

Pursuing 641

Chapter 641

"You didn't make this soup? Who else could it be, then?" Sophie gazed at the other three people there. They were more likely there to eat than to cook, and they weren't capable of preparing their own meal.

"Tristan purposely learned to do this for you." Sarah pretended not to fathom Tristan's warning and directly divulged that information. My foolish little brother genuinely cares about Sophie. Since he had done so much for her, I should tell her about his efforts. Doing this will improve their relationship, so why not?

"What?"

Sophie was truly dumbfounded. Mr. Tristan made this soup? So these three are here because he requested their presence?

He glanced at Sarah. I knew it. She's not reliable at all.

The soup wasn't a success. As it was a failed attempt, he didn't want to let Sophie drink it.

"Really? In that case, I must taste it." Sophie gazed at Tristan. Knowing he had prepared the soup for her, she was touched by his effort regardless of the soup's flavor.

She was aware that Tristan had always been unable to accept her tiny meal portions.

Still, there was nothing she could do about that.

That was the most she could eat, and if she consumed more, she would feel uncomfortable as her appetite was genuinely lacking.

Sophie reckoned that was why he wanted to learn cooking.

Of course, she knew what Tristan was thinking about.

He understood her very well, and she also had a good grasp of him.

“Sophie, Uncle Tristan really treats you wholeheartedly, so you must never abandon him no matter what happens in the future. Otherwise, he'll be brokenhearted.” Ysabelle had never seen Tristan care so much about someone.

Felix nodded in agreement. If Sophie leaves Mr. Tristan, he will surely be devastated. He has fallen head over heels for her.

“Can't you think more positively about our future? Stop talking if you aren't adept at doing so.” Tristan was displeased by their remarks.

Ysabelle uttered, “Touch wood. Fine. I'm sorry. I picked my words poorly. Still, I sincerely hope you two will always stay together and be happy.”

Sarah thought Felix and Ysabelle would only become hindrances if they remained there, so she brought them away.

Finally, Tristan and Sophie were the only ones left in the small condominium.

“Shouldn't I drink a little, too, since they all got to taste the soup you made? Didn't Sarah say you

prepared this soup for me?” Deeply touched, she regarded him with a hopeful look. He treats me so well and prioritizes me in everything he does.

Therefore, she couldn't help but behave more gently before him. She also wished to stay with him forever and never be separated.

Tristan was caught in a difficult position. Judging by their reaction, the soup I made today must've been a failed product. In that case, how can I let her drink this?

“Let's not drink this soup since I didn't cook it properly. I'll prepare some for you next time,” Tristan uttered tenderly.

He wanted to make sure that he provided her the best of everything.

Sophie walked up to him, slung her arms around his neck, and kissed him on the lips.

It was a hot and passionate kiss.

There was no way he could refuse her fervent initiative. He reckoned she would be dispirited if he rejected her at that moment.

Hence, he reciprocated and deepened the kiss.

The couple indulged themselves in that intimate moment for a long time.

Sophie had also learned how to breathe during a kiss, so this time, she could adapt to the situation no matter how long the kiss lasted.

Taking in her slightly swollen lips, he gently rubbed them with his fingertips.

“What do you want to eat tonight? I'll order food delivery from The Crown.” Before he could master the art of preparing the soup, he would never allow her to have a taste.

“Let me drink a little since you've already made it.”

She was still looking forward to trying the soup he prepared for her.

Tristan frowned.

“Are you sure you want to have a taste? They told me the soup today is not that delicious.”

“It's their problem for having poor taste, then.” How can anything Mr. Tristan make be a failed product?

“Sophie, you're only saying that because you're my girlfriend, so you'll compliment me regardless of the soup's flavor.” Especially when she knew he purposely prepared the soup for her.

“What's with all the nonsense? All I want is to drink a bowl of soup. Is that too much to ask?”

Sensing her determination, he had no choice but to serve her a bowl of soup.

The temperature of the soup was just nice after leaving it to cool for some time.

Sophie drank a few spoonfuls of the soup.

Tristan felt his effort was worth it, looking at her savoring the soup.

Nonetheless, he was also worried she might suffer from diarrhea if she drank too much.

“That's enough. Stop drinking. We're going out to have our dinner in a short while.” He grasped her hand. “I know the soup isn't that great, but I'll try harder and do better next time.”

“Tristan, I have a question for you, and you must answer me seriously.”

“Okay. Ask away. I'll give you an honest answer no matter what you ask.” There was nothing he had to hide from her.

“Do you dream of feeding me until I'm fat?”

He was momentarily taken aback before ultimately nodding. Then, he uttered jokingly, "How did you know that? Once I turn you into a fatty, no one will snatch you away from me."

Otherwise, even he couldn't fathom how many more love rivals he would have to face.

Sophie was rendered speechless.

She knew a short video had gone viral recently about a man telling others about his strategy to feed his girlfriend until she became corpulent so that he didn't need to worry about her leaving him for another man.

"Do you really hope for me to turn into a big fatty?" If that's the case, I'm afraid he'll be disappointed because it's very hard for someone like me to gain weight.

She was truly incapable of fulfilling that desire of his.

Tristan pulled her close and seated her on his lap.

"I'm just kidding. I like you no matter your appearance," Tristan uttered affectionately. He was only trying to learn cooking because he knew she had a poor appetite.

All he wanted was for her to stay healthy.

He would accept her regardless of her physique.

Sophie leaned against his chest. This is the man who loves me the most, aside from my grandpa. He loves me with complete sincerity and commitment.

"What's the matter? Are you touched? Still, that is not what I aim to achieve, and you don't have to feel burdened. I'm merely carrying out my obligations as your boyfriend, and I'm contented when doing all these things. Therefore, don't feel pressured because of this. You can drink if you want to, but if you

don't want to drink the soup, you can toss it away instead of forcing yourself to consume it. You should know that I am very reluctant to see you pushing yourself to do something you don't want to."

He would feel distraught if she forced herself to do something because of what he did.

How can he still overthink in this manner after all the things he's done for me?

Chapter 642

"Tristan, you're going to spoil me!" Sophie couldn't help but pout. She would become pampered by his doing.

"You're my woman, so of course I'm going to spoil you!"

Sophie took another sip of soup, nodding. "Mm-hmm. However, I think we still need to get some food. It's not enough to just drink soup."

"Okay. I will learn to cook more dishes next time."

Indeed, soup was not enough.

For the next few days, Charles and Sean were called over to be lab rats as well.

Fortunately, Tristan's cooking was not that bad. At the very least, they did not have to worry about being poisoned.

That was the advantage of being someone with a high IQ. He was capable of doing everything well.

Felix and the others stared at the braised pork ribs on the table.

They were in utter disbelief.

That was too incredible. After all, making soup was simple. He only needed to put everything in the water and boil it.

Yet this time, Tristan had cooked a plate of braised pork ribs, which looked delicious.

“Mr. Tristan, are you serious? You really want to hone your cooking skill, huh?”

If Old Mr. Lombard hears of this, he will definitely be pissed off! Charles exclaimed inwardly.

“Do I look as though I'm joking?”

No matter what he wanted to do, he would be serious about it.

Hearing that, Charles shook his head.

“To be honest, I really admire you. You said you wanted to learn to cook, and you actually did it!” Sean added.

All this because of a woman... Is she really worth it? Even now, I wouldn't do such a thing for any woman.

Sean was impressed as well.

“All right! Cut the crap! Hurry up and give it a try!” Tristan urged. He was very passionate about cooking at the moment.

