

YOUR GUISE 371

Chapter 371

Pearl couldn't ignore the fact that Dustan's reaction spoke volumes. It was evident that he didn't want her to be with Richard, but no one had explained why. It felt like they were conspiring against her in silence.

"I'm done so I'm going to sleep," Pearl casually said as she stood up and headed to her room.

"Pea, what's going on?" Mobius noticed she hadn't touched her food.

"Stay out of it, kid," Sean said. He sensed that something was amiss, though he didn't fully understand the conflict between them. Based on their reactions, it seemed like Pearl had been stripped of her right to be Richard's wife. However, he didn't want to get involved in the family drama

In her room, Pearl sat on the bed, lost in thought, unable to comprehend why she was being treated this way.

Suddenly, her phone rang-it was Wayne calling.

"Yes?" she answered.

Wayne, always perceptive, immediately noticed something was wrong. "What's up, Pea? You sound

tired.”

Pearl frowned hearing the noise coming from Wayne’s end. “You’re at a bar?”

“Yes, the usual, Dark Bar. Come over.”

Pearl had initially planned to clean up and go to bed, but Wayne’s enthusiastic invitation piqued her interest and dispelled her sleepiness.

She went downstairs and drove to the Dark bar.

The bar was lively and noisy as usual. Pearl headed to their usual booth and found Wayne sitting alone, holding a drink.

She grabbed a bottle of beer and downed it in one go. “What’s up? You look even sadder than I am.”

Wayne almost choked on his drink. “No, I’m not. What’s going on with you? Did Richard allow you to go out for drinks at this hour?”

“Don’t mention him!” The mere mention of Richard’s name made Pearl gulp down more alcohol.

Wayne set down his bottle and asked, “What happened? Did you two have a fight?”

Pearl shook her head. “We didn’t argue, but it looks like we’re headed for a breakup.”

“A breakup? Did you run into a problem you couldn’t solve and had to break up?” Wayne’s expression

was exaggerated.

"I don't know." Pearl leaned back on the seat, lacking her usual energy.

Suddenly, Wayne recalled something he had heard and couldn't resist asking, "Is it because of Jenny?

I saw it in the news. She's Richard's first love, right?"

Pearl's lips twitched. "I don't think so." She trusted Richard. Even if he were holding Jenny's hand, she

would still trust him. Wayne rolled his eyes and said, "You don't understand men at all. They never

forget their first loves."

"Oh?" Pearl became intrigued. "Are you saying you've never forgotten your first love either?"

"Of course..."

"Ah!" Suddenly, a commotion broke out at the neighboring table, and one of the girls entertaining

guests was pushed to the floor

The person who did that scolded her, "I can't touch you at a bar? Then what are you here for? Who do

you think you pure virgin?"

The girl started crying, and her maid costume appeared wrinkled, giving her an unkempt appearance.

are? Some

“Grab her. I’m going to show her where a woman belongs!” The man signaled to the men around him,

and they forcefully

grabbed the girl’s hand.

Despite her tears, the girl tried to resist, kicking and punching, but they were much stronger, and she

couldn’t break free.

Pearl was prepared to intervene, but Wayne acted first. He walked over and kicked the man who was

holding the girl. “Who do you think you are, causing trouble in Dark?”

The man, realizing he was going to be on the losing end, yelled, “Who do you think you are? How dare

you hit my men!” He glared at Wayne but didn’t dare to escalate the situation. “I’ll remember this!”

“Get out of here!” Pearl gave him behind a kick. The man quickly escaped from the place, not wanting

any more pain.

Trembling, the girl managed to sit down on a nearby couch and expressed her gratitude. “Thank you. I

might have been seriously hurt if it weren’t for you...”

Although the girl wasn’t exceptionally beautiful, her innocent appearance made her an easy target for

vile men.

Wayne, who had always been nonchalant, remained silent. Pearl noticed that his eyes were filled with emotion and appeared watery.

“Wayne?” The girl froze when she lifted her head.

Wayne nodded and smiled politely. “Lynette, it’s me.”

“What are you doing here? What a coincidence. You’re back” Lynette DeFeo was taken aback, her excitement obvious.

“Yes, I returned not too long ago. Why are you...” Wayne didn’t complete his sentence, but it was clear that he was referring to her job.

