

Billionaire's Match Novel Chapter 81

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Love Demands Honest Hearts – Yash Malhotra 81

Chapter 81

Nick's eyes sharpened, a sudden clarity dawning upon him. Without hesitation, he dialed Khloe's number.

"Hello?... Mr. Hunt?"

At that moment, Khloe was sitting at the table with Grandpa and Grandma Orsen, eating.

Hearing the name, the two elders instantly froze, holding their breath, careful not to betray anything. Khloe didn't notice, merely nodding.

"Yes... it's... how did you know?" she asked, her voice steady.

Nick wasted no time. He asked whether the two elders had visited her today.

"Do you know where they are right now?" his voice cut through the line again.

Khloe glanced at the two elders. They were suddenly sitting straighter, shaking their heads frantically at her.

"I... we've... parted ways," she said, hesitation threading her voice-a small, guilty lie.

Nick didn't press further; he hung up. But even through that brief call, Khloe's mind began piecing things together.

"You... could it be... Nick's your grandson?"

Her gaze flicked to the elders, especially Grandpa Orsen. The resemblance was unmistakable-facial structure, brows, eyes-all echoing Nick's features.

But the surname, Orsen... was different from Nick's surname. Had they lied about their surname?

But if they were Nick's grandparents, everything the two elders had done today suddenly made sense.

“Miss Roswell... truthfully, we are... Nick’s grandparents,” the elderly lady said, a flush of embarrassment coloring her words. She could no longer hide it and decided to tell Khloe everything.

They had come this time to arrange Khloe’s engagement with Nick. The venue was already booked-the Seven Stars Hotel in Goldmont City, scheduled for eight o’clock the next evening. Though the event would be intimate, the proper formalities and grandeur would all be observed.

The Hunt family would all attend, and by now, the Morrison family would have received the congratulatory notice. They had meticulously planned everything in secret, guarding against leaks, all for Nick.

“Our dear grandson... he’s perfect in every way, but he’s slow when it comes to these matters... he almost got engaged once before, but...” Nick’s grandmother’s voice faltered slightly, the memory bitter.

So close to a wedding, Nick had backed out at the last moment, and ever since, hadn’t entertained the thought of marriage. She trailed off, not wanting to dwell on the past in front of Khloe.

“Anyway, with us here this time, you won’t be slighted. Don’t worry, Nick is filial. If he can’t find us tomorrow, he’ll come.”

Once the engagement was set, the rest of the process would flow quickly. In elite circles, the sequence was engagement first, then registration, and finally a grand wedding. Nick’s grandparents would make it as spectacular as possible-the entire business world would notice.

Nick’s grandmother’s words landed like a clap of thunder. Khloe’s mind went blank.

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+25 Bonus

“The engagement... Nick’s engagement is... to me?”

The question escaped before she could stop it. She knew Nick was her fiancé in name, but now, suddenly, the formal engagement was being arranged-and the groom himself was completely in the dark.

The absurdity, the suddenness, overwhelmed her. She had never imagined being pushed into this step-by-step without warning.

As Khloe stood there, struggling to gather her thoughts, the doorbell rang.

Her heart skipped. She tensed, fearing it was Nick arriving in person.

Drawing a deep breath, she moved to open the door.

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Khloe opened the door, bracing herself, only to find not Nick standing there-but the manager from the luxury boutique she'd visited that afternoon. In his hands were two exquisitely wrapped boxes, tied with golden satin ribbons, clearly containing something precious.

“Miss Roswell,” the manager said respectfully, holding the boxes out to her, “these are from Mr. and Mrs. Hunt. They asked me to deliver them to you. The dresses and jewelry you tried on this afternoon have been altered to your measurements.”

Khloe froze, eyes wide. “For me?” she muttered.

Her gaze fell on the labels on the sides of the boxes-her exact measurements, and the style number of the white mermaid gown she'd tried on earlier, the very one Nick's grandmother had immediately favored.

Only now did it click: the excuse about helping choose dresses for their granddaughter-in-law... she had been the granddaughter-in-law they were referring to. The dresses and jewelry had been meant for her from the beginning.

“I... thank you for bringing these over,” she managed, taking the boxes.

She closed the door and placed them carefully on her desk, barely having a moment to process before her phone buzzed. This time, it was Nick calling-and at that very moment, the familiar chime of the doorbell echoed outside.

