

## The Kiss 871

### Chapter 871

Ellinor cocked an eyebrow, "Theo, Rome wasn't built in a day ya know. Your sister turned out this way because you and your folks spoiled her silly when she was a kid. You can't just kick her to the curb. Maybe you should have some patience, go a few rounds with her, and let her figure things out so she can change on her own."

Theo froze a bit. Ellinor always knew how to look out for him.

He was tough on Veronica, but deep down, he couldn't bear to really kick her out.

Where would she go? Back to her flirtatious mom? She'd just get worse!

Veronica might be his half-sister, but she was his only sister and she meant something to him.

Back when he was swamped with work, he didn't have time to discipline her. Since she was feeling lonely at home, he'd try to fulfill all her whims.

As she grew older, Veronica's flaws started to show. She was lazy and arrogant, no one at school wanted to be friends with her.

She had been a real pain in the neck for him all these years.

Theo gently pinched Ellinor's cheek. "You act like a little devil but you're always so sensible that it's heartbreaking."

Ellinor rolled her eyes. "Shoo, shoo! I'm making noodles, don't bug me!"

With that, she wriggled out of his grip, turned around, and started to cook.

Theo, however, wrapped his arms around her waist from behind. "What noodles?"

Ellinor frowned. "Obviously the noodles you're gonna eat! Theo, did you forget you haven't eaten yet?"

"I'm not hungry. I'll eat later, let me

aste of you first."

As he spoke, he took the bowl of egg mixture from her and placed it to the side. He twisted her around, held her close, and kissed her gently.

"Theo stop!"

Sometimes Ellinor really couldn't handle this kissing obsession. She had to question it.

She just wanted to make him some noodles, why was it so hard?

Only after a long while did Theo let her go, but her legs were already weak.

To prevent him from making any more mo

Ellinor shooed him away.

'Theo, go wait outside! Don't bother me here! I can't work with you around'

He smiled. "Why can't you work? Is it because you're too nervous with me here?"

Ellinor rolled her eyes, "Isn't it because you can't keep your hands to yourself? Go, go, go! Get out! Or I won't let you eat when I'm done cooking Theo stopped teasing her "Alright, alright, I'm going. Be careful, don't burn yourself \*

"Yeah, yeah, whatever

With that, Theo left.

Finally Ellinor could breathe a sigh of relief and concentrate on making noodles for him.

Just as the noodles were almost done, her phone rang. It was a call from Chase

Ellinor answered "Chase, what's up?"

Chase's voice was serious. "Ellinor, I just received some news. Someone's been digging around in the village where you grew up "

Ellinor's brows furrowed, "Digging into my past? Who?"

Chase replied, "Our sources confirm that it's someone sent by the Howard family"

Ellinor squinted thoughtfully "How far have they gotten?"

Chapter 872

Ellinor placed the cooked noodles in front of Theo

Theo was casually sitting at the table, aimlessly scrolling through his phone.

After seeing the bowl of noodles placed in front of him, he put down his phone and looked up. "That was quick, wasn't it?"

Ellinor untied her apron and sat down beside him. 'It would've been quicker if you hadn't been causing a ruckus. Now eat up!TM

Theo smirked slightly as he picked up his utensils and stirred the noodles, taking a leisurely bite before saying. "This is really good, but you don't have to cook for me That's what the help is for

Ellinor raised an eyebrow, "What? You don't like my cooking?"

She pinched her cheek. You're taking it too seriously for

insult. I'm just warning you'll tire yourself out."

Ellinor pouted as her face was being squished. Cooking a bowl of noodles isn't exactly hard work

Theo's expression turned serious, frowning now you should be taking it easy"

Ellinor lazily watched him eat. "Are you excited to be a dad?"

"Sort of"

“What do you mean sort of? Either

He finished his meal quickly

arent! So, are you?”

4

Theo put down his utensils.

Ellinor paused, then burst into laught

He took a big gulp of water put

“You think I’m childi 7 | m

alone time. But since the bat

and then replied. I cant wat to be out child’s father But once the baby comes, I’ll have to share you with them. I don’t want

it s our own child”

You’re already jealous of our unborn baby””

and lo

her senously.

