

Spoiled 1411

Chapter 1411: Right into the Trap

"Mr. Battleson, this..."

The person seated lower right of Justin Battleson withdrew his gaze from the direction of the door, his expression visibly sour.

Yet, what surprised him was seeing Justin Battleson curl his lips into a smile.

The current situation played perfectly into Justin's hands.

Indeed, Riley Group was founded single-handedly by Justin, but naturally, the company faced numerous challenges in its early days. As the enterprise gradually expanded, shareholder investments became inevitable.

Now that Riley Group has reached its current scale, certain shareholders were reluctant to cooperate any further.

And individuals like them, no matter where, tend to be disliked.

However, they've been with the company long enough that Justin had yet to find a particularly appropriate reason to reclaim their shares.

Yet, today's circumstances seemed to present Justin with the perfect opportunity.

While Justin's shareholder meeting had just concluded, Charlotte Thompson was dealing with excitement of her own.

"Charlotte, what's going on? What's the deal with all those online news stories?"

Zara Ward's call came while Charlotte was caught in a flash of inspiration, sketching at her design station.

"Are you talking about the plagiarism thing?" Charlotte placed her phone, set to speaker mode, off to the side and answered Zara nonchalantly.

But Zara, being of an impatient disposition, couldn't stand Charlotte's leisurely response. Hearing her speak so unhurriedly, Zara was practically ready to crawl out of the phone and confront Charlotte face-to-face.

"Oh for heaven's sake, when did this happen? You're keeping me in suspense here. What's going on? How could anyone falsely accuse you of plagiarism? And who is this Florienna Ellis anyway?"

Listening to Zara's barrage of words, Charlotte paused for a moment before slowly recounting the events of yesterday to her.

"XTZ's plagiarism accusation? Wasn't that project handled entirely between the two of us and Elijah Walker? How could there even be plagiarism? It's completely original."

The mention of XTZ heightened Zara's tone of surprise even further.

After all, it was a project she had personally been involved in, even meeting up with XTZ's design lead afterward. As for the plagiarism claims, Zara could hardly believe them, categorically denying them in her mind.

"The plagiarized designs aren't ours; they were from the public showcase held on XTZ's runway." Charlotte responded calmly.

"XTZ's public runway? You mean the XTZ's rookie designer showcase?"

Luckily Zara was speaking only to Charlotte; had her words been overheard by the online masses, it might have sparked yet another controversy.

This was because the rookie designer showcase hosted by XTZ, in actuality, hadn't made any notable waves.

Though the collaboration between Riley Group and XTZ bore much publicity, the majority of the final pieces were crafted by the rookie designers XTZ had recruited this year.

As for Riley Group's segment, it was created based on assignments given by Charlotte.

The true details of this situation were, however, known only to a select few.

"Since there's such a misunderstanding, just clarify it directly. Some unknown rookie designer dares accuse you of plagiarism—really, who knows what they were thinking."

Zara couldn't help but throw out a sarcastic remark, yet her tone grew tinged with doubt afterward.

"But seriously, what's the deal with the outfits on the e-store? They did get released way earlier than the designs you submitted to Worsen, the brand partner."

Chapter 1412: Casting a Long Line to Catch a Big Fish

The remarks Zara made naturally became solid proof online for those accusing Charlotte Thompson of plagiarism.

When it comes to cases of plagiarism, in most people's eyes, the first person to release something is considered the original creator.

After that, no matter what kind of work gets released later, as long as there's even a slight similarity, it's immediately labeled as plagiarism.

"Since you're aware of this matter, have you seen the design sketches I provided to the Worsen brand, as well as the clothing Florienna Ellis' online shop is promoting?"

Faced with Zara's inquiry, Charlotte didn't respond immediately but instead chose to ask a question of her own.

"I just skimmed the sketches— the styles and designs look pretty similar. As for the details though, I haven't really looked closely. Give me a moment, alright?"

As Zara spoke, the sound of footsteps could be heard, seemingly confirming Charlotte's words as Zara seemed to head off to check out the design sketches online.

