa won't give me anything. All he cares about is Sophie.

“All right, Clayton. Let's get married!”

Clayton couldn't help but smile at her response.

Once I become a son-in-law of the Tanner family, Sophie will be forced to stay her hand against me. Furthermore, she'll have to show me some respect as her brother-in-law.

When Josiah heard about the news, he erupted in anger, causing Charmaine to shake her head.

“Dad, I know that you favor Sophie, but you can't just object to all of Willow's decisions. Marrying Clayton is the best choice available to her!”

Clayton is so much better compared to Mason.

Josiah could only shake his head at Charmaine's words.

“As her mother, you bear the greatest responsibility for what she has become!” If she hadn't kept planting the idea of marrying into a wealthy family in her daughter, Willow wouldn't have turned out this way.

He added, “Do you really think Clayton is a good man, and Willow would be happy marrying him?”

Josiah was so infuriated that he could barely catch his breath.

Charmaine is just too narrow-minded. That's the reason why I never liked her.

Morgan quickly poured him a glass of water.

“Old Mr. Tanner, please calm down. Here, have some water.” Due to Josiah's advanced age, he still had plenty of ailments despite his successful surgery. After all, when one's body began to decay due to old age, there was no stopping the process.

Consequently, one had no choice but to accept it.

“I'm fine. Give Sophie a call and tell her to come back.”

At the end of the day, Willow was still a member of the Tanner family, and he didn't want to see her suffer. To him, Clayton was someone bound to be ruined sooner or later.

“Dad, what's the point of asking Sophie to come?” Charmaine lamented. “Is it necessary to worsen their already strained relationship?”

There's no need for this, is there?

She continued, “To be honest, Clayton is a decent guy.”

“Charmaine, every rich guy to you is decent.”

“Dad, among all the men out there, Mr. Tristan is the only one you approve of. But where are we going to find another like him?”

Not everyone is as lucky as Sophie.

“Enough! You know nothing, so shut up.” Furious at Charmaine, Josiah didn't mince his words toward her.

“Dad, I'm aware that you frown upon Yale and me. But on this matter, both of us are standing by Willow. Whatever you say isn't going to make a difference,” Charmaine declared after mustering her courage. Her support for her daughter's desire was unconditional.

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“Mrs. Tanner, please stop talking,” Morgan snapped when he saw the gloomy look on Josiah's face.

Upon saying her piece, Charmaine turned around and stormed off as she saw no reason to back down.

Despite painstakingly raising three children, this is my reward. How can this be fair? Having spent so many years in the Tanner family, I'm sure my efforts must count for something!

Speechless, Josiah shook his head.

“All right now, I'm fine. Just give Sophie a call.” I'm nothing but a failure to have allowed the situation to end up this way.

“Right away.”

The moment Sophie received the call, she dropped whatever she was doing and rushed over.

Upon her arrival, Morgan summarized what happened to her.

Despite Grandpa's old age, they keep causing problems to make him worry.

Sophie felt bad for her grandfather, as within the Tanner family, no one understood him at all.

“Grandpa, don't worry. Didn't I tell you that I'll deal with it?”

“Soph, I know both of you are estranged, but she's still my granddaughter. I really don't want to see her live in regret.”

Even though Josiah knew it was wrong to blackmail Sophie emotionally, there was no one else in the family he could turn to.

“Grandpa, Do you not trust me when I told you not to worry?”

For the sake of her grandfather, Sophie was still capable of resolving the matter.

“In that case, you have to act fast. Otherwise, it would be too late once they have gotten married.”

Since it was impossible for her to let Clayton off the hook, the only option she had was to stop the wedding.

“All right. Anyway, I'm sure you must be bored staying at home all day, right? Why don't I invite a few of your old comrades to go on a trip with you?”

A trip to a nearby mountain resort would do him some good. It's not far and isn't too physically demanding.

“Okay. I'll leave the arrangements to you then.”

Josiah, too, didn't want to stay at home and get on everyone else's nerves.

“Okay. In that case, you should prepare to leave first thing tomorrow morning.”

I remember that Grandpa has a few close friends. I'll invite all of them then!

After spending two hours with Josiah, Sophie left when she had nothing else to do.

“Morgan, you should drop everything at home and go with Grandpa to the mountain resort.” Wherever Josiah went, he would make sure Morgan was by his side.

“Will do, Ms. Sophie. Don't worry. I'll definitely take good care of Old Mr. Tanner.” Sophie didn't have to worry as long as he was by Josiah's side.

“I appreciate everything that you've done recently.”

“Ms. Sophie, I'm willing to do anything for the sake of Old Mr. Tanner.”

Upon Sophie's return to TS Entertainment, Ysabelle was already waiting for her.

“Sophie, you're finally back. Hurry up and pack, as we need to go to school now to fill out our choice of university.”

It was necessary for them to make a trip there because the website could only be accessed from the school intranet.

Sophie glanced at the time.

“Let's just do it here instead.” It's just too troublesome to run around filling up some forms.

"Fill them here? Are we allowed to do that? Don't you know that it's compulsory for us to do it in school?"

"With me around, everything's possible." Sophie led Ysabelle to her office and turned on her computer.

Standing by the side, Ysabelle watched Sophie's fingers dance across the keyboard until they reached the university application page.

"Sophie, your hacking skills are amazing!" Ysabelle exclaimed. "To be honest, I wonder if there's anything in this world that you don't know."

"There is. Plenty in fact," Sophie replied earnestly. She then asked, "What do you plan to put as your first choice?"

Sophie had logged in without needing to ask for Ysabelle's account username and password.

Ysabelle pondered upon the question.

"Put Jipsdale University as my first choice." This is the only thing I can promise my dad. Since Dad objected to me joining the entertainment industry, he would blow his top if I were to reject his choice of university.

"Have you made up your mind?"

Sophie felt that the choice required careful consideration.

"I have."

"Good. And which major will you choose?"

"International trade and finance!" In the end, Ysabelle decided not to let her father down.

Sophie said, "All right. When you no longer feel like singing, you can go on to do something else."

Life is filled with possibilities. The choices made now don't determine the rest of one's life.

"That will never happen. I know how much I love doing it," Ysabelle replied. Chasing my passion is the only reason why I disobeyed my father in the first place.

Even though her father was strict, she knew that he had her best interests at heart.

Working in the entertainment industry was a tough slog, and that was the reason why her father was reluctant to let her join it.

