

Honey, You're a Billionaire?

- Chapter 503 Jonathan Is Not the Groom

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[1,074 words]

Everyone in the audience was seated a bit far away, so they couldn't see the groom's face clearly. Even Yara, who was on stage, found her view obscured by the cascading petals. Although she couldn't see the man's face, his tall and imposing figure slowly approaching her was something she couldn't look away from.

Her heart skipped a beat with every step he took, and by the time he was almost in front of her, she felt like she could barely breathe.

Jonathan... Setting aside his identity as the ruler of the Finches, his mere appearance was handsome enough to outshine any celebrity. It was enough to make her infatuated, and this outstanding man was going to be her husband.

He stopped just a step away from her as the petals continued to fall more densely now. All he needed to do was reach out, and he could hold her hand.

Yara gulped nervously, barely containing her excitement. She wished that the petal rain could stop so that Jonathan could lift her veil and admire her beauty.

As the exhilarating music stopped, the petals gradually stopped falling. Yara was ecstatic, but as she finally saw the man's face clearly, all her anticipation seemed to freeze into ice.

"No... Why is it..."

She panicked. She recognized this man, and he wasn't Jonathan!

Guests who had seen Jonathan's face were also stunned when they saw the groom, while those who hadn't seen Jonathan before continued to praise the bride and the groom as a perfect match.

At the main table, everyone's expression changed, including Clover and Miles who were seated beside Rose.

The moment they saw the groom's face, they exchanged a glance, and both of them shared the same confusion. What was going on?

Without receiving an answer, they immediately looked at Rose, who showed no sign of surprise when seeing the groom's face. Instead, she was frowning as if she was still lost in thought.

On stage, the groom took another step closer to Yara, reaching out to take her hand. The touch snapped Yara out of her panic, and she shook his hand off almost instinctively and pulled away.

She stepped back and was trembling as she questioned him, "Why is it you?"

She was so flustered that she didn't even notice the microphone in the emcee's hand was still near her.

Just like when she had announced her pregnancy earlier, her panicked and disgusted voice instantly echoed throughout the venue and reached every corner.

Even the media outlets that were broadcasting live transmitted her words to everyone following the wedding at home.

The scene fell silent in an instant. Everyone stared at the couple onstage and was puzzled by Yara's question. What did she mean by that?

Realizing her loss of composure, Yara tried to regain her bearings, but the groom smiled indulgently and looked at her with deep affection.

"Today is our wedding. Who else could it be if not me?"

Their wedding? These words shattered Yara's calm she had been trying to maintain. She lowered her voice and hissed to the groom, "No, it's not you. Jonathan is the person I'm supposed to marry-Mr. Finch. There must be some mistake!" Her mind raced. Yes, there had to be a mistake.

The groom simply smiled and said, "Yara, what are you talking about? What Jonathan? What Mr. Finch? I'm the groom today."

He stepped forward again trying to take Yara's hand, but she pulled away once more. "No, that's not right."

Yara kept backing away. She didn't want to be associated with this man. Today was supposed to be her and Jonathan's wedding, and she didn't want the man to ruin it.

She glared at the man and quickly shifted her gaze to find Jonathan, but she couldn't see him anywhere after scanning the room.

In desperation, she looked toward the main table where Eleanor was seated. "Grandma, where's Jon?"

All eyes turned to look at Eleanor, and Rose also glanced over. Eleanor's expression remained calm despite everything that had happened as if nothing had surprised her.

Yara's inquiry was met with silence from Eleanor, making her even more anxious. She then turned to Bella. "Where's Mr. Finch?"

Her gaze at Bella was filled with questions. How could this be happening? What was going on?

Bella was just as confused and panicked as Yara was onstage. After all, she recognized the "groom" standing on stage.

Yara still didn't get an answer. Just as she was about to handle the man on stage, there was suddenly a loud bang as the door burst open.

"Mr. Finch..." Yara's face lit up with joy when she saw who it was.

She immediately moved toward him, but the bodyguards stepped forward to block her path before she could get close.

The title she called out confirmed Jonathan's identity for those who hadn't seen him before. All eyes were instantly on him, including cameras from media outlets following him closely.

Without even glancing at Yara

onstage, Jonathan deliberately

walked past where Rose was

seated. He paused slightly when he

reached her and continued to the

main table, sitting down in the

empty seat beside Eleanor

The entire wedding venue was silent, and no music was playing. Only an eerie stillness filled the air.

Jonathan adjusted his suit and

looked around. His smile carried an

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intimidating presence. "Why is everyone staring at me? I'm just a little late. The wedding's not mine, so it doesn't matter if I arrive late, right?"

He seemed to be joking, but no one dared to laugh or even smile. Unhappy with the palpable tension in the air, Jonathan spoke up. "Go on, why is everyone frozen in place?"

The emcee realized his cue and quickly proceeded with the ceremony. "The flower girls are now ready to present the rings to the couple."

Rings? Couple? Yara couldn't take it anymore. She tried to rush toward Jonathan, but the bodyguards kept her onstage. Despite this, she refused to give up. With a forced smile, Yara shot Jonathan a begging look. "Mr. Finch, stop joking. Today is our wedding, and I don't even know who this man is." Yara's firm tone only drew a mocking smile from Jonathan. He looked at her coldly.

"Our wedding? I only know that today is the wedding alliance between the Finch and Maize families, who said it was a wedding between you and me?"

Yara was stunned. She instantly

recalled the invitation and details at the venue. It seemed that none of it had Jonathan's name on it, only the words Marriage alliance between the Finch and Maize families

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But in Yara's heart, Jonathan was the only person she wanted to marry. As for this man...

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Chapter 504 Return to His Roots

[1,140 words]

This man was not who Yara wanted.

Her interactions with him were nothing more than a chance encounter at the bar, and she had played with him a few times out of boredom. Though he was tall like Jonathan, his appearance and status were far inferior. Status? Yara suddenly grasped something.

"Yes, the marriage alliance between the Finch and Maize families is today. I'm the daughter of the Maize family, so the man marrying me should be from the Finch family, but he's not!" As far as she knew, Jack was her cousin, so marriage between them was impossible.

There was said to be a mysterious fourth grandson in the Finch family, whom Yara knew was Ezra bearing the last name Turner. That left only Jonathan.

Everyone was watching Jonathan, seemingly waiting to see how he would respond to Yara. But Jonathan suddenly laughed. He glanced at the groom onstage and then at Bella and Yosef. "For a marriage alliance between the Finch and Maize families, you'll naturally be marrying a Finch. And this man..."

There was a meaningful smile on Jonathan's lips. "Uncle Yosef, aren't you going to introduce him?"

Still stunned, Yosef was suddenly jolted awake at the mention of his name. All eyes, including those of the media outlets, turned to him.

Yara froze. Upon seeing Bella's grim expression, a bad premonition arose in her heart.

Under the gaze of the crowd, Yosef suddenly stood up. He was about to step onto the stage when Bella suddenly grabbed his clothes.

"Yosef, you can't!" Bella's voice trembled, her tone almost pleading.

"Can't?" A cold smile appeared in Yosef's eyes.

If it had been before their earlier conversation or before Jack's affairs were exposed, he might have hesitated. But now, he had not the slightest hint of hesitation.

Though he knew that speaking now was helping Jonathan, his mind was already made up.

Yosef shook off Bella's hand and walked up to the stage. All eyes followed him as he walked to the groom's side.

When the crowd saw the two faces together, they noticed a slight resemblance in facial features. A suspicion formed in their minds and filled them with shock. Could it be what they were thinking? Yosef took the microphone from the emcee and said loudly, "It seems that today is not just a double celebration for the Finch family, but we have another happy event as well."

He smiled warmly and looked lovingly at the groom beside him. "This should have been announced before today, but better late than never. "This is my son, Liam Finch. I already had him before I got married. Over the years, he has been wandering outside and has suffered a lot."

"I've always felt guilty toward him, but fortunately he has grown into an outstanding young man and is now working in the Finch Group."

"Today marks his return to his roots!" Yosef's voice was steady, and his intention to promote Liam was obvious.

The crowd was still reeling from the shock of the news, and Yosef turned his gaze toward the table. "Liam, greet your grandmother."

Yosef was sure that Jonathan had dealt with Eleanor before he took any action. He had once worried that Liam might not gain Eleanor's approval, but it seemed that Jonathan had done him a favor. Liam immediately bowed to Eleanor. "Grandma!"

The silence in the room was so intense that one could even hear a pin drop.

Although Jonathan controlled the business empire of the Finch Group, Eleanor still held a significant sway over family matters. Recognition and return to the family would need her approval to make it official.

Yara and Bella were the ones most nervous present. If Eleanor did not acknowledge Liam, he could not enter the Finch family. He would not have the right to stand here and carry the marriage alliance of both families if he wasn't a member of the Finch family.

Bella's fingers nearly dug into her palm under the table.

Liam Finch. She knew this illegitimate son did not have the last name Finch, but Yosef had changed his last name during the introduction.

She looked at Eleanor, her eyes pleading. Eleanor was silent for a moment, and hope began to rise in Bella's heart. As long as Eleanor did not approve, Liam could never become a Finch.

But just as she thought her hope would be realized, Eleanor's voice slowly rang out. "Hmm. We're all family, so make yourself at home."

Bella's mind went blank at the mention of the word "family". How could they be family?

"Eleanor..." Bella called out, but her voice was drowned in the surrounding congratulations.

The Finch family now had three reasons to celebrate, and it was only fitting to offer congratulations.

Onstage, Yosef and Liam accepted the well-wishes with smiles. It seemed as if everyone present was delighted, and only the Maize family couldn't bring themselves to smile. Yara stood on stage, muttering to herself, "This isn't right... this isn't right."

Liam Finch? Who was Liam Finch? This man had suddenly become a member of the Finch family, but even if he was from the Finch family, what about it? Jonathan was the man she wanted to marry, and no one else was worthy of her.

Yara's eyes flickered with defiance. She was not willing to accept this situation.

She looked at Jonathan and said loudly, "Jonathan, I want to marry you and only you. You promised me, and the Finch family also gave their word!"

But despite her words, Yara lacked

confidence seemed that Jonathan had barely been involved in this marriage from the beginning to the end. He hadn't shown up at

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yesterday's wedding discussions between the two families.

The surrounding congratulations gradually quieted down.

Rupert, who had remained silent, suddenly realized something and quickly came to Yara's aid. "Jon, you and Yara share a marital bond, and she's carrying your child." "That's right. Jon, Yara is carrying your child. How can someone else take your place in this marriage?" Bella suddenly came to her senses.

Yosef might have managed to get his illegitimate son recognized by the Finch family, but Yara's marriage to Jonathan could not fall through. As long as Yara married Jonathan, Bella wouldn't lose. She would later have plenty of means and confidence to deal with this illegitimate son. Their words were like a thunderbolt at the scene. Yara was pregnant, and that was the news no one had missed earlier. But now...

Yara was pregnant with Jonathan's child, but she was marrying this newly recognized Finch family member, Liam. Wasn't that all too confusing?

Everyone turned to look at Jonathan in amazement. The argument finally made Jonathan look at Yara, but his gaze was so chilling it made her scalp tingle.

If the Maize family had stopped here and continued with the wedding, Jonathan would have let it slide, but they clearly weren't done clinging to him.

A cold glint in Jonathan's eyes. If that was the case, there was no need for him to show any mercy. He scoffed.

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Chapter 505 Fallen Altar

[1,214 words]

The unrestrained mockery in Jonathan's laughter made everyone's hearts clench. Then, his clear and measured voice echoed throughout the room.

"Ms. Maize's pregnancy is indeed something to celebrate, but who said the child is mine?"

The question rendered everyone speechless for a moment. Ignoring the numerous people present, Bella questioned, "Jonathan, why wouldn't it be yours? That night, you and Yara-"

A flicker of disgust crossed Jonathan's eyes as he cut her off. "Ms. Maize, haven't you informed them of what actually happened that night?"

All eyes turned to Yara, including those of the Maize family. The multitude of gazes intensified Yara's mounting unease, and a flash of uncertainty crossed her eyes.

Sensing something was off, Bella rushed to the stage and whispered urgently, "Yara, what does he mean? What haven't you told us?"

"I..." Yara's mind was reeling, unable to form a coherent response.

Her reaction confirmed Bella's suspicions that night wasn't as it seemed the next morning. But before Yara could speak, Bella offered a solution in a low voice. "Don't say anything. As long as you insist that the child is Jonathan's, he can't dispute it."

Her words sparked an idea in Yara's mind, offering a way out of her predicament. Yara thought, "That's right! As long as I insist the child's Jonathan's..."

She swallowed nervously and began, "Mr. Finch, that night-" She looked at Jonathan, but a voice suddenly echoed through the room before she could finish.

"Damn it! Why did you pass out? Well, even if you did, I'll have you tonight. Ugh, this isn't working. He's like a lifeless body. I can't even move him! What can I do? I can't just leave it like this..."

"No worries, if he can't do it, someone else will. As long as I have his marks on me by morning, he'll have no choice but to acknowledge it!"

Despite emanating from an audio recording, the voice was unmistakably Yara's. Everyone present instantly recognized her distinctive tone.

"Hello? I'm at the hotel. I miss you. Will you come keep me company?" Yara's suggestive invitation, spoken in her own voice, continued playing for everyone to hear. The room fell into a stunned silence once again, with only the audio playing in the background. Struck by the realization of what was happening, Yara's body swayed. "This... this was from that night... But how?" she thought.

