

Too Far 181

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"Mommy, I'll behave myself at home. You can go." The little guy meekly nodded. He disliked Erica as well, because he was able to feel her ill will toward him although he was but a little boy.

Therefore, he chose to not tag along to prevent causing trouble for his mother. However, instead of having Grace to keep him company on that night like how Anastasia had suggested, Jared thought that Elliot might be a better candidate for the task.

Anastasia went to the office after dropping her son off. She barely sat for a few minutes on her seat before Grace knocked on her door and pushed it open, inviting a flower delivery man to come in. "This is Miss Tillman. Please send the flowers in!"

The bouquet of blue roses stunned Anastasia for a few seconds. Who sent this?

"Miss Tillman, here's your flowers. Do sign and acknowledge it."

And so, Anastasia signed the paper. Then, she reached out for the card in the bouquet and flipped it open. Instead of finding romantic words, she found a domineering order written on it. Do not give the flowers away. Yours sincerely, Presgrave.

Anastasia was rendered speechless. Why did he send me flowers again? He even prohibits me from giving it away.

"Miss Tillman, the flowers are gorgeous. They are obviously imported ones!" Grace came over to admire the flowers. .

Upon hearing that, Anastasia pursed her lips and let out a helpless smile. I don't want to receive it no matter how pretty it is!

"Miss Tillman, your admirer must be super rich!" Grace guessed in envy.

"He's not my admirer," Anastasia vaguely replied before she returned to her seat. In the next couple of hours, she intermittently stared at the bouquet of blue roses and fell into a daze.

At 11.30 AM, Nigel showed up at her office to invite her to lunch-it was in invitation that allowed no room for rejection.

When he saw the bouquet of flowers on the couch, he instantly knew who the sender

was. He felt frustrated with himself for being too busy with the renovation that he had forgotten about sending flowers.

However, Anastasia was embarrassed to have him treat her to lunch every day, so she announced, "Let me treat you to lunch later!"

Nigel merely wanted to have a meal with her, so he didn't mind who would be paying the bill. In the end, they went to a western restaurant together. During the meal, he talked about his office renovation and asked Anastasia about her opinion.

However, no matter what she suggested, Nigel agreed to all her ideas and decided to adopt them. As a result, she dared not give any hasty suggestions. Otherwise, she would be guilty if the renovation turned out awful.

“Anastasia, what do you think about my cousin?” Nigel suddenly asked. Anastasia’s hand trembled at the question, causing the spoonful of food that she scooped to fall back onto her plate.

“Uh... h-he’s my boss and he’s a nice person, of course,” she stuttered.

“Between him and I, who do you think is better?” Nigel stared at her intently, determined to get an answer out of her.

At that, Anastasia put down her cutlery and looked straight into his eyes. “Nigel, what exactly are you angling at?”

On the other hand, Nigel pursed his thin lips and decided that he shouldn’t avoid the question he had been pondering any longer. And so, he exhaled and uttered, “I know that he’s pursuing you and he’s repaying your kindness at the same time. Anastasia, in regards to our relationship, I hope that... you can give me a chance to be with you.” He lowered his head as he knew that chances were slim.

“Nigel, it’s great to be your friend. We can have meals together and meet up sometimes. Besides, you know that I have no intention to remarry. I’m really sorry!” She sincerely apologized, then added, “Please don’t waste your time on me, Nigel. It’s not worth it.”

“But...you are the only woman in my heart. There is no one else.” He raised his head and looked at the woman before him. Although she wasn’t the most beautiful woman, she was the most unique view that he had ever gazed upon.

Truth was, his words moved Anastasia’s heart, but she remained straight-faced and sighed. “In that case, I guess we can’t even be friends.”

His expression stiffened and then fell. “No, I don’t want that to happen.”

“Therefore, let’s remain as friends.” However, Anastasia couldn’t help feeling guilty when she said that. Seems like I have to avoid meeting up with Nigel too often after this. I don’t want to ruin his life. Instead of wasting his time and effort on me, he should go and pursue other women.

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“Will you say the same if it’s my cousin who pursued you?” Nigel pouted and asked. feeling a little depressed.

Something flashed across Anastasia’s eyes at that question. Elliot was never an obedient gentleman like Nigel. Instead, he had a strong and overbearing character, somewhat like a bandit’s. He would ignore her rejection and warnings.

Upon seeing her reaction, Nigel couldn’t help feeling jealous. It seems like she gives Elliot special treatment.

In the end, she didn’t answer his question and she muttered, “After lunch, I have to return to the office for a meeting. You should go about your renovation.”

In the evening, Anastasia went to pick up her son before a certain someone did so. Otherwise, the child would be taken away by him yet again.

This time, she successfully picked Jared up. She even brought him to the mall and had a stroll near her office. She also bought some dumplings home to cook. However, when she was buying them, the little boy kept asking her to buy more. "Mommy, that's not enough. I want more."

"It's enough. In fact, it's more than enough for the two of us," she helplessly replied.

