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Chapter 675 The Calligraphy Association's Low-Level Member?

For the sake of fairness, both of them wrote the words 'hard work always pays'. Soon enough, both the old man and the young boy completed their pieces, and they placed their calligraphy writings on the most eye-catching spot in the store. Then, they halved the original price of the item in order to get passersby to purchase it as soon as possible.

A young man walked past them just a few minutes later before purchasing the old man's piece. Then, the old man beamed as he took the cake away from the young boy. "The cake is all mine now," the old man said cockily.

The young boy hung his head low in disappointment before wrapping his arms around himself. He wore a grumpy look on his face—it was clear that he was shocked by the results. Elise pressed her lips into a smile before she walked over to ruffle the young boy's hair. "Hey, old man. Do you think it's right for someone your age to bully a kid?"

The old man stuck his arms behind him to hide the cake. Then, he responded with a slow smirk. "We both agreed to do this, so why would it be inappropriate? You can always try to win the cake back for him if you feel that I didn't win it fair and square." The young boy parted his lips to say something but shut his mouth again after meeting the old man's gaze.

People nowadays enjoy using their seniority to make themselves appear more impressive, Elise thought. He assumes that he has the right to be demanding and arrogant just because he is older. Elise didn't wish to play along with his rules. "Sure. Let's compete against each other again, then."

"Are you serious?" The old man grew excited upon hearing her words. Then, he stroked his white beard as he spoke eccentrically. "If you lose, you'll have to buy two more pieces of the same cake for me."

"I don't mind buying you an entire cake," Elise replied. "Let's do it."

"Yes, let's!" The old man put the cake down before lifting his brush. Then, in one swift motion, the man wrote the word 'perseverance' on a piece of paper. Elise walked over to take a good look at it before nodding lightly. "That's a really smooth stroke," she commented.

The old man held his head high as he ran his fingers through his beard. "It's your turn."

Elise curled her lips into a smile as she picked her calligraphy brush up before writing the same word on a different piece of paper. However, her actions were just as swift. Initially, the old man didn't pay much attention to Elise, but when he glanced in her direction, he realized that he couldn't look away after that.

'Perseverance' was just a simple word, but the woman's aura transformed when she picked up the brush. A gust of wind seemed to circle around her figure as she ran the brush across the paper. "I'm done." The old man was still mesmerized by the woman's actions even after completing her piece and lowering her brush. Her expression was stiff as she gestured for him to look at her work. His throat felt dry, so he gulped his saliva as he tried to ground himself in the situation.

The moment his gaze landed on the piece of paper, it seemed almost as if he was hypnotized for a moment. He widened his eyes as he stared at her writing. D-Did she write this free-handedly? Her strokes are firm and gentle at the same time, and her lines are so smooth and neat! QH's presence isn't even needed anymore!

The man glared at Elise with a look of disbelief. She's just a young girl—I can't believe she's so good at calligraphy. Even at my age, I'm not at her standard yet. On top of that, she's so good-looking! God's clearly on her side!

Elise was pleased with his response, and she teased him with a slight smirk on her face. "How's my writing? Do you think I can get your cake this time?"

The old man returned to his senses after hearing her voice. "Of course. Young lady—I mean, master, I am humbled to meet you. Would it be okay for me to know your name?!"

"Elise Sinclair," she replied.

"It's great to meet you, Miss Sinclair," the old man uttered while nodding thoughtfully. Unfortunately, he couldn't seem to recall any local calligraphy artists whose last name was Sinclair. But he didn't overthink that and simply lowered his voice before asking her for a favor. "Miss Sinclair, would it be possible for me to bring your writing over to be displayed at the gallery?"

"Well... The child's cake..." Elise raised an eyebrow. She didn't answer his question. "Oh... I nearly forgot about that." Finally, the old man seemed to realize something, so he quickly turned around to bring the cake over before handing it to the young boy. "Here you go. You can have half of it, and you can't tell your mother that I bought this, okay?" he whispered as he bent down to speak to the boy.

"Got it! Thanks, Grandpa!" The boy grinned happily. "Grandpa?" Elise's eyebrows shot up immediately. "Grandpa? Is he your Grandpa?" she asked the boy.

“Yeah...” the boy replied with a shy smile. Elise shot Alexander a somewhat confused look—she felt rather amused and a little embarrassed at herself. It seemed like she had been too much of a busybody. “I’m sorry,” she uttered with a smile. “I thought—”

“Don’t worry about it, Miss Sinclair.” The old man waved her off before returning to his main point. “I was wondering, Miss Sinclair... Would you be interested in joining Tissote’s Calligraphy Association?”

“I’m already one of the members,” Elise replied with a shrug. “Oh?” Andy Nixon, the old man, was taken aback by her response. Judging by Elise’s skills, she would definitely be at a higher level than the old man, and he was very clear of all the names that were listed above his station. He was confident that Elise’s name wasn’t there. Could she be one of the low-level members who just entered the club this year? That would be a waste of precious resources! How could we keep such a talented person at a low position in the association?

