

YOUR GUISE 131

Chapter 131

Richard's self-harm scared Abby. She had never anticipated that he would prefer to inflict pain on himself rather than touch her.

The humiliation she felt was overwhelming. Tears welled up in her eyes, a mixture of shame and intense hatred. If it weren't for Pearl, Richard wouldn't treat her this way.

As she watched Richard unconscious on the bed, a bold and malicious idea began to form in her mind.

She stripped both herself and Richard, lay down on his broad chest, and took a picture. She then sent this intimate photo to Pearl.

After that, Abby carefully got out of bed, put on his clothes, and went back to her room.

The next morning, Pearl woke up to that shocking image on her phone. It depicted an intimate scene, making it appear as if Richard and Abby had slept together.

Her heart ached, but she remembered Richard's words from the previous night, causing her to scoff.

As she examined the photo more closely, something didn't seem right.

The way Richard lay in bed didn't resemble someone who had peacefully fallen asleep. Instead, it

looked as if he had fainted. His flushed face looked unnatural as well. Was he drugged?

Pearl quickly got dressed and headed to Richard's room, which was left unlocked. Inside, she found

Richard alone, and upon seeing him unconscious, she froze before approaching to check on him.

It was clear that he had been drugged, although not with a potent substance that would have led to his death by morning. The person responsible seemed to possess a conscience.

Pearl retrieved some medication she had brought with her, placed it in Richard's mouth, and ensured he

swallowed it. After a while, he slowly opened his eyes and immediately saw Pearl waiting beside him.

"When did you come in here?"

"Why do you want to know? How were you drugged?" Pearl replied.

Recalling the events of the previous night, Richard looked at the cup on the table. "My mom brought me a cup of milk last night, just like she usually does, so I drank it without suspecting anything." His anger began to rise as he considered the possibility of his mother working with Abby.

Pearl couldn't hold in her laughter. "Even your mom tried to trick you?"

Richard looked coldly at her. "Enough of this. How did you get into my room?"

Pearl nonchalantly shrugged and showed him the photo on her phone. "Look, Abby sent this to me. I

guess she wanted me to feel jealous and start hating you."

"Hate me... Pearl, why would you hate me after seeing this?" Richard gazed at Pearl with his deep-set eyes.

Pearl almost blurted out that she liked him, but when she noticed Richard's attempt to get that response from her, she held back. "I might have been disgusted because you feel like telling me about this."

Pearl suddenly noticed that Richard looked off, so she stopped herself. "That's not what I meant... I..."

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Pearl's wrist was grasped tightly, and the next thing she knew, she was in Richard's arms.

"Pearl, repeat what you just said," Richard whispered into her ear, his gaze locked onto hers.

They were pressed closely together, their skin touching. Pearl felt like a helpless chick in his arms, unable to free herself from his grip.

"I didn't say anything."

"You're going to deny it?"

In her struggle, Pearl moved around too much, causing a button on her clothing to pop off. A glimpse of her fair skin was revealed, and Richard's eyes inadvertently caught it, his gaze intensifying.

"I didn't... Mmm!" Before she could say anything further, he hugged her even tighter, his k*ss sealing

her

l*ps.

Richard had just taken some medicine, so his l*ps tasted sweet. Pearl's mind went blank, and she

allowed him

to k*ss her.

Eventually, Richard let her go when she didn't respond to the k*ss and instead wore a shocked

expression. He waved his hand in front of her face.

Pearl shook her head, slowly coming to the realization that she had been k*ssed. All she could manage

to ask was, "Richard, is the medicine working?"

Richard took her hand and pressed it against his chest, allowing her to feel his strong heartbeat, which

caused her own heart rate to quicken.

“What do you think?” he replied with a smirk.

“Assh*le!” Pearl snapped back, kicking his chest. He leaned back slightly to avoid her kick.

“I didn’t say if it’s working or not,” he remarked casually, as if he had just sipped water rather than

taken

medicine.

