

## **The Kiss 561**

### *Chapter 561*

*"Ms. Wesley, the thing is, Ms. Mendoza has now become someone else's spouse. So, Mr. Blanchet should keep his mitts off her and not get tangled up with her anymore. So, when you go in there, don't bring up Ms. Mendoza, got it?"*

*"What?!" Belinda shot up, forgot she was in the car, and thwacked her head on the roof, causing her to yell in pain.*

*Collin watched and felt a bit helpless, Ms. Wesley, are you okay?"*

*Belinda rubbed her sore head but didn't care about the pain. She hurriedly asked, "How did Ellinor become someone else's wife? She hasn't divorced Theo yet, how could she marry someone else?"*

*Collin sighed. "Actually, Ms. Mendoza and Mr. Blanchet never officially tied the knot. Mr. Blanchet wanted to get married just to get his family off his back, so there was no need for them to go through with a divorce."*

*Disappointment swept over Belinda's face, Theo is so irresponsible! It's one thing not to marry in the first place, but if he intended to be with Ellinor, he should've registered their marriage! Ellinor is so cute, I bet she's got a lot of suitors. And now she's been snatched up by someone else!"*

*Collin gave a bitter smile, "Ms. Wesley, especially in front of Mr. Blanchet, don't bring this up, okay?"*

*Belinda frowned, unhappy with the outcome. She loved Ellinor a lot.*

*Even if Theo gave up on his wife, she didn't want to give up on a goddess like Ellinor.*

*After a moment of thought, Belinda asked, "Collin, tell me, who did Ellinor marry?"*

*Collin replied. "The Vice President of Crescent Society, Chase"*

*A calculating expression crossed Belinda's face. "Crescent Society, Chase, got it!"*

*Collin had a bad feeling. He asked nervously, "Ms. Wesley, what are you planning?"*

*Belinda gave a mysterious smile, I'm not telling! But don't worry, I have a plan to help Theo win back Ellinor!"*

*With that, Belinda hopped out of the car and headed home.*

*Collin was left in the car, baffled. Ms. Wesley said she had a plan to help Mr. Blanchet win back Ms. Mendoza, but how?*

*Ms. Mendoza was now a married woman; pursuing her would be stepping into someone else's marriage. And as he knew, Mr. Blanchet and Ms. Mendoza were both principled people; they would never do such a thing.*

*So, what was Ms. Wesley planning? He hoped she wouldn't do anything unwise.*

*The next day, in the afternoon.*

*Belinda, with her resume in hand, arrived for an interview at Crescent Society. She wanted to see what the Vice President Chase looked like, whether he was more handsome than Theo, and how he managed to steal Ellinor from Theo.*

*Also, she mainly wanted to verify if the marriage between Chase and Ellinor was real.*

*She felt that Ellinor didn't seem like someone who would enjoy married life; how could she marry again so quickly after leaving Theo?*

*She had sent her resume to the HR department of Crescent Society just the night before and received a call in the morning to come for an interview.*

*Crescent Society sure was efficient, but she wasn't sure if she could meet their Vice President.*

*Belinda entered the elevator, pressing the button for the floor where the HR department was located.*

## *Chapter 562*

*After being called, Belinda walked into the HR department's interview room, said hello to the three interviewers, introduced herself, and then sat down to*

*wait for questions*

*The interviewers glanced over her impressive resume and looked somewhat surprised as they exchanged a satisfied look.*

*Then, the interviewer in the middle raised his head to look at Belinda and asked somewhat puzzled, "Did you used to work at the Blanchet Corporation?"*

*Belinda nodded, "Yes."*

*"Why did you leave such a good company like the Blanchet Corporation?"*

*Belinda answered casually, "No particular reason. I just felt that there wasn't much room for growth and I wanted to challenge myself by trying something new."*

*Her answer left the interviewers even more puzzled. The Blanchet Corporation was a well-known company with good employee benefits, why would she feel there was no growth there?*

*After Belinda graduated from college, Theo arranged for her to work at the Blanchet Corporation. The job was relatively easy, the salary was high, and the working hours were flexible.*

*Everyone in the company knew that she was the CEO's niece, so no one dared to criticize her work attitude or dock her pay.*