He was already at her door, phone in hand.

“Open up. I know they’re here,” his voice cut through the air like ice, striking her chest. Khloe took a deep breath and steeled herself.

“Mr. Hunt, I... I didn’t mean to deceive you...” she began, her words tripping over themselves. She had only yielded to the elders’ persistent requests.

“Have you had your fun?” Nick’s tone was sharp as he strode toward the grandparents. His face was dark, his presence low and tense, like the air before a storm.

“My dear grandson...” his grandmother’s voice wavered; she didn’t dare meet his gaze.

His grandfather quickly turned his head away. “Don’t look at me—I was dragged along by your grandmother!”

“Let me guess,” Nick’s voice sliced through, “I’m the last to know about the engagement banquet?”

His eyes flicked to Khloe as she approached. Perhaps it was his sheer intensity, or the weight of his aura—her lips pressed together, words caught in her throat.

“How did you know...” she began.

“You think I wouldn’t notice what’s going on?” he cut in, a hint of exasperation threading through his words. “You really believed you could handle something this big without word leaking out?”

Nick’s tone softened slightly, almost resigned. “You’re both elderly, you’ve had a long day... come with me now. It’s best to get some rest first.”

“Nick!” Khloe called instinctively, but the cold edge in his voice had already softened considerably as he turned.

“I’m not upset with you. Don’t read into it,” he added, as if sensing her concern. “I’m upset because my grandparents came rushing over without telling anyone and tried to arrange everything so abruptly.”

Khloe exhaled, relief washing over her, and then her thoughts turned to the elders’ intentions. “They only meant

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+25 Bonus

well... actually, getting these things arranged sooner rather than later might be a good thing," she said softly.

Nick's Adam's apple bobbed. "I know you're concerned for them. The engagement was always in my plans... I just didn't expect it to happen so suddenly. I should have discussed it with you first, instead of letting you be kept in the dark along with everyone else."

Hearing this, the tension in Khloe's chest eased considerably. Even his grandparents let out quiet, almost imperceptible sighs of relief. It turned out their grandson wasn't unhappy about Khloe being his fiancée—he simply didn't like being rushed or manipulated.

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Nick looked back at his grandparents, his voice regaining its calm edge. "Get in the car first. I'll take you home."

Then he turned to Khloe. "Once they're settled, I'll contact you. We'll go over the details for tomorrow's banquet. Anything you feel isn't right, or any changes you want to make, just tell me."

His words left the two elders frozen with surprise. That was it? He just agreed?

His grandmother, Loretta Hunt, squeezed Khloe's hand. "Khloe, we'll see you tomorrow! Don't work too hard- skip the office. I'll have someone come to the house to help you get ready. When it's time, we'll take you straight to the banquet hall. And don't worry, Grandma will prepare a huge gift for you!"

"Khloe, with us and Nick by your side, you'll walk through life with confidence wherever you go!"

Nick's grandparents treated her like a precious gem.

Once they left, Khloe quickly sent a message to her work group, inviting her subordinates to the banquet the next day. As expected, the group erupted in cheers, celebrating her.

Charlotte gushed. “Nick is so hot! Khloe, I’m so happy for you I could cry. Forget that asshole Trey-Nick is your perfect match!” She even teased about the day Nick had carried Khloe away, sparking a flurry of gossip in the chat.

But Khloe couldn’t linger on the conversation. She needed to work, though every time she tried, her mind kept wandering back to the engagement. Every number on the screen blurred into irrelevance.

All she could see in her mind was Nick-how he had come for her in the rain, the feel of his skin, the scar on his shoulder... He acted distant, cold even, yet in every gesture toward her, he was utterly devoted.

Today, when his grandparents had pushed for the engagement, he had clearly been displeased, yet he agreed without hesitation. Did he see this as just a strategic union?

Realizing she was overthinking again, Khloe stopped herself.

The next evening, 7:30 p.m., at the Seven Stars Hotel.

Trey and Angela had scheduled a dinner with a major client on the top floor. But as they stepped into the elevator, someone blocked their way.

“Sir,

the hotel has been fully reserved today. No one without an invitation card may enter.”

“Fully reserved?” Angela’s eyes widened. Who had the wealth to book the most expensive hotel in Goldmont City?

“Are you unaware? Today is the engagement banquet of the Hunt Group’s heir. Every notable person in Goldmont City will be attending.”