“Why don’t you leave me your contact, Miss Sinclair? Then, I’ll gather a panel of members to reevaluate the level you’re at.” Andy immediately pulled his grandchild’s smartphone out. “Hurry, young boy. I want to get Miss Sinclair’s number!”

Elise felt terrible for rejecting a man who seemed so passionate, so she ended up giving him her contact. However, Alexander could tell that Elise didn’t want to stay there for long, so he found an excuse to get her to leave.

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That night, Andy brought Elise’s writing of the word ‘persevere’ over to the Calligraphy Association’s gallery. Cody and Tiana happened to pass by the area, and they called for the staff members to stop when they saw them opening one of the doors requiring high-level clearance.

“Hold on,” Cody shouted at the staff members before glancing at the package in the staff’s hands. “Who sent you guys over? Do you think you guys can just send any random artwork into this area? This is the most guarded section of the gallery!”

“Mr. Andy Nixon was the one who sent this over, Mr. Carlson. He had already checked the item beforehand,” the staff member replied politely.

“Did you say that Andy was the one who checked this?” Cody sounded rather intrigued. “Who’s the artist?”

“Elise Sinclair,” the staff replied. Tiana held her breath for a moment. I can’t believe Elise knows Andy, and I can’t believe her item received an S-Class rating.

“Why haven’t I heard this name in the past?” Cody asked confusedly. “Where did Andy get his student from this time?”

“Miss Elise Sinclair is one of the participants who took part in the Calligraphy Contest, Mr. Carlson.” Tiana reminded him intentionally. “But I don’t think she’s a member of the Calligraphy Association. Of course, my memory might have failed me.”

“You’re right, Miss Hill,” the staff member replied with a smile. “Mr. Nixon said he would arrange for her to enter the association soon.”

“Nonsense!” Cody’s expression turned stone cold as he spoke in a harsh tone. “Do you think any random stranger can receive an S-Class ranking just like that? She’s not even part of the association! Even if she was, her piece shouldn’t be allowed to be on an S-Class display. How do you do your job when you can’t even differentiate where to place these items?! Take that away right now!”

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Chapter 676 Give Alexander a Mistress

“Well...” The staff member was at a loss for words at that moment. Cody wasn’t a man they could mess with, but Andy wasn’t someone they could mess with either! One way or another, the staff member would have to offend one of the men. What was he supposed to do?

“Fine. I know I’m putting you in a tough position by telling you to offend Mr. Nixon. I bet you don’t want to do it. But rules are rules—since this person isn’t a member of the Calligraphy Association, you will have to put the piece aside for now. You can store it somewhere else and take it out to put it in one of the display cabinets once the artist receives her ranking. What do you think?” Tiana tried to come up with a solution.

“That’s right, Miss Hill! That’s the perfect solution! Thank you for that idea!” The staff member nodded before shutting the door to the display cabinet and storing the piece elsewhere. Cody didn’t want to start any further conflicts, so he kept quiet and walked off. After they were a distance away, Cody whispered a reminder into Tiana’s ear. “That old man, Andy, thinks he’s better than me and always tries to step all over me in the association. So, Tiana, you’ll have to defend my reputation in the upcoming Calligraphy Competition. You have to defeat that student of his! What was her name? Elise? Crush her!”

Cody and Andy had never gotten along with one another—everyone in the association knew about it. So, when Tiana didn’t respond to Cody after a long period of silence, Cody stopped in his tracks before turning around to question her. “Tiana? Didn’t you hear what I said?”

She hadn’t been paying attention to his words and only returned to her senses when she heard her name. “What? Oh. Yeah. Don’t worry about it, Mr. Carlson. I’ll definitely

try my best.” However, she only said those words to please Cody. Deep down, she had no confidence at all. Previously, when Tiana heard that Elise had gotten into the finals, she had assumed that Elise wouldn’t be a threat to her.

But after hearing that Andy had rated Elise’s work as an S-Class piece, she lost her cool. Something always goes wrong when I encounter Elise. Elise might not be better than me at drawing, but I’m sure her calligraphy skills must be good if she received Andy’s approval. Will this incident be a repeat of what happened during National Goddess? Is Elise going to be a dark horse who overtakes me once more?! No. I have to find a way to win the title as the champion of the Calligraphy Competition. I can’t always be in second place!

...

One morning, Elise was still fast asleep when the sound of a door knock awakened her. She turned around and shoved her head under her sheets to pretend that she couldn’t hear anything. Alexander was the one who got out of bed to open the door. Moments later, she heard his muffled voice. “Mom?”

Mom? Elise widened her eyes—she no longer felt sleepy at that moment. Whose mom is it? Is it Jeanie, or... Elise pulled her sheets aside and sat upright to see Madeline dressed in a bright-colored outfit.

When Madeline saw Elise’s messy hair, she knitted her brows in displeasure. Elise hastily lifted her hand to comb her fingers through her messy hair. “What are you doing here?” Alexander hadn’t expected Madeline to show up out of nowhere.

“This is my son’s house, isn’t it? Can’t I be here?” Madeline seemed to have forgotten everything that happened in the past as she stuck her chest up and straightened her figure. “I’ve already prepared breakfast. Come down and eat with me now.” Upon finishing her words, Madeline gave Elise a thoughtful look before turning and heading downstairs.