Charlotte listened to the sounds from Zara's side but kept her attention focused on the design sketches in her own hands.

"By the way, I'll stop by another day. I have a newly designed evening gown but I'm not sure what features to add— you'll help me brainstorm when the time comes, right?" Charlotte said casually.

"Miss Thompson, you really are taking your sweet time! The plagiarism scandal has already spread across the entire internet, yet here you are, still leisurely designing evening gowns. Aren't you afraid that when they're released, someone will accuse you of plagiarism again?"

Zara teased Charlotte while looking through the sketches.

However, just as Zara finished speaking, she suddenly exclaimed in surprise:

"This isn't you copying her— it's clearly her copying you! Sure, the styles and designs are identical, but though she's made some tweaks to the details, the resulting effect is glaringly awkward and far inferior to yours. What's going on here?"

Unlike the trend-following commenters online, Zara is a professional designer with a keen sensitivity to color coordination.

But Florienna Ellis is also considered a legitimate designer— it's just that her experience doesn't measure up to Charlotte's.

Talent, on the other hand, can be compensated for with hard work.

Yet when Florienna Ellis and Charlotte Thompson's designs are placed side by side, laypeople might think every piece has its own charm, but to those truly versed in design and coordination, the difference becomes obvious.

Charlotte didn't find Zara's realization surprising in the slightest and instead found herself hesitating over certain decisions.

Her gaze flickered between the belt and a brooch, internally comparing the effects of placing each item on the gown, while her ears still tuned into Zara's comments.

"Florienna Ellis' designs are visually pleasing, but somehow they come across as disjointed. Unless this kind of inconsistency was specifically requested, how could a design piece be plagued by such a fundamental issue?"

"She also appears to have made adjustments during the revisions— for instance, did she slightly alter the cuffs of the dress? If so, this change will probably look awkward when the dress is actually worn."

Finally, Zara pointed out several specific differences between the designs, naturally corresponding to the discrepancies Charlotte had initially observed.

After analyzing together, Zara came to her conclusion:

"Your design sketches were stolen by this Florienna Ellis, weren't they? I've heard you mention 'playing the long game to catch the big fish' before— is the big fish you were referring to her?"

Chapter 1413: The Little Goldfish

"She's nothing more than a little goldfish."

"Moreover, whether this little goldfish will eventually be eaten by some big fish remains unknown~"

Charlotte Thompson spoke softly.

Zara Ward sighed helplessly, "Why are you starting to play guessing games with me? You know perfectly well I hate all these cryptic riddles."

The next moment, Charlotte abruptly changed the topic without warning:

"Then, do you think a chiffon gown with a flowing hemline would look better paired with a cinched belt or a decorative brooch?"

Charlotte and Zara chatted about it for a while. In the end, they still couldn't decide on Charlotte's hesitant choice, so they agreed to meet up sometime to continue the discussion.

Later, as if she had recalled something amusing, Charlotte grabbed her folder and walked out of the office.

"Everyone should have arrived by now."

...

On the other side.

Teddy Carter, caught in a swirl of anxiety, arrived at the company, determined to confront Florienna Ellis face-to-face about the manuscript.

Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to carry on with his life.

But when he entered the designer's office, he discovered Florienna wasn't at her workstation. He asked a nearby colleague but was told they didn't know where she went.

They mentioned that Florienna had been frequently disappearing lately, sometimes even skipping half a day of work. Someone even joked that if anyone knew where Florienna had gone, it should surely be Teddy.

Teddy's expression grew darker.

"Designer Carter, you've been standing there for ages. Is something wrong?"

It wasn't until Charlotte's voice rang out that Teddy was jolted from his spiral of self-reproach.

Everything had already been lined up—he just needed Teddy to take the bait. Then everything would fall into place seamlessly.

Teddy rubbed his nose, instinctively avoiding Charlotte's gaze. "Nothing. I just wanted to discuss something with Florienna, but couldn't find her."

Ever since he started suspecting the design manuscript, Teddy couldn't help but feel guilty when facing Charlotte, let alone imagine she'd voluntarily start a conversation with him.

