

Billionaire's Match Novel Chapter 21

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Love Demands Honest Hearts – Yash Malhotra 21

Chapter 21

Khloe didn't want to take up any more of Michael's time. As soon as he escorted her to the hotel elevator, she spoke up. "Thank you, Michael. I can manage from here. You should go handle your work."

Michael offered a warm smile. "Of course. If you need anything at all, just call me."

"I will." Khloe gave a small wave.

Just then, someone abruptly forced the elevator doors open. A figure slipped inside and deliberately shouldered past Khloe with surprising force, nearly knocking her off balance in the spacious cabin.

"Winnie."

Khloe had barely steadied herself when she recognized the woman in the Chanel-style tweed suit. Michael's voice came from the hallway, sharp with recognition.

Winnie Olson's long black curls cascaded down her back, her perfume so potent it seemed to stain the air. She cast a dismissive glance at Khloe before fixing her gaze on Michael. "Michael, new girlfriend?"

"Don't be ridiculous. This is my cousin, Khloe." Michael's tone carried a clear note of displeasure, though he remained civil for Winnie's sake.

"Khloe? Oh, you mean Niel's... illegitimate daughter?"

Winnie tilted her head, her eyes narrowing as she scrutinized Khloe with newfound interest.

Khloe remained silent. She had no patience for spoiled heiresses—especially one who had intentionally rammed into her hard enough to leave a bruise.

"Winnie, mind your language. She is my uncle's daughter, my cousin, and the rightful heir of the Morrison family.

“Rightful heir or not, I’m not a Morrison, so I don’t care!” Winnie retorted, jabbing the ‘close door’ button and cutting off Michael’s reply.

The elevator doors slid shut with a definitive chime. Inside, a thick silence fell. Winnie offered no apology, and Khloe didn’t expect one. It was obvious Winnie’s hostility was aimed at Michael as much as at her, and Khloe had no interest in getting involved in their drama.

When the doors opened on her floor, Khloe strode out without a backward glance.

She had just reached her suite when her phone rang. It was Michael, checking to see if she’d arrived safely.

Then, his tone careful, he explained that Winnie was the adopted daughter of the Olson family—a childhood friend of his. “She has a terrible temper, but she’s not truly malicious. Please don’t take what she said to heart.”

“The Olson family? Olson Toys?” A memory clicked into place—the Miss Olson she’d clashed with while purchasing her penthouse.

“Yes, that’s the one,” Michael confirmed.

Michael went on to explain that Mrs. Olson and Clarice were close, so the two families often socialized. The Olsons had no sons, only two daughters: Veronica, their biological child, and Winnie, the adopted one.

So the woman who had tried to snatch her penthouse must have been Veronica.

No wonder Winnie had looked at her so strangely after hearing her name. The “illegitimate daughter” slur had likely originated from Veronica, too.

The thought of navigating a gala with both of them tomorrow instantly drained Khloe’s enthusiasm. Mingling

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+25 Bonus

with society heiresses was infinitely more exhausting than any boardroom battle.

That night, jet lag from her first trip abroad kept her restless. Lying in bed, she absently scrolled through her phone until a new post from Nick appeared in her feed.

It was a beautifully shot photo of a city skyline at night, posted without a caption.

Her mind drifted back to Oscar's words on the plane.

"Khloe, have you heard of the three-day rule in dating?"

"The three-day rule?"

"It means if someone contacts you within three days of meeting, they're interested. If not... well, you can assume they're not."

He'd said it with clear curiosity about any progress between her and Nick.

But what progress could there be? Three days had passed, and he hadn't reached out once.

Khloe tapped open his profile. His avatar was another night scene—not of a city, but of a mountain range under a vast, open sky, with scattered stars gleaming bright.

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Chapter 22

Khloe hesitated for a long moment, her thumb hovering over the screen before she finally typed out a message: [Mr. Hunt, are you still awake?]

The message was sent, but it sank like a stone. She stared at her phone for twenty minutes. No reply.

Yet, his social media feed showed he had posted just a minute ago.

He was online. He was just ignoring her.

Khloe wasn't trying to be pushy. But with wolves circling from every direction, she felt a deep-seated unease. This marriage alliance was her safety net, and she had to treat it

with the same strategic diligence as a business deal. If he wouldn't make the first move, then she would.

Suddenly, her phone lit up.

Her heart leapt she thought it was Nick. She snatched it up, only to see Trey's name flashing on the screen.