“Alright, I’m leaving now.” Pearl turned to leave, but as she did, she found Susan standing at the door,

poised to knock.

Susan took in the disheveled scene before her and was left speechless. She then noticed Pearl’s

rumpled attire, a missing button, and smudged l*pstick, and she also noted Richard’s blushing face and

open robe, revealing his exposed chest.

“What...” Susan couldn’t believe her eyes. All her efforts in warning her son went to waste because of

Pearl.

“How could you be so shameless, Pearl? You’re a girl. You shouldn’t be in the same room if you’re not

married. Are you trying to sleep with him and force your way into the family? I won’t let that happen!”

Susan struggled to catch her breath, and her b*dy, which had just recovered, started acting up again.

“You’re overthinking, Madam. I would never use such a method to marry into the family. I’m not interested in that,” Pearl said coldly.

“Rick, explain yourself.”

Not only did Richard fail to offer an explanation, but he casually stated, “I initiated it.”

Susan was furious. “What have you done, Rick? Have you forgotten what I told you last night? Pearl isn’t a good match for you!”

“I don’t like her. I thought you knew.”

Susan tried to advise him, “Rick, feelings can develop. You can’t simply reject her because you don’t like her yet. I’ve known her for years, so how could I be wrong? She made some mistakes in the past, but it was all because she loved you too much. Give her a chance, and you’ll discover how nice-”

“Enough. I only have feelings for Pearl.” Richard heard this too many times and was tired of it.

Abby, who was standing at the door holding a glass of water, heard his words and dropped the glass in shock.

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“Rick...” Abby’s eyes were filled with tears, despair consuming her upon hearing his words. “Even if

you

don't have feelings for me, I want you to know I love you. Why do you keep using Pearl to hurt me? It's

so

unfair!"

"You should understand that I see you as a sister. You need to move on," Richard delivered the final

blow.

Unable to bear the pain any longer, Abby ran off, wiping her tears.

Watching the scene unfold, Susan shouted, "Pearl, you did this to my family! How could you be so

ruthless? You just want to take over the family, huh? I won't let that happen!"

"You're mistaken." Pearl's voice was calm. "I'm not interested in that at all."

Richard immediately replied, "You'll have to take it over, even if you're not interested in it."

Pearl was speechless.

"You're going to give me an aneurysm!" Susan's chest heaved as she raised her hand, pointing at Pearl

while yelling, "You're just like your mother, tearing apart relationships. The daughter she gave birth to is

just as shameless. You've learned everything from her!"

Pearl froze. "You know my mom?"

"How could I not? Your mother was desired by countless men, and she even seduced Dustan. How

could I not

know her!"

Susan's words were hurtful, suggesting that Pearl's mother was promiscuous and attempted to seduce

married men.

"Madam, I hope you choose your words more carefully. You can insult me, but not my mom," Pearl

retorted,

her anger flaring.

She recalled her father talking about the past. Her mother had been like a fairy, gentle and kind. That's

why her father had kept waiting for her return. How could such a perfect person do what Susan was

claiming?

"Go ask Dustan then, see if they had an innocent friendship!" Susan scoffed. "You might even be his

daughter!"

With that parting shot, Susan stormed out, leaving Pearl stunned.

Pearl couldn't help but ask, "Was what she said true?"

Richard avoided her eyes. "I don't think so."

"I have to find a way to shut her up. Her baseless accusations are an insult to my mom." Pearl looked at Richard and began to plot. "I have an idea."

Richard met her determined gaze. "You want a DNA test?"

"Mister Dustan won't be home for about half a month, but I recall that I can use your DNA for the test too."

Richard raised his brows. "So you think that as long as we can prove we're not related, everything my mother said will be proven false?"

"Yes, I don't believe we're related." Pearl then extended her hand. "Give me some of your hair."

Richard frowned. "Where are the scissors?"

"What scissors? Just pull some out."