"No, it's not enough." He used a small ladle and continued filling the frozen dumplings into the bag.

In the end, Anastasia brought a large bag of frozen dumplings home. As they were unable to finish them, she had to keep them in the fridge.

After they reached home and while Anastasia was at the balcony, the boy took her phone. Finding Elliot's number, he sent the man a message. 'Mr. Presgrave, come over to have some dumplings!' All that was done quickly and easily.

'Sure! I'm on my way, Elliot replied.

The boy put down the phone happily. As expected, Mr. Presgrave will come.

When Anastasia saw that it was getting late, she went to cook the dumplings.

"Mommy, you have to cook all the dumplings!" the little boy reminded her

"It's too much. It's a waste if we can't finish them."

"I can finish them. I want to eat 50 dumplings!" he announced loudly.

"You can't fill 50 of them in your little tummy!" She chuckled as she said that.

"I can!" He put on a straight face as he commented, "Mommy, just cook them."

"Alright. I'll cook two plates first, and I'll make some more if it's not enough, okay?" she conceded with a smile.

"Okay, but don't forget to cook more if it's not enough!" Mommy can cook more when Mr. Presgrave is here, Jared thought.

Thereafter, Anastasia went to the kitchen to cook some dumplings. Meanwhile, the little boy waited and stared at the door as he listened to the footsteps outside intently.

Ten minutes later, Anastasia received a message on her phone. The boy quickly took a glance at it.

Open the door

He giggled and immediately turned the door handle. Standing outside the door was none other than Elliot. The man was dressed like an elite who had just exited from a meeting room, and he emanated the presence of someone powerful and influential.

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"Mr. Presgrave, we are having dumplings tonight."

“Great!” Elliot grinned.

Anastasia, who exited the kitchen to get something from the fridge, was startled to see the man in the living room.

“W-Why are you here?” Her eyes widened in surprise.

“Mommy, I invited Mr. Presgrave over to eat dumplings,” the boy explained on behalf of Elliot, for fear that Anastasia would be mad.

Anastasia narrowed her eyes. At that instant, the reason behind Jared’s actions of insisting on getting extra dumplings and asking her to cook 50 of them dawned upon her. It turned out that her son had included Elliot’s portion since the very beginning.

“Don’t put him on the spot. I wanted to come myself” Elliot chimed in.

There was nothing that Anastasia could do at that point since he had shown up.

“Alright, then. Since we have enough dumplings...” Looking at her son’s large innocent eyes, she couldn’t bring herself to scold him.

It’s a good thing that he took the initiative to think about others. It shows that he has become a more mature kid, she thought.

“Have a seat. I’ll go and cook the dumplings.” After Anastasia said that, she returned to the kitchen.

Subsequently, the first thing that came to Jared’s mind was to ask for Elliot’s permission. “Mr. Presgrave, Mommy is going to attend Grandpa’s banquet tomorrow night. Can I go to your house to play?”

“What’s wrong? Won’t she be taking you along?” Elliot asked with a frown.

“Nope! Mommy said that it’s not convenient for me to be there because there will be a lot of people. She is going to get Grace to look after me, but I want to spend time with you.”

Chapter 183 “Sure! I’ll go and pick you up tomorrow at school.” Elliot was more than willing to take care of him, of course. Thereafter, Jared asked curiously, “Mr. Presgrave, will there be many men at the banquet? I’m worried that Grandpa may introduce other men to Mommy. I hope that you can be there at the banquet so that Grandpa can meet you too.” Elliot narrowed his eyes. Could it be that Francis is going to find a partner for the woman at the banquet tomorrow? In that case, how can I miss that? At that instant, he thought of another suitable candidate who could take care of the kid. “Jared, if I’m going to attend your Grandpa’s banquet tomorrow night, is it okay if I get Nigel to take care of you? But can we keep this a secret for now?” Elliot didn’t want his plan to be ruined, so he couldn’t afford to let Anastasia and Nigel know about this. “Okay, sure!” It was obvious that the boy had now become Elliot’s ‘partner in crime! Little did the pitiful Nigel know that he would soon become the babysitter who helped his cousin to pursue Anastasia. Anastasia served two plates of dumplings at the table before she returned to the kitchen to make two more plates. Meanwhile, Elliot and Jared, who were sitting at the table, started dipping the dumplings into the premade sauce and eating them. Anastasia cooked all the dumplings that she had bought that day, and the portion happened to be just sufficient for the three of them. After the meal, Elliot took Jared downstairs to take a stroll, while Anastasia cleaned the house. After she was done with the chores, she sat on the couch and fell into a daze. Why do I feel as though

we are a family of three? She suddenly recalled that Elliot had slept with Hayley before this, and Anastasia felt an indescribable feeling welling up inside her.

