

Standing before Love Chapter 562

The air was tense as Tony would never have expected Heather to bring forth such a matter. At the very least, it wasn't one for them to deal with privately.

Since it involved two families, he couldn't make decisions on his own. However, Heather wasn't one to be irrational either, so what on earth made her do such a thing?

"So this is the work you wished to speak to me about?" Since the relationship between Langstons and the Hart family had been hostile for the longest time, it would only continue that way. Knowing that, Tony couldn't see the discussion going anywhere.

Disappointed, Heather frowned at Tony as his attitude made it apparent that the Hart family had no intention to reconcile with the Langstons, and the grudges they held against each other would not dissolve merely because of the Moriartys' interference.

"I've heard that the Moriartys have been working with the Locke Group in secret. Given how long they have hidden in the dark, there's no way the Langston family is their sole target." Heather felt the need to remind Tony that the Moriartys would give the Hart family a hard time. She even added some baseless deductions of her own.

Hearing her outlining that point, Tony was slightly stupefied. Indeed, it was uncanny for an unstable corporation like the Locke Group to start a conflict with the Harts.

Having assumed that Matthias' power was but a façade and after listening to Heather, who apparently knew much more than him, Tony felt that things weren't as simple as he imagined.

However, he continued to stay rational so as not to make himself anxious over Heather's baseless rumors. "Where did you hear that from?" he questioned.

"I'm still searching for evidence." Heather was much more upfront with Tony than with Robert.

Now that he thought about it, Heather and Matthias had been close lately, so perhaps this was a fragment of her scheme. Bearing that in mind, Tony focused on Heather's composed face.

All this time he had been underestimating her, but it seemed like she was far more formidable than he assumed. She was so skilled at hiding her emotions there was no telling if she was sincere or faking it.

“So how do I play into this?” Having figured out the general idea of Heather’s intentions, Tony assumed she had come looking for help. Since she was earnest enough with her opinions, she must have come up with certain strategies.

“You and I both know that our families aren’t exactly on good terms, so having them cooperate is near impossible. However, that doesn’t affect our capability to work hand-in-hand in private,” Heather confessed her intentions. In fact, when she was on her way to the Hart Group, she had already predicted that Tony would never agree for their families to team up. As such, she could only compromise and make her attempt with Tony.

Without voicing his agreement, he waited for Heather to continue. Since she had approached him by herself, she must have come up with a master plan.

“My company will start operating on New Year’s day so before that, I’ll have all the time I need to investigate the Moriartys,” Heather proceeded while studying every subtle change on Tony’s expression as she attempted to figure out whether he was willing to cooperate.

Unfortunately for her, Tony was as calm as a clam, indifferent even. Perhaps the incentives weren’t appealing enough for him since businessmen had always reached an agreement based on the benefits they offered each other.

“Have you watched the news today?” All of a sudden, Heather switched to a new, irrelevant topic. Since he wasn’t at all interested in what she was professing, perhaps he would be at what she was about to say next.

“I haven’t.” Knowing this was Heather’s setup, he patiently waited for her to make her move.

Pulling out her phone, she swiped to the news and presented it to Tony. The headline was about the explosion from last night.

In a flash, Tony scanned through the news. Published alongside the words was a photo of a woman’s back with Heather’s likeness. There was even a Miss Langston mentioned in the news. In that instant, Tony understood what was going on.

“Somebody set off a bomb in my apartment. It was as terrifying as it was unpredictable.” Heather knew that safety was a priority to Tony and he would hate to have the people surrounding Myra get hurt.

“And the Moriartys are behind this?” Tony curiously asked as he recalled how he and Myra were stalked back when they were overseas. That alone proved how influential and threatening the Moriarty family was.

“Honestly, it’s still unknown so I’ll have to make some time looking into it.” She was unable to provide a clear answer. After all, if she could, there wouldn’t be a need for her to approach Tony.

“Let’s talk about this again when you finally know for sure.” While Tony was still reluctant to agree, he would definitely protect Myra without slacking off for even a second.

At that, Heather helplessly blurted out, “Since when have you been so stubborn...” After so much talking, Tony was still unwavering and that made her feel perturbed.

Shaking his head, he laughingly stated, “I’m not being stubborn. I’ll lend help however I can if you need it. However, partnering up requires strategies and executions. You don’t just form an alliance through words.”

After circling around with her words, Heather still hadn’t revealed her plans on how they could work together. Evidently, it seemed like she hadn’t completely thought this through, so could anyone blame Tony for not agreeing to cooperate?

“So far, there are two unknown particulars that are stopping me from working with you.” As everything Heather had mentioned was the point of forming an alliance, how could he agree to be affiliated if she wasn’t even sure of it herself?

“Since we’re currently unable to form a real partnership, we shall wait until certain things are set in stone.” As Tony expressed that, he couldn’t figure out why she couldn’t think through the matter at hand.

Heather, on the other hand, requested for a definite answer to the question from him. “My reason for coming today is only to ask if you are willing to form a treaty with me.”

“As I said, I’ll provide assistance however I can if you wish for it,” he emphasized once again. Women and their redundancies!

At once, Heather’s tensed up face alleviated as she responded with a subtle smirk, “Take care of Myra.”

“No one in Bradford City can lay a finger on her,” he claimed confidently, as he intended to protect Myra no matter what happened to the city.

Heather trusted his capabilities and she knew that Myra would be safe as long as the latter was under Tony’s care. Meanwhile, deep down, she was contemplating whether to see Caleb for herself. As the general of Leisfield, he must have his reasons for staying in Bradford City for so long.

After leaving the Hart Group, Heather drove her car under the heavy downpour. Despite the raging storm going on, she somehow felt at peace.

Having completed her mission for the day, although she wasn’t able to get both the Langstons and the Harts to work together, she was able to receive Tony’s explicit consent showing his support.

So far, Heather was still clueless about Tony’s true power, except for the fact that he must still have a remarkable influence in the United States after staying there for so long.

Once Tony participated in the fight, it would be impossible for the opposite parties to trump so easily. Therefore, she should hasten the alliance to make advances on her countermeasures.

In such weather, although the number of vehicles on the road was significantly less, navigating through it was no easy feat as one was only a minor mistake away from an accident.

Fortunately, Heather was quite proficient in driving. Up until now, she had only encountered two accidents, both thanks to Matthias. While one was merely an accident, the other was purposefully planned.

As Matthias’ face popped up in her head, she subconsciously grinned, wondering what the man was up to at the time. As if they had some kind of connection, Matthias, at that moment, was also thinking about her and he was about to call her.

Staring at her ringing phone, Heather waited until the traffic light turned red before answering the call. For safety's sake, she didn't call while handling the steering wheel with only one hand. Furthermore, the merciless storm was restricting her vision so she couldn't afford to be reckless. What wicked weather!

Just when Matthias was about to give up after three consecutive calls, Heather picked up at the last one. Instead of reprimanding her for missing his calls, his first words were "Heather".

Hearing that, Heather felt rather awkward. Despite having asked him not to address her in that tone, he just wouldn't listen. Nonetheless, after hearing it from him for so many times, she eventually got used to it as her desire to remind him waned.

"Are you at work or at home?" Receiving no response, Matthias softly inquired just in case she was in a conference meeting.

"I'm outside. Have you forgotten that I've stopped working at the Langston Group?" Feeling his questions were rather deliberate, Heather was somewhat baffled.

"Don't you have a studio?" Knowing very well that Heather had been preoccupied with starting her own company, Matthias didn't spit an ignorant question.

"Enough about that. How may I help you?" Having received his call all of a sudden, she naturally thought he called her for a specific reason.

"I just wanted to hear your voice," he stated flirtatiously, to which Heather had goosebumps upon hearing.

"If there's nothing else, I'm going to hang up. I'm driving right now," she claimed, about to end the call.

As he could hear her revving engine through the call, he expressed with concern, "You should head home quickly. It's not a good day to wander around in your car." Worried about her safety, Matthias couldn't fathom why she would take the risk traveling in such disastrous weather.

Then, Heather gave a light grunt and quickly hung up. Recently, Matthias hadn't been like himself and he was constantly doing things that were rather meaningless.

Initially, she planned to head home but her mind suddenly changed. And so, she changed directions and proceeded to the hotel Leon was staying at. If it was as Leon described, he might still be in danger because as of then, no one could tell what the bomber's intention and next move were.

When she appeared before Leon with her bare face, the man, still half asleep, extended his hand to pinch her face.

"Does it hurt?" Having not expected a bare-faced Heather to exist, Leon felt that he must still be sleeping and that was but a Heather in his dreams.

Brutally, she smacked his hand away and countered, "Does that hurt?"

It did, in fact. Leon was in so much pain that he was literally gritting his teeth as he stared at his swelling hand. Perhaps Heather had put too much force in the smack.

"Why are you here, Heather?" he questioned, feeling bewildered. Turning to the window, he could only see rain outside, which meant that Heather had overcome the storm to meet him.

"I was afraid that you might get bored being alone here," she deflected with a fabricated excuse.

"Wow! Since when have you become a samaritan?" Skeptical, he felt that she must have come over with a purpose.

"You and your cursed mouth. Mind your words!" She replied with another smack on his head. I came all the way here because I was worried, yet I am being greeted by your foolishness. Hmph—looks like I shouldn't have come!

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Skeptical about Heather's words, Leon stared at her suspiciously while giving her a mischievous grin, feeling happy to see her in the hotel.

"Did you sleep well?" Heather changed the topic because she thought it was a hassle to attempt to clear his doubts.

Leon looked out of the window with his eyes squinted, and the dark circles under his eyes became more apparent. Truth was, Heather had already noticed this but she deliberately quizzed him despite knowing his restlessness. Seeing him so fatigued, she continued to mock him, “Seems like you didn’t get enough sleep yesterday. Serves you right for being so stubborn about changing rooms.”

Much to her surprise, Leon remained silent. After a while, he blurted discontentedly, “You came to persuade me to delay the opening.” He didn’t wish to delay the launch of their company and he thought that Heather was being impulsive.

“You’re in over your head. I’ve already made that decision, so there’s no need to persuade you.” Being the lone wolf she was, she would not be swayed by Leon.

“You’re being ruthless, Heather,” Leon countered.

“You have no say in this. As for the investigation, however, you may prove yourself useful.” Since Leon was sharper in investigations, Heather intended to drag him into it.

Puzzled, Leon peered at her as he wondered why she was so persistent on getting to the bottom of the incident.

“You’re aware of the dangers of digging into this?” Assuming it was his own family that was wreaking havoc, he felt compelled to remind her of the risks. Knowing the lengths they would go, he wished she wouldn’t interfere.

“I need closure—it’s important to me.” Since she couldn’t directly look into whether the Lockes and the Moriartys were working together in secret, she could only start from the explosion.

Heaving a sigh, Leon fell back onto his bed, utterly infuriated by her. “You’re really arrogant, Heather. What do you want from me? A direct confrontation?” He asked tiredly, as if he was terrified of the person he hinted about.

“I’m not doing it your way. After all, I only wish to know whether the Moriartys are behind this,” Heather expressed her true thoughts, not wanting to burden him.

“Why won’t you just believe me? It’s really not the Moriartys. After all this time, do you still not know that Caleb merely wants to have you by his side and not hurt you?” Leon questioned in rage. He had made this assumption after having analyzed the statistics for a long time. Although he didn’t want it revealed to her, he felt the need to at that moment.

“So what? Sure, he won’t hurt me but there’s no guarantee he won’t attack my family. Even if he won’t lay a finger on me, he’ll surely give my family a hard time.” Although Heather was surprised by Leon’s information, it was as she said—Caleb would never give up harassing the Langstons.

Feeling lethargic, Leon merely wanted to lie on the bed and do nothing as he did not have the energy to continue debating with Heather, but she just wouldn’t cut him some slack.

“What I’m saying is that since Caleb has no hand in the detonation, why would you even bother looking into it?” Leon was going insane out of frustration from Heather’s unusualness.

“I wish to face him. It’s like he’s vanished into thin air after disappearing for so long. Regardless of his intentions, I wish to look for him and make sure of his plans.” With that, Heather made her goal of meeting Caleb apparent.

Seeing how her aims grew more dangerous than the last, Leon sprung out of bed and exclaimed, “No way! Caleb’s a real snake! You shouldn’t start messing with him.”

“I can’t just sit around enjoying my peace. Sooner or later, I’ll have to face it anyway, so I might as well take the initiative to approach him instead of waiting.” As she no longer had the desire to drag the matter any further, she decided to be the one to find the Moriartys since they wouldn’t show up.

So far, the Moriarty Family hadn’t made a move, so Heather couldn’t figure out whether they were waiting for an opportunity for an ambush or for the Langstons to make a compromise. Since they were still friendly on the outside, Heather thought she might as well use that to her advantage and approach Caleb to find out anything she could.