- stood up, cupped hit

Ellinor found his earner promise to treat you both i

Theo wrapped his arms around

Ellinor blushed understanding his implications.

I’m a healthy man, of course, I have certain

Ellinor’s body softened, feeling electrified. But

might see

now it’s important to enjoy our time together before having a baby If possible. Id love to extend our gladly welcome them with you.

ne face, and reassured him. Don’t worry having a baby wont make you any less important. I

ing her onto his lap, and whispered into her ear. “But because of this baby every night is a real struggle for me”

not again!

pag! If I knew this, I wouldn’t have fed you

shing against her skin with his lips, stealing kisses from her earlobe to her lips

some sense they were in the dining room downstairs, and they couldn't do anything there, the household staff

Theo might not mind the embarrassment, but she certainly did

So, Ellinor turned her face away. "Theo, you just finished eating and you haven't brushed your teeth yet"

Theo's breath was hot and heavy as he held her chin and turned her face back to his

His brows were furrowed, his eyes were hazy, and his voice was husky. Are you disgusted by me

As he said this, his nose brushed against hers.

Ellinor was in a complete fluster Theo was bewitching her. If I was disgusted by you, I wouldn't be with you!"

Chapter 873

She was all over the guy She threw herself at him and planted a big sloppy kiss on his lips

Theo was wearing nothing but a bathrobe When she straddled him, his robe fell open, revealing his chiseled chest. Ellinor

heart went into overdrive,

He was clearly enjoying Ellinor's boldness. A grin spread across his face before he took control of the kiss as if he wanted to devour her slowly. When things started to heat up, Ellinor clung to his arm as tears began clouding her eyes Looking at him, she whispered, "How about we head to the bedroom?"

He let out a low, husky hum from deep in his throat before lifting her up. As he planted kisses on her lips, he headed upstairs.

He kicked the door open and laid her down on the bed. He shrugged off his bathrobe and moved closer to her

Ellinor seemed to come back to reality for a moment and tried to get up. "Theo, I haven't showered yet..."

He pushed her back down on the bed, 'No rush, I'll take you in a bit."

Ellinor's ears turned red, 'Theo..."

Theo kissed her lips, At this moment you should call me something I like"

Ellinor saw an intense desire in his eyes and realized that she might be in for a tough night. Trying to get out of it, she obediently pleaded, "Honey. I'm so tired. Can we not..." The word 'honey tickled him, "Mm, if you're tired, just lie there. I'll take care of the rest"

Ellinor was at a loss for words.

She should've known better than to negotiate with a man in bed

His hands explored every inch of her body. His touch was like electricity, melting away her last shred of sanity.

She had no idea what time they finally fell asleep. When she woke up in the morning he was gone.

Ellinor felt like a wet noodle she was not at all in the mood to get up. She reached out for her phone on the bedside table

After unlocking it, she saw a message from Then. Tve already given you a bath, so don't shower again in the morning. Get up when you're rested, wash up, and eat."

Ellinor blushed as she thought about how hed taken her to the shower when she'd passed out from exhaustion the night before. She sent him a disgusted emoji, then pushed the phone away, intending to go back to sleep.

But her plans were thwarted by a loud knock on the door.

"Ellinor get up!" It was Veronica banging on the door

She was still groggy and feeling grumpy

Ellinor rolled over in bed but eventually got up. She pulled on a loose dress from her closet and went to open the door for Veronica

"What do you need this early in the morning?" Ellinor yawned, looking disinterested.

After seeing her still half asleep. Veronica rolled her eyes in annoyance, thrusting her workbook in Ellinor's face

Chapter 874

I've done my part, now it's time for you to keep your promise and go buy me ten Hermes bags!"

Ellinor flipped through the workbook a bit and verified that all the answers were correct, 'How can you prove that you did this yourself?"

Veronica frowned a little unhappily. "How else do you want me to prove it? I wrote all the answers, you can compare them with my other books!"

Ellinor chuckled softly. Tim not asking if you wrote these answers yourself. I'm asking if you calculated these answers yourself? Did you cheat?"

