

Blind Date 171

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Inevitable Matters

Dexter paused and lifted his gaze from her embrace, his eyes filled with desire.

Josie's cheeks bloomed red, her voice trembling. "Not here. We are at Arnold Carter's place."

It was audacious of him to act so freely in the enemy's domain, completely disregarding the influence of the Carter Group.

Dexter withdrew his hand, their foreheads touching. He spoke huskily, "Are you afraid of him seeing us?"

Josie struggled to grasp the meaning behind his words, unsure if he cared more about her fear of someone catching them or Arnold, in particular, seeing them. She pondered her response carefully, "Yes... I'm afraid of someone seeing us."

Hearing her answer, he grew cautious and tightened his hold on her waist. "Let's go home first."

While their actions in Heaven on Earth might've passed off as ambiguous, their actions this time would be too difficult to conceal. It was hard to hide the chemistry between them.

Josie wasn't naive. She knew the reason why Dexter had turned up at Carter Group.

Carter's elevator overlooked the breathtaking scenery of Wavery. Josie instinctively grasped onto his clothes in the empty elevator as she looked through the transparent glass. Dexter tightened his embrace in return.

"Did Arnold Carter bring you up here the same way?"

Regaining her composure, Josie could finally think clearer. She looked up and smiled cheekily, "Mr. Russell, could I interpret what you said as you being jealous, if I may be so blunt?"

With marks still visible on her neck, her smiling face resembled a blossoming flower bud. Dexter averted his gaze, feeling restless. "Who said I'm jealous?"

"Is that so? It seems that I'm the only one that's jealous every day," Josie quickly replied, playfully teasing.

"Whom are you jealous of?"

She actually pondered for a moment. Dexter had never behaved inappropriately to anyone else, so there was no target for her to blame on. "Perhaps Ms. Miller. You two are always

parable Who knows if you two are into office play, just like Mr. Yves

Unlock succeeded

s in secret that nobody knows of"

As Josie verbalized her thoughts, her fantasies grew wilder.

Dexter sneered, "You know quite a lot. You've entertained these thoughts often during work, huh?"

She pouted, "What. I'm not even allowed to slack for a bit now?"

Dexter remained silent, yet his grip on her waist tightened.

Undeterred, Josie persisted with her questions as they headed back to Mason Garden. "Please do enlighten me, Mr. Russell. Why did you come here by yourself? Were you looking for me just now?"

Dexter stared at the traffic ahead, a hint of awkwardness appearing on his usually calm face. "You're overthinking."

Josie deliberately rubbed against him, her persistence growing. "At the racecourse, when you saw me with Arnold Carter, were you surprised?"

He glanced at her sideways, his voice turning cold, "I didn't know you two were there in the first place; it was a coincidence."

"Then, when you rode your horse and bumped into me, were you angry with me?"

Josie's courage inexplicably grew for some reason.

Dexter cast a sidelong glance at her, his voice and expression distant. "You are one of the Russells and my lawful wife. I don't like others tainting what is mine, so how is it wrong to be angry?"

His possessiveness sent shivers down Josie's spine; hence, she restrained herself, "But... I somehow feel like Arnold Carter already knows about our marriage."

Dexter wasn't surprised; he was always prepared for everything. "It's only a matter of time. before he finds out."

Josie paused momentarily, realizing that henceforth, she was no longer just Josie-she would. also be known as Dexter's wife. She couldn't just behave however she wanted anymore.

When they returned to Mason Garden, the lights were still on, and Marilyn was dozing off in the living room.

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A Night Spent Together

Startled by the noise, she quickly approached them. "What time is it? It's already three in the morning. Where did you two go?"

Caught off guard, Josie exchanged a glance with Dexter. "I... I was accompanying Dex for some matters."

Marilyn grew suspicious. "You got me worried. I thought something had happened."

"Marilyn, you don't have to wait for us; your body needs rest. Go to bed early, alright," Dexter calmly stated, unbothered to explain further.

Seeing them, Marilyn felt reassured. However, as they headed upstairs, she grabbed Josie's hand and whispered, "Did you two have a fight?"

Stunned by her abrupt question, Josie fiddled with her fingers awkwardly and stammered, "...No, we didn't."

but you

didn't show up. you, "Don't lie to me. Dex came back in the evening and waited for Then he went out driving again. Tell me the truth, did the two of you have a fight?" Marilyn insisted.

Josie was surprised. She hadn't expected that Dexter would make an effort to find her. "Um... I guess so."

Marilyn smiled, her attention fixated on the red mark on Josie's neck. "A little quarrel can spice things up. It shows that Dex likes you. Now go to sleep."

Josie blushed. She had never even considered that Dexter would have an interest in her. Marilyn was bold to think that way.

