

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 36 - 40

Chapter 36 Despair

I stared dumbly at the officers who were cuffing me up. “What are you doing?”

“I’m from the vice squad. You’re now under arrest for battery. Do not resist.”

Vice squad? Battery? And then realization struck me. So Julius and Coraline set me up so I’d admit that I was the one who injured her? Just so they can call the cops on me and take my property for themselves?

I was still married to Julius, after all, so if I were to serve jail time, Julius should be able to get his hands on my money since he was my husband. I didn’t know if that was true, but I was starting to panic.

It was then I realized why Dominic wanted me to stay at home. Sh*t. I should have listened to him. The guy didn’t even know I was going to get arrested, so nobody was probably going to come to my rescue.

Before I was taken away by the police, I saw Julius grinning cruelly at me.

If you had told me this was the way I’d get taken into custody a few weeks back, I’d call you crazy, but here I was. The officers took me to the interrogation room the first chance they got, and they started questioning me.

I was terrified and panicked, but I knew I mustn’t show any fear, or else I’d incriminate myself. The only way for me to get out of this was by telling them the truth and nothing but the truth since I didn’t hurt Coraline on purpose.

But it didn’t seem to work, since the officers seemed to trust Julius and Coraline more than they trusted me. The interrogation went on for god knew how long, but eventually it came to an end.

Just then, I remembered James telling me that Dominic would come back later, so I asked the officer, “Sir, can I call my friend?”

“What? Trying to get someone to back you up, eh? Give it up. We won’t do anything to you if you’re really innocent. Just tell us the truth.”

There was only a single officer in the room, and the guy seemed nice. He didn’t say I could call anyone, but I thought I had a chance, so I continued, “I told you everything I know, officer—the truth and nothing but the truth. Please just let me call my friend. Just one call.”

I was on my best behavior since I was arrested, so the officer looked at me for a moment and actually handed me my phone. I took it over from him and thanked him profusely.

“You got five minutes, so make it fast,” he added.

I nodded then unlocked my phone, only to realize it was already seven. There weren't any missed calls or texts, so I wondered if Dominic was still out at work. But I couldn't wait for him any longer, so I had to call him now.

The call went through a moment later, but nobody picked it up. For the first time in my life, ten seconds felt like an eternity. Eventually, the officer rushed me again, so I ended the call in a panic and dialed his number again. Pick it up, Dominic.

But it didn't go through up until the very end. Left with no choice, I had to text him about my arrest. When I was about to make another call, the officer took my phone away. “You had your chance. Don't say I didn't give you one.”

My heart sank. Is this it? Am I all on my own right now?

Soon after that, a new round of interrogation started, but I had nothing more to say, so I repeated the same thing during the first round of interrogation. Finally, seeing as I had nothing of value to contribute anymore, the officers stopped asking and left me alone in the room.

I had been in a stressful situation ever since Coraline was injured, and I was slowly getting to my wits' end. Then someone opened the door again, and I thought it was the officer. Sh*t, I'm feeling dizzy.

“Ms. Zanetti!”

Wait, that voice... That was Calvin! I looked up at the door, and lo and behold, Calvin was there. “You're finally here, Calvin.” The moment I saw him, my tension melted away like butter under a hot sun.

If he's here, then Dominic must be too. That was the last thought that ran through my mind before everything went black.

When I regained consciousness, I saw nothing but white, and a faint scent of disinfectant hung in the air. I'm in a hospital, huh? How long was I out?

I looked around, but there was nobody to be found. Pushing myself up, I tried to get some water. Then, someone opened the door, and Calvin came in with Dominic.

“You're awake, Ms. Zanetti. Oh, you want some water? Let me take it for you.” Calvin knew what I was trying to do, so he filled a glass with water and handed it to me.

“Thanks.” I gulped down the water.

“You can leave now, Calvin,” Dominic said.

Calvin gave me a look of concern, but he left us alone nonetheless. For some reason, I felt nervous when Dominic was staring at me.

“I—” I was about to say thank you, but he didn’t give me the chance.

“I told you to stay at home, didn’t I? What part of ‘staying out of trouble’ don’t you understand? I take my eyes off you one second, and you got yourself arrested. Happy now?”

I bit my lip, and I felt myself tearing up, but I held the sobs back. Here I was, thinking he’d at least comfort me after all I had gone through, but he spared me no such luxury. All he had for me was blame.

