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Chapter 421

Alexander was visibly upset after seeing Elise coming to her friend's defense, but he knew Elise was only friends with this Max character. His real enemy was the one in the coffin, the one who was a hair's breadth away from death.

After Elise got control of the situation, she looked at Alexander and told Claude, "He's in the room. We have to be quick."

"I understand." Claude nodded and went into the room where the coffin was kept.

Elise followed him.

Alexander hated seeing Elise looking so worried for another man, but he still went inside after thinking about it for a second. Jackson had always been interested in Alexander's shenanigans. It was the first time Alexander was being so open, so he went inside as well.

Claude performed a simple checkup on Joseph, then his brows knitted into a frown.

"How is it?" Elise asked.

"Not good," he answered. "The resources here are limited. I have to perform a detailed checkup on him and arrange a surgery at once."

"Can he wake up after that?" she asked again.

"No guarantees." Claude wasn't too sure about it himself either. "But I will try my best. If you want him to wake up immediately, I do have a way to do it, though it won't last long."

"Do it," she said solemnly. Since it wasn't certain that Joseph would wake after the surgery, she would try and extract some useful information from Joseph before that.

Claude looked at her, then at the people in the room. He didn't do it immediately, since Jackson would grow very suspicious if Claude used his meds. But if she has already made that decision, she must have an exit strategy already planned. I don't have anything to worry about, for she is here. Claude took his bag out and rummaged through it until he found a small tube in the hidden compartment. He uncorked it and opened Joseph's mouth before pouring the tube's content into him.

The room was silent for around a minute. Eventually, Joseph started stirring, and he slowly opened his eyes. For a moment, he looked energetic, as if he had never been

sick before.

“Joseph.” Elise went over so Joseph could see her clearly. “We saved you. You can trust us. Tell me, who did this to you? And who usurped your place?”

She thought she could get some useful answers, but the results were disappointing.

“I don’t know,” Joseph said calmly. “The last thing I remember is the case of the disappearance of Timothy—a physicist—and his wife, Sasha. They have been missing for twelve years.” After he said that, the light in his eyes went out. He blinked a few times and closed his eyes, as if he was a robot that ran out of juice.

“Joseph!” Elise held his hand, which felt cold, in hopes to wake him up, but he had lost consciousness. She looked up at Claude solemnly. “What happened?” she asked, her voice tinged with frustration.

Alexander noticed that, of course, and his eyes glinted coldly.

“Things,” Claude answered apologetically. “It’s the med’s effect. It causes a rally, and it works like steroids for athletes. It can stimulate the human brain for a short while, but I can’t control the length of time. It’s a miracle he could last until he finished telling you a clue, not to mention how clear and succinct he was.”

Despite how ‘useless’ the medicine seemed, Jackson went on full alert. Not more than five doctors have that kind of skill in this world. “Mr. Mumm, may I know who’s your mentor?” he probed.

“Self taught,” Claude replied. “Just some tricks I picked up along the way. I can teach you if you want, Mr. Gleeman.”

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“No need for that,” Jackson answered coldly. “But since you’re such an expert, you must have heard of Claude Strike, have you not?”

“No, I haven’t,” Claude answered promptly.

“Do you think I’d believe that?” Jackson gnashed his teeth. This guy knows more than he lets on

"You're an odd man, Mr. Gleeman. There are a few billion people on this earth, and a lot of them are in the field of medicine. I can't possibly know each and every one of them," Claude denied and started joking around without a care. "Is this Claude character your lover, Mr. Gleeman?"

That finally irritated Jackson. His face fell, and he gritted his teeth. "Claude is a man."

"Oh?" Claude sighed regrettably, and he shot Jackson a weird look. "I didn't expect you to have a thing for men."

"I do not!" Jackson growled.

"You do not have to explain yourself. I respect all sexualities. After all, love wins." Claude gave him an understanding look, as if no matter what Jackson said, Claude would not change his mind anymore.

Jackson finally had enough, and he stormed off.

Elise didn't even hear their conversation. She was staring at Joseph, spacing out. A moment later, she asked calmly, "Does Tissote have everything you need for the surgery?"

"No," Claude said calmly. "I'll get someone to send it over from Mesdra. They'll be here in two days, if nothing goes wrong."

"Then perform the surgery in two days," she snapped out of it and said. "Return the coffin to its default state, and supply some nutrients to him."

"Of course. I won't spare any effort on this," Claude replied.

Elise nodded. "Come over once you're done. You'll be staying at my place. I'll be going first to get someone to clear up a room for you."

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She went outside right after, but when she brushed past Alexander, she stopped for a moment and looked at him. "Come with me," she said calmly, then continued walking.

Alexander gazed at Claude deeply for a moment, then he followed her out.

They kept going on until they came to the gate, and Elise stopped. She turned around and frowned at him. "You seem troubled."

"I do not," Alexander said coldly.

"I believe you." Elise knew that even the closest couple in the world would still have their own secrets. She respected him, but she also hoped he could rely on her. "I will always be here for you."