*She was telling the truth, she really felt there was no development for her at the Blanchet Corporation.*

*Because of Theo, all the employees were extra polite to her, and her superiors didn't give her much work. Her main tasks were to organize documents, book meetings, and search for information. The rest of the time, she was resting. She was spoiled!*

*The interviewer in the middle asked her, "So, Ms. Wesley, what position are you applying for here?"*

*"Any position is fine, as long as I can join your company." Belinda was absent-minded, her eyes were constantly watching the people outside the glass door, observing any man who might be Vice President Chase.*

*"Any position?"*

*The interviewers looked at her with less friendly eyes, feeling that this girl seemed to be joking and not respecting their company.*

*After some discussions, they felt that Belinda wasn't serious about applying, her attitude was too casual, and she didn't respect Crescent Society.*

*So, one of the interviewers asked her bluntly, "What about a janitorial position? Would that also be okay?"*

*"Janitor?" Belinda frowned and was a bit surprised.*

*The interviewer smirked, "Yes, we're short a janitor; you can start right away."*

*Belinda thought for a moment as her eyes began lighting up, "Okay, janitor it is. I accept!"*

*As a janitor, she would be responsible for cleaning the company, which would allow her to go anywhere she wanted. It was just what she was looking for. The interviewers looked at this young girl, feeling absolutely incredulous, and even began to question if she was serious.*

*"Ms. Wesley, are you sure you really want to work as a janitor at Crescent Society, specifically responsible for cleaning the company?"*

*Belinda looked determined, "Yes, I'm sure! I came here to try something I've never done before; I hope you can give me a chance!"*

*Her unusual job-seeking attitude left the interviewers astounded.*

*"Alright, you can start work tomorrow then!"*

*Belinda rolled up her sleeves, "No need to wait till tomorrow; I can start now!"*

*The interviewers looked at her puzzled, "You're in a hurry to start work?"*

*"Yes, can you tell me where to do the paperwork? I can't wait to start; I can start cleaning now."*

*One of the interviewers smiled slightly, "Just turn left when you exit for paperwork."*

*"Okay, thank you!" Belinda stood up, bowed in gratitude, and then eagerly went to do the paperwork..*

*Chapter 563*

*The three interviewers were giving each other a once-over.*

*"I'm a bit suspicious about this girl's intentions"*

*"Do you think she's here to get close to our Vice President?"*

*"Could be, Mr. Larios has always been a chick magnet"*

*"Loads of girls apply here in hopes of getting close to Mr. Larios, but she's the only one willing to be a janitor"*

*At the Howard Group.*

*Ellinor was at work as usual today, she spent the morning working on a sales plan for the quarter. After she was done, she took the plan to the CEO's*

*office.*

*There was a new secretary sitting outside the CEO's office, a young and pretty girl who was clearly slacking off.*

*Ellinor walked over and asked casually, "Is Mr. Howard in?"*

*The new secretary snapped out of her daze, hurriedly put down her phone, and stood up.*

*However, as soon as she realized it was Ellinor, her face fell, and she sat back down, idly looking at her perfectly manicured nails, "It's you. What do you want with Mr. Howard?"*

*Ellinor calmly eyed the secretary. She didn't know her, but it was clear that the secretary knew her and had some inexplicable hostility towards her.*

*"I have a document for Mr. Howard to review."*

*The secretary slapped her desk. "Just leave whatever document it is here; I'll give it to Mr. Howard later"*

*Ellinor*

*didn't play along, "I need to explain the data in the document to Mr. Howard in person. Could you please inform him?"*

*The secretary gave her an annoyed glance before reluctantly picking up the phone.*

*As soon as the phone connected, the secretary's impatience with Ellinor disappeared, and she spoke in a respectful and soft voice, "Mr. Howard, Ms. Mendoza from sales is looking for you. She says she has a document for you."*

*Balfour's voice came out faintly from the other end, "Let her in."*

*The secretary hung up and raised her chin at Ellinor in annoyance, "Go in."*

*Ellinor gave her a slight smile, undeterred by the secretary's attitude.*

*Because she knew this colleague wouldn't last long in that position.*

*Balfour, being as strict as he was, wouldn't tolerate a secretary with such a work attitude.*

