

## Chapter 104

### Aren't You Afraid Now That Our Relationship Is Public Knowledge

The reason being—the vice president of Miller Corp informed Zane that Edward had already sealed the deal with Miles Conglomerate. He also relayed their conversation to Zane.

On the other hand, there was a lot that Edward didn't speak to Miles about regarding the content of Zane's article. He only mentioned some of the inconsequential parts regarding Stella, which could easily be dismissed as a minor love affair. The other more serious incident that Zane had mentioned, however, had to do with Jasmine.

According to him, Miles was a f\*ckboy who caused a girl who had deep feelings for him to be left with a permanent disability. The revelation caused an uproar, and the press were soon gathered at the hospital that Jasmine was in.

Miles didn't know Jasmine was transferred to Murdough. Besides, he had just kickstarted his branch office, so he was working around the clock. Thus, he didn't have time to do anything about the rumors.

On the other hand, none of the business journalists were interested in Jasmine's story; only the entertainment journalists were concerned with it.

The fact that the press started bugging Jasmine wasn't within Kevin's expectations when he first planned to transfer her to a hospital in Murdough. His intention was similar to Zane's—to keep Stella away from Miles, as Jasmine would be heartbroken otherwise. However, things had gone off track, which caused him to berate Zane.

Kevin and Yulia were the ones who planned to transfer Jasmine to Murdough. While he assumed that he might be able to get something out of it, he seemed to be the sole loser. Although the situation was giving him a headache, he couldn't tell anybody about it.

Zane's plan wasn't only to avenge himself for losing the contract, for he had a second goal—to separate Stella and Miles. The last time when Stella was hospitalized, he bumped into Miles dropping by to visit her. Miles' condescending attitude toward him irked him then. And now that they moved Jasmine to Murdough...

Although he was hoping that Stella would relay the news to Miles, she was quite wary of the whole thing, having avoided the mistake either due to her smarts or out of sheer luck. Since Stella was still unwell, he was willing to bet that Miles would never let her go to Murdough, considering the fact that he fancied her.

Therefore, he sent Stella a text, informing her that someone made a bet with Miles regarding her. If she went to Murdough, Miles would be able to secure the contract, but would lose it if she didn't. Now, the ball was in her court.

When Stella received the message, she was working on a blueprint in the studio. Pacing around in the room, she wondered why Zane would send her that text. Thus, she texted Miles. 'Do you need me to go to Murdough?'

'Everything is settled, so you should focus on nursing your health.' He texted back.

Stella couldn't shake the feeling that Jasmine's sudden transfer had something to do with Zane. However, she didn't know how it played into his scheme. Eventually, she decided not to go to Murdough.

The collaboration between Miles Conglomerate and Miller Corp was a major event. Therefore, Nancy told the shopkeeper about it when she dropped by Stella's shop, who in turn reported back to Stella. The news was unsettling, so she decided to send one of her shopkeepers undercover to the ball, who would be keeping in touch with Stella throughout the process via a video call.

During the ball, Stella kept a close eye on what was going on. Although she couldn't stop coughing, she made sure to not let any detail, as well as every guest that attended the event, escape her notice. Miles was in a light gray suit when he entered the venue with a crowd behind him. Among them were women who practically had their eyes glued to him, which Stella noticed.

Then, he shook hands with a man, whom the shopkeeper introduced to her as Edward Miller, the president of Miller Corp. Stella nodded upon being informed of the man's identity. After hearing Edward's measurements multiple times from Nancy, she finally got to see him.

When the ball began, a lot of women approached Miles for a dance. He was gentlemanly and polite, which reassured Stella. Unbeknownst to anyone, a reporter from a tabloid managed to sneak into the venue, blurting out a question as soon as he saw Miles. "Mr. Grant, this is a photo that we took of Jasmine Moore at the hospital. Why do you get to attend this ball guilt-free despite being a heartless rat, as well as the reason she was gravely injured back then?"

Miles wore a frown upon hearing that question. On the other hand, Stella finally obtained the final piece of the puzzle. Kevin chose to inform her instead of Miles about Jasmine's transfer as he didn't want to tip Miles off in fear of him being alerted of the plot.

So this is what it is! However, it's also fortunate that Miles has yet to know of Jasmine's transfer. No longer able to sit around idly, she decided she would catch a flight to Murdough immediately.

Stella asked the shopkeeper who she sent undercover when the ball would end. She was informed that there wasn't a set time, but in order to make sure that everybody got to have fun, it would most probably last around four to five hours. The shopkeeper inquired if Stella would like to come, even volunteering to request for the ball to be extended with Nancy if she needed more time. With that, she gave Matthew a call to tell him of her plans to go to Murdough, as well as asking him to come along.

"Are you doing this for Miles?" Matthew asked.

There was a moment's pause before she hummed in the affirmative.