Her eyes darted instinctively toward Jonathan, only to find him coldly indifferent, his face an unreadable mask.

However, there was no mistaking the look of triumph on Leonard's face. He was standing behind Jonathan as if everything was unfolding exactly as he had planned.

Before she could even begin to piece together how they had acquired the damning recording, the room's attention was drawn toward the next revelation.

"You're here." Yara's voice rang out once more from the recording, now accompanied by the sound of a door opening. However, this time, it wasn't just her voice.

New content appeared on the large screen at the front of the stage, where Yara's stunning bridal portraits and glamorous red-carpet moments had previously been displayed. This new development immediately drew in everyone in attendance.

The screen revealed a woman dressed in a scandalously revealing outfit. The moment the door opened, she breathed, "You're here", before pulling the man inside without hesitation.

In an instant, they were locked in a passionate embrace, the scene unfolding in explicit detail as the sounds and images filled the entire wedding venue, leaving little to the imagination.

The footage was crystal clear, and the faces of the two people were unmistakable. They were none other than the bride and groom on the stage-Yara and her fiancé.

The situation was evident, and it required little explanation. The guests had already pieced together the story.

Yara, the internationally acclaimed actress renowned for her pure and innocent image and an heiress to a vast fortune, had been hailed by the media as one of the cleanest stars in the entertainment industry.

Yet, no one could have fathomed that not only had she schemed against Jonathan, but the way she behaved in this video was a stark contrast to her public persona.

Whispers filled the air as the crowd began to gossip.

"Is this who she really is?"

"No wonder she's an international actress. She's always acting."

"What's her game? Mr. Finch never even touched her, and she claimed she was pregnant with his child... Talk about being ambitious!"

"Ambition is one thing, but she didn't consider who she was trying to manipulate!"

The once-adoring voices turned to

harsh criticism, and the guests began pointing fingers at Yara. Their mocking and disparaging comments cut through her like knives,

dismantling the carefully craftene

façade she had built over the years and shattering her dreams of becoming Mrs. Finch into a

thousand pieces.

This wasn't what Yara wanted. "It's not like that..." She attempted to defend herself.

However, Jonathan was unwilling to watch her continue making a fool of herself. "Ms. Maize, surely you don't expect me to marry a woman carrying another man's child? Not only would that be utterly foolish, but it would undoubtedly upset someone," he declared.

As he spoke, he briefly glanced in a particular direction.

Rose, who had been engrossed in the unfolding drama, found herself momentarily frozen. She couldn't shake the strange feeling that she had been indirectly called out, yet she had no evidence to support this intuition. She turned her gaze toward Jonathan. She had already heard the audio recording, but it came as a shock to her that Jonathan possessed a video revealing that the man Yara had invited that night was Yosef's illegitimate son. "Mr. Finch, Yara has been foolish to offend you. I beg you to be merciful..." Rupert interjected, seemingly ready to concede defeat.

"Rupert!"

"Dad!"

Yara and Bella exclaimed in unison. Yara stormed off the stage and headed straight for Jonathan, but her advance was halted as Rupert grabbed her by the wrist.

Without hesitation, he delivered a resounding slap to her face. The sound of it reverberated through the venue, and within moments, Yara's cheek reddened visibly. Yet, the pain failed to bring her back to her senses. "Argh!" she shrieked in despair, disregarding her appearance entirely as she shouted, "I am supposed to marry Jonathan! Jonathan Finch, you must take me as your wife!"

Another slap rang out. Yara recoiled, her hand flying up to cradle her stinging face.

"Yara, shut your mouth!" Rupert snapped harshly. "Haven't you brought enough shame upon us already?"

Their current predicament was already an utter embarrassment. If things were to escalate and provoke Jonathan's genuine wrath, the entire Maize family's existence could be at risk.

Rupert took a deep breath and addressed Jonathan, "Mr. Finch, please consider Yara's mortification today as penance for her past misdeeds. Rest assured, I will discipline her thoroughly afterward."

Jonathan dismissed the notion with

a wave of his hand. "There's no need

for discipline. Today marks the union of the Finch and Maize families, and what happened earlier was merely a minor hiccup. hope it hasn't dampened everyone's spirits."

He raised his hand slightly, and Leonard immediately understood the signal.

In an instant, the incriminating footage on the screen vanished, replaced by the earlier images of Yara in her beautiful wedding dress. The wedding music resumed, but what once felt romantic and perfect now seemed painfully ironic. Jonathan's words hung heavy in the air. It seemed that despite the tumultuous events that had unfolded, this volatile wedding was, against all odds, going to proceed.

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Chapter 506 Will Only Marry Him

[1,224 words]

The wedding would inevitably continue, as even Eleanor affirmed, "Let's not delay the auspicious occasion any further." Both Bella and Yara resisted vehemently, but Jonathan's gaze was fixed on Rupert, clearly awaiting the Maize family's decision.

Rupert was no fool. He knew that Jonathan's insistence on continuing the wedding wasn't just about punishing Yara-a more strategic purpose was at play, which was to sow discord within the family.

If Yara were to marry Jonathan, it would undoubtedly bolster Jack's position. However, should she wed Liam, the newly acknowledged Finch family member, the Maize family would be forced to choose between supporting Jack and Liam in the inevitable power struggle. Rupert found himself caught between a rock and a hard place, yet he knew a decision had to be made. Everyone in the room seemed to be holding their breath, waiting for his choice.

Finally, he let out a weary sigh and turned to Yara. "Go and complete the wedding."

Bella and Yara were both stunned, unable to fathom his decision.

"Rupert, we cannot let this wedding happen!" Bella exclaimed.

"That's right, Dad! I won't marry him!" Yara protested.

Rupert's expression darkened. They were no longer in control of the situation.

"Go now, or the Maize family will sever all ties with you! From this moment forward, you will no longer be a part of our family."

Rupert had reached the end of his patience. Yara's actions had not only disgraced herself but also tarnished the Maize family's reputation. Allowing her to remain a part of the family was already an act of leniency on his part as her father. "Dad!" Yara cried out in desperation.

"Get on with it!" Rupert commanded sternly.

It was at that moment Yara realized that she was left with no choice. With a heavy heart, she glanced at Liam on the stage, feeling a deep-seated revulsion. Despite her inner turmoil, she forced herself to walk up to him and take her place by his side. "Now, let us proceed with the exchange of wedding rings," the officiant announced, moving the ceremony forward.

As the ring slipped onto Yara's finger, her pent-up resentment reached its apex. Unable to resist, she shot a bitter glance at Jonathan, her eyes filled with unfulfilled longing. However, she noticed that Jonathan's gaze was fixed elsewhere. Following his line of sight, Yara saw Rose and clenched her fists unconsciously.

At that moment, Rose was sitting between two men whom she recognized. One was Miles, the eldest son of the Young family, and the other was someone she had heard of at the Finch Manor-Clover from Lerain Group.

The three of them were engrossed in a conversation, the content of which Yara couldn't hear. However, the tenderness and adoration in their eyes as they looked at Rose were unmistakable.

"Miles... Clover... Rose sure knows how to seduce men, huh?" Yara thought.

Glancing back at Jonathan, she noticed he was still fixated on Rose, his eyes filled with a warmth she had never witnessed before. At that moment, a new idea began to form in her mind.

The union between the Finch and Maize families was expected to be a grand event, and it certainly was just not in the way people had anticipated.

After the wedding, Yara returned to her room fuming with anger and began smashing everything in sight. Seeing the onslaught of ridicule and mockery directed at her online only intensified her rage.

Unable to keep up with deleting the scornful comments on social media, she hurled her phone at Kate's head. Blood immediately began to trickle down.

"Get out!" Yara screamed, madness consuming her. "Don't dirty my space! Scram!"

Hurt and confused, Kate rushed out of the room. The bleeding from her head continued, yet no one seemed to notice. As she made her way to the bathroom to clean herself up, someone stopped her. "That could lead to an infection," the woman said, her voice brimming with concern. "You should go to the hospital."

Kate turned around and was stunned to find Rose standing before her. Yara had always paid special attention to Rose, so much so that she had personally instructed Kate to deliver the wedding invitation to Rose. "I'll get you a cab," Rose said when she saw the blood continue to flow from Kate's head and realized that urgent care was necessary.

She gently took Kate by the arm, determined to help her.

The warmth emanating from Rose's hand felt almost magical to Kate. Despite knowing that Yara would be furious if she discovered that Kate had been associating with someone Yara despised, Kate couldn't resist following Rose.

Outside the hotel, Rose was about to call a cab to take Kate to the hospital when Clover's car pulled up in front of them.

Seeing the blood flowing from Kate's head, he immediately got out of the car and opened the doors for them without asking a single question.

"Get in," he commanded.

Rose hesitated for a moment but ultimately decided not to refuse. After they both got in, Clover drove straight to the nearest hospital.

The scene of Rose entering the luxurious vehicle didn't go unnoticed. At that moment, inside a room on the hotel's second floor, a woman wearing sunglasses and a face mask stood by the window.

The mask almost covered her entire face, and as she watched the luxurious car disappear from her view, a cold smile crept across her lips.

"Rose... still so eager to help others, and still... so lucky," the woman murmured, her voice raspy as if her vocal cords had been damaged.

She had assumed that Jonathan or Miles would show up to pick up Rose, but to her surprise, it was someone else.

"Who is he?" she asked, her brow furrowed.

She wasn't alone in the room. The other occupant was none other than Lizzie. Lizzie didn't even bother looking out the window. She remained seated on the couch, seemingly busy with something on her phone. Upon hearing the woman's question, Lizzie immediately knew who she was referring to. "That would be Clover, the CEO of Lerain Group.

"I don't know much about him, but I do know that he's the sole heir of his generation in the Xanth family, destined to inherit both Lerain Group and the Xanth family's vast assets."

Mentioning Lerain Group elicited a visible reaction from the woman. The company held considerable sway overseas, rivaling even the influential Finch family.

"Impressive," the woman remarked with a hint of surprise. "Rose certainly knows how to get things done."

Lizzie glanced up at her,

unimpressed by the comment.

Shortly after, she stood up from the

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couch, leaning against it as she

sized up the woman standing by the window. After a long pause, she nodded approvingly.

"Not bad. You do resemble her a bit. How's your recovery going?"

The woman touched the mask covering her face, her eyes flickering with uncertainty. "I... I might need a little more time, madam."

"Take all the time you need," Lizzie

replied smoothly. "Use this opportunity to familiarize yourself with Regalia. Also, I've arranged some clothing options for you to try on and compiled notes about her habits. Review them thoroughly-they'll be invaluable."

After giving a few more instructions, she received a call from Cyrus and left the room.

Inside the wardrobe, the woman discovered an array of garments, some understated and elegant, others bold and eye-catching. Each piece spoke of an intriguing woman who could capture Jonathan's attention. "But how would I measure up to Rose?" The question lingered in the woman's mind, sparking a glimmer of curiosity.

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Chapter 507 Bumped Into Him

[1,211 words]

The woman's lips curled into an excited smile as she scanned the clothes hanging in the wardrobe. Among them was a school uniform.

She paused, staring at it momentarily before her smile took on a colder edge as if she had just made a crucial decision. She reached for the uniform and changed into it.

Staring into the mirror, she saw a young schoolgirl reflected back at her.

With the wedding concluded and the guests departed, the hotel settled into its usual rhythm. Eleanor had delayed Jonathan, but once he had seen her off, he immediately headed downstairs. "Where's Rose?" Jonathan asked as he exited the elevator, with Finley and Leonard following closely behind.

"Mrs. Finch left with Mr. Xanth in his car," Finley said, watching Jonathan carefully.

He hesitated before finally speaking up. "Mr. Finch, Clover has been spending a lot of time with Mrs. Finch. Should we do something about it?"

Jonathan frowned. "Can you stop him?"

Finley fell silent, acknowledging that they couldn't.

Even though he had connections with the Azure Clan, he had recently been trying to dig into Clover's background.

On the surface, Clover had only brought a female assistant with him to Regalia, but in reality, there were bodyguards following him in secret.

The Xanth family's dark history spanned three generations. The previous generation had produced a legendary figure who, within a decade, had completely cleaned up the family's business dealings.

Since then, the Xanth family had undergone a complete transformation. Nonetheless, their martial influence remained unshaken.

When Jonathan began dealing with Jack, he had specifically assigned bodyguards to protect Rose. But Rose also had another group watching over her-Clover's people.

"Mr. Finch, we can't just let him keep bothering Mrs. Finch..." Finley was visibly concerned.

Seeing Jonathan's calm demeanor, he couldn't help but voice his worry. "What if Clover has ulterior motives toward her?"

"He won't," Jonathan replied with absolute certainty.

His unshakable confidence only served to puzzle Finley further. Jonathan gave him a cryptic glance, stating, "Zac has been in Jovea recently."

"Zac? In Jovea? What did that have to do with Clover's attention on Rose?" Finley thought, feeling at a loss.

Leonard walked past him, dropping a hint. "The Xanth family has strong roots in Jovea."

Finley was still as confused as ever. He had no idea what that implied. Seeing his bewildered expression, Leonard couldn't help but shake his head in disdain, barely restraining himself from calling Finley foolish. Finley glanced at him, wondering what that look was for. He wanted to press for answers, but Leonard ignored him and quickly caught up with Jonathan.

Jonathan strode briskly through the hallway. As he rounded a corner, someone suddenly bumped into him.

