

Chapter 514 Master Seductress

Elliana was still simmering. Her thoughts kept circling Cole's plan to marry the real Campbell heiress. She twirled a mango milk candy between her fingers, her face set in a grim line.

Elliana looked up, met Adah's eyes, and then dropped her gaze with a heavy sigh. "Adah, you were right. There's not a single good man left in this world."

Adah gave a short pause and then let out a chuckle. "A couple of hours ago, you just flirted with Cole like a pro. Why the long face now?"

Elliana didn't hold back. She poured out every detail of her conversation with Paulina.

"Hmph!" Elliana scoffed, frustration bubbling over. "Cole didn't push me aside and let me flirt with him. He has Paulina snooping into my background, all the while searching for the real Campbell heiress just to marry her. What a total scumbag!"

Elliana ripped open the candy wrapper and shoved the sweet into her mouth. But instead of savoring it, she bit down hard, crushing it with sharp cracks like she was chewing Cole to bits.

This very candy had been a gift from Cole. In fact, all the sweets she ate these days were from him.

Back when he was chasing her, he'd showered her with candy. He'd even handed her an entire billion-dollar candy company, making her believe life with him would be nothing but sweet. And now, looked at the bitterness his frustrating memory loss caused her. What a bastard!

Adah processed the revelation and then shrugged. "Yeah, that's pretty scummy."

Cole's actions were baffling. His mother's dying wish was for him to



marry the Campbell heiress—he'd never go against that. But digging into Elliana's background? That meant he was interested. What kind of twisted game was he playing? Maybe he planned to marry the Campbell heiress and keep Elliana hidden away. Pfft. Dream on.

Adah looked more furious than Elliana. "If he's that much of a jerk, drop him! Why are you even moping around? Pretend he never existed!"

Elliana clenched her jaw, grinding what was left of the candy between her teeth. Adah was right. But saying it was one thing. Living it was another. She and Cole had loved deeply and shared moments that felt real and warm. How could she just erase that?

Adah had never truly been in love, so she couldn't understand the turmoil inside Elliana's heart. Heck, even Elliana couldn't untangle the mess herself. Some things could only be understood through experience.

Elliana let out a long, tired sigh, too drained to argue.

Adah grabbed her hand and tugged her toward the door. "Come on. I know just the thing to cheer you up. By the end of tonight, you'll forget that jerk even existed."

Elliana stumbled after her. "Where are we going?"

"Nightfall!" Adah grinned, eyes gleaming. "It's a new club—huge, gorgeous, supposed to rival Manley's Royal Club. I haven't been there yet. Let's hit it tonight!"

Elliana didn't feel like going out. But Adah wouldn't take no for an answer and dragged Elliana along with her.

Meanwhile, in the CEO's office at Evans Group, Cole sat at his desk, eyes locked on his screen, but his mind was miles away. Images from the earlier encounter with Lilah kept replaying in his head—every detail burned into memory.

The softness of her body pressed against his, the cascade of her waist-length hair, that stunningly beautiful face... Even now, he could still catch the faint scent of her perfume, recall the exact shade in her eyes, and remember the sound of her voice.

It was as if the details had been etched into his memory all along, and

her presence had just been the key to unlocking them. No woman had ever gotten to him like this. One meeting, and she'd made herself unforgettable. It was unnerving.

He tried to recall any past encounters, but came up empty. He was sure this was their first meeting. And yet, here he was—restless, her image stamped into his mind. He wasn't the kind of man who let women sway him easily.

There was only one explanation. It had to be that she was such a master of seduction. And he, like an idiot, had fallen into her trap.

The thought made his blood boil. That bold woman. Did she really think she could play him? Not a chance. His fist slammed down on the keyboard.

Right then, a sharp knock echoed from the door.

Cole paused, voice cold as ice. "Come in."

Paulina pushed the door open and instantly felt the tension hit like a wall. She hesitated in the doorway, her eyes darting toward him—and froze. His face was thunderous. What happened?

She buried her confusion behind a polite smile and walked forward, holding out a file. "Mr. Evans, we've completed the background check on that young lady."

Cole was deep in his speculation that Lilah was a master seductress, consumed by irritation—so much so, he'd fleetingly imagined strangling her.

He snatched the file from Paulina's hand and flipped through it. With every word he read, his expression darkened even more.