

Unfinished 171

Chapter 171

Olivia's studio was officially open for business today. Therefore, she put on a traditional-looking red designer gown in hopes that it would bring out her curves.

Just as she stepped out of her house, she noticed Eugene standing at the entrance. He was dressed in formal wear as usual but looked slightly different. For example, he chose to wear a red tie as if he wanted to match her attire. Even the diamond cufflinks on his cuffs looked formal.

After scanning his appearance, she belatedly realized that she knew a lot about him. How did she even notice the color of his tie and the style of his cufflinks? He had been lying low for a few days, which made her believe that he decided to ignore her after her rejection. However, she was not used to his absence during that time. Smiling, she greeted him, "Morning!"

Eugene replied, "Good morning. You must be very busy these days."

She replied with the same smile, "It's not too bad. I have help."

He nodded. "Alright. Let's go." In fact, he had been waiting at the spot for some time. After his official confession of love to her, they did not have many opportunities to talk. He was worried that she might feel awkward and stop coming around for a few days. Thankfully, he had a solid excuse today to meet her.

"Uncle Eugene!" North looked up at him with a smile and greeted him.

The man grunted a reply and reached out to caress the kid's hair. The little fellow was dressed in a dark-colored suit with a red bow tie at the collar, looking cooler than anyone else.

After leaving the house, Eugene told Olivia that she should not be driving because, as the host, she might need to drink. With that, he successfully persuaded her to enter his car. In the same space, he felt an illusion of a family of three on a road trip.

North was excited about the journey. His round and dark eyes darted between Eugene, the driver, and his mom with an unexplainable enthusiasm.

“Mommy, when the school break is here, let’s go on a trip.”

Olivia nodded. “Sure. Where do you want to go?”

“When it’s school break, I want to go skiing.”

“Okay.”

“Uncle Eugene needs to come with us.”

Olivia reflexively stole a glance at Eugene. His deep gaze was fixated on the roads in front, his thick lashes occasionally fluttering. His thin lips were tightly pursed, and the rugged lines of his jaw perfected his side profile. To be honest, she had always thought he was handsome, and he treated her very well too. She was thinking a lot about Kate’s words, but she did not have the courage to add her burden to him. It was impossible for a woman like her, who grew up deprived of love, to bring him happiness. Or so she thought. “Uncle Eugene is busy.”

Eugene had been observing her expression from the rear-view mirror, her face cold and stern. He was confused as to why she looked unhappy even after he had left her alone for days. “I have time,” he chimed in.

Olivia was taken aback. “Huh?”

“When you want to go on the trip, just let me know. I have time,” he patiently elaborated.

North’s eyes were smiling, admiring his dad for being smart and sensible. “Uncle Eugene, you must keep your promise.”

Eugene met North's eyes via the mirror and winked at the little boy, feeling grateful for the tiny cupid. He calmly promised, "I will not go against my promise."

Olivia was speechless at their interaction. At that moment, she wanted to renege on her promise to take her son on a trip.

"Mommy, look!" North suddenly pointed at a huge billboard outside the car window, on which a sentence was printed. It read: Congratulations on the grand opening of Olivia Maxwell's studio!

She stared agape at the billboard for some time and racked her brains only to confirm that she had never placed any ads on the billboards. When they cruised down the road, they saw even more billboards that were similar to the first one. It seemed that the billboards in the entire city were displaying the same video clip. The clip displayed the new studio's interior and went on to showcase an assortment of clothes, ending with the congratulatory sentence.

Chapter 172

Olivia was stunned by the outlandish display. The first thing that flashed across her mind was the amount needed to place the ads. Because she would only be running a small studio, so she wondered if her profits could cover the expenses.

Not only that, she was annoyed at the idiot who splurged on the ads, fearing that he or she would come asking for advertising costs.

At that moment, the idiot in front of her opened his mouth, saying, "Looks like the studio's items are going to sell out soon!"

Upon hearing that, she seemed to have guessed the identity of the troublemaker. "Eugene, is this all your doing?"

"What?"

"The ads?"

Eugene responded, "Yeah, why? Do you like it? If not, I can get the supplier to change it."

Olivia sweated in frustration. It's him indeed! She was at a loss for words out of rage. "Y-You! Were you worried that my clothes wouldn't sell?"

"Of course not! You're the world-renowned fashion designer, Angel!"

Olivia breathed deeply. "Why did you waste money on the ads then?" What the heck? How does he expect me to return the favor?

