

YOUR GUISE 231

Chapter 231

“But it’s great to get engaged earlier.”

As long as they were engaged, Pearl would be Richard’s fiancée, no longer the prospective Waldorf family bride. She would belong solely to Richard.

Unable to bear the awkward atmosphere any longer, Pearl made an excuse and excused herself.

After sitting for a while beside the flower bed, Pearl was joined by someone unexpected.

“Why didn’t you agree to the engagement just now, Pearl?” It was Hanzel, who appeared crestfallen.

He forced a smile as he spoke.

“I think it’s too rushed, and I’m not that close with Richard. I can’t just get engaged with him like that.”

Pearl did have feelings for Richard, but she believed that before making such a commitment, they should ensure they were compatible for a lifelong partnership.

“I envy you guys. You didn’t rush things like I did. I just charged ahead and confessed my feelings directly, which was foolish. Besides, I’m not as accomplished or rich as Rick. So, of course, you wouldn’t choose me, given the comparison.”

Pearl finally noticed the bottle of wine in Hanzel's hand, which appeared to contain strong alcohol.

Hanzel took a swig from the bottle, forcing a bitter smile.

or

"No, you're not worse, Hanzel. Many people admire you and dream of having you. Why do you think so

poorly of yourself?" Pearl smiled warmly, trying to comfort him. "I don't like you because we didn't meet

under the right circumstances, perhaps fate has determined that I'm not the one for you. Your perfect

match is still out there, waiting for you in the future."

Moved by Pearl's words, Hanzel looked up with a mix of hope and puzzlement. "Really?"

"Absolutely! You're only twenty, and you have a long journey ahead of you. Are you afraid you won't

find someone you like?" Pearl extended her hand, offering a piece of candy. "Here, have this candy. It

might help you feel a bit better. I'm truly grateful to you for all your help. We can be good friends, can't

we?"

"Good friends..." Hanzel accepted the candy but held onto it tightly without eating it. He smiled and

asked, "Why are you treating me like a child, offering me candy? I'm a grown-up now. I can't eat

candy.”

Raising her brows, Pearl disagreed. “Why not? I like eating candies. Shouldn’t we have some sweetness in our difficult lives?”

Hanzel realized that someone like Pearl, who had reached her current position without a powerful background, must have faced numerous hardships and challenges in life. Her struggles might have exceeded his own, as he had grown up with great care and protection.

Given that, he thought it was childish to focus only on romantic relationships.

“Did you see it through?” Pearl tilted her head, her smile gentle in the moonlight.

“Yeah, I think I have.” Hanzel rose to his feet, one hand in his pocket. “I believe I should focus more on my career.”

He was really promising and humble.

“If you manage to sign with Brilliance Entertainment, you’ll need to part ways with your current agent,”

Pearl replied, her tone serious as she shifted the conversation to work matters.

Smiling, Hanzel picked up on the topic. “Are you still willing to be my agent?”

His question, however, struck him as somewhat stupid.

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“Oh, I almost forgot. Rick wanted you to be the vice president of the company. Of course, you’ll get too busy to be my agent.” Laughing at himself, Hanzel sighed. “It’s okay. I’m sure the president of Brilliance Entertainment will get me a new agent.”

Pearl felt a bit awkward but knew he was right. As the president, she really should get him a new agent.

“Do you happen to know someone named Clem, Hanzel?” Pearl suddenly remembered that Clem had asked for her assistance in introducing a celebrity. Apparently, he needed a star to manage, as he had been working at Brilliance Entertainment for a few days and was feeling restless.

Hanzel pondered for a moment and then recalled knowing Clem. He had heard that Clem was highly talented but not yet famous because his talents had gone unrecognized. Clem had previously worked as an agent for a female star but had resigned for some undisclosed reason.

Hanzel wondered if Clem had joined Brilliance Entertainment. “Ugh... Are you suggesting that he becomes my agent?”

Grinning, Pearl snapped her fingers. “Bingo!”

“But I’ve heard that he has great taste and standards, and he only manages stars with exceptional talent. He won’t take on just any ordinary star.”

