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Julius, who hadn't gotten a reply from Elise for a long time, continued, "Whatever it is, I'm glad I got to witness the day you re-enter the music scene. I also listened to your song with Jack Griffith. The style of the song is marvelous, and your talent is as good as before without the slightest hint of wavering. If you are willing to return to this circle one day in the future, I will definitely stand behind you and support you till the end."

Elise smiled happily after hearing what Julius said. "Thank you!" "Remember, you're not alone—there are countless people behind you who support you, and they have been waiting for you. No matter how long, they will always wait for you. Okay?" Elise hummed in reply and hung up the phone. Even she herself was not sure when she would completely reconcile with her past self, but she hoped that that day wouldn't be too far away. Jack's new song was really popular—crazily popular.

No matter where one was, one could hear the familiar melody ringing in their ears: On the subway, in the park, on the bus, and even on campus radio... The popularity of this song was unprecedented, and it went viral. Even Alexander played it on loop dozens of times at once before he finally said, "It really is H's style—she's really back." Cameron also knew that Alexander liked H's music. He previously kept H's albums in the drawer of the office, so he naturally understood Alexander's excitement.

"I bet we will be able to hear a lot of H's new songs in the future." Alexander hummed a reply, seemingly in a good mood. "I hope so too." After he finished speaking, he looked at the time—it was almost 5.00PM. He remembered that Jack was supposed to pick Elise up today, so he simply took the car key and went out. "I have to go somewhere later. Cancel all my meetings in the evening." Cameron quickly replied with an 'Okay' and watched Alexander walk into the elevator.

After classes ended in the afternoon, Elise walked to the gate as usual, but after searching for a long time, she could not find Jack's car, so she called Jack. "Jack, when are you coming to pick me up?" "I'm busy with my schedule and will be a few minutes late. Can you wait for me at the gate for a bit?"

Jack's tone was a little impatient. If it wasn't for Jonah's forced request, he wouldn't want to pick up Elise at all. Now, he had no choice—even if his schedule was packed, he still had to pick her up on time. Elise pursed her lips and said, "Got it." With that, she hung up the phone before waiting for Jack's reply. After all, she was not in a hurry, so she walked over to the gate and sat alone on the stool. After a while, a familiar Maybach stopped by, and the window slid down, revealing Alexander's face.

"Elise Sinclair." Hearing someone calling her name, Elise raised her eyes subconsciously and saw Alexander. This surprised her. "Why are you here?" Alexander then asked, "Where's Jack? Not here yet?" Elise shook her head. "I

guess it will take a while more." Alexander said directly, "Then get in the car. I'll take you home." Elise hurriedly opened the car door and got into the car. At this moment, Jack also arrived.

He saw Alexander first and took the initiative to say hello to him. "Alex!" However, just when he made a sound, the eyes of many people around looked over, and after discovering that it was Jack, all of them seemed to have gone crazy as they rushed up to him immediately. "Jack Griffith! It's really you, Jack! Oh, my God! I'm in the presence of Jack Griffith!" "Ahhh! Jack, can you sign my..." When he noticed that he had been recognized by fans, Jack quickly opened the door to Alexander's car and got in.

"Alex, drive!" Alexander started the car and drove out just to get rid of the swarming fans. Jack looked back, and after seeing that the fans did not manage to follow, he was finally relieved. "Thank God you were here, Alex. If we ended up being surrounded by those fans, I don't know when you'd be able to escape." Alexander looked at him. "You've become quite popular lately, huh?" Jack sighed. "Man, I'm so tired. There are more than a dozen meetings arranged on my schedule in a day, and a lot of business performances as well.

I'm exhausted! Oh! How about this, Alex—when it's my turn to pick up Elise another day, can you just do it in my stead please?" Alexander did not refuse and simply replied, "Sure." Jack looked happy from hearing Alexander's answer. "Really? Thank you so much." Immediately, Jack looked at Elise again. "Elise, you have to forgive me. I'm really busy, so I'll have Alex pick you up for me, and we'll discuss other arrangements later when I'm done with all this work on my schedule."

Elise agreed. After all, it didn't make any difference who came to pick her up. Immediately after, Alexander uttered, "Your new song is good. I heard H wrote it for you." Jack knew that Alexander liked H's songs, and he was even considered H's partial fan at one point, so he quickly said, "Actually, I'm not exactly clear about this either. I don't even know H, and we don't have any acquaintances in common that I know of.

It's just a friend of mine who knew H and asked her to do me this favor." Jack was telling the truth, but Elise still silently lowered her head and said nothing. Alexander nodded in understanding and continued to drive. Jack hurriedly leaned forward. "Alex, if you really like H, I can ask my friend to help you play cupid and let you two meet—I heard that H is a beautiful woman; maybe she doesn't have a boyfriend yet.

How about you tie her down and make her my sister-in-law?" As soon as Jack said what he said, Alexander floored the brakes. This caused serious friction between the tires and the road, and the three of them flung forward because of inertia. "Alex, I was just saying this casually. You don't have to be this excited," Jack said with a sullen face, but Alexander replied sternly, "Don't ever talk about this kind of thing again.

I just appreciate H's talent in music. Liking her songs has nothing to do with my personal feelings." Alexander spoke while the corner of his eyes glanced at Elise in the back seat. He didn't even understand why he was so nervous, but he was

afraid that Elise would misunderstand. Seeing that Alexander was being so serious, Jack retracted the mocking smile on his face and quickly explained, "Alex, it's just a joke, okay?"

Alexander's expression turned brighter, and then he continued to drive. "But Alex, you haven't been with anyone for so many years. I'm almost doubting your sexual orientation. Or... do you like men?" Alexander's face sank again, and he shot over with cold eyes. "You seem to be very talkative today."

Feeling a dangerous aura, Jack shook his head quickly. "Hey, hey, hey. I'm just curious; that's all. There is absolutely no other meaning..." However, Alexander's expression still did not improve in the slightest. Jack instantly knew that he had caused a disaster, so he went on to say, "Alex, your sexual orientation is not a problem.

I'm the problem here. I talk too much..." "Shut up," Alexander scolded coldly. However, the next second, Elise couldn't help but burst out laughing, and the two of them looked at her in unison. Elise looked up innocently at the two of them and said with a smile, "It's nice to see two brothers caring about each other. But Alex, do you really like men? Otherwise, why did you react so greatly?"

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This time, Alexander's face was darker than the sky during a thunderstorm. The air pressure dropped instantly, and even Jack shuddered. In the next second, Alexander enunciated, "I. Don't. Like. Men!" With a few simple words, Elise could hear that he was almost hissing it out between his teeth, so she then nodded quickly. "Oh, I see!" The heaviness in the air gradually lightened, whereupon Jack exhaled deeply and blinked at Elise, as if telling her that they couldn't simply joke about this with Alexander.

Noticing that, Elise stuck out her tongue playfully and then withdrew her gaze. After returning home, Elise opened the car door first and got out of the car, while Jack was still chatting with Alexander about H. "Oh, by the way, Alex, I forgot to ask you: Why are you so obsessed with this H anyway?"

