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Chapter 511 Unable to Resist

Kenneth looked at her cynically, but he did not utter a word.

To Faye, his behavior was indicative of a silent approval. She turned around to look at Elise before saying, "I'm sorry to snatch your limelight, Elise, but you should know that I've been unhappy for a few years since I was engaged to Johan. Now that I finally have the opportunity to pursue true love, I must be brave."

Elise raised her eyebrow. "Whatever. Perhaps this is not a good thing after all. Faye, women who blindly seek 'true love' usually do not end up well."

"Now, aren't you quite petty, Elise? Even though your fiance has gone bankrupt, you have been loyally staying by his side. If you are with the right person, you don't have to worry about the unpredictable future," Faye said haughtily, as though she was already Kenneth's fiancee.

"Very true indeed. I don't have your guts to do anything I want, though." With that, Elise smiled sarcastically.

Faye's facial expression slightly changed upon sensing that there was a hidden meaning in Elise's words, but she could not understand what Elise was implying.

Soon, she remembered that it was a party after all and was excited and eager once again. "Kenneth, Elise is the main guest of this party here, so let's have a chat in the room."

With that, Faye walked forward to hold Kenneth's arms.

However, before her fingers could even touch him, Kenneth raised his arms delicately to avoid her.

"Please have some self-respect." His face darkened as he left her hand dangling mid-air in an awkward position.

Her smile became quite awkward, but she still forced herself to smile as she tried to resolve her faux pas. "Kenneth, you are so good at teasing!"

"Who said I was teasing you? Do I even know you?" He looked at her impassively.

Faye's body gave a jolt. "You just told my father that you want to marry me..."

Kenneth finally realized the miscommunication and calmly explained, "Oh! I thought the Anderson Family only has one daughter. I didn't know that the foster daughter is also counted."

Even though the rest of the guests knew that Faye was adopted, they did not say anything about it publicly as they had to take her feelings into account. At this moment when everyone's focus was on them, it was undeniably an insult to Faye that Kenneth had pointed it out in such a straightforward manner.

She was dazed for a brief moment before her anger flared up. "Since you are looking down on me, why did you request to marry me?"

In other words, how high and mighty could you be for wanting to marry the foster daughter of the family?

"From where did you get the idea that I want to marry you? You think too highly of yourself." Kenneth flashed a fake smile at her.

To begin with, he was already a man of high status. Now that his face was clouded with a tinge of anger, he emanated a powerful air around him that stunned Faye, whose mouth fell agape as she dared to retaliate.

His gaze only lingered around Faye for less than two seconds before he looked at Elise gently. "The woman whom I want to marry is the second daughter—the biological daughter—of the Anderson Family, Yoona!" he announced clearly.

"My gosh, this is too awkward!"

"Have you guys seen Faye's behavior earlier? She seems very forward with him, as though she can't wait to sleep with him. How embarrassing!"

"Tsk, tsk! As soon as her fiance passed away, she immediately went for another man. A woman like her is no good at all! Fortunately, God is fair and did not let her tarnish Mr. Bailey's reputation!"

"I know, right? She is merely adopted, yet she dreams of being together with Kenneth. Does she even know who he is? He stands out even among a group of talented men. Will he choose a woman who doesn't even know who her father is? I'm actually impressed by her wild imagination, though. She even says he's her true love—how shameless!"

"Serves her right! I've been dissatisfied by her arrogant attitude for a long time now. It's finally her turn to be rejected today."

The crowd's ridicules rang one after another. Faye's cheeks were flushed as she gritted her teeth, but she had to tolerate their insults.

One had to have self-control to achieve great heights. She had already embarrassed herself enough earlier. If she could not keep herself in check this time, she would be a complete joke. Elise pouted in confusion. I have already made it clear to Kenneth in Dukethorn. Why is he still so persistent? Could it be that the famous Kenneth is actually a masochist who likes to be rejected again and again?

"Mr. Bailey, I think you know that my youngest daughter already has a fiance," Austin interjected.

"I know." Kenneth looked at Elise affectionately without looking elsewhere. "Since they are just engaged, I still have a fair opportunity as long as they are not married. Isn't that so?"

"I don't need it, though." Elise rejected him again. "I love my fiance very much and I don't need anything else."

He retracted his gaze and turned around. "Bring it here," he ordered.

Upon hearing that, Melody took an exquisitely wrapped gift and placed it in front of Elise. "Miss Anderson, Mr. Bailey has personally prepared this for you."

"What is it?" Elise had no plans to accept it.

"Something that you yearn for," Kenneth replied. "Look at it first before deciding whether you want to give me a chance or not."

As she looked at his confidence, Elise's firm decision wavered.

Excluding his relentless attempts to pester me, this man has actually boosted the economy of Landred City until it surpassed Athesea. He definitely wields some power that might help me in unexpected ways.

However, I don't want to owe him any favors.

Elise was a person who liked to keep things clear and had never completely relied on Alexander.

She stretched her hand and took the present over as she gave it a thought.

After all, she suddenly realized that it was not the first time she owed him a favor. If he wanted to use these to ask her to do something in exchange, she could not reject him. Since this was the case, she would not have to hesitate any further. Since she had already owed him many favors, she might as well graciously accept this.

"That's it." Kenneth's lips twitched into a smile.

"Young woman, settle your relationship issues privately and think about us. We are here today to have a look at the red jade. Have you brought it with you?"

An elder could not stand it anymore and pressured Elise.

After so many twists and turns, I can't escape from showing them the red jade anymore.

She turned around to look at Joey behind her and nodded.

"The red jade is too heavy and it's not quite safe to bring it here. I have asked a professional to take down a piece and bring it here. If you don't mind, you can have a look at this."

With that, Joey walked forward and opened the box that she had prepared.

In an instant, the amber glow from the red jade immediately attracted everyone's attention.

"It's an invaluable treasure indeed..."

Joey had no intentions to be the model who showed the jade, so she found a bar table and asked the waiter to bring the champagne away before she placed it there for the guests to admire.

The group of people stared fixedly at the bar as they took a few steps closer, encircling the bar in the process until they were about half a meter away. As they were cultured people, they politely left some space for the Anderson Family members as they looked at the red jade from a distance.

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Chapter 512 So What If You're Born Into a Good Family?

As everyone was still obsessed with the red jade, Faye finally couldn't help but start her so-called performance.

"The red jade is such a precious item. I'm sure you took a lot of effort to buy it for the Anderson Family."

With that, she took out a check and forced it into Elise's hand. "Here's the ten million that you spent for the red jade. You can take the balance as your tip."

Elise looked at the check in her hand and arched her eyebrow. "What do you mean? Are you buying my red jade for ten million?"

Her words attracted the attention of the guests.

"Ten million? I can't believe Faye has the guts to even say it out loud!"

"The red jade is so rare that we can only see it once in a century! A while ago at Pete's Auction, the necklace made from the cerulean jade was worth almost 100 million, let alone the red jade!"

"It seems like the pair of sisters from the Anderson Family will have enough to fight with each other."

Without waiting for Faye's reply, Elise turned around to hand the check to Joey.

"Take this, Joey. This is a gift from Miss Faye to you as your tip for bringing the red jade here."

What? I'm getting a tip for bringing such a small item here?

Joey froze for a moment and lifted her head to look at Elise, who winked at her. She instantly understood the situation and waved the check at Faye. "Thanks for the tip, Miss Faye. You are really generous!"

"What nonsense are you saying? This is not a tip for her! The money is to be used to buy the red jade!" Faye explained anxiously.

"What? Are you kidding me? This isn't funny at all, Miss Faye. I remember at the auction, Elise didn't even sell it when others offered it at 100 million. Are you going to use some sweet words to make Elise suffer a loss?"

Faye could no longer cope with the situation alone, so she quickly mentioned Austin's name to support her. "Yoona is a part of the Anderson Family, so her belongings are also owned by the family. Apart from that, this is what Dad wants too!"

While she was speaking, she shot a look of disgust toward Joey. This brat wants to get a share of everything! When I'm free, I'm going to teach her a good lesson. Her sharp words always make me lose my composure in front of everyone!

