

Pursuing 501

Chapter 501

Upon hearing the same question from his father again, Mark understood that the matters of that day had reached the older man.

“Dad, she and I can never be,” he replied.

Of course, he was distraught by that fact, but there was nothing else he could do.

“Does she not like you, or do you not like her?” Quinton felt it was such a shame.

After all, he was really fond of a girl like Sophie.

“Don't ask about it anymore, Dad. All you need to know is that it's not going to happen. Also, don't do anything to Sophie,” Mark stated.

“You like her a lot,” Quinton pointed out immediately. “So, she doesn't like you. Am I right?”

Does she not have any taste? It's my son we're talking about!

Mark was bereft of words.

Did he really have to say it out loud? What's the point of doing that?

“All right. I understand what's going on now.” Quinton narrowed his eyes as an idea formed in his mind. Since my boy likes her, I'll make sure he gets what he wants. She's a woman, anyway! All he has to do is get her in bed, and she'll be utterly biddable.

Having been involved in the underworld for a long time, he clearly had many tricks up his sleeve and was determined to help his son.

Yet, Mark had no idea what his father was plotting. All he had on his mind then was the way his band members looked when they left earlier.

I must've really hurt them this time. Maybe they won't come back and see me anymore.

Meanwhile, Sophie had already brought Sunny and the others back to the mansion. The four band members had not uttered a word ever since returning.

Whatever had just happened dealt a huge blow to them, after all.

Even when Mark said he wanted to leave, they did not despair as much.

Never had they expected The Wheelers to end up in such a state.

Sunny, especially, was unable to accept such an outcome, but there was nothing he could do to salvage the situation.

"All right now. Let's not overthink the matter. Mark just didn't want to drag anyone else down." Although Sophie was furious, she could truly still understand Mark.

"Don't you think Mark has changed, Sophie?" Sunny asked.

He had never envisioned their leader pointing a gun at them and saying such things.

Sophie advised, "You have to trust him, Sunny. He really just doesn't want to get you guys in trouble. Okay, that's enough. Get some rest. I'll take care of all this."

"I don't think you should see him anymore, Soph. If he wants nothing to do with us, then so be it. I'll pack up and return to Horington in a few days."

Since The Wheelers had fallen apart, there was no point in him staying.

I may as well go home now so that I don't have to see everyone looking so sad.

"It's okay if you're just thinking of making a trip back, Sunny. But if you're trying to run away, I won't allow it," Sophie uttered.

No matter what, he has to learn to deal with these problems.

Sunny voiced, "There's a lot of things I don't actually want to do, Sophie. I just can't accept what's happening." I need lots of time now. What's the future going to be like? I can't be sure anymore. I don't even know if I'll come back.

"Don't do anything rash, Sunny. We're all still part of TS Entertainment. How would Sophie face our fans if we left?" one of the band members urged.

"He's right. Sophie founded the company for us. How could we leave without a word?" another chimed in.

"Then what do you propose we do? Are we going to keep staying here like this? What would become of us in the future?" Sunny retorted.

What value do we have now that it's over for The Wheelers?

"Sunny!" the other members exclaimed.

What's the point of throwing a fit now? Isn't solving this issue what matters the most now? We've been buddies all these years, so shouldn't he know what Mark is like?

Sunny could do nothing but gaze at Sophie in silence, for he did not know what else to say.

"Calm down, Sunny. Everything's going to be fine. I'm sure Mark also feels awful about what happened today," she said.

"I'm tired. I'll go get some rest," the young man responded after a pause, refusing to say anything further.

He had already tried his best to talk himself into being understanding of Mark.

Alas, not everything was possible despite one's efforts.

The remaining three band members could only shake their heads at how despondent Sunny was.

"What should we do now, Sophie?" They were utterly at a loss.

"There's no need to think about that. Just keep doing whatever you're supposed to. I'll take care of Mark," Sophie replied.

They only had to look after themselves at that point.

"Okay."

"Look out for Sunny too. He's not in the best state now," she exhorted.

We can't let anything happen to Sunny right now.

"Okay. Don't worry about it! Sunny will be just fine with us around. You only need to focus on Mark."

Their leader was in a perilous state at the moment.

He could even lose his life at any given time.

“Okay. I'll be heading back now,” Sophie uttered.

With that, she headed straight back to Wisteria Apartments. The moment she opened the front door to her unit and walked into the living room, she found Tristan still waiting for her there.

The man did not go to bed as she had requested.

Sophie took a deep breath to compose herself.

“You're back. How's everything going with TS Entertainment?” Tristan rose to his feet and walked in her direction.

“Didn't I tell you to get some rest? Do you ever listen to a word I say?” she questioned.

Despite her best efforts at controlling her emotions, the words that came out of her mouth still carried a very interrogative tone.

He stilled briefly, having not expected her to talk to him like that right after her return.

“I just had some things to take care of, Sophie. What's wrong? Have the problems not been addressed?” he asked.

Sophie did not know how to respond upon seeing the man's expression.

Instead of speaking, she bit her lip.

Noticing her reaction, Tristan stood before her and hugged her gently.

"What happened?" he inquired in a soft voice.

Sophie instantly felt horrible about herself. How could I lash out at him like that? It's not like he did anything wrong.

"I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that," she uttered.

Tristan held her by the chin.

"Don't apologize to me. Tell me what on earth happened. That's all I want to know." Nothing else really mattered to him.

"Nothing much. The truth is, I wasn't at TS Entertainment. There were some issues with Mark and the band, so I had to head over to take care of things."

Realization dawned on Tristan at the mention of Mark.

He knew how deep the bond was between Sophie and The Wheelers.

"You're not hurt, are you?" he then asked.

Still, given how brutal gang members could be with their guns and knives, he was worried about nothing else but her.

Sophie replied, "I'm fine. It's just that... I am at a loss to know how to deal with this issue!"

Chapter 502

Mark really isn't cut out for Emerald Gang, but how should I solve this problem?

“Don't worry; we'll take our time to sort this out. There's no problem in this world that cannot be solved. It's all just a matter of time!” Tristan cooed.

I lost my temper and lashed out at him, yet he's still trying to help me solve my problems. He's such a sweet guy!

With that in mind, Sophie hugged him tightly and said, “It's terrible of me to behave like this. I'll try to keep my emotions in check.”

Yeah, he's right. There is no such thing as an unsolvable problem. Even if there is, a solution will eventually be found over time.

“You're doing a great job as is. After all, this is a rather complex problem,” Tristan replied. He did not want her to put so much pressure on herself.

“Yeah, you're right. You need to listen to me, too, okay? I want you to recover as soon as possible!”

He's been the one looking after me all this while.

“Sure, I'll do anything you say. I'm definitely going to be a good boy!”

Sophie let out a chuckle when she heard his words.

“Okay!” she chirped.

I really shouldn't have snapped at him.

The following day, Morgan gave her a call early in the morning, expressing his wish to have her drop by.

Sophie agreed to it without any hesitation.

Tristan, who had also woken up, decided to go with her upon learning about it.

"I'll accompany you. I haven't seen Old Mr. Tanner in a few days now, so I kind of miss him," he said.

"Sure."

She was exceptionally easygoing that day after lashing out at him the day before.

Charmaine and Willow were home when the two of them arrived at the Tanner residence. At the sight of Sophie's arrival, the former simply greeted her before continuing with her chores.

However, Willow did not even bother to look at Sophie.

As of then, she had given up on trying to sabotage her.

All she could do was secretly hope for Sophie to someday hit a snag and break up with Tristan.

Still, Willow could not stop herself from stealing glances at Tristan.

Not only did his facial features look incredibly aesthetic, but he also looked perfect from every angle.

On top of having a handsome face, he also had a lot of money and power at his disposal.

Willow kept telling herself that Tristan only chose Sophie because he had a bad taste in women.

That was her only way of comforting herself.

Josiah came running over the moment he saw the duo.

