

Chapter 30 The Present

Julie didn't understand what Carlos meant at first. But soon, she remembered what had happened in the kitchen the day before. 'Did Debbie really take the meal to Carlos' office? Why is he asking about the dinner? Was he displeased by it?' she wondered pensively.

Afraid of the possibility that Carlos was angry at Debbie, Julie replied at once, 'Carlos, to make sure that the dishes tasted good, Debbie cooked every dish several times. She even suffered a few minor burns because of the hot, boiling oil.'

Julie felt that even though the dishes tasted awful, Debbie had worked hard on them; it was her good intentions that counted.

'Got burnt? Was her apology sincere?' The anger in his eyes disappeared as soon as he heard Julie's words.

"Noted." Carlos nodded and started eating his breakfast.

The stress marks on his face softened. Julie breathed out a sigh of relief and headed back to the kitchen.

After lunch, Debbie got dressed and left the villa.

Debbie, Kasie, and Kristina wandered around to pick out a present for Carlos. They walked out of Dubhe Building and went straight to Merak Building arm in arm.

"Tomboy, what exactly do you have in mind?" They had been to a few shops for fashionable men's wear, trendy shoes, and expensive watches, but nothing piqued Debbie's interest. If she kept wandering around, refusing to buy anything Kristina would start suspecting that Debbie was wandering around for hot guys instead of a present.

In fact, the real problem was money. Debbie had been saving up, but her savings were far from enough to afford a decent present for Carlos. "Let's look a little longer," she said.

Kasie leaned on Kristina listlessly, rolling her eyes. "Debbie, my sweet, sweet Debbie, we have been wandering around for two hours now and you haven't bought anything." All the while, she and Kristina, on the other hand, carried a couple of bags each. Some were clothes, but the rest were mostly cosmetics.

"He is so rich, he doesn't need anything. What am I supposed to buy him?" Debbie was in a dilemma.

"Is it his birthday?" Kristina asked. Debbie had told them she was shopping for a present for a friend, but they knew she was hiding something from them.

"Nope," Debbie answered.

Kristina rolled her eyes at her. "Since it's not his birthday, why do you suddenly want to give him a present?"

Debbie returned her a stare, but she wasn't going to answer her question. She was too embarrassed to tell them that the present was for Carlos and it was an apologetic present for offending him earlier. "Spit it out," the other girls demanded and stretched their arms towards her to give her the bags. Debbie took the bags sullenly.

Kasie instantly felt as though a huge weight had been lifted off her and she felt much happier because of it. "Debbie, seriously, it doesn't matter how much the present is worth. It is the thought that counts," she remarked.

Debbie considered it for a moment and replied, "That sounds about right. I know what I should get him now."

She handed the bags back to her friends and started walking back.

"Hey, Debbie. What kind of friend are you?" Kristina yelled as she ran after her angrily.

While the two girls walked farther and farther away, Kasie lowered her head with disappointment. Although she was very tired, she quickened her pace and followed them since she didn't want to be left behind.

Debbie remembered an embroidered box she had spotted lying in a showcase earlier, the contents of which had caught her attention. Before

long, she walked back into the store that sold suits.

"Welcome to Enjoy!" the shop assistant greeted warmly as soon as the customers stepped in.

Debbie smiled at her and pointed at the embroidered box in the showcase. "I'd like to have a look at that one, please."

The woman fetched the box without hesitation and handed it to Debbie. "There is a brooch and a collar pin inside this box. Both are made of sapphire. Miss, are you looking for a present for your boyfriend? You have keen eyes. Every item in the box is uniquely designed and specially made to order."

When she heard the word 'sapphire', Debbie's eyes went straight towards the price tag. One hundred and eighty-eight thousand!

Her entire savings were just less than two hundred thousand.

Debbie was hesitant. She thought about it for a long time before she finally pressed her lips and made up her mind. However, just as she was looking around to search for the shop assistant, she heard a familiar voice from behind her. "Wrap up the accessories I just looked at."

'Gail? Son of a gun!' Debbie felt as if she had found a dead fly in her soup. She ignored Gail, and turned around to walk towards the cashier's desk with the embroidered box in her hand. Much to her surprise, the shop assistant stopped her in her tracks.

"I'm sorry miss, but the other lady has already agreed to purchase this," she said to Debbie apologetically.

"What? Gail wants the same thing as me? Since when does she have such good taste?" Debbie mused, annoyed.

Gail noticed the embroidered box in Debbie's hand. Having just realized what had happened, she sneered and said, "Debbie, luck is not on your side today. I saw that box first." In truth, Gail had no intentions of spending money on the items in the store, but now that she had the chance to snatch something from Debbie, the price didn't matter at all.

Just at that moment, Kasie and Kristina arrived at the scene. As soon as they saw Debbie, they started complaining.

"Tomboy, why did you run so fast? The present wasn't going to fly away," Kasie said, as she gasped for air.

"That's right. Look. My fingers are all red from carrying these bags, and you didn't even help me." Kristina held out her hands in front of Debbie for her to look.

Debbie ignored her friends and focused on Gail instead. "I saw it, too. And I like it. Ask the shop assistant to bring you another one."

Only then did Kasie and Kristina notice Gail, who was a self-proclaimed 'it' girl at school.

Finding herself in an awkward predicament, the shop assistant felt embarrassed. "I'm sorry, ladies. All our products are limited editions. This is the only set that's available." All their products were exquisite. Apart from the shirts, which they had doubles of in their inventory, all other products were single items.

Upon hearing the shop assistant's words, Debbie said nothing and went straight to the cashier's desk. "Be quick," she said to the cashier, handing her the bank card.

Gail rushed towards the cashier's desk and put her hand on the box. "Debbie, I saw it first. Why don't you just pick another one?" She spoke in a fake coy voice, but her eyes were staring at Debbie resentfully.

Kristina felt goosebumps all over her body. "Hey, Gail. Can't you just speak normally? I've got goosebumps here," she shouted.

The other shop assistants all began laughing at Kristina's joke. Gail cast her a fiery glare. "Kristina, this is none of your business. Keep your nose out of this," she retorted.

Kristina curled up her lips and turned her head away. Not only was Gail a self-proclaimed "it" girl, she was also a snitch. Kristina never took a fancy to talking with her, so she sat down to rest and didn't want to say another word to Gail.

Debbie slapped Gail's hand away and pushed her aside. "Why didn't you buy it earlier? Now I have my eyes on it," she declared unequivocally.

Gail was alone; while on her opposing side, there were three of them.

Needless to say, the situation was not to her advantage. Gritting her teeth furiously, she took out her phone and called her boyfriend. After all, the mall was his turf!

"Victor, please come to Enjoy Suit Shop on the third floor. Someone is bullying me," she urged coyly, with an extremely soft voice, which made Debbie cringe. It was a wonder how Gail managed to turn into such an innocent weak girl in an instant.

'Hmph! Calling backup? No big deal. I don't give a damn,' Debbie thought to herself. "Settle the account!" Debbie demanded and glared at the cashier with an intense look on her face. However, the cashier was still hesitant. The name Victor rang a bell. She had heard it before. Was he the vice-general manager of the mall? She wasn't sure about it. But if he was who she thought he was, how could she afford to offend him?

