

Chapter 651

After a short while of Gerald waiting anxiously outside the ward, both Finnley and Dr. Hudson exited the ward.

When Gerald saw both of them, he found it slightly odd and suspicious that Dr. Hudson now seemed much more respectful toward Finnley. Gerald had also noticed that while they were leaving the room, the doctor had almost tried supporting Finnley's arm, though he quickly changed his mind at the last second.

"How did it go?" asked Gerald.

"She's almost cured! You can go in and pay her a visit now!" said Finnley with a chuckle.

Hearing that, he entered the ward immediately to check on Queta. She was looking much better now compared to earlier, and even the usual rosiness on her cheeks had started to return.

"You don't have to worry, Gerald. Mr. Quick has exceptional medical skills!" said Queta as soon as she saw him, clearly worried that Gerald was still concerned about her condition.

"That's good to know!" replied Gerald, breathing a long sigh of relief.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Quick!" Gerald then said as he gave Finnley a nod.

The old man had truly helped Gerald a lot. Though Gerald had been quite annoyed with him in the beginning, he was now filled with sincere gratitude toward Finnley.

“It’s no big deal! My grandson, if there’s nothing else, can we leave now?” asked Finnley, evidently talking about Gerald sending him back to his hometown in the Salford Province.

Finnley seemed like he really wanted to leave now, which led to Gerald’s expression immediately turning somber.

After all, he still had one more issue to attend to. Though Mila had misunderstood him, she was now so angry that she wasn’t willing to even listen to his explanation. What should he even do now?

“Hold on for a little while longer. We’ll head there as soon as I settle this issue!”

After saying that, Gerald told Queta to take a good rest first before leaving her ward to make a call.

Even though he made several consecutive calls, Mila hung up immediately every single time.

Gerald could only sigh internally.

“Mila, why don’t you pick any of his calls up...? Maybe he’s changed his mind by now!” said Molly. Back at the Smith family’s house, Mila and her friends were seated in front of the television while eating snacks.

Seeing how Mila had hung up on every single one of Gerald’s calls, Molly couldn’t help but try to advise her.

“I refuse!” said Mila as she threw her phone aside while nibbling on a potato chip. She was clearly behaving this way out of spite.

At that moment, the doorbell rang.

Mila immediately sat up when she heard the familiar ring.

Her parents weren’t home, so the person at the door could only be Gerald, right? Though Mila was certainly angry, she wasn’t unwilling to meet Gerald.

Instead of her, however, Molly was the one who opened the door.

“Humph! So you still know that- ...Huh? Why is it you?” said Molly, her tone indicating clear disgust.

“Is Miss Smith here? I need to talk to her about something!” replied a pleasant feminine voice.

The woman at the door was none other than Giya.

“Why did you come here?”

Mila definitely didn't have a good impression of Giya. In fact, she resented her.

If Gerald had nothing to do with Giya, why was she latching on to his arm so intimately? Why had she even wanted to be engaged to Gerald in the first place?

“Miss Smith, I would like to talk to you in private, if that's alright?” said Giya.

If Giya had simply chosen to return home after all that, she knew how uneasy she would eventually feel if she didn't settle the things between her and Mila first.

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This was the reason why she wanted to have a nice chat with Mila first.

“What do you want to talk about? Spit it out already!” said Mila as both of them arrived at a park.

“I'll be frank with you. It'd honestly be better for me if you broke up with Gerald. I won't hide the fact that I do indeed, love him, and I've tried to gain his affection on multiple occasions!” said Giya.

Miya simply looked to the side without saying anything.

“However, it’s exactly because I love him that I can see how loyal he is to you. I’m not making any of this up either. His feelings for you have remained unchanged from the very beginning. No matter how much I’ve tried to earn his affection, he simply ignored every one of my advances. This is just my two cents, but if you do end up breaking up just because of some misunderstanding about our relationship, he’ll definitely experience extreme grief. He really is a kind man who likes helping people out, you know? Even the engagement was just him helping me out. He hasn’t done anything to wrong you!” explained Giya as she looked at Mila.

After that, Giya elaborated more about what Gerald and her had been doing throughout Mila’s absence.

It was honestly beyond Mila’s expectations. To think that so many things had happened to Gerald during that period of time.

However, Mila was honestly slightly jealous and irked by the fact that Gerald had helped Giya so many times.

After thinking about it for a little while longer, however, she realized that Gerald really hadn’t done anything wrong.

“I kind of get what you mean now. Do you mean to say that you’ve experienced much more with Gerald compared to what I have?” asked Mila.

“In no way had I meant to indicate that. However, since you’ve said it like that, why don’t you look at it this way? During your time together with Gerald, what exactly have you done for him? Where were you when Gerald was facing his own difficulties?”

Giya had meant no harm with her words. She honestly just wanted to talk it out with Mila.

‘What... have I done for Gerald? Where was I when Gerald was facing his own difficulties...?’

The two questions made Mila speechless.

Initially, Mila had just felt that their relationship still had a long way to go since Gerald was still pretty straightforward and insensitive romance-wise. However, she had never considered how she herself hadn’t been doing anything for Gerald.

Gerald on the other hand, had constantly been helping and taking good care of her.

Not once had she given anything back to him. What more, she had even misunderstood him and was unwilling to hear his explanation despite having returned unannounced this time.

In fact, he had probably left earlier since he was still busy. She had been a mere distraction to him all this time!

After chatting for a while longer, Mila and Giya parted ways.

Back at home, Mila locked herself in her bedroom the entire afternoon, unwilling to even chat with her friends. She was feeling rather depressed by her new realization.

Her actions made Molly and the others extremely worried.

“What’s wrong with Mila...? What did that woman even say to her? They chatted for an entire hour! Something must have happened!”

“I agree! Mila’s been like that from the moment she got back!” replied Molly as she bit into a potato chip.

“Humph! I say we go ask Mila about this. If that Giya woman had really said something bad to her, let’s just go teach her a lesson!”

After hearing that, the rest of Mila’s friends made their way up to Mila’s bedroom.

“Mila, please open the door already!” said Molly in a worried voice.

Soon after, Mila unlocked the door but when the others saw her, they were all equally puzzled.

Mila had packed all her luggage up!

“Mila? What are you doing? We haven’t even been here for a full day yet!” questioned Wanda.

“I know... But I miss Hong Kong already so let’s go back now!” replied Mila.

“...Huh? Right now?”

Everyone was surprised by her rash decision.

“But Mila... What about Gerald? It wasn’t easy for you to return, and we know how much you wanted to meet up with him... Though there was a great misunderstanding, I honestly feel that Gerald’s innocent this time around!”

“I know, I know... I’m well aware that Gerald would never do any of those things... However, I’m sticking to my decision. I really want to return to Hong Kong now!” said Mila, her eyes now teary.

Mila had earlier tossed and turned in her bed for quite some time, deep in thought about her next move.

She definitely didn’t resent Gerald anymore. Honestly, she just wanted him to coax and pacify her.

Though her wish was simple, Giya’s words continued to echo in her head. What Giya had told her had simply never occurred to her before today.

She was well aware now that she couldn’t do anything for Gerald. With that thought in mind, she knew that as long as she stayed here, she would only continue being a burden to him.

That was the moment when she made up her mind to return to Hong Kong. She would work hard and enrich herself to become even stronger.

Her end goal was to one day be able to strike a balance in their relationship.

Seeing how determined she was, her friends said nothing else and quickly began packing up their luggage again for their return trip to Hong Kong.

While they did so, Molly took her phone out before secretly sending a text message to Gerald.

“Come to the airport, quick! Mila is leaving for Hong Kong soon!”

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Gerald had just retrieved some porridge for Queta when he received a text message from an unfamiliar number.

After reading its contents, Gerald was stunned.

‘Mila’s returning to Hong Kong? Already? I haven’t even had the time to explain myself to her yet!’