“Okay. Let me have a taste!”

They were used to eating a lot of different delicacies, so they were quite picky when it came to food.

Felix served himself a piece of pork ribs and took a bite.

It wasn't greasy and had a perfect texture while being sweet.

The taste of the pork ribs took his breath away. Felix couldn't help exclaiming, "Continue down this path, and you can start a restaurant soon! I mean it."

How is it possible this kind of person exists? No matter what he does, he can do it flawlessly and perfectly.

"Is it really that good?" asked Charles while serving himself a piece of pork ribs and tasting it. After that, he went on, "Mr. Tristan, how can someone as perfect as you exist in this world?"

Sean, too, commented after giving it a try, "That's right! It's too much. Whatever you do, you can do it perfectly. Can you give other men a chance to live?"

They did not look like they were joking at all.

Tristan was pretty satisfied with his cooking.

"I realized recently that cooking can be quite interesting."

After toiling away in the kitchen, he found that the moment he enjoyed the most was when he watched Sophie finish all of the dishes he had cooked.

He felt exceptionally happy whenever he saw her eat the food with relish.

That kind of happiness and accomplishment could not be obtained through other means.

“According to legend, a king would kill for a woman. Our dear Mr. Tristan, on the other hand, is willing to learn how to cook for a woman. His acts should be commended.” Felix genuinely thought that Tristan was impressive. He paused for a second and continued, “At this rate, I'm starting to fear that Ysabelle will shun me once she compares me to you.”

I'm just being nice to her. I can't do what Mr. Tristan has done, and it is impossible to go all out. I'm really not talented at cooking at all.

“You want to compare yourself with him? Forget it. Don't you know who he is? He's Tristan Lombard! There's nothing in the world he cannot accomplish!” declared Charles.

Why would he compare himself with Tristan? They're in two different leagues!

Felix couldn't agree more with what Charles said. Well, that's true. Not everyone can do what Mr. Tristan did. I only have to focus on my own business, and that's it. There's no need to kick up a fuss over nothing. Otherwise, I will be the one suffering in the end.

Meanwhile, William was not pleased when he discovered Tristan's recent obsession with cooking.

He had not gotten involved in Tristan and Sophie's relationship recently.

On the one hand, Tristan would not listen to what he said, and on the other, Sophie had given him such a valuable gift, and he was embarrassed to find fault with her.

However, William couldn't bear that his son had become obsessed with learning to cook for a woman rather than focusing on his own business.

He instructed the driver to send him to the condominium near the University of Medicine and got out of the car there. Coincidentally, he saw Sophie, who was on her way back.

He didn't expect to bump into Sophie there, but this would work in his favor.

After all, what he wanted to say was pointless if Tristan refused to listen, so it was better for him to tell Sophie directly.

Sophie didn't hide when she saw William. Instead, she approached him and greeted, "Old Mr. Lombard, are you here for Tristan? He should be at home at this hour. Let's go in together."

"I'm here to see you," replied William.

"Well, shall we find a place to sit down and talk, then?" said Sophie politely. They couldn't just stand there and talk.

"No need for that. I will be straightforward and tell you here. Sophie, are you going to let Tristan fool around like that? He has such a big company to manage, yet, you just sit back and watch him learn to cook? A man has a finite amount of energy. How can you let him do such a stupid thing if you truly love him?" William was very displeased at Tristan's obsession with cooking.

He was adamant in blaming that on Sophie.

If it weren't for her, things wouldn't have gotten to that point.

Sophie explained, "Old Mr. Lombard, don't you understand Tristan? Nobody can stop him from doing what he has set his mind on doing."

Besides, Tristan is only learning to cook. Why is Old Mr. Lombard acting as though Tristan won't manage his business and will become entirely fixated on cooking?

Instead, William responded with a frown and blurted, "Sophie, you can't be like this. If you really want to marry Tristan, you need to think about him. Furthermore, women normally do all the cooking while men run businesses. And you, you should take care of everything in the house."

After all, a man like Tristan should not stay in the house and cook. It's something that I won't tolerate!

Hearing that, Sophie was rendered speechless.

She didn't realize that the old man was actually quite stubborn and conservative.

What kind of old-fashioned view is that? Aren't women human? Aren't men and women equal in this modern day? How could he still have this kind of thinking?

“Old Mr. Lombard, let me repeat myself. This is what he wants to do. I can't think of any reason I should stop him from doing what he wants to.” Tristan did, in fact, learn how to cook for her. That was why she couldn't be ungrateful and stop him from doing that.

“If it were Winter or Jennifer in this situation, they definitely wouldn't say that. They certainly wouldn't let Tristan do such things!” William snorted. That was the reason he couldn't accept a girl like Sophie.

Sophie frowned upon hearing that and uttered, “Winter and Jennifer? What do they have to do with me?”

Chapter 643

I've never thought of comparing myself to anyone else. Everything will be fine no matter how awesome Winter and Jennifer are since Tristan has no feelings for them! Sophie thought.

William frowned. “But... if you are determined to stay with Tristan, isn't it okay to make a few changes to yourself? Why can't you try to change if you truly love him?”

“I'm my best self now. There's no need for me to make any changes to myself.” Sophie felt it was unnecessary to twist and change herself for other people.

“You!”

I can't believe a woman like her exists. Why won't she listen to what I say? If she continues acting this way, what else can I say to convince her otherwise?

“There's no need to get so worked up over this, Old Mr. Lombard. It's not worth getting yourself so upset over me that it hurts your body.”

Anyway, he is my elder and Tristan's father. Since young, Tristan has had no mother. That's why he respects Old Mr. Lombard so much. Hence, I should treat Old Mr. Lombard with respect too.

“Forget it. This is why I dislike you. It's useless to try and talk to you. Who cares if you are a capable woman? You won't even think on behalf of your lover. A woman like you would never become a good wife even if you were to marry Tristan in the future.”

Tristan and the rest noticed Sophie and William were deeply engrossed in a conversation when they walked out.

“Eh, why is Old Mr. Lombard here? Did he show up because he found out you were learning how to cook?” The people in the upper class were conservative and traditional. They believed that a man should not be found in a kitchen, so it wasn't unusual that William would show up for a talk when he realized what Tristan was doing.

Sean agreed, “I believe that's the reason why he's here.” Even though the men were standing far from Sophie and William, they could feel the hostility between the duo.

“Ah. Tristan, I feel like there's no need for you to learn cooking. Old Mr. Lombard had just decided not to intervene in your relationship. It's inadvisable to anger him again over something trivial like this.” Felix shook his head. “It's important to maintain harmony between the people you care about. Am I right, Tristan?”

Tristan didn't stay to listen further. He hurried forward with a few steps and pulled Sophie into his embrace as he stared at William.

“Why are you here? I thought you were busy recently? How did you squeeze in the time to show up here?”

William sneered when Tristan confronted him. "Tristan, where is your conscience? No matter what happens between us, I'm still your father. I was the one who raised you. How dare you speak to me this way over a mere woman? Do you know what respect is? Do you still consider me your father?"

Deep down, Tristan's mistreatment of him distressed William.

It doesn't matter what went down between us. Tristan is the precious child that I've raised for so many years. I've always been so proud of him. Why did he turn out this way?

Sophie grabbed Tristan's hand to stop him from speaking further. She didn't want the man to argue with his father over her.

Tristan shouldn't disappoint Old Mr. Lombard no matter what, right?

"I'm all right, Mr. Tristan. Old Mr. Lombard didn't say anything unnecessary to me." Sophie gazed into Tristan's eyes earnestly. "Don't do anything that you will regret in the future because of me."