Alexander originally didn't want to answer such a naive question, but if he didn't answer, his sexual orientation would be judged again, so he still said what was in his heart. "After so many years, I still owe her a concert ticket, so I have to find a chance to return it to her." "Oh? That's it?" Jack asked in disbelief. Alexander frowned slightly and asked, "What else do you think there is?" Jack shook his head. "No. I'm just curious; that's all."

Alexander graciously said, "Curiosity killed the cat. And stop talking nonsense in the future." Jack nodded again and again with a serious look. "Don't worry. I will never doubt whether you like men or women in the future, because I think you are more likely to like women after all..." After Jack finished speaking, he ran away without waiting for Alexander's reply. Alexander shook his head helplessly while looking at Jack quickly escaping to safety, then he walked into the house.

Elise, on the other hand, went back to her bedroom and did her homework first. At 9.00PM in the evening, she took a shower and changed out of her clothes. However, at this moment, there was a knock on the door of the room. Elise looked at her face with makeup removed and panicked. Hurriedly, she asked, "Who is it?" Immediately afterward, Danny's voice came from the door. "Boss, it's me!" When Elise heard it was Danny, she hurried toward the door but didn't open it.

"What do you want?" As a matter of fact, Danny didn't have any major issues at all. He was only a little nervous because the monthly exam was approaching, so he came to Elise to calm his nerves. "The monthly exam is tomorrow, and I..."

Danny was a little embarrassed to say that he was nervous. After all, this was the first time in his student life that he was nervous before an exam; he never took any exam this seriously before. "Are you nervous?"

As if she could tell what was on Danny's mind, Elise asked directly. Danny, who was exposed by Elise, lost all the nerves in an instant. With a sigh of relief, Elise said across the door, "It's going to be okay. First, have a good sleep and calm yourself; don't think too much about it. When you take the exam tomorrow, just do your best to answer." After hearing Elise's words, Danny knew that he should adjust his emotions. "I see. Okay, Boss! Then I'll go back to my room first." Listening to Danny gradually walking away, Elise was finally able to let go of her dangling heart.

She then slowly walked to the dressing table and looked at herself in the mirror after she had restored her original appearance. With her current effort of trying to hide her own identity, she was about to forget what she looked like. Subsequently, Elise put a sleeping mask on her face and then drifted into sleep. On the next day. The monthly exam was held as scheduled. Elise walked into the examination room without any pressure.

One exam after another, it was obvious that the students' mental state wasn't taking it very well. After the last mathematics exam, all the students were relieved. Elise sorted out her school supplies and walked out of the examination room. Just as she walked around the corner, she ran into Danny. "How was the exam?" Elise asked. Danny frowned. "It wasn't perfect. I couldn't do the last few questions in the mathematics paper."

However, Elise said, "I have told you about the difficult questions before. The way they structure the questions may change, but the way they're solved remains unchanged." Danny sighed. "It seems that I've not worked hard enough. Forget it; it's just one test. I'll go back and revise these questions again." As Danny spoke, he already turned his body quickly and went back to the classroom to do exercises seriously. When there were questions that he didn't understand, he took the initiative to ask Elise for explanations.

After Elise had finished solving the last difficult question, Danny immediately felt astonished. "So that's how you solve it. I didn't think of it at all during the exam." Elise reassured him, "It's okay. Just work harder next time." Right then, Samantha walked up to both of them, then she looked at Danny's test paper and said unceremoniously, "This question is very simple!" Danny didn't like Samantha's tone, so he immediately asked, "You know how to solve it?"

Samantha used to participate in math competitions, which meant her math foundation was good. Besides, she had also studied with Elise for a while, so the big, difficult questions in this monthly exam were really just a breeze to her. "For questions this simple, of course I do!" Danny obviously didn't buy it, so Samantha took the pen and started to solve it while explaining it to him. After the calculation, Danny's eyes sank, whereupon Samantha said arrogantly, "Well, I wasn't lying, was I? It really is that simple." Danny hurriedly took his paper and did not speak. Seeing this, Samantha quickly added, "Danny, it seems that you still need to work harder."

Danny continued to reply, "Don't you worry. I will definitely work hard to surpass you." Samantha hooked her lips to reveal a beautiful smile, looking polite and graceful. "Game on, then!" In fact, Samantha's words had no other meaning, but Danny felt aggrieved. He resolved himself to work hard to surpass Samantha the next time. After school, Elise, Samantha, and Riley walked down the corridor together. Jack's new song was playing in the school's studio yet again, whereupon Samantha said impatiently, "Damn. They play this song every day—my ears are tired of hearing it!"

Riley said, "Well, what can we do? This song is currently on the top of the major charts, which basically shows how influential H is." Samantha shrugged. "Yeah. H is like a God. She only showed up in a tweet, but she made the whole music circle quake. When will I be able to reach this state, where as soon as I appear, everyone will lose their heads from the amazement?"

Elise put an arm around Samantha's shoulder. "Come on. I'm sure that day will come. I'm still waiting for you to win the Best Actress award and sit on the throne as the Best Actress." Hearing Elise say this, Samantha suddenly became high-spirited as she spoke to Elise and Riley. "Just you two wait for me. In the future, I will definitely come back with the Best Actress' trophy and present it to you!" Elise and Riley looked at each other with a smile and said in unison, "We look forward to that day coming sooner."

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When the three of them walked out of the school while chatting and laughing, there was a lively crowd at the school gate. Several middle-aged people in yellow leather jackets were holding posters of Jack and promoting. "Come and get H and Jack's fan-meeting tickets! First come first serve! It's not an opportunity to be missed! Students who want these tickets should hurry up. It doesn't cost 3,000; it doesn't even cost 1,000.

At only 299, you can get the chance to meet H. At only 299, you can get close with your idol, Jack..." When Riley heard this, she exclaimed excitedly, "Oh, my God! Is H making a comeback? She's actually holding a fan meeting? I want to go too." With that, she went forward. Although Samantha wasn't a fan of H, she quite enjoyed her music, so she said, "Help me get one too." Upon seeing this, Elise's face sank. With furrowed brows, she stepped forward to stop Riley and Samantha before walking toward the two men selling the tickets.

"Are you sure these are H and Jack's fan meeting tickets?" The man selling the tickets thought that Elise wanted to buy a ticket, so he quickly answered, "Miss, with only 299, you can meet H. It's better to act now and get a ticket." Elise's expression darkened even more. "Are you sure it's H herself? If what you said is false, you can be suspected of fraud. In that case, you'll be jailed." When the ticket seller heard Elise's remarks, his expression changed, and he immediately shoved her away while saying in a nasty voice, "Little girl, what nonsense are you spewing?

You're clearly here to create trouble. If you can't afford a ticket, then go away. Don't get in the way of other students who want to buy the tickets." Elise immediately took out her phone. "We'll know if I'm talking nonsense after the police come here. If you guys are suspected of fraud, you'll be sent to jail." Seeing this, the man selling the tickets stepped forward and grabbed Elise's phone. "I'm warning you—don't cause trouble.

We're not as nice as we look." Elise sneered, "What's the matter? Are you pissed because you were exposed in broad daylight?" The ticket-sellers saw that more and more students had begun to crowd around, and they knew that the matter could not be escalated. "You'd better watch out." With that, the man left with his group. As soon as they left, Samantha and Riley were dumbfounded. "Are they really frauds?"