Immediately after, he began driving to the airport. On his way there, he bombarded Mila with endless calls. However, not once did she pick up.

Alas, when he finally arrived, he was just in time to see a plane slowly taking off.

Gerald was so anxious at that moment that he was ready to make some arrangements to get a helicopter to catch up with her.

However, before he could do anything rash, he received another text message.

This one came directly from Mila.

“Gerald, I’ll be returning to Hong Kong first. You don’t have to explain anything to me regarding what had happened today. I believe in you. To tell you the truth, I was acting out of spite earlier because of my jealousy. I honestly just wanted you to coax and pacify me. However, now I’m aware that I’ve never even considered your feelings before doing all that! For now, please don’t come looking for me yet. I just need some time. Forever loving you, Mila.”

After reading the message, Gerald was even more anxious now. He continued scratching the back of his head as he wondered, ‘What could this mean? Why would she say such things out of the blue?’

Gerald hit his steering wheel in his slight frustration.

‘It’s been such a long time since we’ve last met, yet she’s already gone before we’ve even had a chance to talk to each other properly...’

When Gerald returned to the hospital, he was visibly still upset.

In the end, Gerald couldn't help but tell Queta about what had happened, hoping that she could give him some advice about the matter.

'What exactly did Mila mean by that message? Does she want to break up with me? Or is it truly something else...?'

After hearing Gerald's story, Queta simply smiled.

"She's not breaking up with you at all! Didn't you see that she specifically added the part saying she loves you forever? I'm sure she wrote that knowing for sure that you'd overthink the message. Don't worry Gerald, it's clear that she simply wants to be left alone for a while!"

Gerald simply sighed internally when he heard Queta's answer.

'In short, she's still mad with me...'

'If only I hadn't agreed to help Giya, none of this would have happened!'

'Regardless, Mila did say that she wanted to be left alone for a while... It would be best if I didn't disturb her for the time being...'

'Alright, once I find Xara in the Salford Province, I'm going over to Hong Kong to meet her.'

The very next day, Gerald, Queta, and Finnley rode together on the high-speed rail headed for the Salford Province.

Gerald's was on a mission to find someone there.

Before boarding the high-speed rail, Zack had told Gerald about a small property located in the Salford Province that Gerald's sister had invested in before.

While she seemed to have long forgotten about it, it was the reason why he now had someone in the Salford Province to help him.

Since he had relevant connections there and sufficient money, it would only take a few more days to look for said person.

"Do have some fruits, Mr. Quick! I've cut some for you!" said Queta who was still slightly weak.

However, it was obvious that she was feeling grateful to Finnley for saving her life. In fact, she had been taking good care of both Gerald and Finnley from the moment they entered the high-speed rail.

"So... Where exactly is your house, Mr. Quick?"

"I've forgotten the exact address, but I'll definitely be able to look it up again once we arrive at the Salford Province!" replied Finnley.

Gerald could only smile helplessly at that.

Just as Gerald looked out the window, seemingly deep in thought, he heard a baffled female voice saying, "...Gerald? Why are you here?"

This surprised him. To think that he would bump into an acquaintance here of all places. Turning around to see who had called him, he found out that it was Maia!

Beside her, was another person whom he had bumped into the other day. If he remembered correctly, his name was Warren.

The two were sitting just opposite of them and they seemed to be part of a group that consisted of a few other unfamiliar people.

What surprised him the most, however, was how they were dressed. In contrast to what they were wearing on the day they last met, they were now all dressed up like students.

By then, a girl from Maia's group was also looking at Gerald, following Maia's gaze.

"I'm headed to the Salford Province! Where are you going?" replied Gerald casually.

"We're going there too! But there's no need for you to know why we're going there!" said Maia calmly.

'What a serious coincidence!'

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‘It seems that I can bump into him just about anywhere!’

‘Regardless, it seems that Gerald is doing quite well. After all, instead of taking the normal train, he chose to take the rail instead!’

After the simple greeting, the two of them chatted for a while longer before Maia eventually stopped talking to him.

While Gerald was simply trying to be nice to her, she didn’t seem to want to bother about him at all.

Gerald was fine with that, and he simply did the same.

After all, though it seemed like Maia was heading to the Salford Province to undergo some secret mission, Gerald wasn’t interested in it in the least.

Meanwhile, Queta had just finished cutting up another fruit. She could see that Gerald and Maia seemed to know each other. What more, she was sitting just opposite them.

Sensing the opportunity, Queta smiled as she asked Maia in a kind and warm tone, “I’ve just cut up a fruit, Miss. Would you like some?”

“Thanks, but I don’t eat fruits!” declined Maia casually.

To her, Gerald was still as lowly as ever. She naturally didn't need to show any of his friends any respect either.

It was similar to a scenario where a circle of friends would completely ignore a single person, simply because everyone else there looked down on them as well.

Since Gerald was the person her group looked down upon, any friend of his would definitely be treated the same way.

On the contrary, if the person was quite powerful within the circle of friends, any friends they introduced would definitely be respected and favored upon by the others.

Queta's initial intention was to make Gerald seem more respectful in front of his friends. Unexpectedly, the beautiful lady seemed to dislike her right off the bat.

After hearing her reply, Queta simply blushed before retracting her hand, feeling slightly bitter.

"Maia, I've brought along some tangerines over. They're from my hometown relatives and they're quite sweet! Here, let me peel one for you!" said Warren as he smiled at her.

While it was common for others to try pleasing them, given their high statuses, they weren't going to just give random people a chance to please them. That would clearly be giving them too much respect.

After hearing Warren's offer, Maia immediately nodded slightly.

"Tangerines from Mayberry are quite famous! We're from the north so we rarely get to taste them. Let us have some too!" teased a few girls who sat just behind Maia.

Their group clearly consisted of people from all over the place.

"Sure thing. Here you go!" replied Warren with a smile as he handed a few tangerines to them.

After peeling one for Maia, Warren handed the tangerine over to her and she plopped it into her mouth before saying, "You're right! It really is sweet!"

As Maia's group began chatting about family affairs next, Gerald could see that Queta was blushing awkwardly as she stared at Maia.

Gerald couldn't blame for feeling that way. After all, he was feeling slightly angry as well by Maia's behavior.

It was clear that Maia didn't respect Queta at all.

He then smiled and patted Queta on the shoulder before peeling an orange for her.

"How will we get to Wendall City, Gerald?" asked Queta as she ate her orange.

“We’ll go there by car. Since we aren’t dealing with anything particularly special, we won’t be needing the help of the owners of the property my sister invested in in Salford City yet. We’ll see how the rest plays out later!” replied Gerald.

After all, aside from him, Zack was the only other person who knew about his father’s orders for him to secretly investigate the incident.

As far as the others knew, Gerald was simply going to the Salford Province for a trip.

This was why he had not informed the owners of the invested property there about his arrival yet. After all, he didn’t really have any requests at the moment.

He had also heard that the property wasn’t too large, much smaller in fact, compared to what he owned in Mayberry.

In the blink of an eye, four hours had passed and evening was slowly creeping in.

Around that time, more than ten luxury cars had been parked right outside Salford High Rail Station.

“Why isn’t he here yet? It’s tiring standing here for so long... Regardless, to think that you’d come in person, Mr. Zaty. Who exactly are we waiting for?” said a woman.

“Shut up and stand properly! If you end up offending that person because of your ignorance and discourtesy, you’ll definitely suffer terribly!” shouted Mr. Zaty—a middle-aged man—at his subordinate.

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County Salford was the city center of the Salford Province. Being the city center, it was always thriving and busy.

Despite being a bustling city, the ten luxury cars parked in front of the ever-busy Salford High Rail Station were still particularly eye-catching.

At that moment, the rail finally arrived at the station.

Standing up, Gerald stretched slightly before getting off the rail together with Queta and Finnley.

