

Always Been Yours Chapter 961-964

Chapter 961 Could It Be Richelle?

Tessa muttered under her breath as she recounted what happened recently, "If I have offended anyone, it's only Eunice. Did she steal my score?"

This idea had just formed in her mind when she immediately dismissed the thought. Even though Eunice was far from amicable toward her, Eunice was still a professional through and through.

Timothy pressed when he noticed the shift in Tessa's eyes, "Tess, do you have a suspect?" "No." She jerked back to her senses and shook her head.

He was clearly unconvinced as he insisted on an answer. Finally, out of wits, she told him about her conflict with Eunice. "Although she's not a likable person, I have faith in Miss Sofia's judgment. So, I don't think it's her."

Since that was her opinion, Timothy took her words as is. Despite that, he still had an awful impression of Eunice, and he couldn't help but think derisively, The nerve of this woman to seduce Nicholas!

When the call ended, Tessa palmed her phone as she furrowed her delicate brows in thought. As expected, she really couldn't think of anyone who would target her this way.

Just then, Nicholas came upstairs because she didn't return for breakfast for a long time, so he decided to check on her.

When he noticed that she was standing in the hallway, frowning deeply while rubbing her fingers against the screen of her phone thoughtfully, he couldn't help but go to her in concern. "What happened? What has upset you?"

Tessa didn't bother hiding anything, so she told him about her discussion with Timothy earlier. "Timothy said that the one who deleted the surveillance must be a highly-skilled hacker, but I couldn't think of anyone who would go through so much trouble just to steal something."

After Nicholas listened to her concerns, his eyes turned solemn. "It's alright. I also asked someone to look into this matter, and I believe we'll have answers soon. Let's have breakfast first. Aren't you going to the orchestra later?"

She nodded and followed him to the dining room.

Unbeknownst to them, they couldn't find any lead to the theft because Susan smartened up after faking her death. As she had previously been through a great deal of pain because of her carelessness, she wouldn't risk the same mistake that would lead the investigations back to her.

Hence, after she obtained the score, she asked her father to delete the surveillance so that even the best hacker wouldn't be able to recover it.

When Tessa was finished with breakfast, she brought Gregory to the orchestra while Nicholas went to the branch office.

Not long after he was deep in work, Edward knocked on his door and came in with a report. The instant he was done with his account, he heard Nicholas' usual dispassionate tone ring across the room, "I asked you to check up on that Vincent before. How are things going with that?"

"I was about to tell you," Edward answered and politely told him the results of his investigations. "I found out that Vincent was in contact with someone from Madam Tessa's orchestra band a few days ago."

Nicholas' face turned glacial when he heard that. "Who was it?"

"A violinist from Miss Sofia's Group Six, Richelle."

The name was not the least familiar to Nicholas, and he narrowed his eyes as he instructed, "Go and find out whether this person has any conflict with Tessa in the band."

Edward nodded affirmatively as he heeded Nicholas' instruction and left to make the necessary arrangements. That evening, Nicholas didn't bring this up immediately when he returned home. Instead, they enjoyed a pleasant dinner harmoniously as a family.

It wasn't until Tessa had coaxed Gregory to turn in for the night that he pulled her into his arms to tell her about this.

"I have some leads regarding the theft."

"Did you find out who did it?" Tessa gasped, turning to him in surprise.

Nicholas nodded and briefly told her about Edward's findings today.

"It's the violinist from Group Six of your band named Richelle. Do you know her?"

"I do know her."

Tessa pursed her lips when she heard the name. She had never imagined that the person who stole from her would be Richelle. Meanwhile, Nicholas could tell from her face that there was some hidden issue she had never told him of regarding this person.

"What's wrong?" he asked softly as he lowered his head to gaze at her in worry.

She knew he was just concerned, so she shook her head as she reassured him. "Actually, it's not anything important. It's just that Richelle desperately wants to be Miss Sofia's apprentice, and she has been working very hard to achieve that goal. But it seems that she didn't make the cut."

Chapter 962 What Richelle Did

Despite what she said, she still couldn't help but overthink the matter as her mind came up with several possibilities. Did Richelle do something like this because she resents me?