Alexander frowned. He was struggling with himself, but in the end, he nodded. "I understand."

He knew she'd listen to whatever he told her. He knew she could be careless and miss out on a lot of details, but for some reason, he greedily wanted her to notice him more. He wanted her to treat him like how she treated the man in the coffin. Maybe I shouldn't make it hard for her. "Go. I'll be joining you for dinner," he said calmly.

That was a good sign. At least he was willing to sit with her, which meant he wasn't going to push her away anymore.

"Sure. I'll tell Maria to make your favorite food." She smiled at him and went to the yard next door.

He saw her off, and he sighed. Why am I dwelling on this? He knew her well. She had a lot on her mind, but he was the only one she cared about when it came to love. That's enough, right? He told himself that, and that calmed him down a little.

But he couldn't stay calm anymore when it came to dinner.

Claude was acting like he owned the place, and he joked around, making everyone laugh.

In the end, he took out a bottle of muscle enhancing pills and energy liquid from his bag and handed it to Trevor. "Since you're Elise's family, that makes you my family. You can stop going to the gym now. It's a waste of time. Take my meds and eat enough food, and you'll get your six pack in no time."

Trevor's eyes shone, and he took them from Claude without hesitation.

Then, Claude handed a bottle of custom-made mask to Jeanie. "Mrs. Anderson, you seem tired. Is it because Elise is worrying you? Oh, that's just so sad. I got this from my research center overseas. It's the latest product. Use it once every day, and you'll be ten years younger in a month."

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Jeanie beamed. "You have such a silver tongue. Thank you very much then. Do stay here for a while longer."

"Thank you!" Claude smiled. When it came to Robin and his wife, however, he was a lot more respectful. Claude handed them two vials of meds for the heart. "Here,

for you, Mr. and Mrs. Sinclair. We won't be home all the time, and emergencies might arise, so this will help. Just inject it into your heart, and it'll make sure you live for another three days. Once we get back, you'll be rescued in no time."

Robin nodded happily. "Thank you, young man."

Alexander was visibly upset, and he didn't even have a bite of his food.

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Even Trevor was starting to warm up to Claude, and the whole family looked merry. Well, everyone except Alexander.

Ever since Elise came to the table, she would glance at Alexander. She noticed his, silence, so she gave him some food. "Here. It's your favorite."

Alexander looked at his bowl, and his frown disappeared. He paused for a moment before he started to eat, but he looked at Claude coldly.

Claude met his gaze, and he knew Alexander was mocking him, but all he did was smile, as if he didn't care about Alexander. Fortunately, none of them got into any argument, so dinner went relatively well.

After the servant came and cleared the table, Claude stood up and stretched his arm, then he huddled closer to Elise. "Where will I be staying tonight, Elise?" he asked.

"Third room on the right in the backyard," Elise said calmly.

Claude craned his neck. "Where are you staying then?"

"Second room on the left," Elise answered impatiently.

"Who's in the first room?" he asked again.

Elise gritted her teeth, but she said nothing.

"That's my room," Trevor raised his voice. "You got a problem with that?"

"Of course not." He grinned and wrapped his arm around Trevor's neck, then he whispered something into his ear.

For some reason, Trevor's eyes widened in excitement, then he shook Claude's hands. "My room's yours now."

Alexander was shocked. He and Elise were already engaged, but Trevor was still on guard and never allowed him to move in. This guy is only here for a day, but now he gets to stay beside Elise? If this goes on, I'm going to lose my status here.

Jeanie noticed that, and she started thinking about the whole situation. Wait, does this boy like Elise too? She did like Claude, but he was too much of a sweet talker and had no sense of personal space. He's a playboy. I can't let him get together with Elise.

"Trevor," Jeanie said. "My room's dark and humid all the time. Can I take yours?"

Trevor was filial, so he would not refuse his mother's request. "Of course, Mom."

"Thank you." She nodded and looked at Claude. "Max, I live in the first room on the right. It's big, so I hope you won't hate it."

"I won't. I'm a big guy, so I can live in dark spaces. It's great for me. Don't mind it," Claude agreed readily.

"Good to hear." Jeanie looked at him approvingly. He's a friendly one, but not good enough to be Elise's husband.

Claude didn't mind. He took Trevor away and had a hushed talk. When they came back, Claude gave him two bottles of meds.

After Elise was done performing acupuncture on Joseph that night, Alexander took her back to her room. The moment they came to her room, the door to the right room suddenly opened, and Claude came out. "Oh, back from your date, Elise?"

"Why are you here?" Elise asked. This room is the furthest one from the front yard. It's quiet and spacious. It's supposed to belong to Grandma and Grandpa.

"I managed to move in. Charisma talks." He looked up arrogantly and smirked at Alexander.

And Alexander stormed off angrily.

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Elise was slightly frustrated after Alexander left. She actually had something to say to him, but now she had to find another time. She turned around and looked coldly at the trickster. "What are you doing?"

