

Right Person, Wrong Time Chapter 301

Chapter 301

Chapter 301 Not Very Far Off

So, this is the very reason why Grandpa missed the surgery... which was his best shot at recovery.

Had everything gone the way it should have, his condition might not have deteriorated and the medication would have prevented this.

However, these were all the ups and downs of life which no one could have predicted.

Nicole was at a loss for words. It was conservative of White to put out an eighty percent success rate at that time as nothing was a guarantee in the medical field; even if it was a small operation, there would always be a chance of death, not to mention that this was a brain surgery.

White's eighty percent assurance of the operation was based on the fact that there would be no accidents during the operation.

With Benedict's current state, other than his increased age, his tumor had also deteriorated. If he was to go through the surgery now, he would only have a fifty percent chance at best. However, this was his best odds at survival.

"It's okay, Grandpa. Don't stress yourself over this. Take care of yourself and eat well. Perhaps you'll feel better," Nicole comforted him.

If it was not for him taking the initiative to bring this up, she would have never known that this was the same old man back in the hospital.

The pain and suffering that he had experienced had changed him entirely.

However, the optimistic old man brushed it off and maintained a smile on his face. "Alright, alright. Let's not talk about these tragic things. Let's talk about something happy."

Nicole nodded eagerly. "Okay."

"Oh, since you've had an affair with my grandson, why not marry into the family? That way, no one would trouble you."

Benedict rolled his eyes and looked at her with a smile.

“Forget about it, Grandpa. Nothing is going on between President Gardner and I. The only relationship between us is just a superior and his subordinate. There is nothing more than that,” she answered as she began to distance herself again.

Benedict understood this and sighed before continuing, “I’m not trying to boast, but my grandson is good-looking. He also comes from a good family background. Although he is a bit cold, he is still a kind man. Are you not going to consider him?”

Seeing how he was selling his grandson to her, Nicole could not help but laugh.

“Yes, yes, you’re right, Grandpa. President Gardner is amazing, but I’m not that bad myself.”

As for Benedict, he agreed with her.

“Indeed. You’ve managed to be the chief designer at such a young age. You’re fantastic! Although Colton is competent and capable of bringing Gardner Corporation far, it is still all because of his family background. As for you, you had nothing yet you’ve managed to go so far. It’s really amazing.”

The sudden praise she received caused her to be a little embarrassed. Without a doubt, she responded in modesty, “You’re being too nice. I’ve slowly worked my way up. As for President Colton, it is admirable for him to handle such a large corporation in such a meticulous manner.”

The old man’s eyes could not help but gleam when he heard her praising Colton.

Although Nicole had said things that Benedict did not want to hear, what she said now were honest words from the bottom of her heart. This showed that she subconsciously had a good impression of Colton.

It seemed like the possibility of Nicole being Benedict’s granddaughter-in-law was not very far off.

He still had more than half a year of his life left. He would try to matchmake the two of them; perhaps it might actually work out.

A delighted Benedict was gleeful with his own plan.

“Alright, now that we’re not strangers anymore, let’s forget about these pleasantries.” He stood up and stretched his arms before tugging at the gray robe around his body to tidy it.

“I want you to stay for lunch with me today. I still have more to chat with you. Now that I’m old, I’m always reminiscing about the past.”

Nicole did not refuse; instead, she nodded and agreed, "Of course, it's been my absolute pleasure."

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Chapter 302 Out of Shape

Benedict was now feeling a lot better, thanks to Nicole's presence. She was also asked to sit next to him at the dinner table.

Benjamin and Anna could not help but laugh when they saw him in such a good mood.

It was because Benedict had looked at Nicole like she was the apple of his eyes. As they ate, he would laugh and chat with her all the way.

This puzzled Anna as she watched them chatting away happily. When did the two of them develop such a good relationship?

Colton lowered his head while eating silently before speaking up indifferently, "It's only been a day and they are already so close."

When Benedict heard Colton's comment, the smile on Benedict's face faded before he looked over and questioned, "What? Can't an old man look for a confidant to chat with?"

Colton saw how happy his grandpa looked and naturally raised no objections. A smile appeared on his face before he replied, "Of course, you can. As long as you're happy, Grandpa."

As Benedict noticed the doubtful looks on everyone's faces, he bluntly explained to prevent any misunderstanding, "Okay, I'll be honest with you. Remember when I told you guys to look for a girl named Nicole five years ago?"

Benjamin seemed to have a faint impression of this and nodded. Then, he suddenly recalled her full name and was stunned.