“Since when were you this dense, Heather? You’re oversimplifying things!” Seeing how Heather was growing irrational, Leon scoffed coldly. The Heather he once knew wouldn’t have made such rash decisions.

“How should I know my odds at winning if I don’t at least give it a try?” Since she had made up her mind, whatever he said would not make her waver.

“Fine, then. I’ll not stop you, but I’ll not jump with you either.” Since they didn’t see eye-to-eye, Leon decided not to give her his support.

“Fine. I won’t force your hand,” Heather claimed apathetically. Based on their stiff exchanges, it seemed she really had ticked him off.

“From now on, I’ll only put my mind on the company. Do not come looking for me for anything else,” he furiously stated as he signaled for her to leave the room.

As a result, both of them were irked by each other. Before Heather rushed out the door, however, she gave Leon a final glance. “I’ll prove myself right.”

Bang! Leon slammed the door shut. Then, he lay against the door, perturbed by Heather’s self-destructive behavior. Despite being told that Caleb had no intentions to harm her, she insisted on taking him on. She is truly offering herself up on a silver platter!

Despite their conflict, Leon couldn’t bring himself to calm down as his friend walked toward her fall. Hence, he decided to inform Matthias about this. Since there were certain details that he couldn’t disclose, he planned to only tell him the causes and effects.

As of now, he could only wish for Matthias to protect Heather. Unfortunately, after having run a check on Matthias’ background, Leon discovered that Matthias had his plate full as well.

Unlike the impeccable façade he donned, he wasn’t as influential and powerful within the Locke Family. Thus, he could also be troubled by his family members.

Aware of that, Leon suspected that Matthias had already known about the collaboration between the Moriartys and the Lockes but could only do as told. And sadly, the only one who could have Matthias down on his knees was the head of the Locke Family, which led to Leon’s fear of the possible pact between the two families.

In the end, Leon pulled out his laptop that he always carried with him. Luckily, he hadn't left the laptop at home during the explosion, or all the data he had collected would have turned to dust.

After going through the Locke Family's information, Leon couldn't find anything about the shady, mysterious head of the family. Even on various media platforms, he could not find any photos of the Lockes' head, nor any audio files either. Regardless, Leon couldn't grasp the intention behind the enigma or what they were preparing for.

Despite the lack of information, Leon knew that the Lockes were no decent businesspeople. Whether it be things that were immoral or unlawful, they had done it all. However, the information Leon had at hand suggested that Matthias had no hand in the family's fishy business, and it was his leader and relatives that were behind the obscene acts.

Pondering on this, Leon wished to understand how much Matthias knew about his family's inside jobs. Nevertheless, he wasn't sure whether Matthias was actually working with his rotten relatives. Thus, Leon could only make a bet for now.

While he scrolled over the pages of data, he was contemplating how he should approach Matthias about the matter and more importantly, whether to reveal the truth to him.

Either way, the only thing Leon was sure of was that Matthias' affection for Heather was genuine—that was the only leverage Leon had. Regrettably, Leon wasn't Matthias so he couldn't tell if Matthias' feelings for Heather were strong enough for him to go against his own family.

Up until now, Leon had stressed himself very much for Heather's sake, assisting her both openly and discreetly. Judging by the Moriarty Family's power, Leon thought that the only group that could take the family on was his own. If the Moriartys were to take action, perhaps even the Lockes had no way to stop them.

Needless to say, Leon hadn't the influence nor the capabilities to help Heather with his family's power as he was unable to persuade his grandfather to lend a hand.

Despite that, there was a way that could guarantee his help, and it was one that got Leon scratching his head and biting his lips—get Heather to be his

wife and put a baby in her. To Leon, who had never pondered about marriage and having a child, the idea was indeed crazy. Besides, it wasn't like Heather would agree to it.

Skipping the impractical method, Leon concluded that he wouldn't be able to get his family's help. Even if it was a matter of life or death, he would not look for his family.

On the other side, a ringtone pierced through the silence. Knowing that she wouldn't be receiving any calls from anyone except Matthias, Heather immediately locked her phone as she wasn't in the mood to speak to anyone.

After having called thrice and with none of them being picked up, Matthias simply sent her a text. As a matter of fact, he had received a text message earlier mentioning Heather was in danger and urging him to hurry over to Violeat Hotel.

In order to make sure the message wasn't actually spam, Matthias wished to call her for confirmation, not knowing it was Leon behind it.

In fact, Leon wanted to test if Matthias would come to him. If he rushed over without any hesitation, that would prove he really loved Heather and lost his rationality in the process.

After a while, seeing how Matthias hadn't responded, Leon figured he was calling Heather. Leon knew that she wouldn't answer any calls or reply to any texts that weren't coming from Robert or Myra.

Indeed, feeling irritated by Matthias' volley of calls and texts, Heather immediately turned her phone off without even glancing at his texts.

Her temper would get even worse whenever she was upset. And so, when Matthias made another call, he noticed that she had already switched off her phone. As it was rare for her to do so, he couldn't help but worry.

To verify the text, Matthias attempted to dial the number of the sender, and Leon revealed a victorious grin when he saw the former's call.

However, Leon chose not to answer the call and continued to text. Hastily, he typed down a series of messages and sent them over to Matthias.

‘Since you have the time to ask for proof, why don’t you come over and see for yourself? Or perhaps, Director Locke, you don’t care one bit about Miss Heather’s safety. Well, that’s all I have for you. It’s all up to you whether to come over or not.’ Leon sent an aggressively provocative message. At that moment, Heather’s whereabouts were constantly changing, so Matthias would be forced to come over since he couldn’t determine her position.

‘Which room in Violeast Hotel?’ There was no way Matthias could afford to barge into different rooms to locate the sender based on the urgency of the matter at hand.

‘Fifth floor.’ After revealing the floor he was in to Matthias, Leon swiftly erased the number of the burner phone and waited as a show presented itself.

He wanted to see if Matthias would check on every room on the fifth floor. If Matthias was able to locate him, Leon would share with him Heather’s ballsy plans and try to have the other man protect her.

As for what would come next, it all lay with Matthias’ determination as Leon hoped that Matthias wouldn’t let him down. After all, it was just one floor.

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Before Matthias’ arrival, Leon connected his laptop to the satellite and found out Heather’s whereabouts. It had been a long while yet she was still on the roads, reluctant to head home.

Accordingly, Leon attempted to call her, only to find out that she had turned her phone off. No wonder! He revealed a helpless grin as he mused, She’s so persistent!

Looks like his actions had hurt her. Since he was unable to support his friend into doing the wrong things, he could only think of righting her wrongs.

Even now, Leon was trying to prove that point with his actions—baiting Matthias to see how concerned he was about Heather.

If Matthias chose to be smart and strategic in this case, that would prove he hadn’t fallen deep enough for her. Back when Leon was all in for Heather, the Langstons used her as bait to lure him home. Although he considered himself sharp-witted, he didn’t contemplate too much back then and eventually fell for such ridiculous excuses. Perhaps he was blinded by love!

Now, Leon wished to draw the same card—luring Matthias over. And all he had to do next was to wait for the latter to knock on his door.

Surprisingly, Matthias showed up much faster than he had expected. Pulling the door open, Leon saw a drenched Matthias standing outside.

Looking at Matthias, who was soaked after running around under the storm without an umbrella, Leon felt a gush of satisfaction in his heart. After all, they were technically love rivals.

“How may I help you?” Leon pretended as if he didn’t already know Matthias.

“Is Heather here?” Matthias inquired with a frighteningly dark expression. Terrified, Leon swore to himself not to reveal to Matthias that it was him behind the text message.

“Why are you looking for her?” Leon acted as if he was clueless.

Gazing at him, Matthias responded, “I know you’re her junior, so she must be inside. Let me in!”

Leon then looked at him perplexedly as he countered, “What a load of bull! Have you lost it?” he muttered as he pointed at his head.

“Sod off!” Shoving him away, Matthias entered the room as he yelled, “Heather? Heather!”

Although Leon stayed in one of the most luxurious rooms, the room wasn’t at all complex as everything fell in sight at the entrance. Crossing his arms, Leon stated, “She left earlier, so she won’t respond even if you shout yourself hoarse.”

Upon hearing that Heather was no longer here, Matthias turned around and walked toward the exit, only to be stopped by Leon. Upon seeing that, the former said, “Let me through.”

Snickering, Leon scorned, “You enter and exit as you want. What do you think my place is?” Of course, at that moment, he had to irritate Matthias in order to see how perturbed the other man was.

“Please move—I wish to look for Heather. Do you know where she is?” Truth was, he could not stop worrying, not until he found Heather.

“And I wish to know why you are here and what’s your business with her.” Leon was so into his act that the disdain on his face seemed genuine.

“Tell me where did she go.” Suddenly, Matthias grasped Leon’s collar, effectively exhibiting his fighting skills that were higher than that of Heather’s. With just a swing of an arm, he quickly subdued Leon.

“Ouch! Let go of me. I can’t breathe!” Not expecting Matthias to be so terrifying when he got triggered, Leon figured that he should proceed with a rather amicable method or he would be digging himself a grave.

“So do you know where she is?” Matthias repeated the question as he was about to lift Leon up with one hand, effectively making the latter slightly panicked.

The reddened eyes and threatening gestures all indicated his love for Heather. Seeing that, Leon was almost sure that he indeed cared about her.

“I’ll need you to explain the situation to me. I’ve no idea what’s going on. For starters, do unhand me or I’ll tell you nothing,” Leon urged furiously, shocked by Matthias’ monstrous strength.

“Okay.” Despite loosening his hands, Matthias was still maintaining his scowl—a horrifying one, at that.

Meanwhile, Leon was still dazed by Matthias’ fighting skills. Although he had heard from Heather about how Matthias was really adept at fighting, he had never imagined him to be this proficient, perhaps even in another league altogether.

“Tell me what’s going on. You’re looking for her so panickedly, so what’s the urgency? If it’s so urgent, why don’t you call her? Even if I tell where she is, do you think you’re able to chase her down?” Leon continued to play pretend. In that instant, there was no way Matthias, who was about to blow a gasket, could see through Leon’s acting.

“Someone texted me saying that Heather was in danger and had me come over to Violeast Hotel to look for her. When I arrived, I went to the reception and asked whether Heather was here as a guest. I even described her appearance in detail. One of them claimed to have seen Heather and I soon found out that she was in your room. And here I am now, knocking at your

door.” Matthias explained his side of the story in detail, from beginning to the end.

Upon hearing that, Leon acted as if he had an epiphany. “I see...”

“Now, can you tell me where she has gone?” Having not the time to lurk around, Matthias wished to pinpoint her location immediately.

Seemingly troubled, Leon muttered, “About that...”

“Hurry up! Don’t waste my time!” What Matthias wanted was a place, not Leon’s stressful expression.

“She’s either at the Langston Residence or...” Leon deliberately made a pause, only to see Matthias frowning tightly, as if he was going to burst into rage again.

At that point, Matthias had long become frustrated by Leon’s suspense. “Or what?” How could a man be this hesitant?

“I’m not sure if I should tell you about this because Heather didn’t want me to tell anyone...” Leon seemed unsettled, as if he was wondering whether to reveal the truth or not.

“Spit it.” Seeing that Leon was so indecisive, Matthias figured something was off and Heather must have been heading toward somewhere dangerous.

“Please, you mustn’t let her know that I’m the one who told you this.” Requesting affirmation, Leon made the matter seem so serious as if it would cost him his life if Heather were to find out he had betrayed her.

“Hurry up, then!” Matthias, on the other hand, was growing impatient. How is this guy such a p*ssy?

“Earlier, Heather mentioned that she intends to get close to Caleb. As for why, I’m afraid I’m in no place to tell you. The point is, I suspect that she’s going to look for him,” Leon finally exposed the full truth to Matthias, and what would happen next was up to the latter’s imagination.

“But why would she do that? What’s really going on?” Of course, Matthias had heard about Caleb, but he couldn’t fathom the nature of the relationship between Heather and the other man.

However, Leon simply replied, "I have no idea either. Some family feud, I reckon." After a few seconds, he turned to Matthias with a stern face and urged, "I've told you everything I know. Please keep this from Heather, okay?"

In order to settle Leon down, Matthias had to give him an assurance. Thus, he nodded his head and earnestly promised, "I swear I won't let anyone know about what happened here."

"Honestly, I'm worried about Heather as well, but I don't think I have the power to interfere in such a matter. If you really care about her, you have to protect her well. And remember—do not let her know I've told you all this. Just pretend that you know nothing and shield her discreetly," Leon advised Matthias. After revealing his ultimate purpose, he felt immensely relieved.

"I got it." Matthias patted him, signaling his gratitude.

