

Chapter 21 Elite Nursery

Rachel nodded without hesitation. "Yes, I would love that."

Attentive to Rachel's heartiness, Nathan nodded satisfactorily. "Come to the Chapman Group headquarters tomorrow at 8 AM, bring the card, and ask for me at my office." 2

Upon finishing his sentence, Nathan left Rachel's sight in huge strides.

Rachel immediately sank into her thoughts.

Everything in the Orange Country depended on the qualification one had. If they were looking for a job after graduation, it depended on their certificates and from where it was obtained. Even professional industries looked for fresh hires that were from a good school.

Her frantic escape from Istituto Marangoni had caused her to not have a degree, and because of that, she would have been stuck in the Orange Country without a way to move forward!

An employer like Nathan Chapman, who does not look at qualifications, was rare, let alone being hired by one! Even if she started from the very bottom of the hierarchy, she would not need to toil for too

long before a promotion would come to her.

Nathan was someone who values capability, which she had. It would be absurd for her to worry about having to start as an entry-level worker.

Rachel was deep in her thoughts when her phone's ringtone pulled her back into reality.

When she picked up the call, all she heard was Jodie's roar over the connection. "Rachel! Through someone I know, I have found the best nursery for elites in the entire Orange Country! However, they do have a stupid rule, they might only take Ziggy depending on his IQ score!"

Rachel was a little puzzled. "IQ score?"

"That's right! I heard every single child in this nursery is a prodigy in one way or another, so they have to test his IQ score before deciding whether to admit him!" 1

There were zero worries in Jodie's excited roar. Evidently, she had full confidence in Ziggy's intelligence.

Rachel checked her wristwatch. It was near noon.

"They want to test him now?" 2

Jodie sounded a little antsy. "That's right! Tomorrow's the first day of school. If we don't do it

Chapter 21 Eric's Nursery
now, no amount of personal connections will help him be admitted!"

Rachel bit her lips softly and hesitantly. "Jodie, I just want Ziggy to have a happy, carefree childhood. I don't need him to be a genius or have breathtaking achievements. He's my son, no matter what, I will love him."

Jodie suddenly stopped talking. When she replied moments later, her voice was calm.

"Rachel, Ziggy-boy is beyond clever. If you place him in some random, mediocre school, it would be wasting his talent! You should go home and ask him what he thinks. I'll wait for you in front of the nursery, I've already sent you the address."

After she hung up, Rachel kept ruminating on Jodie's words, and as she gripped tightly onto her phone, she had made up her mind.

'Ziggy should decide for himself.'

At that thought, Rachel raced back to her apartment.

Ziggy, still writing a piece of code on his laptop, looked at the door all of a sudden.

Within a split second, he saved the code, cleared the browsing history, and turned off the laptop.

The second his tiny hand pulled the cover down, the door opened.

He smiled at Rachel as she walked in. "Mommy, you're so early!"

Rachel sat down beside Ziggy and told him seriously, "Ziggy, Aunt Jodie found an elite nursery for you, but they want to test your IQ score before deciding to take you in or not. The rest of the kids are also clever kids. I'm worried that you won't be able to handle the stress, so I'll let you decide if you want this..." 1

Ziggy listened to Rachel's dilemma and blinked his soulful eyes. "Mommy, whatever you want me to do, I'll do it."

"No, I don't think I can decide for you on this. This is your future, and I know you're much cleverer than the other children, so I think you would choose the right path for yourself." 3

Rachel hugged Ziggy tightly as a warm smile appeared on her face.

Ziggy placed his tiny hand on Rachel's shoulder as though he had made up his mind. "If mommy really wants me to go to school, I want to go somewhere that can challenge me. I wanna see how clever the clever kids in this nursery are."

Rachel ran her fingers across Ziggy's head. "Alright, since you've already made a decision, let's go there now to take the test!"

When Rachel and Ziggy arrived at the address Jodie gave her, Ziggy reached out with his tiny fingers.

Rachel was mildly startled, but she lowered herself to his height.

As she was lowering herself, Ziggy swept her hair to the side, making it slightly less unkempt.

Romantic, stately qualities adorn the building that had a tall ceiling of a foyer, stylized entryway, arched windows, and intricate stonework in every corner; these features all added a sense of grace to the magnificence.

With a classical, open design, it sported a steeple, plastered wooden scaffolding, and beam structures. The natural building materials were contrasted by climbing vines, making it classy and fashionable.

Its fresh, unconventional white stucco walls were paired with light red roof tiles. Moreover, with the archways after archways, cloisters, and tall ceiling-to-floor windows, it was a sight to behold.

The simple symmetrical design showed its

solemnity as all the rooms were in perfect squares, while its functional space division and refurbishing demonstrated a German strictness.

At the entrance of such a luxurious elite nursery, two figures slowly approached. 2

Jodie jogged to Rachel's side with a huge grin.

"Rachel! Ziggy-boy! I knew you would come!"

Ziggy looked at Jodie suspiciously. "Aunt Jodie, how do you know we'll be coming?"

Jodie laughed proudly as she tilted her face upward. "Because I know a twerp like you would take on your mom's bravery. Your grandparents didn't let your mom go into an elite school, but your mom insisted, so I know you would do the same..." 1

Rachel tugged at Jodie's shirt, hinting for her to stop.

Jodie paused in surprise before she immediately covered her mouth and shook her head.

"Alright, alright, come take the test! They're waiting."

Holding onto Rachel's hand, Ziggy's eyes glazed over, thinking about a serious question. 1

Rachel had never told him anything about her own family, so Aunt Jodie's revelation was the first time he had heard anything about her own family.

'Looks like mommy's life was hard before she had me...'

Ziggy followed several ladies in uniform into a small room. He did not cry, fuss, or show any emotion on his face.

The ladies were all intrigued. This would be their first time seeing a kid behave like this! 2

Chapter 22 God's Favored One of the Future

No longer than thirty minutes later, Ziggy exited the room expressionlessly.

Rachel carried Ziggy in her arms, but seeing his unconcerned face, she became a little anxious. 3

"How was it, Ziggy?"

Jodie looked at Ziggy with the same intense, anxious expression. "A normal person's intelligence is around 80 or more, and this school's entrance prerequisite is 120! If someone knows someone on the inside, they usually waive the high requirement, requiring only 100 to 120 to admit."

Her head swayed to the side. "In this case, little Ziggy, you only need to score between 100 to 120."

Upon hearing Jodie's words, Rachel slowly furrowed her brows. 1

She remembered clearly that her IQ score was 130 when she was young.

If the man who slept with her that fateful night had a high IQ, Ziggy's IQ should not be lower than 120!

now?"

