

Spoiled by Mr. Russell Chapter 421-425

Chapter 421

The way things moved proved that Nathaniel won his bet, and not everyone was criticizing him anymore. Some netizens had even started to defend him.

“If Lily did create the past MN Inc. products, why didn’t she say anything before this? Lily had to choose this time, where MN Inc. was in trouble, didn’t she? I bet she is just jealous! She will destroy Nathaniel because he doesn’t love her back.”

“Mr. Hall said he was not guilty of anything and has never slandered Lily or Melanie even after so many things had happened. Regardless of who his girlfriend was or if he loved them both, he had a peaceful breakup with the two.

However, look at Lily. She job-hopped to Rebirth right after leaving MN Inc. and immediately started causing problems for her past employer. It doesn’t matter if Nathaniel is her ex-boyfriend or the man she is fascinated with. Lily shouldn’t condemn him this way. All I can say is that she’s such a petty woman.”

Olivia kept a close eye on the matter, which made her furious. Jenny, next to Olivia, also shook her head. “Why are there so many blind people in this world? The truth is right before them, but they’re still siding with that b*stard. I’m starting to wonder if he hired hidden paid posters to support him.”

“There are also ignorant netizens,” Lily replied calmly, her emotion unaffected.

“There are these kinds of people too. Look at this comment, ‘All your evidence might be accurate, but Nathaniel was someone you loved in the past. Why can’t you have some mercy for him?’” Olivia read it aloud before she slammed her palm onto the table angrily, “What the f*ck?!”

In contrast to Olivia’s exasperation, Jenny’s reaction was slightly better, laughing when she heard Olivia’s words. “My team used to tell me that many are kind in the wrong situations, but I wondered if that was true because I’ve never met many who were like that. It seems that all of them

are on Twitter! Haha!”

“Haha!” Lily broke out in a chuckle because of what Jenny said. “Jen! I never knew you were so funny! You can become a stand-up comedian.”

“Hey! I can’t believe you two are still in the mood for jokes. I’m so mad that I’m going to faint!” Olivia was frustrated. She used her main account to post all the evidence, not afraid of having a fallout with Nathaniel because she wanted everyone to know the truth.

However, his few words managed to move the public's opinions.

'Not guilty of anything? Goodness! I can't believe he dares to say that!'

"Getting mad over Nathaniel is not worth it. Also, it'll make you age faster and get more wrinkles." Lily hugged Olivia from the back, her hands circling the latter's shoulders as she spoke in a way that sounded like she was coaxing a little child. "There's no rush. Since I've decided to get back at him, I won't let him off the hook easily anymore. This time, we're going to get to the end of things!"

"You still have something up your sleeve?" Olivia turned her head in surprise upon hearing Lily's words. "Be patient. We'll let the public's imagination run wild while Nathaniel stays in his complacent bubble a while longer," Lily said, smiling calmly.

Over the past two days, they had posted a series of evidence that embarrassed Nathaniel. He had thought of such a good plan—winning the favors of many people with his excellent after-sales services and request for quick response to the request for product returns, which managed to make things a little better for him. How could Lily burst his bubble now?

"We're done for the day. Let's go home!" Lily announced, yawning while she stretched.

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Before she could leave, Jenny pressed her back down on her seat. "Wait! You seem to be slacking at work these days. You typically spend your days in the lab, but you leave the office on time these days. Tell me honestly. Are you hiding a man from us?"

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Olivia, who was beside them, was hesitant to speak. 'Hiding a man? It's more like Lily is hiding. That man of hers isn't someone who can hide so easily.'

"You're right, so don't stop me from going home to spend time with my baby," Lily replied, patting Jenny on her shoulders as she left. That was a response Jenny did not expect to get.

Olivia was speechless at sight.

"Hasn't Lily been...slightly off these days?" Jenny asked, puzzled as she used her fingers to motion what she meant.

Olivia only shrugged in response.

Recently, Lily bought a new car—a red Porsche, which was not that eye-catching. It was a nice car to drive, making it more convenient for her to travel around. She went to the parking lot to retrieve her car, but someone was already waiting for her.