She recalled how Hayley had described their night together when Hayley was hugging Elliot at the garden of the Presgrave Residence. She had talked about how wild Elliot had been above her. It was apparent that it had been an incredibly passionate night that had become one that was unforgettable to Hayley. Anastasia shut her eyes abruptly, attempting to shrug off the thoughts that appeared in her head. It reminded her of the night five years ago that she had spent with a male escort that she had known nothing about. She did not know his name nor his face, although she had been completely conscious when everything had happened that night. She had felt that the male escort had a large and burly build, with strength so strong that she could hardly resist. He had lost his reasoning at that time, and he resembled a beast that had no sense of humanity at all. Whenever she remembered that night, Anastasia could feel her body tremble all over, and this incident caused her to bear a heartfelt disgust toward the carnal desire between a man and a woman. She refused to get married, not only because of the mental repulsion she felt toward such matters, but also because the incident had traumatized her physically. When Anastasia was engrossed in her painful memories, the sudden sound of the door being unlocked snapped her back to her senses. She inhaled a deep breath. "You guys are back?" Anastasia smiled at Jared, who was running into the house. When she saw her son's adorable and beautiful face, she could feel her earlier agony diminish. "Mommy, this is for you!" The boy came back carrying Anastasia's favorite beverage. "You guys went out and bought something?" she asked with a smile. "I was thirsty, so Mr. Presgrave bought me a drink. I remembered that you like this, so I bought you a bottle." At that, Anastasia looked up at the tall man and thanked him. "Thank you." "Mommy, I feel so hot! I want to take a shower." "Okay, I'll help you to take a shower. Go and find yourself a set of pajamas." She looked at her son and he returned to his room.

Just then, Anastasia looked at Elliot and said, "President Presgrave, it's getting late. You should leave." The man's gaze landed on her face, his eyes beguiling as he murmured, "I want to stay for a little longer." "Do not think that you can take advantage of me. It won't happen again," she calmly announced: I won't fall for his tricks again. Elliot himself was aware that he couldn't possibly be so lucky to manage to lay his hands on her every time. However, at the thought that he would be able to see her the next day, he curled up the corner of his lips. "See you tomorrow at the office, then." With that, he pushed the door open and left the house. In the end, Anastasia exhaled in relief and quickly entered the room to help her son to shower. The next morning, the Department of Design had an early-morning meeting. As Anastasia walked into the meeting room groggily, she abruptly saw a charming and noble figure sitting in the seat next to hers, and the usually noisy atmosphere in the office suddenly became particularly serious.

Chapter 184 Elliot's here! Although all the female designers knew that Elliot was there for Anastasia, they still couldn't hold back their little gestures in hopes to catch his attention. The ladies flicked their hair and pursed their lips. Some tried to make eye contact with him, while others even attempted to undo a button at their low-cut collar to further expose their cleavage. When Anastasia took a seat, someone sent coffee into the room. Everyone was surprised that each of them got a cup of coffee, and it was Felicia who revealed the mystery. "Everyone, let's thank President Presgrave for treating us to a cup of coffee." The lot of them looked at Elliot in gratitude. Some female designers even purred, "Thank you President Presgrave! I'm so happy!" However, Elliot's gaze rested on the woman next to him, causing Anastasia to receive full attention

from the crowd. The female employees suddenly felt that the coffee in their hands didn't taste as well as it had seconds ago, because they now realized that Anastasia was the main reason they were able to drink the coffee in the first place! Meanwhile, Anastasia, who was skimming through the store sales analysis report, took a sip of coffee. This led a hint of smile to creep into the eyes of the man beside her. Everyone at the scene clearly took in his reaction. "At present, the price war in the market is very intense. Our recent store sales have increased by 5% compared to the previous month. The company has decided to promote an associate director to supervise the entire Department of Design alongside me." Alice's eyes widened at that mention. She felt as though the position would have to belong to her and nobody could take it away from her. On the contrary, Anastasia, whose full attention was on design and nothing else, was uninterested with this management position. "How much will the salary increment be when one is promoted to be an associate director?" One of the designers went straight to the crux of matter. "The person who is promoted to become the associate director shall have a salary increment of 5,000 to 10,000 on top of his or her original basic salary, depending on this person's capability," Felicia announced. Anastasia, who had been initially uninterested with the promotion, heard that, and her stunning eyes lit up and her interest was instantly piqued. "What are the conditions that one must fulfill in order to be entitled for the promotion?" "Firstly, one must have worked with the company for more than 5 years. Secondly, we will review their design skills. Thirdly, one must possess a teamwork spirit, understand the market direction, and be able to analyze the market needs. The light in Anastasia's eyes dimmed when she heard that, while Alice, who was sitting opposite her, smiled and deliberately reminded her, "Anastasia, you merely worked with the company for two months. You don't fit the first condition."