“I’m sorry.” My voice trembled.

“Apology means nothing. If you did as I told you to, none of this would have happened,” he said coldly.

Alright, I had been through too much just to get scolded by him. That was the last straw. “Yeah, it’s my fault for not listening to you. It’s my fault you had to go through all that trouble. You shouldn’t have come to my rescue, since you didn’t take my call anyway. You should have just let me rot in jail if you hate me so much. Just leave. Leave! And stay out of my business!

“You’re just my employer, and I owe you a lot, don’t I? Fine, I’ll go to jail then. Is that enough to clear my debt? I mean, my misery is the source of your happiness, ain’t it? Then I’ll give you the ultimate happiness! Are you happy now? Huh?”

I was getting hysterical near the end, and I started crying uncontrollably. Everyone’s an *ss! Including Dominic!

Despite that, Dominic didn’t say anything. He was in his wheelchair, observing me quietly as I vented at him.

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Line

Oh, how his resting b*tch face irritated me. What, he thought I’d be scared just because he was staring at me quietly? Well, he’s wrong. I’m going all out now.

I hastily wiped my tears away and glared at him. "What are you looking at? I told you to piss off!" I roared in despair. But the moment I did, the temperature seemed to take a dip, and I felt everything turning to ice.

Dominic was glaring at me coldly, then he whispered, "What did you say?"

Remember when I said I wasn't afraid of him? Well, I lied. He was looking pretty scary at the moment. "W-Well, if you're not leaving, I will!"

I can't beat you, but I can hide from you. Besides, I didn't want to see him any longer, so I tossed the blanket away and headed toward the door barefooted.

As soon as I opened the door, Calvin was in the way, and I told him, "Out of my way, I'm leaving."

At the same time, Dominic ordered, "Shut the door, Calvin."

Calvin ignored me and was about to close the door, but I stopped him with my leg and pulled as hard as I could at it. I'm not letting you!

Calvin didn't expect me to resist, so he hesitated. "Ms. Zanetti, what are you doing?"

"Just do me a favor and let me go, Calvin." I tried to shove him away, but Calvin didn't budge. He blocked me perfectly, just like how Dominic wanted him to.

"P-Please don't make this hard for me, Ms. Zanetti."

Goddammit, I wanted to scream. If I'm not making it hard for you, your boss is gonna make it hard for me.

And then Dominic said icily, "Don't challenge my patience, Liliana."

At that, I roared without thinking, "You're not the only one whose patience is running thin here! Do you think you can push me around as you please? Well, I'm no pushover!"

Dominic slowly pushed himself and stopped before me. For some reason, even though he was shorter than me, it was still suffocating to be around him.

He glanced at me calmly and elaborated, "So you wanna argue? Fine, let's argue then. First, you became my caregiver because you owe me money. Second, you know very well how you managed to sell the copyright to your work, and third, how many times have I saved you up until now?"

The man had a lot of points, and none I could argue against. But it was not like he cared about my arguments anyway, so he continued, "Point is, not only do you owe me money, you owe me your life. I'm not forcing you to be my woman or anything since I

have taste, but at least show me some gratitude. And I don't accept your screams as payment."

Wow, I had nothing to say to that. Honestly, Dominic had a way with words. Since I had nothing to say to him, we were stuck in a staring contest.

A short while later, Yvonne came to us. "Oh, so everyone's here. Good. I'm just here to say that if you're all good now, we'd appreciate it if you can get yourself discharged. We're running out of beds now.

"I need to see you later." She pointed at Dominic and then to me. "See you next time, Liliana. Bye-bye."

I smiled bitterly at her, then she left like nobody's business. Once she was gone, Dominic shot me a look. "Think long and hard on what I've said. Keep an eye on her, Calvin." Then, he left me too.

I went back to my bed, puffing my cheeks. Since Calvin was here, there was no way I could escape. Honestly, Calvin was wasted on a boss like Dominic. The kid was tall, muscular, and had a nice voice, so he could have worked for a better boss.

"Ms. Zanetti, Mr. Hartnell is just—"

I waved him down the moment he mentioned that b*started. "Don't bring him up, for Pete's sake. Every time he talks, I get a migraine. Just shush, alright? It's not every day I get to enjoy my peace and quiet."

Calvin hesitated for a moment, then he sighed and stopped talking.

I sat on my bed, spacing out. For some reason, I was reminded of Julius and Coraline. Ew. Those b*stards. They keep pushing the boundaries of human morality.