Veronica blinked uncomfortably. "Who cheated? I was alone in my room answering this workbook yesterday, even if I wanted to cheat, there's nobody for me to copy from!"

Ellinor scoffed lightly "Even if there's nobody to copy from, you could still search for answers online."

Veronica turned her face away guillily, no longer looking at Ellinor, "What internet? I don't have a computer in my room!"

"No computer, but you've got a smartphone."

"Ellinor! Are you trying to break your promise?"

Ellinor slapped the workbook onto Veronica, "I wouldn't do such a thing as long as you can prove you worked these problems out yourself, I'll take you to the Hermes store night now, so you can pick any bag you want!"

Veronica was very tempted. "How do you want me to prove it to you?"

Ellinor said 'Give me your phone, I'll hold on to it for the time being Go get another workbook, redo it in front of me, let me check it when you're done, get half of it right, and you win.'

Veronica hesitated, and her eyebrows knitted together. "This is you breaking your promise, I've already finished, yet you want me to redo it?"

Ellinor laughed. "If you were confident in getting half right, you wouldn't be here arguing with me and you'd be doing it already'

Veronica had no other option, 'Final Redo it is! Just wait, I'll go get one!

With a huff, Veronica grabbed another workbook and came back, triumphly asking, "Where should I write?"

Ellinor let her into the room and pointed towards the sofa in the bedroom, "Give me your phone, you sit there and write

Veronica reluctantly pulled out her phone, warning Ellinor beforehand, "You can't look through my phone without permission!"

Ellinor was indifferent, "Relax, if I take a peek, I'm not human."

Veronica snorted, 'You're not human in the first place'

Ellinor didn't want to argue with her, so she took the phone and went to wash up.

When she came out after washing up Ellinor saw Veronica scratching her head while looking at the workbook. Veronica must have encountered a difficult problem.

Then someone knocked on the door and she went over to open it.

Devin was standing outside the door, bowing slightly with a worried face, Ellinor, I heard Ms. Blanchet is bathering you again."

Ellinor waved her hand, "It's okay, she's doing homework here."

Homework?

Devin thought he had misheard. Following Ellinor's direction, he really saw Ms. Blanchet sitting in Mr. Blanchet and Ellinor's room, doing questions. It was truly unbelievable.

Chapter 875

Ellinor whispered to Devin, "Don't sweat it, she won't cause me too much trouble. Devin, can you get breakfast delivered to my room? I need to keep an eye on Ms. Blanchet's homework."

Devin nodded, "No problem, I'll have breakfast sent up right away. If Ms. Blanchet gives you any more trouble, you know where to find me!

Ellinor flashed an OK sign, then shoed Devin out and closed the door.

Veronica hadn't made much progress on her exercises, even after Ellinor finished her breakfast.

Ellinor didn't rush her, she just sat quietly on the side scrolling through her phone

It was noon, and Veronica finally finished the last page of the workbook and handed it to Ellinor

"I'm done! Now let's see what excuses you've got!! Veronica said

Ellinor put down her phone, took the workbook, and started checking. As she flipped through the pages, she suddenly burst into laughter.

Veronica felt uncomfortable She frowned and asked "Why are you laughing?"

Ellinor shook her head and said. Ms Blanchet. I think I overestimated you"

Veronica was slightly pissed off. What are you trying to say? Speak up?"

Ellinor put the work book on the table and said I should've bought you a third-grade workbook, not a fifth-grade one'

Veronica was taken aback, then she immediately got angry. Ellinor! Are you saying I'm at a third-grader's level?"

Ellinor stroked her chin as she looked at Veronica's answers. "Maybe not even third grade, more like second. You spent all morning on this and didn't get a single question right You don't even know the basics of elementary school Ms Blanchet, what were you doing when you were in school?"

Veronica was fuming "Just cause you said I got them wrong, doesn't mean I got them wrong. I think you're just trying to weasel out of your promise. If you didn't want to buy me the Hermes bags, you shouldn't have promised!