Shouldn't this be more of a "die without ever crossing paths again" kind of dynamic?

"Oh, looking for Florienna? I just saw her. She should be in Mr. Robbins' office. Why don't you try there?"

Charlotte blinked deliberately, subtly guiding him.

If he went to George Robbins' office, he was bound to see everything he wanted to see.

But Teddy didn't take the bait and instead nodded lightly to her in thanks, "Thanks. If she's with Mr. Robbins, she's probably discussing work. I'll wait here for her to come back."

Still, Teddy's thoughts turned heavier. He understood Florienna all too well.

Right now, he desperately wanted to make their relationship public, but Florienna never agreed. At first, Teddy thought she was just shy, but over time, he began to sense something more.

Charlotte's gaze shifted slightly, and she let out a soft laugh. "I initially thought I could slack a little and have Designer Carter deliver these documents to Mr. Robbins for me, but it looks like I'll have to make the trip myself."

As she said this, she even displayed an air of exasperation, secretly plotting to steer him upstairs by any means necessary.

She was rather curious—what would happen when those three scheming individuals found themselves in a showdown? What sort of reactions would ensue?

If her plan were to fail, it would be a terrible shame.

"If there are any documents you need sent, just give them to me. I was going to head over there anyway, so go ahead and take care of other things."

Teddy hesitated for a while before politely taking the folder from her.

This sudden change in his attitude surprised Charlotte slightly, making her lips curl into a light smile.

The plan had clearly just started, yet it already seemed to be yielding results?

Chapter 1414: Office Affair

Florienna Ellis and George Robbins, what kind of people are they? Not only Teddy Carter, but everyone in the company knows.

For no apparent reason, asking a female employee to go to the office—how could this not make people overthink it?

Teddy Carter walked into the elevator, holding the documents with a thoughtful look, and arrived at George Robbins' office.

He originally wanted to knock on the door and enter, but discovered that the door wasn't fully closed, leaving a small gap.

From inside, faintly and indistinctly, he could hear the ambiguous and intimate voices of a man and a woman.

"Mr. Robbins, we're still in the office. Be careful someone might see us," Florienna's voice was coquettish and sugary.

"Little darling, you've already come willingly; what's there to fear about being seen by people in this company?"

Listening to the suggestive sounds from inside, Teddy Carter's hand trembled violently, nearly dropping the documents.

He could hardly believe his ears.

It was actually Florienna Ellis and George Robbins inside—is it possible that the two of them really have a shady relationship?

Looking through the crack in the door, the scene inside was beyond appalling. Teddy clenched his fists tightly in rage, desperately restraining himself from barging in.

"Of course I'm worried about being seen—look at me, a flower paired with someone like you; isn't it obvious what's going on?"

Florienna kept whining, accompanied by an unusual shyness she never displayed before.

Her face was tinged with an inappropriate blush, her fawning demeanor a stark contrast from how she usually acted in front of Teddy.

Who would have thought this woman really had two faces!

Usually, she treated him with cold indifference and refused to make their relationship public at the company—this is the real reason behind it!

"And yet, you don't seem to mind coming to me over and over again."

George Robbins pulled Florienna into his arms, his eyes flashing with a lecherous glint. "Isn't that right, little darling?"

"Nonsense." Florienna playfully scolded him, embracing him intimately—a gesture that openly exposed the nature of their relationship.

"By the way, doesn't Teddy Carter still chase after you every day? I haven't seen you outright reject him," George's tone turned cold as he pinched Florienna's face and pressed her for an answer.

His words stabbed directly into Florienna's heart, making her frown in irritation.

"Can we not talk about Teddy Carter? If it weren't for the fact that he's a team leader and that no one else in the design group can boss me around, do you really think I would even consider him?"

"A mere design department team leader thinks he's something special, assuming he can be my boyfriend. He should look in the mirror to see what he's truly worth."

The venomous remarks seeped into Teddy's ears, leaving him paralyzed, as though his entire body had been filled with lead. He couldn't move or even think.