"That's all the help I can give. I think you'd better not look for her now, but you may try waiting for her at the Langston Residence. She might reach home very soon," Leon advised Matthias.

"I'm really worried about her. Even though I don't know who sent me the text, I can't help but feel uneasy," Matthias stated as he showed Leon his phone.

After scanning the message, Leon smilingly claimed, "Must have been a fake. Even the number looks sketchy."

At once, Matthias shot him a weird gaze as he didn't quite grasp what he meant. Realizing that, Leon scolded himself internally for speaking too much.

Very quickly, he attempted to cover up his lies and offered, "I'm good with computers so I can track down callers and senders,"

"How could you tell that the number is sketchy and the content is fake?" Matthias was not one to mess with, so he demanded a clear explanation from Leon.

"Typically, people wouldn't use their personal numbers to send such shady texts, so the number is most likely fabricated. As for the message, it must have been a prank of some sort. Sure, Heather was here in Violeast Hotel and in my room. But the question is, why would she be in danger when she's in my room? That's utter bull!" Leon exclaimed, as if he was speaking facts.

Pondering on the other man's words, Matthias thought they weren't entirely illogical. Regardless, he couldn't put down his worry, not until he made sure that Heather was safe.

"Just trust me and wait for her at the Langston Residence. She'll surely return," Leon suggested as he didn't want Matthias to wander around aimlessly in such hazardous weather.

"But you told me she might be looking for Caleb, so why should I wait for her there?" As Matthias remembered everything vividly, Leon couldn't dismiss him so easily.

"She'll definitely go home so it's best you wait for her there. Otherwise, where would you look for her in such heavy rain?" Seeing how assiduous Matthias was to detail, Leon grew slightly helpless as he became more careful with his words.

"No way. I'll search for her right now. I'll find her," Matthias claimed as he was about to push Leon away and storm out the door.

"Sure, if you insist. Don't forget to try calling her, though; she might have turned her phone on." With that, Leon gave no more suggestions, fearing Matthias would catch him red-handed.

Before leaving the room, Matthias expressed his gratitude for sharing such critical information and he murmured, "Got it, thanks."

"You're welcome. Be sure to protect her! Honestly, I don't hate you that much. In fact, I kind of think you guys are a good match," Leon commented with a bright beam as he complimented his rival, all the while cursing himself in his heart for doing so.

Upon hearing that, Matthias, who had always thought Leon was interested in Heather, was surprised by his sudden blessing. And so, he responded with a smile, "Thank you." With that, he quickly took his leave after voicing his last words.

Standing before Love Chapter 565

After exiting Violeast Hotel, Matthias stormed into the rain. As he was too focused on finding Heather, he forgot to bring an umbrella. Given how on

edge he was right now, he couldn't feel a thing despite the cold raindrops falling upon his skin.

"Please be safe, Heather," he mumbled repetitively.

"Achoo!" Heather, who was driving, sneezed before grabbing a sheet of paper towel to rub her nose. Am I coming down with a cold?

Although the weather had been freezing since early in the morning, Heather didn't feel at all chilly, as her mind was completely focused on the issue at hand. Thus, she merely wore thin layers of clothes when she left home. Moreover, the heater in the car was able to keep her warm but sooner or later, she would have to exit her car and feel the wrath of the cruel storm.

Staring out through the windshield, she had no idea where to go, though her mood had certainly gotten better after wandering around. When she remembered that her phone was turned off, she quickly switched it on. As she was worried that Robert might look for her, she wouldn't usually turn off her phone.

Back when she was still studying overseas, she once turned off her phone in order to focus on preparing for her examination. Coincidentally, Robert had called her countless times, only to be ignored, and it in turn made him very nervous. When she turned it on the next day, Robert gave her a brutal lesson for missing his calls.

Since then, Heather would seldom switch off her phone. Presently, when her phone was turned on, there was nothing from Robert; rather, it was Matthias who sent her a chain of text messages and called her countless times.

Reading the messages, she realized that all of them were him asking for her whereabouts. Upon reading them, she couldn't help but wonder why Matthias was so tense.

In order to keep him from worrying about her, she felt obliged to call him back. Seeing it was a call from Heather, Matthias instantly picked it up and was instantly relieved when he heard her voice.

"What's the urgency, Matthias?" Heather interrogated. Since he seemed so hasty in his texts, he must have important news.

“Where are you?” Matthias’ voice was a little raspy, perhaps because of his anxiousness.

“I don’t know either. I’m currently on some overpass.” With the heavy rain smearing the roadside sign boards, Heather couldn’t tell where she currently was.

Upon hearing that, Matthias thought it would be better to ask her to clarify things. “Where are you heading to?”

“Home,” she answered. Due to the hazardous nature of such atrocious weather, it would be best for her to go home earlier.

“I’ll wait for you there.” Despite knowing that Heather was safe, Matthias had to check on her himself.

“What’s the matter? Why can’t you talk over the phone?” she inquired. She didn’t like Matthias frequenting her home, especially in such weather. What excuse could he use for the visit?

However, Matthias wouldn’t give in. “I want to meet you. No—I have to see you.”

And so, Heather helplessly compromised, knowing that Matthias would surely go to the Langston residence if he said so. “Not at the Langston Residence, though. Let’s find a coffee shop,”

“Okay,” he agreed.

When they had settled on the place and time, Heather was getting down from the overpass. It was not until she read the road sign did she realize she was already in the eastern suburbs.

That meant driving to the city centre would consume a lot of time but having made a promise, she had no choice but to turn her car around. Jeez! How did I end up in the suburbs?

In a blink of an eye, Matthias had already arrived at the promised spot while Heather was still on her way. With his clothes soaking wet, he had long lost the pride he usually possessed.

Knowing that Heather wouldn't arrive that soon, he made a call to Nikolai to have him bring over some clean clothes and an umbrella. Fearing that he would miss out on Heather's presence, Matthias didn't want to leave the coffee shop since he didn't know what time she would appear.

When Nikolai showed up carrying some clothes and an umbrella, he was shocked by the pathetic appearance of Matthias, who was as wet as a fish.

"Do you wish to get changed in the bathroom, sir?" As much as he wanted to laugh at Matthias' rather humorous look, Nikolai held back the urge, as it would be a bad time to make fun of the former.

"Stay here. If Heather arrives, bring her over." Matthias ignored Nikolai's question knowing deep down his assistant was laughing at him.

"Roger that," Nikolai responded as he nodded his head.

Turns out it's Heather! No wonder he's in this state! Initially, Nikolai wondered who in the world was able to captivate Matthias. However, it seemed like Matthias was growing more and more inebriated in Heather's charm as the things he would do for her got more extreme.

Nonetheless, it was something rather pleasant. Knowing Matthias wasn't happy back at home, Nikolai hoped that he could experience more emotions and the connection he shared with Heather was able to warm up his freezing heart.

After some time, Heather still had yet to show herself. Meanwhile, Nikolai, who was lowering his head and stirring his coffee, would occasionally look toward the door, anticipating Heather's arrival. Suddenly, a bewitching woman entered the shop. Although she certainly looked like Heather, Nikolai wasn't sure that woman was indeed her.

Then, he watched as the woman swept her gaze around as if she was looking for someone, until her eyes fell upon himself.

"Nikolai," she greeted as she walked toward him.

Nikolai had only realized it was actually Heather when she got closer. She seemed familiar from far away but seeing her close up, he couldn't help but be stupefied by her unornamented face.

“Where’s Matthias?” Heather, on the other hand, felt strange only seeing Nikolai at the table but not Matthias.

“Director Locke has just gone to the bathroom,” he answered nervously. Whenever he got to see Heather, his heart would always palpitate and he would feel embarrassed for that.

Unlike the women, whose faces were rather unpleasant to look at after removing their makeup, Heather’s bare face was heavenly. Undoubtedly, any men who saw her would have the urge to protect her and that included Nikolai, who couldn’t help sneaking some glance at her.

“Heather,” Matthias called out from behind.

Hearing her name, Heather turned around to the voice. Matthias grinned at the sight of her bare face, as he preferred it that way rather than her usual sharp look. Knowing that she was safe, he finally felt relieved.

At this moment, Nikolai knew it was time for him to go as the duo had met each other. And so, he murmured to Matthias, “If there’s nothing else, I shall return to the Locke Group, sir.”

Seeing that there wasn’t anything in Matthias’ hands, Nikolai assumed he had thrown the clothes away. With that, he screamed internally as it pained him to know the garments that cost tens of thousand had been discarded.

Shortly after, Nikolai courteously said to Heather, “Farewell, Miss Langston!”

Heather nodded her head to acknowledge his departure, unlike the constantly emotionless Matthias, who immediately showed his emotions when Nikolai left.

It was only a minute ago when he showed her a smile which he quickly withdrew upon hearing Nikolai speak, and Heather scornfully looked at him for that.

“Why were you looking for me?” she got straight to the point.

“How would you like your coffee?” Matthias quizzed her, ignoring her question.

“Anything goes.” As she didn’t have any patience, she didn’t want to waste much time on deciding what to pick.

Then, Matthias had the server come over and said something. To her surprise, he ordered her favorite coffee with the exact amount of sugar she would like.

Surprised by Matthias’ knowledge of her taste, Heather looked at him in astonishment. So Matthias does have a tender side!

“Now speak,” she expressed with a scowl, not willing to turn a happy face just because he ordered her favorite coffee.

“Someone sent me this earlier.” Matthias pushed his phone over to Heather.

When she read the content of the screen, she was immediately baffled and reminded of the fishy text she received before the explosion.

Now that Matthias had received a similar message, Heather couldn’t help but suspect that it was the same person behind both messages. What can their intention be?

“This is why you’ve been calling me and spamming me with messages?”

Matthias nodded. “Yes. I got worried because you didn’t answer my calls nor my texts, and even turned your phone off afterward.”

Considering how the sender was able to keep track of her every move and even her behavioral patterns, Heather was deeply spooked. Not only had they predicted her reluctance to reply to texts, they even knew she would turn her phone off. Perhaps it was someone close to her?

Instantly, she felt like her every action was observed. However, how would anyone else know about the argument between her and Leon in the hotel room? That was a question that intrigued her deeply.

“Well—now that I know you’re safe, I can finally rest assured,” Matthias joyfully claimed.

However, Heather had to make sure of something, so she asked, “Did you go to the Violeat Hotel?”

“Yeah, but I got nothing.” Skipping over the fact that he had met with Leon as promised, Matthias intended to keep his words and avoid dragging the boy into this.

“Did you see Leon?” Heather curiously pursued. Theoretically, Matthias should know Leon, just as he should be aware of her relationship with the latter.

“I did but he said you weren’t there, so I went somewhere else to search for you.” Although Matthias attempted to leave out as much detail as he could, Heather was rather meticulous about it and he felt guilty when looking into her eyes.

Fixating her gaze on Matthias, Heather couldn’t help but feel that he was hiding something from her. Knowing him, he wouldn’t leave Leon so easily after getting a simple answer. No matter how I look at it, something is missing here.

“He asked me to wait for you at the Langston Residence and continue to phone. Oh—and he claimed that the message was a prank by somebody else,” Matthias continued, revealing only the parts that were less important in order to prevent her from continuing to stare at him with a suspicious gaze.

“I see...” Heather was piqued by the fact that Leon had yet to give her a call or a text.

Typically, Leon would be concerned after reading such a message, rather than being rational. After all, he wasn’t a rational person.

“What’s the matter?” Matthias queried.

Shaking her head, Heather answered, “Nothing. Everything is just weird to me. I feel like I have to dig the sender out and question his purpose.”

After having gone through such incidents, Heather spared Leon the benefit of the doubt She had now set her sights on Caleb, which made her even more determined to approach the general and figure out whether he was pulling the strings.

Having her mood affected by such irritating weather, Heather halted the discussion. Seeing that, Matthias looked into her eyes curiously and caught traces of murder in them.

“Let me send you home,” Matthias initiated an offer.

“It’s okay. Since we’ve already confirmed the nature of the text, you’ve got no need to worry for me. I’ll return home myself and you should return to the Locke Group.” Not wanting him to constantly disregard his work for her sake, Heather denied his offer. Or else, she would feel guilty for trapping him like a succubus would do an innocent man.

Standing before Love Chapter 566

It was a heavy downpour out there. Heather, who had no makeup on, was sitting opposite Matthias. It stirred something within him that he wanted to capture and keep this beautiful moment to himself. A shutter sound could be heard and he took a photograph of her while she was drinking her coffee. However, she lifted her head the next second and snatched his phone away from him.

He felt a little frustrated that he had forgotten to turn off the shutter sound, and now Heather had deleted the photo without a second thought. She then glanced at him coldly, her expression unkind. “Don’t simply take photos of me.” To Heather, she was looking like a mess now, so how could she let anybody photograph her in such a state? She fixed her fierce gaze at him, as though he had done something unforgivable.