One of the teachers tilted her head in confusion.

"Aren't you curious about his IQ score?"

Jodie and Rachel looked at each other in unison, thinking about the same thing.

Rachel hugged Ziggy tightly. It was because her IQ score was much lower than Rue that she was thought to be useless and received no doting from her parents.

Not to mention she was disowned!

No matter what, she would not have treated her child that way and neither did she have the heart for Ziggy to be hurt!

"No need. We'll be happy as long as he passes. As for his IQ score, we don't need to be so precise about it."

Rachel and Jodie agreed.

At this moment, Ziggy reached out and gripped onto Rachel's hand as if he was sending her some encouragement.

He then flashed her a calming grin before he reached out to the teachers with his tiny hand.

"I'll take the IQ result then."

Rachel held onto Ziggy tightly as her frail figure began to tremble.

Ziggy patted Rachel's hand and said with a smile, "Mommy, don't worry. Just trust me."

Just like that, the teachers handed the result over to Ziggy excitedly. "Ziggy, which teacher would you like to be responsible for your education in the future?"

Ziggy smiled at the teachers politely as he handed the result to Rachel without even looking at it.

Rachel took the report with her heart palpitating in anticipation of the score on it.

To give her strength, Ziggy placed his hand on hers.

1

Rachel unfurled the report, and when she saw the number on it, her eyes widened in shock.

"How could it be?"

Jodie grabbed the report from Rachel's hands and immediately showed the same expression as Rachel's.

She lifted Ziggy in one fell swoop which almost sent him into the air.

"220! Ziggy, you're such a genius! You are out of this

world!"

An average person's IQ score was averaged at around 80, and between 110 and 120 were considered smart, while those between 120 and 130 were considered elites. After 140, one could be considered a genius!

Edward Bluemel, whose IQ score used to be the talk of the Orange Country, had an IQ score of 200!

When Edward's IQ score was revealed, the entire Orange Country was in shock.

Yet now, a five-year-old child had broken Edward Bluemel's record!

His was even higher than Edward's by 20!

This could not merely be described as just 'genius'! Since Edward's IQ score was 200, he was described as a child prodigy and managed to achieve everything he did!

He stood at the top of the world with the power to influence the economic development and operation of the entire world!

Considering that this child's score was higher than Edward's by 20, his achievement in the future would be inestimable!

However, there was no indication of emotion on Ziggy's face. It was as if he had already anticipated it all.

It was only when Rachel looked at him did he broke into a grin.

Rachel covered her mouth, stifling an urge to tear up.

Her IQ score was not that high, so she did not have a good time living in the Bennet household. 1

Yet now, her son possessed such high intelligence!

In Jodie's arms, Ziggy looked at Rachel before leaning over and patted her head lightly with his tiny hands.

"Mommy, don't cry."

Jodie looked at Ziggy pitifully. "Ziggy-boy, I'm good to you as well, right? You're like my baby, why can't you treat me better? Maybe just half as well as your mommy?" 2

Ziggy threw a glance at Jodie and shook his head in feigned seriousness. "Aunt Jodie, you look so tough, I can't even find any urge to be protective of you!"

Jodie raised her fist in an attempt to punch Ziggy.

However, in the next second, her fist was clutched in three hands simultaneously.

Jodie looked at the three teachers, discombobulated.

"Miss Comer! You can't hit God's Favored One of the future!"


Before Jodie could even respond, the three teachers flashed Ziggy a toadying grin.


"Ziggy, which teacher do you want to help you with your education?"

"Ziggy, choose me! I've taught so many prodigies, I can't even count them!"

"Ziggy, the choice is on you, you should be able to decide your future."

Ziggy squinted as his finger slowly moved toward the three teachers... 5

 Comments (5)

 Vote ?

Chapter 23 Threats of Violent Consequences

Ziggy's finger pointed at the furthest teacher, the one without makeup and who was not the prettiest.

It was the teacher who spoke last.

Jodie looked at Ziggy. "Ziggy-boy, why did you choose this teacher?"

'Don't they say all men judge by looks? No matter children or adults, everyone would subconsciously choose prettier things.'

Ziggy's big, round eyes sparkled. "She's right. My future, my choice, no one else can decide for me."

He paused for a split second before he continued, "Except for mommy."

Mainly, it was because the teacher's words were almost identical to what mommy had just told him earlier.

Jane was surprised to be chosen by a genius like Ziggy.

In Minnow Nursery School, it had always been the teacher's prerogative to choose their students. Due

to their high qualifications, the teachers had always been finicky in their selections.

Only genius students were given the choice to choose their teachers. 3

Moreover, this was Jane's first time being chosen by a genius student!

The other two teachers scoffed and looked at Jane with disdain and jealousy.

Jane bent down to Ziggy and smiled. "Ziggy, since you chose me, I will teach you to the best of my abilities. You'll be expected here starting tomorrow."

Ziggy nodded politely before extending his hand to Jane.

Jane was a little surprised by his outstretched hand, but she quickly shook his soft, supple hands.

"Miss Jane, please take care of me in the future."

Jane was a little taken aback by his politeness.

"Same to you!"

In Minnow Nursery School, the genius students usually had more pride than the teachers!

In the presence of these prodigies, even prideful teachers could only follow behind them like a servant. ①

As for a courteous genius like Ziggy, it was practically unheard of in Minnow Nursery School.

When Rachel's group had left, the other teachers discussed Ziggy.

One of the teachers tilted her head to the side.

"Doesn't the child remind you of someone else?"

"I think so too, but I can't remember who it is."

"Oh right, don't you have the other genius child under your care?! His IQ score is also 220, the same as the one today!" ②

"That's right, but remember, even though they have the same IQ, these two are fundamentally different! The other kid is Edward Bluemel's child! With an intellect and family background like that, his future is obvious!"

One of the more polished teachers shook her head.

"Come on, that child's attendance at school can be counted with one hand! They've hired a world-famous educator as a tutor, he would probably only

come in during the exam period."

...

Jodie lifted Ziggy high in the air as she smiled.

"Rachel, we have to celebrate. Ziggy is a genius!"

"Ziggy, how would you like to celebrate?"

Rachel looked at Ziggy at her side.

Ziggy looked down as he thought deeply and almost immediately, his eyes flickered.

"Mommy, I want to go to the amusement park!"

Rachel rubbed Ziggy's head with satisfaction.

"Alright then, let's go to the amusement park!"

Jodie suddenly stopped and looked a little hesitant.

"Actually, are you sure you want to go there? Can't we just eat something good instead of torturing ourselves?"

Ziggy gave Jodie a side-eye and laughed while he covered his own mouth. "Aunt Jodie, are you scared?"