His mind went blank, and even his breathing staggered, out of rhythm.

"And as for Charlotte Thompson, I just cannot stand her. When will you make her leave the company already?"

Florienna nestled in George's arms, whining with pitifully red eyes that tugged at his heart, her melodious voice making his body weak.

"It's all because Justin Battleson keeps shielding Charlotte Thompson. Otherwise, I would've long kicked that woman out of here," George gritted his teeth and snapped.

Who would've thought Justin would withstand such immense pressure and still manage to keep Charlotte in the company?

He's truly a tough nut to crack. He must be dealt with swiftly before he can cause more trouble.

"What should we do? I feel annoyed just seeing that woman..." Florienna puffed her cheeks in an exaggerated expression and spoke in disappointment.

"Don't worry, darling. Justin Battleson has already started to show signs of retreat—he's no threat to us anymore. When the time comes, we'll directly fire Charlotte Thompson. I doubt he'll be able to say anything about it!"

Chapter 1415: No Value to Exploit

George Robbins unbuttoned his shirt hastily, speaking urgently, "Once Charlotte Thompson is gone, the position of Design Director will be vacant. You'll step in directly."

Florienna Ellis let out a crisp, amused laugh.

She playfully pushed George Robbins' chest, her tone coquettish and teasing, "That's not what you originally promised me. You said I'd be made Vice President—why am I being demoted now?"

Their unabashed laughter echoed around them.

Teddy Carter felt as if countless sharp blades were piercing his heart, an unbearable pain searing through him.

He finally understood why Florienna had always been indifferent toward him. She only ever treated him like a tool to speak on her behalf.

To her, their relationship was likely nothing more than simple manipulation, devoid of any deeper significance or complexity.

He desperately wanted to storm into the office and demand answers from these two despicable people—just what did he mean to them?

But then he thought better of it; it would only make him look pathetic.

They could destroy him at will, not just kicking him out of the company but also out of the entire industry, as easily as crushing an ant underfoot.

Frustrated, he lowered his eyes, tightly gripping the phone in his hand.

Clinging to the smallest sliver of hope, he sent Florienna a message.

"Nina, where are you right now? There's something important I'd like to discuss with you. Can we meet?"

The message had barely been sent when he heard a message tone from inside the room.

Florienna glanced at her phone, replying to the message while complaining aloud, "Mr. Robbins, look at this—Teddy Carter is texting me again, always meddling in everything. He's driving me crazy!"

After saying this, she didn't forget to pout and act spoiled, "Mr. Robbins, now that everything's settled, Teddy Carter isn't useful anymore. Why not fire him outright? Saves us the irritation of having to deal with him."

Meanwhile, Teddy received her reply.

"I'm not at the office right now. Out in the field with the team. Whatever it is, we'll talk later when I'm back."

Staring at the simple line of text on the screen, Teddy finally fell into complete despair.

The woman he had once loved most deeply had now personally pushed him into the abyss, without leaving him even the slightest leeway.

He realized how utterly foolish he had been, blinded by his own love all this time.

Florienna had no real talent for fashion design—how could she have ever come up with those excellent design proposals?

No doubt it was plagiarism. There could be no other possibility.

And to think, he had gone out of his way to protect her before.

"Whatever you say. If you want him fired, he's fired. He's just an insignificant designer with no backing—find any excuse, and we can get rid of him."

George Robbins sneered and, after that, their playful banter grew even more shameless.

Resting his hand on the doorknob, Teddy eventually let it fall and turned away in dejection.

From the shadows, Charlotte Thompson observed the scene with a sly, victorious smile curling her lips.

Everything seemed to be unfolding precisely according to her plan, without a single misstep.

By now, Teddy was likely completely broken inside. Judging from his reaction, there wouldn't be any more entanglement between those two.

It was time to inform Justin Battleson of this good news.

That afternoon, Teddy remained at his workstation in a forlorn state.

When his colleagues asked him about work matters, he acted as though he hadn't heard a thing, his face ashen and his gaze disturbingly hollow.