“You look too pretty so I couldn’t help it,” Matthias replied with utmost sincerity. Heather’s aura seemed weaker than usual when she did not put on any makeup, and she looked more adorable now when she was angry.

Upon hearing his words, she felt resigned toward Matthias’ aesthetic judgement of a straight man. She did not think that she would look good right now with her current state. As she came to that thought, she found her attention being drawn away by his phone.

She realized that there were countless photos of her in his phone, and she had no idea when he took all these without her knowing.

Frightened, she looked up with a hint of horror. “You sent someone to stalk me?” There were a lot of photos which were taken from a far distance and it would not have been taken by Matthias himself.

“No,” Matthias responded while he snatched his phone back and added, “It’s all taken by me.” Back then, he once stalked her from behind and he initially

just thought of watching her from afar. However, he could not contain himself in the end and took a few photos.

“Don’t ever do such a thing again.” Heather did not want to have an argument with him today, so she sounded gentle while she spoke.

“I’m sorry.” Being exposed by Heather on the spot, Matthias too felt disgusted with his own obsessed and foolish actions.

“Alright, then; I’m going home now.” Heather did not want to stay with him any longer. She had been running around for a long while, and now she felt so weary that she did not even want to talk to anyone else.

Upon seeing that, Matthias quickly stood up and offered, “I’ll send you.” Right at the moment, he was looking as though he was a big boy who had just done something wrong. He looked so panicked and he wanted to behave better to win her favor.

“No, it’s alright.” However, she rejected his offer decisively. She had not forgiven him for what happened just now and she even refused to let him get closer to her.

Upon hearing her words, he was no longer stubborn. Evan had once advised him, saying that sometimes when a girl forcefully said no, he should listen to her. Otherwise, the girl would hate him if he did the opposite.

Looking at such a situation right now, Heather obviously did not want him to send her off, so he could only watch her retreating figure as she walked away. Holding an umbrella in the heavy rain, Heather looked even more fragile and thin. At this moment, Matthias was longing to stand by her side and hold the umbrella for her, protecting her against the wind and rain.

As Heather’s unbending figure faded away in the rain, Matthias withdrew his gaze, thinking that he should head back to the company immediately. Because of an uncertain text, he ran out in a hurry and made himself look like a hot mess. Moreover, he did not win the heart of his beautiful woman either.

Ever since he was transferred to the business department, he felt that everything became much quieter as he was now free from Regan’s blabber. He knew that Regan was actually waiting for a chance to come back but he was badly hit by the loss previously, which meant that he would not cause any trouble again in a short period of time.

In this poor weather, a lot of people were using various ridiculous reasons to take their time off, as the losers would have thought that the life of a wealthy person was unrestrained and happy. In fact, no matter if it was on a windy day or a stormy day, Matthias would come to the company earlier than anyone else.

Moreover, the board of directors were not completely disappointed in him despite his abnormal actions during this period of time, as his good performance back then was still well remembered after all.

In his most hardworking years, he only slept for four to five hours a day and he gave it his all. Even though he made a whole lot of money for the Locke Group and even expanded the business scale of the company, people would gossip behind his back, saying that he could thrive just because of his identity.

As soon as Matthias thought about this, he decided to put away his messy thoughts. He had been with the Locke Group for a very long time and he even felt a little nostalgic. Moreover, he had been working so hard all these years for another important purpose of his and he would do anything just to achieve it.

The documents were crammed full of words and he looked at the information with his eyes narrowed. The reason that the Locke Group could develop so rapidly and smoothly in Bradford City was all thanks to that person who paved the way for them.

In the business world, everyone would have their own axe to grind just for their own benefits. Ever since he had more concerns in his mind, he started to examine that goal of his which was not known by anybody. Is it really worth it to sacrifice so much for that goal?

There was still a heavy downpour out there. This heavy rain had lasted for a very long while and it would certainly burden the drainage system of Bradford City. Moreover, in some places, the water had risen to calf-level. In short, there would be floods if it continued to rain so heavily. As he looked down from such a high level, Matthias noticed that all living beings had become very small.

He was standing in front of the window while the humans below were just like ants. Right now, there were various conspiracies going on in Bradford City. When the upper levels were competing for power and gain, the ones struggling to survive at the bottom of the pyramid were the ones who suffered.

As this thought came into his mind, he felt increasingly swayed and he was even a little shaken.

If I give up now, will it be a good thing for everyone? In the middle of the night, Matthias would also ask himself the same question. However, there was no turning back for an arrow that had been released, and he did not have any other choice now.

...

Heather was finally back at Langston Residence. As soon as she stepped into the living room, she saw Robert, who was sitting on the sofa. He fixed his gaze at her and she smiled at him wearily.

“You even went out in such a heavy downpour—looks like you really can head out all day,” Robert muttered, feeling a little angry. It wouldn’t help dispel his anger no matter how beautiful his granddaughter’s smile was.

“I had to go out to solve an urgent matter.” She found a reason to excuse herself. However, he glared at her, as he would not accept such a general reason.

Despite his angry glare, Heather walked straight to his side and sat down beside him, and she leaned her head on his shoulder. Robert was old and his hair had all turned grey; even his shoulders did not have much strength.

“You’re so heavy! Do you want to squash your grandfather to death?” Robert muttered, still feeling enraged. However, he did not move his body away and he allowed Heather to continue leaning on him.

“Grandpa, you are the man who treats me the best in this world! I’m afraid I won’t be able to get married next time,” Heather said while she behaved like a spoiled little child. She had no makeup on and she looked adorable.

As expected, Robert’s expression had softened a lot more while he responded in disdain, “Don’t put the blame on me if you can’t get married because of yourself.” Not only that, he sounded a lot gentler too. After all, he was pretty easy to get along with.

“Well, if that’s the case, I’ll be staying with Grandpa forever then. It’ll be great too,” Heather continued. She wanted to always stay by his side and in fact, marriage was not so much of an important matter to her.

Looking at all the unhappy marriages of the Langston Family, she had very high requirements toward her own marriage ever since she was a child. If it failed to reach her expectations, she would rather stay single proudly.

“No can do! I don’t think it’s great. I’ll still want to hold my great-grandson and I want to see you get married and have your own child before I die.” As Robert spoke, he was feeling more and more helpless. He felt as though the last day of his life was approaching and he feared that he could not live to see a few more years.

Moreover, as Heather still had not settled down, he felt anxious for her deep down and this was what concerned him the most. It was even more worrying than the matter of Langston Group, as the company would not have anything to do with him anymore after he had passed on. However, even when he was already up in heaven, he would still be worried that Heather would not receive the happiness she deserved.

“It’s easy to have a child but it’s too hard to get married.” Though she did not have her hopes up high about marriage anymore, she still wanted to have a kid as she had to carry on the bloodline.

Heather believed that even though the child was born in a single-parent family, she could let her child feel double the love and it would not be any worse than the others. At least, it would be better than the families that seemed harmonious outwardly but divided at heart.

“Don’t fool around! Our family rules do not allow premarital pregnancy.” Upon hearing her words, Robert even mentioned the rules of their family just to educate her. He knew that she was having such a wicked idea in her mind and he definitely did not want her to be a single mother.

“How many in the family will still actually abide by the house rules? Come on, Grandpa. The world now has changed.” As Heather spoke, she reached out her hand to touch his white beard. Lately, he had been fond of growing out his beard and it had gradually grown very long.

Ever since he had grown his beard, his face had become kinder. Heather would always touch it as she could not help it, acting like a cheeky, naughty little kid the whole while.

In front of Robert, she was like a child who would never grow up and she would always recall these memories later. Everyone thought that Heather

Langston was a matured and steady woman but in fact, she still had her innocence within her. However, she could only bury this childlike innocence deep down in her afterward.

“Well, if they don’t follow the rules, I can’t care any longer. But you should definitely abide by the rules,” Robert said in an earnest and firm manner, as he definitely would not let her do something foolish.

“Grandpa, you’re treating us so differently! This is unfair.” Heather would certainly not do such an irrational thing when Robert was still alive. She was just casually speaking about it and in fact, she was possibly the most obedient person in the Langston Family who would actually comply with the house rules.

All in all, some of the traditional customs in the family were worth passing on. Although she felt contempt for the Langston Family’s preference for sons over daughters, the house rules that were inherited were not less demanding for the boys and were also not harsher toward the women. Therefore, she thought that the house rules were still relatively fair.

“The whole family thinks that I treat you the best and they think that I’m being unfair. But in fact, they have never looked at themselves and they can’t see the fact of how strict I am with you too.” As Robert thought about the situation in this family, he spoke heartily. The rumors were unfair to Heather but there was nothing that he could do to stop it.

Deep down, Heather was actually clear of many things. The biggest reason why she got along so awkwardly with the Langston Family was that Blake was demonizing her behind her back.

On top of that, her attitude toward her own parents was also cold and she was also not good at expressing her feelings. Therefore, the rumors were spread out naturally by the foolish people. Moreover, Robert did not want to tell them about the contributions that Heather had made for the family privately. They would never know that it was because of her efforts that they could all be living so comfortably right now.

Blake was going overboard lately and he was playing tricks secretly behind their backs. However, Robert hesitated for a very long while and could not make up his mind due to his consideration of the pride of Langston Family. It was proven that Blake was not suitable for that position and with the Moriartys

who were eyeing on them, he was afraid that tragedy would finally happen someday.

The one thing that he was lacking was a suitable reason to pull Blake down from that position and let Heather to replace him. Even if it would cause the whole family to be unsatisfied, Robert would still need to take the family's harmony into his consideration. After all, he did not want to watch the family collapse and fell apart before he died.

"It's alright, Grandpa. As long as you understand what kind of person I am, I don't care what other people think of me." Heather smiled after hearing his words as she didn't know why he was being so indignant today. She did not mind about all these, since she had been misunderstood for so many years, after all.

"The Langston Group should flourish in your hands." As he spoke, he looked at Heather deeply. There were some things that would never be too late to make up his mind on.

Standing before Love Chapter 567

As Heather moved away from Robert's shoulders, she looked at him with a sense of confusion. Truth was, she understood the profound meaning behind his words but it was just that she dared not delve deeper into it.

And so, she took the initiative and avoided discussing it further as she murmured, "Grandpa, let's not talk about this matter anymore." When she was young, she would wonder about the reason why she could not get the rights of inheritance with her strong capabilities. However, as of now, she no longer cared about it anymore.

"So tell me—where have you been today?" Robert asked unreservedly. Heather left in such a hurry that she did not even have the time to put on her makeup, so there must be something strange and subtle behind her actions.

"I went to find Leon." As she spoke, she tried her best to conceal some parts that should not be told.

Upon hearing her answer, he stared at her with a puzzled look. She was in such a hurry just to find Leon. She clearly said that she has no feelings for him but her actions are the opposite.

In order to not let Robert misunderstand, she then added immediately, “Well, the explosion yesterday has affected him very much, so I should also care about him.”

However, the more she explained, the more it seemed suspicious to Robert, so he stared at her with a mistrustful look on his face. There would not be an answer for this matter even if he continued to ask about it, so he might as well just stop there.

“Alright. You young people’s matters are out of my control anyway.” And so, he pretended to be helpless and skipped the topic.

As she heard his words, she chuckled and said in a pleasing manner, “What are you talking about, Grandpa? That’s not true—I’m the one who listens to you the most.”

It was a stormy day and it was a little quiet in the Langston Residence. The ones who had to head out had gone out earlier and those who did not have any occasions were staying in their own rooms. Everly skipped her classes today and stayed in her room. In such weather, she was worried about someone.

In order to relieve her worries, she came out of the room. When she walked to the living room, she happened to see that Heather and Robert were chatting happily.

In this family, Robert had always been the symbol of majesty and house rules. Therefore, there were not many people in the family who dared to get so close with him. As this thought came to her mind, she looked at Heather enviously.

This was Heather’s privilege and she was able to act recklessly in front of Robert. Looking at the scene, Everly also hoped for an elder who could let her act like a child by his side.

However, they could only see how unrestrained Heather was with the presence of Robert, but they never thought that they could actually do the same. As he aged, he became more easygoing and gentle. Still, they would not dare to take the initiative to approach him, as they would always think that Heather was the only one who had the privilege to act like a child.

In the meantime, Heather saw Everly, who was just standing on the staircase. However, she did not take the initiative to greet her just yet. As their gazes met in the air, Heather put on a smile.

She did not know when it happened, but Everly had now grown up. When she left, Everly was still a boisterous little girl and now she had grown into a young lady. Time was indeed passing so fast and it would not wait for anybody.