Samantha couldn't help but exclaim, and Riley was relieved as well. "Luckily we didn't buy the tickets." Then, the two of them asked curiously, "Elise, why were you so sure that they're frauds?" "That's right, Elise. You were so brave just now! You actually dared to confront them directly. I'm sure you know that these frauds will do anything for money. I'm quite afraid of what they'll do to you." Elise knew that she had been a little too emotional, but this kind of obvious deceit was absolutely unacceptable.

"Don't worry. I'll be fine. Tickets for Jack's fan meetings are usually sold on his official website, so how would they organize targeted sales at schools like this? Not to mention, H would never hold fan meetings." Samantha and Riley agreed with the front part of her statement. As for the part about H never holding fan meetings, they were rather curious. "Elise, how are you so sure? Do you know H?" Elise had let slip her tongue, but she still found a good reason.

"With H's character and her status in the music industry, she would definitely be trending if she were to hold a fan meeting, but do you see any news on the Internet?" Samantha and Riley shook their heads simultaneously. That was when they realized that not only did Elise have strong observational skills, she was also extremely clear-headed. "Elise, you really are a genius. I'm beginning to admire you more and more," Samantha praised unceremoniously. "Okay.

Don't think about it too much. Go home now." Elise bid farewell to Samantha and Riley, then stood on the side of the road and waited. However, after waiting for quite a while, Alexander, who was supposed to pick her up today, didn't show up. There were fewer and fewer people at the gate, and gradually, almost all the students had scattered. At this moment, the few ticket sellers who had left returned and surrounded Elise. "Ugly b*tch. You're so ugly, yet you dared

provoke me. You really do have a death wish." The leader of the group was unceremoniously rude.

As Elise looked at him, her eyes darkened. "What are you guys doing?" "What are we doing? People like you won't learn unless we teach you a lesson. Guys, attack her. I don't care even if she's crippled." The moment he gave the order, the few men surrounding her surged forward. Elise stood in place, not moving at all. Her eyes turned a little gloomy, and she saw a man throwing a punch her way. When he was less than a fist away from her, Elise turned sideways to dodge, then kicked the man's calf.

She was quick, ruthless, and accurate as she kicked him, sending him onto the ground and screaming. The other men saw this, but they weren't afraid at all. When they stepped forward again, Elise let out a cold laugh, then dealt with them with ease. After a while, all of the burly men had fallen to the ground until only the leader was left. The man stared at Elise in fear. "You'd better look out. I... I'm skilled too." However, as soon as he said that, he turned around and sprinted to escape.

In an instant, he was nowhere to be seen. When the few men on the ground saw this, they got up and scurried off as well. Elise clapped her hands, not bothered by them at all. But when she turned around, she was dumbfounded. Unbeknownst to her, Alexander was standing not far away, and he was fixing her with a profound gaze, making her flustered. When did he arrive? Did he see what happened just now? Alexander strode toward her.

"I really didn't expect you to be so skilled." As soon as he said this, Elise knew that Alexander had witnessed the entire scene earlier. Since that was the case, there was no point in hiding it. "I learned Taekwondo when I was young, but it's all just for show. I don't have any real skills."

Nevertheless, Alexander didn't think so. Elise had a good grasp of her movements, strength, and speed, so it would be hard to believe that she had never practiced it. But since Elise wasn't willing to tell him, he didn't ask either. "I had some business to handle at the office, so I ran a little late. Get in the car."

Alexander changed the subject. Seeing that he didn't ask any further questions, Elise breathed a sigh of relief and followed him into the car. After getting into the car, Alexander wasn't in a hurry to start the car at all.

Instead, he leaned toward Elise. She widened her eyes and was frozen to the spot, not daring to move. When he was less than ten centimeters away from her, she jerked backward and asked, "W-What are you doing?"

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Studying Elise up close, Alexander found that she had applied a thick layer of foundation on her face. He never noticed before that she had on such heavy

makeup. Nonetheless, he simply said, "I'm fastening your seat belt." Feeling embarrassed, Elise quickly uttered, "T-There no need for that. I can do it myself." After saying that, Elise hurriedly fastened her seat belt. Upon seeing this, Alexander moved away from her, then immediately started the car and drove off. "My brothers and I are having a party tonight. Do you want to go have a drink with us?" Elise knew that the brothers he meant were all the Griffith brothers except for Matthew, so she refused without even thinking. "I'm not going. Just send me home." Alexander slightly raised his eyebrows and asked, "What's wrong? You don't want to hang out with us?"

Elise shook her head. "It's not that. You're thinking too much." "Then let's go have a drink together." Alexander seemed to be hinting that he wouldn't accept her refusal. Elise figured that she had nothing to do at night anyway, so she agreed. Brendan was the one who organized the party, and it was mainly for the brothers to get together and relax. Usually, on such occasions, they wouldn't bring any female companions and would all go on their own.

Hence, today, when the door of the private room was pushed open before Alexander and Elise appeared together, the other three Griffith brothers suddenly stopped what they were doing and stared at Elise in disbelief. Jack was the first to speak. "Why are you here?" Danny was quite protective of Elise, so he trotted forward and asked, "Boss, you—" Before he finished speaking, Alexander said, "I brought her here."

As soon as he said this, the Griffith brothers exchanged looks, but all of them remained silent. Elise felt that the atmosphere was a little weird, so she quickly said, "What do you guys want to drink? I'll go get them for you." Danny took the initiative to make a request. "I want a glass of whisky." Elise acknowledged him, then looked at Jack and Brendan. "What about you guys?" Smiling, Brendan replied, "Whiskey."

Jack cast her a meaningful look. "A mojito." Elise made a mental note of each of their drinks, then finally asked, "Alexander, what would you like to drink?" Alexander's lips twitched slightly as he replied, "Orange juice." When his brothers heard this, their eyes widened. When did Alexander start drinking orange juice? However, none of them dared to question him, so they watched as Elise helped him order a glass of orange juice.

After she walked out of the private room, Jack hurried over. "Alexander, what's the matter with you! Why did you bring her here? We never brought women to our brothers' night out!" Brendan's lips curled into a smile as he turned to Alexander before saying slowly, "We'll never know what Alexander is thinking, but one thing is certain—he's letting Elise get familiar with us." Danny stared at his brother in disbelief. "Alexander, are you interested in my boss?"

As soon as he asked the question, the room instantly fell silent, and three pairs of eyes turned to look at Alexander, but he just said calmly, "Why are you making a fuss about such a small thing? I just felt like she'd be bored at home all alone, so I brought her here. Don't think that far." Alexander's answer made the three of them feel relieved at once. They thought that he was actually interested in Elise! It seemed that they were just overthinking it.

At this moment, Elise pushed open the door and walked in. "I've already ordered everything for you guys." The strangeness in the atmosphere earlier was completely gone. Danny smiled and immediately moved forward. "Thank you, Boss. Since everyone is here today, let's have fun together." Brendan welcomed Elise as well. "We're all family, so there's no need to be so formal. Elise, do you know how to play cards?" Elise nodded. "A little."

