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“Daddy, I know that. I know that I can’t keep bothering Miss Tessa; and I’m very happy that she has taken care of me for so many days, but I’m still a little upset because I really like her very much.” Then, Gregory sighed and said hopefully, “I’m tired, Daddy. Will Miss Tessa come and visit me once I wake up?”

For a moment, Nicholas was speechless. Even though Gregory kept saying that he wouldn’t cling onto Tessa, he was actually being needier than before. Regarding this situation, Nicholas didn’t know whether it was a good or bad thing. In the end, he merely said coolly, “Go to sleep.”

After that, he tucked Gregory in and coaxed him to sleep.

Early the next morning, Gregory’s eyes popped open the moment it was bright and looked around. “Where’s Miss Tessa? Why isn’t she here yet?”

Unwittingly, Nicholas knitted his brows. “It’s so early now. Don’t start a tantrum.”

“Oh, I miss her and wish to see her the moment I wake up.” A disappointed Gregory lowered his eyes in sadness.

After a while, the nurse came to change the dressing for him, and when she saw that the slim figure who had been taking care of him in the room was gone, she couldn’t help but wonder, “Where’s Miss Tessa, Young Master Gregory?”

Immediately, Gregory pouted his lips and looked a little aggrieved, but when he saw the look his father was casting at him, he forced himself to suppress his whining. “Miss Tessa has her own life and I’m not a child who needs an adult to look after me all the time anymore. There’s no reason to have her revolve around me,” he grumbled unhappily.

Seeing a toddler saying all these big ideas seriously, the nurse almost turned into jelly. If it wasn’t for the fact that an aloof Nicholas was also in the room, she would have given Gregory a kiss and pinched his cheeks.

Chuckling, she said, “You’re very sensible, young master.”

Tilting his head, Gregory acknowledged, “That’s because Daddy and Miss Tessa taught me well!”

“Exactly!” The nurse couldn’t help but smile.

When the dressing was done, the ward was once again left with only Gregory and Nicholas, who was working the whole time and would only occasionally lift his gaze at the child and get him some food and drinks.

Now that Gregory was bored to tears, he whined, "Daddy, why isn't Miss Tessa here yet? Can you give her a call?"

Nicholas knew his son very well; Tessa only mentioned that she wouldn't visit yesterday, but not today, and Gregory was already at his limit waiting for her for so long.

If this dragged on without an absolute answer, Gregory would definitely throw a tantrum. Hence, he took out his phone and gave Tessa a call.

The second the call was answered, Gregory hurriedly snatched the phone and greeted sweetly, "Miss Tessa!"

"Yeah," Tessa answered casually. "What is it?"

Realizing that she wasn't as friendly as she used to be, he shifted his tone and he sounded more cautious. "Miss Tessa, you... Aren't you going to visit today?"

On the other end of the line, Tessa paused while packing, but she immediately answered with calmness, "I'll be busy recently, so I won't be visiting. Take good care in the hospital."

"Then, when will you be done?" he asked, sounding upset.

"I don't know yet, but there are a lot of things going on. Greg, I'm hanging up because I'm busy now." Casually, Tessa made up some excuses to coax Gregory and hung up after that.

A dejected Gregory glanced at Nicholas' cell phone. "Miss Tessa said that she won't be here recently."

"Okay." An expressionless Nicholas didn't say anything else.

Meanwhile, Tessa was ready to hop into the cab after she was finished with her packing and booking the flight ticket.

Standing at the entrance of their home, Timothy asked in concern, "Tess, are you sure you don't need me to send you off at the airport?"

"Yeah. Do you think I'll get lost in the airport at my age? Get back to work quickly. I'm leaving now." Then, she climbed into the cab and waved at him.

The car started to move and her tear-filled eyes turned away. She didn't even dare to take another look at her brother because she was worried that she couldn't control herself and wouldn't want to leave anymore after a few more glances.

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After this goodbye today, I wonder how long it will be until I see him again..."

Now that she was alone in the airport, Tessa finished with all the procedures and sat in the boarding hall quietly in a daze.

She would soon be leaving this city which she loved and hated at the same time but still lived here for more than two decades. She would also be leaving her considerate brother, the mess with the Sawyer Family and all the chaos here. Goodbye, Brentwood.

A few hours later, the plane landed.

After retrieving her luggage, Tessa went out of the airport and gave Timothy a call. "Tim, I've landed safely."

"That's great. I was just wondering why you haven't given me a call yet," he said.

Hearing the delight in his voice, she teased him on purpose. "Is it a good thing that I left? Are you happy that you're no longer in my evil claws?"

Actually, she wanted to find out whether Remus had realized his promise to her.

"How did you know that I'm happy, Tess? It's not because you left, though. I can't bear to see you leave at all," Timothy answered with a chuckle on the other end.