"Well..." He paused. "I didn't know how else to help you."

His reply effectively blocked all her impending barrage of indignant scolding. She kept everything to herself as she could not bring herself to reprimand him. In the end, she said dryly, "We're running a business for profits. There's no need to waste money."

He met her eyes from the rear-view mirror and flashed a vague smile at her, giving her an obedient response, "Okay, anything for you."

Olivia was speechless and confused by what he planned to do.

Staring at him, she declared preemptively, "You should get the ads taken down right now. I'm making it clear that I won't pay the expenses back to you."

Eugene chuckled and felt as if there was a distance between them once more. "There's no need to pay back. After all, I'm one of the shareholders, so it's fine for me to do some marketing for our studio."

His remark got her again, and she thought his explanation made sense.

At the studio, the employees were already there, getting prepared for the opening. When they saw Olivia looking like a family with Eugene and North, they smiled and greeted, "Miss Olivia, Mr. Nolan."

Olivia smiled at them. "Is everyone ready? It might be busy today."

The ten employees replied at the same time, "We're ready."

"Miss Olivia, I saw the ads for our studio. They're so cool," Sophia giggled and praised, to which Olivia replied with an awkward smile and a vague response.

It was only nine in the morning, but more and more guests were pouring in. Brian was the first to arrive, followed by a few cars that were carrying some flower arrangements in baskets.

The moment the cars were parked, staff from the florist moved the flower baskets into the studio. There were too many of the flower baskets that the five of them had to spend ten minutes just on moving the baskets into the studio.

Olivia was speechless again at the sight. She thought that Eugene was quite abnormal for putting up the extravagant ads but at least he could explain it as a contribution from a stakeholder.

But! What on earth is Brian McCarthy doing?! Weren't the numerous flower baskets a waste of money and space, not to mention a trouble for the cleaners? What were all these men thinking?

"Congratulations, Olivia. All the best for your opening."

Speechless, she could only remark, "If I had known that you'd send these flower baskets over, I would have exchanged them for cash at the florist. That amount would have paid for half of my annual expenses."

Brian smiled warmly at her. "I didn't know what else to buy you."

Olivia chided him, "You should have provided me with free hotel stays. Why did you waste the money on flowers? What a waste!"

“It’s not that expensive.”

Finally, she flashed a frustrated smile at him. “Come in now. Take a seat.”

Once Brian entered the studio, Nathan and Melanie arrived at the site. When they saw the rows of flower baskets at the entrance, Nathan’s tiny eyes immediately bulged in surprise, and he secretly exclaimed his shock.

Chapter 173

“That’s too many flower baskets! Are these from the same sender? Who’s that rich to send this amount of flower baskets?”

Not knowing how to respond to Nathan, Olivia stared at his two flower baskets, which was typical of his style. Well, being thrifty wasn’t a bad thing.

“It’s Brian.”

Upon hearing that, Nathan felt a little embarrassed at his gift. If this were under normal circumstances, two flower baskets would have sufficed as a congratulatory gesture—those were only for good luck. However, the two flower baskets looked a little out of place among the larger baskets brought over by Brian.

What the heck? If only he knew about Brian’s flower baskets, he would have listened to the florist’s advice and bought Olivia a horseshoe as a good luck charm.

The sight of the two flower baskets by Nathan was overshadowed in a corner, looking sad and pitiful.

Melanie’s expression froze as well upon seeing the sea of flower baskets. Her gaze toward Nathan betrayed her disdain for her man.

The switch in her gaze happened over a second, causing Olivia to doubt her own eyes.

When Nathan looked at Melanie, she hurriedly smiled at him and gripped his arm tighter, appearing like a loving couple.

Nathan was fast to adjust to the situation. He could not do anything to save his dignity, so he decided to ignore it and chuckled, "Olivia, this is not much, but it's my sincerity. I wish you all the best for your opening."

Olivia could not help but tease him, "Thank god you didn't buy a lot. I wouldn't have had the space for it anyway."

Melanie smiled sweetly. "Olivia, congratulations! Everyone around me is talented, unlike me. I'm not good at anything."

Olivia comforted her, "That's alright. You still have Nathan. Anything that you can't settle will be his work."

Melanie took another look at Nathan with a loving expression. Feeling giddy from being praised, Nathan looked at Melanie with his chest puffed. "You're tired, aren't you? Let's get in."

She nodded at him.

As the host, Olivia quickly invited them in, "Yeah, just get into the studio. There are places to rest in there. After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, we will head to the hotel."