I was still worried about my future. Sure, Dominic might have busted me out, but god knew if I had a record. To make things worse, if I couldn't clear my name for some reason... I shudder to think of the consequences.

I'm meeting up with Mr. Chance tomorrow. Gotta show him this video and talk to him about my case. At this point, I had to admit that Dominic's lecture was absolutely right, and I was wrong. Since I knew I was guilty, I didn't say no when he came back and told me we would be leaving.

Dominic didn't say a word to me on the way back, and he went straight into the mansion the moment we came back. The man slammed the door, and I clicked my tongue. Well, someone's annoyed. Then I went back to my room.

It had been a long day, and my phone was already dead, so I plugged the charger in before I went to take a bath.

Once I was done showering, I turned on my laptop and was about to make a copy of the video, but the file was nowhere to be found no matter where I looked. And no, it wasn't even in the Recycle Bin. Julius, you son of a b*tch. That b*stard must have deleted the video.

Great, now I lost the evidence. Would I even win this if we go to court? I mean, there's nothing but my testimony against them.

Wow, this really wasn't my year. It was just a series of unfortunate events ramming into me like a truck all year long. At this point, I wondered why I wasn't in another world yet.

I turned my laptop off and lay on the bed. When I took a look at my phone, I realized there were a few unread messages and some missed calls.

It was Shannon. Since it was getting late, I told her I would call her first thing in the morning.

Two seconds after I texted her, she called me. She's been waiting for me?

The moment I took her call, she started roaring. Fearing for my ears, I put some distance between myself and the phone.

"Liliana! You left my texts on read, and you haven't been taking my calls! What were you thinking, going missing like that? I can't believe you even turned your phone off!"

After she was done ranting, I answered, "Whoa, slow down, lady. You're gonna wake the neighbors. So what's up?"

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Stop Fooling Around

Shannon told me the company which had asked me to draw the movie posters had prepared me some materials and resources in case I lacked inspiration and could not draw well.

They wanted me to collect the materials from them tomorrow, and then I would have to finish the draft within two days after that.

I could not believe that they were so thoughtful and had such a humane side to them.

As I was feeling impressed, I remembered how I still did not know which company that was, and Shannon did not tell me either.

I put my phone beside the pillow and turned on the speaker. “Did they state a specific time to meet? If not, we shall go in the afternoon, yeah? I have something on in the morning. Also, which company exactly is that? You should at least tell me about it.”

“It’s Flash Media; you know them, right? They will finish filming the movie within the month, so they’re a little anxious. They’ve said that we can head over any time tomorrow, so let’s have lunch together tomorrow and head over after that.”

Of course, I did not have any objections to Shannon’s words. We continued with a short casual chat before hanging up, and only then did I have time to be in complete shock.

Never could I believe Flash Media would give me the chance to help them draw the posters.

This is indeed a pleasant surprise!

Flash Media was a big organization. Being a part of the public, I had watched many of their television series and reality shows every now and then.

Not to forget, their films were also well-performing and lucrative releases.

As I shut my eyes and lay on my bed, I could not resist fantasizing about my bright future as I grinned from ear to ear.

That went on even after I fell asleep. When I woke up in the morning, I found a puddle of drool stain on my pillow.

But there was something more grave—I had overslept.

I was unsure if it was the alarm that did not ring or if I was the one who did not hear it. Either way or so, it was already almost eight o’clock when I woke up.

At this timing, Dominic would have finished breakfast and prepared to head out in normal circumstances.

He had just made a dig at me yesterday, yet it seemed like I had proven him right today.

Thinking of that unforgiving and unreasonable mouth of Dominic’s, I immediately tidied myself up at the fastest speed possible and sprang out of the bedroom.

However, I realized there was no one else after scanning through the house for one whole round.

What was more surprising was, there was a plate of untouched breakfast on the dining table.

Dominic isn't that kind-hearted. Hmm... he must have spiked the food.

I took the plate up, only to find a post-it note below it pasted on the table, which read: Ms. Zanetti, this is the breakfast that Mr. Hartnell asked to save for you. Please remember to reheat it before consumption when you're awake.

The note was signed off by Calvin.

I pursed my lips. That was virtually as good as asking the sun to rise from the west. It was so rare that he grew his conscience.

Since that was the case, I decided not to hold back anymore.