"What is it, then?" she asked again.

"Good news. The university just called me earlier, saying that I'm innocent after their discussion and canceled my demerit because of that. Mr. Tompkins has been asked to return to work and Leo is back in our company." A little excited, he added, "All the bad luck from before has disappeared. It's such a happy day."

Upon hearing all that, Tessa was also relieved. Old Master Sawyer has really fulfilled his promise, and everything is back on track.

She noted with a smile, "All these are good news, indeed. I wish all the best for us where we will have a safe and smooth-sailing life."

“Safe and smooth-sailing life, Tess.”

After hanging up, a huge weight was lifted off Tessa’s shoulders, but an inexplicable sense of melancholy washed over her and gushed straight into her heart.

A bitter smile tinged the edges of her lips. Maybe she shouldn’t have contacted

Gregory and Nicholas since the beginning. Then, all these things could have been avoided.

It was not their fault, though. When Remus warned her the first time, she should have known it better and left straight away instead of dragging the situation on and off,

Fortunately, it was a right decision for her to leave now; everything had returned to its original situation, and all the unrelated people wouldn’t be unnecessarily involved in the mess.

Leaving the airport, Tessa found and checked into a hotel with a few stars and a nice environment in the city. After washing up simply, she lay down to rest on the bed to adjust to the time difference.

By the time she woke up, the sky was already dark outside.

With a click, she turned on the lights next to the bed, and the dark room lit up instantly

Then, her cell phone on the side started to ring and it was a video call from Timothy. When the call was connected, his handsome features appeared on the screen.

“Tess, did you already have your dinner?”

“I just woke up, and I plan to unpack a little before calling for room service,” she answered with a faint smile, sounding a little hoarse after waking up moments ago. “What about you? Did you have your meal yet? Are you in the office or back home already?”

“I ate in the office together with Henry, and I’m home now,” he answered truthfully and urged her to get out of bed to unpack and order room service.

A little while after Tessa had placed her order, she plopped onto the couch and continued to chat with Timothy.

“Tess, what are your plans afterward?” he asked.

Giving it a thought, she then responded, “I’ll find a place to settle down first, then I’ll report myself at the school, and if it’s possible, I would like to look for another orchestra band.”

Timothy nodded. "Don't forget to send me the address once you get it."

"Sure," Tessa agreed with a smile, but her leisure expression became serious as something else popped up in her mind. "Tim, if someone asks about my whereabouts, don't tell them no matter what. Don't mention where I went or which country I'm in..."

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Looking at the seriousness in Tessa's eyes, Timothy inwardly sighed because he knew that she meant Nicholas and Gregory by that. He had a hunch that they had something to do with her sudden decision to further her studies abroad.

Unfortunately, it seemed like she didn't plan to tell him what had happened. So, he didn't press her about it in the end.

The next day, Tessa left the hotel early in the morning to look for an apartment. After viewing a few places, she decided on one located in the heart of the city. Although it wasn't a huge place, it had everything Tessa needed. Then, she moved her belongings in and cleaned up her future home.

Despite the room looking neat, it hasn't been occupied for a while. Therefore, many areas were covered in a layer of dust. After all the cleaning, a day had passed without her realizing it.

After dinner, Tessa sat on the couch, watching TV while taking a break. She couldn't focus on the TV program for some unknown reason, and her heart felt empty like she was missing something. Shaking her head, she tried her best to focus on the TV program, but to no avail.

Nicholas' tall and well-built figure kept appearing in her mind, and she could still hear Gregory's sad little voice in her ears.

"Miss Tessa, don't forget to look for me when you're done with your work. I'll be waiting for you, Miss Tessa." *"Miss Tessa, I'll be a very good boy, so you must come and visit me."*

Recalling Gregory's hesitant and tentative look whenever she left him, she felt agitated. It was as though an invisible pair of hands clutched her heart, making her feel painful and breathless with each breath.

A few minutes later, she took a deep breath and forced herself not to think about all these things. *I'm not goo*

d enough for the Sawyer Family. She kept telling herself. Leaving was the correct thing to do, and it was the best for everyone.

She wasn't sure if such a hypnotic method was working, but gradually, her emotions started to calm down with each repetitive chant.

For the next few days, to stop her thoughts from running wild, Tessa had planned to go around a little for sightseeing to experience this city that was filled with musical and artistic values.

Located on the Danube River, Vienna housed many gorgeous buildings. Due to this city's strong classical music atmosphere, it was an attraction and gathering place for many musicians worldwide. It could be said that Vienna was a paradise for many who had a musical dream, especially because Vienna also had the world-famous concert hall—the Wiener Musikverein!

Tessa temporarily forgot all of her miseries as she stared at the elegant Wiener Musikverein in front of her. All she felt was the beating desire of her dreams. The stage filled her gleaming, dark eyes with a fighting spirit as she admired the sacred location in the middle.