Chapter 422

Maybe it was Lily's instinct. Although the person did not get down from their car, Lily sensed something unusual. She turned to look into the adjacent car and saw Justin sitting in the backseat, motioning for her to go over with his finger.

She was rendered speechless but got into his car without a word. After looking at Justin, she averted her gaze to her red Porsche and asked, "How did you know that's my car?"

"You've been pretty busy lately," Justin said profoundly, ignoring her question.

"Kinda. I'm sure you've heard about everything." Lily nodded. Since Justin knew which car belonged to her in this massive parking lot, Lily was confident he had heard about the recent commotion on the Internet.

"I don't remember you being this high-key in the past," Justin said, and this time, he turned to look at Lily.

"It might be because the Lodge family has influenced me, or I'm just looking for a style

change." Lily lowered her head, brushed out the folds on her shirt, and tugged it when she realized it was not getting any better. "You weren't running errands around this area again, were you? Did Grandpa tell you to come for me?"

"Birthday celebration." These two words explained the reason Justin was here today.

Lily remembered the occasion and nodded lightly. "I knew you came here because of that. I'll be there."

"Have you decided not to come back for real?" Justin stared at Lily as if he could get an answer from looking at her face.

"I've told you before. It's not that I'm not going back. It just isn't the right time yet. Plus, does it matter whether or not I return to the residence? Am I that important to the Lodge family?" Lily felt otherwise.

She was not reluctant to leave the Lodge family's residence back then as she could finally be free from the depressing and hasty environment. Lily never thought about returning ever since she left, not even when Nathaniel and Melanie tricked her.

It would be a piece of cake for Lily if she borrowed the Lodge family's power to get back at Nathaniel,

Spoiled by Mr. Russell by Luminous Night Chapter 422

but the rebuke she would have to face would be even more challenging. Hence, she would rather face her problems alone than seek help from them.

Justin had a complicated expression. His lips moved, looking like he wanted to say something, but he stopped himself in the end. He said, "He's old now."

"People from the Lodge family have longevity genes. Don't worry about it." Lily patted Justin's shoulder. "If there's nothing else, I'll leave now."

"Wait!" Justin called out and threw a folder to her.

"What is this?" Lily asked, puzzled.

"Some information that may be useful to you. Just look at those when you're free," Justin explained nonchalantly.

Lily raised her brows, feeling that folder in her hand. It was light, so she accepted it. "Okay then!"

Once she exited the car, the car engine started and soon left her sight. She looked down at the folder again, thinking she would open it when she reached home. There was no need to rush anyway.

Chapter 423

Alexander was not home when Lily arrived. She went to wash up, changed into her home clothes, and made herself a cup of hot cocoa before taking a seat to open the folder Justin had given her earlier.

He said it was some information she might need, but she did not ask him to search for anything, so she had no idea what it was about. After taking the papers out, Lily glanced at them and caught sight of Nathaniel's name. 'It's about him?'

Once she scanned the documents, she was surprised to find that it was the result of an investigation into Nathaniel's background, where the most crucial part was his relationship with his mother.

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The document had detailed information about Eloise. Everything from her identity to her current status, and even facts like Eloise introducing Frank to Nathaniel. The last page had the most critical information, however. It was the DNA test of Nathaniel and his mother.

This information astonished Lily. She knew

nothing about Nathaniel's family, even though they had dated for many years. All this while, she thought he was an orphan. Due to that fact, she had always liked Nathaniel more because he was hardworking, even though he had a miserable life. It turned out that he was hiding so much from her.

Eloise's name rang a bell in Lily's mind, but she could not pinpoint who she was. The papers stated that she was a well-known actress and had won the best actress award back then. Later, she left the industry and married the second son of the Tanner family. However, no one knew she had a son.

Indeed, it would be a massive scandal if word got out.

What Justin told Lily was an understatement. This information may not be fatal to Nathaniel, but it would be to his mother.