Alexander shut the door before exchanging glances with Elise. He shrugged with a helpless look on his face. “I’m sorry. I didn’t know she would be here. You can continue sleeping—I’ll go down on my own,” he offered.

“Forget it.” Elise sighed as she got out of bed and walked toward the washroom. Her voice was weak as she shuffled her feet. “The ugly daughter-in-law has to meet her mother-in-law eventually. We can’t avoid each other forever.” After they washed up, Alexander led her downstairs.

They were halfway down the stairs when they saw a slender figure sitting on the couch in the hall. It was a conservative and intellectual-looking woman with glasses resting on her nose’s bridge.

The woman stood up when she heard footsteps, and she gave them a bow as her form of greeting. Both Alexander and Elise froze for a moment before they nodded in response. When they got to the dining table, Madeline was already in her seat. Alexander pulled the chair further away from Madeline for Elise to take a seat before he took the spot next to Madeline.

They had just gotten seated when Madeline pulled out a jewelry box from her bag. She pushed it to Alexander with an arrogant look on her face. Alexander was confused by her actions at first, but he opened it to find a jade bracelet that had been passed down from the previous generations of the Griffith Family.

He curled his lips into a smile before gazing at Elise with a sweet look. "Why are you looking at me like that?" Elise felt rather shy to have him stare at her, and she raised her hand to touch her face. "Is there something on my face?"

Alexander shook his head before speaking in a gentle voice. "Give me your hand, Elise."

She reached her hand out obediently, and Alexander took the bracelet out of the box before slipping it into Elise's wrist. "This is my mother's gift for you. It's our family heirloom that only goes to the eldest son's wife."

Elise was stunned for a moment. Does this mean that Madeline accepts me as her daughter-in-law? Alexander knew what was going on in her mind, so he nodded in response to her. "Aren't you going to thank Mom?"

"Thank you, Mom!" Elise smiled as she spoke in a gentle tone.

There is nothing better than having the two most important women in my life come together, Alexander thought. Elise was happy as long as he was happy—they were both willing to move on from the past.

"Ahem..." Madeline took this opportunity to play her role as the mother-in-law. She cleared her throat before speaking in a stern voice. "You and Alexander may be married, but that doesn't mean that you have successfully obtained the Griffith Family's daughter-in-law role. You're still at school, so you don't know anything about caring for the family. I have sent my friend's daughter over to take care of the house, and you will have to learn from her. You need to know how to care for your husband," she uttered. "Come here, Sofia."

The woman in the hall immediately strode over before standing next to Madeline and smiling at the couple. "Do you remember me, Alexander? We were in the same school through primary and high school." Her admiration toward Alexander was painstakingly obvious.

He simply kept a poker face without responding to her while Elise exhaled air out of her nose to make a scoffing sound. I thought Madeline really changed this time, but it seems like she hasn't given up yet. Is this a new tactic she's trying? Is she trying to get Alexander to have a mistress?

"This is Sofia Hawkins. She used to be a reporter, and she is a double degree Ph.D. graduate. As long as she's here, your family will surely see huge improvements," Madeline uttered in a pleasant voice. Alexander was about to reject her offer when Elise spoke up. "Miss Hawkins, you're so gorgeous and sound like a capable woman. Are you sure you're willing to be a caretaker in our household?"

"Every household comes with its set of challenges. One's home needs to be cared for, and it takes a lot of IQ and EQ to handle matters at home. It's not a simple job," Sofia beamed after responding calmly. But, of course, her target wasn't to be a caretaker but to win Alexander over.

She had known Alexander since she was young. If she had returned to the country a little earlier, she would've been able to stop Elise from snatching Alexander away. But, this time, Sofia wanted to prove that only a woman as elegant and sophisticated as her had the right to be with Alexander!

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Chapter 677 Coquettish Women are the Luckiest

I agree that managing a household is challenging and that you can learn a lot from it. But can she at least take her eyes off of Alexander? Elise lowered her gaze as she tried to stifle her laughter. She sure is something. I can't believe she's sending herself up to Alexander's doorstep even when he's married. I don't see the point in me playing nice if she wants to act so immorally. She will have to pay for targeting my man.

"Thank you, Miss Hawkins," Elise decided to keep Sofia around, but Alexander snapped his head back to look at her with a frown after hearing her words. He spoke to her with his eyes. Can't you tell that my mother left her in our house to cause trouble? His eyes seemed to say.

Elise only smiled at him, which made him more confused than ever. The more Alexander stared at her, the more he felt dejected. Has Elise fallen for Kenneth? Perhaps she doesn't have feelings for my true identity anymore. Otherwise, how could a woman who loved her husband allow him to keep another woman at home? She must have fallen for Kenneth.

Alexander grew increasingly sad as he thought about this. "I'm not hungry. You guys can go ahead," he uttered while standing up. After that, he pushed his chair aside before heading upstairs.

Alexander had never been a big eater, so Elise simply assumed that he wasn't hungry. As she ate her meal, she thought about how she could make Sofia's life miserable when she was in the house.