Little did she know that she had hit the bullseye for a part of it—Richelle really did despise her that much. However, as Sofia was too strict, she didn't dare to do anything until an evening a few days ago.

In the vast training room of Group Six, Richelle was the only one left still practicing. She had been practicing until late evening before she started packing her things away, and Susan appeared then.

"Richelle," she called, stopping Richelle before walking over to her.

Richelle's eyes flashed with befuddlement when she saw Susan since they weren't close, but she still stopped in her tracks and asked, "What's up?"

"Nothing. I just noticed that you're still around, so I thought to have a little chat with you." A scheming look flickered briefly in Susan's eyes as she chuckled softly. "Frankly, I think there's no need for you to practice so hard now. Miss Sofia has already accepted Tessa as her apprentice, and she probably won't accept anyone else for now."

Richelle scowled when she heard Susan's disparaging remark. One could say that Susan had stepped on Richelle's minefield when she said all those things.

Therefore, she snapped angrily, "What's it got to do with you whether I work hard or not?"

It didn't bother Susan one bit that Richelle was fuming mad because she had hit where it hurt. Instead, she merely smirked before saying suggestively, "This indeed has nothing to do with me, but I just feel so terrible for you. You've been in the band for a few years, and everyone knows you want to be Miss Sofia's student. Just when you thought that your dream was about to be realized, someone snatched it away from you just like that. Honestly, I applaud your good temperament. If I were in your shoes, I definitely wouldn't be able to take it lying down."

Actually, she deliberately said all of this just to incite Richelle. But then, as she considered how Richelle was now clearly foaming at the mouth to rip her head off, she successfully ignited Richelle's suppressed fury.

"What exactly are you trying to say?" Richelle balled her fists in outrage as she shot daggers with slightly reddened eyes at Susan.

Hence, Susan decided not to beat about the bush and said bluntly, "I know that you hate Tessa. However, if you would like to teach her a lesson, I can help you with that."

Richelle was taken aback as she blurted, "Why would you do that?"

Although it wasn't a lie that she would love to see Tessa disappear from her life, nothing in life was free. So it was only natural for her to regard Susan warily. She couldn't believe that someone would help her out of nowhere.

Susan undoubtedly noticed that Richelle had her guard up, and she chuckled lightly before saying mysteriously, "Just think of me as doing a good deed. Or maybe, you don't want to teach Tessa a lesson at all. If that's the case, then just forget about it."

After she said her piece, she pretended to leave. Then, just as she anticipated, Richelle's somewhat agitated voice echoed from behind her. "How are you planning to teach her a lesson?"

Clearly, Richelle was swayed by her words. With that thought in mind, Susan couldn't help the gleeful smirk that painted across her face when she heard Richelle's question due to the sheer delight that her plot had worked.

Nevertheless, when she twirled around, her face was wiped clean of all other emotions. She merely took out the sheet music which she had stolen from her handbag and passed it to Richelle.

Richelle gave her a puzzled look. "What's this?"

Susan plastered on a fake smile that didn't reach her eyes as she hinted, "I think Tessa dropped this by accident, and it seems very important to her..."

Although she didn't finish her sentence, Richelle already understood what she meant.

When Richelle considered her current position in the orchestra, where she was an easily replaceable piece while Tessa was the new rising star, she tightened her jaw and decided to bite the bullet.

The next day, she heard that Vernon was collecting scores in preparation for publishing a new song; she didn't hesitate to send the score to him without pausing to think about the consequences.

Honestly, she regretted it immediately after sending the score to Vernon.

For the past couple of days, there was quite a commotion in the band because Tessa had lost her score, and Sofia wanted to get to the bottom of this matter. As a result, Richelle was utterly terrified as she was worried that she would be sussed out almost instantly.

It was accurate to say that she had been going to the band fearfully for the past couple of days.

But Tessa didn't know about all this, and she was dispirited after she learned of the culprit's identity.

The following day, she brought Gregory to the band. When they arrived, she dropped him off at the training room but didn't plan to accompany him this time.