When he passed by Maia and her group of friends, however, he simply walked past them without greeting them at all.

“Humph! Just look at that behavior! Who wants to bother about him anyway?”

‘How dare he not take the initiative to greet me?’ Maia thought to herself. She had never expected Gerald to end up becoming such a stubborn man.

It was evident that Maia had a superiority complex.

‘If you had only greeted me, I would’ve refrained from bothering you. However, for a person like you to ignore me, your actions are similar to destroying a beautiful object! How humiliating and upsetting!’

However, she would let it slide this time. After that, she too got off the rail together with her group.

“Didn’t you say that someone was going to pick us up once we arrived at the station, Warren?” asked Maia as a few of her friends started looking around.

Just as she asked that, the sound of a car honking could be heard. Seconds later, a large Land Rover drove over and stopped in front of the group.

The driver reeled his car window down and the group soon saw the young and handsome man driving it.

“Over here, Warren!” said the man.

“Jamier!” replied Warren while slightly waving his hand.

“Wow! It’s a Land Rover! What does your friend do for a living, Warren?” asked a few girls who were standing beside him.

“Ah, well, he used to be my classmate in the police academy. After he graduated, however, he didn’t become a police officer. That’s because his father had called him home so that he could inherit their family’s company!” answered Warren with a chuckle.

The girls couldn’t help but look at Warren with admiration after hearing that.

Why were exceptional people like that? All the people they were acquainted with were somehow equally as exceptional!

“Speaking of which, Maia, didn’t you say that you had several close high school classmates in County Salford? You said that they would come fetch us, right? If we leave in this car now, won’t they be unable to meet up with us then?” enquired one of the girls.

“Speaking of classmates, how’s that one high school classmate of yours doing now? The one whom you said established their own business? What’s his deal?” asked Warren as he walked toward Jamier’s car.

“Oh, that friend? We were both from our high school’s competition team back then, and he’s one of my many classmates who passed the test and eventually wound up in County Salford. Since our mission will be starting in a few days, I thought it would be nice to meet him to have some fun first. I have to say though, Warren, my friend’s nowhere near as outstanding as Jamier!” said Maia rather sourly.

At that moment, they were all standing beside Jamier’s Land Rover. While they were further introducing themselves to get to know each other better, another honk was heard.

This time, a BMW5 series parked right behind Jamier’s car.

When the car’s front window was lowered, a man and woman could be seen sitting side by side.

Both of them then waved as they said, “It’s been a while, Maia!”

“Vincy! Lennard!” replied Maia happily.

Seeing that even Maia’s classmates had arrived in a luxury car to fetch her, the two girls standing beside her became quite jealous.

After all, neither of them had that many classmates or friends to boast about. Even if they once had any, they had long ceased contact with them.

The greeting and introduction session then resumed, this time with two extra faces.

Since they were all successful people, they shared a lot of similar thoughts and perceptions.

“We haven’t met each other in so many years, Maia! I’ve missed you terribly! This is the perfect time for us to get together again!” said Vincy as she held on to both of Maia’s hands enthusiastically. Vincy herself looked quite charming.

All of a sudden, Vincy lifted her head as she stared behind Maia, looking quite stunned.

“...Huh? Isn’t that... Could that really be Gerald?” said Vincy as she observed Gerald and his odd group walking out of the station together while carrying their luggage bags.

“Humph! It’s him alright!” replied Maia.

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“Gerald!” shouted Vincy.

Gerald was surprised to hear his name being called out. Turning around, he saw both Vincy and Lennard.

Gerald had never really talked to both of them outside competitions, so he wasn’t too close to either of them. Between the two however, Gerald was definitely more acquainted with Vicky. After all, Lennard came from a rich family so that gave him even less reason to talk to Gerald back then. Lennard was much closer to Maia and the others.

Gerald then walked over to them with a surprised look on his face before saying, “Vincy! Lennard!”

While he wasn’t well acquainted with them, they still used to be classmates. It was the only reason why he was speaking to them in such a friendly manner.

Lennard only scanned him briefly from head to toe before unwillingly nodding in response to Gerald’s greeting.

Vicky on the other hand, jumped in front of Gerald before patting him on the shoulder.

“Hey, Gerald! It’s been a while! You barely even keep in contact with us anymore!”

Back in the day, Gerald and Vincy used to be partners whenever they participated in competitions. Since both of them usually managed to get decent rankings together, Gerald was starting to feel slightly nostalgic now, now that they were meeting again after so long.

“I know right? It’s been such a long time!” replied Gerald.

“Speaking of which, is the duo over there your girlfriend and a family member of hers? She looks really pretty by the way! You know, Lennard could fetch you guys to wherever you want to go!” said Vincy.

“Actually, I have to meet someone later!” added Lennard as soon as he heard Vincy’s suggestion.

Vincy just smiled awkwardly after hearing his reply and quickly changed the topic.

“Oh, by the way, both of you may not know it yet, but Lennard and I are getting married! I’ve also been pregnant for about three months now!”

“Oh wow! Congratulations!” said Maia, visibly shocked by the revelation. She then turned to look at Gerald as though she was comparing him to Lennard.

“...Hey, I just realized this, but look at all those cars over there!” said Jamier out of the blue while pointing at a corner.

“Huh? Oh wow! They’re all luxury cars!” said a girl in a shocked voice after turning to look for herself.

Everyone else was equally as surprised.

“Say, doesn’t that first car belong to Barry Zaty? The well-known businessman in our town?” questioned Lennard who seemed to recognize the car model.

“I believe so! It’s so weird seeing a man like him waiting to pick someone up. I remember going to a business function together with my dad when I was younger. Back then, I had accidentally knocked into him and he patted my head, you know?” said Jamier rather proudly.

“I think I’ll try to go over there and greet him! One of the managers waiting with him now knows my dad!” said Jamier as he walked over.

His action both shocked and impressed everyone there.

After walking up to said manager and talking for a little while, Jamier eventually returned.

“How did it go?” asked Warren.

“I simply greeted him with a simple hello. He told me that they’re here to pick a big boss up so he didn’t have time to talk to me. Mr. Zartyr glanced at me as well, but I didn’t dare to speak with him!”

While everyone was talking excitedly, Gerald couldn't help but feel awkward standing there. Thus, he told Vincy that he was leaving before exiting the scene.

Vincy didn't try to stop him since she knew how awkward it was for him simply being there.

"How odd, why isn't Mr. Crawford here yet?" said Barry as he checked the time nervously, beads of sweat flowing down his forehead.

Zack hadn't arranged for Barry to pick Gerald up since he had specifically told him not to organize anything grand for him. Because of that, Zack had only told Barry that Gerald was coming over today, and that he just had to wait for his call.

While Zack had meant every word that he said, Barry simply didn't dare to forgo a formal welcome, which explained why he was still waiting there for Gerald to arrive. However, Gerald had yet to arrive even though they had been waiting for so long.

Meanwhile, Gerald and his own group had just found a hotel to stay the night in. After settling down for a while, Gerald's phone began to ring.

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It was a call from Zack.

"Yes?"

“I just wanted to check if you’ve arrived, Mr. Crawford. I’ll be sending you a number belonging to the general manager of County Salford. His name is Mr. Zartyr and just like the Crawfords, County Salford has businesses from all around the world as well. Once you’ve arrived, you can look for Barry Zartyr if you need anything,” said Zack.

He was simply checking in on Gerald to make sure that he wasn’t in any kind of trouble.

“Got it!”

“Speaking of which, Mr. Crawford, I’ve previously assigned Barry to look for the Jade pendant in County Salford. He apparently has some news about it already!”

“Alright! I’ll be giving him a call soon!”

As soon as he hung up, Gerald lay on his bed before calling Barry next.

Barry seemed quite agitated upon receiving the call. However, he managed to calm himself almost immediately before getting straight to business.