"Dad, is this the Nicole whom you were looking for this whole time?"

Benedict nodded with utmost satisfaction and said with a smile, "Yes, she is the girl that I have been looking for. I've never expected to meet her like this."

At that moment, Benjamin could not help but laugh as he remembered his dad's urgency when he was looking for Nicole.

"It's fate."

When Anna saw how much Benedict liked Nicole from the permanent smile on his face, she smiled as well and immediately added, "Yes, yes. It's indeed fate that brought you two together. Nicole also gave birth to Colton's son. We're all one big family now."

Although what Anna said was true, it was still a little embarrassing for Nicole to have her dirty laundry aired out like this.

While knowing well that Anna meant no harm, Benedict still stepped in and spoke after noticing Nicole's uneasiness. "Let's not bring this up right now. The baby was brought up by Nicole while Colton did not do anything. If we want Hayden to be a Gardner, we would need Nicole to agree. Otherwise, it would be difficult for both sides."

His words were plausible as he spoke with an indisputable dignity.

The smile on Anna's face froze and she had no choice but to comply, "You're right, Dad. We can't be pressuring her."

Nicole was touched that Benedict had put himself in her shoes and stood up for her.

After lunch, she went for a stroll with him. As age was catching up to him, he was sleepy after walking for a short while and began to yawn non-stop.

"I'm old and worn now. I'm tired after walking a few steps."

In response, Nicole smiled and stretched out her hand to support him. "It's because of the warm weather. It makes people sleepy. Why don't you head back and rest? I'll visit you another day."

Although he was unwilling, his body could not hold up any longer and he nodded.

She planned to leave the Gardner Residence after she sent Benedict back to his room.

However, as soon as she left his room, she bumped right into Colton.

He lifted his gaze before asking, "Is Grandpa asleep?"

Nicole nodded. "Yeah. He said he was a little tired before this. As soon as we got back, he immediately fell asleep."

Colton replied with a hum and continued, "Grandpa is getting old. It is inevitable, especially now that he is ill. However, he seemed happy today. So, thank you for that."

This made her shake her head humbly. “No worries, it’s my duty.”

“Grandpa likes you, Nicole. Do visit him more often if you can,” he exclaimed with a smile.

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Chapter 303 Neurosurgeon

Nicole nodded and thought, Understandable...

“I will. Grandpa and my mom used to be close and I have also regarded him as my elder. So, I will visit him more often when I’m free.”

Amused by the seriousness on her face, Colton could not help the corners of his mouth being lifted into a smile as he softly replied, “Okay.”

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The dark, ambiguous room was filled with a woman’s sweet moans combined with a man’s panting.

Once the haze was gone, Queenie lay softly on the bed while the man’s hand wandered around her body with a grin on his face.

“Tsk, Colton’s woman has a different taste.”

Although he had an honest look, the words that came out of his mouth were extremely lewd.

She lowered her gaze and suppressed the anger in her heart. She was now a prostitute who had to smile and please any men who came her way.

Queenie reined in the sorrow on her face. When she looked up at the man again, she had a bright smile accompanied with a youthful glow as she spoke coquettishly, “President Kohlberg, don’t you forget about our deal.”

As she said this, her fingers slowly drew circles on the man’s chest.

Bryan quickly grabbed her hand and cursed in a low voice, "You little demon. If you keep this up, you will die on this bed sooner or later!"

On the contrary, his words made her smile sweetly. Suddenly, she felt that it was worth it to sell her body as long as she could get what she wanted.

"President Kohlberg, after being with Colton for so many years, I naturally know all of his weaknesses. The rest is all dependent on you."

After such a lustful session, Queenie's voice was a little hoarse, which made her even more seductive.

He bared his teeth and chuckled. "With a body like yours, I'm happy just to be here even if you didn't know any of Colton's weaknesses."

At that moment, she wrapped her hands around his body and leaned her chest against his. "Really? Then, it depends on the price you're willing to pay."

Bryan's hands wandered around Queenie's bosoms mischievously. "The old man in the Gardner Family is about to die."

Without understanding the context, her eyes narrowed upon his response. Since she had nothing to do with the Gardners, she did not know what he was talking about.

Then, he continued, "I heard from people that Old Mr. Benedict only has half a year to live if he doesn't go through with the surgery."

Narrowing her eyes even more, Queenie looked at the man below her and asked, "So, what's the plan?"