I finished breakfast quickly and gave Benjamin a call before heading out. When I found out that he was at the law firm today, I rushed down immediately.

Getting onto the car, I told the driver to head to the commercial district. But before we got to the city center, Julius called to say he wanted to meet me and asked to bring along my ID card and household registry as well.

He has just put on a disgusting show yesterday and even caused me to end up at the police station. What is it with him looking for me today?

I figured there was no need to ask me to bring along my ID card if he wanted to get his revenge.

The confusion in me was growing, but I reckoned it was quite a hassle to ask more over the phone. Besides, I was in the taxi too.

But since he had asked to meet me, I had to go. To prevent him from playing any tricks, I requested to meet at a café opposite Wisteria Building, and I also told him to meet an hour later than the time I wanted to arrive.

After ending the call with Julius, I immediately called Benjamin. I intended to ask him to accompany me and also explained things to him before Julius' arrival.

I was on the losing side yesterday; thus, I would not give Julius another chance to set me up again.

Since lawyers were busy people with their schedules fully packed, anyone who wanted to meet them would have to make an appointment beforehand. With that in mind, I was unsure if Benjamin would be able to meet me since I called him so last minute.

Yet, who knew he would agree to it readily and even turned up at the café earlier than me.

I had wanted to sit opposite him, but he asked me to sit next to him and leave the spot opposite for Julius.

When I heard that, I thought he made some sense since I should not be sitting with Julius and facing Benjamin directly.

After settling down, I explained to him how Julius had taken the initiative to call me.

What made me puzzled was how Benjamin did not seem to be surprised at all. Instead, he was even very sure that Julius' motive to meet me was to ask me to sign the divorce agreement.

The truth was, I had already thought of that since he had asked me to bring my ID card along.

But I could not believe that guy would have a sudden change in mind and not mess with me any longer when it had only been one night, and not forgetting I had hurt his mother too.

At this point, I could not resist looking at the calm Benjamin and asked, "Mr. Chance, actually I was in a hassle with Julius' mom yesterday. I—"

"I know. Julius' mom knocked her head, right?" Benjamin interrupted me before I could finish my sentence.

I was instantly stunned. How did he know about that? Could it be that James told him about it?

He looked at me, baffled. "What's with your expression? Did Dominic not tell you that I was the one who bailed you out?"

I shook my head and unwittingly said, "Other than telling me off, scolding me, and ostracizing me, he said nothing else yesterday."

Out of my expectation, Benjamin burst into laughter. "That idiot. I guess he has gone back to those old school days, huh?"

I did not get what he meant, but that was not the main point nonetheless. To find out what I wanted to know, I continued, "Mr. Chance, since you're clear about what happened, then I'll get straight to the point. The police said I had caused intentional injury to another yesterday. So will that leave me a criminal record? Can they really sue me?"

Benjamin took a sip of coffee and calmly replied, "That's not a problem. Besides, only you two were present at the scene yesterday. We can't possibly take their words for it. If not, I can also say that you're kind-hearted and full of virtues."

I could not wrap my mind around it. So that's how things work?

"Not to mention..." Hearing that there was more to come, I widened my eyes in curiosity.

Yet Benjamin suddenly held back his words. "Forget it. It's good enough for you to know that Julius won't be able to do anything more to you. Just sign the papers later; leave the rest to me."

That is great. I was pretty satisfied after hearing his reassurance.

Just after we were done with our chat, Julius arrived.

His expression became a little unnatural the moment he saw Benjamin beside me.

"I asked to meet you. Why did you bring someone along?" Julius' tone sounded hostile.

I had yet to open my mouth when I heard Benjamin say while smiling, "Mr. Keaton, can't believe we meet again so soon."

I blinked my eyes, curious. Huh? Have they met each other before?

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 39

Chapter 39 Compromising Over And Again

"Do you guys know each other?" I asked, slightly baffled.

Looking overjoyed, Benjamin answered, "We've met once, and we had a great time chatting. Am I right, Mr. Keaton?"

I only became more bewildered than before. Why does that sound more like a threat even though Benjamin sounded nice?

What was weirder was the trace of panic that I saw flashing across Julius' eyes.

Something was definitely up between the two. However, I chose to believe Benjamin since he was, after all, introduced by James, and his relationship with Dominic must be pretty close too.

Whatever. As long as I can get a divorce and get all the problems solved, anything's fine.