“One day, I'll be standing right there, and everyone worldwide will come to watch my performance!”

After another day of sightseeing, she gradually adjusted her mentality regarding her choices and started looking for a band, planning to provide herself with a steady income.

She found a few bands looking for a violinist via the internet, and before leaving for the interviews, she practiced a little.

She propped up the violin in a brightly lit music room and played it gracefully. At this very moment, she seemed like a completely different person than her usual self, radiating confidence and greatness. After playing the piece, she slowly opened her eyes and placed the violin next to herself, bowing and saying, “That's the end of my performance.”

“Miss Reinhart, judging from your basic performance skills, your foundation is solid, but that doesn't mean anything here because there are many individuals with amazing foundations as well. Nobody likes a performance without any panache. So, we're very sorry,” the interviewer commented objectively about her performance.

After Tessa

heard that, the light in her eyes immediately dimmed, and she walked out of the room d ejectedly. Even her shoulders, which were straight, were now hanging

She had failed five interviews already. It didn't occur to her that the competition overseas would be much greater than back home, and the requirements were also much higher. However, on second thought, this made complete sense because this was Vienna. It was the place where musicians from across the globe gathered. There were many musical geniuses who wanted to make a name for themselves here.

Therefore, it was only natural that the competition was greater in any other place.

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Back at home, Tessa received a video call from her brother after she finished dinner.

Timothy would contact her every evening for the past few days to learn about her situation.

"Tess, how did the interview go today?"

"It's alright, I guess. They told me they would get back to me," Tessa lied as she didn't want Tim to worry about her.

Then, she casually changed the topic and asked him about his life in Southend. They both chatted about their daily lives, and none of them brought up Nicholas or Gregory in their conversation in tacit understanding.

After she hung up, the smile on her face gradually fell, and she unconsciously rubbed her fingers on her smartphone's screen. Despite appearing as though she had forgotten about Nicholas and Gregory's existence, she was actually just forcing herself not to think or care about them.

After her phone call with her brother, the room slipped into complete silence as she sat on the couch quietly. As still as a sculpture, she pondered without knowing how much time had passed. Then, suddenly, the phone in her hands started ringing, breaking the silence.

Lowering her head, she saw that Scott had called her. Curious, she placed the phone next to her ear and answered the call.

"Hello, Mr. Brooks. It's already so late. Is something the matter?"

“Nothing, I’m fine. Actually, I just want to ask if you would like to have a coffee together tomorrow.”

“I’m afraid not because I’m not in Southend now.”

Surprised, Scott uttered, “You’re not in Southend?”

“Yeah, I’m now in Vienna.”

However, unexpectedly, the words had just left her lips when Scott’s delighted voice echoed through the phone. “What a coincidence! Our band will be performing in Vienna in the next couple of days.”

“That’s truly a coincidence,” she said, surprised.

“Since that’s the case, let’s meet up then,” he said, taking this opportunity to ask her out.

With a slight smile, she accepted his invitation. “Sure.”

Two days later, at the Vienna Airport, Scott, dressed in a light blue casual suit, slowly followed his other band members out of the airport.

His dashing and straight figure combined with his gentle and elegant aura attracted the attention of countless tourists who passed by. However, as though he didn’t realize their attention on him, he offhandedly passed his luggage to his assistant.

“I’m going to meet a friend and won’t be going with you guys to the hotel. So please just bring my luggage to my room.” After saying that, he went to inform the music director and left in a cab.

Meanwhile, he called Tessa and invited her to meet up in a coffee house.

Half an hour later, he sat across from Tessa in a coffee house with a minimalistic theme. They made a great-looking couple that was pleasing to the eyes—a handsome man with a beautiful woman—and the cafe’s customers glanced at them curiously. But unfortunately, the both of them didn’t notice any of it and had their coffee by themselves.

Placing down his coffee cup, Scott cast her an apologetic look, saying, “I’m really sorry about what happened that day.”

Knowing that he was referring to her dismissal, she shook her head nonchalantly. “It’s not your fault. I was the one who offended someone that shouldn’t be trifled with at the time.”

Scott's brows locked together tightly, and just as he was about to ask who this overbearing person was, Tessa's voice, which sounded a little bitter, echoed again.

"As for who that person is, I'm sorry but I can't say it."

Stumped for words, Scott didn't know what he should say, and the atmosphere suddenly became pin-drop silent.

Sensing the awkwardness, Tessa changed the topic on purpose. "Mr. Brooks, will your performance this time be at the Wiener Musikverein?"

Surprised, he then chuckled. "Our director did want to perform there, but unfortunately, they didn't allow us the chance."

As she heard this, Tessa chuckled along, and she gave him words of encouragement. "Although there are no chances now, I believe that it won't take long for them to perform at the Wiener Musikverein with the Berlin Philharmonic's current achievements."

