

Standing before Love Chapter 572

It seemed that their definition of a friendship had greatly varied as well. Heather quietly increased her pace as she wanted to leave Matthias behind.

“So, this is how Director Heather treats her friends.” His mocking remark instantly left her speechless.

Soon, she arrived at the all too familiar underground parking lot. There was no way she would go with him on the picnic, so she had to quickly leave. As soon as she opened her car door, he rushed over and slid into the passenger seat.

Before Heather could say anything, he interrupted, “I didn’t drive today.” He had definitely planned this a long time ago. Upon seeing the triumphant smile at the corners of his mouth, she had the urge to kick him off the car.

“Get your chauffeur to pick you up.” She stopped the car as she refused to bring him along.

“We’ve agreed to go on a picnic together. Since we’re heading in the same direction, it shouldn’t be a problem for us to carpool,” Matthias self-righteously explained as he felt that there was nothing wrong with it. In fact, he had decided everything beforehand and forced Heather’s hand.

“That’s your own plan. It has nothing to do with me,” she rudely expressed her thoughts. Instead of wasting her time with Matthias, she might as well pay a visit to Myra.

“What’s your plan then? I don’t mind tagging along.” Upon hearing Heather’s words, Matthias asked shamelessly. To her surprise, he was far more thick-skinned than Leon!

A helpless Heather started her car because it seemed that Matthias was determined to cling to her. With a darkened expression, she answered, “It’s none of your business. I’ll drop you at the Locke Group now. You can continue with your work and I can do what I want to do. Let’s not interfere with each other’s life.”

The best thing to do now was to get him out of her sight. However, as much as she wanted to get rid of him, he had his own scheme.

“I’m done with work for the day, so there’s no need for me to return to the company,” he gently said. Even Heather couldn’t read what was on his mind at the moment.

Truth be told, Matthias was rather impressive for his ability to perfectly combine work and personal affairs. The gray area between those affairs caused her to find it hard to understand him.

“We’ve finished talking about work and I have my personal affairs to attend to now. Director Locke, please behave yourself.” Ever since the day he had set her up, it had been her fate to be on the losing end. She was fated to be inferior to him and lose to him in every aspect.

After all, Matthias was Heather’s formidable rival. She was always helpless whenever it came to dealing with him. As unpredictable as he was, he never did the right thing at the right time. It was difficult for her to know what he was planning.

“I wonder what kind of personal affairs that you have that I can’t tag along.” Matthias was not really regarding himself as an outsider. It was already obvious that Heather made it clear that he was a friend, but it became an excuse for him to further push his luck.

“I can’t tell you.” She started to regret her decision. Why did she agree to befriend him in the first place? He was that kind of person who would grow even brighter if he was given some sunshine.

“This is just a friend being concerned. You should at least tell me the gist of it.” From time to time, Matthias had emphasized the term ‘friend’ with a hint of irony.

“We’re just ordinary friends. Please know where you stand and stop causing unnecessary trouble.” Heather was completely helpless, but she needed him to understand his place. The fact that he defined them as close friends was too opinionated on his part.

“How can we be ordinary friends with this relationship?” He continued to quibble, thinking of different ways to make Heather compromise.

Pulling over at the side of the road, she snapped at Matthias, “Get down. Please head to the Locke Group on your own.” As expected, she shouldn’t have nicely treated him as he would only be more insatiable as time passed.

A shameless Matthias continued to stay in the car, ignoring Heather's impatient expression. She couldn't possibly lay her hands on him at this time. As she stared at him, she found that he was leisurely looking out of the car window.

Since it was an area where cars couldn't stop for long, she couldn't leave her vehicle there for long. The drivers in the cars behind here were already honking as she was blocking the road. Even if she were to drop him here, she was only allowed to stop for a while.

Left with no choice, Heather had to start driving again. After all those experiences that he gained, Matthias knew very well that he had to be as shameless as possible to make her compromise.

Those people who pursued her in the past could not do this, nor did they realize it because there was no chance for them to get closer to her at all.

However, Matthias did it. He used the worst method of pursuing, which was pestering the other party. It was true that she was annoyed, but unknowingly, her attitude toward him also subtly changed. Without her even noticing it, he was already conquering her heart.

Because of him, she couldn't visit Myra anymore. It was impossible for her to pay Myra a visit with the pesky Matthias tagging along. During this time, she and Tony tried their best to avoid letting Matthias and Myra meet. Both Heather and Tony wanted to avoid Myra getting irritated before her labor.

While dealing with such a shameless man like Matthias, Heather thought of Leon. Perhaps he would have a way to deal with Matthias. At the thought of them fighting with each other, she flashed a sinister smile since it was time for him to taste his own medicine.

"I'm going to look for Leon now. Not only am I going to talk to him about personal affairs, but I'll be discussing work with him too. It's not right for you to tag along." Heather still hoped that she could get rid of Matthias although the possibility of it was close to nil.

"Perhaps there's something that I can help you with since I helped with the incident surrounding the Saffords back then. So, in other words, I can be considered a part of your company too." Unexpectedly, Matthias brought up the past incident. Upon listening to his statement, Heather seemed to realize everything that happened around her was related to Matthias.

It turned out that he was involved in her whole life, but when did it happen? As soon as she returned to Bradford City, she instantly became his prey. Little did she know that he would end up conquering every part of her world and becoming a significant existence in her life.

She remained silent at her words. What else could she say at this moment? He was following her like a shadow and quietly invading her world.

The two of them were tacitly silent for a while. Matthias would occasionally steal a glance at Heather while she focused on her driving and ignored him peeking at her.

When they were about to reach their destination, she suddenly asked, "Would you fall in love with a person who appears everywhere around you and invades your life as a whole? Not to mention, you can't even get rid of him at work." Her voice was low and gloomy.

Naturally, Matthias knew that she was complaining about him and the fact that he had invaded all her space. Yet, he didn't answer her question.

"I have a similar question. How can I open the heart of an independent woman who never believes she would be lucky enough to meet her true love? In fact, she's a woman who longs for love, yet she's afraid of it," he asked as he stared at her. He really wanted an ideal answer from her, but there was never a standard for love.

Heather deliberately looked away, avoiding his gaze for the fear of being drawn in by his deep eyes.

"We're here," she said gently.

Then, the car gradually came to a stop. It was the same hotel as yesterday. A second later, they both exited the car one after another. There was a spacious parking space that was filled with rows of luxury cars in front of the hotel.

She stepped forward in a hurry, refusing to walk side by side with Matthias. Their current relationship was somehow progressing, but slowly and awkwardly.

Standing outside the room, Heather knocked on the door. Leon was playing his video game on a laptop inside his room until he heard the knock from the door. Immediately, he got up from the bed.

As he arrived at the entrance and opened the door, he saw Heather standing outside his room with Matthias behind her. When did these two become so close?

“Oh, what a coincidence! Yesterday, both of you came to look for me one after another and you actually came together today. What is it this time?” Leon asked in a frivolous tone. He always had a sloppy look on him, making him seem unreliable. However, he was a totally different person at work.

“I came here to talk about work.” Heather walked in immediately while Matthias followed.

Leon quietly winked at Matthias behind her back. It seemed that something must have happened between those two. As much as he was curious about it, Leon was afraid that he would be beaten by them if he had asked. So, the only choice he had now was to zip his mouth and suppress the curiosity within him.

“I wasn’t aware that our company had another shareholder,” he said as he cast his gaze at Matthias. At last, he still couldn’t help but tease them. He could clearly see a hint of awkwardness flashed across Heather’s face as he said those words.

She soon regained her composure and joined him in teasing Matthias. “He’s not our shareholder. Rather, he’s here to run errands for our company.”

Upon hearing that Heather was also standing on his side, Leon became bolder and replied to her words, “Even the Director Locke is here to run errands for our company. It seems like our company’s standards are high!”

They sang in the same tune in an instant. The tacit cooperation between them had Matthias feeling a little jealous. However, he still gave a generous smile.

Since Matthias didn’t mind the teasing, Leon started to take a fancy to him. In short, he bet that Matthias would definitely win Heather’s heart—and he would be waiting for the result of their relationship.

“Director Heather, make sure you don’t go back on your words,” Matthias remarked all of a sudden, which caused Heather and Leon to look at him in confusion.

Then, Matthias continued, "Leon heard it too. Director Heather, when your company is launched, please hire me to run the errands for the company." In the blink of an eye, he was in control of the situation after having turned the tables around. Suddenly, she didn't know how to deal with him.

At the same time, Leon decided to help him out, so he added, "It seems like Mr. Locke really wants to work in our company. Heather, you better not disappoint him." It was obvious that he was taking Matthias' side. With her gaze shifting from Leon to him, she realized that they had the same sinister smile on their faces.

It seemed that the plan of having him taste his own medicine didn't work. Without her knowledge, the two of them had long united with each other and stood on the same side.

Heather smiled in awkwardness. "I'll definitely reserve a position for you." As soon as she finished her words, she stared fiercely at Leon and sneered at his betrayal.

"I'll have to trouble you then, Director Heather," Matthias courteously replied as he exchanged a glance with Leon. At last, their goal had finally been achieved.

It was now that Heather regretted her decision to bring Matthias along to meet Leo. If she had known that they would be on the same side, she would have thought of a way to get rid of Matthias when she was on her way here.

"Cough..." To prevent her gaze from piercing his body, Leon pretended to let out a slight cough.

Yet, she still looked at him with a contemptuous expression for a second before changing the mood in the room by announcing, "Let's talk about work."

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Her sudden announcement had caused Leon and Matthias to look at each other in confusion. Both men didn't think there were any business matters to discuss at this time. Initially, Matthias felt that Heather was only using Leon as a pretense, so he didn't think much about their trip. Now that Matthias heard her mentioning work with a solemn expression, he was stunned.

On the other hand, with a bright smile on his face, Leon answered, "Heather, you didn't inform me beforehand that we're going to talk about work." He was still secretly helping Matthias this time, causing her to roll her eyes at Leon.

A grateful Matthias glanced at Leon, thinking that he was indeed a loyal man. As the two of them made eye contact and exchanged a few knowing glances with each other, she felt the urge to kick the door down and leave the room.

"You kept mentioning the launch of the company yesterday. Isn't that a business matter?" Heather reminded Leon. Since she came looking for him today, she already had her set of rhetoric figured out.

"Didn't you already make up your mind and there's no point in me persuading you?" He continued to ridicule her. With regards to his refusal to cooperate, she assumed that he was still angry with what had happened yesterday.

"If you don't want to talk about it, I can leave now," Heather responded in a threatening tone, hoping that Leon could stop being carried away by his temper.

In helplessness, he looked at her. If he continued to act against her principles, she would definitely not spare any mercy on him in the future. Since he had no choice, he hopelessly nodded.

"No, Heather. I still want to talk about the company launch." Now that Heather had made herself so clear, there was no way Leon could act boldly anymore. After all, he still feared her in his heart.

Not knowing what was happening, Matthias gave a blank expression. He had no idea about the company launch at all. Upon noticing the confused expression in his eyes, she secretly smiled in her heart.

"When are you planning to launch the company?" He forcibly interrupted the conversation.

She did not reply. Instead, Leon answered, "On New Year's Day." There was nothing but a strong hint of helplessness in his tone.

"You've delayed the launch until the New Year's?" Matthias expressed his opinion, which caused Heather to frown a little.

It was then that Leon became excited. With a slightly raised voice, he responded, “Don’t you think it’s taking too long? The company can be launched within a few days. Yet, she wants it to be on New Year’s Day and that was different from what she promised me.” The moment he had an outsider supporting him, he started to get bolder with his thoughts.

“Launching the company is a big thing. There’s no use launching it in a hurry.” Heather made her grandiose explanation. Leon had not mentioned the reason behind the postponement because it was not convenient for him to talk about it in front of Matthias. At least, he was still aware of that point.

“I heard you mention the company launch before and it’s already been delayed for half a year from your original plan. If you don’t launch it as soon as possible, it might not be a good move.” It was surprising that Matthias’ memory was not bad. She had once told him that she wanted to start her own business and even shared her plan with him.