Lynette knew her job was not highly regarded, so she stopped smiling.

Pearl guessed who Lynette was and feared that Wayne might say something that would frighten her away, so she intervened, Miss Lynette, I can lend you some money if you need it, and you don’t have to repay me.”

As women, they both understood that Lynette was likely in this line of work because of financial

difficulties.

“Really?” Lynette paused. Her eyes briefly lit up before dimming again. “It’s alright, I can manage on my own.”

Pearl could sense that Lynette was a resilient girl with a gentle disposition, which likely contributed to Wayne’s attraction to

her.

So, she suggested, “You don’t have to work here. How about becoming a hostess? It’s not as bad as entertaining the guests, and you can earn a bit more.”

Working as a hostess wouldn’t bring in a substantial income, but it would certainly be better than her current situation. “Alright, thank you!” Lynette was overjoyed at the prospect of earning money without having to entertain guests, so she readily agreed.

Recognizing that Wayne and Lynette had a lot to catch up on, Pearl said, “I’ll go for a walk. You two can chat.”

Wayne nodded gratefully, and Pearl left them to continue their conversation. She walked over to the bar and ordered a drink while waiting

As she sipped her cocktail, she spotted Richard sitting in a booth not too far away, with Jenny sitting very close to him.

“Why do they have to be here?!” Pearl was enraged. Slowly, she made her way over to them after picking up her freshly mixed drink

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“What do you want to drink, Rick? I’ll go order it,” Jenny said, leaning against Richard and being very flirtatious, but she no longer looked the same way as when they were in university.

Richard kept his eyes shut, clearly annoyed. “You should go home.”

Unfazed, Jenny continued to press herself against him. “Rick, I just want to spend some time with you.

You’re not that petty, are you?”

Richard finally opened his eyes and pushed her away with irritation. “How did you even know I’m here?”

Jenny persisted but changed her approach. “Our minds are connected, Rick. But okay, I’ll stop teasing you. Hugo told me you were here.”

“Why would Hugo know I’m here?” Richard squinted and immediately felt uncomfortable.

Jenny decided to play on Richard's strained relationship with his brother. "I think it's because he cares about you, Rick. You two had that argument, and he wants to apologize. He told me he'd find a chance to apologize to you."

Though Richard was skeptical, he didn't press further. He then noticed Pearl approaching them.

Jenny noticed Pearl too and leaned on Richard's side, addressing her with annoyance, "Oh, isn't this Pearl? What are you doing here?"

Pearl scoffed. "It's none of your business."

Jenny continued to provoke her. "Of course, it's none of my business, but good women don't usually come to bars in the middle of the night, especially when they're dating someone. When I was with Richard, he never allowed me to come to bars." She smiled nostalgically at her memories.

Pearl finished her drink in one go and shot back, "Richard never tried to control me like that. Maybe it's because you don't exactly have the best reputation."

"What did you say?" Jenny was visibly angered. Pearl's sharp tongue left no room for subtlety. Turning to Richard, she complained, "Look at your girlfriend, Rick She's so fiery and not gentle at all."

Richard kept silent and didn't want to speak up for her.

Pearl, fed up with their conversation, suggested, "Richard, shall we go home?"

Richard was still silent and slowly closed his eyes.

"Can't you see he's not having a good time, Pearl? Why don't you let him enjoy himself? You're being quite inconsiderate." Jenny tried to appear caring for Richard.

Pearl glared at Jenny. "I'm talking to Richard. You should shut up." Her typically soft and expressive eyes now held a fiery intensity, causing Jenny to tremble. Pearl was not one to be trifled with when she was angry.

Finally, Richard spoke up. "Pearl, you should go home." He was clearly dismissing her.

Pearl took a step forward, her eyes reflecting defeat and pain. "You want me to leave?"

Richard remained neutral and said nothing

Determined, Pearl took a deep breath and declared, "I won't."

Jenny, on the other hand, relished the situation. To her, this was Richard protecting her, and she was delighted. She believed that if she persisted, Richard would eventually fall for her again.

Continuing to provoke Pearl, she said, "Why are you being so shameless, Pearl? Rick asked you to

leave, so why are you still here?"

