

Standing before Love Chapter 552

The atmosphere was a little awkward, causing the smile on Heather's face to appear a little unnatural, but Myra merely took it that she was being shy. Completely unaware of the situation, Leon could neither understand why Heather was smiling so unnaturally nor the deep meaning behind Myra's smile.

"Are you here to pick out furniture, Myra?" Heather asked casually, trying her best to mask her awkwardness.

Luckily, all of Myra's attention was now on Leon. "I'm thinking of decorating the house," she answered, turning her eyes to Heather.

Now that she and Tony had moved back to his other house by themselves, Myra was rather free staying at home and wanted to do something. She wanted to make the house more cozy, and while she rubbed her unborn child in her womb, she had the idea to make the place a little more cute and angelic. Since she already had the thought, she had to start working on it. In one of those rare times when she would visit a furniture and bedding store, she unexpectedly bumped into Heather.

A little while after Heather returned to the country back then, this was the store she had dragged Myra in. To Heather, this store had high-end custom-made pieces with rather good designs, so it was the first store that popped into her mind when she wanted to buy furniture.

"It's not always that you have such plans. Do you need my help?" Heather offered without thinking. A heavy task such as decorating the house was not suitable for a pregnant woman, and since Heather got to know about it, she just had to help out Myra a little.

"I haven't picked out the furniture yet. Why don't you help me with it?" Myra said, accepting her offer. As she hadn't figured out the relationship between Heather and Leon, it seemed like she would have to disrupt their date a little longer.

Next to them, Leon, who wanted to interject into their conversation the whole time, couldn't find the opportunity at all as the women spoke one after the other. Meanwhile, Myra kept thinking of ways to steer the conversation to Leon because Heather didn't seem like she wanted to introduce him at all.

“Sure, then we’ll pick it out carefully for you.” For now, Heather had thrown her own issues to the back of her head as Myra’s issue was more important.

Still, it was one thing to pick out the appropriate furniture because some had to be customized, and she might not be able to buy everything she wanted.

From time to time, Leon would shoot glances at Heather so that she would formally introduce himself, but she merely ignored him. However, Myra, who was purposely not looking at Leon, asked casually, “Heather, aren’t you going to introduce the person beside you to me?”

Heather’s bizarre behavior only served to affirm Myra’s conclusion. At the same time, Leon’s spirits lifted the moment he heard Myra specially mentioning himself.

Casting a glare at him, Heather found it surprising that Leon wasn’t up to his silly ways as he usually did. Normally, he would have tried to make his existence known. I really gotta hand it to him for being so serious now.

“He’s my junior in school, Leon, the stunning man with mixed heritage as well as my business partner,” Heather said, formally introducing Leon even though it sounded overtly simple.

Looking at Leon thoughtfully, Myra recalled that Heather had mentioned her junior before. Oh. So he’s the one. As the saying went, ‘seeing is believing.’ Back then, Heather merely mentioned him casually, but they seemed especially well-matched for each other as she looked at the both of them now.

Leon came off as a very cheerful person, looking like the boy next door when he smiled, and his beautiful appearance earned him a lot of attention. Until now, Myra always thought that Heather was so stunning that everyone couldn’t help but steal a peek at her, but after seeing Leon today, she realized that he was truly the person who would attract everyone’s eyes.

Such a bright and cheerful person complemented Heather rather well, and Myra had assumed them as a couple. On the other hand, after hearing that Heather had introduced himself, Leon immediately said, “I’m happy to finally meet you after hearing about you from Heather so often. You look like a very gentle person, Myra.” At the end, he didn’t forget to throw in a compliment to please Myra.

Myra seemed a little awkward after being stared at by Leon, who didn't quit his bad habit of mesmerizing others with his eyes, and this made Heather furrow her brows.

"Don't you have to buy bedding items, Leon? Don't follow us around and waste your time," she said, not wanting Leon to stick with them.

Giving her an aggrieved look, he didn't understand why she wanted to cast him aside as he replied, "I'm not in a rush to get my stuff, so let's shop together!" His insistence on sticking together with them earned him a glare from Heather.

Even Myra chirped in a word for him, saying, "I'm almost done anyway, so you don't have to go through the trouble of shopping separately. You guys can help me to pick one out of two."

Obviously, she was filled with interest about Leon, and Heather couldn't do anything to stop it, but she was worried that Leon might say something wrong in front of Myra. From the look in Myra's eyes, Heather already knew that she thought there was a complicated relationship between herself and Leon. While Heather wanted to explain herself, after some thought, she figured there was no need to.

There was a benefit if Myra mistook her relationship with him. At least, Myra would stop asking her about her complicated relationship with Matthias.

Still, she was worried that Leon didn't know how to play along because he didn't understand the looks she was casting him. If something slipped out of him unexpectedly, Heather couldn't promise that she wouldn't blow her top at him.

While chatting, they reached the store Myra was shopping from. The designs from this store pleased Heather rather well, but the bedding items from this store were more adorable while she preferred something with a simplistic and elegant design.

It was surprising for Heather that Myra decided on this store, and when she pictured Tony's face appearing in such a cute room, she thought that it seemed a little out of place. Her surprise doubled when she saw the blueprint of the design because the furniture Myra had picked out were more cute than she had imagined.

“Are you sure your husband will accept this style that you like?” Heather asked, thinking that Tony wouldn’t be able to accept furniture like that, plus it looked a little too young in style.

Stroking her belly, Myra answered with a gentle smile, “I would like to decorate a baby’s room, and I hope that the house will be a little more cute so that the child will like it.”

Glancing at her belly, Heather thought that there was still some time left until she gave birth. Plus, the baby wouldn’t have any consciousness when it was still young. Until the time the child grew a little awareness, it would be at least a little more than a year later. So, it seemed a little early for Myra to be decorating now. “I think you’re doing this a little too early,” Heather advised. Moreover, she was pregnant now and wasn’t suitable to be doing any renovation or decoration works.

Myra eyed her. Just when she was on a whim to do something, Heather’s words diminished her enthusiasm greatly. On the other hand, Leon held a different opinion from Heather. “It’s not bad to prepare early. The most important thing is to make it into a space that you like.”

Sure enough, he couldn’t change his habit of interrupting a conversation. In addition, he wouldn’t consider anything else and would only focus on pleasing others.

“Then please help me to pick out which is better,” Myra asked enthusiastically. What she needed then was agreement. Thus, Heather was cast aside at this time.

Looking at both of them helplessly, Heather thought, Indeed, any regular guy can’t be compared to Leon when it comes to pleasing a girl. The entire time, he merely went along with Myra’s wishes instead of sharing his opinions, and Myra was quickly done with picking out the furniture she wanted with his help.

“Do you need me to help you pick out any furniture, Leon?” Myra offered politely. Since he had helped her, she would like to help him out as well.

From the beginning, he was here to accompany Heather to pick out some bedding items and small furniture, but he didn’t have anything that he wanted to buy. Earlier, he merely came up with an excuse randomly because Heather wanted to cast him aside, but Myra took it for real. Therefore, he couldn’t reject her offer and could only bite the bullet with a nod. With no retreat left, he

decided to pick out some things that Heather wanted and take it as helping her out.

While they were shopping, he would look at Heather occasionally and even ask her opinion. Myra with her keen eyes noticed that the furniture he was shopping for were obviously for ladies, and she even suspected if Heather was moving out to move in with him.

With a suspicious look, Myra observed from the side silently without much opinion to offer because he only cared about Heather's opinions. Meanwhile, Heather, too, knew that he was shopping for her, and she decided to go with the flow for the things that she planned to buy.

After picking out a bunch of stuff, Leon secretly pulled the salesgirl to the side and told her the address softly. As these things would be sent to Heather's house, he didn't want to say it loudly in Myra's presence.

After that, he passed his credit card to the salesgirl, and he felt his heart wrenched. After all, these things weren't cheap at all. Beside him, Heather seemed like she was watching a good show, which made Myra even more confused as to how these two people got along with each other.

"Between you and your junior, are you guys really just simply—" Myra asked in a whisper.

Cutting her off, Heather said, "It's a long story between us. I can tell you all about it slowly when there's time." Today, Heather had her guards up against Myra, and fortunately, Myra didn't ask her about Matthias again.

Before Myra gave birth, Heather wouldn't want her to meet Matthias at all, and even though she felt that she still had a long way to go, she hoped that everything would go smoothly without a hitch.

"Why are you avoiding me on purpose recently?" Myra asked instead. Although there were sayings that a pregnant woman's brain would work much slower than usual, Myra's instincts as a woman were still very sharp.

Startled, Heather looked at her and replied, "I'm not avoiding you. I've just been really busy recently."

Despite the fact that it sounded like a superficial reply and wasn't able to diminish the confusion in Myra's eyes by one bit, there was nothing else Myra

could say. In the end, Myra held back her tongue because she understood that she would look like a whining woman if some things were said. "Come and visit me in my new place when you're free," she said with a smile, keeping away her emotions as though she didn't say anything earlier.

"Sure," Heather agreed readily. This was something that slipped her mind. Ever since Myra returned from abroad with Tony, she hadn't found a time to visit their place personally.

They had spent too much time at the furniture store, and Heather still had some business to attend to. However, as Myra already noticed that she hadn't visited her, Heather felt it was inappropriate for her to walk away now. As for Leon, he made the decision by himself to invite them for afternoon tea, which Myra quickly agreed to, and Heather thought that she shouldn't hesitate much longer. Since adjustments could be made for her matters, and it was such a coincidence to run into Myra today, she decided to act willfully a little.

"I recently discovered a dessert store that serves pretty good sweets. I'll bring you guys there," Heather said. Attentive toward food with the courage to give new things a try, she thought that this was one of the ways she could discover more delicacies hidden in the streets and lanes.

As Leon wasn't interested in dessert but the other two did, they immediately started a conversation by themselves while he trod behind them with a bored look on his face. When they arrived, he went and ordered a cup of hot tea and some snacks for himself. There was a marked difference in the tastes between men and women, after all.

On the way, Myra received a call from Tony. "I'm leaving work early today. Are you home?" he asked over the phone in his husky voice. Very seldom would he have the chance to knock off work this early, and he was eager to see Myra.

"I'm hanging out with Heather now. Would you like to join us?" Today was a day that would only come once in a thousand years with so many coincidences in a day. It was very common for Tony to be working overtime, and he almost never left work this early.

"Send me the location and I'll be there in a while." The fact that she was with Heather didn't surprise him at all. Ever since Heather returned from abroad, Myra had been hanging out closely with her, spending even more time with her than she did with Estelle.

Clearly, the relationship she shared with Heather was incomparable to others. Reuniting after having separated for so long, they were so close that it was as though they had never been separated before.

Standing before Love Chapter 553

All of a sudden, what was lovely weather turned into a massive downpour. Resting her arms on the window frame, Heather stared out of the window. As soon as they got to their seats, the unanticipated rain came storming.

She observed the scurrying pedestrians outside the window and thought that the storm was unusual, given how it wasn't reported in the weather forecast. There were only a few passersby who put up their umbrellas calmly. The messy scenery was indeed more captivating than the lifelessness inside the store.

The unconcerned trio appeared particularly picturesque in this gloomy weather as they relaxed in the shop. Heather casually traced circles on the rim of her cup, looking especially elegant from the side—a view that stunned Leon, who was sitting opposite her.

On the other hand, Myra looked extremely serene. An entirely different aesthetic, but no way lesser than that of Heather's. Perhaps, thanks to the contrast in their personalities, this duo was able to stick around each other for so long.

No one dared to make a sound as they did not want to disturb the peace. Occasionally, Heather would giggle to herself, seeing how even the gregarious Leon stopped talking.

Suddenly, Myra's phone vibrated. After checking who it was from, she immediately answered the call. The call was from Tony, who had just got out of his car as his driver put an umbrella up high above him.

"You can see us by the window once you're at the entrance," Myra informed him. At Tony's speedy arrival, she failed to hold back her sweet smile.

He hung up and pushed open the tea place's door as he ordered his driver, "Don't wait for me. You may get off work now."