When the couple entered the studio, Olivia turned around to greet the incoming guests at the entrance.

Suddenly, a jacket with some warmth was draped across her shoulders. She looked up to find Eugene's familiar face staring at her. "It's a little cold. Put this on."

Feeling grateful toward his care, she clutched at the jacket and thanked him. "You should head in."

He curtly replied, "It's fine."

Peering down at her eight-inch heels, he asked, "Are you tired? Take a rest. Since I'm a stakeholder, I can take over."

Olivia smiled at him. "It's fine. I'm used to wearing heels."

He didn't say anything more because he only wanted to hang out with her. If so, they'd both remain outside the studio.

At the same time, a fleet of cars approached the studio. The leading car was a black Maybach, which rolled to a stop at the entrance.

Everyone at the site was gossiping. "Are those cars coming for the opening ceremony?"

"Who's that? Looks like someone influential."

"Look, look, isn't that Gillian Thompson? Jean Ford is here too. Oh my god, the superstars are showing up!"

"Yeah, Abby Elliot and Ruth Paxton are here."

"Wow, Olivia sure is well-connected."

During the commotion, the car door was opened, and Marcus Cohen's face appeared. Olivia immediately went up to him. "Marcus!"

He smiled at her. "Olivia, congratulations. Best of luck with your opening!"

“Thanks, Marcus.”

Then, he shifted his gaze to Eugene and greeted him with a surprised smile. “President Nolan, I didn’t know you’d be here too.”

Eugene flashed a faint smile. “I’m a stakeholder of the studio after all.”

Marcus gave a meaningful response, “Oh, so you’re a stakeholder? If so, congratulations to you as well!”

Chapter 174

Eugene replied to him politely, “Thank you, please come in!”

Instead of moving into the studio, Marcus stood on the spot and turned to look at the superstars who were filling in. “Olivia, they came here for your reputation. Just give them a discount.”

Olivia knew very well that the superstars did not come here for her. Perhaps Marcus asked them to come, which they obliged to. Anyway, she smiled at them and agreed, “That’s not a problem. If Marcus says so, I will offer him a family discount. Ladies, please take a look around. For you, everything is 12% percent off.”

Upon hearing that, the women showed excited reactions. “Thank you, Olivia!”

Across the street, Anna’s fashion studio was unusually lonely. She stood at the display window and observed the cars driving over to Olivia’s studio, which had piles of flower baskets at the entrance. Olivia even put up ads on the billboards around the city as if she was worried that no one would notice her opening ceremony.

What a show-off! The more she shows off, the sooner bad luck befalls her! Anna thought to herself with resentment.

Sarah stood beside her with envy in her eyes. Ever since Anna was exposed for plagiarising at the competition, her studio lost a lot of business, and all employees left except for Sarah. All of a sudden, she tugged at Anna.

“Miss Anna, they’re wearing items from Olivia’s studio, right? Just now, I saw Gillian Thompson arriving in a different outfit. She must have changed.”

Following Sarah’s gaze, Anna noticed that not only Gillian Thompson changed her outfit. Jean Ford, Abby Elliot, and Ruth Paxton, the stars she was familiar with, had changed into outfits from Olivia’s studio as if they were promoting the designer for free.

I hate this! I hate this so much!

Anna’s fingernails dug into the flesh of her palm in envy, but she did not feel the pain at all. Dealing with the divorce request from Hugo Gray, her son’s alienation from her, and the cold reception from her doting father, Anna lost both her reputation and her family. On top of that, her only studio was about to shut down.

As for Olivia, she looked merry, swimming around different men, her career and her relationships looking bright and promising. In Summer City, most residents must have heard of Olivia Maxwell.

Anna was really skeptical as to why did the men around Olivia not bat an eye about her past? Didn’t they find it disgusting that she had slept with a beggar underneath Jordan Bridge?

Why would they please her one after another?

Oh, right! Perhaps they were totally in the dark about Olivia’s past!

At the thought of that, a cruel smile appeared on Anna’s face. She thought that she should give things a push.

On the other side, Olivia was stunned by the sight of the superstars dressed in her designs.

“Olivia, how is it? Isn’t my marketing idea brilliant?” Marcus beamed at her, to which she replied with a nod and a smile. “Yeah. Thank you, everyone.”

Eugene lifted a brow in amusement because he wasn’t expecting a stroke of genius from Marcus. Indeed, the power of superstars was the best marketing.