“Yes, Mr. Crawford, I’ve searched high and low for news regarding the pendant and I finally managed to find something. While I haven’t been able to pinpoint the exact family the pendant originates from, I managed to find an old man who was willing to have a look at the pendant after I described it to him. According to him, he’ll be able to tell which family the pendant comes from just by having a look at it!”

“Alright, but it’s rather late now. I’d appreciate it if we could meet up tomorrow morning. You can take me to the old man then!”

After having a brief conversation, Gerald then hung up.

He then tried calling Mila. He was simply used to calling her every night, just to have a short talk. However, she hadn’t been picking up on any of his calls for a while now.

Meanwhile, Mila was thinking about Gerald back in her hostel as well.

There were many female students from all over the world staying in the TV station’s apartment building. While some of them were there to study, the others were there for their internships.

“Say, Mila? Could you accompany me to get some stuff?” asked Molly as she patted Mila on the shoulder.

“Sure thing!” answered Mila.

Both of them then headed downstairs before leaving for the hypermarket. When they got there, the hypermarket was crowded with people.

“Hey, hey, isn’t that Mila? Didn’t know you had the time to come out and buy stuff with that packed schedule of yours!” said a rather tall and extremely pretty girl as she looked at Mila coldly.

“It’s none of your business, Hallie! Quit being so nosy!” snapped Molly as she spoke on Mila’s behalf.

Hallie was from Modow and her results were slightly lower than Mila’s. Since both the entertainment and specialist departments had joined this time around to compete, both she and Mila were competitors. After all, they would only send their best intern to join the entertainment department.

The person who got into the entertainment department would stand a chance to become famous. Currently, the most popular candidates for that spot were Hallie and Mila. However, Hallie seemed to have connections with the entertainment department, and she was taking every chance she could to sabotage Mila’s performance on stage. It was a competition based around popularity, so it was natural for both of them to not be on good terms.

Just as Molly looked as though she was ready to start a fight, Mila immediately stopped her.

“Forget it, Molly. Let’s just go back!” said Mila as she started walking away.

“You won’t get into the entertainment department! Give up already!” sneered Hallie with her arms crossed.

When Mila got back to the hostel, someone was already waiting for her.

“Mila! You’re back! I came by earlier but you weren’t here. I just finished my script. Could you have a look at it, please?” asked the girl as she smiled.

“Of course!”

She then followed the girl to her room. After going through the script for a little while, she then made her way back into her room.

Mila had initially thought that she was just going to have another regular day. However...

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All of a sudden, a girl could be heard crying near Mila’s room. By the time Mila got out to see what the commotion was about, a few others had already left their rooms to see what was wrong. Mila and the others simply followed behind them.

“What’s wrong? What happened?” asked one of the girls present.

“I... I went out with my housemate earlier and when I got back, I realized that the diamond ring that my boyfriend got for me was missing! It’s a very expensive ring and I can’t find it anywhere!” said the girl with a wail.

Hallie had heard the racket from next door and she too was now present.

“Don’t cry, Xyleena. You could have just misplaced it. You know how careless you can be. Maybe you accidentally left it somewhere?” suggested Hallie.

“But Hallie, I would never misplace something so important! I’m always particularly careful with that six thousand dollar ring!” cried out Xyleena.

“How odd! Well, how about this. Where have you been today and who else was in the hostel? Could it be that your door wasn’t properly shut so someone who knew about the ring came in and stole it?”

“In the first place, who told you to show your ring off to everyone in broad daylight?” added Hallie.

“Well... All five of us went shopping together... Only Narissa was in the hostel... She said she needed to write her script...” said one of the housemates.

“No... It wasn’t me! I didn’t take the ring!” said Narissa, terrified.

“But you were the only one in the hostel at that time. Who else could it have been?” interrogated Hallie.

“Why don’t you let us check your bed so that you can prove your innocence?” suggested Hallie next.

Mila was well aware that Hallie was simply directing her anger at Narissa since Narissa was close friends with her.

Understanding that, Mila then immediately defended Narissa by saying, “I can prove that Narissa didn’t touch Xyleena’s stuff! After all, she isn’t that kind of person!”

“Prove? And how exactly are you going to do that?” said Hallie as she pointed at Mila.

“Hold on, I remember now! When I went out to get a drink earlier, I think I saw Mila and Narissa entering the hostel room together!” said a girl who was living in the room next to Mila’s.

“Huh?” Everyone was now staring at Mila.

“No wonder you’re helping her so much. Did both of you team up to commit this crime?” sneered Hallie.

“Quit spouting nonsense!” said Molly anxiously.

“If it wasn’t either of you, then let us check your beds! If you didn’t commit the crime, why are both of you getting so worked up?” replied Hallie.

“Mila... You...” said the girl who had lost her ring while staring at Mila. After all, both of them were quite close friends as well.

“Fine! Do as you wish!” said Mila.

Upon getting their approval, Hallie then proceeded to go through Narissa’s belongings. However, she wasn’t able to find anything.

Hallie and her sisters then entered Mila’s room.

After going through her things for a while, Hallie lifted Mila's pillow before shouting in shock, "Xyleena, look! Isn't that your ring over there?"

Everyone present then watched as Xyleena walked over and picked the ring up.

"Y-yes! This ring belongs to me!"

Xyleena couldn't believe it. She simply stared blankly at Mila before saying, "...Mila? Why would you do such a thing?"

Chapter 659

Mila herself however, was equally as shocked as they were.

"H-how is this even possible? I didn't take it!"

"The evidence is here and everyone can clearly see it! How are you still trying to defend yourself? What a show!" said Hallie.

"Mila, I've always admired you but you've really disappointed me this time... If you really liked my ring, you could've just told me!" added Xyleena in disbelief.

"I... I really didn't take it! I didn't!" denied Mila as she continuously shook her head.

"She's telling the truth! Let me tell you, Hallie, Mila's boyfriend is the richest man in Mayberry! She could get anything she wanted! Why would she even need to steal someone else's ring?" said Molly.

“Hahaha! Oh no... The richest man in Mayberry... I’m so scared!” replied Hallie as she laughed hysterically.

“Who cares about any of that! What’s stolen is stolen. I’ll definitely be bringing this up to the director tomorrow! Let’s go! I can’t believe that you’re actually the director’s favorite! There’ll be a grand event at Hong Kong TV Station tomorrow and we’ll listen to your explanation then!” added Hallie as she turned around and left while dragging Xyleena along.

As for Narissa, she only looked at Mila with a confused expression on her face. Eventually, she bit her lower lip before leaving as well.

“Mila? How is any of this possible? We believe that you’d never do such a thing, but who could’ve put that ring under your pillow? We were here the entire time!”

Since Mila’s group was aware of who her boyfriend was, they knew for a fact that Mila would never steal anything. Even if they didn’t know about Gerald’s true identity, her friends would have still known her well enough to believe that Mila was innocent.

“I... I think I know who put it there... But I don’t think she did it purposely!” said Mila, her eyes tearing up.

It was impossible for her not to know what was going on.

However, Mila simply didn’t understand why Narissa would help Hallie sabotage her. After all, every time Hallie bullied her, Mila would be the first to stand up for her.

When Molly and her other friends finally realized who had committed the act, all of them—especially Molly and Wanda—were furious.

“D*mn it! I’m going to go look for her now! What an utter piece of trash!”

“Forget it, there’s no use looking for her. If they’re willing to trust Narissa to sabotage me, then Narissa will definitely never spill the truth out! This entire trap had been set up specifically for me! Even if she were to fail this time, Hallie will definitely try to set me up again the next time I participate in a competition together with her. She’ll never let me off that easily!” said Mila as she sat on her bed, depressed.

“Why don’t you give Gerald a call? Hallie’s a local and she has great connections. You won’t be able to win a fight against her without his help! I mean, just look at her! To think that she was actually able to get Narissa to listen to her! She clearly wants you out of the competition! I’m certain she would leap for joy if she managed to send you back to Mayberry in the process!” replied Molly, her tone worried.