As it was raining outside, the driver was confused by the unprecedented fact that Tony asked him to leave. Regardless, he tactfully heeded his order and

kept his questions to himself as he handed Tony the umbrella. While on his way earlier, Tony got worried that the rain would persist, so he intentionally bought two umbrellas.

After all, Myra and Heather would eventually split up to go home. If the storm went on, the umbrellas would prove useful. Initially, Tony intended to have his driver wait for them, but he couldn't determine how long the duo would hang around. Therefore, he decided to dismiss the driver, intending to personally drive home later.

After placing the umbrellas at the counter, Tony slowly walked toward Myra. The moment the door was pushed open, he immediately spotted her. How smart of the girls to pick such a convenient spot!

However, something else intrigued him—the man facing Myra, who had his back to him. Before that, Tony had assumed it would only be the two of them and he did not expect the attendance of another man.

It was obviously not Matthias judging from the man's figure, so Tony didn't particularly mind his presence. He walked straight toward the group and as he was approaching them, he intimately called out, "Myra."

Suddenly, both Myra and Leon turned to look at Tony in unison. This was Leon's first time seeing the man in the flesh despite knowing him very well thanks to the documents.

Meanwhile, Heather gave him a welcoming smile. Although she was known to admire Tony, the sight of it was somewhat surreal. As it was rare for her to eye someone that way, almost like there was a trace of respect in her gaze, Leon got slightly jealous about the fact that she had never looked at him the same way despite having been friends for so long.

Finding no other available seat, Tony decidedly sat beside Leon, and it just so happened to be directly opposite Myra. While Tony and Myra were exchanging lovey-dovey looks, the remaining singles enviously shot each other a knowing look.

Recalling what Heather had mentioned about Myra and Tony's relationship, Leon felt a little envious. It was indeed a precious occurrence for such an influential man to wholeheartedly commit to a woman.

While drooling over the fact that Tony was able to find a woman to devote himself to, Leon started fantasizing about the idea of “eternal love”.

Nonetheless, love was never that simple. After having met so many women, among the ones he could and couldn't have been with, Leon had never found one that could tie him down.

Unfortunately, he couldn't feel such a sensation even from Heather. While he longed for a partner to spend his life with, he was not willing to forgo his personal freedom—something that he would not hesitate to give up a relationship for.

“Nice to meet you.” Leon took the initiative to greet Tony as he extended his hand out for a shake.

Tony shook Leon's hand in return and they interacted courteously. “Likewise.” The former then decided to forgive Leon for interrupting his ogle toward Myra.

“After having heard about you for so long, I've finally got to meet you in person!” Tilting his head, Leon smirked as he continued to introduce himself. “I'm Heather's junior, Leon.” He pointed at Heather while he spoke, to which she responded with an embarrassed look on her face.

For some reason, Heather didn't know why Leon was behaving so excitedly. The man was on cloud nine when he first met Myra, and now even more so when facing Tony. Is there really a need to be this ecstatic?

After looking at Leon, Tony turned to Heather and a rare smirk made its way onto his apathetic face. He then briefly introduced himself. “I'm Tony, Myra's husband.”

Seeing how Tony wasn't hostile toward the unexpected man, Myra hinted something at him with her eyes, to which he had a sudden epiphany.

Meanwhile, Heather, who was feeling rather awkward, remembered something bitter when Tony arrived. Although it seemed like he wasn't going to pursue the matter between her and Matthias any further, she acknowledged that his vexation toward Matthias was no less intense, and that made her wonder what he would do to get back at the latter.

The peaceful environment shattered and the quartet did not have any more exchanges, which made Heather visibly uncomfortable. Perhaps Myra and

Tony didn't sense her uneasiness but Leon, who understood her very well, recognized it as he caught the minor twitches in her eyes.

However, it was possible that Heather purposefully displayed it to signal something to Leon because, at that moment, it was impossible for anyone other than him to suggest departure. Hence, Leon was most suitable to propose it.

As the thoughtful man that he was, he attempted to come up with an excuse to leave the place as he subconsciously looked at the couple.

Finishing the cup of coffee in his hand, Leon turned to Heather and inquired, "Heather, Paige just sent a text asking what time we'll arrive at the office." Like a master deceiver, he spat the question without a change in expression, and the couple wasn't at all suspicious toward his utterance.

Picking up on his act, Heather played along and exclaimed, "Oh—I almost forgot about that! Tell her we'll be there very soon."

Leon clicked into Messenger and immediately lowered his gaze to his phone and pretended to text Paige, as if he was actually replying to her.

Heather then took the opportunity to inform Myra about her leave. After whispering to each other for a moment, they joyfully stated their goodbyes. Getting up from her seat, Heather deliberately waved at Tony and announced, "We'll get going, then. Be sure to drive safe later!"

Tony, too, responded with a jerk of his head. "Don't worry, I know what to do. It's still drizzling outside and I left an extra umbrella for you at the counter. Don't forget to take it."

Leon thanked him swiftly. Touched by Tony's gesture, the former thought that he was quite a kind, discerning man, one worthy to befriend.

Heather smiled and nodded at Tony. She realized that she would discover a new trait of his each time she met him, and she felt relieved that Myra had found herself a fine man.

Watching as Heather and Leon left, Tony moved to sit beside Myra. It seemed like he did not have the intention to go home as he asked for Myra's opinion.

"Where are we going next?"

Thanks to the synergy they had between them, at Tony's question, Myra understood that he intended to hang around some more.

"Anywhere you want," she murmured, knowing he already had a plan in mind.

"Since I don't always get off work early, let's go watch a movie." In truth, Tony was somewhat relieved that Heather and Leon left early as he was eagerly anticipating some alone time with Myra.

"Don't reserve the entire theater or I'll feel spooked if we're the only people inside." Recalling the time when Tony booked an entire theater for her, Myra felt rather bland. Instead, she preferred to be in a space filled with people, which would give her the joy of being in a cinema.

"We're not going to the cinema," he claimed with a mysterious smirk. Tony, who was often apathetic to others, would always morph into a colorful man when he was around Myra.

Despite that, his resistance to watch a movie among a crowd hadn't changed. Since Myra got pregnant, he became even more wary and he disallowed her to visit places that were crammed with people.

"There's a private theater not far from here, so it'll be just you and me." Prior to that, Tony had already made the reservation and the only thing left to do was to bring Myra over.

"Alright." In addition to his desire to give her the best in everything, Myra knew that what Tony did was solely out of concern, so she did not object.

When it came to matters of such kind, although there were differences in their mindsets, both of them would compromise as they understood there was no need to make a big fuss over such trivial matters.

And so, the couple half-embraced each other under the umbrella. Fearing that Myra would get drenched in rain, Tony tilted the umbrella to cover more of her. As the weather had been strangely unpredictable that year where it poured more than usual during fall, storms had been difficult to anticipate.

Since the theater was only a few dozen yards away, driving the car would be troublesome; thus, they decided to go on foot. As they trudged along the walkway, they could smell the scent of soil under the rain.

Myra, who always enjoyed walking in the rain, giggled like a child while Tony assiduously guided her in his arms, not wanting even a droplet to fall upon her.

“I’m not a child, Tony. Don’t be so tense!” she murmured as she aimed to loosen up her husband, whose face had become unintentionally stiff as he looked at others.

Witnessing how the other pedestrians passed them by so hurriedly, Tony got significantly cautious as he dreaded that they would splash stains onto her from stepping on the water puddles.

Tony pampered Myra to no end, and he had been taking good care of her, not letting her return to the Stark Group. Fortunately, the group had been back on track so there wasn’t anything that worried her.

Although the Locke Group was often antagonistic toward the Hart Group, they drew the line at offending the Stark Group. Besides, with the Hart Group backing the Stark Group, developments had been smooth and no other corporations would dare to trouble the latter.

“Tony, do you think Heather and Leon are a good match?” Myra quizzed out of nowhere. Since she had achieved such a sense of happiness, it was natural for her to wish a similar bliss upon her bestie.

As Tony was focusing on the path and the people around them, he didn’t pay much attention to her question.

Indeed, Leon’s appearance was truly one in a million, even more astounding than that of himself. Nonetheless, mischief and spontaneity were still burning brightly in Leon’s gaze, unlike what a mature man should possess.

“I don’t think Heather’s into dating someone younger than her,” Tony responded vaguely. After pondering about it, he would assume Heather to be interested in a man like Matthias.

Standing before Love Chapter 554

Myra was visibly disappointed to hear him say that. During the times they had spent together, Heather was never especially flirtatious with Leon. On the other hand, Leon seemed enthusiastic whenever he looked at Heather. Then

again, when Myra carefully recollected Leon's gaze toward Heather, she realized there wasn't much real passion in his eyes.

Oh, Heather and her relationships! Forget about making progress with Philip, she can't even do that with Lucas! Other than these two men, there were no other suitable men that Myra knew with the capabilities to fulfill her friend's basic needs.

"Stop worrying about Heather's love life. She may have plans for herself." Tony stated firmly as he got even more determined that there were some feelings between Heather and Matthias.

Back when they bumped into Matthias in the spa, complication and frustration filled Heather's eyes when she glared at him. To Tony, this gave their connection away.

On the other hand, back at the tea place, the way Heather looked at Leon was as if she was looking at a little brother, with not even a trace of intimacy between a man and a woman.

Presently, a pregnant Myra was undoubtedly foolishly adorable. Upon reaching the theater from the tea place successfully, Tony put down his umbrella.

As the private theater was on the fifth floor, they went in and looked for an elevator. While holding the umbrella with one hand, Tony grabbed Myra's hand in the other, making them look especially lovey-dovey. Since returning from overseas, he was constantly occupied with work, leaving no time for her. Thankfully, he got to get off work early that day so naturally, the first thing he would want was some alone time with his wife.

Myra and Tony arrived at the quiet private theater and were warmly welcomed by the reception staff. As expected from a private theater, the ticket prices were sky-high. Because of her pregnancy, Myra shouldn't be watching movies that were stress-inducing. Thus, they went for a romantic film.

Looking at her discontented expression, Tony tugged on her hand. When they were selecting a movie earlier, Myra insisted on watching a horror thriller, only to be instantly shot down by the man.

Due to the immense pressure from Tony, she could only pick a light-hearted, romance film, leaving her craving for a horror movie unfulfilled.

“Now, now, don’t be wilful,” Tony claimed in his usual tone that was gentle yet stern, effectively dismissing any further objection.

Soon, they entered the reserved room. In truth, the room was so spacious that it could contain two dozen people. Apart from the landscapes of exotic sceneries painted on the wall, the beds and couches made the room feel very much like a home theater.

Although the screen wasn’t as enormous as that of a cinema, it was certainly bigger than a typical home theater’s screen. At first sight, the room looked pretty classy while the viewing effects were as well up to the mark. Thanks to that, as well as Tony’s willingness to sit through a romance film with her, Myra stopped whining about her initial desire.

“Do you even like movies like this?” she questioned softly.

“I like anything you like,” he replied as he stared deeply into her eyes. As they were the only people in the dim room, he had a pulsating urge to kiss her.

“Eyes on the screen, please,” Myra blurted as she avoided his peck. Although they were in a private space, anywhere that wasn’t home to her was considered public. Hence, she couldn’t help but feel too embarrassed to make out with him.

“But I rather look at you,” Tony proceeded with his amorous talk, to which Myra responded by covering her face with her hands. Unlike his apathetic front, he was an entirely different man in private.

“You said you wanted to watch a movie with me, so watch it with me. Even our child is focused on it.” Immediately, Tony pulled Myra into his chest with a force so overbearing yet loving.

“I like cuddling during movies.” he murmured as he embraced her tightly, resting his chin on the top of her head.

He squeezed her with his warm body from behind and his breath continuously brushed against her nose. Feeling as if she was completely wrapped in his embrace, Myra shook her head slightly. Meanwhile, Tony, who felt rather awkward placing his hand on her inflated abdomen, moved his hand upward.

“Stay still,” he urged, pretending to be all serious as his hand was nearing her “valuable” parts, which caused Myra to feel helpless.

“Mind your hands,” she retorted.