Josie became somewhat self-conscious when sharing the same room again. But unlike the sizzling air from before in Carter's resting lounge, the space in between them appeared more tranquil since Dexter didn't seem to have any intentions to pursue further. He lay beside her and said, "Let's sleep."

Josie couldn't help but think that if they had continued earlier, she might have been willing to oblige. After all these years, she wasn't ignorant about matters between a man and a woman. Besides, Dexter had good looks and an incredible physique. She wouldn't have been at a loss either way.

"Okay," Josie responded, listening to the gentle breaths from the man beside her.

In the darkness, after a while, the man's large hand reached for her neck, drawing closer with a gentle touch. "Sleep."

Josie silently chuckled. Dexter's arm was incredibly soft, more comfortable than a pillow. She turned to her side and said, "Goodnight, Dexter."

"Goodnight."

The following day, Josie believed that Dexter had already left. Still, to her surprise, she found his sleeping face beside her when she opened her eyes. Sensing her movement, he slowly lifted his eyelids, his voice husky from waking up. "You're awake?"

They were still in the same position as the previous night. Josie boldly touched his furrowed brows. "Is your hand sore?"

Dexter seemed to have just remembered his hand and attempted to move it, furrowing his brows with a slight smile. "It's numb."

She couldn't help but laugh, quickly sitting up. "It's still early. Are you having breakfast at home today?"

Dexter nodded while stretching his arms, thinking about the day's schedules.

“What do you want to eat? I’ll ask Marilyn to prepare it.”

“Whatever you want. I’ll have the same as you,” Dexter got up and headed to the bathroom to freshen up. Josie happily descended the stairs, her smile never fading.

His way of being affectionate was peculiar, but she understood that it was his own way of expressing care for her.

After breakfast, Dexter put on his coat, heading to Russell Group. Josie stood on tiptoes and helped him tie his tie, asking in a mellifluous voice, “Can I go with you? I find the house too boring.”

Dexter squinted and glanced at her arm. “When can you have the cast removed?”

She thought for a moment. “Another week.”

“I’ll accompany you then and take the opportunity to visit your father,” Dexter replied.

Josie jumped with joy, her mind racing. “You didn’t refuse me!”

Dexter made a soft grunt and walked straight toward the outside of the villa. Autumn had arrived, with the leaves of the phoenix trees turning yellow and forming a beautiful, connected landscape. The panoramic scene before them was breathtaking, and the air felt refreshing.

Chapter 173

Getting Bribed

Josie trailed behind him, brimming with joy and energy.

While Dexter attended to business matters in the car she was bored and took selfies with her phone. Accidentally, he ended up in the frame, and the unexpected harmony of the picture surprised her. She saved it and set it to private viewing only.

Entering the office with Dexter, the secretaries found her presence peculiar. She quickly explained. “Oh, hi! I’m here for work.”

That explanation seemed reasonable, and no one dwelled on it further except for Ivy Miller. She was well aware of the relationship between the two and couldn’t help but feel a twinge of sadness.

Did he really have to bring her along everywhere, even for work?

Taking a deep breath, she glanced at the woman seated in the reception area, engrossed in her phone, before approaching Dexter. “Mr. Russell.”

“Speak, Dexter responded.

Ivy hesitated, her words caught in her throat.

Dexter quickly grasped what she meant, casting a gentle gaze at Josie. “She can know whatever you’re about to tell me.”

“But, Mr. Russell... it’s really not appropriate, Ivy voiced her concerns.

Previously, Ivy believed that she and Dexter were the only ones who shared common topics within the Russell Group. Though their discussions revolved around work, they were primarily commercial secrets. It was like sharing something intimate with Dexter. However, now there was someone else who took that privilege from her.

Sensing the tense atmosphere, Josie snapped back to reality. "Should I step outside?"

Dexter's expression turned grim, prompting Ivy to restrain herself. She took a deep breath and spoke solemnly, "There's no need."

"Mr. Russell, we have discovered that Mr. Yves has been accepting bribes. He had been living lavishly, going on luxury trips, but he shouldn't be able to afford them with such a modest salary."

"How much money was he bribed with?" Dexter pressed his temple

He sneered, "Thirty million. Arnold Carter sure is generous when it comes to such matters."

At this point, Josie interjected, her keen perception catching onto the shift in the atmosphere. "Arnold probably wasn't directly involved. That day at the hospital, Mr. Yves mentioned that they had only met once." It was likely that Arnold had ordered one of his subordinates to carry out the act.

Upon hearing this, Dexter and Ivy turned their gaze toward her simultaneously.

Raising an eyebrow, Dexter asked, "You remember it so clearly. Are you trying to defend him?"

"What are you talking about? I'm just stating the facts, not trying to mislead you," Josie replied fearlessly, unafraid of the consequences.