Ellinor calmly said. If you don't believe me, we can send this workbook to your college classmates to correct

Veronica was very conscious of her dignity, there was no way she would agree to this, "Ellinor you

Ellinor calmly handed her a tablet. If you don't want to embarrass yourself in front of your classmates, then learn what's in here.

Veronica was confused What's in here?"

"This is a course I downloaded After you finish the course, redo these questions. If you can get half of them right, my offer for the ten Hermes bags still stands."

"Ellinor, are you teaching me a lesson? Veronica asked

Ellinor raised an eyebrow, I'm teaching you how to do exercises. But if you don't want me to teach you, I can call your brother and have him come teach you: Though, if your brother finds out how bad you are at elementary school knowledge, he might get pretty angry"

Veronica was annoyed, she definitely didn't want Theo to come back and teach her

Knowing that Ellinor would really rat her out to Theo, Veronica begrudgingly took the tablet

She put on the headphones and started listening to the elementary school course

When Veronica was a kid, she just went to school to play. Because of her family background, the school teachers didn't dare discipline her

So, her educational foundation was poor, her academic performance was terrible, and she only got into middle school and university because of her family connections

She didn't think there was anything wrong with poor academic performance She thought she didn't need to learn those things. She believed she didn't need to work of support herself when she grew up.

Because there was plenty of money at home for her to splurge, she thought studying those useless things was a waste of her time and energy

Ellinor was actually making her relearn the things she considered useless, it was utterly incomprehensible.

After being forced to listen to an hour of the course, Veronica picked up the workbook again, erased the wrong answers, and rewrote them.

## Chapter 876

She presently meaning the whole word that he even ek pjd kanch

Fally the toased the completed work on Ellinor's desa, "Crane, here you got hiped

and chuching lightly as ad pase ingred You gati tuna ripar

Veroreca full a ime awkward How did she only manage to get ten question night after attending the whole lecture? How emba ra ss ing

Tim starving I need food

Unate to hold her had high in fort of Elanor, whom the dasked, Vamos chose to escape, standing up to leave immediately

"Hold on Florale qely

Verona stopped in her thick, tumang patiently. You can even let me grab a bite to eat? You want me to starve to death or what?

For casually put down fra ankboca, standing up to put on her cost, Let's go eat out together I'm famished too

Verreza was taken aback Ellinor was miting her to eat out? What was the catch?

"Hat As get out with you can dest with the awkwardness"

Elinor did seem to mand, and she put on her cost, Tm also planning on getting you a bag from Hermes, are you still not coming?

Veronica's eyes widened in surprise, she bought she heard wrong. "What did you say?

Elinor ached an eyebrow, "Hot interested?"



Veronica was a little confused about Ellinor's intentions, "Of course I am. But I didn't get half of the questions right"

Get half right and buy ten, get ten right and I can get you one to start with"

Veronica's eyes started to sparkle, "You're not messing with me"

Ellinor took a gold card out of her pocket and held it between her two slender fingers, "I've got my credit card, so what's it gonna be?"

Veronica didn't hesitate, "I'm in. Just wait a minute! I'll be right back after changing"

With that, she darted back to her room to change

Ellinor let out a bored yawn as she watched Veronica's excited behavior. Sometimes she envied people who could feel extremely happy by just getting something materialistic.

Material things were tangible dreams that could be achieved by working hard to earn money to buy them.

She was never really interested in material possessions. What she yearned for were abstract spiritual pursuits, which were hard to grasp since it was even harder to find spiritual satisfaction. Devin was surprised and happy when he found out the two incompatible women were going out for a meal and shopping, and he arranged for a driver to take them to the mall.

In the car, Veronica was humming excitedly while browsing the latest handbag styles on her phone.

Ellinor was quietly looking at the view outside the car window, lost in thought

Veronica handed her phone to Ellinor, "Ellinor, which color do you think is nicer?"

Ellinor glanced down, "The one on the left"

Veronica also preferred the one on the left, "Didn't expect you, a country bumpkin, to have good taste"

Ever since Ellinor first entered the Blanchet family, Veronica had been calling her a 'country bumpkin'. She was used to it, didn't take it to heart, and didn't get angry anymore.

