

Pursuing 531

Chapter 531

There were a lot of rare items at the auction that day. The competition started right from the beginning.

Some bidders were truly interested in the items they were bidding for, while others were either bidding for charity purposes or to seek attention.

The auction venue was bustling with activity.

Almost everyone raised their paddles to bid for the first few items, which started at lower prices.

However, Sophie was not very interested in any of those items.

Jennifer was sitting next to them. A contemptuous sneer crept across her face when she noticed that Sophie had not raised her auction paddle at all.

Indeed, she's just a bimbo who doesn't know anything. How can she be compared to me?

Ysabelle felt extremely uncomfortable when she saw the look on Jennifer's face.

Who is Ms. Whitley looking down on?

She knew that Sophie was simply not interested in such things and had exquisite tastes, judging by the stone that Sophie had gifted her on her eighteenth birthday.

Yet, those socialites thought that Sophie was just ignorant. Some even assumed that she could not afford anything.

"Is there anything you fancy?" Tristan asked Sophie. "Let me know if there's something you want. I'll get it for you!"

Sophie shook her head as there was nothing that caught her eye.

“Nothing really stands out to me.”

Jennifer could not help but laugh when she heard what Sophie said.

How arrogant! Does she even know that today's auction items are all donated by some of the most prestigious families in Jipsdale?

These are all rare and valuable items!

This young lady is ridiculous! It's clear that she doesn't know anything, but she's still trying to put on an act.

“Ms. Tanner, you shouldn't be spouting nonsense if you don't know anything. These are all very valuable items.” Be careful of becoming a laughingstock if you continue acting smart.

Sophie did not pay any attention to Jennifer. Does she really think she knows everything? There's indeed nothing spectacular about these items!

Tristan was definitely not pleased with Jennifer's attitude toward Sophie.

He shot Jennifer a glance and said, “Ms. Whitley, I don't doubt that you've seen a lot, but it's true that

there's nothing extraordinary about these items.” Regardless of the circumstances, Tristan would always be on Sophie's side, and he did not need any reason to do that.

He would not allow anyone to humiliate Sophie.

Jennifer's expression darkened. She had wanted to flaunt her knowledge to impress Tristan, but she was reprimanded by the man instead.

Nevertheless, as the daughter of the Whitley family, no matter what happened, it wouldn't be appropriate for her to stomp off.

She could only remain in her seat.

"Just ignore her!" Tristan held Sophie's hand.

There was no need for Sophie to know so much. What he wanted was a girlfriend and not a jewelry appraiser.

Ysabelle felt rather bored during the first half of the auction until a new auction item caught her eye. It was a ruby that she could hardly take her eyes off.

"It's so beautiful!"

She was really fond of the red gemstone and desired to have it. How nice would it be if this was mine?

Sophie saw the ruby as well. It was indeed a gemstone of the highest grade and very finely crafted.

Every woman at the auction was attracted to the ruby, and Jennifer was no exception.

Ever since young, Sophie had always gotten everything she wanted.

Upon noticing that Ysabelle was interested in the gemstone as well, she decided to bid for it and give it to her friend.

"Do you like it?" Sophie asked Ysabelle.

“Yup! I love it so much!”

“I'll bid for it and give it to you, then!” It's just a ruby.

A few surrounding socialites who heard their conversation could not help but cast mocking glances at Sophie.

She's so arrogant!

Does the Tanner family even have that kind of money?

Jennifer was also amused by Sophie's words. However, she tried her best not to laugh as she recalled Tristan's attitude toward her earlier. Apart from a pretty face, Sophie has nothing! She's just a bimbo without good any inner qualities.

Jennifer could not understand why Tristan would fall in love with a woman like Natalie. It was simply mind-boggling for her.

“Huh? You'll give it to me?” Even though Ysabelle liked the ruby very much, she knew it cost a lot.
“Sophie, there's no need for that. Actually, I don't really like it that much!”

Jennifer was even more certain of her evaluation of Sophie after hearing what Ysabelle said.

Sophie is just bluffing. Even though Tanner Group is currently under her control, the company doesn't have much for her to spend.

Jennifer was determined to get her hands on the ruby.

“I know you really like it. I can tell just from the look in your eyes.”

“Sophie, you don't have to care about her. There are so many things that she likes. You can't possibly buy everything for her!”

Sarah did not want Sophie to spend too much money on Ysabelle.

Judging by Sarah's and Sophie's reactions, the socialites had no doubts that Sophie did not have money and was pretending to be rich.

Jennifer's good friends were among those present at the auction that day. Naturally, they were aware of Jennifer's feelings toward Tristan.

The few women exchanged glances and decided to vie for the ruby against Sophie. They wanted to show Tristan that Sophie was simply not in the same league as them and that she should not even be there in the first place.

As such, the bid price of the ruby was five million right from the start.

After calling out such a high bid, Jennifer's friends glanced at Sophie with an obvious intention to flaunt. At the same time, with a satisfied expression, Jennifer also turned to look at Sophie.

Let's see what she's going to do about it!

Sophie raised her paddle. As the standard bid increment of that auction was five hundred thousand, it meant that the current bid price of the ruby was already at five million five hundred thousand.

Immediately after Sophie put down her paddle, another one of Jennifer's friends raised hers. You want it? Well, that's not happening!

The bid price of the ruby eventually reached ten million. At that point, Jennifer's friends were not sure if they should continue to raise the bid.

After all, it was their families that were rich. The ladies themselves did not have that much money.

“Ten million. Going once, going twice... Is there anyone who would like to raise the bid? If not, this ruby would go to Ms. Tan—”

Before the auctioneer could finish his sentence, Jennifer raised her paddle. “Eleven million!”

Everyone was shocked.

Is Ms. Whitley openly going against Mr. Tristan's girlfriend?

That made sense. After all, Jennifer was not the only woman present who was jealous of Sophie.

Everyone desired a man like Tristan, who was perfect in every way. However, Tristan only had eyes for Sophie. The other women wanted to see misfortune befall Sophie.

Sarah and Ysabelle looked at Jennifer simultaneously, feeling surprised that the latter was the one who ended up bidding against Sophie despite her inactivity all the while before that.

“Ms. Tanner, I'm sorry. I can't let you have this ruby as I really like it too.” As the only daughter of the Whitley family, as long as it was something she wanted, Jennifer would never let anyone have it.

The crowd fell silent when they heard that.

It seems that it's not only the ruby she's talking about! I bet she's referring to Mr. Tristan as well!

“Eleven million. Going once, going twice—”

At that moment, Sophie raised her paddle.

Sorry!

No one can snatch away anything that's mine, and that includes both the ruby and the man!

Chapter 532

The auction was brought to a mini climax by the battle between the two women.

The tension in the air was palpable, and everyone was excited to see who would finally get to own the ruby.

Jennifer raised her paddle again.

The duo went back and forth, and neither of them was willing to relent.

"Ms. Tanner, it seems that you are really fond of it." Jennifer did not expect Sophie to keep raising the bid. Does she really have that much money? "But are you sure you can afford it? You would probably need Mr. Tristan to pay for it in the end!"

I'm sure the reason she dares to keep raising the bid is that she knows she has Mr. Tristan's support!

Sophie cocked her brows.

"Ms. Whitley, are you inferring that I am a kept woman?"

Kept woman?

Is that the female equivalent of a kept man?

"Well, you can think of it that way."

“You sounded certain that I won't be able to afford the ruby. But I'm sorry to disappoint you. Not only do

I have the money to buy this ruby, but I can also afford to buy your entire Whitley family!”