"Sweetheart, be good and practice alone for a bit. I have to look for Miss Sofia to settle some issues. I'll be back right after that, okay?"

Chapter 963 Do You Have Evidence?

"Okay. But you have to come back quickly, Mommy."

Gregory nodded obediently and walked into the training room with the violin on his back, and Tessa watched him until he started practicing before she turned to leave.

In the office, Sofia was a little surprised to see Tessa. "What brought you here?"

"My husband found the key person that stole my score," Tessa said honestly. Sofia had not a single shard of doubt at that. After all, with Nicholas' status, there was no reason for him to lie about this.

Sofia immediately kept her work away as she looked at Tessa sternly and asked gravely, "Who is it?" "Richelle," Tessa answered right away.

"It's her?" Sofia was taken aback when she heard the identity of the culprit responsible for such a heinous crime in the music industry. Clearly, she didn't expect that Richelle would do such a thing as she had a relatively good impression of the woman; Richelle was a rather gifted violinist and hard-working to boot.

Despite her disbelief, she instructed her assistant to bring Richelle over. Meanwhile, Richelle's heart almost leaped out of her throat, and it filled with anxiety when she heard that Sofia was looking for her. So, the instant she entered the office, panic swelled to insurmountable levels when she saw that Tessa was also in attendance.

Why is this woman here? Did Miss Sofia find out that it was me? Richelle thought in trepidation.

The more she dwelled on it, the more uneasy she became, but she tightened her fists and forced herself to calm down.

It didn't matter if they learned that she was the culprit; she couldn't afford to be all over the place at this crucial time.

Hence, she squashed all her emotions down her throat, lowered her eyes, stood in front of Sofia, and asked demurely, "Miss Sofia, why did you ask for me?"

When Sofia saw how earnest and docile she appeared, she really couldn't bring herself to believe that she was capable of something so vile.

"Do you know about the theft in the band recently?"

Richelle's heart skipped a beat, and she pursed her lips. "Yes."

"I heard that you met Vernon the other day," Sofia said, narrowing her eyes at Richelle with an unreadable expression.

On the other hand, Richelle's heart was hammering against her chest in fright, and she had never been this nervous in her life. She tightened her fists briefly and used the stinging pain to calm down. At that moment, countless thoughts flashed through her mind, but she finally decided to 'come clean'.

"Yes, I did because I know Vernon as a friend. So, I hung out with him for a chat."

She's still being stubborn, eh? Tessa thought when she heard her excuse.

Therefore, she interrogated Richelle mercilessly with a stony expression, "Was it only just a chat and nothing else?"

Richelle's heart shuddered at her sharp inquiry. Still, she shot Tessa a glance, feigning annoyance as she argued, "What are you implying, Miss Reinhart? Do you suspect me of stealing your score just because I was in contact with Vernon?"

Tessa huffed in anger at the sight of the self-righteous act the woman was pulling before her.

"No, I'm past being suspicious of you. I'm sure that you're the one who took my score!"

Her words sent a chill down Richelle's spine, and she swept her gaze over Sofia, who had a sullen look. Sofia's attitude made it clear that she wouldn't be interjecting in her conflict with Tessa. Finally, she decided not to admit to the theft no matter what, or else she wouldn't be able to bear the consequences.

"Miss Reinhart, you need to have proof for saying that. Do you have any proof to show that it's me?"

She glared at Tessa in frustration as though she had been framed and a victim as well. Frankly, if Tessa didn't have the necessary evidence at hand, she may have been fooled by Richelle's compelling act.

Tessa sneered as she retorted, "Since you want proof, I'll show you proof."

Then, she played the surveillance recording that Nicholas had obtained. The recording showed Richelle inviting Vernon privately and the process of their deal. As expected, Sofia looked grim after watching the recording, and she shot a sharp look at Richelle.

"What else do you have to say with the evidence here?"

Blood drained from Richelle's face, and her knees buckled, which resulted in her slumping down to the floor on her knees.

Never did she imagine that Tessa would come into possession of the recording of her deal with Vernon.