Although Anastasia was disgruntled, she said nothing. Just then, a low yet firm male voice rang out beside her. "Anastasia will be promoted as the associate director." Anastasia abruptly jerked her head toward him, but Elliot was seen looking at Felicia as he ordered, "Notify the Human Resource Department about this." Felicia, who didn't expect the boss to promote Anastasia with just a statement, revealed an awkward smile. "Sure, I'll notify the Human Resource Department about the change in her position." At that, Alice, who was sitting opposite them, was so mad that her face blanched, while the other designers were astounded. Does Anastasia have such a powerful background? Could it be that the reason President Presgrave attended the meeting today is just to promote her as the associate director in front of all of us? "But that's unfair, President Presgrave! Shouldn't other employees be given a fair chance?" Alice boldly refuted. "It will be difficult to convince the others if you make an exception and grant her a promotion like this." As soon as Alice voiced out her disapproval, the air in the meeting room instantly became heavy. Elliot furrowed his brows, darting a sharp gaze at her. "Are you objecting to my decision?" "N-No... I-I just think that t-this is a company, and the company should have rules and regulations..." Alice was so frightened that she started stammering and her face flushed crimson. Anastasia suddenly didn't find the position of the associate director attractive anymore. It would be alright if she earned the position with her own effort, but an exceptional promotion like this was indeed unfair to the others, let alone when she didn't want to owe the man any favors in the first place. "President Presgrave, I refuse to accept the position. Please allow Felicia to pick someone more suitable!" Anastasia chimed in reasonably. Elliot's cold gaze that had initially been on Alice now landed on Anastasia, but there currently was a hint of frustration in them. Why is she concerned about all those irrelevant matters? Doesn't she want to earn more money? "Let's do it this way, then. Anastasia gains the right to compete for the position because her capability

is undeniably outstanding. Alice, Anastasia and Alexia are the suitable candidates for this position. I'll assign tasks to the three of you to assess your capabilities."

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"You guys can take it from here," Elliot calmly announced. It was apparent that he had no intention to participate in the meeting further, so he rose up from his seat and left. As soon as he had left, everyone in the meeting room exhaled in relief. The heavy atmosphere earlier had been suffocating. "Anastasia, we will fight for the position in a fair and square manner. If you can beat me, I'll give you the position!" Alice sneered. "I don't need you to give it to me. Let's each do our best," Anastasia coldly refuted. "Other than the three people whose names were called earlier, the others may leave." Felicia asked them to leave, as she wanted to have a private talk with the trio. In the task this time, all three of them would be responsible for one of the stores under the company. Whoever attained the best sales performance the next month would be crowned the champion. However, they were not allowed to request their friends or family members to make bulk orders. Only sales from free-will customers would be taken into account. "You three may liaise with the store managers, or you may take care of the store in person. Ultimately, the three of you have the right to do anything in the store. The total sales next month will be the deciding factor." All three of them, including Anastasia, blindly picked a store. Since she had decided to participate in the competition, she wouldn't give up that easily. "Anastasia, I dare you to not rely on President Presgrave's influence and compete with us fair and square." "I would have accepted the position if I were to rely on his influence, no?" Anastasia refuted. "Anastasia, what in the world did you do to make President Presgrave treat you so differently? Could it be that you are hooking up with him?" Alice sneered in disdain.

Anastasia merely looked at the other woman coldly without saying a word. Upon hearing that, Felicia tried to make peace between them. "Alright, we are all colleagues. Please speak to each other politely." In the end, Alice tossed the documents on the table and announced, "Anastasia, I won't lose to you!" With that, she arrogantly left the scene. After Anastasia returned to her office, she received a call from her father. When Francis heard that she wouldn't be bringing her son along, he asked, "Why aren't you bringing Jared?" "Dad, there are many people at the banquet. I'm worried that Jared would wander off. Besides, I've made arrangements for him." "Alright. Since you have made arrangements, just leave him at home, then." Ever since the incident when Jared had been lost, Francis dared not show the slightest negligence when it came to the matter about the kid. "And do remember to dress prettier," Francis reminded in the end. At that, Anastasia couldn't help but look down at what she was wearing that day. It was regular office attire—a gray blouse paired with a tight-fitting skirt, and she didn't prepare any other clothes. At noon, Anastasia had lunch with Felicia. The latter told her that the mold for the custom-made jewelry had been produced by the factory. What came next would be the craftspeople doing their jobs, and the final product would be completed by the end of the month. A sense of achievement bubbled up inside Anastasia upon hearing that. She, too, hoped to bring more profit to the company. At 3.00 PM, Anastasia called Grace over to her office. She instructed her to help her to look after Jared, to which Grace happily agreed. At 4.50 PM, Anastasia took Grace to the kindergarten to pick up her son. The moment she stepped into the classroom, the young female teacher asked in surprise, "Miss Tillman, why are you here? Jared has been picked up by his father." Anastasia's heart skipped a beat and she asked, "Are you sure that... it was his father who picked him up?" The female teacher was certain. "Yes, it was his father who came in person to pick him up."

"I see. Thank you." Anastasia felt annoyed at that. Why did Elliot pick my son up without informing me? "Miss Tillman, what does Jared's father do?" Grace immediately asked curiously. "Uh... He's in the finance industry." "Wow! That's so cool! I wish to see what Jared's father looks like someday. Jared is so good-looking, so I reckon that his dad must be very handsome!" Anastasia's face flushed red as she explained, "He's a busy man, so you won't be able to see him most of the time." After she said that, she added, "Grace, I won't be troubling you tonight, then. You may get off work." Grace nodded, feeling a little sad that she wouldn't be caring for the kid that night. As Anastasia walked toward the road to hail a cab, she dialed a man's number. The call went through. "Hello." "Elliot, where did you take my son to?" "Jared told me that you will be attending your father's company banquet tonight. Since you won't have the time to take care of him, you can just leave him in my care!"