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A day passed in the blink of an eye. Alexander stayed in the study for the whole day, and Elise was hesitant to speak to him as she didn't want to disturb him. Finally, when it was time for dinner, she knocked on the door gently as she passed by his door. "Why don't you take a rest and have a meal with your wife, Mr. Griffith?"

He had been giving her the cold shoulder for the whole day, and he wasn't about to give in just yet. He lifted his chest up a little without even glancing at Elise. "Fine. I'll tell them to prepare supper for you, then," she said before pretending to leave.

"Hold on!" He called for her before he walked out of the study with a grumpy look on his face. "Why can't you be a little more coquettish with me?!" he mumbled as he slipped his hand into hers.

"Fine, fine..." Elise pressed her body against his. "Why don't I start talking to you the way I talk to a kid the next time I ask you for dinner, huh? Would you like that?"

He let out a long sigh. She's an intelligent woman. Can't she tell that I'm angry? Is she smart, or is she actually an idiot? Regardless, she's too adorable for me to be mad at her. So, why was I angry again? I can't remember anymore. Forget it. What matters is that I have dinner with my wife!

They headed to the dining area, and Sofia 'dutifully' served them their meal. But, of course, her main intention was to take care of Alexander. "Mr. Griffith." Sofia placed a pot of soup on the table in front of him. "I specially made this herbal soup for you. It helps to cool the body and rid you of any tiredness. You've been working the whole day, so this is perfect for you."

Alexander didn't even bat an eyelid as he responded to her. "I don't like the bitter taste of the herbal soup."

"Um..." Sofia let out a quiet laugh. "I've boiled it specially, so it doesn't taste bitter at all. So, don't worry about it," she said. But Alexander didn't look like he was interested in drinking it. "Why don't you try this, then?" Sofia placed a sea cucumber on his plate. "I prepared this just a while ago. It's still fresh."

"I'm allergic to seafood." Alexander didn't care about the woman's feelings at all. Sofia was starting to feel somewhat embarrassed at this point, and the atmosphere in the room began to turn tense and awkward. Elise rested her chin on her palm as she watched their interactions. She couldn't help but chuckle to herself. I don't get it. She's a pretty girl—why can't she just live her own life without coming over to meddle with our relationship? She's trying so hard to get on Alexander's good side. It seems like a lot of people in this world simply enjoy being tortured. Well, she surely put effort into this meal. It wouldn't be nice to waste all her efforts.

Elise pulled the pot of soup closer to her before scooping some into her bowl. "Mmm. It tastes pretty good," she muttered after taking a sip of it. Then, she pushed the bowl toward Alexander before resting her hand on his wrist. "I can't finish it, Hubby. Help me..." she said in a whiny tone.

Alexander shot her an odd look before lifting the bowl and finishing the soup. "You're the best, Hubby!" Elise sent him a flying kiss. Then, she took a piece of the sea cucumber and ate half of it before placing it on Alexander's plate. It lay right next to Sofia's piece on his plate. "I can't finish this either. Thank you, darling!"

Alexander felt highly amused at the sight of his wife making things difficult for Sofia. However, he kept his cool as he picked his chopsticks up and chewed on the half-eaten sea cucumber. Sofia looked extremely uncomfortable as she watched them from a corner—she knitted her brows as she observed them. Madeline's right, she thought. Elise knows no limits. She just forced Alexander to eat something he didn't like. If he's already so obedient during a regular meal, he probably listens to her when it comes to other things. I bet Elise made him drink some concoction that turned him into such an obedient man. He's nothing like the arrogant and confident man I used to know.

Sofia gritted her teeth as she felt herself hating Elise a little more than before. Alexander was the only man Sofia had ever been interested in—she couldn't allow Elise to ruin him! Just you wait, Elise. I have all the time in the world. I'm definitely going to win Alexander's heart over! However, Sofia wasn't interested in watching their lovey-dovey interactions right then. "Enjoy the meal. I'll excuse myself now," she muttered as she left in a hurry.

After she was gone, Alexander whispered in Elise's ear. "You could've just sent her away if you didn't like her. So, why do you have to put on a show for everyone else?"

"What makes you think it's a show?" Elise didn't want to admit to anything. "Don't you usually finish my food when I'm halfway done with it?"

"That's true, but I don't feel as comfortable when there's someone else around." Alexander wore an exasperated look on his face. When is this dumb wife of mine going to be more considerate?!

“You should treat her like a maid,” Elise uttered carelessly. “Sofia’s cooking is pretty good. If she doesn’t want to be a reporter, perhaps she can consider starting her own restaurant. Her dishes taste excellent—just like what a five-star hotel chef could come up with! She’s pretty and can cook. I bet that would attract many customers.”

Alexander simply sighed and shook his head without saying anything else. While eating, a piece of breaking news spread across all of the major websites and news channels. “The well-known celebrity, Garreth Dowrick, has just announced the termination of his contract with Blitz Entertainment. According to our sources, Blitz Entertainment lost up to 300 million due to this. They are presently filing a case against Garreth.”

That night, Mr. Howard gave Elise a call to talk to her about this. “...Do you need me to look for him, Miss Sinclair?” he asked.