Her thumb slipped, and the call connected before she could reject it.

It was too late. His voice was already coming through the speaker.

"Khloe, you haven't been answering my messages. Are you still upset?"

His tone was as gentle as ever, but tonight, to Khloe, it sounded unbearably repulsive.

She quickly held the phone away from her ear and didn't dignify his question with a direct answer.

"I was about to sleep. What do you need?"

Her cold response only confirmed to Trey that she was still holding a grudge.

She had always been so easy to placate, so obedient. When she suddenly asked for leave during a company crisis and refused to come home, he had been both surprised and irritated.

He had wanted to teach her a lesson, deliberately giving her the cold shoulder for two days.

But now the company was bleeding, and he had run out of patience. He had to be the one to swallow his pride.

"About my mother and Alicia... I didn't consider your feelings. I'm sorry. They won't bother you again. My father has already disciplined them, and they even called to apologize..."

"They wouldn't dare apologize to my face, would they?"

Khloe cut him off, unwilling to listen to another word of his excuses.

Trey hadn't expected her to press the issue. His voice grew strained, almost pleading. "You know what they're like. If a face-to-face apology is the only thing that will satisfy you, I'll find a way to arrange it..."

"That won't be necessary. I've never forced anyone to apologize."

That was the truth. Just the thought of Stella and Alicia's faces made her feel contaminated.

"Then what do you want?"

He couldn't hold back any longer—a sharp edge of impatience crept into his tone.

Khloe's lips curved into a faint smile, her voice softening deceptively, almost taking on a coquettish lilt. "Emotional wounds are hard to mend. But financial ones are much easier. I want half of Fox Group's shares."

"What did you just say?"

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Cineple

+25 Bonus

For a moment, Trey was sure he had misheard.

She was actually asking him for shares—half of Fox Group no less.

Khloe repeated herself in that same unnervingly calm and quiet tone.

"Khloe, you're not serious... are you?"

He could hardly believe it. The woman who had never asked him for anything was suddenly demanding a king's ransom—half the company.

He didn't even own half of it himself.

"Of course I'm serious, Trey. I've given it a lot of thought. The reason your mother and Alicia disrespect me is that I hold no real weight in the company. If I were the largest shareholder, they'd have no choice but to acknowledge my position."

"And the investors I've been negotiating with are extremely cautious. As a junior manager, I have no real authority in their eyes. But as a major shareholder? That's a completely different story."

Her voice was gentle and steady, every word measured. It was so perfectly reasonable that, for a fleeting moment, Trey almost found himself convinced.

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Chapter 23

+25 Bonus

Trey quickly regained his composure.

“Khloe, what’s gotten into you? You never cared about this before. Fox Group is our shared effort—our blood, sweat, and tears. We’re husband and wife. What’s mine is already half yours. What you’re asking is completely unnecessary. Besides...

“You know how it is. My father and the other major shareholders hold more combined equity than I do. Even if I wanted to give you what you’re asking, I couldn’t. And those old-timers would never accept a woman wielding that much power. If you push for this, you’ll make yourself a target,”

“I’m just trying to protect you. That’s why I never pushed for you to have shares in the first place.”

He neatly shifted the blame to the shareholders while casting himself as her guardian.

“Exactly,” Khloe replied, her voice soft but unwavering. “We’re husband and wife. So, even if you transfer the shares to me, they’re still marital property, aren’t they?”

No matter how he tried to justify it, she calmly followed his own logic.

“I’m only doing this for the company’s future. For our family. For you.”

Trey felt a wave of frustration. He wanted to shout, but had no outlet. He wanted to argue, but the woman on the other end of the line was acting like a stranger tonight—unyielding and impossible to manipulate.

Was this just a tantrum?

Or... had her feelings truly changed, making her start calculating a return on every investment she’d made in their relationship?

“Khloe,” he tried again, softening his voice, laying on the sentiment. “It wasn’t easy for us to be together. I don’t want family drama to come between us...”

In the past, this was his trump card. Reminding her of how he’d defied his family to marry her always made her

relent.

But this time, Khloe cut him off before he could finish. Her voice was quiet and utterly detached.

“Trey, they say a man’s priorities are shown by where he puts his money. I’ve given my all to Fox Group without holding anything back. I hope you can meet me with the same level of commitment. Otherwise, I’ll have to reconsider my position here. Perhaps if I resign, it would be easier for you. The shareholders would certainly be more comfortable.”