Richard winced. "Pearl!"

Seeing him agitated, Pearl didn't want to linger any longer, so she flashed an awkward smile and ran.

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Pearl brought Richard's hair to the hospital in the morning for the DNA test.

As she was leaving, Hugo, who happened to be walking past, spotted her. Once she had left, he

entered the

DNA testing room.

"What was the girl here for?" Hugo casually inquired as he walked in.

The doctor recognized him and immediately tensed up. "Dr. Waldorf, she came for a DNA test."

"What test?"

The doctor handed the sample to him and smiled. "This one..."

Hugo picked up the sample and examined it. There were two strands of hair inside, one long and one

short.

The short one was...

He suddenly had a bold idea, then he said to the doctor, "Could you get this month's report for me

please?"

The doctor nodded and went to retrieve the report. Seizing the opportunity, Hugo took out the long hair from the bag and replaced it with one of his own.

After that, he stood up straight and instructed, "Take your time. I have to rush off, so once you find it, bring it to my office."

"Okay."

Hugo then left with a cunning smile.

Pearl was ready to return to the office when she noticed a familiar woman sitting on the floor, looking injured.

Approaching her, she found that the woman was the same one who had given her flowers.

"Are you alright?" Pearl squatted down and checked her, discovering that she had a sprained ankle.

"The hospital is nearby. Would you like me to take you there?"

The woman was in immense pain and refused to speak. Instead, she just nodded.

Pearl helped her to her feet, and as they leaned closer, she noticed a silver necklace around the woman's neck. The pendant on it looked familiar.

It reminded her of a time in middle school when, after school every day, her father would hold a similar

silver pendant in his hands. However, his had a heart cut-out, while the lady's pendant was a solid heart.

After her father's death, he was buried with the pendant, and after so many years, she didn't recognize it at first.

"Can I ask you a question?" Pearl asked cautiously.

The woman replied with some enthusiasm. "Sure, go ahead."

"Could you tell me where you got this pendant from? It looks familiar to me, and my dad had one too, although his was slightly different..."

The woman froze and suddenly started trembling. "What?"

"I said your pendant looks a lot like the one my dad had."

"Where's your dad now?"

Pearl lowered her voice, "Dad... He passed away."

The woman's trembling hand hung in mid-air, and tears soon streamed down her face. She was

wearing glasses, so Pearl couldn't see the sadness in her eyes.

"Are you alright, Madam?" Pearl was shocked to see this unexpected emotional reaction.

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"Oh, I'm fine. It's just that my ankle hurts so bad," the lady replied with a smile, though her expression was tinged with sadness.

"I feel like I've seen you so many times. Since the first time you gave me flowers, you've always been very mysterious. Now that we are meeting again, could you tell me your name, please?" Pearl asked

with a warm

smile.

"I... My last name is Ramsay."

"You can't tell me your name? That's fine, I'll just call you Madam Ramsay then."

The woman nodded and didn't say anything more.

After sending her to the hospital, Pearl told her to take care of herself and left. She returned to the office but was summoned into a meeting before she could even take a moment to rest.

"Pearl, you have a new mission." Richard turned around and placed a file on the desk, then slid it over.

“We plan to design an Angel & Devil series of bracelets for best friends, but we haven’t found a suitable brand ambassador. I was wondering if we should use you for this.”

Pearl’s eyes went wide. “Why me again? Richard, I’m the design director, not a celebrity. Why don’t you get a proper celebrity to do this?”

Richard

gave a practical reason, “We can save a lot of money if we go with you.”

Pearl smiled. Why would the Waldorfs fret over the small expense of hiring a brand ambassador? That seemed ridiculous.

“Are you just trying to torture me, Richard?”

Richard didn’t deny it. “Of course not. I was just thinking from the company’s perspective.”

His main reason, of course, was that if Pearl had to be in the ads, he would have more opportunities to spend

time with her. While she worked in the office, their conversations were limited to business matters.