"All right. Regardless of what you have chosen, you have my full support." Sophie had already completed the application for her.

After filling up Ysabelle's subsequent choices, Sophie exited the former's account and logged into her own.

"What about you? Have you decided?" I'm sure she has already made up her mind.

"Ysabelle, I'm not going to Jipsdale University."

Jipsdale University might be the best university in the city with many students dying to get into it, but Sophie felt as if there was nothing more she could learn there.

"What? You're not going?" Can we still hang out in the future if that's the case? Ysabelle continued to ask, "Where do you plan to go then?"

"The University of Medicine right next to Jipsdale University."

"I see. I think it's a good choice too. At the very least, the two schools are close to each other, and I can see you whenever I miss you."

After all, Ysabelle had no intention of being apart from Sophie.

"Now that you're an artiste under TS Entertainment's stable, we'll still see each frequently, anyway."

"But I still want to see you in school!" Ysabelle whined. It's even better if we could travel to school together.

"Fine. All that matters is that you're happy." Sophie had no further comments about the matter.

"Sophie, what's with that indifferent attitude of yours? At the very least, show some enthusiasm, or it'll look as if the feeling isn't mutual!"

It's embarrassing for me!

"I'm happy to be studying in the school next to yours. Satisfied?"

"Mmm-hmm, indeed I am!" Ysabelle nodded.

There was no way she would say otherwise in front of Sophie, who was the idol she adored.

"Sophie, to be honest, I think you're ready to go professional. The way you performed on the stage was absolutely mesmerizing!"

If she launches her career, I'm sure men and women alike will be captivated by her!

In response, Sophie said, "All right now, that'll be all with regard to this matter."

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“Fine.”

Ysabelle was cognizant of not overstepping her boundaries.

Sophie said, “Now that we have completed the application, you can go back to practice.”

Ysabelle sighed inwardly when she heard that. Just as expected, she's a real slavedriver.

“I got it, Boss. Don't worry. I'll definitely work hard in my training.”

“Ysabelle, since singing is your passion, you should go all out. By the way, one of my music directors will hand some demo tapes over to you. You should take a listen!”

Sophie had personally curated the songs that she felt were suited to Ysabelle.

“Sure!”

Although Ysabelle was well aware that she had to make preparations in her attempt to go professional, the news still filled her with excitement.

My efforts have not gone to waste, as I can finally chase my dream.

“Didn't you promise to write me a song?”

“Don't worry. I'll keep my word. It's just that I've been swamped with work recently. For your first album, the title track will definitely be written by me.”

Given how important Ysabelle's debut album was to Sophie, she endeavored to write the former a hit single.

Feeling ecstatic, Ysabelle threw her arms around Sophie.

“Sophie, I love you so much!”

“You don't have to. Both of us will never be together,” Sophie quipped.

“Haha...” Ysabelle couldn't resist bursting into hearty laughter.

It's surprising to see Sophie's humorous side.

Not long after, Ysabelle went off to see the music director.

“Ysabelle, remember to give it your best shot! Do you know who wrote the songs for you?”

“Who?” Despite mentioning the songs earlier, Sophie didn't reveal who the songwriter was.

“Why don't you see for yourself? I'm sure you'll be pleasantly surprised.”

After taking the document from Sophie's hands, Ysabelle was thrilled to see the name on it.

“Sophie, how did you manage to do this?” They were written by her favorite singer—the famous Richie Tannen.

She added, “You never cease to amaze me! Working for you is the most awesome thing to ever happen to me.”

Richie hadn't written a song for anyone in recent years. However, at Sophie's request, he composed a few specifically for Ysabelle.

"I'll put my best foot forward and not let anyone down," Ysabelle declared resolutely.

Being a newcomer to the industry, she had nothing more to ask for after all the resources Sophie had provided her.

All that was needed now was her effort.

Previously, she had never thought Sophie was serious and was consequently surprised at how influential the latter was.

After all, it wasn't an easy task to get Richie to collaborate.

Later on, Mark dropped by to speak with Sophie. He had a troubled expression on his face.

Seeing that, Sophie asked, "What's wrong? Did something happen to the Emerald Gang?" Considering how long he has been away, he must have encountered many problems while taking over it.

"There's nothing to worry about. I can manage," came Mark's reply.

Regardless of how grim the situation was, it was still his responsibility, and he didn't want her to interfere.

"Mark, there's no need for secrets between us. If you need anything, just let me know. You'll be surprised at how I can be of help."

"Sophie, I'm well aware of how capable you are, but I hope that you don't involve yourself in the affairs of the Emerald Gang."

Sophie had no idea how to respond to that.

In the end, she said, "I'm not as naive as you think and might really be able to provide some assistance."

"That's enough. I just wanted to check in with you."

Mark had no intention of seeking her help.

"You..."

Faced with his adamant refusal, Sophie didn't insist any further.

"No matter what, just remember this. We'll always be the best of friends. Whenever you're in trouble, we'll definitely lend you a helping hand," Sophie reminded him sincerely.

"Yeah, I got it. I know everyone has my best interests at heart."

But there are certain matters I need to resolve myself.

"Anyway, I have to go for practice now."

With that, Mark took his leave.

Sitting alone, Sophie felt a sense of melancholy descend upon her.

He always insists on carrying the burden by himself. It's terribly exhausting to do so.

Meanwhile, Clayton arrived at TS Entertainment to see Sophie as he needed to speak to her in person.

However, the security guard stopped him by the door.

"I'm sorry, but no one other than staff is allowed to enter. You'll need an appointment if you're here to see someone."

Having received a raise recently, the security guards were more serious about their job than before.

"Do you not know who I am? I'm Clayton Zales. I'm here to see the CEO." Clayton announced his name proudly, but the security guards weren't impressed at all.

"I'm sorry. Regardless of who you are, you still need an appointment to see the CEO." What's going on? Why are there so many weird people showing up lately?

"What did you say? Do you have a death wish or something?" Clayton's patience had been running thin recently due to the sheer amount of problems he was facing.

"Please do not threaten us. Otherwise, we'll be forced to call the police." The guards had zero tolerance for threats against their safety.

"You—" Clayton grabbed one of the guards by his collar. "You really aren't afraid of death, are you?"

When Sophie was subsequently informed that someone was stirring up trouble outside, she was surprised to see Clayton upon her arrival.

"Clayton, what are you doing here?" she snapped, for she never tolerated anyone who bullied her subordinates.