Sophie had always kept a low profile.

However, Jennifer was really getting on her nerves.

“Gosh! What a brazen young lady! Does she even know anything about the Whitley family?”

“Exactly! Even Old Mr. Lombard wants an ally like the Whitley family. How dare she make such a claim?”

“She thinks she can do anything she wants just because Mr. Tristan is interested in her. What a joke!”

Jennifer's expression turned grim.

Is she challenging me in front of so many people?

“Mr. Tristan, you—”

“As long as you like, I can buy you the Whitley family too.” Tristan showed his unconditional support for Sophie.

Jennifer was rendered speechless when she heard that.

“No. If there's anything I want, I will get it myself! There's no need for you to help me.” Sophie passed her card to one of the staff at the auction and said, “I guess this ruby belongs to me now.”

The staff glanced at Jennifer, unsure if the woman wanted to raise the bid.

Jennifer shook her head.

At its current price, the ruby was already overvalued. Jennifer still had some rationality left in her.

The staff processed the payment on the spot. When that was done, he handed Sophie's card back to her and passed her the ruby. After keeping her card, Sophie handed the ruby to Ysabelle.

Touched by her friend's gesture, Ysabelle said, "Sophie, what do I do? I really want to marry you!"

She's practically my dream boyfriend!

Tristan shot Ysabelle a look. "She's mine!"

Ysabelle stuck out her tongue cheekily in response.

The actual climax of the event happened when Tristan bid an emerald ornament for Sophie, which she had wanted as a gift for her grandfather.

The old man was a collector of such items.

Sophie had wanted to bid for it herself; however, Tristan would not let her.

"You've given Ysabelle a ruby. Let me get you this." The starting prices of the auction items would get higher toward the end of the auction.

The final bid price of the emerald ornament was one hundred million.

Everyone in the audience had complicated looks in their eyes when they saw Tristan give the emerald ornament to Sophie.

Looks like Mr. Tristan is very serious about this girl!

Jennifer turned pale as she watched the man she was in love with pampering another woman.

She had thought that Winter was just too weak.

However, after witnessing it personally, she finally understood how it felt to be so jealous that she almost lost her mind.

She was dying to strangle Sophie.

At the end of the auction, both Sophie and Ysabelle walked out of the auction hall feeling satisfied. When they were about to leave, they noticed Jennifer following behind them.

"Ms. Whitley, is there anything we can help you with?" Tristan asked.

Jennifer wanted to have a chat with the man, but at that moment, she really did not know what to say.

"No."

There was nothing she could do but watch them leave.

"Jennifer, forget it! Given your status, you can get any man you want. Why do you insist on having Mr. Tristan?"

"Yeah! You've seen it for yourself earlier. Mr. Tristan is head over heels in love with Sophie. I think it's better that we stay away from that young lady!"

Jennifer bit her lower lip so hard that she could taste her own blood.

"It's been ten years. I've loved him for ten years! How can I give up on him so easily? That's impossible! If I could do that, I would have already done it a long time back and wouldn't have waited until now."

"What do you intend to do, then? Sophie doesn't appear to be a person to be trifled with!" Not only did she dare to vie against Jennifer for the ruby, but she could also pay for it on her own. It was clear that Sophie wasn't just an ordinary person.

"I will find a way. Even if they're married, it's still possible for them to get a divorce! Besides, Old Mr. Lombard doesn't even like her!"

Otherwise, the current circumstances wouldn't have been the way it is.

Right after Tristan sent Sophie back to the condominium, he received a call from William, who flew into a rage once the call connected.

The old man was aware of what had happened at the auction.

"Are you trying to embarrass me on purpose?"

Tristan put down his phone and waited for his father to finish venting.

He only picked up his phone again after William was done.

"Are you done? I never wanted to go on a blind date. I've already told you that Sophie is the only woman I love and will ever love, but you still went ahead to make arrangements for that. It's none of my business that things turned out this way."

"Y-You! I'm your father! Are you not going to listen to me anymore?"

"When have I ever listened to you?" Even since he was young, Tristan had always had a mind of his own and knew what he wanted. No one could stop him.

His father should have already known that by now.

"I don't care. You are the one at fault, so go and apologize to the Whitley family. I don't want this incident to cause a rift between our families." William was the one who had proposed the matchmaking session and not the Whitley family.

"I'm sorry. Is this a joke? Have you ever seen me apologizing to anyone? Besides, Ms. Whitley was extremely rude to Sophie. I've already tried my best to be polite." No one is allowed to bully my woman!

"Tristan! I'm sure you don't want anything bad to happen to Sophie, right?" William warned.

"Are you threatening me because of an outsider now? No one is allowed to touch Sophie. Anyone who tries to lay a finger on her will be declaring war against me." His father would not be an exception.

When William heard that, his temper sparked. He could hardly believe that his son had said that to him.

"Dad, you should know my temper well, so please don't try to cross my boundaries."

Tristan hung up after saying that.

He would not allow anyone to threaten him with Sophie, including his father.

Burning with anger, William smashed a vase on the ground, shattering it to pieces.

He could not remember the last time he had felt so angry.

Chapter 533

Upon returning home, Sarah and Ysabelle saw the mess on the floor and figured out how furious William was.

Both of them exchanged glances. They were also rather upset with William for trying to set Tristan with someone.

Ysabelle walked toward her grandfather and asked, "Grandpa, who made you so angry?"

"I heard both of you were also at the auction today."

Ysabelle did not dare to reply and merely looked at Sarah.

"Dad, there is really no need for you to be so angry. You knew Tristan has a girlfriend, yet you still tried to set him up with another girl. You can't blame them for how things turned out."

Sarah knew how stubborn her father was. It was extremely difficult to change his mind.

However, the fact was that he was at fault in that matter.

"Are you intending to lecture me as well?" Is there no one in the family who respects me anymore?

"Dad, you know how much we respect you. But I'm definitely on Tristan's side this time."

Both of them are my children and my closest kin, but none of them is on my side.

"Grandpa, Sophie is a nice girl. Perhaps you can try to get to know her better. If you take some time to

bond with her, I'm confident that you will like her too. Just ignore those rumors you hear outside. They're all fake. Seriously, Sophie is perfect."

“Ysabelle, you hang out with her quite often these days, right?”

William had never lost his temper at Ysabelle.

However, he sounded rather angry right then.

“Grandpa, you've always been a wise person. I trust you will make a good judgment. Sophie is really the perfect match for Uncle Tristan.”

“Just keep quiet, both of you. I don't want to hear any of that. If you're going to continue to upset me, there's no point in keeping on talking.”

The two women held their tongues.

Since William was not receptive to anything they said, there was no point in them wasting their breaths. Time would tell if Sophie was indeed a good partner for Tristan.

William sat in the living room by himself, feeling lonelier than ever.

He had done everything with Tristan's interests at heart, but no one seemed to understand him.

Tristan needs an equal with whom he can go through hardships and face all of life's perils, not a weak woman who will drag him down.

Meanwhile, after Tristan ended the call, Sophie wrapped her arms around him from the back and said, “Why are you so angry? Relax.”

“Are you not mad at all?” Knowing that we are officially a couple, he still insists on setting me up. Don't you find that humiliating?

“Aren't you on my side? Why would I be angry?” Nothing else matters.

Tristan turned around and pulled Sophie into his arms before leaning forward and kissing her lips.

It was a passionate kiss filled with a myriad of emotions, including heartache and the desire to have her by his side forever.