Pearl could barely contain her frustration. "Stop with your bullsh*t, Jenny, or I'll have someone throw

you out!" "Who do you think you are? Who's going to throw me out? You don't own this place!" Jenny

scoffed.

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"I do own this place!" Pearl straightened up and towered over Jenny, who was now visibly shorter than

her.

Jenny's smug expression vanished. "What do you mean?"

"I own this bar, and you're making a scene here. Do you think I won't throw you out?" Pearl enjoyed the

annoyance she was causing Jenny

The atmosphere grew tense, and after Wayne had calmed Lynette down, he walked over.

Observing how close Jenny was sitting to Richard and how he didn't push her away, Wayne's disdain

for Richard intensified. He whistled and said, "What are you doing here, Pea? I've been looking for you.

The guy in the jersey seemed quite interested in you and asked me for your number, so I gave it to

him."

Richard stayed silent, but his hand balled into a fist.

“I was still feeling guilty about it, but considering how Richard is acting, I guess he wouldn’t mind, because he’s... fooling around too,” Wayne said, dripping with sarcasm.

Pearl felt disappointed by Richard’s lack of reaction. “Let’s go.”

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“Okay, that group is waiting for you.” Wayne grabbed Pearl’s arm, preparing to leave, when suddenly

Richard stood up. His voice, though clear, carried a tinge of sadness as he said, “Let’s go home!”

Pearl froze, then scoffed. “I thought you’re not going home?”

Wayne chuckled. “Oh, that’s a shame.”

Jenny tried to stop Richard. “Why are you going home now, Rick?”

Ignoring her, Richard gazed at Pearl with quiet intensity. “Let’s go home.”

Pearl ignored him, chortled, and said, “Are you feeling jealous?”

“It’s not good for a girl to be out drinking so late.”

“Not jealous?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“Wayne works for you.”

“Well, you should ignore me,” The smile on Pearl’s face disappeared as she turned around and smiled seductively at Wayne.” Let’s go. I’m not leaving here till I’m drunk”

Pearl walked away without sparing another glance at Richard.

“Don’t feel sad for a woman like that, Rick. I’ll always be here for you.” Jenny did all she could to sound supportive and looked. at Richard with pity.

However, Richard’s response was cold. “You should go home. Being caught late at a bar wouldn’t be good for your public image, I’m sure”

Jenny leaned in closer, glanced at the half-full glass of wine, checked the time, and then smiled. “I’m not leaving. I want to spend more time here with you”

“The drug would be kicking in soon,’ she thought.

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Pearl walked to the booth not too far away and started drinking. She was determined to drown her thoughts in alcohol.

“Don’t drink so fast, Pea. There’s no point in drinking so much!” Wayne felt terrible watching her treat herself that way and wanted to curse Richard and all his ancestors. “Listen, Richard is cold as ice. You should just dump him and find someone new. You’re not married to him yet so it won’t be that bad-
Ouch!”

Before Wayne could finish his sentence, his arm was suddenly pinched.

“You can’t say that about him!” Pearl, her face flushed from the alcohol, gave him a fiery glare, even though she looked more like a tipsy child.

“Fine, fine, I won’t interfere. But remember, if Richard ever hurts you, I’ll bring down Waldorf Enterprises.”

Wayne regarded Pearl as a dear friend. Although he was usually playful, he would be the first to defend her if anything went Wrong.

“Richard... He’s such a dummy. I know he has issues, but why won’t he confide in me? Don’t you think he’s a dummy?” Pearl, her breath heavy, couldn’t stop talking about Richard even as she drank herself

into a stupor.

Wayne rolled his eyes. "Yes, yes, you're both dummies."

Pearl couldn't hear well, and when she looked at Wayne's face, it momentarily overlapped with

Richard's. She threw herself at him while giggling. "Richard, do you love me?"

"I do, I do! But you need to let me go!" Wayne's eyes widened, and Pearl was surprisingly strong. He

didn't want to push her away too forcefully, so he felt quite silly.

Pearl, having heard that he loved her, leaned in even closer, nearly planting a k*ss on his l*ps. A

moment later, someone grabbed her collar and hoisted her up.

Pearl, in her daze, turned to see an irate Richard standing there. "Oh, Richard?"

Richard didn't say a word. He glared at the stunned Wayne, then shifted his gaze back to Pearl and

sighed. "I'm taking you home."