At the sight of Sophie, Clayton snorted and released the guard.

"Sophie, these men don't know any better. I told them that I was here to see you, but they insisted on me having an appointment."

"Oh, is that so?"

Sophie gave him a hostile look.

“Are you saying that all TS Entertainment's employees must grovel before you every time you visit?”

Embarrassed by her retort, Clayton scratched his nose.

“Sophie, no matter what, we're family. You're humiliating me by doing this.”

“Family? Why would anyone want a scumbag like you as family?” Since he came over shamelessly,

there was no reason for Sophie to show him any respect.

“You—” Clayton had never been ridiculed so badly before, especially not in front of an army of reporters.

Whatever reputation he had left was now ruined.

“Sophie, at the end of the day, I'm still your brother-in-law. How can you do this to me?” Clayton hissed in anger.

“Brother-in-law? Since when do I have one? You had better not make baseless claims about you being my relative!”

Let's see if he can actually make it to the time of the wedding.

“Sophie, you had better not cross the line. Willow is still your sister!”

Confident that Sophie would back down on the account of the reporters present, Clayton began to blackmail her emotionally.

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“Too much? Are you sure you want to discuss this matter with me here, Mr. Zales?”

Sophie shot a threatening glare at Clayton, causing the latter to stop talking immediately. At present, he had no idea what kind of evidence Sophie had in her possession that claimed that he had killed someone.

If she really had any substantial evidence, it would be very unfavorable to him as there were many reporters there.

“Forget it. I'm not talking to you anymore.”

Not having the guts to act boorishly, Clayton was determined to flee as quickly as possible.

“Hold on!”

However, Sophie stopped him from leaving.

Clayton stopped in his tracks, wondering why she had suddenly told him to stay put.

“Mr. Zales, is this how you behave in front of others? You were threatening my staff just now. Don't you think you owe them an apology?”

The reporters had been here for quite some time.

In the past, they had suffered quite a lot due to Clayton's extreme arrogance. Thus, when they saw Clayton behaving docilely in front of Sophie, they felt pleased and satisfied.

“Indeed! Mr. Zales, the security staff were merely doing their job. It's only fair that you apologize for threatening them just now!”

“That's right! You can't ignore their feelings!”

All of a sudden, the reporters began chiming in. When Clayton swept his gaze across them, they pretended as if they didn't notice it and continued speaking what was on their minds.

They paid him no heed at all.

At that juncture, he finally realized what it felt like to lose his dignity and power in someone else's territory.

“Are you sure you want to kick up a huge fuss, Sophie?”

“What's there to be unsure about? Hurry up and apologize! I've other matters to attend to. I don't need to waste my time with you here!”

Sophie glanced at the time on her phone's screen as she had a lunch appointment with Richie as well.

Clayton was at a loss for words.

He was on the verge of losing his temper, for he had never suffered such humiliation before.

“I'm sorry!”

Since there were so many reporters around, he could not afford to offend Sophie at that moment.

Thus, the only thing he could do was apologize.

“It's not me that you're supposed to apologize to.” Didn't I make myself clear just now? Or does he have difficulty understanding my words?

“Gentlemen, I apologize for being too rash today.”

The reporters were dumbfounded.

That was the very first time they had seen Clayton behave in such a submissive way.

When did Clayton become so timid? He had always been the high and mighty Clayton Zales! Ms. Sophie sure is amazing! I can't believe she could actually subdue Clayton!

“Remember, I won't let anyone bully or harm my men,” Sophie said coldly.

The security guards were very moved by her words.

Even though they had been working as a security guard for quite some time, that was the first time they were regarded with great importance by their boss.

They were determined to work harder in the future so as not to let Sophie down.

As soon as Sophie finished her sentence, she walked away in a cool and chic manner, leaving Clayton

with a grim expression on his face.

The reporters ignored the man and were elated because they would have something interesting to write about that day.

At night, Willow's expression darkened terribly after she read the news.

She then tore the newspaper into shreds.

“Don't be like this, Willa. You know the reporters love to write about nonsense every time.”

“Mom, Sophie obviously knows Clayton is my fiancé, but she completely disrespected him! This is a huge slap to my face!”

The situation put Charmaine in a difficult position as well.

“You know well that Soph doesn't bother about giving respect to others. Don't dwell too much about it, okay?”

Willow clenched her fists tightly.

“How could she do this?”

Charmaine knew Willow was upset, but at this moment, she genuinely didn't know how to comfort her daughter.

It was a society where the strong preyed on the weak, and there was nothing she could do about it.

Meanwhile, Clayton was panicking.

At present, a few people from different departments were closely monitoring him. There was no way for him to try any funny business.

Willow, who came to visit him, was concerned upon seeing the look on his face.

“Are you all right, Clayton? Did you run into some kind of trouble? Otherwise, you wouldn't have to submit to Sophie!”

He was acting differently than usual.

Truth be told, Clayton was indeed exhausted.

“Do you really like me, Willow?” Clayton suddenly asked her. At that point in time, no one stood by his side or supported him.

Willow took the initiative to hug the man.

“Don't worry, Clayton! No matter what happens to you in the future, I'll always be by your side.” Willow decided to go all out.

Regardless of what happened, he was her only hope.

Naturally, she would not give up on him.

Besides, is Sophie really that powerful? Is she even capable of taking down Clayton?

After hearing her confession, Clayton hugged her tightly.

“Yes. You're the only one by my side right now. Willow, I know that you're not exactly on good terms with Sophie, but would you please beg her for my sake?”

Willow didn't know what to say.

“What do you mean by that, Clayton? Why do we have to beg her?” Willow was utterly perplexed.

“She has some dirt on me! She has been threatening me, and that's why I've been like this. Will you look down on me because of that?”

“What kind of dirt does she have on you, Clayton? Is it serious?”

She was sure that even if she were to curry favor with Sophie, the latter would still not bother to entertain her.

“Yes, it's serious. So, if you really want us to get married, you must beg her! You're sisters, aren't you? I'm sure she'll show you some respect, right?”

After coming out from Zales Corporation, Willow was still in a daze.

Does this mean Clayton is trying to use me to deal with Sophie? But... am I really capable of doing so? Sophie will definitely mock me if I go looking for her right now! How can I possibly do that? But I might lose this last chance if I don't try.

Willow waited patiently at the entrance of Wisteria Apartments since she knew Sophie wouldn't come out even if she called her.

At half past ten that night, she finally saw Tristan's car.