Even though she couldn’t remember when it happened, he could remember every detail about it—a rather impressive feat to both Heather and Leon.

“Thoughts will change as time passes. Changes always occur to plans.” She had insisted on launching it on New Year’s Day and even got into a fight with Leon because of this yesterday.

If it hadn’t been for Matthias today, Heather wouldn’t have brought up the matter and landed herself in this situation. However, she did have her own reasons—she really wanted to persuade Leon into accepting her opinion.

It was just that she wasn’t expecting Matthias to express his thoughts at that time. And what was more shocking was the fact that she had once disclosed her business plan to him. Now, she knew that she was in trouble.

Undeniably, Leon was indeed annoyed with Heather yesterday, but he was not the kind of person who would hold a grudge against someone. Now that she had mentioned it again, he didn’t have any complaints about it. He was just surprised that Matthias was actually on his side, which made things more interesting.

Ever since she met Matthias, many embarrassing things that happened were all related to him. Sometimes, she wondered whether he was her calamity.

Suddenly, the lady boss' words popped up in Heather's mind—that she and Matthias were a match made in heaven. Yet, why did she feel that it sounded so ironic at this moment?

However, Heather knew that the lady boss was indeed proficient in metaphysics. For some reason, her words had Heather feeling a little excited. Although Matthias was always causing her troubles and embarrassment, he happened to be the one that could bring her happiness.

Even Myra thought that it was a wonderful thing. When Heather chatted with her a few days ago, Myra had even brought this up.

The emotions in Heather's gaze had frequently changed from one to another that Matthias was feeling strange. Was there something on his face?

"I'm just expressing my thoughts. If you've made up your mind, you don't have to care about what others think," Matthias responded from the bottom of his heart. He was willing to support Heather in whatever she wanted to do.

Here came another plot twist! Leon instantly felt betrayed by his ally. In anger, he glanced at Matthias and regretted his decision for helping Matthias. In the end, Matthias would always stand on Heather's side.

Upon hearing Matthias' words, Heather could feel warmth filling her heart. That sounds just about right! If he dared to say anything that made her upset, she would definitely not see him again during this time.

Despite the overwhelming happiness in her heart, she was still not going easy on him. "On one hand, you told me not to care about what others think and on the other hand, you're expressing opinions that contradict with mine. You're indeed a contradictory person."

A sympathetic Leon cast a glance at Matthias. Pleasing Heather would not guarantee a positive outcome. Look what happened now? Now that he was looking at Matthias' defeated expression, Leon gloated a little in his heart as he regarded it as Matthias' karma for betraying him.

"Everyone has the freedom of speech. I can express my opinion openly and you can choose to ignore it as well. Do I have to keep quiet just because my opinion contradicts yours?" Matthias refuted. Since she was going overboard, he would not be polite with her either.

On the side, Leon was dying to applaud Matthias for his ability to silence Heather. Sure enough, he was a talent in eloquence.

Then, the debate continued. As the two of them continued to argue with one another, Leon found the scene rather interesting. He was initially growing bored in the hotel, but these two came to look for him today and enacted such a great show to help him pass the time. For that, he was grateful to them.

Now that the situation was getting chaotic, he couldn't miss the chance of making it worse for the sake of his own pleasure.

"That's right, Heather. You have to fix that chauvinism of yours. You can ignore our opinions, but you can't tell us to shut up. We support freedom of speech!" Leon emphasized the last sentence with a raised tone. That triumphant expression of his really pissed Heather off.

"Please pay attention to the words you use. Do some research and figure out what chauvinism is before labeling it on me." Heather expressed her dissatisfaction while Matthias also took a glance at him. It was true that Leon really made a mistake in his word choice this time.

"Hey, since you insist on launching the company on New Year's Day, then we shouldn't talk about it anymore. It's not a big deal to postpone the launching anyway. We can even make use of the auspicious signs of the special day." Leon hurriedly appeased Heather. He was too full of himself earlier and shot himself in the foot. It would be the worst thing on earth if he had actually offended her.

It seemed that he was not that difficult to deal with as compared to Matthias. Leon had actually compromised with ease, but it was expected because he really shared the same fate with Heather.

"Now that we have finished talking about work, is there anything else that you want to talk about?" Leon couldn't wait to get over this topic. Knowing Heather's personality, he knew that she wouldn't change her mind once she had something decided. So, why should he bother to waste his effort and time arguing about the launching?

"I have," Matthias suddenly interrupted.

Leon curiously shifted his gaze to Matthias, wondering what quote Matthias was coming up with this time. After being bullied by Heather for so long, Leon

finally saw a glimmer of hope in Matthias. It seemed that the day where he could turn the tables around was not far away.

“What is it? Tell me.” Leon and Matthias started to sing the same tune, leaving her aside.

“Since the weather is so nice today, do you want to go for a picnic?” Matthias was still thinking about the picnic until now. He had been waiting for a chance to bring it up all along.

Upon hearing that, Heather held her forehead with her hand. Why was Matthias so stubborn? She shouldn't have brought him here to visit Leon. Now, they were birds of a feather flocking together.

“Picnic? That sounds like a good idea!” Leon agreed with an eager expression since he had always liked outdoor activities.

“Then, you'll have to persuade Heather for me. She has rejected me earlier.” Matthias gazed at her. As expected, she was looking a little gloomy at that moment.

“Heather, a picnic is good for our body and mind. Why did you say no?” Leon started to throw the question at Heather. As if Matthias was not enough to make her life difficult, there was Leon doing the same thing. It was then that Heather realized she really made a serious mistake.

“I don't want to go. I'm not interested in being self-sufficient.” She threw a death glare at Matthias as she answered. At the thought of his proposal, she couldn't help but roll her eyes.

“Self-sufficient?” Leon was a little puzzled. With doubts written in his eyes, he looked at Matthias. Of course, she wouldn't bother to explain to him, so he could only pin his hope on Matthias.

When he heard Leon's question, Matthias explained in a serious manner, “Since we're going for a picnic, of course, we will have to make our own food. I plan to bring a pot with a soup base and look for a beautiful place in the mountains. Then, I'll be in charge of fishing while she harvests the wild vegetables. By doing so, we'll get to enjoy the most authentic delicacy of nature.” Matthias portrayed it as vividly as possible and it made Leon excited just by listening to it.

An eager Leon kept nodding his head as if he really wanted to give it a shot. However, Heather didn't seem to have the slightest interest written on her face.

"This is an awesome idea! What are we waiting for then?" Leon skipped Heather's opinion directly; he was dying to be there at this moment.

"Since both of you like the idea, then you should go together. Don't drag me along." Heather couldn't wait to return to the Langston Residence. There was no way she would spend her time with these two childish men.

"No way. We have to work together so that we don't exhaust ourselves. If Matthias and I go for a picnic on our own, others might get the wrong idea. For the sake of our innocence, you must come with us." Leon was intimately addressing Matthias, making it seem like he was really planning to form an alliance with Matthias.

"Oh," she replied coldly with an indifferent expression. While looking at her, Matthias and Leon couldn't make sense of her reply. Did she agree to it or...

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Heather could only agree to the proposal of a picnic as they would not give up in their pestering. As much as she thought that it was a stupid idea, Leon and Matthias were utterly excited about it. Not understanding the reason behind their excitement, she just hoped that they could get this outdoor activity over with.

As the three of them hopped into the car, Matthias was a step ahead and occupied Leon's front passenger seat. Knowing Matthias' intention, Leon subconsciously moved to the backseat without another word.

It was a terrible day for her. She ignored the two childish men next to her and focused on the road. On the other hand, Leon chatted about his plan for their upcoming picnic and it was surprising that Matthias was patient enough to listen to him.

"Heather, it's been so long. Are we not there yet?" Leon wondered. It had been 40 minutes, but they had yet to arrive at their destination.

"Bradfort City is bigger than you think. It takes at least an hour to get from the city center to the suburbs," Heather replied contemptuously. She really wished

that she could drug him at the moment so that she didn't have to listen to him and his nonsense.

A second later, he looked out of the car window with disinterest. Although the scenery was remarkable outside, he didn't enjoy the feeling of staying in a constrained space for too long as it would make him uncomfortable.

"I'm bored." Leon complained. "The journey is too slow."

"Can you shut up? I can't focus on driving because of you," Heather snapped. She was already irritated at the fact that they had forced her to come along for the picnic. Now that he was whining and getting impatient, it caused her mood to turn even worse.

He instantly zipped his mouth and dared not utter another word in the fear that she would turn her car around if she became agitated.

While staying quiet on the side, Matthias finally figured out the relationship that Heather and Leon had. It turned out that her treatment of him was already considered cordial compared to the way that she treated Leon. When it came to Leon, she seemed relentless.

Soon, the road ahead of them was getting narrower. It seemed that they were about to drive up the mountain road. While Matthias had a perfect place in mind for their picnic, Heather was still moving forward without a specific direction.

In a low voice, he whispered the direction of the destination in her ear, causing her to frown every now and then. "That road is too difficult to pass through. I'm not going there." He didn't specify the location beforehand and as soon as he finished speaking, she immediately opposed his words.

In fact, he had expected her to say those words, which was why he did not tell her the specific location before they made it here. And now that they were getting closer, he believed that he and Leon could continue to persuade her.

After noticing their exchange at the front, Leon leaned forward as he added, "Heather, you can't give up halfway. We've made it this far. We'll be arriving in just a bit." Although he didn't know the exact location, he guessed they should be arriving at their destination soon.

Matthias soon added, "We're just 3 kilometers away. Hang in there."

At their words, Heather gradually tightened her grip on the steering wheel. She was a little hesitant on whether to continue moving forward or to turn the car around. One thing was for sure—she did not want to disappoint them. Even though she was reluctant to come along before this, she had made it this far anyway. It wouldn't be polite of her to leave at this moment.

"Your turn to drive," she told him. Upon seeing that the road was too difficult to pass through, she figured she might as well let him take the wheel.

Upon hearing that, Matthias smiled triumphantly. "No problem." Initially, he wanted to offer to drive, but since it was Heather's car, he didn't take the initiative to mention it.

Then, she pulled over to the side of the road and exchanged seats with him. He had always been a skilled driver who drove through even the bumpiest roads. Even though it was a difficult road ahead, he did not have any intention of slowing down. Instead, he floored the accelerator and sped up.

At the same time, Leon cheered in his seat, "Hooray! Speed up! Faster!"

An annoyed Heather turned to glare at Leon as if she was looking at an idiot. Immediately, he smiled and pointed at his own mouth as he acknowledged, "I'll zip my mouth and shut up now."

Whenever he was with Heather, Leon would be restrained in all kinds of ways. Meanwhile, after hearing Leon's words, Matthias stepped on the pedal even harder. Looking at them, Heather was sure of one thing—she could not allow Leon and Matthias to stay close to each other.

It might seem to be a world of difference between Matthias and Leo, but, in fact, they were the same—something that she should have noticed a long time ago.

The biggest mistake she had made today was to bring Matthias along to visit Leon. However, there was nothing she could do with their sort of people. The shamelessness of Leon and Matthias had far exceeded her imagination.

And the most troublesome thing was that their skills in pestering were totally out of the world. Even Heather's stubbornness was not a match to them at all.

As the car sped along the bumpy road, she felt the urge to throw up. On the other hand, Matthias was driving like a professional racer with eyes that were filled with madness.

“It’s rare to come across such terrain these days. It’s been a long time since I’ve been able to freely drive.” Matthias actually regarded places like that as a good choice for car racing. It seemed that he was a little crazier than Leon.

Even Leon, who was sitting in the back seat, felt sorry for Heather. It was definitely not easy for her to sit in the front passenger seat, but luckily she was a stronghearted person.

On the other hand, there was no seatbelt at the backseat. Sometimes, when the car passed through larger bumps, it would cause Leon to jump from his seat. And, it was then that he realized three kilometers was a long way to go.

It had been a long time since he last rode in a bumpy car. He somehow felt like he was an action movie star desperately escaping for his life. The short five-minute journey almost had him puking in the car.