## Chapter 877

Veronica suddenly got curious and asked, "Ellinor, you now have free rein over my brother's credit card. Why don't you spoil yourself a bit?"

Ellinor replied, "I don't need anything. There's nothing I want to buy"

Veronica crinkled her brow and scornfully eyed Ellinor's simple attire.

Sure, Ellinor was a stunner, and even basic clothes couldn't hide her beauty, but without designer labels, she just looked... ordinary

Who said you don't need anything? I think you should chuck those clothes and get a whole new wardrobe! Ellinor, you're part of the Blanchet family now, so you should step up your style game. You don't want to embarrass my brother, do you?"

Ellinor looked at her with a subtle expression in her eyes.

Realizing what she had just said, Veronica awkwardly coughed and said, "Don't get me wrong! I'm not admitting that you're part of the Blanchet family, accepting you, or anything like that. It's just that my brother is head over heels for you and insists on keeping you around, so I thought you should up your fashion game. I'm thinking about my brother! He's high and mighty, he can't have a woman by his side who looks like she shops at thrift stores!"

Ellinor smiled, "Thanks for the advice, but your brother doesn't care what I wear, and I'm not interested in those things. But don't worry, I'll dress up for formal occasions to accompany him. Casual days, not so much."

Veronica rolled her eyes, "I see you have bigger ambitions and don't even want to spend petty cash. You just want to completely bewitch my brother, get all his money, and then control the Blanchet family's"

assets

Ellinor smiled slightly, "If what you say is true, then I must be very skilled. Ms. Blanchet, if you're so capable, why don't you find a man who's willing to hand over all his assets to you?"

Veronica rolled her eyes again while crossing her arms, "I'm not as cunning as you!"

They arrived at a large shopping mall and walked into the Hermès flagship store.

While Veronica excitedly picked out bags, Ellinor sat in the waiting area sipping coffee.

"Ellinor."

Before long, Ellinor heard someone call her name. It was a man's gentle and warm voice.

She turned her head and saw Bartlett Rex walking over, arm in arm with an elegant girl.

Bartlett greeted her with a big grin, "I knew it was you, Ellinor! I thought I was seeing things when I first came in.",

"Well, what a coincidence." Ellinor nodded without getting up, still cradling her coffee.

Bartlett softly told the girl next to him, "You go take a look over there and pick a few you like. I'm going to chat with a friend here."

The girl seemed reluctant to leave. She gave Ellinor a wary look, nodded, and went on her way to check out the bags.

Once the girl was gone, Bartlett sat down on the sofa next to Ellinor.

"Ellinor, are you here alone to buy a bag? Theo didn't come with you?"

Ellinor responded, "I'm not planning on buying anything. I'm here with Veronica. She's in there picking something out. I'm just waiting for her."

Bartlett squinted slightly. "You're really nice for taking Veronica bag shopping."

Ellinor didn't bite at his sarcasm; instead, she asked, "Is that your girlfriend?"

Without hesitation, Bartlett said, "No."

Ellinor arched an eyebrow, "She's not your girlfriend, but you brought her shopping for bags? Oh, I see, for rich folks like you, buying a bag for a girl is no big deal." Bartlett gave a helpless smile, "No, she's not. She's a blind date set up by my family. I was worried about it. Ellinor, since you're here, can you do me a favor?"

"Hmm? Do what for you?"

## Chapter 878

Bartlett leaned in with his handsome face, "Help me shake off this blind date without offending her family"

Elinor frowned, not hiding the displeasure in her eyes. "If you think she's not suitable, just tell her directly so nobody's wasting time! Why are you pretending to be all gentlemanly? You're bringing her to buy bags and making her think you like her too

Bartlett shrugged 1 did tell her, but she insists that feelings can be developed over time. We've eaten and seen a movie, I really have no idea what else to do with her. I offered to take her home, but she refused, so here I am dragged along on her shopping spree. Ellinor, you're always the smart one, can you help me out?

Elinor took a sip of her coffee, surveying Bartlett, who had a hint of worry in his eyes.