Ivy hadn't expected that Josie would have a connection to Arnold Carter.

Dexter retracted his gaze. He asked, "Has he got anything to do with the car accident?"

Ivy froze, gritting her teeth. "Yes, we discovered he had a romantic relationship with Claire Wilcher, and she's pregnant."

"Gather the evidence," Dexter's expression turned cold. "compile it and send it to his wife."

"Alright."

Ivy paused momentarily before continuing, "We are already preparing to acquire Landon. Should we reassess the background of all personnel involved?"

"No need. That is Arnold Carter's last resort; he has no hidden moves left."

"Why do you think so?"

"At this very moment, he's in London, feeling the heat of the situation," Dexter spoke calmly, a glint of malice crossing his eyes. "Assassins prefer to strike in autumn because the wind is strong, and blood dries quickly."

After concluding the work report, Ivy passed by Josie, taking a deep breath. Two of her best cards were wasted because of Josie. She couldn't help but feel a great sense of resentment towards her.

“Ms. Warren, what would you like to drink?”

Josie sensed a hint of stubbornness from her stern expression, understanding its meaning as women naturally do. She responded with a hint of playfulness, “Thank you, Ms. Miller. Just water will do.”

Ivy didn’t reply and turned away, leaving the room.

Josie tapped her leg with her fingers, reflecting on the few encounters with Ivy. It seemed that Ivy did not like her.

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Dexter Might Not Like Me

She turned her gaze, propping herself against the couch to observe Dexter. The morning light streamed through the tall windows, casting a golden glow upon his brow. Josie finally understood why people said that men dedicated to their work were the most attractive.

She pondered for a moment but refrained from voicing her thoughts.

Ivy returned to the secretary’s office, and several people noticed her troubled expression. They couldn’t help asking, “What’s wrong? Did Mr. Russell lose his temper?”

“I would rather he lose his temper, honestly,” Ivy forced a smile. “it’s nothing.”

She was walking towards the pantry to pour water when her phone rang. Glancing at the caller ID, she immediately answered, lowering her voice to reprimand, “What do think you’re doing?”

you

The person on the other end said something, further infuriating Ivy. “I simply asked you to stop

her from attending that meeting. And you hired someone to crash into her with a damn car? Things wouldn’t have turned out like this if you weren’t so stupid!”

“You dare blame me now? Blame yourself for giving me a handle. I wouldn’t have had a chance to threaten you if you hadn’t gotten yourself all over that man.”

“I can’t do this anymore. Mr. Russell’s given strict orders. Both of you are finished,” Ivy sneered. “Don’t you ever call me again.”

The person on the other end became hysterical, continuing to argue. Ivy’s anger rose, her chest heaving. “Claire Wilcher! Stop making a scene, would you? Go ahead, report me. Let’s see if Mr. Russell believes you or believes in me.”

With that, she abruptly ended the call, only to notice water overflowing onto the floor. Snapping back to reality, she picked up the cup and turned around, but at that moment, she saw a figure standing at the doorway, causing her to take a step back in fright.

Leaning against the door, Josie shrugged innocently. “Oh, Ms. Miller, you were taking too long grabbing that glass of water. I thought I could save you the trouble and come over myself. Hope you don’t mind.”

Ivy's heartbeat hammered repeatedly, and she quivered, "...You heard."

Her voice tightened, and Josie laughed, her body trembling with mocked amusement. However, a seething rage was consuming her inside. "I never expected that you were the one that was behind all these, Ms. Miller. You disguised it so well, without a single flaw."

Unlock succeeded

bed the water cup, her face turn

Wilcher out of it. I had no part in what happened."

"I believe you," Josie responded quickly.

"You... you believe me?" Ivy's voice cracked, unable to believe her words.

"Not only do I believe you, but I believe Dexter will also believe you. After all,

you truly didn't do anything." Josie took slow steps forward, evading Ivy's personal space with each step.

"And aside from that, you have helped me when things happened. Even though I'm now aware

you were the one that started all these, neither he nor I have any reason to blame you."

Her placid understanding made Ivy even more anxious, her breathing quickening. "What do you want?"

"I don't want anything," Josie paced around her slowly. "I won't dwell on this matter or tell Dexter. But I want you to know—"

"Now that I'm already married to him, and it's a done deal, you should stop your pointless struggle. I value my life and don't want to lose my life for some foolish reasons," she raised her voice, her tone heavy. "Dexter doesn't like you and might not like me either. But until everything is over, please refrain from plotting against me, alright? Let's just do our jobs as well as we should. What do you think?"

Ivy stared intently at her cunning face, gritting her teeth. "I don't believe it. There's no way you haven't developed feelings for him. He's such a perfect man."