“You don’t like the top? Guess I’ll go down, then.” As he spoke with a devilish grin, his hand swiftly slid downward.

“Stop it!” Myra got even more defensive toward Tony, who was constantly coming up with ways to take advantage of her. I’d rather you go back up!

At that moment, there were many things Tony wanted and was willing to experience with Myra, including things that were perfectly normal.

As long as she was by his side, even the duller little things would turn into rainbows and unicorns, and he did not mind whatever they did. Even just by thinking about the goals they could achieve in the world, Tony would get energetic, intensifying his inclination to walk alongside Myra in every path they took.

At the beginning, they would chatter about topics irrelevant to the movie. As they gradually got immersed in the film, they eventually stopped conversing and simply enjoyed the movie in silence.

Feeling relaxed, Myra snuggled into Tony’s familiarly warm and sturdy embrace, one that belonged solely to her.

In a flash, the movie was over. As the couple walked out of the theater, Myra was already fatigued so Tony could only cancel his plans for dinner.

After retrieving his car, he drove her home. Feeling sleepy, Myra yawned but she immediately covered her mouth as that would soil her grace.

“You’re getting significantly more sleep lately, aren’t you?” Tony laughingly quizzed, recalling how he would warily move around in the morning so as to avoid waking Myra up from her sleep.

“I can never get enough of it,” Myra answered with a pout.

“Have something to eat when we get home, then shower before you sleep.” Tony understood that when the drowsiness hit Myra, the only thing she would want is slumber and nothing else, not even food.

“Okay.” As if her bones had turned into jelly, all she wanted to do was curl up and sleep. After all this time, she still couldn’t figure out why she had been so

sleepy and she couldn't help but wonder if this happened to other pregnant women too.

To stop her from sleeping in the car, which would cause her discomfort when she woke up, Tony tried to think up some topics to discuss with her.

"Myra, do you think we are expecting a boy or a girl?" In all honesty, Tony had never thought of this before.

Intrigued by the query, Myra suddenly regained some energy as she thought about the question both of them had never wondered.

"Which one do you prefer?" she countered with a question of her own.

"I'm fine both ways, but I prefer to have a pair." It didn't matter to Tony what gender the child would be but if he had to pick one, he would like a daughter.

If he were to own a daughter resembling Myra, he would have two precious treasures—big and small—all to himself. However, a boy wouldn't be bad either, as that would make Myra the family pearl.

"Oh—I'd like a pair of twins too! Who doesn't want a boy-girl pair?" Myra gigglingly stated. Despite her words, she acknowledged the odds for that to happen were extremely low.

While they were still on the topic, Myra was led to another question. "What should we name our child?"

Tony pulled the car to a stop in front of a stopwalk and he shot her a sideways glance. "We have to think about this seriously." In order to give their child a pleasant and noteworthy name, it was only natural for them to get earnest about it.

Myra toyed around with the idea of naming their child, but she couldn't think of one at the moment as she thought none of the names in her mind captivated her in particular. She thought that naming a child in itself was a tough job. In Latin, Tony referred to a "priceless one", which perfectly described how much he meant to her.

...

When they reached home, Tony had the servants serve the meal, including a daily, delicately-made nutritious soup. Staring at the bowl of thick soup, Myra pushed it to him. “You should get some nourishment too, Tony.”

He shook his head as he looked at the bowl of soup. “This soup is specially made for pregnant women. It’s not suitable for men to drink it.” Although the kitchen crew often switched up the flavor, it was inevitable for her to get tired of the taste after continuously having soup for so many days, hence her reluctance to have it.

“But I’m too sleepy to eat!” Myra expressed like a spoiled kid, wanting to escape the fate of having to finish the soup.

“Finish your soup first.” Having seen through her tricks, Tony instantly pushed the bowl back to Myra and insisted that she finish the soup.

And so, she helplessly swallowed down the soup spoon by spoon. After having some dessert in the afternoon, she wasn’t that hungry. Besides, her drowsiness drastically reduced her desire to consume anything.

Seeing that, Tony ordered the servant, “Have the chef make another bowl and keep it warm.”

After that, he said to Myra, “Have a little food if you don’t wanna drink the soup.”

As if she had hit the jackpot, Myra smiled in delight. After eating a little, she walked toward the stairs. Seeing how she didn’t have an appetite, Tony lost his as well. After having hung around each other for so long, they were easily influenced by each other’s little gestures.

Recently, Myra’s body had undergone many strange transformations, and that included her appetite and her sleep—losing her appetite when it was dinner time, only to starve in the middle of the night.

Tony would carefully study her actions and determine a pattern, including her ever-changing craving for food as it would change at every meal, tormenting the chef and his crew.

When it came to healthy food, Tony would fulfill her every craving without hesitation; on the other hand, no matter how much she longed for junk food, he wouldn’t even think to entertain her.

After a long time, he had figured out her behavioral pattern. If he got it right, Myra tended to get up during midnight and cry for food within thirty minutes of waking up.

Having predicted that to happen, Tony would always have the chef prepare some food and soup beforehand. Then, when Myra had the appetite, the chef could serve them to her at ease.

Sometimes, when the servants and crew had already gone to sleep, Tony had no choice but to put something together himself. Although he had never been in the kitchen, he knew a thing or two about culinary. Besides, it wasn't an obstacle for him as he had never caused an accident in the kitchen.

Often, the kindest people were also the most empathetic as they would love someone unconditionally. The more time Tony had spent with Myra, the deeper his feelings for her got, thus, his desire to be a good husband got stronger.

Instead of remaining as the world-stomping man he was, he would rather fulfill his role as a husband and soon, a father.

His heart started to soften, and the ambition and aspiration he once had became nothing compared to the warmth he received from being with Myra. As such, how could he ever be harsh on her?

Despite that, love didn't turn him into a complete weakling as his principles and limits still remained, as well as his determination to accomplish certain milestones in his career.

However, every time he was around Myra, he would turn into someone else, like a complete version of himself. Thankfully, Cupid had delivered him his other half, filling the void in his soul he once felt.

Standing before Love Chapter 555

It was Heather's first time bringing Leon back to the Langston Residence, so the sight of them walking side by side naturally attracted the attention of other pedestrians. Excited, Leon spat some meaningless chatter as he scanned around the residence.

“It’s like a medieval castle! Ha!” He laughed loudly as he was astonished by the residence, as if it was one of the iconic buildings in Bradford City, although he might have been exaggerating.

“Shut up,” Heather muttered furiously as she was triggered by Leon’s running mouth.

When it came to her, Leon would always find something about her to pick on. He would have so many teases building up in his mind that he had trouble finding words to express them.

“Heather, is this why you’ve been reluctant to bring me to your residence?” Presently, Leon finally acknowledged that the reason Heather wouldn’t bring him home was to prevent him from making fun of her.

“Shut up, I said. Is this how you behave as a guest?” Heather shot him a look from the corner of her eye, failing to find the humor in his speech. Why is he so detestable?

Holding back his laugh, Leon nervously waved his hand out of denial. “Of course not! The design is really unique. For someone who seldom explores the world, overreacting to such a wonder is natural, isn’t it?”

Sensing the mockery in his words, she decided to ignore him while she drowned in remorse for bringing him home. I must have been out of it when I decided to bring Leon to the Langston Residence. As much as Heather wanted to clip his mouth shut, she could only surrender to her misery.

On the other hand, Leon, whose smile was toppingly intoxicating, had smeared the line between heterosexual attractions. Be it a man or a woman, no one could resist his charm.

Sadly, the hideous, infuriating truth behind the handsome mug was only known to Heather. At that very moment, she wanted to toss him outside the door.

“I can’t wait to see your boudoir, Heather!” After seeing how Heather’s home was built like a castle, Leon got eager to see what her bedroom looked like and wondered, Perhaps it’s like a princess’ chamber?

“Our family rules are strict. Only my significant other is allowed entry into my boudoir.” she shot him a cold grin. If she were to let him into her room, she’d be a gag topic for days!

“Oh—how disappointing! Looks like I’ll never have the chance to visit your room for the rest of my life, then,” he mumbled with a dispirited expression. Seeing how Heather wouldn’t let him into the room, it must have been as he predicted—the boudoir was but a front to the princess chamber.

“Behave yourself! My grandfather hates an indecent man,” she reminded him. Indeed, Robert did abhor men that had a cunning tongue like Leon. He might even have Leon escorted out of the residence before dinner.

“Am I not decent enough?” Feeling great about himself, Leon thought that as long as he wasn’t too uptight, he would be good to go.

Heather sarcastically scoffed as she rolled her eyes at him, secretly hoping everything would go fine. Except for Myra, she had never brought any friends to the residence. Now that she had brought Leon over, she would be extremely ashamed if her family didn’t accept him.

Seeing the inexplicable expression on her face, Leon thoughtfully behaved himself as he straightened his clothes. Although sporting a jacket seemed somewhat perfunctory, his fit figure allowed him to look fanciable.

As long as he was mindful of his facial expressions, Leon would still be a piece of art, not emitting any trace of obscenity.

Gifted with a ravishing face and the diligence to maintain a desirable body, Leon had certainly passed the attractiveness test. Besides, he had undergone nobility training, so he could reflect the quality of a noble as long as he remained stern and orderly.

To strangers, Leon would appear friendly and beguiling. However, to acquaintances, evilness would fill his eyes when he grinned with cunningness imprinted on his face, just like a true degenerate.

Shortly after, Heather led Leon to the residence hall—a vast, empty hall, only because the kids were still in school while the adults hadn’t gotten off work.

The stillness in the residence would soon be over when the kids eventually returned home, turning the silence into a head-aching party.

Since the children were raised spoiled, none of them was sensible in arguments. Annoyed by that, Heather often fantasized about smacking each of them.

Unlike the disciplined, meticulous family they once were, the Langstons had failed to pass down the admirable traits to their heirs as none of the succeeding generations after Heather was well trained, but it was not that she cared anymore. Nonetheless, the kids still knew their places in the family and would control themselves when Robert was around.

Conversely, when in private, they would turn into a gang of mischief in a split second, and Heather would immediately discipline them. Hence, they were rather scared of her.

Ultimately, when it came to instructing children, she alone couldn't do much in helping them develop their core personalities; she could only educate them to conduct themselves under certain circumstances.

Heather sat down on the couch and she invited Leon to do so too. She then had a servant prepare some tea for him, and they then served some tidbits and snacks along with drinks.

Leon thanked the maid with a friendly smile and it made her blush immediately. Upon seeing that, Heather shot him a warning look. Despite having informed him several times in the past, Leon disregarded her reminders as he carried on with his usual ways. Ah—when will he ever change?

Because of his tendency to make passes, Leon would never have a good ending with girls. After all, who in the world would like their partners to continuously flirt around with others?

Despite that, Heather had an intuition that he might drop that irresponsible habit of his if he were to get together with Paige.

“Where’s Old Master Langston?” Leon looked around but he couldn’t find Robert anywhere. He could have saved the sweat if he knew the old man wasn’t present.

Heather pursed her lips slightly and she knitted her brows. “If he’s not in the living room, he should be in the study room,” she murmured. Truth was, she

hesitated whether to bring Leon to Robert. Although she had mentioned Leon to him, she wasn't sure if he still remembered it.

"I'm a little nervous," Leon explained outright. Somehow, he felt more anxious than meeting the parents of a partner, not that he had done that many times.

Hearing that, Heather responded with a smirk as she would never have expected the mighty Leon to reveal his timid side. It seemed like her effort in making her grandfather seem intimidating didn't go to waste.

Just as she had wished for, a little uneasiness helped shut Leon's witless mouth up. This way, he wouldn't blurt things he wasn't supposed to, especially pertaining to certain private matters that she wasn't ready to tell Robert.

"What for? Grandpa's real amiable!" Heather's grin got even deeper as she got to enjoy Leon's vulnerable look.

"Why do I find that hard to believe?" he questioned suspiciously. Amiable? What a load of bull!

Just like the one Leon had at home, a man who had once conquered the business world could never evolve into an amiable person even if he tried. Recalling how ferocious his grandfather was, Leon would shiver even at the mere thought of his existence.