"We'll let that old man die early. By then, we can take advantage of the chaos in the Gardners and use the chance to throw them off the industry!" he exclaimed viciously.

As for Queenie, she had no care about Benedict's life and death. Although she had met him a few times, the old man's attitude toward her was neither good nor bad.

"What do you need me to do?" She quickly picked up on what Bryan was trying to say. For him to bring this up now, he must have wanted her to do something.

Undoubtedly, this filled him up with satisfaction when he realized how brilliant she was.

"I know a well-known neurosurgeon named Pierre Toth. When the time comes, you'll find a way to get him going with Old Mr. Benedict's operation."

She was not dumb and immediately understood what he was trying to do, after which she placed her hands on him again and squinted. "Do you want Old Mr. Benedict to die on the operating table?"

"Exactly. You're so smart," he complimented mindlessly.

However, the shrewd Queenie replied with a smile, "If Old Mr. Benedict dies on the operating table by the hands of the neurosurgeon I introduced, I'll be the first one to take the fall."

She was not slow; as the frontman, she had to have a certain amount of leverage.

At that moment, Bryan reached out to caress her face. "Alright. Once this is over, I'll not only give you a large sum of money, but I'll also send you abroad. Once things have calmed down, I'll pay for your return trip."

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Chapter 304

Chapter 304 Do You Like President Yates?

Although Bryan was a businessman, he was still a man whose words could be trusted. Queenie narrowed her eyes as she contemplated this matter. At that moment, she needed money, so she was willing to do nasty stuff if Bryan was willing to pay her for it. "Fine. I'd really appreciate your help, President Kohlberg," she spoke demurely.

Bryan felt his insides burning with passion when he heard the woman's cheeky tone. "Let's do it again, you sl*tty woman," he uttered as his hands started exploring her body. The room was silent for a while after that before a series of sweet, shrill screams filled the air.

Queenie knew that these men only found pleasure in making love with her because she was Colton's woman. They would feel a boost of confidence knowing that they had the power to dominate her as well.

Unfortunately, Colton was the one who had never laid hands on her at all.

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Zachary was gone by the time Nicole arrived home.

Whitney gazed at Nicole with a rather grim expression on her face, and she let out a sigh before speaking. "President Yates is gone," Whitney uttered.

Nicole squeezed her brows together as she didn't understand why he left without saying anything. He could have at least said goodbye before leaving.

Whitney knew what Nicole was thinking about, so she offered an explanation. "President Yates said that he wouldn't be able to bring himself to leave if he had to say goodbye to you before going. So, he decided to leave while you weren't around," she said.

Her words left a bitter smile on Nicole's face. "Oh. I got it," she muttered as she ran her fingers through her messy fringe.

When Whitney heard Nicole's flat and calm tone, she stepped forward and stopped in front of Nicole. "Don't you feel anything, Nicole? President Yates was so nice to you—"

Nicole interrupted Whitney midway through her sentence. "Not all relationships are mutual, Whitney!" The remaining of Whitney's words were caught in her throat, but she took a gulp and kept quiet for a moment before speaking again. "Don't you like President Yates, Nicole?" Whitney asked while pressing her lips together.

Nicole didn't know what to say when she looked at the woman in front of her. In the end, she simply let out a sigh before resting a hand on Whitney's shoulder. "You know I had a child with another man, Whitney. I might not have married before, but I'm no longer a virgin. Zachary is a good guy, and he's nice to me, but I can't match up to his standards," Nicole explained.

Whitney lowered her gaze. She knew about everything that Nicole had just told her. However, after all her years in the company as Nicole's assistant, Whitney also witnessed all the sacrifices that Zachary made for Nicole. She thought Nicole and Zachary would get together eventually—she hadn't expected things to change so drastically after returning to the country.

"You shouldn't think too harshly of yourself, Nicole. You're the best person I know," Whitney replied firmly. It was true—Nicole had taken great care of Whitney throughout the years, and she had taught Whitney a lot about the business. Nicole spread her lips into a smile at first, but her movements came to a sudden halt as she seemed to recall something. "By the way, Whitney, now that I've quit my job at F&M Apparel, and now that you're no longer my assistant, does that mean that you're going back?"

Whitney pouted and crossed her arms in front of her chest while she sank back onto the couch. The stern and serious tone she had used earlier was gone as a girlish and whiny tone replaced it. "Why should I stay in F&M Apparel when you're no longer there? I handed my resignation letter to President Yates, and he approved it. So, I guess I'll just stay in the country to accompany you," Whitney muttered.

