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As the first ray of sunshine shone through Elise's room, her annoying alarm rang on time yet again, and she got up reluctantly to take a morning shower. Then, she went out and bumped right into Alexander. "Morning," Alexander greeted her. "Morning," she greeted back. They walked ahead side by side. "Had a good sleep?" he asked. She smiled sweetly at him. "Not bad." They went downstairs, and Elise looked around, but Danny was nowhere to be found. "Danny should be taking me to school today. Where is he?" Alexander answered, "He was wasted last night. Probably still sleeping, so I'll give you a ride later." Elise wasn't going to object to that. "Sure." She went to the dining room for her breakfast. It was a simple one, which was her favorite. Once she was done, she went into Alexander's car. While she was on her way to school. Elise did her extra

went into Alexander's car. While she was on her way to school, Elise did her extra homework, while Alexander looked at her, who was focused, in the rear-view mirror gently.

When they stopped at her school, she quickly kept her stuff away. "I'll be going now. You should go to work too. Bye." She got out of the car and strode toward the gate, but then, a guy stopped her. "Elise!" Elise stopped instinctively and turned around, and she was greeted by a delighted Zachary. "Finally." He beamed at her and showed her the breakfast he bought. "For you." Elise was slightly annoyed that he was here, so she didn't take the breakfast. "Why are you here?"

Zachary chose to ignore that question and only smiled at her, but then he looked sad. "I thought I asked you to wait for me after the test. Why did you leave without me? I..." He bit his tongue and instead said, "It's fine. I'll come to you anyway. Oh, I've heard about the results. You got full marks again, huh? Congrats," he congratulated her.

Elise noticed the passion in his eyes, and it made her feel uncomfortable. She pursed her lips. "Do you need anything, Zachary?" Zachary shook his head and pointed at the breakfast he bought. "Nothing. Just here to give you breakfast. Got some great egg sandwiches for you. Here, take it." Elise refused, "Thanks, but I already had breakfast." Zachary looked crestfallen, but he still said, "I'll bring you something else next time."

Elise looked straight at him. "Zachary, we aren't as close as you think. You don't have to do this." That made him blush, and he stammered, "I-It's fine. I want to do this." Elise kept on refusing. "Please don't, Zachary. We're only highschoolers, and relationships aren't really what we should be focusing on right now. I don't want any rumors to start, so please stop seeing me." Her straightforward response caught him off-guard.

"D-Did I trouble you? It's fine. I won't do it if you don't like it." Since she wanted to end it right there and then, she asked, "Zachary, why are you doing this? What do you want from me? I'm not exactly pretty. You can even call me ugly and I won't say a thing. Why are you so interested in me?" Zachary tried to look at her calmly, but his heart wouldn't stop pounding. "You got this the wrong way. I'm not interested in you. I-I like you.

I like you, Elise." Elise blinked at him. What on earth is happening? Why do guys keep saying they like me? Am I in a novel or something? "Yes, you aren't the prettiest girl around, but you're very capable. I mean, you got full marks in the Math Olympiad nationals. That alone is already great enough. Also, you're kind and always helpful. That's why I like you. I don't care about your looks. I care about what's inside. Yes, I know it's not great for high schoolers to get in a relationship, but I can wait.

I'll start when we get into college. Just give me a chance—" Before he could finish, someone coughed behind them. Elise snapped out of it and saw Alexander standing behind her. He smiled apologetically, "Sorry for interrupting you guys, but you dropped your pen in my car, Elise." *Really?*

He just has to show up at this moment? Zachary, on the other hand, looked at Alexander suspiciously. The guy looked and felt better than Zachary in every way, and that realization crushed his confidence. Even so, he asked, "And this is?" Elise held Alexander's arm without thinking. "He's my boyfriend.

I'm sorry, Zachary, but I'll have to refuse you." Zachary couldn't believe what he was hearing. The news came as a bombshell for him, and he stared at the both of them in disbelief. "Is that true?" His voice changed. "Are you her boyfriend?" Alexander was about to say no, but he felt Elise gripping the hem of his shirt from behind, so he smiled. "We live under the same roof every day." He wrapped his arm around her waist. "Is that answer enough?"