"Don't stress yourself out. After all, weren't you the one nagging to see him?" Heather teased. As a matter of fact, Leon was indeed the one who wished to meet Robert, which Heather took no part in.

"Maybe I shouldn't be seeing him after all. I don't think I'm ready to." Frightened, Leon tried to retreat from his decision. "Well, I could meet him when our business starts up. That way, we have more things to talk about."

"No way, Leon! Since you're already here and the maids have already seen you, Grandpa will be coming soon knowing you're here." Heather continued to scare Leon as she felt tremendously satisfied seeing his panicked expression. Serves him right for being so gabby!

"Tell him something urgent came up and I had to go. I'll take my leave now." He stood up as he spoke, getting ready to walk out, to which Heather quickly grasped his arm.

With one drag of a hand, Leon was immediately pulled back to his seat and Heather gave him a vicious stare. “Do not leave. If you do so, you’ll be embarrassing me, so do as you promised.” Looking at her murderous expression, Leon was frightened out of his mind.

Coincidentally, the sight of the duo sharing skinship was caught by Robert and he frowned. Even with his deteriorating eyesight, he could tell the man beside Heather wasn’t Matthias.

Perhaps she is seeing a man other than Matthias? Then again, Robert knew how Heather hated being intimate with other people. Given how close they were interacting, was Heather closer with this man than with Mathias?

Speeding up his steps, Robert wanted to identify the man. Could he be someone she truly fancies?

Hearing the rapid footsteps coming from the staircase, Heather swiftly unhanded Leon as they both stared at the staircase, only to see Robert walking over.

Heather watched as Robert came down the stairs, and she got worried that he might have seen her dragging Leon. She then thought that she should have been more careful in the residence and regretted her decision to bring Leon home. Now, she had basically dug a hole for herself.

Leon turned to Heather anxiously, clueless about what to say when Robert was approaching them. Since having arrived in Bradford City, Leon had been socially helpless as he had to force himself to communicate with others, unlike in Italy, where people were more hospitable.

If the opening acts were already this exhausting, how devastating would the main play—the tricky Robert—be? In all honesty, Leon hadn’t the faintest idea.

“Relax; act more naturally. Just remember—you’re my entrepreneurial partner, so confer more about the job and do not even try being funny.” Heather purposefully emphasized the last part.

Regardless of everything, cultural differences between countries would never cease to exist. Thanks to the openness of Italy, a carefree man like Leon was born.

Hastily, Leon nodded his head in acknowledgment. Within seconds, Robert arrived before them. Immediately, Heather sprung up from her seat to link her arm through his as she beamed sweetly.

So there really is a man that can turn Heather into a demure, little girl, and that man is none other than her grandfather, Robert Langston! Stupefied by her act, Leon momentarily forgot to greet the old man.

“Who’s your friend, Heather?” Robert quizzed his granddaughter.

Despite Heather’s hinting glare, Leon, who was still stunned, wasn’t able to heed her signal. As Leon failed his first impression, Heather felt utterly frustrated and could only peer at him helplessly.

“Hello, Grandpa.” Out of panic, Leon mistakenly blurted the form of address Heather uttered.

Amazed by his stupidity, Heather shot a speechless look at Leon, having already stabbed him countless times in her mind. Upon hearing that, Robert hit her with a knowing look and she knew then and there that she was done for.

Standing before Love Chapter 556

Afraid that the old man would misunderstand, Leon hastily corrected, “I mean... Old Master Langston! It’s a force of habit. I hope you un—”

“It’s fine. I understand,” Robert interrupted in the midst of Leon’s explanation.

Leon was lucky that Robert was in a fairly good mood on top of Heather forgiving Leon for his slip up—as long as he didn’t further annoy her grandfather. When she first brought Myra home the other time, Robert had enjoyed Myra’s company. Even Myra herself loved to have his acceptance.

Robert indeed seemed more amicable unlike Leon’s own grandfather, which allowed him to heave a breath of relief.

“You’re the second friend whom Heather has ever brought home,” Robert suddenly stated. Upon hearing that information, Leon felt somewhat honored.

Like an obedient granddaughter, Heather kept her gaze elsewhere while Leon would occasionally sneak a glance at her. Catching that, Robert attempted to

figure out the nature of their relationship from their eyes. Sadly, nothing had attracted his attention, except for how awfully natural she was with Leon around.

The way she behaved suggested not even a hint of affection toward the boy. It seemed like her feelings toward Leon were wholly platonic. As for Leon, Robert couldn't tell whether the emotion in his eyes was adoration, admiration, or perhaps something more.

A relieved Leon responded with an awkward smile—one that spooked even Heather. As if he was a whole new person, all of his gestures today were out of the ordinary and she was thoroughly perplexed by that.

Upon seeing how the ice breaker between him and Robert was far smoother than expected, she realized her worry of Robert disliking her friend was all for naught.

Then again, why would Robert hate any friend of hers? He was always welcoming toward her peers as he understood her well enough to know she wasn't someone who wouldn't befriend any rascals.

Therefore, despite the fact that Leon seemed rather frivolous and flippant in nature, Robert knew anyone within Heather's social circle must be goodhearted and sociable. Nonetheless, he didn't mind Leon's flaw as he recognized the boy's attitude toward her was solely out of respect. Considering that Leon was able to treat her in such a way, Robert didn't mind her seeing him as a true friend.

Then, Robert continued to study their interaction, wanting to ensure there weren't any romantic feelings between the duo. As it was a rarity for friends of different genders to remain purely platonic, he felt happy for Heather's friendship with Leon. Although he had heard about Leon from her before, he didn't mind it since he assumed it was just another successful man.

Now that they finally met today, Robert discovered something Heather didn't mention about Leon—his sincerity toward her.

It was the same when she first brought Myra home. Myra quickly grew on Robert thanks to her truthfulness as well as her lack of intention to take advantage of his granddaughter, which was enough to acquire his recognition and permission for further interaction. As a businessman himself, he

acknowledged that in this dog-eat-dog world, a faithful connection without any polluted mindset was rare, but it was what everyone needed.

Shortly after that, Leon took the initiative to share the moments he had in Italy with Robert, which included details that Heather previously omitted as she had only told Robert the stories in the Langston Group division, but nothing about her university life.

When Leon brought up the topic about their lives as students, Robert was visibly piqued and chatted excitedly with Leon. Heather was at the side and wanted to remind Leon to be mindful of his words in private, but he remained talkative and spilled the beans on certain matters that she would rather not touch on.

“Heather was the golden girl back in uni. She was so popular that people mentioned her name everywhere on my first day!” Reminiscing about that particular memory, he smiled with nostalgia. Back then, he was filled with fascination toward her and had been eager to meet her.

“Attagirl!” Robert replied as he let out a satisfied laugh, knowing that she had been exceptional since she was a kid. As other kids were impressed by her, they would even perceive her as their role model.

In agreement, Leon continuously nodded his head and added, “And I would always look for opportunities to get to know her properly!” Recalling his innocence, he remembered how he used to regard Heather as his dream girl.

Since he wasn’t acquainted with her back then, he had somehow obtained a photo of her and kept it with him at all times. After days of effort, he eventually gathered his courage and patiently waited for her on the path she always took to class.

After Leon waited for a long time, Heather finally showed up. At that time, they might have simply walked past each other or perhaps made eye contact with each other. Regardless, he chickened out at the most crucial moment and failed to start a conversation with her.

While listening to his description, she had a flashback of meeting a dashing mixed-race boy when she was returning to her dorm.

A committed Leon would always wait for Heather and occasionally sneak a peek at her, clueless to the fact that he would ultimately become the hot topic of the entire university.

During that period, he had a pair of tranquil eyes with a beguiling face, which made him more striking than the hunks from other universities. Every person's eyes would fall upon his boney face—boys and girls alike. Due to his appeal, relationships came easily to him and he would start one witlessly and end it on a whim.

Now that Leon had entered university, he wished to turn over a new leaf and decided to pursue Heather, wanting to experience the purest form of love. Unfortunately, due to certain reasons, she didn't give him the chance and rejected his advances.

After having failed to ask her out, Leon, born with a playful nature, quickly relapsed into his hedonistic lifestyle. With an abundance of admirers around him, he would wantonly date anyone whom he had the slightest interest in.

With that, Leon and Heather both moved on in their own routes, drifting away from the potential of a romantic relationship. Moreover, as she was extremely particular with the integrity in her relationship, there was no way she would allow a playboy to tag along with her.

"She was that charming, huh!" Robert exclaimed with a gratified laugh. Since Heather seldom spoke about her past, he was joyous to have heard it from Leon.

"Certainly! She had so many pursuers that each of them had to rack their brains just to get her attention." As Leon and Robert were overly indulged in conversing, they hadn't noticed the hideous scowl on her face.

Everything that Leon had revealed was the topics that she won't share in front of Robert. How could she have expected him to be loquacious and become such a good companion with her grandfather in such a short time? After having no interest in hearing about the childish lover-boy talk, let alone joining in the conversation, she frustratedly wished to hide in isolation.

"Hahaha!" Robert cackled loudly. In Bradfort, after knowing Heather's identity, no boy from her school dared to confess their affection to her.

However, it seemed like that wasn't the case abroad. Apparently, she had been receiving so many confessions that even he was baffled how she could have denied every one of them. As he laughed at Leon's stories, Robert incidentally turned to her, only to see her gloomy frown while Leon was still ignorantly speaking and immediately recognized the tragedies ahead of the poor boy.

"Oh! There was one boy who would profess his love for Heather on Valentine's Day every year, only to get turned down by her each time!" Leon slyly grinned. Being the one who confessed the most to Heather, he couldn't help but feel sympathetic when he remembered the boy.

After having had enough of his crap, she gloomily spoke, "I'm a little tired. I'll get some rest upstairs." As she spoke, she rose to her feet and left the men without glancing back.

A curious Leon watched as Heather's figure departed. At the same time, he felt weird by the fact that Robert didn't even try to stop her. It was just minutes ago when she behaved like a filial granddaughter in front of Robert, so why didn't he mind even one bit when she had left so rudely?

"Have I said something wrong, Old Master Langston?" Leon timidly inquired after feeling threatened by her final malicious glare before she completely vanished.

"You haven't, Leon. Carry on. I'm all ears." Robert continued to encourage Leon so as not to scare him away, or he would lose the chance for more invigorating tales.

After all, despite Robert's attempt to have a light-hearted chat with Heather about her study days, her mouth was always resistant as every time he brought up Italy, she would always focus on business and discussed matters regarding the Langston Group's branch.

Feeling guilty, Leon apologetically mumbled, "It's getting late. Why don't we continue next time? I should be going home now anyway." If he were to overstay his welcome, he would have to stick around for dinner with the enormous family, which would make him feel immensely awkward.

It was soon before the kids came home one by one. However, after seeing Robert sitting on the living room couch, they quickly returned to their room, not daring to lurk in the same space as him.

“You should stay for dinner,” Robert enthusiastically invited Leon for a meal.

Upon hearing that, Leon grew hesitant as he imagined how the entire family would puzzlingly stare at him at dinner. Not that he was afraid of being at the center of attention as it had always been that way since he was a kid, but he simply felt uneasy.

Robert’s invitation had reminded Leon of the dinners he had at home: a crowd seated around a table without any interaction, not even a single word—noble, but desolate. However, all that facade of maintaining royalty like ancient kings was but a joke to Leon, for he looked down upon the declining family’s insistence on upholding its righteous front.

“I’ll take your silence as a yes,” Robert quickly added before Leon could answer.

With that, Leon had no excuse to turn Robert down. Although Robert was indeed much friendlier than Leon’s own grandfather, they were both of the same cunning people in their hearts. Despite that, Robert undoubtedly seemed much more approachable in comparison, hence Leon would feel disheartened at the thought of his own grandfather.

Since he was but a young man, Leon had taken countless measures to detach himself from his toxic family and earned a significant sum of money without the help of his family, which was similar to what Heather was doing.

The only difference between them was their familial background—the Langstons were decent, upfront business people while Leon’s family was highly involved with shady activities and eventually evolved into heartless individuals.