“Everly,” It was only when Robert called out to Everly that she came back to her senses, and a hint of fluster flashed across her face as soon as she realized it. It was a little impolite of her to wander away with her thoughts just now, so she immediately responded, “Grandpa.”

She then moved her gaze to Heather and added, “Heather.” In fact, she once wanted to try to get closer to Heather but in the end, she did not have the courage to do so.

The whole family did not dare to approach Heather, so she wasn't that courageous to be the first person to do such a thing. Moreover, she was not welcomed in the family; if she took the initiative to get close to Heather, she was afraid that she would be isolated from the whole family.

Everly was not as courageous as Heather and the former only wanted to be an ordinary person. If it weren't for her meeting that person, she would never have the courage in her entire life to break through the accustomed path of this world.

“Come down quickly.” Heather felt that she should at least be more intimate with the younger generation in the family.

There were indeed not many good people in the Langston Family, but there were a few younger ones whose personality was still able to be corrected, and even some of them could be trained. Though they were quite ordinary, at least they were not evil.

It was rare for Heather to be so easygoing, so Robert was a little surprised and he looked at her with admiration. Everly felt astonished too so it took a while for her to react and hurriedly went downstairs. After all, it was the first time Heather took the initiative to call her over.

Pointing to the seat beside her, Heather said, "Come sit beside me." As she offered Everly to be a step closer to her, Robert was guessing her intentions secretly in his mind.

Flattered, Everly sat beside the other woman timidly. Her body was a little stiff, as she thought that she would never be qualified to sit at this spot.

"Everly has grown so much in a blink of an eye! You're such a beautiful girl when you were still little but now you've become even more stunning!" Heather sincerely praised Everly. Sometimes, she would also envy this pretty face of hers.

The sisters were both not wearing any makeup, but it was obvious that Everly looked better with her features. After all, she was still young and her face was still filled with collagen, looking bright and youthful.

However, Heather had a kind of charm—a unique charm which was different from everybody else, and which Everly could never be compared with. Moreover, there were also only a very few people who could be as attractive as her.

After all, Robert still liked Everly but he did not like the younger generation who were too noisy and troublesome. Unlike them, she was quiet and calm. Therefore, this side of her was to his liking.

However, it was a pity that she was a little timid and she did not dare to take the initiative to talk to him. Thus, he had no idea how to start caring for her.

Upon hearing Heather's praise, Everly lowered her head with a sense of embarrassment. At her school, she was the center of attraction. No matter if it was a boy or a girl, everyone thought that she was extraordinarily good-looking, as though her appearance was otherworldly.

However, she felt inferior when she was at home. Firstly, almost everyone in the Langston Family was very good-looking, so her stunning appearance was not as important anymore. On top of that, the family's attention was mainly focused on Heather and Blake, so who would even notice her?

Meanwhile, Heather reached out her hand and touched Everly's hair. She especially liked that silky, dark hair of hers, as unlike her peers, there was not even once she tortured her hair.

Up till now, Everly she had never once dyed or permed her hair so it was particularly smooth. Moreover, her natural hair quality was very good indeed, and it could not be compared to Heather's. This was because the latter liked to do something with her hair, and she would frequently change her hairstyles when she was still abroad.

Everly's body became even stiffer because of Heather's touch. She sat up so straight on the sofa, as though the other woman had cast a magic spell which would freeze her actions. Noticing this, Heather giggled and murmured to her, "Why are you always keeping your head down? This is nothing like the Langston Family. As a member of the Langstons, you should be daring to have your chin up and hold your head high."

She had long noticed that Everly was a little self-conscious, so she wanted to try her best in helping her to make a change. Besides, she did not know how much longer she would stay at the Langston Family, thus she would not be so cold-blooded on something that she could actually do.

Looking at such a scene, Robert had the urge to get to know Heather all over again. Previously, she treated the whole family with an indifferent attitude and she even hated the noisy little kids very much.

Right now, she had such a drastic change. Other than the power of love, he could not think of any other reason that would soften her. She must have fallen in love unconsciously, which was why she cared more about feelings. Even with the Langstons who she had always hated, she could even face them pleasantly with a gentle and cheerful countenance.

Today was a new beginning for Heather. She had never thought that her actions today would benefit her in the future. She would also never expect that her initiative in taking a step forward to get close to Everly would save her from a disaster later on.

There were a lot of times when an act of benevolence would reward us with something wonderful in the future. Therefore, it was certainly reasonable to always be kind to others.

After Heather returned to her bedroom, she recalled the things that happened the whole day, and it seemed like she had done a lot of things which were usually impossible for her to do. Laying on her large bed, she satisfyingly wore a smile on her face. Sometimes, it actually felt good when she slightly lowered her stance.

Right at this moment, as though Matthias had actually pinpointed Heather's free time, he called her just as she was about to rest for a little while.

Before this, Heather was unsure about the sincerity of his feelings toward her but now, she was certain that he truly liked her.

Heather had also acknowledged from Nikolai that this was the first time Matthias took the initiative to chase someone, and he hadn't been in a relationship before. Later, she had also talked about these things with Myra without letting her know that she was actually talking about Matthias.

Myra told Heather affirmatively that it was certain that he did like her, but he was just bad at expressing himself. At that time, Heather was pushing it off, saying that it was her friend's matter. However, Myra knew what was going on all along, though she did not point it out.

In fact, Heather could not suppress her feelings any longer. She needed a safe corner to pour her feelings into, so she could only go to Myra.

She remembered that Myra had also expressed her blessings in the end. As she was saying that she hoped the pair could end up with a happy ending, Heather felt her heart skip a beat after hearing her words. She would not dare to guarantee that when Myra had known everything, would she still be able to bless Matthias and her with a smile?

As she was spacing out, she missed his first call. However, Matthias was a man full of patience. He would normally call her three times before he gave up.

When the second call came, she immediately picked up the phone. His voice sounded a little hoarse as he was feeling a little unwell after being in the rain.

"What are you doing?" He would always start their conversation formally. Sometimes he would want to be a little more intimate with Heather, but he had no idea how to put it into words.

He admitted that he did not have any talent in this aspect. His words were not that moving and the way he chased Heather seemed formal as well.

"Spacing out," Heather responded slowly with just two words.

“Oh—I’m really sorry that I bothered you while you were spacing out,” Matthias said as he chuckled, and his voice even sounded a little unpleasant to hear. However, he was sick so his voice would naturally sound off.

“Since you know that you’re bothering me, why don’t you hang up?” Upon hearing his words, Heather teased him. Matthias was probably the most shameless one among those who were chasing her.

Even Leo was not as thick-skinned as he was. Back then when Leon was chasing her, he would still give her a lot of freedom and he would not fool around and act recklessly too.

At that time, she nearly accepted Leon’s pursuit but there were too many girls surrounding him. After getting along with him for quite some time, she initially decided to take a step forward, but she then immediately backed down because of such a reason.

She would not confess to him that there was once she promised to go on a date with him, but she happened to bump into him chatting so happily with another girl when she was on her way.

She did not want to admit that she would be so overbearing toward love, and she wanted to be the only one in that person’s eyes. Though Heather knew that Leon did not have any affair with the girl, she was still holding a grudge against it deep down.

Therefore, she stood him up that time without giving him any reason. This was not in line with Heather’s behavior and personality, as she was clearly a person who would always keep her words. Later on, Leon had reflected on himself for a very long time, but he still could not figure out the reason behind it. At last, they were defeated by the small details in life, and they were unable to get together.

However, in this aspect, Matthias did a very good job. Ever since he said that he would give up on Myra, he had hardly mentioned anything about her in front of Heather. Moreover, at least when he was chasing her, he did not show that he was still emotionally attached to his previous love at all.

Back then when she was at the hot springs, she had also finally figured out herself. She figured out that Matthias just didn’t want to break that pure and innocent promise he made when he was young, and he understood that his

feelings toward Myra was just him being wistful of the wonderful moments of his youth.

As she thought this through, Heather found that attitude toward Matthias had changed a lot. A suitable person had appeared in her life and she was clearly moved. Therefore, she wanted to give it a try, as no one would want to end up leaving this world alone.

Standing before Love Chapter 568

Once one opened up the soft spot of their heart, a lot of stories would unfold accordingly. Besides, some new changes would also lead to a big difference in a person. Matthias' words were still circling around her ears but as she was hearing his voice, she gradually started to feel sleepy. Even if it was just himself, he could also talk eloquently.

After a long moment, Matthias did not get any response from Heather so he asked, "Heather, are you listening?"

She had fallen asleep while she was breathing steadily, and her phone was also slid to the side. She did not respond to him at all and it was as though Matthias was talking to the air.

Right at this moment, he wondered if he had upset her again to get such a consequence, so he hurriedly reflected on himself.

"Heather, have I said something to irritate you? Are you angry with me right now?" This is all he could think of at the moment. Well, he wouldn't have thought that Heather had actually fallen asleep, because this was the first time for such a situation to happen.

Still, not a response could be heard. Matthias was so panicked and it was as if he was walking on hot coals. However, Heather was now sleeping so soundly that even a sweet smile had crept up to the corners of her lips.

By the time she woke up, she felt astonished too. This was the first time she fell asleep while she was talking to somebody on the phone. Moreover, she had forgotten the things he had said and she fell deep asleep in an instant just like that.

As she found her phone, she took a glance at the screen and realized that their talk time lasted for two hours. She clearly remembered that when it was

one hour into the call, she had already felt sleepy, and perhaps the following half an hour was all Matthias' monologue.

Thinking that he could talk to himself without getting any response for half an hour while holding his phone, she burst out laughing as she was amused by the scene she had imagined in her mind.

Besides that, he had also sent her a lot of messages on Messenger. As she roughly browsed through all of them, she felt that Matthias was inexplicably cute. Though he would also look easygoing in front of the others, after all, he was still the director of the Locke Group. However, when it came to Heather, he would be so flustered as though he was still a little boy.

As soon as she thought about this, she had an epiphany. Perhaps the kind of man that she wanted was mature, steady and successful in his career just in front of everyone, but he did not have to be so when he was with her. The man would still feel nervous, panicked and even overwhelmed with her presence—this was what she actually wanted.

It was only then that she remembered to check on the time after waking up for such a long while. She had missed dinner time, and it was strange that Robert did not send anyone to wake her up this time.

As she was starving, she slightly frowned, thinking that she had not eaten all day and her stomach was aching a little because of that. However, there was no radical cure for stomach problems. Back then when she was still abroad, her problems were even more severe. As she returned home, Robert had forced her to eat three meals a day, so her stomach problems had eased a little though it was not completely cured.

She had to quickly get something to eat, as she felt that her stomach was getting more and more uncomfortable. Moreover, it would get extremely painful if she continued leaving her stomach empty. In the middle of the night, the stormy rain had finally stopped and the night was so quiet that it seemed a little creepy. In the end, she sneaked into the kitchen, not wanting to wake the others up.

The kitchen was so clean, as though it had just been cleaned and washed thoroughly. Robert had very high requirements for the kitchen, so the chef was also conscious about taking care of its environment. As of right now, Heather was contemplating whether she should make fried rice or a bowl of noodles, as both of these were easy and fast to make.

The eggs were easy to find and she had also seen the tomatoes. It was great that the raw ingredients that she needed were all available. After pondering for a moment, she decided to go for the noodles, as eating rice with an upset stomach was certainly not good for digestion.

She then started to cook, and she tried her very best to move as lightly as she could, as though she was a thief who just barged into a residence, fearing that she would awaken the owner of the house. Furthermore, the security guards were still patrolling outside. She did not want to alarm them as she did not want this matter to reach Robert's ears.

He had always been paying great attention to her stomach problems, so she did not want him to be worried about her regarding such trivial matters anymore. As this thought came to her mind, she sped up her actions and she looked absolutely skilled in cooking.

During her time abroad, there were a lot of moments she craved for a decent home cooked meal. Therefore, she had to cook it herself all the time and this was how she practiced and gained her cooking skills.

Heather had a habit of carrying her phone with her wherever she went. Initially, everything was progressing safely and soon, her noodles would be ready to serve. However, the phone rang so loudly all of a sudden. Panicked, she immediately hung up the call in a hurry without having the time to check on who was calling.

As expected, the ringtone had drawn the attention of the guards and she saw a beam of light flashed through from the outside. As she was feeling helpless, she glanced at the phone and it was none other than Matthias who gave her a call.

Well, it was already meaningless to continue avoiding the guards at the moment, so she decided to make the first move. She walked straight to the door and opened it, and she spoke to the guard who was still searching for the source of the sound directly. "It's my phone ringing, so you don't have to look for it anymore."

The guard was originally acting aggressively but as soon as he saw Heather, his attitude changed drastically in an instant and he then smiled at her in a solicitous manner.

"Miss Heather, why are you here?"