Nicole was amused by how loyal Whitney was—she couldn't help but chuckle when she heard what Whitney said. "Deal. You can stay with me and be my assistant, and I'll pay you your salary."

"Of course. I've been with you for so long, Nicole. I promise I'll be able to meet all your needs!" Whitney beamed in response. She didn't specialize in fashion design, and had only ended up in F&M Apparel's design department by chance. It had been three years since Whitney became Nicole's assistant, and Nicole had kept Whitney around ever since day one.

Regardless of what happened, Nicole was always on Whitney's side. Just that fact itself was enough to convince Whitney that she wanted to work for Nicole for the rest of her life!

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Chapter 305

Chapter 305 The New Head Designer

Even though Benedict had recovered after being triggered by Olivia, his health deteriorated after the incident. The doctor previously promised him that he had at least six months to live, but this was no longer the case after he lost his temper. Benjamin felt sleepy all the time, perhaps because his tumor was pressing against one of the nerves in the brain.

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Meanwhile, the Gardner Family had started placing their hopes on White's apprentices and were actively searching for him in order to cure Benedict's illness.

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After Nicole quit her job at F&M Apparel, the company continued its partnership with Gardner Corporation. So, F&M Apparel naturally had to send someone else over. This person was none other than Kylie Simmons, the head designer of F&M Apparel. Nicole and Colton came to an agreement—they would use both Nicole and Gardner Corporation's names as partners for the 'Ann' brand, while the person that F&M Apparel sent over would just be for decoration at the office.

On the first day that Kylie went over, she headed to Joanna's room, and they had a friendly chat in the office. Both of them stepped out of the office while chit-chatting. Then, they walked hand in hand over to Nicole's office. When Nicole looked up to see the uninvited guests in front of her, she put on a courteous smile as she raised her brows. "It's rare to see you guys here."

Kylie eyed Nicole with an unmistakable look of disdain on her face. Nicole was nobody now that she didn't have F&M Apparel's support. "Miss Lisa—No, I should call you Miss Anderson now." Kylie took a step forward in her six-inch heels. The clicking sound of her heels filled the room whenever she walked. Nicole wasn't an idiot—she knew what Kylie was doing there. After all, Kylie had already disliked her when she was still in F&M Apparel.

However, Nicole was the head designer back then, while Kylie wasn't. So, Nicole still had power over Kylie. But now that Nicole had left, Kylie could show off her power in the office. She spread her red lips into a smirk as she gazed at Nicole. "You're no longer the head designer of F&M Apparel now, Nicole. I'm the head designer," Kylie uttered slowly.

Nicole lifted her head and rested her back against the chair as she sent a lazy gaze in Kylie's direction. "I know. But you're only getting this position now because I've quit my job. So, it's interesting that you're cherishing something I'm throwing away."

Initially, Kylie had intended to come over and show off in front of Nicole, but she hadn't expected Nicole to have such an offensive comeback. The look on Kylie's face immediately changed as she spoke through gritted teeth. "Who do you think you are, Nicole? F&M Apparel had intended to fire you from the start. You would have been gone a long ago if it weren't for President Yates!"

Nicole grinned when she saw the other woman losing her temper. "So, you came here because you were proud of the fact that you got a position I didn't want, huh? Were you trying to show off in front of me?"

Joanna could tell that Kylie was no match for Nicole, so she hurried forward to comfort Kylie in a gentle tone. "Don't be mad, Kylie. I'm sure that's not what Miss Lisa meant." After Joanna soothed Kylie's ruffled feathers, she turned to look at Nicole while smiling.

“Gardner Corporation has always had a partnership with F&M Apparel, Miss Lisa. Now that you’re not part of F&M Apparel…”

Nicole immediately understood what Joanna meant, and pressed her lips to form a smile. “Are you saying that you want me to clear this space for you?” Since Nicole got what Joanna meant, Joanna nodded and proceeded with her words. “I don’t want to do this either, Miss Lisa. Regardless, F&M Apparel had sent Kylie over to work with us, and this office was meant for F&M Apparel’s staff members.”

Joanna had made herself clear—she wanted to chase Nicole away! Nicole stared at Joanna for a long time as she swiftly moved her hands across her keyboard and reformatted the entire computer.

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Chapter 306 A New Broom Sweeps Clean

Nicole didn’t even feel the slightest bit of anger as she got to her feet. “You’re right. I do have to clear this space. Why don’t you give me a few minutes to clean up before I leave? How does that sound?”