Chapter 186 Anastasia didn't expect that her son would tell Elliot about the banquet. Since things had come to that point, she had no choice but to trouble the man with taking care of Jared. And so, she immediately replaced her initially angry tone with her usual one. "If it's not too much of a hassle to you, please take care of him for me tonight. I'll go and pick him up at around 9.00 PM." "Sure!" Elliot unhesitatingly agreed and hung up the call. Gazing at the sunset in the distance, Anastasia fell into a daze, wondering whether it was a good thing that her son relied on Elliot so much. Oftentimes, the choices available were limited. On one hand, she didn't want Jared to depend on that man too much but on the other hand, she couldn't help feeling relieved when the man took care of her son. In fact, she even trusted that man unconditionally. After Elliot ended the call with Anastasia, he instantly called another person. "Hello, Elliot! How can I help you?" Nigel's voice rang from the other end of the call. Although the two men had made a bet, it didn't affect the relationship between them. "I need a favor from you. Will you help me to take care of a child?" "Whose child?" "Where are you?" "Where else? My father's company, of course." "Alright, I'll send him over right now." "You haven't told me whose kid is that! And I don't like to babysit," Nigel grumbled. "It's Anastasia's boy. Are you not going to babysit him?" Elliot muttered in exasperation. "What? Jared? Jared's with you now?" Nigel asked in surprise, then he rejoiced. "Send him over! I don't like other kids, but Jared's different." Elliot ended the call on his Bluetooth earpiece before he said to the kid in the back seat. "I'm sending you to Nigel's place now, alright?" "Okay, Mr. Presgrave. You have to keep an eye on Mommy tonight and make sure that no man snatches her away!" "I'll certainly keep a close eye on her." Elliot chuckled. No man would be able to take her away under his watch. Soon, they arrived at a 7-star hotel, and Nigel was waiting downstairs to get the kid. When the car came to a stop, Nigel pulled open the car door of the back seat. He was surprised when he saw a child car seat in Elliot's car and the little boy was safely strapped on the seat. "Mr. Nigel!" Jared politely greeted him. Meanwhile, Elliot walked up to Nigel and said, "Anastasia is tied up with something, so she asked me to send Jared to your place. I'll have to trouble you with him tonight." Upon hearing that, Nigel felt a little displeased. I would go and pick Jared up if Anastasia gave me a call, so why did she get Elliot to send Jared over? Could it be that in her heart, I'm not as reliable as Elliot? "Goodbye, Mr. Presgrave." As Jared held Nigel's hand, the boy looked behind and winked at Elliot, hinting the latter about the secret that only the two of them knew. — CA

In the end, Nigel led Jared to his office. The more the former thought about it, the more frustrated he felt. Instead of asking Elliot to send Jared over to me, why didn't Anastasia contact me directly to go and pick Jared up? Nigel turned to look at the little guy, who was sitting on the couch with his little feet dangling in the air. Suddenly, Nigel noticed that Jared's beautiful facial features had started to become sharp, which caused the man to widen his almond-shaped eyes. What's going on? Why do I find that

Jared seems to look a little like Elliot? Jared's features and demeanor were very similar to Elliot's. The next instant, Nigel seemed to recall something, and he took out his phone to scroll through his photo album. He remembered that he had kept a photo of Elliot as a child-it was a photo that had been taken when he was with Elliot.

After searching through a few albums, Nigel finally found the photo. Nigel looked at the little boy in the photo who had his arms around Nigel's shoulder. At that point, Nigel's eyes nearly fell out of his sockets. In the photo, Elliot was a five-year-old kid and he looked exactly like the little boy who was currently sitting on the couch. They had faces so similar that one seemed to be a duplicate of the other. What kind of strange phenomenon is this? Anastasia's son looks exactly the same as Elliot when he was a kid! Nigel looked at himself in the photo, at the boy who had Elliot's arm around his shoulder. Although he had been an adorable kid as well, he had looked nothing like Jared. At that moment, Nigel felt as though he was burning in rage and jealousy. Is this a hint from God? That Elliot is going to beat me in this relationship? Nigel glanced at the kid on the couch again, and the love he had for Anastasia was still strong. If I were to marry Anastasia, I wouldn't ever make the little guy sad, nor would I give him any younger brothers or sisters!