At her words, a longing look appeared in Scott's eyes. Not only was the Wiener Musikverein Robert's target, but it was also his. Or perhaps, it was the target of all musicians. After all, it was a well-known fact for every musician that only after standing on the Wiener Musikverein stage would it be their first step to fame.

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"May your words come true." Then, snapping back to reality, Scott passed a ticket to Tessa, smiling as he invited her. "This is the ticket to our performance. I hope to see you on that day."

Taking the ticket, she broke into a smile. "Thank you. I'll definitely be there."

Seeing the pretty smile on her face, Scott was in a daze for a second but quickly jolted back to his senses and hurriedly kept his gaze away. Then, picking up his coffee, he took a sip to hide his gaffe earlier.

Meanwhile, Tessa didn't realize that he was behaving out of the norm as she kept the ticket properly away in her usual handbag, and when she was done, Scott had already recovered.

Rubbing the rim of his coffee mug, he asked, "Why did you come to Vienna, Miss Reinhart?"

"I'm planning to further my studies at a music school here." As she felt that there was nothing to hide, she told him the real reason.

Astonished, he asked, "Why the sudden decision to further your studies? I've never heard you mention anything about it before."

A bitter look flashed past Tessa's eyes for a split second as she heard his question. Then, she lowered her gaze and gave her coffee a gentle stir, saying softly, "Actually, it's not sudden because I wanted to do this a long time ago. Unfortunately, many things happened back home, preventing me from doing so. So, to maintain my family's livelihood, I could only give up on the idea temporarily. However, things are different now. I don't have to worry over my brother any longer, and the situation at home is well at hand. So, it's only natural that I decided to make plans for myself this time."

After she finished speaking, she took in a deep breath and looked up at him with a smile.

Looking into her bright, dark eyes, he was stunned momentarily but later nodded in agreement. "You're right. It's time you make plans for yourself."

Grinning, Tessa took another sip of coffee, and they started chatting about their shared interest, which was music. Since it was a topic that the both of them enjoyed, they were very engrossed, and it was already evening before they realized it.

Scott gazed at her and extended his invitation with a gentle look in his eyes. "I wonder if I have the honor of inviting you for dinner tonight, Miss Reinhart."

After he had a conversation with her for half the day, his admiration for her had grown greater. Even though she was still somewhat lacking in music theory, he was sure that she would become an accomplished violinist in time, given her talent.

Not knowing that he thought so highly of her, Tessa blinked playfully at him and jokingly said, "It's my honor that a future violinist is buying me dinner."

Scott couldn't help but chuckle. Then, he brought her to a high-end Western restaurant. Whilst having their meal, they chatted happily in a harmonious atmosphere.

Later, when they were finished with dinner, as Scott still had to practice for the performance, they didn't make any more plans. Finally, he returned to the hotel after sending Tessa back to her apartment.

In Southend's Regal Gardens, the doorbell rang after Timothy hung up from a call with Tessa. When he opened the door and saw the person standing outside, he couldn't help but look shocked.

"Greg, why are you here?" he asked, glancing behind Gregory but he saw no one else. In that instant, he knew that Gregory had come here alone again.

Immediately, a disapproving look appeared on his face. “Greg, didn’t I already tell you that you shouldn’t go places by yourself because there are a lot of bad guys out there?”

“Mr. Timothy, I didn’t come alone. The driver dropped me here, and Daddy knows about it as well,” Gregory explained, tugging the hem of Timothy’s shirt.

Hearing that, Timothy breathed a sigh of relief and let Gregory into the house. Then, after placing a glass of water in front of him, he asked, “Why are you here at such a late hour?”

“Mr. Timothy, I don’t understand a part of the program you taught me before, so I came here to ask you.”

Even though that was what he said, his eyes which were scanning around the room, betrayed him. After looking around, he didn’t see Tessa anywhere, and his eyes couldn’t hide the disappointment he was feeling.

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Pretending not to see his indiscrete actions, Timothy asked, “Which part don’t you understand?”

“Uh, this part.” Then, he took out a notebook from his little backpack, carelessly flipped to a page, and pointed to a spot.

While Timothy checked the notebook, Gregory fixed his eyes again on Tessa’s tightly shut bedroom door. *Why isn’t Miss Tessa out yet? Didn’t she hear my voice?*

Half an hour passed by, and Timothy stopped his explanation and turned to look at the distracted Gregory, asking, “Do you understand it now?”

Snapped back to his senses, Gregory nodded sheepishly. “I got it, Mr. Timothy.”

Nodding, Timothy chose not to expose him. “It’s late. I’ll send you home,” he said, placing his notebook into the backpack before he stood up to send him off.

Unwittingly, Gregory started to become anxious because he deliberately used learning as an excuse to visit Tessa, but he didn’t even get to see her at all.