So, Brendan said, "All right. Let's play cards, then." He called for a waiter to bring over a new set of cards, then the five of them sat down. Elise had played cards before, but her skills were mediocre; she wasn't excellent at it, but she was still quite proficient, so after playing only one round, she had already won a lot. "Boss, why are you so good at this? You won so many chips after just playing two games." Danny looked at the remaining chips in front of him, which were only half of what he originally had, then looked at Alexander.

"Alexander, can't you go easy on me?" Alexander replied nonchalantly, "Playing games requires sportsmanship. If I go easy on you, then what would be the point of playing?" Danny was close to tears. He found that Alexander was eager to excel in everything, and it seemed that he and Elise were a strong team that no one could beat.

"I can't do this anymore. Jack, Brendan, do your best." As Danny complained, Jack and Brendan looked at each other and shook their heads. "After so many years, when have we ever won a card game against Alexander?" Brendan sounded a little distressed, so Elise couldn't help glancing at Alexander. "Who would've thought that you're actually so good at this!" Alexander's expression didn't change at all. "I'm just playing for fun."

However, Elise disagreed. The five of them continued to play cards until about 11.00PM when Danny called for them to stop. "I really can't do this anymore. I have classes tomorrow. Why don't we end it here today?" Jack didn't have any objections. "All right. That's all for today, then." Elise didn't have any opinions either. At this moment, Brendan stood up. "Okay. Let's call it a day. I'll go settle the bill." With that, Brendan walked out, then Elise set down the cards and got up as well.

Looking at the time, she found that it was rather late, so she followed Alexander out of the room, and the few of them walked to the hall while chatting and sharing laughter. All of a sudden, their footsteps came to a halt, and they watched as Matthew walked toward them with his arms wrapped intimately around a beautiful woman with a curvy figure.

This was Elise's first time seeing Matthew after he left the Griffith Family. She hadn't seen him for only half a month, yet it seemed as if he had changed completely. Danny was about to say something, but Jack stopped him and said, "Forget it. Don't bother. Let's go home."

Danny pouted, but they understood Matthew's current situation; they heard that in order to get the company's resources, he went out of his way to marry a rich and beautiful woman. "He's just degrading himself, and he's simply embarrassing the Griffith Family." Danny spoke with disdain, so Jack advised him, "His affairs

have nothing to do with the Griffith Family anymore, and we shouldn't interfere too much either."

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Brendan retracted his gaze. "It's getting late. We'd better go back and have a good rest. Alexander, you go ahead and send Elise back. The three of us will go back together." Alexander agreed, then watched the three of them leave. However, Matthew saw them and walked over. He stared at Elise and only looked away after about three seconds, then said to Alexander, "We haven't seen each other for a long time, but you guys didn't have to hide from me." Alexander remained calm. "You think too much. Everyone's just tired from the night out." Smiling, Matthew looked between Elise and Alexander, then hugged the woman in front of him. "No matter what, we used to be a family, so now that we've met, let me introduce you: This is my fiancée, Heather Langford." Giving him no face, Alexander ignored Matthew and turned to look at Elise instead. "Wait here for me. I'll go get the car."

Elise nodded, then Alexander turned around and left, not bothering about Matthew and Heather, who were standing there awkwardly. However, Heather was unbothered as she comforted Matthew, "Matt, don't pay attention to them. I'll always stay by your side." The corners of Matthew's mouth curled up into a reluctant smile, but he still placed a kiss on Heather's forehead. "Babe, will you wait for me in the car?"

Heather smiled and nodded before walking away. After she left, only Elise and Matthew remained. Matthew looked at Elise, and for a moment, he felt as if he was living in a different timeline. After a pause, he said, "I didn't expect you to get together with Alexander." There was a hint of dissatisfaction in his tone. Elise wasn't exactly well disposed toward Matthew because she was rather disgusted with men like him, who would make use of other people's feelings to achieve his goals.

"My affairs are none of your concern." Elise's tone was so cold that it gave Matthew a bone-chilling sensation, causing him to laugh at himself. "Indeed, it's none of my concern, but I have to remind you that Alexander isn't such a simple person. If you've really gotten together with him, you'd better keep an eye out. Nobody knows what might happen to you one day." Elise's eyes darkened. "I have eyes, and I know how to judge people.

I know who's worthy of my friendship and who I should keep away from. Unfortunately, Mr. Matthew, you're one of the people that I must stay away from." Her remark choked him off, and he was about to say something when Alexander drove over in his car. Without saying anything else, Elise walked over and got into the car.

Matthew stood there and watched as the car drove off and disappeared from his view, and only then did he withdraw his gaze. In the car, Alexander asked, "What

did he say to you?" Staring at the night scenery flashing past outside the window, Elise replied, "Nothing much. Just some random remarks." Upon hearing this, Alexander didn't ask any further questions. "It's getting late. You can rest for a while. I'll wake you up when we arrive."

Elise gradually closed her eyes, but Matthew's words couldn't help but emerge in her mind. She clearly told herself not to bother about him, but his warnings subconsciously appeared in her mind, so she was a little frustrated as she turned and leaned sideways against the seat. After arriving home, Elise washed up and went straight to bed, falling asleep almost immediately after lying down. The next day was the day when the monthly test results were announced, so Danny woke up early and waited in the dining room for Elise.

However, when Elise didn't come downstairs after he had waited for a long time, he ordered a servant, "Help me get Elise. We're going to be late." The servant was just about to go upstairs when Elise came down while yawning involuntarily. Seeing that, Danny hurried over and said, "Boss, you've finally come downstairs. Let's go to school after we're done with breakfast." Elise raised her eyebrows. "Why are you so excited today?"

Danny answered a little abashedly, "They're announcing the results for the monthly test today. I want to know how I did in the test this time, so Boss, could you please hurry up?" It was Elise's first time seeing Danny care so much about his grades. "Okay. I'll satisfy your wish. Pack up our breakfast. We'll eat along the way." Danny immediately asked the servant to pack up their breakfast, then he and Elise went to school.

Their first session was Chinese class, and the teacher looked delighted when she entered the classroom. "Our class did well in the monthly exam this time, especially Elise, who once again got full marks." As soon as she said this, all eyes turned to Elise, and even Danny couldn't help but look at her with admiration. "Boss, you really are amazing." "Our class's performance this time has improved a lot compared to last month's test.

One student in particular whom I'd like to commend is Danny. This time, Danny has made great progress. He failed last time, but he got 80 marks during this test. Let's all applaud his improvement." The class burst into a round of warm applause. It was Danny's first time being praised by the teacher, so his cheeks turned red from embarrassment, but he rather enjoyed the feeling of being praised. As soon as their Chinese grades were announced, the grades of the other subjects were also announced one after another.

Besides mathematics, which Danny didn't perform that well in, his grades for the other subjects were quite good, and he was considered to be above average. When the rankings were revealed, Danny was tied for fifth in the class with another classmate. Danny stared incredulously at the report card. "I'm actually ranked fifth in the class. I'm not dreaming, am I?"

Elise pinched him without reservations. "How does it feel? Does it hurt?" Danny nodded repeatedly. "It hurts. It hurts. This is real." Seeing that he was so happy that he was forgetting himself, Elise suddenly remembered the promise she had made to him last time, whereupon she pursed her lips and said, "I promised you

last time that if you get into the top five during this exam, I'll play online games with you. Pick a time. I'll play two rounds with you."