"Tell me, what do you want today? Please speak your mind today so that the next time it'll be at the court when we meet. It's incredibly annoying to do a meet-up so often like this."

I had to say it felt different with a professional sitting beside me.

Julius frowned and seemed somewhat infuriated. Nevertheless, he did not say anything else and only pulled out two sheets of paper from his briefcase.

At that instance, I saw what they were. On the heading were two words: Divorce Agreement.

I did not expect Benjamin to guess it right.

As Julius passed me one set, he said, "If there are no issues, then we can proceed to sign the papers and head down to the Registry Office after this."

In place of me, Benjamin helped to receive the papers from Julius.

There was as though a surge of being snobbish and acting all high and mighty within me, and to be honest, it was a great feeling.

After reviewing it, Benjamin asked me about matters regarding matrimonial assets—cars, housing, and savings—in front of Julius.

Ever since our marriage, we had stayed in the house Julius bought. As a celebratory act, we had both forked out money to do some minor renovations to the house before our wedding.

As for the car, we bought it with my dad's money. Back then, Julius' faked righteousness and pretense to rely on himself had my parents coaxed and made them think he was a thoughtful man.

As such, even with his multiple rejections, my dad ultimately still forked out money to buy a mid-range car that looked presentable enough for us.

As for savings, there were none. Julius was not fond of me ever since after our wedding night. Thus, we would only spend our own money normally.

Apart from those, I would also buy some daily necessities at times, but those were small amounts that I did not want to harper.

"That's basically all of it. Did I get it right, Julius?" I deliberately questioned him to see what kind of attitude he would have.

After all, one had to remember that he had once asked for fifty hundred thousand as one of the divorce terms previously.

Benjamin coldly glanced at him to find that Julius' expression froze a little as he nodded.

“Ahem. Ahem.” Benjamin coughed, and with a solemn expression, he continued, “Based on what both of you have said, there aren’t any problems except for one point. Mr. Keaton, as the wrong party in this marriage due to your extramarital affair, my client has requested compensation for her emotional damages.”

I could not react in time to Benjamin’s words. Does that mean I don’t have to fork out money, and instead, I’ll get some compensation?

Thinking that Julius would not agree to it, I was proven wrong. Not only did he not reject that, but he had also agreed to it readily and even said he could pay a hundred thousand as the compensation.

What a huge surprise! Is this really Julius in front of me? Or perhaps Benjamin’s authority and dominance are too overpowering?

With how things took a turn, I was very contented. Not only did I not have to fork out money for the divorce, I even ended up with an additional hundred thousand compensation!

Nonetheless, Benjamin did not think alike. As I was in joy over the results, I heard him speak, “Mr. Keaton, do you think the damage you’ve caused to my client is only worth a hundred thousand? How about this; I won’t ask for too much either. We’ll settle at five hundred thousand. That’s also the amount you’ve originally asked for, so I deemed it’s more than appropriate.”

Oh my gosh, it seems like the tables have turned! At that moment, Benjamin was shining so brilliantly in my eyes.

The Julius in front of me had all along felt like a submissive person today, until this particular moment.

He abruptly stood up from his seat and pointed at me as he snarled, “Liliana! I’ve agreed to your request for a divorce, and I’ve agreed to the compensation too! Don’t you try your luck with this!”

I was stunned. Does he think that I’m the one who ordered Benjamin to do all that?

On second thought, I figured it was no big deal if he thought that way. After all, Benjamin was fighting for my rights. Furthermore, Julius did not seem to feel he was overboard when he had asked me for five hundred thousand either.

As I opened my mouth and got ready to refute his words, Benjamin lightly tapped my shoulders and calmly replied, “Mr. Keaton, this seems like a huge sum, but for you, who’s a sales director of Yorkshire Corporation, it’s nothing but a bonus from a major deal.”

“Besides, Ms. Zanetti didn’t ask for the whole sum now. We can always sign the papers first, and you can do the payment periodically afterward.”

Again, I froze in shock. I could not believe Benjamin would know every detail of Julius so well, including where he worked and his position in the organization.

After hearing Benjamin’s explanation, Julius’ face paled even more.

Perhaps he had clenched into the table too tightly that even his fingers turned white.

“If you agree to the terms I’ve mentioned, I can draft two new sets of the divorce agreements and print them out right now.”

Benjamin added on, leaving Julius no time to consider.

Then once again, my opinions and knowledge toward Julius had been completely overturned. He agreed to it.