Elise was shocked that Alexander would tell Zachary about that, and she gawked at Alexander. Alexander ignored her, continuing, "You have great taste seeing that you fell for my girlfriend, but my girlfriend's taste seems to be better than yours.

After all, she did fall in love with a prince like me instead of a peasant like you." Zachary almost tripped over himself, and he looked offended by that comment. *Wow, what's the deal with this guy?*

Did he knock his head when he was a kid or something? He looked at Elise with sadness and determination. "I won't give up no matter what." Just give up. Elise wanted to tell him that, but Zachary left without giving her the chance. That was inconvenient for her, of course. Why won't he just quit? I just told him I'm taken.

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After he left, Alexander pulled his hand away and arched his eyebrow at Elise. "You don't get loyal guys like that now. Sure you don't want to give him a chance?" Elise glared at him. "Don't give me that! *Staying under the same roof*? Now that's just cheeky!" Alexander replied calmly, "You called me your boyfriend first. That's cheeky too." *Well, true. I mean, the part where I called him my boyfriend.* In the end, she stammered, "E-Even so, you can't tell him we're living together.

What will he think?" He shrugged. "But I didn't lie. We are living under the same roof, just not in the same room." *Oh god. I'm never hearing the end of this.* "Forget it. I'm going to be late." She hurried away, and he saw her off. His lips curl into a smile, and his mood got better. Elise walked as fast as she could to the classroom.

"Hey, why are you running, Elise?" Mikayla asked. Elise was frustrated, so she grumbled, "Mikayla, life is hard." That confused Mikayla. "Sorry? What are you talking about? Is it a game? But that's Life Is Strange." Elise took a deep breath and calmed herself. "It's nothing. We should get to class now." It took Elise the whole morning to calm down and put the morning's events behind her. During the afternoon break, Samantha and Riley asked Elise to eat out together, and Elise invited Mikayla as well.

Just when they were about to exit the gates, she saw a familiar guy standing across the street, and her heart sank. She thought she got the wrong guy, but when he took his sunglasses off and smiled at her, she knew she wasn't seeing things. Elise snapped out of it and told her friends, "You girls go ahead.

I need to settle some matters, so I won't be coming." Samantha was concerned, seeing that Elise was leaving so suddenly. "What is it? Do you need our help?" Elise refused, "It's fine. No big deal, so I'll handle it myself." The girls said nothing more and left. Elise stared at the man across the street until he finally came up to her.

"It's been a while." Elise was surprised that he was here, but she smiled too. "How did you find me?" Noel smiled at her. "I met up with Julius. He told me about you, so here I am." *I see.* "Let's talk at a more private place," Noel suggested. Elise said yes, and she left with him. They went to a private restaurant. It was located in a quiet spot, and the ambience was great. Noel and Elise got a room for themselves, and the guy kept looking at her.

"Wow, that getup is ugly. Anyone else wouldn't have recognized you." Elise took a sip from her teacup and said nothing. Since she was keeping her silence, Noel continued, "How have you been doing?" Elise smiled. "What do you think?" Noel nodded. "Not bad, I guess. It's a pity you left. You would have been a great celebrity if you had stayed." Elise didn't respond. Instead, she looked outside the window. "I heard you're someone's songwriter now."

Noel answered, "You know the guy too. In fact, I came here on his behalf today." Elise knew why he came, but she would not budge no matter what. "Noel, you know I would never write another song." Noel interjected, "It's been years. Can't you let it go?" "Put yourself in my shoes. Can *you* let it go?"

"Um..." Noel wanted to answer that, but he couldn't. She sighed. "If you're here to ask for my help, then sorry. I can't. But if you just want to have a cup of tea and a little chat with a friend, then you're always welcome." Noel knew Elise wouldn't budge no matter what, though he thought it was a shame. Jack was decently popular in the industry, but he needed a good song to establish himself. A celebrity built on hype would never last.