“How are things at Tanner Group lately, Soph? I haven't been there in quite a while. Is everything okay?” he asked in concern.

“Don't worry, Grandpa. Nothing will go wrong with Victor around,” Sophie replied.

Moreover, Victor would report any and all updates to her, so she had no reason to worry.

“Yes, Victor is indeed quite capable,” Josiah concurred.

“Grandpa, as capable as Victor may be, he's not a Tanner. I don't think it's appropriate to put him in charge of Tanner Group. If Sophie is too busy to manage the company, I think I could try managing it instead. Don't forget that I'm your granddaughter too! I just want to be a part of Tanner Group. That's not too much to ask, is it?” Willow piped up.

I'm a member of the Tanner family, yet, I don't hold a single position in Tanner Group! This is unacceptable! I've lost Clayton, but it doesn't mean I can't rely on myself! I'm just as good as Sophie, if

not better! I can do anything that she can do!

“I think you should let Willa give it a try, Dad,” Charmaine quickly chimed in.

Josiah frowned as he gave it some thought.

Willow was not cut out for business, so he had never considered her a potential candidate.

“All I want is a position in the company, Grandpa. Is that too much to ask? Am I not a part of the Tanner family?” At once, Willow questioned him, displeasure welling up within her.

Because a lot of people in Jipsdale knew about her engagement with Clayton, most of them remembered her as his fiancée.

After he got locked up in prison, however, she became the laughingstock of the city.

Many mocked her for overestimating herself and said she had it coming.

Willow swore to make all of them pay for making fun of her like that.

“You're not cut out to manage a company, Willow,” Josiah replied in a straightforward manner.

“Why are you being so unfair, Grandpa?” Willow whined.

She had a hand pressed against her chest, finding herself suffocating a little from her anger and frustration.

Unsure of what to say to her, the elderly man simply shook his head in response.

“Are you done, Willow? I'm the one in charge of the company right now, so bothering Grandpa won't do you any good,” Sophie remarked.

“You...” Willow was stumped for words.

“You're not getting in as long as I don't want to let you in.” In other words, Sophie implied that it was pointless for her to pester Josiah.

“You've gone too far, Sophie!”

“Yeah? And what are you going to do about it, huh? You can't do anything!”

“You...”

Willow wanted nothing more than to strangle Sophie to death.

However, she knew she could not do anything rash with Tristan standing right next to her.

Despite the hatred and fury bubbling up inside her, she had to rein them back.

“You can't treat Willa like this, Soph! She's your sister! You should give her a position that allows her to receive some training!” Charmaine reprimanded.

After all, Willow was her dearest daughter, whom she had pampered for years. Hence, she could not possibly bring herself to leave her be.

“You will all receive your fair share of money as long as you behave yourselves. If you try anything funny, however, I will not hesitate to take action against you,” Sophie replied, not mincing her words.

She could not be bothered to explain any further.

That was how the situation was.

“How could you say such a thing, Soph? Regardless of what happens, we're still family! Why must you treat us like this?” Charmaine protested.

Sophie simply kept quiet as she did not feel like arguing with them.

I will make all decisions as I see fit. It has nothing to do with other people, and I don't need them to understand the reasons behind my decisions.

“Since Old Mr. Tanner has handed Tanner Group over to Sophie, the company now belongs to her. She can make any and all arrangements as she desires,” Tristan said flatly.

He could not stand how Charmaine and Willow would constantly try to cause problems for Sophie.

It looks like they haven't learned their lesson. I'll have to punish them again when I have the chance!

Willow shot Tristan a glance in response.

Forget it. With him around, I'll never be able to get anything out of this exchange. At that thought, she had no choice but to turn around and leave.

Charmaine, on the other hand, lost her temper and snapped at him, "I don't think you're in a position to get involved in our family's affairs, Mr. Tristan!"

"I won't sit by and do nothing as long as Sophie is involved," Tristan replied calmly.

She knew he was certainly capable of delivering on his promises, so she stormed off angrily as well.

It pleased Sophie greatly to see that only the three of them were left in the living room.

"Grandpa, if you ever struggle with rejecting their requests, just direct them to me. Don't worry; they won't dare to pester me," she uttered.

Josiah replied, "Soph, I know you don't like returning to this house because of how much the people here have disappointed you."

"I'm fine, Grandpa. You don't have to worry about that at all," Sophie reassured him.

There was nothing she could not handle, so she had no issues with coming back to visit him.

"Thank you so much, Soph. I asked you to come over because I missed you, that's all," he said.

"Yeah, I know."

Sophie was not a chatterbox, but she would always come home on time whenever he asked her to.

Josiah gave her a pat on the shoulder as he said, "You've enrolled in university, right? You chose the two most difficult majors available, so things are only going to get tougher from here on."

Although it pained him to see her working so hard, he still decided to support all of her decisions.

Chapter 503

"It's all right!" Sophie responded.

I made that choice myself, so I will follow through with it no matter how hard it gets.

"That's good to hear! Remember, I will always support you no matter what you do," Josiah replied.

He felt incredibly proud to have a granddaughter as strong and capable as Sophie. Although he did not know how much time he had left to live, he was determined to use the rest of it to support her fully.

"Grandpa, if living here makes you unhappy, then why don't you come to live with me instead?" Sophie asked as she helped Josiah over to the couch.

She did not understand why he insisted on staying there when he had the option to move out.

The elderly man shook his head. "I will never give up on this household, no matter what."

I can't possibly run away from my responsibilities, especially when my days are numbered. Besides, I'm partly responsible for the way this household turned out, so I need to manage it myself. I mustn't burden Soph any further!

"I know what you mean, but there are things that you simply can't force," she coaxed.

Not everyone will gratefully repay the kindness they receive. There are people who will always blame others if things don't work in their favor.

"All right. I'll take your advice into consideration. By the way, Tanny, how is your recovery going?"

Josiah then voiced.

He felt bad for not visiting Tristan after finding out about his injury.

"I'm mostly healed now, Old Mr. Tanner. It's nothing to worry about," Tristan replied as he walked up to the elderly man.

"I didn't manage to pay you a visit. You're not mad at me, are you?" In truth, Josiah was not particularly busy with anything. He merely did not go to the hospital because he was not feeling well.

"What are you saying, Old Mr. Tanner? I would never be mad at you! It's just a minor injury, and I'm mostly healed now."

"I'm glad to hear that. You have to be more careful from now on, okay? Bear in mind that you're not single anymore; you have Sophie to look after. She would be distressed if anything were to happen to you."

It wasn't easy for my dear granddaughter to open up to him and accept his love. Thus, he has to be safe and sound.

Tristan held Sophie's hand as he replied, "I will, Old Mr. Tanner. I promise to be more careful from now on."

He had learned to value his well-being more ever since he got together with Sophie.

After all, his life no longer belonged to him alone. It was also hers.

Josiah was gratified to see the two of them being so affectionate with each other.

He believed that Sophie would know what was best for her.

Besides, Tristan had never let them down even once.

“I just hope I'll be able to see you two get married,” Josiah commented in a melancholy manner.

I know my condition best. Most of my internal organs aren't functioning well after that major surgery I had, so who knows how much longer I have to live? Even so, I don't want to worry Soph by telling her about this. I just hope that she'll be able to handle everything on her own after I'm gone.

With that in mind, he said, “Soph, I need you to go upstairs and fetch me something.”

Josiah purposely made Sophie leave so that he and Tristan were the only ones in the living room.

“Old Mr. Tanner, are you feeling unwell lately?” Tristan asked, finding the elderly man's behavior odd beyond words.

“Tanny, you have to take good care of Sophie after I die. Do you hear me?” Josiah said.

Tristan was at a loss for words.

I knew it! Old Mr. Tanner really is having some issues with his health! He means the world to Sophie, so she'll definitely be devastated if he dies!

“Don't overthink it, Old Mr. Tanner. You should go see a doctor if you're feeling unwell,” Tristan reassured him.