With Bartlett's good looks and privileged background, it was hard for girls not to fall for him. If a girl set her sights on him, she was likely to hold on tight.

in their social circles, the partners their families arranged for them were always well-matched. Whether things worked out or not was not just their business, but a matter between two families.

It was not easy to handle such situations If not handled well, it could lead to grudges, making it hard to

explain to their families.

Ellinor responded lazily "Til give it a shot!"

Bartlett beamed "Thanks a lot?"

Bartlett's blind date, probably not trusting her potential beau alone with another pretty girl, came back soon after.

The girl was carrying a new bag, with two shop assistants trailing behind her with smiles.

"Bartlett, how do you think this bag looks on me?"

Bartlett looked up and nodded with his usual smile, "Hmm, it looks pretty good."

Though the girl received praise and affirmation, she could sense his indifference.

Her attention wasn't really on the bag. Her probing gaze landed on Ellinor, who was sipping coffee,

"Bartlett, what were you two talking about? Who is this lady? You didn't introduce her to me."

By rights, Bartlett should have introduced them, but a formal introduction would make it seem like he took this blind date seriously.

At that moment, his first reaction was to fear that Ellinor would get the wrong idea, so he didn't introduce her

Now that he thought about it, he was probably overthinking things.

As far as he was concerned, Ellinor wouldn't give it a second thought or care.

Mocking himself inwardly, Bartlett smiled politely and elegantly, "I forgot! Let me introduce you now.

This is my old friend, Ellinor Mendoza. Ellinor, this is the daughter of my father's friend, Floy Lewis."

The daughter of his father's friend?

Floy was a bit upset to hear Bartlett introduce her this way. She couldn't tell if she was overthinking, but she felt like Bartlett was deliberately keeping a distance from her in front of Ms. Mendoza.

"Ms. Mendoza, nice to meet you!"

Before understanding Ellinor's background, Floy greeted her amicably.

Ellinor responded with a smile, "Hmm, Ms. Lewis, nice to meet you."

Floy sat on the armrest of the couch next to Bartlett, deliberately creating an intimate atmosphere to assert her position. She then asked curiously, "Bartlett, when did you and Ms. Mendoza become

friends? I pretty much know all the girls in the Greenhaven circle, how come I've never seen Ms. Mendoza? Which family does she belong to?"

Mendoza? Which family does she belong to?"

She was clearly probing, trying to see if Ellinor's family had the qualifications to compete with her.

## Chapter 879

"She is "Bartlett opened his mouth, about to spill the beans that Ellinor was Theo's wife.

At this point, Ellinor cut him off and said to Floy, "We met when we were both sick. So, I guess you could say we're sick buddies"

"Sick buddies? Floy was taken aback.

Bartlett did not expect Ellinor's response. His eyebrows furrowed, but the corner of his mouth curled up, eager to hear what she would say next. Ellinor nodded, "Yes, we're sick buddies. We met in a group chat for people with the same illness. We were just discussing his condition"

Floy turned to Bartlett in astonishment, "You're sick? Why didn't you tell me?"

Ellinor feigned surprise, "Ah? You didn't tell her?"

Bartlett chuckled, "Yeah, I haven't had the chance to tell her yet."

Ellinor quickly apologized, "Sorry, I didn't mean to blab."

Bartlett shook his head. It's okay. She would have found out sooner or later."

Floy was confused "What kind of illness do you have? You can't keep it a secret from me!"

Before Bartlett could answer, Ellinor began to explain. "Ms. Lewis, don't worry. His illness is not serious, and it won't threaten his life. It's a rare disease that is only a little bit contagious, but as long as he takes good care of himself...

Ellinor hadn't finished her sentence when Floy jumped up at the mention of "contagious."

She grew pale, obviously recalling her previous contact with Bartlett.

Even the shop assistants unconsciously took a step back.

After seeing Floy's reaction, Ellinor reassured her. "Ms. Lewis, don't worry too much. It's not very contagious, but it's hard to cure. Once you get it, it might be with you for life.

Floy didn't know what to say. She took out her phone, typed a few words, and sent them off.

In no time, her phone rang.