Josie paused, then smiled as if that were indeed the case.

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A Light Kiss

"So what? Look at yourself. You love and care for him so much, but what do you have to show for it? Has he ever reciprocated or shown the same feelings for you?"

Ivy's heart sank as Josie's words hit her like a dagger.

Still grappling with the hurt, Ivy pressed on, needing confirmation, "Are you sure you're not catching feelings for him?"

Frustrated with Ivy's ongoing doubts and insecurity, Josie impulsively snatched the glass of water from her hand and walked off without a word.

"Josie!"

Ivy suddenly called out, her voice trailing behind, "And what about him? Does he have any feelings for you?"

Ivy couldn't ignore the red flags raised by Dexter's recent behavior.

Josie pursed her lips and said, "I don't know."

She wasn't quite sure how to maneuver this delicate love triangle, assuming that giving Ivy a forewarning as such would be enough. Despite Ivy's strong affection for Dexter and her desire to remain close to him, somehow, Josie knew that Ivy wouldn't act impulsively and target her.

At this point, Josie was certain that Ivy wouldn't pose any threat to her safety.

Dexter had a meeting in the afternoon. When he returned, he couldn't find Josie in his office. He furrowed his brow and walked into the lounge, where he discovered her sleeping on the couch.

This girl must have been tired from staying up late last night.

A twinge of sympathy tugged at him. Dexter grabbed a thin blanket and gently draped it over her, only to find that his well-intentioned action roused the light sleeper.

Feeling parched, Josie yawned and mumbled, "Ah, you're back..."

Dexter lowered his gaze, "Why didn't you sleep in the room?"

Josie was abashed, "I said I'd keep you company while you work. Look at me... ended dozing off. Oops."

Unlock succeeded

ad that you knew

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Glad

up

and handed it to her.

Josie took it, surprised. "How did you know I was thirsty?"

"Your lips are dry." He shrugged casually, glanced at her quickly, and moistened his lips. In an instant, a wave of restlessness washed over him. He furrowed and averted his gaze.

Josie quenched her thirst and smiled as she asked, "Are you done? Can we go home already?"

Dexter chuckled, "You're like a little kid counting the minutes until class is over."

She laughed, "That's exactly how I was back in school. When the bell rang, I would race out of the classroom!"

Dexter's smile gradually faded. He couldn't help but think of Leanne. When Leanne was still around, she was just like Josie. She wasn't keen on academics and always needed a push to focus on her studies. To Leanne, nothing was more important than having fun.

He instinctively asked, "How were your grades back then?"

"Do I even need to say? I always ranked first in my class, alright!" Josie raised her thumb, beaming with pride.

Dexter tugged at his lips, masking a hint of agony in his heart. He stood up, saying, "I need another two hours, and then we can wrap up the work and go home."

"Dexter!"

Before Dexter could walk away, Josie suddenly called out to him. He turned around and saw her leaping over. The next second, he felt a peck on his lips, with her delicate hands cupped on his cheeks, "I'll be right here waiting for you."

Dexter's heart raced. Although it was just a superficial peck on the lips, it sent butterflies fluttering inside him.

He ran his fingers across his lips, a surprised smile forming, "You've got some nerve."

The culprit beamed a mischievous grin at him, delighted with the success of her playful act.

In the following days, Josie stopped accompanying Dexter at the Russell Group. It was too ostentatious and boring, not nearly as exciting as her modeling gigs.

But no matter how busy Dexter was, he always came home in the evening and slept beside her. His arm would be her designated pillow cushioned under her head, providing a sense of security. Josie couldn't help but feel distressed at the thought that his tenderness might fade one day, leaving her deeply saddened.

The mere thought of that day approaching caused her present sense of happiness to fade suddenly, replaced by a hollow emptiness.

Only then did she grasp the meaning of 'extreme joy often leads to profound pain.'

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He Rushed Back

In the blink of an eye, a week had gone by. It was time for Josie to have her plaster cast removed. In the early morning, Marilyn had been busy preparing the necessity and

accompanying Josie to the hospital. Meanwhile, Josie sat at the dining table, absentmindedly picking at her breakfast.

Last night, Dexter messaged her, telling her not to wait as he would pull an all-nighter at an important business function. But now it was morning, and he still hadn't returned.

Didn't they agree that he would go with her to the hospital?

"What's the matter, Jo? You look so down. Is something bothering you?" Marilyn noticed Josie's expression. She was concerned and quickly sat beside her.

Josie mustered a smile, "Oh, it's nothing. You've been taking care of me all this time. Once I fully recover, you'll have to return to Russell Mansion. I just feel a bit sad about you leaving so soon."

Josie's words brought a smile to Marilyn's face.