Trapped in the man's arms, Sophie had no choice but to allow the man to kiss her. Tristan's hands were roaming all over her, causing the temperature in her body to rise.

Suddenly, Sophie felt something pressing against her. The moment she realized what it was, her cheeks grew even redder.

"Tristan!"

"Yeah?"

Tristan stopped moving at once, as he might lose control of himself if he carried on.

But do I really have to let her go now? Unwilling to do that, he continued hugging Sophie.

"Are you feeling very uncomfortable?" Although Sophie sounded rather cold, there was a hint of desire in her voice.

Tristan planted a kiss on her forehead.

He would not go further than touching or kissing her as he intended to save her first time for their wedding night. That was his way of respecting her.

"I'm fine. I can wait. I want our first time to be on our wedding night." That would be his wedding gift to his bride.

Sophie was very touched by Tristan's words.

In a society that had a constant emphasis on vanity and glamor, it was rare to find a man who honored his woman so much.

Although Tristan had claimed that he was fine, he was already experiencing epididymal hypertension.

"I think I need a shower right now!" Tristan said after letting go of Sophie. It was just hugging and kissing, but he was already losing control.

"Tristan..."

"Don't think too much. I'm really all right." The man pinched Sophie's cheeks affectionately before heading to the bathroom.

Sophie, who remained standing at the spot, could not help but smile as she thought about everything Tristan had done for her.

He was definitely a man worthy of her love.

Meanwhile, someone had been chasing Arius. It was only then that he knew Nicholas was also in Jipsdale.

If he had not run fast enough, he would have already been captured. Immediately after he escaped, he went to look for Sophie.

Sophie frowned when she heard the doorbell ring.

After all, not many people knew where they were staying.

Who could it be at this hour?

The moment she opened the door, she saw Arius standing there and noticed that the man seemed to be injured.

“What happened to you? What's going on?” Arius was usually very vain, and that was the first time Sophie had seen him in such a disheveled state.

“F*ck! Do you know Nicholas is here too? Damn that disgusting ass*le! He's everywhere! He's like a ghost who wouldn't stop haunting me!”

Nicholas?

So Nicholas was the one who did this to him?

“Are you hurt anywhere?” Sophie pushed Arius onto the couch and pinned him down, not allowing him to move about. “Tell me!”

I can't possibly rip off his clothes!

“I'm fine. Just some minor abrasions. Don't worry. I'm not that weak. Did he come and trouble you?”

“He did.”

“What? He came to see you?”

“Who?”

Just then, Tristan appeared, just in time to hear the strange conversation between Sophie and Arius.

“Why are you here? You even showered? What are you trying to do? Tristan, I'm warning you. Sophie is still young. Don't try anything funny. You hear me?”

Tristan merely ignored him.

He could not be bothered to entertain Arius, who was acting dumbly most of the time.

However, judging by the man's appearance, Tristan knew that something must have happened.

“Who have you offended? Why do you look so miserable?” Tristan was not concerned about Arius. He just did not want Sophie to be bothered by that.

“There are tons of people whom yours truly have offended. How would I know who did this?” Arius had made some enemies over the years.

After all, he always behaved smugly, and not many people could stand that, which resulted in his current situation.

“Since you're not dead yet, why did you come here?” Doesn't he know that Sophie has a boyfriend? Does he really think it's appropriate for a grown man like him to look for her anytime he wants? He's so obtuse!

Arius clenched his chest and said, “Sophie, did you hear that? He's been cursing me every day, hoping that I will die young! How could you fall in love with such an evil man? Anyway, since you're not married yet, just break up with him already.”

She should get rid of him as soon as possible!

Chapter 534

“Okay, that's enough. Why do you two have to quarrel every time you see each other?” Sophie was totally speechless.

“Do you think I'm interested in arguing with him? He's the one who keeps picking fights with me! Sophie, I'm warning you. You can't take his side just because he's your boyfriend, understand? You need to be impartial!”

“He's my boyfriend. Of course I will be on his side. There's nothing wrong with that.”

Arius felt like ignoring the woman when he heard that.

He could not believe that she had openly said that.

“I can't believe that I'm no better than your boyfriend in your heart. I feel so hurt!”

While Arius was feeling sad, Tristan was delighted.

He loved it when Sophie favored him.

“All right, since you're fine, you should leave now. Just remember to be careful from now on.”

Arius gaped in disbelief.

“Ha! Looks like it really was a mistake for me to come here.” Arius looked at Sophie with a sorrowful expression.

“Arius, just go back first!” There was no point carrying on the conversation since she was already aware of the situation. Something like that would not happen again in the future.

“Fine. Since you can't wait to get rid of me, I'm leaving now.” Arius stood up from the couch and snorted at Tristan.

It's all his fault! If it wasn't for him, Sophie would never have treated me this way.

He's nothing but trouble.

Tristan could not be bothered by Arius' childish antics.

Besides, he had to look good in front of Sophie. He did not want to lose his cool because of Arius.

After Arius left, Tristan and Sophie were the only ones left in the living room.

“What happened to Arius?” Even though Tristan found Arius annoying most of the time, he knew that the man was Sophie's best friend. In fact, the two of them were as close as family. If Arius was facing any problems, he would want to help.

“It's no big deal! You don't have to concern yourself with it.”

“Sophie, we're a couple now. I don't wish for you to keep pushing me out of your world.”

She always told him she did not need his help, and he hated to hear that.

No matter what it was, he wanted to face it with her.

“Tristan, why are you acting this way? I don't interfere with your affairs too, no?”

Can't we just date happily and settle our own problems ourselves?

Tristan replied rather helplessly, “I would want you to help me with my problems too. Do we really need to have such a clear line between us?”

He did not like having such boundaries between them.

Sophie kept quiet, as she did not know what to reply.

She did not want Tristan to be involved in her situation with Nicholas.

However, she did not want to lie to him as well, which led to the current situation.

Tristan hugged Sophie tightly and said, "You're right in front of me now, but why do I feel so insecure?"

Am I going to lose her?

Tristan did not want that to happen as it was not easy for them to finally be together.

Feeling the man's unease, Sophie wrapped her arms around his waist and replied, "You're overthinking. Arius can settle his problem himself. Even if he really needs help, he has Barney to help him."

The International Medical Association was not to be messed with after all.

"All right, I understand. I will just let Arius do his thing!"

Tristan knew how important Arius was to Sophie. The fact that she did not want him to interfere meant that there was definitely something strange going on.

However, there was nothing more he could say.

All he could do was get his men to pay closer attention to the situation.

Tristan and his friends met up at Star Club.

He had not stopped drinking, causing Felix and the other three men to exchange glances with each other. It had been a while since the four of them had met up for drinks.

Ever since Tristan started dating Sophie, he had been hanging out with them a lot less.

Nevertheless, it was Tristan who initiated that day's gathering, and he did not bring Sophie along.

He started drinking right after he arrived and did not speak much.

What's going on?

"Guys, what do you think happened to him?" Felix pointed at Tristan.

Sean shook his head.

"Maybe he was dumped? After all, anything can happen. I wouldn't be surprised if Sophie had broken up with him," Charles said.

"You're crazy! That's not possible," Felix exclaimed.

Given their deep feelings for each other, there is no way they will break up so easily.

"Why is it impossible? Nothing lasts forever. Besides, change is the only constant. That's a natural law of the universe," Charles replied.

"Well, not everyone is a Casanova like you," Felix said.

Some people do take love seriously. Once they are sure of someone, they will not easily change their minds.

"Do you think I like that? It's just that I tend to get tired of a woman after spending some time with her. There's nothing I can do about it," Charles said.