Furthermore, Heather had the love and support from Robert whereas Leon was the black sheep back at home. Sure, he was currently free like a bird, but no one could tell when he would be ‘captured’ back home.

Therefore, he could only live in the moment, enjoying each day as he went. Life was so unbiased that it treated everyone equally yet unfairly.

Upon seeing the complicated emotions in Leon’s eyes, Robert was sharp enough to pick up the anomaly in the man in front of him—something he hadn’t noticed in the gregarious boy from earlier.

As it seemed that Leon also had his share of secrets, Robert stared at him with empathy. He figured he should do a background check on Leon since he hadn't done so previously.

For starters, Leon was a combination of irony as shown in his physical qualities, although no one could quite tell what his origins were.

"Allow me to show you my study room." An enthusiastic Robert invited Leon to his study room. It was unusual for Robert to invite anyone into his study, so there must be something important he wished to discuss with Leon in private.

Standing before Love Chapter 557

During dinner, Heather turned to Leon who was seated beside Robert. As if they had a tacit agreement, both Robert and Leon did not mention anything about the conversation they had back in the study room. As she approached her usual seat, the rest of the family entered the dining room accordingly. Upon entering the room, Everly instantly noticed the handsome lad sitting next to her grandfather.

For him to show up here, he must be Heather's acquaintance. Then, Everly took a quick peek at Heather and wondered, How could she attract so many men? There's even a whole variety of them!

With that, Everly couldn't help but feel jealous as men wouldn't notice her. Even if she became ten times prettier, no one would take a second glance at her.

When her gaze fell upon Leon, he immediately noticed the admirable young lady and looked at her with interest.

As Heather and Everly were sitting not far apart from each other, he could easily compare their beauty. Much to his surprise, Everly was remarkably prettier than her cousin sister, which excited him. Upon facing his stare, Everly couldn't help but feel bashful as she wondered why he would look at her in such a way—unlike the other men Heather had brought home.

At that moment, Robert also noticed Leon's lustful ogle and suspected that he was attracted to Everly. Although Everly had always been overshadowed by Heather, she was undoubtedly the most glamorous among the Langston children as none—male or female—could trump her in terms of beauty.

“Does our food not suit you, Leon?” Heather coldly interrogated as she sent a piercing leer toward Leon.

As he withdrew his stare from Everly, he let out an awkward laugh. Given that it was rare for Heather to speak up during dinner, even the other family members were surprised.

Upon hearing Heather’s question, the Langstons couldn’t resist their urge to peek at Leon and speculate whether he was Heather’s boyfriend. Even Everly thought her cousin was jealous.

In that instant, after thinking she had made Heather jealous, Everly felt relieved to know that she wasn’t unattractive. She warily glanced at Leon and admired his appealing looks as she gradually became even more intoxicated.

“No way! They are great! I’ve never eaten such tasty dishes!” Leon sulked as he glanced at Heather, fearing that her anger would lead to his mass defamation.

It was unfortunate that he had made his intentions a tad bit too obvious, so she glared at him, hinting at him to stay away from Everly. As a woman, she understood that Everly’s charm tended to attract various attention and that included the eyes of degenerates.

Seeing as Everly grew into a compliant young lady, Heather thought Everly looked awfully like her young self and she would do anything to protect her.

Although the two cousins weren’t exactly enthusiastic around each other and they didn’t seem like blood relatives, sheltering Everly from harm gave Heather a sense of bliss.

As Heather had greatly contributed to the Langston Family and its members openly and discreetly, she no longer owed her family anything. Although she might look apathetic and unapproachable, she actually gave a lot to the family in silence without asking for any rewards.

She personally drove Leon home after dinner. Her behavior was odd as she volunteered not to send him to the gate, but back home instead.

Upon seeing her suspicious acts, her family members thought she had some nasty plans in mind with Leon—the pretty boy. Well, not that she cared about their thoughts anyway.

“Heather, I’m so sorry that you have to drive me home yourself,” he expressed with a grin even though not even a hint of apology was shown on his face.

“Since you can’t grab a cab here, I can only send you back,” Heather coldly replied.

Even when she was nice to someone, she would rather act in an unpleasant and rude manner than admit that she cared. And knowing that, Leon didn’t mind her irksome facade.

For a moment, Leon racked his brain for a topic to chat with Heather, but he didn’t know what would pique her interest. After infuriating her earlier in the evening and experiencing her cold treatment during dinner, he felt a little bad for agreeing to stay for the meal.

“Don’t even think about courting Everly.” Heather suddenly warned Leon when they were nearing his apartment. After all, Everly’s beauty was truly eye-catching, so there was no guarantee that he wouldn’t make his advances.

For girls at Everly’s age, his seduction would surely be irresistible. She would rather have Leon invest all his efforts into pursuing Paige than to have obscene thoughts toward Everly.

“Which one’s Everly?” Leon peered at Heather in confusion.

“The girl you’ve been staring at all night.” She stopped her car at the apartment gate, not intending to drive into the premises.

“Come on, you know Paige is the one I like. It’s not like I’ll have any nasty thoughts about others,” Leon explained hastily. Having assumed that Heather cared not one bit about her family, he realized now that wasn’t the case. She was a toughie on the outside, but a softie on the inside.

“As if! You’re not allowed to even be friends with her.” Shattering his fantasy, she had decided to never bring him back to the Langston Residence, forbidding him to see Everly.

In response, Leon answered with a pitiful face, “For real? She’s so gorgeous! Can’t I admire her solely for her looks?”

“No freaking way. She’s just a little girl and a rascal like you doesn’t suit her. Even as friends, you’ll surely corrupt her mind.” As Heather spoke, she

unlocked the door on the side of the passenger seat, signaling him to alight from the vehicle.

An unsatisfied Leon exited the car and she instantly sped her car away. With a face full of sorrow, he gazed at the apartment gate, realizing she dropped him at the Eastern gate, which was the furthest from his unit and it would take another thirty minutes for him to arrive home.

The creatures called women were terrifying! In helplessness, he walked home with the knowledge that he would no longer get to enjoy the sight of such beauty. In the past, Heather once told him about a cousin of hers whose looks were as heavenly as an angel's. Now that he had personally seen the said cousin, he realized Heather really wasn't exaggerating.

He originally thought that she was just toying with him. Little did he know that Everly's grace exceeded all expectations. Her facial features were even more delicate than those of Heather as if she was a gift from God.

Discarding those messy thoughts from his mind, Leon thought that since he decided to court Paige, he should stay faithful and not be distracted by Everly. Besides, with Heather as the girl's guardian, he had no way to get anywhere close to Everly, so he'd rather focus his efforts on wooing Paige.

On her way home after sending Leon, Heather turned her car as she received a mysterious message.

In fact, she had already seen it when he exited the car, but she didn't care to read it at the time. When she finally opened it, the message showed a time and it was nearing the hour.

Feeling as if something bad was about to happen, she floored the gas pedal, knowing not many people would show up at such a time, so the road should be clear.

For some reason, time became significantly precious as Heather prayed in her heart, Please be safe! Judging by the speed she was driving, she could probably reach Leon's apartment within five minutes. Racing against time, she wished that she had a pair of wings to accelerate her pace.

Unfortunately, there were only three minutes left until eleven and she strongly wished for time to slow down. The moment her car came to a fast stop before his apartment, a loud boom thundered from the 21st floor.

Without any hesitation, Heather sprung out of her car and charged into the apartment. In dismay, she raised her head and realized that it was the floor Leon lived on. She forcefully grasped her cellphone, almost as if she was about to crush it.

Reluctant to believe he was involved in an accident, she was so anxious that her body trembled as she prepared to barge in and check for herself. As her heart was filled with guilt and self-blame, the expression she made was terrifically unnatural. Someone must have cursed me!

Before she could take a step, a familiar voice sounded from behind. "Why are you here, Heather?"

In disbelief, Heather turned and saw Leon. In an instant, she rushed toward him and hugged him, nearly bursting into tears as she did so.

She tightly clutched to him, having been struck with the terror of almost losing him to death. Then, she muttered in his ear, "I'm so sorry, Leon. I'm so sorry..."

In response, a confused Leon gently patted Heather, attempting to comfort her out of her uncontrolled emotions.

When he heard the explosion earlier, he hastened his pace, only to notice her before him.

What truly shocked him was the fact that she took the initiative to hug him for the first time. It was such a tight embrace that he could feel her quivering. At that moment, she was at her weakest, needing someone to support her.

"It's okay, Heather. It's over now." Leon glared at the stairs with the knowledge that the detonation had happened in his room.

As it seemed like he was related to the explosion, a trace of gloom flashed across his eyes. He hadn't the faintest idea as to who would be cruel enough to finish him off with a bomb.

Like survivors of a tragedy, the duo firmly held each other, unaware of the person taking photos of the scene behind them.

The moment Heather got out of Leon's arms, she awkwardly looked at him as she regained her composure. At the same time, he noticed how she was still tightly grasping her phone and couldn't help but stare at it.

Heather immediately showed Leon her phone. "Before the explosion, someone sent me this text. Perhaps you could find out the source."

Since it wasn't something worth hiding, she revealed the message in the hopes that he could trace it. As of now, she couldn't tell whether the sender was a kind person who warned her or the bomber himself.

While reading the text message, he instantly frowned as aggression filled his eyes. Switching off the phone, he handed it back to her. "Do not report this to the police."

Since the police would arrive soon, they planned to wait for them. After all, Leon was a resident of the apartment while Heather was its rightful owner.

Even if they tried to escape from the police, the latter could easily summon them back to the police station, so they decided to await the policemen's arrival. They hoped to gain some information about the explosion.

"Some men thought I was interfering with their business and wished to kill me off," Leon expressed with a condescending scoff. Like his family, he wasn't a person whom anyone would simply mess with.

"Is it related to the investigation you did for me?" Heather blurted as the first thing that came to her mind was the family grudge she recently begged Leon to look into.

"It's not," he answered decidedly as he didn't want to burden her, knowing the main reason behind her mental breakdown earlier was her self-blame.

"You're lying." As she observed his attitude, Heather assumed that she was related to the case. She had never expected to drag Leon into her personal matters.

"You're overthinking it. Don't you believe in my ability to obtain information without anyone knowing? I'm like a shadow in the dark! No one could find me even if they tried!" Leon exclaimed boastfully as he felt the need to ease Heather's emotions at that time. Given that the things he had experienced in

the past were much worse than what happened tonight, he didn't put much thought into it.

"I'm sorry," she remorsefully apologized as her heart was filled with penitence.

"Perhaps you don't know my family that well. They might even be the cause of the explosion," he stated with a casual face. Well, it wasn't like he chose to be born and raised in that family.

Standing before Love Chapter 558

Heather would not allow herself to be toyed by Leon this time. Motionlessly staring at him, she intended to determine whether he was telling the truth by carefully studying the subtlest detail on his face.

After relying on all his cards, he had finally calmed her down. Among the rescue teams, the firefighters were the first to arrive. Intrigued by the fire, more residents and passersby stopped by to observe the incident. It was the first time that the quiet area became so lively.

Accordingly, the police arrived and brought Leon and Heather to the police station to file a report, although the duo didn't share any information that was deemed useful. Seeing that she hid the text message from the police, he matched her actions with lies and stated that he had invited her over for a visit.

After clearing their doubts toward the duo, the policemen eventually dismissed them in the middle of the night. Since bomb detonations were one of the deadliest crimes, the police claimed that they would assiduously look into the case. Investigations for crimes like this shouldn't be delayed or it would be categorized as an unsolved case.

Since it was already late, Heather accompanied Leon to look for a hotel to stay in. However, Leon had a bad habit, which was being picky with hotels, or rather, he simply hated staying in hotels. With that, she braced herself, preparing to spend her night looking for hotels with him. Since she chose to respect him, she might as well respect his uncanny perfectionism.

To her surprise, Leon was unexpectedly considerate. Without his usual fussiness, he decisively booked a room at the first hotel they arrived at.

“Don’t worry about me. It’s already so late that you should quickly get home or you’ll miss your beauty sleep,” Leon urged Heather to return home, worried that she would catch a cold, given her thin layers of clothing under such unforgiving weather.