*She must be a temp filling in the position and will disappear from the Howard Group soon.*

*Ellinor opened the door to the CEO's office.*

*Not only was Balfour in the CEO's office today, but there was also the young member of the Howard family, Byran Howard.*

*Byran was sitting next to the desk, not far from his brother, focused on a test paper, and scratching his head in frustration over a problem.*

*Ellinor gave Byran a glance, then looked at Balfour with a serious and polite demeanor, and handed over the document.*

*"Mr. Howard, yesterday Mr. Rex and I conducted a market survey. Based on that, I prepared a quarterly sales plan. Could you please review it and see if it's feasible?"*

*Hearing Ellinor's voice, Byran, who was deep in thought, immediately stopped writing and looked up in surprise, "Ellinor, what are you doing at my brother's company?"*

*Chapter 564*

*As Balfour took the documents from Ellinor, he gave his little brother a cold glance, "Keep working on your homework, kiddo."*

*Stung by his brother's rebuke, Byran kept his head down and continued to work, not making a peep.*

*Balfour skimmed through the sales plan Ellinor had put together. He paused and squinted his eyes, seemingly impressed by her business savvy.*

*After a moment, he raised an eyebrow, looking at her with a bit of skepticism, "Did you do this yourself?"*

*Ellinor nodded. "Yes, Mr. Howard. After visiting the market with Mr. Rex yesterday, I had some ideas and put together this plan for you. If you're okay with it, I'll move forward"*

*Balfour gave her a cold, mocking smile, "Not bad. But a bit of an overkill."*

*Ellinor frowned, "Why?"*

*Balfour closed the folder, "Food is just a small part of our business. We're not expecting to make waves with it, so there's no need to go overboard with marketing."*

*Ellinor looked at the folder on the table, chuckled, and voiced her thoughts.*

*"Even though you made me sales manager, you didn't give me much power. I can't touch most of the company's operations.*

*But I believe I should do my best at what I can do. I didn't make this plan as a way to slack off. Whether we go with it or not is up to you.*

*I heard that the food is just a hobby of yours because your favorite little sister liked the snacks our company made. That's why we've been making small*

*batches.*

*If we could make it even better and get more people to like it, I think your sister would be happy to see others enjoy it as much as she does.*

*But hey, that's just my two cents. Take it or leave it."*

*After hearing Ellinor's words, Balfour looked at her, his eyes expressing an indescribable emotion.*

*Ellinor interpreted his look as dissatisfaction with her presence, and the fact that she was still breathing.*

*Yesterday, the guys Balfour sent didn't off her, and she narrowly escaped. Showing up today unscathed must've been a sore sight for Balfour.*

*Balfour stayed silent for a while, then said, "Alright, I'll consider your plan. You can go now."*

*"Okay"*

*Without saying more, Ellinor turned around and left.*

*Byran lifted his head to sneak*

*a peek at Ellinor's retreating figure. He furrowed his brows, puzzled by why she was working at his brother's company.*

*When Ellinor stepped out of the CEO's office, she ran into Patricia, who was there to see her brother.*

*Patricia was holding some food and chatting away with the new secretary at the office entrance.*

*Unlike her cold attitude toward Ellinor, the secretary seemed quite chummy with Patricia, showering her with compliments about how pretty she looked and how nice her clothes were, all while being very polite and respectful.*

*When Ellinor emerged, the door made a soft noise, and the two naturally turned to look.*

*Upon seeing Ellinor, neither of them looked too friendly, one was full of disdain, and the other was full of hostility.*

*Chapter 565*

*Ellinor had no intention of dealing with the two of them, so she naturally avoided them.*

*'Ellinor!'*

*Patricia's soft voice stopped her.*

*Ellinor halted and turned around, "Ms. Howard, what can I do for you?"*

*Ellinor's words were laced with sarcasm, encapsulating all the previous incidents and subtly hinting at a warning not to stir up more trouble.*

*Patricia approached Ellinor, smiling innocently*

*and feigning ignorance, "Ellinor, why do you ignore me when you see me?"*

*After that set-up incident yesterday, what more was there to say between them?*

*Ellinor curled her lips, "Oh, it's nothing. Just saw you and Mr. Howard's secretary having a good chat and I didn't want to interrupt."*