Given how advanced the medical field is nowadays, there has to be a way to treat his condition, so he shouldn't be so pessimistic about it.

"There's nothing wrong with my health, so that won't be necessary. I just need you to promise me you'll look after Sophie."

Once again, Josiah expressed his wish to entrust Sophie to Tristan.

He hoped that the younger man would not let him down.

"Old Mr. Tanner, rest assured that I won't let anyone bully Sophie as long as I'm around," Tristan declared.

"Mmh," Josiah responded with a single word.

It was common for people his age to dwell upon something endlessly. There was no way they could get it off their minds.

Ever since they left the Tanner residence, Sophie had been thinking about arranging for Josiah to make a trip to the hospital.

Noticing that she was distracted, Tristan held her hand and asked, "What's on your mind?"

"Don't you think my grandpa acted very strangely today?"

"It's normal for the elderly to behave in that way. You know that he adores you the most, so there's nothing strange about him asking you to visit him," was all Tristan could say, for he did not want to upset her.

"Is that so? Could I be overthinking it? Oh, well... I sure hope so..."

Sophie knew it was common for old people to have health issues but found it hard to shake off her concern about Josiah's well-being as he meant the world to her.

On that day, Ysabelle was holding a press conference for the release of her new album. Sophie had promised to be there, so she and Tristan headed to the press conference together.

Ysabelle had just finished changing and applying her makeup when the two of them arrived. Felix was holding her bag in one hand and a thermos flask in the other.

"I told you to stay hydrated, didn't I? Do you have any idea how important it is to take good care of your throat as a singer? Here, drink some more water!" The man nagged at her as a mother would.

Ysabelle was rendered speechless by his behavior.

"Felix, it's just a press conference. You don't have to be so nervous about it," she said in the end.

"I'm not nervous at all! Why would I even be nervous?"

That amused her.

How can he bring himself to claim that he isn't nervous?

"Thank you for staying by my side all this while, Felix," Ysabelle said, sounding like a mature adult all of a sudden.

Felix froze for a good few seconds before replying, "I'm not used to you being so nice to me all of a sudden, Ysabelle."

Again, she could not come up with a response.

Yup, he's definitely a masochist!

At the sight of Sophie walking toward them, Ysabelle rose to her feet.

“Sophie! You're finally here! I was starting to think you wouldn't come!” she exclaimed. It was a very important day for her, so she wanted those she cared about to be by her side.

“There's no need to be nervous. I'm sure you can handle this,” Sophie said. The two of them had worked really hard on perfecting the first album, so she was confident that everything would be all right.

Ysabelle replied, “Yeah, I'm not nervous. I might be a little nervous initially, but I'm surprisingly calm now.”

The outcome is beyond my control, so I might as well try to enjoy the process. After all, this is something that I love to do. I shouldn't stress myself out worrying about it.

“You're all grown up now, Ysabelle,” Sophie remarked with a smile.

Ysabelle reached out and gave her a tight hug.

“Thanks for staying by my side all this while!”

For Ysabelle, meeting Sophie during her final year of high school was the best thing that had ever happened to her. If it were not for Sophie, she would not have known what she wanted to pursue in life.

“I'm grateful to have you by my side, too, Ysabelle.”

Sophie was not a very sociable person, but Ysabelle was the only one who was never afraid of her, always siding with her in everything.

The two girls shared a truly mutual friendship where both sides played their respective parts equally.

Chapter 504

Felix, too, believed Ysabelle was incredibly lucky to have Sophie in her life.

He had always been supporting her, but he was never able to help her out with her problems.

Sophie, on the other hand, did so much for Ysabelle that he felt ashamed of himself.

“Your Sophie sure is an amazing person, Mr. Tristan!” Felix exclaimed.

Charles and Sean arrived at the scene as well.

They had known Ysabelle since she was little, so they could not possibly miss out on such a huge occasion.

“Yeah, she sure is!” Charles nodded in agreement as he continued, “By the way, Winter has been in Alendor for quite some time now, Mr. Tristan. Will you please let her come back? She's no match for Sophie at all!”

Winter had been begging to return after spending an exceedingly long time in Alendor.

“I think it's best if Winter remains in Alendor, Charles. You don't know what she might do if I let her come back, and I won't let anyone cause Sophie any harm. Winter won't be able to handle the consequences if anything happens to Sophie,” Tristan replied.

Winter was not the type of person who would give up easily.

In that case, keeping her in Alendor was the best option.

Charles let out a huge sigh before saying, “You just won't take any risks, huh? All right, then. I understand.”

In truth, he was under a lot of pressure from Walter badgering him to ask Tristan to let Winter return.

"It can't be helped. She's more important than my own life," Tristan replied. He would not let Winter return as long as she still posed a threat to Sophie.

"Could you at least send her to Anglandur instead? The environment in Alendor is really horrible..." Charles requested. This isn't too much to ask, is it?

Tristan simply nodded at him in response.

He had been close friends with Charles for many years, so he figured it would be okay to fulfill the latter's tiny request.

Sean gave Charles a pat on the shoulder without saying a word.

He could understand the reason behind Tristan's decision.

Even so, he felt bad for Charles. Winter was the latter's sister, after all, and being stuck overseas all by herself was not a good thing.

Alas, no one was able to change Tristan's mind on the matter.

Taking that into consideration, perhaps it was not all that bad to have Winter stay overseas.

With Xandra personally handling Ysabelle's press conference, things were naturally off to a good start.

From backstage, Ysabelle could see that the place was swarming with journalists.

She was calm at first, but the sight of all those journalists got her feeling nervous again.

Seeing that, Sophie walked up to her and gave her hand a squeeze as she said, "It'll be fine. You've done well, so nothing will go wrong."

It was true that Ysabelle had done the best she could.

Ysabelle flashed her a smile. "Yeah, I'll give it my best, Sophie."

She's right! I've worked so hard all this while, so it's time to reap the rewards of my hard work! I can't be chickening out now!

"That's the spirit!"

The host then called out to Ysabelle, prompting her to go on stage. As they had done quite a lot of advertising beforehand, she had amassed quite a fanbase.

The second the fans saw Ysabelle appear on stage, they started screaming her name.

For the first time in her life, Ysabelle was able to experience the support that a fanbase provided.

After hearing the voices of her fans, she no longer felt afraid.

"I'm sure all of you here know who this beauty is. Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together for Ysabelle Lombard of TS Entertainment!"

The fans screamed in excitement once the host introduced Ysabelle.

Ysabelle waited for them to quiet down before saying, "Hello, everyone! It's me, Ysabelle! I'm very happy to see all of you here today. To be honest, as a rookie in this industry, I'm thrilled to receive such a tremendous amount of support."

Since it was a press conference for the release of her new album, she sang her first title track, which was composed by Richie himself.

That alone was enough to hype Ysabelle up for a long time, as Richie had a ton of fans himself.

Most of the people in the crowd turned up because they were fans of Richie.

However, they fell in love with Ysabelle after listening to her performance.

“This girl sure is great at singing!”

“Yeah! I really love her voice! It's so distinctive!”

“I know, right? Richie will be having a concert in a few days! Do you think she will be attending it as well?”

“I don't think so. Richie never invites guests to his concerts.”

“That's hard to say. Richie never composed songs for others either, but look what he did for her.”

Nothing was truly impossible in the world.

“True that!”

Felix felt really glad for Ysabelle when he heard those comments.

Ysabelle has worked so hard for so long, and she's finally made her dreams a reality! I'm sure she'll be able to continue doing what she loves from here on.

“Ysabelle sure is talented in singing! I kind of like this song!” Charles praised.

He used to think that Ysabelle was all talk back then, which was why he was genuinely surprised to see her start her career as a singer.

Felix nodded in agreement. "I like it very much."

"As if there's a single thing about Ysabelle that you don't like!" Charles teased. He likes Ysabelle so much that I bet he'll praise her even if she does something nasty!