She swept a glance at the guard, knowing that they were just fulfilling their duties, so she tried to keep her attitude as gentle as she could.

“I’m here to practice my cooking since Grandpa’s seventieth birthday is approaching.” She came up with this reason within a split second.

Upon hearing her words, he could not come up with any questions anymore so in the end, he was being sent away by Heather wisely. However, the guard certainly did not know when Robert’s birthday was coming up; at least, he had not heard any news about it yet.

In fact, Robert’s seventieth birthday was still two months away, so it was indeed still very early in time to talk about it. After the guard left, Heather hurriedly turned back to check on her noodles. She had forgotten to turn off the fire just now, so the noodles became all mushy and soggy.

She looked at the mess in the pot and it was simply not edible, so she could only cook another pot all over again. The culprit of this incident is none other than Matthias Locke! Fortunately, he did not call her again afterward, or else she would definitely teach him a lesson.

Matthias was feeling gloomy, as he gave Heather a call just now but she hung up in an instant. Since it was her who cut off the call, he dared not continue dialing again, as he thought that she was still angry with him.

This situation had left him so worried that he could hardly eat and sleep. He even spoke to Evan about this, wanting to get some useful advice from him.

However, upon hearing about his concerns, Evan kept shaking his head in confusion. He pondered it over and over again, but he still could not figure out which of Matthias’ words turned out to be wrong, and he felt that Heather wouldn’t be that enraged.

As he stared at Matthias face for a good while, he then asked firmly, “Are you hiding something from me?” He was suspecting that Matthias had hid away something that was rather bad.

“No, of course not! We were just having a small talk about some insignificant things. I really don’t understand why she got mad,” As he spoke, his face looked very innocent. Ever since he started to chase Heather, Evan had become his love guru.

After hearing his words, Evan merely waved his hands. It seemed that Matthias was really not lying, so he could only tell him with a sense of resignation, “Oh well, I’m not able to help you this time. A woman’s heart is a deep ocean of secrets.”

This time, he had met a strong opponent and it was the first time he met such a woman like her. Evan had always thought that he knew women very well, but when it came to Heather Langston, he was completely defeated. He felt that Matthias was not the only one who felt frustrated, but he was also feeling the same.

“However, there are a lot of things that can’t be explained clearly over the phone. If the girl is indeed angry, then she needs to be coaxed in person. Find a chance and go meet Heather. It’s better to make things clear face to face.” Looking at Matthias feeling so distressed, he then gave him a suggestion. Moreover, this is also the only way that could work for now.

“Evan, am I a failure?” All of a sudden, Matthias changed the subject and asked such a question.

Evan blinked, looking as though he did not understand the meaning behind his words. “Matthias, you are a successful person. Look at me—a person like me should only be called a failure,” replied Evan as he mocked himself. All these years, he had not been revitalizing his family business, and he even intended to continue abandoning himself. He was even called a ‘cowardly loser’ by his own family.

“Hey, I am actually pretty envious of you because you can do anything that you want to do. Don’t bother about the prejudices of the world, Evan. You’ll be the most successful only when you’re being yourself.” After listening to his words, Matthias comforted him. He could not even put himself to say such a thing back then, but now the words came out of his mouth so naturally.

Love could change each other, as it not only made Heather begin to value feelings, it also made Matthias become gentle and kind.

Evan was not used to Matthias being like this, but after listening to his comforting words, he put on a bright smile on his face.

“You know that I don’t care what others think. You don’t have to encourage me and also, don’t feel remorse. Though you encountered a lot of problems when chasing Heather, you even became not like yourself anymore. You’ve

even put your pride aside.” Evan knew best about the process of Matthias’ pursuit toward Heather. Back then, he had also encouraged him many times to take the first move, so he understood naturally what he meant by his ‘failure’.

“So?” Matthias felt that he had already worked so hard, but the progress was still very slow and sometimes, the situation would even become unstable.

However, the person who first fell in love in a relationship was destined to suffer the pain. Moreover, Heather’s attitude was ambiguous; it would be good sometimes, but it would also be bad sometimes. Therefore, he was feeling less and less confident in such a volatile situation.

What Matthias was experiencing right now was exactly what Leon had been through back then. Leon also once had such a tormented journey, and it was also true that not getting something successfully that you had been longing for would really destroy a person’s confidence.

In the end, Leon did not persevere with this journey, and it was also still an unsolved question on whether Matthias would keep himself going on this same path.

After the thunderstorm, the sky was being washed thoroughly, as it was no longer grey and gloomy. It was a sunny morning with a clear blue sky, and the fluffy clouds were hung up high. What a beautiful day!

As Heather pushed the window open, she stretched out her head to gaze at the scenery. She was blindly repelled by the luxurious style of the Langston Residence back then, but now it seemed like this residence had a different kind of beauty. The people in the business world also like to jokingly say that the Langston Residence was a landmark of Bradford City.

With such beautiful weather, and with the colorful flowers blooming in the garden, it felt like being in an ancient medieval castle. Heather took a deep breath of the fresh air, and the corner of her lips lifted slightly. Today will be a good beginning, she thought.

It had been cold for a very long time and she even experienced a cold winter yesterday. However, the sun was shining so bright today and as the warm sunlight was sprinkled down, it would make a person become soft.

Her mood had turned great in an instant too. If there was anyone who would date her out for a spring outing at the moment, she would definitely agree without any hesitation. Though it did not have any green scenery for now, she could at least go out for a walk at a place full of golden leaves and with stunning landscapes.

Just like a caged bird which was finally set free, she could not wait to spread her wings and soar freely in the sky. Perhaps her thoughts were too strong, thus Matthias had pulled her back to reality with a phone call.

She then picked up the phone immediately. Right at the moment, he was sitting in his office, also with his window wide open. He felt that the weather today was just right for a date.

“Dear Miss Langston, may I ask you out for a date to talk about some business matter?” He was still keeping a secret on the previous matter of cooperating with the Langston Group. Robert had also given him an exception, saying that he could select any person in charge as he wished from the Langston Family to discuss the cooperation.

He sounded so relaxed that one could never tell from his tone that he was still in frustration yesterday regarding the matter of an angry Heather. He had already made a plan and in order to cheer a girl up, he should also prepare more surprises for her.

“Well, I’ll have to think about it.” She was secretly feeling happy deep down. Just when she thought about going out for a walk, Matthias then appeared coincidentally, as though it was specially arranged by fate.

Listening to Evan’s advice, Matthias wanted to become an interesting person in front of Heather, as an interesting soul had always been exceptionally attractive.

Standing before Love Chapter 569

On the phone, Matthias did not feel a sense of displeasure from Heather, and both of them tacitly remained silent about what happened yesterday. It was a brand new day and a new beginning; yesterday had already passed. He had improved a lot in dealing with relationships.

“What is your decision about the date, Miss Langston?” Since she did not reject him at once, she would very likely agree to his offer. Therefore, he certainly should take advantage of this situation to persuade until she nodded.

“Well, I’m afraid that Director Locke is doing this for his private reasons under the disguise of business matters,” replied Heather in a teasing manner. This was not the first time he had done such a thing and it used to happen very often. Therefore, in her eyes, he was like a person with previous convictions.

Upon hearing her words, he smiled while looking resigned, as he was unable to continue with what she said. By using the name of official business matters for his private interests, he had indeed done such a thing countless times. Right at this moment, he couldn’t help but feel ashamed while he looked back on his actions.

“We’ll only be talking about business and not about the other things.” He then pledged in all honesty and sincerity, but even he himself could not believe in these words.

“Alright, then. I wonder what matter Director Locke wants to talk with me about?” She was having the thoughts of teasing Matthias. As she recalled his embarrassed look, she smiled broadly.

Meanwhile, he flipped through the documents that he was holding. These were all the information regarding the cooperation between the Locke Group and the Langston Group, and it would possibly take half a day to read through these thick bundles of documents without missing a word.

“It’s about the cooperation between the Locke Group and Langston Group.” As he spoke, he pushed the documents aside. He would need to bring it along later for the date, and it could be said that he indeed spent a great effort just to meet Heather.

Upon hearing his reply, Heather frowned. She did not want to take care of this matter and since it was about the company’s cooperation, Blake was far more qualified than her to further discuss it with Matthias.

“Can I not accept it?” She hesitated a little, as she thought of the words that Robert had told her back then, which were hinting at her implicitly yet obvious.

She used to think of fighting for it in the past, but she completely gave up on this thought later on. However, Robert brought up this matter again all of a

sudden, and it caused a total mess in her mind. On top of that, she was surprised that Matthias dared to brazenly ask her out by using this reason, which meant that Robert was indeed backing him up. As she thought about this, she did not know whether she should comply with his wish.

“The cooperation will be happening soon but a lot of things are yet to be finalized. Miss Heather, are you really not feeling worried about it?” Speaking in a businesslike tone, Matthias was trying his very best to ask Heather out to meet him.

He insisted on using this reason as he had set his mind to talk about this matter with her, so he certainly would not go to Blake Langston for this. If she refused again, he could only compromise in the end. Moreover, she had envisioned various possibilities that might happen in her mind.

“I’m not working at the Langston Group anymore, so I’m afraid that I’m not eligible to have a hand in this matter.” Still, she refused. The only thought she had right now was to develop her own company well and she did not want to compete with Blake any further.

“But that’s not what Old Master Langston said to me. He told me that you’ll always be a member of the Langston Group’s board of directors. Other than Blake Langston, you’re the director with the most company holdings among the Langston Family.” Matthias’ words were so high-sounding but it left her feeling startled.

“Where did you hear this rumor? I don’t even have the slightest share of the company in my hands.” Heather said inexplicably. Was it really what Robert told him, though? She thought.

At the same time, Matthias was surprised too. Robert did not tell him that she was not aware about this matter back then, and it seemed like he wanted to inform Heather about it through his mouth.

“It was your grandfather. He gave you the shares.” Looking at this situation, he was certain to conclude that it was definitely Robert who transferred the shares to Heather.

“But I’ve never signed any share transfer agreement.” She did not have the memory of signing such an agreement, but she indeed signed a lot of contracts and documents before.

“I’m not clear about this either. You can ask Old Master Langston about it.” This time, he had been used by Old Master Langston. As soon as he thought about this, he held his forehead in distress.

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In the meantime, a scene had popped up in Heather’s mind while she recalled. There was a time when Robert called her over to the study alone, asking her to sign for a document. At that time, he only asked her to sign, but he did not show her the contents of it. Could it be...

It was simply unknown whether it would be good news or bad news. She was feeling both helpless and amused about this, as she couldn’t believe that Robert would do such a thing behind her back.

“Alright. Where did you plan to meet?” Not wanting to stress herself about this matter anymore, she changed the topic in a split second and agreed to meet with Matthias.

For him, he had achieved his aim. Therefore, he no longer cared about the messy things of the Langston Family too.

“Wherever you like—you can decide.” He was afraid that Heather might not like the place that he chose, so he might as well let her choose on her own.

After thinking about it for a moment, she decided to go to the tea house. The place was rather quiet and they could also book a VIP room for themselves, so they would not be disturbed by anyone.

Matthias agreed with her suggestion and he then hung up the call before picking up the documents instantly which were placed near to him. At the moment, all he wanted was to hurriedly arrive at the teahouse they agreed upon.

The place that Heather picked this time was not in the city center. It was located in a remote alley at the outskirts of the city, as good wine needs no bush. She once came here by chance, and she liked the charming, attractive lady boss here. On top of that, she also admired her proficient tea ceremony.

It was a kind of artistic enjoyment when you watched her brewing the tea, and what Heather liked the most was the boss’ smile—her smile was

extraordinarily enchanting, as though it could hit the deepest part of one's heart.

Besides, she would also discuss the tea ceremony with the guests, as she felt that the tea ceremony was similar to the humane way of life. If one had been to this tea house for once, one would definitely think about coming here for the second time. During this period of time, Heather was swamped by various kinds of tasks. Fortunately, the weather today was great, so this simple and unsophisticated tea house came to her mind, and it was also just in time to fulfill her promise which she made to the lady boss.

Back then, she had promised the lady boss that she would come over again next time. When such words were coming out of Heather's mouth, it certainly was meant to be a promise, not just a casual remark.

This was the first time for Matthias to come to this place and he navigated it on the map for a pretty long while. The roaring machinery sound could be heard coming from the side, as this place was a development area. He did not expect that there would be an antique tea house in such a place.

Heather, on the other hand, had arrived ahead of him. The tea house only had one VIP room and since it would be served by the boss personally, the cost of the room would be a lot more expensive. Therefore, the people who would purposely book the VIP room were few and far between.

After all, sitting in the cubicles would not be disturbed either; it would already be good as long as the guests tried their best to speak with a soft and lower voice. Sometimes, the lady boss would even jokingly say that nobody had ordered her for a very long time.