"I just want to be closer to you. You don't have to be so fierce about it, Elise."
Claude put on a tearful act.

Elise loosened her right hand, and the needle in her sleeve fell into her palm. She was ready to attack.

Claude noticed that, so he retreated back into the room at once and stuck out his head just enough for him to see. "Hey, can't we talk this through? You can't attack me just like that. At least give me a hint."

"You asked for it." She took another step.

"Stop!" Claude stopped her. "Hold it right there! I was just trying to help, Elise! Don't you get it?"

"No." I just think you want to mess this family up.

"Of course you don't." He sighed and came out of the room.

The moment he stood still, Elise sent her needle flying and rooted him to the spot.

"Can't you at least hear me out? Oh my god!" Claude had a look of horror on his face. Man, she is the most ruthless woman I have ever met.

"No. You'll run away." Elise wouldn't show him any mercy. "Now talk!" she demanded.

Claude whimpered for a moment before he finally said with some grievance, "You're still young, so you might get duped. I want to create a sense of crisis for him so he'd get annoyed and care about you more. Don't you see? He's jealous! And you say I'm not helping."

"He's jealous?" Elise stared at the ground. Is he jealous? I guess so, but he was already looking weird before Claude came. Claude only made things worse.

"Yeah. I made your family happy, and now I'm living right next to you. Now he must be coming up with ways to beat me or treat you nicer in case I take you away. I'm

doing this for your own good? How can you be so ungra-

Hm that's logical. But he knows nothing about Alexander. He's a calm and collected man, and he would never try to butter up anyone like Claude does. All he needs to do is just stand there, and his aura's enough to conquer everyone. That kind of vibe and air isn't something someone stupid like Claude can understand. Elise didn't want to elaborate, so she rolled her eyes and simply walked into her room.

"Hey, don't go! Please, at least free me!" Claude called after her.

"You deserve this," she replied calmly. "You called me an ingrate."

"I did not call you an ingrate," Claude denied. But then he realized what she was saying, and he pleaded, "I didn't even finish the sentence, so it doesn't count."

"Implied meaning counts to me." She went into her room and slammed the door shut.

The cold night wind blew across the courtyard. Claude stood beside the door, and his teeth chattered from the cold. Oh god. It's so cold. Naturally, it was a sleepless night for him.

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Chapter 425

Everyone sat at the table and had breakfast the next day.

Alexander seemed to be in a good mood. He was eating slowly, but it was obvious he looked relaxed, and the main reason for that was Claude. Or more precisely, the condition Claude was in.

He was covered in a thick blanket, and it almost encompassed his head. The heater was right beside him, but he was still shaking. Even when he was trying to have some soup, his hand was trembling as if he had Parkinson's disease.

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Elise glanced at him and put her cutlery down. The moment she stood up, she saw two men and a woman coming in, smiling at them.

"Ah, looks like we came at the right time. Having breakfast, are we?" Russell asked, as if he was great friends with the people there.

Trevor stood up the moment he heard that voice, and he turned around seriously. "Uncle Russell? Why are you here?" he asked indignantly.

Before Trevor and Austin got into trouble, Russell had already set his sights on the company. Over the last few years, he was trying to get himself crowned as president. This man is a hypocrite. Trevor thought his uncle truly had no ambition, since he was always smiling. However, he had learnt his lesson, and since then, he never got close to Russell or his family. Even after Trevor and Austin came back to the office, Russell chose to take Faye's side. Why is he here today?

"Oh, that was rude, Trevor. Yoyo's been back for a long time, but she hasn't seen any of her elders yet. Maybe she's not used to us yet, so I came over. Aren't you

going to welcome me?" Russell gave Trevor a reprimanding look, though he seemed friendly enough when he did that. Then, he turned his attention to Elise, who was the only one standing

"You must be Yoyo." He looked at her closely and nodded. "You've grown into a fine lady. I used to hug you when you were a baby. Do you remember?"

"I don't," Elise answered coldly.

"Ah, it doesn't matter. It's all in the past now." He waved her down and looked behind him. "Come over and meet your cousin, kids."

Daniel and Tania came up and greeted her politely, "Hi, Elise."

They were wearing a friendly smile, as if they were nice people, but even so, Elise saw the ambition in their eyes. She had seen a lot of people, and she knew Russell and his family were more complex than they let on. She didn't answer them, though she did give them a nasty look.

"Hi, I'm Tania. I'm one year younger than you."

Tania came over and tried to hold Elise's arm, but Elise dodged her easily, leaving Tania's hand hanging in the air awkwardly. It took her a while to pull her hand back, and she faked a smile to pretend that everything was fine. Then, she looked up and tried to say something, but she met Elise's ferocious gaze.

It was at that moment, she realized that Elise's gaze was sharper than anything she had seen before. The moment their eyes met, Tania felt a damning chill running down her spine. It was as if she was stranded in a snowy wasteland, trying to take a step ahead, but she was buffeted by a snowstorm that forced her to close her eyes.