He avoided Florienna altogether.

Even when she personally came over to ask about his latest design proposals, he didn't so much as look up at her.

"Teddy Carter, what's wrong with you? I'm speaking to you—can't you hear me?"

Chapter 1416: I'll Make Money to Support the Family

Florienna Ellis tapped on his desk, clearly dissatisfied.

But she was met with those bloodshot eyes, and couldn't help but be startled.

Teddy Carter pressed his palm against the desk and roared at Florienna in a deep voice, "I don't want to see you right now! Can you just stay away from me!"

Those reddened eyes no longer held a trace of the affection they once did.

Florienna hadn't expected Teddy to dare speak to her like this, especially in front of so many colleagues.

What on earth was he thinking!

Her face turned crimson with anger, and she screamed at the top of her lungs, "Teddy Carter! What kind of nonsense are you pulling here? Do you want me to throw you out right now?"

"Florienna, don't push your luck!"

Teddy refused to back down, glaring fiercely at Florienna without wasting another word before storming off.

The surrounding colleagues were utterly stunned. Everything happened so quickly, as if no one had a chance to react.

Everyone knew how Teddy used to behave toward Florienna, but now things had suddenly taken this turn.

"What's going on here?"

"Teddy was perfectly fine during the day. How did it come to this in the evening?"

"I noticed Teddy acting off the entire day—he seemed like he'd lost his soul. There's definitely something behind all this!"

After dealing with the matter involving Teddy Carter, Charlotte Thompson went straight home to take care of the kids.

Charlotte was in an unusually good mood—so good that even her time in the shower took a little longer than usual.

Everything was proceeding exactly as she planned, leaving her with nothing to worry about anymore.

As she stepped out of the bathroom, towel in hand, she saw Justin Battleson sitting on the bed waiting for her, his black silk pajamas making his figure appear even leaner and taller.

Seeing him like this, Charlotte couldn't help but smile.

"Today Teddy caught Florienna and George Robbins in the middle of their little affair. I bet the two of them are completely over now. Everything's progressing smoothly—it's just a matter of waiting for the final blow."

"This was all your doing?" Justin's voice was deep and captivating.

Those obsidian eyes remained fixed on Charlotte, unwavering and intent, refusing to stray for even a moment.

"Of course. I just used some minor tricks—it's not like they ever had much patience to begin with."

Charlotte tousled her hair, the soft fragrance of her shampoo lingering in the air.

The atmosphere suddenly grew several degrees more intimate.

"I also heard Florienna wants George to fire me. Wouldn't that mean I'll be jobless soon?"

Charlotte deliberately scooted closer to Justin, feigning a pitiful expression. She grabbed his sleeve and gently shook it, her demeanor as endearing as a child seeking comfort.

"If I get laid off, you'll have to earn the money and take care of everyone..."

Before she could even finish her sentence, she felt herself suddenly weightless. The next moment, she was pinned down onto the bed.

When she looked up, her gaze collided with Justin's, his eyes gleaming with a deeper meaning.

He raised a delicate brow, bending down to gradually approach Charlotte's face, now tinged with blush.

"Then I suppose you've also heard about their plan to kick me off the board, haven't you?"

The warmth of his breath burned against her skin.

Charlotte knew that struggling would be pointless, possibly only inviting harsher treatment, so she decided to meet him halfway instead.

She leaned forward and softly planted a kiss on the corner of Justin's lips.

Her face lit up with a radiant smile. "I guess I'll have to sacrifice myself to earn the living for all of us then."

...

The night passed without any dreams.

The next morning, as Charlotte headed to the office, she overheard news of Teddy Carter's resignation.

"Resigning on his own?"

Upon hearing this, Charlotte raised an eyebrow, clearly unsurprised.

Chapter 1417: Mr. Battleson Likes Florienna Ellis

Yesterday, outside George Robbins' office, Charlotte Thompson overheard quite the show. This news didn't come as a surprise to her.

Immediately, Charlotte pulled out her phone and drafted a message to Teddy Carter.