"Ah!" A startled cry escaped the woman as the force of the impact caused her to stagger back before she fell to the ground.

The woman who had run into him wore sunglasses and a mask. When she looked up at Jonathan, her eyes revealed a flash of panic, even behind the lenses.

"I'm... I'm so sorry..." she stammered before quickly getting to her feet.

Seemingly eager to escape, she hastily circled Jonathan and fled down the corridor without even a backward glance.

Jonathan remained frozen in place, lost in thought, until Leonard caught up, his voice laced with concern. "Mr. Finch, is everything alright?"

He had seen the woman bump into Jonathan from a distance. Usually, Jonathan wouldn't be one to make a fuss over something like that, but his reaction this time was unusual.

Leonard's inquiry pulled Jonathan back to the present. He quickly glanced around, but the woman who had collided with him was nowhere to be seen.

"Mr. Finch, is there... a problem?" Leonard asked again, his concern deepening.

Jonathan shook his head slightly. "No, it's nothing." But despite his words, the image of that woman kept replaying in his mind.

After the group had moved on, the woman emerged slowly from around the corner. She had seen the shock in Jonathan's eyes, and it confirmed what she suspected. He had recognized "her".

This was the first time "she" had appeared before him, and he had recognized "her" immediately. It seemed that in Jonathan's mind, "she" held more significance than she had anticipated.

A sly smile tugged at the corners of the woman's lips, hidden beneath her mask.

Now, she eagerly awaited the next time "she" would formally meet Jonathan. She wondered if Jonathan would choose "her" or Rose when that moment came.

Meanwhile, the union between the Finch and Maize families was still making headlines when Yosef made a shocking announcement through the Finch family's official platform- he was disowning his son, Jack.

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Before the public could fully process

this news, the police released a statement connecting Jack to numerous cases of missing and abused girls from recent years. The internet quickly turned against Jack, with people condemning his heinous actions.

At Finch Manor, the serene morning was abruptly disrupted by the sound of anguished sobs echoing through the halls.

In the garden, Eleanor paused briefly while pruning the flowers, her expression unchanged, before resuming her task.

"It seems like Bella's causing a fuss again," she remarked calmly as if discussing the weather.

Anna glanced toward the source of the cries. "Mrs. Finch Senior, it's understandable that Madam Bella is distraught. With Jack being her only son, the recent events must have taken a toll on her. As for Mr. Yosef..."

She hesitated before continuing, "He has repeatedly asked me to convey his messages to you. Mr. Liam has been back at Finch Manor for a few days now, visiting the place daily in hopes of seeing you. Ms. Maize has also come by several times,

requesting an audience with you..."

If it hadn't been for the surveillance footage that Jonathan had presented before the wedding, Eleanor would never have allowed Liam to rejoin the Finch family.

Ultimately, everything was Yara's fault. Ever since the morning she discovered Yara and Jonathan together in a room, sharing a bed, Eleanor knew the situation was far from simple.

She understood Jonathan well enough to recognize when he had been manipulated. She didn't approve of Yara's behavior, but since Yara was pregnant, Eleanor had initially accepted the marriage arrangement.

However, the true extent of Yara's

audacity became clear when

Jonathan revealed the incriminating video, exposing her attempt to

deceive the entire Finch family ne

From that point on, Eleanor had silently backed Jonathan's

subsequent plans.

Her thoughts soon turned to Liam. "Yosef has been secretly grooming this child for a long time. Now that Jack is out of the picture, it's time to meet this Liam," she said, her eyes narrowing.

"As for Ms. Maize... That woman is not permitted to set foot in Finch Manor without my approval," she declared.

Even though the wedding had taken place, Eleanor's refusal to acknowledge Yara as anything other than "Ms. Maize" made her feelings abundantly clear.

"Understood," Anna replied.

The clamor from inside the main building intensified, with Yosef's enraged shouts reverberating through the manor, accompanied by the sounds of objects being shattered.

Eleanor's expression remained stoic throughout the commotion, and she continued to tend to the garden until she was done. Calmly putting her tools aside, her thoughts drifted to the embroidery project awaiting her attention in the study. "That Rose from the Young family is rather interesting," she remarked, an unusual note of interest in her voice. Since the family dinner that night, Eleanor had mentioned Rose more than once.

Upon hearing this, Anna suggested, "Shall I invite Ms. Rose to visit the manor again?"

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 508 Time To Go Back

[1,236 words]

Eleanor immediately rejected the idea of inviting Rose to their home. She was worried that Jonathan's fascination with Rose would only lead to more paranoia and surveillance, which was becoming a nuisance. Suddenly, she thought of something. "I heard that Anastasia has gotten a divorce. Is that true?"

"That seems to be the case. Ms. Young and Anthony had been going through the divorce process for quite some time, but the Weasley family is resisting.

"The media speculated that the divorce would never happen, but it finally did," Anna responded, clearly well-informed about the latest gossip.

However, she couldn't quite grasp why Eleanor was suddenly interested in this. Eleanor didn't elaborate further.

Regalia's high society had indeed been abuzz with recent events. First, the eldest daughter of the Maize family married the Finch family. Now, Anastasia had finally ended her own marriage.

Rumors had long circulated that she was enamored with Jonathan. Now that she was single again, speculation ran wild that she might try to rekindle her connection with him.

As expected, Anastasia didn't waste any time.

Merely three days after her divorce, she was already making her move. Under the guise of honoring the late Oliver, she hastily organized a charity auction scheduled to take place in just three days. Invitations were swiftly dispatched to Regalia's most elite and influential women.

It was obvious to everyone that the commemoration of Oliver was merely a facade. Anastasia's true intention was to declare her newly single status publicly. However, despite the transparency of her intentions, no one dared to confront her openly.

Completely immersed in ensuring the success of the upcoming auction, she had temporarily put all matters related to the Young family's business on hold.

As night descended, Miles stormed into the Young Estate, wasting no time in inquiring about Anastasia's whereabouts from Patrick.

Upon learning that she was in her room, Miles made a beeline for her door and kicked it open with a resounding crash that reverberated throughout the house.

Anastasia, who had been leisurely enjoying a face mask, was taken aback by the sudden noise. She turned to see Miles standing in the doorway, his face contorted with the anger she had fully expected.

"Anastasia, I don't care what you're up to, but exploiting Grandpa's name is absolutely unacceptable!" Miles roared, his voice trembling with rage.

Anastasia remained composed as she leaned against the sofa. In contrast to Miles' anger, she was utterly calm.

She began, "How am I exploiting Grandpa's name? He was always passionate about charity work during his lifetime. Organizing this auction is my way of honoring his memory and carrying on his charitable legacy."

She continued smoothly, "Don't worry, Miles. All proceeds from this charity auction will be donated in Grandpa's name."

Anastasia's self-righteous declaration only served to stoke Miles' fury further.

However, before he could retort, Anastasia interjected with a smile, "Miles, I know you want to stop me, but the invitations have already been sent out. If the charity auction doesn't go ahead as planned in three days, it will reflect poorly on the Young family and Grandpa's legacy."

"You..." Miles' anger welled up, yet he found himself calming down as he maintained a fixed gaze on Anastasia.

After a prolonged silence, he finally said, "Even if you're single again, Jonathan won't be interested in you."

The underlying motive behind Anastasia's organization of the charity auction in Oliver's name was apparent. She aimed to leverage the event to publicly disclose her divorce, thereby presenting herself as available, particularly to Jonathan.

She had always harbored deep feelings for Jonathan, which had remained steadfast throughout the years. Alas, her affection was not reciprocated.

Miles' scornful gaze shredded Anastasia's calm facade, causing her to rise instinctively to her feet.

Noticing the intensified derision in his eyes, she snapped, "Miles, don't you have feelings for Rose as well? Are you afraid you can't compete with Jonathan? If I were you, I'd do whatever it takes to win her over from him!" Anastasia found herself growing increasingly bewildered by Miles' behavior. She knew he harbored feelings for Rose.

She had witnessed the undeniable intensity in his eyes whenever he looked at Rose back in Aquastead. Yet, since their return to Regalia, something had changed.

While he still regarded Rose with tenderness and affection, distinct from his interactions with others, his gaze now held a serene calmness. The fiery intensity seemed to have been replaced by an air of peaceful resignation. Nonetheless, Anastasia was certain that Miles still harbored feelings for Rose. She believed her words would provoke a competitive spirit in him, but to her surprise, he merely smiled faintly. Then, he spoke. "Anastasia, don't even think about doing anything against Rose. Or else..."

Even after Miles left, his warning continued to reverberate in Anastasia's ears, along with his faint smile, which replayed in her mind incessantly.

"Was it my imagination? There

seemed to be a trace of

helplessness in Miles' smile as if he

met

had resigned himself to some inescapable reality. But what is it? What Could make him give up so willingly?" she mused as she tried to figure out what could have caused him to adopt such a resigned demeanor.

As she was lost in thought, her phone rang, interrupting the silence. She glanced at the screen, which displayed "Lizzie" as the caller. Quickly gathering herself, Anastasia answered the call.

Lizzie's gentle voice came through. "Anastasia, can I request an extra invitation for the charity auction three days from now?"

Anastasia felt a deep sense of gratitude toward Lizzie, who had played a significant role in her smooth divorce by coordinating with the Weasley family. As such, she agreed without hesitation. "Of course."

Lizzie chuckled softly on the other end of the line. "Aren't you curious about who I'm asking for an extra invitation for?"

While Anastasia was undeniably curious, she opted to maintain her cordiality. "Madam Lizzie's guest is also an honored guest of mine," she responded sincerely. "I just hope your guest has an enjoyable time at the auction."

Unbeknownst to Anastasia, a

coldness had crept into Lizzie's gaze

despite the warmth in her voice. The thought of that particular person made the smile on Lizzie's lips grow even wider as she replied, "Oh, she'll definitely have a wonderful time!"

The following morning, Anastasia personally delivered the extra invitation to Lizzie. Soon after, Lizzie presented the invitation to the woman seated before her in a modest hotel in Regalia.

"It's time for you to make your return at the Young family's charity auction in three days," Lizzie stated, her tone far from friendly.

She was still displeased with the woman for wearing "her" clothes and intentionally crossing paths with Jonathan after the Finch and Maize family wedding.

Since then, Lizzie had treated her with cold disdain, even forcing her to vacate the Finch family hotel that very night.

Knowing she had been in the wrong, the woman dared not offend Lizzie further.

"Madam, I apologize for my mistake. I was merely curious if Jonathan remembered 'her', so I..."

In truth, she had gambled on a hunch, and much to her surprise, her bet paid off-she had come face-to-face with Jonathan.

"Avoid succumbing to such curiosity

in the future. Jonathan is a

suspicious, introspective man with

deep, complex thoughts. You're not fully prepared yet, and appearing before him prematurely could ruin all our plans," Lizzie warned sternly.

"My apologies. I will strictly adhere to your instructions from now on," the woman replied submissively, her sunglasses and mask still in place. However, at this point, she was almost fully recovered. In three days, she would be making her return at the Young family's charity auction.

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Chapter 509 Hiding Something From Her

[1,193 words]

Having accepted the woman's apology, Lizzie decided not to dwell on the matter anymore. She gazed at the woman intently, a profound idea forming in her mind as she thought about the upcoming Young family charity auction. "You have yet to pay your respects to Mr. Young Senior since his passing. It's only fitting that you do so now that your identity has been reestablished," she said.

The woman felt a twinge of hesitation but knew better than to argue with Lizzie. "Alright. I shall visit him first thing tomorrow morning."

Early the next day, the woman arrived at the cemetery with a bouquet of flowers. She gently placed them before Oliver's grave, her eyes fixed on the weathered photograph on the tombstone.

A mix of cold determination and satisfaction flickered in her gaze. Her eyes gleamed with a triumphant light as she removed her sunglasses and mask.

"Grandpa, I'm back. Do you still recognize me?" she rasped. Without waiting for a response, she continued in that same rough tone, "I suppose I am unrecognizable to you now. But look at my eyes. Do they not seem familiar?" She let out a chilling laugh. "Grandpa, you always loved these eyes. Does seeing them make you happy?"

She continued, "Grandpa, I'm about to meet them. Do you think they'll be surprised to see me? I bet they won't recognize me either."

The woman had a defiant look in her eyes as if she was issuing a declaration of war. After a brief moment, she rose to her feet.

"I'd love to stay longer, Grandpa, but madam said I shouldn't linger here. After all, this cemetery is under Mr. Miles' watchful surveillance..."

She added, "Grandpa, Mr. Miles-no, I should say, Miles-is quite the dutiful son. Perhaps he's already aware that someone suspicious came to see you by now."

As she had anticipated, her actions did not go unnoticed. In a hospital owned by the Young family, Miles was reviewing the report from the cemetery. His brows furrowed in concentration.

"Mr. Miles, a woman visited Mr. Young Senior's grave. She wore sunglasses and a mask, so we couldn't see her face, but she seemed quite young."

The vague description failed to jog Miles's memory. Frustrated, he demanded, "Send me the surveillance footage immediately." He needed to see it for himself.

Moments later, the surveillance footage arrived in his email. He opened the video and saw a woman in a black dress.

Although every angle failed to reveal her face, something about her figure stirred a vague sense of familiarity in Miles.

"Miles, is everything alright?" Rose's voice pulled him from his thoughts. She had just returned from a rehab session with Yvonne and noticed the serious expression on his face as he stared at his phone. Almost instinctively, Miles hid his phone and averted his gaze. "It's nothing, Rose. But there's a company matter I need to attend to."