“I know, Molly. However, all of you don’t have to worry about this anymore. She’s just targeting me. I don’t want to end up pulling the rest of you into this. I heard that someone great is coming to the station tomorrow, so all of you should get some rest and prepare while you can!” said Mila as she lay on her bed as soon as her sentence ended.

Though Mila seemed tough, she was still a girl at heart. Not only did she lack the proper connections to fend for herself, she even lacked a person who could take care of her there.

She missed Gerald terribly now. If only he was here, he would definitely be with her regardless of the situation. She only needed to tell him what had happened for him to instantly rush over to her.

At the moment, she really wanted to call Gerald and cry together with him. It wasn't an easy feat for a girl to live outside on her own.

However, before she could do so, she remembered what Giya had told her. If she only relied on Gerald every time something happened, then what good would she be to him other than being a pretty face?

She felt that she needed to be a woman standing together with Gerald instead of just being a pretty flower for him to protect. Thus, she refrained from calling him.

This led to Mila having a sleepless night till it was almost dawn.

A grand event was going to be held at the station so they needed to prepare the function hall.

Those involved were the Hong Kong TV Station, the TV stations around the Southern Ocean, and some other television stations that collaborated under the Westons. All of them were under the same management group, and they were each equally powerful in the media industry.

Chapter 660

Rumor also had it that the television company was owned by a fairly young woman who had an astounding background. In fact, she was so influential that even the powerful television company meant nothing to her.

While the rumor had spread like wildfire, nobody actually knew if it was the truth. After all, nobody had even seen her before.

This was why the TV station was quite concerned about the event. Even all the furniture in the function hall had to be perfectly arranged. This was proof of how concerned the station was.

What more, several celebrities would also be participating. It was definitely going to be a lively event.

While everyone was preoccupied with making sure that the hall was perfectly decorated, Mr. Hill clapped his hands loudly before telling the interns and the crew members to stop for a moment.

“Gather round, everyone! I have some news for all of you!”

Hearing that, everyone did as instructed.

“Today’s VIP is a very special person indeed! All of the crew members have to be extra careful today!”

“Regarding who gets to be the prize presenter, I’ll personally pick one of the interns to do it. However, the person who gets picked will have to be even more careful since you’ll be interacting with our VIP!” said Mr. Hill who seemed equally as nervous.

“We fully support you, Hallie!” shouted a group of people from within the crowd.

All of them seemed to be popular rich heirs. They were clearly here to support Hallie since they had permission to enter the hall.

Quite a number of other guests had arrived as well, including a few big bosses from Yanken and Modow.

The corner of Mr. Hill’s lips twitched when he heard that. However, he only smiled awkwardly before saying, “I’ve discussed this with the TV station and all of us have decided to give this opportunity to Mila!”

“All the best, Mila!” said Mr. Hill. He obviously had high hopes for her.

Mila simply nodded in response.

“I disagree!” shouted Hallie, sounding incredibly upset. Only the best intern would get chosen to be the prize presenter and that was clearly her! It was obvious that she was feeling nervous since she hadn’t been selected.

“You have other responsibilities to attend to, Hallie. Why are you disagreeing?”

Mr. Hill was well aware of Hallie’s background, which was why he was careful with his tone and words.

“I’m not saying that I want the post, but anyone else other than this thief can have the role! Choosing her would be an insult to the VIP!” replied Hallie.

“Thief? What do you mean by that?” asked Mr. Hill, his tone much stricter than before.

“Well, I was going to report the incident to you last night but I wasn’t able to. See, Mila stole Xyleena’s diamond ring which was a gift from her boyfriend! All of us present at the time saw that the ring was under her pillow!” explained Hallie as the other girls nodded.

Nobody would’ve believed her if they hadn’t seen the ring there with their own eyes.

“Because of that, Mila shouldn’t be qualified to be on stage!”

“That’s right! How could someone like her be allowed to go on stage?”

“Might as well just throw her out! She’s just a disgraceful thief after all!”

“Yeah! She’s just dishonoring us interns!”

The ones who were shouting those comments were all interns who were evidently jealous of Mila.

“But I really didn’t steal it... I didn’t...” said Mila as she faced all their accusations and disdain.

Chapter 661

“What’s going on here, Mila?”

Though Mr. Hill admired Mila a lot, he still had to be impartial, especially when so many people were involved with the uproar.

“Explain it to the director yourself, Xyleena!” said Hallie as she dragged Xyleena into the spotlight.

Xyleena, for one, had been unwilling to speak in the first place. She could only stammer, reluctant to tell the truth. After all, she and Mila were on good terms. Mila was also usually a very nice person.

However, after finding out that the culprit was Mina, there was nothing more that Xyleena could say. For the sake of Mila’s dignity, she honestly just wanted to remain silent and let it all slide.

“Explain yourself, Xyleena!” demanded Mr. Hill as he frowned.

Seeing that she had no other choice, Xyleena detailed everything that had happened the day before. She couldn’t lie about it either since there had been so many witnesses around when it happened.

After hearing her explanation, Mr. Hill found it difficult to believe what she had said. Quite honestly, he didn’t buy her story at all.

However, if he tried to gloss things over or refuse to make a fair decision after hearing all that, he knew he would have to eventually deal with Hallie who could most definitely report the case to the police.

What more, Hallie had brought along many of her college classmates to support her. They would definitely not let the case rest easily if he persisted with picking Mila.

“Mila, I can’t do much regarding this matter. If that’s what really happened, then I’m afraid I can’t give the spot to you!” said Mr. Hill.

“You definitely shouldn’t!” said Hallie as she crossed her arms.

Narissa simply stood in a corner as she looked at Mila. She seemed like she wanted to say something. However, before she could even make a move, she spotted a warning gaze from Hallie.

Seeing that, Narissa could only helplessly clench her fists and lower her head. She felt shameless.

There was nothing Mila could say to defend herself. As a result, she had no choice but to watch her opportunity get taken away by someone else.

She was simply in a helpless position since nobody dared to go against Hallie.

“Mila!” said Molly as she and the others approached her.

“Don’t worry, Molly. I’m fine. I just need to use the restroom!” replied Mila as she turned around to leave.

After washing her hands, Mila was just about to leave the ladies when Hallie and a few of her good friends blocked Mila’s path.

“What else do you want? Aren’t you done yet?” said Mila as she glared at Hallie icily.

“Oh, but of course I’m not! I know what these people will think of me. Actually, maybe they already think that I deliberately planted the evidence there to frame you, but it doesn’t really matter anymore. While the opportunity is now mine and you’ve clearly lost, I’m definitely not done with you yet!” replied Hallie as she glared back, her eyes reddened.

Ever since she was a child, Hallie had always wanted to be first in everything. Regardless of where she went or whatever organization she was participating in, she wanted to be the leader. The ‘Big Sister’ of everything.

There was nobody who dared not to call her that.

Since she had come to the TV station to study and learn, she had also taken advantage of the people and platform there, resulting in almost everyone referring to her as the ‘Big Sister’.

Despite that, she was still lacking behind Mila in almost every aspect.

What more, she thought that Mila was simply faking her friendliness, and that she had fooled everyone into liking her.

From the poor Narissa, to the extremely wealthy Xyleena whose boyfriend was equally as rich, all of them treated Mila well.

In the past, Xyleena had been one of Hallie's best friends. Now however, she was extremely close to Mila as well.

'Do you really think I haven't figured it out yet?' Hallie thought to herself.

If someone else or even Hallie had stolen Xyleena's valuables, Hallie knew that Xyleena wouldn't have easily forgiven any of them, not even her. Rather, Xyleena would probably not let the thief get away without a fight!

However, not only did Xyleena not pursue the matter when Mila had been framed as the thief, but she had even convinced the others not to spread the news around as it could have an unfavorable effect on Mila!