When the car finally came to a stop, Leon hurriedly alighted from it. To Leon’s surprise, Matthias’ expression didn’t change even the slightest bit after the ride. It seemed that the gradient level was not a big deal to Matthias at all.

A second later, Heather also slowly got out of the car. Her movements were slower and calmer as compared to Leon’s. It was better to be slower for the nausea to sink in. In fact, she seemed relatively fine. Judging from how everyone looked, Leon seemed to have suffered the most.

Since he had left the car in a hurry, the nausea had hit him harder, causing him to have a stronger urge to puke. Heather faintly scanned his distressed expression. Upon seeing that he was trying his best to resist himself from vomiting, she flashed a bright smile. When she thought of the alliance between the two men, she felt that it was the best punishment for him.

Besides, she was still waiting to see Matthias’ disappointed expression. One thing that she clearly remembered was the camp stove with a pot and the soup base.

Since the two of them were busy persuading her to come for the picnic earlier, they had completely forgotten to swing by the grocery store along the way. Of

course, she didn't want to remind them either. After all, she was waiting for this moment to arrive.

They should never doubt how vindictive a woman can be. Heather pretended to be nonchalant as she asked, "So, what are we going to do next?"

A moment later, Matthias looked at her before he shifted his gaze to Leon. Suddenly, a thought came to his mind. I need a fishing rod to fish. They seemed to have forgotten to swing by the grocery store before they came. She quietly stared at him, carefully observing the changes in his expression.

"Did we forget about something before we came?" Matthias asked awkwardly.

"Huh?" Heather looked calm on the surface while she gloated in her heart.

Who would've thought that the Director Locke would be a clumsy man who could forget about such a simple thing? He was so confident and convincing before this, yet he turned out to be a birdbrain after all. Heather secretly looked at him with contempt.

"We didn't buy a fishing rod," Leon responded as he suddenly remembered. They came in such a hurry that they didn't prepare any tools at all.

"Camping stove with a pot and the soup base. We have none of these either." Heather rubbed it in their faces.

Feeling defeated, Matthias looked at her. He could clearly see the triumphant smile on her face. At the same time, Leon also gazed at her while feeling sorry. They had actually forgotten such an important matter.

"So, how are we going to have our picnic then?" she asked with a hint of mockery.

Leon and Matthias looked at each other. One couldn't make bricks without straw. As much as nature was rich in resources, they had no cooking utensils.

"Open the trunk," Matthias told Heather. "There may be some tools in the trunk that we can modify."

As he arrived at the back of the car, he pushed the trunk open only to find out it was empty. Heather proudly wrapped her arms around her chest and smiled. "I'm sorry. I never place anything in my trunk."

She didn't even have a spare tire in it. He helplessly glanced at her since it was rare to come across a woman like her these days.

Leon also entered the car as he tried to locate something usable for the picnic. To his dismay, there was nothing but a box of napkins. There wasn't even a lighter in the carriage.

It seemed that they had no choice but to cancel the picnic and return home, which was the outcome Heather wanted. However, he suddenly suggested, "Since we can't have hotpot, we can have a barbecue then."

Leon's words had immediately attracted Matthias. After carefully thinking about it, Matthias agreed. "That's right! There are many ways for us to create fire and the sun is bright today. It's not going to be a problem at all."

While listening to their conversation, Heather looked at them incredulously. They were going to use the wild man's method to have their picnic. Isn't this getting a little too absurd?

"Let's get started then," Matthias instructed Leon before looking in Heather's direction.

Swiftly, she had already hopped into her car and closed the window as if she was determined to isolate herself from the outside world. Then, Matthias came knocking on the window lightly as he cajoled, "Heather, come down. We need to work together and divide the jobs."

In the car, Heather wore her earphones as she completely ignored Matthias. Yet, he had no intention of letting her get away with it. At last, she had no choice but to wind down the car window as she answered, "Since both of you are so motivated, you should work more then. I'm not interested at all." Suddenly, she took out a bag of potato chips from nowhere. She would rather have this snack as her meal than associate with them out there.

"Is this enough for you?" Matthias asked, pointing to the bag of potato chips.

"I don't have a big appetite," Heather replied.

He tried to persuade her. "Then, I'm going to catch a game. There must be something delicious here that you can't get in restaurants."

At his words, Heather waved her hand at him. "There should be a lot of protected species here. Don't lay your hand on the wrong ones. You know the consequences for breaking the law."

"Don't worry, I still have this bit of common sense within me." Matthias was not polite either. There was no way for them to get along with each other at all. It seemed that it was their daily routine to argue with one another.

Watching as he turned around, Heather cast a disdainful glance at him. Anyway, it was a totally different kind of enjoyment for her to savor her potato chips in the wild.

Standing before Love Chapter 575

The sunlight peeked through the tall trees and fought for their entrance via the leaves. Heather raised her eyes and looked out the car window. It was a little shady in the woods and there was even a slight breeze blowing into her car from time to time. She closed the car window and realized that it was getting late.

Looking at the busy figures of Leon and Matthias, she did not have any intention of offering her help.

She missed Myra so much at this time. Clicking into her Messenger, she sent a sticker illustrating a bored expression to Myra. However, even after a long time, there was no response from the other end of the line. Heather guessed that Myra probably did not have her cell phone on hand. After all, they had pinned each other's contact at the top of their chats. As long as they had their cell phones with them, they would reply to each other in seconds.

Scrolling through her contact list in Messenger, Heather realized that there wasn't anyone else whom she could chit-chat with other than Myra. Normally, she wasn't the kind of person who would chit-chat. It just so happened that Myra was an exception.

Heather scrolled through her Stories in boredom. In fact, she rarely used this application whenever she was abroad. If it weren't for Myra, Heather wouldn't have used Messenger so frequently upon her return to Solaria because there weren't many people on her contact list. Thus, there was nothing much to see on her Stories as well.

Wasting time in the wilderness was not something written within Heather's principle at all. After thinking about it for a moment, she exited the car. There was one thing she had to do, but she needed to obtain Matthias' permission first.

On the other hand, Matthias and Leon were studying the best way to build a simple stove with stones for their barbecue session later. As she leaned forward, she could see the seriousness on their faces.

"Matthias." Heather would normally call his given name whenever she was in a good mood. Of course, when she was in a bad mood, she would address him by his name as well, although the tone would be extremely different.

Matthias was talking to Leon when he heard her calling him. Instantly, he turned around and looked at her.

"Yes, Heather?" Matthias raised his gorgeous face and tenderly gazed at her.

At the side, Leon gave Matthias a disgusting glance. Matthias was still exasperated with Heather a second ago and now he was like a toady in the hope of gaining her favor.

"It seems that you're getting better with your hands-on skills. There's no need for my help at all." Heather expressed her intentions as soon as she walked toward them, for she did not want them to misunderstand that she was here to help.

Upon hearing her words, Leon rolled his eyes at her. "Heather, I know you've been a pampered princess, so we won't dare to let you lay your hands on this kind of dirty work." His words were full of sarcasm.

"True enough, this kind of dirty work is not suitable for girls like me to lay my hands on," she responded in agreement, not giving in to him at all.

Before she forgot about her initial intention, she pushed him away and met Matthias in the eye as she continued, "I want to open your briefcase." She was here to inform him rather than seek his permission.

"No problem, you can even have it if you like it that much," Matthias answered generously. Heather immediately understood the meaning behind his words.

Now that she had informed him, she stopped talking to him. Refusing to waste her time arguing with him, she turned around and walked back to the car. A confused Leon looked at her back with a puzzled expression as he winked at Matthias.

“Did Heather recently suffer from an emotional shock?” Leon asked curiously as soon as Heather left.

At Leon’s words, Matthias shook his head. He didn’t know much about her private life, not even as much as Leon did.

“Aren’t you close with her? You should know better than me.”

Leon curled his lips helplessly. Of course, he knew what was bothering Heather lately, but it was somehow related to Matthias. Therefore, there was no way he could tell the truth.

Upon noticing the brief expression flashing across Leon’s face, Matthias thought that perhaps he had guessed it right. Could it be that Heather was really hiding something from him?

“What’s on Heather’s mind lately?” Matthias asked tentatively, wanting to read Leon’s expression. He knew Leon was not going to tell him the truth anyway.

However, Leon shook his head. “Even if she had something in mind, she wouldn’t tell me.” He was feeling a little embarrassed for not telling the truth. After all, he wanted to be an honest person.

Perhaps there was no way for him to be an honest person in this life. He didn’t want to live in a world of deception, but he always found himself lying. The adult world was filled with many lies.

“Who would she normally talk to when she is bothered then?” Matthias continued to ask, but he couldn’t gather any more hints from Leon’s face.

“Myra. You should know this very well.” Leon felt that Matthias was asking a question with an obvious answer. Almost everyone who knew Heather was aware that she would only share her problems with Myra.

Matthias was not surprised at Leon’s answer. So, it turned out to be Myra and here, Matthias was thinking that it would be someone else. Could it be that

Myra was the only one who managed to walk into Heather's heart since they were young? At the thought of it, he became a little envious of Myra.

With little effort, Myra could convince two defensive people to let their guard down. She had a temperament that no one else had—it was a kind of reassuring aura that had people approaching her without fear. It was like she was the source of warmth that others would instinctively rely on during the cold winter.

A moment later, Matthias quickly changed the subject as he said, "Look, we did a good job." As he placed the last stone, the construction of the temporary stove finally came to an end.

With his eyes slightly squinted, Leon stared at the pile of stones in front of him. They tried their best to search for stones with a smooth and pretty surface. Now that he looked at the final product, he reckoned that the height of the stove should be high enough to keep the fire within.

It was dangerous to build a fire in a bushy forest during the winter, which was why they had to use stones to enclose a range on the open ground.

They had to make sure the fire did not burn wildly as they wanted to use it within a controllable range. At the same time, the enclosed range should be in moderate size for the fire to burn effectively as they could get the food cooked in the shortest time possible. However, they had to also take into consideration the issue of even cooking.

Matthias and Leon were still not sure what kind of game they could find around here, so they could only make a simple stove for the time being. There could even be a need for slight adjustments after they had actually caught something.

There were two relatively dry stones near them that seemed to be frequently exposed to sunlight. When those stones collided with each other, they could produce the sparks needed for the fire—and it was the flint and steel that they had found.

As for the effectiveness of the flint and steel, it still had to depend on the methods they used. Leon and Matthias used the materials available around them as much as possible based on what they knew.

Perhaps the most ironic part of the story was that none of these men had a lighter with them since neither of them was a smoker.

Because of health reasons, Matthias was never a smoker, nor did he have a tobacco addiction. Leon, on the other hand, had also quit smoking a long time ago as Heather didn't like anyone who smoked.

In fact, she hated people who smoked around her. She loathed secondhand smoke and the smell of tobacco on men. Because of her sensitivity toward the smell of smoke, she could even detect the faint smell of tobacco on Tony. On the other hand, Matthias did not have it on him at all. Perhaps it was indeed a coincidence of fate.

When Leon used to be a smoker, he would always cause Heather to feel uncomfortable with him getting close to her. Even though he had quit smoking for her later on, she could still remember the time when he reeked of tobacco.

On the contrary, Matthias had always smelled fresh and clean since the first time they met during their teen years. Although he occasionally had a faint smell of herbs on him, it was still a pleasant scent.

Now that they had met again after many years, he was still free from the smell of tobacco that other men would have, which was why she was not so repulsive to him. Truth be told, she liked Matthias' scent the most as compared to other men.

With only the last piece of potato chips left, Heather looked in the direction of Matthias and Leon, only to discover that they were still in the full swing of their preparations. It seemed that they wouldn't be done with it anytime soon. Things had not been easy for these two pampered nobles as a result of the picnic.

After noticing her gaze, Matthias looked in her direction and their eyes happened to meet each other. He gently flashed a warm smile at her. There wasn't even the slightest hint of tit for tat on his face. In embarrassment, she turned her head away.

Coincidentally, she met his eyes and his gentle smile. He was just like a character emerging from a painting; it was so beautiful that it tugged at her heartstrings.