“It’s fine,” she replied. “He deserves a break to calm down for a while. He’ll reappear when he’s done thinking about his life. He needs to let us in for us to help him.”

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Chapter 678 Don’t Insult Her

The next day, Elise had just walked out of the Elite Class in the Small White Building when she bumped into a man who was covered from head to toe. He wore a mask over his face and pulled his baseball cap low to cover his eyes. The man stood behind some plants to avoid getting noticed by the students.

Elise immediately recognized who the man was. “Garreth,” she said as she walked over to him. He froze for a moment and only heaved a sigh of relief when he saw that it was Elise. “Elise,” he mumbled as he pulled his mask down and hung his head low. He looked like a child who had made a terrible mistake.

“We’ll talk when we’re home.” The last class of the day had just ended, so there would be students swarming out of their classes anytime soon. It wasn’t appropriate for them to talk on school grounds. So, Elise decided to bring Garreth back to the villa. Once they got in, he took off his cap and sunglasses.

Sofia happened to come downstairs as they entered the hall. “This is...” she mumbled when she saw the man. Elise simply ignored Sofia’s words as she turned to look at Garreth. “You can wait for me at the study upstairs.” He nodded before heading upstairs.

Once he was gone, Elise turned to look at Sofia before speaking with a blank expression on her face. “Miss Hawkins, I hope you understand the upper floors are private spaces for Alexander and me. No one else should be allowed upstairs, even if

my mother-in-law is the one who arranges for them to go up. You will need to ask for our permission first.”

Sofia didn't seem taken aback by the woman's words, for she continued to smile at her. “Well, how am I supposed to clean the place up if I don't go up? How should I change your toiletries? My job is to ensure that Mr. Griffith lives a comfortable life. So, you should trust me since I'm the professional at this, Miss Sinclair.” Sofia refused to refer to Elise as Mrs. Griffith—it was as if they would be equals with one another if she didn't do so.

Elise curled her lips into a smile that didn't reach her eyes. “I will not repeat myself. If you wish to get fired, feel free to go against my orders.” They glared at each other for two seconds before Elise headed upstairs. Sofia remained on her spot, and the smile on her face stiffened as a hateful look formed in her eyes. It took a while before her rational side allowed her to calm her emotions down. At that moment, she came up with an idea. If I tell Alexander that Elise brought another man home while he wasn't around, what would he think of her? I heard that Elise is pretty famous in the entertainment industry. What if the reporters find out about this?

At that thought, Sofia pulled her phone out to text a reporter she was close to. ‘I told you I've always got your back, right? Well, I want you to immediately send someone over to 188, Building 6 on XX Street. Elise is having a date with her secret boyfriend,’ she typed.

‘Her secret boyfriend? Could it be Garreth, who has just disappeared?’ the reporter replied almost immediately.

Sofia stared at the text. Garreth... That's a familiar name. She ran a search on the name, and her eyes lit up immediately. Isn't this the man who just headed upstairs? I can't believe he's the hot topic of the whole entertainment industry right now! Oh, Elise. How dare you bring him a man as trendy as him? You asked for it, Elise. You can't blame me for this.

‘Yeah,’ Sofia replied through text. After she was done, she put away her phone and crossed her arms. Then, she sent a smug look in the direction of the room Elise and Garreth were in. Sofia used to be a factual journalist, so she had always regarded the paparazzi with disdain. She would've never imagined herself putting them to good use. I guess it is important to have some connections, she thought.

About 30 minutes later, the entire villa was surrounded by the paparazzi. A few of them were shouting their lungs out. “Miss Sinclair, we heard that Garreth is in there! We came all the way here just to take a look at him. Please give us something to work with!” one of the reporters cried.

“How long have you been dating Garreth, Miss Sinclair? Are you guys staying together?” one asked.

“Garreth, what do you have to say about the 300 million that Blitz Entertainment is requesting?!” another one cried.

“Miss Sinclair, Garreth, are you guys sure that you guys want to stay hidden when there are so many people out here? Is this how you should treat us reporters?” one shouted.

“We heard that Miss Sinclair helped Garreth with the termination of the contract. Is that true? Please say a word or two!” a reporter stated.

Elise simply opened the blinds a little to peep at the situation downstairs. The moment there was movement in her room, the sharp-eyed reports caught it and began to shout. “Miss Sinclair! It’s Elise Sinclair. She’s on the second floor! Why don’t you come out and explain yourself?!” one cried.

She hastily shut the blinds before retreating into the room. Garreth couldn’t sit still for much longer, so he clenched his fists and walked out of the room. “Hold on,” Elise called. “Where are you going?”

“They’re here for me. You’ll be fine as long as I leave. I don’t want to drag you down,” he said desolately.

“Leave? How are you going to leave with that huge crowd out there? You’re tiny compared to those tens of people,” Elise said calmly. “Didn’t you just say that you want to start a new life? All of this is a process. If you want to start anew, you will need to learn how to control your emotions,” she advised him.