Chapter 187 "Jared, where did your mommy go?" "Mommy has something else to do." And so, Nigel came to the conclusion that Anastasia had to work overtime, so she had brought Jared to the office, then had Elliot send Jared over to him. Nigel was certain that that was the truth. At that moment, Anastasia was in a cab on the way to the hotel where her father's company event would be held. Her father's company wasn't exactly a large establishment, so the celebration this time was organized in a regular 5-star hotel. The attendees of the event were not required to go through the hassle of registration before entering the venue. Anastasia saw a sign at the lobby that stated, 'Attendees of Tillman Construction's banquet, please proceed to the third floor. As soon as Anastasia exited from the lift, she followed the sign and arrived at a hall that was decorated with numerous tables and chairs. She saw her father standing among a few elderly men, and he looked radiant as he beamed gleefully. He seemed to be in high spirits as he raised his glass and chatted with the people around him. "Dad!" Anastasia walked up to him and greeted him. "Hey! This is my elder daughter, Anastasia." Upon seeing her, Francis introduced her to his peers standing around him. One of them couldn't help but

compliment, "Tillman, you are so lucky to have such a gorgeous daughter!" "Not only does she have the looks, I heard that she is quite a capable lady as well," another man praised. Anastasia felt embarrassed upon hearing that. It seemed like her father had often mentioned her in front of his friends. Still, she was glad that she made her father proud. "Good evening." She smiled and greeted them. Meanwhile, Francis was surveying the hall, seemingly looking for someone. Just then, a vigorous young man in a suit entered the hall, and Francis immediately called out to him, "Alex, come here." Alex Hunter was about 28 or 29 years old, definitely below his thirties. Currently, he was emanating the youthful vibe of a young man. Upon hearing his boss' summon, he quickly strode over. At that instant, he saw Anastasia, who turned to face him, and he was completely in awe. Anastasia appraised him with her stunning eyes. This man must be Dad's employee! "Anastasia, let me introduce you to him. This is Alex Hunter, a recently promoted Finance Manager of our firm. He's young and capable, and he's a graduate from a renowned university," Francis commended, his eyes full of compliments. Anastasia greeted him with a smile. "Hello, Mr. Hunter." Alex ruffled his hair in embarrassment. "You must be Miss Tillman! It's nice to finally meet you in person. President Tillman mentions you often." "Alex, this is my elder daughter, Anastasia. I've always wanted to introduce you to each other. Please take good care of her on my behalf

tonight,” Francis chimed in. It was apparent from his gaze that he had other plans. Alex was both surprised and excited. At that point, he seemed a little flustered as he was afraid that he would offend or upset Anastasia. “Miss Tillman, do you want to drink anything?” On the contrary, Anastasia remained calm and composed. She accompanied Alex to a table and smiled at him. “Mr. Hunter, I’ll help myself. You should go about with your things.” Alex was personally trained by Francis to be his right-hand man. The latter even handed Alex the power over the most important department, which was the Finance Department. That night, Francis had the intention to set up Alex and his elder daughter, Anastasia. When Anastasia took over the company in the future, it would be much easier for her with Alex as her husband. Francis had been cracking his head to keep his large business going when he had no son. Hence, the best way was to make Alex his son-in-law. “Miss Tillman, I’ve often heard your father mentioning you. He said that you are a jewelry designer of a jewelry atelier. You are such a talented young woman.” Alex seemed embarrassed, but he was eager

to present himself before the woman he had fallen for at first sight. “I’m just a designer. You are the one who is amazing!” Anastasia praised him. He was a valuable employee of her father, so she naturally treated him politely. “You are flattering me, Miss Tillman. President Tillman thinks well of me, so he gave me the position,” Alex replied humbly. Anastasia then turned to survey the other guests, but Alex couldn’t help but gaze fixedly at her. Her every movement seemed to capture his heart. It seemed that he had really fallen for Anastasia at first sight.

Chapter 188 Alex was well aware of the fact that Anastasia most likely would be Francis’ successor in the future, Truth was, Alex had his own thoughts as well. After all, everyone in the world would dream of having an easier life, Meanwhile, Anastasia was bored, so she took out her phone to check her messages, while Alex went to get her some snacks. He had made up his mind to stick with Anastasia no matter where she was that night. She was curious about what her son was doing at that moment, so she sent Elliot a text. ‘What’s Jared doing?’ After she sent the message, she didn’t receive any reply even after waiting for more than ten minutes, so she thought that the man must have missed her message. Just then, a mother-daughter duo hurried into the hotel lobby-it was none other than Naomi and Erica, who had just arrived due to the terrible traffic. Erica wore a burgundy evening gown that night. As she entered the hall while lifting her skirt, she suddenly thought of something and turned to her mother, “Mom, I left my phone in the car. Could you go and get it for me?” Upon hearing that, Naomi agreed resignedly. “You go sit on that couch for a while. I’ll go get you your phone now. Don’t play with your phone all the time in the car in future.” And so, Erica lifted her skirt and took a seat on the couch while waiting for her mother. At that moment, a black vehicle stopped at the main entrance of the hotel. Under the light from the hallway, a man pushed open the car door of the back seat and alighted from the car. Standing at six feet two, he had an imposing bearing. After tidying his suit, he strode into the hotel with his long slender legs.