“Wha... what are you saying?”

He was stunned. Was she threatening him?

“Think it over carefully,” she said coolly. “And until you’ve made a decision, don’t contact me. I don’t take time off often. I’d rather spend it on myself.”

With that, she hung up.

When he called back, the line went straight to voicemail.

She was using the same tactic again. And she seemed to have developed a taste for it.

Trey’s chest heaved, rage burning through him. He swore he wouldn’t give in this time—he would put Khloe back in her place.

But his resolve lasted less than two hours.

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+25 Bonus

The company’s losses were mounting. If the projects weren’t saved soon, their entire IPO would be doomed.

He tossed and turned, unable to sleep. Once Angela finally drifted off, he slipped out of bed and retreated to his study.

Closing his eyes only made it worse. All he could see was Khloe.

Why had she become so cold?

For a moment, doubt crept in. But then he remembered their years together—all the tenderness and her unwavering devotion.

No. Khloe was a woman who valued loyalty above all. Her dependence on him, her affection, were absolute. That could never change.

That certainty steadied him. And then, an idea struck.

He picked up his phone and sent her a series of five transfers—200,000 dollars each.

On Khloe's end, sleep still hadn't come. Her phone lit up, buzzing with one alert after another.

Trey had just wired her a total of one million dollars.

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Chapter 24

Trey sent the money without a single word.

Khloe let out a soft, derisive laugh.

+25 Bonus

She knew his game. This silent, grand gesture was just another calculated move to manipulate her emotions. He wanted her to read into it, to imagine some profound meaning in his “generosity.”

She had asked for shares. He refused, but sending this money gave him an easy way out. Wasn't he just offering himself a graceful exit?

The moment she softened, the moment a flicker of guilt appeared, Trey would once again become the magnanimous husband, and she would be expected to fall back in line, sacrificing without complaint.

But those cheap tricks, once enough to fool her, no longer held any power.

And her instincts were right. Trey waited all night, certain that once she saw the money, she would be the first to break the silence.

She never did.

On her end, Khloe was far from idle. After dismissing the transfer notifications, she noticed another alert.

It was a reply from Nick, sent twenty minutes earlier. Just one word: [Yes.]

A ripple stirred in her heart.

She typed a response, hesitated, then deleted it. His terse reply was a clear signal he wasn't in the mood for small talk. Would she be bothering him if she said more?

But since she had initiated the conversation, ignoring his reply seemed equally rude.

After a brief internal debate, she finally sent another message: [I saw your post and thought I'd check in.]

To her surprise, his reply came instantly: [You're in Celosia?]

She had assumed her message would end the conversation.

She quickly typed again: [I'm here for a charity gala. Will you be attending?]

If he knew where she was, perhaps he'd also received an invitation.

The thought of potentially meeting him in person sent a sudden, unexpected flutter of nervousness through her.

[I'm not. I have a summit tonight. It's about to go live.]

[Oh... Am I disturbing you? My apologies.]

She sent the message in a rush, then quickly added another before he could respond: [Don't let me keep you. I should get some rest as well.]

Better to end the conversation gracefully before she became a nuisance.

This time, Nick didn't reply.

Yet, his brief words had piqued her curiosity.

Sleep was now the furthest thing from her mind. Instead, Khloe opened her laptop and searched for his name.

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Cheater 24

+25 Bonus

The initial results were sparse—until she remembered what Oscar had said: Nick was a towering figure on the international business stage.

Switching to a global network, she soon found what she was looking for.

An international finance site was covering the Global Business Summit, an event hosted by the world's leading financial conglomerates. The attendees were a who's who of industry titans and banking giants.

And Nick, as the head of the multinational Hunt Group, was listed as one of the summit's keynote speakers.

Intrigued, Khloe found the live stream. She waited for nearly half an hour before he finally appeared on screen.

He stood near the main stage, tall and commanding in a perfectly tailored dark suit, an assistant at his side. His presence radiated a restrained authority—sharp, steady, and impossible to ignore.

Even through a camera lens, the aura of long-honed dominance was palpable—striking and intensely magnetic.

When it was his turn to speak, Nick took the podium. In flawless, fluid foreign language, he delivered his address with precision and power, sparking a wave of lively discussion across the auditorium.

His voice was deep and resonant, smooth as velvet yet underpinned with steel, more captivating than any financial commentator she had ever heard.