Games were Danny's strong suit. Before this, he thought that Elise had said that just to give him confidence. Now that he had really gotten into the top five in the class, Elise made good on her word. "Boss, are you sure you can do it? If your skills are really bad, then forget about it.

I don't want to bring you along when I know you'll drag the team down. It'll just be a form of torture." Elise didn't know whether to laugh or feel offended. "Do you look down on me that much?" Danny, however, denied it. "It's not that I look down on you. It's just that I haven't seen you play games before, so I'm afraid you'll drag me down." Elise was neither humble nor arrogant.

"Whether or not I'll drag you down, you'll only know after you play with me, right? If you haven't played with me before, how would you know if I'm bad at it?"

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Danny figured that she made sense, so he immediately took out his phone and handed it to Elise. "How about you play first, Boss? Let me see how strong you are." Elise was speechless, but she gave him a smile. "There's no need for that. Go online. I already have an account." Upon hearing her say that, Danny scratched his head sheepishly, then took back his phone and logged in to his account. However, when Elise was about to log in to her account, which hadn't been accessed for a long time, she realized that she had forgotten her password. Hence, she simply signed up for a new account and logged in. "I'll add you as a friend," Elise said, then asked for Danny's username. After a while, he received a friend request. Although he already had the conception that Elise was just a rookie, when he saw that her account was still at the lowest level, the corners of Danny's lips twitched.

However, he didn't think it was nice to destroy Elise's enthusiasm, so he figured that he could help her a little later when they formed teams so that she wouldn't lose so terribly. "How are we playing?" Elise asked. Danny thought that she didn't know how to play and was planning to explain it to her, but she continued, "Are we playing 1 vs 1, 3 vs 3, or 5 vs 5?" Danny was stunned. He usually played the 5 vs 5 version with his teammates.

After taking a look, he found that those teammates were all online, so he answered, "Let's play 5 vs 5. It's more exciting. I'll ask my friends to join." As soon as he finished speaking, he sent a message to his group. When his friends heard that they were teaming up with a novice player, they lost interest. 'Young Master Danny, you're not trying to trick us, are you? I don't want to play with someone who knows nothing and who will only hold us back.'

'That's right, Young Master Danny. You should at least find someone with similar strengths as us. Everyone will be more interested then.' Danny knew that he was forcing them with his request, but Elise was his boss nonetheless. She only agreed to play games together to motivate him to study, so he couldn't disregard her kindness. Danny's fingers flew across the keyboard. 'If you guys join this game today, I'll send each of you a full set of skins later.'

He could be so capricious simply because he was rich. After a few seconds of silence, his teammates replied in unison, 'All right. Let's play one round.' Danny breathed a sigh of relief when he saw this and hurriedly called Elise, "Boss, they're here." Elise hadn't played this game for a long time. Fortunately, she didn't have any issues navigating it and was still as good as before. The five of them quickly formed a team to match their opponents before entering the game.

"Boss, you can just follow me later. Your movements aren't that fast, so don't run around." Elise didn't speak, but her fingers quickly moved her character in the game so that she was running forward with huge strides. As soon as she met an opponent, she quickly settled them. Her movements were natural and smooth, not at all sluggish. The moment she attacked, she defeated the opponent's main force. "Wow, well done," Zedd, one of Danny's teammates, marveled.

Even Danny was caught by surprise. "Boss, that trick was amazing! You don't seem like a rookie at all. " Elise said nothing as she continued to pursue their opponent, and Danny hurriedly followed. The opponent's movements were stable, and it could be seen that his skills were average. However, Danny didn't pay attention and was attacked by the other party. "Dann it!" Danny couldn't help but curse as his character died and fell to the ground.

At this moment, Elise came over to give him blood, then she chased after the opponent without saying a word. Her movements were so fast that the opponent didn't even see how she attacked before they were finished off. Danny was stunned when he saw this, and he completely forgot to operate his own character. Elise hurriedly ran to his side and planned to wipe out any players who were going to attack him. "Boss, lead the way!"

Danny finally realized how good Elise was and followed her. Not at all bothered by this, Elise led Danny as they completely demolished their opponents. In the end, they won the game with an absolute advantage. After the match was over, Danny stared at Elise in disbelief. "Wow, Boss, you handled it so smoothly. You're simply amazing. It's hard to believe that you're a rookie." Setting down her phone, Elise raised her eyebrows and asked, "Who told you that I'm a rookie?"

Danny widened his eyes in shock, then looked at Elise before murmuring, "But your account is obviously a new one..." Elise was ashamed to tell him that she had forgotten her password, and so she randomly gave a reason. "I've played too much on my main account, so I'm just practicing on this extra account." Only Danny would believe such statements. Afterward, his other teammates added Elise's account one after another. 'KK wants to add you as a friend.'

'Fortuner wants to add you as a friend.' 'Wilder wants to add you as a friend.' When Elise saw the friend requests, she asked, "Who are they?" Danny took a glance and answered, "We play games together. They're the top ten players on

the leaderboard, and they're all my friends." After hearing this, Elise accepted their requests. At this moment, KK sent her an invitation message: 'This user has invited you to join the group chat.'

When Elise saw that the group picture was one of four stickmen, she couldn't help but laugh. "Danny, that's quite a unique group picture. What do the four stickmen represent? Does it mean that all four of you are bachelors?" Danny didn't expect that Elise would expose them so straightforwardly, so he hurriedly tried to redeem himself. "What's wrong with being bachelors? Bachelors have dignity too. We even have a really nice name—'The Aristocratic Bachelors'."

Elise laughed, then accepted the invitation to join the group chat. When KK saw that Elise had joined them, he took the initiative to greet her. "May I know what's your name, Miss?" Elise subconsciously typed 'Ellimane', but felt it was inappropriate. After all, the title was given to her by other people and not self-penned, so she simply used the one she was used to—'Elli'. Unexpectedly, after she typed out that word, KK said, 'Elli, can you change your name?

Your name overlaps with my idol's name." KK's idol happened to be Ellimane. Danny quickly piped up, 'That's okay. You can still call her Elli.' Immediately afterward, Fortuner greeted her as well. 'Hello, Elli. I'm Fortuner.' Elise replied with a smiling emoji. 'Nice to meet you.' The last member, Wilder, hurriedly wrote, 'Elli, you were amazing.

It's been a long time since I last saw a girl playing games so well. Your skills are almost comparable to Ellimane's.' KK was dissatisfied with this statement. 'Elli is indeed amazing, but she's still not as good as my idol.'

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Upset, Wilder answered, 'We know. We know. Your idol is the most powerful one; no one can break the record she had set back then. But there's been no news about your idol for so many years. When do you think she'll start playing games again?' As soon as he said this, the group fell silent. After a while, KK said, 'My idol is just resting. When she's done resting, she'll definitely come back.' KK was absolutely certain of this. He believed that his idol, Ellimane, would definitely return. 'I still have something to do, so I'll go offline first. Let's play together another day.'

After Elise sent the message, she immediately quit the game. Danny, who was beside her, was dissatisfied. "Boss, if I had known you were so good at playing games, I would've asked you to play a few more rounds with me. I haven't had enough of it yet, yet you're already going to quit?" Elise wrapped her arms around her chest and looked at him. "You still want to play games with me?" Danny nodded without the slightest hesitation, so Elise agreed and said, "Okay.