Although Wayne didn't have a high opinion of Richard, he couldn't leave Pearl in her current state, so

he nodded and let Richard take her away. After all, Richard was her boyfriend-they should be fine

together.

Richard carried Pearl to a car parked outside, settled her into the passenger seat, and fastened her seatbelt. He didn't start the engine right away.

Pearl, now semi-conscious, looked at Richard, who appeared grim, and asked, "What's going on?"

"You k*ssed him?" Richard's tone was stern, and his eyebrows arched in accusation.

"Kissed who?" Pearl rubbed her eyes and replied in an innocent tone.

Richard leaned in closer, staring directly into her eyes. "I know you're not really drunk, Pearl."

They had drunk together before, and he was well aware of her alcohol tolerance. He could clearly see that she hadn't consumed enough to be this intoxicated.

"You're clever." Pearl smiled, and her eyes cleared up.

Richard held back his temper and said calmly, "Why did you do that?"

"Would you have come over if I hadn't?" Pearl pouted. She had chosen a seat where she knew he could see her actions.

She was right, but Richard was more astute than she gave him credit for, and even though he had seen through her little scheme, he still fell for it

"You love me, Richard. Your eyes don't lie. The way you look at me has changed."

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Richard started sweating. "I've been drugged." He could feel his b*dy heating up, and the effects of the drug were becoming more apparent.

Pearl didn't know what to say. She didn't want to look like she was throwing herself at him.

"What do you plan to do then?" Pearl felt helpless. "Why do these women love to drug you? Is sleeping with you some sort of guarantee?"

Richard thought it was Jenny. That was why when he went to grab Pearl, she threw a fit. It was because the drug she dropped in the wine was about to take effect.

"Take me to the hospital." Richard closed his eyes, appearing to be in pain.

"You don't want to do anything while a beauty like me is here with you?" Pearl joked, not wanting to take advantage of his vulnerable state.

Richard shook his head. "No."

Pearl, for some reason, felt annoyed, but she still drove him to the hospital. After a simple checkup, she asked him to stay there for further observation.

"Go home, I'll be fine here on my own," Richard told Pearl.

Ignoring his request, Pearl feigned dizziness. "I had too much to drink, and I'm feeling lightheaded now.

I was very careful while driving here, but it's illegal to drive under the influence." She then looked at

Richard and smiled cheekily at him.

Richard felt helpless and closed his eyes, choosing not to respond.

Later that night, while they were both trying to sleep, Pearl had taken a spot on the couch near the bed.

She was drifting in and out of sleep when she heard Richard's voice.

Richard saw her falling off and said, "Why don't you sleep in the bed?"

Pearl woke up. "Ignore me. Focus on getting your IV drips. I just need a nap."

Richard knew Pearl was stubborn, so he just switched off the lights. He then opened his eyes in the

dark because he couldn't sleep.

After some time, Pearl, who was on the verge of falling asleep, heard a voice.

"Pearl, this isn't worth it."

The next morning, Pearl awoke to find an empty bed. She had slept on the couch and her back was

sore. Instead of the jacket Richard had given her in her dream, she was covered by a patient's gown.

The doctor entered the room, noticed Pearl was awake, and greeted her with a smile. "You're awake, Miss Pearl."

Pearl folded up the gown and sat up, asking, "Where's the patient?"

"Mister Richard left for work early this morning and instructed us not to wake you but to let you wake up naturally."

"Alright," Pearl nodded, stretched, and went to the office too.

When she arrived, she learned that Richard had gone to Hazelton for work. They were sponsoring a series that would last for three days, and he was already on his way to the airport.

Pearl lowered her eyes. Richard was still avoiding her.

As she checked her phone, she noticed some news: "The first series starring international actress

Jenny Sullivan after returning home has officially begun filming in Hazelton."

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'So that's why...'

Jenny and Richard had both left for Hazelton, and Pearl's world suddenly grew quiet. She decided to apply for leave and moved to Brilliance.

Clem looked at her curiously. "What brings you here? You've never managed Brilliance before, and you've been focused on Richard and Waldorf Enterprises."

Pearl chuckled at being called out. "My mind is clear now."

Clem got down to business. "By the way, about the series I mentioned last time, we've signed it, and filming will start soon."