Khloe often enjoyed watching public speaking events, but his performance was in a league of its own. Within moments, she was completely captivated.

Even his impromptu responses during the Q&A were masterful—concise, eloquent, and brimming with sharp insight.

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Chapter 25

Every time Nick finished speaking, thunderous applause swept through the auditorium. Even Khloe, watching from her screen, found herself clapping before she realized it.

There was no denying it—professional excellence had an irresistible allure all its own.

Nick was cold and aloof, like some untouchable marble statue. Yet, to Khloe, he radiated a powerful, almost overwhelming magnetism.

When the livestream ended, she finally understood his reticence. With someone that brilliant, silent admiration was enough. There was no need for small talk, and certainly no room for frivolous romance.

Her phone stayed dark. No new messages appeared.

Eventually, sleep claimed her, and she pulled the covers over her head.

The following evening, Khloe attended the charity gala. Oscar accompanied her at first but was soon pulled away to handle urgent business.

Michael, too, was constantly in demand—either on his phone or cornered by associates eager for a word.

In contrast, Khloe received little more than polite nods, the occasional handshake, or a business card pressed into her palm. Though she bore the Morrison name, few sought her out for anything beyond a cursory greeting.

She understood why. Everyone here was a titan of industry. Their respect for the Morrison family was genuine, but it was reserved for Niel and the acknowledged members of his household.

To them, Khloe—the newly arrived, “illegitimate” daughter—wasn’t worth their serious attention.

Oscar had warned her this would happen.

The attendees valued Clarice and Ethan far more. In their eyes, Khloe was incapable of steering Niel’s empire, and eventually, the Morrison fortune and power would return to its “rightful” heirs.

No one wanted to offend Clarice or her son prematurely, so they kept their distance, preferring to watch and wait.

Khloe didn’t mind. She was here to represent the Morrison family, that was all. Still, with billions at stake, she couldn’t afford to fade into the background.

She had prepared meticulously for her speech.

The draft had been written by professionals Oscar hired, but she had refined and polished every line herself.

Just before her segment, Michael noticed her tension. He leaned in close, murmuring that if she lost her nerve, he could deliver the address for her. 1

After all, she was speaking on behalf of the Morrison family. Any misstep would reflect poorly on all of them.

But Khloe shook her head.

She clenched her hands once, steadied her breath, and whispered, “Don’t worry. I won’t make any mistakes.”

When they had first entered the hall, she had spotted Veronica and Winnie with their parents, surrounded by a fawning crowd.

The two sisters had offered her a fleeting, dismissive greeting before rushing off. Soon, the banquet’s spotlight had shifted entirely from the Morrisons to the Olsons.

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Libanon 25

+25 Bonus

Even with Michael by her side, whispers still slithered into her ears.

“Illegitimate daughter.”

“Just living off the family name.”

“An embarrassment.”

If she lacked the courage to step up now, those sneers would solidify into accepted fact.

“Khloe, don’t pay them any mind. None of them are worth your attention,” Michael said, his gaze sweeping the hall with a trace of disdain.

To him, even if she was labeled “illegitimate,” Khloe was a Morrison. Their coldness was nothing more than thinly veiled envy.

Khloe met his eyes, a quiet gratitude shining in her own as she nodded.

Soon, it was her turn.

The host handed her the microphone, and the spotlight locked onto her.

Dressed in a stunning sapphire-blue gown embroidered with crystals and adorned with millions in jewels, Khloe looked like a movie star descending onto the stage.

For a moment, every eye in the hall was fixed on her.

Yet the room remained eerily silent. Not even a ripple of perfunctory welcome applause broke the stillness.

Before her, this stage had been reserved for seasoned moguls and industry titans. In years past, not a single representative had looked like Khloe-

So young. So beautiful. An unfamiliar face.

And, above all, a woman.

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Chapter 26

It was Khloe's first time facing such a high-stakes crowd, and no matter how hard she tried to steady herself, nerves clawed at her insides.

"Who is she? Shouldn't Ethan or Clarice be representing Morrison Group?"

"Haven't you heard? She's Niel's illegitimate daughter. Word is she lucked into a fortune worth hundreds of billions."

"Have the Morrison family lost their minds? What does she know about business? Letting her give a speech is a joke."

"Looks like Morrison Group is in chaos. An unqualified outsider as the heir... they're finished."