As soon as Matthias arrived, the waitress noticed him with the first glance and she then greeted him and asked, "Are you Mr. Locke?"

When Heather arrived, she had told the waitress some of Matthias' characteristics for her to keep an eye on. And so, once she saw him, she could then lead him to the VIP room immediately.

"Yes," Matthias replied decisively.

The waitress then put on a gentle smile and added, "Miss Langston is already waiting for you in the VIP room. Please come with me."

The etiquette of the waiters and waitresses of this tea house was very good. Besides, when he saw this building from the outside, he thought that he had travelled back to the ancient times, as it was builded with retro architectural designs.

After entering the tea house, the shop assistants were all wearing traditional costumes, and they were mainly young and comely girls with a few beautiful little boys.

It seemed like the shop owner had a pretty good eye, as all of the service would be done by these good-looking boys and girls. As Matthias smiled politely, he followed after the waitress.

Meanwhile in the VIP room, Heather and the boss were chatting eloquently about some life principles, and the former would put on a soft smile from time to time. Compared with the boss, who looked past her prime but was still attractive, Heather had an appearance that was extremely cold but glamorous.

Matthias' arrival had interrupted their conversation, so the boss looked at him and smiled politely. However, his gaze was fixed at Heather and he only spared the boss a glance.

"Come here," said Heather while she pointed to the seat beside her.

In the past, he had always been sitting at the seat opposite her but this time, he could finally sit next to her. As this thought came to his mind, he couldn't help but smile softly as he sat by her side.

The boss looked at them curiously and she then said to Heather, "Since Miss Langston's honored guest has arrived, then I'll be leaving first."

Heather nodded slightly. "I'd like you to pour a cup of tea for him," she then added while pointing at Matthias.

Upon hearing her words, the boss adeptly lifted the exquisite ceramic teapot to pour a cup of tea for Matthias. She raised the teapot very high and a slender stream of water slowly flowed into the teacup. Surprisingly, not a single drop of water was spilled.

After she was done, she said to him, "Enjoy."

“Thank you.” He replied in a polite manner.

The lady boss merely smiled. As she was about to leave, she glanced at Matthias and said, “The both of you are truly a match made in heaven.”

As soon as she was done speaking, she left in a hurry before both of them had the time to respond to her words. Heather blushed in an instant, as this was the first time someone said that Matthias and her were a heavenly pair. This felt a little abstruse.

On the other hand, Matthias was elated and he thought that was the best phrase he had ever heard. He then said to Heather, “This boss even knows some metaphysics?”

“Well, she’s a rare sober person in this mortal world,” Heather replied, which was a pretty high compliment toward the boss.

“This is really such a great place.” As he spoke, he scanned around the designs of the surroundings. The screen beside him was definitely embroidered by hand, stitch by stitch.

“But it’s a pity that it would be razed to the ground very soon,” said Heather while she sounded a little regretful.

“Oh—that’s indeed a pity.” Matthias let out a sigh along with her, as it was really a pity for every inch of the wholehearted designs in this tea house.

Upon hearing his words, she sneered while looking at him. “Did Director Locke forget that this place is a development area under the Locke Group?”

If she hadn’t reminded him, he would have really forgotten about this matter; no wonder he felt that the surroundings were so familiar while he was on his way here. Recently, he had only been thinking about the ways to surmount the Hart Group, so he did not put his focus on the development projects. Therefore, he had become a little forgetful due to his overwhelming thoughts.

“I wonder what Miss Langston wants me to be alert of with this matter?” After a moment of contemplation, he finally figured out that there was another intention behind her decision to meet at this place.

“Nothing. It’s just a coincidence.” She skipped over the topic, but he had already understood it.

The bold and drastic moves of Locke Group lately were indeed extremely impactful to many places, and it also harmed the interests of some of the people.

“Have you brought the documents?” Heather went straight to the point.

Matthias took the documents out from his briefcase and handed them to her, and she then took the thick bundle of documents. The words on it were so densely packed and perhaps even when the pot of tea had become cold, she still couldn't finish reading it.

However, it was fortunate for her that she had a whole day to spare, so that she could take a good look at these documents. After all, deep down she was still concerned about the cooperation between the Locke Group and the Langston Group, and until now she still disagreed with this matter, as they were still unable to judge on which side the Locke Group was taking their stand on.

The enemy's friend was still an enemy, but the enemy's enemy would be a friend. In fact, Heather was still hoping in vain that the Langston Group could achieve the aim of cooperating with the Hart Group.

“This tea house also has local specialties. You can just order anything if you're feeling a little hungry.” She said to Matthias before she immersed in the documents. Meanwhile, he was staying so quietly by her side, fearing that he would disturb her.

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The tea house had a good sound insulation effect as the roaring sound of the machinery not far from here could not be heard. Sitting in the tea house made them feel as though they were in another space, isolating them from the noise out there.

The aroma of the tea wafted around the room, which teased Matthias' olfactory. He knew that Heather was a person who liked to enjoy life and he thought that it wouldn't be boring in the future when he was together with her. While he was deep in thought, anticipating his future with her, she remained quiet as she flipped through the documents.

At this moment, he remembered some of his old memories. They had once sat by the lakeside while enjoying the breeze and at that time, he would

secretly peek at her. It was something that even Myra had taken notice of—when he was with her, he would feel comfortable, but if Heather was there together with them, he would feel nervous.

Although it was a memory from some time ago, he could still recall his nervousness. As he gently stroked his chest, his heart was racing unsteadily and loudly. He was unsure whether it was the aroma of the tea or Heather's light fragrance; he just couldn't help but want to get closer to her.

Cough, cough. Upon noticing that sight, Heather softly let out a few coughs and said, "You squashed my documents." She wondered when they had sat so close to each other as it made her feel slightly uncomfortable.

"Oh, I'm sorry," Matthias apologized, having done something dumb once again. He was thinking of quietly approaching her, but his plan had failed even before he could start.

She took a faint glance at him. When she realized that there was a slight issue regarding the distance between them, she moved slightly to the side. After all, she was not used to being so close to him and he had already far exceeded her safe distance with him.

"Aren't you hungry?" Heather asked.

"Are you hungry?" Matthias countered. With only a pot of tea in front of them, things were indeed looking a little dull.

"Nope," she answered before continuing to fix her gaze on the documents in her hands.

It was the most frightening when the air suddenly drowned in silence. Looking at her, she looked like she did not want to bother him any longer, so he lowered his head and looked at his phone. Meanwhile, she inadvertently took a glance at him. She felt that he was acting a little strange, but she could not tell exactly what was wrong with him.

Heather poured herself a cup of tea. The tea tasted especially bitter when it was being sipped at the very beginning, but the aftertaste proved to be sweet. It was extremely good, and it was exactly as how the saying went—'after the suffering came the happiness'.

On the other hand, the teacup in front of Matthias was still full. It seemed like he was not really fond of the tea, so upon noticing it, she responded, "If you don't like this pot of tea, you can order another pot."

Her sudden words had left him a little dazed before he looked at the teacup in front of him. He merely took a sip when he first came, but he wasn't feeling thirsty at that time. All he tasted was just the tea's bitterness, so he did not drink it again.

On second thought, since Heather had ordered this pot of tea, this could be the kind of taste that she liked. There was an old proverb that went 'love me, love my dog', so Matthias should certainly show her that he loved the tea too.

"No, it's alright. I really like this taste." In fact, he didn't like the tea to be that bitter. His tongue was astringent by the bitterness of it and he did not care much about its aftertaste either.

"Tea should be savored slowly." As she lifted the teacup in her hands, the corners of her lips were slightly raised to reveal a soft smile. She liked tea and she would also love to make friends who liked tea as much as her.

Mimicking her actions, Matthias lifted his cup of tea and took a sip again. As their eyes met, they smiled at each other. This time, he felt that the tea was not as bitter anymore; he could even taste a tinge of sweetness.

"It's good tea." He honestly thought that it was a good cup of tea, but Heather had already ignored him and turned her gaze toward the documents once again.

It was a quiet afternoon where the sound of pages flipping could occasionally be heard as the ray of sunlight shone through the window. Her side profile looked as if it was coated with a layer of soft halo and one could hardly resist giving her a kiss.

Time had swiftly passed and it took her a whole three hours to finish pursuing all the documents. Rubbing her temples, Heather felt that she had not read such a thick bundle of information in such a long time.

"Seems like the Locke Group is pushing their luck." She expressed her initial evaluation on the matter.

A confused Matthias looked at her. He had tried his absolute best to compromise in the collaboration, but he could not understand why she would still make that sort of comment.

“I can’t feel the sincerity from Locke Group in this document. Mr. Locke, you’ve said that you want to sincerely cooperate with the Langston Group, but it seems like you’ve mistaken the definition of collaboration.” When it came to business matters, it had to be dealt with in a business-like manner and she would not give him even a sense of mercy.

Those words had left him even more puzzled, and he was speechless toward Heather’s query. In terms of interests, Locke Group had compromised a lot. If she was still dissatisfied about it and they had to make further concessions, it would become an unequal treaty for them.

“I don’t quite understand what you mean, Miss Langston.” He transformed into his working state in a split second.

“Well, we can cooperate. However, to do such a thing like sharing the same hatred against one enemy, the Langston Group will never be involved in it,” she replied in a gentle manner, but she had also pointed out the main problem.

The corner of Matthias’ lips twitched, and he put on a businessman’s formal smile. “I see. So, this is what you’re concerned about, Miss Langston. Since both of the companies are going to have an in-depth collaboration, it’s not that unreasonable to have the same enemy.”

It seemed like Heather did not care about the concessions that he had made since what she was concerned about was the aspect of in-depth cooperation. She refused to let both of their companies have an extensive collaboration and it seemed like it was because she did not trust the Locke Group.

“In-depth collaboration? Both the Locke Group and the Langston Group are large enterprises, so there’s no need for us to collaborate extensively. Furthermore, we have our own style of running our businesses. It will easily turn into a situation where a great man cannot break a rival.” She continued to play riddles with him. After all, it was her who was not willing to budge.

“If you think that the in-depth collaboration is unnecessary, then I’m afraid that the cooperation between the two groups will be difficult to develop further.” Firmly standing his ground, Matthias could not make any more concessions on

this matter. What he wanted was to allow both the groups to have an extensive collaboration, not a cooperation for a shallow project.

Upon hearing his words, Heather gave an unkind smile. “If this is what you think, Director Locke, then I guess you can just refuse to cooperate with the Langston Group.” She would rather ruin this collaboration than submit to his request.

Matthias then took a deep glance at her. He knew that Heather had her own plans and he also understood why she disagreed with the collaboration between the two companies. However, business is business and he could not allow his emotions to outweigh business matters. He needed to gain her trust on this matter. Even though she was no longer working in Langston Group, her words still carried the most weight in front of Robert. If he failed to persuade Heather, then he would be looked down on by Robert.

When Matthias was having this thought in his mind, he could finally understand the meaning behind the words that Robert had told him back then. It turned out that Robert was having such an intention in his mind—to kill three birds with one stone. He could bring Matthias and Heather together on this matter while on the other hand, he could also bequeath something that was difficult for him to convey to her through Matthias. Thirdly, he could even make things exceptionally difficult for Matthias. At that moment, Matthias could not help but admire Robert’s tactics. No matter what, he needed to break through the predicament in front of him. Since Robert had given him a difficult problem to handle, he should just resolve it!

“Alright. Since you’re not satisfied with this document, Miss Langston, then I’ll take it back and revise it.” As his middle finger tapped lightly on the table, the expression on his face turned serious.

“No matter how you amend it, I will never be satisfied with it,” Heather aggressively responded. In fact, Matthias had also made compromises for her. If it was for other people, he would have lost his temper.

“Well then, what should we do to ensure that you’ll be satisfied with it, Miss Langston?” Not losing his patience, he asked steadily. At that moment, she was not only the woman whom he fancied, but also the business partner of his project that he needed to convince.

“We are having conflicting ideas. Right now, isn’t it the most urgent to resolve this conflict of ours? I don’t agree with the in-depth collaboration between

Locke Group and the Langston Group since these two big companies do not have the need to form a so-called ally.” However, Heather was still tightly holding onto this point of hers and she would not compromise unless Matthias gave in to her request.

“Miss Langston, the alliance that you’ve mentioned is a little exaggerated. If the two companies are merely cooperating, then I will not need to dedicate so much time in drafting this cooperation plan.” Trying to persuade Heather, Matthias slowly expressed his opinions.

“The Langston Group is now facing a bottleneck and the Locke Group can help to procure new resources involved in the company’s business. This is something that will benefit the both of us, so I don’t understand why you would keep refusing it.” He had long investigated the Langston Group and the company’s current situation was indeed not in an optimistic state.