Pearl nodded. "Keep an eye on it."

Clem hesitated, then added, "But there was a condition."

"What condition?"

Clem wasn't sure how Pearl would react, but he had to share it for the sake of the project's success.

"They said... I have to bring you along for them to agree to work with us."

Pearl felt a sudden headache coming on. "Who is that person?"

"The president of NK Group, Raymond York"

Pearl was frustrated. Raymond York was a constant thorn in her side.

She slammed the desk angrily. "He's such a nuisance!"

Clem was relieved that Pearl knew him. "I'm glad you're familiar with him."

"We don't only know each other, we're enemies." She emphasized on the last word.

If Raymond knew she left Enswood and was now in Brilliance, it meant Ezra knew about that too. But

why didn't he send someone to capture her?

Clem carefully asked, "So, what's your plan? Will you go?"

Pearl's mind was a blur, but she saw how enthusiastic Clem was about this partnership, so she

reluctantly agreed. "Yes." Clem was overjoyed. "We should get some rest. If filming starts tomorrow,

we'll be heading to Hazelton."

'Hazelton?' Images of Richard and Jenny crossed Pearl's mind.

"Yes, that's where the shooting will take place," Clem confirmed.

Pearl couldn't back out now, so she simply nodded and went along with the plan.

As she boarded the plane, Esther took the seat next to Pearl, while Hanzel sat behind them, looking

rather gloomy.

"Pearl, I heard this is a great director. I've been on his shows once, and he's really nice. All the shows

he's worked on turned out great!" Esther excitedly shared, talking like a little bird.

Pearl nodded since she had also heard positive things about the director. She smiled and added,

“Jenny Sullivan will be at the same location where we’re headed. She’s filming a different series.”

Esther felt annoyed when Jenny was mentioned, recalling what Pearl had said.

Pearl’s hand froze. “What’s wrong with her?”

“Nothing, I just don’t like her. She’s a snake,” Esther bluntly stated, forgetting her surroundings.

Fortunately, they were in first class, so only Hanzel and Clem overheard that.

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Clem discreetly touched his nose and pretended he didn’t hear anything.

Pearl, concerned about Hanzel’s reaction, whispered to him, “Esther was just...

Although Pearl didn’t explicitly say “complaining,” Hanzel smiled and said, “I understand.”

Pearl paused, then smiled too.

After they disembarked from the plane, they checked into the hotel near their shooting location. Since

the hotel often hosted celebrities, no one paid much attention to them, and they were assigned four

rooms.

Esther wanted to share a room with Pearl, so they ended up with three rooms. Esther, holding onto

Pearl's arm, walked into their room.

Teasing her, Pearl asked, "Why do you want to share a room with me?"

Esther playfully replied, "Just because. When I went to the bathroom, I overheard someone say Jenny

is staying here too. I'm going to teach her a lesson if she bullies you." She then shook her fist and

bared her teeth, clearly jesting.

Pearl couldn't help but laugh at Esther's playful nature.

That evening, Pearl and Esther went downstairs to the hotel's dining area for dinner. It was evident that

Pearl was quite hungry from the way she ate.

Suddenly, someone at a nearby table scoffed, "Only a country bumpkin would eat like that."

Pearl looked up and saw Jenny staring at them with annoyance, which irritated her. Jenny seemed to

be everywhere.

Pearl retorted, "Wasn't expecting to bump into you here. Your voice gets pretty loud when Richard isn't

around." Jenny's face flushed with anger, but when she thought about Richard, her arrogance

resurfaced. "Do you know who's the investor for the first series I'm acting in after coming back? It's

Richard! I know you love Richard, but you should know that I was the woman he loved the most before you. Even Mister Dustan wants him to marry me as soon as possible.”

“If Richard and Mister Dustan love you so much, why don’t they let you live with them?” Pearl calmly picked up a slice of fresh toast.

Jenny had always been sensitive about this topic, and her smile began to fade. “I’m not comparing myself to you. You lived with them even before you were married. That’s why you were dumped.”

Esther couldn’t stand it, and she jumped up, shouting, “What are you talking about? Everyone knows Uncle Dustan loves Pearl. Who are you to give commentaries here? You’re just an ex who’s acting proud. People might think you’re the side chick who got pregnant!”