The concierge’s tone was polite, yet threaded with subtle mockery.

Angela’s expression soured instantly, and Trey’s temper flickered. But at the mention of the Hunt Group, even he couldn’t help feeling a shift inside.

The Hunt Group was untouchable. And today, fate had brought them here.

At that moment, a stretched Rolls-Royce rolled up to the hotel entrance. Every concierge and security officer on the first floor immediately gathered around.

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Through the throng, a slender, graceful figure moved directly into the main lobby.

“Khloe?”

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Trey called out Khloe’s name almost without thinking.

It was only a glance, a fleeting sight, yet the woman disappeared from view almost immediately, escorted by others.

“Khloe? Why are you still thinking about her at a time like this?”

The name made Angela’s nerves tense instantly. But Trey, pointing ahead, spoke with a subtle hesitation. “I... I think I just saw Khloe...”

The figure was familiar—so familiar that even without seeing her face, his mind registered it as hers.

“How could that be? The hotel’s completely booked.”

Angela scoffed, feeling both incredulous and irritated. There was no way Khloe could have made it here; this banquet was for Goldmont City’s elite, and even the Fox family hadn’t been invited.

“Do you really think the woman who just got out of that car is Khloe?” Angela’s lips curved in a hint of derision.

Before Trey could step forward, a concierge intervened, and soon after, a team of bodyguards sealed off every entrance and elevator to the hotel. Outside, the area was cordoned off, and anyone without a special invitation card was turned away.

“Such an operation... the Hunt family sure is powerful and efficient.”

Back in the car, Angela murmured under her breath. But a glance caught Trey staring at his phone.

“You’re not messaging Khloe, are you?”

“I was just telling our client we’re changing locations.”

Trey immediately locked the phone, his voice neutral. But Angela had been right—he was checking Khloe’s activity.

It wasn’t until he noticed her Whatsapp status had changed a few hours ago that he felt some relief. She had switched it to her “busy working” update, a habit of hers when caught up in a project. That meant she was occupied—either with company matters or some freelance work.

Khloe was competent. The last time he talked to her on the phone, she’d mentioned exploring other companies, and there was that one time a man had picked up when he’d called her phone. These signs suggested someone might have extended an offer to her.

Perhaps that was why she’d asked for shares. Trey knew she wouldn’t resist the lure of the company going public. And on top of that, she was still sulking at him.

He was certain of one thing: she would come back to him, eventually, obediently.

By eight o’clock, the banquet hall was gradually filling with guests. Khloe had planned to arrive later, but out of courtesy, she came early.

Nick had a crucial meeting and said he could only arrive just in time. Though rushed, as long as they both arrived, the grandparents’ mission would be accomplished.

No sooner had Khloe stepped in than Loretta pulled her from group to group, introducing her to the Hunt family

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+25 Bonus

members. Many hadn’t arrived due to other commitments, but had sent generous gifts for her.

Nick's father was abroad and couldn't make it, so his stepmother, Arista Collins, attended in his place. She was young, perhaps in her early thirties-beautiful, gentle, and approachable.

Arista's first impression of Khloe was immediately favorable. She had heard rumors that the bride-to-be, though an heiress of the Morrison family, was born out of wedlock, and had worried whether Khloe and Nick would suit each other.

But now, seeing Khloe in person, every concern melted away. Khloe's beauty was striking, her demeanor poised, her manners impeccable.

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With Loretta singing Khloe's praises nonstop, Arista didn't hesitate for a second. She handed Khloe a carefully wrapped gift-a set of exquisite, rare fire-colored jewelry.

It was something Arista had gone to extraordinary lengths to acquire, flying overnight to a neighboring country's auction just to secure it.

"Arista... this is far too precious. I can't—"

"You must accept it, Khloe. I may not be Nick's birth mother, but he's always treated me with respect, and I am genuinely grateful. More than that... I truly hope for your happiness."

Arista patted Khloe gently. As she spoke, tears gathered at the corners of her eyes. The thought of Nick finally finding a family, having a life of his own, brought her genuine joy.

She knew his childhood had been harsh-strained relations with his father, his mother gone too early, and only his grandparents had pampered him for a brief time. He'd grown up under strict, unyielding rules. Arista hadn't known him long, but she understood his life story, and she truly cared.