Pearl wasn’t aware of his ulterior motive, so she hesitated. “But shouldn’t two people be involved in promoting these best friend bracelets?”

“Don’t worry, I’ll find someone to do it with you.”

Suddenly, Hanzel appeared out of nowhere. “Why didn’t you ask me to be part of the ads? Asking me to find someone for you is so cruel.”

Hanzel pouted and looked quite unwilling.

“Cruel? You can’t do it. It’s not suitable for you,” Richard shot him down.

Hanzel wasn’t ready to give up and moved closer to Richard. “Why not? You said Pearl is going to be in the ad. If she can, why can’t I? Are you doing this on purpose? I heard you confessed your feelings to Pearl in front of her and Mom. Are you afraid that Pearl might catch feelings for me if we worked together?”

Richard frowned. “Why would I be afraid of that?”

“Then why wouldn’t you let me be part of the campaign? Why do you need a woman?”

Pearl froze as she looked at Richard, then at Hanzel, and finally burst into laughter.

Hanzel was puzzled. “Why are you laughing?”

Richard explained to him, “Have you read the agreement?”

Hanzel hesitated because he hadn't.

"It's a bracelet for best friends. How can you, a man, be in the ad campaign?"

Hanzel's expression turned awkward. "Uh, I was just thinking that I could go in drag and work with

Pearl. It could work..."

Pearl was rendered speechless.

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"Okay, stop messing around. Did you find the female celebrity I need?" Richard asked, his tone

businesslike.

Hanzel, after glancing at Pearl, nodded reluctantly. "I checked out the recently popular celebrities, but I

couldn't find the kind of glamorous model you're looking for."

Clearly, they needed two types of women to portray an angel and a demon. Pearl, with her pure and

charming demeanor, could play the angel, while they needed a glamorous woman for the demon role.

"You didn't find anyone? Then you can forget about being a star. I'll have your company suspend your

contract, and you can return to work at the company," Richard threatened, knowing well how to use his

influence.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Hanzel pleaded, "Don't, Rick. I told you it's difficult to find this kind of character because there are too few women of this type in the entertainment industry. Most are just vulgarly S**y. There are hardly any women who possess an aloof and attractive aura."

"It doesn't mean there are none. I'll give you one day to find someone, and if you fail, say goodbye to your showbiz career," Richard stated firmly, giving Hanzel one last chance.

Hearing that, Pearl offered a reassuring smile to Hanzel and pointed at a news article on the computer screen, saying calmly, "I think she might be a good fit."

The article featured a sweet, adorable, and pure young woman on the cover. She was a new rising star named Esther Sanders.

"What does she have to do with being glamorous?" Hanzel asked, baffled, as Esther appeared purer and cuter than Pearl.

Smiling, Pearl explained, "She'll be the angel, and I'll be the demon."

"But you don't look like a demon either," Hanzel muttered.

Richard felt better seeing Pearl's confidence because he trusted her judgment. Without wasting time, he instructed someone to negotiate a collaboration with Esther.

Unexpectedly, Esther agreed to the proposal without much fuss.

The shooting was set for this Sunday at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Pearl arrived at the set early, driven by her curiosity. She had never met such a popular TV star before.

Esther arrived not long after Pearl got there. Contrary to her pure and cute image on television, Esther came across as somewhat arrogant, behaving like a spoiled princess.

When she saw Pearl, she sized the latter up and asked, "You're Pearl?"

Pearl nodded. "Yes, I'm Pearl."

"I heard you have an engagement with the five Waldorf brothers, is that true?"

Esther, being around sixteen or seventeen years old, was a young female idol who had become a B-list star due to her sweet and cute appearance. Clearly, she had quite a bit of confidence.

Pearl nodded once more. "Yes, everyone in Enswood knows that."

. Esther, however, seemed puzzled by Pearl's behavior. Pearl didn't appear to be in awe of her at all.