Tristan wouldn't be happy either if he hurt Old Mr. Lombard now.

Understanding Sophie's intention, Tristan changed his tone. "Yeah. Dad, why don't you head back first? I have something else going on today. I'll talk to you when I head home some other day."

Sorrow filled William's heart when he saw Tristan's obedience around Sophie.

My son wouldn't listen to a word I said. Yet, he takes everything Sophie says so seriously. Why does he treat me so differently from her? It's making me sad. No wonder other people always talk about how a son always ends up siding with his wife or girlfriend over his parents. Ah! It seems like my son didn't escape the same fate either.

Tristan opened the car door for William, reminding him, "All right. The weather is getting cold. You should remain inside the mansion if there is nothing important. It's not right for you to run around like this when you are getting old."

He was truly concerned for William's wellbeing.

Dad didn't have an easy life as he had to raise his three kids alone. He's never once thought about remarrying, as he always says that he doesn't know what love is. From what I see, he is the one that is the most affectionate and emotional. If not, he wouldn't have stayed single for so many years.

With the car door opened for him, William knew he would only annoy the people present more if he didn't leave now. With a snort and no more words, he turned and left.

William grew more and more upset when he got back to the mansion.

Come on! I wasn't wrong. A woman should learn to cook and stay at home, taking care of everything in the household so her man can work without any worries.

Meanwhile, Sarah got a call from the butler. Knowing that William was overthinking and obsessing over some matters again, she quickly headed home from the company.

As soon as she stepped through the door, she was greeted by the sight of a sulking William sitting atop the couch. Sarah walked over, sat beside him, and leaned her head on William's shoulder. She asked softly, "Dad, what's wrong? Who had the gall to offend you? Let me know. I'll go and teach him or her a lesson now."

William sighed in resignation. "Was it easy for me to raise the three of you alone? Why are you all disobeying me?"

He lowered his head miserably as if everyone had wronged him.

Sarah mused inwardly, Maybe everyone will act this way when they get older. They become child-like, needing the comfort of the people around them. See! My dad has turned into one of them. Even though he used to be a successful and influential businessman in the past, now he is just a mere mortal who wants his children to care about him.

“Dad, we all love you. Really! I promise. I swear you are the person that I love the most in this world,” Sarah exclaimed.

Sarah knew how difficult it must have been for William to raise her and her siblings alone. It was a fact that the Lombard family didn't have financial trouble, but then again, William didn't neglect to show his love for his children either.

“Is that true?”

“Of course! It's not just me who loves you. Lincoln and Tristan love you too! They just don't show it outwardly because they don't know how to express their love. Don't overthink this, okay? All of us want you to be healthy and well. We are only able to live in peace knowing that you are fine! As for Tristan, please stop worrying about him. He is a grown-up now. He knows what he is doing.”

“How can he learn how to cook? He overly dotes on Sophie! If this goes on, Sophie will only ask for more and more outrageous things when they get married. He is a man. He can't let that happen to him!” William voiced. That was the part that he was unable to wrap his mind around.

“Dad, there's something you should know. Times are different now. If a man doesn't pamper his woman, she might run away from him.”

Sarah's words rendered William completely speechless.

He retorted, “Where can she escape to? Sophie told me she loves Tristan, but I've never seen her do anything for him!”

William felt indignant because he didn't want Tristan to live such a pathetic life just because he was in love.

“Hey. I've already told you that this is how things are between them. Your anger does not change anything. If you know your anger is worthless, why don't you remain calm? Men and women are equal now. Take me for an example. I'm a career woman!”

Chapter 644

Meanwhile, Jennifer had recently been waiting patiently for a chance to finish Sophie once and for all. As she stared at James then, she felt like the time had come.

“Here are the details. You can read through them thoroughly when you get back. Ring me up if there's anything that you don't understand,” Jennifer explained.

James was smart. He knew what he had to do. “Noted, Ms. Whitley. Don't worry. No problem will arise. We will make the best team.”

Don't blame me for this, Sophie. If you have no regard for me, I won't hesitate to take action against you. I've worked in Tanner Group for so long as compared to Sophie. How dare they disrespect me? Since they did this to me, there is no way I'll continue serving the company willingly and loyally.

James continued, “Let's make a pact. My salary mustn't be lower than my previous salary at Tanner Group when I join Whitley Group.” Even though he initially wanted to request a salary double the amount his salary at Tanner Group, he didn't have the nerve to do so.

Naturally, Jennifer knew what James was going on about. “Relax. I'll keep the promises I made to you. However, let's get things straight. It would be best if you were on your toes all the time. Make sure you leave no trace behind.”

This time, Jennifer was determined to end Sophie thoroughly, ridding Jipsdale of Tanner Group forever.

James nodded. “I know. Don't worry. Leave it to me.”

Then, he got up, took his things, and left.

With that, only Jennifer was left in the private room. She had held her anger in for so long, and now was the time to exact her revenge.

Her expression twisted viciously as Jennifer mumbled to herself, “Sophie, you always thought that you were an impressive woman. This time, I'm going to show you the cruel reality of the real world!”

Different emotions flashed across Jennifer's face uncontrollably when she thought about the challenges coming Sophie's way. Jennifer wanted to know whether Tristan would cover up for Sophie this time.

Minerva had accompanied Jennifer through her conversation with James, so she was aware of Jennifer's plan. She remarked worriedly, "Jennifer, are you sure it's okay to do this?"

Why did Jennifer's personality change drastically after falling in love with Tristan? Minerva went on, "What you are doing is illegal. If someone finds out, the consequences could be dire."

Everything she said was from the bottom of her heart, for she genuinely regarded Jennifer as her friend. However, her advice fell on deaf ears.

"Minerva, you are my friend. I need your support most at a time like this, so please stop spewing this nonsense at me, okay?"

Minerva furrowed her brows. "But..."

What Jennifer is doing is wrong! In my opinion, it isn't okay to frame an innocent person.

Jennifer didn't bother to explain anymore. At that moment, all she hoped was for Sophie to experience misfortunes.

James ran into Sophie at the entrance when he got back to Tanner Group. She glanced at the files in his hands.

The man's hands shook ever so slightly when he noticed Sophie's gaze. James tried to calm himself down before speaking. "Oh, you are in, Ms. Sophie."

His mind raced. Why am I panicking? She doesn't know what I'm trying to do. These just appear like regular files. Nothing out of the usual. It's impossible for her to see through my plan.

Sophie knew James was up to no good upon seeing how suspicious and sneaky his actions were. "Mr. Lestrangle, why did you head out during working hours?"

"Something happened at home, so I went out for a while. I'm sorry, Ms. Sophie, for not informing you in time. But I just went out for a short period. It's no big deal, right?" James replied. He was extremely displeased by Sophie's attitude.

In the end, I'm still one of the veterans at Tanner Group. How dare Sophie disrespect me in this manner? If this is what she's going to be like, then she deserves whatever I do to her. A person like her doesn't deserve the loyalty of her employees.

James couldn't help but feel excited when he thought about how Jennifer was going to deal with Sophie and the dire situation that Sophie was going to end up in.

"Indeed, it's no big deal for you to head out for a short while. I didn't say you did something wrong,"

Sophie stated, unwilling to converse further with James. She walked into Tanner Group.

Victor knew Sophie was visiting today, so he waited for her in her office. When he saw her, the man asked, "What happened? What's with the sullen expression?"

"Victor, I'm afraid we have to get rid of James quickly. Find a person to replace his position as soon as possible." Sophie noticed that James had displayed signs of being disloyal to Tanner Group.