The Tanner family of Ruby City was old money, and they mainly engaged in doing business. The family became prosperous today via several older

generation Tanner family members. The family was huge, and their relationships were complicated as well.

The man Eloise married was the second son of the

Tanner family, but the eldest son was the one who had real influence over any matters. The second son married Eloise, and she had only given birth to a daughter. Later, he had an affair, where the woman birthed a boy. Sure enough, he would respect his legitimate wife, but there was probably not much love between them.

It was just that Eloise had mingled with people in that society for many years. She had the connections and skills to help her husband's business. Their relationship was merely a mutually beneficial one.

However, if he discovered that Eloise had a son before marrying him and that she had been contacting him secretly over the years, she would need to face dire consequences:

Holding the papers in her hand, Lily pondered the matter for a long time. It was just a few pieces of paper, but she understood how confidential the information was.

Nathaniel had never mentioned anything about it in their few years together. Lily was sure that no one else would know about it because that was the case for her.

Such a secret was not something an ordinary private investigator could find. However, getting this done was a piece of cake for the Lodge family, as they had power in this place. Lily was just confused. 'I didn't ask Justin to help me, so why did he take the liberty to give this to me?'

After some thought, Lily decided to keep the papers. She had a card in her hand, but that did not mean she had to play it now. She kept the folder at the back of the bookshelf and tidied up a little. There, she saw the two wooden figurines, still adorable and lively. The sight of them made her feel embarrassed.

Initially, Lily wanted to get the shop to carve something meaningful for her grandfather's birthday. However, the young man quit his job. Now, she could not get the wooden carvings she wanted, and Lily also lost her source to find the type of wood she was interested in. The young man had seemingly disappeared, and no one could get in touch with him.

Later, Lily went to the woodcraft shop to ask the owner about the young man's whereabouts twice, but the owner also knew nothing about it.

Such a small shop by the roadside would just put up a poster to hire new employees when they were short of staffing. Any suitable applicants would be taken in, and they usually would not ask much about their employees' private lives.

Chapter 424

She fiddled with the doll with her fingers, sighed, and said, "Tell me, where did that young man go?"

Across her, the wooden doll stared back with a smile.

Nathaniel called Eloise as soon as he got home, but both of his calls were declined. Seeing this, he assumed that it must be inconvenient for her to pick up his calls, so he dared not to call again. However, he was too agitated to sit still and turned on his computer to look at that day's sales data and check the situation online.

He saw that the sales were still declining, and although the rate of product returns had decreased, there were still many applications for it.

Nathaniel had already released a statement, so he could not retract it. Now, the only matter he could focus on was to deliberately slow down the after sales process and try to minimize the losses while he rebuilds his reputation.

At the same time, new staff were being recruited to speed up the processes in the laboratory. Nathaniel planned to launch a few new products to replace the tarnished ones without prioritizing quality. In his mind, it is only through introducing new fragrances that the company could continue to strive.

He spun around in his chair restlessly more than 20 times, and his phone finally rang. As soon as he heard this, he instantly grabbed his phone like his life depended on it. When he picked it up and saw that it was indeed a call from Eloise, he quickly picked it up. "Mom!"

"Shut up!" A stern voice was heard from the other end of the phone. It was evident that whoever that voice belonged to was trying to keep things under cover.

Nathaniel was stunned for a moment before he quickly returned to his senses. Then, he called out again, "Ms. Neville..."

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"It seems like you're getting too comfortable with me. You've been overstepping your boundaries too much. Who told you that you could call me any time you want?! Do you not remember what I've

said before?!" It was obvious that Eloise was fuming, although she was trying her best to keep her voice down.

"I..." Nathaniel couldn't defend himself.

Eloise had mentioned several times that he should not call her out of the blue. Instead, he should leave a message for her to reply at her convenience. She also said only to call her Ms. Neville to avoid being caught.

This was what the two had agreed on. However, Eloise's attitude toward him had softened a lot recently. She would advise him, and the two would meet up more frequently. That caused him to forget her rules as he let his guard down and called her mom.

Seeing that it was his fault, Nathaniel couldn't refute it and continued to listen earnestly.