"Yeah, I like everything about her," Felix replied.

I'm not sure if my feelings for her will end up burdening her, though...

"You'll have to up your game, then. The entertainment industry is a very complex world, Felix. If you like her, then you need to hurry up and go steady with her," Sean reminded him.

There were simply far too many temptations in the entertainment industry, and a naïve girl like Ysabelle could easily succumb to those temptations.

"I believe in Ysabelle, so you guys should, too," Sophie said. Ysabelle knows exactly what she wants and thus will not let those temptations lead her astray.

"Yeah, you're right." Tristan agreed with her statement.

Ysabelle is a member of the Lombard family, after all. None of the Lombards are fools. She knows what she's doing.

A signing event took place after the press conference. Because the press conference was broadcasted live on the internet, a lot of people came over to show Ysabelle their support upon listening to her performance.

That was why Ysabelle ended up spending over three hours meeting and greeting her fans at the venue.

Naturally, Felix stayed there with her the entire time.

For some reason, Ysabelle felt incredibly at ease when she went backstage and saw him waiting for her.

“Thanks for keeping me company, Felix!” That was the first time she had spoken to him so calmly.

Without saying a word, Felix spread both his arms out.

At such a moment, he did not want to say anything else but give her a big hug.

Seeing his action, she ran up to him and hugged him tightly as she continued, “I’m really thankful to you for staying by my side all this while.”

Felix wrapped his arms around her.

“I will always be by your side, so make sure to save me a spot, okay?” he said gently.

Ysabelle fell into a daze.

It was her first time seeing him behave so gently.

Now that I think about it, Felix has been by my side all along. He was always the first to rush to my aid whenever I ran into trouble.

“Felix, do you like me?” Following that line of thought, Ysabelle asked the question, only to realize how nervous she was afterward.

Chapter 505

Truth be told, Felix was not expecting her to ask him that at all.

He had liked her for a long time, and yet, hearing her ask him that question still made his heart race.

It looks like Ysabelle has become a grown-up for real, huh?

“Yes, I do. What about you, Ysabelle? Do you like me too?” he said.

“What the f*ck, Felix? I've always treated you like an older brother! I can't believe you've been trying to date me all this while!”

Ysabelle realized she felt rather happy after receiving his confirmation about his feelings for her.

“I've always liked you, Ysabelle. You just never realized it.”

An older brother? Why would I want to be her older brother? I want to be her man!

“I see... All right, then!” Ysabelle was not all that surprised.

It was as though she had noticed his feelings toward her long ago.

Arching an eyebrow, Felix asked, “What do you mean by that? Shouldn't you give me a response? Do you like me or not?”

How can she give me such an ambiguous reply?

“I know that you like me, but I need some time to consider if I should get together with you,” Ysabelle uttered.

The thought of them dating had never crossed her mind.

“Consider? What else do you need to consider? Do you not have any feelings for me?” Felix pressed on anxiously.

He had never felt so impatient in his long years of wait.

Yet, he suddenly felt eager to start dating her after his feelings for her were out in the open.

“I don't know, Felix! Stop pressuring me like this, okay?” Ysabelle said.

Felix hugged her even tighter as he declared, “Remember this, Ysabelle. I will always support you no matter what you do, but I will never let someone else have you.”

That was the one thing he refused to compromise on.

Ysabelle kept staring blankly into space after returning to Wisteria Apartments.

It was very suspicious.

“What's the matter? Why are you spacing out like that?” Sophie asked as she handed her a drink.

“Sophie, say, do you think it would be strange if I start dating Felix?” Ysabelle inquired.

Sophie replied, “Why would it be strange? If you like him, then you should go for it. What others think about your relationship does not matter.”

Is Ysabelle finally realizing her feelings for him?

“Okay. I got it,” came Ysabelle's response.

“Did he confess his love to you?” Sophie asked.

“Yeah, he did. Sophie, am I ridiculously dense? He has always treated me well, but I never realized it.”

“It's not too late to realize it now.” Ysabelle was still young, after all.

“Yeah, I think I really like him,” Ysabelle said as she finally understood her feelings for Felix.

“Then you two should start seeing each other romantically.” Sophie was the type of person who would stick to her guns once she had confirmed her feelings toward someone or something.

“Yeah, I think I will. Still, is it really appropriate for a rookie singer like me to start dating right after making my debut?”

“There's nothing inappropriate about that. Just focus on your career as a singer and let Xandra take care of the rest.” Xandra had a lot of experience in dealing with such things.

“Okay!”

Meanwhile, Felix, too, was spacing out at his desk.

Annoyed, Tristan slammed the stack of documents onto Felix's desk.

“Hey, Felix! Snap out of it, will you? You won't get any work done if you keep tittering like that!” he rebuked.

“I told Ysabelle that I like her, Mr. Tristan. Do you think she'll accept me as her boyfriend?” Felix asked, voicing out the one thing he was most concerned about.

Without waiting for the other man's reply, he continued, “What should I do if she doesn't accept me, Mr. Tristan? I'm so much older than her, so—”

"That's enough, Felix." Tristan believed there was no point in him worrying about it, not to mention that they were still at work.

"I know we're at work, but I can't seem to calm down no matter what!" Felix exclaimed.

I can't believe I confessed to her on the spur of the moment! What if she doesn't want to date me? What will I do, then? This is such a tricky situation.

Felix's behavior was peevish Charles too.

"Have a little more confidence in yourself, Felix! You're quite the big shot in Jipsdale, you know? Why are you getting so worked up over this?" Charles uttered.

"That has nothing to do with this!" All Felix wanted to know was how Ysabelle felt about him.

"How does it not? You can easily find yourself another woman even if Ysabelle doesn't like you!"

Charles believed that all women were the same in bed.

Hence, he found it unnecessary for Felix to get so worried about Ysabelle's feelings toward him.

Felix decided to ignore him completely.

Although Charles had countless girlfriends in the past, he never truly loved any of them.

As a result, he did not know what it meant to love someone, let alone treasure them.

"You can worry about your relationship after you finish your work, Felix. Until then, snap out of it and stay focused!" Sean reproached Felix, displeased with the latter's performance at the moment.

Felix is just wasting all of our time dilly-dallying!

Since Sean had spoken up, Felix had no choice but to get back to work.

“All right, all right. I'll be sure to get my work perfectly done, so don't you guys worry!” Fortunately for Felix, he was capable of putting his personal feelings aside while working.

With that, the four of them went back to work at their desks.

An hour had passed by the time they were finished with work.

“Mr. Tristan, has Old Mr. Lombard found out about Sophie's existence?” Sean asked.

Knowing Old Mr. Lombard, there's no way he wouldn't pay Mr. Tristan a visit after finding out about him dating Sophie!

“Yeah, he does. It's only a matter of time before he finds out anyway,” Tristan replied. As long as he was around, he would not let anyone bully Sophie.

“You'll have to be careful, then. Old Mr. Lombard is definitely going to pay her a visit behind your back!” Sean reminded him. I hope that dramatic scenes like those in soap operas won't happen!

“I'll try to talk to him about this.” Anyhow, Tristan had decided that he would only marry Sophie and no one else.

“That's good to hear!” Sean found Sophie to be a nice girl, so he did not wish to see her get hurt.

“Hey, Sean! Since when did you care so much about Sophie, huh? This is the first time I've seen you get so concerned about someone! Is Sophie really that special?” Charles teased.

Sean did not feel like replying to that question at all.

“Well? Say something, Sean! I know Sophie isn't your type!” Most importantly, Sophie is Mr. Tristan's girlfriend!

“Charles, you need to keep your mouth shut if you don't have anything nice to say!” Me? Have feelings for Sophie? You've got to be joking! With that in mind, Sean continued, “Admiration is all that I have toward Sophie, got it?”

He was telling the truth.

Felix nodded in agreement. “I think she's really impressive too.”

Sophie would do anything she set her mind to, never worrying too much about other things.