Then, she dashed out and stopped in front of the car.

Sophie furrowed her brows as she looked at Willow, who was standing outside the car.

Why is she here again? Can't she just behave herself for a bit? What's the point of her coming here in the first place?

Tristan glanced at Sophie and asked, “Do you want to have a chat with her?”

Sophie shook her head and replied, “I don't like her.”

Indeed, Sophie disliked Willow to the point where she truly hated the latter's guts. There was no need for her to waste time on people whom she despised.

Tristan slammed on the brakes hard after Willow dashed out suddenly, so the car came to a stop not far away from her.

Nonetheless, he stepped on the gas again, and the car continued to move forward.

Willow did not expect Tristan to continue driving even when she was standing right in front of the car. Is he trying to run me over?

Upon noticing the car was about to hit her, Willow dodged it before chasing after it.

“What do you think you're doing, Sophie?”

Chapter 446

Sophie watched through the rearview mirror as Willow continued running behind the car, showing no sign of giving up. The latter only stopped chasing after the car after she tripped and fell.

“What an idiot,” Sophie muttered.

Did she really expect to catch up to a vehicle with four wheels just by running? Is she really my older sister? How can one possess such a low IQ?

“Ignore her. She's of no importance, so don't let her affect your mood,” said Tristan.

People like Willow only think about what they want. They don't care about others at all. She must've come looking for Sophie because of something to do with Clayton. There's no need to pity people like that.

“Don't worry. I'm not bothered by her in the slightest.”

The car pulled up in the underground parking lot. After getting out of the vehicle, Tristan opened the car door for Sophie, and they headed upstairs together.

Sophie was already exhausted by the time they returned to Wisteria Apartments. However, Willow kept calling her phone, so she blocked Willow's number.

Only then did she have some peace and quiet.

"Oh, by the way, which university did you apply to?" Tristan asked. They had been so caught up with other things that he had not gotten the chance to ask her.

"The University of Medicine."

Although her answer was unexpected, it made sense.

Moreover, Arius did mention that she was truly gifted.

Nonetheless, Tristan could not stop his heart from aching at the thought of Sophie becoming a doctor. After all, it was a taxing career.

"What's the matter? You look as though you have something to say about that."

"Oh, it's nothing. I'll always support you, no matter what you choose to do. It's just that I feel being a doctor will take a lot out of you," he replied.

Sometimes, one surgery alone could take a few hours, and the mere thought of Sophie standing there for several hours was already starting to worry him.

She leaned against him and said, "After my grandfather fell ill previously and there was nothing I could do, I thought that being a doctor would be quite a good thing. At least I wouldn't be so powerless in the face of death."

In truth, that idea had always been in her thoughts. However, she had never made up her mind about it.

Now, she had genuinely considered it carefully.

"Hmm, that's a good point," Tristan remarked.

Neither of them ever imagined that Tristan would one day be the one lying on the operation table and that the person performing the surgery would be Sophie.

"So, you're not unhappy about that, right?" She could now read his emotions better.

"Why would I be unhappy? I'm glad you can do the things you like, future Dr. Tanner!"

Sophie grinned.

"Oh, I won't be going to Anglandur either, so you won't have to shift your focus there."

Tristan knew she had made that decision because of him.

He cradled her face and planted a kiss on her lips. "Oh, Sophie! Thank you!"

"I don't want your thanks, Tristan. It was a voluntary decision, so you don't have to feel bad about it."

"Oh, no. I don't feel bad about it at all. I couldn't be happier that you chose to stay because of me. However, just know that should you need to go to Anglandur, I can go with you."

Sophie's heart softened when she saw how much he cared for her.

This guy really knows how to make my heart melt.

“Who says I must go to Anglandur? Even if I don't go abroad, I can still become the best doctor in the world!” she declared, brimming with confidence.

Besides, Chanaea has been making great strides on the medical front!

“But didn't you promise Arius you'd make a trip to Anglandur?” Tristan asked. That matter had gnawed at him for a long time, and he had never forgotten it.

Sophie nodded.

“You're right. I promised him that, and I do need to make a trip there. Dr. Smith saved my life, so I must make good on my promise to him.”

Although she had decided not to join the International Medical Association, she still had to go there and personally tell Barney her decision.

“When are you planning on leaving? I'll go with you.”

“Even if I go, it'll only be for two to three days. You have plenty to do here, so there's no need to accompany me,” she replied, knowing how busy he had been lately.

Tristan had a collaboration with a multinational corporation on hand, and everyone was watching him like a hawk. Hence, he could not afford to leave the country at such a crucial time.

Even so, he said, “What am I busy with? I'm only working to earn money. I have a whole lifetime ahead of me to do that. What matters the most to me now is you.”

It's only for two to three days, after all. It won't affect much. After what happened during that last trip to

Anglandur, how can I let her go by herself?

“Don't tell me you're reluctant to part with me? Or is it because you're afraid I won't return?”

What Sophie meant was that perhaps he was worried she would not return because she would surely fall in love with that place after getting a taste of the International Medical Association.

“Both,” Tristan answered frankly without attempting to deny it. After all, that was the truth.

Then, he added, “However, if you truly wish to go there, I won't stop you. Nothing can come between us anyway.”

Sophie stared at him wordlessly.

“I already told you. I want to go to the University of Medicine.”

It may not be the top university in the world, but it's pretty good.

“All right. That's settled, then. Just let me know in advance when you're planning to go.”

“Okay.”

Seeing how much he wanted to make the trip with her, Sophie did not say anything more.

Meanwhile, the chancellors of Jipsdale University and Capston University could not help feeling regretful that Sophie had chosen to attend the University of Medicine.

Hence, they went looking for her again.

Hoping that Sophie would pick his university, Christopher said, "You can still think about it again, Sophie."

"He's right. You actually possess talent in scientific research. I know you were the winner of the last physics competition, and you—"

"That's kind of the two of you to say that. However, I've already made my decision."

"You know, you don't have to attend Jipsdale University to join our research institute. How about doing a major at our university?" Christopher proposed. He did not mind that alternative as long as it meant she was not completely turning them down.

Is he for real? I can study medicine while doing research?

Sophie was speechless, and even Ysabelle was dumbfounded.

Seriously? Mr. Olsen is truly pulling out all the stops!

"All right. I'll think about it again," Sophie replied. With her abilities, it would not be impossible to do two majors at two different universities.