Hanzel was unsure if Clem would accept him, as he had heard that Clem preferred to work with highly talented stars. Clem was known for his ability to handle even the most arrogant and difficult celebrities, but he wouldn’t represent ordinary talents with no potential.

“Ordinary star? Are you doubting your own worth?” Pearl lazily glanced at Hanzel. “You seem to have forgotten that you were once nominated for best actor, and your fan base is growing rapidly. You might not have reached the top tier yet, but you’re far from ordinary. If Clem becomes your agent, I’m confident you’ll ascend to the A-list in no time.”

“Alright, thank you, Pearl.”

Pearl chuckled. “No need to thank me. It’s not a big deal.” If Clem found out that his first assignment upon starting work would be with Hanzel, he would be thrilled.

Hanzel, however, felt genuinely grateful. “It means a lot to me. You’ve given me the opportunity to be a part of Brilliance Entertainment and provided me with such an excellent agent. I should express my

gratitude properly.”

However, a moment of realization dawned on him, prompting him to ask, “How are you able to do this,

Pearl? Are you the president of Brilliance Entertainment?”

Taken aback, Pearl responded defensively, “What kind of nonsense is that? How could that even be

true? What president doesn’t work at their own company?” A wave of embarrassment then overtook

her, as she realized her own lack of responsibility, having left Wayne to manage everything.

“Okay then.” With his doubts dispelled, Hanzel nodded in agreement.

Hanzel, feeling sleepy, decided to call it a night and headed back to his room. Meanwhile, Pearl found

herself filled with energy, the evening’s conversation stirring up emotions within her.

“Oh, Richard. I just can’t figure you out,” she murmured to herself.

Nearby, Richard overheard her words. “Ask me if you’re confused. Why are you keeping your distance

from me?” His tone remained composed, but one could tell he was slightly unhappy.

Pearl hurriedly responded with a smile, “No, I’m not keeping my distance.”

“Why didn’t you agree to the engagement then?”

Richard’s question and grave tone caught Pearl off guard, leaving her momentarily speechless.

Chapter 233

“You don’t like me, do you? Or have you suddenly realized that you don’t like me at all?” Richard started doubting himself again.

“No, it’s not that. I just feel like things are moving a bit too fast. I’ve never been in a relationship before, so I don’t really know...” Pearl stumbled over her words, her explanation coming out somewhat clumsily, which surprised Richard.

“You’ve never been in a relationship?” Richard found it hard to believe that Pearl, who appeared so experienced and attractive to men, was actually quite inexperienced and naive when it came to love.

“What’s the big deal? Are you looking down on me?” Blushing, Pearl didn’t expect Richard to mock her for her lack of romantic experience.

“Hasn’t anyone ever tried to win your heart?”

Pearl tilted her head in thought. “Well, I guess a few have tried, but no one has ever succeeded.”

However, Richard wasn’t satisfied with that answer. “What about Hanzel?”

“No, not even with Hanzel. It’s not like I’ve fallen in love with anyone, and no one has fallen in love with me either. Maybe it’s because I was always the champion of the school taekwondo competition.” Pearl

shook her head and continued, "Most men prefer sweet and cute women who wear dresses, not girls who know nothing but how to fight."

She recalled a time when a boy had attempted to confess his feelings to her when they were younger but got scared and ran away when he found out about her taekwondo skills. He had even called her a violent and rough girl and said that no one would ever like her.

Pearl's serious explanation made Richard's heart skip a beat. "But I do."

Pearl misunderstood Richard, thinking that he liked the type of obedient and sweet woman she had just described. She felt disheartened and kept her head down. "You also like that kind of

"No, I said I like you." It was impossible for him not to fall for her, especially considering how she had helped him through multiple crises. Moreover, her confident and radiant smile could charm anyone.

"Wow, you're really something to like a woman like me."

"Those men who didn't like you had low self-esteem and didn't deserve you. But I'm different," Richard declared confidently, never one to have low self-esteem in front of the woman he liked.

"So, I want to marry you sooner. Is that okay?" Richard took a step forward and held her hand. "Get

engaged to me. Say yes, okay?"

"Be sensible, Richard." Pearl tried to break free, but he held her hand firmly, not letting go.