Before she could say more, a familiar face called her away. The room buzzed with movement-today's gathering wasn't just Hunt and Morrison family members. Numerous top-tier aristocratic elites had come, turning the pre-banquet moments into what felt like a private, opulent high-society event.

"Khloe," Loretta said, leaning close, "the Hunt family has a lot of relatives today-even those you'd never expect. You don't need to meet everyone or greet everyone. Today, you are the star. Stay with me, and no one will bother you."

To spare Khloe from exhaustion, Loretta introduced her only to Arista, exchanged quick greetings with a few uncles, and stepped away. Every social interaction would normally drag on for half an hour; she wasn't about to let Khloe endure that.

The Morrison family had sent only a small contingent today: Oscar, Michael, and a handful of close friends. Khloe's five colleagues-turned-friends were also present.

Clarice feigned illness to skip, and Ethan cited company matters. They still prepared a few gifts for Khloe and the Morrison family to keep appearances.

Loretta, having completed her quick tour, gave Khloe a reassuring squeeze. "Khloe, go mingle. I'll make sure everything's set for the banquet. I won't let anything go wrong."

Khloe hugged her lightly, whispering thanks.

Loretta, delighted, handed out tiny gifts to each of Khloe's friends before slipping away.

The friends couldn't contain themselves.

"...Oh my God! This... this is beautiful!" Charlotte exclaimed, almost in tears.

The gifts were exquisite.

Everyone gasped, hands flying to cover their mouths. It was the most exquisite gift they had ever received. And this was just for an engagement banquet-imagine the wedding itself.

Their excitement made them clutch Khloe's hand tightly.

"Khloe, please... let me attend the wedding too!"

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"I swear, from now on, you're my real sister!"

“Don’t worry about us-we’ll stand by you through everything!”

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Khloe laughed, shaking her head at their exaggeration. But her heart warmed. The Hunt family’s generosity and warmth, even toward someone they’d only just met, exceeded her expectations.

For the first time, the idea of life tied to a wealthy, powerful family felt... possible. She had long given up hope of such a life, yet here it was, unfolding in ways she had never imagined.

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Chapter 86

A quiet ripple of emotion stirred in Khloe’s chest.

Moments like this-so gentle, surrounded by a kind stepmother, and the warm, patient care of Grandpa Leon and Grandma Loretta-brought her a sense of familial comfort she had never truly known before.

Nick arrived precisely at eight. The moment he stepped into the banquet hall, the room seemed to hold its breath.

Dressed in a sharply tailored black suit, his posture impeccable, he moved under the crystal chandeliers in a way that made every light catch the planes of his face, enhancing the striking beauty and commanding presence he carried effortlessly.

He approached Khloe’s side, and in an instant, the hall fell silent. Everyone’s attention locked onto the pair, though they only stood at the side of the room.

The glow of the chandeliers seemed to conspire, focusing all brilliance on them. For a few moments, it was impossible to find words that could describe the effortless harmony between the two.

“Mr. Hunt, you’ve arrived.”

Khloe quickened her steps, closing the small distance, her smile gentle but luminous. Her eyes, framed by the soft warmth of her makeup, seemed capable of melting even the coldest ice.

Nick paused, caught off guard, then nodded. “Sorry, I’m late.”

“Not at all,” she said softly, “your timing is just right.”

She slid her arm into his, and a strange, grounding sensation anchored him in place. The MC had just finished a short introduction and invited them to the stage to exchange rings. Leon and Loretta stepped forward ceremoniously, presenting the rings with quiet pride.

The rings were everything Nick had chosen with meticulous care: sleek, elegant, impossibly well-crafted. The diamonds alone were enough to make anyone envy them, but the value was secondary to the symbolism they now held.

When Khloe’s finger slipped into the ring, a surge of feeling rolled through her—gratitude, awe, a touch of disbelief.

Nick’s hand was striking, his fingers long and perfectly shaped. The light sparkled off the diamonds, yet somehow, she found his hand itself even more captivating than the jewelry.

“You look beautiful tonight, Khloe.”

The words fell low and steady, yet close enough that her heart fluttered uncontrollably. His voice, calm but deeply resonant, carried a gravity that made her breath hitch.

“Thank you.”

Her cheeks warmed. She lifted her eyes and met his gaze. Usually so cold, those eyes now held a depth, as if countless stars had condensed there, shimmering quietly.