Why...?

Just why did everyone like Mila Smith so much?!

Chapter 662

"I don't care if you hold any grudges against me. It's not like I can even fight you!" sneered Mila.

“Oh, it’s not about that. I just don’t understand why everyone likes you but hates me. Even though everyone knows that you’re the one who stole the ring, I’m sure that they’re all still going to think about your wellbeing first! In fact, I’m certain they’ll start saying that I’m the one who framed you!”

“I don’t want to hear it. However, I believe that the truth will prevail in the end!” said Mila as she tried to leave.

“Stop right there! I’m the ‘Big Sister’ here! You can’t just ignore me like that!” shouted Hallie as she grabbed Mila’s arm and forcefully pulled her back.

A second later, Mila could feel a burning sensation on her cheek. Hallie had just slapped her!

“I’m going to go ahead and say it now. I’ve been meaning to teach you a lesson for the longest time! I’ve held myself back every time others praised you, but there’s no need for me to put up with your bullsh*t anymore!” said Hallie as she raised her hand, preparing to land another slap.

“Stop right there! What on earth are you doing, Hallie?” shouted Xyleena.

At that moment, several girls rushed toward the scene. Among them was Xyleena and several of Mila’s dorm mates.

Xyleena had early sensed that something was amiss when she saw Hallie walking together with her gang of friends.

“Who do you think you are to hit Mila?”

“So what if I hit her? What’re you going to do about it? I’m the ‘Big Sister here! I’ll teach her a god d*mn lesson whenever I feel like it!” retorted Hallie.

She then pointed at Mila before saying, “If you want to remain here next time, just be honest!”

After saying that, she led her gang away.

“Are you alright, Mila?” asked Xyleena in a worried tone.

“I’m fine!”

“D*mn it, that Hallie’s being such a b*tch! That field spot was supposed to be yours, but after her meddling, you now only get to greet the attendees at the entrance! I can’t stand that b*tch and her hateful a*s anymore! Let’s beat her up!” said Molly furiously.

“Don’t even think about it. If you even touch her in the slightest, it’s definitely going to be much more difficult for you girls to gain a foothold here, especially if you’re doing it for my sake. Leave it be, there’s nothing else we can do since she’s the boss around here!” said Mila, her tone grateful.

Mila personally didn’t mind being an entrance hostess. After all, she would rather do that than drag Molly and the other girls into the matter.

At that moment, Narissa walked over to Mila's side before saying, "Mila, we have to greet the guests now... Many wealthy businessmen and celebrities are already coming over. Let's head over first..."

However, when their eyes met, Narissa accidentally let out a squeak.

"Humph! I don't see you getting a promotion for being a bootlicker!" sneered Molly as she stared at Narissa.

Everyone else there gave her an equal look of contempt before leaving to get the rest of their things done.

Mila simply looked at Narissa before saying, "Sure, let's go!"

Once they arrived at the entrance, they saw that the big square was crowded. Many VVIPs were also already present at the venue.

Unlike Hallie, she was now able to walk amongst the group of big celebrities.

"M-Mila... I'm... I'm so sorry!" said Narissa out of the blue. She was looking at Mila as she said that and her cheeks were burning red.

She simply couldn't hold it in any longer and she soon burst into tears.

For Narissa, it had always been difficult for her to study outside. It was Mila who had constantly treated her well. Even when she faced hardships financial wise, Mila had always been the one who had used her own money to help her.

It was near unbearable for Narissa to see how much trouble she had caused Mila.

“Mila... You have to understand... I was forced to... Otherwise, I would’ve gotten into trouble...” said Narissa in between sobs.

Chapter 663

Narissa then explained the entire plan that Hallie had set up to frame Mila.

Basically, since the opportunity to work with the TV station was extremely important to Narissa, Hallie had threatened her by saying that she wouldn’t let Narissa intern there if she didn’t go along with the plan!

Because of that, Narissa had no choice but to cooperate with her.

While Mila had indeed been somewhat angry with Narissa, after hearing her side of the story, she just couldn’t hold any grudges against her anymore.

After all, she couldn’t just put the blame on Narissa.

If Mila lost this position, sure, it would affect her job later on. However, she could still return to Mayberry where she still had her family and Gerald.

However, if Narissa lost the position, she would have nothing left.

‘If I were in her shoes, I would probably do the same thing, right?’ Mila thought to herself.

In the end, the true culprit of this entire fiasco was Hallie Yates. If she needed to hate someone, it should definitely be Hallie.

“I’m thinking of standing my ground against Hallie, Mila. I don’t want her to continue treating you like this!” huffed Narissa.

“Please don’t. It’s fine, I don’t blame you at all. I know that you’re having a hard time, but this matter is between Hallie and me. I won’t blame anyone else but her!” said Mila.

“Humph! How dare both of you talk nonsense! Stand still already!” said Hallie as she walked over to them, a smug smile on her face.

“Molly! Wanda! Stand here as well! We need more people handling the guests so I requested for two more hostesses!”

Hallie then glanced at Molly and Wanda as she stood by the entrance. By then, the VIPs had already begun showing up and they were all ready to greet them.

“William Rye, President of Yanken, has arrived!”

Following that announcement, a young man walked over like a superstar, surrounded by lots of people.

As he walked on, a flag representing the VIP was raised.

Every VIP who attended was prepared to show something off to present their identity and business.

After all, this was a prime opportunity for them to advertise and make themselves known since people from all over the world—all the attendees being wealthy businessmen—were flooding the grand scene.

“The President of Modow has arrived!”

One after another, the number of VIPs steadily increased.

Hallie herself had the honor of standing at the very end to welcome and shake hands with each of the VIPs.

By then, the red carpet had already been stepped on by what seemed like hundreds of wealthy businessmen and celebrities.

For some odd reason, the longer she stood there, the more excited Mila felt. However these were just bigshots from Sunnydale.

‘Why the hell am I even feeling excited?’

All of a sudden, she wondered if he too would be one of the VIPs...

Outside the venue, paparazzi and reporters were swarming the red carpet area. After all, aside from their charming faces, the VIPs were also flaunting their expensive luxury cars to show how powerful and wealthy they each were.

“Mila! Mila!” said Molly as she ran to her side.

Since Molly was now here, it wasn’t hard for Mila to imagine Hallie kicking her other friends out as well as part of her revenge.

“Do you think Gerald will come? If he does, we can make a fool out of Hallie! Even if all her contacts banded up together, they’d still be no match for him!” said Molly excitedly.

“I... I don’t know!” replied Mila as she shook her head.

“Oh for the love of god! I can’t believe you’re this stubborn! If I had a rich boyfriend like yours, I would’ve followed him around the world! It’s all because of how stubborn you are to prove yourself as a strong and independent woman! What’s so bad about being called a trophy wife? For me, as long as my husband is rich, that’s all that matters!”

While Molly had previously supported Mila in her quest to become an independent woman, getting into trouble with Hallie had changed her mind.

Deep in her heart, Molly thought that if Gerald was her boyfriend, she would've used him to embarrass Hallie for bullying her. That way, Hallie wouldn't ever dare to mess with her again.

While Wanda hadn't said a thing, she was also standing together with them, looking forward to Gerald's arrival.

Chapter 664

After all, even she would be able to show off slightly if he truly came.

"What are you guys talking about?" said Hallie with a snicker as she approached Mila and Molly who had been whispering to each other for a while now.

"Nothing much. Also, Hallie, while it's true that you've been freely toying around with us, don't ever try to cross the line. Consider this to be a fair warning if you wish to live to see another day! I've already told you that Mila's boyfriend is Mr. Crawford from Mayberry, an extremely powerful man! He may even come today, and if he does, well... You'll just have to wait to find out!" replied Molly.