Jodie snorted and marched ahead in large strides.

"Me? Scared? Are you kidding me?!"

In the amusement park, Jodie stopped after hearing

the waves of shrieks and screams.

She coughed twice. "Are we really going in?"

Rachel waved the tickets in her hand. "We've already bought the tickets, are you chickening out?"

Jodie pursed her lips. "I will pay you ten times the ticket price, let's go."

Ziggy pulled Rachel's hand as he was prepared to leave Jodie alone. "Aunt Jodie, you can leave first if you're scared. Mommy and I will go and play."

Ziggy's goading worked because then, Jodie snorted again as she slotted herself between Rachel and Ziggy, holding them each with one hand. ①

"Who's scared? I'm protecting the both of you, remember?"

Although Jodie was employing her protector stance, from an outsider's perspective, it looked like Rachel and Ziggy were protecting her.

Ziggy pulled Jodie and Rachel in a beeline to the roller coaster's queue, completely ignoring Jodie's feelings.

Jodie blurted out while she held onto the handrail,

"Can't we play something simpler and suitable for kids like the merry-go-round or something?" ①

Ziggy shrugged. "Do we have kids here? Oh, did you mean yourself, Aunt Jodie?"

Jodie feigned a cough and laughed in embarrassment. "If I'm that young, I don't mind being a kid."

Rachel grabbed Jodie's arm and gave her a reassuring look.

Touched, Jodie grinned in response. "Rachel, you don't seem like much, but I know you'll be on my side in critical times like this."

Rachel shook her head and grinned evilly. "Jodie, don't worry, we'll both be on your side! It's just a roller coaster. It'll be done within a blink of an eye, don't worry."

Upon hearing Rachel's words, Jodie's smile melted away in an instant.

She raised her hand toward Rachel angrily. "You ungrateful girl, I must choke you to death! Even you want to see my downfall..."

Immediately, the steel gate opened as the staff member smiled at Rachel's group. "Please take a seat, the next session is about to start."

The warm smile on the personable staff member looked like the devil's wicked grin in Jodie's eyes.

Instinctively, Jodie turned around and tried to escape the ride.

However, Ziggy and Rachel pulled at her arm at once as if they had expected her to behave like that.

1

Ignoring Jodie's threats of violent consequences, they dragged Jodie onto the roller coaster... 3

Chapter 24 A Family of Three

On the roller coaster, Jodie looked at Ziggy and Rachel in the first row with utter resentment.

'These jerks!'

'You want to take the first row, fine! Why make me take the second row?!

The staff member lowered the overhead restraints one by one, scaring the shivers out of Jodie.

When everything was ready, the staff member signaled 'OK' at another worker in the control room.

When the roller coaster emitted a series of humming sounds, Jodie shuddered uncontrollably.

Closing her eyes, she asked her ride partner, "E-excuse me sir, a-a-are you scared?"

"Madam, who are you calling sir!"

A childish voice spoke up.

Confused, Jodie's head snapped around to face the young girl beside her who was about 6 or 7 years old.

'What happened to children these days? Why do

they like to ride on torturous things like this??'

"Madam, don't worry, it's my first ever ride, I'm so nervous!"

Jodie was slightly relieved at that confession.

"Hearing you say that made me feel better."

The girl rolled her eyes at Jodie.

Rachel and Ziggy turned around and grinned in schadenfreude. "Don't worry, it's gonna be over in just a flash."

Jodie opened her mouth in an attempt to berate Rachel and Ziggy as the humming roller coaster began to move forward very slowly.

The other passengers of the roller coaster were talking amongst each other as if they were at a reunion dinner.

However, a jarring shriek rang from the front of the train.

"Gaaaaaah!"

Within that moment, everyone's gaze focused on Jodie.

The girl beside her covered her ears helplessly.

"Madam, we're only starting, what are you shouting for?!"

Jodie grabbed onto the safety handrail in front of her and replied while having the jitters, "I-I-I-I'm only warming up!" 2

The roller coaster moved to the highest point of the track and slowed to a stop. 1

Jodie opened her eyes in a daze but she was smiling.

"Oh! It's finished already?!"

Rachel, who sat in front, smiled as her eyes closed slightly. "That's right! I told you, it's not scary, and it'll be over very soon!"

Ziggy nodded to Rachel's statement. "That's right, I don't know what Aunt Jodie was so scared about."

The girl beside Jodie looked at Rachel and Ziggy in confusion. 'Why are they lying to the madam? The roller coaster is just starting...'

With a smile on her face, Jodie tutted, "I thought it would be scary! I guess there was nothing to worry about aft—"

Before Jodie could even finish her sentence, the stopped roller coaster started to move as it plunged at high speed. 4

All of a sudden, everyone in the roller coaster screamed.

Waves of yells and squeals filled Jodie's ears, but they could not pull her expression back.

In the first row, Rachel and Ziggy exchanged a wicked grin.

After the roller coaster finally stopped at its loading platform, everyone slowly got out of their carts.

Only Jodie sat at her place, her face as pale as paper. It was as if her soul was lost to the void. 2

The little girl on Jodie's side patted her shoulder. "Madam, take care."

Rachel then unbuckled Jodie from her seat and pulled her to her feet.

Jodie leaned onto Rachel's shoulder weakly, her face expressing her will to live, or lack thereof.

She felt as if the entire world had betrayed her.

The girl beside her said she was scared on her first roller coaster ride, but she was squealing as Rachel and Ziggy did. What the heck was that?!

Also, didn't Rachel and Ziggy say the ride was already done? Why did it start again?!

It was only after leaving the roller coaster area that Jodie felt alive again.

She leaned against the bench feebly.

"Jodie, sit here for a bit, Ziggy and I are going to buy some things."

With a smile, Rachel patted Jodie's back lightly.

Before long, Ziggy beamed and placed a cool cap onto Jodie's head.

"Aunt Jodie, this is my gift to you."

Jodie sat up slowly and puffed an air of dignity with her hand on the cap.

"Don't think I'd forgive you for what you've done at the roller coaster just because you bought me a cap!"

Ziggy shrugged apologetically. "Oh well, if you don't like it, I'll have it back."

Jodie looked the other way and snorted. "No way! A cap that you give away is like spilled milk, you can never get it back!"

Rachel held Jodie up on the bench with a grin.

"Alright, alright, since you're so uncomfortable with the ride, we'll try something not as thrilling."

Jodie looked at Rachel doubtfully. "Really? You're that nice?"

Ziggy tugged at both Jodie's and Rachel's hands with his own. "Stop wasting time, let's go!"

The three of them looked almost painting-like with Ziggy in the middle, holding hands with the tall, slender Jodie and Rachel.