This was unusual because Esther was used to being adored wherever she went. But Pearl looked calm when she saw Esther-no, more than that, she seemed slightly curious and playful.

“So, which one of them is your favorite?” Esther asked with a sly smile.

Pearl instantly knew what Esther meant. It seemed Esther might have a crush on one of the Waldorf brothers.

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“Why? Does my preference in men have anything to do with this project?” Pearl replied.

Stunned, Esther didn’t expect that Pearl would refuse to answer her question. She frowned and continued, “Yes, it does. Just ignore the reason and tell me.”

“Why don’t you tell me who you like instead, Miss Esther?” Pearl responded calmly, causing Esther to blush. deeply, wondering how Pearl knew...

Esther’s agent, sensing the danger, quickly intervened, pulling Esther’s arm to silence her. “Of course, Esther doesn’t have a crush on anyone.”

With a multitude of male fans closely following Esther’s every move, any rumor of her having a crush could negatively impact her career.

“Oh, I’ll drop the question then, if that’s the case,” Pearl said with a chuckle, moving on from the topic.

The makeup session was now underway, with both heroines present. However, Esther was far from

cooperative. She sat there complaining about her makeup artist's inability to accentuate her charm and behaving arrogantly.

"Hey! This will make my eyes look small. What's with this makeup? It's hideous. Do you even know what you're doing? Quit if you can't handle being a makeup artist. I've never met such a lousy makeup artist in my life."

Esther's harsh words made Pearl frown, prompting her to glance over. While the makeup artists were skilled, Pearl couldn't help but feel that something was missing.

Being a part of the entertainment industry for such a long time, Esther could tell if someone's makeup skills were good or not.

"It's not my fault, Miss Esther. I've given it my all..." The makeup artist felt disheartened, as she had done her best but couldn't seem to create the right look for Esther.

Pearl patted the makeup artist's shoulder. "Alright, leave it to me. You can take a break."

"I never thought a big company like Waldorf Enterprises would hire such an incompetent makeup artist. It's embarrassing," Esther remarked rudely and arrogantly, crossing her arms.

"Don't be too quick to judge, Miss Esther. Why don't... you give me a chance?"

Esther cast a disdainful glance at Pearl. "You? Can you do it? I don't settle for just any makeup artist."

"You won't know if you don't let me try. Sit tight. I'll do your makeup."

Others assumed Pearl was just trying to calm Esther down, but to their surprise, Pearl removed

Esther's makeup using makeup remover and cotton pads, then applied moisturizer to Esther's face.

"Can you really do it?" With her makeup removed, Esther appeared fair, soft, and cute.

"Absolutely," Pearl replied confidently as she gently applied a light concealer and foundation. "You're a very cute girl, you just need a subtle touch."

"Okay."

Previously, the makeup artist had aimed to lighten Esther's complexion but unfortunately made her look like a doll-beautiful, but unnatural.

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"Plus, those sequins might give you a slightly subdued look. We can replace them with feathers and attach them to the corners of your eyes, along with a touch of golden powder." Pearl explained while working swiftly to complete Esther's makeup.

When she was finished, the nearby makeup artists were left astounded. They had never seen Esther in

this light before.

Esther had always been labeled as a Barbie, and it was the first time they saw such a fairylike side to her.

Looking at herself in the mirror, Esther gaped in silence.

“You’re so good at it.” Esther, who had a somewhat childish disposition, blurted out her thoughts.

“Do you like it?” Pearl picked up a small golden ring and placed it on Esther’s head. “Don’t you look just like a fairy?”

“Yeah, I look just like a fairy. Pearl, I didn’t expect you to have such amazing makeup skills.” Esther blushed, feeling remorseful for doubting Pearl earlier. “I’m sorry for what I said earlier...”

“It’s okay.” Pearl chuckled. “I’m glad you like it.”

Suddenly, an idea popped into Esther’s head. “Why don’t you be my makeup artist? You get only a few ten thousand dollars at Waldorf Enterprises a year, but I can pay you a few hundred thousand dollars.