"You won't have to worry about the timetable. I'll adjust it for you and ensure it doesn't clash with your classes at the University of Medicine."

Christopher's remark proved just how desperately he wanted her as a student at Jipsdale University.

Flabbergasted, Ysabelle nearly sputtered in disbelief.

Haven't there been rumors that the chancellor of Jipsdale University is a cold and aloof person? Why has someone like him done a complete one-eighty in front of Sophie? She's truly something else!

Not to be outdone, Joseph piped up, "Capston University can offer you that as well. If you're willing to pick us, we'll agree to any request you may have."

Chapter 447

Sophie felt a bit distressed about the two chancellor's enthusiasm.

When Tristan noticed that she was getting impatient, he stood up and prompted, "I think you gentlemen should go."

Since he already said that, the two chancellors could not possibly press Sophie further. They had no choice but to pack up and leave.

"Sophie, I actually think Mr. Olsen's suggestion is good. You can study medicine at the University of Medicine while doing your physics research at Jipsdale University!" Ysabelle chirped.

Sophie was very talented in physics, so it would be a shame for her to give it up.

"Ysabelle!" Tristan snapped.

Ysabelle immediately shut her mouth, though she still thought the suggestion was nice.

"It's not like you have unlimited energy. Just do what you like to do," Tristan told Sophie. He did not think she had to venture into something just because she was talented in it; that would be too exhausting.

"But I really think it's a good idea," grumbled Ysabelle. She tugged at Sophie's sleeve and complained, "Sophie, Uncle Tristan is being mean to me again."

Now that she had Sophie on her side, she was getting bolder and bolder in front of Tristan.

“That's enough. Isn't Felix here to pick you up? Hurry and head to the company.” The recording for Ysabelle's new album had begun, and she was supposed to record the first track that day. In the coming days, she would be very busy.

“Aren't you going with me?” Ysabelle sounded a little dejected.

It was an important day for her, so she thought Sophie would accompany her.

“Go with Felix first. I'll follow once I'm done with the matter on hand.”

Ysabelle knew that Sophie was busy, so she could only nod obediently.

“Make sure to come, okay? I'll be really disappointed if you don't show up,” she expressed as she looked at Sophie with puppy eyes.

“When did I ever lie to you?”

Hearing that, Ysabelle beamed. “You're right. You never lie to me. I'll go first then.”

Tristan couldn't help but shake his head as he watched his niece. He felt like she was becoming more and more willful.

“You shouldn't spoil her so much,” he said to Sophie after Ysabelle left.

“Do I?”

Sophie adored Ysabelle very much. The latter was pure and simple, and it was very easy to make her happy.

Thus, Sophie always found herself giving in to Ysabelle's requests unknowingly.

"You do. If you have so much time and energy, you should spoil me, too."

Tristan was jealous again.

"Tristan, are you actually jealous of your niece right now?" Sophie asked in exasperation. Is he for real?

"Yes, I am," Tristan admitted. "You spend too much time on her."

His words rendered Sophie speechless.

I didn't! Well, never mind. If he says I did, then I did.

Suddenly, Tristan walked over and hugged her.

"I know you're busy, but you have to promise me to take care of yourself properly. Don't tire yourself too much. Don't mind what others tell you as well. Just do what you like to do."

Sophie had many roles now, and they all required her time and energy.

"Yes, I know," Sophie responded.

She was not that fragile.

"That's good to hear. By the way, The Wheelers have begun promoting their concert, right? Have you decided to perform?"

Tristan knew Sophie did not like getting too much attention from the fans, so he had to ask her.

"This might be The Wheelers' last concert. When we first formed the band, our dream was to have a concert. So I really don't want to miss it this time."

It was true that Sophie disliked being in the spotlight all the time, but she had to join this concert with her bandmates so she would not have any regrets in the future.

Nevertheless, she wouldn't actually expose herself on the stage.

"I'll perform while wearing a mask, just like last time," she stated.

"All right. Since you have decided, go for it so you won't have any regrets." Tristan wanted Sophie to live life to the fullest.

Giving him a peck on the cheek, Sophie gushed, "Tristan, I didn't expect that you'd be such an obedient boyfriend."

No matter what decisions she made, he always showed his support for her.

"Well, I have no choice since the girl I like is so strong-minded."

Since he liked her, it was natural for him to accept everything about her.

"By the way, I like Mr. Olsen's suggestion. I think I can go for a double major," Sophie remarked. She figured she should take the chance since Christopher already made things so convenient for her. As a matter of fact, she did quite enjoy studying physics.

Upon hearing that, Tristan felt a headache coming.

What should I do? My girlfriend is too capable and eager to learn. She won't have much time for me in the future!

He groaned, "I've made up my mind. From now on, Christopher will be my enemy!"

It's his fault for bringing up that idea!

At that, Sophie burst into laughter.

"You know what? You're so adorable when you act like this."

"Adorable?"

Tristan was baffled. He never considered himself to be adorable in the least bit.

"Yes, I'm serious. You're super adorable. I really like it when you act like this."

"Fine. Since you like it, then I'll be more adorable in the future." As long as she liked it, Tristan had no objections.

Later, when Tristan and Sophie left in their car, Willow was still standing by the gate.

She had waited there for the entire night.

Naturally, Tristan and Sophie saw her right away.

"Willow is quite persistent at times," Sophie commented. That was something about Willow that impressed her.

"Isn't she here for Clayton?"

"Yes." As there was no way Sophie would let Clayton off, there was no point in talking to Willow. That was why Sophie ignored Willow so heartlessly despite the fact that the latter waited for so long.

Right at that moment, Willow collapsed to the ground.

“Is she acting?”

“It doesn't seem so.”

As someone who had studied medicine before, Sophie could tell that Willow actually fainted.

“Seriously...”

In all honesty, Tristan did not want to help Willow. However, she was Sophie's sister after all. If they turned a blind eye now, Sophie would be put in a bad light.

Looking at Willow, Sophie sighed helplessly.

Meanwhile, Tristan stopped the car by the road and got out to check on Willow. She was indeed unconscious, and onlookers had begun to gather around her.

Sophie also got out of the car.

When she saw Tristan bending down to pick Willow up, she immediately stopped him.

“You should drive. I'll carry her.”

“You're a girl. How will you—”

“I don't want you to carry other girls,” Sophie explained.

Tristan immediately accepted her excuse. "All right."

With that, Sophie took Willow into her arms and got into the car. They then brought the latter to the hospital before giving Charmaine a call.