Pearl was surprised by Esther’s sharp tongue. Her smile turned into a smirk as she sipped her tea.

“Miss Jenny, if you don’t want to be shamed in front of a crowd, I suggest you keep your voice down.”

Jenny suddenly noticed that everyone was looking at her oddly, especially those who were aware of the situation between the three of them. When they heard the term ‘side chick,’ they realized what Esther was insinuating.

Jenny flushed and lowered her voice as she issued a warning to Pearl, “I’ll remember this, Pearl. I’m

not going to let you get away with this!” She then glanced around and left angrily.

Although she managed to drive Jenny away, Esther wasn’t content. Seeing Pearl lost in thought, she tried to console her. Don’t mind her. Just think of what she said as farting noises.”

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Pearl rapped her head. “That’s not a classy thing to say.”

“I’m just trying to cheer you up. Wasn’t thinking about it.” Esther rubbed her head and pouted.

Pearl suddenly realized something, “Did you tell Mobius that you’re coming here?”

Esther bit her fork. “Yes, he said he wanted to come along because school is out, but I don’t want that, so I just came over without telling him the exact dates.”

“Why? Don’t you want to spend time with him every day?” Pearl teased.

Esther frowned and sniffled. “I thought so too, but he feels like my dad. He even cares if I applied hand lotion before leaving home. I can’t stand that!”

While Esther expressed her frustration, Pearl understood that Esther still loved Mobius, but her love was no longer passive; it was starting to become more equal.

“I’m going to tell Mobius to stop caring so much,” Pearl teased once more.

Esther's expression changed. "Don't, Pearl!" Then she realized Pearl was just teasing her, and she blushed before rushing back to their room.

Pearl didn't want to return to the room yet, so she decided to take a walk in the garden. Suddenly, she received a text message from Raymond.

[Where are you? Can we meet?]

Pearl turned off her phone and pretended not to have received the message.

Just a moment later, Raymond appeared out of nowhere in front of her. "Hello, nice to see you again."

Pearl replied with a dry chuckle, "It's not nice for me," and attempted to leave.

Raymond, however, grabbed her wrist and noticed how slim it felt. Concerned, he asked, "What's going on? Why did you lose so much weight? Is Richard starving you?"

Pearl rolled her eyes. "I don't need him to feed me."

Raymond touched his nose in understanding. Then, he looked at Pearl and grinned playfully. "I heard some big news when I got to Hazelton."

Pearl shook his hand off. "What?"

“I heard Richard is here too,” Raymond said as he stood by the lake, watching the fish. His smile shifted from warm to cold.” And he came all because of Jenny.”

Pearl didn’t say anything. Even though she had expected this, hearing it again made her heart ache.

“Whatever he does or how he does it has nothing to do with me.”

Raymond raised an eyebrow and looked at Pearl. “You’re not angry about it? Your fiancé is going to be with a different woman. How can you be so calm? I’m impressed, Pearl.”

But it made sense. Pearl wasn’t like other women. That was why she was... mesmerizing.

Pearl forced a smile. “It’s impossible that I don’t mind at all, but if you keep talking about it, I’m going to push you into the lake.”

Considering the chilly December weather, being pushed into the lake would be quite uncomfortable.

Raymond responded with an “Oh.” Then he continued, “Well, how have you been lately?”

Pearl chuckled. “Don’t you guys have your eyes on me? I’m sure you know my whereabouts the first day I came back.”

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Although Raymond was called out, he didn’t look awkward.

However, Pearl said 'you guys' instead of just 'you'. Raymond maintained his smile. "Master Jordan misses you."

Pearl didn't believe him. "He would have come and captured me. Miss? He doesn't miss me. The Jordans just didn't have anyone better."

"It doesn't matter because we have a lot of time left," Raymond replied with a subtle smile before turning and returning to the hotel.

Pearl found the phrase 'a lot of time left' sounding familiar. As she pondered it, she realized it was something she had said to Richard before.

"We have a lot of time left, Richard."

But did they?

Pearl watched him walk away, sensing that he might be hiding something behind those words.

The next day, filming for the series officially began. Pearl and Esther woke up at five for makeup, outfit changes, and script memorization.

Pearl gained a new appreciation for the challenges actors faced. As they finally started shooting, one of the minor actors began to throw a fit.