Eugene’s ads shocked the entire Summer City, but Marcus’s ad was directed at a targeted audience.

Clad in Olivia’s outfits, the superstars started to do a catwalk at the entrance of the studio, which successfully attracted a lot of attention from passersby.

Suddenly, another car approached the studio and rolled to a stop at the entrance.

This time, Eugene and Olivia exchanged a glance because this was a van, which looked nothing like what a guest would ride. The van driver hopped off and asked, “Who’s Olivia Maxwell?”

She went up to him. “I am.”

The driver grunted and handed her a pen in a professional manner. “Please sign this.”

She took the pen and signed while asking, “What’s that?”

The driver answered, “A money tree.”

Astonished, Olivia gasped, “A money tree? Where is it from?”

“I don’t know either. I’m just a delivery man. Isn’t the sender address written on the delivery slip?”

The driver didn't care and called his coworkers down from the van, after which the group of men shuffled to the back of the vehicle. Olivia's lips quivered uncontrollably when she imagined the size of the money tree that needed to be carried down by six to seven men.

Out of curiosity, she followed behind the delivery workers to peek.

Aside from her, all the guests at the studio were busy peeking into the van, curious to see the enormous gift that needed to be moved by a group of men.

When Olivia finally landed her eyes on the money tree, she couldn't stand it anymore.

Wait! This ain't no money tree! No, technically, it's a money tree.

The 'tree' was a gigantic safe that measured 1.8 meters in height and 1.2 meters in width. One side of the cube was made of glass to show the contents. A money tree was placed in the case, and it was not an average plant. It was literally a money tree with heart decor, gold coins, and diamonds hanging on its branches. She only needed to take one look at it to feel dizzy.

Olivia felt that she was struck by lightning, therefore she stood frozen on the spot. The workers from the delivery company appeared more composed than her. Not only did they not rob the item, they even managed to deliver it in perfect condition, which was surprising to her.

When everyone saw the money tree, they could not help but draw a sharp breath.

"What the heck? Who splurged on that?"

"Look, that is the real money tree. Say, the diamonds and gold coins on the branches must be genuine, aren't they?"

"Should be fake. I mean, who would put genuine gems and gold on the tree and place it in a transparent case to show off?"

“I think if it’s fake, there will not be a safe. Even the huge safe must be expensive.”

“No matter how expensive the safe is, it’s worth less than the tree itself. Even if the diamonds are fake, the design of this tree must have cost tens of thousands.”

People were chatting in amusement, but Eugene was frowning deeply. He suddenly felt that his ads over the city were not as explosive as the money tree gift. This surprise gift triumphed over his efforts and stole his limelight.

Who was the person behind this gift? Olivia sure had a lot of connections.

At the same time, Olivia was also dying to know the identity of the sender, whose choice of gift frustrated her. Not bothering to check the time zone difference, she took her phone and made an international call. When the call was picked up, she demanded, “Tell me that the money tree was not from you, was it?”

A sleepy male voice was heard from the other end. “Olivia? You received it?”

She was speechless at the truth. “Wait, it was really you? Do you intend to send it to the robbers or me?”

The man sounded like he struggled to sit up, and his voice returned to a casual tone. “Of course it’s for you!”

“We all know that you’re a famous doctor. Those who don’t might suspect that you’re a diamond exporter from Africa! Why did you send a gigantic gift? Aren’t you worried about theft and robbery?”

“Didn’t I place it in a safe for you?”

“Oh, wow, thanks a lot!” Olivia took a deep breath. “But why did you design a transparent side? Are you tempting the thieves or testing the features of your safe?”

“Don’t worry. I’ve tested it before. The safe has an automatic alert system. The money tree won’t go missing. If the alert is triggered, you just have to enter your birthday as the passcode on the remote control.”

Olivia went silent from astonishment.

The man chuckled. “Alright. If you think it’s jarring, you can sell it off. I just wanted to express my good wishes. To be honest, I had wanted to send you some rose tea for beauty and health purposes, but your juniors kept complaining that the rose tea looked stingy and wanted me to buy something more luxurious. I was out of ideas, so I picked the money tree!”

Olivia was both tickled and frustrated at the same time. “Yeah, you’re indeed inhumane! You’re really planning to make me lose sleep to keep an eye on that thing all day, aren’t you?”

Chapter 176

The man’s joyful voice boomed through the phone once more. “Don’t worry about the safe and sleep well. It won’t be gone. Even if it is, I’ll send you a new one!”

“Go back to bed!” After that, Olivia hung up angrily.