He had Rey following by his side carrying his briefcase. However, Rey, who was also a handsome, white-collared elite, seemed inconspicuous as he stood next to Elliot. When Erica was staring at the door waiting for her mother to get her phone, she suddenly spotted the

man and her heart started pounding wildly. Oh, God! How can there be such a dashing, elegant man in this world? The man who entered the premises under the bright lights had a cold and noble bearing. Dressed in a fitted suit, he emanated a stern yet intimidating aura that made it obvious he was someone with a high and mighty position. Erica’s heart nearly jumped out of her chest. He’s so handsome and

sexy! Elliot's gaze swept across the signboard and he saw that the banquet of Tillman Construction was held on the third floor. He then entered the elevator together with Rey and pressed on the button to the third floor. Upon seeing that the lift stopped at the third floor, Erica couldn't help but hold her chest excitedly. Could it be that the man is here to attend Dad's company event? Does this mean that I'll have the chance to get to know him? Erica was exhilarated and she felt as if she had met the love of her life. She wanted to know him very badly, and she had even thought about the names for their future kids. When Naomi saw Erica staring at the elevator in a daze, she called out to her, "Erica, what are you staring at?" "Mom, I just saw a super handsome man! He seems to be heading to Dad's company event. I want to get to know him. I have to know him!" Upon seeing how crazy her daughter was for that man, Naomi thought to herself, A handsome face will be useless if he's poor. I won't agree for my daughter to marry a poor man or even a man with an ordinary background. My daughter has to marry the wealthiest man. Meanwhile, Elliot stepped out of the elevator and into the hall. At one glance, he spotted Anastasia, as well as the existence of a man beside her. That man was chatting with her, while she had one hand on her chin and a curve at the corner of her lips. She looked as though she was having a great time. Elliot narrowed his eyes menacingly. As expected, this woman attracts the gaze of men no matter where she goes. Upon seeing Francis among the crowd, Elliot walked up to him. Francis was chatting with his friends

when he suddenly heard a pleasant male voice beside him. "Hello, Mr. Tillman." Francis turned to look at him and was stunned for a few seconds. "And you are?" Rey immediately handed him Elliot's business card. "This is President Presgrave's business card. Please have a look." Francis took the name card before he glanced at it and his pupils dilated at that instant. He then stared at the young man before him in disbelief. Is he the young master of the Presgrave Family, whom my ex-wife sacrificed herself to rescue back then?

Chapter 189 With Elliot's powerful status in the business world, as well as the influence of the Presgrave Family, Francis instantly welcomed him excitedly. "Young Master Presgrave, you actually have the time to join us! It's an honor to have you here!" Although his wife had saved him, Francis still viewed this man as a powerful figure that he couldn't afford to offend or mess with. "Mr. Tillman, you are being too courteous. I heard that today is the celebration for your company's 20th anniversary. I hope that you will forgive me for coming uninvited." "You are overthinking it! I'm really glad that you can come, Young Master Presgrave. I'm really excited, in fact!" Francis was genuinely delighted, and his companions were equally astonished as well—none of them had expected to see the legendary mysterious head of the Presgrave Family at Francis' company celebration. "Mr. Tillman, I reckon that you don't know that President Presgrave is the employer of your daughter, Miss Anastasia." "What?" Anastasia is working in President Presgrave's company?" Francis initially didn't know how he should entertain the young master of the Presgrave Family, but now that he knew that his daughter worked for Elliot, he thought that it would be a great idea to have her accompany him. Meanwhile, Anastasia was sitting in the hall chatting with Alex about her father's company's recent affairs. Alex was telling her everything that he knew, while Anastasia listened to him attentively.

Suddenly, she heard her father calling for her. "Anastasia! Anastasia, come over." She inadvertently looked up in her father's direction. She saw her father at first, but her eyes soon met another man's pair of cold, piercing eyes. Although there was a distance between them, the man's gaze resembled a deadly sharp blade when he peered at her. If the gaze were to land on someone else, this person would be scared out of their wits. However, upon seeing the noble man next to her father, not only was Anastasia

not afraid, she was even enraged. Didn't he say that he would take care of Jared?! Why is he here at Dad's company event? How about my son? In the end, she pulled her chair back and headed over to her father. "Anastasia, come here. We have an honorable guest. Please help me to entertain Young Master Presgrave." Francis waved at her to gesture at her to come over. When Anastasia stood in front of her father, she immediately calmed down, as she didn't want her father to know about her relationship with Elliot. "Hello, President Presgrave, welcome to my father's company event." She held her hand out in a distant yet polite manner. Elliot extended his hand to hold hers, an unfathomable smile playing by his lips. "Dad, let me entertain President Presgrave. You should go about with your business. President Presgrave, this way, please." She gestured at Elliot to come with her. Elliot raised his head and looked in front. He was currently heading in the direction of the VIP tables while Anastasia followed behind him. When she gauged that her father wouldn't be able to hear their conversation from where they were now, she anxiously asked, "Where's Jared?" Elliot looked back and responded, "Don't worry. I've handed him to Nigel." "Why are you here at my father's company event?" she asked, staring at his back. "To congratulate him, of course." The man curved up the corner of his lips and he turned around to look at her. At that moment, the two of them had arrived at the table. Elliot pulled the chair back and took a seat, while Anastasia sat down beside him, a look of frustration on her face.