"I know what I'm doing." Richard shook his head and pulled her into his arms. "This time, you don't get to choose. You can only choose to say yes."

"Are you always this overbearing, Richard?"

Richard answered honestly, "I thought I should listen to your opinion before, but you were very annoying. You always made me sad, so this time, you have to listen to me."

Chapter 234

Pearl was rendered speechless by Richard's flirtatiousness.

"So, I want to be with you and get engaged sooner. You can't run away from me for the rest of your life then," Richard continued, his tone filled with determination.

Taking advantage of a brief pause in their conversation, Pearl managed to slip out of his embrace. "Do you still remember my words, Richard?"

Enlightened, Richard stopped trying to hold her. "You asked me to win you over before being my girlfriend."

“Yeah, that’s right. I believe two people in a healthy relationship should take the time to get to know each other before deciding if they’re right for each other. Do you understand where I’m coming from?”

Richard nodded. “Yes, I won’t force you anymore.”

“Thank you.” Pearl finally smiled at him. “Please take good care of me, my future boyfriend.” She then extended her hand to shake hands with him, but he pulled her into his arms again.

“I’ll be waiting for you to say yes.” With that, he k*ssed her tenderly, as if he were confident of his victory.

Pearl found herself unable to forget that passionate k*ss even after she had returned to her bedroom, leading to a restless night.

The following morning, she woke up late and was greeted by a heated argument downstairs before she could even make it down the stairs.

When she reached the bottom of the stairs, she asked Dustan, who seemed furious, “What happened, Mister Dustan?”

However, Dustan appeared greatly infuriated, slamming his hand on the table and yelling into his phone, "Come home now, Hugo!"

Pearl couldn't help but wonder what had driven Hugo to infuriate Dustan so much, especially since he was usually docile around others. Before she could ponder it further, she heard Hugo's indifferent voice responding, "Don't meddle in my business, Dad. You've always cared more about Richard than you have about me."

"What nonsense, Hugo! Listen, come home now!" Dustan demanded.

Though Hugo initially refused, he eventually relented, saying, "Fine, I'll come home later."

Seeing that Dustan was trembling, Pearl gently placed her hand on his chest to help calm him down.

"It's alright, Mister Dustan. Is there perhaps some misunderstanding?"

Dustan's eyes widened. "Misunderstanding? Do you have any idea what he's done, Pearl? He sold the hospital this morning, and it was one of his b*dyguards who informed me. How dare Hugo keep this from me? And not only that, he's also become a part of Lawson Enterprises. Do you understand what this means? Lawson Enterprises has always been in fierce competition with Waldorf Enterprises, and

Hugo is about to become our enemy!”

After sharing this, Dustan sat down to have a sip of water, his anger making him shaky. The act of drinking helped him regain some composure.

Pearl, on the other hand, couldn’t have imagined that Hugo would act so quickly and abruptly.

Chapter 235

After choosing Richard the previous night, Pearl noticed Hugo’s lack of emotional reaction, leaving her perplexed about his sudden change in behavior today. Nevertheless, the situation had escalated to this point, and they needed to wait for Hugo’s return to confront him.

Hugo rushed home swiftly, wearing a smile as if he had encountered something good.

“I’ll give you another chance to explain yourself, Hugo. Why did you sell the hospital and join Lawson Enterprises?” Dustan demanded, his anger palpable.

Hugo nonchalantly took a seat and crossed his legs, which was very far from his usual attitude. This strange transformation left those around him feeling uneasy. “You have no right to stop me from working at Lawson Enterprises, especially since you forbade me from being part of Waldorf

Enterprises.”

Dustan stared at Hugo in disbelief. “Are you even listening to yourself? Don’t you realize that it’s in your best interest that I kept you out of Waldorf Enterprises?”

Hugo scoffed. “In my best interest? You’re only concerned that I might compete with Richard for the position of president. Even Sean, who’s so useless, managed to become the vice president, but I never even had a chance. It’s ridiculous! Dad, aren’t you playing favorites?”

Dustan gaped but couldn’t say anything for a moment.

Hearing that, Pearl frowned. “Don’t speak to Mister Dustan this way, Hugo.”