Her way of living her life freely was something that many envied.

“What, do you have a problem with my Sophie?” Tristan questioned. What is Charles trying to imply? His words make me feel uncomfortable for some reason.

“No, not at all! You've definitely gotten the wrong idea, Mr. Tristan. I have nothing against Sophie!” Charles knew Tristan would kill him if he said yes, so he quickly explained himself.

Chapter 506

Quinton ended up looking in on Sophie.

It was the first day of university. The moment Sophie left the house, she saw a luxury car parked nearby.

Needless to say, the car drew her attention. Someone's here for me so soon?

“Ms. Tanner, my boss wants to have a word with you. Are you free now?” Quinton's subordinate had witnessed Sophie's capabilities before, so he was very polite when he talked to her.

"Do you mean Mark's father?" Sophie asked. Boss? The boss he's referring to can only be Mark's father.

"Yes."

At that, she glanced at her watch before replying, "The thing is that today is my first day of class, and I don't want to be late. Tell your boss we shall meet at noon."

While she was not available at the moment, she would have an hour of free time at noon.

No matter what, Mark's issue needed to be settled.

"Ms. Tanner, are you—"

"What's wrong? Do you have a problem with that?" Sophie raised her brows. Although I'm the one asking for a postponement, he should watch his attitude.

Upon recalling how unhesitant she was when she pulled the trigger, the subordinate quickly shook his head.

"No. Why would I? Besides, I wouldn't dare," he replied. After all, he was merely carrying out his employer's orders.

Sophie ignored him. Right then, she saw Tristan arriving in his car, so she strode off, opened the car door, and got in.

The subordinate, who was wearing a black T-shirt, got into his own car as well.

"Boss, Ms. Tanner said she's busy now and can only meet you at noon," he reported.

“Okay. Got it. In that case, you guys should get everything ready.” Quinton nodded. Since Mark likes Sophie, I have to let him have her. Besides, having her be my daughter-in-law will solve all the problems.

“Boss, are we really going to do this?” the subordinate asked. Ms. Tanner looks formidable. If she finds out what we're about to do, we're doomed.

Quinton shot a glare at him and scolded, “Are you questioning my decision? Are you the boss, or am I the boss?”

He was prepared to take all risks for his son, regardless of the consequences.

“That's not what I mean, Boss.”

“Enough. Stop talking nonsense and do what I told you to do,” Quinton ordered.

When it comes to women, some drugs are all it needs to tame them.

As soon as Sophie got into the car, Tristan asked, “Wasn't that Mark's father? What did he want from you?”

Quinton had a bad reputation in the underworld, being infamous for his usage of despicable tactics. Hence, one had to be wary while dealing with him.

“It's nothing. I think he came here because of Mark. Don't be bothered by it. By the way, you aren't completely healed yet, so you shouldn't overwork yourself, okay?” Sophie uttered.

“Okay. Got it!”

Tristan personally sent her to the University of Medicine. “Call me when you're done with your classes! I'll come and pick you up.”

He was more than happy to drive his girlfriend around.

Sophie placed her hands on his shoulders and looked at him intently. "You don't have to pick me up. I have something to attend to at noon, so I won't be having lunch with you."

"Okay. I bought two units of a condominium nearby. They are next to each other, one for you and one for Ysabelle. Besides, I also found someone to cook for you two."

"All right."

"Later, I'll send someone to move your belongings from Wisteria Apartments. That way, you don't have to go back and forth!" Tristan had planned everything out for her.

"Okay. Thank you!" Sophie answered. Who would've thought the incredible Mr. Tristan would do so much for me?

Although her height was almost one hundred and seventy, she was still not tall enough when she stood in front of Tristan. In order to kiss him on the corners of his lips, she had to stand on her tiptoes.

"You should go now!" she said afterward.

"Sure!"

A simple peck was enough to please him.

In fact, it never took much for her to gladden him.

When Sophie arrived in her classroom, she noticed that most of the students were male. Only a handful of females were present.

Moreover, a few male students could be seen surrounding a female student at once.

Considering the significant gender imbalance in their cohort, the male students naturally had to make every chance count if they wanted to find a girlfriend. Furthermore, their female classmates were all quite pretty.

Every man shifted their attention to Sophie just as she entered the classroom.

That displeased the other ladies, who were the center of attention a few moments ago.

In response, they exchanged knowing looks and decided to make Sophie their common enemy.

Sophie walked toward the end of the classroom and took a seat. Even though she knew everyone was looking at her, she was unperturbed.

“Hey! What's your name?”

As soon as she sat down, a man approached her and struck up a conversation with her.

Sophie was at a loss for words for a moment.

“I'm Sophie Tanner, and please don't speak to me. I hate noises!” she replied.

The man was slightly embarrassed.

However, he was willing to let it slide since she was gorgeous. “I'm sorry to have disturbed you!”

It's perfectly normal for pretty girls to be a little feisty. I can handle it.

"Let me buy you lunch," the man added.

Sophie raised her gaze toward him and replied, "No."

As a matter of fact, she was showing him a lot of respect, but if he were to push it, she would not hesitate to put him in his place.

"Sophie, come on. There's nothing wrong with a coursemate buying lunch for a fellow coursemate," the man said.

"I don't want to eat with you, and I don't want to listen to you talk. You may leave now," Sophie answered.

Why won't he take the hint?

"Hey! Why are you so rude? Do you have any idea who I am?" he snapped in displeasure.

A moment of silence later, she countered, "Who are you? Does it matter? I told you to stop bothering me. Didn't you hear me?"

Why must someone try so hard to get my attention so early in the morning?

"Forget about it, Simon. She's so high and mighty! Why would she want to have lunch with you? Don't you think you're overestimating yourself?" a young woman voiced.

The person who had just spoken had a major crush on Simon Little. It annoyed her greatly when she saw him hitting on Sophie.

At the sight of Sophie rejecting Simon, she could not help gloating over it. Simon is the son of the

director of the largest upper-class hospital in Jipsdale. Whoever crosses Simon is bound to have a tough time in Jipsdale. Sophie might be pretty, but she seems like a fool.

Simon's expression turned grim when he heard her remark.

All his life, every person he met would ingratiate himself with him.

It was his first time being disrespected by another person.

"Sophie, you should feel honored that I offered to buy you a meal. Quit being so shameless!" Simon began behaving like a spoiled brat.

Truth be told, Sophie did not want to get into trouble on her first day of university.

Alas, someone just had to mess with her.

"Are you sure I'm the shameless one? Didn't I tell you to stop disturbing me? Are you too stupid to understand my words?" Sophie roared.

"You..." That was definitely the worst humiliation Simon had ever suffered in his whole life. "You're so shameless!"

As he was talking, he suddenly reached out his hand to hit Sophie.

Upon seeing that, the female coursemates exulted in Sophie's imminent misfortune.

Chapter 507

She deserves it! Does she think she can seduce anyone just because she's a looker?

Right when everyone thought Sophie was going to get beaten up, she stood up and grabbed Simon's arm before throwing him to the ground.

A muffled thud rang out when the man weighing about two hundred pounds smashed onto the ground.

Everyone at the scene gaped in shock. Didn't Simon learn combat skills before? Besides, he was the one who attacked first. How did he end up on the ground instead? The noise his body made as he hit the ground sounded painful!

"Are you okay, Simon?" The young woman who had a crush on Simon quickly went to him and helped him up before saying to Sophie, "Do you have any idea who he is? How could you do that to him?"

"I don't care about his identity. The rest of you better stay out of my way!" Sophie never allowed others to walk all over her.

"You're dead!" Simon fumed. "Do you think you're all that just because you got into the University of Medicine? I'm going to get you kicked out in less than a day!"

Sophie did not bother to entertain him. Let's see who will get kicked out instead!

"Are you all right, Simon? I'll send you to the hospital now," the young woman who was crushing on Simon uttered.

He shoved her aside and shouted, "Get away from me!"