At the thought of this, he couldn’t help but ask, “Mr. Timothy, I’ve been here for so long, but why didn’t Miss Tessa even come out to see me?”

Seeing the eagerness in Gregory's eyes, Timothy felt a little sorry, but when he recalled Tessa's reminder, he toughened his heart and said, "My sister has gone to sleepover at a friend's place."

Gregory was taken aback, "So, Miss Tessa isn't coming back tonight?"

"Yeah, she won't be back," Timothy answered with a nod.

The light in Gregory's eyes dimmed immediately after he heard that, and he hung his head with an unmistakable look of disappointment. "I haven't seen Miss Tessa for so many days, and I really, really miss her."

Since Timothy didn't know how he could comfort Gregory, he merely ruffled his dark hair gently and stayed by his side silently. Just then, the doorbell rang again, and when Timothy opened the door, he saw Nicholas dressed in a tailored black suit outside his door. His well-sculptured face was wearing an aloof expression.

"I'm here to pick up Greg," he said, peering past Timothy and straight into the living room.

There was no one else besides Gregory in the living room, and Nicholas' brows furrowed inscrutably. Finally, he said, "Come home with me, Greg," in his usual calm tone.

"Okay," Gregory replied as he trodded lifelessly to the door. Nicholas narrowed his eyes a little; Gregory would only have such a bleak look when he didn't get to see Tessa.

"Are you home alone? Where's your sister?" he asked casually.

"She's not home," Timothy answered and told him the same excuse he used on Gregory earlier.

Nicholas didn't think too much about it and left with Gregory.

In the next few days, Gregory would come every single day to look for Tessa using learning as the excuse. However, he didn't get to see her even once, to his dismay. And every single time, Timothy would tell him that she was staying over at a friend's place.

Once or twice was fine, but when the excuse was used too often, not only was Gregory suspicious, but even Nicholas became dubious. He had investigated Tessa before, and he knew very well that this woman didn't have many friends in Southend. So, how could she stay at someone else's place for so many days?

Wait a minute... Is she avoiding us? As Nicholas came to an epiphany, his face turned grim as he was seated on a genuine leather office chair.

Suddenly, it came into his mind that during the past few days when he went to Tessa's place, besides the fact that she wasn't around, even a lot of her possessions were missing as well! Shocked, he concluded. *No, Tessa isn't just out of the house. She isn't living in the house at all!*

At this thought, he quickly contacted Edward. "Within an hour, I want to know Tessa's whereabouts for the past few days," he said, his voice interspersed with anger.

On the other end of the line, Edward heard the displeasure in his tone and immediately ordered someone to check up on it, thinking that something had happened to Tessa.

An hour later, he read the information in his hand in shock.

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Edward didn't imagine that Tessa had left the country a week ago and even settled down abroad. Nevertheless, he hurriedly sent the information packet to Dynasty Gardens, not daring to withhold the information.

Nicholas sat at the desk dressed in casual home attire in the black and white minimalist study, emanating an ominous air around him.

"Where's she? Did you find her?"

Sensing the pressure in the air, Edward immediately reported the results of his investigations respectfully. "I found her. Miss Reinhart bought a ticket and left the country a week ago."

As soon as he said that, the temperature in the room dropped a few degrees lower, and as expected, Nicholas' face was terrifyingly solemn. *Great, just great*, he thought sarcastically. *This woman actually left without a word!*

Edward asked cautiously, peering at his boss, who had an unusually glum look on his face, "President Sawyer, should I bring Miss Reinhart back?"

"For what?!" Nicholas snapped, his voice filled with anger as he cast an icy stare toward Edward.

Secretly, Edward sulked, thinking, *You'll still have to get her back in a couple of days' time. After all, Young Master Gregory can't do without Miss Reinhart.*

Speaking of the devil, Gregory pushed the door open with red-rimmed eyes. At first, he wanted to look for Nicholas to help him think of a way to meet

Tessa. However, he didn't expect to overhear the news that she had already left the country instead.

"Daddy, is Miss Tessa not coming back anymore?" He gripped his pajamas mournfully and started to whimper as he said, "Am I not going to see her again in the future?"

Nicholas kept quiet, unsure of what he should say, and Gregory understood the look in his eyes. Then, in an instant, he started bawling. "Why did Miss Tessa leave? Is it because I'm not a good boy? Daddy, will you get her back for me? Please?"

The way he twitched and jerked while crying looked so heartbreaking that Edward couldn't bear it and hurriedly crouched down. While wiping his tears away, he assured him, "Young Master Gregory, maybe Miss Reinhart went abroad because of

some business and would be back after a few days."

As soon as Gregory heard that, only then did he try his best to stop his cries. "Hic... Really? Will she be back after a few days?"