"Hahaha! Oh no... I'm terrified... Please, I've heard of several rich people in my life, but never have I heard of... What's his name again? Crawford from Mayberry? Haha!" sneered Hallie sarcastically.

"Oh, you just wait and see, Hallie! You just wait and see!" said Molly in response.

As soon as her sentence ended, the crowd's excitement seemed to suddenly escalate as ten dazzling sports cars, unlike any of the previous ones, arrived at the scene.

It was surprising to see such expensive cars here, to say the least.

Even Hallie was shocked speechless. While she had seen many expensive sports cars before in her life, this was the first time she was seeing a convoy of this many luxury cars together.

Before the cars had even stopped, a few staff members dressed in suits were already rushing toward the greeting hostess's side while shouting, "Mr. Crawford, the director of Dream Investment Group has arrived!"

Those who heard that felt chills run down their spines.

"Hurry! Mr. Crawford's already here!"

"What? He's arrived early!"

The entire group still seemed to be in utter shock as the hosts and hostesses began running downstairs to greet him.

After all, though there were many other VIPs, Mr. Crawford was still the most important person today.

Even several of the businessmen and heirs that had earlier entered exited again, just to greet him after hearing word about his arrival.

“...What? Mr. Crawford exists?!”

At that moment, Hallie’s face was the palest anyone had ever seen. It was as though her heart almost stopped beating.

After seeing the commotion happening before her eyes, she no longer doubted that Mr. Crawford was indeed, the most important person of the day.

It didn’t take long for her to snap out of it, and once she did, she immediately threw jealous glances at Mila as she said incredulously, “You said Mr. Crawford’s your boyfriend? How could that even be possible?”

Could it really be that she was never actually a match for Mila Smith to begin with?

How was she always this lucky? To be even able to have such a powerful and wealthy boyfriend?

“Hah! You look star-struck! Every word we said was true! Mila here is Mr. Crawford’s girlfriend!” replied Molly excitedly.

She wanted to see how Hallie would react after being beaten in her own game.

Mila on the other hand, had her eyes peeled on the convoy before her.

She wasn't really expecting any help from Gerald. Rather, she was thinking about how she hadn't even had the chance to talk to him properly despite having returned to Mayberry briefly that day.

Saying that she didn't regret resenting Gerald was a big fat lie.

"Holy f*ck! This should be the most luxurious convoy we'll be able to see tonight, right?" exclaimed someone from within the crowd.

"I'd assume so! Each of the ten cars in there costs at least three million dollars! That's like thirty million dollars in total!"

As many from within the crowd gasped in surprise after hearing that, the cars finally stopped moving forward.

"Mr. Crawford's here!" shouted a man.

Following that announcement, fireworks were set off on the television building's top floor, and the night sky was instantly painted with beautiful bursts of colors.

Simultaneously, water was also shot out from the water fountains on both sides of the pond while the staff carefully began raising a massive flag.

Mila herself had her head lifted, nervously looking out for Gerald.

When the main car's door was finally opened, the crowd was stunned.

A fair-skinned and rather chubby guy with eyes as small as pumpkin seeds stepped out as he waved at the crowd in his gorgeous suit.

"Is he Mr. Crawford?"

"Really?"

"Of course not! I recognize who he is! He's Yoel Holden! The son of the richest man in the county state!"

"Is that so? I guess by the looks of it, Yoel's attending in place of Mr. Crawford, right?"

While the crowd was busy discussing among themselves again, the stage manager looked visibly disappointed when he saw Yoel instead of Gerald.

However, he still had to take Yoel seriously. After all, Yoel Holden was also one of the VIPs.

Mila on the other hand, wasn't familiar with Yoel. This made her slightly surprised and disappointed when she saw him.

'Why didn't Gerald come...?'

Even if Gerald had made his appearance, she would've hidden in a corner so that he couldn't spot her. Regardless, it was no lie that she had at least hoped to have been able to see him.

While Mila wasn't the kind of girl who liked to show off, any girl's heart would throb like crazy if they ever saw their boyfriend making such a grand entrance.

Sadly, it wasn't her boyfriend in the car. It didn't seem like Yoel knew who she was either.

As Yoel was led up the stairs by the guide, Hallie—who had earlier been scared witless—said, “Well, well, well. What have we here? Why didn't your boyfriend come over to greet you?”

She was clearly trying to rub it into Mila's face.

“D*rn it! It wasn't Mr. Crawford after all! Why isn't he here?” said Molly rather regretfully. She was certain of how utterly pleased Hallie must have been feeling at that moment.

“The f*ck were you trying to pull off, b*tch? Weren't you talking about how great your boyfriend was earlier? Embarrassing! It seems that I didn't slap you hard enough earlier!” mocked Hallie, a hint of anger in her voice.

Before she could say another word, another burst of excitement could be heard.

“Oh god! Oh god, oh god, oh god!” shouted someone hysterically.

“What kind of cars even are those?”

“Hot d*mn! Aren’t those exclusive Lamborghini models? Designed only for the company’s top customers? I think it was around three years ago when they revealed online that each car costs about ten million dollars! The cars are each equipped with a superior artificial intelligence system and their bodies are said to be even stronger than that of bulletproof cars! I don’t think I need to say anything more about their stunning designs!”

“You’re kidding right? Ten million dollars for a car... There’s like... Five, ten... Twenty of them!”

“Holy sh*t! You’re telling me that what we’re seeing now is a convoy worth two hundred million dollars?!”

It wasn’t just the youngsters at the entrance who were waiting in anticipation this time. Even the businessmen were giddy with excitement.

While most of the wealthy people there had gone through several hardships to earn what they had today, the VIP that would soon be making their appearance had a convoy worth two hundred million dollars!

Most, if not all, of the people in the crowd had gone pale, clearly overly excited by this unprecedented grand entrance.

As the person leading the hosts shifted his gaze to the stage manager, he could see that the stage manager himself was taking several deep breaths to calm himself.

“This is the main VIP for today, right stage manager?” asked someone excitedly.

“Yeah, that’s her! Tell everyone to start paying attention immediately! Don’t make any mistakes or you’ll be dealt with accordingly!” said the manager, his voice quivering slightly.

After the cars stopped in front of the entrance, the stage manager began walking briskly toward them to greet the main VIP.

Molly, Hallie, and the other girls were frozen in anticipation as well. All of them were too shocked at the scene to even remember that they were fighting.

Even Mila could hardly believe any of what she was seeing.

She knew how rich Gerald was. To think that there were still people way richer than he was. After all, the main VIP was a person who owned a two hundred million dollar convoy!

What kind of house did she even live in? Gosh, everything was just so extravagant to the point where this entire scene seemed unbelievable!

By the time the car's door was opened, the stage manager and several other VIPs had formed two uniform rows outside it, standing ready and alert to greet their grandest guest yet.

Chapter 666

As soon as they saw the young woman step out, everyone in the two rows immediately bowed deeply.

The woman with snow-white skin—who looked to be around twenty-seven years old—had a pair of branded sunglasses on. She also wore extremely expensive-looking clothes, complemented by the blazer draped over her shoulders.

As she continued chewing on her gum, she tilted her shoulders slightly, allowing her blazer to seamlessly fall off her shoulders. One of her bodyguards caught on to it before it even managed to touch the ground.

Even from afar, everyone could see that all the bodyguards surrounding her had equally fierce gazes in their eyes. They also seemed to be extremely capable and strong. These were the kinds of bodyguards who would most definitely be prepared to tackle any sort of situation that they had to face.

While she was extremely charming, the woman had an extremely strong aura as well, pressuring a lot of the present people to not even dare to take a breath.

As she scanned through the crowd, her gaze fell on the large flag placed right outside the scene. It was Gerald's flag. She then smiled slightly before pointing at it and shouting, "Raise that flag higher!"

“Very well!” said the head of the broadcasting station who had not dared to even straighten his body yet.

With a wave of his hand, he immediately ordered his subordinates to do as she said.