She let out a doting sigh and gently clasped Josie's hand, saying, "I like you a lot too. But Old Mr. Russell needs someone to look after him back home. I must return to him after leaving him alone for so long."

Josie nodded, understanding the responsibility.

"In these past few days. I've seen how your relationship with Dex has evolved. He's not someone who articulates or easily acknowledges his feelings. To be frank, his aloof and distant nature makes it even harder for him to fall in love." Marilyn said earnestly. Josie muttered in her heart, "But he has someone special in his heart, someone he cares deeply about."

he'll "But Dex likes you, and that's the most important thing. Don't worry, when he likes you, go above and beyond to please you. Even if it means reaching for the impossible. Just trust him, Jo. Although it might be challenging at times, just know that everything will work out. If possible, please bear with his occasional bouts of anger."

Marilyn's well-meaning advice stirred a bittersweet feeling in Josie's heart. She nodded gratefully and said, "Thanks, Marilyn, I will remember that."

However, a nagging worry lingered in Josie's mind that she might disappoint Marilyn's expectations and trust.

Aware that she was running behind schedule for her hospital appointment, Josie grew

ed and decided not to wait any longer Unlock succeeded

Just as they were about to leave the premises, they spotted Dexter's Porsche approaching from a distance. Marilyn exclaimed, "There! Dex is back!"

Surprised, a flicker of joy illuminated Josie's eyes as she rushed towards the car and grabbed the door handle. "Dexter!"

Despite the fatigue evident in his furrowed brows, as if he hadn't slept all night, Dexter's weariness dissipated when he saw Josie. He beamed and said, "You shouldn't be running with your injury."

"Why did you come back so late?" Josie ignored his scrutiny and quizzed him.

"The business negotiation went on throughout the night,"

Josie sniffed, "And you've been drinking."

"Mm. Just a bit."

She believed him because, given his status, not many people dared to pressure him into drinking. On the contrary, these people should count their blessings that he didn't chug booze down on them and make them go on a wild bender.

Dexter pushed open the car door and motioned for her to get in, "Come on in. We should head to the hospital now."

Josie nodded eagerly. After waiting all morning, she was overjoyed as her anticipation was finally fulfilled!

Upon arriving at the hospital, they found a considerable crowd and had to wait in line. Josie held onto Dexter's hand as they sat in the corridor.

Holding Josie's appointment card, Dexter had attracted envious glances directed at Josie with his striking good looks.

"Was it the Landon case that kept you in an all-night discussion?" She pried.

With evident fatigue in his eyes that softened his typically imposing demeanor, "You could say that. It's got something to do with the Ardon family."

No wonder the discussion lasted all night; it must be related to the political sphere.

Josie felt a tinge of concern.

"Will you be implicated and investigated by the police? These cases aren't trivial. I've heard similar cases where the police would dig through several generations of the family."

Dexter chuckled at her innocent remark. He reclined, finally able to unwind after a night of work. "Not at all. They won't find anything on me. But Arnold will be in deep sh*t for what he's done."

To put it bluntly. Josie knew that Dexter wouldn't let Arnold off the hook for his actions. He would ensure that Arnold faced the consequences of his crimes without suffering any losses to himself.

[Chapter 177](#)

Promotion to Director

As they waited, Josie leaned closer and quizzed, "What's the deal with the Ardon family?"

The queue was crawling along, and soon, a nurse approached them. She politely said, "Mr. Russell, the hospital director mentioned that you could bypass the protocol. Please let me know if you need immediate attention, and I'll make the necessary arrangements."

Her words were veiled, but Dexter and Josie understood.

Dexter glanced at the crowd and declined with a wave of his hand, "No need for that. We'll wait like everyone else."

The nurse nodded and moved on.

Josie always thought he would take advantage of his status and seek special treatment, but today, his humility surprised her. Sitting beside him, she couldn't help but admire Dexter's down-to-earth attitude.

She gave him a thumbs-up, to which he simply beamed and didn't say anything else.

Then, in a hushed voice, Dexter shifted back to their previous conversation, “The higher authorities have their sights set on them. The Ardon family is definitely going to face severe consequences this time.”

No wonder Arnold would also be in trouble. These intricate and complex webs of interests were bound to have far-reaching repercussions.

Dexter’s weary face carried a sense of ease, signaling that he was content. It seemed like victory was well within his reach.

At last, it was Josie’s turn. The doctor glanced at her X-ray and prepared to remove the cast. The process didn’t take long; throughout it, Dexter stood faithfully by her side, his gaze patient and unwavering.

Afterwards, Josie flexed her limbs as the cast came off, feeling significantly at ease and comfortable.

Her heart skipped a beat when they locked eyes.

For years, she had grown accustomed to being independent, going to school alone, eating out by herself, and even visiting doctors unaccompanied. She had managed so much on her own. But now, with him beside her, she felt an overwhelming sense of security.

