

The Mocked Miss's Hidden Crowns – Chapter 51

"Oh?" Charlotte arched an eyebrow, taking her time as she reached into her bag.

Out came a snake, about a meter long, its body a deep blue with streaks of orange- red coloring its neck and chin. The little thing writhed and twisted, very much alive.

A snake. In the classroom.

Someone screamed. It set off a chain reaction, classmates stumbling over chairs, tripping over backpacks, and scrambling to put as much space as possible between themselves and Charlotte.

Why was there a snake here? Was someone targeting her on the very first day? Was this how things were going to be from now on? Whispers and nervous glances bounced around the room. Some were sure Charlotte would faint any second.

But she didn't. Charlotte just sat there, calm and collected, as if this was the most normal thing in the world. She watched the snake, even played with it a little, like she was handling a bracelet instead of a living, hissing reptile.

The snake bared its fangs, hissing, looking about as unfriendly as possible. It wasn't even venomous, but still, no one wanted to get close. Not the boys, definitely not the girls.

"Oh my god, is she in shock? That's a real snake!"

"I can't..... I can't. I've got goosebumps all over."

"How is she not scared? She's actually playing with it. Oh, gross, it's flicking its tongue at her..."

Charlotte frowned. She tapped the snake on its head with her finger and, with a sharp tone, said, "Behave."

The snake stiffened, then obediently curled up in her palm, quiet and still.

The room went silent. If they hadn't just seen it, everyone would swear the snake in her hand was fake.

Just then, hurried footsteps sounded outside the door.

"Charlotte!" Shirley stood at the doorway, clutching her stomach and gasping for breath. "Don't... don't touch your bag. There's a-"

She stopped. Her eyes landed on the snake, already curled up in Charlotte's hand. Her mouth fell open, and she slapped her hand over her lips.

"Charlotte." Did the snake already bite her?

"Charlotte, just... don't move." Shirley was shaking so hard she could barely..keep standing. She forced herself closer, but stopped a cotables of meters away, trembling even more. "Don't be scared. I'm...I'm coming to save you."

Charlotte just hummed, switching the snake to her other hand with a bored look.

"I... I..." Shirley tried to step forward,

but every time she got close, the snake made her jump back. She looked like she was about to cry.If it weren't for her, Charlotte wouldn't be in this mess. She couldn't just stand by.

Taking a deep breath, Shirley squeezed her eyes shut and reached out for the snake.

But before she could touch it, Charlotte casually pulled out a cake box, grabbed the snake, dropped it into a bag, and tied it shut.

Just like that, the whole thing was over. No drama, no fuss.

Shirley was still frozen in her brave, ready-to-sacrifice-herself pose. Charlotte's quick action left her totally lost for words.

Around the room, jaws dropped. Shock quickly turned to awe.

"Charlotte are your hands okay?" Now that the snake was contained, Shirley finally dared to get closer. She gently took Charlotte's hand, checking for bite marks. "I... Al take you to the nurse-"

"I'm fine." Charlotte wiggled her fingers, showing off her long, pale hands, not a scratch in sight. They were almost too pretty to be real.

Once Shirley was sure Charlotte was really okay, she relaxed a little, and her admiration for Charlotte shot through the roof.

"I'm so sorry. They... they only did this because of me."

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Shirley always started to stutter when she got nervous. It was the thing everyone at school teased her about the most.

The moment she finished talking, two girls standing by the door couldn't help but snicker, mocking her under their breath.

"B-b-because... I... I... abba abba..."

They burst into laughter, their sharp voices echoing through the crowd like little knives. Each giggle landed hard on Shirley's heart.

She opened her mouth, wanting to say more, but embarrassment made her drop her head. Her voice came out so small it was almost a whisper.

"Charlotte, as long as you're okay... I... I'll go now."

She turned away, but Charlotte grabbed her gently by the collar and held out a box of pastries. "Take it."

Shirley shook her head, refusing. She didn't dare get closer to Charlotte.