Soon, she saw the few workers pushing the safe on a cart into the studio. They were shouting out directions at each other while finding the right place to put down the safe. “Where should we place this item?”

How am I supposed to know?

Taking a deep breath, she stepped into the studio and made space in her office for the safe.

Just now, when she saw the glaring money tree, she was at a loss, finding it both frustrating and funny.

The instant Kate arrived, she saw the delivery men yelling and moving the gargantuan item into the studio, which was really funny in her eyes. "Is that what your senior got you?"

Olivia nodded. "Yeah. He had a patient who was working in the diamond business, so he got the money tree ordered and delivered. The price tag of this tree is probably equivalent to the annual pay of the craftsman."

Kate smiled. "Wow, you're his true love then!"

She received a stare from Olivia. "Stop that nonsense. He's my senior."

Moving on, Kate rubbed her chin and started thinking. "Tsk, tsk, why don't you leave someone here at night to guard the safe? I plan to come over at night to break the glass and steal a few diamonds."

Smiling, Olivia egged her on, "Yeah, you should try it."

"What?"

"I thought you wanted to break the glass?"

"What? Do you think I can't?" As she spoke, she knocked on the safe, and the next second, an alarm immediately blared and attracted the attention of those outside the studio, who walked over to check out the situation.

Olivia was shocked too because she only wanted Kate to give it a try without expecting the loud alarm noise. She hurriedly looked around for the remote control and finally managed to turn the alarm off after entering the password.

Everyone surrounded the two and discussed the security alarm with great interest.

As for Kate, she was patting her chest in shock. "My god, that was terrifying. It looks like it's not easy to steal that tree."

Nathan happened to walk up and overheard her remark. He could not help but make fun of her. "Are you stupid? There's a reason they placed the money tree at the most conspicuous place. How would they let you steal it that easily?"

Kate looked up at Nathan and wanted to tell him that it was none of his business. However, she saw Melanie locking arms with Nathan. When her eyes met Melanie's, she decided not to retort and instead chose to ignore him.

It was Nathan who was unused to Kate's behavior as he joked, "Looks like you're more behaved today. You indeed have a guilty conscience."

Furious, Kate could not stop herself from barking back at him, "Get lost, Nathan Baker! I'm only overlooking your comments out of respect for your girlfriend. Don't cross the line!"

"Tsk, tsk!" He clicked his tongue disapprovingly and turned around to take a look at Melanie. Then, he pinched Melanie's chin and remarked, "You command people's respect."

Melanie shunned his advance in embarrassment, "Quit fooling around. There are people around us."

Kate stared blankly at the lovey-dovey couple and frantically shifted her gaze away to the money tree, acting as if she was casually admiring it.

Noticing Kate's discomfort, Olivia stood out and announced, "It's about time. Let's go out now."

A few people responded to her. They left the studio and prepared for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

At 9.58 a.m., the ceremony officially started. Since there was a firecracker ban in Summer City, some merry music was played in the background as a replacement. In the middle of the music, Olivia took the microphone and gave a short speech.

"I would like to express my thanks to everyone who has taken time off to attend this ceremony at my studio. Here, I'd like to welcome everyone warmly and sincerely thank my team. Olivia Maxwell's studio

has just opened, but we have an established design team, ensuring that each of our outfits is unique so that every woman who wears our products could shine in their unique and irreplaceable charms. Do look forward to more products and support us in the future. Today, we will provide a 12% discount as a welcome gift to all guests. You can pre-order any item you like and even discuss your ideas with us. We guarantee you a satisfactory shopping experience. Thank you!”

Chapter 177

After the speech, Olivia bowed deeply at the audience beneath the stage, hence winning a round of applause.

Next, some hostesses led the VIP guests to their respective spots on the stage with Olivia at the center. Eugene and Brian stood beside her to the left and right. Beside them stood Marcus and Nathan.

With trays in their hands, the hostesses handed over golden scissors to everyone on stage, and the ribbon-cutting began. The bow on the ribbon fell onto the tray from the ribbon-cutting, at which the audience applauded, marking the end of the brief ceremony.

Afterward, Kate and Nathan helped to clean up, and the studio staff busied themselves with greeting the customers.

Be it attending out of courtesy or love of fashion, the guests and customers packed the studio. They chatted or tried on clothes. In general, the atmosphere was good, and business was booming.

The hotel was not very far away. Therefore, Olivia decided to head over at 11 in the morning. With only half an hour left before her departure, she decided to sell as many items as possible. Out of her expectations, she heard someone shouting her name.