"Look at her, all dolled up like she's treating this place as a runway show."

11

Whispers swirled through the hall, growing louder and more brazen. Khloe stood frozen before the microphone, her mind a blank slate, her hands stiff at her sides.

Then, a single, sharp sound cut through the murmur-firm, deliberate applause.

It was Michael.

He led the clapping, and a handful of others, seeing his cue reluctantly joined in. The scattered, hesitant applause was enough to jolt Khloe back to herself.

She forced her nerves into check and glanced toward the teleprompter for her opening line. The screen was completely blank.

Her heart sank. Someone had sabotaged it. They had set a trap for her, hoping she would fail spectacularly in front of everyone.

As the brief applause died, a heavy silence reclaimed the hall. Khloe took a steadying breath and, without missing another beat, launched into a flawless, confident opening in Celosian.

Her accent was crisp, her tone assured. Within seconds, the whispers ceased entirely.

Whoever tried to humiliate her clearly hadn't done their homework. Khloe had a degree in finance, a field demanding not just analytical skill but superior communication. Her command of Celosian was excellent; her ability to think on her feet was even better.

Back in university, she had won first place in English impromptu speaking competitions year after year, often focusing on business case analyses. She hardly needed a script—with a solid structure and a dose of confidence, she could command a room with ease.

While previous speakers had relied on translators, Khloe left hers sitting idle.

Watching her, Michael finally released the breath he'd been holding.

For five straight minutes, she spoke—fluent, poised, and lacing her points with sharp, quiet wit. She never stumbled, her delivery a masterclass in clarity, professionalism, and engaging charm.

When she concluded, the hall was silent for a single, suspended moment.

Then, applause erupted.

This time, it was thunderous—a genuine, rolling wave of approval as the audience cheered her on.

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Clator 20

+25 Bonus

Who would have thought? The young woman they had dismissed was a hidden ace. Perhaps they had judged too quickly. After all, would a titan like Niel Morrison have entrusted his legacy to just anyone?

Khloe offered a graceful bow, thanked the audience, and stepped down from the stage.

Her heart was still hammering against her ribs, but the exhilaration was unlike anything she'd ever felt.

Throughout the speech, she had replayed Nick's livestream in her mind—his commanding rhythm, the effortless authority in his words. She hadn't understood every detail, but his unwavering gaze and powerful presence had left a deep impression.

She had channeled that same energy. And it had worked.

“Khloe, you completely surprised me,” Michael admitted afterward. He knew she had a finance background, but her eloquence and composure far exceeded his expectations. She hadn't even glanced at her prepared notes.

Khloe offered a wry smile and told him about the sabotaged teleprompter.

Michael's frown was slight, his calm more profound than she had anticipated. "That's my oversight. I didn't expect such cheap tricks here."

"Was it Clarice?" Khloe asked immediately.

"That's hard to say."

Michael was deliberately cautious. He had no love for Clarice, but he wouldn't name names without proof. No need to add to Khloe's burdens prematurely.

Still, one thing was now certain: more than a few people had their sights set on Khloe.

When the formal program concluded, the banquet officially began.

Michael and Khloe were seated at different tables. He tried to escort her, but was intercepted by an acquaintance along the way.

Khloe waved him off. It was just dinner, and the tables were clearly marked. She could find her own seat.

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Chapter 27

To her dismay, Khloe checked every table and couldn't find her name card anywhere.

By now, all the other guests were seated. Left standing awkwardly by the side, she stuck out like a sore thumb.

A flustered floor manager approached. "Miss Morrison, dinner is about to be served. Please take your seat."

"Alright."

Scanning the room, Khloe spotted one empty chair at the head table and began walking toward it.

"Sorry, that seat isn't available."

A woman's voice stopped her.

Khloe looked up—and of course, it was Veronica. It seemed fate had a cruel sense of humor.

Veronica's lips curved into a mocking smile as she looked Khloe over. The young socialites seated around her ducked their heads, poorly hiding their giggles.

"I couldn't find my name card," Khloe stated calmly. "This seat doesn't have one either, does it?"

She glanced at the empty place setting. Sure enough, there was no card..

"This is a reserved seat," Veronica explained in a tone of exaggerated patience, dripping with condescension. "It's for distinguished guests whose attendance isn't confirmed. We don't put name cards out for them. I thought that was common knowledge."

The implication was clear: Khloe was an ignorant outsider.