What's the point in continuing if there's no more excitement in the relationship?

"Felix, why are you wasting your breath arguing with him? A guy like him will never understand." It was too much to ask of Charles to be faithful. To him, that was a non-existent concept.

Charles stared at Sean speechlessly.

"How could you say that about me? No matter what, we are good friends! Can't you see that I've been

making an effort in my relationship?" Charles had been with his current girlfriend for more than a month, and he had been trying hard to keep it going.

However, he was losing interest and was already thinking of finding an opportunity to break up with her.

"Mr. Tristan, what happened to you? Is there a problem that you're unable to solve? If there is, you should share it with us, and we can figure it out together. There's nothing in the world that the four of us together can't handle."

"I'm fine. I just felt that it would be nice for us to meet since it's been a while since we had a drink together."

What other problems can there be?

"You're not happy." Sean's words hit the nail on the head. After being friends for so long, of course, I can tell that you're feeling down.

"He's right. You're obviously upset with something, but we can't figure out what it is. Both work and love seem to be going well for you. What can you possibly be unhappy with?" Isn't he head over heels in love with Sophie?

"Perhaps I'm just not content. Although I have Sophie by my side, I just can't help wanting more!"

“Want more in bed?”

It's perfectly understandable if it's really that. One can never have enough of it.

Tristan rolled his eyes at Charles.

“Is that all you think about?”

“What's wrong with thinking about that? That's what men usually do, isn't it? No matter how in love two people are, there has to be some progression in a relationship. Having a physical connection in addition to an emotional one will definitely take the relationship to a higher level, don't you agree?”

Well, being sexually compatible is very important for a relationship to last!

“Mr. Tristan, seriously, I think you've been spoiling Sophie too much. You're always trying to help her, but have you ever considered if that is what she really wants?”

Chapter 535

“She might feel shy to tell you since she's a girl. Who knows? Maybe she also wants you!”

“That's enough. You can shut up now!” Tristan snapped. I shouldn't have expected anything good to come out of Charles' mouth.

“Mr. Tristan, ignore him. Why don't you tell me your concern? I'm also experienced in love now. Maybe I can help you analyze the situation,” Felix said proudly.

He had waited for over ten years until Ysabelle finally opened her heart to him, so he was on cloud nine every single day.

Tristan cast him a glance.

Felix? What can he possibly analyze? He's a big mess himself!

"Just mind your own business. You've finally become her boyfriend. Don't end up getting dumped." That was something likely to happen, considering Ysabelle's temper.

"That's impossible! Our relationship is very stable right now. There's no way we will ever break up."

It would be another story if Ysabelle didn't like him.

However, now that he knew about her feelings for him, he would never break up with her.

"Mr. Tristan, what exactly are you unhappy about?" Sean piped up.

"I feel like she's hiding something from me! As her boyfriend, I don't want her to keep anything from me."

"I see. What is she hiding from you?" asked Sean as he wondered what important matter it could be.

Tristan shook his head.

"I wouldn't be so troubled if I knew. Do you guys think it's because she doesn't trust me?" Tristan was usually a decisive and strong-minded man, but he had his insecurities when it came to Sophie.

"I don't think this has anything to do with trust. You know Sophie well. She doesn't like depending on others. Even if there's something wrong, she will handle it herself as long as it's within her power. So if you keep dwelling on this matter, you will be the only one unhappy."

Sean hit the nail on the head again. After all, this had something to do with one's personality.

"I think Sean's words are on point. Sophie is very capable, so she can handle most things herself. She's an independent person, and I don't believe that being in a relationship will change her personality. It's impossible for her to turn to you for every single matter she encounters."

Since that will never happen, Tristan might as well stop troubling himself.

"Mr. Tristan, I don't get why you're like this. Isn't it great that she can solve her problems on her own? Even though you're dating, you have to give each other some space." Charles finally provided some useful advice.

Having little experience with romance, Tristan asked, "So you mean this is my problem?"

Sean stated, "Yes. Give each other space. She will tell you when she feels like it."

Meanwhile, Nicholas threw a fit upon arriving home.

Whenever he thought of Sophie being with Tristan, he just couldn't hold himself back.

His manic episodes were becoming increasingly severe. As the housekeepers watched him, none of them dared to make a sound.

Even Javier, who was inside the room on the second floor, could hear things being shattered. Unfortunately, he couldn't do anything as he was confined in the room.

"What's wrong with him again? Did he get triggered by something?" I've worked so hard to get the Sable family to where it is today, yet everything may be destroyed in Nicholas' hands!

"We don't know," his subordinate answered. Nicholas was getting more and more aggressive, and most of the time, he could not control his emotions.

"Get the psychiatrist to come. If this goes on, he will ruin the Sable family!"

The Sable family was what Javier cared about the most in his life.

He would never allow Nicholas to bring the Sable family down.

“Old Mr. Sable, you know how Mr. Nicholas is. He listens to no one at the moment. There's no way he'll see a psychiatrist.” It was common for people who were mentally ill to refuse to admit that they were sick.

“If he's sick, he needs to get checked.” Javier had been in denial of this truth before, but now he could no longer sit back and watch.

Otherwise, the Sable family would surely meet its end.

“Send someone to find Sophie. Find a way to bring her to me.” Now that things had come to this point, Javier had to admit that Sophie might be the only one who could solve this problem.

She was the only one Nicholas would listen to.

“Old Mr. Sable, you know what kind of person Sophie is. It's impossible to control her.” They had tried to take her life many times, so it was natural that she would not help them.

“That's why I told you to find a way! Do you think everything in this world is easy? How will you gain anything without even making an effort?” Javier scolded.

His subordinate did not dare to talk back to him.

“Old Mr. Sable, Mr. Nicholas won't even let us leave the house now. So...”

The other people were now under Nicholas' control. He was the only one left by Javier's side.

Hearing that, Javier fell into deep thought.

What should I do to solve this predicament? The key to this matter is Sophie. Maybe everything will end only when she dies.

The living room was in shambles as Nicholas smashed everything that came into sight. It was only after a long time that he finally calmed down.

He took out his phone and tried to call Sophie, only to find out that she had blocked him.

In his fury, he killed a housekeeper on the spot.

Upon smelling blood in the air, Javier closed his eyes in despair.

His mania is so severe to the point that he's killing his own people!

Downstairs, Nicholas ordered, "Listen carefully. I want you to capture Arius by all means. He's just a doctor. If you can't even catch him, then you don't deserve to be alive." Capturing Arius was his only way to get a chance to talk to Sophie.

His subordinates did not raise any objections.

Under such circumstances, staying silent was the best thing to do.

That was because whatever they said would be deemed wrong.

In fact, they were also afraid of death.

Arius knew that Nicholas' people had been tailing him recently, and the situation was giving him quite a

headache.

Nicholas is way too obsessive. It's not like he will gain anything good out of this. So what if he captures me? Sophie will never like him back. Why does he have to make himself so pathetic?

When Arius detected the men behind him and their intention to abduct him, he chuckled bitterly.

Sophie, you vixen! Why do you have to be so charming?

Upon noticing his plan to escape, the men gave him no chance to do so and fired at him.

If it weren't for Arius' agility, he would have been injured.

"F*ck! Damn you, Nicholas. You better stay out of my sight. If I catch you, I'm going to torture you to death!"

Unfortunately, the men seemed determined to catch him this time.

Just when Arius thought he was doomed, a car came to a stop beside him. He raised his head and saw Sophie, the cause of his suffering.