After a brief pause, she slid the ring onto his finger. “Nick... I look forward to our future.”

He didn’t reply with words. Instead, he grasped her hand firmly, and in the cascade of applause, he drew her gently into his side.

Khloe’s face flushed, though she maintained an air of composure. Nick’s touch was careful, measured—a

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gentleman's.

+25 Bonus

Loretta had organized a simplified betrothal, and after the brief exchange, only the elders' speeches remained. Guests were free to begin dining without unnecessary formalities.

Khloe settled at her table with her small team, Nick at her side.

"Let me introduce them," she said, "these are my former subordinates, now my friends and teammates."

She offered a quick introduction, and her team straightened nervously.

"Hello, Mr. Hunt."

"Hello," Nick replied in a measured voice, shaking hands with each of them in turn.

Khloe hadn't expected him to take the time. She had planned only to introduce them briefly, letting him move on to other duties. Her team was equally unprepared for the encounter, their hands trembling slightly as they shook his.

Even Charlotte, who had met him before, found herself caught off guard, her heart skipping in that familiar, chaotic flutter.

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Nick's presence was overwhelming. Even from across the room, the sheer authority he exuded made anyone uninvited hesitate. It was the kind of air that seemed to say, keep your distance, stranger.

Only someone like Khloe-poised, unflinching, with a heart as steady as her composure-could stand beside him so calmly.

"Khloe, you and Mr. Hunt are perfect together! Watching you exchange rings just now-I really felt so touched," Charlotte whispered, her voice trembling as she dabbed at her eyes.

Another girl next to her sniffled and added, "Yes! I can't stop crying..."

"Seriously! It's just a betrothal... why are you crying?" Khloe protested, her face flushed.

"I'm crying because you deserve this happiness, Khloe."

"Exactly! You finally found your happiness..."

"Mr. Hunt, Khloe is truly an extraordinary person! Beautiful is only the tiniest part of her-there's so much more that makes her special. You absolutely must, must treasure her!"

They were the only ones in the Fox Group who knew the real relationship between Khloe and Trey. Even then, they had only found out about it through Khloe after leaving the Fox Group. Back at the Fox Group, Khloe had worked diligently, and nobody had even known her connection to Trey.

Being praised so openly, in front of Nick himself, made Khloe squirm. She hurried to interject. "Alright, alright... Nick, you should go mingle. These girls are just exaggerating-please don't take it to heart..."

"I think they're right," Nick said. Instead of moving on, he seated himself, scanning the table with a gaze that remained commanding yet carried a surprising softness.

"You can go on... tell me more about what makes Khloe so remarkable."

Even Lenny, trailing behind Nick, couldn't hide his surprise. Never before had his boss spoken with such approachability, even to business associates of the Hunt family.

"Well... there are just so many things!" Charlotte's friend spoke up again.

Khloe's face burned. "The banquet is starting-aren't you all hungry? I'm starving..." She picked up her plate, quickly placing cupcakes onto each girl's plate, hoping to silence their praise with food.

But Nick's spoon hovered over his plate, poised but empty. He looked at her. "What about mine?"

Khloe froze. She hadn't expected him to sit here at all. When he'd come over earlier, he'd only said he wanted to greet her friends.

"Nick, you should go to Arista's table. She's been waiting for you-seems like she has something to tell you.'

"I can hear whatever she has to say later," Nick replied calmly, withdrawing his gaze and lifting his spoon again. But he wasn't taking food for himself. Instead, he gently placed the last piece of cupcake onto Khloe's plate.

"Tonight, I should be with you."

His voice was soft, almost casual, yet somewhere inside, a string inside her chest loosened.

Around them, the room buzzed with chatter and teasing, but Khloe's eyes never left him. Each time he spoke this way, his calm, distant tone seemed deceptively neutral-but why did it feel so intimate, so... stirring?

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+25 Bonus

"Nick..."

A sudden, cold voice cut through the air.

Khloe turned to see a tipsy, stumbling woman approaching, clutching a wine glass. Her pupils flickered, and recognition flashed immediately across her features.

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It was the same woman from that night's ball, the one who had danced with Nick-his childhood friend, Michelle.

Tonight, Michelle had dressed to impress.

A pale blue, strappy gown clung to her figure, clearly a custom, handcrafted piece. The fabric caught the light in delicate sparkles, and a soft white silk shawl draped over her shoulders, amplifying her natural elegance.