The passersby's attentions were all pulled to the trio as they walked by.

"Look, don't you think that family of three look like models?"

"Really? The guy is wearing a cap, I can't really see his face!" 1

"You can see it from his general appearance though, he must look good under the cap!"

"Wow! They look like a happy family..."

...

Jodie already had a super cool short haircut and with the cap on, it was completely hidden.

Her outfit was a trendy androgynous look, so it was understandable that she was seen as a man.

Jodie glared at the gossiping people behind them.

"Look carefully, you bullhead! I'm a woman!"

The people behind them jumped in surprise before blabbing again.

"F*ck me, she's a lesbo!"

"Ooh, interesting! I think that one with the cap is the top, and the other one with the long hair is the bottom!"

"Oh well, both of them look pretty, what a waste."

"That's right..."

...

Jodie almost lost it. She could not understand how these people think! 'How are they able to head-canon to that degree?' 5

If that was the case, she would rather have them think she was a man! 5

Even calling them 'a family of three' sounded so much better than just 'lesbos'!

Chapter 25 He Hasn't Touched Her in Five Years

Ziggy's footsteps slowed to a stop as he looked at the blindingly bright Ferris Wheel that towered into the clouds with sparkles behind his wise-beyond-his-years eyes.

Rachel grinned audibly beside Ziggy. "Ziggy, do you want to ride the Ferris Wheel?"

Ziggy nodded seriously at Rachel. "I want to go on it with mommy and Aunt Jodie!"

Jodie took Ziggy into her arms. Although her legs were shaking, she had an expression that said, 'If not me, who?'

"If Ziggy-boy wants to go on it, we should!"

Ziggy patted Jodie's head lightly while he teased, "Aren't you scared, Aunt Jodie?"

Standing in line with Ziggy in her arms, Jodie snorted. "Scared? There's no such word in my dictionary!"

Rachel shrugged as she shared a smile with Ziggy.

Waiting in the VIP waiting area on the other side was a woman in a lavish off-shoulder top who had

the same face as Rachel and a child with the same face as Ziggy.

The difference was that the boy in the VIP area had the aura of the ice queen, and he was playing with a Rubik's cube. With astounding speed, the scrambled Rubik's cube was solved within one minute.

Rue's hands pressed against the glass window of the VIP area in shock.

Her palms tightened into a fist as her heavily made-up face betrayed an expression of panic.

'Rachel! Rachel is back! Why is she back?! Didn't she leave the Orange Country for years? How is she back so suddenly?!

She closed her quivering eyes, doubting everything she had seen.

However, when she reopened her eyes and saw Rachel's group in harmonious joy, her heart pounded.

'I'm not wrong! That's Rachel! And That kid!'

Rue looked down at Josh, who was still playing with his Rubik's cube, in shock! 1

'That kid looks practically identical to Josh!'

Even though they were twins, Rachel and Rue still looked slightly different.

However, Josh and Rachel's son did not look any different, if at all!

The VIP area's windows were made from one-way mirrors, so anyone inside could look outside without the worry of people on the outside peering in. 1

That was why Rachel did not notice Rue and Josh in the VIP room.

Rue's fist slammed at the window heavily as her brows tightened into a knit.

Josh, still playing with his Rubik's cube, looked at Rue with a slight scowl as he fumbled.

Then, the entrance for the VIP area opened and the staff who was manning it smiled cordially and pleasingly at Rue. 1

"Mrs. Bluemel, you may ride the Ferris Wheel now."

Rue's cold gaze fixated on the employee's face before she pulled Josh aside without a morsel of tenderness.

"Josh, we're leaving!"

The employee closed the door in confusion.

'Did I say anything wrong and offended Mrs. Bluemel?'

Josh looked at Rue coldly. "Mother, didn't you say you would accompany me to the amusement park? We haven't even played the first one yet, why are we leaving?"

Seeing how identical Josh's expression was to Edward's, Rue's fury burned hot!

Although she had become Mrs. Bluemel by pretending to be Rachel and married Edward, she still had her own ulterior motive.

She planned to conceive a child of her own with Edward during the years that Rachel was away!

5

When that happened, even if her lies were seen through, at least she would have given Edward a child! By then, Edward would not do anything to her and so her position in the Bluemel would not be compromised. 1

She might never regain Edward's favor, but why would that matter?

She would still be sitting on the throne of the coveted Mrs. Bluemel!

Rue's fingernails sank deep into her flesh. She felt no pain even when her nails broke her skin barrier.

What she could not fathom, was that no matter what she tried to do, Edward had never touched her within the five years they had been married! Not one of her seductions worked! 5

Edward had never shown her a good mood, let alone Bluemel Inc.'s cooperation with the Bennet Group!

Hence because of that, even Mr. Bennet was dissatisfied with her. Thankfully, as Mrs. Bluemel, even if Bluemel Inc. never officially offered a contract with the Bennet Group, there had been many companies rushing to be acquainted with the Bennet Group.

However, five years ago, Edward hired someone to investigate Rachel!

She was scared out of her mind back then! Fortunately, Rachel had already been forced out of the Orange Country or her plot would have been exposed!

Yet now, Rachel is back with her son!

The more Rue thought about it, the angrier she got. She brushed away Josh's hand with a disgusted

look.

"Shut up! You're not a baby anymore! Why are you so obsessed with coming to the amusement park? Don't forget, you have the entire Bluemel Inc. on your shoulders! I have my own worries, so I don't have time to waste time with you here!"

Rue was mean. There was not a hint of maternal care in her voice, only loathing and hatred congealed together.

Every time Rue saw Josh's face, she would immediately think about Rachel!

Thinking about Rachel would then give her an urge to choke Josh to death! Not only did she need to care for a child that was not hers, but she also had to watch out as to not step on Edward's toes!

If Edward even so much as glared at her, she would need to please Josh in any way she could!

Although Edward seemed like he did not care about Josh, as he was so cold and strict, Rue knew that Edward actually cared for him!

Only when she was nice to Josh would Edward be nice to her in turn!

Upon hearing Rue, a hint of disappointment flashed past Josh's steely eyes. "If you're so busy, you

Chapter 26 Suspicion

Since Edward was not coming to the amusement park, how would Rue have the patience to accompany Josh in his pursuit?! However, seeing how much Edward cared for Josh, she endured her own thoughts and came to the park with him.

That was until she saw Rachel who was lining up outside!

If that was the case, how could she stay in the amusement park?!

If they met Rachel, this lie would pop like a bubble!

As Josh prepared himself to go on the ride, Rue reached out and clutched his arm.

She yanked Josh to her, not caring if he would be hurt.

"You may not go!"