Finally, she snapped back to her senses as the pain in her knees registered and quickly begged for forgiveness tremulously, "I was wrong. I shouldn't have done something like this in a moment of folly."

Unfortunately, her pleas were not sufficient to appease Sofia's ire.

Chapter 964 Get Back the Score

"What has Tessa ever done to you? Why did you do this?!" Sofia questioned in a deep, imposing voice. Tessa also turned to stare at Richelle in disgruntlement. She, of all people, wanted to know just why this woman would do such a thing.

Richelle felt so wronged and upset under their sharp, piercing gaze that she simply blurted all the dissatisfaction she had bottled up inside her.

"I did this because I admire you very much and want to be your student, but you didn't have any thoughts of making me your student." She sobbed, choked on her tears as though she was the victim, and whined, "I know that you have high expectations, and maybe I have yet to reach your requirements. For the past couple of years, I've been practicing so hard, but you still didn't pay any attention to me and even accepted Tessa as your last apprentice. I'm jealous of that and slowly began to resent her, so I..."

Tessa was dumbfounded when she heard Richelle's complaints and felt that this disaster had descended upon her out of nowhere.

Sofia felt equally conflicted as she didn't think that Richelle would go to such extremes just because she didn't accept her as her student. Therefore, she set her sights on Tessa and brazenly took revenge on her instead.

At this moment, she was so overwhelmed with disappointment that she could only say, "Although I do look at talent when I accept an apprentice, there are also other factors, such as a musician's intuition."

In other words, she never had and would never consider Richelle as a possible candidate to be her apprentice. When Richelle understood this, she was even more inconsolable.

"However, this isn't an excuse for you to steal someone's work, and you even sold it off. This isn't just a misdemeanor due to a burst of impulsiveness, but a matter of character!" Sofia continued sharply, and Richelle gave her a hurt look. Nevertheless, Sofia ignored her and said sternly, "I want you to apologize to Tessa now. Otherwise, I would have to ask you to leave. My band cannot accommodate someone with such a foul character!"

Richelle's face turned stark white, and because the last thing she wanted was to be fired from the band, she eventually chose to apologize. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have sold your music to someone else because I was jealous of you."

Richelle appeared very pathetic, with her head hung low and her shoulders hunched, but Tessa didn't have any sympathy for her. In her opinion, Richelle had brought this upon herself.

So, she decided to accept her apology, albeit with a condition as she replied coldly, "Although I accept your apology, you'll have to get my sheet music back if you want to put an end to this matter."

After all, this sheet music was her gift to Nicholas, and she didn't want anyone to misuse it.

A perplexed look washed over Richelle's face at her words because she knew Vernon's character. It was literally impossible to retrieve the sheet music back from a person like him.

Regardless, before she could say anything, Sofia also voiced her agreement over such a decision, "Since Tessa had already said that, get the sheet music back, and we'll sweep this issue under the rug."

Because of Sofia, Richelle could only bite the bullet and agree. So then, on the very same afternoon, she made a trip to Vernon's studio.

"So, you want me to remove my new song and return the original score to you?" Vernon repeated in the reception room as though he couldn't believe what he had just heard.

Richelle, seated on a couch across from him, nodded without any confidence. "That's right."

"Are you kidding me, missy? You're the one who gave that score to me. What makes you think I should give it back to you now?" Vernon pointed out with a look of ridicule. "In addition, if I remove my song now, that's as good as admitting that I stole it."

A dumbfounded Richelle didn't know how to refute him, so she could only say doggedly, "But you're not the one who composed this song, to begin with."

"So what? It's fine as long as I hold all of its rights," Vernon retorted nonchalantly. "I don't care how you got your hands on this music score and what complications it has caused you. All of that is unrelated to me."

Those words were as good as saying that he would definitely not return this sheet music.

After Richelle heard his shameless proclamation, no words could describe how much regret she currently felt. If she had known this, she wouldn't have handed the score to this guy.

Despite that, the most important thing now was to get the score back. "Aren't you worried that our band will pursue you for plagiarizing?"

She tried using the band's reputation in an attempt to make Vernon budge.