“But they aren’t going to leave until they see me.” Garreth turned around to reveal a conflicted look on his face. He didn’t want to face the media either, but this was the only way to get rid of the crowd outside the house. “I’m not telling you to stay here forever.” Elise pulled her phone out and typed a few words while speaking absent-mindedly. “You can wait for another 30 minutes. We need one more person,” she said.

“One more person?” Garreth had no idea what was going on, but he simply obeyed Elise’s words when he saw how focused she seemed. He took a seat quietly as he didn’t want to disturb her. Finally, Garreth got to his feet after what felt like the longest 30 minutes in the world. At that moment, Elise’s phone began to ring. She picked it up and pressed it against her ear. “I got it,” she murmured after a few seconds of silence.

Then, she put her phone away before addressing Garreth. “You can leave now. Take the front door. Don’t say a single thing. Once the reporters have been gathered, I’ll give them an explanation on behalf of you.”

Although Garreth had no idea what Elise was planning to do, he felt oddly safe with her. So, he simply nodded and went along with her plan. Then, after taking a deep breath to steady himself, he headed downstairs and opened the door to face all the reporters outside the villa. “Garreth is out!” all the reporters cried when they saw him.

The reporters squeezed toward him from all directions, and Garreth found himself in front of more than 20 microphones in a matter of seconds. “Did Elise agree to pay for the termination of your contract, Garreth? Is that why you’re dating her?” one reporter asked.

“Is Elise in there, Garreth? When did you guys start dating?” another one asked.

“Was Elise the one who chased after you?!”

“The rumors claim that Elise has a thing with both Kenneth and Alexander. Are you another one of her boyfriends? What do you think about an open relationship?”

“Shut up!” When he heard the last reporter’s question, Garreth completely forgot about Elise’s words. “Elise is a good person. I won’t have you talking bad about her like that!” he hissed coldly.

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Chapter 679 Betrayal after Betrayal

Garreth could tolerate the rest of the groundless accusations that the reporters made, but he wouldn’t allow them to insult Elise. He had always held a gentle and warm image in public, so the reporters were shocked to see him lose his temper. Everyone was silent for a moment, and the only noise around them was the cameras clicking.

Soon enough, the reporters returned to their senses before repeating the few questions they had earlier. Garreth had to clench his jaw to keep his mouth shut. At the same time, a gold BMW came to a halt at the backdoor of the villa. Mr. Harold stepped out of the car and sneaked into the mansion before the vehicle sped off. After that, everything returned to normal—it was as if nothing had happened at all.

When Garreth was about to give in and speak to the reporters, the villa’s doors opened again. Elise and Mr. Harold stepped out of the building gracefully. When the reporters saw them, they immediately shifted their attention toward Elise. Although Mr. Harold was dressed in branded logos from head to toe, and although he was clearly a wealthy man, he still received the least attention when he was placed beside Garreth and Elise.

“Miss Sinclair! What do you have to say about cohabiting with Garreth?!” Garreth frowned when she saw the microphones edging closer and closer to Elise’s face. He reached an arm out to block the reporters before he snapped at them. “Which company are you guys from? Don’t you guys know how to show basic respect for your interviewees? I’ll take your whole family down if you ever injure Elise!”

The reporters quickly held themselves back when they saw how Garreth had transformed from a sweet boy into a fierce beast. They quietly took a step back. However, some reporters who were slightly farther away continued to press on with their questions. "You guys have a really close relationship! Could you guys be getting married soon? Have you guys decided on a date?!" one of the reporters cried.

"You've always claimed to be single, Garreth. Have you thought about how your fans feel about this?" another one said.

"Are you guys showing up together to confirm that you guys are dating?!" one reporter asked.

"That's enough!" Garreth cried in an agonized tone. "Does a man and a woman have to date each other just because they respect each other? Don't you guys have a family—" He was halfway through his sentence when Elise gave him a subtle nudge with her elbow. She was telling him to calm down.

Garreth clenched his fists as he kept his mouth shut to avoid doing any further damage. The reporters had expected to get something out of Garreth, but their hopes were crushed when he stopped talking. They couldn't help but feel disappointed at that moment.

Right then, Elise spread her lips into a smile. "I would like to thank all of you for attending this press conference tonight. It seems like Garreth, and I have a pretty strong influence when we're put together as a pair," she uttered.

"A press conference?" one reporter muttered.

"What press conference is she talking about? Do you know about it?" another reporter asked.

"Who am I supposed to ask if everyone here doesn't know the answer?" one reporter mumbled. They all looked at each other with confused looks on their faces.

At that moment, Mr. Harold squeezed his way out of the crowd, flaunting his large belly as he reached his hand up to comb the few strands of hair he had. He chuckled heartily as he took his spot beside Elise. "That's right. All of this is part of my plan. I hereby announce the grand launching of our new entertainment company, Rushmore Entertainment! Previously, Blitzzy Entertainment was preparing to host a reality show that pairs the National Gods and Goddesses. However, they didn't complete the reality show. Since the public requested it, I decided to take Garreth and Elise under my company. I'm about to plan a similar reality show for them, as per the fans' requests. It seems like everyone's surprised to hear this," he uttered.