Upon seeing that Heather turned in a panic, Matthias gave an even brighter smile. She was really adorable when she looked like that. However, what he did not know was that her heart pounded like a drum. Ever since she bumped into him, she had come to realize the feeling of having butterflies in her stomach—and it was not the first time that it happened.

Heather hated her heart for being so honest and the fact that Matthias was exceptionally charming. His allure had recently skyrocketed and even surpassed Tony's popularity to become the most desirable man among the socialites.

Now that Tony and Myra were married, they became the golden couple who were deeply in love and about to welcome their first born soon. Matthias was a different story altogether; although there were many scandals between him and Heather, neither party had confirmed the rumors. Therefore, there was still at least a glimmer of hope for the socialites.

It became extremely boring to stay in the car for the entire time. Thus, Heather decided to come out and get some fresh air while waiting for them to finish their preparation. Soon, Leon and Matthias would have to split ways to hunt separately. Leon had already been eager to have the novel experience ever since Matthias mentioned it back in the hotel.

"Leon, you can go ahead to look for something that you can catch for our barbeque later." Matthias was about to complete the final touchup and asked Leo to head first. He could already notice Leon's excitement.

After Leon left, Heather walked over to Matthias. Upon seeing that he did a good job in building the stove, she praised, "Your craftsmanship is not bad."

"It was all thanks to Leon's Swiss Army Knife." Matthias swung the dagger in his hand.

Well, it wasn't surprising to her at all. She had long known about Leon's habit to carry a dagger with him. In the past, she used to think that it was his personal preference and hobby. However, when she connected it with the recent explosion at his residence, she suspected that it might be one of his means of self-defense.

Heather even wondered whether he had taken up martial art classes before this. Even though he always behaved in a weak manner, she wanted to know the answer by testing him.

There were just too many suspicious points in Leon and Heather couldn't help but be more wary the more she thought about it. Looking at her with puzzlement, Matthias wondered why she was spacing out while staring at the dagger.

Just as she was still in a daze, Matthias quickly stepped forward and planted a light kiss on her cheek. As she was stunned, she wasn't able to react until her face flushed red due to the embarrassment.

Instantly, it caused Heather's body to stiffen a little. She instinctively raised her hand as she wanted to slap him. However, he had already made his escape from the 'crime scene', leaving her standing still in her spot. Heather had always thought only naive women would be caught off guard and encounter a sneak attack. It was only when this happened to her today did she understand how cunning a man could be and the boldness of Matthias.

"I'm going to hunt for some game and fill up my stomach," he said and left as if he was escaping for his life.

Standing before Love Chapter 576

If it weren't for how fast Matthias was running, Heather would have definitely not let him get away. Right now, she could only stare angrily at his back.

When they had finally arrived in the wild, they felt absolutely relaxed and free—which was the opposite of their usual selves—especially Matthias, who was now practically swinging from tree to tree.

In fact, the ladies of Bradford City would be appalled to see him like this. Soon enough, Heather could no longer find any trace of him. She felt alone, but she was not at all worried about Matthias; she was only afraid that Leon would lose his way in this huge forest.

The sun was slowly setting, so it wasn't as bright as it was at noon. Since it was also during wintertime, daytime was also much shorter than usual. Heather glanced at the time and estimated in her heart that the sun would completely set in a short while.

It was inevitable that they would have to drive in the night when they decided to go back. Heather got back into the car again as she noticed that the surrounding was horribly quiet, completely void of even the sounds of birds chirping or flapping their wings. She guessed that the birds might have

already flown to the south during this time of year, and dusk was about to come.

It had been a long day today, and it was getting late. Around this time, the wilderness was a dangerous place to be. No one could tell where the ferocious beasts that hid deep in the forest and their whereabouts were. As soon as this thought crossed her mind, Heather couldn't help but worry for Leon and Matthias.

Sigh. They're too childish and stubborn to come to a place like this at this time. It was already getting darker when we arrived. Besides, they even wanted to go deep into the forest—did they really think they were hunters? Heather thought to herself while heaving a sigh.

The air around her seemed to have stagnated. Heather put the earphones into her ears, trying to distract herself from any unnecessary worries with music. She knew that in the face of the wilderness, there wasn't much she could do anyway, so she prayed silently in her heart that Matthias and Leon would be safe.

Time passed by quickly; she still hadn't seen either of them return, but the sky was getting darker every passing moment, especially since the sun rays were blocked by the tall trees in the forest, darkening the surroundings much quicker.

Seeing that it was indeed getting darker, to the point that it was hard to see the ground in front of her as dusk approached, Heather felt that this feeling was rather strange. After all, she was always busy with work, so she naturally would not notice these things. However, she happened to witness the entire gradual transition of light to dark of a day; no words could describe the feeling she had right now.

She held her breath to listen for any possible movements in the forest, but she still did not hear anything from them. Could it be that they have gone too far? she thought.

At this point, she could only stay where she was and wait for them to return. Heather couldn't go anywhere in case they returned and didn't see her, but the waiting process was unbearable. By now, she was almost counting the time for them to return. The sky had gotten completely dark, but there were still no signs of either of them.

As a matter of fact, she would have felt a little more at ease if either one of them had just returned. However, to her dismay, no one did, causing her to palpitate from worry.

Occasionally, the wind would blow at the grass and make a rustling sound, whereupon Heather would immediately cast her eyes out of the window when she heard the sound, in hopes that she'd see either of them.

Meanwhile, Leon had gone to look for food before Matthias, but in this vast forest, he didn't manage to find anything to eat.

After all, Leon knew little about food ingredients, and he would only chase small animals around in an attempt to hunt them. Little did he know, there were many wild fruits and mushrooms that were also edible.

Matthias, on the other hand, was better in this respect. However, the wild fruit could only be eaten raw after washing. As for the wild mushrooms, they wouldn't have much taste to it even after being grilled.

To roast a delicious meal, he would need to catch living animals. That being the case, there were certain skills needed in order to successfully hunt animals—he also knew that some animals couldn't be hunted.

He wasn't able to find anything suitable along the way. The two of them finally met in the forest and found that they were both empty-handed after taking a look at each other. Immediately, they let out a chuckle in unison.

“Did you manage to find anything?” Leon asked first. It seemed like he was not the only one who was embarrassed from not finding any food.

Matthias calmly replied, “I couldn't catch any animals, but I saw a lot of wild fruits and some wild mushrooms along the way. If we really can't catch any animals in the end, I guess we would have to settle our hunger with those...”

Although he did see a lot of things that could be eaten along the way, Matthias didn't pick them up immediately, but instead simply made a mark.

“It took us so long to set up the temporary barbecue pit. If we really couldn't catch anything to eat, I wouldn't have the face to go back. And I can already foresee Heather laughing at us,” Leon said helplessly. By then, Heather would have a reason to tease and taunt them, so he had to catch something that could be barbecued no matter what.

“Did you see any small animals on the way here?” Matthias asked. There were even fewer animals during winter, and he wouldn’t know where they were hiding. Could it be that they’ve all gone into hibernation? Matthias thought.

“I did. But they ran faster than rabbits, and I couldn’t get close to them at all. Do you reckon we should set up a trap?” Leon suggested, since he obviously couldn’t catch them with his bare hands.

“That’s not necessary. The animals I saw on my way here are protected at the national level, so I couldn’t do anything. As long as I see animals that can be hunted, I will definitely be able to catch them.” Matthias was quite confident in his skills. Unfortunately, his luck was not so good, as he didn’t encounter any animals that could be hunted at all.

“What? There are protected animals here? So does that mean what we are doing here is illegal?” If Leon had known that this would be the case, he would definitely not have agreed to come here. He didn’t recognize those national-protected animals and could have very well killed them by mistake—that would’ve been bad news.

“No. Most animals here can be hunted. You’d better follow me to avoid making any mistakes,” Matthias thought for a while and said. Since Leon had no idea about such things, it was better for the both of them to stick together—this way, they would be able to take care of each other as well.

“Alright, then. I will follow you and hopefully bring you some luck!” Leon said with a smile. He saw many small animals running around a while ago, including several rabbits. Thinking back to what Matthias said about protected animals, Leon thought, We can hunt rabbits at least, right?

As soon as he said that, Matthias held his hand up immediately, as if he noticed something. “Don’t move. There is a rabbit right in front,” Matthias whispered, fearing that he would scare the rabbit away if he was too loud.

Leon immediately stood frozen and motionless, also fearing that he would scare today’s dinner away. “Stay right there. I’ll catch it.” Matthias didn’t plan to capture the rabbit with Leon, as he thought it would be enough for him to catch the rabbit all by himself.

Seeing that Leon nodded, Matthias started the hunting, and he flew straight in the direction of the rabbit like a sharp sword.

Leon looked at Matthias' explosive power in amazement. He didn't expect him to be so agile, and his speed was staggering. It was the first time he ever saw someone running faster than a rabbit; that was when Leon finally believed that Matthias was indeed more agile than Heather after all.

Soon after, Matthias returned with a rabbit in his hand, a triumphant smile hanging at the corner of his lips. Leon looked at Matthias admiringly. He sure is amazing! Leon thought to himself.

"Awesome. I am really impressed," Leon said sincerely.

Matthias held the rabbit by its ears and replied with a smile, "It seems we've gotten our dinner sorted."

Leon nodded vigorously. The rabbit that was in Matthias' hand was really fat; it was enough for at least three people.

The next step was to get back. Leon had lost all sense of direction, so Matthias said calmly, "We will go to the left and walk straight forward. I left marks along the way, and we can pick up some wild fruits on the way back."

Hearing that, Leon immediately agreed as his admiration of Matthias grew a little more. He didn't expect Matthias' survival skills in the wild to be so advanced.

"Have you had to survive in the wild before? It seems that you are very experienced," Leon remarked casually, but it indirectly reminded Matthias of the training he had done in the Locke Family. There was indeed a program about survival in the jungle in the training before.

The reason why such a training was arranged was because, should they become an important figure in the family and face any danger in the future, they would be able to survive in the wilderness.

After all, Matthias had undergone much cruel training in order to climb to his current position. He once thought that the Locke Family was actually training him to be a special forces officer.

However, even if he was proficient in all survival and martial arts skills, accidents weren't completely avoidable. Hence, Matthias didn't think those training sessions were completely useful.

Upon hearing Leon's words, Matthias only smiled and looked at Leon without answering his question. He had indeed undergone a special training, so the latter's guess was correct after all.

"Well, it seems that I've guessed right." Leon was even more certain. Although he usually acted ignorant, it was undeniable that he still had a keen observation.

"Did you see the shrub ten meters away from here?" Matthias changed the subject without a trace and pointed in a direction to show Leon.

Leon looked over curiously and saw many small red fruits growing on it. Meanwhile, Matthias continued to explain, "Those wild fruits are edible, and they taste a little sour and sweet."

"Cool." Leon nodded. "Will it be too sour? I don't really do well with sour food."

"You can go pick a few." What Matthias said a while ago was to signal Leon to pick some fruits, but he didn't expect Leon to be so clueless about his suggestion, so he explained it clearer this time.

"Huh? Why me?" Puzzled, Leon asked.

Hearing that, Matthias brought the rabbit in his hand over to Leon and said, "It's not convenient for me. I have to carry the rabbit, you see."

How could he not get what I'm trying to say? Matthias looked at Leon helplessly and thought. Why do I suddenly feel like he's kind of dumb? Matthias began to question Leon's IQ.

"Okay, I got it. Alright. Wait for me here." Leon finally regained his senses, and he ran happily to the bushes to pick some wild fruits.

At the same time, Matthias reminded Leon behind him, "Be careful of the thorns in the bushes!"

As Matthias was speaking, Leon had already let out a wailing. It seemed that the thorns had gotten him as soon as Matthias warned him. At once, Leon's face grimaced in pain and hatred.

Matthias couldn't help but laugh at how clumsy Leon was. Compared to him, it seemed that Leon really lacked common sense in life.

On the other hand, Heather was still waiting anxiously in the car; it was her rationale that made her glue her bottom in the vehicle. Aside from that, she would occasionally get out of the car and get some air to calm herself down.