Hugo’s eyes turned cold as he retorted, “I’m talking to my dad, Pearl. You’re an outsider, so just shut up.”

Dustan’s anger flared up, and he snapped, “Don’t speak that way with Pea, Hugo! She’s your future sister-in-law, not an outsider!”

Hugo dismissed Dustan’s reprimand, his eyes growing colder. “Of course, I understand. All of you favor Richard, and he’s the only one you value. That’s why you prevented me from standing out and assigned me a lousy hospital. I admit that you gave me a hospital just to secure my position in this

world, but I can't figure out why you didn't let me work at the company."

Hearing that, Dustan's fury subsided a little. With a heavy sigh, he said, "Oh, Hughie, you're overthinking this."

Dustan had always seen Hugo as a docile and non-competitive child, which was why he had never pressured him into anything. He believed it was simply Hugo's nature and had always acted out of concern for his son. Little did he know that his past decisions had caused such deep-seated resentment in Hugo.

"What's the matter? Just keep going. I want to see how you're going to lie to me." Hugo no longer believed in Dustan.

"You weren't like this when you were younger, Hughie. You were obedient and always followed my lead. You were exceptionally diligent, but perhaps you were too gentle. I protected you because I feared you might be mistreated. I took great care of you to keep you from harm's way.

"I remember you once told me about your dream of becoming a doctor who saves lives when you were a child. That's why I supported your dream and even bought you that hospital. I never anticipated that

you'd harbor such thoughts. It's my fault for not understanding your feelings sooner."

Dustan's sincere apology touched Pearl, but it seemed to have little effect on Hugo.

He laughed bitterly. "You might have moved me if I didn't know the truth, but now I know everything.

Dad, or should I say Mister Dustan? After all, I'm not a Waldorf, right?"

Dustan never imagined that Hugo would discover the truth, causing his face to pale. "How did you find

out?" He couldn't understand how Hugo had learned the truth, especially considering that he had even

burned the evidence of adoption in their

home.

Hugo responded with icy detachment, "The how isn't important. What matters is that you can stop lying

to me. You were nice to me out of guilt and fear of karma, right? You never saw me as your son!"

A pang struck Dustan. "What do you mean?"

Hugo's eyes grew even colder. "You killed my biological father, didn't you?"

Chapter 236

Hugo's contorted face sent shivers down Dustan's spine. "Do you know what you're talking about,

Hughie?"

However, Hugo's sneer was extremely frosty. "Yes, I do. You killed my parents in a car accident and made me an orphan. Then you forced yourself to take me in because you feared karma. Well, I'm aware of all that."

"That's not how it was, Hughie. Your father caused the accident because of drunk driving, and I happened to come across the scene, finding you as the sole survivor. I felt pity for you, alone and covered in blood. That's why I adopted you. I'm not the one responsible for killing your parents."

But Hugo responded with another derisive sneer, seemingly anticipating Dustan's denial. "You'll need a better story than that, Mister Dustan. Do you think I'll still believe you?"

A month ago, Hugo accidentally uncovered the truth that he wasn't a Waldorf but the son of a truck driver. Shocked by this revelation, he attempted to drown his sorrows but encountered the president of Lawson Enterprises, who disclosed the hidden truth to him. It was a secret that had been concealed from him for over two decades.

He discovered that Dustan was the man responsible for his parents' deaths, making him his own enemy. That discovery, on top of having been deeply suppressed for many years, had tainted his character. There was simply no turning back now.

Seeing Dustan's guilty expression only fueled Hugo's resentment further. "That's enough. Starting today, I'll sever all ties with the Waldorf family."

Hugo turned away coldly, his gaze passing over Pearl as he sneered. "I heard that anyone who marries Pearl will receive twenty percent of Waldorf Enterprises' shares. I guess you wanted to give that to Richard right from the start."

Stunned, Dustan asked, "How did you know that?"

"That's irrelevant, but your bias is really disgusting." With those words, he began to leave, but Pearl stopped him.

"Mister Dustan has taken care of you for all these years, Hugo. Don't you have any gratitude for him?"

Even a dog knows to thank its master-Hugo was too cruel.