Even though he was asking Edward, his tear-filled eyes glanced over at Nicholas seated at the desk.

Realizing this, Edward turned to look at his boss as well, squinting at Nicholas in hopes that he wouldn't expose his white lie from earlier. However, Nicholas ignored him entirely and kept his eyes on the pitiful Gregory as his heart filled with

resentment and anger at Tessa, who left without a word.

A few years ago, she abandoned her son because of money, and she's still the same a few years later! This woman is just as heartless as she was before.

"Daddy..." Gregory cried when Nicholas didn't answer him for a long time.

Then, meeting Gregory's eyes, Nicholas was soft-hearted for a split second. Still, he finally steeled his heart and warned strictly, "You're not allowed to think about Tessa Reinhart and you're also forbidden to go to their place to look for Timothy Reinhart from now on."

Stunned, Gregory cried and yelled angrily, "Daddy's a meanie! You can't stop me from seeing Miss Tessa. I want her and I don't want to be separated from her."

After saying that, he turned around and dashed off. He wanted to find Tessa and didn't want to be with his mean father.

"Gregory Sawyer, stay right there!" Nicholas shouted loudly.

Unfortunately, Gregory didn't care and dashed out of sight. Nicholas chased after him with a stone-cold face with an air of fury surrounding him. Noticing the situation spiraling out of control, Edward followed behind closely.

After they came out of the study, Nicholas saw Gregory making a scene, crying as he ran for the main doors. Then, he immediately ordered the servants, "Stop Young Master Gregory!"

The second he said that, servants from all sides lunged forward and surrounded Gregory

"Go away, all of you! I want to look for Miss Tessa," Gregory bawled, shoving the servants in his path.

Despite his efforts, he was too young and too weak to shove them aside. At that moment, he knew it was a futile effort and that he couldn't leave on his own without help.

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Abruptly, Gregory turned around. Then, feeling heartbroken and angry, he shouted at Nicholas, "Bad Daddy! I hate you!"

As soon as these words left his lips, Gregory rushed to the second floor like a tornado. Then, he returned to his room and slammed the door hard.

Bang! The whole second floor shook like an earthquake had taken place.

Nasty was not enough to describe the sullen look on Nicholas' face. There was even a feeling of helplessness in his heart.

At that moment, Nicholas knew very well that his relationship with Gregory, which took much effort to become somewhat of a father and son again, would return to square one after today. But, even so, he did not regret it at all. I will never allow anyone to harm Greg! Even if that person is his biological mother!

"President Sawyer—" Edward wanted to say something. However, he was interrupted by Nicholas before he could finish his sentence.

“You have no business here. Leave.”

Looking at the glacial look on Nicholas’ face, Edward could only bite back the words that he was about to say. Then, he nodded and left.

“In the future, Greg is not allowed to go out without my permission.”

After giving his order, Nicholas also turned around and went back to his study.

Two days later, Timothy realized that Gregory had not shown up for several days. And thus, he vaguely figured out a few things. That night, Timothy told Tessa about this matter when he was on a video call with her.

“Tess, President Sawyer seems to have noticed your departure. He didn’t let Greg come to find me these days.”

Upon hearing that, Tessa stayed silent for a moment. Later, with a hint of bitterness in her smile, she said softly, “It’s fine even if Greg didn’t show up. After all, we’re from two different worlds. They are bound to simply be passers-by in our lives.”

Timothy quietly looked at Tessa on the screen. I can sense the reluctance in Tess’ words. It’s just that I have no idea why she insisted on leaving. But since Tess doesn’t want to talk about it, I won’t push for answers until she’s ready to talk about it herself.

As he thought about that, Timothy changed the subject. He asked Tessa about the progress of her college application.

“Tess, have you successfully registered for college?”

In the past few days, Tessa had been applying for enrolment into Vienna Conservatory. It was just that the progress was not looking well. The college admission qualification in Vienna was challenging to obtain. Tessa had been running around places for so many days but still couldn’t make heads or tails of everything during that process.

In actuality, she felt somewhat frustrated with her lack of progress. However, in order to not worry Timothy, she pretended to be okay. “I’m still waiting for the news, but I’ll find a way. So, you don’t have to worry about me.”

Seeing that Tessa was looking confident, Timothy did not say anything. Instead, he chatted about some family affairs.

It was some time later when the call was finally over. As Tessa held the phone, the smile on the corners of her lips slipped off her face as she returned to the bedroom.

After that, Tessa threw herself on the bed. She stared at the ceiling above her head, feeling lost and miserable. Right now, her mood was very down. She was feeling down not only due to the college affairs. However, it was more because she had a hunch that this time, she might never cross paths with Nicholas and Gregory ever again in the future once she parted with them.

“Greg must be sad,” Tessa whispered sadly. Her heart throbbed in pain as her mind was full of Gregory’s reluctant look when parting with her every time. As for a particular callous guy, Tessa decisively chose to forget about him.