Soon, Charmaine arrived at the hospital.

"Sophie, what in the world is going on? What did you do to Willa? Why did she faint?"

Josiah had gone to the resort, so only Charmaine was home. She was in such a hurry that she did not even change out of her home slippers.

It was apparent that she cared about Willow very much.

"Mrs. Tanner, please mind your attitude," Tristan warned.

How could she treat her daughter like this?

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Sophie didn't really seem to mind as she had long since gotten used to Charmaine's nasty attitude.

"You need proof before making such accusations, Mrs. Tanner. I had nothing to do with Willow fainting. If anything, you should be thanking me for sending her to the hospital!"

Not wanting to waste any more of her time and energy arguing with Charmaine, Sophie turned around and began dragging Tristan out of there.

Willow had fainted due to a low blood sugar level, so it wasn't anything serious.

"Hah..." Charmaine let out a cold chuckle in response.

I used to regret treating Sophie poorly before, but now, I just wish I could strangle her to death! How dare she take that tone with me? I'm her mother, for crying out loud! Such insolence is unacceptable!

Although she was infuriated, she didn't dare lash out at Sophie because Tristan was standing right next to her.

Even if Tristan wasn't there, the dangerous aura emanating from Sophie was terrifying enough to deter her.

Given the circumstances, all Charmaine could do was pin her hopes on Willow.

If Clayton can make a comeback, we'll become members of the upper class. I sure hope he'll be all right...

After leaving the hospital, Tristan opened the car door for Sophie and said, "Wait in the car. I'll be right back!"

Unsure of what he was going to do, Sophie replied, "All right."

Tristan then closed the car door and walked away.

Ten minutes later, he returned with two scoops of ice cream.

"Here you go."

Tristan didn't like eating ice cream, but he remembered how Ysabelle would eat it whenever she was in a bad mood, and it would make her feel much better afterward.

He figured Sophie must've felt upset after hearing those nasty remarks from her mother.

Sophie froze in shock and confusion when she saw the ice cream cones in his hands.

Did he just run all the way there just to get me some ice cream? I don't like ice cream, but he did queue up in this scorching heat just to buy it for me. What should I do?

"Tristan, you..."

Unsure of what to say, she simply stared at him with a conflicted look in her eyes.

"Which would you prefer?" Tristan asked.

Although he didn't like ice cream, he still wanted to share the frozen treat with her.

"I'll have this one!" Sophie replied as she picked the strawberry-flavored one, leaving Tristan with the vanilla flavored one.

He picked those two flavors because those were the ones she chose when getting milkshakes.

Just like that, the two of them sat in the car with the air-conditioning on as they munched on their ice cream. For some reason, eating ice cream felt a lot more tolerable when they did it together.

Noticing that Tristan had been staring at her ice cream cone, Sophie held it up to his face and asked, "Do you want to give mine a try?"

Tristan paused for a brief moment before giving her ice cream a lick.

It wasn't until he licked it that Sophie realized what she had done.

Oh, my goodness! That ice cream has my saliva all over it!

"I'm sorry! I didn't do it on purpose! I just thought you might want to try it, that's all!"

"Yeah, I did want to give it a try."

The atmosphere in the car changed as the two individuals known for their aloofness had an intimate moment together.

"Would you like to try mine?" Tristan asked.

Sophie shook her head. "I actually don't like ice cream."

Tristan fell silent instantly when he heard that.

What? Does this mean I went through all that trouble for nothing?

"That being said, it feels kind of nice eating it with you!" Sophie added, much to his relief.

She's right. I don't like ice cream either, but I kind of enjoy eating it with her. Is this the power of love? Does one just end up liking anything as long as they're doing it with someone they love?

Tristan tossed the ice cream cones into the trash and said with a chuckle, "Same here. I don't like ice cream either."

"Tristan, I'm actually a lot stronger than you think. When something happens to you often, you tend to get used to it, and it doesn't bother you as much."

Sophie knew he was trying to cheer her up with ice cream because of what Charmaine said earlier, but she wasn't bothered by it at all.

"Even so, I don't want you getting used to that sort of thing."

All Tristan wanted was to protect and love the woman before him for the rest of their lives, so he refused to let anyone mistreat her.

"I don't mind it at all, though."

There's no way to control the way people think, so why even bother trying to change them? Besides, it would be too exhausting to constantly worry about how others perceive me.

"Now that you have me in your life, I'll be sure to keep you safe from harm. I won't let anyone else mistreat you ever again."

Tristan was determined to protect her from anyone who would hurt her, including her family members.

"Don't worry. I'm really fine," Sophie reassured him.

He always has my best interests in mind. Having him in my life is probably the best thing that has ever happened to me.

"I mean what I said, Sophie. You no longer have to worry about a thing. All you need to know is that you're the one I love the most."

In order to ensure her happiness and make up for her tragic childhood, Tristan was willing to shelter her from any storm that they could encounter.

"Honestly, it sometimes hurts me deeply to see how strong you've gotten."

He believed that, as a woman, she deserved to be loved and protected.

"Okay, I'll listen to you from now on."

“Yeah, that's right.”

Unbeknownst to her, Tristan was more than willing to listen to her.

Ysabelle was halfway through recording a song when Tristan and Sophie arrived at TS Entertainment. Felix had been standing guard outside the recording booth the entire time.

As Ysabelle was talented in singing and had an amazing voice, she was doing quite well.

Noticing that Sophie and Tristan were here, Ysabelle came out of the booth after finishing up a segment of her song.

“You're finally here, Sophie! I thought you weren't coming anymore!”

“Why are you being so clingy? You've got Felix here to keep you company, don't you?”

“Felix can't possibly take your place in my heart! I feel a lot more confident with you around, Sophie!”

“I got held up with something,” Sophie replied as she pressed a few buttons and played Ysabelle's recording.

As it was Ysabelle's first time hearing her voice like this, she felt somewhat embarrassed.

The entire recording was only thirty-eight seconds long, but Ysabelle felt like it took forever for them to finish playing it.

“Well? What do you think? It's not that good, right?”

Sure enough, Felix was quick to compliment her. “I knew you were talented, Ysabelle! That was the best song I've ever heard!”

Ugh... Isn't he being a little too enthusiastic?

"I know I'm not that good, Felix. You don't have to exaggerate to make me feel better about myself."

"I'm just telling the truth. I don't care what other people say. To me, you're always going to be the best."

Ysabelle burned bright red when she heard that.