Her initial plan was to force Elise to sell the red jade to her at a low price in front of all the guests. However, now that she had no choice, she had to let Austin take the responsibility.

"That is our father's intention too?" Elise chuckled coldly as she looked at Austin steadily. "Do you really mean to give your biological daughter 10 million to gloss this matter over?"

Austin heaved a sigh before he said thoughtfully, "Yoyo, just give it to her. If you are still not satisfied, I can arrange for you to have another 100 million, alright?"

"No." Elise's face darkened immediately. "No one can buy the red jade from me. I have enough money to begin with and I've already made a deal to give this to Mr. Shaw from Shaw's Jewelry Co.. Even for such a small piece of jade like what you are seeing now, I'm still going to give it away."

"The Anderson Family can help you to terminate your deal with Shaw's Jewelry Co.." Faye gave a cunning smile.

Elise was so furious that she let out a snort of laughter. "Is this how you do business? You don't take your word seriously and just terminate the contract whenever you like it?"

Faye thrusted her chest arrogantly. "The way I do business has always been putting the profits of the Anderson Family first and making decisions that are the most favorable to our family."

"How selfless of you." Elise's lips curled into a cold smile. "Why don't you hand over the jade worth 5 million that you received last time? Set an example that I can follow. If you hand it over, I will naturally follow suit."

"You—" Faye was so furious that she gritted her teeth. Elise still has the guts to mention that jade? She was the one who hired people to steal my jade, and she even accused me of stealing it myself! How dare she take this matter out to attack my weak points! It's all her fault that the police in Landred City thought I was a lunatic! Even now, I can't even find the jade. How do I even hand it over?

"Please don't change the topic. We are now talking about you now. It's fine if you don't listen to my advice, but are you going to defy our father's wishes and disrespect him as soon as you return?"

Elise smiled at her condescendingly as she said meaningfully, "Hah! I'm not the only one who defies him. In fact, I want to thank you for starting the tradition, dear sister!"

"Stop diverting the topic here. Answer me clearly—are you going to hand the red jade over?" Faye looked at Elise fiercely as she had formulated some plans in her mind.

If Elise handed the red jade over, Faye would be credited as the person who brought a highly valued asset to the Anderson Family.

However, if Elise rejected her request, she could use this reason to further aggravate the shaky relationship between Elise and the Anderson Family, making Elise unable to receive her fair share of the family assets. Even if Elise has some special powers tonight, I will be the ultimate winner. This is the price Elise has to pay for ruining my plans repeatedly. So what if she's born into a good family? She can't win against my foolproof plan, and she will remain defeated by me.

At this exact moment, the huge screen that was temporarily built in the garden suddenly buzzed alive. It let out a shrill sound in the beginning before it gradually softened.

As the electricity went off, the Anderson Pharmaceuticals' promotional video that had been playing on the screen suddenly disappeared.

Just as the technical team went over to fix it, the screen suddenly brightened again.

At the same time, the promotional video had been changed to a powerpoint slide that was set on autoplay mode and at a comfortable pace for the crowd to read.

The contents of the powerpoint was the evidence of Faye using Anderson Pharmaceuticals to collaborate with Jordan to conduct some illegal activities.

From the evidence, one could tell that it was normal for her to commit money laundering for mafia bosses behind the stakeholders' back, and it was also beyond normal for her to renege on her word. However, apart from forcing others to buy the company products, what was the most shocking was that she embezzled the company funds several times. The sum of the money she had embezzled was almost a billion and the most recent case happened three days ago, where she transferred 100 million from the company's account in two transactions.

In other words, Faye was not as selfless as she portrayed herself to be. On the contrary, she was a gold-digger who kept transferring money from the Anderson Family into her own pocket while ruining their reputation in the process.

Upon seeing this, Austin, who had been siding her all this while, could not help glaring at her. "You better explain yourself!"

Faye's expression instantly changed as blood drained from her face. She was so nervous that she gulped, and her eyes anxiously darted everywhere as she thought about the excuses that might be able to cover this as well as the alibis that could convince the present stakeholders.

"Dad, this is not true! Someone is trying to frame me! This is clear as day that someone is trying to accuse me of something that I have not done! They deliberately showed this at such an occasion to destroy the Anderson Family's reputation! All these years, I have been supporting the Anderson Family so that we won't be defeated by our competitors. Because of this, they have fabricated such lies to ruin our relationship!"

Austin's anger abated rather significantly when he heard that.

After all, the contents of the powerpoint were just a one-sided accusation that was not credible. However, he knew that Faye had left some loose ends indeed.

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Chapter 513 And You Have the Right Instead?

Truth be told, Austin was hoping that the accusations were true.

However, although Faye's dirty laundry had been aired in front of everyone, none of the elders from the Anderson Family commented about it. Obviously, her connections at the company were far more complicated than he imagined. It wouldn't be that easy to defeat her.

"How about this? I'll ask someone to investigate this issue, but you have to explain to me how you used the 100 million that you just transferred."

"Why do we have to wait?" Before Faye could even reply, Elise answered the question. "We will have a way to find out whether it is accurate or not."

Then, Elise glanced at the crowd and said loudly, "Captain Gleeman, I know you are here. Please show yourself."

From the back of the crowd, a muscular man walked through the crowd toward her with a cocktail glass in his hand.

An impatient Jackson asked, "Who told you that I'm here?"

I used someone else's identity and invitation card. How did this 'murderer' find out?

Elise beamed. "I'm sure you won't dare to miss such a good opportunity to observe me."

He heaved a long sigh. "Alright. I will look into this. If this evidence is true, none of you can escape."

After that, he took a slight pause before adding, "You know that I'm not referring to today's incident."

"Of course, none of us can escape from the mighty law." Elise shrugged.

"This is a serious matter." Jackson chastised her.

"I'm just joking." Elise rolled her eyes in exasperation. "As usual, you lack humor, Captain Gleeman."

He did not reply to her.

"Alright. We have enough of a scene for today. Let's discuss this later," Austin added solemnly.

After all, he did not want the police to bring his daughter away from the party that his family hosted.

Elise nodded. "Oh, right. It's time to talk business."

"You have something else to discuss?" Austin frowned and murmured quietly, "Yoyo, if it's private, we can discuss it among the family members once the party is over. We don't have to make a fool of ourselves in front of the guests."

"Are you worried that I might continue to disgrace Faye?" Elise asked directly.

Austin was instantly at a loss for a reply.

To be precise, he was worried about the Anderson Family's reputation and since Faye was a part of it, it meant he could not deny the truth.

Elise immediately turned indifferent as she said coldly, "Don't you worry about that. There are many people who want to teach her a lesson. I have no interest in her for the time being."

Upon hearing that, Austin sighed. I'm afraid I'll have to interact with this daughter of mine as if we are strangers for the rest of my life.

Elise ignored him and walked to a nearby table. Then, she took a small spoon to hit her champagne glass, letting out a crisp sound.

"Everyone, I have some good news to share with you. You know that I have been enjoying myself abroad and I know little about the Anderson Family's business. Now that I have returned, I finally thought it through and understood the hard work that my father and my sister have put into it. From now onward, I will officially join Anderson Pharmaceuticals to help them to bear the burden."

As soon as Faye heard that, anger pulsed through her veins as she yelled, "No!"

After realizing her faux pas the next second, she lowered her voice and pretended to be kind as she responded, "I was just trying to say—how could you do that? You are still studying at university. You should live your life without any burdens, Elise. It's enough that one of us is helping out with the business. Since you are still a student, you should focus on your studies."

"Don't I have the right to do so?" Elise stared into Faye's eyes without any humor. It was clear that she was not making a joke.

"If you insist on taking that perspective, my reply will be yes. Indeed, you are not fit to take charge of Anderson Pharmaceuticals. I don't want to say this, but you are from the countryside..." She pretended to accidentally let slip of the fact and quickly paused before she continued. "I mean, the countryside abroad. You have been having fun with farmers and they are the people whom you have interacted the most with. Our business is worth hundreds of millions. It's not something you can simply play with."

"I see." Elise blinked carefreely. "So, as the person who embezzled the company funds, you have the right to manage the company instead? Don't forget that I acquired the land that we need for the development of the next six months without spending a cent. If this is not enough to prove my abilities, I'm going to suspect that you actually don't want me to join the company."