“Miss Olivia!” Sophia jogged over to her. “We ran out of clothes!”

Olivia frowned in confusion. “What do you mean?”

Helpless but proud, Sophia announced, “The 68 pieces we prepared for the opening day were sold out.”

Shocked by the good news, Olivia gulped and checked with her staff again, "Not one left?"

Sophia nodded hard. "Yeah. Just now, the stars themselves ordered around 19 pieces. Some other customers who showed up as fans were waiting for this exact moment. When you announced the 12% discount, they ordered more for their friends. Anyway, we're out of products now."

Olivia found it hard to believe. Was this someone else's doing under the table?

"How about this? If the customers are still interested, we'll leave them our contact. Or you could jot down their preferred item style and have them wait for a few days while we restock. The 12% discount still applies."

Smiling, Sophia replied, "Alright. I'll head in now."

Olivia beamed at her staff. She had anticipated that her products would sell out, but she did not expect it to be snatched up in a matter of moments. It felt good to be validated.

On the other side, Anna was still fixated on the merriment across the street. She observed the money tree being delivered and Olivia coolly giving a short speech for the ceremony. She was basically putting herself under torture. Even though she knew she would feel awful for watching the ceremony, she still decided to stare on.

Time passed when she was staring. At the end of the day, she noticed that Olivia's studio was empty and the doors shut, looking deserted as if it was not open for business yet. If not for the flower baskets at the entrance, Anna would have thought so too.

Why was no one in the studio?

Anna kept staring at her rival across the street until afternoon, but no one returned.

She looked at Sarah. "What does that mean? Are they closed for the day, not taking any business?"

Sarah furrowed her brows in suspicion. "No way. The first day usually sees more customers. How could they not sell anything on the first day?" After that, she glanced at Anna and suggested, "Miss Anna, maybe they are sold out."

"Sold out? That's impossible! Their studio sells high fashion. One item is at least worth a hundred thousand or even millions. How do they sell out?"

Sarah could not find a plausible answer. "Should I go over and peek? I should be able to see something through their windows."

At first, Anna was reluctant to send Sarah over out of her pride. If she kept her eyes on her rival without a good reason, it might show that she was unconfident. On the other hand, she was dying to know what happened to the studio. After some hesitation, she nodded. "Just be careful. You need to pretend that you're strolling around."

Sarah agreed and went out.

Anna remained in her studio and perched in front of the windows to observe Olivia's studio. She saw Sarah running across the street after looking around, leaning into the windows to peek into that studio and running back hastily after the inspection.

Soon, she heard the door creaking open and Sarah's panting. "Miss Anna, t-their studio..."

Chapter 178

Before Sarah could finish her words, Anna was already annoyed at her actions. "Why did you run? Didn't I ask you to stroll over and take a casual look? You looked like you were going to steal something. What if they returned and bumped into you?"

Sarah waved her hands. "They won't be back."

Confused, Anna blurted out, "What?"

Her hands clasped on her knees, Sarah panted for some time before she resumed talking. "They are sold out. Not one item was left."

The news shocked Anna, and her eyes widened. "What did you say? They are really sold out?"

Nodding, she was shocked by the sight as well. Even though it was her guess to begin with, she never took it seriously because the possibility of selling out on the first day was close to nil. She recalled the opening day of Anna's studio when they had sold about five items. Back then, Anna even thought that it was a decent result.

How could Olivia's studio sell out within half an hour?

Anna stumbled onto the sofa. Although the billboard ads across the city were indeed good marketing for Olivia, the speed at which the items sold out was mind-boggling.

"How many items did they prepare?" She asked numbly.

Sarah answered, "They had at least twenty items on their mannequins, but the total amount of products is definitely more than whatever is on the mannequins. Anyway, there's nothing left on the mannequins."

Anna's soulless eyes wandered over to the studio across the street. She recalled that she had prepared about forty pieces of work for her studio opening. Judging by Olivia's grand opening, Olivia must have had more than twenty pieces in stock.

Olivia showed no mercy.

...

At the hotel, the banquet was nearing an end. As the host, Olivia had to go around and toast the guests. Although she was a good drinker, two hours of toasting the individuals made her tipsy. Her footsteps were unsteady, whereupon she lost her coordination and almost toppled over. Thankfully, someone

grabbed her at that moment. In a moment of panic, she turned around to look at her lifesaver before breaking into a smile. "Eugene?"