"Alright. Be careful on your way, Miles," Rose replied with concern.

Seated in her wheelchair, Yvonne watched Miles' hurried departure and frowned.

"Something's up! He's definitely hiding something from you!" she said with certainty. "The way Mr. Miles acted just now, especially how he hid his phone, made it clear that he's keeping a secret."

Naturally, Rose had noticed Miles' strange behavior as well, but she simply smiled without saying a word.

Her nonchalant reaction surprised Yvonne. "Rose, he's obviously keeping something from you, and you're just... you're being way too calm about it!"

Rose chuckled. "He's my family, Yvonne. He's entitled to his privacy."

Yvonne couldn't argue with that. "But..." she began, still feeling a sense of unease about Miles' behavior. Despite her reservations, she agreed with Rose's perspective.

After all the time they had spent together, Yvonne had come to understand that Rose considered Miles family, regardless of their lack of blood relation, and family members didn't need to pry too much into each other's private matters. Meanwhile, the woman from the footage had already disappeared by the time Miles reached the cemetery. However, a bouquet left at Oliver's grave immediately caught his attention.

"Purple lilies of the valley..." he muttered.

Acting on instinct, Miles picked up the bouquet and examined it closely. Once he had confirmed they were indeed purple lilies of the valley, he quickly scanned the area as if searching for something.

However, no one was within sight. In his mind, distant voices echoed, resurrecting long-forgotten memories.

"Miles, from now on, you'll be my brother..."

"Grandpa gave me purple lilies of the valley today. They're my lucky flowers from now on.

"Miles, Grandpa allowed me to plant purple lilies of the valley in the garden. He even gave me seeds..."

"Miles, the lilies of the valley are so beautiful this year. I met someone at school who's just as beautiful. His name is Jonathan.

"Miles, I want to marry Jonathan and become his wife..."

The voice in his memories shifted from the innocent tones of a child to the bright, hopeful voice of a young woman. Her image transformed from a sweet, timid child to a vibrant, spirited teenager. Buried deep within Miles' heart, these memories had long been untouched. Yet now, they surfaced uncontrollably, filling his mind.

A thought took root, and he couldn't suppress his excitement. His hand trembled slightly as he gripped the bouquet.

"Harriette... is it really you? Grandpa, was it Harriette who came to see you?"

A gentle breeze rustled the leaves of the surrounding trees. Yet, no answer came to his questions.

Miles reviewed the surveillance footage once more. The woman had kept her head down, seemingly intent on avoiding the cameras. Even as she left the frame, he never saw her face. Despite this, her mere presence had undeniably stirred something within his heart.

Over the next couple of days, Miles often seemed distracted. Ever perceptive, Rose couldn't help but notice the change in his demeanor.

One evening, after they parted ways at the hospital, Rose was on her way back to her temporary residence when she encountered Miles' assistant carrying a large bag of alcohol. Looking flustered, the assistant glanced nervously toward the stairs. Rose quickly pieced things together. "Give it to me," she said.

The assistant hesitated but eventually handed the bag to her.

T.no

When Rose arrived at the rooftop, she found the ground littered with empty bottles. Miles was sitting at a ping-pong table with his back facing her. It was clear that he was burdened by something weighing on his mind.

"Was it because of the secret he was hiding that day?" She lowered her gaze thoughtfully. Approaching him from behind, she opened a bottle of beer and took a sip. "Miles, how could you drink without inviting me? That's not very nice."

Miles was slightly inebriated. The sudden voice startled him, sobering him up significantly. "Rose? How did you "

"I happened to see your assistant

bringing you some drinks, and I

thought I'd join in. I hope you don't mind me crashing your party. You wouldn't be mean enough to send me away, would you?" Rose interrupted him with a playful wink.

Miles' gaze instantly softened with affection. "Of course not. Come here..."

Rose walked over, handing Miles a beer and sitting beside him. The cool night breeze was refreshing as it swept over them. As they drank, Rose was about to ask what was bothering him when Miles spoke first. "Rose..." he began.

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Chapter 510 The Whereabouts Of Kelly

[1,246 words]

"Rose, how would you feel if someone from your past, someone you haven't seen in a long time, suddenly came back?" Miles asked, gazing up at the pitch-black sky.

"Someone from the past? Is this why he's drinking tonight? Could it be related to the secret he was hiding that day?" Rose mused.

She smiled faintly. "Is this person a dear friend of yours?"

Miles' eyes flickered with an indiscernible emotion. Over the past few days, he hadn't been able to track down the mysterious woman from the cemetery.

However, he had watched the surveillance footage countless times, growing more certain with each viewing that the woman was Harriette.

After the tragic accident all those years ago, everyone believed that Harriette had perished, but her body was never recovered. She was neither found alive nor confirmed dead.

"If it really is Harriette..." Miles thought as he stole a glance at Rose. He hesitated momentarily before deciding against mentioning Harriette.

"She's... someone closer than a friend."

"An ex-girlfriend?" The thought crossed Rose's mind almost instantaneously. It was apparent to her that Miles hadn't forgotten this former lover and was drowning his sorrows with alcohol.

She studied Miles, reflecting on the time they had spent together. Ever since she had known him, he had always been alone, never accompanied by any woman.

Perhaps if there was someone he loved, someone to share his life with, the depths of his loneliness wouldn't run so deep.

Rose made up her mind. "If it's someone closer than a friend, then of course I'd be happy. The connections we share with others can be truly mysterious."

"A second chance to meet again might just be fate's way of giving me an opportunity to mend past regrets." Each word she uttered was carefully chosen to guide the conversation with purpose. "Mending past regrets..." Miles felt a sharp pang in his heart.

Harriette's supposed death was indeed one of his greatest regrets. But if that person was indeed Harriette, and she had returned, Miles couldn't help but wonder what would become of Jonathan and Rose and how Jonathan would choose if he was caught between Harriette and Rose.

These considerations consumed his mind. Gazing at Rose's radiant smile, Miles felt a peculiar sense of guilt.

"Rose..."

"Hm?" Rose held his gaze steadily.

However, when their eyes locked, Miles quickly looked away, unable to maintain eye contact. This reaction struck Rose as odd.

"You seem different tonight, Miles," she noted, brushing aside the odd feeling.

She gave his shoulder a reassuring pat. "Whatever you decide, whatever choices you make, just know I will always support you. I'll always be here for you."

Even if Miles didn't rekindle his relationship with his ex-girlfriend, there would be plenty of wonderful women who would adore him.

As his family, Rose would remain by his side, offering support and blessings until he found his true soulmate.

"I'll always be here for you."

Those words filled Miles with a comforting warmth. For the time being, he didn't want to dwell on the possible consequences of Harriette's return.

Miles reached over and playfully tousled Rose's hair, prompting a laugh-filled protest from her. The somber mood that had engulfed the rooftop earlier dissipated, replaced by the sound of their carefree laughter. Empty bottles littered the ground as the alcohol's influence grew increasingly evident. Through the drunken fog, Rose heard Miles speak up beside her.

"Rose, no matter what happens, I will fulfill Grandpa's wishes. As his only blood relative, the entire Young legacy is rightfully yours.

"Just give me a little more time. I'll make sure everything is in place... and then... I'll hand it all over to you..." His speech was slurred, and his words were not entirely clear.

Rose turned to look at Miles, her mind swirling with questions. She pondered, "What did he mean by everything will be mine? What was he planning to hand over? And why did he need more time?"

As she grappled with her confusion, one word echoed distinctly in her mind "Grandpa". A wave of longing for Oliver washed over her.

"Grandpa..." Rose murmured. "Miles, I miss him," she admitted, a hint of sadness in her tone.

"Mom said that people become stars after they pass away. Do you think Grandpa is up there now, watching over us?"

She tilted her head back, her gaze fixed on the night sky as she fought back tears. The twinkling stars appeared to dance in her blurry vision, shining brilliantly.

"Miles, I can almost sense his gaze upon us..." she whispered, her voice barely audible.

Lowering her head, she continued in a hushed tone, "Miles, I need your help with something. Yvonne's injuries have improved significantly. Once she's better, I want to return to Aquastead. I need to find Kelly..."

The memories of Oliver's death remained vivid in Rose's mind. Kelly had seemingly disappeared. It was as though she had vanished from the face of the earth.

Yet, Rose's resolve was unwavering-she would find Kelly and make her pay for what she had done, even if it meant going to the ends of the earth to unearth her whereabouts.

...

The following morning, Rose awoke to a pounding headache as she groggily answered a call. Anastasia's voice echoed from the other end.

"Rose, let's meet at Mobius Auction House tonight at eight. I have something important to discuss with you."

Rose had previously heard about the charity auction that Anastasia was organizing at Mobius Auction House. It seemed Anastasia was attempting to persuade her to attend the event. "Sorry, I..." she hesitated, knowing that she and Anastasia didn't see eye to eye and were wary of unnecessary interactions.

However, before she could decline, Anastasia cut in with a measured tone, "It seems you've forgotten about Kelly."

"Do you know where she is?" Rose blurted, her voice betraying her urgency.

On the other end, a satisfied smile formed on Anastasia's lips, knowing she had Rose exactly where she wanted her. Rather than answering directly, she reiterated her invitation. "Eight o'clock at the auction house. Don't be late." With that, she hung up. She was certain that Rose would show up.

As expected, Rose arrived at Mobius Auction House right on time at 8:00 p.m.

The charity auction dinner, held in honor of the late Oliver, had drawn many of Regalia's most

distinguished figures. Every guest possessed an invitation, but Rose had only been invited verbally by Anastasia, leaving her without one.

As a result, she found herself barred at the entrance.

"Well, well, well. Look who it is. Can't get in, can you?" A biting voice pierced the air from behind her.

Rose didn't need to turn around to identify its owner. It was Yara. Rose had no intention of acknowledging her presence.

However, having spotted Rose, Yara wasn't about to miss the chance to vent her frustration. She sauntered up to Rose and taunted, "Ms. Shaffer? Why, it's you!"

Rose remained unresponsive, acting like she hadn't seen or heard Yara. This perceived indifference only served to aggravate Yara further.

She mocked, "Rose, I thought you were more capable than this, but you can't even get into the Young family's charity auction, huh? How laughable!

"It seems you only managed to

acquire the title of 'the Young

family's adopted granddaughter' by

using some underhanded tactics

But in the end, a fake is a fake it's

just a meaningless title. Ultimately, you're a nobody!"

Her cold laughter was filled with malice. She wanted every word to inflict a deep wound and humiliate Rose.

To her astonishment, Rose merely smiled a smile laced with indifference and contempt, rendering Yara's verbal assault ineffective. Yara's face darkened with anger. She couldn't believe that no matter how hard she tried to insult Rose, it seemed to have no effect.

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Chapter 511 We Are Friends

[1,283 words]

Still reeling from her humiliation at the wedding and its aftermath, Yara finally snapped. She marched up to Rose and gave her a hard shove.

Caught off guard, Rose staggered backward, only to be steadied by a pair of soft, delicate hands. The hands were gentle, yet firm.

She instinctively turned to face her rescuer and found herself momentarily captivated by the stranger's appearance.

Long, lustrous hair framed the woman's face, accentuated by an elegant beret perched atop her head. A black skirt and white blouse gracefully highlighted her slender figure.

Though dark sunglasses concealed her eyes, the woman's refined features still managed to convey an unexpected warmth.

"Are you okay?" the woman asked, her raspy voice taking Rose by surprise.

Sensing Rose's discomfort, the woman smiled wryly. "Sorry, my voice isn't the most pleasant. I suffered an injury years ago, so..."

Realizing her mistake, Rose quickly apologized. "No, I didn't mean any offense. I..." She had no intention of dredging up painful memories.

"It's fine. You meant no harm. Besides, I'm used to it." The woman shrugged, her smile bright and radiant as if she really didn't mind. Yet the simple phrase, "I'm used to it", alluded to the challenges she must have faced. Rose felt even more apologetic. "I'm really sorry..."

"Really, it's nothing," the woman reassured her before turning her curious gaze to Yara. "Anyway, what's happening here?"

From the moment the woman had appeared, Yara had been sizing her up. Even though she hadn't been back in the country for long, Yara was familiar with the notable families in Regalia, and this woman didn't seem to belong to any of them. Besides, she was certain she had never encountered someone with such a distinct, raspy voice. She scoffed.

"Just another nobody trying to weasel her way in, huh? Whatever. Rose, I'll let it slide today so that you don't get in the way of my charity work."

With a haughty smile, Yara dismissed them, her attitude dripping with arrogance.

Despite her tarnished reputation in the entertainment industry following her disastrous wedding, Yara still held onto her status as the eldest daughter of the Maize family.

Furthermore, though she was reluctant to acknowledge it, her marriage had made her a member of the Finch family too. Nonetheless, her haughty behavior only amused Rose.

"She seems to have something against you," the woman remarked in her raspy voice.

Rose shrugged helplessly. "Seems so."

She had an inkling of where this resentment might have stemmed from but found the whole situation unjust. After all, she had always viewed herself as innocent in the entire affair. The woman then asked, "Are you trying to get in?"

Rose nodded. "Yes." She was grateful to this woman who had helped her earlier and felt guilty about her unintended reaction to the woman's voice. So, she let her guard down. "But you're having trouble getting in, right?" the woman inquired further.

"Yes," Rose admitted again, planning to contact Anastasia for assistance.

However, before she could do anything, the woman affectionately linked arms with her. "Don't worry. I'll take you in."