The laughter around them grew louder, less restrained.

"Khloe, is this really your first time at an event like this? You're supposed to find your assigned seat. Surely not. After such an impressive speech for the Morrison family, you mean you can't even find your own place at the table?"

The banquet hall had grown quiet, the whispers carrying easily. Once again, Khloe was the center of attention, every eye fixed on her.

It was obvious—Veronica had tampered with her name card and had been lying in wait for this exact moment of public humiliation.

Khloe's expression remained unreadable as she let her gaze sweep the tables one more time. Not a single place

card bore her name.

The looks directed her way were filled with open mockery, and the smug pride on Veronica's face was unmistakable. 1

Then, a crisp, clear voice cut through the tension from behind Khloe.

"It seems the organizers are incompetent. I can't find my name card either."

Khloe turned. It was Winnie, standing with her arms crossed, one eyebrow arched as she stared down the panicked server. "You can't even manage the seating arrangements for a banquet? Do you think the guests here tonight are riffraff you can disrespect?"

The server paled, frozen in place.

Khloe seized the opening. “Winnie is right.

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+25 Bonus

“Everyone here is a respected leader in their field. For the organizers to overlook something as fundamental as seating assignments—it’s not just a slight against Winnie and me, but a sign of disrespect to every guest present.

“Such unprofessionalism will make powerful families think twice before trusting you with future events. The Morrison family, for one, will be hesitant to work with a team this careless.”

“Th—the Morrison family?” The server’s face went ashen. His tray shook so violently he nearly dropped it.

Everyone knew that securing the Morrison family’s presence had been the organizers’ crowning achievement. Khloe’s words were a death sentence.

Winnie’s eyebrow lifted in genuine surprise. For someone who looked so gentle, Khloe’s counterattack had been swift and merciless.

With a casual motion, Winnie pulled over two chairs and placed them neatly at the table. “Since the organizers can’t do their job, we’ll handle it ourselves. Khloe, shall we?”

The server, now sweating profusely, didn’t dare stay another second. He practically stumbled over himself, fleeing backstage to find his manager.

Veronica sat frozen, her triumphant expression crumbling into disbelief. She had been waiting to savor Khloe’s humiliation, only to watch her deftly redirect all the blame onto the organizers in just a few sentences.

“Winnie? I thought you left?” Veronica stammered, rising to her feet. Her smile was strained.

Of all people, the one she despised most was her older sister Winnie—a mere adopted daughter, yet doted on by their parents, always standing in her way.

Winnie’s tone was cool. “I’m hungry. I’ll leave after I eat. I registered for this banquet, so my name card should be here.”

Khloe knew Winnie had stepped in deliberately to shield her. She offered a small, grateful smile.

Winnie responded with only a frosty glance in return.

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Chapter 28

+25 Bonus

Winnie hadn't intervened out of kindness. Earlier, in the restroom, she had overheard Veronica scheming with her

friends.

She simply couldn't stand to let Veronica win.

... And besides, Khloe was Michael's sister.

The memory of how protectively Michael had shielded Khloe the night before—as if Winnie were some kind of threat—still stung.

“Thank you for your help, Miss Olson,” Khloe said softly, “but... I think I'll sit here.”

Turning back to the table, she pulled out the empty chair and sat down as if it had been hers all along.

“Khloe, who do you think you are? You can't just sit anywhere you want! Have you no manners at all?”

Veronica lost her composure, her voice rising to a shrill pitch.

“I'll admit, I don't know much about banquet etiquette,” Kloe said evenly, a faint, unruffled smile on her lips, “because this is, in fact, my first time at an event of this caliber.”

The sheer calm with which she owned the insult left Veronica momentarily speechless.

“But,” Khloe continued smoothly, “when I arrived, both the organizers and my family reminded me that, as the principal heiress of the Morrison fortune in Goldmont City I am expected to sit at the head table. To do otherwise would be seen as a loss of respect for the family.”

She gestured lightly to the empty place. “This is the head table, and this seat has no name card. Coincidentally, mine is missing. It seems logical that the organizers reserved this spot for me.”

Her words were delivered with such quiet authority that even skeptical guests found themselves nodding. The Morrison family’s stature was undeniable, and it gave her every right to claim that seat.

“That makes perfect sense. If there’s no card, let Miss Morrison have the seat.”

“She’s not wrong. By status alone, this is exactly where she belongs.”