"Gratitude?" Hugo turned back, anguish creeping into his expression. "I was willing to compromise even after learning the truth, but now that I know he killed my father, why should I be grateful to my enemy?" He had lost his usual composure, consumed by hatred.

After Hugo left, Dustan was left in shock and anguish, while Pearl grappled with mixed emotions.

“Don’t let the sadness get to you, Mister Dustan. I’m sure Hugo is blinded by anger and will eventually come to understand you.”

Hugo had carried these feelings for a long time, and what happened last night was just a catalyst for his outburst. It was clear now why he had been so eager to marry Pearl—he had his eyes on those shares.

With Pearl now in a relationship with Richard, Hugo no longer needed to pretend, revealing his true intentions.

“I hope so. I wonder what those Lawson Enterprises b*stards had said to Hughie to make him believe that I was responsible for his parents’ deaths.”

As Dustan began to cough violently, Pearl quickly fetched some tissues, and they came back stained with blood.

“You’re coughing up blood because you’re so agitated, Mister Dustan,” she remarked.

Seeing the bloodstains on the tissues, Dustan struggled to breathe through his fury before ultimately blacking out.

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Pearl grabbed her phone and called Richard. "Richard, you need to come home right now. Mister

Dustan is in trouble!"

"What happened?" Richard immediately turned his car around and drove back to Waldorf Residence.

When he rushed home and saw Dustan lying on the ground, his lips stained with blood, with a worried

Pearl nearby, he frowned. "What's going on?"

Pearl explained, "Hugo learned that he isn't a Waldorf and mistakenly believes Mister Dustan is the

person who had killed his parents. He even sold the hospital and has gone to Lawson Enterprises."

"Mister Dustan asked him to come home, but Hugo said those hurtful things and made Mister Dustan

furiously," she added.

Richard hadn't anticipated such a dramatic turn of events within his family. "I had a feeling that Hugo's

true nature would eventually come to light."

But he didn't dwell too much on Hugo's actions at the moment. His primary concern was his father's

well-being.

After driving Dustan to the hospital, both Pearl and Richard sat by his hospital bed, their emotions a

mix of complex feelings.

“I don’t know what Hugo’s planning, but I suspect he might seek revenge with Lawson Enterprises’

support. We’ll have to wait and see. If they try to harm the company, we’ll be ready for it,” Pearl calmly

analyzed the situation.

Her calm assessment contrasted with Richard’s troubled expression. She could sense his unspoken

worries.

“Are you sad, Richard? Hugo was your brother, and now he’s turned against you all. I’m sure this must

be really tough for you.

In silence, Richard was visibly moved by her words.

Sighing, Pearl continued, “You can’t blame yourself for this, Richard. It was Hugo who failed to see the

bigger picture and chose this path. It’s not your fault, and you shouldn’t burden yourself with the

responsibility of being his older brother.”

Richard looked at Pearl, his emotions overwhelming him. Suddenly, he took a step closer and

embraced her.

This time, Pearl didn't awkwardly push him away. Instead, she patted his back to offer comfort. Despite

Richard being a decisive and ruthless person, and even though his relationship with Hugo wasn't

particularly close, they had been brothers

for over twenty years.

After some time, Richard had already regained his composure.

"How is Dad's doing, Rick?" Both Hanzel and Mobius rushed to the hospital and were worried by the

sight of the unconscious

Dustan in bed.

As they hurriedly entered the room, Pearl quickly released her embrace from Richard, her heart racing.

"He's fainted out of anger, but he's okay. Don't worry," Pearl assured them.

"Ramona informed me about the situation at home while I was on my way here," Mobius said, his

temper flaring as he inwardly cursed Hugo upon hearing the news. "What an ungrateful b*stard! Just let

him go. Don't worry about him!"

Hanzel, on the other hand, remained composed but cold. "It's pointless to mourn for someone like him

since he chose to cut ties with us."

Chapter 238

“Alright, Mobius. You should go back to class now. I’ll stay here to take care of Dad,” Richard

suggested, suddenly realizing that Mobius had skipped class to be there, and it didn’t sit well with him.