“Why am I only on screen for such a short time? My makeup will go to waste! I don’t want to film this anymore!”

The director was furious. “It’s your choice then. We won’t coddle you!”

One of the assistants whispered, “Sir, we won’t find a replacement in half an hour...”

“Why can’t we pick from the extras? Are they not good enough?”

“They’re not as pretty-”

The girl became even more arrogant upon hearing that. “Well, I’m pretty, so you should give me more lines. It wouldn’t be hard to include me in every episode.”

The director was wide-eyed but had no words.

“You look like a rotten apple, and even makeup can’t cover that up. Why do you think you’re pretty? I swear it’s always the ugly ones.” Pearl didn’t hold back, targeting the girl’s insecurities with a cutting remark.

“Who are you calling ugly?” The girl stood up and stared, only to realize the criticism came from someone at least a hundred times more beautiful than her. Her anger intensified. “You’re not much

better. You've probably had a lot of work done on your nose and face."

Pearl's features were naturally stunning. Her face was petite, her nose straight, and she was even more beautiful than the female lead, Esther.

The girl was consumed by jealousy, wondering why she hadn't been blessed with such beauty.

Esther angrily scolded, "Do you know who you're talking to?"

"Who is she? She's not an actress. She's probably just a minor character like me..." The girl tried to console herself, but the next revelation was a shock

"She's our investor, the president of Brilliance-Pearl Leighton!"

"Investor? The girl went pale.

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"I'm so sorry, Miss Pearl. I was too audacious. Please forgive me. I'll do anything you ask," the girl said with a pale face. She was panicking at the thought of being kicked out, as she had told her friends she would be part of the show.

Pearl squinted at her. "Anything?"

“Of course!” the girl replied, desperate to salvage her role.

“She shouldn’t die by taking pills. If she wants to perform, let her fall into the lake,” Pearl stated, after reviewing the script and realizing that the character was supposed to die by overdosing on pills.

“But it’s so cold, and I’ll probably catch a cold if I fall into the lake...” The girl’s face turned even paler, and her voice trembled

with fear.

Pearl raised an eyebrow, looking curiously at the girl. “Didn’t you say you’d do anything? Why won’t you jump into the lake then?”

Tears welled up in the girl’s eyes as she cried out, “I’m sorry, Miss Pearl. I won’t do it again. Please don’t ask me to jump into the lake!” She almost got down on her knees to beg for mercy.

Pearl glanced at the director, Derek, who was whispering with his assistant. She noticed that Derek’s eyes were darting around nervously and decided to ask the assistant, “Mister Assistant, is there anyone else who could play this role?”

The assistant, who had just taken a bribe from the girl, was about to say no. However, under Pearl’s piercing gaze, he quickly changed his tune. “Yes, yes, of course there is.”

The assistant then selected another girl from the extras. She was young and had a seductive look, which suited the role of the evil side character.

“We do have someone who looks similar to this rotten apple.” Pearl glanced at the girl who had caused trouble and said firmly, “Please leave the set.”

The sentence effectively ended the girl’s role in the production. Hatred flashed across her eyes as she glared harshly at Pearl, then turned and left.

The director suddenly felt that working with Brilliance was a good decision, seeing how Pearl had skillfully resolved the issue for them.

The rest of the shoot proceeded smoothly. Everyone was aware that the investors were monitoring the progress, so they maintained their professionalism.

As it neared noon, Esther changed out of her costume and approached Pearl. They had a two-hour break, and Esther was eager to explore the area with Pearl.

“This is your first time here, so let me show you around. Outside of filming, this place is actually quite interesting,” Esther suggested.

Although the set was primarily designed for filming, Pearl agreed to go outside for a look. When they stepped out, they found an ancient-looking building that seemed intriguing.

Esther led her through the doors, and they discovered they were on a period drama set. Both the male and female leads appeared ethereal and enchanting. Her jaw dropped when she spotted someone drinking, and she immediately realized who it

was

It was Jenny!

Pearl grabbed Esther and said, “Why shouldn’t we look around? She didn’t buy this place. Why can’t we explore it?”

As long as they didn’t disrupt the ongoing shoot, no one could stop Pearl from exploring and enjoying the surroundings.