If he didn't produce anything good, it'd be difficult for him to make a comeback once the hype died down. Jack had been his longtime disciple, and Noel had been developing his musical talent from when he was an amateur. He didn't want Jack to lose his future just like that. "Give it some thought, H. I just need one song. You can write about anything. Just one song." "Noel, you know where I stand on this matter." "I know, but this is just a simple thing for you."

Noel didn't want to give up. Elise said nothing, but she still wouldn't budge. Noel knew she was still offended by what happened back then, and he knew she would never change her decision. That was just how she was. "I'm sorry, H. I know it's a difficult decision. Since you refused, let's put this behind us."

He took out his card. "This is my personal number. Call me if you change your mind. You're still my friend no matter what, and that will never change." She took it and put it in her pocket. "Dig in." Noel was glad she took his card. "Sure. Dig in." After that, Noel sent her back to school. "You can call me anytime you want, H," he told her solemnly before she left.

Elise waved to him and went back to school. The moment she came back to the classroom, she saw Mikayla typing away furiously on her phone. She sat down beside her friend and asked, "What happened? Someone got on your nerves?" Mikayla answered without even looking up, "I need your help, Elise.

These trolls are too much. They're insulting my idol! Quick, make an account and troll them back." Elise huddled closer and saw Mikayla arguing with Jack's haters on Twitter. Judging from the looks of it, Mikayla wouldn't back down until the trolls did.

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"Hurry up, Elise!" Mikayla urged Elise to help, since she was about to lose. Elise asked, "What happened? Why are there so many trolls there?" Mikayla grumbled, "These guys said Jack is just a talentless celebrity who only got popular because he's hot. Said he can't even act his way out of anything. Someone even called him a sissy. God, that makes me so mad." "Haters, huh? Ignore them. I'll help you." She took her phone out, and lines of code flashed on her screen. Elise hacked into Twitter's server and banned the haters from the platform. "Oh, they finally stopped." When the trolls stopped commenting, Mikayla gushed, "They must have backed off because they're scared of me." Elise kept her phone and said nothing. Danny came to pick Elise up after school. The moment she came back, she heard someone playing the piano in the piano room, and her eyes lit up.

She thought it was Alexander, so she put her bag down and went upstairs, but the moment she came up, the piano went silent. A moment later, she heard the

sound of something getting scrunched up, and Jack came out looking frustrated. He saw Elise, but he went past her without even saying hi.

"Jack..." Elise wanted to say something, but she decided against it. Curious, she went into the piano room only to see it looking like a mess. The floor was littered with crumpled papers, and even the stand, which stood perfectly fine before, was now lying on the ground. Elie crouched down to pick up the crumpled papers and opened it to see what it was.

An unfinished song. "Ah, Miss Elise, you're here," a servant suddenly said. Elise kept the paper quietly. "Yes?" The servant said politely, "Yes. Master Alexander will be working overtime tonight. Master Jonah doesn't want him to eat out, since the food outside isn't hygienic, so he asked the servant to cook something for him.

But Mrs. Woods is on leave to see her sick grandchild, while Stella can't leave. In the end, I had to come to you for help." "You want me to take his dinner to him?" The servant looked worried that Elise might be offended. "It's fine if you can't do it." *Hm, I don't have anything else to do, and the servants are busy. I might as well help them.* "Oh, just leave it to me. Pack his dinner up and I'll take it to him." The servant was delighted to hear that.

"Of course, Miss Elise. I'll take my leave now." After the servant was gone, she picked the paper up and kept them before leaving. Elise took both her and Alexander's dinner on her way out. On her way there, she looked through the song she picked up back at the piano room. *Hm*, *it's okay*, *but it doesn't pop out*. *It's a bit mediocre, but if it's spiced up a little, it should work.* She started changing it up, but a short while later, she was already at the company.

"We're here, Miss Ashlyn." She kept the paper and pen in her pocket before going into the company with two sets of dinner in hand. Everyone knew her as she came with Jonah before, and they greeted her respectfully. "Miss Sinclair." Elise wasn't used to people being so polite to her, so she went up to the top floor alone using the VIP elevator.