Finally, the stakeholders of Anderson Pharmaceuticals, who had been observing the situation all this while, opened their mouths.

"So, that land was auctioned off by the second daughter of the Anderson Family!"

"Once we get the piece of land, we don't have to worry about the development for the next three years, do we?"

"Faye even wanted to halt the plan before this. It turns out that she just wants to bully her sister and ignore our profits!"

"We are businessmen, after all. There's no reason why we won't want to earn more profit. Say something about this, Mr. Anderson!"

Austin, who was suddenly brought into the conversation, had no idea how to explain this and glared at Faye. It's Faye who asked me to hide this from the stakeholders, and she's the one who privately asked for the land from Elise. Now that everyone knows this, how can I even defend her?

Faye did not look well either. It was completely out of her expectation that Elise could be so ruthless as to completely ignore Austin's feelings and embarrass both her and Austin in public. This woman is too cruel! I still lost to her in the end!

"Hahahaha! Interesting!" Kenneth, who had been observing the situation all this while, suddenly clapped. "Since you would like to learn how to manage a business, Yoona, I will announce this—as long as you join the management of Anderson Pharmaceuticals, Smith Co. will collaborate with Anderson Pharmaceuticals on the properties that we plan to invest in Landred City."

With that, he did not forget to lean toward Elise to get her approval for his help. "How about that? I helped you out again."

Elise shot him a sideway glance. "I can succeed even without you."

"That's true. But with me, it's way easier for you, isn't it?"

With that, Kenneth straightened his back and looked at the crowd arrogantly as if he was a victor.

However, Elise was stunned upon hearing his question because her thoughts had wandered elsewhere.

At that moment, she felt a familiar feeling and even wanted to reply to his dominance. It was just an instantaneous feeling, yet it created even more doubts in her.

She did not believe that a man like Kenneth would be willing to help her out so much without asking for any return, just for her beauty.

It was probable that this man would bring even more mystery to her.

Kenneth's promise of working together with Smith Co. had attracted the stakeholders who valued profit.

"Miss Yoona, you are so talented at such a young age. You should have a spot in the company!"

"I support Miss Yoona to join the company and inherit the business."

"It's time for Anderson Pharmaceuticals to have some new blood. Please take up your responsibility, Miss Yoona!"

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Chapter 514 A Logical Explanation

Everyone else had supported Elise, but Faye's face darkened when she saw that. These old jerks! They support whoever has the advantage right now. All of them have forgotten how much money I earned for them throughout these years! Because of this little profit today, they have

betrayed me completely. Ungrateful scums! When I officially take over Anderson Pharmaceuticals, the first thing I will do is to fire these stakeholders who have betrayed me!

However, she could not do anything at this moment.

"Mr. Anderson, it seems like everyone has agreed for Miss Yoona to represent your company to discuss our collaboration. Am I right?" Kenneth asked with a slight smile.

Austin nodded. After all, his current position in the company couldn't be compared to the stakeholders, so he was unable to do anything but follow their wishes.

Kenneth pressed his lips into a smile and asked Elise, "In that case, Miss Yoona, shall we find a quiet spot to discuss the details of the collaboration?"

Elise eyed him before offering her hand to him. "It's my pleasure to do so."

After all, she had already accomplished her goals here and she had no interest in socializing with them either. It was a good opportunity for her to avoid them and have some peace. Hence, they entered the Anderson Family mansion.

As soon as they walked through the door, Elise withdrew her hand to sit on the couch to open his present. After she had shoved him aside, Kenneth froze for a brief moment and clenched his fingers as he helplessly sighed. Then, he followed her and sat beside her on the couch.

Elise saw a gold-plated USB drive when she opened the box. Holding the item in her hand, she asked, "What is this?"

"You will know after seeing the contents." Kenneth crossed his legs with one hand on the couch and another on his lap, looking like a boss indeed.

Elise rolled her eyes at him and asked the servants to bring a laptop to her. When she received it, she immediately checked out the contents of the USB drive in front of him.

There was only one folder in the drive named 'CM'. After she opened it, a few documents and pictures appeared.

Elise randomly opened one of the folders. However, her expression became grim the moment she looked at what was inside. She tried to take in the information for a bit before she raised her head to look at Kenneth again. "You're investigating me?"

The reason for her question was because the picture showed a woman whom she had been anxiously looking for—Clemence Murray.

"It's more accurate to say that I am investigating the person whom you want to investigate," Kenneth replied calmly.

"What's the difference? If you don't investigate me, how do you know I'm looking for her?" Elise asked sarcastically.

"Perhaps it's because I know you well enough." Kenneth's lips twitched into a chivalrous and polite smile.

"That is just your assumption. You better stop investigating me for no good reason. I don't like it." She felt as though she was being watched by the people behind SK Group.

Kenneth shrugged without replying to her.

In those few seconds of silence, Elise slowly regained her rationality. She did not hasten to quickly read the information in the USB drive and

instead closed the window. Of course, she had erased all the traces that might be left behind. Looking at the dimmed screen, she asked again, "Why are you helping me?"

"You are a woman I want to marry. Who will I help, if not you?" he replied in a matter-of-fact tone.

"I don't want to hear such a reason that you use to tell others as well. You better give me a reason that can convince me," Elise answered with a solemn expression.

Kenneth merely heaved a helpless sigh again. "Well, I'm telling the truth, but I have other reasons as well."

With that, he took a pause and met Elise's clear eyes. Then, he said seriously, "It's for business."

"Business?" Elise arched her eyebrow, thinking of the credibility of his words.

"That's right," he added firmly. "You acquired the red jade twice, which shows that you have good luck. Of course I know that you are more than just lucky—you have the skills too. I would not let someone who is both lucky and skilled slip away, for I like to work with people who like that."

"The leader of Smith Co. actually believes in something as unreliable as luck." Elise looked at him incredulously.

"That's right. I know luck sounds even more unreliable than the weather report, but sometimes you just have to believe that people who are lucky seem to have God on their side. So, I would like to also obtain some of your luck. Are you satisfied with my explanation?" Kenneth smiled at her.

Though it seemed rather unreliable, she had to agree that it was logical. Some people believed in God and others in geomancy while the more realistic ones believed that it was up to one's decision to decide their fate. Luck was no different from these beliefs as it was purely a personal preference.

"Barely." Elise placed the USB drive into her bag as a silent approval to his explanation.

However, he suddenly started a new topic of conversation. "By the way, I found something else related to Alexander. Would you be interested?"

Elise's gaze darkened upon hearing that. She took out a silver needle and turned around to aim for Kenneth's eyes, but he avoided her attack in an agile manner.

When the needle flew past his ear, he returned to his previous posture and pretended to pat his chest fearfully. "If I hadn't been looking at you all this while, one of my eyes might be blind."

"That's because you deserve it. If you are blind, you will stop looking at things that you are not supposed to look at," Elise informed without any warmth in her voice. "I have already warned you many times that you won't end up well if you challenge my bottom line. Alexander is my man. If you dare to touch him, no matter how many people at Smith Co. can take the damage for you, I'm still able to make your life so difficult that you wish to be dead."

Alexander seemed to be her bottom line. After finishing her sentence, she did not want to stay any longer and stormed off after taking her handbag with her.

Kenneth placed his hand on the couch's hand rest and supported his chin in disappointment as he watched her leave. I wanted to tell her my

identity, but it seems like I need to find another time to do so. I think I can understand why she can't tell me about her various different identities.

In order to avoid the guests, Elise walked from the entrance to the garden before she hailed a cab to leave. Initially, she planned to return to the Sinclair Residence to perform a checkup on Laura. However, she seemed to remember something when she saw Clement standing by the gate. Then, she changed her direction and headed to Alexander's place as she looked Clement in the eye.

However, Clement was still rather stony and rigid, as if he was just a stone statue.

"Clement, your name is quite special." Elise appraised him from head to toe as she addressed him meaningfully.

She had already investigated him and found out that he was from Smith Co. It was not a big deal, but now that Kenneth had started to extend his reach to Alexander, she had to be on guard.

"What is it, Miss Sinclair?" Clement looked at the ground impassively.