She gave an awkward laugh. "Sorry, I have to take this call."

After answering the call, she spoke loudly to the person on the other end.

"What? You're all together waiting for me? Alright, I'll be there soon."

After hanging up, Floy turned back. This time, she didn't get close to Bartlett.

"Bartlett, I have to go meet my friends. They're waiting for me to go to a spa. I can't accompany you anymore."

Bartlett stood up and reached for his car keys, "No problem, I can give you a ride.

Floy laughed awkwardly and quickly declined, "No need, you don't often catch

Bartlett had no choice but to agree, "Alright, take care on your way."

"Okay, got it! I'll be going then! Ms. Mendoza, you guys carry on!"

up with your sick buddy. You guys should chat.'

With that, Floy made a quick exit from the store, as if trying to get as far away from Bartlett as possible.

The shop assistants quickly retrieved the bag that Floy had picked, treating it like a hot potato. They held it with two fingers and moved away, ready to disinfect the bag.

## Chapter 880

Bartlett didn't know whether to laugh or cry as he turned his gaze to Ellinor.

Ellinor was leisurely sipping her coffee, looking totally relaxed and chilled

Bartlett raised his eyebrows a bit, "Ellinor, if you keep doing this, I might never find a wife. Who would want to be with a guy who's supposedly terminally ill?" Ellinor just shrugged "Didn't you just ask me to help you escape from a blind date? I just solved this problem for you, and I'm not dealing with your future ones Bartlett stroked his smooth chin, grinning at her "No way! If I end up not finding a wife because of this, you're going to have to take responsibility for my marital issues" Ellinor rolled her eyes at him, "How am I supposed to do that? I'm already married"

Bartlett narrowed his eyes as his voice dropped, "That's okay, I can wait until you're divorced to take responsibility for me.

Ellinor thought he was joking, so she started laughing. "And what if I don't get a divorce?"

Bartlett laughed, his eyes gleaming with mischief, "You will."

His words were spoken with such solemnity that it was clearly not a joke.

Ellinor looked at Bartlett, raising an eyebrow, "Why?"

Bartlett had a mysterious smile on his face, "Because I know Theo. We've known each other since we were kids"

Just because he knew Thea, he was certain that Theo would leave her?

Ellinor sported "Really? If I do get divorced, you won't mind that I'm a divorcee?"

Most guys would mind being with a woman who had been divorced, especially if it was their friend's ex-

wife.

If it were any other woman, I would mind. But if it's you, I'd wish I had met you sooner."

Ellinor felt like she had just heard a cheesy pick-up line, "Ha! Mr. Rex, stop joking around, it's not funny."

Bartlett looked serious; his usual smile was gone, I'm not joking, Ellinor. If you and Theo get a divorce...."

"Ellinor can you help me choose between these two? Which one looks better?"

Veronica suddenly came over with several bags, wanting her opinion, but she frowned when she saw Bartlett sitting next to Ellinor on the couch and heard him say, "If you and Theo get divorced." Ellinor remained calm, sipped her coffee, and looked at the several bags Veronica was holding, then gave her opinion, "Hmm, both are good, but the one on the left suits you more, the colors in the middle and on the right are more mature."

At this point, Veronica didn't care which bag looked better. All her attention was focused on Bartlett, "Bartlett, how come you're here?"

Bartlett smiled slightly, "I happened to pass by, so I just dropped in."

He didn't plan to tell Veronica that he came for a blind date; that would be unnecessary.

Veronica frowned, feeling that Ellinor was attracting attention and sitting too close to another man.

She said a bit angrily. "Ellinor, come here!"

In fact, Ellinor and Bartlett were not on the same couch, but the two couches were just a bit close.

But it was the way the store arranged it, not something they moved themselves.

Ellinor didn't want to appease Veronica. So she didn't immediately go over and only asked, "What for? Just say it!"

Veronica just wanted Ellinor to come over and keep a distance from Bartlett, but Ellinor stayed put, which made her even angrier!

Since Ellinor wouldn't come, Veronica raised the bag in her left hand and said furiously, "I'll take this one!\*