Joanna hadn’t expected Nicole to agree so easily as she thought that Nicole would throw a whole fuss over it. But, since Joanna wanted to seem like a nice person in front of Kylie, she naturally agreed to Nicole’s suggestion. “Of course. Please go ahead, Miss Lisa.”

Kylie had been under Nicole’s command for a long time, so she felt the need to seize this chance to get back at Nicole now that she could do it. After she glanced at the whole office, her gaze landed on Nicole’s table and stool before she spoke with an unimpressed look on her face. “I’m the head designer of F&M Apparel, Director Schmidt. You don’t expect me to reuse the things someone else has used, right?”

Joanna instantly understood what Kylie meant, and nodded while shifting her focus onto the table. “I know. I’ll get the logistics department to throw out everything in this office!”

Nicole could tell that the other two women were trying to bully her, but she simply stood by the side without saying anything. Once they finished making their sarcastic comments, she started clearing her things out.

Kylie opened the room door to peek at the people outside before looking at Joanna. “I hope my work environment is nice and clean, Director Schmidt. I don’t like that someone else had been using this room in the past, and I hope you can sanitize the

place so that I don't catch some virus here," she practically hollered for the whole office to hear.

Whitney was sitting outside, but she had seen Kylie entering a while ago. Whitney had tried her best to keep her mouth shut, but she hadn't expected Kylie to speak in such an offensive manner. Whitney was the hot-tempered woman, so she charged over and shouted at Kylie. "Who do you think you are, Kylie? You're just someone who's picking up the trash that Nicole doesn't want anymore!"

Kylie was even more annoyed when she saw Whitney, and raised her hand to push Whitney away. "Who do you think you are? You've quit your position at F&M Apparel, so you should just leave this place now. You're such an eyesore!"

After working under Nicole for such a long time, Kylie finally had the chance to get her revenge. "You—" Whitney's expression darkened. She was about to say something when Nicole interrupted her. "That's enough, Whitney. Let's pack up and leave now." Nicole's voice was calm and gentle—she didn't sound angry at all. It was almost as if she didn't have any reaction to Kylie's insults.

Joanna's tone softened a little when she saw Nicole walking out. "I don't have a choice, Miss Lisa. This office was meant for the head designer of F&M Apparel, and Gardner Corporation's design department works with F&M Apparel as well. So, this time..."

Nicole scoffed when she saw how Joanna was still trying to act friendly in front of her. "This is Gardner Corporation, and this is the design department, so of course, I'll have to obey your orders, Director Schmidt. You told me to clear the room, so I cleared the place before I even finished the stuff I was working on."

Joanna intended to exert her power over Nicole in front of the rest of the design department while also acting all generous and lovely. But she hadn't expected Nicole to turn the tables around. Instead, since it was Kylie who had requested to work with Joanna, she stood on Joanna's side and spoke up for Joanna.

"I think you should just hurry up and chase off these people who aren't related to Gardner Corporation, Director Schmidt. Otherwise, things would get complicated if some of the company's private files get leaked to the public."

Kylie was all prepared to show her authority now that she had obtained this role in the company. She even sounded a lot cockier after she got her position as the head designer, and she clearly directed all her words toward Nicole.

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Chapter 307

Chapter 307 Chase Her Out

Nicole refused to allow someone else to step on her that way. Kylie had been below Nicole ever since she kicked off her career in F&M Apparel, so how could Nicole allow Kylie to show off in front of her face now? Nicole narrowed her eyes as she smiled. "That's true. Perhaps some company secrets might be leaked now that Kylie's here."

Kylie's expression changed immediately. "What are you trying to say?!" She glared at Nicole angrily.

"What else do you think I'm trying to say? Don't you know what you did in the past?" Nicole said in an amused tone. There had been a breach of confidentiality in F&M Apparel in the past, but it wasn't related to the designs made. Instead, it was associated with the sum of the amount that had been offered for some partnership. The blame had gone to Kylie back then, but she managed to get rid of the controversy after she slept with some CEO.

"Stop talking nonsense, Nicole. Are you trying to frame me now that I'm the head designer of F&M Apparel?" Kylie hastily denied her involvement. However, the guilt in her voice was evident as she spoke in a higher pitch. Nicole responded with a lazy smirk when she saw how self-conscious Kylie looked. She knew the sort of person that Kylie was.