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Chapter 515 The Biggest Competitor

"Does Alexander know that you are from Smith Co.?" Elise asked directly.

Clement maintained his silence without saying anything.

It was mainly because he did not understand what Elise meant.

After all, Alexander was the boss of Smith Co., which meant that he knew everything without a doubt.

"It seems like he doesn't know this." Elise came to a firm conclusion. "Even though I don't know why you are hiding your identity around him and your motives for doing so, since he trusts you, I hope that you better not disappoint him or have some malicious plans toward him. I'm quite sure that I'm better at keeping an eye on people than you."

She was defending Alexander.

When Clement realized this, he slowly raised his head and stared into her powerful yet serious eyes.

If he had been right about his assumptions, Elise had been trying to win his approval ever since he arrived. However, it was because of Alexander that she dared to threaten Clement now. Even though she was merely warning Clement, he knew that she meant her words.

While both of them were involved in such a conflict, a black MPV slowly stopped by the road. The door was opened as Alexander exited the car.

"What are you guys discussing?" He then walked to Elise with a wide smile on his face.

"Nothing. Just asking Clement about his family," Elise replied with a slight smile.

Alexander nodded without any suspicion. "Let's enter the house first."

With that, he held her hand and walked through the door.

Clement wanted to follow them, but she turned around to instruct, "Stay by the door and don't let anyone enter."

Hence, he retracted the leg that he had just lifted past the door and turned to face the streets as he guarded the entrance.

Alexander was confused by this. "Did he make you angry again?"

"No." Elise pulled him toward the bedroom coldly.

"It's true that he's not good at interacting with people. If you aren't happy with him, I can change to another bodyguard for you. Does that sound good?" he asked tentatively.

While they were speaking, they had already entered the room.

Elise released him to close the door. Then, she turned to look at him for a second before she leaned into him for a hug.

Her special fragrance made Alexander almost lose his breath as lust pounded through his blood.

Although their breaths were now slightly heavier, Elise still showed no inclination of stopping. Using the last remnant of his rationality, Alexander held her shoulders and pushed her back.

"What's wrong, Ellie?" He looked at her with aroused eyes. Although he was breathing heavily, his concern was apparent.

"I miss you." Elise looked at him wistfully with wide eyes that were slightly tearful.

Those three words made Alexander blush.

The force on his hands became greater as he kept a distance from her. "It's still during the day," he said awkwardly.

"So what?" She stretched her hand without any fear and grabbed his collar as she pulled him closer to her. "Tell me—do you want to do it or not?"

Alexander was torn. "There's no... thing."

"What thing?" With that, she realized that he was referring to condoms and felt slightly amused by that.

However, she soon regained her dominance and dragged him to the bedside before she shoved him. "Let's just cut the crap and get to business!"

. . .

It was only in the evening that both of them finally slept in each other's arms.

However, Elise quickly opened her eyes as she thought about her experience in Dukethorn for the past few days.

She wondered whether she should tell Alexander about how Kenneth had pestered her. It was not to make Alexander jealous, but she thought he ought to know the truth.

However, she had no confidence in Kenneth and was worried that Alexander would take action on him after knowing this. In that case, they both might be injured and that was something she dreaded seeing—a bloody scene that would leave her helpless.

Elize gently sighed without even realizing it.

In the next second, Alexander hugged her waist through the sheets. "What are you thinking?"

Elise slightly rubbed her cheeks against his. "I just miss you."

"I'm right beside you now, am I not?" he asked in a low voice.

"I guess I'm not used to being apart from you for so long." With that, Elise changed the topic subtly. "Why didn't you ask me about my time in Dukethorn? Aren't you interested?"

"As long as you are willing to tell me, I'll listen to you; if not, I won't force you to do anything." Alexander tightened his hug around her. "Ellie, I will always be with you, and no matter what happens, I will always love you."

Alexander was her prince, her safe harbor. When she was with him, she felt as though she was surrounded by a warm, spring breeze that made her slightly lazy yet assured.

At that moment, she finally cast the thoughts about the missing physicist and Kenneth behind her before she fell sound asleep in his arms.

. . .

The next day, even though Elise had done nothing, trouble seemed to look for her.

She was having a video conference with Tom from Landred City in the room.

He looked troubled, but he dared not speak in front of Elise, who looked unperturbed no matter what happened.

"Miss Sinclair, those are just rumors and gossip. The netizens just can't stand seeing other people living a good life. I hope you don't mind that. You are now the pillar of Shaw's Jewelry Co., so please don't be affected by the malicious news—"

Tom was quite a humble person who was terrible at giving advice. He just spoke whatever he thought in good will, but the more he said, the more anxious he became.

Elise calmly looked at her laptop and smiled after she returned to her senses. "You don't think that such news will affect me, do you?"

Just as Tom finally sorted out his thoughts, he cast them aside once again and thought about her question before replying, "You looked terrible earlier, though."

Elise slightly frowned. "I just can't think of anyone who would do this to me at this time."

Tom was speechless upon hearing her reply. You should tell me that earlier! I was so shocked just now.

"I have a good guess." He gave it a thought before his expression became more solemn.

"Who is it?" She raised her head to look at him.

"The Saunders Family in Landred City," he seriously answered.

"Oh, the Saunderses?" Elise arched her eyebrow. Then, as though she suddenly remembered something, she smiled in surprise. "Oh, right! I actually forgot that my biggest competitor is the Saunders Family!"

However, it was not the main reason. Written on the documents that Kenneth passed to her was the fact that Clemence now worked for the Saunders Family.

At the mention of this, Tom immediately flared up. "At the auction last time, I knew that they would not give it a rest after you argued with that woman from the Saunders Family! No one in that family has good intentions!"

"Why do you say so?" Elise asked.

"It's because of their attacks that the sales in Shaw's Jewelry Co. have fallen over the past few years. Otherwise, our long-lasting business would not have landed at this stage today."

Coolest Girl in Town Chapter 516

Chapter 516 Error

"The jewelry that the Shaw Family makes is not only about the value of the gem but also about accentuating the gem's natural beauty with outstanding designs. Most customers choose Shaw's Jewelry Co. for our unique designs. However, when the Saunders Family, the family that made a fortune in the real estate industry, entered the jewelry business, they despicably altered and improved the designs of Shaw's Jewelry Co. before declaring it as theirs. To make matters worse, they sold the products at 30% lower than the market price. And just like that, Shaw's Jewelry Co. gradually phased out."

The more Tom explained, the more enraged he was. He spat and continued, "Imitation and forgery are the most loathsome means, but the Saunderses are unashamed by them. Not only that, there was a time when they even forged a batch of jewelry and released them into the market. Everyone gradually thought that Shaw's Jewelry Co. sold counterfeits

since most of the items had imitated the company's designs. Although the entire jewelry industry was affected, the Shaw Jewelry Co. has never been able to change people's perception about us since then."

Elise patiently listened to his story and thoughtfully nodded. "I see. No wonder you gritted your teeth when the Saunderses were mentioned."

"I'm sorry, but I really resent them." Tom collected himself and exhaled before he reminded her, "The Saunders Family are despicable and shameless people. This time, we managed to bring back a red jade, so they won't just sit back and watch. If they were to pull off the same trick again, I'm afraid that—"

She understood where he came from but still interrupted with a confident bearing, "What's there to be afraid of? We will deal with everything that comes. Since they like to execute shady deeds, I'll make sure that the market is as bright as the sun."

"As bright as the sun? Are you going to restructure the market? I don't think it's something that could be done overnight." He voiced his reservation about the plan.

"No, no, no." Elise wagged her index finger from side to side. "I'm not that generous; I'm only concerned with my own business. This is why I requested you to make a signboard. We have to build our own brand. Even if the customers are able to buy the same design, it would be a second-class product that would embarrass them if it isn't a product of our brand. Plus, don't forget that we have Frostine by our side. We will have our own brand as well as good designs—I call this double security." The Saunders Family may have their schemes, but I have my own strategies as well. Bring it on!

The gloom within Tom's eyes disappeared as a flame of hope started to burn inside him. However, he suddenly felt troubled. "Building our own brand is not a small expense, though."