"I had the same thought. It's tricky business, though. He is one of the old-timers at Tanner Group. If we replace him now, I wonder whether it will cause unease among the other staff," Victor explained his worries. He would have kicked James out before this if he didn't have to consider the effect it would have on the company.

"You don't have to worry about that. The staff at Tanner Group should be trusting us. If they don't believe that we can bring the company to a higher, better level, there's no point for them in staying here," Sophie answered. She wanted a team, a company that was able to work together peacefully and appropriately.

“Okay. I understand. I'll find someone suitable for his position within these few days.”

One should know when to admit that they are getting old as they end up not being able to handle matters appropriately. Moreover, James is an old-timer with a high salary at Tanner Group. If he does his work correctly, his contribution will match his salary, which would be enough for us not to doubt him.

“Whitley Group has been trying to sabotage us endlessly lately. Do you think we should do anything to retaliate against them?”

“Oh, I know. Do whatever you need to do to teach them a lesson. I'll be there to take care of the mess if anything bad happens,” Sophie promised. She didn't want to back down from the conflict since Jennifer was the one who provoked her first.

With Sophie's words, Victor knew he could finally do whatever he wanted to retaliate against Jennifer's dirty tricks. Who does she think she is? Jennifer wouldn't be able to abuse her power if she weren't part of the Whitley family.

As for James, he had returned to his office to browse through the files that Jennifer had given him. At last, he knew what Jennifer's plan was.

I've been Tanner Group's employee for so long. Even though I've had no overwhelming accomplishments, I can say that I've worked hard all these years. Who would have expected Sophie to disrespect me without regard for my contributions? She can't blame me for doing this now.

“Old Mr. Tanner, if you can see what I'm doing now, please don't blame me. It's not my fault that things turned out this way. I have no other options left.”

I've sacrificed so much for Tanner Group. It's disappointing that I'll end up in these unfortunate circumstances. I no longer want to continue living like this. Since Jennifer is able to offer me such significant compensation, I have to put myself first. Humans are selfish, and we've been this way since the beginning of time. No one can resist the temptation of money, so no one can really blame me for doing this.

The next day, Sophie arrived at her classroom with her backpack when a group of people in uniform came looking for her.

She was having breakfast with Sandra when the men showed up. When Sandra saw these people, she was dumbfounded.

What happened? What's with the crowd?

Chapter 645

The leader walked up to Sophie and greeted her somewhat politely, "Are you Ms. Sophie Tanner?"

Sophie bobbed her head in response. Did they come for me?

The group of men instantly became the center of attention of the people in the school.

The leader said, "Ms. Tanner, we received a tip informing us Tanner Group was involved in illegal activities. It's inconvenient for us to spell out the details publicly, so we need you to come to the police station with us to get a better picture of the matter!"

Panicked, Simon walked over when he noticed the people were about to take Sophie away. "Who are you? How dare you take Sophie away? You're at the University of Medicine now. How could you—"

"We're on duty now, sir, so please do not get in our way. If you continue to make a scene here, we'll have no choice but to take you back with us," the leader threatened.

"Fine! I'll go with you! You think I'm afraid of you? We didn't do anything that went against the law. Who gave you permission to arrest us?"

Meanwhile, Greta was among the crowd of curious onlookers.

A corner of her lips quirked up when she saw a group of men in uniform come to look for Sophie. Is bad luck going to befall Sophie soon? How exciting. She has always acted all high and mighty. I wonder how she's feeling now that this group of men is here to arrest her.

Sophie glared at all the uniformed men with a deadpan expression. "You're saying Tanner Group has done something against the law?"

Others girls would have trembled in fear had they been confronted by a group of men, but not Sophie. She continued enjoying her breakfast as if she was unbothered by their threat.

"That's right, Ms. Tanner. Please come with us." The leader knitted his brows. Did she just disregard me?

"Okay. I'll go with you once I finish my breakfast," she said. It would be a waste if I don't finish the breakfast that I was served.

Sandra became all the more confused. "Sophie, what's going on? What do they want from you? Should I call Mr. Tristan?"

Sandra, who had never seen anything like this before, was so stunned that she did not know what to do, but she knew Tristan would have ways to get Sophie out of the sticky situation. Mr. Tristan is an influential figure in Jipsdale. I'm sure he can solve the problem in no time by speaking to the people involved.

"I don't want to trouble him. It's all right, I'll follow them. Since Tanner Group has never done anything against the law, I'll not be intimidated by their investigations," Sophie replied.

Despite saying that out loud, Sophie had somehow identified the culprit behind all this.

The first suspect that popped into her mind was James. That man is the root of all problems. Issues like this wouldn't have popped up had I gotten rid of him earlier. Anyway, it's too late for me to say or do

anything now. I have to figure out a solution to tackle this matter before thinking of ways to deal with him.

Like Sandra, Simon was also on pins and needles. "Sophie, since we're in the university now, I'll talk to the chancellor. Your reputation will be ruined if they take you away like that."

Sophie was a popular figure at the University of Medicine. People would definitely spread all kinds of rumors about her if she were taken away!

"Guys, I'm serious! Just go and do your work or attend classes as usual. Don't worry about it," Sophie uttered. Why can't I follow them? It's not like they're taking me to a dangerous place.

Sandra was on the verge of crying upon noticing Sophie's attitude. "Please let me call Mr. Tristan. But I don't have his number. Give me his number, and I'll call him right now!"

Upon noticing how they paid no attention to him and his men, the leader expressed his disdain. "Ms. Tanner, please come with us right now!"

"Why are you in a hurry? Can't you wait for me to finish my breakfast first?" Sophie glared at the man, who could feel the intimidating look in her eyes.

Surprised by the threatening aura in such a young girl's eyes, he froze for a moment as he did not know how to react to Sophie's words.

After taking her own sweet time to finish her breakfast, Sophie drew a piece of tissue and wiped her mouth.

She then stood up and said, "Let's go! You're tired of waiting, aren't you? Tanner Group will do our best to cooperate with you in your investigation, so don't worry."

"What's going on? Did they really come to arrest Sophie? What did she do? How come I haven't heard anything about her before this? All this while, she has always acted as if she was superior to anyone else. I can't believe she still put up an arrogant front before us," Greta sneered.

"This time, I'm afraid she has run out of luck." She then grinned and snorted. "See? That is why we should always stay humble because we never know what the future holds. Am I right?"

"D*mn you, Greta! Are you done? Who do you think you are? How dare you badmouth Sophie?" The nonsense Greta spouted caused the panicked Simon to explode in rage.

Greta's lips twitched. What? Did I not say the truth?

"I know I used to have a crush on you, and that was why I allowed you to control me. But I don't like you anymore, Simon. You can't stop me from saying what I have in mind," Greta said with her head held high. I'm Charles' girlfriend now, mind you. Everyone in Jipsdale knows how influential Charles is. Does Simon think my life still revolves around him? What a joke!

Upon noticing how Simon flew off the handle, Sandra stepped in and got hold of him. "Calm down, Simon. Now is not the right time to argue with her. We have to contact Mr. Tristan. I'm sure he can help!"

Upon hearing that, Simon regained his composure. "What's with the smug look on your face, Greta? You should know what kind of person Charles is. He'll ditch you once he's done toying with you. Just you wait!"

He then left with Sandra.

After stepping out of the cafeteria, they wanted to call Tristan but soon realized they did not have his number.