*"I see!" Patricia's 'innocent' smile deepened, and she took another step forward, tiptoeing to whisper into the ear of Ellinor, who was a head taller than her, "Ellinor, you won yesterday! But don't get too cocky; the real challenge is yet to come! If you think you can create a wedge between me and my brother, you're dead wrong!"*

*My brother has always been very fond of me; no matter what I do wrong, he always forgives me, loves me, and tolerates me!*

*And a girl like you, who never got love from family, can never understand this happiness I have!"*

*Though her words were all spoken with a smile, they gave off an extremely eerie vibe.*

*However, Ellinor was not angry but smiled, "Yeah, I can see that; Mr. Howard really does love you"*

*Patricia landed back on her heels. Her eyebrows raised at Ellinor in a proud and sweet challenge, with her smile still radiant, "Glad you see it! So, save yourself the trouble of looking for faults in my brother, it's useless!"*

*Ellinor kept smiling, "Ms. Howard, aren't you tired?"*

*Every day you put on a mask, use your family and friends to stir up trouble, and are always on guard against any woman who might threaten your*

*position*

*Honestly, are you really that happy? Do you really feel secure?*

*From what I see, a calm person wouldn't act like you, guarding what you already have by any means necessary.*

*I guess you're really anxious inside, right? Because you know everything you have now is fragile, and all the love and tolerance around you are earned through your lies and flattery.*

*You have no confidence that you could still have the same love and status if you showed your real self.*

*So, you're actually more afraid of losing everything than anyone else, right?"*

*Patricia's smile froze, and she was speechless for a moment.*

*Ellinor raised her hand again, patting her shoulder gently and earnestly, "Ms. Howard, instead of spending all this time on me, why not do something useful and accumulate some good luck for your kid?"*

*With that, she walked past Patricia and returned to her office.*

*Patricia's face almost lost its composure. Each of Ellinor's words hit her hard, completely exposing the fear deep in her heart.*

*Chapter 566*

*Watching Ellinor's retreating figure, Patricia finally dropped her icy facade, turned around, and put on her usual sweet and gentle smile.*

*She said to the new secretary in the CEO's office. "Jone. I hope you can keep an eye on my brother from now on. As you know, many women try to get close to him under the guise of work, and I want to keep him from being bothered by women with ulterior motives"*

*The secretary named Jone nodded in agreement, 'Miss Howard, I understand. Don't worry, I've got this. If anything happens on Mr. Howard's end, I'll let you know right away, especially any moves by that sales manager. I won't give her any chance to pester Mr. Howard."*

*"Mmm, I'm relieved you're here. Jone, you're special and nothing like those ordinary girls. Keep it up, okay?" Patricia said, smiling warmly. Then she turned and walked into her brother's office*

*Jone blushed, feeling secretly delighted as her mind began to run wild.*

*Miss Howard just said that she was different from other girls and even told her to keep it up.*

*Did this mean Miss Howard wouldn't mind her getting close to Mr. Howard and she might have a chance to become the lady of the Howard family? Would Miss Howard accept her?*

*If so, Miss Howard really was as kind as the rumors said, without any of the arrogance of a rich girl.*

*In the CEO's office.*

*When Patricia walked in with a thermos, her brother Balfour was frowning at a test paper their younger brother Byran had just finished, his frown deepening the more he read.*

*"What the heck have you been learning all these years? You can't even do basic math?"*

*Byran was terrified. His head was lowered, not daring to speak.*

*He didn't know how to answer any of the questions, but he didn't dare leave them blank in front of Balfour, so he just wrote whatever came to mind.*

*Balfour rubbed his forehead, barely able to accept that this uneducated, unintelligent child was a member of the Howard family and his own little brother. He had intended to go over the wrong answers and explain the concepts Byran didn't understand, but there wasn't a single correct answer!*

*All those tutors they'd hired over the years were a total waste. Despite years of coaching from renowned teachers, Byran's academic level was still at an elementary school level. He was absolutely hopeless.*

*Balfour's face looked stormy as he threw the paper back in front of Byran, "Rewrite it all!"*