Josh looked at Rue in puzzlement. His mother was not at all nice to him, and she was not like the other mothers. It could be said that his mother would behave one way in front of his father, and behave another way away from him.

Even so, he had never faulted her. Mother had given him his life, so he could not blame her but, undeniably, he did not like her.

She had been very ladylike in the past, but today, she was rude and disrespectful.

"Mother, why can't I go? I am no longer a toddler. If you're busy, please go home on your own. I can manage myself!"

With her face fierce, Rue gripped onto Josh's wrist tightly.

"No! When I say no, it means no! It's already late, we should go home, or your father would blame me!" 1

While Rue was talking, her gaze was kept on Rachel's group, who was getting ready to enter the Ferris Wheel.

Confused, Josh followed Rue's gaze, but he was several seconds too slow.

When he had looked over, Rachel and Jodie with Ziggy in her arms had already entered the Ferris Wheel so he could not see them.

After Rachel disappeared from her sight, Rue let out a sigh of relief and exited the VIP waiting area with Josh's hand in hers.

Once they had rushed back to the Bluemel mansion, Rue let go of Josh's hand and placed her hand, palm facing up, in front of Josh.

"Put your hand in mine."

Josh simply looked at Rue but felt obliged so he placed his palm against hers. It was as if he was already accustomed to this situation.

Rue's face morphed into a gentle smile as she held Josh's hand tenderly like a kind mother should.

As soon as the Bluemel mansion's door was pushed open, Edward, who was sitting on the sofa with his legs crossed while reading, lifted his head at Josh and Rue.

In actuality, he only looked at Josh.

"Aren't you going to the amusement park? How are you back so early?"

Rue sat beside Edward and immediately spoke as if she was worried Josh might criticize her. "Oh, Josh wanted to come home to finish up his homework and read. He thinks amusement parks are for kids." ①

Rue chuckled. "He's still a child, but he always behaves like an adult."

Edward did not look at Rue at all and instead, chose to focus on Josh.

He looked at Josh silently, waiting for Josh to speak.

Then, Josh looked at Rue lightly before nodding. "That's right. The amusement park is for kids. Rather than wasting time there, I'd prefer reading books at home."

Edward slowly stood up from the sofa and went upstairs.

Rue shot Josh a glance from the sofa before she quickly followed Edward upstairs.

"Edward, wait for me."

Josh lowered his gaze and went into his own room with heavy strides.

He picked up a picture of their family of three on the table, but he could not smile looking at it.

Although everyone was there in the picture like a happy family would be, no one looked happy.

His father and him were cold and expressionless while his mother was only trying to look for the best angle.

Josh placed the picture face-down on the table and

sighed.

There were many times when he doubted Rue as his actual mother. He constantly had a feeling that his mother might be someone else. 3

Though when he saw the paternity test report a while ago, he understood that his father was his actual father, and if that was the case, his mother was likely to be his real mother as well.

Even so, that suspicion had always been in his heart.

The old butler opened Josh's door lightly and walked in.

"Young Master Josh, it's late. Better put down your books and rest."

Josh nodded at the butler. "I know, Pennyworth. You should rest too."

The old butler took a plush toy and placed it in front of Josh with a grin. "Young Master Josh, this is for you."

Josh looked at the plush toy in surprise as a slight joy sparkled in his cold eyes.

"Is-isn't this the souvenir doll of the amusement park?" 1

The old butler placed the plush toy in Josh's arms.
"That's right. I don't have a use for it, so here, you take it."

Josh took the plush toy and looked at the butler.
"Pennyworth, isn't this yours?"

"Oh, ah, my grandson gave it to me, but I can't enjoy it as much as you do."

The old butler scratched his head with a huge grin on his face.

With the plush toy in his hand, Josh jumped off the chair and bowed at the old butler politely. 2

"Pennyworth, thank you."

The old butler rubbed Josh's head with love. "That's alright, as long as you like it, Young Master Josh." 1

After the old butler came out of Josh's room, he leaned against the wall in guilt as his face reddened.

'How would my grandson give me a doll like this? It was Master Edward's idea!' 1

Several minutes ago...

Edward called the old butler into the room as he was reading his book by the bedside. "I placed a

plush toy on the backseat of my car. Please take it and give it to Josh."

The old butler was confused. "A plush toy?"

Edward flipped the page, his face deliberately aloof. "I bought it when I passed by the amusement park."

Seeing Edward, the old butler teased, "Master Edward, you bought it because you couldn't be at the amusement park with Young Master Josh, didn't you?" 1

Edward's hand jolted. "No. Don't be ridiculous, go and give it to him." 3

Chapter 27 | Hope He Can Become Someone Independent

The old butler nodded and turned around to leave the room.

Before he got out, Edward's voice stopped him.

"Don't let him know I bought it for him. Don't even mention me when you talk to him, understand?"

The old butler paused, not understanding as his brows furrowed. "Master Edward, what will that achieve? You have always been strict on Young Master Josh, and have put on an uncaring facade. In the Bluemel household, no one cares for him as much as you do."

Edward frowned as he slowly turned to his butler.

"Because that's how I grew up. I hope for him to become someone independent in the future, and not just be headlined as 'Edward Bluemel's son'. Do you understand?"

The old butler nodded after a short pause. "Yes, Master Edward. I understand."

The flashback concluded as the old butler soothed

his own chest. Even though Young Master Josh was a genius, he was still an easily-fooled child.

Josh carefully placed the plush toy beside his pillow before a faint smile eventually lined his cold face.

If Pennyworth's grandson had gifted him a plush toy at the Bluemel mansion, it would be impossible for him not to know.

When Pennyworth gave him the plush toy, he had detected the mild fragrance on it.

It was the scent of the air freshener in his father's car.

This meant that the plush toy was not from Pennyworth's grandson, but his father.

When Josh thought of this, he felt warmth radiating throughout his body. Even though his father had always been strict on him, he still cared for him.

Josh's tiny hand poked the plush toy's head.

"Father can be so silly sometimes. Is he trying to deceive my 220 IQ score with his 200 IQ score?" 6

In the other room, Edward slowly set down his book with a satisfied smile, not knowing his deception

had already been seen through.

...

At the amusement park, Ziggy bought a plethora of souvenirs and toys with the widest smile he could muster after having satisfied himself with the rides. 1

Jodie inched her way out of the park by supporting herself on the handrails as she swore silently, 'I will never return to a horrific place like this!'

"Aunt Jodie, mommy! Can we come back here again?!"

Upon hearing Ziggy's sincere words, Jodie lost her balance and almost fell to the ground.

'Again?!'

Jodie turned around and grabbed Rachel's hands. She said seriously, "Rachel, I have something going on at home, so I can't go to your place tonight, bye!" 1

Rachel reverse-grabbed Jodie's wrist unhappily.