"F*ck, you're finally here! If you came any later, I wouldn't be able to live to see tomorrow!"

Chapter 536

"Shut your trap! Your fighting skills have gotten worse," Sophie remarked. If that weren't the case, Arius wouldn't have been cornered by such a small group of people.

"I guess that's true," Arius admitted. He had been immersed in practicing medicine recently, so he had no time to train.

With Sophie by his side, Arius felt completely at ease. He knew that those men were no match for Sophie.

Indeed, Sophie showed off her incredible skills the next moment and beat the men to a pulp.

Knowing that she was the woman Nicholas cherished the most, the men could not bring themselves to strike back.

If they accidentally did her the slightest harm, Nicholas would definitely not let them off.

As a result, they were defenseless against Sophie. The latter, on the contrary, vented her dissatisfaction with Nicholas on them. It had been a long time since she had last fought someone, so she gave them a good beating.

When the men realized they would be crippled if they stayed any longer, they ran off in an instant.

Arius, now out of danger, plopped into the passenger seat comfortably.

"It seems that I have to hire a few bodyguards soon," he said.

Sophie ignored him. She couldn't believe a few men were enough to make Arius end up in this state, and she didn't want to speak a word to him.

"Are you upset?" asked Arius. Why is she mad? I'm not even mad when I'm the victim! "Sophie, if Nicholas abducts me one day, will you save me?"

"Why should I save you when you're so useless?" Sophie answered without hesitation.

"That's right. Listen, if Nicholas captures me one day, do not care about me. Okay?" Arius voiced. Nicholas is crazy! Does he think he can force Sophie to submit to him by holding me hostage? What in the world is he up to? How can he be so evil?

Soon, the duo came to Wings of Light. It had been a while since Butterfly had last seen Sophie, and she did not expect the latter to visit at this time, and with a handsome man at that.

“Sophie, I've always known you're incredible, but I didn't expect you to own a place like this,” Arius commented.

This was his first time coming to Wings of Light.

“Implant a chip in him,” instructed Sophie. As Nicholas wouldn't give up so easily, they had to be well-prepared as early as now.

She could not possibly leave Arius to his own devices.

“Sophie, you're overreacting. There's no need for this! Don't waste resources,” Arius protested.

He really didn't think there was a need to make such a big deal out of this.

In response, Sophie shot him a meaningful glance.

Seeing that, Arius scratched his nose guiltily. He only had himself to blame for being too weak.

Otherwise, Sophie wouldn't have to be so worried about him.

“All right, I got it. Just implant it. Stop looking at me like that.” Finally, Arius gave in. Although Sophie was just a young woman, he felt chills running down his spine every time she looked at him that way.

When Butterfly saw how obedient he was in front of Sophie, she burst into giggles.

“Sophie, I didn't know you could look so intimidating with your pretty face,” she said. This was the first time she had witnessed this scary side of Sophie.

While Butterfly led Arius to another room, Sophie walked to her office in Wings of Light.

She had been offline for a long time, so the moment she logged in, hundreds of notifications popped out. She closed all of them before sending Nicholas' current location and posting a mission.

Then she logged off again.

Nicholas was enjoying a glass of red wine in his mansion when a bomb was dropped on his rooftop.

The explosion wasn't a big one, but it still caused significant destruction.

In an instant, the housekeepers' screams filled the mansion.

Dust snowed down on Nicholas, making him look disheveled.

Javier also felt the impact, but thankfully, he was unscathed.

He took the chance to run out of the room, only to see that the mansion rooftop had been blown up.

In no time, everyone moved to the courtyard.

“Nicholas, didn't I tell you already? She doesn't like you at all. If she does, she wouldn't have done something like this. Do you still not get it?” Javier pointed out.

Despite her innocent face, Sophie was a ruthless woman.

“What did you do to make her so angry?” asked Javier. Although it was true that Sophie was cruel, she wouldn't do this for no reason. The only possibility was that Nicholas had done something again to provoke her.

Nicholas simply looked at the mess with an unbothered expression.

“Whatever I do has nothing to do with you. Just mind your own business and make sure not to die here.”

Even though Javier was his father, Nicholas was not the least bit polite.

He was in a terrible mood.

“Then what do you plan to do now? Are you going to keep liking her even when she did this to you? Do you really want to die in her hands?” Javier questioned again. He was extremely worried. If things went on this way, Nicholas would be doomed.

“Even if I die in her hands, it's something I'm willing to do so. Don't you interfere! Only a woman like her is worthy of me!” Nicholas claimed with a mad look in his eyes.

“You're crazy. You're hopeless!” How could this kind of love possibly exist in this world? How could someone kill the person they love?

“Yes, I am crazy. I enjoy doing this. Leave me alone!”

Though Nicholas had always known that Sophie would never have mercy on him, he still felt heartbroken.

As if someone was clutching his heart, he found it painful to breathe.

What should I do so that Sophie can feel my sincerity?

“Mr. Nicholas, what should we do now?” a housekeeper asked. Given the current state of the mansion, it was uninhabitable.

“It's not like the Sable family is short of money. We can just buy another mansion! If she wants to bomb us, we'll let her do so!” Nicholas was willing to cooperate with anything Sophie wanted to do.

“You!” Javier was incensed. I can't believe I have a son like him. He's going to ruin the Sable family sooner or later! “I don't even want to see you. Just send me back to Anglandur.” If he stayed here any longer, the Sable family would really be done for.

Nicholas responded, “You've finally figured it out! You're my father, so I won't actually do anything to you. Since you want to go back now, I'll ask someone to accompany you. However, you better not play any tricks. You know I'm a heartless person. If anyone dares to hurt Sophie, I'll destroy them.”

Javier shook his head helplessly. “Do whatever you want. I can't control you anyway.”

Only by leaving this place could he get a chance to control Nicholas.

Chapter 537

“That's great.” Everyone will be happy if you leave now. “Both of you, send Old Mr. Sable back personally. If you betray me, you know the consequences.”

“Yes, Mr. Nicholas!”

Javier glanced at Nicholas.

Even though they were in front of such a huge crowd, Nicholas did not show any respect to his father.

Nevertheless, he could not possibly let Sophie ruin his son.

Meanwhile, Sophie felt much better after seeing the photographs at the scene.

This should be a good lesson!

Nicholas will never understand even if you tell him nicely. Only simple and brute methods like this work.

After finding out what Sophie had done, Arius could not help but give her a thumbs-up.

“Sophie, we've received the same years of education, but why are you so amazing?” How could such a talented woman exist in this world?

“I've got no idea what you're saying.”

“That's enough. You don't have to pretend in front of me. Do you dare to say that you didn't instruct someone to blow up Nicholas' mansion?”

“Did I do anything wrong?”

“No one said that you did anything wrong. I think you were amazing. Nicholas, that b*stard, deserves it. You should blow him up to smithereens the next time.”

All Sophie did was oppose Nicholas. Considering his special identity, she would cause a lot of trouble if she actually killed him. She could only teach him a slight lesson each time.

“It'll be troublesome if I kill him.”

“I was just kidding. There's no way I'd actually make you kill him.” Arius knew Nicholas' identity well.

Now that the chip inserted in his arm could no longer be seen, he felt more relieved.

"I'm serious, Sophie. If Nicholas manages to get his hands on me, don't care about me. I'll think of a way myself."

"Quit spouting nonsense!" It's pointless saying things like that. "All right, you should go back first. Nicholas probably isn't in the mood to capture you for the time being."

"Okay. Where are you going? I'll send you back."