*"Okay..." Byran was so scared that he didn't dare breathe. He put his head down as he started to rewrite.*

*Seeing this, Patricia sighed in resignation and walked over.*

*"You're tutoring Byran? Don't be so mad. I brought some chicken soup. Let's take a break and have some soup."*

*Balfour looked up when he heard the sound of her voice, his expression still not softening. "What are you doing here again? The kid is still in the hospital; shouldn't you be there taking care of him? Who's going to look after him if you're not there?"*



*Patricia was taken aback by her brother's cold and displeased tone.*

*He had never spoken to her like this before. Ever since Ellinor exposed her bribery of the restaurant waiter yesterday, he had been distant and hardly spoke to her.*

*She explained in a small voice, "I left Haillie and the nanny with the kid. I thought you might be tired from work, so I brought you some soup. I asked the nanny to cook extra when she was making it for Baber. You must be tired from work, so have some soup to replenish your energy"*

*Balfour glanced at the thermos in her hand and said nothing. "The kid has burns. He needs to eat less greasy food."*

*Patricia looked pale, "I know, I..."*

*Chapter 567*

*"Alright, just put the soup down and go back to the hospital to be with the kid Balfour cut her off, picking up the documents on the table to read, his cold demeanor clearly indicating he didn't want to talk further."*

*The documents he held were a sales plan submitted by Ellinor. As Balfour read the clear text and data, he couldn't help but recall Ellinor's words about expanding production and sales in the food industry.*

*He wondered if his own little sister Pearl were still alive, would she have missed out on these foods due to insufficient promotion? If she had gotten to eat her favorite snack from childhood, would it stir up old memories and maybe make her want to come home to see him?*

*Possibly, this sales plan Ellinor put together could work.*

*Seeing that Balfour was not interested in her words and wouldn't even look at her, Patricia felt awkward standing in the office, not knowing what to do.*

*Byran, who was doing his homework nearby, also felt the strange tension. He looked up at Patricia, then at the aloof Balfour, feeling uncomfortable.*

*It was weird. Balfour had always doted on Patricia and practically did whatever she said.*

*But for some reason, he had been ignoring her since yesterday, and his attitude today was just as cold...*

*This had never happened before. What on earth was going on?*

*Patricia thought for a moment, walked over, and placed her thermos on Balfour's desk. Then she softly said to Byran, who was still doing his homework.*

*"Byran, stop writing for now. Go take a break. I have some things to discuss with Balfour. You can come back in a bit and have some soup with him."*

*"Sure thing!"*

*Byran jumped at the opportunity. He didn't know how to solve any of these problems and staying here would just get him scolded by Balfour.*

*Given the chance to escape by Patricia, he didn't hesitate to put down his pen and hurry out.*

*Watching Byran leave, Patricia turned back to Balfour, who was engrossed in reviewing the documents. She hesitated, then asked in a teary voice, "Do you really hate me now?"*

*Hearing his sister's sobbing voice, Balfour looked up at her with complex and tired eyes. "Enough, don't start crying at the drop of a hat. You're in your twenties now; you're not a kid. You have to understand that crying won't solve anything."*

*Patricia felt a real crisis. He used to comfort her immediately when she cried, but not today. Instead, he seemed annoyed by her crying.*

*"...I admit...I messed up yesterday. I went in the wrong direction. But you didn't give me a chance to explain! I felt trapped; I really couldn't think of any other way."*

*There was something off in her words and Balfour frowned, "Trapped? Who cornered you?"*

*With a wronged look, Patricia wiped her tears and gave her prepared explanation, "I really didn't want to drive Ellinor away... But she flaunted her pregnancy to me in the bathroom, and said it was Theo's! I panicked... How could I ever compete with her?"*

*How can my infertile body compare to Ellinor's healthy and easily pregnant one?*

*If Theo knew she was pregnant, he'd surely neglect me and Baber.*

*So I was really scared. I was scared that Ellinor would use her pregnancy to steal Theo away again, so I went to extremes in a moment of panic.*

*I'm sorry! I know I was wrong and I really know I messed up."*

*Balfour's expression froze.*

*Ellinor was pregnant?*

*Chapter 568*

*After Byran emerged from the office, he asked the secretary at the front desk, "Where's the office of that girl who just went in to drop off documents for my brother?"*