All the reporters pressed their lips to force a smile. A surprise? This is more like a shock! We spent so much time here tonight to ask for money, yet all that we did, in the end, was to promote Rushmore Entertainment for free!

We were called over and used by these people, and they will benefit from us now! We're on the losing end here! One of the reporters refused to step down. "Mr. Harold, you're signed Garreth as your artist. Aren't you worried about going against Blitzzy Entertainment since they're still dealing with the court case with Garreth?"

Mr. Hold waved the reporters' concerns off. "Oh, it's just 300 million. I've already sent the money to Blitzzy Entertainment. A financial issue is never really an issue. As for the competition between both entertainment companies... I don't think we are competitors. Many teens have big dreams nowadays, and Blitzzy Entertainment can't take all of them. Rushmore is here to resolve that issue. So, I hope both companies will be able to cheer on each other and improve together in the future."

When Mr. Harold had a meal with Mr. Lowry from Blitzzy previously, Elise had already reminded him to stick to the same narrative. Mr. Harold's response was flawless, and he spoke in a warm and soft tone, making him seem like he wasn't a threat. However, the reporters were experienced individuals. Blitzzy Entertainment had practically monopolized the whole industry, so Rushmore Entertainment would definitely come in conflict with them someday. Since the company's founder was right before their eyes, the reporters weren't about to let go of him just yet. They wanted an exclusive interview.

"How do you improve the quality of the entertainment industry? Do you have any secret tips, Mr. Harold?" someone asked.

"Please share your upcoming plans with us, Mr. Harold. Are you planning to take more artists from Blitzzy Entertainment?"

"You're the founder of the company. Could you tell us about the company's goals..." All of the reporters began to squeeze toward Mr. Harold, and Garreth and Elise were soon left in a corner. When Elise saw how the reporters were distracted by Mr. Harold, she quickly looked at Garreth before leading him back to the house.

Once they were back in the villa, Garreth glanced at the crowd with a worried look on his face. "Is it really fine to leave him alone?"

"Don't worry. I've taught him how to deal with all their questions. It's going to be fine," Elise uttered as she sat on the couch and poured two glasses of water for them. She placed one of the glasses on the table beside the sofa before taking a sip out of the other glass.

Garreth noticed her actions, so he walked over to the table and picked up the glass from the table. However, he didn't drink it immediately. Instead, he was silent for a while

before letting out a long sigh. “Thank you, Elise. I know Mr. Harold only paid for me because of you,” he uttered in a grateful tone as he gazed at her thoughtfully.

“What am I supposed to do when you’re so polite all the time?” Elise didn’t know how to respond, so she simply waved him off. “You don’t need to thank me. You’ve earned more than this amount of money for Blitzzy Entertainment, so all you have to do from now on is continue working. You’ll pay us back someday,” she said.

“Okay! Don’t worry! I’m going to work really hard!” Garreth shouted firmly. However, he began to stutter again after a while. “Elise, there’s something else that... I’d like to ask for help...”

“What is it?” she asked generously.

“I want you to put in a good word with Mr. Harold to convince him to sign my other two team members. They have great potential and are just as skilled as I am. They shouldn’t continue to be bullied in Blitzzy Entertainment,” Garreth said resolutely.

Read Chapter 680 of Coolest Girl in Town

Chapter 680 Alexander’s Cheating Spouse

Right then, Alexander pushed the side door open and dragged two youngsters into the room. He only let go of them after dragging them to the center of the hall.

“Explain yourselves! Who are you guys? Who sent you here?” Alexander growled as he pushed them toward the stairway. He gave off an intimidating aura that made others afraid to disobey him.

“Blake! Gordon!” Garreth shot up to his feet. “Why are you guys here?”

The shorter boy spoke with a hesitant look on his face. “We overheard others saying that the paparazzi was coming to hunt you down, so we thought we’d come over to see if we could help out.”

The other boy looked a little more resentful. He wore an awkward expression on his face—he seemed as if he didn’t want to admit that he was there because he cared for Garreth.

Garreth knew that the other boy was soft-hearted under his tough exterior. A warm sensation spread across Garreth’s chest as he realized that the two boys still cared for him. “Do you guys know each other?” Alexander asked.

“They are my teammates. They mean no harm,” Garreth explained. Only then did Alexander take his gloves off before walking toward Elise. “Did anyone bully you?” he asked her gently.

“No.” She shook her head before cracking a joke. “But I think we might need to move out of this place. The security here is pretty useless. The entire group of reporters showed up at our front door, and the security didn’t do anything about it at all.”

Bang! Phew... phew... phew...

“I finally got rid of them...” Mr. Howard pushed the door open and ran into the hall before resting against the back of the couch as he tried to catch his breath. He may be a shameless man who often appeared in entertainment magazines, but those were all pictures the paparazzi took, and it didn’t require him to come face-to-face with cameras. Moreover, he wasn’t skilled in talking about his business plan in front of a huge group of reporters at all.

Once he realized that he had said everything Elise told him to say, he hastily found an excuse to leave the site.

“Thank you so much, Mr. Howard,” she said with a smile on her face.