"I still hold the same opinion to that notion—problems that can be solved by money aren't problems." Elise advised, "All you have to do is to focus on your task as the company director, manage the company well, follow my instructions and supervise the progress. You may leave the rest to others."

"Sure! Miss Sinclair, please be rest assured. Nothing will happen to the Shaw's Jewelry Co. under my watch!" Tom adamantly declared. Then, he paused for a moment as his gaze landed on the news on the small screen. He couldn't help but add, "The news on the Internet—"

"Just let it be. We should thank her for giving us free advertisement," she responded, a slight smile on her lips.

Tom nodded firmly before he rose to his full height to leave the screen.

"Mr. Shaw?" The man disappeared at the moment Elise blinked. "Hello? Although we are now familiar with each other, isn't it more polite to at least inform me that you are dropping off the call now that the meeting has ended?"

As soon as she said that, Tom's head popped out from a corner of her screen. "Huh? I'm still here, Miss Sinclair."

A speechless Elise pouted. She had to admit that a human could sometimes scare a fellow homo sapien more effectively than a ghost could.

"What are you doing?" she asked in displeasure.

Then, she saw him dragging a log and stopping when he was two meters away from the computer. Then, he flipped the log to show it to her. "Miss Sinclair, this is the sign that I specifically asked a designer to make according to your request. It cost a lot of money," he spoke in a proud tone.

However, when Elise saw the words 'Lexis', she wasn't able to squeeze out a smile.

"Hmmm, the design looks great with an antique feel. I can see that the designer has spent a lot of time and effort on it. Please redo it."

Tom was glad to hear her compliments; he couldn't help but touch the signboard in his hand, pleased that he had finally done something worth complimenting. However, a few seconds later, he finally returned to his senses and realized her last three words—'please redo it'.

"What?" He was so shocked that he craned his neck. "Why, though, Miss Sinclair? This is our sixth design. Both Miss Murray and I find that it looks great."

Elise narrowed her eyes. "That's because you had the word wrong! I meant 'Alexis' with my boyfriend's name in it, not 'Lexis'!"

"Huh? Oh, haha, I see. Alexis. Lexis. I think I may have mixed them up." An awkward Tom scratched his head.

"It's not 'may', it's 'must'." Elise, who was rendered speechless, shook her head and ended the video call.

She sat behind the desk for a while before she gave Frostine a video call.

Frostine answered the call after 30 seconds. She found a good angle that allowed the upper part of her body to be exposed on the camera.

She stuttered upon meeting Elise's gaze; she seemed anxious, as if she didn't know what she should say.

"You don't need to be nervous before me. All I want is to see your designs." Elise went straight to the point.

Frostine meekly nodded with pursed lips before she took her first drafts and displayed them before the camera.

"All in all, you are still Clemence's handpicked disciple. Your ability is surely outstanding." Elise repeatedly nodded.

A hint of sorrow flashed across Frostine's eyes at the mention of Clemence.

"Don't think too much; focus on the designs and ask Tom if you need anything. The jewelry exhibition is just around the corner. I will bring you along if the timing is right. Of course, if you don't wish to show your face, you can—"

"No," Frostine interrupted. "I have to go. I have to let my master see my effort. I believe that if she knows that I have been following her teachings without slacking off, she will certainly change her mind and return."

Elise nodded. "Sure. Everything is possible."

After some small talks, Elise hung up the call and switched off the computer before exhaling a deep breath. Frostine really is not in the condition to know about Clemence's news. I'll keep it a secret from her at the moment, at least until she meets Clemence.

Thereafter, she packed her things. When she was about to leave the house, an unknown number surfaced on the phone. I shouldn't be able to receive any spam calls since my phone has been specially modified. I wonder who this is, she thought.

She answered the call and brought the phone to her ear. "Who is on the line?"

"Miss Anderson, we haven't met for two days. Do you miss me?" Kenneth's irritating voice was heard from the other end of the line.

"How did you obtain my number?" Elise subtly asked

He chuckled "I still have this sort of capability.".

"Stop beating around the bush," she snapped.

"Miss Anderson, you are getting edgy, but I still adore you no matter how you behave. Truth is, it's just a small thing. I need a female date to accompany me for a gathering. I wonder whether you could help me out with this, Miss Anderson."

Coolest Girl in Town Chapter 517

Chapter 517 Do I Have a Reason to Reject It?

"I'm not interested," Elise muttered and was about to hang up the call.

"Don't reject me so fast, Miss Anderson. Perhaps I can give you a surprise tomorrow night, just like how I did during yesterday's banquet," Kenneth profoundly answered.

Elise had to admit that he had caught hold of her weak spot.

Or rather, Kenneth's aim from the very beginning had been tomorrow's gathering. The USB flash drive that he gave her at the Anderson Residence was only to initiate a better return, so that she would believe that he had the ability to easily resolve her dire situation.

She could feel an invisible net enveloping her, whereby the other end of the net was within Kenneth's hand. He was slowly pulling the net in an attempt to capture her.

Nonetheless, she had never been one to be afraid of challenges. Even if her efforts would be in vain, she would risk everything to seek for what she wanted.

After a brief silence, Elise caved in. "It's a deal. Send me the address and time." She then ended the call without waiting for Kenneth to reply.

Ironically, the moment she hung up the call, Tom's message popped up.

'Miss Sinclair, why did you end the call so soon?'

Don't worry, I won't get it wrong this time.'

'The Saunders Family sent us an invitation to Celina's birthday banquet tomorrow. Should I go?'

'Miss Sinclair, do you find me annoying?'

Yes, you are indeed quite annoying, Elise thought. The Saunders Family is clearly up to something. It seems like Celina dislikes me a lot. However, a mere Celina is unworthy for me to waste time on her.

She tapped open her WhatsApp in an attempt to ask Tom to give her some time to think it through before making a decision, but she saw an unread message in her correspondence with Austin.

When she tapped it open, the message was about the Saunders Family's birthday banquet.

He texted, 'Accompany us to the Saunders Family's birthday banquet tomorrow night.'

It was a notice, without any intention to ask for her opinion, but he naturally included Faye under the term 'us'.

As Elise stared at the brief message, she snickered and wasn't bothered to reply.

At this moment, she happened to see Kenneth's message, so she replied, 'I have an appointment tomorrow. Get someone else as your female date.'

Kenneth texted, 'What appointment? Who has the guts to snatch my date?'

Her gaze was cold when she saw that. He sure thinks highly of himself.

'What time? Where? Maybe the time doesn't clash. Doing only a single thing a day is a waste of time.'

*2:00PM tomorrow at the International Center. It will end by 6:00PM. How about your side, Miss Anderson? Considering how sincere I am now, would you give me a chance?'

As she didn't reply to him, an unrelenting Kenneth sent another three messages, which instantly flooded the tiny chat box.

Hence, when Kenneth's message that stated 'Are you sure that we should continue to chat like this?' popped up, Elise immediately agreed that

they shouldn't. There wasn't any special reason; it was just that she disliked him spamming the chat box with messages.

Almost instantaneously, he gave her a WhatsApp call and she answered it on loudspeaker. "I don't buy what you said—if it's just a gathering, you don't necessarily need me to be your female date."

"You may not believe it, but it doesn't mean that it's a lie. Miss Anderson, I don't mind using Smith Co.'s network to search for your lost doctor friend; treat this as an extra gift. How does that sound?" Kenneth asked in a serious tone.

Elise sank into a deep thought. He mentioned my doctor friend, which could only refer to Claude. The fact that Smith Co. was able to locate Clemence shows that the company shouldn't be underestimated. Since this deal won't bring any losses to me, why don't I agree to his request?

"How could I possibly reject your generous offer?" she responded, to which he chuckled.

"I'm curious about one thing—aren't you afraid that you won't be able to recover your capital after investing so much resources on me?" Elise asked in a menacing tone. The way she phrased it was rather clever. She deliberately revealed that she might go back on her words; she might even enjoy Kenneth's one-sided commitment without the intention of repaying his help.

"There's a saying in Cittadel that goes 'every dollar that I spent comes back to me multiplied'. I'm confident that I'll earn my spent resources again, but it's impossible to find another exceptional date like you, Miss Anderson. I don't like leaving things half-done and even hate giving up without trying. Therefore, I'll do my very best to change your mind. All I hope is that you won't be bothered by me and push me away from your heart," Kenneth confessed in a rare sincere manner.