The shift in the crowd’s murmurs made Veronica’s face darken with fury. The socialites who had been snickering with her moments before fell silent, unwilling to draw Khloe’s ire.

But before the situation could settle, the banquet manager rushed over, his face pale and beaded with sweat.

The team had already been in a panic over the seating blunder. Then, just minutes ago, they had received word- an unexpected, heavyweight guest had arrived.

Bowing repeatedly, the manager apologized profusely. “Miss Morrison, we’ve prepared another seat for you. Please, allow us to escort you.”

Without waiting for her consent, he placed a name card on the table.

The card was faced away from Khloe, but Veronica and her friends saw it immediately.

Nick.

It was Nick Hunt.

Everyone knew—even at the height of their power, the Morrison family’s influence, both domestic and international, paled in comparison to the Hunts’.

Charmin 2h

+25 Bonus

The organizers would rather offend the Morrisons a hundred times over than risk displeasing the Hunts. And certainly not for Khloe—a newcomer, a recently acknowledged illegitimate daughter with no established power base.

Besides, Nick was infamous for avoiding social functions. His unexpected appearance tonight had instantly elevated the entire event’s prestige.

“Since your oversight left me without a seat,” Khloe replied, her tone still calm, “it seems only fair that I sit where I can.”

She had no desire to make the organizers’ lives harder their panic was evident—but if she backed down now, the humiliation would be entirely hers.

Seeing the name card, Veronica let out a triumphant, mocking laugh.

“Khloe, give it up. This seat is far beyond your reach. Stop embarrassing yourself. There’s always a bigger fish. If you don’t move, you’ll be disgracing not just yourself, but the entire Morrison name.”

The sight of Nick’s name silenced even those who had just spoken in Khloe’s defense.

Now, their eyes held no support, only a cold, eager anticipation—waiting for the show to unfold.

The Morrison family versus the Hunt family.

An illegitimate daughter against a legendary titan.

No matter how this played out, Khloe would be the one left utterly humiliated.

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Billionaire’s Match Novel Chapter 29

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Chapter 29

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Yet Khloe remained seated, her composure unshaken, her poise so natural it couldn't possibly be an act.

The organizer, realizing she wouldn't be moved easily, was on the verge of begging. "Miss Morrison, it was our error! We can arrange another seat for you at the head table immediately—we promise you won't be slighted. It's just that this particular seat... was reserved some time ago. The guest will be here any moment. Please, don't make this difficult for me..."

The longer Khloe held her ground, the more strained the atmosphere grew. Whether she stayed or left now, it would be awkward.

Veronica's smirk widened, her triumph barely contained. She seized the moment to twist the knife.

"Some people love to put on a show, but they never know how to end it. It's just pathetic."

Her barb ignited a wave of murmurs. Voices around the room suggested it would be wiser for Khloe to yield gracefully. At least then she could save face by appearing considerate of the organizers.

If she was forced out or clung on until a scene erupted, the humiliation would be far greater.

A faint smile touched Khloe's lips. She adjusted her posture with deliberate elegance, gathered her thoughts, and spoke with calm authority, "I understand that mistakes happen."

Her voice was even, but her gaze sharpened as it landed on the pale manager, her tone turning icy.

"But I am here as the official representative of Morrison Group. By occupying this seat, I uphold the dignity of the Morrison family. First, you failed to place my name card. Now, for the sake of a guest who hasn't even arrived, you ask me to move to a makeshift seat? Does that mean the Morrison family's honor isn't worthy of your respect?"

A stunned silence fell over the room. Everyone understood the weight the Morrison name carried—this blunder was, indeed, a profound sign of disrespect.

Cold sweat beaded on the manager's forehead. He opened his mouth to explain, but Khloe pressed on.

"As for the distinguished guest who is on his way, his presence is a favor to this event. But if, due to your error, it appears that he 'took the seat' from the Morrison family, that is surely not the reputation he would wish to cultivate."

Her meaning was razor-sharp. The fault lay entirely with the organizers. She would not be made a scapegoat, nor would she be pitted against the incoming guest.

From the sidelines, Veronica sneered, waiting for Khloe to crumble. What could she possibly do? Force the organizers to give up the reserved seat? Impossible.

But then Khloe turned back to the organizers, her tone softening as if offering them a way out.

“The solution is actually quite simple.”

“Oh? And what solution would that be?”

The reply did not come from the floor manager.