"Why? Do you want me to escort you?" Sophie asked mercilessly.

Arius touched his nose.

"Sophie, I know you're more skilled in fighting than I am, but you're still a girl, aren't you?"

"Don't you feel ashamed to ask a girl to protect you? After this busy period is over, I'll make you receive some special training."

To her, Arius was a very important person. She would not let anything bad happen to him.

Arius had the urge to cry at the thought of those grueling training.

"It's fine. I think I'm doing quite well now. See, Nicholas didn't even manage to capture me."

"If I hadn't appeared today, do you think he wouldn't have been able to capture you?" Also, Nicholas hasn't personally made a move yet. Even though all he did was send some lackeys out, you were already struggling. "This is final."

Arius was on the verge of tears.

Her special training was so terrifying that an average person couldn't carry it off.

“You know it's useless to resist in my world. Just be obedient.”

When Butterfly finished changing her clothes and came out, she saw that Sophie was about to leave.

“Are you leaving again, Sophie? Can't you stay behind and have a meal with me?”

It had been ages since they had shared a meal together.

“Next time! I have something else to do today.”

That left Butterfly in a very gloomy mood.

“You're always so busy. You only care about others but not me.” Butterfly was genuinely sad.

Sophie walked over and patted her cheek.

“I'm telling the truth. I'll treat you to a meal next time. How's that?”

Butterfly pouted, not believing Sophie's words at all.

“You said that the previous time too.” If she trusted what Sophie said, she would still be the one getting hurt.

“But I'm actually busy today.” Victor had been the one taking charge of Tanner Group's projects all along. It was time for her to have a look at it, given her high expectations for Tanner Group.

“Fine. Go ahead with your work! I'm the least important person in your life anyway,” said Butterfly sorrowfully.

“Why do you sound so pitiful? Why don't you finish your work here first? I'll pick you up after I'm done with everything.”

Only then did Butterfly crack a smile.

“That's more like it.”

Although Butterfly was sometimes a stubborn person who could not be convinced no matter what, she could be easily coaxed by people she cared about.

Sophie had known that a long time ago.

“All right, then. I'll be waiting for you!” Butterfly missed Sophie so much after not seeing her for so long.

“I'll wait for you here too. Let's have dinner together after you're done.” There was no way Arius would be excluded from it.

“Okay. You guys wait for me here.”

Sophie hailed a taxi to Tanner Group.

The same thing happened each time—every time she was there, something major would happen.

“Hello, Ms. Sophie!” the staff greeted her along the way.

Sophie nodded back slightly as a greeting before heading straight to Victor's office.

When Victor received a call from his assistant and found out that she had arrived, he immediately stopped his work and went over.

Indeed, he saw her sitting on the couch and playing with her phone when he arrived at the office. From his angle, he could spot her gorgeous neck and was slightly stunned.

Although he had always known how breathtakingly beautiful Sophie was, he did not expect to be dumbfounded by her beauty sometimes.

Upon returning to his senses, he walked toward her and sat down opposite her.

“Ms. Sophie, looks like you're free enough to visit today!” He knew she was studying at the University of Medicine, which would make her unimaginably busy.

Everyone knew she had a lot of work on her hands.

In addition to studying at the University of Medicine, she was also researching at the physics department of Jipsdale University. Since she was studying two impressive majors, it was obvious how busy she would be.

“I'm here to look at how the projects are doing.” She had handed Victor the business plan the previous time, so she was here today to check on his progress.

She was definitely not joking when she declared her goal to make Tanner Group on par with Lombard Group.

“Everything's going smoothly. Don't worry, Ms. Sophie! Since I've got Tanner Group in my charge and you as my advisor, nothing bad will happen!”

“Okay! I want Tanner Group to surpass Whitley Group in three months!”

She only gave him three months.

“Whitley Group?” Victor was stunned. However, when he remembered the rumor that had been making its way around town, he knew that Sophie was referring to Jennifer's family. “I'll try my best.”

“Trying your best isn't enough. You must succeed. Jennifer will definitely not let Tanner Group off the hook so easily.”

Jennifer from the Whitley family might seem like a strong and independent woman, but she was completely smitten with Tristan to the point she would do anything for him.

Since she wanted to destroy Tanner Group, razing Whitley Group to the ground would make Sophie feel much better.

Chapter 538

“Oh, right, be careful of Jennifer. She'll definitely take action one of these days,” reminded Sophie.

Victor nodded. “Got it!”

It was through his hard work that Victor managed to rise to his current position, so he knew how vicious people could be.

However, he did not believe that a girl like Jennifer was capable enough of doing anything too horrible.

“Is there anything else I can do for you, Ms. Sophie?”

“There's someone we mustn't keep in the company.” That was the true purpose of her visit that day.

“Who?”

Isn't the company doing well? There were no problems at all! Why can't we keep that person?

“Charlie White, the manager of the project management department. He's your cousin, right? Since you were the one who brought him in, you should deal with it yourself.”

“What? Charlie?”

Charlie was indeed his cousin. Back then, Charlie had approached him for a job. Thinking that it was no big deal, he made the arrangement accordingly.

“Yeah.”

Sophie handed a file to him.

“If you can't bear to deal with it, I'll do it.”

After reading the documents in the file, Victor finally understood what deeds Charlie had committed.

“Don't worry, Ms. Sophie. I know what to do. You don't have to do anything about this!” He had been nurturing an enemy right in their midst.

Charlie, that ungrateful b*stard!

“Not everyone knows how to be grateful.”

Victor glanced at her.

Is she consoling me?

“Got it, Ms. Sophie.” Yeah. It's true that everyone wants to climb to the top. While some people choose to climb up step by step, others strive to find a shortcut.

“Ms. Sophie, I swear this won't happen again in the future.” This is definitely the last time. I won't let this happen again.

“You know what to do.” Sophie did not expect her employees to not commit any mistakes. It was inevitable for human beings to make mistakes after all.

All that mattered was that they would correct themselves afterward.

“Okay.” Victor had always believed that he was doing a decent job. Never had he expected a problem like that to crop up.

“You don't need to feel burdened by it.” Since she had handed the matter to him, it proved that she trusted him greatly.

“To be honest, I admire you a lot, Ms. Sophie.”

Sophie shrugged.

“You don't need to flatter me either.” She was just an ordinary person who was equally prone to mistakes.

After that, Victor brought Sophie around for inspection.

Tanner Group was no longer the same as before.

All the departments were working orderly without a single hiccup.

From the speed they were going, it was not impossible to be on par with Lombard Group.

“In the past, I've never dared to imagine any company being on par with Lombard Group. But I believe Tanner Group can achieve that one day,” said Victor proudly.

Tanner Group's current success was thanks to each individual's hard work.

He was proud, indeed.

“Don't worry. Tanner Group will only get better from here.”

Tanner Group would prove itself to those people who had been underestimating it all along.

Although Jennifer had been in a sullen mood ever since that previous incident, she invested all her energy in her work.

The more hardworking she was, the more likely Tristan would notice how exceptional she was.

Caylie was extremely worried when she saw that.

“Jennifer, our family doesn't expect you to earn so much money. A girl like you should pay more attention to your health. Understand?”

Knowing that Jennifer had been provoked by what had happened at the charity dinner, Caylie was very upset with Tristan.

However, as it was Tristan, there was nothing much she could do regardless of how angry she was.

She had no choice but to try to persuade her daughter.

“Mr. Walker's son is coming back from overseas. Why don't you meet him? It's always better to get to know a new friend.”