The atmosphere in the room fell into somber silence. Tessa did not know how long the time had passed when the phone that she had left aside rang, breaking the silence.

Grabbing her phone, Tessa checked who the caller was. She was a little surprised when she found out it was a call from Scott. Logically speaking, tomorrow is the performance day for Scott and his orchestra band. They should be rehearsing at this hour. Why does he still have time to call me at this hour?

Feeling perplexed, Tessa answered the phone, “Mr. Brooks, is something the matter?”

“Miss Reinhart, I might need your help with something. The assistant concertmaster of our orchestra was temporarily unable to perform due to a car accident. Unfortunately, the orchestra could not find a replacement for the time being. So, I recommended you to Mr. Miller. Since this is a rare opportunity, do you want to come and give it a whirl?” Scott told Tessa the whole story.

As Tessa listened, her heart was pounding. Once, I had practiced the notes on the music sheets day and night just to be able to perform as an assistant concertmaster. But an accident occurred when I was one step closer to achieving my goal, and the position of the assistant concertmaster that I had earned through blood, sweat, and tears was given to someone else.

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Although it had been a long time since the incident, Tessa had always regretted it in her heart. At that moment, she wanted to promise Scott out of impulse. However, her pragmatism held her back.

Tessa hesitated for a split second. Then, she politely declined, “Mr. Brooks, I’ll definitely help if it’s another position in the orchestra. However, I may not be able to help you if it’s the position of an assistant concertmaster. I have no experience performing as an assistant concertmaster, and I have no experience collaborating with the others in the orchestra. So I’m afraid I’ll only hold you guys back.”

“Every musician accumulates their experiences performance after performance. And if you don’t come and try it out, how will you know that you won’t collaborate well with us?”

Unwilling to give up, Scott continued to persuade Tessa, “Besides, there will be many orchestra leaders among the guests who will come and watch the performance tomorrow night. If your talent got scouted by them and they put primary focus on your training, you would be able to spare yourself five years’ worth of struggle!”

“Let me think about it again.” Tessa was a little tempted.

Sensing that Tessa was a little enticed, Scott continued persistently, “Also, Mr. Miller even recognizes the teachers of the Vienna Conservatory. Didn’t you say that you have been looking for admission qualifications? As long as you’re willing to help us, you may have a chance when the time comes.”

This time, Tessa had absolutely no reason to reject Scott’s offer. *These days, I have gone to many places for the sake of the admission qualifications. But I was left out in the rain. So now that I finally have an opportunity, it’s only natural for me to grab it.*

“Alright. I’ll try.”

After hanging up the phone, Tessa cleaned herself up and rushed to the studio temporarily rented by the Berlin Philharmonic.

Under the front desk lady’s guidance, Tessa arrived at the studio’s door. However, before she could knock on the door to enter, noises of arguments came from the ajar door.

“Mr. Miller, how can an unknown violinist be the assistant concertmaster of the orchestra at this hour? Isn’t this like ruining tomorrow’s performance?”

“I also disagree with this decision.”

“What’s more, we’ve been practicing day and night for these performances. We have already developed a tacit understanding. The violinist is an interim member. Can he collaborate well with us? Mr. Miller, I think we can’t let there be a flaw in the performance even if there’s no assistant concertmaster this time.”

At once, members of the Berlin Philharmonic expressed their dissenting opinions.

Robert kept listening to them silently. He waited until everyone finished expressing their opinions. Then, he turned to look at Scott. “You’re the one who recommended that violinist. So, what do you say?”

“I trust my friend. If everyone is unconvinced, you can all wait for my friend to come over and play a live performance. We shall let our skills speak for themselves!” Scott said with a determined voice as his dark eyes glanced at the band members.

Meanwhile, Tessa felt a little moved outside the door when she heard Scott standing up for her. *Since Mr. Brooks believes in me so much, I can't let him down.*

Tessa took a deep breath, knocked on the door, and entered. “Mr. Brooks, I'm not late, am I?”

Pretending she did not overhear the argument from earlier, Tessa carried the violin case on her back. She stood tall at the door. Her face without makeup was even more beautiful than the female band members adorned in makeup presently. Her looks amazed many people.

Scott was dazed for a moment. Then, he quickly snapped back to reality and smiled lightly. “No, you're not late. In fact, you came just in the nick of time.”

Upon hearing that, Tessa nodded. Then, she turned her gaze toward everyone else. She greeted Robert, “Mr. Miller, we meet again.”

Robert looked somewhat awkward. After all, they had parted on terrible terms not too long ago. He never thought that the ‘assistance’ that Scott invited was actually Tessa.

At this moment, the band members who were initially stunned also recognized Tessa. So, one by one, they started whispering.