She had gotten used to Felix being harsh, so hearing him compliment her caught her completely off guard.

"Stop it! I'm not used to hearing such things from you, Felix."

Chapter 449

"What? I was just complimenting you, though. Do you want me to go back to being harsh again?" Felix didn't know what he was supposed to do.

"I think you should just keep your mouth shut," Ysabelle replied, much to Felix's chagrin.

I keep her company while she's recording, and yet, she turns against me the moment Sophie shows up. How rude!

Since neither Tristan nor Felix knew much about singing, Ysabelle decided to seek Sophie's professional opinion instead. "What do you think of my singing, Sophie?"

"You did all right."

Ysabelle had a great voice and had been putting in a lot of effort, so her singing had improved significantly.

Ysabelle breathed a sigh of relief when she heard that. "Really?"

"Yes, really."

"You do indeed sing pretty well. I'll let your father listen to your album once you're done recording it," Tristan said.

Lincoln is still against the idea of Ysabelle singing, but he might change his mind after hearing how well she sings.

"Thanks, Uncle Tristan!" Ysabelle felt very satisfied with her performance.

Uncle Tristan rarely compliments me, so that must mean my singing was decent! Looks like my hard work has paid off, after all!

"Carry on with the recording," Sophie said.

"Okay!"

Sophie and Tristan continued observing her for a little while longer before stepping out of the recording booth.

TS Entertainment seemed to be doing well with The Wheelers, Cecelia, and Ysabelle on its side.

"You're doing a great job managing TS Entertainment."

"I think I did all right."

At the very least, it wasn't far from what she had in mind.

Cecelia had been given a role in a film with a really high budget and was preparing for the shoot.

Ysabelle was in the process of recording her album, and The Wheelers was preparing for an upcoming concert. So far, everything seemed to be going according to plan.

“Tristan, did you run into some kind of trouble lately?” Given how advanced internet technology had

become, Sophie was able to find out even though he had kept quiet about it.

Tristan was not expecting her to say something like that all of a sudden.

“No, it doesn't exactly count as trouble. I didn't tell you because I didn't want to worry you. It's just a minor issue, after all.”

There was no problem he couldn't solve, so he wasn't really bothered by it.

He has been helping me out by my side all this while, so why won't he tell me about his problems? There's no reason to keep me in the dark if I can help out!

“I told you to let me know if you ever run into any problems. I might be able to help you out,” Sophie reminded him.

“All right, I'll let you know if I'm unable to handle it.”

Tristan wasn't actually struggling with anything as he was the one who caused those problems.

Being a businessman, he sometimes had to resort to underhanded means, and he didn't want Sophie to see this side of him.

Arius was freaking out when he heard about Sophie choosing the University of Medicine and Jipsdale University.

“What's the meaning of this, Sophie?”

He came all the way from Anglandur just to confront Sophie about it in her office.

“What are you talking about?”

“Don't play dumb with me! Didn't you promise Barney you would join the International Medical Association? Why did you choose the University of Medicine? Why would you want to stay here?”

“I never promised anyone I'd join the International Medical Association, Arius. Just like before, I only said I'd go have a look. Besides, I don't need to go to Anglandur just to study medicine.”

The medical technology in Chanaea was pretty advanced too. Since Sophie wasn't the type to glorify foreign countries, she believed it made no difference where she chose to study in.

“How could you say that? You'll be able to achieve so much more by joining the International Medical Association! You can't seriously be content with being an ordinary doctor for the rest of your life, right?” Arius exclaimed.

A talented individual like her should be working alongside an elite team of researchers to benefit the medical field!

“This is my choice, Arius. I want to stay here.”

“What do you mean your choice? I bet you're only staying because of Tristan! Life is short, Sophie. You shouldn't let your relationship get in the way of your studies and research,” Arius retorted angrily.

Sophie stared at him in disbelief.

“Arius, you're glorifying Anglandur's medical research a little too much.”

“I'm not glorifying anything. It's simply an undeniable fact, regardless of whether you believe it or not.”

“That's enough. You hardly come back these days, so I don't want to get into an argument with you over this.” Sophie felt there was no need to argue over such trivial matters.

Arius could only let out a helpless sigh in response.

Unbeknownst to them, Barney had dropped by as well.

The conversation was interrupted when Arius' phone started ringing all of a sudden.

Seconds after answering the phone, he exclaimed in disbelief, “What did you say? Where did you say you were?”

“I said, I'm outside TS Entertainment. Will you come downstairs, please? These people won't let me in!” Barney repeated himself with a displeased frown.

People had always treated me with respect wherever I went, and yet, these guards won't even let me enter the building.

“Are you sure you're not talking in your sleep right now?”

“I'm in a bad mood right now, Arius! You'd better not mess with me!” Barney yelled impatiently. He was upset that his favorite student refused to join the International Medical Association and take over his position.

“Dr. Smith is downstairs. You go talk to him!”

As Barney really wanted Sophie to be his successor, her decision gave him quite a huge shock.

Sophie fell speechless when she heard that.

Why is everyone coming over? It won't do them any good. I've already made my decision, so I'm not going to change my mind so easily.

Arius then went downstairs to let Barney in.

"Go pour me a glass of water." Barney had rushed over in such a hurry that he didn't even have time to hydrate himself.

"I'll go get it," Sophie said as she stood up.

"Oh, it's fine. Arius should be the one to do this sort of thing," Barney replied.

Arius rolled his eyes in response.

What the heck is wrong with Dr. Smith? I'm his student! How could he be so mean to me?

Although unhappy, Arius had no choice but to do as told. After all, Barney was his mentor and had tons of ways to make his life a living hell.

Feeling a lot better after gulping down a glass of water, Barney looked at Sophie and asked seriously,

"Sophie, can I ask you something?"

"Of course," Sophie replied respectfully.

"Why did you pick the University of Medicine instead of joining the International Medical Association?" Barney asked the question that had been bugging him the entire journey.

“Because I believe it makes no difference where I study medicine.”

She didn't really feel the need to go to Anglandur.

“In that case, why did you refuse to join the International Medical Association?” Barney pressed on. He believed those who wished to study medicine should join that association.

Chapter 450

“Because it's too far, and I don't like flying.”

Just for that reason?

Barney fell into deep thought.

“Old man, are you okay? Don't do anything foolish, you hear? At worst, you'll just have to look for another successor.” Arius reckoned that his mentor was old and couldn't handle the shock anymore.