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Eventually, Tania swallowed her words.

Russell noticed the short exchange, and he was displeased, but he hid it quickly. They say Yoona's brought up in a village, but I don't think so. Someone with that kind of aura can't have grown up in a regular family.

Even though his sister had stumbled, Daniel was in no hurry to come to her defense. Instead, he shifted the topic like he usually would. "And I'm one year older than you. Come to me if you need any help."

"What kind of help can you give me?" Elise asked without missing a beat.

Daniel was only being polite, but he never thought Elise would take it seriously. He had nothing to answer, and the air was becoming awkward, so he threw out a random reply. "Anything. If someone tries to bully you, or if you run into any trouble, you can come to me for help."

"Get me a hundred doses of hyacinth serum then," she answered calmly.

The moment she said that, Claude spewed his soup out. Hyacinth serum? And a hundred of them? Wow, she does not hold back.

Daniel had some knowledge on medicines, since he was the young master of a family of doctors. Hyacinth wasn't a rare item, so he thought hyacinth serum was just another regular medicine as well. "No problem. You will get your serums in three days," he accepted the request readily.

Elise looked at him as if he was an idiot. "You have three months. If you can get a hundred doses by then, I'll acknowledge you as my cousin."

Claude came over. "Hey, if I get a hundred of them, can I be your cousin too?"

"Buzz off" Elise told him off bluntly.

"Okay." Claude went away immediately, but he muttered under his breath. "You didn't have to tell me off so bluntly."

Daniel knew nothing about how Elise and Claude got along, so he thought of that as a funny little episode and brushed it aside. Proudly, he said, "No need. Don't worry about that, Elise. Leave it to me. If I can't find a hundred of them in three days, you can pick anything from my medicine stash. What do you say?"

"Deal." Elise's eyes glinted slyly. Well, Christmas came early this year. And Santa came to my house himself.

"Good" He puffed his chest out confidently, but when he glanced at his sister, a hint of disdain flashed in his eyes. Hmph. In the end, it's still up to me to complete Dad's request of befriending Elise. You're just a girl and going to get married off soon. Just give up on the inheritance. You're not worthy of it.

"Seems like you're getting along." Russell nodded happily. "Do keep in touch. It's how a family bonds."

"Don't worry, Dad. I'll come over a lot," Daniel answered proudly.

"Good." Russell nodded. He looked around the yard, and when he saw Alexander, his eyes shone.

Sometime earlier, he had looked into all the rich kids in Tissote to pick a good candidate for his daughter's marriage. Not to mention he could use the connection as well. Alexander was on the list, and he was by far the best candidate for Tania.

The Griffiths might be in a decline, but Alexander was capable enough to get into Frazier Incorporated and save their pharmaceutical company from a crisis. That alone pointed to the bright future Alexander had.

When he heard the rumor about Alexander being Elise's fiancé, he thought it was just a rumor. I guess that rumor's true, but they're still not married. As long as he's still not married, I can still snatch him away. Russell gave Tania a look.

Tania looked at where he was looking. When she saw Alexander sitting there handsomely, she realized what her father was getting at, and she nodded imperceptibly.

Russell went up to Jeanie and requested genuinely, "Jeanie, we're really busy with work, Daniel and I. We have no choice but to leave Tania at home every time. She's really lonely there, so can you take care of her for us for a few days? It's a lively place here, and she can learn a thing or two from Yoona. What do you think?"

Before Jeanie could say anything, Elise refused, "I have nothing to teach her."

Daniel laughed. "You're being modest, Elise. You're a top student in Tissote University. You're more than qualified to teach her a thing or two."

"Daniel's right. Please don't refuse us. She's a hard worker, and she's a great cook. Let her stay and help you guys out, alright?"

Russell left them after saying that, worried that Elise would refuse again. "Enjoy your day. Tania, come with me. I need to talk to you."

He went out of the hall, and his children quickly followed him.

After they left, Moses mocked, "Well, someone's more shameless than I am."

Trevor snapped out of it and turned to look at his mother. "Are we really letting that girl stay here, Mom?"

"What can you do? Chase her out?" Jeanie could not do that, for they were still relatives.

Trevor shut up, since he could never chase his relative out.

Elise blurted, "Chase her out then."

Jeanie smiled bitterly. "I was just joking, Yoyo. Russell's a b*stard, but Tania's your cousin, and she's a girl. You can't chase her out. It's a bit too insensitive."

"If you don't want to take her in, then why do you care if it's insensitive?" Elise asked curiously.

“Um...” Jeanie was at a loss. Human relationships were weird and complex. Any minor decision could result in a great disaster, so they couldn’t do whatever they pleased all the time.

Elise knew it was something she couldn’t understand, so she simply waved her hand. “Fine, you decide.” She left it to her family.

Russell and his children stood face to face outside.

Tania grumbled pitifully, “Dad, you want me to seduce Elise’s fiancé on her turf? That’s too risky. If they find out, Aunt Jeanie and Trevor will kill me.”