The doctor briefed her on post-care instructions. On the side, Dexter stealthily committed the doctor’s reminders to memory. Then, they left the hospital together.

“Who would have expected the busy and esteemed Mr. Russell would personally accompany me for a follow-up check at the hospital, Josie quipped, playfully trailing behind him. Now that the cast was removed, she could move more freely.

Dexter joined the banter with a smirk, “Who knew the esteemed Mr. Russell doesn’t need someone to feed him but can eat on his own.”

His impromptu cheesy comeback made her burst into laughter.

Once they got in the car, Dexter casually handed her a document.

“What’s this?” Josie opened it and realized it was a contract—an appointment letter for her as the new director of the design department.

“Dexter...”

The man rubbed his temple and uttered, “Yeah, that’s for you.”

“... But why promote me now? You realize it’s going to stir up gossip and speculation about our relationship, right?”

“You’ve helped the company secure the Sylmark project. It’s a major win! Plus, no one in the department is more qualified for this position than you.”

Dexter looked into her eyes and said, “Josie, I believe in you.”

No extravagant expressions were needed, just a sincere and straightforward declaration of trust. Yet, it lifted Josie’s spirits to cloud nine.

Dexter’s opinion had a significant effect on her sense of self-worth and overall happiness.

“Your trust means a lot to me.”

He raised an eyebrow and flashed a radiant smile. Seeing Josie’s smile and happiness made him happy too.

After the cast was removed, Josie headed to the Russell Group to report for her new role the next day.

At the office, Alice was the first to congratulate Josie on her promotion. She gave Josie a bear hug as she exclaimed, “Congratulations, Jo! I’m so happy for you!”

Almost out of breath, Josie interrupted Alice from her over-expression. “Okay, okay. This is getting embarrassing. People are staring at us.”

Alice released her and glanced back at the curious onlookers in the department

“Let them! You’re the department director now. There’s no doubt that you are well qualified for this role! And who dares to say otherwise?”

A woman walked by and jeered. Tsk. Who knows how long you’ll last

It was one of Claire’s teammates.

Alice wanted to fire back, but Josie held her back. She shook her head at Alice and replied the woman. “Only time will tell

[Chapter 178](#)

Outwitted by Jesse

Since taking on her new role, Josie had been swamped with work every single day. Dexter was equally busy, and they hadn’t seen each other in a few days.

Alice, being the person in charge of a brand collaboration and the progress of an advertisement, had been pestering Josie, “Why don’t you come with me? Jesse Abbott, the famous celebrity, will be participating in the ad shoot.”

The name rang a bell in Josie, “Oh? Is Jesse Abbott a guy or a woman?”

“It’s a woman,” Alice whispered, “and there were rumors that she was dating Mr. Russell after they walked the red carpet together at an awards ceremony. The media exploded the next day, dubbing her his alleged girlfriend.”

Josie cringed at the idea of Dexter having a rumored girlfriend, “For real?”

“Who knows? But I bet she’d be dying to claim Mr. Russell hers since she’s been crushing on him.”

Unable to resist Alice’s persuasion, Josie then reluctantly agreed to visit her at the filming site once her work ended.

The shooting location was in a commercial district, so she brought a cup of hot cocoa on the way.

When Josie saw Jesse, she finally remembered that she used to take on Jesse's project to design an apartment when she was still a junior designer.

At that time, Josie busied herself with sketching for a solid two weeks, but in the end, Jesse abruptly terminated the project.

Consequently, Jesse's action infuriated Josie. Filled with anger, she took to the Internet to expose Jesse's exploitation of her professional work. The online community rallied behind Josie, leading to a significant backlash against Jesse.

Josie never expected to reencounter Jesse, let alone see her rise to fame as a well-known celebrity.

Upon hearing the story, Alice felt sympathy and resentment for Josie. She couldn't help and shot a disdainful glance at Jesse, who was busy posing for the camera. With a resentful tone, Alice remarked, "Yeah, she may have good looks, but her vanity and thirst for attention make me gag."

was the only one bold enough to express her disdain.

Sensing the piercing gaze of Jesse's manager from afar, Josie immediately signaled for Alice to tone it down and maintain a low-key demeanor to avoid any potential offense.

Alice, known for her quick wit, devised a mischievous plan. She nonchalantly settled at the director's computer, offering comments that appeared objective and casually constructive. Little did they know, she was up to no good, covertly attempting to sabotage Jesse. Much to everyone's surprise, the director adopted Alice's suggestions and had Jesse redo several takes.

As a result, Jesse's cheeks were sore from the prolonged filming, and her annoyance became evident as she lost her composure.

"Hey, are you friends with the director?" Jesse approached and scrutinized Alice.