Eugene was frustrated. "I know you're a heavyweight, but you can't go on like this. It's fine to down a glass at each table, but you can't toast every single guest!"

Her cheeks flushed and her gaze hazy; she squinted her eyes into a crescent shape with a smile. "I'm happy!"

He took her arm and pampered her, saying, "I know you're happy today. Leave the rest to me. Please take a seat."

She fired back, "No. I can't be unfair. There's only one table left. I can do it!"

"What if I toast them on behalf of you? Is that fine?" Eugene wanted to reach a compromise.

Olivia blinked her eyes at him in the middle of a daze and shook her head. "No."

Eugene frowned. "Why not? I'm one of the stakeholders." Why did she have to keep him at arm's length?

Olivia knitted her brows in response and sternly reasoned, "You will have to drive later."

Upon hearing that, Eugene was defeated. "That's not a problem. I'll have Curtis pick us up later."

She nodded in approval. "Well, that works."

He found it frustrating and funny that she was reluctant to take his advice.

Leading her to the final table, he noticed that the guests were all close acquaintances. Due to their close relationships, everyone could tell that Eugene was ready to toast on behalf of Olivia.

Therefore, those who did not plan to drink insisted on toasting Olivia for fun.

The first one to joke around was Marcus. Stealing a look at Eugene, he raised his glass at Olivia with a smile. "Olivia, you're the boss because it's your opening day. I'll toast you. I'm not going to repeat the cliché well wishes because I know that your business will do well. I shall wish you good companionship and happiness."

She beamed at him. "Thanks, Marcus." The next second, she lifted her glass in an attempt to down the alcohol. Seeing that, Eugene grabbed her glass and explained, "Olivia had too much to drink. I'll take this for her."

Marcus smiled slyly. "Hey, that's against the rules! I know that you hold stakes in the studio business, but you're different from Olivia. You can drink on her behalf, but you'll have to do double!"

Chapter 179

Once Marcus noticed that Eugene was smitten with Olivia, he instantly saw Eugene in a more affable light instead of fearing him. After all, Marcus was a cousin of Olivia!

Of course, Eugene was aware of the dynamics of the relationship and behaved well in front of Marcus. After all, he was pursuing Marcus' cousin. Therefore, he obediently agreed, "Okay!"

Then, he instantly downed the alcohol in Olivia's glass and poured himself another, smiling and declaring, "Marcus, my fellow cousin, thank you for showing up." Next, he raised his glass at Marcus courteously.

Following that, Marcus stood up with a smile. "You're too gracious. I wish nothing but the best for the studio business."

Everyone at the table cheered them on with gossiping expressions. Kate was especially agitated at the scene, to which Nathan gave a side-eye. "You idiot. They're only toasting, but why are you getting all excited?"

She glared at him. "I just love it. It's none of your business."

Melanie's eyes quietly moved between Nathan and Kate as her lips curled up in mockery. Then, she gently took a sip of the drink in front of her. However, Brian's expression fell, and he wondered if Eugene and Olivia were together. Isn't he afraid of burdening her?

Staring at Eugene, Brian's gaze sharpened. "You're addressing Marcus as a cousin of yours, huh? Do you have another identity aside from a stakeholder of the studio?"

Olivia tried hard to think with her numb brain as she looked at Eugene in confusion. Yeah! Why did he claim that Marcus is one of his cousins?

Eugene stared Brian down as he calmly explained, "I'm a friend of Olivia's, and Marcus is her cousin, so I see him as a cousin of mine too. Is it wrong for me to address Marcus the way Olivia addresses him?"

Brian scoffed, "Did Marcus allow you to do so? For those in the dark, they might think that you have a special relationship with Olivia!"

Sensing that the joke was getting out of hand by the two men, Marcus hurriedly stood up to mediate, "It's alright. He can see me as a cousin. I'm older than most of you here. If you don't mind, you can see me as your elder cousin too. I'd be more than happy to see that."

Eugene shot a dark look at Brian for some time before slowly commenting, "Marcus himself has no issue with it. You should quit fussing about it!"

Brian returned a sharp look at him without any intention to back down. "Marcus didn't put it out, but you have to be sensible. Do you know how much trouble you'll bring to them after you refer to Marcus as your cousin?"

Eugene knew what Brian was worried about. He was aware that he lived in a perilous world, but he selfishly wanted Olivia for himself. He couldn't stand the sight of Olivia with any other man, even if she were only hanging out with her brother. "I wonder what right do you have to question me."