"You sure are a smooth talker." Then, she killed the call.

The Saunders Family visited Elise that night. As she greeted the guests at the door, she looked down at the middle-aged man in a tuxedo from the top of the stairs. "How should I address you?"

"I'm Gabriel Saunders, the butler of the Saunders Family." The man bowed at her politely.

"Mr. Saunders, how can I help you?" She wore an innocent expression.

He handed her a delicate-looking gift box that he had been holding earlier. "Miss Celina understands that the Anderson Family is busy with something else, so she's afraid that you guys won't be able to find the time to prepare a gown. Hence, she has specially prepared these for you and Miss Faye; she has even instructed us to personally hand this to you."

She raised her eyebrow. Celina was kicked out of the mall because of me two days ago and she has forgotten about the incident and is now showing kindness to me? I smell a rat.

However, Elise hid her true feelings well and behaved as though she was delighted to hear that. She deliberately and hastily snatched the gift box to impatiently open it.

"Oh, God, this looks gorgeous!" Elise seemed to have been enticed by the gown.

Gabriel sneered upon seeing that. Celina made a big deal out of it. She's merely an innocently stupid girl who hasn't gone out to see the outside world. How formidable could she be?

He lowered his eyes and stated in a seemingly sincere manner, "It's great that you are willing to accept the gift. Being able to see you showing up in the gown that Miss Celina gave will be the best gift for her."

Elise wore a smile. "For real? That's nice to hear. I was worried that she may dislike the gift that I picked for her. How about I give this clothing a wash so that it will be cleaner tomorrow? What do you think?"

"Cough." He placed his fist by his lips and impatiently muttered, "There's no need for that, Miss Anderson. Didn't the Anderson Family ever tell you that a banquet gown is only meant to be worn once? There's no need to wash it."

"Oh, I see. I'm just not accustomed to this." She smiled to conceal the awkwardness.

"No worries. Just remember to show up in the gown. You'll be fine by then." Gabriel paused for a moment. As he was unable to stifle the urge to comfort her, he added, "You are still young, so nobody will blame you even if you embarrass yourself." She had a face that was pleasing to the eyes, so even he couldn't help but take a liking to her.

"I understand. Thank you, Mr. Saunders!"

"It's nothing." Gabriel nodded and said nothing else.

Elise watched as his car disappeared into the alley while the innocent expression on her face also disappeared.

She indifferently carried the box and returned inside, unable to resist the urge to applaud herself for the perfect act of feigning stupidity earlier. At this rate, I can consider joining the entertainment circle.

Coolest Girl in Town Chapter 518

Chapter 518 Transfer the Risk

As soon as Elise returned to her room, she opened the box that Celina gave her.

What Gabriel had said was true—other than a gown, there was a pair of high heels and some jewelry. It was apparent that Celina's intention was to give her a hand when she was in need.

Elise carefully checked each and every corner of all the items and even examined the box, yet she couldn't find any problem with them.

In the end, when she tried the gown, it looked surprisingly good on her as it accentuated her perfect figure.

Could it be that Celina has changed? After being thrown into an unfavorable situation at the mall, Celina has learnt that she won't be able to gain anything from going against me, so she has changed her strategy and now wants to seek peace instead?

Elise peered at her reflection in the mirror. She seemed elegant with a tinge of sexiness, looking gentle yet capable. The clothing perfectly accentuated her beauty as a woman.

She had to admit that this was an impeccable piece of gown that would make the person who wore the attire the center of attention, no matter where she was.

However, is Celina really so generous?

Elise soon denied that possibility when she thought of the fact that nobody would be happy when someone else snatched her limelight when she was the main focus of the event. Therefore, without a doubt, there had to be a lurking danger that she had no knowledge of at the moment.

After a few seconds of contemplation in a daze, something came to her in a flash of inspiration. She snapped her finger and decided, "I know what to do. Since I can't resolve the trouble, I'll only have to transfer the risk!"

The next day, at the Anderson Residence, Faye dragged her drained body home. As soon as she stepped into the house, she plopped on the couch and massaged her neck.

During the ceremony that took place the day before yesterday, the slides had exposed a lot of ugly news, which resulted in Jackson detaining her and refusing to release her. He had managed to keep her in detention for 48 hours before she was freed.

Lying on the couch while staring at the ceiling, she recalled how close Jackson and Elise were with each other. That realization made her expression cold.

Faye now remembered that she had once seen the police in Elise's yard before this, which proved that Elise worked together with them.

At that realization, she abruptly sat up as her expression became stern and wary. If that's the case, the slides must be of Elise's doing. It must be her! That b*tch is finally starting to fight back to steal the family fortune from me. I won't allow Elise's plan to succeed. The fact that the Anderson Family is still standing strong here is all because of my effort. How could she snatch everything from me now that she has returned? That's outrageous!

"Miss Faye? Miss Faye?"

"What do you want?!"

The maid, who had called Faye from one side, received a scolding that weakened her feet. She bowed her head and handed the gift box to Faye with trembling hands and mumbled, "The butler from the Saunders Family sent this over yesterday. He said that Miss Celina has personally picked this for you so that you could wear it at tonight's banquet."

"Banquet?" Faye was puzzled.

"It's Miss Celina's birthday banquet," the maid respectfully answered.

"Okay, I understand. Place it down and you may leave," Faye calmly responded.

As a matter of fact, Celina's birthday had slipped her mind. With the Anderson Family's broad network, she would have burned countless brain cells if she were to remember each and everyone's birthday.

When the maid had left, she opened the gift box and her eyes brightened at the sight.

At first look, one could tell from the top-notched quality that it had been made by professionals. She touched the fabric as she was unable to resist the temptation. Sure enough, the smooth and soft texture of the garment suggested that it was definitely of the finest quality.

I never knew that Celina's quite a generous person although she's stupid. I bet that everyone won't be able to take their eyes off me when I show up in such a flawless gown. At least the time and effort I spent on giving Celina advice all this time is not in vain; she finally did something useful.

As Elise had acquired the luxurious store in Athesea, Faye had no choice but to wear an outdated gown and embarrass herself at the ceremony the day before yesterday. This time, Faye could finally redeem herself! Just you wait, Elise. This time, I'll let everyone see for themselves who among us is the real lady of the family!

. . .

That night, the event held at the triple A-class International Center was a minor gathering that consisted of enthusiasts of a niche interest. The prerequisite condition to attend the event was that the participants had to be elites of their respective industries. Hence, those who were lacking in status among the upper-class society or were not one of the world-class elites didn't meet the qualifications to be invited.

Outside the hall, a red carpet had stretched from the entrance to the curb with scrambling reporters standing at both sides.

The moment Kenneth alighted from the car, the cameras instantly lost control with its flashes and blinded him from all directions.

The host grinned and spoke in a perfect tone, "We can see that the person who is heading in our direction is the president of Smith Co., Mr. Kenneth Bailey! Mr. Bailey has attended the event alone all these years. Will he give us a surprise this year?"

Upon hearing that, the young ladies of the wealthy families couldn't help but slow down their pace at the front to intentionally delay their entrances.

They thought that since he had been showing up without a date all these years, there shouldn't be any surprises this year. All of them hoped that they could be lucky enough to walk shoulder-to-shoulder with Kenneth into the hall. They would die without regrets if that were to happen.

Nonetheless, Kenneth didn't catch up to them like how they had expected. After fastening the last button on his shirt, he turned on his heel and chivalrously extended his hand to invite the other person out of the car.

All the ladies were astonished. Don't tell me that Kenneth really came with a female date this time?

"No, that can't happen! Maybe he brought his mother with him!" One of them tried to lie to herself in exasperation.

However, as soon as she said that, a fair, slender hand appeared from the car before Kenneth. The hand naturally rested on his palm, and under his lead, the owner of that hand placed a foot on the ground. Her long, fair legs also had a complexion that was as smooth as silk.

It was a young lady, which obviously indicated that she wasn't Kenneth's mother.