“Then don’t let them find out, duh,” Daniel mocked. “I don’t have to tell you who Alexander is, right? If you actually marry him, even I have to butter you up. Dad’s paving a road for you here. Are you sure you want to act like a child and refuse?”

“But—”

“Alright, quiet,” Russell interrupted the conversation. He told Tania, “I’ve always told you that it’s important you marry a rich and powerful man. Endure this, and you will come out as a champion. Don’t tell me you can’t do even this much.”

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“You’ll need to get married someday, Tania. I can’t protect you forever. Think about it—there are tons of wealthy women who wish to marry that man inside, but they don’t even have a chance to get close to him. Now that this chance is right before your eyes, are you sure you want to let it go just like that? As long as Alexander is on our side, I’ll get the chance to be the head of the Anderson Family. Our fates are tied together. You shouldn’t make rash decisions during such crucial times.” Russell made his intentions clear, and Tania would come off as a self-centered and ignorant person if she were to reject his request.

Therefore, Tania had no choice but to swallow all her afflictions and nod obediently. “Don’t worry, Dad. I won’t disappoint you.”

“That’s my girl. It’s all up to you now,” Russell uttered thoughtfully. After giving her a pat on the shoulder, he turned to leave. “Good luck, sis!” Daniel wore a gloating expression on his face as he walked off. Tania watched as the two figures disappeared down the alley, and she let out a long sigh before she returned to the house.

The moment she walked through the front entrance, she put all her worries aside and forced a pleasant smile onto her face. Even her footsteps seemed lighter as she made her way in. However, she realized that the front porch was completely empty once she got in. It had been filled with people earlier, but now there was no one left. It was as if they were trying to avoid her.

Tania was the precious child of the family, and she had been spoiled and pampered her whole life. She had never been neglected in the past! She felt a lump in her throat as tears began forming in her eyes. However, when she recalled Russell's instructions, she forced her sobs back down her throat. Daddy's right. Everyone has to go through some tough times in life. All of this won't mean a thing when I achieve my goals and become better than everyone else. With my skills and traits, I'll win Alexander over soon. No one's going to look down on me then!

Tania no longer felt sad after that. If anything, she felt more determined than ever. She turned around and walked over to the backyard in search of Jeanie. "Mrs. Anderson, do you think I should share a room with Yoyo? I think that would help us get closer to each other, right?" Tania wore an innocent look as she spoke.

"No." Jeanie rejected her immediately. "Yoyo doesn't enjoy sharing her room with others." The truth was that Elise didn't like being bothered by others, but Jeanie made her explanation sound a little kinder as she thought that Tania was a relatively nice child. Well, can't she tell that she isn't welcome here? I can't believe she's shamelessly staying around. I wonder what's going on in her head.

"If that's the case..." Tania nodded thoughtfully. "You're right, Mrs. Anderson. Why don't I share a room with you, then?"

"No!" Jeanie felt a headache coming. "I don't like sharing rooms either. You can find yourself an empty room!" she grumbled, feeling annoyed. Although Jeanie didn't want grudges from the older generations to affect the younger generations, she simply couldn't bring herself to like Tania whenever she thought about Russell. Jeanie's gut feeling told her to stay away from Tania.

Jeanie's words were precisely what Tania was waiting for, so Tania strode off with a grin on her face after that. Initially, Tania had assumed that Alexander was staying in one of the rooms in the current house, but she circled the area to realize that he was staying in the area next door. If that's the case, then I won't get a chance to get close to Alexander even if I stay with Elise, right? Tania's footsteps came to a halt in the middle of the courtyard when she realized the issue she was facing.

Meanwhile, Elise was just about to head over to Valerie's place to give her an acupuncture treatment when she bumped into Tania. "What are you doing here?" Elise asked in an icy tone.

Tania was caught by surprise, and her heart jolted when she turned around to look Elise in the eyes. It took Tania a while to gather herself. "Mrs. Anderson told me to pick my own room, but it looks like there aren't any empty rooms here." She tried her best to sound calm.

Elise thought about it for a while. She might be right. All six of the rooms are full since Claude took the last one. I don't think this place can fit anyone else. "You can go over to stay with Maria," Elise uttered flatly.

"Maria? Who's that?"

"The cook," Elise replied.

"What? Would that work?" Tania's body language made it clear that she was against the idea, but at the same time, she didn't want Elise to know that. "Personally, I'm fine with it," she explained after biting her bottom lip. "But if the public finds out that the Anderson Family's young mistress is sleeping with maids, it will ruin my family's reputation. You can't tell me to do that."

Elise crossed her arms in front of her chest. "This won't work, and that won't work... Tell me where do you want to stay, then?"

There was a long pause as Tania pretended to think about Elise's question for a while. "When I first arrived, I noticed that people were guarding the yard next door. I think

those belong to the Andersons, too, right? Perhaps I could move there."