Thank goodness Charlotte wasn't afraid of snakes, and at least she hadn't been scared today. But who knew what those girls would come up with next?

"Take it!"

Charlotte's voice was a little sharper now. Shirley jumped and quickly took the box, worried she'd made Charlotte upset. Charlotte was her first friend at Vanguard High School, and Shirley treasured that.

"Hey, isn't that from The Oak & Vine?" one of the girls at the door whispered, her eyes wide.

"Yeah, it is. My dad got some when someone wanted a favor from him. They're crazy expensive. Just one tiny piece costs almost ten thousand."

"How could someone like Charlotte, straight from the countryside, afford something like that? Makes no sense."

"I heard her main family wanted to send her to Pathfinder Academy, but she went behind their backs and pulled some strings to get into Vanguard instead. Who knows what she did to make that happen."

"A problem kid gets into Vanguard High, then hands out a cake worth nearly ten grand like it's nothing... She must have some serious connections."

The two girls exchanged looks, not saying it outright, but everyone could read between the lines.

"They say she's an illegitimate kid. Guess it shows, right? It's in her blood. Just dirty all the way through."

"And I heard she bullied Olivia. Seriously, what bad luck to end up in the same class as her."

Their voices trailed off in mutters, but then one of them raised her voice and yelled, "Charlotte, get out of Vanguard High!"

Charlotte heard it all. She just gave a

small, careless smile, then bent down to pick up a bag from the ground letting dangle from her finger.

Shirley pulled back, nervous about what was inside. "Charlotte, put it down... Be careful, it could bite."

But Charlotte just smiled. "It doesn't bite people. Only trash."

"Huh?" Shirley blinked, not getting it.

Charlotte flicked her fingers, sending the bag sailing right into the trash can. She brushed off her hands totally calm. No one understood what she was doing.

Then, out of nowhere, a snake slithered out of the bag and made a beeline for the door.

Screams exploded through the classroom. Students jumped onto their chairs in a panic.

The two girls at the door saw the snake racing toward them and scrambled to get away. They l

so frantic, they crashed right onto each other and hit the floor

In a flash, the blue snake wrapped around one girl's leg and sank its fangs deep into her calf.

"Ow, it hurts!"

"Help me, somebody help!"

The other girl was so terrified, she fainted right then and there.

The Mocked Miss's Hidden Crowns – Chapter 53

The hallway and classroom were a mess. Everyone was shouting, running, and nothing made sense until security showed up and finally caught the snake. Only then did things start to calm down. The student who fainted got rushed to the nurse's office, while the one who got bitten was treated on the spot.

"Winnie, don't be scared. I'm here."

A middle-aged man hurried over, his gold-rimmed glasses slipping down his nose, a shine of baldness at the top of his head. His striped shirt was too loose and crumpled, tucked haphazardly into wrinkled dress pants that barely held back his big belly. From his belt dangled a huge ring of weird, noisy keys, knocking together with every step. He looked like he'd just walked out of a photo from the 80s.

"Why is there a snake in the classroom?"

Bald Lee, as everyone called him, slid a book from under his arm and looked at Winnie. His Mandarin was so clumsy it almost sounded made up. He was the homeroom teacher for Class A and taught physics to both A and B classes.

"The snake was in Charlotte's desk. She had to have brought it," Winnie sobbed, pointing at Charlotte with shaking hands, cheeks streaked with tears. Charlotte had been quietly wiping her hands. She paused, then slowly looked up, her cool eyes meeting Bald Lee's.

So it's her.

Bald Lee recognized Charlotte right away. His face tightened, eyebrows pulling down in open disgust. She was that useless student, the one who only got in thanks to some connection. He still couldn't believe the principal had let her stay. One person like her could ruin everything for the whole class.

"That's not true. Charlotte didn't bring the snake," Shirley blurted out, jumping in before anyone else could speak. She looked right at Bald Lee, desperate to explain. She'd girls in

overheard Share cafeteria

plotting to give Charlotte a big

surprise" and, after listening more closely, realized they meant to scare her with a snake.