When Alexander's assistant saw her, he greeted respectfully, "Miss Sinclair, what brings you here?" She raised the lunchbox in her hand. "Where's your boss?" "He's in a meeting, but you can wait for him in his office." Then, he led Elise to Alexander's office. It wasn't her first time in his office, but it was her first time taking a close look.

His office was huge, and it had leather furniture as well as a luxurious desk. A big french window stood behind his chair, and it overlooked the whole city. She picked up a magazine from the book rack and read it on the sofa. Time passed. When Alexander came out of the meeting, his assistant went up to him.

"Sir, you're finally done." Alexander arched his eyebrow. "Did something happen?" He walked ahead. "Yes. Miss Elise is here. She's in your office, but it's been three hours." Alexander was obviously delighted to hear that, but he asked curiously, "Why is she here though? And why didn't you tell me?" The assistant wanted to explain, but Alexander was already hurrying to his office. He pushed the door open and was about to go in, but the next second, he stopped and put his finger to his lips. The assistant knew what Alexander meant, so he retreated. Elise was already asleep on the sofa when he came in.

Alexander looked at her gently. Night had already descended upon the city, and the moonlight shone upon her silently, as if protecting her. He went to the cubicle and took a blanket to cover her up, but she opened her eyes before he could do it. Their gazes met, and time stood still for a moment.

"Oh, you're awake," Alexander spoke first. She sat up right away. "Sorry, I fell asleep." Alexander stood up. "It's fine. Sorry you had to wait." *Oh, yeah. I'm here to give him his dinner.* "Here you go. Your grandpa told the servants to make you this. I bet you're hungry, so dig in."

Alexander arched his eyebrow. *Huh? Grandpa knows I usually have dinner at the company's cafeteria whenever I have to work overtime. So why did he ask Elise to come?* He knew what his grandfather was trying to do, but he didn't tell Elise. "Yeah, I am. We can have dinner together if you want to."

Elise was hungry as well, so she took her lunchbox out and laid it on the table before handing Alexander's cutlery over. They sat across from each other and had their dinner in silence. Elise was wolfing it down like an uncivilised brute, for she was starving. Alexander cocked his eyebrow and chuckled. "Well, someone has a big appetite."

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Elise grumbled, "Yeah, because I had to wait for you. The nerve of you to mock me." Alexander chuckled. "So this is my fault?" Elise shot him a glare. "Of course it is!" Alexander quickly stopped her from talking by filling her lunchbox up with more food. "Thanks for the wait. Have some more." Elise ignored him and only put her cutlery down after finishing her dinner. At this moment, Alexander's phone rang. It was his alarm, actually.

Since it was Wednesday, it was time for his Arisian class with Sare. "Um, I might be home late. I have something to do. I'll get the driver to take you home if you want." "It's fine, just go ahead. I'll go home by myself." "Be careful then. Call me if you need anything." He went back to his desk, booted up his PC, and tried to contact Sare. Elise's phone started beeping, and she took her phone out. When she saw his message, she realized it was time for her class, so she glanced at him and kept her phone. "I'll be going home now." She got up. "See you later."

"Sure." Then, he called his employee. "Tell the driver to send Elise home." "Thanks." She went out of the office and texted Alexander, 'Class is delayed by half an hour tonight. Talk to you later.' Alexander gave her an OK emoji and closed his laptop, then went through his documents. Right after she arrived home, she went to her room, closed the door, and booted her PC up. It had been a while since Alexander started learning Arisian from her. He was a fast learner and managed to grasp a lot of the concepts with just a few pointers. The class went by in a flash. Just when she was about to go offline, he texted, 'They sent me an email. I need your help with it.' Elise texted, 'Send it to my email.' A minute later, Elise got a new email. She logged into her account and skimmed through it before telling him its gist. 'They said the first phase went well. They're planning on sending a rep to Athesea next week to talk about the second phase and its plans.'