Yet her cheeks were flushed, her gaze unfocused, and Khloe could tell she'd been drinking.

"Michelle... what are you doing here?" Nick's voice darkened as soon as he saw her.

"How could I not come to congratulate you now that you're engaged?" Michelle raised her glass toward him, but her eyes immediately flicked to Khloe. She let her gaze linger, assessing her, before a faint, strained smile appeared.

"Miss Roswell, you're truly beautiful... no wonder Nick chose you as his fiancée. You two really do look perfect together."

The jealousy in Michelle's tone made Khloe's mouth go sour. It was clear Michelle had feelings for Nick far beyond friendship.

But today was Khloe's engagement-her moment. Whether praise from others was genuine or not, she could take it graciously. "Thank you, Michelle. You look lovely as well."

Michelle was striking-her features sharp, her aura icy. But her next words carried a bitter undertone.

"Lovely, but what good is it if fate isn't kind? Always meeting the wrong person at the right time... or the right person at the wrong time."

Her voice softened, her gaze again landing on Nick, suddenly shimmering with unshed tears.

Khloe didn't fully understand her meaning. Around the table, Khloe's friends looked as if they'd just witnessed some dramatic revelation, their expressions tense and wary.

Everyone's attention instinctively snapped to Nick.

"You've had enough, Michelle." His tone was flat now, stripped of all expression. He turned slightly to Lenny. "Take Michelle home."

"Yes..."

Lenny nodded immediately, moving to support her. But Michelle dodged him, swaying toward Nick instead.

“We’re old friends. You wouldn’t deny me even one drink, right? I’ll finish this, then I’ll go on my own—no need to trouble anyone else.”

Nick didn’t respond. He simply lifted his glass and drank it down, eyes never leaving straight ahead. Michelle’s tears spilled over her cheeks.

“Fine, Nick... you’ve made your point. I won’t trouble you again.”

She drained her glass and set it down, but her body went suddenly slack, tipping directly toward him. In an instant, Nick sidestepped, not a thread of her dress brushing against him.

Lenny, having caught Nick’s silent signal, stepped in immediately, steadying Michelle with a respectful tone. ” Ms. Keller, you’ve had too much. I’ll take you home.”

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Michelle hadn’t expected such complete avoidance from Nick. She hesitated, opening her mouth, but Nick’s cold, unyielding gaze stopped her words in their tracks.

“That won’t be necessary.” She glanced one last time at him, pushed past Lenny, and stumbled out.

After she left, the atmosphere at the table shifted entirely. All eyes were on Nick, including Khloe’s. But he only gestured across the table.

“Please, eat. Don’t hold back,” he said lightly, as if nothing of interest had happened.

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Chapter 89

“Ah... alright.”

“Thank you, Mr. Hunt.”

Even though everyone’s curiosity was piqued, no one dared ask more-Nick’s presence carried an unspoken command that silenced questions.

Khloe hesitated a moment, then spoke up, “Nick... about Michelle... are you sure you don’t want to go check on her?”

She recalled what Michael had said: Michelle came from a scholarly family, always disciplined and composed. To lose her composure so publicly, she must have been deeply hurt.

Nick’s tone softened, calmer than before. “Today is our engagement party. You are the focus of this event.

“Lenny will make sure she gets home safely. There’s no need to let someone unimportant disrupt our engagement.

“I am your fiancé. Leaving you on our engagement day to chase after someone else would be disrespectful. I wouldn’t do that.”

The earlier disruption had stirred in her a faint unease about this arranged engagement. But his words—direct, considerate, and deliberate—were like a small stone dropped into her heart, sending ripples outward.

So the engagement she thought was just a formality, in Nick’s mind, mattered. Her feelings mattered.

After the banquet, Nick’s grandparents were reluctant to see Khloe leave. They wished she could move directly into his estate. Khloe, pressed by courtesy and work, could only offer flimsy excuses.

Nick personally escorted her home.

Exhausted from back-to-back work, Khloe had barely sat in the car before drifting into sleep. When she awoke, the car was parked in front of her building. Nick sat quietly on one side, seemingly content just to wait.

“Nick... I’m sorry. Have I been sleeping for long?” she murmured, glancing at the time. She inhaled sharply. “It’s so late... you should have woken me.”

It was already 1 a.m. She had slept for over an hour.