"What are we gonna do now? I've known Sophie long enough to know she won't tell Mr. Tristan about this," Sandra said. Those men wouldn't hurt her, right? Oh God, she must be terrified!

They did not know what else to do.

Simon suggested, "I'll go to Lombard Group to look for Mr. Tristan, and I need you to look for Sophie's parents. If you can't find them, look for Ysabelle!"

"You're right! I have Ysabelle's number!" Sandra immediately called Ysabelle but to no avail.

"Ysabelle didn't pick up my call. What can we do now? What else can we do?" Sandra was worried. She liked Sophie very much and did not want anything awful to happen to her.

"I'll make a trip to Lombard Group now. You keep calling Ysabelle. Let's keep each other updated from time to time!"

Simon then drove straight to Lombard Group. When he arrived, a group of security guards stopped him. There was no way he could enter the building.

Chapter 646

Beyond panicked, Simon entered a scuffle with the security guards.

"I'm here to see Mr. Tristan for an urgent matter. Let me in now! Otherwise, if things are delayed because of you, Mr. Tristan will hold you accountable when the matter escalates!" Simon said.

Simon was worried about Sophie's safety after the latter was taken away by that group of uniformed people. At such a moment, Sophie must be afraid to be all by herself.

The security guard was just as helpless. "Sir, I am truly sorry, but without a reservation, we can't let you in."

Countless people came to see Tristan every day using the same excuse. Thus, the security guards could not let just anyone in without discretion.

If something were to happen after these people were given access to the building, then that would count as the security guards having neglected their duties. Therefore, the high salaries they were paid would not be justified.

"It's about Mr. Tristan's girlfriend. His girlfriend is in trouble. You have to let me in immediately!" Simon warned. He was so close to forcing entry.

However, the security guards of Lombard Group had undergone professional security training.

Average individuals were simply no match for them, let alone Simon, who was facing them all by himself. "Sir, if this matter you're talking about is really that urgent, it would be best if you think of a way to reach Mr. Tristan instead!"

It was true that causing a fuss there would not do any good. It would be better to reach out to Tristan directly.

"I don't have Mr. Tristan's phone number. Why else do you think I'm here?"

Had Simon had Tristan's number, he would not have wasted time wrangling with the security guards.

The security guards were also exasperated.

"Do you think we will let you in when you don't even have Mr. Tristan's phone number? I think you should leave!" The security guard scoffed.

There was no way Simon could enter if he didn't even have Tristan's contact number.

"I really need to speak to him! Do you hear me?" Simon pleaded. Had he known getting through security would be that difficult, he would have tried getting Tristan's phone number instead.

While Simon had a hard time getting in, Sandra tried relentlessly to reach Ysabelle. Unfortunately, Ysabelle was in Koandria for the filming of a variety show, so the call couldn't get through since she was out of the country.

Sandra then went looking for Simon, only to find him still being kept out of the building.

"What do we do now, Simon? We don't know where Sophie was taken to. I'm worried they might do something bad to her," Sandra fretted.

Sandra was worried sick about Sophie.

Sophie was never one who was easily taken advantage of.

Nevertheless, the people who took Sophie appeared to have less than friendly intentions, and that was worrisome.

"I'll call my father and see if there is anything he can do," Simon said after a moment's hesitation.

A phone call to his father was a last resort, but he really had no other options.

Without delay, Simon rang his father.

On the other end of the line, Simon's father was furious when he realized that it was his son that was calling him on the phone.

"Oh, so you're talking to me now? Tell me, Simon. When was the last time you came home? Hurry up and get back here, you little brat. I'm tired of listening to your mother nag!" Patrick grumbled.

As the director of the largest private hospital in Jipsdale, Patrick was far too busy to deal with the frivolous matters of his son.

"Don't worry, Dad. I'm going home tonight! However, before that, can I ask you a favor?" Simon said.

"What is it?" Patrick asked. He had never seen his son acting in such a serious manner. "Have you gotten yourself into trouble again?"

This brat is truly spoilt!

“Dad, I'm not the one in trouble. My friend has been taken by the Department of Justice. I have no clue what the situation is now. Can you see if there is anything you can do?” Simon explained.

“What? What kind of person is your friend to be taken by the law? What have they done exactly? Simon, I don't expect you to be successful, but can you get a grip on yourself?” Patrick was displeased when Simon asked him for such a tiresome favor.

Patrick had questions about the kind of people Simon was friends with.

“Dad, there must be some misunderstanding. This friend of mine is a decent person, really. I'm not lying,” Simon reiterated in a cold sweat.

It was true that Simon had been a handful and a nuisance in the past, but Sophie was different.

He was confident that Sophie would do nothing wrong that could warrant apprehension by the legal authorities.

“That's enough. What is the name of your friend? I'll try to ask someone for help,” Patrick said. He felt that it wasn't easy for Simon to ask for his help, so he didn't want to take the matter too lightly.

However, there was nothing much that Patrick could do besides asking around.

With that, Simon told his father Sophie's information.

At last, Simon hung up the phone. There was nothing left to do but to wait, albeit anxiously.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice had also sent their men to Tanner Group, causing quite a scene. The staff members whispered and exchanged glances as they looked on.

“Why are those men here? Did something happen in the company?” asked one of the employees.

“I know, right? Why are there so many of them? And where is Ms. Tanner? Is she aware of this?” another questioned.

“Ms. Tanner is the chairwoman of the company. I'm sure she knows about it,” one of them answered.

“My goodness! I hope that nothing bad happens at this point in time. Tanner Group has only just been going uphill, so it can only get better in the future. Please, do not let anything bad befall us now.”

At the moment, they had a major project in the pipeline.

If something bad were to happen now, the project would be negatively affected.

The group of men in uniform went straight to Victor, who had long since learned of the news and was waiting in his office.

“You are Mr. Victor White, correct?” the man at the front asked.

Victor nodded.

“Hello, I am indeed Victor. May I ask what brings you here today?” Victor asked quite politely.

“We're from the Department of Justice. Your company has been reported to us for violating the law. Please come with us to the Department of Justice for a talk,” said the man in uniform.

Hearing that, Victor raised an eyebrow.

Tanner Group violating the law? This must be a joke!

The employees of Tanner Group had always been law-abiding citizens. Besides, the company was running a legitimate business, so how did it come to be accused of violating the law?

“Sure! I get it. We will give our full cooperation in your investigation. However, Tanner Group has always abided by the law. We hope the legal authorities will do us justice!” Victor said.

With that, Victor followed them to the Department of Justice.

“Take him there now and take their financial manager, James Lestrangle, along with you!” the leader of the group said to those under his command.

When Victor heard what he said, he realized that this matter had something to do with James.

Victor's heart skipped a beat when he heard the name.

He would have been confident that they had done nothing wrong if it had been about something else. However, that was not necessarily the case if James was involved.

James must really hate Ms. Sophie! What is he trying to do?

When the senior executives saw that Victor had been taken away, they looked at each other in disbelief, unsure of what to do next.

Chapter 647

“Goodness gracious! What do we do now? Was Ms. Sophie arrested, too?”

Given that those people were from the Department of Justice, one would really be put behind bars if there was a problem.

“With Mr. White taken away and no one at the helm, what should we do?” The executives were thrown into utter desperation.

“Enough! Everyone, stay calm. We don't know much about it yet, so there's very little point in worrying. We should get back to our posts and do what we're supposed to do.”

At that point, they could only go with the flow.

“Why don't we contact Mr. Yale? After all, he's Ms. Sophie's dad!” someone suggested.

That would make sense, for Yale would probably have some inside scoop on the matter.