Alexander didn't reply immediately. In fact, he was taking his own sweet time, but she wasn't in a hurry. Elise stretched her arm and went downstairs to get herself a glass of milk. When she came out of the kitchen, she bumped into Jack, who just came back. Jack wasn't looking too well and seemed tired. He seldom came back home because of his work, but he had been coming home a lot over the last couple of days. "Still up?"

he asked. "I was thirsty, so I came out to get some milk." Jack went upstairs without saying another word. After he was gone, she remembered the song he wrote, and she rummaged through her pocket. *Oh, it's still there.* Then, she went upstairs and glanced at Alexander's reply. 'Tell me the time, and I need you there to translate if it's fine with you.' Elise looked at the date. It was a Saturday, so she agreed to it. *Hey, money is money.* 'Sure.' She turned her PC off and took out the unfinished song to finish modifying it. It took her forever to get out of bed the next day.

The modification had gone on late into the night, but luckily, she finished it, and she even added some lyrics into it, turning it into a new song. When she came down, Matthew was waiting for her in the living room. "Morning, Elise," he greeted her with a smile. Ever since he confessed to her, Elise had been avoiding him. If it weren't because of Jonah telling them to take turns sending her to school, she wouldn't even talk to him. "Good morning," Elise greeted back, but obviously, she was being distant. However, Matthew ignored it and pulled out a chair for her.

"Here, dig in." She sat down and finished her breakfast quickly. Elise then took her bag and left, while Matthew quickly followed her. They said nothing to each other the whole way. Elise was doing her math questions, while Matthew was trying to find a chance to talk. However, Elise was ignoring him, so he pursed his lips and thought for a while before calling her name. After a pause, he said, "Sorry. I might have been rash back then."

Elise smiled at him politely. "It's in the past now. It's fine." Matthew continued, "I'm sorry, Elise. I never thought I'd cause you so much trouble. I know you're concentrating on your studies so you're not in a hurry to get a boyfriend. Or maybe you just don't like me, but either way, can we go back to how we used to be? Just pretend it never happened, alright?" Elise heaved a sigh of relief after hearing that, but that also proved that Alexander was right.

He is trying to get closer to me because he wants something else. "Sure." After a pause, she added, "The company needs all the manpower it has right now. If you're busy, you don't have to send me to school." Matthew didn't take that offer. "Grandpa told us we must send you to school no matter how busy we are." Dammit. Jonah was the only reason she couldn't refuse him. Fine. Since Grandpa Griffith wants this, there's no point in arguing.

She got out of the car and went into the school, but someone suddenly tapped on her shoulder. When Elise turned around, she saw Samantha and Riley behind her. "You were in your head. We noticed you spacing out," Riley said. Elise smiled. "I was just thinking about the solution for that question yesterday.

Thanks to you, I finally found the solution." Riley smacked her head in fake annoyance. "Man, you top students are always thinking about homework, huh?" Samantha sighed. "That's why they're top students and we're not." Elise put her hands on their shoulders. "Just kidding. I just wanted to motivate you two."

Samantha and Riley looked at each other before pouncing on Elise and went toward their classroom. Unbeknownst to them, Mikayla was standing not far away. When she saw the girls looking so happy together, she felt jealous for some reason.

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"Oh right! Elise, I need to tell you something." Samantha suddenly held Elise's hand and lowered her voice. "Fenix Entertainment was recruiting actors for a new drama set in the ancient era, so I sent in my application. But you know what? They told me to go for the audition this afternoon. I was going to ask Riley to come with me but she has some personal matters to settle, so can you come with me instead?" Samantha was looking at her expectantly.

Since it was just a self-study session that afternoon, Elise agreed. "Sure. I'll take the afternoon off then." That delighted Samantha. "Alright. See you later." After they had lunch, Samantha grabbed Elise and took a cab to Fenix Entertainment. Elise thought the company sounded familiar, but when she came to the front door, she realized that it was Jack's agency. Just when she was immersed in her thoughts, Samantha grabbed her arm and snapped her out of it.

"Hurry up, Elise. It's starting in twenty minutes. We don't want to be late." They went into the elevator. There was already a guy wearing a cap in there when they came in. When he saw them, the guy lowered his cap. Elise thought he looked familiar, but she couldn't remember who he was. It wasn't after she got out and saw the posters on the corridor did she realize who the man was. *Hey, that's the new best actor—Ernest.* "Hi, may I know where's the audition for Truest Love?"