What do you think?”

Pearl found Esther rather cute and straightforward. “Are you that rich?”

“Yeah, I can afford it, even though I’m not very popular.”

Laughing, Pearl said, “Okay, let’s stop there. I’ll go put on my makeup first. We can chat more after the shoot.”

For the first time, Pearl adopted a different style, abandoning her usual innocent and cute appearance.

She donned a dark, form-fitting dress and applied heavier makeup.

Unexpectedly, this look suited her well and made her very attractive.

Standing outside and waiting for her, Richard was struck dumb when he saw her. At first, he had concerns about Pearl adjusting to this look, but he hadn’t anticipated her looking this stunning.

“Eh, what’s wrong?” Pearl smiled because of Richard’s stunned expression. “Is my makeup bad? I did it myself, and I’m afraid I’m not as good as the professional makeup artists here...”

“How could you call that bad? Pearl, the makeup artists here didn’t do half as good as you did.” Hanzel couldn’t stop praising Pearl earnestly.

Looking down, Pearl smiled. “You flatter me.”

“You’re so pretty, Pearl!” Esther leaped off her chair.

The black dress complemented Pearl flawlessly, with only a few small diamonds adorning the corners

of her eyes. She exuded a captivating charm.

Esther felt somewhat inferior upon seeing Pearl's beauty. "You're so pretty. I'll look worse beside you in the ad."

While Esther was filled with admiration for Pearl's stunning appearance, she also felt a sense of humility.

Amused, Pearl affectionately pinched Esther's soft cheek. "Stop overthinking. The makeup I did for you is very pretty too. I'm sure you'll get a lot of fans. Besides, I'm not part of the entertainment industry.

Just

relax."

Her words filled Esther with pure joy. Esther lifted her chin and said smugly, "Well, yeah. I'm Barbie."

Pearl suddenly realized that Esther wasn't as mean as she initially thought. Instead, she was simply straightforward and honest, especially when compared to others in the entertainment industry who often beat around the bush.

"Yeah, Barbie. Shall we proceed with the shoot?"

Esther held Pearl's hand. "Let's go."

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Both Esther and Pearl worked seamlessly, bringing the pure angel and glamorous demon to life in their advertisement.

When the ad clip aired, it received a lot of praise.

[Oh, my Barbie is so pretty! Help, I can't catch my breath!]

[Oh, please. Pearl is the prettiest, okay? Have you ever seen a female star more glamorous than Pearl?]

[What? Stop pitting them against each other. They're both beautiful!]

[Pearl is the prettiest! You either agree or you're wrong.]

Pearl found these comments amusing. Her fans had even given her the nickname "Satan" and idolized her.

It was a Friday, and Pearl intended to collect the DNA report, but Mobius stopped her abruptly.

"Miss Pearl." Mobius looked somewhat awkward, leaving Pearl baffled.

"What's wrong?"

“Ugh...” Embarrassed, Mobius found it hard to speak up. “There’s going to be an arts festival at my university, and my team needs a singer for a performance. So, I was wondering if...” His eager expression betrayed his request.

Pearl exposed his thoughts. “You want me to help you, right?”

“Yeah.”

Touching her chin, Pearl dwelled on it briefly. “Why didn’t you ask for Hanzel’s help instead?”

“He’s even busier than Rick and is hardly ever home. That’s why I’m asking you...”

Indeed, Hanzel frequently traveled for film shoots.

Pearl nodded in agreement. “I believe this is the first time you’ve asked me for a favor. Alright, let’s out what you’ll be performing.”

Mobius immediately flashed her a smile. “Let’s go, Miss Pearl. I’ll take you there.”

As they were about to leave, a sudden knock on the door caught their attention.

go

check

Pearl opened the door to find a young woman completely covered with sunglasses, a mask, and a

scarf.