Everyone at the scene gasped and stared at them. Finally, a gorgeous young lady, who seemed as though she had just walked out of a fairytale, slowly appeared in front of everyone's eyes.

She wore an off-shoulder gown with her hair naturally cascading down her shoulders. When she slowly surveyed the crowd, she reminded them of a poetic picture.

Her face was especially exquisite. She had a sharp nose bridge as well as boundless eyes that seemed to contain the universe, and even her lips resembled a piece of artwork, whereby every arc and curvature were flawless. When she surveyed the surroundings, her gaze revealed great confidence and composure, as though she was born a princess who was destined to receive her subjects' admiration.

Her looks were so stunning to the point that it made everyone who beheld her beauty learn about the beauty of nature; their very definition of the term 'beauty' itself had been redefined. At the same time, she appalled them with the realization of how awful their lives would be if they could no longer partake in such a stunning scene again in the future.

At that moment, even the photographers forgot to press the shutter. They raised their heads from behind the camera and stared unblinkingly in the direction of the lady.

The longer they stared at her, the more they were able to understand why the ancient Lords were able to do something as irrational as waging wars for the sake of the beauties.

Meanwhile, Elise, in fact, wasn't accustomed to the excessive attention from the crowd and it even depressed her.

However, Kenneth complacently commented by her side, "I'm starting to regret the decision of inviting you to be my female date."

"There's no use crying over spilt milk now." She suddenly grabbed his arm. "Since I'm here now, you have to keep your promise."

Coolest Girl in Town Chapter 519

Chapter 519 A Different Purpose

Kenneth slightly pursed his lips. Then, he reached out to position her hand in place before taking it into his as they headed inside.

Both of them walking together was quite a sight to behold—one looked mature and stable while the other was ethereal-looking.

The host was considered to be quite experienced and used to handling different situations, so he quickly came to his senses. However, he

couldn't quite contain the surprise and excitement that was clearly evident in his voice. "This is totally unexpected! Mr. Bailey has actually arrived with a date for this event. Mr. Bailey, please sign here."

At this moment, Kenneth naturally strolled forward and signed his name on the wall before heading inside with Elise.

The duo's sudden appearance had caused quite a commotion inside.

"Who's the person next to Kenneth? Is there someone so beautiful amongst the members here?"

"Kenneth's date would definitely not be just an ordinary person. Who cares about her identity?! If you get the chance, just go forward and talk to them! That's more important."

However, most of the comments from the crowd seemed to be quite bitter.

"Oh. That person there. Haven't you guys heard of her? She's the second daughter of the Anderson Family from Athesea. She didn't grow up in that household and was instead raised on a farm with cattle. It's just that her looks are acceptable, but there's no hiding the stench of cow dung and sheep poop on her."

"Is that for real?! So, she's just an uneducated girl. Tsk. Tsk. I don't even know what the lower-class people eat as their main meal. I shudder at the thought of it. God bless us. I hope she doesn't come close to within ten meters of me later on."

"Don't panic. Have you forgotten the rules of our gathering? After attendance has been taken, firstly, she would have to play a series of chess matches. Once the marks are tallied, the ones who come out of the match as the bottom three will have to leave. She's just an uneducated

girl, so do you guys think that she would be familiar with the ways of chess?"

"That's right. Hahaha! That means it's quite likely that she'll have to leave the place in an embarrassing manner."

Then, a bunch of mean people gathered around and waited to see Elise being kicked out of the room.

In fact, their words coincidentally were heard by Kenneth.

There was a fierce glint in his dark eyes as he glanced directly in the direction of those people. His domineering aura resulted in the previously happily talking crowd falling silent almost instantly.

Elise did not have a strong family background and neither did she have any actual skills, so they were not afraid of offending her with their words. However, they didn't dare to offend Kenneth.

At that point, Kenneth turned in the other direction with a cold, indifferent expression as he continued to steer Elise inside.

Despite that, Elise had in fact heard those nasty words and turned to him curiously, "Who are those people attending the gathering?"

"They're the elites from all over the world and come from all sorts of industries including physics and jewelry design. I'll introduce you to them later on. It's good to know more people because you could find the contact useful in the future. However, the reason for me bringing you here today isn't actually to expand your contacts but to get to know Steven Randall."

[&]quot;Steven Randall? Who is he?"

"He's the president of Randall International and he's also the first man in the country to own and have an odd-colored jade for display. You've discovered two pieces of blood jade in succession, but you've only sold one of them. I reckon you have a plan for the other one, so he should be able to help you with it."

At that moment, Elise was significantly shocked as she paused in her tracks.

So, the only reason he's here for this gathering today is just to help me solve my problem?! Elise was quite torn and she didn't quite know how to face Kenneth.

After quite some time, she finally managed to come up with a few awkward words through gritted teeth. "Thanks... I really don't know what else I can say, so I can only say thanks. I hope that I'll have the chance to help you in the future."

She disliked the feeling of being indebted to someone because it was quite unpleasant.

Meanwhile, Kenneth was tickled by her action. "I can't believe my eyes! Miss Anderson is shy?! Well, I am of the opinion that to be able to smoothly get along in life, one would need to train to be brash and less shy. That's why I think that perhaps we'll only be able to get along well once we are at the point where you no longer feel burdened and have to keep coming up with ways to repay my favor equally for all that I've done for you."

"I hope so."

Meanwhile, Elise shrugged and subsequently changed the topic. "Shouldn't the gathering be merry and jovial? Why is there a chess match? Furthermore, the losers are eliminated too."

"This gathering was initially organized by an old man named Mr. Warren Reynolds. He's the chess pioneer in Cittadel and was the one who set this rule during the first gathering. It then became a tradition up till today," he explained.

As the two of them continued their conversation, Clement, who had arrived fashionably late, walked toward them and glanced at Kenneth. Then, he respectfully greeted Elise, "Miss Sinclair, I'm sorry for being late."

"It's fine with me as long as you turn up." Elise lifted her head and directed a half-smile at Kenneth. "Your secretary is Melody Smith while you have a staff member called Johnny Smith. Coincidentally, I have just hired an assistant with the name of Clement Smith. Mr. Bailey, do you find him familiar?"

At this moment, he smiled with a calm expression. She's purposely probing. What a brat. I'm busy helping her solve her problem and yet she's trying to uncover my identity. She's such a naughty girl.

"I've spoken with Old Mr. Reynolds and told him that you're with me, so you don't need to go through those series of chess matches." He then abruptly changed the topic.

"Then, you might need to give him a ring and inform him that I'm interested in chess, so I would like to join the match. I'll try to see how far I can get," Elise responded with a deep look in her eyes.

"Do you play chess?" Kenneth lifted his brows questioningly.

"Well, how hard can it be? It's just an intellectual game of black and white pieces on a board." She had gently raised both hands as she casually commented.

"Yeah. What else do you know?" he asked.

"Isn't this enough?" Elise gravely squinted her eyes and asked, "Are you going to go and talk to Old Mr. Reynolds? If you aren't, I'll go and enroll myself instead."

Meanwhile, Kenneth had a resigned expression as he looked at her. He had only considered it for a moment before finally relenting, "Okay. If you're actually interested in it, there's no harm in giving it a go. I'll be here with you anyway, so no one will dare to kick you out. Just stay right here and don't wander off."

"Okay." She beamed widely at him. As soon as he saw that, he shuddered slightly.

He thought that he had already kept his emotions in check quite well, but he was totally a gone case when facing Elise.

Furthermore, he knew that it would be unwise for him to continue staring at her, so he forced himself to shift his gaze to the other direction as he left in a hurry.

Meanwhile, Elise looked at his sprightly figure and she suddenly revealed a smug smile of having successfully pulled a prank.

Although Kenneth was a lovely man, she had a different purpose for attending tonight's gathering—she was intent on humiliating him. She wanted to humiliate him as badly as she could so that he would finally have had enough of her. At that point, surely he wouldn't be fixated upon marrying someone who brought about such utter humiliation to him.

She wrapped her arms around herself. Then, she swiftly and rhythmically tapped with her long, slender fingers on the side of her arms as she

contemplated how to lose so badly in the chess match later to the point where everyone would be shocked to the core.