“Yale? Forget it. We all know how tactless he has always been. Having him around will bring us nothing but trouble.”

Upon hearing that remark, the person perished the thought.

Besides, Sophie was more than capable to tackle anything thrown her way, so there should not be a problem.

Meanwhile, Sophie was brought to the Department of Justice. The officer who dealt with her, however, was not very cordial.

Witnessing Sophie's nonchalant mien even when she had been apprehended, the officer was livid.

“Since you're already sitting here, you ought to be cooperative with the investigation. Or else—”

At long last, Sophie looked up at the officer.

“Are you threatening me right now? How am I not cooperative? Just question me about anything you want to know. You need not resort to threats.”

She had always disliked being threatened.

Having to deal with those legal professionals, she was anything but afraid of them.

“We've received a report asserting that Tanner Group has been evading taxes, and it has amounted to five hundred million. To top it off, this only came about after you inherited the company. What do you have to say for yourself?”

“Aren't you the one working for the legal authorities?”

“What do you mean?” Why's she keeping up this kind of attitude? Doesn't she have any fear at all? “You do know you're at the Department of Justice, right? How could you still be so arrogant?”

“Me? Arrogant? Technically speaking, we, the taxpayers, are the ones who've been paying you your salary. Now that someone has reported us for tax evasion, you guys should back up the claim with

evidence. Are you expecting me to dig into my own company files and hand over the proof myself?”

How laughable!

“Hah! Of course, we have incriminating evidence against you, which was why we even brought you here in the first place. Continue putting on a tough front all you want! I've seen more than enough people like you!”

Never had anyone been willing to admit their crimes right at the start when they were detained at the Department of Justice.

Each one of them had acted all high and mighty.

Even so, they were still done for at the end of the day.

Such is the natural law of this world. More often than not, it was only fair for sinful men to be punished.

“Oh, really? Then show me the evidence you've got. I'll definitely cooperate with you,” said Sophie indifferently.

She figured that someone must be trying to frame Tanner Group.

In order to do that, the perpetrator must have orchestrated a grand scheme. In that case, Sophie had to put on a show just as well.

I shouldn't disappoint them now, should I?

During the interim, Victor had also been taken to the Department of Justice, but he was confined to another interrogation room.

Knowing that Sophie had also been brought there for questioning, Victor could not help but worry about that woman. As a grown man, he did not mind going through a tribulation like that.

Still, he reckoned that a lady like Sophie must not have experienced such events before.

She must feel all alone and helpless right now.

After the questioning had been on for some time, Victor put forward a request to meet Sophie.

“I want to see the chairwoman of Tanner Group. I believe this isn't too much to ask for. Besides, since she's already here, I'll need to see her.”

“You're here to assist in the investigation, Mr. White, so you'd better not push your luck.”

Considering that Tanner Group had been put under investigation, there was no way the officer would allow Victor to have contact with Sophie.

“Push my luck? I'm making a valid request here,” insisted Victor. He was a worldly man, after all.

In the entirety of Jipsdale, the vast majority of the people would show Victor some respect. Yet, the officer had been nothing less than discourteous toward him.

Toleration was no longer an option for him at that point.

“You—”

“That's enough! He's Victor White. Don't you know sort of man he is? If that's his wish, we'll do him a favor.”

No one in the Department of Justice could afford to step on the toes of people like Victor.

Someone had to be opposing Tanner Group to have called them out like that. As for the reason behind it, the officers had yet to figure it out.

At a time like that, it went without saying that they would never choose to go against these prominent individuals.

Soon after, Victor was led to meet up with Sophie. Upon seeing the latter as calm as ever despite having to step into a place like that, Victor felt relieved and proud.

After all, Sophie was not even twenty years old. She had to deal with so much at such a young age, yet she could remain composed and unperturbed.

“I didn't know you were also brought here. Are you okay?” Sophie showered Victor with concern the second she saw him.

The man sat opposite her.

"I'm fine. It seems that someone's deliberately setting us up, and they must've come prepared. Fear not, because I'll take care of it!"

Not only was Victor concerned about Sophie, but he was also confident that he could handle the matter perfectly.

A smile spread across Sophie's face on that note.

That smile of hers was utterly dazzling. Nothing could seem to render her any less beautiful than how she already looked, even in such a dire situation.

No matter where she was, her confidence never faltered.

"I think I know who the culprit might be! Since that woman is dying to shoot herself in the foot, we should give her a hand, don't you think? When this is over, we'll put an end to Whitley Group's era in Jipsdale once and for all!"

The legal authorities were beside the duo the whole time.

Having been working in the Department of Justice for so many years, they had encountered people from all walks of life. Even so, never had they heard of anyone declaring to wipe out an entire corporation that casually.

This daughter of the Tanner family is indeed no ordinary woman!

"Right! Since they have a death wish, we'll show them no mercy!" agreed Victor. Nevertheless, this incident alone would definitely have an impact on Tanner Group.

It was a good thing, though, for it only made Sophie bring forward her plan.

Truth be told, Whitley Group was the one that had been evading taxes.

If anything, they were only digging their own graves.

“What now? I suppose we won't be let out tonight. How should we inform Mr. Tristan?” Victor assumed that Tristan had likely not gotten wind of the situation yet.

Otherwise, that man could not possibly still not show up.

Although Victor was not that well-acquainted with Tristan, he knew the latter cared about Sophie very much.

“He must still be in the dark,” uttered Sophie.

I guess only Simon and Sandra know about this at the moment. Those two dummies... I bet they must be worried to death by now!

Chapter 648

After listening to what the person said on the phone, Jennifer lapsed into a glum silence.

Ha! How audacious of Sophie to think she can wipe out Whitley Group from Jipsdale! Is she tired of living? I can't believe such shameless women still exist in this world. The ladies from other prestigious families in Jipsdale aren't even as arrogant as her for goodness' sake!

“There's no need to fret, Ms. Whitley! This time around, Tanner Group is done for!” the caller reassured.

“Okay, I got it. Let me know if anything else crops up at the Department of Justice. Don't worry. You'll be paid accordingly. I won't shortchange you,” Jennifer replied.

After all, there was no such thing as a free lunch, especially when she needed a member of the Department of Justice to work with her.

“But you have to remember not to let anyone get the dirt on you! Otherwise, we'll both be dead meat!” she reminded before hanging up the phone.

Timothy had rushed back from Ospea the moment he learned about his daughter's shenanigans, and as luck would have it, he overheard her entire phone conversation from the door.

“Jennifer Whitley, you've truly let me down! Do you know what you're doing? You're breaking the law!” Timothy scolded as he shook his head.

Try as he might, he couldn't understand why his daughter had become so atrocious.

Despite knowing how disappointed her father was, Jennifer still failed to see the error of her ways.

“I haven't done anything, Dad. I just—”

Before she could finish her words, Timothy slapped her across the face.

“I want you out of Whitley Group from tomorrow onward! If you carry on like this, you'll ruin my life's work!”

Whitley Group is the fruit of my labor, and I won't let anyone destroy it!

Furious at how Timothy had slapped her over something so trivial, Jennifer scowled. “Dad, what do you mean by that? Are you not letting me manage Whitley Group anymore?”

“I don't want you in the office until this matter is over. Given what Tristan's like, do you think he'd let you off if he knew you were responsible for this mess? How are you this dense? Just because Sophie has him backing her doesn't mean she's immune to prosecution. She'd still be held liable for any violation of the law!” Timothy fumed.

I've always thought my daughter was clever, but why is she acting so foolishly now?