Elise subconsciously shot a glance toward Alexander's place. Moments later, she had a sudden realization. Russell's actions puzzled me at first. I was wondering why he sent his daughter over for no reason. Well, I got my answer now-she's here for Alexander. Gosh, she's trying to go for my fiancé when it's only our first day meeting each other. She sure is an impressive woman, huh? Well, both Russell and Tania are being a little too confident. Do they think Alexander will find someone like Tania attractive? Okay. Since they want to embarrass themselves, then I have no reason to stop them. I'll just treat this as entertainment.

"Sure." Elise generously gave consent before she made her way to the yard next door. "I'll bring you there," she offered.

Tania hadn't expected Elise to agree so easily, so she froze in her spot for a few seconds before she hurried after Elise. Both of them went over to the yard next door. When they stepped in, Alexander happened to walk out of the main hall. Elise walked over when she caught sight of his towering figure, so she walked over to address him directly. "My cousin would like to stay over here. Do you guys have a spare room?"

Tania hadn't managed to catch up with Elise's footsteps, so she had to jog to follow her. When Elise's footsteps came to a halt, Tania nearly crashed into her. It took Tania a few moments to recover her energy and steady herself. Her eyes were filled with anticipation and fear as she looked at Alexander.

Alexander lowered his gaze to look at Tania before he shifted to stare at Elise. His hands were stuck in his pockets, and he pressed his fingers together as he wondered, What is this woman trying to do this time? Can't she tell that the girl beside her is interested in me? Is she sending someone over to balance things out because she has someone interested in her next door? She's saying that we can each have our own fun, huh?

Alexander had already been sulking over the incident with Joseph, and his face turned more sour when he realized that Elise had personally sent a girl over for

him. Anger was written all over his face as he spoke grumpily. "I guess. Deal with it on your own. Don't tell me about this."

He had initially planned on turning around and walking away to avoid interacting with them. But to his surprise, Elise had a comeback immediately after. "Great. She can stay here, then. She can prepare your meals and tidy the place. You're welcome," she said in a haughty tone.

Upon finishing her sentence, Elise gave Tania an affirming pat on the shoulder before she walked to Joseph's room. She was utterly entertained by the look of fury on Alexander's face.

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Tania wasn't the most observant person. It was clear that Alexander only had eyes for Elise, but Tania proceeded to fix her hair before she addressed him in a timid voice. "Which room should I stay in, Mr. Griffith?"

"You can stay on the streets." Alexander didn't bother to think before replying to her.

"What?!" Tania froze as she thought she might have heard him wrongly. When Alexander returned to his senses, he peeked through the doors to see Elise gazing at Joseph in a caring manner. Rage burned in Alexander's chest as he saw this scene. This time, he changed his answer as he realized his initial reply had been a mistake. "The first room on the right. Follow me!" he uttered in an exceptionally loud voice.

"Really?!" Tania was overjoyed. She hadn't expected things to go so smoothly. It seemed like both Elise and Alexander didn't have their guards up against her because they were agreeing to all her requests. Dad and Daniel were overthinking it earlier. My cousin isn't that hard to deal with after all!

"Yes." Alexander wore a steely expression as he addressed Tania. "You can get Cameron to provide you with anything that you need."

"Okay!" Tania nodded enthusiastically. "I'm a simple and easy-going person, so I'll just need some daily necessities," she uttered in a respectful tone.

"Mhmm," Alexander mumbled as he stepped into the room. After glancing at Alexander, Tania looked over to the room that Elise was in. Tania felt an urge to leap with joy. I thought their relationship would be more solid since they're engaged, but it seems like all of that is just a show! I only arrived a while ago, and it's already clear that Alexander is really cold toward Elise. Soon enough, he won't even look at her anymore.

Happiness spread across Tania's face as she thought about how she was about to marry the dream guy of all women in Tissote. Soon enough, Cameron arrived with the daily necessities that Tania needed. He had just arrived when Elise strode past Tania's room without gazing in their direction. Alexander looked out for a brief moment, but his actions were too subtle to be realized.

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Chapter 428

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Alexander only stepped toward the exit after he made sure that her footsteps had traveled far away from the room. "Hey, Mr. Griffith!" Tania stopped him in a rather meek tone. "I'm not done talking..."

But it was almost as if Alexander couldn't hear her at all—he simply walked out of the — room without turning back. Cameron, who was watching both of them from behind, put on a puzzled expression when he noticed the disappointed expression on Tania's face. Why do you look so dejected when your cousin's fiancé leaves your room? Cameron gave Tania a long, thoughtful gaze before he walked out after Alexander.

Alexander walked over to the room that Joseph was in before he slammed the door behind him. His burly figure towered over the man sleeping in the glass coffin, and he let out a sigh as he looked at the man. How are you related to Elise? How does she truly feel about me? She sent a young girl over to me—is that something all women in love do? Or... Does she not care about how loyal I am to her? There were tons of questions running in his head, but the only answer he got was silence.