When you get into the top three in the class during the final exam, I'll play with you for an entire night." Danny's eyes widened. "Boss, are you serious?" Smiling, Elise replied, "Dead serious." Danny was as excited as a kid in a candy store. "Boss,

just wait and see. I'll definitely get into the top three. When the time comes, don't forget to play games with me all night as you promised." Elise nodded. "Don't worry. I won't forget."

Having gotten her word, Danny didn't have any interest in fooling around anymore. He went back to get his homework done, vowing to study hard, improve every day, and work hard to achieve his goals. ... Elise returned to the Griffith Residence. The house was extraordinarily lively today because Robin and Laura were there. Jonah was in the living room, greeting Robin and Laura. "Thanks for coming all the way here.

This time, stay here for a while longer before going back." Robin gave him a bright smile. "I'll say, Jonah, when I sent my granddaughter over, you swore to me that you would definitely bring the two children together. It's been more than half a year, but there's still no news. Both of us old bones are still waiting for a grandchild." Hearing this, Jonah repeatedly patted his head. "Robin, the children's relationship matters can't be rushed.

Besides, I think those two have some feelings for each other, but someone just needs to give them a little push. Only then will they take it a step further." As soon as Jonah finished speaking, the servant came over. "Miss Sinclair is back." In an instant, the three elderly people in the hall looked at each other, and it was as if something had sparked inside them. "Since Ellie is back, we need to carefully sound her out to find out what's going on," Robin said in a low voice, and Laura chimed in as well, "Let's get this straight first:

No matter what, we'll respect Ellie's choice. We can't interfere too much." Robin reassured her, "Don't worry about that! As long as Ellie likes him, as her grandfather, I'll give my full support no matter what. I'll never cause them additional trouble." Laura dropped the subject, while Jonah said, "Don't worry, you two. I'm concerned and have been watching whatever's happening between those two.

But I'll admit that I'm at my wit's end too." As he spoke, Elise came in. Upon seeing Robin and Laura, she was instantly surprised. "Grandpa, Grandma, what brought the two of you here?" Striding forward, she threw herself into Laura's arms. "Grandma, I missed you so much." As Laura studied her granddaughter, she couldn't stop her eyes from turning red. "My lovely Ellie." Robin, on the other hand, pretended to be calm.

"Ellie, have you gotten used to living here yet?" Elise nodded. "Yes, everything is well here." When Robin and Laura heard this, they felt like a heavy weight had been lifted. The family continued chatting, and after a while, the servant came over again to report, "Sir, the young masters are back." Immediately afterward, with Alexander leading Jack, Danny, and Brendan, the four young masters of the Griffith Family entered the hall. Jonah called out, "Come here. This is Mr. Robin, and this is Madam Laura."

The brothers greeted in unison, "Mr. Robin. Madam Laura." Robin and Laura swept their gazes over them one by one before finally stopping on Alexander. "Such good boys! Jonah! Your grandsons are all marvelous young men." Jonah replied with a smile, "You don't have to praise them. Compared to Ellie, they're

not even worth mentioning." "Robin, Laura, it isn't often we get you two here, so let's enjoy the evening together."

Jonah invited them all into the dining hall. The whole family sat together, and the atmosphere was extremely lively. Robin looked at Elise, then said to Jonah, "Actually, we made this trip here to bring Ellie back. She's been here for so long that it must be causing you trouble." As soon as he said this, the Griffith brothers exchanged looks. Danny was the most anxious one. "Elise is leaving already?" Robin nodded. "It's time for her to go back."

Elise was confused about this too, because Robin had never mentioned this to her. Now that he had announced it in front of so many people, Elise felt a strange sense of reluctance. "Can't she stay for a while longer?" Danny asked in a somewhat pleading tone as he looked at Elise with a pitiful look. Elise's lips curled up into a smile. "Why? You can't bear not having me around?" Danny nodded without hesitation.

"Boss, if you leave, who's going to teach me math? Who's going to play games with me? And who's going to look out for me?" Elise slightly raised her eyebrows. "But sooner or later, I'll have to go home." This upset Danny even more. He didn't even realize that amongst his brothers, he was the most reluctant to let Elise leave.

Alexander didn't say a word throughout the entire meal, and he had a calm expression on his face, as if this matter had nothing to do with him. At this moment, Jonah said to Robin, "Ellie has brought a lot of joy to our family during this period. Now that you're taking her home so suddenly, I'm quite unwilling to let her go."

Looking up at Jonah, Elise said in a melancholic tone, "Grandpa Griffith, I'll come visit you often." When Jonah heard this, he was rather relieved. Despite that, he couldn't help but glance at Alexander, only to realize that his grandson had no reaction whatsoever, which caused the anger inside him to rise.

Just then, Alexander set down his cutleries. "Grandpa, Mr. Robin, Madam Laura, I'm done eating, so I'll excuse myself to go upstairs first." With that, he got up and left the dining hall without a second thought.

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Elise watched his departing figure as her eyes revealed a shade of inexplicable sensation, which she covered up perfectly as no one noticed it. After dinner, Elise and her grandparents took a stroll around the yard. Aware that she was obviously distraught, the senile couple peered at each other. Laura then quizzed, "Ellie, you don't wanna go home yet, do you?" Elise pursed her lips when she was so easily seen through. Yet, she remained wordless.

Laura suggestively eyed Robin, who then stretched his back and hastily claimed, "It's getting cold. I should go get my coat." Finished, he went into the house.

Right when he reached upstairs, he coincidentally bumped into Alexander. "Care for a game of chess, Mr. Robin?" Robin was visibly delighted at the invitation. "Sure! It's been a while since my last game." And so, he headed to the games room under Alexander's lead.

Meanwhile in the yard, Laura was goading her granddaughter into a heart-to-heart. "Now, Ellie, be honest with me. What's troubling that mind of yours?" After glancing at her, Elise embraced her grandmother's arm. "Can I stay a little longer for now, Grandma?" Laura smilingly looked at her. "It's that Griffith boy, isn't it?" Although Elise never intended to hide it from her grandmother, she was certainly astounded by her keen observation. "I may be feeling something, Grandma."

A sentence so simple, yet was able to convey all in her heart. Laura was overjoyed to hear that, but she showed not even a tinge of her ecstasy. "Oh, dear Ellie, are you sure? That it's not just a heat of the moment?" Elise took a deep breath. "That's the thing, Grandma. I'm not even certain whether it's real or simply infatuation, which is why I wish to stay a bit longer to make sense of my feelings. Aren't you all always worried about my love life?

This time, I wish to take things into my own hands." Elise was always an opinionated girl, and Laura knew that very well. Thereupon, Laura held Elise's hand. "I trust you, Ellie. But I do have to warn you that often in love, it's the girl that's always blinded. Therefore, when you get anxious about it, I hope you'll be able to stand your ground and not lose sight of everything. Don't drown yourself and blindly allow yourself to be vulnerable."

"Thanks, Grandma." Laura heaved a sigh. "It's about time, huh. If you truly want to stay, Ellie, I won't stop you, but there's a catch." Having said that, Laura whispered something else in Elise's ear, to which the latter flickered her eyes before staring at her grandmother and sternly nodded her head. Comforted, Laura stated, "My baby Ellie has turned into a full-grown woman. Sure, you'll make your decisions yourself. No matter what answer you find yourself with, your grandfather and I will always be here for you."