“In this document, I don’t see the necessity for both of the companies to cooperate. Besides, Locke Group is not the only company that can help in obtaining new resources for our company. I’m afraid that this reason does not make sense.” Unshaken, she skipped the topic of the bottleneck period that the Langston Group faced. It was indeed true, but it was also true that it was not a necessity to cooperate with the Locke Group. If they could fight for cooperation with the Hart Group, then it was bound to be better than cooperating with Matthias.

“Well, what you said is also true. However, you need to understand something. Throughout the whole Bradford City, are there any other companies that can be so well-capitalized and disposed to make concessions for the Langston Group?” Not willing to surrender, he firmly responded. The concessions that he made were extremely tempting and his principal issues would not be changed. Moreover, it was not a big deal to give more benefits to the Langston Group.

“Well said, Director Locke. Although businessmen do value and will seek benefits, it doesn’t mean that two sides with totally different opinions can come together reluctantly. Also, although the Langston Group is not as strong as before, we still have our own limits. We are not interested in becoming other people’s bullies.” Heather cut to the chase. She would definitely not compromise and would also try her very best not to allow Matthias to achieve his wish.

“Alright, it seems like you and I can’t agree with each other’s opinions.” Matthias did not want to argue further as it could possibly affect their personal relationship afterward.

Upon hearing his words, she smiled without saying a word. What he said was true, so she did not want to argue with him either.

“Please give me another chance then, Miss Langston. I’ll modify the cooperation plan once again. Since the both of us can’t represent the whole company, when the time comes, both of the groups can hold a board of directors meeting together. By then, we can let everyone decide.” Since it was hopeless to persuade Heather anymore, Matthias could only come up with his killer idea. He knew that the people in the Langston Group who wanted the cooperation to happen were not small in numbers, so he would not lose in terms of voting.

As soon as she heard his words, her expression changed in an instant. She did not expect that he would force her into a situation of despair. If they were involved in the meeting together, she was afraid that the directors supporting her would not be many.

“This sort of cooperation plan is not suitable to be brought up to the public, so it is not necessary to make the decision through the board of directors. Moreover, both of us are the ones who hold the most shares in our companies. Can’t we decide on this small plan instead?” At this moment, Heather had no choice but to bring up the matter of shares to support her stand, as she definitely didn’t want to bring the matter of cooperation to the board of directors.

“Miss Langston, you’re really not being careful with your thoughts. We indeed have a lot of shares on our hands, but there are also a few other large equity holders. Are you really ignore them? Don’t forget the current President of the Langston Group—Blake Langston, your big brother. I guess he has a lot of thoughts about this cooperation too, right?” As Matthias spoke, he emphasized the last sentence in an intense manner. A ghastly expression was slowly creeping up on Heather’s face for the situation now had been reversed.

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The crisp sound of wind chimes rang outside as the two of them looked each other in the eye. With her lips slightly curled upward, Heather gazed at Matthias and replied, "Alright, we'll do as you say then."

She didn't want to argue any further since he was confident. After all, it seemed that he had long prepared his countermeasure.

A smiling Matthias gently nodded. "Since you have assented to it, Miss Langston, then it's decided for the time being. I'll make the necessary amendments and decide on it later on."

Looking at his triumphant smile, Heather had the urge to throw a pot of tea at his face. He had insisted on 'discussing' the collaboration with her, but in fact, he was forcing her to agree to it.

Obviously, he was a wolf in sheep's clothing. Suddenly, she recalled an evaluation of him given by someone in the industry. The person had said that Matthias was indeed a wolf inside out.

After all, business was still business. He didn't go easy on Heather at all and it seemed that he had everything planned beforehand.

Well, she could only blame herself for lowering her guard because of his abnormal behavior these days. How could she forget that he was the CEO of Locke Group? Of course, he would prioritize his company's interests over anything else!

Heather was utterly annoyed at this moment. After maintaining a low profile for so long, Matthias finally revealed his cards on the table and she was completely defeated this time. Every time she dealt with him, there was not once she would gain the upper hand in the situation. Without fail, he would always cause her to have her guard lowered.

Rejecting the idea of having her elated mood ruined, she could only accept the outcome for the time being. Perhaps she would be able to come up with an idea to turn the tables around within the next few days. "Since we're done talking about business..."

Without waiting for Heather to finish with her words, Matthias interrupted, "Let's talk about personal matters then."

Upon hearing that, she glanced at him with a complicated smile as she asked, "What is there to talk about?" In fact, she was not in the mood to discuss personal matters with him.

"Anything. I don't want our relationship to be affected by business matters." He was worried that she would blame him for not showing any mercy at work this time.

"I certainly wouldn't confuse business matters with personal affairs. As for us, I don't think we have any relationship that's worth mentioning." Heather was still attacking Matthias with her words. The fact that she had lost to him on business affairs resulted in her refusal to be easy with him on personal matters.

How could a woman possibly make a clear distinction between public and private matters? Capturing a faint hint of disappointment flashing across his face, Heather could feel a pang of slight guilt in her heart. It was as if she shouldn't have treated him like this.

"Heather, don't you care about our feelings and relationship at all?" Matthias asked as his heart throbbed in pain. To him, when he was in love with someone, he couldn't wait to be together with her and spend the rest of their lives together.

She tried to see through him, yet he had his walls erected so high that it prevented her from thoroughly reading his mind. Sometimes she felt that they were meant for each other, but there were times when she had the feeling that they would end up arguing a lot as a couple with no end to the 'war' between them.

"Why are you so eager to know the answer? Shouldn't we let our feelings come naturally? Don't ever ask this kind of question anymore because I don't like the feeling of being pressured." A helpless Heather didn't know how many times she needed to repeat herself so that Matthias would allow their relationship to slowly progress.

She had always openly rejected him in the past, but now, she was willing to give him a chance. Yet, he was still pushing his luck further and expecting more from her.

"We should indeed let our feelings come naturally, but we should also fight for it at the right time." Matthias had his own set of theories. He believed that he

should take the initiative to fight for something that he wanted and it was all thanks to his perseverance and tireless efforts that he was able to improve his relationship with Heather.

“Have some tea.” Heather elegantly poured a cup of tea for Matthias. His dominating aura was making it difficult for her to breathe.

As much as his tone was gentle and he had a warm smile, the words that came out of his mouth sounded rather aggressive. It was like he didn’t allow her to have any space for consideration.

As soon as he gulped the tea, the taste of bitterness filled the inside of his mouth. However, his expression remained unchanged. She faintly glanced at him from the corner of her eye as she knew he didn’t like bitter tea, which was why she had ordered a pot of it.

More often than not, Heather was always coming up with ways to make things difficult for Matthias. It was as if she wanted him to experience countless obstacles before giving him the answer that he needed. As a matter of fact, she was an extremely insecure person.

After having her sense of security held tightly in her hand, she claimed that she could be self-sufficient in making herself feel secure. However, it was people like that who often felt insecure toward others. Distrust was the norm for them.

Perhaps the only way to prove that they were truly in love was through the torture that they were subjecting the other party to. Someone once sang that the presence of a problem could strengthen a couple’s relationship. What kind of extreme romance could that be?

“I understand the reason behind your stubbornness.” Matthias gave a bitter smile. Nevertheless, the weather was inappropriate for them to be sentimental. Rather, they should seize this opportunity to take a walk outside and breathe in some fresh air instead.

“We’re just friends now, okay? Just friends,” Heather assured with a solemn expression. It was already a good start that she was willing to be friends with Matthias.

To her, she still needed some time before she could allow their relationship to move to another level. Before everything was settled, she would not easily allow herself to decide on her feelings.

The conflicts between the Lockes, the Langstons, the Harts, and the Moriartys were already a pain in the neck for Heather. How could she be in the mood to have a romantic relationship when she had to take care of such a mess on a daily basis?

“Since we’re friends and we’re done talking about work, can I invite you for a walk then?” Matthias dared not expect more from her. There were not many people whom she would regard as friends. At least for now, he knew that he had a special place in her heart.

“Where do you want to go?” a clueless Heather asked. For Matthias to come up with such a suggestion, surely he had a place to go in mind.

“Should we go for a picnic?” He suggested an idea that had him feeling good about himself.

She gazed at him in confusion and asked, “How are we going to have a picnic when we don’t even have anything prepared beforehand?” At this moment, she started to feel helpless with his constant influx of ideas.

“Why do we need to prepare anything when we can get the ingredients from nature?” Matthias was getting excited. He had always wanted to do something to entertain himself as he had recently been having a frustrating time.

“Are you planning to eat raw, wild vegetables?” Heather asked sarcastically. They did not even have any cooking utensils with them. What a whimsical man!

“We can buy a camp stove with a pot and make our own hotpot.” It was the first thing that came to his mind. He was indeed living up to his name as the ‘hotpot lover.’

“What about the soup base?” She certainly had no idea how to make a hotpot base.

“We can get it from the grocery stores.” The issues that she mentioned were definitely not a problem for Matthias.

“So, are you planning to buy a camp stove and the soup base from the grocery store while looking for the remaining ingredients from the mountains?” Heather had a feeling that they were going on an adventure on the west side. A bad premonition was warning her that they were about to brave the elements for their picnic.

“Yes, there’ll be a lot of fresh, natural ingredients from the mountains and the sea. I can fish while you harvest the wild vegetables.” Matthias was high in spirits. He had never done anything like that before and it actually didn’t sound too bad.

Upon hearing his words, Heather instantly had goosebumps all over her body since there was no way she was going to touch dirty soil with her hands. After being with Matthias for a long time, it felt that her germophobia would be cured sooner or later.

“No way. I don’t like touching dirty things, especially soil that looks dark and sticky.” It was a big fat no from Heather to harvest the wild vegetables from the ground. Moreover, she didn’t think that it was a great idea at all.

“Well, I don’t mind exchanging my role with yours. You can fish while I harvest the wild vegetables then.” He had always wanted to do something extraordinary. While growing up, he never had the chance to experience such fun in his childhood and that was why he wanted to give it a try now.

With her eyes slightly narrowed, Heather suspiciously looked at him. It turned out that Matthias had such a childish side as if he was a boy who had yet to grow up.

If anyone found out that they actually do such a thing in private, they would definitely end up being on the news headlines again. She might not have done this before, but she didn’t have any intention to try it either.

“Why do we need to get our ingredients from nature? Why can’t we just bring our own ingredients?” Still, she felt that it was way more convenient to get them from the grocery store.

“We work for what we eat and that’s what makes a picnic meaningful.” Matthias continued to persuade Heather into agreeing to it. At the thought that he would be able to do this with her, his eyes gleamed with joy.

“What’s so meaningful about it?” It was obvious that she was rejecting him and his idea. Yet, he was like an idiot with an IQ of 70 at this moment. From time to time, he insisted on his attempt to persuade Heather to agree to his proposal.

“It must be extraordinarily delicious to eat the food from our own labor.” Matthias reasoned while attempting to move her with his emotions. Coming up with all kinds of methods to persuade her, he was as determined as that time when he wanted to convince her to agree to the collaboration project.

“I earn through mental labor every day and I use the money I earn to buy anything I want. That’s also what I get from my own labor,” Heather replied sternly as she disagreed with his statement.

“Stop shilly-shallying! Let’s go!” Matthias didn’t want to argue with her anymore. She was a philosopher, so there was no guarantee how long the conversation on this topic would last once she started to talk about her philosophical theories.

Without any hesitation, he pulled her to her feet. As it was not the first time he held her hand, his movements were so natural that she didn’t seem to care about it too much.

Soon, she was almost lifted from her seat as he dragged her all the way to the door. As they walked past the aisle, people were casting curious and envious gazes at them.

On the other hand, the lady boss was greeting other guests when she saw Matthias dragging Heather down the aisle. Instantly, the woman flashed an understanding smile because it seemed like the two of them had progressed rather quickly.

Heather struggled slightly as she attempted to withdraw her hand. However, her effort was futile. She was no match for Matthias in terms of strength at all. Suppressing the urge to kill him with her death glare, she pretended to be casual as she greeted the lady boss, “Miss, I’ll call it a day for now. I’ll drop by again when I have the chance to do so.”

Matthias also nodded at the lady boss as a courtesy. Contentedly, she fixed her gaze on the two of them. It had been so long since she last came across a match made in heaven.

“Next time when you come over, I’ll have the private room reserved for the both of you,” she said politely with a charming and vulpine smile.

As soon as they walked out of the shop, Heather waved his hand off with great force and warned with a gloomy expression, “Don’t touch me. And don’t hold my hand so casually either.” She strode away in irritation, hoping to leave Matthias far behind.

Yet, he caught up with her in just a few steps and argued, “There’s nothing wrong with friends holding hands, right?” Since she had claimed that they were friends, he could do anything freely under the guise of friendship from now on.