In her heart, she was complaining about how Matthias and Leon went straight ahead without bringing their mobile phones. Their phones were just lying in the car ever since they arrived, meaning they couldn't be contacted now.

When Heather got out of the car once again and was walking in circles, Leon's voice rang from the forest.

"I can't hold them in my hand anymore. You still have an empty hand there; come and help me!" Leon had picked a lot of wild fruits and vegetables along the way. He looked very happy.

"I told you to pick less, but you didn't listen. So, you are now responsible for what you picked." Matthias obviously didn't want to help.

Hearing their voices, Heather immediately followed and looked in their direction. Soon, Matthias and Leon walked over from the bushes, which made Heather overjoyed. There they are. Finally! she thought. She was looking forward to this for so long.

However, Heather didn't greet them immediately. Instead, she only said contemptuously, "You guys took so long that it's dark now—are you planning to camp here?"

Standing before Love Chapter 577

The two had long been accustomed to Heather's sarcasm. It was not easy to hear kind words from Heather—they were all reserved for clients only.

"Heather, you're still here! And here I thought you would leave us behind." Leon did not back off from Heather's remark and showed her no mercy.

Matthias, who had been standing at the side, replied casually, "Thank you, Miss Heather, for wasting your time here with us."

Facing their cooperation, Heather turned speechless, but she didn't want to continue quarreling with them. After all, it was getting late, and she didn't want to delay any more time here.

“Are you planning to eat this rabbit for dinner?” Heather asked, pointing to the rabbit in Matthias’ hand—this was her effort to change the subject.

“Yes! It must taste good,” Leon replied almost immediately.

Heather looked up and down at the gray-furred rabbit in Matthias’ hand. She grew curious as to how Matthias caught it at all. By right, this color should not be easy to detect.

“We are going to make a fire. Would you like to join us?” Matthias invited Heather again, even though Heather had refused many times prior to this.

“No.” Heather didn’t want to help; she had no intentions in roasting a rabbit.

“Heather, aren’t you bored staying in the car all alone? It will be fun doing this with us,” Leon urged Heather. In fact, Leon had a lot of fun in this forest.

“I’m good.” Heather refused again. After all, what Leon found interesting was not necessarily interesting to her.

Seeing Heather’s determination, Matthias didn’t invite Heather again and just let her be instead. Before they began hunting a while ago, Matthias and Leon found some withered grass, which they planned to make fire with.

The grass finally came in handy as Matthias looked at the flint and steel on the ground—it was all now a matter of it working or not. As he picked up the flintstone, he felt that there was a bit of residual heat on the stone that was irradiated by the sun when he got it; he felt like he had made the right choice picking this stone up.

Before leaving, Matthias tried his best to put the flintstone at a place where it could be exposed to the sun as he weighed the stone in his hands.

Leon, on the other hand, looked at Matthias expectantly. He had never seen such a way of making fire—this ancient way of making fire was especially new to him.

Seeing how Leon was staring at the flint in his hand, Matthias handed the flint to Leon and asked, “Do you want to try?”

Leon pointed to himself in disbelief. Then, he smiled and took the flintstone from Matthias’ hand, eager to try. Seeing his enthusiasm, Matthias smiled and

handed it to Leon, but he didn't tell Leon the correct way to use it as he wanted to see what he would do with the stones.

Soon after he had received the flintstones, Leon immediately rubbed the two stones together vigorously. Seeing that the friction didn't create the flame he wanted, he rubbed the stones even more violently in an effort to try to generate more friction.

A crisp voice entered Heather's ears, making her cast her eyes to the source of the voice curiously, only to find that Leon still failed to make fire.

Meanwhile, Matthias was not simply standing idly on the side either; he wanted to try to make fire by drilling wood. However, since there was no sunshine, the chance of success was relatively low.

Heather saw Matthias skilfully fiddle with the sticks of dry wood in his hands; she didn't get in the car, but instead silently watched them from the side.

If they hadn't been dressed in decent and formal clothes, they would probably look like savages now since they were using such barbaric and primitive ways of making fire. Night fell, and the forest turned extremely cold—it was not going to be easy to start a fire under such low temperatures.

Matthias and Leo both had serious expressions on their faces. It seemed that they were attending to an important matter, but it was a pity that things were not going well.

Soon after that, Leon put down the flintstones in his hands. His hands were almost raw and numb, but he still couldn't get the result he wanted, leaving him utterly frustrated.

Matthias, on the other hand, also gave up on the wood in his hand. It seemed that the two pieces of wood he chose were not dry enough. Going back to Leon's side, he took the flintstones next to Leon's hands.

"You need skills for this," Matthias said to Leon. He intended to teach Leon the correct way to make fire—that using brute force was not the way. "Well, It would be better if there were soft and fluffy materials similar to dandelion seeds," Matthias said while looking at the dry pine leaves on the ground—pine leaves were not so easy to catch fire.

When he heard Matthias say this, Leon had a lightbulb moment and said to Matthias, "I know where to find it! Wait for me. I will bring them to you."

Just right beside him, Leon did see this kind of material a while ago. So they are a good material for making fire, Leon thought to himself. He looked just as energetic as before.

Soon, Leon brought what Matthias wanted, whereupon Matthias grabbed the material from Leon's hand and looked at the flintstones in his hand. He planned to use the sparks generated by the friction of the stone to ignite the fluffy material, and then cover the withered grass and pine leaves on it. Then, he would blow slightly toward the pile to make them burn.

Seeing Matthias' calmness, Leon was certain that it would be successful this time. And when the fire rose, Leon smiled contentedly.

"Hurry up and find some firewood," Matthias told Leon, as they didn't have much firewood prepared in advance.

Leon reacted very quickly this time around and left to find firewood immediately. Now that there was already a fire started, he only needed to find more dried wood.

At once, Matthias moved the fire into the simple pit they had set up in advance, and he threw the firewood in front of him into the fire. There were a few large pieces of wood in it, and he figured that they would burn for a long time.

Next, Matthias was about to deal with the rabbit tied up not far away. As he had to make fire a while ago, he had to temporarily tie the rabbit to a tree at the side.

The rabbit's eyes were a bit hollow. It seemed that it didn't know that it was going to die here. Matthias didn't have any reservations; he directly took the knife and cleaved it at the rabbit's neck, quickly ending its life.

Heather, who had been watching from a distance, seldom saw such a killing scene directly. She quickly turned her head away. The rabbit looked rather cute, but in Matthias' eyes, it was nothing but a meal.

After killing the rabbit, Matthias directly put the rabbit on the fire. He was fast, indicating that he had done this before.

Since he was roasting rabbit meat, it didn't matter if he roasted it with the skin or not. Hence, Matthias didn't even cut open the rabbit to clean its organs.

The entire process was rough and crude. This was the first time Heather saw such a scene, and she was curious as to where he had learned all these skills from.

After Matthias did all that, he took out a handkerchief and wiped the blood off his hands. Then, he turned and said to Heather, who was not far away from him, "Why do you keep staring at me?"

Heather looked at Matthias coldly. "You were not only savage, but also very skilled. You must have had similar training before." Heather could at least tell this about Matthias.

Matthias nodded. "Yes, this is a skill that everyone in the Locke Family must master." He didn't mind being honest with Heather.

Hearing that, Heather looked at Matthias meaningfully, but she didn't quite understand why the Locke Family had such training. With that in mind, she barely squeezed out a polite smile in response.

"Your family sure is a special one." Heather's understanding of the Locke Family was only from books, and apart from Matthias, she had really not met anyone from the Locke Family before.

"The Locke Family is not only special, but also very traditional," Matthias continued, following Heather's words.

This made Heather even more curious about what the Locke Family was like. Matthias rarely mentioned his family, but today, he took the initiative to talk about it with her, which made her feel a little strange.

Besides, she noticed that Matthias frowned whenever he mentioned the Locke Family. From that, it seemed that he had a very complicated relationship with his family.

"Matthias, are these enough?" Leon ran over with a pile of firewood. He didn't like the thorny pine leaves; he felt that holding smooth wood was so much better.

“Yes. Just put them aside.” Matthias told Leon to put down all the firewood in his hand, and there was an unpleasant smell of burnt fur in the air.

Leon looked over at the rabbit on the fire—it was dark and looked a little horrible to be eaten. Seeing Leon’s expression, Matthias also turned his gaze to the rabbit that was roasting, and he decided to turn the rabbit since the outer layer was almost done roasting.

The burnt fur was sticking to the meat, and it was impossible to tell from the outside whether the inside was cooked or not. Hence, Leon also curiously leaned forward to take a look.

They were already able to smell the meat, so Leon sniffed harder—the scent made his stomach growl even louder.

“How much longer do we have to do this?” Leon grew impatient. All he could think of now was the taste of the rabbit’s meat.

“It needs to be heated for at least half an hour more. It’s still too early.” Matthias was not in a hurry. One mustn’t be impatient over these sorts of things—if the cooking time was too short, bacteria might still remain in the meat.

Only ten minutes had passed, and there were more than twenty minutes left to wait. Leon, who was idle now, didn’t know what to do.

Matthias continued to stare at the rabbit meat that was roasting before him, seemingly very focused. Heather could smell the scent of the roasting rabbit meat; even without any seasoning, it still smelled amazing.

The outside was all scorched and black, and the smell of meat was still mixed with a hint of burnt smell. Seeing that, Leon gulped hard and immediately asked Matthias, “Should I peel the burnt parts off?” Without peeling it, there was no way to tell if the meat inside had been fully cooked.

“No.” Matthias stopped him. “Just make the fire smaller.” After all, roasted food had to be charred on the outside for it to be tender on the inside. Moreover, the oil dripping from the rabbit skin by the fire will make the fire bigger.

Leon watched happily from the side, while Heather only wrapped her hands around her chest; she felt cold as the temperature dropped. As if they had

telepathy, Matthias suddenly turned around and said to Heather, “Are you cold? Come closer to the fire. It’s warmer here.” He invited Heather to come closer to the fire.

Hearing this, Leon hurried over and said, “The temperature difference between day and night is too much. It’s so cold right now, so it’s better for us to stay by the fire.”

Heather looked at the two of them. Not wanting to torture her body, she moved a little closer, but still kept a little distance from them. Leon kept squeezing toward Matthias, and the two of them looked like brothers.

It was unexpected to Heather that Leo and Matthias would grow so close. This surprised her, but it didn’t seem to be such a bad thing after all. Right then, she smiled lightly and felt a warmth envelope her heart.

It had been a while since she had done such a time-consuming and useless thing. After what happened today, Heather did indeed find it quite interesting, and she thought she would definitely look back fondly to this in the future.

“Heather, get closer. It’ll get warmer if the three of us are closer together,” Leon turned his head and shouted at Heather as nighttime in the forest was exceptionally cold.

Matthias also turned his head to look at Heather, as if sending out a silent invitation. The shadows of the flames danced on their faces, flashing and dimming as if it would never extinguish.

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The smell of meat made Heather a little hungry, but she remained silent as she watched Matthias flip the rabbit meat with an indifferent expression.

The bag of potato chips she had before this was her dinner. She wasn’t going to eat the rabbit meat Matthias was grilling, so she pretended not to be hungry at all.

“Heather, are you hungry? The food Matthias is grilling smells so good that I can hardly resist it.” Leon gulped. The food in front of him was making his stomach feel increasingly empty.

Heather had no desire to respond to Leon, as certain sensitive topics shouldn't be brought up. Meanwhile, Matthias continued working quietly on the task at hand.

Seeing that Heather wasn't going to answer at all, Leon had no choice but to talk to himself while drooling over the rabbit meat. "I'm so hungry. I can't wait."

"Just a short while more and you can eat it," Matthias said from beside him. He was getting a little hungry too.

The three of them exchanged short chatter, so the atmosphere was lively. From time to time, Heather's gaze would turn toward the rabbit meat that was being grilled.

It was Heather's first novel experience of barbecuing in the wild, so she actually wanted to try grilling the meat as well.

Noticing the curiosity in Heather's eyes, Matthias shot her a knowing look, but she simply shifted her gaze disdainfully.