With that, Benjamin swiftly took out the laptop that he brought along and drafted the agreements before borrowing the café’s printer to print them out.

We each signed on a set and exchanged it to sign again before the procedure was considered completed.

Julius was probably burning in rage that he almost tore the paper while signing on it.

Following that, we headed toward the Registry Office, with Benjamin still following along with us.

As I laid my hands on the divorce certificate, I was in disbelief at how fast and smooth-sailing the process was. It seemed like I was in a dream.

With that said, my inner self was ecstatic. It was a feeling that no words could express accurately. I had finally ended this disgusting relationship with Julius, and what was more, I had earned a sum of compensation from it.

When I received the full sum from Julius, I would donate half to charity and the other half to my parents.

At the thought of it, I was feeling delighted.

“Mr. Keaton, do remember to pay the compensation on time, and that’s all. Take care.” As Benjamin put forth those words, I sensed how Julius’ whole body had frozen in place.

After Julius’ departure, I was on cloud nine. It felt so good to regain my freedom.

The next thing I had to do was to repay Benjamin. If it wasn't for him, I would not walk out a free person today.

But I was a little tight for time, and besides, it would seem too hasty of me to repay his kindness now. Hence, I deemed it was not possible to do it today, and so I put on a sincere tone and said, "Mr. Chance, I appreciate your help today. Tell me when you're free; I'll treat you to a meal and pay you your legal fees too."

"Don't stand on ceremony. But I'm more than willing if there's a free meal. As for the date... Oh, excuse me; let me get the call first."

Upon excusing himself, he went ahead to pick up the call.

"Hey, you've called at the right timing. It's all taken care of, and I'm more or less done I guess. There are no big hiccups."

Figuring that he was probably referring to my case, I was instantly curious who the caller was.

Love the Second Time Around Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Unable To Tolerate

Just as I was in curiosity, Benjamin gave me the answer at once.

"Dominic, call her yourself if you have so many questions. Why do you keep asking me?" That was what I heard him say.

Knowing it was Dominic, I instantly furrowed my brows.

Is he trying to pry on matters that concern me?

It felt like he already knew beforehand that Julius would come to find me for the divorce.

Seeing that Benjamin hung up the call, I hesitated but ended up still asking, "What does Dominic want to find out?"

"Don't be bothered about him. Let's pick up from where we left off, Ms. Zanetti."

"Huh? O-Oh yeah. So... When will you be free, and what cuisine would you like?"

Since the man did not want to delve into that, I figured not to continue asking either. After all, it did not matter to me what Dominic thought or wanted.

At last, Benjamin and I set the date on Saturday night at seven o'clock at a barbecue joint.

I loved barbecue; it was both affordable and delicious.

After saying goodbye to Benjamin, I hailed a taxi and rushed to meet Shannon. I gave her a call along the way.

As the two of us had lunch, I shared with Shannon about what happened earlier that day. Hearing my story of how Benjamin had helped me with the divorce and compensation, she immediately ordered a bottle of Moscato for a celebratory toast.

Of course, I was feeling overjoyed inside. The Moscato was low in alcohol content, so it would not affect my schedule even if I drank too much. More importantly, I also got rid of that massive pain in the neck — Julius.

After eating and drinking to our content, we headed toward Flash Media. However, upon our arrival there, the receptionist told us that it was not the working hours of the afternoon shift yet.

Glancing at the time, we realized it was only half-past one — the administrative staff would only start work at two.

Since there were thirty more minutes and we did not feel like heading anywhere else, Shannon and I sat down at the rest area on the right in the lobby to wait for time to pass.

Not long after we sat down, I saw an elderly man dressed in a cleaner uniform walking out from a corridor. He had a pail in one hand and a mop in the other.

It wasn't him who caught my attention; it was the two other people following behind him. One of them was a rather good-looking and fashionable lady. I recognized her as Hayley Baker, the second lead of a recently popular television series.

The other person, who was chatting with her as they walked out, was either her assistant or manager.

I was instantly full of excitement. I could not believe I would see celebrities so easily just by sitting in Flash's lobby.

Hoping that Shannon would notice too, I hurriedly signaled her, who was busy with her phone.

But just as I called her name, I heard Hayley scolding someone angrily.

Even without me calling her, Shannon was attracted to the sudden commotion naturally.

It seemed like the elderly man had spilled some water on accident. He had wet Hayley's sneakers.