As she spoke, the woman presented an invitation letter to the staff member. "She's my friend, and we came together. Is that alright?"

It was common for guests to bring companions to auctions, so the staff member didn't object. Before Rose fully realized what was happening, the woman had already led her inside.

"Hey! You! The one with your nose in the air..." the woman's raspy voice called out, snapping Rose back to reality.

Nearby, Yara turned in response to the voice, only to see the sunglasses-clad woman waving at her. It was clear that the snarky remark was directed at her.

Yara's face flushed with anger. The fact that this woman was invited and brought Rose in with her was unbelievable and infuriating. She clenched her fists, seething with frustration and resentment. Meanwhile, the woman seemed to be thoroughly enjoying herself, laughing as if she had just scored a personal victory.

Rose was taken aback by the woman's audacity but couldn't help feeling a sense of satisfaction as she watched Yara storm off in a huff.

Although she knew that Yara's grudge against her would only intensify after this, it was difficult not to feel a little victorious at that moment.

When the woman turned her gaze back to Rose, they shared a knowing smile.

"So, does this mean we're friends now?" the woman asked, her tone sincere. Even through the sunglasses, Rose could sense the genuine warmth in her eyes.

"Of course!" Rose replied with a

smile, knowing that their connection wasn't just about being rescued

from a tight spot. There was something else about this woman, a sense of familiarity that Rose

couldn't quite put her finger on.

"I have to go. I'm meeting someone," the woman said, glancing at her watch before hastily bidding farewell to Rose and making her way toward the elevators.

As Rose observed the woman's departing figure, a sudden frown creased her forehead. For a fleeting moment, she could have sworn that she was looking at Kelly. "Kelly... It couldn't be, could it?" she thought.

Even though the woman had been wearing sunglasses, Rose was certain that the face behind them wasn't Kelly's.

Despite this, an unsettling feeling lingered, and Rose found herself stepping forward, almost instinctively following the woman.

Upon reaching the elevator, the woman turned around, and their eyes locked. Rose abruptly halted in her tracks.

With a bright smile on her face, the woman waved at Rose, causing her to pause momentarily. "No, that definitely isn't Kelly. How could it have been Kelly?"

A bitter smile graced her lips as that thought crossed her mind. Rose concluded that her intense longing to find Kelly must have made her see traces of her in someone else's form.

She then carefully reconsidered the woman's silhouette. Although they were of similar height, there were discernible differences in their physique.

Taking a deep breath, Rose tried to clear her mind and let go of the thoughts. There was no sense in dwelling on it.

However, as the elevator doors slid shut, the woman's bright smile vanished, replaced by a dark, chilling expression.

"Rose..." The woman whispered the name in her raspy voice, making it sound ominous and charged with something sinister.

She muttered, "So, we're friends now..." A twisted sense of anticipation filled her. She was genuinely curious about what it would be like to be friends with Rose.

The charity auction that evening was

held in the opulent auction hall on the top floor. Rose arrived to find the room already bustling with guests. The auction hadn't started, but Rose could see Anastasia engaging with the attendees from a distance.

Anastasia was dressed in a champagne-colored evening gown that accentuated her flawless figure, with her long hair elegantly styled to one side. She exuded an air of grace and sophistication. "Congratulations, Ms. Young," a guest nearby said, their tone filled with a knowing undertone. Although they didn't spell it out, everyone present understood the implication.

It was widely known that Anastasia had been childhood friends with Jonathan and had harbored feelings for him for years.

There were even rumors that the two were destined to marry. But a few years ago, Anastasia shocked everyone by marrying Anthony instead, leaving many in Regalia puzzled.

A year ago, rumors began circulating that Anastasia and Anthony were going through a divorce, with some speculating that she could never forget Jonathan and was divorcing to be with him once more.

Recently, the union between the

Finch and Maize families, where

Yara wed jam, who had only just

been recognized as part of the Finch family rather than Jonathan, only added fuel to these speculations.

QUMS

"Ms. Young, will Mr. Finch be attending tonight? Surely he wouldn't miss a charity auction like this," someone inquired, their words laced with innuendo.

Their implication was clear-they were suggesting that Jonathan would be there to celebrate her newfound single status with her.

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Chapter 512 Stand Behind Him

[1,290 words]

Many guests at that night's charity auction saw through Anastasia's underlying motive but chose not to mention it. "How would I know about Mr. Finch's plans?" Anastasia replied with a coy smile. She didn't mind being misunderstood.

In truth, she had extended an invitation to Jonathan, but she wasn't sure if he would attend. Nevertheless, she had dangled a tempting lure, one that she hoped would be irresistible to him.

Just then, Anastasia felt someone's gaze on her and looked up to see Rose approaching. "Ah, she's here. Good," she mused.

"Please excuse me for a moment," Anastasia said with a smile, gracefully excusing herself from the conversation and heading straight toward Rose.

Upon reaching her, Anastasia slipped her arm through Rose's in an intimate gesture.

Rose frowned. "You asked me to come, and here I am. You promised to tell me about Kelly's whereabouts. I hope you're not going back on your word."

"I wouldn't dream of it," Anastasia replied, her smile taking on a more enigmatic edge as she locked eyes with Rose.

She continued, "But now that you're here, don't you think it would be a waste to focus solely on Kelly's whereabouts?"

"This charity auction is held in Grandpa's name, and he was very fond of you. Surely, you wouldn't want to see something he cherished fall into someone else's hands, would you?" Rose was taken aback. "What do you mean by that?" She scrutinized Anastasia closely.

"Is she suggesting what I think she is?" Rose thought.

Rose's reproachful gaze caused a ripple of displeasure within Anastasia. However, her smile only grew more carefree.

"It's nothing, really. I just thought that since this charity auction is in Grandpa's name, it would be fitting to include something of his to encourage guests to bid generously."

She went on, "Do you recall the suit Grandpa wore during his birthday celebration at Aquastead? I've actually brought it along with me."

"Anastasia!" Rose's fury erupted as she clenched her fists.

That suit had been a birthday gift from Miles to their grandfather, one that Rose had personally designed and had custom-made. However, Anastasia remained unfazed by Rose's anger.

"Rose, it's just a suit. Grandpa may have liked it, but it's just a piece of clothing in the end. Why are you getting so worked up?" She raised an eyebrow, feigning innocence.

But to Rose, that suit was far more than just a piece of clothing. "How can I get it back?" she asked, forcing herself to remain calm. She was determined to reclaim the suit.

This was precisely what Anastasia had anticipated. "Well, getting it back might be tricky." She sighed. "All the auction items have already been handed over to a third party, and they're part of the auction process now. I have no control over them anymore." Then, as if suddenly struck by an idea, her eyes lit up. "Oh, wait! The only way you could get it back is by participating in the auction and bidding for it yourself!" "Participate in the auction..." Rose mused. She could discern the intentional provocation in Anastasia's smirk, and her fists clenched even tighter in response. Meanwhile, Anastasia seemed rather pleased with herself for successfully inciting Rose's anger. Just then, a server happened to pass by them with drinks. Seizing the opportunity, she casually picked up a glass and handed it to Rose. "The night is still young. I hope you enjoy yourself," she said. She was confident that Rose would stay and bid on the suit.

Sure enough, Rose accepted the glass. Not only did she take the drink, but she also took Anastasia's suggestion.

"Fine, I'll stay and bid on the suit, and..." Her lips suddenly curved into a smile as she crooked a finger at Anastasia, beckoning her closer.

Intrigued and unsuspecting, Anastasia leaned in further. In an instant, Rose lifted her glass high and slowly tilted it. The vibrant red liquid cascaded down over Anastasia's perfectly styled hair and exquisite dress, causing her to gasp in shock. "Ah!" Her cry of shock drowned out the soft notes of the piano playing in the background, drawing the attention of everyone in the room.

"Isn't that Ms. Young?"

"Someone just poured wine all over her!"

"Who would dare do such a thing?"

Before Anastasia could even process her anger, she heard murmurs of sympathy from the crowd. Forced to suppress her urge to retaliate, she put on a wounded expression. "Rose, how could you do this to me? I've done nothing to offend you!" she exclaimed, her face contorted with feigned hurt.

However, Rose had witnessed such a dramatic change in expression from more than one person. As such, Anastasia's sudden shift in demeanor wasn't the least bit surprising to her. A faint smile graced her lips as she leaned in close to Anastasia, her voice cold as she delivered a warning.

"Anastasia, while I've accepted the situation with Grandpa's suit, this," she gestured to the wine now dripping from Anastasia's head, "is your punishment for disrespecting his belongings. Should you forget, even for a moment, why I'm here tonight, just know that I won't hesitate to use this glass to mar your face."

Anastasia was well aware of Rose's unwavering determination. This woman had never shied away from speaking her mind or acting upon her words.

"You're insane!" she hissed, clenching her teeth in fury.

Rose was unfazed. She pushed Anastasia aside as she moved away from the crowd. The mix of sympathetic whispers and scathing remarks was nothing more than background noise to her.

It wasn't until she saw Miles

standing a short distance away that

she abruptly halted in her tracks. The satisfaction she had felt from teaching Anastasia a lesson quickly faded, replaced by a feeling of being caught red-handed by an elder after misbehaving.

After all, this charity auction was held in Oliver's name. It was not the place for a spectacle.

"Miles, I" Rose began, prepared to admit her error, but Miles cut her off with a gentle pat on the head.

His voice was full of affection as he said, "What did she do to upset you?"

His demeanor suggested that he would support her unconditionally, no matter what had happened.

Rose met his gaze, the urge to confess slipping away as she considered the suit. Instead, she replied, "ve already taught her lesson, She's a mess

eline

now drenched in front of everyone.

You should see how pitiful she looks."

Both of them turned their attention toward Anastasia, who was making her way out of the venue, covering her disheveled makeup and maintaining an air of unjust indignation. "She does look quite pathetic," Miles commented. He was pleased with how Rose had stood up for herself but still felt compelled to offer his support.

He gently tucked a stray lock of Rose's hair behind her ear, saying, "Next time, let me know if something like this happens again. No matter who it is, you can always stand behind me."

Rose was overwhelmed with gratitude. Not only had she been blessed with Oliver's care, but she also had Miles as a brother. Their protection gave her a comforting sense of warmth. "Okay," she replied with a playful nod. "After all, I do have a big brother to rely on!"

Miles' smile grew increasingly fond as he gazed at Rose.

Meanwhile, a woman wearing sunglasses observed them from a distance, her gaze lingering on the pair. Shrouded behind the dark lenses, it was apparent that her concealed eyes held untold intentions. As the auction began, Rose took her seat beside Miles. Clover entered the room soon after, his eyes scanning for Rose.

Although he had received the invitation to this charity auction well in advance, he hadn't been interested in attending.

However, half an hour ago, when his

bodyguard had informed him that Rose was present at the event, he had promptly canceled a scheduled video conference with the Xanth family and rushed to join her at the auction.

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Chapter 513 Determination to Win

[1,063 words]

Emily and Clover arrived together and were soon led to their seats by an attendant. She followed his line of sight and quickly understood his mind. After scanning the room, she glimpsed Rose first and said, "Mr. Xanth, Rosie is right there!" When Clover saw Rose, he couldn't help but notice Miles beside her. Why were they together? They seemed to be chatting about something.

Despite the distance, he could see Rose's distinct smile. He scoffed and stared disdainfully at Miles. At that moment, he had an impulse to sit beside Rose.

"Sir, miss, the auction is about to begin. Here are your seats," the attendant reminded them.

Clover furrowed his brows, and Emily grasped his intention. "Mr. Xanth, there isn't an empty seat... over there. We should lay low here in Regalia."

He had no words to refute. Watching Miles stroking Rose's head, he huffed and reluctantly sat down, clearly jealous.

Taking it in, Emily couldn't help but tease him. "Mr. Finch is the one Rosie likes, but why are you more jealous of Mr. Young than Mr. Finch?" Jealous? Clover glanced displeasably at her and scoffed. "Who says I'm jealous?"

Why would he be jealous? He had nothing to be envious of! However... When he looked in their direction again, his dissatisfaction overflowed. Moments later, he coldly uttered, "I dislike Miles because... our birth charts clash."

Emily raised her eyebrows and decided not to expose him.

"Welcome, distinguished guests, to the Young Group Charity Auction. I'd like to thank the esteemed individuals who have generously contributed their collections for today's

auction. You're all great philanthropists, and I believe Grandpa would be very pleased with today's event."

Anastasia, the organizer of the auction, commenced the event onstage. Having been splashed with red wine by Rose earlier, she had changed into a new gown. It was white on the top and black on the bottom, reminding Rose of the woman who had helped her outside the venue earlier.

Why did she think of her? They simply shared the same color combinations in their outfits, which was perfectly normal at this event. Was she in attendance at this auction too?

Then, Rose frowned slightly when she realized she didn't ask for the woman's name.

On stage, Anastasia finished her speech and received a warm round of applause, pulling Rose back from her thoughts. Following that, the auction items were brought up to the stage in succession.

Rose waited patiently. However, with the auction halfway through, Oliver's suit remained out of sight.

In the meantime, Jonathan's luxury car was stuck in traffic on the busiest street in Regalia during the peak hour.

Time passed by quickly, and he was visibly impatient and frustrated. The atmosphere in the car became suffocating.

"Sir..." In the driver's seat, Finley glimpsed through the rearview mirror and saw Jonathan's brows increasingly furrowed.