"Are you in a hurry?" Matthias asked Heather curiously.

"I'm not in a hurry at all. You guys take your time barbecuing. I'm going back to the car first." Heather didn't want to be nestled with them by the fire anymore, for it painted a bad image of her. She was the distinguished lady of a well-known family in Bradford City, yet she was being led astray by them.

After Heather left, Matthias and Leon began discussing in low voices, because neither of them understood why Heather suddenly left when she was doing well earlier.

"Matthias, you provoked Heather again." A sly smile played at the corners of Leon's lips. Heather truly had no regard for Matthias whatsoever.

Matthias gave Leon a puzzled look. "When did I provoke her? Did I say something wrong?" Matthias couldn't wrap his head around it. I was just concerned about Heather. Women's minds are so hard to understand.

"Don't take it to heart. It's really hard to guess what Heather's thinking. You shouldn't care about this too much." Leon patted Matthias on the shoulder, as the latter was currently experiencing what he had experienced back then. Of course, Leon's current situation wasn't any better.

Looking at Heather, who was in the car, Matthias didn't even have the mood to taste the delicious food. Without Heather around, it was meaningless for him to do anything.

"Matthias, I think the rabbit meat is cooked!" Leon stared at the greasy grilled rabbit meat while lamenting about his inability to withstand hunger. He felt so hungry, and he wished so badly to taste the delicious food.

"It should be done." Leon picked up the rabbit meat as soon as Matthias said that.

"Be careful. It's hot." Matthias warned Leon, stopping him from doing anything more.

Leon grabbed both ends of the stick with the grilled rabbit in the middle. With a dagger, Matthias removed the burnt parts from the rabbit's surface.

The rabbit meat was piping hot, but Matthias' movements were swift as he handled the meat.

Heather opened the car window and watched Matthias and Leon's antics, envious that they could find happiness in such ordinary things.

Heather couldn't remember how long it had been since she found joy in the small things in life. Occasionally, she would slow down her rapid pace and contemplate her life.

While she was growing up, happiness was scarce; she didn't find anything worthy of happiness.

All day long, Heather could feel the novelty and joy Matthias and Leon were experiencing from the outdoor barbecue, but she didn't have the mood to participate at all.

She found many things to be boring, and nothing could interest her. Inside the car, Heather watched the flames flickering in the distance, and she had the feeling that she was the little match girl watching the cheerful family through the window.

While Matthias ate, he asked Leon, "Has Heather always been like this?" Heather looked disappointed, but he didn't know how to brighten up her mood.

Leon stuffed his mouth full of rabbit meat, looking blessed. “Just like her namesake plant, Heather lives in solitude. Up till now, I haven’t seen her take up any hobbies.”

It was a rare occurrence for Leon to understand Matthias’ question. Matthias frowned and said, “Just like her namesake plant. That’s a good way to put it. Heather and solitude. She’s really the kind of person who sticks to herself and is unconcerned about everything.”

“Now that you understand this, don’t worry about her temperament anymore. Whatever the case, after you become a married couple in the future, you’ll get used to it,” Leon said to Matthias caringly, causing the latter to find the situation both funny and embarrassing. Leon’s words certainly made him feel a mixture of joy and sorrow.

“In front of Heather, I can’t find any sense of accomplishment, nor do I have any confidence to pursue her.” Matthias confided in Leon, thinking that perhaps Leon could give him a little help. After all, Leon and Heather had known each other for a long time, so he knew her better than Matthias did.

“That’s completely normal. Are you not used to it now, or is it because you can’t let go of your pride?” Leon deliberately lowered his voice when he got to the last part, as if he was afraid that Heather would hear him.

“I have to respect and love myself first before I can love others, so how can I possibly let go of my pride?” Matthias had a baseline when it came to his feelings. He couldn’t shamelessly love Heather, and in his eyes, love shouldn’t be done subserviently.

Leon shoved the last piece of rabbit meat into his mouth, seemingly afraid that Matthias would snatch it away. His chewing was forceful as the grilled rabbit meat was rather chewy.

The two of them were truly unbelievable. They didn’t leave a single bite for Heather, mainly because Leon had eaten most of the meat. Even Matthias only ate a small portion.

“I won’t comment on that, and it wouldn’t be good for me to say much about your affairs either.” Leon didn’t want to get involved in this messy situation. However, Matthias was right; he was a dignified seven-foot-tall man, so he couldn’t possibly let go of his pride just to pursue a woman. If he disregarded his pride, then he would indeed be too spineless.

If Matthias was actually such a spineless man, Heather wouldn't like him either. Perhaps through every conflict they had, they would start to develop a fondness for each other.

Taking out his handkerchief, Matthias carefully wiped a few wild berries. He planned to give Heather some fruit, as forcibly pulling her over wouldn't make her happy.

Upon seeing Matthias walking toward her, Heather closed the car window. She put on her earphones, not exactly wanting to bother about him.

Nevertheless, this did nothing to stop Matthias. Matthias knocked on the car window, creating thumping sounds, so Heather had no choice but to lower the car window once more.

"Wild berries for you to replenish your vitamins." Matthias grabbed a handful of wild berries and spread them out in front of Heather. His gentle smile made him look like a carefree gentleman.

"It's fine. I don't like sour food." Heather rejected Matthias' kindness, but he grabbed her hand and forced all the wild berries into her hands.

Without a doubt, Heather's hand wasn't as big as Matthias', so a number of wild berries fell from her hand, leaving only half of the bunch laying firmly in Heather's palm.

Noting the stubbornness in Matthias' gaze, Heather reluctantly withdrew her hand. She noticed that Matthias had wiped the wild berries until they were bright and shiny.

This was a token of Matthias' regard, so Heather couldn't refuse. Hence, under his watchful gaze, she picked up a berry and placed it into her mouth.

"Don't worry. There aren't any pesticide residues on them." Matthias flashed her a gentlemanly smile. As he watched Heather eat the wild berries he gave, his mood improved a whole lot.

"I know." The wild berries turned out to taste good; they were slightly sour but still acceptable.

Heather proceeded to eat a second one. Matthias was more excited than anyone else to see this. It seemed like she didn't dislike the taste of the berries, which gave him a sense of achievement.

"Do you really have no interest in anything?" Matthias asked boldly.

Heather was eating the berries when Matthias said this, causing her appetite to disappear in an instant.

Is having a lack of interest my fault? Heather didn't like it when other people posed such questions so directly. Matthias had crossed the line, so her face naturally turned sour.

"What does it have to do with you?" Heather shot Matthias a cold look, thinking that he was being really nosy for not letting go of any of her affairs.

"Don't be so disgruntled. I want to get along well with you, but I can't find the right way to do it. You might as well be honest with me and tell me the truth. Open up to me so that I can find a way to make it easier for us to get along well." Matthias was fed up with the constant ups and downs between the two of them. He didn't want to touch on topics that Heather disliked; he just wanted to make her happy every day.

"I advise you not to waste your effort," Heather replied coldly. "Also, I have no intentions of getting along well with you, so you shouldn't put so much effort into it as it'll just be in vain." Every sentence she said was more aggravating than the other. Whenever Matthias tried to make his way into her heart, all of her thorns would spike up.

The cold wind blew against Matthias' face, but he couldn't feel the chill, because Heather's words had frosted his heart.

"Heather, why are you always so hostile toward me?" Matthias was truly puzzled. Why does Heather have to treat me so much more terrible than she treats others? And she's rarely gentle with me.

"You probably offended me in your previous life," Heather said without blinking. Sometimes, she would feel bad about her behavior, but she would still hurt Matthias unscrupulously when dealing with him.

“Fine. As long as you’re happy.” Matthias didn’t want to continue talking to her. Heather refused to give in at all, and her heart was utterly frozen, so how was he supposed to get through to her?

Seeing Matthias return looking frustrated, Leon didn’t take pleasure in his misfortune this time. Instead, he looked sympathetically at Matthias, remembering that Heather had also thoroughly hurt him in the past.

“Matthias, you don’t need to care too much about what she says sometimes. She crosses the line at times, when in fact she—”

Without waiting for Leon to finish speaking, Matthias interrupted him. “I’m fine. It’s getting late. We should pack up and go back.” Matthias didn’t want to talk about this anymore. Perhaps one day, he would completely lose his feelings for Heather, and maybe then he wouldn’t be so troubled.

Heather turned away, not wanting to look at Matthias as she knew that she had hurt his pride once again.

In their relationship, the both of them were of equal status. Heather knew she only acted this harshly because she knew that Matthias loved her, but she couldn’t control herself.

“I’m sorry,” Heather whispered as the thought that maybe she should change this personality flaw surfaced in her mind.

Standing before Love Chapter 579

When they got back to Bradford City, it was already late, so Heather sent Leon back to his hotel first.

After he left, only Heather and Matthias were left in the car, so the atmosphere was somewhat awkward.

“I’ll send you back,” Heather said to Matthias.

“Go straight to the Langston Residence. You don’t have to send me.” Matthias refused Heather’s offer, because he wanted to accompany her home. What kind of man would need a woman to send him back?

“Okay.” Heather scoffed. “Well, in that case, you can get out of the car now!” Matthias said himself that he didn’t need her to send him back, which meant that they could go their separate ways now.

“I want to see you get home safely.” Matthias didn’t have any intention of getting off whatsoever. It wasn’t easy for them to be alone together, so he certainly wouldn’t let go of this opportunity.

“No, you don’t have to.” Heather refused. He had refused her kindness, so why couldn’t she do the same?

Matthias noticed the resolution on her face, which left him at a sudden loss for words. Heather wasn’t going to start the car—that decision was more than obvious.

“Heather, are you that reluctant to let me send you back?” Matthias fixed her with a gloomy look. Whenever they were together, Heather wouldn’t spare his feelings at all.

“This is my car. I’m afraid it’s not right for you to say that you’ll send me back.” Heather picked this moment to be stubborn, so Matthias was simply speechless. He truly didn’t know when she would finally be gentle with him.

Matthias wanted to say something else, but when he caught sight of Heather’s expressionless face, he couldn’t get the words out.

“If I don’t get out of the car, will you keep spending time with me?” The words that he let slip weren’t exactly polite, but Heather’s attitude made it impossible for him to continue being soft with her.

Heather swept an inexplicable glance over Matthias, not understanding how she managed to provoke him. Seeing how disgruntled he was, for a moment, Heather didn’t know how to fight back.

For a while, neither of them were willing to budge. Then, Heather opened the car door. “I don’t want to waste time with you here. It’s late, and I want to go home earlier to rest.”

Faced with Heather’s cold attitude, Matthias was done with being given the cold shoulder, so he gave her a cold smile.

“Okay. I’ll get out.” Matthias wanted to be harsh with her, but when he looked at Heather’s face, his heart softened in an instant.

Watching as Heather’s car whizzed off, Matthias felt mocked. He chuckled and shook his head as he thought about how he only had himself to blame for his current situation.

At that time, he understood that loving a person was just self-inflicted self-torment. Sometimes, he thought that Heather loved him a little, but sometimes he had to wake up and face the reality of her cruelty.

There were many times when Heather wanted to change her behavior, but everytime she spoke, her words would come out harsh. She was always critical of Matthias. Time and time again, Heather would ask herself why she couldn’t be nicer to him.

When she arrived home, it was already 12.00AM. Lying on her soft bed, she closed her eyes and seemed to hear the bell striking midnight.

The bell rang continuously, causing her heart to be in turmoil. Not only did going out with Matthias not strengthen her feelings, it actually worsened their relationship.

Does loving someone mean making things difficult for them? Heather really wanted to know the answer to this, and she even wondered if there was something mentally wrong with her. She had written books related to psychology before, yet her own mental state wasn’t sound.

At night, the air was cold. Heather didn’t like being in air-conditioned rooms, so she wouldn’t turn it on unless absolutely necessary. However, she didn’t like those heating facilities either.

Fortunately, the indoor temperature of the Langston Residence was designed to be constant. As long as it didn’t drop below zero outside, it wouldn’t be too cold.

When Heather woke up in the morning and opened the window, she looked out and was surprised to see icicles.