Samantha asked a crew member. The crew member pointed to the right. "Walk down this corridor to the end. It's in the last room." "Thanks." Samantha took Elise and went down the corridor. There were a lot of people auditioning. When Samantha took her number, it was around fifty, so they had to wait for a few hours. "I would have come a bit later if I knew it would drag on this long." Elise calmed her down by saying, "It's fine.

That means you can be more prepared. Read your script." Samantha looked at the script she just got. "Let's go there then. You can help me out." They went to the less crowded balcony, and Samantha combed through the script. At the same time, Jack was playing some games on the couch in the room next door while his

manager was scrolling through some data, looking worried. "Jack, your numbers have plummeted.

You dropped out of the top five on Trending and the popularity ranking. You used to be in the top three. Even your songs dropped out of the top twenty on the search list." Jack answered calmly, "It's normal, Ronald. That's how it is with the entertainment industry. We should just accept it." Ronald didn't like it that Jack was being so unmotivated. "Oh, what do you know? The most important thing for a celebrity is their value.

Sure, your fanbase is sturdy, but you're losing them quickly. All the newbies are starting to gain a lot of ground. If you don't work hard, you'll be a nobody in two years, tops." He kept pacing back and forth. "Have you been coming up with a new song like I asked you to?" Jack answered nonchalantly, "Sure. I'm doing it right now, so don't push me. I'm gonna lose this match at this rate." Ronald stopped pacing. "I can't just count on you. I must call Noel and ask him to write some new songs for you. And interact with your fans on Twitter when you have time.

Keep them interested." Jack went on playing his game in silence, but after Ronald went out, he put his phone down and put on a serious look. Then, he logged into his Twitter account to read through his fans' comments. Finally, he drafted one tweet, but in the end, he deleted it. "Forget it. I'll just leave it like this." He got up and went out of the room. Every time the company's employees saw him, they would greet him respectfully.

"Hi, Jack." Jack nodded and went past them calmly. It was then he noticed Elise from the corner of his eye. She was on the balcony, of course. "This line is hard, Elise." Samantha had a deep frown on her forehead. Elise took a look and said, "Hm, break this into parts and memorize them that way. That might work better." Samantha did as Elise said. When she said the lines again, it sounded much smoother. "Fancy seeing you here," Jack blurted, shocking Samantha and Elise.

When Samantha saw who it was, she jumped with delight. "Y-You're Jack!" She sounded excited, while Jack reacted to it calmly. He was used to getting recognized, so he just smiled and said, "Hello." Samantha was already gushing with delight. "Oh my god. I actually got to meet you. Um..." She took her phone out. "Can I get a photo with you?"

Jack nodded. "Sure." Samantha was already buzzing. She went up to him at once, pointed her phone's camera at both of them and snapped their photos before posting them on her social media accounts. Elise looked at him. "I'm here with my friend. She has an audition." "How did it go?" he asked. "It hasn't started yet," she answered gently. "It might take a while." Just when they were chatting, Ronald came over, looking happy. "Oh, there you are, Jack." He looked at the girls and nodded at them with a smile. Jack then told Elise, "I'll have to go. Good luck to your friend."

He then left with Ronald. "What made you so happy?" Jack asked. Ronald answered jovially, "I just called Noel, and you know what he said?" Jack arched his eyebrow. Before he could ask, Ronald told him the answer, "He said he's going to get a new composer for you. Do you know who it is? It's H! Yes, that famous one!" Jack wasn't interested in the answer until H was mentioned. "H? The composer who only wrote three songs but still managed to top the charts for a year? The one who's still the talk of the town even after her retirement? Are you sure it's the same H?" Ronald knew Jack would be skeptical, so he nodded quickly.

"Yes, that's right. Noel said he's friends with H, so if he can convince H, the leading track of your new album will be composed by H herself! The whole nation's going to know you when that happens. H's popularity alone will jack your album up to insane heights." "But I thought H had retired a long time ago. Is she making a comeback?" Jack had his own doubts, and Ronald shared that doubt too. However, he thought, *Well, Noel said he can probably convince H. I bet he must have his own plan.*