Elise didn't even realize the charm that she exuded since she had remained lost in her thoughts. Many men dropped by to flirt with her one after the other and they left her their business cards before walking off. In no time, she was left holding a pile of name cards.

Suddenly, one of the cards fell to the ground and she instinctively reached out to pick it up. At that point, she suddenly came to her senses and figured out the situation she had encountered earlier. This is too scary! Why is it that all of these elites are still single? Is that why Kenneth is so fixated on me? It must be because he wants to end his bachelor's life! That's quite possible!

Just as Elise was lost in her thoughts, three to four women in heavy makeup came toward her with evil looks.

The person leading them was a young woman in a white, tulle dress and she was the one who also greeted Elise first, "Miss Anderson, we meet again. Do you remember me?"

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Chapter 520 Miss Bad Breath

Elise tried to recall in her mind but she didn't remember meeting this person before.

"I'm sorry, but there were just way too many people who attended the ancestral recognition ceremony. I don't have a good memory either, so I can't quite recall things. May I know your name?"

Since she had addressed Elise as Miss Anderson, they must have met each other at the Anderson Residence.

The girl heard her words and revealed a deep smile. Then, she flicked her long hair, which had fallen to the front of her chest, to the back while revealing the precious jewelry she wore on her hands and her neck.

"My name is Sophie Bowen. I'm Alexander's cousin and we've met a few times before at the Griffith Residence." She placed a hand on her chest with a smug expression and seemed to be intentionally trying to show off the jade ring on her hand.

Then, Elise nodded with a thoughtful look. Cousin? She must be some random distant relative then. Looks like she's here to find fault with me.

"Your ring looks beautiful." She smiled subtly before complimenting the girl.

As soon as she finished her sentence, she heard Sophie mentioning in an ambiguous tone, "It's important for one to know their position. Some people have already known that they have an ill-fated life, yet they refused to stay in the countryside. Well, they still insisted on coming out and causing trouble for others. The Griffith Family had such a legendary background, but she managed to cause the downfall of both the family and its members. Look at her now; she has subsequently sunk her claws into Kenneth Bailey and seduced him with her wily moves. In actual fact, she's just a joke in the eyes of others."

The smile on Elise's face gradually disappeared before it was replaced by a cold glint that flashed across her eyes. "Miss Sophie, you were merely an insignificant being previously, but today, I reckon you'll leave a long-lasting impression on me forever because of the overpowering stench originating from your foul words, Miss Bad Breath."

Meanwhile, Sophie was angered to the point where her face flushed red. "Shut up! Who are you calling foul?! I don't even have bad breath!"

At the same time, her companions spoke up for her too.

"It's hard for these country bumpkins to learn manners. Look at how she easily comes up with such hurtful words."

"That's right. This is too much! The chess match is about to start. If you don't wish to be utterly humiliated, you should quickly get lost!"

Then, Sophie saw her girl squad banding together to help her deal with Elise, which resulted in the dark look in her eyes gradually dissipating. I hope that she gets eliminated from the chess match! It doesn't mean a thing even if Kenneth Bailey has chosen her!

Anyone who wanted to join the gathering had to participate in the chess match and it was a rule that had been passed on since the start of this gathering. Even if she was Kenneth's woman, there was no special exemption for her either. If she lost, she would regardlessly be kicked out of the gathering.

I'll wait and see how she would still have the nerve to continue showing off in our circle after today's embarrassing situation!

Sophie thought of this and she couldn't help smirking. However, she feigned an act of standing up for Elise. "Stop your speculation. She didn't ask to be brought up in the countryside for such a long time. Whoever that is assigned to play against her in the match later better not take it too seriously. After all, she's my cousin's fiancée, so we have to consider his image too."

Her companions then laughed out loud. "Sophie, you're putting us in a tight spot with this request. Even if we give her some leeway, she has to

know the basic step of how to deflect us. Besides, the match will be broadcasted live on the Internet so to the people watching, it may seem like we're intentionally insulting her by letting her win."

At that point, Elise lifted her brow and sneered. Insult to me?! Them?! Hah! They must be daydreaming! Even if they worked together and came at me all at once, they would be no match for me at all!

She was indeed here to make a fool of herself but sometimes, once one had made up his or her mind to do something but ended up being defined otherwise by others, it would be likely that the person would no longer be willing to do it. This could be described by the example of one intending to do the dishes but being pestered to do so by her partner; obviously, she would be adamant not to do the dishes for that day.

To Elise, she was fine with being taken for a fool. However, now that they intended to make a fool out of her, the foolish person in front of them was about to lose her temper.

As such, she changed her mind.

She lifted her hand to flick her fringe, which had fallen in front of her, to the back as she smiled with a meaningful look in her eyes. "Since you guys are great at chess, then you must give me a chance to play with you later."

As soon as she finished her sentence, Kenneth returned for her as well. He saw from afar that she had been stopped by a group of people, so he purposely fastened his footsteps.

He moved forward by a step and stood protectively in front of Elise. As he did so, he faced the group of ladies and kept Elise apart from them while his pair of evil-looking dark eyes coldly scrutinized Sophie and her gang.

Each of them suddenly felt a shiver running down their spine and they hastily shifted their gaze while silently gulping as they stood by the side.

It was Sophie who calmed down first and she took advantage of her identity as Alexander's cousin to initiate the conversation with Kenneth. "Hi, Mr. Bailey. I'm Sophie. My cousin, Alexander Griffith, used to be a member of this organization, so I'm not sure whether you guys might have known—"

Before Sophie could even finish her sentence, Kenneth suddenly turned his face in the other direction and spoke in a soft and gentle voice to Elise, "Are they finding fault with you?"

Sophie's hand had remained suspended in mid-air awkwardly as she looked at his tentative behavior around Elise. Now that she was angered, she retracted her hand and clenched both hands into a fist as her fingernails were practically embedded deep in her flesh.

In the past, she had been infatuated with Alexander for many years, but he was too outstanding for her to summon the courage to confess her love to him. Afterward, he had introduced Elise to the entire family, so Sophie could only lament her unfortunate self.

However, she maintained her intense displeasure toward Elise and couldn't quite comprehend how an uncultured girl from the countryside could be a match for her.

After she had heard of how Alexander had broken off with the Griffiths for Elise, Sophie was tempted to rush to the Griffith Residence and confess her feelings, but she never mustered up the courage to do so in the end.

She had exercised a lot of effort to enter this organization in an attempt to be closer to Alexander. Meanwhile, she had encountered Kenneth here and he triggered the flames of passion within her instead.

However, even Kenneth was now being snatched by Elise. Sophie thought, Why does Elise always go after someone else's favorite?!

At this moment, the hatred within Sophie consumed her and caused her eyes to bulge with horror. She tightly clenched her teeth and the sound of her teeth grinding each other was audible.

"No, we're not monkeys that haven't gone through evolution! The refined wouldn't be finding fault with anyone on such an occasion. We were just talking about chess."

Elise said this with a matter-of-fact look directed toward Sophie and her companions. Elise didn't even realize that Kenneth was merely less than a fist bump away from her as he spoke.

"That's good to know." He nodded slightly and trusted her words without any hesitation. Then, he changed the topic. "I have a friend waiting over there, so let's head over."

She nodded and walked off with him.

As soon as the two of them walked off, Sophie and her girl squad immediately burst into a commotion.

"What?! Is Mr. Bailey actually serious about that uncultured girl?! Is being good-looking sufficient to cover every other flaw?! He should be afraid of catching some venereal disease."

"Well, honestly, she is quite pretty."

"If I could gain such beautiful looks after a jaunt in the countryside, I would definitely be the first to head there! By then, Kenneth will belong to me—"

"Forget about it! There's no way of becoming beautiful after staying in the countryside, but you'll definitely come back riddled with all sorts of bacterial infections and diseases. Your whole body will be full of skin lesions!" Sophie was angered by their words and she suddenly lashed out at them.

Her girl squad was suddenly stunned into silence.

This was the first time that they had ever seen Sophie lose her top like this. Their usual impression of her was that she was a gentle and soft-spoken girl.

Nonetheless, they were good friends after all, so they exchanged looks with each other and quickly seemed to catch on to the fact that Sophie was jealous!