It was time for her to think about marriage at her age.

One must not dream forever.

Finally stopping her work, Jennifer raised her head and looked at Caylie.

“Mom, I've persisted for ten years without giving up. How can I give up now?” She had never hidden what she wanted.

“So what if you never give up? Don't you know Tristan's personality?”

“Mom, this isn't what I want to hear now. All I want is your wholehearted support.”

As her mother, Caylie should support her without any inhibitions.

“I want to support you too. But why are you persisting in something you know is absolutely impossible?”

She knew how much Tristan liked that girl.

“Mom, if you don't support me, then don't say anything. I'll bear the consequences of everything I do.”

No matter what, she would never give up. Even if she remained single for the rest of her life, it would not change anything.

Tanner Group, huh? I'll make sure it won't survive in Jispdale. There'll always be a way, right? I'm going to utterly destroy Tanner Group!

When Sophie went to TS at night, she discovered that the Wheelers were still practicing in the practice room.

They were putting in a lot of effort.

When Sophie witnessed how determined they were to pursue their dream, a surge of enthusiasm flowed through her as well.

Mark was the first to notice Sophie. He could always sense it whenever she appeared.

After the practice ended, the five of them were covered in sweat.

Performing rock music was exhausting, and they were extremely serious even during rehearsals.

Sophie applauded.

“Very good! I think you guys can compete with the bands in Koandria now!”

Sunny replied, “Of course! This is such a rare opportunity to come across. Since we're all together, we'll put in the extra hard work!”

If they had not suffered any losses, they would not have been so hardworking. However, since they had experienced missing an opportunity by the slightest bit, they went all out this time.

They did not want to leave behind any regrets.

“What brings you here? We know you're very busy. If you have time, go back and get some rest. We're doing fine, so you don't need to worry about us.” They were an amazing group that would not cause any trouble for her.

Sophie patted Mark's shoulder.

“Mark, you don't need to give yourself so much pressure. I didn't lose anything!” They were giving it their all after what had happened the previous time.

Mark nodded, yet there was no way he would not feel stressed. He could not possibly feel at peace after what had happened to her because of him.

The others left to do their own things, leaving some space for Sophie and Mark.

Mark chuckled bitterly.

“You don't need to bother about me. I'm doing well! I've never been better, actually. The issue with Emerald Gang has also been resolved.”

Sophie shook her head when she heard that.

“No. You're not doing well.”

Chapter 539

It's probably because of me that he's not satisfied with this outcome.

Wiping the sweat on his hair, Mark gazed into the far distance, his eyes unfocused.

“If you still aren't prepared, I'll give you a three-month break for you to reconcile with yourself.”

Nothing could change the course of history.

There was no use in constantly being hung up on the past. One should constantly look forward.

“I don't need that.” It had not been easy for everyone to be together again, so there was no way he would leave.

“Mark, you've got a whole life ahead of you. There's a lot of time for us to fulfill our dreams. You should relax when it's appropriate. There's nothing wrong with that.”

People should not be so obsessed with chasing a distant goal that they miss out on the beautiful things along the way.

“Okay. Let's talk about it after some time.” If he really needed a break, he would raise it to her personally.

“Sure. Remember, I have no regrets.”

Mark cracked a smile.

Does she not have any regrets? I wouldn't even dare to imagine if something did happen to her.

When Sophie and Mark left the practice room, they saw Ysabelle and Felix walking out.

Immediately forgetting about Felix the moment she spotted Sophie, Ysabelle ran over.

“Why are you here today? Shall we have a meal together?”

Isn't she very busy? What is she doing here?

“Not today. I'm meeting other friends.” She almost forgot about Arius and Butterfly at the Wings of Light.

They were still waiting to eat with her.

“Who? Don't I know your friends? Why don't we all eat together?” suggested Ysabelle casually. Since Sophie's friends were also her friends, there was no big deal in having a meal together.

"Perhaps another time." Since Butterfly's identity was quite unique, it was better to avoid exposing her so much.

Ysabelle could not help but feel slightly disappointed.

"It's fine. You still have me, right? I'll eat with you." Felix was, after all, her boyfriend.

Ysabelle linked her arm with his.

"Looks like you're the only one who won't abandon me." She had a feeling that Sophie had just shunned her.

Felix pinched her cheeks.

"What are you thinking about? Why would I even abandon you?" He would never dislike her, even in the next lifetime.

"Really? You must promise to treat me nicely forever. Otherwise, I won't let you off the hook!" She was a petty person.

"Who else would I treat nicely other than you?" There was no way he would ever hurt her.

Seeing how both of them were acting all lovey-dovey, Sophie burst out laughing.

She did not expect to see them acting like this after they got together.

"Tell Sunny and the rest that I'll eat with them next time. I'm busy today," Sophie said to Mark.

"Okay. I know how busy you are. You don't have to come over just to eat with us."

When she reached the Wings of Light, she heard Arius complaining, “F*ck! Did we get stood up?”

Did Sophie really change after getting into a relationship?

“Probably not. We must trust Sophie. She's not that kind of person.”

“Well, things aren't the same as in the past.” Arius was starving. “Why don't the two of us eat first without waiting for her?”

Since it was just a meal, it was no big deal even if Sophie did not show up.

“Arius, are you doubting me or yourself?”

She was already there.

Arius leaped to his feet from the couch upon hearing her voice.

“What are you talking about? How can I possibly doubt you? You're the person I've got the most confidence in,” exclaimed Arius in a flattering tone the moment he saw her.

Butterfly gaped.

Is this what a medical Ph.D. student acts like? How have I not noticed it before?

Ignoring him, Sophie poured herself a glass of water and drank a few mouthfuls.

“What are we eating?”

Haven't they been wanting to eat with me? Now that I'm here, I wonder what they want to eat.

“How about barbecue?” Butterfly liked to eat popular food catered to a more general audience.

“I'm fine with that! You girls should decide on matters like this.” He could eat anything.

“Okay, then. Let's go to Smokestar Barbecue!”

“What about your boyfriend, Sophie? Why don't you invite him too?” Her boyfriend would probably be unhappy that she's keeping us company.

“Why should we invite him? I don't want to eat with him,” opposed Arius immediately. If he ate with Tristan, he would probably have difficulty digesting his food.

“What's wrong? You don't like Sophie's boyfriend? Aren't you supposed to like him as well?” Doesn't he like Sophie?

“I don't like him. In fact, I detest him!” Every moment he spent with Tristan was like torture.

Even though he could not get along with Tristan at all, there was nothing else he could do.

“That's enough, Arius!”

Arius drove them to Smokestar Barbecue. On their way there, Sophie called Tristan.

“I'm eating with my friends. Would you like to join us?” Since Butterfly wants to meet him, I should just invite him over.

It was normal for her to introduce her boyfriend to her friends.

A few days ago, her classmates had gotten their boyfriends to treat their dormmates to a meal.

If others could do it, there was nothing stopping her from doing the same.

“Okay!”

Having just finished his work, Tristan was packing his bag and preparing to leave to find Sophie.

Sophie did not have many friends. Furthermore, there were even fewer people whom she would have a meal with.

“Where are you? I'll go over right now.” Tristan had already finished tidying his table.

Since he had a slight obsessive-compulsive disorder, he would always tidy his table after work.

“Smokestar Barbecue. I'll send you the location.”

“Smokestar Barbecue?” Sophie has a weak stomach. She shouldn't be eating such food.

“Yeah. It's fine eating it once in a while,” said Sophie immediately, knowing what he was worried about. She could not possibly bring everyone's mood down just for her sake.