He cautiously stated, "Sir, don't worry. The bodyguard has confirmed that Mr. Young and Mr. Xanth are at the auction venue, so Mrs. Finch's safety is assured."

Yet, his consolation only darkened Jonathan's expression. "How much longer?" he asked coldly.

After returning to the car from checking the traffic conditions, Leonard reported, "Sir, there's been a car accident ahead involving several vehicles. It looks complicated and will likely hold up the traffic for some time."

A car accident on the busiest road in the city during the peak hour... Finley glanced at Jonathan and suddenly saw him opening the car door. "Sir..."

Leonard quickly followed suit. "Sir..."

The two were baffled by what

Jonathan planned to do until they

Vel

saw him passing through the vehicles and arrived at a row of shared bicycles by the road. After some tinkering, he rode off on a bike and left the two stunned.

After some time, Finley casually asked, "How's Mr. and Mrs. Finch's wedding planning going?"

Back in Aquastead, Jonathan had ordered Leonard to prepare for the wedding. "Everything is in place, but Mrs. Finch..." He trailed off and seemingly sighed.

He could tell that Jonathan had not won Rose's heart, as she was the key to whether the relationship worked.

Not long after the marriage alliance between the Finches and Maizes, he was always seen staring at the ring and grinning foolishly. The longing in that smile was something he had never seen before. "The wedding can't wait any longer." Finley sounded firm.

Among the long line of cars, a

bicycle struggled to maneuver

forward. The wind roared in his ears, and sweat trickled down his hair. A drop fell onto the ring on his ring finger, making the red hue of the ring shine more brightly.

Back at the auction, an item had been delivered on stage, followed by the auctioneer's introduction. "This exquisite item holds great significance. It was a suit worn by the late Mr. Young Senior."

The staff removed the white cloth

from the suit revealing it to the

crowd. Although the craftsmanship and materials were of visibly high quality, this suit, custom-made according to Oliver's measurements, could only be purchased for collection purposes without any practical use.

Given that this item belonged to Oliver, the attendees naturally would participate in the bidding to show their respect for him. However, the price... Almost everyone in the audience had calmly set a limit on their bid, but Rose was far from calm. The moment she saw the suit, she was on high alert.

Miles, sitting beside her, was stunned by the sight. "Anastasia..." He gritted his teeth, deducing it was Anastasia who auctioned it.

When the auctioneer announced, "Starting bid is ten thousand dollars. Each bid increases by ten thousand. Bidding begins," Rose instantly raised her bid paddle.

"Number 112, I have your bid of ten thousand." The auctioneer's voice echoed.

112 was the number on Rose's bid paddle. At that instance, Miles knew she aimed to bid on this suit tonight, a thought-out scheme set by Anastasia. Still, why would she do that? He descended into thoughts... "Number 176 has raised the bid to 20 thousand."

"Number 112, 30 thousand."

"Number 356, 40 thousand."

"Number 112, 50 thousand."

...

"Number 239, raising the bid to 300 thousand."

"Number 112..."

The auctioneer's voice continuously echoed in the venue. Some of the guests had raised paddles as a sign of respect, but each time, Number 112 would immediately follow with a higher bid, suppressing their offers. It was as if she was determined to purchase that suit at any cost.

"Number 112, I have your bid of one million dollars!"

With each successive bid, the price reached one million. At last, the crowd couldn't help but turn toward the bidder who held Number 112.

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Chapter 514 It's Her

[1,028 words]

"Isn't that the woman who splashed wine on Ms. Young earlier?"

"Who is she? Do I live under the rock or what? How do I not know of such a figure in Regalia?"

"One million? Sure, the suit has great craftsmanship and materials, and belonged to Mr. Young Senior, but one million dollars far exceeds its original value." "Right? She's lavish. Who is she?"

Discussions from all corners of the venue began. Suddenly, a person noticed Miles beside her. "You guys, look! It's Mr. Young!" They were shocked to see them seated together.

"Oh, I remember now. You guys, tell me that isn't the young woman who carried Mr. Young Senior's memorial photo at his funeral!"

That reminder quickly refreshed their memories. "You're not wrong..."

"See? I'm right!"

"Is she a Young family member? Why have I never seen her? What's her connection to the Youngs?"

The numerous questions piqued everyone's interest in the crowd, but they were sure of one thing.

"Regardless of who she is, having the honor to carry Mr. Young Senior's memorial photo at his funeral signifies that her status is extraordinary!"

"Exactly. Not even Mr. Miles got to hold it. Does that mean her status is greater than..."

That assumption led many to be curious about this young woman who held the Number 112 paddle.

However, the unfolding scene was nothing like what Anastasia desired. She simply wanted to make Rose stay by using the suit as bait but didn't anticipate her to steal the spotlight so effortlessly!

Anastasia tightened her fists. A million dollars? Did Rose even have that kind of money?

Averting her gaze from Rose, who was fixated on the suit, Anastasia glanced in a certain direction. As though receiving her signal, a person quickly raised their paddle.

At the same time, another person in a corner had their paddle in the air. "Number 77 has raised the bid to one million and-"

Before the auctioneer could finish, she was interrupted by a voice. "1.5 million dollars!"

What an amount! The crowd simultaneously looked in the same direction, and even Anastasia was shocked. Number 77 wasn't the one she arranged to bid against Rose...

Instead, the number belonged to a woman in a white top and black skirt. Beneath her beret, with long hair cascading over her shoulders, she wore a pair of sunglasses. Although her face was obscured by the eyewear, her facial features were exceptionally striking. At a glance, Rose recognized her. "It's her!" she murmured in disbelief. Rose didn't anticipate her to bid against her.

"1.5 million dollars, offered by this lady. I must say, it is a very high price..." The auctioneer's voice seemingly awoke Rose from her daze.

She only had one goal, which was to retrieve Oliver's suit. As such, she unhesitatingly raised the paddle again.

"Ah, Number 112 again. It seems that Miss Number 112 has taken a great liking to this suit. 1.51 million dollars by Number 112..."

"Number 77 has raised the paddle again, bidding at "

"Two million dollars!" The woman's voice rang again.

Everyone focused on her appearance when she raised the bid to 1.5 million earlier, but her voice became the main highlight this time. Her voice was... hoarse and even somewhat unpleasant.

Yet, to Miles, hearing her voice sent a searing pain to his chest. Even if she was hidden by those sunglasses, he recognized who she was!

He struggled to recover from the shock at first glance. He had been seeking the woman he saw at the cemetery the last two days, and to his surprise, he found her here today.

He was confident he had the right person the moment his gaze landed on her, but her voice... What happened to her voice? Suddenly, he felt suffocated.

Nobody noticed Miles' strangeness,

including Rose, who fixed her gaze on Oliver's

firmness. She could hear the

firmness in that woman's tone when she bid two million dollars, but Rose shared the same sentiment as her. No matter what, she vowed to retrieve that suit and would not rest until she had it!

Once again, Rose raised her paddle. "2.5 million!" She added 500 thousand to her bid as well!

The auctioneer was startled and ready to announce the bid when Number 77 appeared in the air again. "Three million dollars..."

Rose was surprised by her determination. Still, she proceeded without hesitation. "Four million."

"Five million..."

"Six million!"

Without waiting for the auctioneer to announce the bid, the two shouted their bids back and forth.

In their presence, the crowd couldn't help but glance suspiciously at the suit on stage, wondering whether they had missed something. Perhaps it wasn't a typical suit but a rare vintage. Soon, the bid had raised to a hefty 12 million dollars. The crowd no longer focused on the suit but on the two women instead. Every time they raised their bids, they observed quietly.

Sure, it had been established that the lady with Number 112 was an important member of the Young family, seeing that she sat beside Miles and spent lavishly. But... what about Number 77?

She sat in the corner, and someone

noticed she didn't lift her head once when announcing her bids. It was as if tens of millions of dollars were so insignificant to her that she didn't bother to bat an eye. So,

Swas

she?

The same question plagued Rose's mind. She wanted that suit because it belonged to Oliver. No matter the price, she would retrieve it because it was worth it. But what sentiment did that suit hold for that woman? Rose couldn't comprehend that.

12 million dollars was just the amount that she could pay with her card, but...

Amid the silence, the hoarse voice rang again. "15 million!"

Anxiety spiked within Rose. If this persisted, she would lose Oliver's suit!

"30 million!" A voice stunned the whole crowd, thinking they had misheard.

Even the auctioneer was taken aback. However, she quickly found her bearings and locked her gaze on the paddle in the air.

"Sir, how much are you bidding again?" She wanted to confirm.

"30 million dollars!" The voice repeated.

This time, everyone in the audience heard it loud and clear. Indeed, it was 30 million dollars... But who was that extravagant individual?

Immediately, everybody turned toward the bidder. A man sporting a custom-made suit sat with crossed legs, yet his demeanor remained distinguishable and imposing. He was none other than... "Clover!"

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Chapter 515 Reunion With an Old Acquaintance

[1,032 words]

When Rose saw Clover, she instinctively murmured his name. Her volume was low, but the people around her still heard it amid the dead silence.

At first, Clover seemed cold with an unwavering gaze. However, upon sensing Rose's eyes on him, he met her gaze despite knowing everyone was watching and smiled affectionately. He seemed to be saying, "Leave it to me to secure this suit!" Soon, he withdrew his gaze and resumed his cold demeanor. He lifted his chin slightly as if warning everyone in the crowd, "Whoever dares to bid against me, bring it on!"

His imposing presence made the woman in the corner frown. It was also then the audience looked in her direction, anticipating her next bid. Yet, they didn't hear that hoarse voice again.

As such, the auctioneer spoke, "This gentleman has raised the bid to 30 million dollars. Do we have any other offers?"

The audience was silent. Then, the auctioneer announced, "30 million, going once... Going twice... Sold!" Nobody raised their paddles anymore before the hammer finalized the bidding.

Clover glanced at Rose again and raised his brows with a smile, seemingly awaiting her praise. Undeniably, she felt touched by his action. He quickly sensed her gratitude through her expression and straightened up in his seat.

He was ready to glance at Miles and flaunt how much better he treated her, yet he noticed that the latter was in a complete daze. Nonetheless, he brushed it off and didn't overthink it.

The auction continued. More items were sold one after another, but none exceeded the final price of Oliver's suit. It seemed that everyone was still absorbed in the earlier bidding. Anastasia could no longer maintain her smile. She had planned for Rose to embarrass herself, yet she had become the event's highlight! And the suit, purchased by Clover...

She knew all too well that he had bought the suit, at a hefty price of 30 million dollars, for Rose. At that thought, she looked at Rose and was even more infuriated by her look of relief. Damn it!

Then, she thought of Number 77, wondering why the lady didn't bid against Rose. She looked mysterious, keeping her head down with sunglasses the whole time when bidding.

Anastasia didn't take a good look at her earlier and wanted to check her out again. However, the woman was no longer in the corner.

"Has she... left?" Anastasia wondered with a frown.

Meanwhile, Miles was the other person who had noticed the woman's disappearance. He caught it as soon as she stood up.

More accurately, he had been focusing on her. Even after she left her seat and walked out of the venue, his attention followed her. "Miles? What's wrong?" Rose finally noticed his strangeness.

He snapped back to reality. "I..." Saw her! He was confident it was her!

"Rosie, I'm... sorry."

He looked at Rose. His gaze displayed visible remorse, prompting a frown on Rose. "Hey, Miles, what's wrong? You're scaring me." She had never seen such an expression from him. Why did he apologize to her?

Miles knew the reason well enough. He should've been the one helping her bid the suit earlier, but he hesitated because...

That figure continued lingering in his mind. As if afraid to lose sight of that person again, Miles made a decision.

"Rosie, I'll head out for a second." He gently caressed her head as usual.

Looking at his receding figure, Rose furrowed her brows. How strange Miles acted way too peculiar tonight! What was the reason? Could it be related to the "old acquaintance" he mentioned last night?

Amid her thoughts, Miles had already exited the auction venue. He jogged along the way, searching everywhere for that figure. Despite flipping the whole building upside down, it was in vain. Just as he drowned himself in disappointment for losing sight of her again, a voice rang behind him. "Miles..."

That hoarse voice made Miles' heart skip a beat. He swiftly turned his head and saw her standing a few feet away.

Standing in her black and white outfit, she smiled so charmingly that even the sunglasses couldn't conceal her joy. "Harriette..." he uttered shakily. It had been ages since he last said her name.

Harriette was momentarily stunned. Then, she removed her sunglasses, exposing her entire face before him. She met his gaze and gradually became overwhelmed.

"I thought... I thought you'd forgotten about me. I thought... you wouldn't recognize me and..."

Although it was just a few words, they seemed to carry so much meaning. It was as if she had many grievances to express but was too overwhelmed to articulate them. Without finishing her words, she rushed toward him, closing the distance between them to just a single step. Harriette looked at Miles with a grin. "Miles, I'm back."

"You're back... That's great..." he muttered. It wasn't until he saw her face up close that he confirmed it was her. She had returned! "Miles, don't you wanna know where I've been? Don't you wanna know what happened to me all these years?" she asked surprisingly.

Little did she know, her hoarse voice was enough to break Miles' heart. Wasn't her damaged vocal cords enough to reflect the experiences that she had been through?

He couldn't bear to ask her and simply held her hands with sorrow. "Harriette, no matter what happened, it's all in the past. Now that you're back, you have me and the family..."

"That's right. I have you, Miles. I've always had you as my brother, but Grandpa..." The grief in her eyes intensified.