Alice grinned and said slyly, "Oh, not at all. But it seems like the director found my suggestions useful. You probably thought so, too, right?"

Josie almost burst out laughing at Alice's witty comeback.

Finally given a twenty-minute break, Jesse skipped resting and went straight to Alice without bothering to take even a sip of water, "Do I know you?"

"Huh? Uh... Nope," Alice was taken aback by Jesse's sudden question. She blinked her eyes, pretending innocence with acting skills that surpassed those of movie stars.

"Are you one of my haters, then?" Jesse probed with suspicion.

Her crude questioning left everyone cringing, including Alice and the crew members w earshot.

Jesse took a deep breath, attempting to compose herself. She glanced around and caught sight of Josie, who had remained silent throughout.

Narrowing her eyes, Jesse felt a surge of unpleasant memories rushing back.

I remember this woman! She was the reason I got backlash from the netizen and accused me of being cheap for canceling the project! Jesse thought to herself bitterly.

Josie locked eyes with Jesse and calmly responded, "What a coincidence. Never thought we'd cross paths again, Ms. Abbott."

Jesse's gaze shifted between Alice and Josie; her hands balled into fists.

Having experienced the highs and lows of the entertainment industry, she contained the shame and fury. She remarked, "Well, if that's what you say, then I can only thank you for the coffee treat you're offering everyone here. Let's see... there are about twenty of us here."

Alice was caught off guard by Jesse's unexpected response. Unaware of the underlying tension, the surrounding crew cheered, buying into Jesse's claim that Josie would treat them to coffee.

"You...!" Alice exclaimed, annoyance and embarrassment coursing through her. On the other hand, Jesse couldn't help but flash a triumphant smirk at her defeated foes.

To Josie and Alice's dismay, they were put in a checkmate and outwitted by Jesse.

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Scalded

Josie quickly grabbed Alice's arm, intervening and agreeing resignedly, "It's alright, the treat is on me. No big deal."

She didn't want to make a fuss about it since it would reflect poorly on Alice and her if they insisted on refusing.

Alice understood Josie's concern and refrained from arguing. She cheekily whispered a snarky comment about Jesse in Josie's car. Alice had prompted a chuckle from Josie, apparently amused by Alice's remark.

"I'll go with you."

"It's fine. I can handle it."

The commercial area had plenty of coffee shops. Josie bundled up in layers of coats, shielding herself from the severe chilly wind gusts.

At the coffee shop, she ordered an array of coffee flavors.

Cup after cup of beverages was handed to Josie by the barista, who was surprised when Josie singled out a specific cup, marked it differently from the others and left it with the lid open to cool.

Before returning to the filming site, she was given a large foam box to ease the inconvenient transporting task by herself.

But even with a large foam box at her disposal, it was still quite a challenge to handle over twenty cups by herself....

Being petite and slender, the sight of her hugging a huge box filled with cups of beverages was comical. She resembled a silly baby penguin as she waddled through the gusts of wind.

With her injury only partially healed, the task became even more difficult. As a result, she caught the attention of many onlookers passing by.

Upon reaching the filming site, Josie took a pit stop to catch her breath. Feeling embarrassed, she rubbed her nose, thinking she must have looked quite foolish in that situation.

Meanwhile, not far off, a Lincoln Limousine could be seen parked by the roadside. Arnold, clad in a casual outfit, stepped out of the car. However, he was startled as he spotted Josie in the distance. Following his gaze, Ivy was surprised and turned to Dexter in the back seat, saying, "Mr. Russell, isn't that...?"

Back on set the mid-back director permitted Jesse and

A few crew members were chatting about heading out for a barbecue after filming

In the dressing room. Jesse was removing her makeup.

"

With her work badge hanging around her neck. Alice was casually killing time on her phone and intermittently glancing at the clock, wondering why Josie was taking so long.

Jesse sat quietly as the makeup artist applied makeup to her, stealing glances at Alice through the mirror.

Suddenly, Jesse's manager, Ms. Hattie, barged into the room. Slyly glancing at the woman playing on her phone, she patted Jesse's shoulder and whispered in her ear,

Jesse appeared stunned at Ms. Hattie's information, "Are you sure?"

Ms. Hattie bobbed her head affirmatively.

A covert glint flickered in Jesse's eyes as she shoved the makeup artist aside. Then, she grabbed her lipstick and eyebrow pencil and swiftly touched up her makeup.

Amidst the chaotic scene, she asked Ms. Hattie, "How do I look?"

Ms. Hattie wiped off her smudged eyeliner with her finger, "You look great. Just relax and be confident."

With that assurance, Jesse straightened up, lifted her skirt, and rushed out in a hurry.

She even forgot to grab her coat.