He waved his hand in her direction. “Don’t make fun of me anymore, Miss Sinclair. You know I’m not that bright of a person—you shouldn’t get me to be the representative in the future. You should just tell Elliot to finish his studies so that he can start work at the company!”

“You should be the one talking to your son since I’m not part of your family.” Elise tilted her chin toward the two of Garreth’s team members as she changed the topic. “I’ll need you to talk to Blitz Entertainment about the contract for these two guys as well,” she said.

Mr. Howard took a good look at them before he straightened himself. “No worries. Mr. Lowry owes me a ton of favors, so it wouldn’t be a problem for me to ask a few more guys from his side.”

“Thank you for all the effort,” Elise replied.

“What nonsense are you talking about?! Why are you being so polite with me, Miss Sinclair? I’m going to lose my temper if you do this again.” Mr. Howard was a thoughtful man, so he prepared to leave the house once he saw that Alexander was home. “Since everything is settled, I’ll excuse myself now. Hey, that guy... Garreth! Bring your friends along, and let’s leave the place together.”

Garreth took a look at Elise, and he left along with his two friends and Mr. Howard once she gave him the green light. They had just stepped out of the house when Sofia entered from the side door and walked into the hall.

“You’re back, Mr. Griffith.” Sofia wore a smile on her face. “Do you need me to prepare supper?”

Alexander acted as if he didn’t hear her speaking. He wrapped his long arm around Elise before leading her up the stairs. “Miss Sinclair,” Sofia called them to stop.

His footsteps halted before he turned around slowly. “What do you want this time?”

She felt somewhat uneasy when she noticed him glaring at her. She quickly shifted her attention to Elise before speaking in a rather sarcastic tone, “Oh, it’s nothing much. I just wanted to ask Miss Sinclair about what she said earlier. She said that I shouldn’t allow random people up to the second floor, but she brought Garreth upstairs for a really long time earlier. So, should I stick to this rule or not?”

After that, she paused for a moment before changing her tone and began to mumble, “The paparazzi are like mosquitoes that won’t seem to leave you guys alone. They are so unethical! If they hadn’t come over, Mr. Dowrick and Miss Sinclair could have spent the whole night talking to each other. Thankfully, Mr. Howard came about an hour ago to resolve the issue. Otherwise, I’m afraid the whole of Cittadel would find out about Miss Sinclair and Mr. Howard’s close relationship.”

The description that Sofia gave of the situation amused Elise. Sofia sounded like she was happy for Elise, yet she kept mentioning Elise’s relationship with Garreth. It was obvious that Sofia was trying to cause a misunderstanding between Alexander and Elise—she was trying to make Alexander suspicious of Elise’s relationship with Garreth.

No wonder she used to be a reporter. She sure is good with her words, Elise thought.

She turned around and crossed her arms in front of her chest. “Are you trying to say that there seems to be something going on between Garreth and me just because we stayed upstairs for half an hour?”

Sofia let out a soft chuckle. “You’re the one who’s saying that, Miss Sinclair. However, I do think that you shouldn’t have done such things if you didn’t want others to misunderstand your actions. Mr. Griffith came home late, and you brought another man upstairs. I don’t think I’m the only one who misunderstood you. The other maids probably shared the same opinions.”

Elise eyed the maids who were standing by the entrance of the kitchen. “Is that so?” she asked the maids.

The maids stared at her with confused looks on their faces. No! We disagree! Sofia might not value her life, but we do!

They were too afraid to speak up. On one end was the female owner of the house and on the other end was the caretaker that the male owner's mother had brought home. They couldn't afford to offend either of them, so their only choice was to keep their mouths shut.

Elise scoffed before she turned to meet Sofia's gaze. "It doesn't matter if I'm up there for 30 minutes or a whole night. What has my relationship with other men got to do with you?" she asked derisively while edging closer to Sofia.

"You're the caretaker, yet all you do is pry into my business. You should be thinking about how you should serve and care for us! Do you even know what your job scope is? Or do you think you're the owner of this house just because you have Alexander's mother's support? Huh? By the way, since you used to be a reporter, you should know about my relationship with Garreth. Why didn't you warn the others to watch their mouths? Instead, you leaked the news out. Are you trying to make it seem like I cheated on Alexander? Would that make you happy?"

Elise seemed like a harmless university student on the outside, but she was a completely different person when she didn't smile because she had a dominating aura.

Even someone like Sofia, who had seen all sorts of grand events and influential people, was stunned for a moment. She kept quiet for a while before speaking up in a hesitant tone. "I-I... I forgot about that for a moment. Anyway, there are a lot of different types of reporters. I didn't know anything about Garreth's identity."

She sounded especially confident with her last sentence. That was because she only found out about Garreth's identity after hearing what the reporters said, so she wasn't lying.

"Is that so?" Elise faked a smile as she stared at Sofia. "Then, why did you have to remind Alexander about me spending 30 minutes in the room with Garreth?"

"I was just telling the truth," Sofia said defensively. "Mrs. Griffith told me to stay here, so it's my duty to watch out for the house. You guys only got married a while ago, yet you're already bringing other men to you and your husband's private space. Are you saying that there's nothing wrong with that?"