Having been humiliated in front of so many people, he was infuriated, but he did not have an outlet to vent his anger.

When the young woman saw Simon turning away and walking off, she chased after him and voiced, "Would you stop being so willful, Simon? Don't you know I've liked you for a long time?"

With that, the two of them left one after another.

Upon seeing what Sophie was capable of, none of the males in the classroom dared to bother her anymore. Forget about it. This girl can fight, and there's no way we can get the better of her.

Everyone then started to do their own things. Since that was the first day of university, they were still getting used to the environment.

Suddenly, a young woman went up to Sophie and said, "Sophie, you're going to get yourself in trouble! Simon is the son of a director at a famous hospital. I'm worried you might get expelled from the University of Medicine because you've offended him." She harbored only kind intentions, for she was sincerely worried about Sophie.

"What's your name?" Sophie was quite fond of her.

"I'm Sandra Quimby." Sandra was a cute girl, albeit a different kind of cute compared to Ysabelle. One would be surprised to see her in a medical school.

"Oh! I'm Sophie Tanner."

"I'm serious, Sophie. I went to high school with Simon and the rest. He's a petty person. You humiliated him in front of so many people, so I doubt he'll let the matter slide." Sandra was genuinely concerned about Sophie.

In response, Sophie shrugged and said, "He should worry about himself."

Simon did not return to the classroom that morning. Since it was the first semester, the syllabus was not difficult.

Although Sophie was doing well in the classes, the same could not be said for Sandra.

In fact, the latter was having trouble understanding the things being taught. How can there be such a vast difference between me and the others?

Frustrated, Sandra sprawled on her desk helplessly.

The morning session had ended by then. At that moment, Sophie was packing up her belongings. Seeing the state that Sandra was in, she asked, "Are you all right?"

"Sophie, did you understand everything that was taught?"

"Yes," Sophie answered.

What's the problem? I think they were fairly simple.

Sandra was rendered speechless for a while.

"I think I chose the wrong major!" She was very interested in medicine, yet she could barely understand what was being taught by the professor in the classes.

Hearing that, Sophie did not know what to say in response.

However, there was something about Sandra that attracted her. Therefore, she was willing to help her. "From now on, note down the things you have trouble understanding and ask me for explanations after class."

Sandra bit her pen and asked, "Really? In that case, I'm going to need your help in the future."

"Really."

"Where are you going now? Can I buy you lunch?" Sandra started packing up her belongings as well.

It's time for lunch, and we have to eat anyhow.

"I already have an appointment. I'll eat with you next time." With that, Sophie took her bag and left.

"She's so cool!" Sandra muttered to herself.

In truth, she admired girls like Sophie. Not only is Sophie brilliant, but she's also a fast learner and a beauty. Even a girl like me is very fond of her.

Upon leaving the building, Sophie whipped out her phone to call Quinton. She then gave him an address and hailed a taxi.

When Quinton arrived, she was not there yet.

However, there were ten minutes left till the agreed-upon time, so he was happy to wait for her.

"Is everything ready? We can't afford to make any mistakes. Do you hear me?" he asked his subordinate.

"Boss, don't worry! I've done this before, so nothing will go wrong," the latter assured.

Right then, the subordinate heard his associate's voice through his earpiece. The associate told him that Sophie had arrived.

"Boss, Sophie is here!"

"Okay. Stay calm," Quinton said to his subordinate.

At the same time, someone brought Sophie in. The subordinate even pulled a chair for her once she arrived at the table.

"Sophie, we couldn't have a proper talk since we were in a rush the last time around. Thus, I would like to have a word with you today," Quinton uttered.

"Okay. Have you thought about it, Mr. Wheeler? Mark really isn't cut out for Emerald Gang!" Sophie replied.

Quinton stayed silent for a while before saying, "He's my son, so I, too, wish for him to be happy.

However, some things are just beyond my control!"

"Mr. Wheeler, as I've said, as long as you can let Mark free, I'll guarantee your safety! Mark isn't cut out for a life full of violence," Sophie said. Is he not tired of the life of a gangster yet?

"You seem thirsty. Take a sip of water first!" With that, Quinton shot his subordinate a look.

The latter immediately instructed the waiter to serve Sophie a glass of water.

"Drink some water! We have more than enough time to talk about this issue," Quinton urged.

Sophie picked up the glass of water and took a sip. Seeing that she was drinking the water unwarily, he knew his plan would work out.

I spent a fortune buying this drug. One sip is all it takes!

"Mr. Wheeler, let Mark leave Emerald Gang, and I'll get someone to take over Emerald Gang," Sophie suggested. The matter is solved as long as someone can take over Emerald Gang, no?

"There's no hurry, Sophie. You know how much Mark likes you, right?" Quinton asked. No matter what, Mark was his son. Hence, he would naturally want him to be happy.

“Mr. Wheeler, I've told you before. I have a boyfriend, so Mark and I can never have a romantic relationship as you wish,” Sophie answered. Didn't I already make myself clear?

“All right, then! I know these things can't be forced. Let's drink!” Quinton voiced nonchalantly.

Noticing that she took another sip of the water, he smiled. Once she's in bed, who cares if she wants it or not?

Chapter 508

That drug was colorless and odorless, so Sophie failed to detect anything unusual.

After a short while, her body showed some reactions.

Her expression changed at once, and she regarded Quinton with a sharp gaze.

“You drugged me.” Sophie never anticipated she would one day fall into someone's trap.

Even someone like Quinton, who had experienced so much in life, was momentarily astounded by the stern look in her eyes.

“Sophie, I—”

“Get lost!”

If he were not Mark's father, she would have turned Quinton into a corpse at that moment.

Livid, Quinton snarled, “Sophie, I suggest you recognize what's best for you. You should be feeling blessed that Mark likes you.”

How is my son inferior to her boyfriend?

“Take her to the hotel.” With that, he turned around and left, not wanting to remain there to face Sophie's wrath.

Since he had executed the plan, he would have to see it through.

“Ms. Tanner, we're sorry. We have no choice but to do this now,” one of Quinton's subordinates said.

They could not do anything except carry out the orders given to them.

Sophie sneered. “Get lost if you don't want to die. Otherwise, don't blame me for being unmerciful.”

“You should stop resisting. After drinking the drug we prepared for you, you won't be able to put up a fight, no matter how capable you are.”

Hence, there's no need for you to struggle further since any attempt to free yourself will be futile.

The few men then approached her. By that time, Sophie felt weak and drained of energy.

She smashed one of the glasses on the table to the floor and picked up a piece of glass shard to cut her wrist.

Instantly, she turned sober.

“Do you think you can restrain me using such an underhanded method? You're underestimating me!”

After saying those words, Sophie charged forward.

Her movements were swift and merciless as she realized she needed to end the fight as soon as possible before the drug fully exerted its effect.

Otherwise, once that happened, she would not be able to leave that place anymore.

The few men did not expect her to be capable of retaliating at that time.

After their initial shock, those men put forth their best effort to exchange blows with Sophie. No matter what, they had to accomplish the mission given to them by their boss, or else they could not explain themselves to him.

Under normal circumstances, those men would not have stood a chance against her. Unfortunately, she was gradually losing control over her body.

If it were not for her strong determination, she would have given up and surrendered.

Nevertheless, Sophie had no desire to continue fighting.

As soon as she shook off her captors, she hastily left the scene. Since they were still in public, she reckoned those men would not dare to pursue her openly.

Besides, it was lunch hour then, so the private rooms were crowded with people.

She also figured Quinton's subordinates would not be capable of searching every room.

“What should we do now? If we don't seize her, we can't report to Boss when we return.” For the group of men, that was the least favorable outcome.

“Hurry up and find her! If anything happens to her, Mark won't let us off the hook.”

They were well aware of how protective Mark was toward Sophie.

Still, they dared not defy Quinton's order.

Hence, they were caught up in such a difficult set of circumstances then.