“Dad, I—”

“Enough. I don't want to hear another word from you!”

Seeing that Jennifer was oblivious to how her actions might spell trouble for the Whitley family, Timothy wanted nothing more than to slap her till she finally realized her folly.

“Dad, I can't believe you hit me because of an outsider. Have you forgotten that I'm your daughter?” Jennifer choked out as she cupped her swollen cheek. “All I want is to pursue my own happiness in life. Is that wrong? As my father, shouldn't you be on my side?”

I don't understand! What on earth have I done wrong? Isn't this how things work on the business battlefield? Everyone's scheming against one another, and only the strongest survive. So what if we resort to underhanded means from time to time? That's just part and parcel of the fight!

“My goodness. You still don't realize your mistakes, do you? I'm so disappointed in you, Jennifer. Do you think Tristan will direct his love to you with Sophie out of the picture? He'd have liked you long ago if he had ever harbored feelings for you. There wouldn't be a need to pull these stunts to win him over! This isn't your first rodeo, and you, of all people, should know how ruthless Tristan can be!”

Unfortunately, Jennifer remained adamant.

“If there's something I can't have, Sophie Tanner can forget about getting it too!” she shouted hysterically.

Enraged, Timothy turned to the housekeepers. “Lock her up in the room! Nobody's allowed to let her out without my permission!”

Caylie frowned at her husband's orders. She had always doted on her only daughter, so naturally, it broke her heart to see Jennifer being slapped and grounded.

“Don't you think you're being too strict with her? She's still young...”

"A kind mother makes a wastrel! It's your fault Jennifer has become the way she is today, so don't you dare lecture me," Timothy replied brusquely. "We still don't know if our family can pull through this. You'd better start making plans for the future!"

With that, the man stormed off, leaving Jennifer still holding her burning cheek.

Hmph! I don't believe Tristan would go to such extremes to destroy our family. How could he when we have such a solid reputation in Jipsdale?

After seeing her husband's demeanor, Caylie, too, lost her cool. "Jennifer! What on earth have you done? I've never seen your father so angry before!"

"Mom, you have to believe me. All I wanted to do was teach Sophie a lesson..." Jennifer whined. "I just can't stand how arrogant she is!"

"Really?"

Then again, Sophie is Mr. Tristan's woman! It doesn't matter whether we like her or not. Nothing will change the fact that he's ready to do everything in his power to protect her!

"Your father is still angry, so you'd better behave yourself and stay home for the time being. And keep your distance from Sophie!" Caylie urged.

Even though Tristan was undoubtedly a good catch, what could they do if he had no romantic feelings for Jennifer?

Many things can be taken by force, but love is not one of them.

It is impossible to coerce anyone into a relationship, especially when one party has clearly stated their lack of interest in the other.

Alas, Jennifer was undeterred by her parents' warnings. Ha! How can I stop when this is only the beginning? I won't let Sophie off that easily!

Having lost the mood to talk, Caylie promptly instructed the housekeeper to lock Jennifer in her room. After all, Timothy was the head of the house. Who was she to defy his orders?

Meanwhile, Tristan had been busy the entire day, yet he still found time to call Sophie. Sadly, the latter never answered the phone.

Felix, of course, couldn't help but poke fun at him. "What are you doing? Sophie is a capable woman, and she's probably too busy to pick up the call. Don't worry about her!"

Although Tristan didn't think anything was amiss, the fact that Sophie didn't answer his call left him feeling dejected.

When he finally finished his work and stepped out of the office, he was greeted by the sight of a teary-eyed Sandra.

"Oh, you're finally here, Mr. Tristan! I've been waiting for you the whole day! The guards refuse to let me into the building!"

Needless to say, Sandra's demeanor gave Tristan a sense of foreboding.

"What's the matter? Did something happen to Sophie?" Tristan asked. "Don't just stand there and cry! Tell me what's going on!"

Felix, too, became anxious when he saw Sandra in such a panic.

"That's right! Dry your tears and tell us what's wrong! With Mr. Tristan here, you don't have to worry about a thing. There's nothing he can't handle!"

As it turned out, Simon had run off to think of a plan, leaving Sandra behind to break the news to Tristan. "Sophie has been captured!"

Chapter 649

"Captured?" Who has the audacity to capture Sophie?

"It was a group of uniformed men. I don't know where they came from or who they were." Sandra was brimming with anxiety.

"All right, stop crying. Now that we already know, we'll definitely deal with it, so don't worry," Felix comforted her.

Wiping her tears away, Sandra tried her best to calm herself down.

He's right. With Mr. Tristan around, Sophie will definitely be fine.

"Felix, find out where Sophie is right now."

Tristan had been wondering why he couldn't get in touch with Sophie. Little did he expect something like that to have happened.

Without a moment's delay, Felix started tracking down Sophie's location.

In less than ten minutes, he finally received an answer.

"Ms. Quimby, you should head home first. There's nothing you can do now. We'll give you a call once we find Sophie. Don't worry. With us around, nothing will happen to her," Felix said patiently.

Regardless, she was a friend of Sophie who cared a lot about her, so they still had to be cordial with her.

“Can I go with you?”

However, his reassurances failed to allay Sandra's concerns.

“No. You'll just get in our way,” Tristan rejected her request outright as he got into the car with no time to lose.

Felix simply shook his head in response.

“You should head back now. Be careful when you do so. Sophie will be fine.”

With that, Felix drove off together with Tristan.

Even though Sandra knew that the powerful Tristan would ensure Sophie's safety, she still couldn't stop herself from worrying.

Meanwhile, Sophie didn't give her captors anything incriminating despite the long interrogation. Due to her in-depth knowledge of Tanner Group's financials, they couldn't find any weaknesses in her testimony.

The members of the Department of Justice began to panic.

“What do we do now? We can't keep detaining her here. Without any evidence, we'll be forced to release her.”

“Although Tanner Group isn't particularly powerful, Sophie is Mr. Tristan's girlfriend. We'll all be doomed if he finds out about it.”

“But this isn't our fault. We're just carrying out our duty based on someone's report. Even Mr. Tristan can't get in the way of us doing our job.” The man who spoke was the one who had given Jennifer a call. He was a junior officer in the Department of Justice.

"You've been working in Jipsdale for such a long time. Why are you still so naive? Do you really think Tristan can't touch us? He's powerful enough to do anything he pleases."

"Then what should we do? Are we going to let her off just like that? How are we going to answer the taxpayers?" the officer asked in an indignant tone. "Besides, didn't their finance manager confess already? What more do we need?"

"That's just based on the testimony of a single person. This case has plenty of holes inherently, and we still can't determine if Tanner Group is evading taxes. Do you really think this can be easily resolved?"

"Special situations require special measures," the officer said brazenly, for that was in line with Jennifer's objective.

Regardless of the conclusion, Sophie had to be made to suffer.

"What are you babbling about? We live in a society where the rule of law applies. How can we resort to such unscrupulous methods?"

The junior officer snorted in response.

"You should get off that high horse of yours. Didn't the Department of Justice use all sorts of methods before this? Why are you making an exception for Sophie? Did she pay you off? Is that the reason for your cowardice?"

"Stop making wild accusations!"

"Why are you so worked up? I was just making a casual comment," the officer said.

"Hmph! Do what you want with this case. I'm washing my hands of it," the senior officer said angrily. During his long years of service in the Department of Justice, he had never accepted a bribe. The accusations outraged him. "We have been colleagues for such a long time. My advice to you is to know your limits. Otherwise, you'll bite off more than you can chew."