Then, she observed the room as he seemed to be getting ready to endure a night. Since he didn’t make a rant about it, who was she to complain? On the way home, she was driving in a daze when her phone suddenly rang. She turned her phone to face upward and saw Matthias’ name on the screen. Why would Matthias call at such a time? She skeptically answered the phone and heard his feeble voice.

Instinctively, she frowned at Matthias’ words. The Langstons hadn’t even heard about the incident yet he was already asking about it.

“Let’s meet,” he requested.

When he was told that she was involved in an accident, he became so worried and instantly wanted to see her. Nevertheless, as she was on the move, no one other than herself could give accurate information regarding her whereabouts.

Although he thought of waiting for her at the gates of the Langston Residence, he knew how she didn’t like him to show up at her home. Since he had no other choice, he decided to initiate a rendezvous.

“I’m not in the mood for that.” Without a second thought, Heather turned his request down. After encountering such a tragedy, she did not have the desire to see anyone. Despite the dilemma of feelings she had toward Matthias, she couldn’t bring herself to rely on somebody else’s shoulder like a little girl.

At that moment, what she wanted to do was to collect herself and mentally organize everything that had happened to her to the point where she didn’t even want to go home. In order to keep herself awake, she opened the roof of her car, allowing the night’s chilly breeze to brush against her face.

Instead of taking the direct route home, she decided to take the long way around and drove by countless places. Sadly, no trouble could be solved by merely thinking of it. All of a sudden, her phone vibrated again. Upon seeing Matthias being this persistent, she reluctantly answered the phone.

“I’m behind you.” His words were rather cryptic.

Looking at the rear-view mirror, Heather saw a familiar car—one that Matthias had always driven—and was taken aback by his presence. After all, she had even taken a detour to avoid bumping into anyone, so how did he manage to find her?

Since he was already here, she didn't try to shake him off and found a place to stop her car. After parking her car, she alighted from her car while he parked behind her.

It was a while later that Matthias exited his car, but Heather couldn't see his face clearly in the dark. Although they weren't far apart, she didn't have the intention to walk over to him. Thus, he walked up to her. As he approached, he would soon reveal his boney face to her. While they were staring at each other, he tried to be closer toward her but she avoided his approach.

"Please stay away from me!" Heather had her back against her car. In fact, she didn't have any other thoughts when she said those words. She simply didn't want Matthias to get too close to her.

"Are you okay, Heather?" He came even closer, wanting to check whether she was hurt, but judging from her condition, it didn't seem like she was injured.

"I'm fine." Knowing that she couldn't hide anything from him, she couldn't help but wonder how he knew everything about her. Had he planted a bug on me?

"How did you know about the explosion?" Due to Heather's abhorrence toward the fact that her movements were being tracked, she intended to figure things out with Matthias.

Upon seeing Heather's hostile expression, Matthias decided to open up with her at this moment.

"A reporter whom I know went to the scene and forwarded a set of photos to me." When he saw Leon and Heather hugging, he almost lost his sanity. If it weren't for the accident, he would have unleashed hell upon Leon.

As of then, Matthias had recognized Heather as his own woman and no one was allowed near her. After having observed how she was getting closer with Leon, Matthias could feel a gush of resentment surging in his heart.

“A reporter?” As she was previously in the heat of the moment, she failed to notice the reporter secretly taking pictures of them. Curious about the contents of the photos, she told Matthias, “Show me the photos.”

Obediently, he turned his phone on and presented the photos to Heather. From the album, she found a photo of her tightly hugging Leon. As she continued to scroll through the album, she stumbled upon a video and immediately clicked to play it.

The footage evidently included everything—from the moment she rushed out of her car to the embrace that she and Leon shared after the explosion. Oddly, even the scenes before the explosion were recorded. Given how every shot was a close-up of her, she was obviously the main target in the video. It was all too fishy!

Upon returning Matthias’ phone to him, Heather approached closer to him and instructed, “Tell me who’s the reporter. I wanna meet him.”

“I’ve already asked him beforehand. He disclosed that he was told about the explosion in advance and was directed to film the process. After waiting for a long time and seeing no explosion, he would have given up if you didn’t show up. Your presence was merely a coincidence and he would never have expected the driver of the car to be you,” he laid out everything in detail from beginning to the end.

“Can you arrange a meeting with him tomorrow?” She insisted to personally meet the reporter as her intuition told her that it was too much to be a mere coincidence. Perhaps the reporter would have the information she could use.

“Of course. He’ll do anything as long as he’s paid.” In fact, the reporter had approached Matthias for money, and of course, Matthias had to fork out a sum to obtain the photos and videos. Moreover, he paid an extra sum to buy the reporter’s silence and suppressed the spread of the news. Given the scale of the incident, it was bound to make the headlines the next day.

Because of that, Matthias paid a great sum of money to contain the news. With how fishy everything seemed, even Matthias could feel something off about the incident. Nevertheless, he couldn’t find a breakthrough.

“Before the explosion occurred, an anonymous person texted me, warning about a bomb detonation that was to happen in Leon’s apartment. At first, I didn’t put much thought into it, but on my way home, I decided to turn back to

look for Leon, who could have been fatally injured.” Even until now, Heather was still shaking from the tragedy. Had Leon not taken his time making it back to his unit, only God knew what would have happened.

“It’s okay. You’re both fine now.” Matthias was solely focused on comforting her and was not jealous whatsoever.

Under the moonlight, Heather appeared rather frail, so he removed his coat and placed it over her.

“Don’t take it off. Things are gonna be complicated soon. You mustn’t be sick by then,” he urged with an intimidating, overbearing tone.

With an understanding, she accepted his goodwill. Wearing the garment, she could feel his warmth and scent lingering on it. Now that she wore the coat, she was shielded from the harshness of the cold wind while Matthias only had a thin shirt on him after removing his coat.

“Aren’t you cold?” Heather queried with worry. At that moment, she couldn’t bring herself to reject anymore of his kindness.

“Men are physically stronger,” he claimed as if he wasn’t troubled by the cold. However, with the freezing weather and adding to the fact that he was only sporting two layers of thin clothes, how could he not be?

“Let’s go home! This isn’t a place to chit-chat,” Heather jokingly stated, not wanting Matthias to fall sick. No matter how fit he was, there was no way he could withstand this chilly temperature.

“You don’t mind me driving behind you, do you?” Matthias tentatively inquired.

“You want to escort me home?” As she spoke, Heather removed her jacket. Since she would be returning to her car soon, the heater in the vehicle would warm her up.

“Is there a problem?” Naturally, he couldn’t let her drive home alone in the middle of the night without worrying for her, so he had to make sure she safely arrived home with his own eyes.

“Not if you wear this.” She handed the coat to Matthias as she granted his request, but under one condition.

He hastily grabbed the garment and quickly wore it, to which Heather responded with a satisfied beam. After opening her car door, she slid right into the driver seat while he walked back to his car. Upon hearing the start of her car engine, he increased his pace for fear that he would be shaken off by her.

On the road, both Heather and Matthias were driving quietly as none attempted to converse with each other. Although they weren't that far from each other, they would still require a phone call to speak to each other with the distance. While he didn't want her getting distracted while driving, she didn't have the intention to call him as well; hence, both of them navigated their respective vehicles in a straight line.

After some time, the two cars stopped before the Langston Residence. Rolling down her car window, Heather ordered the security guard at the gate, "Let me in." Since the Langstons always had a face recognition scanner at the gate, the guard was able to memorize and recognize each of their faces.

Meanwhile, Matthias didn't follow any further as she should be fine from there on, given that it was only a few steps until she entered the gates. Besides, he remembered how she disliked him showing up at the residence; thus, he stopped his car outside the gates to avoid displeasing her.

This time, Heather had the security guard park the car for her while she waved at Matthias, who was outside, as she reminded, "Drive safe now. Drop me a text when you get home." Thankfully, everything he had done up until then gave her no reason to despise him.

Standing before Love Chapter 559

On Matthias' way home, Heather initiated a call to keep him company—something she rarely did. With her usual dull tone, she chatted with him about whatever came to mind and before they realized it, Matthias had already reached home.

When he entertained her with a joke Lara once told him, he could hear her subtle chuckle. Then, she stopped her giggle to inquire, "Are you home yet?" All along, she was sitting at her study desk, reading a book while chattering with Matthias.

"Yup. Just got to park real quick." Having much left to say to Heather, Matthias was reluctant to end the call as hearing her voice made him feel like she was right beside him. Swiftly, he parked the car into the garage and grabbed his

phone as he got out of the car. Unexpectedly, Heather didn't hang up on him. What a pleasant surprise! he thought to himself. However, given the pile of mess they had gone through that night, nothing else could intrigue him anymore.

"Heather," he ecstatically called out. There were only two people in the world that would call for her in such a manner, and Matthias wished to be the third. To his surprise, not only was she not upset, she even hummed a response, and that got him excited.

"Aren't you tired?" Since it was already late, Matthias didn't want Heather to stay up, lest she lose sleep. After all, she lived a strict healthy lifestyle.

"I'm used to it." Recently, due to many reasons, one of them being insomnia, she had been pulling all-nighters.

"You better get some rest, then. There's a lot ahead of you tomorrow." Anticipating hecticness awaiting the next day, Matthias couldn't help but be concerned. Despite having bribed the reporters to shut up, he couldn't guarantee the absence of other paparazzis.

Before going to meet her, he had ordered Evan to deal with the journalists possessing Heather's photos by tomorrow through social media. Judging by how Evan was still managing it, the matter must have been really troublesome, making Matthias worried for the day that hadn't even come.

"Do you mean to say that I'll be dragged into the bombing incident?" Having considered the possibility of her being involved due to the atrocious nature of tragedies such as bombings, she had already prepared herself for whatever would come.

The fact that she drove recklessly like a madman earlier could be linked to the incident, leading to the birth of more scandals. Besides, recalling her impulsive embrace with Leon and his mention of his family, she hoped the reporters of Bradford City wouldn't find out about his background.

"I have no idea how many people have possession of those photos," Matthias expressed his concern about how that one photo would be the root of countless issues.

Pulling up the photo on his phone, he gazed at the picture, thinking about how the explosion occurring upstairs could have demolished the building into two.

And then there was Heather, with her worried face while hugging Leon. The picture was taken from such an impeccable angle that one could see every detail of her expression. In contrast, Leon's face was left in the dark so there was no telling what his expression was like.

Consequently, Matthias found an oddity in the photo. Indeed, the picture was targeted to emphasize Heather, but it strangely seemed like it was trying to protect Leon given how blurred his mug was in the shot.

Upon coming to that realization, he shared his opinion with Heather. "I may have discovered something else after going through the photos again. Well, more like a speculation, really." After stating that, he contemplated how to express his thoughts to her.

"What is it?" Heather curiously questioned, seeing nothing fishy from the picture.

"In the photos, your face is so clear that I can even see the worry in your eyes. However, Leon's face is so blurred, as if the angle from which the photo was shot was to protect him," Matthias voiced his thoughts. Why did the photographers protect Leon? That was indeed an insightful question.

"Send them over. Let me see for myself." Feeling the discovery was worth something, Heather wanted to study the photos herself.

After receiving the images from Matthias, she zoomed in to study each of them. True enough, no matter the angle of the shot, Leon's face was always hazy and was even more pixelated upon zooming in. One could only figure it was a man while staying clueless to his ethnicity.

"Someone must have been pulling the strings behind this. With what we have on our hands, we can't determine if it was done by one man, a few people, or factions of them. If anything, there might even be an organization that's manipulating everything," Matthias claimed, thinking the entire occurrence was a complicated ruse. If there was only one party causing the explosion, no one could tell whether they intended to kill him off or simply send him a warning.

On the other hand, if it involved many parties, then one of them must be aiming to shield Leon. Considering the possibility, Matthias instinctively scowled. Given how things were escalating so fast, he couldn't even tell if it was a business dispute or something else.

While Heather remained silent, Matthias quizzed, "What do you think? Are they coming for you or Leon?"