“I saw you were sleeping soundly, so I didn’t wake you. You should go inside and rest,” he said.

“Alright... thank you.”

Khloe nodded, not wanting to take up more of his time. As she stepped out of the car, she glanced back. He was leaning slightly forward, fingers lightly pressing the bridge of his nose, exhaustion faintly etched into his posture.

Of course he was far busier than she was, undoubtedly far more tired. Yet, he rarely allowed himself to appear vulnerable; even this slight hint of fatigue seemed carefully contained.

The next morning at the Fox Group, Angela had just reached her desk when countless eyes snapped toward her.

Everyone was staring.

A staff member hurried over and said softly, “Miss Thompson, the chairman requests your presence in the CEO’s

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+25 Bonus

office.”

“Who?” Angela had just picked up her water cup when it slipped from her hand with a sharp clatter, splashing her clothes. She barely noticed.

The chairman... that was Arthur-Trey’s father.

He... he was here at the company?

Arthur hadn’t set foot in the office for years. Full authority had long been handed to Trey. Trey had even assured her that Stella would never reveal anything about her to his father. At least while interacting at the company, she

could feel safe.

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Chapter 90

“Miss Thompson, please head over right away.

It wasn't until the staff member reminded her again that Angela finally came to her senses.

“Alright, I'll go now,” she said quickly. “You can get back to work.”

As soon as the person left, she snatched up her phone and dialed Trey's number.

He happened to be out of the office meeting clients that day.

“Trey, what should I do? Your father-he's here at the company!”

The moment her words hit his ear, Trey's expression changed. He was mid-meeting, but he immediately stood up.

“Are you sure?”

“He asked me to head over to the CEO's office. Can't I just... not go?”

She was already grabbing her bag, her nerves in full revolt at the very thought of facing anyone from the Fox family.

“Angela, calm down. Since my dad specifically asked for you, just go see him. He's more composed than my mom -he won't do anything drastic. I'll rush back right now. Just hold on for a bit.”

Trey knew his father's temper well. If Angela tried to run, it would only make things worse-and possibly drag him into the fire, too.

“I can't. I'm too scared...”

She didn't plan on listening this time. But before she could even reach the elevator, a few security guards stepped in to block her way.

Arthur had clearly anticipated this in advance.

Moments later, Angela was escorted straight into the CEO's office.

Arthur sat behind the desk, flipping through the company's recent project and performance reports. His face was thunderous.

So many problems-and not a word from Trey.

When Khloe was still around, the company had flourished. That was why he'd handed over full control to his son, finally allowing himself to step back. But in the past two weeks, everything had started to crumble.

If not for shareholders calling to complain, he wouldn't even have known that Khloe had been gone for so long- and that Trey had brought Angela back into the company.

The night before, when the news reached him, his anger had nearly boiled over. He'd almost lashed out at Stella. He couldn't believe she'd helped to cover up such a serious matter.

She'd cried the entire night. She'd tried to call Trey, but Arthur had confiscated her phone and ordered the servants to watch her. He intended to handle the situation with Angela and the company personally.

"Mr. Fox..."

The moment Angela saw Arthur, her legs nearly gave out. She forced herself to speak, her voice trembling.

1/2

Chapter 90

+25 Bonus

A file dropped onto the desk with a sharp thud. She flinched.

"I don't want to talk about you and Trey anymore," he said gravely. "But you should know that you have no business being around him-much less remaining at Fox Group."

His gaze slid from her face to his hands, the quiet weight of his presence pressing the air flat.

"Mr. Fox, please don't misunderstand. Trey and I are only colleagues now. You know the company's situation- short on people... Khloe left impulsively, her team all resigned, and Trey's project-"

"If it's just a professional relationship," Arthur cut her off sharply, "then I suggest you mind how you address him."

He raised his hand slightly, and someone beside him immediately brought over a document.

“Miss Thompson, I prefer to act efficiently. Please sign this voluntary resignation form. Let’s part ways with some dignity.”

He slid the paper across the desk. It was a resignation letter-effective immediately.

Beneath it lay a supplemental agreement: Angela was forbidden from having any private contact with Trey. Violate that clause, and she would be liable for all company losses incurred during her time there.

“Mr. Fox...” She gave a shaky laugh, anger breaking through her fear. “You really think I’d sign something this absurd?”

2/2