“I want to stay and look after Dad, Rick. You’re busy with work, so you should head to the company,”

Mobius insisted, despite his usual obedience to Richard.

“Okay, stop arguing, you two. I’m jobless now, and I can take care of Dad here. You guys just go do

your thing.” Hanzel’s words were the most persuasive, and Richard nodded and agreed to it after a little

deliberation.

Richard drove Mobius back to the university, and as they arrived, Mobius spotted a familiar figure at the

entrance.

Pearl also recognized the person and exclaimed in surprise, “Isn’t that Esther?”

Esther was walking hand in hand with a man toward the university’s entrance. The man seemed

vaguely familiar to Mobius- he was a notorious troublemaker in the university, known for his good looks

and the attention he received from girls.

“Is Esther in love?” Pearl commented, although she quickly realized her mistake and fell silent. She

knew that Esther had a crush on Mobius, and it seemed unlikely that she would move on so quickly,

even if she could be somewhat fickle.

“I don’t care about who she likes.” Unconcerned, Mobius averted his gaze but still secretly observed

Esther out of the corner of his eye.

Suddenly, the man reached out and pulled Esther into his arms.

Mobius couldn’t bear it any longer. He marched forward and grabbed Esther’s hand. “How can you hug

another guy on the street like this, Esther?”

When Esther saw Mobius, her face lit up with surprise and delight. But she was taken aback by his

intense questioning. “What hug? Oh, you mean him. He’s-”

The man, noticing Mobius’ agitation, figured out the situation and smiled, embracing Esther’s

shoulders. “I guess you’re the one Este talks about. You’re Mobius, right? You’re pretty famous in our

university.”

“Yeah, I’ve heard of you too. Not exactly known for being a nice guy,” Mobius replied bluntly, his

irritation obvious as he watched the man’s hands on Esther.

Glaring at Mobius, Esther demanded, "What are you talking about? Why do you say he's not a nice guy?"

"What's the matter? Are you upset that I criticized your new boyfriend?" Mobius snorted. "Just a few days ago, you claimed to like me and wanted to be my girlfriend, and now you're with someone else. You're quite something."

Esther initially felt anxious and was about to cry, but she realized that Mobius might be jealous, which sparked newfound confidence. She wondered if Mobius' behavior indicated that he had feelings for her.

Jealousy... did that mean he liked her?

With her newfound confidence, Esther retorted, "Why do you care who I'm with, Mobius?"

"Oh, wonderful. I won't interfere, no matter who you're with. But do you even know who this guy is?"

He's a notorious

troublemaker in our university. Is that the kind of guy you want to be with?" Mobius then looked away coldly. "I have no respect for you."

Aggrieved, Esther wanted to refute, but Mobius suddenly walked away.

“Mobius!”

Chapter 239

Mobius walked into the university without looking back.

“Look at the guy you like! He doesn’t even respect you, and he’s so arrogant. Honestly, you should have moved on from him a long time ago,” Lifting his head, Esther’s cousin blew at his bangs in a somewhat gangster-like fashion, but he still managed to look handsome.

“Why did you have to provoke him like that, cousin?” Gloomy, Esther felt that it was her cousin’s fault that Mobius had left in a huff.

“Would he have shown that he cared about you if I hadn’t provoked him? Alright, I’m going back to class now. Tell my mother that I didn’t skip class,” Esther’s cousin replied before turning and heading into the university.

When Esther turned around and saw Pearl and Richard standing nearby, she was stunned. “What are you doing here?”

Hearing that, Pearl burst into laughter. “We wouldn’t have witnessed such a strange misunderstanding

if we hadn't been here.

"Oh, you heard all that..." Esther blushed and lowered her head, feeling embarrassed that they had

seen her lie to Mobius with

her cousin.

"Mobius has a quick temper, and he can be harsh with his words. You'll need to figure out ways to deal

with him if you want to be his girlfriend," Pearl advised, trying to encourage Esther.

Esther nodded. "Got it. But Pearl, I need your help with something."

"What is it?"

Esther hesitated before explaining, "Well, it's my eighteenth birthday next Wednesday, and I'd like to

invite Mobius to my birthday party. Can you help ask him to come?"