"Well, I guess you'll have to sit tight in this position as the head designer. You'd need to watch out and ensure you don't fall off and hurt yourself. "

Kylie's face turned pale with fury as she listened to Nicole's sarcastic comments. However, it was true that she had been caught up in a tricky situation in the past, so she was reluctant to say much about it. Therefore, she kept her mouth shut as a tense expression formed on her face.

Nicole handed a cardboard box over to Whitney as she made eye contact with Jessica, who looked like she had something to say. Nicole used her eyes to tell Jessica not to come over before she led Whitney out of the room. Once Nicole left, Joanna began introducing everyone to Kylie. Kylie was the new head designer of F&M Apparel, so everyone naturally showed her the respect that she wanted. But after the scene earlier, anyone with common sense could tell that Kylie and Nicole didn't have a good relationship. So, to please Kylie, all of them started complimenting her.

"It's great that you're here, Kylie. Lisa wasn't friendly at all—she chased off some of our staff members when she first came in. We felt so uneasy at work back then," one said.

"That's right. We're so glad to have you here, Kylie. At least we wouldn't have to be worried about triggering someone and being fired for that," another one said.

Kylie was pleased to hear all these comments that put Nicole down, and she happily responded to them. “Don’t worry; I’m not as temperamental as her. As long as everyone does their part, I’m sure things will go smoothly.”

Even though the staff members had thought that Kylie was hard to get along with after witnessing her encounter with Nicole, they changed their minds once they spoke to her. They figured that it’d be easy to please the new head designer of F&M Apparel—all they had to do was insult Nicole. “Please contact the logistics department and get them to change everything in the office to brand new items. I don’t want to use something that others have used!” Kylie ordered with a look of disgust on her face.

One of the more alert staff members nodded once she heard Kylie’s orders. Then, she turned around to call someone from the logistics department. Meanwhile, Whitney followed Nicole out of the design department, and she questioned Nicole when she saw the calm look on Nicole’s face. “How did you hold it all in, Nicole? Don’t you feel angry at all?” she asked.

Nicole halted her footsteps and glanced at Whitney before spreading her lips into a smile. “Whitney, you wouldn’t bite a dog back if it bit you, right?” A smile surfaced on Whitney’s face when she understood what Nicole meant.

“I understand your logic, but I would definitely hit the dog with a stick if it bit me. I wouldn’t allow someone to bully me!” Whitney exclaimed.

Nicole couldn’t help but laugh when she heard the other woman’s words. She knew that what Kylie mentioned must have triggered Whitney earlier.

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Chapter 308 Need an Office

“Let’s take a stroll over to President Gardner’s office,” Nicole said before she started leading the way. Whitney’s eyes lit up—she had nearly forgotten how Nicole and Colton had some history together. “Do you have any ideas, Nicole?” Whitney hurried after the other woman.

“Mrs. Gardner wanted me to be Gardner Apparel’s CEO previously, but I rejected her offer. However, I believe it’s now pretty easy for me to request a position in Gardner Corporation,” Nicole uttered with a smile. Whitney seemed to understand what Nicole meant as she hastily nodded while cheering. “I knew you’d come up with a plan, Nicole!” She stuck closely behind Nicole as they headed to the top floor.

Nicole got Whitney to wait outside while she headed into Colton's office alone. Tony wasn't surprised to see Nicole as he greeted her politely before letting her in. Colton was seated at his desk in the office, and he seemed to be thinking about something as he stared at his computer. When he saw Nicole walking in, he shifted his gaze toward her.

"Nicole," he spoke gently while giving her a sincere smile. She strode over to his table while maintaining eye contact with him. "I got chased out by your staff members from the design department. What do you think I should do now?" she asked with a smile.

"What?" A confused look surfaced on Colton's face when he heard what she said. Nicole explained herself in a leisurely tone when she saw Colton's cluelessness. "F&M Apparel and Gardner Corporation are working together, but I'm no longer part of F&M Apparel, so they sent a new staff member over. Since there's a person to take over my job, they decided to chase me out of the office," she uttered.

Colton chuckled when he sensed the anger in her tone. "Are you unhappy because of that?" he asked.

"I wouldn't dare to be angry. I obeyed their orders and left the office—I'm here to bid goodbye now, President Gardner." Nicole continued to smile—she didn't sound angry, nor did she sound like she was there to snitch on someone else. Colton could tell that Nicole had shown up because she wanted to express some of her annoyance to him, but he suppressed his laughter as he addressed her statement. "So, what's your plan from now on, Miss Anderson?"