At last, she couldn't hold back any longer and cried. "Grandpa isn't around anymore. I saw the news of his passing. That's why I..."

"I only wanted to visit him at the

grave. I knew the charity auction was organized in Grandpa's name and I thought I'd come here and feel his presence. But then, the auctioneer said Grandpa wore that suit, so I..."

She let out a dry laugh. "I don't actually have that kind of money. No matter how much I bid, I knew I wouldn't get the suit. I just wanted to hold onto something, even if it's just an illusion..."

"Harriette!"

Miles understood her bond with Oliver more than anyone. When Oliver adopted them, he was practically their parent. However... He stared at Harriette. "Why didn't you return sooner?"

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Chapter 516 Get Back What Was Hers

[1,016 words]

Had she returned earlier, she would've seen Oliver before he passed. But... why didn't she?

A look of sadness brimmed in Harriette's eyes. "Whether it's around Grandpa or the Young family, there's no place for me to stick around."

Back then, they rarely made any public appearances. Many knew of the Young family heiress and that there was only one of her. While Harriette used to hold that position, the Youngs kept that information from the public after what happened that year. Without her, Anastasia became the heiress of the Young family in succession. At that thought, Harriette revealed a bitter smile.

Feeling extreme heartache, Miles suddenly regretted his question. "Sorry, Harriette. I shouldn't have asked. Back then..."

It had been a long time. Back then, everything seemed to confirm Harriette's death. However, he didn't believe it and continued searching for her traces.

Yet, one day, Anastasia barged into a party where Oliver was at. At the event, she saved a highly esteemed socialite.

When the socialite inquired about her identity, a flustered Anastasia blurted that she was the Young family heiress.

It was precisely that event that brought Anastasia to the public eye. Since then, she had repeatedly explained that it was an accident and that she had been too panicked in that situation that she gave such a response. However, Miles knew she had waited for that moment all along. With Harriette's disappearance, she took the chance and announced herself as the Young family heiress.

"It's okay." Harriette forced a smile and looked at him. "Miles, I know I don't have a place in the family anymore. But don't worry. My return won't be permanent this time. I came back simply because I missed Grandpa... a lot." "Harriette!" Miles frowned, refusing to listen to such words. He looked at her long face and solidified the decision he had made long ago.

He held her hand. "Now that you're back, you should stay. It took me so long to find you. Grandpa would've been elated to know you're back. As for the others..."

He narrowed his gaze and seemingly made a promise. "Whatever was yours, I'll get it back for you."

Whatever was hers... Harriette's gaze brightened briefly but soon reverted to her initial look of indifference. She didn't respond because she knew what he meant by that.

Feeling Miles' care and remorse, she found herself somewhat intrigued. If he realized there was more to what she felt she deserved, would he get them back for her too?

She soon had an answer-yes! Her heart couldn't help but skip a beat. She looked forward to what was to come...

Inside the auction venue, Rose became bored as she watched each item getting auctioned off. She couldn't leave until she discovered Kelly's traces from Anastasia, who sat in the front row. As such, she could only wait. She planned to get some fresh air when Miles returned to his seat.

"Miles."

"Rosie." He stroked her head affectionately, his warm smile a stark contrast to his expression earlier. It was as if he freed all his strangeness from earlier after returning from outside.

What happened to him outside? Rose glanced curiously at the door.

Following that, Miles' excitement became contagious as Rose couldn't help but notice his constant gazing in a direction.

She followed his line of sight and

saw someone. It was her-the woman who helped her outside and bid against her just now! Harriette still had on her sunglasses at that moment.

Initially, Rose thought she was looking at her. Gradually, she realized she was looking at Miles instead!

Not only that, but Rose could also distinctly see the warm smile they flashed at each other. Recalling the previous night, she suddenly had an epiphany.

By then, she was almost confident that the woman in sunglasses was Miles' "old acquaintance"! An ex-girlfriend... perhaps?

Examining their eye contact, Rose became increasingly certain of her guess. The auctioning onstage was suddenly tossed into oblivion.

She sat quietly by his side and delightfully enjoyed the scene. Her blatant observation quickly caught Miles' notice.

Rose didn't conceal her excitement either and raised her brows. "Aren't you going to introduce me to someone, Miles?"

Miles recalled his promise to Harriette earlier. "Yeah. I will later." Not only to Rose but to everybody!

Then, he glanced at Harriette again. He became more resolute in his decision when he thought of all the possible grievances she had experienced during her disappearance. "Alright!" Rose was full of anticipation. Thanks to Miles, she then looked at the woman with an added hint of friendliness.

She continued admiring their interaction while waiting for the auction to end. Of course, a certain someone wouldn't let her off so easily.

"The next item up for auction is the

highlight of today's event. The item's owner is none other than the

organizer of today's charity auction, the Young family heiress, Ms. Anastasia Young!"

Hearing Anastasia's name from the auctioneer pulled Rose's focus back to the stage. Similarly, Miles' expression shifted when hearing her title.

On the other hand, Harriette looked at her replacement and saw her donning a black and white gown-the same color combination as hers. How coincidental!

Anastasia gradually made her way to the stage with elegance, acting like how a real heiress would. Harriette took it in and smiled, murmuring, "Long time no see... Anastasia!"

On stage, Anastasia weirdly felt a chill. When she looked into the crowd, she received all sorts of admiring gazes.

She had just received news that Jonathan was on his way to the auction. As expected, he would do anything to be here as long as Rose was.

She was incredibly jealous of how Rose could win his heart, yet she couldn't afford to let envy control her. After all, she had more important things to do now.

Faced with anticipating gazes,

Anastasia smiled gently. "Thank you

everybody for attending the charity

auction today. Actually, I have a

personal motive when organizing

this event as well.

toFindNovel

"I'm divorced. As of now, I remain only as the Young family heiress. As for any new titles in the future... Well, I look forward to it!"

Her announcing her relationship status and the ambiguous statement at the end led some to think of her entanglement with Jonathan. "Do you mean a new identity as Mrs. Finch?"

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[1,015 words]

A random person in the audience raised that question.

The identity of Mrs. Finch naturally meant being Jonathan's wife. The crowd soon looked at Anastasia with suspense, awaiting her response. Of course, she meant being Jonathan's wife, but she couldn't make it obvious. She grumbled playfully with a smile. "Hey, I didn't say that." Although her words denied it, her tone added more ambiguity to her statement.

Glancing at the entrance and finding no sight of Jonathan, Anastasia was slightly relieved, continuing, "The item I'm auctioning today is a ring I received not long ago."

Following her words, the staff moved the display stand onto the stage. The item on the stand was covered with a silk cloth.

When hearing that the item was a ring, Rose was taken aback and almost instinctively thought of the red diamond ring on Anastasia's hand. With bated breath, she watched Anastasia remove the silk cloth and reveal the ring... Not only Rose, but the audience also held their breath with shock in their eyes. That diamond ring...

"Red diamond!"

"I can't believe it's a red diamond. And it's so big!"

"The design is full of ingenuity, and the cutting craftsmanship is absolutely perfect. More importantly, the size! It's a scarce item!"

"How did you get such a big red diamond cut, Ms. Young?" a curious person asked.

Everyone knew Young's House of Jewels was the leading player in the industry. Still, such a large cut with a perfect red hue was a real rarity.

The audience quickly caught the look of tenderness in Anastasia's eyes. Suddenly, their assumption from earlier solidified. Could it really be...

"A friend of mine gifted this to me. As for how he acquired the red diamond, I have no idea." Anastasia's voice echoed in the venue.

A friend of hers... Was it who they thought it was?

"I heard that a large red diamond was discovered at the Finch Group's overseas mine not long ago..."

"Yes, I heard that too. Well, only Finch Group has that kind of money."

"So, does that mean Ms. Young's ring was Mr. Finch's..."

The more they connected their theories, the more they believed they were right. Anastasia and Jonathan had been friends since childhood. Even if she had been married once, what mattered more was that they genuinely loved each other. Amid the heated discussion, a person piped up. "During the Young family inheritance dispute lately, Mr. Finch had seemingly helped Ms. Young."

"Seemingly? He did. One of my collaborators even received a specific order from Mr. Finch..."

"If that's the case, then Ms. Young and Mr. Finch..."

By then, the audience had reckoned their theory was true. Still, Anastasia should announce the good news herself.

Regardless, the dynamic had shifted between her and the audience. Some were even ready to treat her with the respect that only the wife of the ruler of Finch Group should receive. Although the chatter was inescapable, Rose stared blankly at the ring. How could she not recognize it? She had the same ring!

In any case, she wasn't the only one who recognized it as Miles was stumped to see it too. He was about to say something to her but was interrupted by the sound from the entrance.

The noise wasn't subtle, prompting many to look toward the door. When they saw the person who had entered, they were stunned. Wasn't that... Jonathan?

His hair was slightly damp, as if dripping with sweat, and his black shirt clung tightly to his chest. His rapid breathing made him look like he had been through an intense workout.

The first thing Jonathan did upon

entering was to look for Rose. After scanning the room, he caught sight of her figure, but she didn't look in

his direction. Despite feeling

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dejected, he was pleased enough to see her.

Not wanting to attract more attention, Jonathan simply found an empty seat and sat down amid the concentrating gazes on him. However, those looks felt rather ambiguous.

He frowned and crossed his arms across his chest, visibly impatient. Instantly, the crowd retracted their gazes.

Perhaps... Jonathan disliked others discussing his private business. At that thought, they pretended like nothing had happened.

The entire time, he spared no glance at Anastasia on stage. Although disappointed, she had a way of making him see her soon. Curling her lips into a smile, she continued her speech.

"I hope this ring will find its rightful owner!"

It was only then the audience realized Anastasia wanted to auction off the ring Jonathan had gifted her! If it was a present from him, why not cherish it? Why would she sell it? Everybody was baffled.

Meanwhile, Jonathan's expression darkened when he saw the ring on the display stand. He radiated coldness and prompted the Poet around him to glance over cautiously, only to see him staring at the ring with a menacing gaze.

When Anastasia descended the stage, a person raised their paddle. "100 thousand dollars..." As though knowing the price was far from the actual value, their voice sounded visibly hesitant. "200 thousand."

"300 thousand..."

Bids came in one after another, and soon the price reached five million dollars.

"Ten million!" The powerful, resounding voice was unmistakably commanding. The crowd followed the source of the sound and saw Jonathan, who had acquired a bid paddle at some point. The auctioneer announced, "Number 36 has offered ten million dollars! Do I hear more?"

The audience was dead silent. Who would dare to bid against Jonathan?

His expression was filled with anger, as though unwilling for anyone else to get it. Connecting the theory from earlier, the audience seemed to have found the answer to their question.

Perhaps the couple had a fallout,

and Anastasia was auctioning off the ring out of spite. Still, it was a bizarre scénario, seeing one was selling it while the other was buying it back with ten million dollars. How extravagant!

Just as the crowd thought the ring would be auctioned off at ten million dollars, another voice rang in the venue.

"20 million!"

Those two simple words resembled a thunderstrike, pulling everyone's focus to the owner of that voice. They were stunned when they saw who it was.

"20 million, offered by the gentleman with Number 95!" the auctioneer announced.

Wasn't Number 95 the person who purchased Oliver's suit at 30 million dollars earlier?

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Chapter 518 Handing the Ring to Him

[948 words]

He had just spent 30 million on Oliver's suit and was now bidding again! Who was this extravagant fellow? Rose was just in the middle of feeling bitter about Jonathan's bid when Clover's voice pulled her back to reality.

When she looked at him, he wore a mischievous smile. Although others did not decipher the meaning behind his smile, Jonathan saw it vividly. What did Clover plan to do? "Number 95 has raised the bid to 20 million. Do I have a higher offer?" The auctioneer carried on with the event.

At that point, everyone looked toward Jonathan. He was probably the only one who could bid higher than 20 million dollars. As expected, Jonathan raised his paddle. "30 million." The crowd descended into utter silence.

Without waiting for the auctioneer, Clover followed up with a 40 million dollar bid.

This time, even the experienced auctioneer was astounded by the scene, let alone the audience. She regained her composure and said, "Number 95 has raised the bid to—" "50 million!" That imposing voice interrupted the auctioneer.

This round, the crowd was startled and even thought they had misheard his bid. An increase of ten million dollars each time... Who bid like that?

Despite the baffled crowd, the auctioneer continued, "Mr. Finch... has offered 50 million. Does anyone..." She deliberately slowed down her words, as though ready to be interjected again. However, there was no interruption this time. "No other offers?" she inquired again.

All the gazes were directed toward Number 95. Clover continued smiling despite all eyes being on him, seemingly prepared to increase his bid. However, Emily halted him.

"That's enough, Mr. Xanth. Don't forget. We have a collaboration with Finch Group..." She understood his intention as soon as he bid.

His goal wasn't the ring onstage, but to provoke Jonathan. He raised his brows. "Fine. He can have it." With an increment of 40 million dollars, that ought to avenge Rose and give him a lesson!

Emily smiled without saying a word. She knew Clover couldn't stand Rose experiencing even a bit of grievance.

"50 million, going once... Going twice... Sold! Congratulations to this gentleman for acquiring Ms. Young's diamond ring!" The auctioneer hit the hammer, officializing the deal.

The crowd remained silent, as though stunned from the previous bidding. That was 50 million dollars from Jonathan! Why was he so intent on getting the ring, though? The crowd soon arrived to a conclusion.

It was because of... love!

By then, everybody was confident that Anastasia had auctioned off the ring out of spite after her fallout with Jonathan, which caused the following event they witnessed earlier. No matter the price, he was intent on retrieving the ring!