"If it wasn't her, then who was it?" Winnie snapped, cutting Shirley off. Her eyes were red and angry. "Mr. Lee, everyone saw what happened. Charlotte wasn't even scared. She played with the snake for ages. She's from the countryside, she's used to stuff like that. It had to be her."

Shirley's cheeks burned. "Mr. Lee, it was someone else... someone else put it there..."

"Enough." Bald Lee's patience ran out. He cut her off, voice sharp and full of irritation. "I thought you were just lazy. Now you're picking up bad habits,

hanging around with the wrong people?"

Back when Shirley won first place in the national physics competition, she'd gotten into Vanguard High

because of that. But after joining et

Class A, her physics grades kept dropping Lee never let her Bald forget it.

He'd always thought she was just coasting by, maybe even that she'd cheated her way into the competition.

Shirley shrank under his glare. Her hands twisted in her skirt, her whole body trembling. She was scared, but she still pushed herself to speak up for Charlotte.

"Someone did it on purpose. It wasn't Charlotte..."

"On purpose? She's only just transferred here. No one even knows her yet.

Why would anyone bother putting a snake in her desk?" Bald Lee gave a cold laugh. Hel asked, but his tone made it obvious he'd already decided Charlotte was to blame. A country girl who didn't care about studying, bringing trouble into school... If she stayed, she'd just be a bad influence on everyone.

Shirley's face went white. Charlotte was getting bullied just because she'd helped her. So many people at this school hated Charlotte that Shirley couldn't even guess who had actually done it.

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"I..."

"Instead of worrying about other people, why don't you spend your time working through a few more practice exams? Maybe then you won't drag down the whole class in the next test."

Shirley tried to explain herself, but she was cut off again. She just couldn't figure out what to say to make them believe her. Deep down, she knew she'd let Charlotte down. Her lip trembled as she bit down, trying to hold back tears that shimmered in

her eyes.

Seeing Shirley's round little face with tears clinging to her lashes, Charlotte felt very familiar. She remembered being just as helpless once, with no one to believe her either. Charlotte gave Shirley's shoulder a gentle pat and forced a small smile. "It's okay."

"Okay?" The moment Charlotte spoke, Mr. Lee's temper snapped. "You

brought a snake onto campus, it bit another student, and you disrupted class. That's a serious offense. I'm reporting you to the administration and recommending expulsion."

He'd never wanted someone like Charlotte at Vanguard High, and now that he finally had an excuse, he wasn't going to let it slip by.

Expulsion? The word hung in the air. Students nearby stared in disbelief. The whole thing was still so unclear. No one even knew for sure if Charlotte had brought the snake in the first place. Wasn't kicking her out just like that a bit much? But Mr. Lee was notorious for holding grudges, and he'd been at the school long enough that even the principal usually let him have his way. If he wanted someone gone, they usually ended up gone.

"Pack up your things and leave. Now." Mr. Lee glared at Charlotte and jabbed his finger toward the school gates.

"Mr. Lee "

"Unless you want to go with her?" he snapped, cutting Shirley off before she could finish. It was obvious he had it out for both of them. In his eyes, they were just a pair of hopeless cases.

"Shirley..." Charlotte gently patted her shoulder again and slipped a fork into her hand. "Go eat your cake."

What? Shirley still had tears clinging to her eyelashes. She was worried sick about Charlotte getting expelled, and all Charlotte wanted her to do was eat cake?

Charlotte stood up slowly and walked over to Mr. Lee. She was almost five-foot-eight, tall and poised. Next to her, Mr. Lee, whonet

barely scraped five-foot-seven and was thickset with a broad face, suddenly seemed a lot smaller.

Charlotte took a bite of her cake, carefully set her fork down, and then looked up at him, her eyes cold. Her voice was soft but sharp. "Do you really think you own the school? You think you can just tell me to leave?"

Her calm defiance caught everyone off guard. The room buzzed with attention, especially from the students in Class C. Mr. Lee had always favored the top students in Class A and never missed a chance to put down the rest.