Nicole raised her chin a little in confidence before she responded. Previously, she had noticed that the room beside Colton's office on the same floor had a great view. But, unfortunately, it had been empty for a while now. "Mrs. Gardner previously mentioned something about hiring me as the CEO of Gardner Apparel," Nicole said in a careful tone.

"So, are you prepared to take the job?" Colton raised an eyebrow as he questioned Nicole.

Nicole stuck her bottom lip out as she was deep in thought. She wasn't an idiot—she knew that she would be tied down to Gardner Corporation if she took this job. It had taken her a lot of effort to get out of F&M Apparel, and she wasn't about to dig herself another grave.

"No. I want to have a partnership with Gardner Apparel using my name. In other words, I'll be working as the founder of Ann. Let me know what you think," Nicole expressed herself confidently while gazing at Colton with sparkling eyes.

Colton nodded as he stared at the confident woman before his eyes. He couldn't seem to reject her at all. "Of course," he replied. The smile on Nicole's face widened when she saw the man nodding. "Since we're going to be work partners, it wouldn't be too much for me to ask for an office, right?"

"Of course not," Colton said. Before Nicole could tell him about the room next door, he provided her with the same offer. "The room next door is empty. What do you think of that spot, Miss Anderson?"

Nicole froze for a moment as she hadn't expected him to read her mind. That's good, I guess, she thought while nodding her head. "Great. I'll tell the people to move my stuff up from the office downstairs. I'm used to my usual furniture, so I'd like to continue using them."

"Sure. You can let Tony know about this, and he'll get someone to arrange it for you," Colton followed up gracefully. It was clear as day that they had great chemistry with each other.

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Chapter 309

Chapter 309 Moving Out

Meanwhile, Kylie was at the design department of Gardner Corporation, and she had ordered those from the logistics department to clear Nicole's items out of the office. However, to her surprise, Tony sent a group of people downstairs to move those items up just a few minutes after she had given her orders. Kylie had just arrived and couldn't recognize Tony, so she assumed that he was just some regular staff.

Joanna, on the other hand, was shocked when she saw Tony. They were just clearing a room out—she hadn't expected Tony to get involved in such a thing. "We're just moving some furniture, Mr. Larson. What are you doing here?" Joanna smiled as she asked him in a cautious tone.

Tony pressed his lips together while looking at Joanna. Then, he glanced at Kylie, who was standing right beside Joanna. "These things should be moved upstairs. President Gardner was the one who gave out the orders, so I figured that I should make sure everything goes smoothly," he explained.

The look on Joanna's face stiffened, and she seemed rather helpless for a moment. What does Tony mean by that? "Did you say that these things should be moved upstairs?"

A thought popped up in Joanna's mind, but she quickly shook her head as she didn't think that it could be possible. She forced a smile onto her face as she spoke softly. "These are all old items, Mr. Larson. If you need furniture upstairs, you can get some new ones."

Tony couldn't help but laugh when he saw the look on Joanna's face. He straightened his figure and looked directly into her eyes for a moment before he spoke. "Miss Anderson said that she's used to her old furniture, so she ordered for them to be sent upstairs. Thanks for your concern, Director Schmidt."

Joanna's face turned pale as she realized her predictions were correct. Her lips trembled as she articulated slowly. "Are you saying that Miss Lisa is moving upstairs?" Tony scoffed as he scanned Joanna's figure before speaking.

"Where else do you think she can go? You chased her out of the design department, so she has to move somewhere else, right? Miss Lisa isn't fussy, so she's fine with working in any office. The president decided to move her to the room next to him." Tony had been Colton's assistant for a long time, so he knew about the drama that went on in the office.

Joanna was completely stunned. She thought that she had finally managed to chase Nicole out, but she hadn't expected Colton to allow Nicole to move to the office beside him! Before she could say anything, Kylie started to express her dissatisfaction. "Did President Gardner misunderstand something? Nicole is just a head designer who has left her job at F&M Apparel. So, why should she remain in Gardner Apparel?"

Tony shifted his gaze toward Kylie when he heard her voice, but he only looked at her for a short while. "You must be the new person that F&M Apparel sent over, huh?"

Kylie lifted her chin to put on a proud expression when she heard Tony's words. "That's right. I'm the new head designer of F&M Apparel, Kylie Simmons."

"Sure," Tony replied before turning back to look at Joanna. "The partnership between Gardner Corporation and F&M Apparel isn't that important. Right now, Gardner Apparel's focus is on the new brand, Ann.