That should be enough to earn Anastasia's forgiveness, right? The crowd turned toward her and distinctly saw the gentle smile on her face.

"She must be so happy!" they thought.

Well, of course, she was. During the National Jewelry Design Award in Aquastead, Jonathan spent 30 million dollars purchasing the couple rings Rose designed. This time he had spent 50 million in buying hers. Rose had to be heartbroken by then.

Anastasia looked smugly at Rose, who seemed upset and in a daze.

Even if Rose stopped looking at the ring, its image continually resurfaced in her mind. Countless speculations arose in her heart, only to be dismissed with her feigned nonchalance.

The way Jonathan bid for the ring with utter determination made her feel extremely upset like a rock was sitting on her chest.

"Rosie..." Suddenly, Miles held her hand.

Rose turned and met his consoling eyes. Almost instinctively, she forced a smile. "I'm fine, Miles."

But how could she be fine with such a bitter smile on her face? Miles frowned. He knew she cared about the ring and Jonathan, but she fooled herself to think otherwise. "Rosie, I know him. He's got nothing to do with Anastasia." Miles was probably the only person who could guarantee that.

"The girl they thought had grown up with Miles isn't Anastasia. Jonathan has no feelings for her at all!" He eagerly wanted to dismiss all the speculation that could upset her. However, Rose's mind was flooded with that ring. She smiled at Miles and melancholically withdrew her gaze.

"Mr. Finch has just signed the contract. From now on, this ring belongs to Mr. Finch. Earlier, Ms. Young mentioned wanting to hand this ring over to him. What do you say, Mr. Finch?" the auctioneer asked.

This was a procedure that none of the previous auction items had. As such, many anticipated to see what was next and even wanted to cheer.

However, that person was Jonathan... They suppressed their excitement and turned toward him, awaiting his response.

Under countless gazes, Jonathan

rose from his seat. Most of the audience was excited, but Rose, Miles, Clover, and Emily frowned. Was he really planning to retrieve the ring from Anastasia?

The crowd seemed to be expecting the romantic gesture between Jonathan and Anastasia. As soon as he got on that stage, it should confirm their guesses, right?

For a moment, even Miles couldn't comprehend Jonathan's intention.

Clover's face darkened after glancing at Rose. "Jonathan Finch..." While frowning, he vowed to himself that he would punish Jonathan if he did anything to hurt Rose on that stage.

In actuality, Jonathan felt all the burning gazes and anticipated cheers from everyone. He even felt Miles' confusion and Clover's fury, yet... Rose did not even look at him.

With a frown, he stopped briefly upon arriving at her row and continued forward. When he went onto the stage, a wave of applause sounded.

Even Anastasia was surprised by how quickly he came onstage, saving all her premeditated tricks to lure him there.

She looked at Jonathan, her heart skipping a beat. Amid the loud applause, she found her bearings and ascended the stage with a smile.

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Chapter 519 A Public Confession

[1,072 words]

The handsome ruler of Finch Group and the stunning heiress of the Young family stood side by side, looking utterly compatible to the eyes of the audience.

The way she looked at him was full of affection, and even the auctioneer felt like she was third-wheeling. After placing the ring into Anastasia's hand, she quickly descended the stage. With that, the two stood onstage, fueling the ambiguity in the air. Anastasia almost couldn't contain her excitement. She held the ring and couldn't help but think of the plan she had concocted to provoke Rose.

She initially wanted to sow discord between Rose and Jonathan, but at that moment, she desired more. She wished she could freeze time and stand by Jonathan's side forever, accepting the praising and admiring gazes as they did now. Only she deserved to be with him! "Aren't you going to give that to me, Ms. Young?" Jonathan piped up, piercing the silent yet ambiguous air.

The way he urged her sounded like he couldn't wait to get the ring. But what would he do after he received it? Would he return it to Anastasia as a gift in front of everyone? Yes, that had to be it! The crowd became increasingly excited.

Jonathan's reminder pulled Anastasia back to reality. She handed the ring, together with its exquisite box, to him with a smile. Knowing Rose was watching, she gazed at him even more affectionately.

As expected, Rose felt her heart clenching at that moment. Even Clover couldn't help but stand up.

Meanwhile, Jonathan retrieved the ring box from Anastasia and closely appraised the ring. "What a ring," he complimented.

"Jonathan..." Clover growled.

Before he could say more, Jonathan interrupted him. "Too bad..." He sighed and shook his head.

Too bad? What went wrong?

The crowd couldn't comprehend him. Despite that, they still firmly believed that Jonathan would give the ring to Anastasia by putting it on her finger.

As such, they watched with anticipation but slowly realized that wasn't happening. Instead, Jonathan held the ring with an indecipherable look.

After some time, he slowly recounted, "Last time, at the National Jewelry Design Award organized by the Young's House of Jewels in Aquasteed, I purchased a pair of couple rings." His voice was calm.

The crowd assumed he was retelling the ring's origin and quickly became invested. Everyone perked up and paid attention to his words but failed to notice Anastasia, standing beside him, looking stiff. Her anxiety spiked at that moment.

"Those pair of rings were designed by an exceptionally talented designer. I used the red diamond from my family to craft them according to the design blueprint."

Instantly, the crowd was shocked to know Jonathan had partaken in making the ring. Since Young's House of Jewels was the leading player in the industry, while Anastasia was a jewelry designer, it all made perfect sense. On top of that, the red diamond came from the Finches!

"I spent an entire day and night on this. I shall consider this a collaborative work between the designer and I," Jonathan continued. Suddenly, his lips curled into a content and optimistic smile.

When retelling the stories about the ring and its designer, the crowd noticed that the originally cold and harsh Jonathan had transformed into a gentle and warm man.

That version of him was unlike anything they had seen, and it was precisely because of that designer that revealed this side of him!

"When I purchased these couple rings, I gave one of them to her. At that time, I even saw myself spending the rest of my life with her. I believe she knows how I feel as well."

Then, Jonathan gazed toward the audience. Rose looked up, meeting his burning gaze. The image of his solemn side profile when gifting her the ring resurfaced in her mind, leaving her in a daze. His words, "I saw myself spending the rest of my life with her", continued to echo in her ears, rendering her so shy that she couldn't meet his eyes.

Jonathan's public confession instantly sent the crowd into a frenzy. They didn't expect him to be such a romantic! With such a genuine and grand confession, one would expect he would propose next! That assumption made everyone in the audience perk up, while some women directed their admiring gazes to Anastasia.

At that moment, the doors to the venue swung open with a bang, prompting the crowd to look over in unison. Some recognized the man to be Jonathan's right-hand man, and he was pushing an object.

When Jonathan saw Leonard, he

revealed a smirk. "It's about time he

thought. He glanced indifferently at the red diamond ring in his palm, his gentleness from earlier converting into harsh coldness.

The object Leonard brought piqued everyone's curiosity. However, the words that came out of Jonathan next shocked them.

"The pair of rings belong to a man and woman, while this... Well, since this is an extra one, there's no point in keeping it!" By the time he finished his words, Leonard had already moved the object onto the stage.

While the crowd was still confused by Jonathan's words, Leonard removed the lid on the handcart. Instantly, a burst of fiery red steam erupted. "What's that?" The audience couldn't see it.

However, Anastasia saw it crystal clear. That was molten lava! Was Jonathan planning to...

"You can't, Jon!" She instinctively stopped him.

However, that was the molten lava

Jonathan had Leonard arrange to be transported by helicopter from a research laboratory in Regalia! Why would a few feeble words from Anastasia stop Jonathan from doing what he wanted?

He smiled faintly and extended that diamond ring toward the lava-filled container.

"Jon, you can't destroy it. It's mine..." Anastasia blurted out of panic.

Jonathan's hand, holding the ring, trembled slightly, and his mocking smile deepened. "It's yours? If I remember correctly, I've just spent 50 million on this ring and even signed the contract. "Then, you handed the ring to me. I thought this ring belonged to me now. Isn't that right? What do you guys think?"

He looked at the audience, but the crowd was too stunned to think by then.

What was happening? Didn't he purchase the ring to give it to Anastasia? He looked so gentle when making his confession. Why did he seem so cold and nonchalant when looking at her? And what did she mean by "you can't"? What was she preventing him from doing?

The audience gazed at Jonathan, and his question lingered in their mind. Almost instinctively, they nodded in agreement.

"Of course, the ring belongs to you, Mr. Finch!"

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Chapter 520 There Can Only Be One of This Ring

[964 words]

Since Jonathan had spent 50 million dollars on the ring, it naturally belonged to him!

He raised his brows at that answer. Then, he glanced at the container filled with molten lava. "Since it belongs to me, nobody can tell me what I can or can't do with it, right?"

Of course, he meant Anastasia, who felt embarrassed by his words. However, things only got worse for her from then on. What could she do when Jonathan could bear

destroying a red diamond ring? She had no solutions against him. Anastasia's hand remained frozen in the air, a pleading look evident on her face. Yet, Jonathan spared no glances at her before tossing the ring into the container, causing sparks to fly.

It was only then the audience understood something. "That's... molten lava..."

"The high temperature of molten lava is enough to melt diamonds. Did Mr. Finch just..."
Destroy the diamond ring!

"But why?"

Suddenly, everyone looked at the two figures on stage. By then, they had detached from their theories and slowly understood Jonathan wouldn't have destroyed it if he cared about it. So, it could only mean...

He hated that ring and would spend 50 million dollars to obliterate it if it meant erasing it from existence!

When they recalled Jonathan's confession earlier, they were confident he was expressing his love for that designer. Why would he...

"I think everyone here misunderstood something. Like I said, this ring is an extra one. The one I made according to the blueprint is with the designer.

"It's unique, and there shouldn't be another similar one," Jonathan explained calmly. His voice mixed with the lava-melting sound created an eerie atmosphere.

Jonathan had called them out for their false assumptions. Since the one he melted was the extra one, it meant...

"The designer wasn't Ms. Young!" a person voiced out the crowd's realization. They looked in unison at Anastasia with strange looks and realized they had been misled and misunderstood the situation.

Intending to protect her dignity, Anastasia quickly clarified, "Uh, I saw the design blueprint at the time and really liked it. That's why I made one myself. I was aware that the copyright for that design belongs to Young's House of Jewels. I just liked it too much." Was that why she replicated the ring? Because she liked it too much?

Below the stage, Miles and Clover paid no heed to her words. Regardless of her intention when making the ring, it was evident she wanted to mislead everyone when auctioning the ring. Of course, she wouldn't have anticipated Jonathan to melt a ring he had spent 50 million dollars on!

Clover glanced at Jonathan onstage, scoffing. "That's much better."

Not only did Jonathan destroy the ring, but he also expected Anastasia to misdirect the crowd. However, he crossed the line at the possibility of Rose believing her lies. Hence, he had to clarify.

"I did not grow up with Ms. Young, let alone was her childhood sweetheart. We don't interact much generally, and we definitely don't have any romantic entanglements.

"So, I ask everyone to stop speculating. If my loved... one took this wrongly, I'd have to face her wrath at home!" Jonathan smiled.

Although it sounded playful, his

words shocked many in the

audience. It sounded like Jonathan was about to say "lover" but changed to "loved one" in the end. He also said he'd have to face her wrath at home. Huh? That sounded like what a married man would say!

Since everyone had made a blunder earlier, they dared not create more assumptions. However, one person couldn't contain their curiosity. "Mr. Finch, may I ask you a question?"

Jonathan replied, "Sure."

"Who's your loved... one?"

Upon hearing that direct question,

everyone held their breath and secretly applauded that person's bravery, Everyone gazed at Jonathan with suspense, knowing for a fact that all of Regalia would

focus on his "loved one" as soon as

he answered the question.

In the audience, Rose could feel her heart in her throat. She was stunned by Jonathan's actions and knew his confession was directed at her, no matter how much she looked away from him. His loved one... She sighed faintly to ease her emotional fluctuations, stimulated by Jonathan.

Despite that, her heart continued pounding. Especially after the question from that random person, she felt her breath hitching.

On her side, Miles' expression. He knew that as soon as Jonathan exposed Rose under the limelight, all the scrutiny and discussion would focus on her. Inevitably, she would be uncomfortable.

Even if she had to publicize her relationship with Jonathan one day, she needed to have enough confidence and composure to handle any external scrutiny.

What Miles had been doing was to aid her in that aspect. However, it wasn't the right time to expose her yet.

He frowned and vowed to accelerate his plan. After making the decision, he looked at Jonathan onstage and was ready to stop him at any moment.

Clover carried the same sentiment and concern as Miles. While preparing to interrupt Jonathan, he was also considering the possibility of something else...

"Well... She's here today!" Jonathan locked his gaze in a specific direction. His gaze was passionate, prompting Rose to gulp her saliva nervously.

The crowd quickly followed his line of sight but missed her when he averted his gaze. As such, they hoped he would announce the mysterious woman who had captured his heart. However... Jonathan smiled faintly. "But she prefers to keep a low profile. If I expose her to you guys, she might actually get mad at me. So, please spare me from upsetting her."

The formidable Mr. Finch, known for

his dominance in the business

world, now seemed like a henpecked husband. The crowd was startled and gradually felt the

disappointment, while Rose, Miles, and Clover were relieved.

"That's what I thought!" Clover scoffed. Since Jonathan had resolved the "crisis", he could now fully consider his new idea. Amid his thoughts, he suddenly asked Emily a question.

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