"What! Why are you racing home? Is Ian back here?"

Jodie nodded slightly, then sighed. "Ever since Rue married Edward, my brother had been depressed every single day, and he would always drink! My

parents were outraged, so they sent him out of the country to calm down. It's been a year and he's coming back tonight!"

Rachel nodded and placed her hand lightly on Jodie's shoulder. "Alright then. If that's the case, go home!" 1

Jodie looked at Rachel and Ziggy worriedly. "You too, text me when you arrive home."

After seeing Jodie off, Ziggy sighed. "Mommy, it's so quiet after Aunt Jodie left."

Rachel then patted Ziggy's head. "Silly boy. Aunt Jodie went to see her lover."

Ziggy furrowed his eyebrows after hearing Rachel. "Lover? Isn't Aunt Jodie going to see her brother?"

Rachel was slightly taken aback by Ziggy's response. "It's... difficult to explain."

After they returned to the apartment in a cab, Rachel put down all the plush toys and figurines before she heated up the water in the bathroom.

"Ziggy, time for your bath!"

Ziggy covered his body entirely with his towel as he

moved slowly to the bathroom door, but he refused to enter.

"Mommy, I'm a grown-up now, I can shower myself."

Sensing Ziggy's hesitation, Rachel chuckled. "You cheeky child, do you really think I'm thirsty enough to do that to a child?" 5

Ziggy shook his head seriously. "No no, the only person thirsty enough to do that to a child is Aunt Jodie. But, mommy, I'm a big boy now, I can do a lot of things myself." 4

Rachel's eyebrows jerked. "You sure you want to shower on your own?"

Ziggy nodded in all seriousness. "Mm-hmm!"

With that, Rachel stood up, left the bathroom and sat on the sofa. "Alright then. I'll be in the living room. If you have any problem bathing, call me."

After Rachel left the bathroom, Ziggy scuttled into the bathroom.

"Alright, mommy, don't peep!" 1

Rachel moved her mouth sideways. She thought, 'Am I so perverted in the eyes of my baby??'

Ziggy placed a stool on the side of the bathtub before he climbed in and stood in it.

The water in the bathtub was deep enough to submerge him completely and because of this, he could only stand and not lie down to bathe himself.

He first set the towel aside, then used his hands to splash the water onto himself...

Less than half an hour later, Ziggy came out, having changed into a pair of cute bunny pajamas.

"Mommy, I'm done."

Rachel crouched beside Ziggy and sniffed him happily. "Oh my, you smell good! Looks like my Ziggy has really grown up, you can even bathe yourself!"

Ziggy nodded vigorously and flexed his biceps. "I'm really strong, mommy. I can protect you really well!"

Rachel took her own pair of bunny pajamas and walked into the bathroom. "Alright, my turn."

Ziggy looked at Rachel from outside the bathroom and asked seriously, "Mommy, do you want me to bathe you?"

Rachel almost fell after hearing that.

She immediately refused. "Are you joking, Ziggy? I'm an adult!"

After Rachel closed the bathroom door, the pure smile on Ziggy's face immediately disappeared.

He looked at the time on the clock and closed his eyes, doing a mental calculation.

'Mommy's shower time is usually around half an hour. Even the fastest she'd been was 25 minutes. There's enough time!

Ziggy climbed onto the barstool and quickly turned on the laptop before entering an unknown website.

After zooming past three transactions, he closed the website and cleared his browser history.

When he saw the name card beside the laptop, his bright eyes started to squint... 4

Chapter 28 An Under-aged Adult and an Over-Aged Baby

Ziggy inspected the card for a while before he opened his tiny mouth. "Nathan Chapman of the Chapman Group?"

Just before he shut down the laptop, Ziggy's tiny hands swiped at the mouse pad and started typing on the laptop. Very soon, information about the Chapman Group and Nathan Chapman appeared on the screen.

Ziggy quickly read through the information on the screen attentively. 'Looks like this is where mommy is going to work in the future.'

The company was not bad considering that there was practically no sketchy past.

Furthermore, the company's main portfolio was fashion design, which is what Rachel was good at.

Ziggy nodded satisfactorily, not noticing that Rachel approaching from behind.

"How come the information I looked up on Google was not half as detailed as yours?"

Rachel's gaze lingered on the article on the laptop

the entire time with her head slightly tilted. 1

Shocked, Ziggy quickly shut down the laptop.

As the screen turned dark, Rachel was baffled.

"Why did you turn it off? I haven't finished reading."

"Mommy, I verified them. They're a good company, you should work there."

Rachel nodded. "The Chapman Group has always been pretty good in the Orange Country."

She laughed and then shook her head. "Why am I discussing with a child like you? What a dunce I am."

Rachel carried Ziggy in her arms and walked straight into the bedroom. "We have to sleep earlier tonight. You have school tomorrow, and I have a job."

The night progressed to midnight by which most people had already slept.

Yet in an opulent room, a figure constantly tossed around, unable to sleep.

Rue sat up on the bed with a lit cigarette between her fingers.

Smoke rings formed out of her mouth, smogging up

her room.

Everything she had seen just hours ago kept spinning in her mind, keeping her up.

As soon as she closed her eyes, Rachel and Ziggy's faces would appear in her mind! 1

In her dream, Rachel would step on her and reunite with Edward, in which the four would then live happily together. Their dazzling smiles would pierce her eyes, waking her up mid-sleep. 4

She picked up the phone heavily and called a number.

The other end of the phone was the voice of a sleepy woman. "Rue? Why are you still up at this hour? Is something worrying you?"

Rue narrowed her eyes as she made a cruel face, but her voice was worried and nervous.

"Mom! Rachel is back! Rachel came back!"

On the other end of the phone call, the woman yelped and the sleepiness in her voice dispersed immediately.

"What?! Rachel is back?! How?! She'd only left for 3 years! Rue, did you mistook someone for her?" 7

Rue's lips tightened. "Mom, it's real! I saw her

myself. I didn't want to believe it, but it was real,
Rachel is back in the Orange Country!" 2

Mrs. Bennet stayed silent for a moment before she
sighed. "After coming back, she won't leave so
easily anymore, would she?"

Rue bit down on her jaw in hatred. "But mom,
Rachel shouldn't have appeared in the Orange
Country! If she's here and Edward finds out, the
Bennets will definitely be finished! He investigated
Rachel five years ago. If it weren't for her not being
in the Orange Country by then, we would've been
exposed already!" 3

Mrs. Bennet's heart plunged after hearing Rue's
explanation. "Rue, how are you with Edward? Have
you slept with him yet?"