"If so, I'll book the flight tickets now, and we should be able to arrive at Murdough in a little more than an hour. Are you in a hurry?"

Stella hummed again. Later on, they met up at the airport. After boarding the plane, she queried if Matthew informed Miles of Jasmine's transfer.

"No. I had a feeling that the fact that Kevin came to you instead of Miles was rather fishy."

Upon hearing that, Stella heaved a sigh before going on to ponder the possible outcome of the incident. Miles has been busy with work in Murdough during the past few days. The signing of the contract alone entailed a string of tasks that he would have to complete. Therefore, he won't be able to make time to visit Jasmine even if he knows she is in Murdough. In turn, the press would paint him as a cold-blooded man. All these constitute Miles being shown in a bad light.

Stella also acknowledged that what Zane texted her was no lie. It was, in fact, a means to infuriate her, but she knew not his reasons. Fortunately, she still had Matthew with her, from whom she could get a second opinion.

Upon their arrival at the venue of the ball, she changed into the gown she brought with her in a hurry. Then, Matthew told her, "Remember to call me in case of an emergency."

Stella hummed in agreement before saying, "I'm feeling rest assured since you're here."

Her response caught him off guard. After all he had been through with her, he decided he would be content maintaining a friendly relationship with her. He would be content even if he couldn't be her lover. Then, he entered the venue with a smile on his face.

When he stepped into the venue, Yulia was inviting Miles to a dance, while the latter was hesitant to accept the invitation. When he saw Matthew, he brushed past Yulia to walk up to Matthew, as he had a hunch that he wouldn't have come alone. "Since you're here, where is she?"

As soon as he said that, he turned to look in the direction of the entrance. At the entrance stood none other than Stella, who was in a dark green gown. She didn't have time to do her hair, so she allowed it to cascade down her back. Due to her recent illness, she seemed a little haggard, but her eyes were as bright as ever.

Meanwhile, Yulia's face was drained of color. Her role in the convoluted plan was to work with Zane. First, they had Jasmine transferred to Murdough without Miles' knowledge. She had predicted Stella's decision to not inform Miles of Jasmine's transfer. Then, Zane relayed what the vice president of Miller Corp told him to Stella.

Other than that, Stella was quite ill, so she was on medication for a whole month, which should by right give Yulia the opportunity to post a video of her dancing with Miles at the ball in order to be used as material for a scandal. However, her plan was thwarted by Stella's presence. I never expected to make a mistake in the final stages of my plan! Yulia gritted her teeth in frustration.

While Stella was walking up to Miles, she garnered the attention of the crowd with her unique temperament and gorgeous looks. All the while, the reporter had been staring at her. As an entertainment journalist, he knew who she was. In fact, he had been investigating her ever since Zane's article was published. Things are going to get interesting now that the female lead is here.

Immediately, he walked up to her before throwing her a question. "Miss Johansson, your relationship with Mr. Grant is now public knowledge. What do you think of the fact that he never paid Jasmine Moore a visit in the hospital?"

In the meantime, Stella was gazing at Miles and vice versa. They locked eyes across the crowd between them. "Due to Miles' busy schedule, I have yet to inform him of Jasmine's transfer in fear of distracting

him. However, a friend of mine already handled all the necessary procedures for the transfer. Besides, Miles also wished for Jasmine to receive the best treatment possible. That's all I will say."

With that, Stella went to Miles eagerly, as if they hadn't seen each other for a long while. After all, absence made the heart grow fonder. On the other hand, Miles felt his mood brighten up when Stella gradually closed the distance between them. Extending his arm, he pulled her over to start dancing with her.

"Aren't you feeling unwell? Why did you come all the way to Murdough?" Miles lowered his gaze at her. Her mentioning his name earlier already did enough to distract him. He didn't ask how she got to know what had transpired, as he knew he would have time for that later.

For now, he was bewitched by her shoulder and collarbone, which led to him burying his face in her shoulder to sniff at her fragrant scent. "After you made your appearance here, not only all of Hollowcrest City, but all of Murdough will know of our relationship. Aren't you scared?" he inquired.

"I wasn't thinking. I came because I know this is a trap."

Miles said nothing in response.

At a dark corner somewhere else in the ball, Matthew was watching them. The sight of the lovely couple enjoying themselves on the dance floor was pleasing, or at least, he thought he should be happy for them.

A while later, Edward and Nancy came along to greet Stella, who definitely stole the limelight. "You must be Miss Johansson! My wife was telling me that you're acquaintances."

"That's true." Stella chuckled.

After the ball ended, Stella changed out of her gown backstage and back into her normal summer clothes. However, she was already used to wearing fashionable clothing. The lengthy fabric and high heels she wore gave her an otherworldly look. Then, she walked up to Yulia, who had been putting on a nonchalant look. She invited the latter to keep her company on her way home, all the while deciding to feign ignorance over Yulia's schemes.