“Dr, Smith, it doesn't have to be me. Arius can actually be your successor. His medical skills have improved a lot, after all,” Sophie suggested.

In her mind, she had deemed Arius to have the qualifications to be the successor of the International Medical Association.

“Sophie, what do you mean by that? Since you don't want to do it, you've decided to dump it all on me, is that it?”

I have no intention of becoming Barney's successor. I'm perfectly happy the way I am right now. I'm free and comfortable this way. I can go whenever and wherever I want to go. I can do my research whenever I feel like it, and I don't need to think of anything else. However, if I were shackled with being a successor, I could say bye-bye to all of these.

“Too far, you say? Well, if that's the case, how about we move the International Medical Association to this place then?” The location was never an issue. If Barney willed it, he could move the headquarters of the International Medical Association to this place.

At his proposal, Arius was dumbfounded.

“Dr. Smith! Are you crazy?” How can he move an organization that big to wherever he wants?

Barney shot Arius a glare.

“You talk too much.” For the advancement of the medical field, Barney was willing to compromise.

He was a medical savant, and there was nothing that could stop him from getting what he wanted.

Sophie was stunned speechless. She never thought the older man would say something like that. “Are you sure you want to do this, Dr. Smith?”

Because of me, a lot of people would have to move to Chanaea. Is this really okay?

“You only need to tell me one thing. If I move the International Medical Association to this place, would you be willing to join? You can ignore the rest.”

Since he could present that offer, it meant that he had the power to do that.

Sophie glanced at Arius.

Arius knew Barney wasn't lying.

As long as Sophie agree to it, Barney would do everything in his power to move the International Medical Association to Chanaea.

This way, Sophie would be able to join the association without any worries.

“Okay. If that's the case, then I'll join.” In truth, she never intended to negotiate terms like this.

After all, she wasn't that desperate to join the International Medical Association.

However, the lengths that Barney would go to for her to join moved her.

For the sake of medicine, Barney was willing to move mountains.

He had lived in Anglandur for half his life.

As such, Sophie was impressed that he actually had the gall to propose moving to Chanaea.

“Okay, that's settled then. I'll go back and make the necessary arrangements. In the meantime, you stay put and look for a place to be our headquarters,” Barney said to Arius.

After all, the medical association would occupy a large space.

So, they would need to purchase a piece of land and build the building there themselves.

The estimated time for all the preparation works to be completed would take about two to three years.

Nonetheless, all of these were worth it if it meant that Sophie could join.

“Will do, Dr. Smith. Don't worry and just leave everything to me.” At the end of the day, Arius was

Chanaean.

He figured that moving the International Medical Association to Chanaea would bring nothing but benefits to his country.

“So, when are you going back? You can stay the night at my place if you'd like.” Barney wasn't that young anymore. It would be bad for his health if he kept flying.

“It's fine. Now that we made the decision, I still have a lot of things to do.” For one, he knew there would be trouble at Anglandur.

Anglandur wouldn't let them move to another country that easily.

“Dr. Smith, you can tell me if there's anything you can't handle. I'll think of a solution,” Arius said.

Barney smiled.

“You don't have to worry about me. Even Anglandur's president wouldn't dare to do anything to me.” Since he made the decision, he should deal with the consequences himself.

Sophie stayed quiet.

She was really touched by his determination.

This man is willing to give up everything just for the sake of medicine.

“Dr. Smith, you—” Arius did not know what to say.

He could only imagine the pressure of moving the International Medical Association to this place.

Later, Sophie and Arius accompanied Barney for a meal before sending the latter to the airport.

“Brat, I trust you to handle everything that needs to be done. I hope to move here as soon as possible.”

First, they needed to deal with the large group of people from the medical association.

Next, the land for the medical association had to be obtained.

Last but not least, arrangements for the living quarters of the medical association members needed to be made.

These were some of the things that needed to be dealt with.

“Please be rest assured that everything will be fine with me here.” After all, Arius had been Barney's mentee for so long. Thus, there was no way he couldn't handle this level of paperwork.

“Okay. I'll be leaving then.”

It was time for Barney to board the plane.

Although he was going back alone, he figured it was fine since he would be back in Chanaea soon.

Arius took a deep breath.

“Sophie, did you put a spell on him or something? I can't believe he's willing to move the medical association here because of you!”

I can already imagine the level of trouble the move would create.

“Well, I didn't expect things to turn out like this, too.” To be honest, Sophie could not help but admire Barney. “There are no borders when it comes to medicine. I believe this now,” Sophie mused aloud.

“Yeah, you're right.”

After pausing for a moment, Arius added, “By the way, I just got back here, so I don't have a place to stay. I think you still have an unoccupied room, right? Can I stay at your place for a few days?”

Arius didn't want to go to a hotel.

It was inconvenient as he couldn't do a lot of things.

“If you can bear with Tristan's anger, later on, feel free to come over.” Personally, Sophie had no objection to him coming over as she had empty rooms to spare.

However, she knew that Tristan might not be that happy with her decision.

“Sophie, honestly, how could you put men over our friendship? If you're on my side, Mr. Tristan won't be able to do anything.”

Sophie went silent.

She then said, “Between Tristan and you, who do you think I'll choose?” This is practically a no-brainer!

At that, Arius was rendered speechless.

Okay. She has a point. I should keep quiet lest I embarrass myself further.

Sophie added, “If you really can't find a place to stay, I have a mansion at Jipsdale. I'll have the place cleaned tomorrow and you can move there.”

Knowing he had a lot to do, Sophie reckoned it would be inconvenient for him to stay in the hotel.

At night, Sophie treated everyone to dinner. Tristan, the three of his friends, and Ysabelle were all present.

“Welcome back, Arius!”

Because Arius was a medical professor, it was natural that anyone would want to be acquainted with a talent like him.

After all, even rich people would get sick one day. And when one was sick, one had to go to the doctor.

Arius raised his glass and gave a toast.

“Thank you. I'll be staying in Chanaea from now on. Even though nothing good ever comes from people calling for me, you are welcome to contact me should you really need my services.”

He only said that because he knew anyone who called for him would meet him whilst lying on an operating table.

“Sophie and I will become legendary figures in Chanaea's medical history in the future,” Arius added. Sophie will undoubtedly become a legend because her talent in the medical field is high.

“Yes, that's right. Sophie is awesome!” Ysabelle praised. She firmly believed that there was nothing Sophie couldn't do.