

## Chapter 27 His Attentiveness

Madisyn felt a twinge of disappointment.

It wasn't that she disliked crabs; rather, she found them a bit too cumbersome to enjoy.

Noticing Madisyn's hesitation, Kristine attempted to be helpful, though her tone inadvertently carried a hint of condescension. "Oh, Madisyn, I forgot. You're from the countryside, so maybe you haven't had much experience with this kind of seafood. Let me show you how to enjoy them."

Kristine picked up the cutlery to demonstrate.

Madisyn responded with a cool detachment, "No need. Please, carry on without me. I'm not particularly fond of crabs."

"Alright then, but just so you know, the seafood here is the highlight. If you skip it, you'll be missing out and have to choose from the more basic options," Kristine replied, her voice laced with a feigned pity.

Madisyn quietly continued with her meal, choosing simpler dishes that were easier to handle.

Meanwhile, Kristine was fixated on Andrew as he effortlessly and elegantly picked the crab meat. His graceful movements, even in such a mundane task, seemed to enchant her.

Within moments, Andrew had a bowl full of neatly extracted crab meat ready.

"Andre, you're incredible at this. I'm nowhere as quick," Kristine remarked sweetly, fluttering her eyelashes, clearly hinting for a taste of his expertly prepared seafood.

"Perhaps you should pick up the pace then," came Andrew's cool, matter-of-fact reply. He didn't even glance up as he spoke.

Madisyn stifled a laugh at his directness, appreciating his no-nonsense style even if it was somewhat harsh.

The next moment, a small bowl of crab meat was set before her.

Andrew's rich, resonant voice soon followed. "Since you don't want to pick the crab meat, I've done it for you. Please, go ahead."

Madisyn paused, slightly unsettled by the unexpected offering. "Well... I appreciate it, but maybe I shouldn't. I'm happy with the other dishes," she responded, her shyness evident.

"No worries. You should eat. Your brother told me to look after you. I'm just following instructions," Andrew remarked, his gaze softening slightly as he looked at Madisyn.

Madisyn's heart skipped a beat as she took a bite of the crab meat.

It was exceptionally fresh, with a delicate sweetness that seemed to echo the kindness in Andrew's gesture.

Across the table, Kristine's grip tightened around her spoon, her jealousy palpable.

The sight of Andrew, who typically maintained a distance from women, attentively catering to Madisyn was too much for her.

In her agitation, she pressed too hard and sliced her finger on a sharp crab shell, the sudden pain snapping her back to the moment.

"Ouch!" Kristine cried out, startled by the sight of her own blood.

"Waiter!" Andrew called out without hesitation. "She needs some help over here."

A waiter was quick to respond, bringing over a first aid kit to attend to Kristine's injury.

As her finger was being bandaged, Kristine couldn't help but watch Madisyn and Andrew.

The ease with which Madisyn enjoyed the crab meat that Andrew had prepared for her was like salt in her wound.

The bitterness of the situation was overwhelming.

The man she had longed for, pursued relentlessly over the years, was now showing attentiveness to someone he had barely known.

It filled her with a deep-seated resentment.

"Miss, please relax," the waiter gently said, noticing her tension as he tended to her wound.

Kristine's realization that her actions were exacerbating the bleeding made her ease her grip.

Once the bandage was securely in place, she attempted to return to her meal, but the dishes that once delighted her now seemed bland and unappealing.

Her plan to humiliate Madisyn had backfired, leaving her the one enveloped in discomfort and regret.

After dinner, as they prepared to leave, Andrew turned to Madisyn and asked, "Where are you headed?"

"Back home, I suppose," Madisyn responded.

"Alright." Andrew nodded in acknowledgment.

Kristine trailed behind them silently, her thoughts swirling with frustration and confusion.

When they arrived at the Johns family's house and Andrew had departed, Kristine and Madisyn entered the living room together. It was then that Kristine decided to address the undercurrents she felt were at play.

"Madisyn, do you think Andre is being extra nice to you?"

Madisyn gave her a measured look, prompting Kristine to continue, "Andre is only acting this way because we had a fight. Madisyn, I can let go of

everything else, but not Andre. We grew up together, and we even have an engagement. Please, don't come between us, okay?"

Madisyn found herself momentarily speechless.

She was taken aback by Kristine's priorities. The idea that Kristine could so easily let go of everything else, including her parents, yet cling fiercely to a man, struck Madisyn as profoundly misguided.

If their parents knew about this, they would be devastated, she thought.

"Kristine, if you truly believe that, think about how Mom and Dad have raised you. How can you prioritize a man over your family?" Madisyn asked gently, hoping to stir some reflection in Kristine.

Kristine's expression tightened, her defensive reflex kicking in. "That's not what I'm saying. Mom and Dad are your biological parents, and I wouldn't dream of competing with you for their affection. But Andre is different; he's my boyfriend. He's just being nice to you to get under my skin. I needed to clarify that."

"Is that so? Then why don't we just call Andrew now and see if he actually considers himself your boyfriend?" Madisyn challenged, pulling out her phone, ready to dial.