FILE

Elise took a trip to the black market, and it was already late in the evening by the time she got back. She heard a commotion going on next door, so she turned and walked over to Alexander's area. When she got there, she saw chickens and ducks running all over the place. There were feathers flying all over the yard, and the whole place was an entire mess.

Tania was situated right in the middle of the yard with a knife in her hand. She was too terrified of the chickens and ducks to keep her eyes open, so she merely held the knife out in front of her as she swung it around while screaming. She didn't manage to hit a single thing with her knife.

Elise felt like her eardrums were about to burst if she listened to Tania's screams for any longer. With a flick of her right hand, a couple of needles slipped into Elise's fingers, and she sent them flying out all at once. In an instant, all of the chickens and ducks collapsed onto the ground—Elise's needles had done the work. The yard was finally peaceful again.

"Grandpa and Grandma both prefer a quiet environment, so you should stop making so much noise." Elise turned around and walked off right after that.

Tania had her lips parted to say something, but she couldn't find the words at all. In the end, Tania had no choice but to force herself to pick up all the chicken and duck carcasses and drag them into the kitchen.

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Chapter 430

Another two hours went by before Tania placed the final pot of soup on the stove. She heaved a sigh of relief when she saw the scrumptious dishes that she had prepared on the kitchen countertop. She was excited to be praised for her skills, and she hastily brought empty bowls out to set up the dining table.

She had just arranged all the dishes when Alexander came back home. With a broad grin on her face, Tania let out a loud cry. "You're back, Mr. Griffith! It's time for dinner!" Upon hearing her, Alexander walked in to take a look at the dishes. He wore a blank look on his face, but he raised an eyebrow when he saw Tania standing by the table. "Who told you to do this?" he asked heartlessly.

"What?" Tania didn't fully understand what he meant, but she replied to him with a polite and reserved tone. "No one told me to do anything—I decided on this myself. I'd be freeloading if I just lived here without contributing, so I figured that I would prepare your meals so that you don't have to go over next door. It'd save you some trouble."

"Did you ask the maids before you prepared the meal?" There wasn't a hint of warmth in Alexander's tone.

Tania frowned as she didn't get what he meant. "I don't like the smell of oil and smoke at home," he explained. He walked out of the dining area right after that. Tania remained frozen in her spot for a long while before returning to her senses. I spent the whole day working on this, yet I didn't get a single good comment. I even violated one of

Alexander's rules at home!

Her sharp eyes darted all around the room before she hurried along behind Alexander. He was headed in the direction of Elise's room. When Tania got there, she realized the atmosphere was completely different—there was a cheerful, light atmosphere at the dining table as everyone gathered around for a meal.

Once again, Tania felt herself being enveloped by a layer of embarrassment. She didn't even know what to do with herself. Right then, a group of people walked through the entrance. These individuals seemed as if they had been trained—they were arranged in two straight lines, and each of them had a gift in their hands. They marched past Tania before entering a horizontal formation and held their gifts up.

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Chapter 431

"What's going on?" Claude was a busybody—he was the first to lower his cutlery and rush over to take a look. "Hey, who sent you guys here?"

"These are the gifts that Mr. Griffith has prepared for the senior members of the Sinclair Family," a woman who was standing in the middle of the line replied with a— smile.

Elise immediately lowered her cutlery when she heard what the woman said. "Did you arrange all of this?" She stared at Alexander, her eyes wide with surprise.

"Yeah," he replied while eating in an unhurried manner. It was almost as if he wasn't related to the entire scene that just occurred in front of them. That was when Elise realized something—Alexander's jealous! Someone as cold and indifferent as him would never send gifts to the elderly otherwise. He's trying to win them over, huh? Elise felt both sorry and happy as she watched him trying his best to remain calm. Her eyes were filled with love for the man as she gazed at him.

Claude had just given her family gifts one day ago, and Alexander instantly gathered all sorts of suitable gifts the very next day. Alexander even made sure to put on a grand show of the gifts. If they were to compare the quality of both men's gifts, one of them was going to be embarrassed.

Right then, Cameron walked over to address Elise in a polite tone. "Young Master Alex was the one who prepared all of this. Apart from preparing the same gifts that Mr. Mumm had prepared, he also purchased some nutritional and healthy foods, a famous painting, and a hundred doses of the hyacinth serum that you asked for, Miss Sinclair."

CU

"Sh*t." Claude was already surprised when he heard that Alexander had purchased a famous painting, but he was blown away when he heard Cameron's last sentence. "That's a lot of money!" Claude exclaimed. Alexander is willing to give his all to impress Father, huh? Just the hyacinth serums probably cost him more than 100 million. That's brutal!

Elise wasn't sure whether to laugh or to cry. "The truth is... I've already pre-ordered the hyacinth serum."

"You can just cancel your order," Alexander uttered without even looking up. Once he finished speaking, the men from the second row stepped forward to open their gift boxes. Inside them were fresh and delicious-looking dishes. The men set the dishes on the table while Cameron continued to provide an explanation for the gifts. "Young Master Alex prepared these dishes based on your family's recent health

condition—he specially incorporated some ingredients with special health benefits. Furthermore, he was the one who prepared these dishes on his own. Please enjoy them."