Most of them had resented him for ages, but none of them ever dared speak up. No one expected the quiet Charlotte to stand up like this. Suddenly, every eye was on her. Watching Mr. Lee, for once, lose his cool was almost exhilarating.

In all his years teaching, no student had ever dared to talk back to him in front of everyone like this. Mr. Lee's face went dark, his voice laced with contempt. "Just because the principal recommended your you. think I can't get you kicked out?"

Charlotte just looked at him, her lips curved into a lazy, almost bored smile. "I'm just

telling the truth. You don't actually have that kind of power over me."

The room went completely silent. The tension was thick enough to feel. Charlotte really had some nerve.

The Mocked Miss's Hidden Crowns – Chapter 55

"What did you say?"

Getting called out so openly in front of all these students made Bald Lee's face flush with embarrassment. Who did Charlotte think she was anyway? Just the Main family's daughter, and not even the legitimate one. Rumor had it she was a troublemaker, the kind no one respected or paid attention to. He had assumed she must be protected by someone important.

"Mr. Lee, do your ears only work for the top students? Or do you just ignore the rest of us?"

Her sarcasm was sharp and direct, exposing his favoritism and snobbery for everyone to see. It was exactly what the students had been wanting to say for the past three years. A few couldn't help flashing Charlotte a thumbs-up behind their desks.

"If Charlotte actually pulls this off and stays, I'm calling her boss from now on."

"Not likely," someone murmured.

Everyone remembered a similar scene back in their first year. A student didn't do well on a test and Bald Lee tore into him. His words went too far, crossing into humiliation. The student stormed out of the classroom. Even though that kid had good grades and a great family, Bald Lee still managed to get him expelled. If Charlotte was picking a fight with him, she was probably doomed.

"Charlotte Main!" Bald Lee's voice shook with anger as he glared at her. "I'm calling your parents right now. Get them to the school immediately!"

"Charlotte," Shirley whispered, tugging gently at Charlotte's sleeve, her face full of worry.

"Don't waste it. It's expensive," Charlotte replied with a lazy smile. She took the fork from Shirley and calmly went back to eating her cake, acting like the threat of expulsion had nothing to do with her.

The other students stared, stunned. Bald Lee was so mad he clutched his chest, his face contorted with rage. He wanted her gone, right now.

He pulled out his phone, ready to call the Main family, but a voice sounded from the door.

"Mr. Lee!"

It was Eleanor, the homeroom teacher for Class C. Bald Lee found a new target for his frustration and immediately snapped, "Ms. Adams, what kind of students do you let into your class? You're here at the right time. Call Charlotte's family and tell them to get her out of here within the hour!" There was no room for discussion.

Eleanor was still new, having only joined the school last year. Compared to an old-timer like Bald Lee, she barely had any say. Charlotte had just transferred Kere, and nobody had even figured out what really happened yet. Forcing a student out right before the college entrance exams could ruin her whole future. Eleanor couldn't let it happen.

"Mr. Lee, maybe there's been some misunderstanding," Eleanor said softly, glancing

over at Charlotte. "Shouldn't we at least hear her side first?"

"The facts are right in front of us. Anything she says now is just an excuse," Bald Lee cut in, his glare icy. "She's from some nowhere village, probably not much education. Eve heard she's always causing trouble. Are you really okay having someone like that in your class? Aren't you worried she's going to drag everyone else down? Today it's a snake tomorrow she might bring a gun!. The more he talked, the wilder his accusations got, like he was determined to make Charlotte sound as bad as possible and get her thrown out.

Problem student, always stirring up trouble...

Eleanor's face went pale at his words. She turned to look at Charlotte, who stood quietly off to the side in her black uniform, her skin looking almost luminous. There was a cool, distant look in her eyes, but standing there in silence, she actually seemed pretty well-behaved.

Eleanor remembered reading Charlotte's file. She knew how tough her life had been. Growing up alone in a remote place, with no family to look out for her, just surviving must have been hard enough.