Meanwhile, Sophie had run into a private room and locked the door from inside. Then, she took out her phone.

The first person who surfaced in her mind was Tristan. She immediately dialed his number, but no one answered the call.

Her consciousness started fading away, and she even began to hallucinate.

In the end, Sophie had no choice but to contact Arius.

"Arius, it's me. I'm sending you my location. I need you to come here at once," she said.

Sensing something amiss with her tone, Arius instantaneously leaped to his feet.

"Sophie, what's wrong with you? What happened?" he asked anxiously.

It had been a long time since he last heard her speak in that vulnerable manner.

"Don't worry. I'm not in danger now, but if you don't show up here in half an hour, I won't be so sure about staying safe," Sophie replied.

"You brat! I've told you to be more careful. Fine. I'll head over at once. Hold on for a little longer."

Seriously, I can do nothing about her.

Upon finishing his work, Tristan returned to his desk and noticed the missed call on his phone. Immediately, he dialed Sophie's number.

However, no one picked up the call.

A sense of foreboding rose within him.

Taking in his demeanor, Felix could not stop himself from asking, "What's the matter? You seem anxious."

It was rare for Tristan to behave in that manner.

"Sophie contacted me earlier, but she's not answering my calls now," Tristan replied.

Felix remarked, "Perhaps she's busy. You don't have to be so worried. She's so formidable. Nothing bad can happen to her."

"Help me find out where she's at," Tristan requested.

No matter what, he had to figure out her whereabouts at that moment to ease his anxiety.

He just needed to know that she was safe and sound.

"Okay!"

With that, Felix immediately instructed his men to find out Sophie's location.

In less than ten minutes, they locked in on her whereabouts.

"I'll go there to check on her," Tristan said.

Nothing was unusual with her location. However, Quinton had gone looking for Sophie that morning, and Tristan was not sure if he was trustworthy.

“Do you need me to go over with you?” Felix asked, thinking he could back Tristan up if something terrible happened.

“That's not needed. You can stay here,” Tristan replied.

He was confident he could handle the situation alone.

On the way to the restaurant, he dialed Sophie's number continuously, but his calls remained unanswered.

As time passed, his uneasiness intensified.

When he arrived at the restaurant, he saw the man who had approached Sophie that morning.

“Where's Sophie?” Tristan demanded while grabbing that man's collar.

That person did not anticipate Tristan's appearance at the restaurant.

“Ms. Tanner has already left,” he said.

“Is that so?” Tristan questioned, staring into that man's eyes.

The overwhelming sense of oppression from his gaze was almost unbearable, but that man dared not speak the truth at that instant.

Therefore, he could only clench his teeth and stick to his statement.

"I'll ask you one more time. Where's Sophie?" Tristan demanded.

He's lying. Something must've happened to her.

Taking in that man's reluctance to divulge the truth, he immediately took action. He was not fond of resorting to violence, but when he did, his moves were fatal.

Quinton's other subordinates hurriedly stepped forward to help their colleague. Alas, they were not Tristan's match.

"Are you going to tell me the truth or not? If you don't, you can forget about uttering another word in the future." There were not many people who could be more ruthless than Tristan in the world.

"Ms. Tanner left for real!" that man insisted.

We'll still die even if we come clean to him. He's too terrifying.

"It seems like you haven't learned your lesson," Tristan snarled.

He then proceeded to break that man's arm while enunciating, "Where is Sophie?"

The unbearable pain of having his arm broken by another person caused that man to wish he was dead.

"We don't know. She ran away. We were no match for her!" He could not endure the agony further, so he had no choice but to be completely honest.

Tristan's expression turned grim after he listened to his words.

"D*mn it!" He was overwhelmed by the urge to murder all those men.

“Just you wait! I'll make you pay dearly.” Tristan would ensure those men regretted they were ever born.

Chapter 509

He knew that it was not the best time to settle accounts with them, but he would definitely make them suffer and pay the price.

Just then, Arius also arrived.

When he saw Tristan was there too, he was taken aback, but soon, realization dawned on him.

He's Sophie's boyfriend, after all. It's understandable why he is here now.

“Where's Sophie?”

The most important thing now was to find Sophie, but they didn't know where she was.

“What should we do now, then?” Arius was still stunned.

“Let's split up and look for her.”

With that, Tristan went to see the restaurant's manager and ordered, “I want to reserve the entire restaurant. Ask all the diners to leave.”

It was a huge restaurant, so finding her right away was going to be tough.

He could only ask all the other diners to leave.

“Sir, I'm sorry. We have a lot of customers at noon, and everyone else is still having their meals. Asking them to leave abruptly now is going to leave a bad reputation for the restaurant.”

Tristan's aura was intimidating, but what the manager said was right.

“Since I'm booking the entire restaurant, I'll pay for all your losses today. I'm Tristan Lombard. Do you have any other questions?”

“Mr. Tristan?”

On top of his countenance, Tristan's name was enough to make the manager go along with his request.

“Is there any other problems?”

“Not at all. Don't worry. I'll get it done immediately.”

Just when Arius was about to start looking for Sophie, Tristan stopped him in his tracks.

“Check the surveillance footage, and see which room Sophie last went to.”

That was the most effective method.

“Okay.”

Arius immediately went to check the surveillance footage.

Meanwhile, the manager broadcasted that there was a problem in the restaurant, and everyone was

asked to leave.

Hearing there was a problem with the restaurant, everyone else left.

“Mr. Tristan, who are you guys looking for? We can help!” offered the manager. With so many employees in the restaurant, they could aid in the search.

“Mr. Tristan, the surveillance cameras are broken.”

Someone had purposely tampered with the surveillance cameras, hence the problem now.

“D*mn it,” Tristan cursed under his breath.

Fortunately, he had asked all the other people to leave.

After much contemplation, he continued, “We should split up to find her, then.”

That was the only thing they could do at the moment.

Tristan felt a pang of hurt in his heart whenever he thought of Sophie being in an uncertain situation.

It's my fault for not protecting her well and letting her get hurt.

The staff opened all the doors, and everyone helped out.

However, Sophie was nowhere to be found.

There was only one room left, and the room was locked from the inside.

Without hesitation, Tristan kicked the door open.

The moment he stepped in, he smelled the metallic odor of blood, causing him to frown in worry.

She's injured. D*mn it! How dare those people hurt my woman!

When Tristan found Sophie drenched in a cold sweat on the balcony, his heart broke into million pieces.

He hurriedly went over and gently picked her up. "Don't be scared. I'm here. No one can hurt you anymore."

As long as I'm here, I won't let anyone hurt you.

His voice snapped Sophie back to her senses, and she shook her head frantically.

"Am I hearing things again?" Sophie opened her eyes.

"No, it's really me. I'll take you back now. Arius is here too. You'll be fine."

"Okay."

It's really him! Even though the call didn't go through, he still came?

The two spoke no more and went straight to the hospital, and Arius immediately drew Sophie's blood for blood tests.

Time trickled by painfully as they waited for the results. Tristan continued to stay by Sophie's side. Watching her in pain plunged him into a pit of agony.

Just then, the drug kicked in again.

It was a time when she would suffer the most, but she gritted her teeth and tried her best not to cry out.

Tristan held her hand, not letting her hurt herself. "You can scream if you want to. You'll feel better."

She doesn't have to be so strong.

When her gaze landed on Tristan, the desire in her was aroused again.

However, she didn't want to lose her virginity in this way.

"I'm fine. You should go out! I feel even more uncomfortable when I see you."

He understood her so well. There was no way he wouldn't know what she was thinking about.

"Sophie, perhaps—"

"No, I don't want to do it when I'm in this state."

She would never agree to it.

"But it pains me to see you like this!"

Just then, Mark came.

Only when he was taken to the hotel did he get to know what happened.

He only got the antidote by threatening his father with his life.

Upon noticing Mark, Tristan swung at him.

He simply couldn't hold back his anger. If it weren't for Mark, Sophie wouldn't have gone through the pain she had now.