Elise shoved herself into her grandmother's embrace. "You're the best, Grandma." Meanwhile, Robin and Alexander were playing chess in the games room upstairs. The two were exceptional, and their levels were indistinguishable. It had been a while since Robin last played someone on par with him and he couldn't help but be thrilled by Alexander's moves as they played the game. "Say, Alex, I'm sure chess isn't the only reason you called for me." Robin broke the silence.

Despite that, Alexander grabbed a chess piece and brushed it off, slowly voicing, "Say, Mr. Robin, you're very good at this." Robin raised his line of sight to Alexander and chortled. "I've been doing this for decades. Guess that's only natural. You, however, are still so young yet you're already putting me on edge. What a prodigy!" "You flatter me, Mr. Robin." Robin calmly smiled as he pondered before making another move on the chessboard, to which Alexander countered with another move shortly afterward.

Eventually, the former opened up, saying, "Ellie has been through a lot ever since she was a kid. Her parents died in a car crash when she was eight, and she's been living with us since. I still remember the first time I saw her after her parents were gone. She was all devastated and not even a trace of energy was left in her, like a spiritless body that purposelessly existed. She didn't cry nor blurted a sound. It pained us to see her like that."

Upon those words, Alexander's eyes sank. At that moment, he didn't know where to position the chess piece that was in his hand. Robin continued, "That time, she was so petite. It wasn't until I carried her that she started crying her heart out in my arms. Instantly, my heart was crushed and I couldn't help but wonder why God would punish the little girl so mercilessly. And that was when I swore to protect her and provide her a happy, healthy life."

Alexander placed down the chess piece and replied, "She grew up very well." It was a simple answer, but it was enough to reassure Robin. He nodded his head and agreed. "Yes. She has never let us worry about her. She was always independent in her studies and in life overall, though a few headaches is only inevitable. However, her grandmother and I are almost at the end of our chapters. Who knows how much more time there is for us to be by her side?

So, we deeply wish that someone else can come and look after her in our stead when we eventually leave." As those words were laid out, Robin's message became pretty much apparent. On the other hand, Alexander, who was hesitating on his chess move, seemed to have calmed down also. "It's your turn, Mr. Robin..." Alexander reminded Robin. Seeing how the young man had no response to his message, Robin felt as if he couldn't grasp his thoughts, clueless whether he had heeded his words as he was so focused on the game.

Robin then gazed at the chessboard in front of him, feeling a little dispirited. Little did he expect, Alexander suddenly proposed, "Elise is indeed a fine lady. I was thinking, perhaps she could stay for a little longer?" After having expressed that, he felt a minor tremble in his heart.

All the things he faced in life could never shake him even for a little. Yet, something else that day was able to stagger him. Regardless, there wasn't a hint of joy on Robin's face. He strictly glared at the young man. "Do you mean it? You better not joke about this."

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Alexander gazed back at Robin and said earnestly, "We wouldn't be discussing this if I weren't. I wish to take care of her. For as long as I can." Every single word that came out of his mouth clearly traveled into Robin's ears. Robin then grinned. "So you're into our Ellie, huh?" Before Alexander could reply, he added, "You best think this through. Although our Ellie doesn't possess the most repellant face, she's not exactly a beauty either.

All the provocations in the outside world, are you sure Ellie is the woman you want?" Hearing that, Alexander started to wonder. Elise's appearance never

stood out in the crowd, and her face wasn't what he was attracted to in the first place. Nevertheless, for some reason, he was captivated by her. He couldn't even trace back to when it was that he started paying attention to her. "Rest assured, Mr. Robin, I responsibly promise you that I like Elise for what she is and not for her appearance nor her family background.

I genuinely adore her for her being." Robin was satisfied with his answer. Regardless, it pertained to his granddaughter's future, so it was nothing to joke about. Thus, he did not make any promises. After all, their destiny belonged to them, so it should be up to them to fulfill it. "Understood. Now, it's all up to you whether you can keep her. Either way, her grandmother and I will not influence her in her decision-making." With that, Alexander acknowledged that Robin had expressed his position in the matter.

As for the result of their relationship, it still solely depended on him. "Thank you, Mr. Robin. I know what I should do now." Robin then started to cackle. "Time shall tell!" It was late at night. Nothing but silence filled the Griffith Residence—except for the living room on the second floor. In the merry space, Robin and Jonah were gregarious exchanging insights. "Splendid indeed! Your kid Alex finally opened up with me.

It seems our wish for a great-grandchild is nearing!" Excited, Jonah could not hide the grin on his face. "Haha! We were messing around back then. Who would've known things are getting set in stone!" "Hold your horses, buddy! We're not supposed to rush these youngsters' affairs. Sometimes, things need time to develop or it'll fall apart. Whether they can make it work entirely depends on them. And if it doesn't work out, I'm sure we can help mend things by then." Having reached an agreement, the two grandfathers were rapturous.

The next morning, it was only Alexander left in the dining room when Elise walked down the staircase. Subconsciously, she slowed down her steps and took a glance at him. Strangely, she felt rather agitated. Thereupon, she took a deep breath and collected her feelings before greeting, "Good morning!" In response, Alexander raised his head and looked at her. His brows obviously relaxed. "Morning." Then, Elise went over and pulled her chair out before sitting down. Seeing all her favorite breakfast foods laid down in front of her, she took a couple of bites.

Suddenly, Alexander stated, "Your grandparents had me relay to you that they have something to take care of, so they left first and will come back to visit you another time." Despite hearing that, Elise showed no surprise, as if she had already gotten used to Robin and Laura's tricks. She simply blurted an "oh" in acknowledgment before placing down her cutleries. "I'm done. I'm off to class now." Unexpectedly, Alexander stopped her.

"Hold up. I'll send you." "Okay," Elise replied. She casually walked in front of the line while Alexander closely followed beside her. And so, the two exited the house in a line. After sending Elise to school, Alexander wasn't in any hurry to leave. He took out his phone and made a call. "Lily, are you done with the draft I had you do last time?" "Good morning, President Griffith. It is finished. I'll send it over to your office shortly after."

After taking a glimpse at the school gate, Alexander started his car and drove off. Meanwhile, Elise had just walked into the school compound when her phone started vibrating. She pulled it out from her pocket and saw a blinking red dot, which made her eyes sink. The red dot was a secret signal between her and Jamie. Therefore, she hurriedly picked up her phone. "What's wrong?" With haste, Jamie said, "Boss, somebody has breached our security system. They've broken through the fourth wall. If they were to break the fifth, all of our confidential information will be leaked!"

Elise revealed a frown. "How did this happen?" Jamie knew nothing about the attack, except for the fact that it was too late when he realized it. "Hurry over, Boss! I'm on the 16th floor of Ferry Building." Right after Jamie divulged the address, without any hesitation, Elise stormed out of the school gate before stopping a cab and hurried over to Ferry Building. At that moment, the entire 16th floor of Ferry Building was in turmoil.

