

Rewritten 26

Chapter 26

Once she had collected herself, Madelyn returned to the table and took her seat.

Hayson, in a rare display of interest, asked, “Miss Manning mentioned that your grades have improved considerably recently, which is commendable progress from last time. What would you like as a reward?”

Usually, Hayson was stern toward her, seldom engaging in conversation even at the dining table. But with Jasmine’s presence, it was evident that his mood was unusually pleasant.

Seizing the opportunity, Madelyn made her request. “After the college entrance exams, I’d like to travel to Marisburg with some friends. May I, Dad?”

“Hmm, be sure to take a chauffeur with you. It’s not safe to go out alone.” Hayson agreed.

Not overly exuberant, Madelyn managed a small smile, replying, “Thank you, Dad.”

At this, Jasmine chimed in. “Are you going to Marisburg to see the ocean, Madelyn? I’ve heard the scenery there is excellent. After the college entrance exams, it would indeed be a good idea to unwind.”

Madelyn gave a noncommittal response. “I haven’t had a chance to go out and have fun in a while.”

As a maid refilled Jasmine’s juice glass, she asked, “Have you decided on which university you’d like to apply for? If you’re thinking about Ventropolis University, with your current grades, a final push could well secure you a place.”

Ventropolis University was a reputable institute of higher education with moderate competition. Considering Madelyn’s strong performance in liberal arts, her chances of admission were fairly high.

Zach was aware of Madelyn's academic abilities. He had seen her test papers while at the hospital, and he knew she was more than capable of securing admission to Ventropolis University, one of the best universities in the country.

Poking absently at her food, Madelyn responded in an indifferent tone. "I haven't decided yet. I'll see."

"That's fair. Once you've made up your mind, I can help you formulate a study plan. Don't forget to keep up with your studies."

Jasmine projected the air of a concerned mentor, the same façade that had tricked Madelyn in her previous life. She would not stay in Ventropolis; that much she had decided from the start. Studying abroad, even at an ordinary, non-prestigious university would suffice.

Madelyn found her mind wandering throughout dinner. When Zach tried to engage her in conversation, she responded with vague affirmations. With Hayson thoroughly ensnared by Jasmine and Zach focused entirely on Jadie, Madelyn excused herself from the table midway

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through the meal. Regardless of whether Jasmine would become part of the Jent family or not, it no longer had anything to do with her.

Stepping out onto the small balcony of her room, Madelyn stared at the tightly shut window across from her. Glancing at the time, it was already noon.

'Hasn't he woken up yet?'

As she wondered about his activities, Madelyn noticed a convoy of black cars pulling up at the villa next door. She watched, curiosity piqued, as a chauffeur emerged from a stretched Cayenne and assisted a young man, clad in a black casual outfit with a dignified posture, into a wheelchair.

'Is that Ethan?'

From this angle, Madelyn could only see his back. More than a dozen bodyguards emerged from the vehicles, a formidable display that gave off an air of organized crime.

‘What exactly does his family do?’

Madelyn had never asked. From an earlier argument she had overheard between Ethan and a woman, she had some idea. Ethan’s misfortune was linked to his family, hence why she rarely brought it up. Their usual conversations revolved around mundane day-to-day topics.

She had not managed to get a good look at his face. Protected by his bodyguards, Ethan had already entered the villa. Not long after, a knock sounded at her door. It was Zach. He mentioned that Hayson had called for her as he wanted to discuss something.