Without caring whether she'd get a reply, Charlotte set the phone aside and went back to her work.

Currently in the company, while the matter with Teddy is officially described as a "voluntary resignation," most people believe it was certain individuals who fired him.

And who these "certain individuals" were, the employees naturally understood. After all, Teddy was the one who stood up for Florienna Ellis.

What left everyone surprised was that even though Teddy had been fired, Florienna still remained in the company safe and sound.

Of course, the employees also had their own reasoning for this.

After all, if the company had truly fired Florienna, it would confirm that Charlotte's plagiarism was irrefutable. Keeping Florienna around might help salvage some of the company's reputation.

Ever since Florienna exposed Charlotte's plagiarism of her video online, Charlotte's demeanor in the company had drastically changed. She no longer flaunted her power arrogantly; instead, she always carried herself in a more subdued manner when coming to the office.

"I never thought Charlotte could be this despicable!"

During tea time, a few employees gathered during their break, chatting animatedly.

"Those awards should have rightfully gone to Florienna. Yet Charlotte shamelessly stole them!"

"But Florienna, did Charlotte really bully you in the office?"

"Have you all forgotten the incident during the last meeting? If that's not bullying, then what is it?"

As everyone chimed in one after another, Florienna's expression remained indifferent, yet deep down inside, she couldn't help but feel overjoyed.

Now, in the battle of public opinion, she held the absolute advantage.

Initially, when she exposed Charlotte's plagiarism, Florienna had been a bit nervous.

But seeing how Charlotte hadn't made any moves in response, it brought her a sense of relief.

Florienna knew the truth of what had really transpired, but since she had seized the initiative, no matter how much Charlotte tried to explain, it would all be in vain.

Thinking back to how Charlotte used to strut before her with such arrogance, and now witnessing her on the verge of becoming a pariah despised by everyone, Florienna found immense satisfaction.

She lowered her head slightly, using this posture to suppress the smile threatening to escape her lips.

It wasn't until someone called her name that Florienna quickly adjusted her expression, slowly lifting her head and responding weakly:

"Don't say that. Maybe it's really my fault. Maybe... maybe it's just me, someone Miss Thompson could never like."

As she spoke, Florienna bit her lip in such an aggrieved way that it stirred even more sympathy from those around her.

"I think Charlotte is absolutely jealous of you!"

The girl standing next to Florienna suddenly interjected.

That statement immediately drew curious gazes from the onlookers, not just Florienna.

"Florienna, I think Mr. Battleson seems to have feelings for you."

Florienna's face flushed as she hurriedly covered the girl's mouth.

"You mustn't say such things carelessly."

But clearly, the girl's comment delighted Florienna, as a faint glimmer flashed in her eyes.

"I'm not speaking carelessly." The girl cleared her throat, then looked at Florienna conspiratorially.

Chapter 1418: Prostrating Under Her Pomegranate Skirt

"I once overheard Mr. Battleson when he was talking to Mr. Richard, and it seemed like he mentioned you."

"Really? Are you making this up? Don't spread nonsense here." Someone nearby immediately voiced their doubts.

The woman furrowed her brows upon hearing this and continued, "Then tell me, if Mr. Battleson truly didn't feel anything for Florienna, why is Miss Thompson always targeting her? Isn't it because Charlotte thinks Florienna is pretty and is afraid Mr. Battleson might fall for her instead?"

After hearing the woman's analysis, everyone's faces lit up in realization.

However, Florienna's gaze flickered, as if she were pondering her own thoughts.

"Besides, wasn't the whole reason Charlotte got back together with Mr. Battleson back then because she had his three kids? She must have used those kids to morally blackmail him into staying with her!"

"Oh my god, I can't believe Charlotte is that kind of person!"

Everyone reacted as if they'd just heard some earth-shattering gossip, their disdain for Charlotte deepening.

"I'm telling you, Mr. Battleson has definitely taken a liking to Florienna. Otherwise, why would Florienna be singled out like this? There are so many employees and designers, men and women, but why doesn't Charlotte go after anyone else?"