Rue looked at the giant space behind her and
smiled bitterly. "Mom, Edward hasn't slept with me
yet. He's been sleeping in a separate room, how am
I supposed to be pregnant with his child?" 3

"Rue, don't be hasty, just take it one step at a time.
You are Edward Bluemel's wife, this is a fact.
Having a child is just a matter of time!" 3

Mrs. Bennet tried to soothe Rue's anxiety.

Rue threw the cigarette on the ground and stepped
on it, rubbing it on the carpet as though it was

Rachel.

"Mom, I know! But now that Rachel is back, it's hard to say if I'm still going to be Mrs. Bluemel or not! I don't mean to rush, but my fate is tied to the Bennet family, isn't it?"

Mrs. Bennet fell into silence again before she nodded. "Rue, don't worry. I will take care of Rachel. Worst-case scenario, we'll drive her away again!"

Upon hearing Mrs. Bennet's promise, Rue was finally at ease.

"Mom, for my sake, for the Bennet family's sake, you cannot be gentle about it..."

"Don't worry, Rue, I understand..."

Rue let out a relieved sigh after she hung up. As long as Rachel could be chased out for a few more years, she would definitely be able to carry Edward's child! 4

In the past five years, Edward had never touched her, but Rue believed that, with time, she would succeed in melting the ice that was Edward! 2

The next day, Rachel leaped into a sitting position with her bedhead as the alarm clock rang. 1

"Ziggy-ziggy! Quick, get up, it's your first day of school!"

She went to wake Ziggy up, but Ziggy's figure was not beside her.

The moment she walked outside the room, a mouthwatering scent lured Rachel to the dining table, on which was toast and a glass of warm milk.

Meanwhile, Ziggy shoved a cup of water and a toothbrush with some toothpaste on it into Rachel's hands. "Mommy, brush your teeth and wash your face."

When she was done freshening up, she was still a little dazed.

'Am I being cared for by my son? Why does Ziggy feel like the adult while I feel like the child in this relationship?'

After spreading the strawberry jam onto the toast, Ziggy placed the toast into Rachel's hands and immediately started dragging a stool behind Rachel. ①

He stepped up onto the stool with a wooden comb in his hand.

"Mommy, if you keep spacing out, we might both be

late."

Rachel snapped out of her thoughts and immediately munched on the piece of toast.

Meanwhile, Ziggy smiled as the comb in his hand glided through Rachel's smooth hair.

After combing through Rachel's hair, Ziggy casually picked up the hair tie and tied her hair into a french pleat.

Ziggy then jumped off the stool and stood facing Rachel before he nodded in satisfaction. "Mm-hmm, nice."

This morning, he had searched for pictures online about hairstyles. Although it was his first time styling hair, it looked much better than some professional hairstylists!

Chapter 29 Mommy Needs Me

After Rachel had finished her breakfast, Ziggy handed her her bag. "Mommy, I've put your drafts, drawing materials, and some simple first-aid kit items into the bag."

Rachel opened her bag and looked at the nicely-packed items in astonishment.

Even she, herself might not have been able to prepare everything so neatly.

She then looked at Ziggy, who already had his school bag on his back. All she could do was stare in amazement as words failed her.

"Stop spacing out, mommy. The bus to the school will be here in five minutes. You should switch to bus 220 after that and it should arrive at the Chapman Group company within five minutes, which means you should arrive at work by 7.50 AM."

Ziggy held Rachel's hand and walked down the stairs at a moderate speed.

Rachel's lips were open the entire time. Did she give birth to a baby or a computer??

"Ziggy, how do you know the bus route to school?"

And the bus route to my company?! I was planning to take a cab..."

Ziggy said matter-of-factly, "I was looking on the bus route to school when we were in Aunt Jodie's car, and when I was Googling the Chapman Group, I saw the Chapman Group's location on the map, and I derived the route from Minnow Nursery School to the Chapman Group from there."

Surprised, Rachel's hand tightened around Ziggy's tiny hands. "You knew just by looking at the map once? And you derived the route from their locations??!" 1

"Um, is this hard?" Ziggy tilted his head in confusion.

Rachel drew a cross on herself and muttered, "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name..." 1

'So this is what it felt like to have a genius around!'

Rachel shook her head and increased her pace. "Ziggy, didn't you say the bus will arrive in five minutes? We need to hurry!"

Ziggy tugged at Rachel's arm calmly. "Mommy, there's no need to hurry." 1

Rachel and Ziggy strolled to the bus stop leisurely. Just as they arrived, the bus arrived too and stopped right in front of them.

Even when they were on the bus, Rachel still could not reconcile with how smart Ziggy was. Bringing Ziggy out was basically like having a cheat code on hand!

As the bus moved along, there were more and more people, including the elderly and children. There were plenty of young people on board, but no one was willing to give up their seats.

When Ziggy saw an old lady standing beside him, supporting herself by holding the handrail, Ziggy stood up and tugged at the lady's hand. "Madam, please sit here."

The old lady was a little startled, but she did not take the seat. "I can't, honey. You're tiny, and it's so packed on the bus. It won't be good if you get walked over." 1

"Madam, I'm not a child anymore, I'm grown up, so you should take this seat!" 3

Ziggy replied with determination.

Seeing the old lady's hesitation in taking the seat, Rachel felt a certain warmth in her heart.

She stood up and said to the old lady with a smile, "Please take the seat, my son can sit on my lap."

Upon hearing Rachel's reassurance, the old lady sat down.

She beamed at Rachel. "Miss, you are raising a good man!"

With a smile, Rachel tried to place Ziggy on her lap, but Ziggy would not budge.

Instead, his tiny hands grabbed onto the seat; he was adamant about standing.

"Mommy, I told you, I'm a grown-up, so don't treat me like a child."

Rachel shook her head while she grinned and poked Ziggy on his head.

"Alright, Ziggy is a grown-up, so mommy will stand with you, okay?"

Without hesitation, Ziggy shook his head. "No! Mommy is a lady, I will take care of mommy! Mommy sit!"

Seeing that even a five-year-old knew to offer his seat to older people on a bus, the young people were embarrassed to keep theirs and promptly stood up.

For a moment, a heartwarming scene unfolded on the bus as the elderly and children sat in the seats while the youths stood.

The only thing that stood out in that picture was Ziggy, whose cute, tiny frame stood amid the adults.

1

Rachel rose from her seat and held Ziggy's hand.

"Mommy wants to be with you."

Ziggy was a little surprised, but his eyes quickly narrowed as he smiled.

"I guess it can't be helped." 1

As Rachel stood up, there was an empty seat on the bus but no one took it.

Even after Rachel and Ziggy had alighted, it was still left empty.