A deep, magnetic voice resonated from the edge of the crowd.

Every head turned.

There stood Nick, dressed in a simple yet impeccably tailored black suit, his strides long and commanding. Only his assistant, Lenny, accompanied him—yet it was Nick alone whose presence seemed to suck the air from the

room.

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With just a few words, his aura washed over the hall, pressing the crowd into a hushed stillness.

His gaze locked directly on Khloe, his dark eyes gleaming with something unreadable—scrutiny, and a trace of unmistakable amusement.

Khloe’s heart stuttered in her chest. ‘Nick! Wasn’t he thousands of miles away last night? How is he here?’

A wave of shocked whispers swept the banquet hall. Disbelief was etched on every face.

The man was a phantom in the business world—rarely seen, shrouded in legend. But his ruthless demeanor was well-known.

Even among this elite crowd, his circle was exclusive. Power, wealth, prestige—none of it mattered. He had crossed titans before and dismantled them without a second thought. Those who had dared to offend him were said to have vanished without a trace.

Billionaire's Match Novel Chapter 30

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Chapter 30

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Nick was a man who never spared anyone's feelings—and he was famously indifferent to women.

Even at his age, when most men were settled with families, no one in the Hunt family dared pressure him about marriage.

And yet now, after Khloe had effectively taken his seat, he hadn't shown a flicker of anger. Instead, he had calmly, almost cordially, asked for her proposed solution.

Under his penetrating gaze, Khloe felt the pressure intensify. But she drew a steadying breath and answered with quiet composure, "Respect the situation and turn a mistake into an opportunity."

She paused awhile, her eyes scanning the long, spacious banquet table.

"There's more than enough room here. Adding one place setting is simple. The organizers can arrange a seat of equal standing for Mr. Hunt right beside me. This way, the dignity of Morrison Group is upheld, Mr. Hunt's magnanimity is displayed, and the organizers demonstrate their flexibility and sincerity in handling a crisis. Isn't that far better than forcing me to move and creating unnecessary conflict and embarrassment for all involved?"

A dead silence fell over the hall.

Everyone was stunned. To be so calm under pressure, so razor-sharp in logic—this was no ordinary "illegitimate daughter." This was a mind of formidable intelligence.

In just a few precise sentences, Khloe had unraveled a seemingly impossible standoff. Veronica's face went pale.

Unnoticed by most, Michael had returned to the hall. Watching his cousin command the room, he quietly released a breath he hadn't realized he was holding.

Nick studied her for a long moment. The corner of his mouth lifted in the faintest hint of a smile before he turned to the organizers.

“Do as she suggested.”

His tone was even, betraying no emotion.

But the mere fact that he had accepted her proposal was a monumental concession—the organizers looked as if they’d been granted a last-minute pardon.

“Right away, Mr. Hunt.”

Within moments, the staff brought another chair. The disruption was over, and the banquet officially began. Khloe remained the center of attention, but now, not a single person dared question her right to be there.

“Why are you staring instead of eating?” Nick’s sudden, low baritone made her jump. Khloe realized she had been lost in thought, studying his profile.

Their seats were close, uncomfortably so. He had removed his suit jacket, loosened the top button of his shirt, and his tall frame was angled toward her. His distinct, masculine scent seemed to envelop her.

She quickly averted her gaze. “Mr. Hunt, what brings you to this banquet tonight?”

He didn’t look at her, continuing to cut his food with effortless precision.

“Ten hours on a private jet. But it wasn’t a wasted trip. I go to hear a rather remarkable speech.”

He hadn’t answered directly, yet his words were loaded.

He had flown through the night. And he had been there, listening, when she delivered her speech earlier.

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So... he had witnessed the entire seating debacle as well?

Heat rushed to Khloe’s cheeks. Compared to his seasoned prowess, her speech felt like a child’s performance.

“I’m afraid I made a fool of myself.”

At that, his hands stilled. He turned his head, and his gaze held a rare trace of warmth.

“No. You were impressive.”

So impressive... it had genuinely surprised him.

Impressive enough that when he saw her cornered over the seating, he found himself curious—wanting to see how she would handle it.

“Thank you for the compliment,” Khloe murmured, her cheeks growing warmer.

But the same question echoed in her mind.

He had flown for ten hours through the night. It couldn’t possibly have been just for a meal.

Could it have been... for her?

Yet he offered no explanation, and she dared not press further.