"Wow, I can't believe Florienna has this kind of luck. I'm so jealous!"

"Isn't this exactly like a romance novel, where Florienna is the female lead, and Charlotte is the scheming, evil supporting character!"

The others chimed in, egging on Florienna so much that she bashfully covered her cheeks, though she was actually hiding the smile tugging at the corners of her lips.

"Oh, come on, stop teasing me! There's no such thing!"

"Look, look, your face is all red! Mr. Battleson is so handsome, so accomplished, and he owns such a big company. Who wouldn't fall for a diamond bachelor like him? Why should someone like Charlotte get to have him? Tell me, aside from her background, what does Florienna lack compared to Charlotte?"

At that moment, some thoughts naturally started to form in Florienna's mind as well.

Could it really be that the reason Charlotte always targeted her was because Justin liked her?

And now, with all the rumors online about Charlotte plagiarizing, all she did was post a simple Weibo statement, while it was the Thompson Family backing her up the entire time.

Through all this, Justin hadn't made any statement whatsoever.

It did seem to align with what these people were saying. Justin probably didn't have deep feelings for Charlotte; he was only staying with her for the kids.

Thinking about this possibility, Florienna couldn't help but lightly bite her lower lip. It seemed that no man could resist falling for her after all!

Her thoughts started to swirl, and Florienna began to consider finding an opportunity to visit Justin's office to test out his true intentions.

If Justin really had feelings for her, then in the matter of the rumors online, he would definitely take her side.

Just as Florienna was scheming in her heart, the group's gossip shifted from Charlotte and Justin to other topics.

"Do you all think that Team Leader Carter really took the initiative to resign from the company?"

When the topic turned to Teddy Carter, Florienna's eyes flickered with a sharp change.

"How could that be? Teddy has been with the company for so many years, and he's already the team leader of the design group. Who would willingly leave such a good position? I think—"

"It was my fault."

Suddenly, Florienna inserted herself into the conversation, drawing everyone's attention to her.

Chapter 1419: I Dragged You Down

"He spoke up for me, and as a result, he was fired by the company." Florienna Ellis's expression revealed a trace of guilt on her face.

The crowd suddenly had an epiphany at this moment.

Back when Florienna joined the company out of nowhere, many people knew that she had Teddy Carter backing her.

But whenever they inquired about it, Teddy never gave a straightforward answer, and Florienna merely said Teddy was just a distant relative of hers.

Even so, there were plenty of whispers in the company about the true relationship between the two, and over time, it gradually became an open secret.

Now that something like this had happened to Florienna and Teddy stood up for her immediately, didn't this essentially confirm everyone's earlier suspicions?

As for Teddy's departure from the company, the reason behind it naturally sparked deeper thoughts among those in the crowd.

"So it really is like that. I've been saying there's no way Team Leader Carter would resign for no reason!"

"Oh my god, the company is just too much. What are they planning to do about Charlotte Thompson?"

"What else can they do? With the Thompson Family backing her, us small-time employees could never..."

But before the conversation could finish, someone knocked on the break room door, reminding them that they shouldn't be slacking off during work hours.

The group exchanged glances before gradually returning to their respective workstations to continue their tasks.

Returning to her seat, Florienna pulled out her phone.

The discussion earlier had jogged her memory; Teddy had indeed been fired because of her, and, of course, Florienna was well aware of the real reason behind it.

To her, Teddy no longer held any value, but he had been quite nice to her most of the time, not to mention that set of design plans...

Nevertheless, Florienna had long since stopped seeing Teddy as worth her attention.

Moreover, after finding out earlier that Justin Battleson might secretly have feelings for her, she felt an even greater sense of elation.

However, when Florienna saw the message she'd sent to Teddy and saw that there was no response on his social media profile, she felt a faint displeasure rising in her chest.

As such, she sent him another message.

Yet, just like last time, her message sank like a stone into the sea. Florienna waited for a long time but still didn't receive a reply.

Normally, it was she who didn't reply to Teddy's messages, so this role reversal left her feeling deeply dissatisfied.