Even though Mark was beaten, he just kept mum.

After all, it happened because of him. If it weren't for him, Quinton wouldn't have done that.

"This is the antidote," Mark uttered.

He didn't come here to beg for forgiveness. All he wanted to do was give her the antidote.

"Can I still trust you?"

"It doesn't matter whether you believe me or not. The most important thing is that I don't want to see Sophie suffer."

Meanwhile, Arius had already developed an antidote.

"There's no need for that. You'd better leave!" Arius said curtly.

How dare they trick Sophie. They have to pay for what they've done.

Arius handed a bowl of concoction to Tristan, and the latter quickly fed it to Sophie.

"Don't worry. With me here, nothing will go wrong," comforted Arius as he patted Tristan on the shoulder. "As for you, leave now! We have nothing to say to you," Arius continued, glaring at Mark.

Despite that, Mark stood there and refused to leave. "What happened today is because of me."

"Are you done? Get out now." Tristan was very blunt.

That was the nicest thing he could say to Mark at the very moment.

If he hadn't known Sophie cared a lot about Mark, the latter wouldn't even have had the chance to speak now.

So he needs to scram now.

"Mr. Tristan, this matter has nothing to do with my father," Mark explained.

No matter what, Quinton was still his father, so Mark felt that he had to bear the responsibility.

"Mark, don't assume everyone else is a fool," Tristan sneered.

None of the prominent people in Jipsdale were foolish.

Mark pleaded, "Mr. Tristan, you can deal with me however you want, but please let my family go."

Tristan gave him another punch. "Do you think I have to be nice to you just because Sophie cares about you?"

Mark was a nobody in Tristan's eyes.

Arius pulled Mark to the side with one swift motion and suggested, "Mr. Tristan, you should take care of Sophie first."

It was not a good time to resolve the matter.

Anyhow, Sophie was the one who could make the decision.

Mark's expression darkened as he was dragged out by Arius.

What he was most worried about at the moment was Sophie. There shouldn't be any problems with her health, right?

"Arius, is Sophie all right? Will it have any bad effects on her?" Mark asked in concern.

Chapter 510

"Mark, what exactly did you tell your father? Why did he do something like that?" There's no way he isn't involved.

"I—"

Mark was cognizant that whatever he said was useless, for no one would believe him now.

"Enough. We'll discuss this some other time. I'm sure you know Mr. Tristan's temperament. There's no way he's going to let this slide." Whoever dares to hurt Sophie will not get off lightly.

The fact wasn't lost upon Mark as he realized that Emerald Gang was doomed. Unlike in the past, he wasn't in a place to beg for mercy.

All this happened because of me. I would be ashamed to even do so.

When he saw the look on Mark's face, Arius didn't know what else to say.

No matter what, this isn't the end of it, but we'll have to wait till Sophie wakes up first. If she doesn't want to pursue the matter, Tristan would probably not retaliate with a heavy hand. After all, he values her opinion a lot.

“Given how close you are to Sophie, you probably have nothing to worry about.” Well aware of how much Sophie cared about Mark and The Wheelers, Arius couldn't bring himself to be too harsh.

“I'm fine.”

When Mark returned to Emerald Gang, Quinton was already there.

“You bunch of trash! Why can't you even complete such an easy task?”

How did they screw up such a wonderful opportunity?

Mark was incensed to hear his father's words.

“Why must you insist on harming them when I specifically asked you not to? How am I going to face them going forward? Why must you do this to Sophie?”

After how I've been disgraced, my members will definitely feel betrayed by me!

“Are you blaming me now? Didn't I do this for you? What's wrong with forcing her into your arms when you like her so much?”

“Are you really my father?” Mark was disappointed.

He had never felt this disappointed in his entire life.

“Mark, what are you saying?” Quinton was equally infuriated. It was common for people like them to force themselves onto whichever woman they fancied.

Therefore, he didn't feel that he had done anything wrong.

After all, there was no point in overthinking in a dog-eat-dog world.

“Do you know who her boyfriend is? Tristan Lombard! You probably need to think about how to salvage the situation now.”

Doesn't he know who her boyfriend is?

“Who?”

Quinton was slightly stunned.

Although he spent his life in the underworld, the name Tristan still rang a bell.

“Are you talking about the infamous Mr. Tristan of Jipsdale?” Quinton began to lose his composure as it was clear to him that Emerald Gang was about to be wiped out.

Once Tristan sought revenge, the biggest gang in the city would be easily annihilated, let alone Emerald Gang.

“Mmm-hmm.”

Mark had no desire to further the conversation, as he had no clue how to remedy the situation. All he wanted now was a quiet moment for himself.

“Mark, you—”

The look on Mark's face rendered Quinton speechless. Have I made a mistake? It looks like I have really gone overboard!

In the end, upon learning that Tristan was Sophie's boyfriend, everyone trembled in fear.

All of them wondered if they still had time to flee the city.

“Boss, what should we do?”

The same question was floating in Quinton's mind.

I knew that Sophie was formidable, but I had no idea that her boyfriend was Tristan. The man whose name alone would strike fear in the underworld. Offending someone like that is the equivalent of death.

“Mark, don't worry. What happened has nothing to do with you. In the event Mr. Tristan seeks revenge, I will bear the responsibility alone!”

Since he was the one who did the deed, he wasn't afraid of owning up to it.

“I won't drag anyone else down with me. All you need to do is take good care of your mother.”

Even though Quinton wasn't an extraordinary person, his love for his wife was true.

However, Mark was filled with conflicting emotions.

If not for his father's love for his mother, he wouldn't have bothered about the former.

“Stay out of this and go. I'll take care of it.”

Now that Mark was the leader of Emerald Gang, he couldn't wash his hands off a matter like that.

“Mark...”

Quinton was stunned, for he had never imagined that his son would grow up to be someone who would step up to the plate.

Nonetheless, as a father, there was no way he could allow his son to shoulder the blame on his behalf.

Meanwhile, Sophie was gradually recovering after taking her medicine. In spite of that, she still hadn't regained consciousness.

Her condition caused Tristan to lose his composure as he quickly summoned Arius.

"Arius, why hasn't she woken up after taking your medication for such a long time? Could there be something wrong with the drug you have given her?"

Arius was initially confident in the products of his research, but Sophie's situation unsettled him nevertheless. Hence, he examined her again.

"I don't foresee any problems, so don't worry too much."

"If there are no issues, why hasn't she regained consciousness?"

When he saw the condition the woman he loved was in, staying calm was too much to ask of him.

"Just be patient."

Arius could empathize with Tristan, as he, too, was equally worried. Despite that, he knew that their anxiety wouldn't help matters at all.

"Are you sure that there's nothing wrong with your drug?" That was Tristan's main concern.

"Tristan, can you stop doubting my professionalism?"

My drugs are safe and effective.

Tristan waved him away.

“Forget it. You should just go.”

His response rendered Arius speechless.

“Can't I stay by Sophie's side too?”

It's not like you own her.

Right then, Sophie regained her consciousness.

Even though she barely had any strength to move, the restlessness she had previously felt was gone.

“How do you feel? Any better?”

The sight of them gave her a sense of relief.

“Don't worry. I'm fine.”

Given that Arius had treated the wound on her hand, it was no longer painful.

“Sophie, what happened to you? You had us worried sick. I told you to be more careful, and yet, something like this had to happen.”

Ever since he got to know Sophie, he was always unsettled by his constant concern for her.

"I know. I'll be more careful next time." She didn't deny how careless she had been.

"The fault is mine." Despite knowing that Quinton is a shady character, I didn't put in place enough security measures.

Sophie held Tristan's hand.

"Tristan, this has nothing to do with you. It's my fault instead, so don't keep blaming yourself for everything." As an adult, I should take responsibility for my own life.

Their exchange made Arius feel as if he was the third wheel. Subsequently, he scratched his nose awkwardly before leaving the room.