"Why don't you invite him yourself?"

Esther sighed. "I've tried approaching him several times, but he doesn't want to see me. Please help

me, Pearl, I really want

him to be there."

Pearl agreed to help Esther with her request. After saying goodbye to Esther, Pearl and Richard returned to Waldorf Enterprises.

Richard immediately convened a meeting with the company's executives and formally appointed Pearl as the vice president.

Sophia, who had been recently promoted to the design director role, was the first to express her reservations. Pearl had only been with the company for a short time, and Sophia felt that her promotion was against company rules.

"I'm not sure about this, Mister Richard." Sophia hesitated, "Pearl lacks experience in this role, and she's not even an employee here. Promoting her to vice president so suddenly might not be in line with company policies."

Pearl had long anticipated that kind of statement from Sophia. Smiling, she said, "You're mistaken, Miss Sophia. Didn't you also get promoted from a regular employee to the design director position not too long ago? And it's not like you earned your promotion solely based on your qualifications. You simply took advantage of the situation. It's no surprise that you fail to see the bigger picture."

Pearl's sharp retort left Sophia pale and flustered. "You've crossed the line, Pearl. I earned my

promotion based on my qualifications. Moreover, I graduated from the top design school in Enswood with honors. I am more than qualified to be the design director.”

Sophia’s confidence was apparent when she mentioned her academic achievements. She believed her qualifications made her the rightful design director and was unapologetic about it.

Chapter 240

“Isn’t everyone here a graduate of a top university? The two directors sitting before you were top students from Ancard’s universities. As for your experience, I doubt you have any noteworthy designs to showcase. Besides, when I reviewed your past Christmas exclusive jewelry, I found that there’s a reason for its mediocre sales.”

Pearl’s words struck right at the heart of Sophia’s confidence, dismantling it within seconds.

Suddenly, Sophia felt like a laughingstock, as if she were trying to teach the fish how to swim and failing miserably, causing humiliation rather than success.

“We’re colleagues, Pearl. How could you say that about me...” Sophia feigned innocence, wearing a pure expression, which soon elicited sympathy from some of the male colleagues.

Unable to outwit Pearl, Sophia played the victim card, but Pearl exposed her manipulative tactic. “So you resort to tears when you can’t win an argument. Are these the kind of petty tricks you’ve learned in the company, Miss Sophia?”

Stunned, Sophia was struck dumb on the spot, not knowing how to respond.

Richard cleared his throat, casting a glance at the quarreling pair. “Alright, let’s stop this bickering. I’ve made my decision. Does anyone else want to voice their opinion?”

After that, he looked at Pearl with a doting gaze. Her words would make Sophia sad for a while.

Lazily, Sean raised his hand. “I have something to say.”

Pearl braced herself, anticipating that Sean was about to stir up trouble again, but his next statement took her by surprise.

“I’d like to request a leave of absence for a few months to travel. In my stead, Pearl can take over as vice president.”

Richard’s decision, coupled with Sean’s surprising request, left Sophia with little room to continue her protest. She glared at

Pearl with intense hatred.

“Then it’s settled,” Richard declared, finalizing his decision.

After the meeting, Sophia approached Pearl humbly. “I apologize for my harsh words during the meeting, Miss Pearl. Please don’t take it personally. I was only expressing my concerns about the company and not questioning your abilities.”

Despite Sophia’s conciliatory words, Pearl saw through her act. Sophia was likely worried that Pearl, as the new vice president, might target her and try to force her out of the company.

However, Pearl had no intention of participating in such schemes. She had too much on her plate already.

“Don’t worry. Just focus on your work and don’t offend me. I won’t do anything to you,” Pearl replied with a smile. “Let’s work together for the sake of the company’s success.”

“Okay, Miss Pearl. But you’ve got a lot of resources when you were the design director...”

Pearl finally realized that Sophia was seeking access to her professional network and resources.

“It’s been a while, and I can’t recall who they are anymore... Besides, aren’t you the design director now, Miss Sophia? I’m sure it won’t be difficult for you to establish those connections on your own.”

Pearl continued typing on her computer, sounding somewhat disinterested.