"I'm sorry, Ms. Neville. I've made a mistake," he apologized once she was done.

On the other hand, Eloise seemed calmer after a few deep breaths and her sudden outburst. "Okay, now, let's get down to business."

"To be honest, I feel on edge. I feel like Lily has

more dirt on me. Is she waiting for me to retaliate?"

Although everything was going smoothly at the moment, the uneasiness in Nathaniel's heart continued to grow. Lily had yet to make a move, yet Nathaniel had a terrible suspicion.

"Lily? What does this have to do with her? Did you go and look for her?!" Eloise asked in surprise.

She had been very occupied the past two days and paid no attention to online news. Naturally, because she had no idea about the trending hot topic, she was baffled to hear Lily's name being mentioned.

Chapter 425

“About that...” After a moment of hesitation, he continued, “I didn’t aggravate her. She’s the one who made things difficult for me. Now that the public has stated their opinion, sympathy is useless. Everyone believes Lily. If the product return rate continues like this every day, it’s over for our company.”

“You...” She was so angry that she could barely stand up. Eloise did not speak. Instead, the sound of footsteps was heard from her end. She was probably looking for a convenient place to talk, and once she found it, she glowered, “She played no role in the plan I gave you! You know exactly what forces are behind her, yet you continue to provoke her. Aren’t you just courting death?!”

“No, I told you. I didn’t do anything. She started it first. No matter how pitiful I try to be now, no one would believe me!” Nathaniel felt helpless.

Eloise snorted coldly. “I don’t think you have to pretend to be pitiful. You’re already an idiot!”

Nathaniel was speechless.

Then, Eloise said, “Okay, let’s not talk about this. I’ll see what’s going on. Don’t call me if there’s nothing urgent.” Before she hung up, she seemed to have remembered something and added, “You know what, don’t call me even if it’s urgent. I’m busy these days. I’ll get back to you when I’m free.”

Nathaniel stayed silent while listening to the phone’s beeping from the other end. He was even more despondent after the call. Instead of getting the answer he wanted or coming up with ideas to solve this, he received a scolding.

After giving it some thought, he concluded that he could not continue to sit still, especially since it appeared that he was the talk of the town.

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The latest online buzz seems to have centered on whether Lily or Melanie was responsible for MN Inc.’s earlier perfume lines and whether Nathaniel and Melanie jointly stole Lily’s work.

Another topic of discussion was whether Nathaniel had ever been in love with Lily and if Lily or Melanie was the mistress of the relationship. They were theorizing whether he was lying as well.

Most of the other issues revolved around these two main problems. Once these two were solved, the rest would quickly clear up.

The discussion of his love life could be considered a private affair. The most important thing to resolve was the ownership of the previous perfumes. He could easily let this slide in the past, but he couldn't hide now.

Nathaniel was aware of who made the perfumes, but he did not expect Lily to have this much evidence against him.

After thinking about it, Nathaniel decided it was better to confess than cover it up. In his mind, people who confessed at the police station would get a lenient sentence, so maybe his sincere apology and self-pity would get him out of hot water.

The more Nathaniel thought about it, the better he thought this idea was. He did not have time to ask Eloise and did not dare to bother her anymore. He had no idea when she would reach out to him again.

Nathaniel's anxiety grew with each passing second. He couldn't just sit back and wait. He had to do something

He quickly turned on his laptop and sat down in front of his desk. Then, he opened up a blank document, and his fingers hovered over the keyboard before he typed. "My apology."

As soon as Lily arrived at the office the next day, she saw a large box on her seat. It was a wooden box that was tightly hammered together, and she couldn't even peek inside it.

"Whose is this?" she asked.

"Yours, of course!" one of her colleagues said. "The security guard brought it up early this morning, saying it's your parcel. It's quite heavy."

This confused Lily even more.

She circled around the box and did not notice anything special. No courier note was posted on it, and no contact information was left. There was only a name written in black pen.

"Lily Christian."

It seemed like this was really hers, but who would send such an enormous thing without reason? "Lily, what's inside this big box?"