The temper of the two men was flaring up, and dangerous looks lurked in their eyes. It was so tense that they might break into a bloody fight the next moment. Everyone at the table held their breath and stared at the two men.

Even though Olivia's response was slowing down, she could tell that the atmosphere had worsened. With a smile, she held Eugene back. "Come on, guys. It's just a way of addressing Marcus. It's nothing much. I even call Eugene's grandfather my grandpa. You guys, don't make an issue out of nothing. If I get vindictive, both of you will be in trouble." As she was speaking, she filled Eugene's glass with alcohol, followed by Brian's glass. "Drink up! Thanks for showing up to support me and provide me the hotel event venue. Later, please remember to give me a discount. My business just started, and I haven't broken even!"

Taking a deep breath, Brian looked away from Eugene and smiled. "You haven't broken even? I thought your clothes were sold out today? Big Boss Maxwell, are you pretending to be poor?"

She replied with a somber expression, "Yeah, I'm penniless. I haven't received my rent payment yet."

Brian played along with her, "How grateful! I should have become your studio's stakeholder too."

She smiled back at him. "I feel regretful too for not opening a florist shop."

Chapter 180

The familiar joke managed to amuse the guests and made everyone laugh, thereby lightening up the atmosphere. "Come on, everyone! Let's have a toast!" Olivia raised her glass, but Eugene snatched her glass again and stared at Brian to imply something. "There is no use regretting things that were meant to happen. Anyway, Olivia has drunk more than enough, so I'll drink on her behalf."

Nonetheless, Brian only stayed still and glared at Eugene who wasn't bothered at all as he continued what he had been doing. No one else dared to mess with Eugene anymore as they finished the ceremony without a hitch. Soon, Eugene approached a waiter and ordered some tea for Oliver. "Here. You should feel better after drinking this."

Meanwhile, Olivia took a peek at those sitting around the table, feeling a little embarrassed as she didn't know how to turn them down. Therefore, she decided to drink the tea without much hesitation. On the other hand, Kate noticed Melanie leaning forward to Nathan, seemingly whispering something to him. In the next moment, she was seen leaning even closer to the man with a bashful look on her face, thus Kate couldn't help but think they were flirting with each other.

Instantly, Kate was overwhelmed by depression, so she decided to walk away to the restroom to have some solitude. However, it wasn't long until Melanie came in as well. Deep down, Kate didn't really like this lady, not only because she was Nathan's girlfriend, but also she knew they wouldn't get along with each other well. After all, it was easy for two women with clashing natures to fly into a rage as soon as either of them said the wrong word. Nonetheless, Melanie was deemed to be a honey-tongued lady who was good at winning a man's heart by flirting. On the other hand, Kate was the total opposite as she was impulsive and ill-tempered. She would even get physical at times when she found herself at odds with someone. Therefore, it was understandable why Melanie's meek nature would be the preferred type by men to her headstrong character.

"Are you alright, Katie?" Melanie caringly asked when she saw Kate standing near the basin top.

"I'm fine." Kate shook her head.

"You don't look so good. I guess you must've probably drunk a little more than you can handle," Melanie worriedly replied with a pair of furrowed brows.

"It's no big deal. My cheeks flush every time I drink," said Kate who was deliberately touching her face.

In a caring manner, Melanie gave her a piece of advice, "You need to stop drinking then. Men aren't going to like how you look right now." Her words made Kate knit her eyebrows. "What does that have to do with drinking? Look at Olivia. Men like her even though she drinks. As the saying goes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so everyone is entitled to his own feelings and opinions."

Frustrated, Kate turned around and headed toward the exit, but soon heard Melanie sniggering. "I don't know how the others feel, but I do know how Nathan feels." Kate didn't want to listen to her nonsense, but it seemed that she wasn't in control of her own legs as she stopped in her tracks and looked back in curiosity.

At this time, Melanie was seen fixing her makeup with lipstick in front of the mirror for a while. After that, she placed her lipstick back into her purse and turned around slowly, winking at her in mischief. "I'm his cup of tea, the type that he likes. We usually do it three to four times every night until I beg him to stop. His performance in bed is the best I've ever seen." Melanie added with a smile, "Nathan told me he is not interested in any other woman because only I can turn him on. So, don't you think he is crazy over me?"

Melanie's words made Kate's blood boil with anger as she was now certain that this was an attempt to provoke her. With a glacial expression, she said, "I don't know whether he likes you, but I do know that you're disgusting and shameless."