She was completely oblivious to what happened the night before. In just one night, the temperature had dropped so low.

When she exhaled, her breath was foggy. At this moment, her face felt so cold that it hurt, so she quickly closed the window.

The weather changed overnight, proving that this year's winter was truly different. It had been a long time since she last experienced a winter like this.

There was slight joy in Heather's heart. After changing into thick pajamas, Heather left the room.

Looking at the living room from above, Heather didn't see Robert anywhere, so she decided to go to his room to look for him. Filled with excitement, she ran to his room.

Robert's room door wasn't closed, so Heather rushed right in. The butler was handing Robert a bowl of medicine, and she even heard him coughing.

"Grandpa!" Heather greeted cheerfully.

When Robert's gaze landed on Heather, he panicked a little and finished the medicine in one gulp.

The bowl in Robert's hands caught Heather's attention. She went straight over and narrowed her eyes at him while asking, "Grandpa, what's wrong?"

Heather wanted to retrieve the medicine bowl from his hands, but Robert handed it directly to the butler, and their eyes met for a moment.

The butler hurriedly left with the bowl, and Heather couldn't stop him in time. She found this move to be strange, as it seemed like Robert was hiding something from her.

"Grandpa, what medicine were you drinking?" Heather continued asking.

Holding in his coughs, Robert completely ignored Heather's questions and proceeded to change the topic to Matthias. "Heather, how have you been getting along with Matthias recently?"

"Grandpa, don't change the subject. You have to answer my question first," Heather said solemnly. Robert was too good at deflecting, but she wasn't going to let him get away with it.

“Heather, why didn’t you knock before you entered my room?” Robert turned serious as well. He didn’t want to talk about this, so he could only change the topic to her.

“Grandpa, we’ll talk about these insignificant things later. You need to answer my question first,” Heather pressed on with extreme patience, as she intended to pester Robert till he gave her an answer.

“Heather, let’s not talk about this for the time being,” Robert stated outright. He noticed the disappointment in Heather’s eyes, and he didn’t want things to be like this either, but he really couldn’t tell her about it.

“Grandpa, you know I’ll definitely find out what I want to know.” Heather hoped that Robert would personally tell her, rather than for her to find out through her investigation.

Robert heard the threat in her tone and was slightly angered. Her words made him uncomfortable, although he knew that she only said it because she cared about him.

“Heather, when did you start being so rude?” Robert asked a little irritably.

“I’m sorry, Grandpa, but I just don’t want you to hide things from me. I know you have quite a few minor health problems, but the medical industry is so developed that there aren’t any insurmountable problems. I don’t want to see you experimenting with those home remedies anymore. We should trust the doctor, shouldn’t we?” Heather understood that Robert was secretly trying some home remedies. She had always wanted to find out what exactly was wrong with his health, but so far, there was no progress.

Originally, she thought this incident wouldn’t happen again. But, now that she had unexpectedly seen it, she couldn’t hold back from speaking her mind.

“Shut up. I have my own judgments. You should just be concerned with your own business.” Robert had no patience to listen to Heather anymore, and his anger was evident.

“Grandpa—”

Before Heather finished speaking, she was interrupted by Robert. “Stop investigating my affairs, and stop doing things that will disappoint me. You’ve always been my pride, so I don’t want to argue with you.”

Looking at how stubborn Robert was being, Heather seemed to see herself. It turned out that she completely inherited her stubbornness from Robert.

“I’m sorry, Grandpa. I just wanted to help out. I’m really scared.” Heather confessed her feelings, as she was truly afraid that she would lose him one day.

“Don’t think so much. I’m tired. You should go out now!” Robert turned away, not wanting to look at her. He was afraid that his heart would soften.

When Heather walked out of Robert’s room, she was a little upset. She figured he must’ve been diagnosed with an incurable disease. Otherwise, there was no need to hide it from her.

The only person with knowledge of this matter must be the butler, but he completely obeyed her grandfather’s orders, so there was no way she could get any information out of him.

On her way out, she bumped into the butler. Upon seeing how worried Heather was, he found it a little hard to bear.

However, he couldn’t possibly go against Robert’s orders. Not to mention, everything would turn messy if Heather found out about it.

Heather didn’t want to stay stuck at home, but wanted to go out for a walk instead. Thinking of Myra, she hurried back to her room.

Because Heather didn’t like to carry her phone with her when she was at home, it was always left in her room. Yesterday, she forgot to check her phone, so she didn’t know if Myra had responded to her.

After opening the door of her room, Heather walked straight toward her bedside before turning on her phone, which was on the bedside table.

This time, Leon didn’t disturb her, and there were no missed calls or text messages from Matthias. Her phone was completely silent, as if the entire world had abandoned her.

Heather then opened her Messenger. Usually, she would have unread messages from Matthias, but today, there weren’t any.

If Matthias didn't text her today, it meant that she must've really hurt him last night.

She only had unread messages on Messenger from Myra. Last night, the latter had even sent Heather a video, but unfortunately, her phone was turned off then. She came back too late at night, and also she forgot to charge it in the car.

If it weren't because she needed to check the time last night, Heather would've completely forgotten that her phone had run out of battery. It was only because of that that she went to her bedroom to charge it.

By the time the phone turned on, Heather was already asleep, so she didn't notice the messages on Messenger.

Myra's message was simple. All she asked was if Heather had time to come out and meet with her. Myra's stomach was getting bigger each day, so Tony didn't allow her to go out to work anymore. She had to stay home all day, which was why she wanted to go out for a walk.

Before this, Myra had asked her friend, Estelle, out as well, but she had gone overseas for a shoot, and it was unknown how long it would take before she would return to Bradford City.

Meanwhile, because Myra was not in the office for the time being, Tilly had more work to handle. She was so busy with work every day that she didn't even have time to spend with her boyfriend, much less hang out with Myra.

At present, the only person Myra could ask out was Heather, because her company had yet to open, so she currently had a relative amount of spare time.

Seeing that Myra wanted to meet up as well, Heather immediately dialed her number. However, after the call was connected, she didn't hear Myra's voice, and no one responded for a long time.

Occasionally, she would hear the faint sound of electric current from the phone, but not Myra's voice, which made Heather suspicious.

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A minute had passed since the call was answered, but no matter what Heather said, there was no response on Myra's side. Heather suspected that Myra's phone was having some issues, so she ended the call. After pondering for a bit, she decided to video-call Myra on Messenger.

Even after a while, however, Myra still did not pick up; perhaps she wasn't even online. Feeling that something fishy was going on, Heather tried calling Myra's number again.

This time, no one answered. Heather started to have a bad feeling about this. What is going on? She knitted her brows together. Someone answered the phone earlier, but why is there no answer now?

When she tried to call Myra again, the line was apparently busy. Heather stared at her phone in disbelief. The whole situation was rather unusual; she didn't think it wasn't just a simple phone bug anymore. Where on earth is Myra right now?

Heather put down her phone and fell into deep thought. I haven't seen Myra for a few days. She hasn't been active on her Instagram Stories lately, nor has she reached out to me. In any case, this silence is quite inconceivable.

Suddenly, her phone rang. Seeing that it was a call from Myra, she answered it immediately. On the other end of the call, Myra's worn-out voice came through. "Heather."

"Myra, are you unwell?" Heather felt that her voice didn't sound right at all. Could something have happened?

"I'm doing great. Did you want to talk to me about something?" Her voice sounded extremely stiff. Heather's intuition was telling her that Myra was hiding something from her.

"Myra, we agreed yesterday to meet up today. Do you have time now?" Heather thought that if she saw Myra, she would be able to figure out a thing or two. Seeing Myra this way, Heather was even more desperate to meet up with her now.

“Heather, something came up at the last minute, so I won’t be able to go out with you.” Myra refused gently. She was so excited about meeting up yesterday, but something suddenly came up today.

Heather was getting a strong feeling that something was wrong. It was apparent that Myra was, indeed, keeping her in the dark. “Are you at home now? What’s so urgent?” Heather wanted to confirm her location so she could go look for her.

“I’m outside. I’ll talk to you later.” Her voice sounded slightly flustered. Right after she finished speaking, she hung up the phone.

After getting hung up on, Heather simply stared at her phone miserably. Myra did not tell her where she was, so she couldn’t go look for her. Regardless of what had happened to Myra, Heather wasn’t able to rush to her side. What exactly happened that Myra is keeping me completely out of it?

Thinking about it for a moment, Heather decided to give Tony a call. Perhaps he would know some things she didn’t.

After calling him a few times, however, she still couldn’t reach him. Putting her phone away dejectedly, she wondered, What are those two doing? They’re being so mysterious. Did they get into an argument with each other? Is this situation happening because they are in the middle of working things out at the moment?

Thus, Heather decided to go to Myra’s house. If she guessed right, then they would be at home now.

With that thought in mind, she quickly got moving. She didn’t like to meddle in other people’s affairs, but she was especially worried because it had to do with Myra.

By the time she arrived at their new house, it was already noon. She pressed on the doorbell and was greeted by the Hart Family’s helper.

“Miss Langston, what brings you here?” The helper was familiar with Heather. She knew that Myra and Heather were really good friends.

“Where’s Mrs. Hart?” Heather asked while assuming that Myra was probably inside the house.

“Mrs. Hart is not home. May I know why you’re looking for her, Miss Langston?” The helper’s smile was a little unnatural. Hence, Heather tried to get some clues from her expression.

The helper became even more restless under Heather’s gaze. At the same time, Heather also felt like she was being impolite. Looking at the helper with a smile, Heather replied, “It’s nothing major. We agreed to spend the day together today. She should be back soon.”

She did her best to sound relaxed and ease the helper’s nerves. As much as she wanted to go inside to wait for Myra, the helper was standing in the way of the door without any intention of letting her in. It was strange because it wasn’t proper etiquette at all.

“When Mrs. Hart went out, she told me she would be back very late. So…” The helper was looking at Heather with a troubled expression. The tension felt awkward between them now.

Heather laughed it off nonchalantly. “Is that so? I guess she really has forgotten about our plans today.” Since she wasn’t able to enter the house, she might as well find a way out for herself.

Upon leaving the place, she heard the door shut tightly behind her. Turning around to look intently at the villa behind her, she felt like a pair of eyes was watching her from the window on the second floor.

After that, she left the place without looking back. Having been to Myra’s new house, she felt like things were even more suspicious now. Not only had Myra stammered over the phone, the helper was also acting abnormally. Additionally, she wasn’t able to reach Tony on the phone.

At the thought of that, she tried to call Tony once more but only heard a precise automated female voice come through the phone.

His phone was turned off now. Raising her eyebrows gently, she thought, It looks like things are getting stranger. This definitely isn’t good news.

First, Robert kept his disease from Heather all this time, and now, even Myra was hiding something from her. Heather was suddenly in distress. Why is there a problem today with the only two people I care about in my life?

At the moment, she did not know who to go to. She didn't want to ask Leon for help anymore for she also knew that ever since the explosion last time, Leon had one more thing bothering him. He couldn't even manage his own problems, so she didn't want to give him more trouble. For a period of time, she had troubled him quite a bit. Thus, she couldn't keep doing as she pleased anymore.

She also thought about Matthias. Nevertheless, she didn't want him to get involved in anything that had to do with Myra. In that case, she could only rely on her own hard work to look for an answer. At some point, she learned how to depend on other people for help even though dealing with problems on her own had always been her method of doing things.

Just as she was about to take the first step in her investigation, her attention was drawn to a car. It was a limited-edition Bugatti; it made clear the driver's exceptional status in society.

She recalled this car belonging to Caleb Moriarty. I can't believe I'm seeing his car in front of Myra's house. Should I go up and say hi to him?

Shortly after, the car door opened, and Tony stepped out. Heather was thankful that she was inside the car now, or else he would've noticed her.

Since when did Caleb and Tony get so close to each other? Caleb is even sending Tony home in his own luxury car. They were chatting and laughing; it didn't look like they were in opposition to each other.

Heather kept her eyes fixed outside the car window. Indeed, this was truly an unusual situation. She was still wondering why Myra wasn't with Tony. Even after waiting for a while, she didn't see Myra come out of Caleb's car. But when the car door opened earlier, she clearly saw the edge of a woman's dress.