When they arrived at the Minnow Nursery School, Jane was already waiting for them.

"Ziggy, you're on time."

Jane greeted Ziggy with a smile that reached her eyes. 1

Ziggy nodded slightly. "As humans, we must stick

to our promises, and most importantly, be punctual." ①

Jane nodded in satisfaction before she looked at Rachel. "Ziggy's mommy, if where you stay is a significant distance from us, you can let him stay in the nursery so as to not trouble yourself. But of course, you're welcome to visit anytime."

As soon as Jane finished her words, Ziggy yelled.

"No! I don't want to stay in school! I want to stay with mommy." ①

Seeing Ziggy's reaction, Jane chuckled. "Oh Ziggy, I was only giving a suggestion."

Ziggy shook his head seriously. "Not even a suggestion. I have to stay by mommy so I can take care of her!"

When Jane heard that, she gave an awkward smile because, of course, she did not believe Ziggy could take care of Rachel at this stage.

Rachel, on the other hand, started to redden.

'He does take care of me, it seems...' ①

Rachel politely rejected Jane's suggestion. "Teacher Jane, it's alright. I like my child by my side."

Ziggy stood in front of the school entrance and looked at Rachel with a face filled with worry as she left.

He took a step forward and shouted, "Mommy, wait for me in front of your company after work, I'll come to get you!"

Rachel almost lost her balance and fell hearing Ziggy's declaration.

She answered, "Alright, Ziggy. Get to class, I'm going to work now."

Seeing Ziggy's worried face, Jane became perplexed. 'Their relationship seems... flipped around??' 6

Chapter 30 Office Politics

Not long after Rachel left the Minnow Nursery School, bus 220 arrived right by her side.

She boarded the bus with a slight surprise and could not recover from it even after the bus had stopped in front of the Chapman Group headquarters.

Rachel shook herself out of her thought before she walked into the building.

She stood in front of the company directory for quite a while, searching, with her eyebrows knitted tightly together.

'Just where is the president's office?? The Chapman Group's headquarters is so large, I can't even find his office?'

Seeing a female employee pass by with her cup of coffee, Rachel chased after her. "Hi, I was wondering where the president's office is. Can you point me in the direction?"

The employee looked at Rachel's nude-but-pretty face and narrowed her eyes. "The president's office? What business might you have there?"

Rachel showed her the name card she had in her

hand. "Actually, Mr. Chapman asked me to report in his office today by 8 AM."

The employee spaced out as she squinted at the card Rachel was holding out.

All of them could only join the company through several rounds of selection and had to slowly progress through the ranks. While this woman, on the other hand, could go straight to the president's office with his name card! 1

She looked at Rachel and squinted even more. "This woman is not an average person!"

"The president's office, well, you have to go through that corridor over there, turn left, and go up the stairs. You'll reach the president's office in no time."

The employee pointed at the corridor in front of them and said softly.

Rachel's eyes contracted in suspicion, "Why the stairs? Aren't there any lifts in the Chapman Group headquarters?"

The lady smiled and shook her head. "It's not that. The lift malfunctioned today, so all of us have to take the stairs."

Rachel nodded thankfully and walked toward

where the lady had pointed.

"Thank you so much, I'll be on my way now."

Staring at Rachel's silhouette, the employee's hospitable expression quickly warped into one of contempt.

With that, she turned around and looked at the clock with a sinister smile.

"When you realize what had happened, it should be later than 8 AM, isn't it?"

Still smiling, she shook her head before returning to her workstation.

Rachel's eyebrows knitted tighter the longer she walked along the corridor she was pointed toward.

The deeper she went, the darker it looked.

'The president's office is along this corridor?'

'Which president has this kind of fascination??'

Rachel slowed to a stop and tried to turn back.

At this moment, her phone rang.

Rachel retrieved her phone from her bag and was confused when she saw Ziggy's text.

'Why is Ziggy texting me?'

She then clicked open the message to read it and was immediately stunned.

[Mommy, I forgot to tell you where the president's office is! It's on the seventeenth floor!]

After reading Ziggy's text, she glanced at the time on her phone screen.

It's 7.57 AM!

'There's no time!'

Rachel charged into the deepest end of the corridor and sprinted up the stairs with her bag in her hand.

Finally, she had arrived on the seventeenth floor, but she continued to charge her way into the corridor.

Only when she saw the plaque that indicated the president's office did she let out a sigh of relief. She then went in after pressing the bell.

The president, Nathan Chapman, was sitting in his chair as he glanced at his watch.

He lifted his head with his signature gentle expression. "It's 8.02 AM, you're two minutes late."

Rachel bit her lip but bowed in apology. "I'm sorry, I should've been more careful. It wouldn't happen again."

Upon hearing Rachel's words, Nathan's eyes squinted in curiosity and interest.

He had seen everything on the first floor, including the part when the female employee tricked Rachel.

Fortunately, Rachel realized the deception in time and was not completely fooled, but she still lost a good amount of time. ①

However, Rachel did not mention the employee who tricked her even though she was late.

"Oh? There aren't other factors?"

Nathan hinted to her more directly.

Rachel narrowed her eyes. Naturally, she understood that Nathan was hinting her, but she just did not understand what he was referring to.

"If there really is another factor, it must be my being slow." ①

Nathan rested his chin on his palm and looked at Rachel seriously. "If my employee didn't lie to you,

you might have made it."

Rachel was a little stunned. "I am a little slow to adapt to an office environment. If I realized sooner, it wouldn't have turned out like this."

Nathan nodded as his hand lightly glided across his chin. "But you still believed her."

"What?" Rachel tilted her head, confused. 2

Nathan lightly tapped on the table. "The building's lift did not malfunction."

There was no hint of surprise on Rachel's face. It was as though she had anticipated everything.

She already knew about the lift's condition. Since the Chapman Group was one of the biggest enterprises in the Orange Country, it was rare for lifts in such a huge company to malfunction. 2

Even if there was a slight problem with the lift, it would have been fixed in no time. 2

However, she was unfamiliar with the Chapman Group headquarters at that time. If she had turned around and looked for the lift, she would have to ask another person as well as look for the lift.

If she chose that route, she would have been more than two minutes late!

That was why she chose a more tiring option. 1

"Mr. Chapman, if I turned around and looked for a lift back then, what would happen? I believe I would be more than just two minutes late..."

It was Nathan's turn to be gobsmacked.

Rachel's point did not occur to him at all.

He did not expect to have a lapse in judgment against a woman.

He shook his head with a smile. "Rachel, you're the second person who could act outside of my expectation." 3

Rachel smiled following a brief pause. "So the first person who can do that must be someone exceptionally memorable."