*Secretary Jone stood up. "Are you asking about Ellinor?"*

*Byran nodded, "Yeah"*

*Jone asked uncertainly, "Mr. Howard, why are you looking for Ellinor? Are you guys close or something?"*

*Byran frowned slightly in impatience, "Do I really need to tell you why I'm looking for her?"*

*Jone quickly waved her hands and smiled, "No, no, I was just asking. Ellinor's office is up front; just keep going, then turn right and left, and you'll find the Sales Manager's office. Need me to guide you there, Mr. Howard?"*

*"No need" Byran said coldly, then hastily followed the directions.*

*Once he found the Sales Manager's office, Byran peeked inside to make sure Ellinor was in, then barged right in.*

*"Ellinor!"*

*At the sound of his voice, Ellinor, who was engrossed in a computer game, looked up placidly. "What's up? Do you need something?"*

*Byran sauntered over, glancing at her computer screen, "You're gaming during work hours?"*

*Without taking her eyes off the screen, Ellinor replied nonchalantly, "I finished my work. What's wrong with taking a gaming break?"*

*Byran laughed and didn't press the issue. He honestly didn't care whether Ellinor was working seriously or not.*

*He sat down on the chair opposite Ellinor's desk, stared at her, and asked, "Ellinor, where have you been this past month?"*

*Still focused on her game, Ellinor replied casually, "Nowhere much, just out and about."*

*Byran was puzzled, "Out and about? Then why did you come back to work here at my brother's company?"*

*"Because your company offers good benefits and high salaries, I saw a future here, so I applied."*

*Byran frowned deeply, scrutinizing her face with suspicion, "Do you really need a salary?"*

*While clicking her mouse to make a move in her game, Ellinor responded, "Mr. Howard, you might not need a salary, but us regular folks do. We need it to put food on the table, you know?"*

*Byran was still confused, crossing his arms in seriousness, "What regular folks? You used to be part of the Blanchet family, you could have all the money you want."*

*Even if you really wanted to work, Theo could have arranged a position for you at the Blanchet Corporation. Why would you leave the Blanchet family and come to work for us instead?*

*Ellinor didn't feel like explaining too much to this kid and gave a big yawn.*

*"Mr. Howard, have you finished your homework? Why do you have so much free time to ask me all these questions?"*

*Byran glared at her, "Patricia's discussing things with my brother in his office. I've got nothing to do; why can't I come chat with you?"*

*Ellinor chuckled and nodded, "I guess there's no problem. This is your family's company and you can do whatever you want."*

*Byran felt that she was being dismissive, which pissed him off and made him grit his teeth.*

*"Ellinor!"*

*Ellinor was still absentmindedly playing her game. "Okay, Mr. Howard, spit it out. I'm all ears"*

*Byran stood up, leaning on her desk, getting up close and personal. "What's the real reason you left the Blanchet family?"*

*Hearing this, Ellinor's hand on the mouse hesitated for a moment. She offered a small smile but didn't look up.*

*"I did what I needed to do, then I left"*

*Byran looked puzzled. "What was that?"*

*Ellinor glanced at him, "Didn't you already know? Mr. Blanchet never truly intended to marry me. He just needed me to deal with the Blanchet family elders. I carried out the mission. If I had stayed, I would have become Patricia's rival,"*

*Byran was stunned and at a loss for words as she calmly spilled the beans.*

*Just then, there was a knock on Ellinor's office door.*

*Byran's secretary, Jone, poked his head in, "Ms. Howard has left. Mr. Howard asked me to remind you to get back to your homework"*

*Byran felt a headache coming on upon hearing he had to get back to homework. He was restless.*

*"Alright, got it! You go ahead, I'll chat with Ms. Mendoza for a bit and then head back myself"*

*"Okay, Mr. Howard Jone respectfully acknowledged Byran's words, shooting Ellinor a look. He couldn't help but feel a bit miffed.*

*What was with Ellinor? Even kids weren't off-limits.*

*Once Jone was out of sight, Byran grabbed Ellinor's hand on the mouse.*

*"Ellinor, let's go! You're coming with me!"*

*"Why should I go with you? Mr. Howard didn't ask me to."*

*Ellinor was internally rejecting him, but Byran had already pulled her to her feet. She had no choice but to follow him out of the office.*