Previously, she was unable to make her decision and suspected it was someone from the Moriarty Family given how they had been abnormally quiet. "Initially, I thought it was me but after hearing some things from Leon, I started to think it might be a warning to him instead."

As it was getting late, Matthias decided to halt the discussion with Heather and reluctantly advised, "We shouldn't be racking our brains this late at night. Rest up now, alright?"

Still reluctant to end the call, he waited for Heather to hang up first. However, seeing how she wouldn't hang up, he couldn't help but think perhaps she had more to chat about.

"Go to bed if you're tired." Hearing no further words from Matthias in a few seconds, Heather hesitantly hung up.

Staring at the end-call screen, Matthias felt a little upset with how needy he was, wishing to never part from her even for a moment. Thanks to the incident, he was even more determined that he in fact adored Heather and wanted to spend his life with her.

Meanwhile, thousands of words narrowly packed on a page entered Heather's eyes, yet none went into her mind. Whenever she felt troubled, she would always grab a book and mindlessly turn its pages as if that was able to calm the conflict in her mind.

For some reason, Matthias' unusual lack of clinginess made her feel a little odd. Hell, he even asked me to go to sleep! Unlike earlier, the Matthias she knew was headstrong, doing whatever he felt like and forcing his wills onto others. Now that he had learned to take care of others and respect their opinions, Heather felt somewhat comforted. Perhaps his once-detestable side was indeed salvageable, after all.

Acknowledging how there were many sides to a person, Heather couldn't bring herself to hate on Matthias as she got to understand him more. Essentially, his concerns for her were genuine as he would notice little things she had never even paid attention to, and this tended to move her.

Swiftly, Heather reached the last sheet of the book. Since the book contained less than ten thousand words, it didn't take her much time to finish it. Besides, underneath the pitch-black night, Heather got gradually drowsy and felt a little ache surging on her back. Hence, she headed to bed.

When she finally lay on her bed, she felt her aches disappear. Rolling around, she wished for the light of the day to come later. Since her destiny was bound to arrive, she had already predicted the disastrous headlines on the papers. She tossed and turned on her bed repeatedly, forcing herself to sleep with her worries.

Meanwhile, Matthias was still up awaiting Evan, who had just returned home with a chilly aura. Immediately, Matthias approached him and asked about what had been worrying him most. "How is it?"

"So far, we're unable to determine how many people had taken photos of the scene," Evan expressed with a glower. Regardless, he had done all he could, looking for people and "persuading" them to keep their mouths shut.

"So there are too many to handle?" Matthias inquired anxiously. He had expected that there were only a few that possessed Heather's photos but on the contrary, there were actually quite a number of reporters that had already received the news.

"Yes. Bunch of amoral imbeciles." Thinking how many of them had dared to make demands, negotiate and take advantage of him, Evan grew more furious.

"I just fear that we've missed some of them," Matthias voiced out in distress.

"That's a no-brainer. It's an ocean of fishes out there. There's no way we can net them all up at once." At the time, Evan was somewhat hesitant to pay any more bribes as he was conscious that his effort would go in vain with just one whistleblower.

"Never mind. It's merely a matter of money and we've done what we can. Besides, once we have paid them, they'll no longer interfere in this matter. Thus, they are no longer a problem to us," Matthias claimed upon seeing how it pained Evan to hand out bribes. Despite his gifted, beguiling charm, Evan was, deep down, an avaricious calculator.

“I didn’t really mind because it’s your money anyway.” Evan rolled his eyes at Matthias, who tended to turn into a brainless fool in love that would do any stupid thing for his obsession—in this case, Heather.

“Have a rest now,” Matthias urged Evan, feeling somewhat sorry for him after his day of hard work.

To be fair, Matthias cared very well for his peers and subordinates and would seldom cause them any difficulties or trouble. Hence, whenever he voiced his desires, Evan and Nikolai, and sometimes even Lara, would assist him toward his goals without any question.

“You should get some sleep too, sir. If this actually blows up tomorrow, you’ll really have no time for rest then.” Knowing Matthias wouldn’t sit still, Evan expected him to clean up the mess faster than Heather would.

Matthias hummed in response and he carried a perturbed heart with him upstairs. Ah—such a hectic day! The day, however, wasn’t all fruitless. Recalling Heather’s rather welcoming attitude toward him, Matthias was on cloud nine and his commissures would instinctively lift themselves.

Indeed, he had become a fool in love. It was already three in the morning yet he was still grasping his cellphone, sending a goodnight text to Heather. Seconds later, Heather, who was tossing around in bed, heard her ringtone and immediately turned on her phone, only to be let down by the word ‘Goodnight’.

Unlike a mysterious text out of nowhere she fantasized about, it was merely a text from Matthias. Given that he was still texting at this hour, it seemed like he was insomniac as well.

‘I can’t sleep.’ Heather typed three words down. But when she was about to send the message, she decided not to and deleted it.

Feeling that the three words were rather attention-seeking, she laid her phone down as she contemplated what to reply to him with. No matter what she came up with, everything just felt odd. After pondering for a while, she decided not to make a response at all as she put her phone away.

“Calm before the storm, huh...” she muttered to herself as she lay back in bed.

It was three in the morning and the air was stifling. What plans could God have set up in the next morning that awaited everyone?

Standing before Love Chapter 560

Boom! The penetrating thunderclap shocked Heather awake. Hearing the wind howling, she immediately got out of bed to close the windows as the thunderstorm neared.

The peace of yesterday had now turned into a heavy downpour. How spontaneous of the weather! Seeing that winter came early and how it rained more than usual, Heather couldn't tell if it was her fault for getting too comfortable with the climate overseas or it was the weather which was being rather unpredictable.

All at once, Heather, who disliked rain and abhorred thunderstorms, closed the window, effectively blocking the piercing thunder outside. The thunder went on for quite some time but it still hadn't rained, and only a massive billow of grey clouds was seen filling up the sky.

Upon seeing that, Heather thought to herself, This rain's going to take years. Seems like I'm not going out today. Suddenly, she had an epiphany and dialed Leon's number.

Missing the first call, Leon reluctantly accepted the second. Hearing Heather's voice, Leon, who was feeling rather lethargic, mumbled, "Do you know what time it is, Heather?" After a long night of forcing himself into sleep, he felt as if he had only closed his eyes for a few minutes only for his slumber to be interrupted by her call.

"I wish to start the business in the New Year," Heather announced, getting straight to the point.

Hearing her out-of-the-blue desire to postpone their business startup, Leon got curious about her plans. He was wide awake now as he curiously questioned, "Why do you want to delay the startup?"

"I have my plans." Unwilling to sit back and relax, Heather intended to investigate the bombing, thus the business postponement.

"It's not a good time to be mindless, Heather," he muttered helplessly while wondering what she had gone through yesterday to make such a decision.

Since she had already settled on that, there was no way to change her mind. Instantly, she hung up on Leon, not wanting to hear any debates from Leon. While Leon was easy to win over, Paige's parents were no easy feat to take on. After having set a startup date, Heather thought a spontaneous change to the schedule was rather hard to profess to them.

All of a sudden, Leon sent a text over, 'I'm heading to your place now.' Much to her surprise, Leon actually cared about the business. It has only been a night. How can he be so headstrong?

When the thunder struck once again, Heather was reminded of the awful weather and thus phoned Leon to reject his visit.

"It's not a good weather to come out, Leon. Just stay put in the hotel." The reasons she defied his visit were firstly because accidents were prone to happen to Leon if he were to go out under such hazardous weather and secondly, she simply didn't want him to show up at the Langston Residence.

The storm beat down heavily and Leon stared out the window at the rainstorm—one that would give a hard time to the city's drainage system. Consequently, he walked back to his bed and curled up in it. Since it was indeed inconvenient to go out, he decided to properly talk it out with Heather through the phone.

"Tell me—why are we postponing the launch?" Leon enunciated clearly as he was thoroughly clueless when it came to her self-willed actions.

"I thought it'll be more meaningful to commence business on New Year's Day," she replied casually, though not entirely insincere.

Hearing her blurting the perfunctory answer, Leon didn't know what to feel and unable to accept such a baseless excuse, he scowled.

"I feel obliged to find out the reasons behind the explosion yesterday. If I can't ensure my own safety, how am I supposed to concentrate on the business?" Bothered sick by the messy things happening around her, she tossed everything about entrepreneurship aside.

Especially after the disaster occurred the night before, she couldn't bring herself to pretend as if nothing had happened, so she was determined to find out the mastermind behind all that.

Lately, she felt like she was constantly being attacked from all angles and it was as if someone was manipulating her life in the dark. By no means was it the plans of God but the doings of men.

“Yesterday was a warning to me. You’re not the target.” Leon was confident that apart from his own family, no one was bold enough to perform such a daring act so openly, thus it must have been their doing.

“If so, can you explain the text message to me?” Heather queried as she was unable to completely trust what Leon said. After hearing Matthias’ discovery, Heather, who had been skeptical since the very start, grew even suspicious of her own relevance in the case.

Already bearing a suspect in mind as he couldn’t think of another, Leon responded, “People love making stuff up—it’s just one of their things, so don’t worry about it.”

“We both have our doubts and there’s no way to convince each other.” Since the truth was still an enigma, any explanation was nothing but empty inferences; thus, Heather was unable to take his words entirely.

Once again, she hung up on Leon, who wanted to give her a rational clarification but instead gradually found more loopholes in his words.

Being rudely hung up on, Leon vexedly gazed at the phone as if he was giving Heather, who was right in front of him, the death stare. Looking at the atrocious weather, he decided not to go to the Langston Residence after all. With that, what was more fulfilling than snuggling under the bed sheets?

Based on his understanding of her, he knew that she must have been racking her brains on how to propose the postponement to Paige. Although Heather was always upfront with Leon, that wasn’t always the case with Paige.

After deciding to forget Heather and her triggering attitude, Leon turned the heat up by two degrees since the rain would cool down the room anyway.

Unlike in Europe, Bradford City’s chilly climate was quite a challenge for Leon—who loved himself a warm space—to get used to. It was only fall, yet it was already freezing like in the middle of winter, as if autumn quickly skipped to winter in mere days.

Resting her arms on the window frame, Heather blankly stared at the downpour on the other side of the window. When the rain eventually ended, the weather would become freezing. At this rate, it wouldn't take long to snow.

Unexpectedly, the winter in the South was as cold while snow was already falling in the North. After a long period of not seeing any snow, Bradford City would get snowy very soon.

Suddenly, there were taps on her door. Turning around, she ordered at the door, "Come in." Since she had forgotten to lock her door, it was accessible from the other side.

When the butler showed his face after opening the door, Heather, who was still in her pajamas, covered her chest. Unlike any other person, she had forgotten to change into her winter sleepwear after having gotten distracted by many happenings.

"Miss Heather, the Old Master wishes to see you in the study." Judging by the butler's look, Heather intuitively knew it wasn't going to be anything good.

"Let me get changed first," she responded.

Upon hearing that, the butler, who didn't dare to enter her bedroom, immediately withdrew the revealed half of his body and shut the door without delay.

After watching the butler taking his seemingly guilty leave, Heather took off her pajamas and changed into a set of casual homewear before heading to the study room.

As she had the most excellent reaction speed among the Langstons, she didn't mind the door being unlocked. Besides, nobody was bold enough to charge through her door without permission.

Swiftly, she put on her clothes and had a quick wash up, exposing her delicate bare face. When she pulled the door open, she saw Everly who was just walking down the stairs. Despite having eye contact, none of them initiated a greeting.

Seeing how Everly had put some effort into her makeup so early in the morning, seemingly heading out under such weather, Heather couldn't help but feel that something was off, but she didn't put too much mind into it.

Nonetheless, when Everly walked away, Heather was stunned by her figure, unable to determine whether it was her misconception that Everly's womanly charms seemed to have overflowed lately.

The once little girl had turned into such a fine woman so rapidly. However, Heather suppressed that thought as that wasn't the time for her to dwell on that.

Then, she continued heading toward the study located on the other side of the hallway while imagining the possible reasons she had been summoned for. The first possibility she could think of was that Robert now knew about the explosion.