Tania pounded her fist against her chest when she heard what Cameron said. Didn't Alexander say that he doesn't like the smell of oil and smoke!! She wasn't the only one who felt ashamed-Claude felt just as embarrassed by the situation then. Alexander even – dirtied his hands just to prepare this meal. There's simply no way for me to outdo this guy!

Robin was the first to notice what Alexander was trying to do. He let out a grateful sigh as he parted his lips to give a rare compliment. "That's really thoughtful of you, Alexander."

Alexander's eyes lit up for a moment as he raised his head to look at Robin. Both of them gave each other a nod when their gazes met. They had a man-to-man connection-Alexander could tell that Robin was willing to reconsider him as Robin's future son-in-law. Ever since Matthew and Elise's pictures were exposed, such moments had been rare, so Alexander found this especially meaningful.

After Alexander's men left the house, the family's maids dragged two women over to the dining area. "These two brats were snooping around outside. We don't know what they were trying to do!" one of the maids uttered. They gave the two women a slight push, and Maya nearly stumbled and fell. Her assistant held onto her just in time to stop her from falling. Once they steadied themselves, Maya hastily fixed her hair and clothes.

"Did Young Master Alex send you over too? Are you here to dance and entertain us?" Claude asked in a teasing voice.

"You b*stard!" Maya shot him a glare. "How dare you compare me to those filthy women who sell their bodies for money?"

"Who are you calling a b*stard?" Claude's expression turned grim as he glared at Maya.

"You're the b*stard!" Maya straightened her back to show that she wasn't afraid of him. "You're just a useless guard dog-how dare you look down on me?!" she cried.

"Hmph! You're really provoking me now!" Claude rolled his sleeves up and readied himself for a fight.

"That's enough." Elise stopped them, stepped out of the dining area, and stared Maya down. "This is our property, and you came without an invitation. We can be rude to you, and we can even get violent with you—what are you going to do about it? Do

you think you're allowed to do as you please here just because of your status?"

"I'm not talking to you." Maya knew how powerful Elise was, so she decided to avoid a confrontation with her. "Tell Alexander to come out. I want to talk to him!"

Elise turned around to gaze at the man sitting in the dining area. "She's here for you. You can deal with this on your own." Upon hearing her words, Alexander unwillingly got to his feet.

"Who are you?" he asked as he stepped out to stop in front of the woman. Maya stared at him helplessly when she heard his words. "I'm Maya!" She was about to lose her mind. "We've met a few times when Mrs. Griffith tried to matchmake us. Don't you remember me?" Maya shot Elise a piercing glare as she spoke. This woman must have cast some spell on Alexander. That's why he didn't come for me even after so long!

Elise narrowed her eyes as she met Maya's gaze. For some reason, Elise felt a strong dislike toward the woman then. Should I just get rid of her right now? The very next moment, Alexander's deep, icy voice filled the air. "I have a pretty bad memory when it comes to people and things that don't matter to me," he said matter-of-factly.

Elise no longer felt the urge to do anything after that. Maya, on the other hand, clenched her fists in shame. Am I that unimportant to him? Do I not matter to you at all, Alexander? Just you wait! You'll come begging for me someday! Maya gritted her teeth and dug her nails into her palms as she took a deep breath to calm herself down. "That's okay. It's fine if you don't remember what happened in the past. All that matters is that you remember what happens from now onward. Come home with me, Alexander. You don't belong here," she said with a smile on her face.

Maya gave Alexander a longing gaze as she continued talking. "I understand your situation, Alexander. I know that the Griffith Family has been hard on you. Don't worry, I'll help you regain your status as the head of the family. You're a privileged man, so you shouldn't waste your life away in this rotten, old home. Don't ruin your life like that."

Elise scoffed. "You wouldn't be so kind if you didn't have some sort of ulterior motive. Why don't you tell us what you really want? You'd sound more sincere that way."

Maya didn't seem flustered even though her intentions had been exposed. Instead, she stepped forward and tugged on Alexander's sleeve. "You know I love you, Alexander. I'll belong to you once we're married. Everything the Dahlen Family owns will become yours as well. With my father's support, you won't have to struggle out here anymore."

"Tak tsk tsk, what a sincere confession." No one had noticed Claude walking over to them. He scanned Maya with his eyes before he spoke in a rather shocked tone. "Are you aware of your sickness, young woman?"

"You're the one who's sick!" Maya hissed. She nearly lost her composure, but she calmed herself down after taking a look at Alexander.

"I'm serious," Claude uttered in a serious tone. "Do you feel like your complexion has been deteriorating? You might also feel rather light-headed, and you might feel some dryness in your mouth!"

Maya realized there was some truth in his words, and she subconsciously reached out her hand to feel her throat.

“That’s right!” Claude snapped his fingers. “You’ve got an incurable disease!”