“All right.”

Although Tristan was still unsatisfied with where they were eating, he did not say anything else. After all, it was their decision.

Although Butterfly knew who Sophie's boyfriend was and had met him once, it was her first time eating with him.

They had already arrived and settled down in a private room. Upon receiving a call, Sophie went out to welcome Tristan.

Butterfly was filled with envy when she saw such a handsome man entering with Sophie. She had always had poor luck with love.

Seeing how in love the two of them were, she felt jealous.

Sophie brought Tristan over and introduced him to them.

“Tristan, this is my friend, Butterfly. Butterfly, he's my boyfriend, Tristan.”

Chapter 540

“Hello. Thank you so much for always taking such good care of Sophie,” Tristan said politely.

“Oh, no. Not at all. Sophie has been the one constantly looking out for me,” Butterfly replied. I doubt I'd have come this far if it weren't for her! For all I know, I might've married a random guy and settled for a mediocre life that's a far cry from what I have now.

“Mr. Tristan, are you bad with directions? Smokestar Barbecue isn't all that big, so why do you still need Sophie to lead you in? Don't you know she's had a long day?” Arius asked scornfully.

He couldn't stand the sight of Tristan, so to him, anything the latter did was wrong and off-putting.

Tristan chose to ignore the man.

After all, why should he stoop to Arius' level in front of Sophie?

Butterfly, on the other hand, shot a glare at Arius. My goodness. He's doing it on purpose! What on earth does he have against Tristan anyway? Shouldn't he be happy that Tristan treats Sophie with so much love and care?

"If you don't want to eat, you can see yourself out right now, Arius," Tristan uttered flatly.

"You—" Arius muttered, anger rising in him like a tide. Damn it! I know I'm not Tristan's match.

"Let's tuck in, Arius! Didn't you say you were starving?" Sophie urged. They had already ordered the food before Tristan arrived, so why let that go to waste?

Seeing the mouth-watering meats sizzling on the grill, Tristan promptly cut a slice of lamb for Sophie.

"Eat up and leave him be. Given his childishness, it'd be useless to talk sense into him!"

"Excuse me? In what way am I childish?" Arius fumed.

Argh! What else can I do, though? I'm all alone, and there's no one to back me up...

At that point, however, Butterfly began to find Arius rather amusing. Haha! This Arius seems like a lot of fun! Could he be jealous of Tristan? Then again, he doesn't look the type to fall for Sophie!

Just then, Sophie's voice rang out. "Ignore him, Butterfly. Eat your food!"

"Okay!"

The food at Smokestar Barbecue was excellent, so Butterfly and Arius gleefully ate their fill. Sophie didn't eat much, but that was hardly surprising since her appetite had always been small.

She was, however, somewhat worried when she saw Tristan picking at his food.

"What's the matter? Is the food not to your liking?"

"No, it's not that. My stomach's just not feeling too well today," Tristan muttered. As it turned out, he had been plagued with abdominal pains since the afternoon, yet he had no idea what caused them.

"Ah, you should've told me earlier! Then I wouldn't have dragged you here for barbeque!" Sophie said

before pouring Tristan a cup of water.

"It's okay. How can I miss the rare opportunity to have a meal with your friends?"

Sophie merely stared at the man in stunned silence.

Oh, gosh! He has to stop overthinking everything. The meal can always be rescheduled, but he has to rest when he's feeling unwell!

"I swear I'm all right!" Tristan insisted as he held Sophie's hand to assuage her concerns.

"Okay."

Well, as long as he's fine, what more can I say? Besides, we're already more than halfway through our meal...

After the meal, Sophie instructed Arius to send Butterfly home, to which the man readily agreed.

How could he not when Butterfly was such a pleasant young lady? Even he couldn't deny he felt comfortable around her.

"Get her home safe and sound, you hear me? Don't bully her."

"Your words cut me deep, Sophie! Why would a good man like me bully the lovely Butterfly?"

"Quit fooling around!" Sophie scolded. He and his frivolous remarks! That said, I know Arius is indeed a good and dependable man. I can trust Butterfly with him.

"We'll be taking our leave, then," Butterfly piped up. "Don't forget to invite me again the next time!"

"All right," Sophie said, chuckling at how clingy Butterfly was.

As soon as Arius and Butterfly left, Sophie and Tristan finally stepped into the car.

"Where should we go now?" Tristan asked. It had been a while since Sophie had visited her grandfather, so if that were what she wanted, he'd be more than happy to oblige.

"Is there anything else you need to do? If there is, you should get that done first."

"No. I'm free. Let's pay Old Mr. Tanner a visit, then," Tristan suggested.

Honestly, I feel bad for not having arranged a meeting between our families. Then again, Dad's attitude has always been atrocious, and I don't want to risk him upsetting Old Mr. Tanner.

"Sure! Let's do as you say! It's been quite some time since I've met Grandpa," Sophie said. "However, if Grandpa asks, you don't have to tell him how your father feels about us. Grandpa's getting on in years, and I don't want to worry him unnecessarily..."

"I'm sorry, Sophie. It's all my fault that you have to put up with this," Tristan replied solemnly. "You don't have to care about other people's opinions, though. No matter what happens, you'll always be the one for me. I want you, and only you, to be my wife."

Not even my father will be able to stop me from marrying the love of my life!

"I know. Don't worry. I don't mind at all."

To Sophie, the issue with Tristan's father wasn't a big deal, and she didn't see the point in fretting over it.

After all, it was common for any couple to face problems throughout their relationship, and she and Tristan had only just begun.

As long as their love for each other remained steadfast, nothing else mattered to her.

Even though Josiah wasn't expecting Sophie and Tristan's visit, it was such a long-awaited and pleasant surprise that he decided to stay up for them.

"Soph! How are things at Tanner Group?" Josiah asked. Ever since he handed over the reins to his granddaughter, he had hardly been checking in, but that didn't mean he wasn't worried about it.

"Don't worry, Grandpa! Everything's going very well at Tanner Group," Sophie answered confidently.

With me around, there's no way I'll let anyone make a mess of the company.

Upon hearing her words, Josiah finally heaved a sigh of relief. "That's good to hear! As you know, Tanner Group is the only thing I've left for you. You have to protect it!"

More importantly, the company would help close the social class gap between Sophie and Tristan. He was confident that with her at the helm of Tanner Group, the Lombards wouldn't look down on her.

"Don't worry, Old Mr. Tanner. Sophie and I will handle everything adequately," Tristan added, knowing

all too well what Josiah was concerned about. "I'll arrange for you to meet my father sometime later!"

Of course, I'll have to settle everything on my side first. Sophie cares about Old Mr. Tanner the most, so I can't let my family upset or offend him. I have to tread carefully.

“Sure, sure. No hurry. You can arrange it when the two of you are free!” Josiah said smilingly. As a man who was reaching the end of his life, he wanted nothing more than for Sophie to be happy and unburdened.

All of a sudden, Sophie grabbed her grandfather's hand.

“Grandpa, didn't I tell you not to worry about me? I'll take care of everything,” she reassured. I got this. I know I do.

Josiah merely hummed his acknowledgment.

I know she's capable, but how can I not be anxious? She's my precious granddaughter, for goodness' sake!

Determined to give her the best he could afford, Josiah continued, “In the future, Tanner Group will be my wedding gift to you.”

“Grandpa!” Sophie exclaimed.

Oh, dear... I honestly don't need any of these to improve my image. If I had needed a company, I'd have started one myself! However, I chose not to because I don't require it!