Glancing around, Florienna made up an excuse to head to the restroom, when in fact, she was trying to call Teddy.

After a long series of ringing tones, Teddy finally picked up Florienna's call. By now, the prolonged wait had drained what little patience Florienna had, and she almost failed to suppress her displeasure when she spoke.

"Why didn't you answer my call?"

But in the next instant, Florienna realized her tone had been inappropriate, so she immediately softened her voice and asked with feigned concern,

"I heard from Human Resources that you resigned voluntarily. What's going on? Did something happen?"

On the other end of the line, after a long silence, Teddy's voice finally came through slowly:

"The reason I left the company... aren't you the person who understands it best?"

Teddy's voice was so unnervingly calm that Florienna didn't pick up on anything unusual in his tone.

However, when she heard Teddy shift the topic onto her, Florienna quickly responded,

"I didn't expect that just for saying one word on my behalf, you'd end up being targeted by Charlotte Thompson. I'm sorry, this is my fault for dragging you into it."

Chapter 1420: Let's Break Up

If it had been in the past, Teddy Carter would have been elated to hear Florienna Ellis apologize to him softly.

But now, every time he closes his eyes, the only sounds that replay in his mind are the words he overheard at George Robbins's office door.

Those words were like countless needles, piercing deep into Teddy Carter's heart.

It turned out that all this time, he had simply been deluding himself.

He had been played like a fool, and yet he acted so willingly!

"Teddy?"

After not receiving a response from him, Florienna Ellis couldn't help but call his name.

For some reason, she couldn't shake the feeling that Teddy Carter seemed strange today.

After all, losing one's job unexpectedly would make anyone deeply frustrated!

A slightly hoarse voice slowly came through the phone: "Florienna."

Though it was a name he'd called countless times, now that he said it, Teddy Carter felt a profound sense of unfamiliarity.

"What's wrong?" Florienna Ellis paused for a moment; it had been a long time since Teddy had called her by her full name.

"You..."

Teddy Carter's voice scraped out of his throat with difficulty.

But the slow pace of his words only served to make Florienna impatient.

"What exactly are you trying to say?"

Though she tried to suppress it, Teddy could still sense traces of impatience in her tone. And it was exactly this attitude that became the final straw breaking Teddy Carter's resolve.

A bitter smile tugged at the corner of his lips as he slowly questioned Florienna Ellis, "Florienna, have you ever lied to me?"

Teddy Carter felt as though he had mustered every ounce of strength within him just to ask this one question.

But what he got in return was Florienna's utterly unhesitant response: "Of course not. What could I possibly lie to you about?"

At this point, Florienna's voice paused briefly. Then, as if trying to mask some sort of emotion, she coughed before speaking softly:

"Teddy, there's something I want to tell you."

Teddy Carter pressed his lips tightly together, his hand hanging by his side clenched forcefully.

His chest rose and fell sharply with each breath, though the air escaping through his nostrils was faint.

Teddy already had an idea of what Florienna was about to tell him.

"I'm still at the company, but you've been fired because of me. I think, to avoid affecting you further, we should stop being together," Florienna stated plainly.

"You're breaking up with me?" Teddy Carter's voice sounded strained.

"Honestly, not many people even know about our relationship. If we split up, it wouldn't cause much curiosity from others, wouldn't it?"

Florienna Ellis wasted no time in saying, "Let's break up."

After uttering these words, Florienna still felt a trace of unease in her heart.

What if Teddy Carter refused to let her go and started clinging to her? What then?

But in the end, all she received was a chuckle from Teddy Carter.

"Florienna, don't regret this!"

In saying this, Teddy had tacitly agreed to the breakup Florienna had just proposed. Yet upon hearing his words, she couldn't help but curl her lips in mockery.

Did Teddy Carter really think she'd regret it, and beg him for reconciliation later?

Such daydreams could only be imagined by men like Teddy Carter.

Now that Florienna had completely severed ties with Teddy Carter, she felt an immense sense of relief.

She didn't even bother with perfunctory words, ending the call on the spot without hesitation.