*Byran didn't have time to explain. He rushed her into the closing elevator, finally letting out a sigh of relief.*

*Thankfully, they made it to the elevator and there was no one else inside.*

*Ellinor shook off his hand, "Byran, what's your deal? Why are you dragging me around?"*

*Byran admitted, "I don't want to go back to homework. I can't solve a single problem. I'll definitely get chewed out by my brother."*

*Ellinor gave him a bitter smile and said, "Then just take off on your own. Why drag me into it?"*

*Byran justified himself, "Because I didn't bring any money. If I leave, I can't afford a cab ride home!"*

*Ellinor was speechless.*

*"Mr. Howard, consider others' feelings! You've made me miss work for no reason. Do you want me to get chewed out by your brother too?"*

*Byran scoffed, "Ellinor, cut the crap! I know you didn't come to the Howard family to work, so what does it matter if you miss a day?"*

*Ellinor paused, surprised at Byran's insight. He was onto something.*

*Byran turned to her with an intense gaze that suggested that he was no fool and that nothing could be kept from him. "Tell me! Are you eyeing Balfour again?"*

*Chapter 570*

*Ellinor fell silent*

*She may have overestimated his intelligence.*

*The elevator arrived at the first floor and the doors slowly opened.*

*Ellinor reached out to press the floor button again, planning to go back upstairs by herself, and calmly said to Byran, "Go back on your own."*

*Byran intended to leave, but not alone. He pulled her out of the elevator.*

*Ellinor was dragged out by him again and she frowned in annoyance, "Can you stop disrupting my work?"*

*Byran was indifferent, "Didn't you just say you finished your work? Why are you so eager to go back?"*

*Ellinor rolled her eyes, "I'm not the same as you. You're an aristocrat, but I'm a worker. If I leave without permission, my wages will be deducted. Do you understand?"*

*Byran's aristocratic attitude kicked in, "How much will be deducted? I'll double it and compensate you later! Anyway, you can't go back now; hang out with me for a while!"*

*With that, Byran took Ellinor's arm and dragged her out of the Howard Group building without any room for resistance. Ellinor was left speechless.*

*After leaving the Howard Group, Byran took Ellinor to a taxi and went straight to a famous antique shop in the city center. Upon arriving, Ellinor looked at the antiques in the shop, a bit surprised at Byran.*

*"Didn't expect you, a young student, to be interested in these old things?"*

*Byran was seriously selecting antiques on the shelf, "It's not me who likes them. I'm picking a birthday gift for my grandfather"*

*Ellinor raised an eyebrow in boredom,*

*"If you want to buy a gift for your grandfather, just pick it yourself. Why did you drag me here?"*

*While Byran held a pair of walnuts in his hand and tried to feel them, he shamelessly said, "Because I'm broke, so I brought you here to help me pay." Ellinor was dumbfounded.*

*Ellinor's gaze at him instantly changed, "Mr. Howard, have you no decency? I work to earn money at your place, and you want me to help you pay for your purchases?"*

*Byran said, "I can't help it. Balfour has stopped all my credit cards and won't let Patricia give me money.*

*But my grandfather's birthday is tomorrow. We all have to go to celebrate with him. My grandparents have always been very good to me and I don't want to go empty handed.*

*Ellinor, can you pay for me? I'll definitely pay you back!*

*Ellinor picked up a small wooden horse carved from rosewood on the shelf and asked him thoughtfully, "Your grandparents... are they your mother's parents?"*

*Byran's expression was a bit complicated and he shook his head, "Strictly speaking, they are not my grandparents, but Balfour's. They have no blood relation to me and Patricia.*

*As you know, our grandparents have been dead for many years."*

*Upon hearing this, Ellinor frowned.*

*Based on some past events she understood, his mother was treated unfairly by the Howard family and was forced to leave.*

*Normally, in such a scenario, there should be a deep conflict between his mother's family and the Howard family. But they seemed to get along well, and the Howard family even participated in their birthday celebrations.*

*Could it be that his mother was also overlooked in her own family?*