He must have found out about it from the newspaper... But the serious news would not be highlighting me, so perhaps it is the entertainment section? Since entertainment journalists loved forging stories as they liked, Heather shivered at the thought of the photos taken from the previous night.

She gently knocked on the study room door and she could hear Robert's voice from inside the room. "Come in."

She pushed the door open and there was only Robert alone in the room with a newspaper laid down on the table in front of him, just as she predicted.

In the end, Robert started with words that made Heather's heart skip a beat. "You made the headlines again."

"I can explain," she told him to avoid a misunderstanding. Since there was nothing to hide, she might as well lay everything out. "The news is a mess. Let me explain it to you myself."

"Save it. I trust you, but..." Robert took a pause as he gave Heather a sharp gaze. "I'm telling you that if anyone messes with you or our family, I will personally see to the matter."

At once, Heather let out a sigh of relief after knowing he didn't call her over to lecture her but rather, to show her his love and support. At such a moment, Robert understood that Heather could use some assistance from her family and decided not to leave his granddaughter alone.

“Thank you, Grandpa.” Feeling a little tingle in her nose and some moisture in her eyes, Heather held back the urge to cry as she wouldn’t allow herself to do so in front of others.

“Silly girl, you don’t have to thank me for anything. Well, do you have any suspects in mind?” In an instant, he fluidly switched from a benign grandfather to an objective one.

“I suspect that it was the Moriartys.” Heather directly expressed her suspicion as she couldn’t think of any other.

Hearing that, Robert lowered his head and stared at the newspaper. After a while, he showed his face and muttered, “I don’t think so.” Although the Moriartys had their reasons to make a move on the Langstons, they wouldn’t have taken such extreme measures to prove their point.

“Why not?” Even Robert had spared the benefit of the doubt toward the Moriartys, so perhaps the incident wasn’t actually targeted at her but instead, at Leon.

“Needless to say, our relationship with the Moriarty Family isn’t bad enough to threaten the people around you, let alone bomb threats. Besides, they never stray far from the purpose, so it isn’t their habit to involve irrelevant parties,” Robert claimed, knowing the Moriartys wouldn’t have taken such severe, shameless actions.

“Last night, Leon told me that he was the target and it was a warning from his family,” Heather revealed to Robert. In the end, it seemed that Leon was indeed telling the truth.

“That’s very likely. Leon isn’t a simple one, is he? His family background is complicated and there wasn’t much I could dig up about him.” Even after having his men run a background check on Leon, Robert hadn’t gotten any useful information. Other than the basics, all other information seemed to have been erased on purpose.

Standing before Love Chapter 561

Since there was no point in discussing it further, the duo naturally stopped talking. However, Robert’s attitude had given Heather an immense assurance. Knowing that her grandfather chose to side with her, she no longer saw any point to worry.

After exiting the study, Heather pulled out her phone that had been buzzing and opened up her Messenger, only to be greeted by Leon's swarming texts. Unexpectedly, the last one grabbed her attention. 'You'll need my help with Paige.'

Reading the obvious blackmail, she helplessly typed out a reply. Never would she have expected Leon to be this reactive.

'Thanks for the help.' Since it was not much of a threat, she didn't mind accepting his help.

Reading her response, Leon subconsciously frowned as he realized he was, as expected, no match of hers. Firmly believing that his family was indeed responsible for the explosion, he was unwilling to compromise by letting the matter affect the start up of their business.

'I think it's better that I head over to your place. Some things cannot be discussed via a mere call.' Leon insisted on visiting the Langston Residence as there were some particulars regarding his family that he would rather disclose face-to-face.

'There's no need for that. I have no interest in your family feud. Our partnership bears no relevance to your personal affairs.' Heather rejected his visitation right away, having no intention to get involved in Leon's ambiguous family matters. Since she had agreed to partner up with him, she decided not to meddle in his shady family business.

Upon seeing that text, Leon was taken aback. It was as if something had thoroughly changed her mind with how she wasn't one bit interested about his family.

'Rest up. Bad weather doesn't go well with discussion.' Fearing that she might lose a good friend, Heather no longer had the desire to further conversate with Leon.

Since nothing was ever elementary as it appeared, why not just stay a simpleton in such a complex world? Despite that, she would continue looking into the detonation. If Leon's family was actually pulling the strings, she would let him handle it himself.

Nevertheless, if there was a one in a million chance that the Moriartys were behind it, she would never let them off the hook so easily. Although Caleb

hadn't been showing up lately, Heather knew that he was never far away from her.

As if they were always lurking around the Langston Residence, standing by for a lethal strike to the Langstons, Heather couldn't drop her worry of the Moriartys being aware that their conflict could drag the Hart family down. However, given how the Locke Group had been troubling the Hart Group, perhaps someone from the former did collude with the Moriartys.

With that, Heather couldn't be sure that Matthias had no hand in this. After all, he was the director of the corporation, so opposing the Hart Group must have been his command.

Linking all the happenings together, it was as if the opponents had laid down a chess board and Heather could only play it safe. Up until now, the Langston Group hadn't stirred up any major issues and the Moriartys were just staying put. No one could tell what they were waiting for.

And so, Heather decided to meet Myra at the same time to look for a chance to speak with Tony regarding the matter. Without having her breakfast, she immediately departed from the Langston Residence.

In this stormy weather, Myra suddenly got a call from Heather. "Open up, Myra. I'm at your door."

As the go-getter she was, Heather would never delay her plans she had come up with even for a minute. When Myra opened the door, Heather looked somewhat damp—it seemed like she got caught in the rain.

Myra's gaze fell upon Heather's right hand that was holding a foldable umbrella. Despite having put up an umbrella, she still managed to get herself wet, indicating how terrific the storm was.

"Is Tony at work?" Heather questioned, going straight to the point.

Welcoming her into the house, Myra answered, "He's having breakfast. What's the urgency?"

However, Heather only hummed in response. By then, she had already decided to go against Robert's will—to work with the Locke Group. However, it was possible that the Locke Group was already affiliated with the Moriartys, so she thought forming an alliance with the Hart family was the safer bet.

Reading the time on his watch, Tony had anticipated a traffic jam in the storm that would hinder him from reaching his workplace on time.

Clueless about whomever it was that Myra opened the door for, he curiously stared toward the door. A minute ago, Myra silently left her seat and walked toward the door. Before he even realized it, he heard the house door opening.

Heather, on the other hand, entered the house and put her umbrella aside. In all honesty, both Myra and Tony were simultaneously surprised and baffled at her sudden appearance.

“Director Hart,” Heather courteously greeted.

At that, Tony turned to Myra—only to see her confused expression—before politely asking, “What’s the matter, Miss Heather?”

“There’s something urgent I came for. If I could trouble you for a bit...” As a drop of sweat fell from Heather’s face, Tony felt somewhat odd as it was his first time seeing her so desperate.

As she donned a bare face, no one could have associated her current appearance with a strong, independent business woman. Perhaps she had indeed come with pressing news.

“Work?” Despite saying that, Tony had no idea what business could make her so restless.

“Yes.” Giving him a knowing look, Heather hinted that she didn’t want it known to Myra.

Tony never liked discussing work at home and after receiving Heather’s underlying meaning, he suggested, “Why don’t you follow me to work to talk about it?”

Since the matter should be kept from Myra, they could properly talk about it in the Hart Group’s building.

“Sure.” As Heather answered, she thought that she might have been too impulsive given the fact that she had even come to the Hart Residence when she could have waited for Tony in the Hart Group.

Watching as Heather and Tony leave as they put up umbrellas of their own, Myra, who had been clueless since the beginning, couldn't help but feel a little left out.

Although they were behaving formally with each other, they seemed like criminals that were avoiding suspicion. With that, Myra couldn't help but wonder what it was that had Heather rush over to the residence.

Shortly after, the both of them got into their respective vehicles. A lot of times, some women hoped their best friends would befriend their partners while the rest would expect them to keep their distance.

Myra belonged to the former as she wished that Heather and Tony could get along. Since she had utmost trust in them and their qualities, she believed there wouldn't be anything messy happening between them.

As the storm continued to raid Bradford City, every vehicle seemed like a mini canoe drifting in the endless sea. Gazing out the window, Heather looked rather dazed, and she was perturbed by the fact that she was actually considering bailing on her own decided plans.

Thinking of Robert, she couldn't help but feel like she had betrayed him and a weird sensation surged in her heart. At that moment, she was hesitant on whether to confess the matter to Tony. Weirdly, the confidence she initially had was now nowhere to be found.

Very soon, the both of them had arrived at the Hart Group. Consequently, Tony exited his car while Heather, after spacing out for a while, weakly got out of hers.

Following Tony's footsteps, Heather worried that her trailing Tony into the building might not be a good idea. After all, it had been a hell of an autumn, so she intended to avoid any unnecessary trouble, knowing paparazzis were as savage as hungry beasts.

"Go ahead, Director Hart. I'll be with you shortly." Worried about the adhesive shutterbugs, Heather decided to stay in the parking lot for a little longer to steer clear of any possible sneak shots.

Once the fearless lady that never bat an eye to scandals nor cared enough to explain things herself, Heather had finally acknowledged the true dread of rumors. Back in the Langston Group, one of the partners had publicly shamed

her with rumors during a banquet, indicating how a woman's pride was always disregarded in the real world.

And so, Heather reentered her car and waited inside for another quarter of an hour before walking into the building alone. Apart from the fact that it was her first time visiting the Hart Group, her pretty bare face prevented the employees in the building from recognizing her—the mighty Heather Langston.

Without taking a detour, Heather walked to the director's office, only to be stopped by Tony's secretary, Leo. At that moment, even Leo couldn't tell it was indeed Heather.

"Do you have an appointment, Miss?" Leo interrogated.

"Mr. Clark." Heather revealed a tender smile as she continued, "I'll have to trouble you to notify your staff. I'm Heather Langston."

Hearing that, Leo dazedly glanced at her a few times. Although her current look was as beguiling as ever, it was a whole new semblance from her usual appearance.

"I'm sorry. You may enter." Instantly, Leo felt embarrassed for making such a rookie mistake. No wonder Tony said Heather was coming!

Perturbed, Leo pulled the door open for Heather as he lowered his head, feeling too shameful to look her in the eye. That was the reason she always had makeup on. Otherwise, no one could recognize the robust identity she possessed.

Of course, Heather would sometimes enjoy looking at her own bare face. Although she was already pretty without makeup, perhaps even possessing a tinge of Everly's attractiveness, it was no way appropriate to be presented in the industry.

At her presence, Tony invited her for a seat with a smile. Immediately, the tension that was on her face was relieved. Recalling her awful scowl, Tony got curious about her thoughts.

"I'm sorry for earlier. That was rude of me," Heather apologetically expressed after having shocked Myra with her visit.

“It’s not a big deal. You must carry some important news, huh?” He spoke to Heather with a welcoming smile since she was Myra’s closest friend.

After the incident at the hot springs, Tony had no idea if he had left Heather a bad impression. After all, he felt guilty after having bashed her that day despite her genuine concern toward him and Myra as a couple.

Presently, Heather dropped the courteousness and went straight to the point. “Do you know anything about the Moriartys?”

Hearing her question, Tony deliberately peered at her. Undoubtedly, he had heard some things about the Moriartys. Perhaps she comes bearing news about the Moriarty Family?

“I worry that the Moriartys might have come to Bradford City to have their revenge over a feud from many years ago.” At the thought of Caleb, Heather felt that he would bring bloodshed upon Bradford City.

“Revenge?” Tony repeated the word as he didn’t quite grasp her message.

“Back then, the Langstons, Harts, and the Moriartys had a relationship but after a certain event, the three families held grudges against each other. Do you know about this?” Heather questioned. Although she didn’t know how much Tony understood about the families’ history, she thought it was best for them both to be upfront.

Unwilling to talk about the past, Tony stared at Heather thoughtfully, as he wasn’t prepared to discuss such matters with her.

Hearing no response from him, Heather switched to a more friendlier approach. “Caleb’s already in Bradford City. But you already knew that, didn’t you?”