"Your arrival gave my father a fright! You were not supposed to show up here with your identity." She glared at him helplessly. "What identity should I show up with, then? How about his elder daughter's boyfriend?" Elliot asked with a charming smile. Anastasia nearly jumped to her feet as she denied in a fluster, "Stop talking nonsense." "I'm not here as a mere guest. I would like to talk to your father about a business project." He raised his brow at her. Of course, he wouldn't come over for nothing. Anastasia was stunned to hear that. Any random project that Elliot had in his hands would allow her father to make a profit for at least a few years to come. However, Elliot's true intention was to repay kindness, and she didn't wish to see her father interact with him too much. Just then, Erica entered the hall holding her mother's arm while gazing around anxiously. Suddenly, she took notice of the handsome charming figure at the first table from the left in front of the stage. Although she only saw his back, it was enough to make her heart race. Soon, she noticed a familiar figure sitting next to that man. At that instant, jealousy and anger started raging inside her. Isn't that Anastasia?

Chapter 190 She actually hooked up with that hot man ahead of me? This won't do! I cannot allow Anastasia to snatch away the man I have my eyes on! "Mom, that's the man. Do go and ask Dad who he is!" Erica pointed at where Elliot was. Naomi raised her eyes and looked in that direction. It was the figure of a young man, and he seemed tall and decent from his back, so he should have handsome looks. Therefore, Naomi held Erica's arm and headed toward her husband. After greeting him, she dragged Francis to one side and asked, "Francis, who's that guest?" She pointed in the direction of Elliot. Francis laughed. "He's the young master of the Presgrave Family, the most honorable guest tonight." "The young master of the Presgrave Family? Which Presgrave Family?" asked Naomi in puzzlement.

She was unfamiliar with the people of the business world. "Which else? Their company is situated in the tallest office building in the city center. Don't you always see it when you go shopping?" Francis explained Elliot's identity in the simplest and easiest manner. At that instant, Naomi and Erica exchanged glances. They instantaneously understood who he was referring to. After all, that building was a landmark, the most iconic structure at the city center. "Oh, God! The Presgrave Corporation belongs to him? He's super rich!" "His wealth is on par with a nation's! His company is in global business," Francis exclaimed "Mom, I have to get to know him! I have to get to know Young Master

Presgrave!” Erica was so excited that she nearly went crazy. Never in a million years did she think that she would meet the President of the Presgrave Corporation at her father’s company event. Just then, Naomi narrowed her eyes in displeasure. “Is that Anastasia accompanying Young Master Presgrave? Why is she with him?” “I just found out that Anastasia actually works in a jewelry company under Young Master Presgrave, so I asked her to entertain him,” Francis replied. “Dad, why didn’t you ask me to entertain him instead? I’m your daughter too!” Erica immediately felt jealous of Anastasia. Did Dad intentionally give Anastasia a chance to spend time with Young Master Presgrave? “Ask you to go? What can you talk to him about? Even I myself don’t know how I should entertain him,” Francis reprimanded helplessly. It was fortunate that his elder daughter could entertain the guest on his behalf. Truth was, Francis had glanced in that direction a few times and found that Anastasia seemed to be getting along well with Elliot. However, nobody knew what they were actually talking about. In fact, nobody could guess how displeased Anastasia was with Elliot’s presence. She was currently persuading him to leave if he had no other business there. Unfortunately, the thick skinned man insisted on staying. “I’ll tell my father that you have to leave because of something urgent. He won’t blame you for that,” she urged.

“Miss Tillman, are you driving away your father’s guest? If you continue to try to drive me out, I’ll complain to your father and have him uphold justice.” The man elegantly held a teacup and took a sip of the tea that he disliked. Anastasia bit her red lips. “Elliot, I’m begging you. Stop repaying my dad. He doesn’t know that you are actually repaying kindness, so it won’t be fair to him.” “Anastasia, let me tell you something-someone has their eyes on your father’s business. They are trying to carry out their plan of acquiring a few small-scaled construction material companies, and your father’s firm is one of them. Do you still think that I shouldn’t help out your father now?” he leaned in and whispered at her. Anastasia was startled by the news. She raised her head and looked into the man’s serious eyes that suggested that what he had said was not a lie. “Are you serious?” she asked. “The industry of construction material has always been a profitable industry. Besides, there will always be investors wherever there is profit,” he nonchalantly commented. Anastasia was stunned to hear that. She knew that the business world was always treacherous with a set of harsh survival rules, but she never thought that it would happen to her father. At present, someone was looking at her with a disappointed gaze from a distance not far away from them. After barely getting to know her, Alex found that Anastasia had an outstanding man by her side. He had just heard from the others that the man who looked even younger than him was actually Elliot Presgrave, the high and mighty leader of the Presgrave Corporation.