

## Chapter 513 Win Him Over

After listening to Paulina, Elliana finally understood everything. Cole hadn't approached the Campbells to propose because he was fond of their daughter. His real goal was to marry a Campbell girl, not because of who she was, but because of the title she carried, to honor his mother's final words.

The realization settled in Elliana's stomach like a stone, and a familiar wave of frustration washed over her.

On one side, Elliana felt some comfort knowing Cole hadn't fallen for someone else while dealing with his memory loss. On the other hand, learning that his dedication was to a family name instead of a real person made things even harder to accept. She was not a Campbell, and it seemed that there was no way she could ever win him over.

A gloomy silence fell over Elliana, and she pressed her lips together, refusing to say more.

Seeing the disappointment written all over Elliana's face, Paulina hesitated, trying to find the right words. She finally asked, "Ms. Marsh, Mr. Evans is expecting an update from me. How should I explain your new identity to him?"

Elliana let out a frustrated huff. "If he's so determined to marry someone from the Campbell family, why is he investigating me at all? He's being completely hypocrite."

Paulina could only offer a weak smile in response. "I agree that Mr. Evans's choices don't always make sense. Still, I think there's a part of him that just can't help being interested in you."

Even though Cole felt bound to marry a Campbell daughter, and that promise was almost impossible for him to break, he was still drawn to Elliana and couldn't resist knowing more about her.

Elliana understood this perfectly well, but that did nothing to ease the frustration building up inside her. "Suppose he does figure out my real





identity," she replied bitterly. "What does he expect me to do? Become his mistress?"

Paulina was at a loss for words. The whole situation was a mess, and she had no idea what Cole really wanted.

As the awkward silence dragged on, Elliana finally picked up the file containing her information as Lilah and handed it over to Paulina. "Just give him this."

Paulina carefully placed the documents in her bag, offered a respectful bow, and slipped out of the room.

Waiting just outside, Heather quickly approached to escort Paulina to the gate. Their faces lit up at the sight of one another, and lively conversation flowed between them as they walked toward the gate.

Clifton, Kieran, and Damian looked on, each wearing a stunned expression. Heather was usually fierce and sharp-tongued, always taking charge. Watching her act so friendly and deferential now was completely unexpected.

After seeing Paulina off, Heather reentered the room, and the three men regarded her in silence with unreadable expressions.

Adah didn't bother masking her contempt. She shot Heather a sharp look and said, "What happened to that pride of yours? Did your self-respect vanish with it? Or did you lose your spine somewhere along the way?"

The friendliness melted off Heather in an instant. With a dismissive shrug, she answered, "Come on, we're both women. You know how it is."

Adah shot her a look of disbelief. "Get what? That's bullshit," she retorted. "Every woman in our team is strong in her own right. Which one of us acts like a desperate puppy for the approval of a man's sister? You make Thorn Rose look bad!"

Adah turned away, her disgust clear, and stomped upstairs, determined to find Elliana.

Stung by the public rebuke, Heather shifted on her feet, a hot blush creeping up her neck.

Glancing around, her gaze landed on Clifton, Kieran, and Damian, who



seemed to be enjoying her discomfort a bit too much. Instantly, she redirected her annoyance toward them. She crossed her arms and glared. "What are you all staring at?" she shouted. "Is this the first time you've seen a gorgeous woman?"

The shrillness of her voice made all three men wince at once. Years of working together had taught them that Heather loved a verbal fight and rarely lost one. Kieran and Damian kept quiet, knowing better than to challenge her in the moment.

Clifton, who was the leader among them, didn't feel the need to back down. "Sure, we've seen plenty of beautiful women," he responded. "But it's rare to see one who lowers her head like that."

The insult hit with the force of a slap. Heather's hand shot out, snatching an apple from the fruit bowl. She hurled it.

Yet, instead of striking Clifton, the apple landed on Damian's head with a loud smack.

"Ouch!" Damian yelled, leaping to his feet.

Coming from a trained killer like Heather, the throw had vicious force. Pain spread across Damian's scalp in a steady, pounding wave. Luckily, he was built like a tank, and he managed to shake off the pain. An ordinary man might have suffered a concussion, or worse.

The apple had caught Damian completely off guard. He'd been sitting there, enjoying the show and waiting to see how Heather would respond to Clifton's jab, never dreaming the response would be aimed at him.

If anyone else had thrown it, Damian would have blamed bad aim. But Heather never missed her mark. She had aimed for him.

After the sting began to fade, Damian turned to her, his face twisted in anger. "Are you out of your mind? I didn't even say anything! Why am I the one getting nailed?"

He didn't have to say what everyone was thinking. The insult had come from Clifton. Why not aim for him?

Heather placed her hands on her hips again, a sly smile appearing. "You really think I'd waste an apple on Clifton? I can't take him in a real fight,



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 +120 Points at most

and I'm smart enough not to go after someone who'd beat me."


There was no sugarcoating her reasoning. She picked her battles carefully and only went after those she could outmatch.

Among the Four Guardians, everyone knew rank came down to fighting skills, and Heather had Damian beat every time.

Damian glared in disbelief, but after a moment, he gave up and stormed off without bothering to argue further.

Meanwhile, Adah was already upstairs, sitting across from Elliana in the study. She studied her friend for a moment and asked, "Elliana, what's got you looking so pale?"



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