Amid the commotion, Ms. Hattie caught wind of Dexter's arrival at the filming site and hurriedly relayed the news to Jesse.

Startled by the gust of wind created by Jesse's hurried dash, Alice paused her phone activity, astonished to see Jesse sprint off impulsively. She swiftly stashed her phone away and trailed after Jesse.

Jesse was in a state of frenzy, her heart thumping with impatience. She couldn't wait to see Dexter. The crimson hue on her face revealed her deep infatuation for the man who had captured her heart.

Caught up in her romantic fantasies and infatuation, Jesse was oblivious to her surroundings. Turning a corner, she unintentionally crashed into someone, resulting in a stumble. It was only then that she realized she was drenched in hot liquid!

"Ah!"

A shocked scream escaped her in sheer disbelief!

The commotion caught everyone's attention.

The tantalizing scent of coffee filled the air, and as they turned to see what was happening, they were stunned at Jesse's sorry state.

Her clothes were soaked in brown liquid, and her delicate skin had turned a fiery red from the scalding.

Tears streamed down Jesse's face without a sign of stopping, a testament to the intense pain she was experiencing.

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He Didn't Help Her

A crowd rushed forward. Meanwhile, Josie frantically cleaned up the spill with a pack of tissues, "I'm sorry, I didn't notice..."

Just then, Ivy exclaimed from the corner, "What's happening here?"

Dexter and Arnold, who had been following Ivy, went pale at the sight. Dexter quickly withdrew his hand from his pocket and came forward.

Clueless about the preceding events, Dexter was shocked to see Jesse shoving Josie away tearfully. "What is wrong with you? I was just joking with you. Do you have to spill hot coffee all over me? You're so mean!"

With a believable despair demeanor, Jesse presented herself as a victim, effectively winning over everyone's trust and support.

Alice elbowed her way through the crowd and grabbed Josie's arm, her voice filled with disbelief. "Jo, did you really...?"

Josie's anger boiled up, and she forcefully shrugged off Alice's grip, "No, I didn't. She ran into me!"

Ms. Hattie, with a keen eye, noticed Dexter and seized the chance to point fingers at Josie, "Seriously? How could someone be so despicable as you? Jesse didn't wrong you; you're despicable for trying to ruin her!"

Josie stood bewildered, "Instead of blaming me, shouldn't you hurry up and send her to the hospital?"

Ms. Hattie's eyes burned with fury as she raised her hand at Josie, "Don't you dare tell me what to do or try to reason with me!"

Just then, someone intervened, stopping her hand in mid-air. A deep voice commanded, "Leave her alone."

The crowd fell silent. Alice shielded Josie, her voice trembling, "Mr. Carter...?"

But Josie noticed another man standing nearby...

But that tall and handsome man didn't even spare her a glance. He walked up to Jesse, removed his coat, and draped it over her, "Let's get you to the hospital first."

Jesse was taken aback, clearly surprised to see him. She instantly adopted an inferior demeanor as if she had been bullied. Mr. Russell? Why are you...

The surroundings erupted in chaos.

Regardless of the reason for Dexter's presence at the filming site, his actions seemed to validate the circulating rumors about him dating Jesse.

Dexter said calmly, "I've asked Ivy to take care of the rest. Let's head to the hospital now,"

He glanced at Josie before addressing Ms. Hattie, "You're coming with us."

Withstanding the pain, Jesse shot a devious glance at Josie and hastily clung to the man's arm, "Mr. Russell, I need you. Please keep me company at the hospital."

There was a brief pause before Dexter retracted her arm and patted her shoulder, "Sure."

Another wave of commotion ensued.

Everyone exchanged incredulous glances.

Josie finally averted her gaze, along with a flicker of hope vanished from her eyes... as if she had lost hope in Dexter.

Could the rumors be true? Is Dexter really dating Jesse?

Josie couldn't shake off the feeling that Dexter and Jesse were the perfect fairytale couple destined for each other. At the same time, she was left playing the villainous character who interfered in their love story, despised by all.

Jesse was the subject of admiration, yet she was stranded with malicious accusations.

Dexter and Jesse had left.

"Anyone who dares to spread gossip about what happened today will have to deal with me!" Arnold's sharp gaze swept across the crowd, eventually settling on Alice. "Come with me."

Arnold projected an air of dominance and authority. Even someone as bold and courageous as Alice felt a tremor in his presence. She squeezed Josie's hand reassuringly and said, "Don't worry, I'll be back soon."

Then, she set off with Arnold.

As they tidied up the set, some nosy crew members couldn't resist gossiping about the incident.

Josie stood there, feeling isolated and disheartened.

With a detached demeanor, she picked up some tools to clean up the mess.

Her long hair cascaded down, partially obscuring her ashen face.