Jamie and the rest of the team were doing all they could to fend off the attack. Unfortunately, the offenders were too strong, and the team was in grave disadvantage. Immediately, Jamie voiced an ultimatum, "Whatever it costs, hold them off, just for 15 minutes more!" Drops of sweat were wetting the foreheads of the team's technicians, fighting hard to defend their territory. On the other hand, Elise started triangulating the location of the attackers while en route to Ferry Building with her phone that was always with her.

Sadly, apart from a cell phone's technological deficiency, the attackers were cunning enough and slipped out of Elise's grasp. When she finally arrived at Ferry Building, she sat down before a computer. Her fingers rapidly tapped across the keyboard. Beside her was Jamie who held his breath as if the storm had passed.

The attackers seemed to be deliberately waiting for Elise with how they sent a series of digits to the team, to which her commissures lifted as she brutally launched a counterattack toward the opponents' security system and instantly penetrated through seven layers of defense. Jamie silently clenched his fist and revealed a delighted face. In that instant, the screen in his eyes turned blue. Shocked, Elise furiously slammed the keyboard.

"F*ck! We got played!" For the first time since forever, Elise found a rival in hacking, who appeared to have no intention to spar with her. Rather, they simply wanted to fool around with her. When the computer reactivated, it functioned properly as usual, as if the blue screen never occurred.

Elise speedily ran a check, only to find out that the offenders had vanished without a trace. "What's going on, Boss?" Elise glared at Jamie, explaining, "We were targeted, but they don't seem to be very hostile. Weird. Based on the skills they possess, they could have demolished our security system with ease, but they chose not to. It's as if they're doing this to draw our attention." Jamie was stunned. "But who could it be?" Who else in this world could possess hacking skills that were even greater than Elise's?

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"No matter who it is, we'll have to be on guard. Upgrade our security system right away and set up firewalls around our connectivity to the internet. Then we'll be able to track their IP down the next time they attack." At once, Jamie answered, "Got it. I'll do it right away." Then, Elise ran another check on the internal system and repaired some loopholes before giving it a final check. The attackers must have been well prepared with how they left no traces after the breach. Having been preoccupied by the incident until afternoon, she proceeded to leave the building. She took the elevator and descended to the first floor, only to find out the building was crowded by someone's fans. Baffled, she halted her steps and read the sign in the fan's hand—Charlene Rivers. Many memories from the past flashed across her mind when she saw that name. They lived in the same world, yet Elise had always managed to neglect her.

What a small world! "Charlene! Charlene!" The fans, cramped in one space, chanted Charlene's name in unison. Shortly after, Charlene walked up the stage under her bodyguard's escort. She grabbed a microphone and smilingly greeted the audience, "Hello, everyone. I'm Charlene Rivers. It's an honor to see you here."

Elise, standing amidst the crowd, watched as the elegant, dashing Charlene walked up the stage. There was an indescribable emotion in her eyes. Now, Charlene had become an A-list singer who had published numerous albums that topped charts and received multiple music awards. She had become a musical icon of the era. Regardless, Elise had no interest in her, so she simply turned around and left. Unexpectedly, not far away stood Noel, who saw Elise and hurried over to her, grabbing her by the wrist.

"Why are you here?" Immediately, Elise scowled and turned her head, gazing at her constricted forearm. "Do I need to report everything I do to you?" Quickly, Noel let go of her. "I didn't mean it like that. I'm just surprised to see you attending Charlene's fan meeting." Elise's face was rather emotionless, even when it came to the person who she once was the closest to. Monotonously, she answered, "You're overthinking it. I'm only here by chance. I have no interest in her affairs."

Noel was visibly unconvinced. The Elise that was currently in front of him was as stubborn as the one he knew in the past. "Nevermind. Charlene said she misses you very much and wishes to explain to you what happened back then. Why don't I arrange a meeting for the two of you?" Elise gave him a mocking smirk and pursed her lips. "Do you think there's still a need for that now?"

Hearing that, Noel assumed that she was still holding grudges on the incident many years back, but Charlene was innocent in the matter as well. They could've sat down together and had a proper discussion about it. If they had done that, perhaps Elise would have given up on the resentment and returned to her singing career, which was the dreams of many music enthusiasts. "H, in spite of everything, you're old friends. Just see it as a reunion, can you?"

Elise remained silent. All of a sudden, a familiar tune was played on the stage, and she heard Charlene saying, "Next up, I'll be presenting a hit of mine—Stargazing." It was Charlene's most popular song since her debut. After so many years, it was still one of the top songs in pop music charts—one that was familiar to many. And so, once the song's prelude played, every single fan that was present started chorusing. "Be it composition or lyrics, this song of Charlene is recognized as an all-time classic.

Thus, it's always everyone's go-to song despite having been published after so many years," Noel generously praised as he failed to notice Elise's tensed fists. Originally, she just wanted to pass by Charlene without having to recall anything from the past with her. Nevertheless, having heard the song, she couldn't help questioning, "If she's that talented, why does everyone only remember this one song of hers?" Her statement dazed Noel.

Indeed, although Charlene had released countless albums and singles after the hit, none of them could surpass *Stargazing*. Despite her questioning, Noel said, "It's impossible to turn every song into classics. It's already difficult to have even one." Elise knew that Noel had always unconditionally believed in Charlene, so she didn't attempt to argue, though his words were rather irritating to hear. "Then is there a possibility that this one classic of hers is a product of plagiarism?"

At that, Noel chose to remain wordless. Memories started flushing in his mind. He opened his mouth as if he was about to refute, but knowing further debate would be pointless, he simply replied, "Charlene is a talented singer. She would never do such a thing." Elise raised her gaze toward Charlene, who was smiling sweetly on the stage. She, too, once believed in what Noel just said. But sadly, humans were prone to make mistakes, including judging others. "I'm leaving," Elise blurted and immediately walked away. Watching as she walked into the distance, Noel blurted, "Even if I knew what you said was the truth, there's nothing I can do to change it.

I'm sorry, H." Withdrawing his stare, he walked toward backstage. After Charlene was done with the song, she went backstage to get changed. When she saw Noel, she trotted to him. "How was the performance? Was I good?" He soundlessly looked at her. After hesitating for a while, he eventually revealed, "H was here." Surprisingly, upon the information, her brows tensed. Even her voice clearly shivered. "Really? H? She came? W-Where is she?

I wanna meet her..." Noel stared at the familiar expression. At his stare, Charlene felt somewhat embarrassed and quickly looked away. "Why are you staring at me like that, Noel?" He answered, "She left already." Visibly, Charlene let out a sigh. Noel, however, observed every gesture and word of hers assiduously, yet he didn't attempt to confront her. "Didn't she quit music? Why is she here? Oh, by the way, what's her relationship with Jack Griffith?

Why did she write a song for him?" Although she was feeling uneasy, she appeared to be concerned about Elise. At that moment, her behavior made Noel feel as if she was a stranger to him. "Ask her yourself if you wanna know. I'm heading back." Charlene hastily called for him, "Wait!

The event's not over yet. Then—" However, this time, Noel didn't even care to turn around as he marched away, leaving her standing still, biting her lips. All the gentleness in her eyes instantaneously dispersed as it was replaced with darkness. Then, she pulled out her phone and made a call. "I want you to look into a person for me. I want her latest details. Every single one."