There's definitely a woman in Caleb's car, but that woman isn't Myra. Who on earth could that woman be? Heather felt puzzled. Moreover, she couldn't understand why Tony and Caleb were together.

She didn't reach a conclusion regardless of how much she thought it over. For that reason, she decided to follow Caleb. Luckily, she was not driving the car she normally did.

That way, people couldn't easily guess her identity by looking at her car. After Caleb and Tony exchanged a few more words with each other, they went their separate ways.

Just then, Heather wished she had supernatural abilities to be able to see their expressions and listen in on their conversation.

A while later, Caleb went back into his car. It was clear now that the woman had something to do with Caleb. Heather wanted to follow them to see for herself.

For some reason, the edge of that woman's dress looked rather familiar to Heather, but she couldn't remember where she had seen it before. While maintaining some distance, she followed carefully behind Caleb's car. I don't think he noticed me.

Once the car went on the overpass, Caleb suddenly sped up. If it weren't for the lack of cars on the overpass then, an accident would've taken place.

The speed of the Bugatti surpassed that of Heather's ordinary Mercedes-Benz, so she watched in anguish as Caleb disappeared before her eyes. She wasn't sure which way he took to get off the overpass.

Before she had time to react, Caleb disappeared without a trace, and she could only pick a random path to get off. Once she was off the overpass, she tried to look for the platinum Bugatti but failed to find it. Before she realized, she had arrived in the city center.

Currently, the traffic was incredibly congested, so even if the Bugatti appeared in front of her, it would be impossible for her to follow after it.

"Did he notice that I was following him?" she mumbled to herself. Nevertheless, it was expected. Caleb was a general—his acute countermeasure ability was not comparable to that of an average person.

If anyone were to blame, it was Heather's fault for wanting to follow Caleb. She had alerted him already. At the time, she should've pretended as though she hadn't seen anything and quietly returned to Langston Residence.

She was truly torn between who to trust now. On the surface, Tony and Caleb were not hostile with each other, but she couldn't be certain. After all, Robert

still addressed Caleb as a distinguished guest on the outside. It looks like Caleb is really putting on a great act.

Presently, the three families had yet to get into a fight with one another. I don't know when Caleb is going to make his move, or has he really let go of the past and only came to Bradford City to make a fortune?

Being reminded of how Robert was wary of Caleb, Heather felt like she still couldn't let her guard down yet. At the moment, no one could be trusted, including Matthias.

In the past, she assumed that she could trust Leon, who wasn't involved in the family feud. After the explosion, however, she had to face the fact that Leon's family situation was even more complicated.

She really did not know who to trust now. It was also impossible for her to speak her mind to Myra and tell her about her little secret. Everyone had their own secrets after all.

All of a sudden, Heather felt completely helpless. She had so many things bottled up inside that she feared she would reach her breaking point someday. If she were to push her limits every day, she would break soon. She couldn't find a way to alleviate the psychological pressure she felt.

"What else is real in this world?" For a moment, she questioned the value of existence and the meaning of life.

Standing before Love Chapter 581

The road ahead was filled with red lights. Heather looked in annoyance at the car in front of her. The more upset someone was, the more likely they would be to run into negative situations. She was reminded of Murphy's Law—life wasn't a TV show, where the next turn would bring about a change for the better.

In reality, the next turn would often bring about even more troubling matters. She didn't have much luck today and had a feeling of misfortune in her gut. The car in front of me is definitely a new driver. Despite wanting to overtake the car, she failed to do so over several attempts. It felt as though the car in front of her was against her. In a moment of anger, she wanted to confront the person ahead. I'd never seen someone drive like this before. For her personal safety, however, she just followed slowly behind the car. Driving in the city

center was always frustrating; all the cars were jam-packed together on the road with sounds of car horns blaring one after the other.

Suddenly, a thought struck Heather—she didn't want to go home anymore. She wanted to go see Myra, so she turned the car around. Since Tony was already home now, it was highly likely that Myra had also returned. Heather had to see her and gain some clarity today.

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When the helper opened the door and saw Heather, an astonished look flashed across her face. She probably wasn't expecting Heather to come again since she had just been here three hours ago.

"Did Mrs. Hart come home yet?" Heather got straight to the point. She was almost certain this time that Myra was inside the house.

Tony's voice suddenly sounded from within, whereupon the helper turned around with a troubled expression on her face. Heather saw Tony's face peak out slightly; he was standing right behind the helper.

He was rather surprised to see Heather, but he still invited her in. Upon entering the house, Heather looked all around her but did not see Myra.

Knitting her brows together, Heather asked Tony, "Is Myra not at home?" The indifferent look on his face was slightly strange to her. According to reason, he would definitely be anxious if Myra wasn't home.

"Myra went to the cemetery this morning and hasn't returned yet," Tony explained.

"Why didn't you go with her?" This wasn't like him at all. She was surprised to learn that he let Myra go to the cemetery alone while pregnant.

He gestured for her to sit down then asked the helper to prepare some light refreshments. It looked like he was going to attend to Heather.

"Myra insisted on going alone, so I couldn't follow her," he explained. It seems like Heather came with a number of questions today.

Heather didn't press on any further. Judging by Tony's demeanor, it didn't seem like he was lying. It looks like Myra really isn't at home. My predictions

were wrong again this time. However, she still couldn't figure out why Myra went to the cemetery alone when she had asked Heather yesterday to go shopping with her today.

When all the pieces were put together, it looked extremely suspicious. Thus, the uneasiness Heather felt only grew more intense. She was considering whether she should bring this up to Tony, but hesitated when she remembered the amicable interaction she saw between him and Caleb earlier.

"Why are you looking for Myra?" he probed when Heather didn't respond for some time.

"Nothing. I just dropped by to see her as I was nearby." Heather made up an excuse to brush him off.

Unfortunately, the helper had reported Heather's visit to see Myra as soon as Tony came home. Thus, he could tell that she was deliberately ignoring his question.

"If you have time, you can wait for Myra here. She should be home in a bit," he said to her. Seeing how preoccupied she looked, he couldn't just let her leave.

"No need. I still have things to do. I'll come back to see Myra when I have time in the future." She refused this opportunity to see Myra as she had other plans of her own.

This time, she came and went hastily again. As she was leaving, she looked intently at the helper. The helper only brought out the refreshments when Heather was about to leave; her actions were uncannily slow.

The helper lowered her head immediately under Heather's gaze. Although she suspected that something was up with the helper, Heather couldn't keep staring blatantly at her with Tony present.

"I'll see you out." Tony politely offered to send Heather off.

"Never mind. Just help me pass a message to Myra." Heather looked over at the helper deliberately while she spoke.

It looked like the helper was also keen on listening to Heather's message. She was still holding the tray of refreshments in her hand and had no intention of leaving.

Tony wanted to hear what Heather had to say, but Heather remained quiet to drag out the time while the helper stood where she was. Then, Tony observed Heather's behavior and noticed that she was casually looking at the helper. Hence, he dismissed the helper. "You're not needed here. You may go downstairs first."

Finally, Heather spoke again. "Did you notice that?" With Tony's level of intelligence, she reckoned he surely had noticed it.

"Yes. I'll deal with it." He had undoubtedly noticed something so obvious.

"How long has she been working here for?" Heather continued to converse with Tony. That person got caught in broad daylight today; it seemed like she needed more improvement in her acting skills.

"Not for very long. Someone I know introduced her." He also felt like something was fishy here. Someone actually had ulterior motives toward him and had placed an informer by his side. This led him to feel exasperated.

"Be more careful, then. I'm going home now." Since she had already given him a heads-up, she believed that he would resolve this matter. The rest from this point on had nothing to do with her.

"What message did you want me to pass on to Myra?" He had to remind her as she still hadn't told him yet.

"When Myra comes back, tell her to come to Langston Residence to look for me. I'll be waiting for her there." Since Heather couldn't find Myra, she might as well try out the waiting game.

"Okay," Tony answered and did not pry any further; he could perceive that much.

After seeing Heather off, he thought, Who on earth sent that helper? It was definitely someone in business. It wouldn't be my first time seeing a business person do anything to gain an advantage.

Originally, the housekeeper who worked in his house was a lady he was familiar with. Not long ago, however, that lady fell ill, so this helper was brought in.

As a matter of fact, the lady was the one who recommended this helper. He didn't think this person would turn out problematic and only blamed himself for being too negligent. He should've noticed sooner and not have hastily selected someone like her for the job.

Once Heather was gone, he shifted his focus back to the housekeeper. He was watching her every move and action, so much so that it made her feel uncomfortable. Because he had never stared at her like that before, it made her feel extremely anxious.

"Ms. Wolfe, I need to have a word with you," he uttered. It was still better to act promptly on some matters.

He did not reveal anything to the helper and simply fired her on the basis of not doing her work properly. Nevertheless, the both of them knew the real reason. Therefore, the helper did not put up much of an argument either and accepted his reason in a calm manner. Toward the end, an unusual smirk even grew at the corner of her lips.

He did not want to trace back to the person who was behind the helper. He was definitely going to bring everything to light, but he did not want to alert anyone. On one hand, he wanted to warn the other party, but on the other, he didn't want to leave any traces either.

Just like he said before, as soon as he dealt with the helper, Myra came home. It pained him to see her haggard appearance as she walked into the house.

"Myra, why are you home so late?" She did indeed take a lot of time on this trip to the cemetery. It didn't make sense for her to have taken this much time, so he decided to ask casually.

"I'm a bit tired. I'm going to go upstairs and rest first." She didn't seem to have noticed the absence of the helper in the house. It looked like she was a little absent-minded.

"Heather came by twice today. By the looks of it, I think it's urgent. She wanted me to tell you that she'd be waiting for you at Langston Residence."

Tony told her about Heather's visit, but her expression still remained unchanged.

"Okay." Her response was also indifferent. His keen senses led him to wonder whether a crack had formed between the both of them, and that was the reason for their abnormal behaviors.

After that, Myra went straight upstairs while Tony followed behind her. She was walking at a fast pace, which made him slightly worried, especially as she was going up the stairs, since it was very dangerous.

The words had reached his mouth several times, but every time he wanted to speak, he swallowed them back down. He could only follow alongside her cautiously. Meanwhile, Myra completely overlooked him. As soon as she walked into her bedroom, she closed the door on him.

They were now separated by a door. Furrowing his brows, he thought, This had never happened before. It's past just being odd now.

Leaning against the back of the door, Myra took a deep breath. She could sense that Tony was left outside. A while later, she opened the door weakly for him and looked at him with an apologetic gaze.

He couldn't stand the look of self-blame she had in her eyes the most. This wasn't even a big deal. Not wanting to let her feel that way, he lovingly held her in his arms.

"Myra, what happened? I'm really worried about you." He didn't want to force her to tell him, but he was also worried about her.

"I need time to organize my thoughts. I still don't know how to tell you about it." She never kept anything from him before, but this happened all too suddenly this time that she needed time to process it by herself.

"No matter what, I'll always be with you." They had gone through great upheavals together. He believed that there weren't any more difficulties that could knock them down.

Burying herself in his arms, she thought of how great it was to be able to depend on him at this time.

“Why did you get off work so early today?” She spoke in a muffled voice as she stayed nestled in his embrace. He did come back from work way too early today.

“I finished discussing a collaboration project with a client early, so I came straight home.” He didn’t want to tell her the details, so he just gave her a simple explanation.

“I see.” Her voice sounded nasally, which suddenly made him uneasy.

“What’s wrong with your voice? Did you catch a cold when you went to the cemetery this morning?” He anxiously tightened his arms around her. It was dangerous for pregnant women to catch a cold.

“No. You’re holding me too tight. I can’t even breathe properly, much less speak,” she grumbled playfully, whereupon he let her go immediately and looked at her with a guilty expression.

They smiled at each other. Today, they were both hiding something from one another. It all started with that mysterious call this morning. Indeed, some people were truly experts—in order to undermine the enemy, they would start by creating internal chaos.