“It’s me, Pearl. I’m Esther!” Pearl heard a delicate female voice. Before she could react, Esther’s tone changed the moment she saw Mobius.

“Oh, Mobius. You’re here too...”

Mobius, impatient and slightly annoyed, responded, “You came all the way to my place. What do Can’t you focus on your work instead of stalking me every day?”

you

want?

Pearl could sense there was something extraordinary about their relationship. She turned to Mobius and

asked, “What’s going on?”

“I bumped into her in a shopping mall, where she was being harassed by a fan in a corner. I helped her out, but she insisted on giving me money, which I declined. She followed me to my university, and now she’s here at my doorstep.”

Pearl suggested, "Well, let's invite her in. She only wants to repay your kindness."

"I told her it was unnecessary, but she came here anyway. I have nothing to say to her. Just get her to leave," Mobius replied and tried to push Esther out.

Stupefied and indignant, Esther said, "Mobius, I told you I just wanted to repay you. Why do you have to be so cold to me?"

But Mobius sneered. "Repay me? Your way of repaying me was to announce in the university that I have a girlfriend?"

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Hearing that, Esther looked away. "No, I said that because I happened to see a woman pestering you."

Mobius insisted, "Just stop. This is my house. Please leave immediately."

Esther kept her head bowed, never having experienced such humiliation, and tears welled up in her eyes.

"Stop crying. I can't stand it when women cry." Mobius's frustration grew as he saw Esther's tears.

Pearl, noticing Mobius's insensitivity, shook her head and tried to console Esther. "Alright, Este. Don't cry. Despite his bad temper and sharp tongue, he's a good guy. Don't take his words to heart."

“It’s the first time someone has humiliated me like this. No, I won’t leave. I’ll stay here,” Esther declared, preparing to enter the house.

Seeing Esther’s determination, Mobius became flustered. “Fine, stop causing a scene. I’m sorry, okay?”

Esther stopped crying at his apology. “Really?”

“Yeah, I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have offended you. Just don’t approach me again. We’ll be total strangers.

What do you think?”

Total strangers...

However, his words didn’t bring her joy but rather a sense of emptiness. He had apologized, but she wasn’t sure if that was what she truly wanted.

“I...”

“Okay, just go. Miss Pearl and I have something to do,” Mobius interrupted her.

Esther widened her eyes. “Where are you guys going?”

Noticing Mobius’ impatience, Pearl answered for him, “He’s got to rehearse for a competition at the university.”

“What kind of competition? Can I help?”

Pearl sized Esther up and agreed, “If a popular star like you joins their performance, winning the competition should be easy.”

However, Mobius immediately rejected their offer. “No, I don’t want to. I already told you we’re going to

be strangers.

“Are you a coward, Mobius? You’re rejecting me because you’re worried I’ll steal your spotlight?”

Esther, aware of Mobius’s impulsive nature, intentionally provoked him.

As expected, Mobius couldn’t resist rising to the bait, sneering, “Stop flattering yourself. It’s not like everyone likes you.”

“Then why won’t you let me join your performance? You’re scared, aren’t you? It’s alright. I’m generous and won’t steal your spotlight.” Esther watched Mobius from the corner of her eye.

Rolling his eyes, Mobius gave in. “Fine, come along. I don’t think everyone will vote for you just because you’re pretty.” He was indirectly complimenting Esther’s looks...

Esther beamed with delight. “It’s settled, then!”

“Don’t get too excited. It’ll be very embarrassing if you fail to create a great impact, given you’re a

famous

star.”

Seeing that they had reached an agreement, Pearl decided to stop intervening. “Alright, I’ll leave you

two to it. I won’t join because I have other plans.”

But Mobius said anxiously, “Miss Pearl, you’ve got to be in this show...”

“Why? My fan base is just as strong as hers. What’s there to be afraid of?” Esther was very confident.

Pearl stifled a laugh and pushed them out of the house. “Alright, hurry to the university for the

rehearsal. I’m going out too.”