Unfortunately, the junior officer refused to listen.

I obviously know who Mr. Tristan is, but Sophie is nothing but a toy of his. Why would he go against us over someone as unimportant as her? Besides, he hasn't even shown up after so long. If he really liked her, he would have already come.

That was the reason why the officer grew increasingly brazen.

After the senior officer left, the junior officer brought Sophie straight to the interrogation room where he sat down opposite her.

"Sophie Tanner, we already have the evidence in our hands, so I'd suggest you confess now. The earlier you do so, the less painful it is," the junior officer said in a snarky tone.

Sophie scrutinized the man with her eyes narrowed.

"Are you threatening me?" Sophie's voice was cold and inexplicably intimidating.

"Sophie Tanner, since we have proof, nothing you say will help you. If you don't come to your senses, we'll have to—"

"What? Are you planning on torturing me?" Sophie's tone was nonchalant as ever.

She maintained that demeanor regardless of the situation she was facing.

"I guess Jennifer Whitley was the one who made the report."

Having waited for such a long time, Sophie began to grow frustrated.

It's better to end this soon. Otherwise, the others are going to worry.

The junior officer was surprised that Sophie brought up that name.

"I cannot reveal who it was who reported you. What matters now is to get to the bottom of your case instead of digressing." The junior officer spoke sternly, not giving Sophie any chance to defend herself.

"Let me tell you right now that Whitley Group was the one evading taxes, and I'm reporting them right this instant!" Sophie leaned back into her chair with a languid expression. "I have sufficient evidence in my hands. Anyway, it's about time you release me. You have detained me far longer than you're allowed to. I've no time for your games and I'm leaving now."

Her words infuriated the junior officer.

"What are you trying to say? Since you're already here, there's no way you're going to leave easily. What do you think the Department of Justice is? A hotel?"

Sophie sprang up to her feet.

"Let me repeat myself. Since you have no evidence, you have no authority to detain me. If you insist on continuing this charade, then speak to my lawyer." With that, Sophie walked toward the door.

Chapter 650

"Seize her! The suspect is trying to flee." The junior officer had been paid off. There was no way he would release her so easily.

"Suspect?" Sophie furrowed her brows.

I'm amazed that he even dared to utter that word.

She walked up to him.

“Looks like Jennifer has you in her pocket. You're doomed now! Having someone like you work here will destroy the nation and its people.”

“Do I need to repeat myself? I ordered you to seize her!” The officer flew into a rage out of humiliation, for no one had ever had the audacity to speak to him that way.

Sophie glanced at everyone in the room icily, and none of them dared to move a muscle.

The senior officer was right. As Sophie was Tristan's woman, no one had the courage to lay a finger on her.

The last thing anyone wanted was to offend Tristan, who was capable of ruining their careers with a single word.

After all, all of them had worked hard to reach the position they were currently in.

It made no sense for them to give it up easily.

“Ms. Tanner, you're right that you're free to leave now. I'm sorry about today. We had no choice but to do our duty after receiving a report. If we have offended you in any way, please forgive us,” one of the men who knew better apologized immediately.

However, the obsequious words had no impact on Sophie.

“Then can you give me back my phone now?” These guys still have it.

“Yes, of course. I'll go get it for you.”

Despite his colleague's reaction, the junior officer remained defiant.

“Ms. Tanner, I said you're not allowed to leave yet.”

“Damn it! Just you wait! I've even collected evidence of your wrongdoing. I'm sure it wasn't easy for you to land this job. I'm going to make sure that you're fired!”

Sophie would not show someone as despicable as him any mercy.

“F*ck you!” the junior officer swore back. Even someone of Mr. Tristan's stature has to show our department respect! There's no way anyone would dare challenge us.

At that moment, the department chief entered with Tristan and Felix. Tristan was in front with the other two following closely behind.

Just a while ago, the chief had been shocked to see Tristan arriving at their department.

Upon learning what had transpired, he felt a chill down his spine. After all, everyone in Jipsdale knew that it would be suicide to get on Tristan's nerves.

Tristan glowered the moment he stepped into the building. His expression would strike fear into anyone who saw him.

Sophie, too, was surprised to see Tristan. She was dissatisfied with her current conclusion and had wanted to see him after dealing with it herself.

Right then, her phone was brought into the room.

Tristan was upset to see it in another man's hand. Pulling out a tissue at once, he meticulously wiped its cover clean.

“I heard someone reported my girlfriend's company, Tanner Group, for tax evasion. Do you have any evidence of it right now?” Tristan asked while cleaning the phone.

The junior officer did not expect Tristan to appear.

We're just doing our job. There's no way he can do anything to us.

“Mr. Tristan, it's our duty to investigate once a report is made, but we haven't found any evidence yet.” The junior officer didn't dare lie in front of the department chief, for it would be cause for his dismissal.

The chief responded with a glare.

“Mr. Tristan, I'm sure there must be some misunderstanding somewhere. I'll definitely teach my subordinates a lesson for making such a mistake.”

The chief expressed his stand immediately.

“Since there's no evidence, can I go home now?” Sophie asked as she was impatient to leave.

She was also famished.

“Of course you can, Ms. Tanner. I'm sorry for the misunderstanding. Please don't hold it against us.”

As the chief let out a sycophantic smile, Sophie took her phone back from Tristan's hand.

“All right, it's clean enough.” Sophie held his hand. “Anyway, I'm fine,” she then reassured him, knowing that he was worried sick.

Thereafter, Sophie sent the details of Whitley Group's tax evasion to the chief.

“Chief, please check your email. I have furnished you with clear evidence of Whitley Group's crimes. I trust you to do your duty without fear or favor.”

Since Jennifer dared to make such a despicable move against her, Sophie wasn't going to show her any mercy, especially since Whitley Group did really evade tax.

“What?”

The chief was stunned.

Tristan threw her a glance.

“Investigate them right away. I'm sure you've heard of Whitley Group!” With that, he left together with Sophie, confident that the chief knew what had to be done.

Standing in front of the chief, the junior officer didn't dare act rashly.

“Chief, this is Whitley Group that we're talking about. We—”

Before he could finish, the chief gave him a slap. Failing to fully vent his frustration, he followed up with a kick at the junior officer.

“So you do know we can't afford to offend any of these groups. The audacity of you to mess with Mr. Tristan's girlfriend!” the chief thundered.

After crashing to the ground, the officer didn't dare say a word in the face of his boss' tongue-lashing.

As for everyone else in the room, they held their breath in fear.

“Enough! Go and investigate the matter now!” With Tristan keeping an eye on them, they knew they had to do something.

Out of all the prominent families in Jipsdale that they couldn't afford to offend, Tristan was the most fearsome of them all.

Meanwhile, Sophie and Tristan waited outside for Victor, who looked terrible after being locked up for a long time.

Upon emerging from the building, he stopped in his tracks at the sight of them.

“Ms. Sophie, are you all right?” Victor gave her a look of concern.

As she was still a girl, he figured that being detained for such a long time must have been terrible for her.

“I’m fine. Sorry for all the trouble. It’s getting late. You should head home now. We can catch up tomorrow in the office.”

That was the end of the matter for the time being.

She would definitely make Whitley Group pay a heavy price.

“Okay, Ms. Sophie. You, too, should go back and rest. You must be exhausted.” Victor maintained a professional distance in front of Tristan.

After their conversation, Tristan opened the car door to let Sophie in.

When she noticed the scowl on his face inside, she held his hand to comfort him. “What’s wrong? Am I not doing fine? Why are you still so angry?”