“She's the ‘cavalry’ invited by Mr. Brooks? Is this a joke? How can a mere student be the assistant concertmaster?”

“No, I can't let Mr. Brooks act recklessly. He's going to ruin the performance.”

“Mr. Brooks, I don't agree if you let a student Mr. Miller expelled take over the position of an assistant concertmaster.”

“I don't agree either.”

The objections of the members of the Berlin Philharmonic continued to sound around the studio. However, neither Scott nor Robert said anything.

Tessa knew that they were waiting for her to deal with this matter. Immediately, she took off the violin case that she was carrying on her shoulder. Then, she scanned the agitated crowd indifferently.

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“I am aware that everyone has great doubts about my capability. So I’ll tell you what: I’ll play a song, and we’ll use our capabilities to prove everything! How about that?”

Upon hearing that, everyone gazed at one another in silence, and they agreed to Tessa’s proposal in the end.

After a few minutes, Tessa adjusted the strings and put the violin on her shoulders.

“Hey, look at the violin in her hand. Isn’t that Nirvana that Maestro Flores once used?” Someone recognized the violin in Tessa’s hand, and there was a sudden uproar.

“I hope this woman’s capability is worthy of the famous Nirvana violin.”

As Tessa listened to the discussion around her, her initially quiet heart gradually became tense. Finally, she took a deep breath as she tried to mute the surrounding sounds. Then, she began to pull the bow against the violin’s strings.

The piece that Tessa would be playing this time was ‘Violin Concerto in D major.’

Tessa knew that if she wanted these people to recognize her capability, she had to show them her skills. And ‘Violin Concerto in D major’ had very high requirements in terms of rhythm.

Accompanying the soft sound of the violin, the people who were previously discussing the matter of her ownership of such a famous violin immediately quieted down. Then, one by one, they closed their eyes and listened to her play.

Perhaps it was because of her nervousness that Tessa’s performance was not stable at first. Many people frowned, and some even looked derisive. Fortunately, Tessa did not see that. Otherwise, it would affect her performance even more.

Tessa, of course, also knew that she did not play well at the beginning. Therefore, she tried hard to adjust herself, while she played the piece. As she gradually got into a better headspace, the faces of the people who initially belittled her became serious. After all, to be an official member of the Berlin Philharmonic, every musician must have had the utmost talent in music.

As of this moment, they could all feel that Tessa’s musical talent was not inferior to any of theirs. On the contrary, even the emotions conveyed by Tessa’s musical sense were more powerful than theirs. The light and agile musical notes continued to sound in the studio, showing the fullest extent of cheerful, lively, and youthfulness.

As the song ended, Tessa let out a sigh of relief. Then, she put down her violin and bowed. “My performance is over.”

Clap! Clap! Scott was the first to clap in support. Then, the others came back to their senses and applauded her performance.

Listening to the round of applause, Tessa felt very relieved. *It seems like I've passed the challenge!*

After the applause ended, Scott left his remarks for Tessa's performance. "Compared to last time, your performance has improved a lot this time, especially emotionally. It feels complete this time."

"Really?" Tessa looked back at Scott in surprise. Then, the smile on her face became even brighter. Like a tiny flower blooming in spring, Tessa's dazzling smile made the others unable to take their eyes off her. Even Scott could not help but be mesmerized.

Meanwhile, Robert also made a decision. "I have decided that Tessa will take over the position of assistant concertmaster for tomorrow's performance."

At this moment, Tessa's black eyes burst into a pure brilliance and joy.

"Thank you, Mr. Miller!" Tessa excitedly thanked Robert.

"Don't mention it. Right now, time is money. You need to be familiarized with the repertoire by this afternoon and evening."

After Robert decided to hire Tessa, he arranged training for Tessa vigorously and resolutely. He did not let Tessa relax for even a minute.

For the next whole day and night, Tessa spent her time rehearsing.

In the luxurious president's office of the Sawyer Group, Nicholas, as usual, wore a black bespoke suit.

He was sitting at a large desk, and even so, one could still see his tall and straight body. At this moment, Nicholas' domineering aura filled the entire office.

When Edward knocked on the door and entered, he could feel the invisible pressure circulating in the air. He straightened his mind, walked to the center of the office, and respectfully reported to Nicholas, "President Sawyer, the latest partner for our

branch in Europe requested to meet you before they agree to sign the contract."

Nicholas frowned in displeasure. Noticing Nicholas' frown, Edward immediately explained to him, saying, "President Sawyer, he's a member of Asiatic Inc. He wants to meet you because he also knows a lot about your achievements, in the hope of making friends with you."

At the mention of that, Nicholas' expression relaxed. *The position of Asiatic Inc. in Europe is similar to Sawyer Group's position in Southend. Undoubtedly, befriending such people is very beneficial to our branch's development in Europe.*