The designing team should support Nicole in completing this brand's work. Meanwhile, you can push the other unimportant matters aside."

Kylie was confused after hearing Tony's words. Isn't the Ann brand supposed to be part of the partnership between F&M Apparel and Gardner Corporation? What does he

mean when saying they have to work with Nicole? “Hold on. Ann should be a collaboration between Gardner Corporation and F&M Apparel.

Why is Nicole in charge of this? Nicole isn't part of F&M Apparel—I'm the one who's in charge!” Kylie exclaimed. She had taken the role as F&M Apparel's head designer because she wanted to work with Gardner Corporation to witness the massive success of their collaboration—Ann.

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Chapter 310 All For Naught

Previously, Gardner Corporation had only handed Nicole the role of the founder of this brand because she was the head designer of F&M Apparel.

Since Kylie was the one taking over this job, she naturally assumed that she would become the founder of Ann instead. This was the main reason Kylie had rushed back to Gardner Corporation even though she had been abroad.

“F&M Apparel and Gardner Corporation's partnership is legitimate, but so is our individual partnership with Miss Anderson, young lady. So, there's no conflict of interest here,” Tony uttered.

Kylie's face fell as she questioned him confusedly. “What do you mean?”

Tony couldn't help but scoff when he saw the look on the woman's face. “I meant what I said! Gardner Corporation will collaborate with Miss Anderson for Ann, while we will collaborate with F&M Apparel for other things.”

All the blood drained from Kylie's face upon hearing the man's statement. She had only pleaded with F&M Apparel to give her this role because she wanted the fame that would come along with Ann. Yet, in the end, she found out that Nicole was in charge of this brand only after she got to Gardner Corporation.

“That's impossible. Ann was already created when F&M Apparel and Gardner Corporation were still working together. Nicole was still working under F&M Apparel back then!” Kylie hissed through gritted teeth. She couldn't believe that she had gained nothing even after coming to this company.

“Our partnership agreement with Miss Anderson has stated everything in black and white. Gardner Corporation’s Ann is a brand that we agreed to collaborate with Miss Anderson. Miss Anderson has already informed President Yates from your company about it. Do you think she is responsible for reporting to you about it as well?” Tony’s face darkened as he glared at Kylie icily.

Kylie’s face was as gloomy as night—she clenched her fists without saying much. She had just gotten her role as the head designer of F&M Apparel, and things were still unstable.

She glanced around at all the eyes on her as she thought, I can’t afford to cause any huge uproar just yet. So, she tugged her lips to form a stiff smile before she spoke in a calm tone.

“Of course not. I just wanted to clarify some things as the head designer of F&M Apparel so that I don’t end up in conflicting situations.”

“Well, you don’t have to worry about any of this. Gardner Corporation has been placing most of its focus on Ann. Since F&M Apparel sent a new person over, I guess you can just stay in your office and focus on your designs for now. If you need anything, you can just tell Director Schmidt about it.”

Tony put on a polite yet distant smile as he spoke. “Gardner Corporation wishes to keep Ann’s designs and documents confidential, so you’ll have to ensure that all our data is protected, Director Schmidt. If any of the staff members get access to the drafts, things will get really troublesome if something gets leaked out.”

Kylie felt her face burning with anger. She wasn’t any idiot—she knew who Tony was referring to when he talked about leaking company documents. She balled her fists up as she tried her best to calm herself down.

Even Joanna felt rather clueless after she heard what Tony had said. Joanna had been all prepared to hand Ann over to Kylie, yet she found out that it would still be under Nicole’s name.

Tony smirked when he saw the hostile looks on the two women’s faces. “There’s something else that President Gardner told me to inform you guys about. He ordered me to take good care of the new person from F&M Apparel, but he also highlighted that we had had a shortage of computers recently.

So, I’m afraid you will have to hang in there for a bit while we try to fix this issue. But, it should be fine since you don’t have much to do,” he said to Kylie.

Kylie was utterly shocked. Does that mean that I have nothing to do here after they sent me to Gardner Corporation? I went through so much to get to this company.

I can't believe I'm in this situation! "No way. I'm the head designer of F&M Apparel! Don't you guys want to work with us?!" Kylie growled with a look of fury.

"You shouldn't put too much blame on us, young lady. Gardner Corporation does sincerely wish to have this partnership with your company.

Unfortunately, however, your company is the one that switched staff members midway through our project. That makes us wonder about F&M Apparel's sincerity in collaborating with us," Tony uttered.

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