“Old man, are you blind? Did you not see me walking over? You’ve made my sneakers wet because of your inattentiveness! Tell me what I’m going to do now! How can I carry on with my day with wet sneakers!” Hayley bellowed, looking furious.

It was unbelievable that such a sweet-looking girl would yell so harshly, what more, toward an elder. I was instantly put off by her attitude; the impression I had of her changed in a blink of an eye.

The elderly man was probably in shock as well. He was bowing his head and apologizing repeatedly. I also vaguely heard him mentioning something along the lines of providing her compensation.

However, the woman was obviously not buying it. The person beside her tried persuading her to let the matter go but to no avail.

In a high-pitched and arrogant tone, Hayley sneered, “These sneakers are limited global edition. Do you want to pay for them? How are you going to pay for them? I’m afraid you won’t be able to afford the shoelace even if you work till death!”

After finishing her sentence, she gave the man a hard push. Due to his old age coupled with the wet flooring, the elderly man lost his footing and fell to the ground.

Upon seeing that, I could not hold myself back from interjecting. The elderly man reminded me of my grandpa, who had passed away two years ago.

Since young, Grandpa had adored me the most. He would always leave the best for me and pampered me instead of his grandson.

This elderly man appeared to be around the same age as my grandpa. It was tough enough for him to be in the workforce at such an old age — let alone suffer such treatment. It pained my heart to see such a sight.

Without thinking, I stood up and ran over to help the elderly man up.

“Are you alright, sir? Are you hurt anywhere?”

The man seemed a little surprised by my appearance, but he soon calmed down and shook his head, indicating that he was fine.

When I exchanged gazes with him, I was slightly startled as well. His pair of eyes was breathtakingly clear, and I could sense a hint of sharpness and curiousness to them. It was not the same as an average elderly.

The thought of giving the rude female celebrity in front of me a good scolding flashed across my mind. Not bothering to keep my words to myself, I walked over to her.

“You’re Hayley Baker, right? The second female lead in ‘Love Me, Please?’”

At once, her expression fell, making her look as though she was in deep thought.

However, I was unbothered by it and continued, “I’ve always thought that you were quite pretty, and I thought you act well too. No wonder people say knowing a person by repute isn’t as good as meeting them face to face. Now I finally understand why someone would say such a thing.”

I then continued harshly, “He’s probably older than your parents, yet you’re yelling at him? You even raised your hand at him? Don’t you know respecting your elder is a virtue? Do you not have any morals?”

As I said those words, my anger was building, my voice was growing louder, and my tone was hardening.

Hayley lost her temper upon hearing me berate her. “Who are you? Why are you meddling in my affairs? Where’s the security? Hurry and throw this woman out!”

I was ready to retort when someone pulled me from behind. Turning around, I realized it was Shannon, who had appeared behind me out of nowhere.

The look Shannon gave instantly made me understand her meaning. She wanted me to stop being a busybody so I wouldn’t get into trouble; I still had to rely on Flash for a job.

I knew I should let it go, but I couldn’t bring myself to do so. Since my grandpa passed, my heart would always ache whenever I saw elders around the same age as him.

If I end up losing the opportunity to draw posters for Flash because of this, I’ll admit my defeat then!

I shook Shannon’s hand away and stared straight into Hayley’s eyes before growling, “Celebrities like you who lack morality and principles should plan for early retirement. It’s best if netizens boycott you forever so that you won’t set a bad example for the younger generations!”

I had learned from Dominic to be so malicious.

Hayley’s eyes bulged so much that they almost popped out of her sockets.

As I was waiting for her rebuttal, the elderly man beside me suddenly straightened his back and started clapping his hands together.

Following that, a few cameramen walked out of the room along the corridor.

Two other guys came beside the elderly man and took the stuff in his arms from him.

I was dumbfounded and simply stared at all of them blankly.

What is going on? Did I perhaps run into a reality show filming?

I instinctively turned to look at Hayley and realized she was nowhere better than me. Her expression had become grimmer than before.

At this exact moment, the “elderly man” tore off the mustache on his face and removed the wig and cap on his head too. He smiled at me and said, “I’m Nicholas Scott. I fully agree with what you’ve just mentioned.”

His words struck me like a bolt out of the blue, and I found myself frozen in my spot, shocked.

Nicholas? Don’t tell me he’s the same Nicholas I’m thinking of?