As he did that, the rest of the businessmen at the entrance held on to their breaths as they remained bowed down. It almost felt like they were participating in a queen’s arrival.

Even those who appeared to be over fifty didn’t dare to do anything. They were simply too terrified to say a word, most of their legs quivering as though they had just been struck by lightning.

They all watched as Gerald’s flag was slowly lifted to the highest point it could reach.

Seeing that, the woman’s smile deepened.

She then walked forward and handed her handbag over to Mila, who just so happened to be the first in line among the others who were also tasked with receiving the guests.

At the time however, Mila was still looking at Gerald’s flag curiously.

‘Why did the president only want Gerald’s flag to be raised higher? What exactly is her relationship to him?’

Mila knew that even though Gerald had several female friends, he was still loyal to her. However, after seeing all this, she was starting to feel slightly nervous.

After all, the woman seemed extremely powerful and frightening.

“Hmm?” said the woman as she frowned slightly.

It was at that moment when Mila broke from her daze and finally realized that the woman had been handing out her handbag to her!

The head of the broadcasting station was so terrified at that moment that his eyes were bloodshot as he growled, “Mila! What the hell are you doing?”

He had constantly reminded them not to make any mistakes when the grand VIP arrived. Yet here Mila was, making a mistake as soon as she arrived!

“Are you new here?” said the woman as she continued chewing on her gum calmly.

“H-huh? I-I’m sorry! I’m terribly, terribly sorry!” answered Mila. She was so frightened that her face has lost all its color,

“I-I’ll dismiss her immediately! I’ll even be sure to punish her and her entire family!” said the head of the broadcasting station nervously.

It hadn't occurred to Mila that just because of her slightly slow reaction, even her family would be brought into this!

'She's simply too overbearing!'

At that moment, Mila was more frightened than ever. After all, the woman standing before her now—who was exerting an immensely powerful aura—had every right to do as she pleased to her.

"Did I say I wanted you to dismiss her? Cease your nonsense!" retorted the woman as she rolled her eyes at the head of the broadcasting station.

"I've been saying nonsense, yes! I apologize for not watching my mouth!" shouted the head as he harshly slapped himself thrice.

Once he was done, his mouth was stained with blood.

Hallie on the other hand, lowered her head at that moment. She was filled with glee.

It was definitely going to be all over for Mila now!

Chapter 667

"Tell me, why were you staring at that flag earlier?" asked the woman, her voice crystal clear.

Mila simply lowered her head, unsure of even what to say.

As Mila continued remaining silent, the woman noticed the slap mark on Mila's cheek. She then stretched her hand out and lifted Mila's chin gently.

"You're so beautiful yet you were slapped. Such a pity... Where are you from?" asked the woman, her tone sounding genuinely regretful.

"M-Mayberry!" replied Mila.

She hadn't answered the woman's earlier question since she didn't want her to know that she was honestly thinking about Gerald!

After all, Mila was still unsure of that woman's true identity and status.

"She's an intern student who was chosen and sent here from Mayberry University! Her academic results are outstanding!" replied the head of the broadcasting station.

Raising an eyebrow, the woman said nothing as she took a few sneaky glances at Mila before turning to enter the main area.

However, before she entered through the door, she turned around and pointed at Mila before saying, "You there! Follow me!"

After saying that, she entered without saying another word.

“Mila! Why are you still standing there in a daze? Go follow the president already!” said the head of the broadcasting station immediately.

“G-got it!”

Mila was still in deep shock. However, she simply followed the president inside.

Hallie on the other hand, was left stupefied.

‘Why?’ She thought to herself.

‘Why was the president taking particularly good care of Mila? Was it because she heard that Mila was from Mayberry University? She didn’t even tell Mila to take responsibility for her rudeness earlier!’

Hallie was filled with jealousy.

It was when the event was about to begin when Mila finally realized that the president’s surname was Crawford. She had found out about this when she heard others addressing the woman as President Crawford while following her.

So she bore the surname of Crawford as well.

Since President Crawford had requested for Mila to follow her, Mila was placed within the group of assistants assigned to help her out. Because of that, both Hallie and Mila had to work together on stage at the same time.

Now blinded by jealousy, Hallie looked at Mila with murderous eyes whenever she could.

A little while later—when she saw that Mila was busy refilling tea for the guests—a nasty plot formed in her mind!

As Hallie walked past Mila, she gave her an extremely brief but cold glare before nudging her slightly.

Due to her actions, the cup Mila was holding nearly toppled to the floor! Thankfully, Mila was able to catch it in time! While the cup was safe, its contents were splashed all over the person in front of Mila...

And that person was none other than Yoel!

“F*ck! Look at what you’ve done!” said Yoel as he glared at Mila angrily, a frown already forming on his face.

“I-I’m terribly sorry!” apologized Mila immediately.

As she said that, a burning hatred for Hallie had bloomed within Mila. It was obvious that Hallie’s jealousy had driven her to continue creating trouble for Mila, even now!

Regardless, though Yoel was currently only here in place of Gerald, Mila had been meaning to find out what his true relationship was with Gerald. She was also interested in finding out who he was to President Crawford.

After all, even a fool would have realized by now that Mr. Yoel Holden had been addressing President Crawford as his sister. It was also obvious that the president clearly liked him a lot.

What kind of relationships did Gerald have with both of them?

Though she had earlier thought about asking them about it, after giving it some thought, she refrained from doing so. After all, she was only part of the staff there. They, on the other hand, were very important guests.

If she simply acted rashly and asked such a personal question, what would they think of her?

“Sorry? Do you honestly think that everything will be over with just a simple apology?” said Yoel as he immediately got up and shoved Mila with his right hand.

The force from Yoel’s push was strong enough to send Mila falling to the floor.

During the process, her phone fell to the ground as well.

While it seemed like President Crawford was the main guest today, Yoel was clearly the actual one in control here.

After all, Yoel had been given the role of Gerald's direct substitute.

Similar to past events, whenever Gerald was busy or unable to attend any grand functions, either Yoel—who was Gerald's godbrother—or Aiden would be sent to take his place.

Since Mr. Crawford was already busy when the event invitation was received, Zack hadn't bothered informing him about it. Instead, Zack simply went through the usual process of electing Yoel to take Gerald's place, since Aiden wasn't available.

While Yoel was usually obedient and nice in front of Gerald, both he and Aiden were truthfully quite reckless and arrogant when they were on their own.

Because of that, it would certainly not be him if he didn't get angry after being drenched in water by a rude assisting staff member!

Chapter 668

Almost everyone present at the scene was stunned speechless.

While Molly was equally terrified and sad for Mila as she watched her good friend get shoved to the floor, Hallie was contrastingly sneering like there was no tomorrow.

President Crawford herself, who was getting a massage at that moment, pretended like she had seen nothing.

“Humph! How bold of you to offend Mr. Crawford! If I don’t personally teach you a lesson now, you’ll never learn!” shouted Yoel as he raised his arm, seemingly ready to beat Mila up.

However, before he could launch his first blow, he paused right in the nick of time.

He had noticed just in time, that the lock screen on Mila’s phone—which had earlier fallen to the side—contained Mr. Crawford’s photograph!

“...Hmm? What?!” said Yoel, startled.

“Do you know Mr. Crawford?” asked Yoel, clearly surprised to see his godbrother’s photo in some assisting staff member’s phone.

He then picked her phone up, trying hard to figure out who she really was. Since he wasn’t able to come up with any logical conclusions yet, he refrained from beating her up just yet.

“Return my phone to me!” said Mila as she snatched her phone from Yoel’s hands.

“I’m asking you now. Why do you have Mr. Crawford’s photograph as your lock screen photo?” asked Yoel again, his voice filled with confusion.

While her eyes were closed at that moment, even President Crawford had heard his question. She then gestured for the person massaging her to leave before glancing suspiciously at Mila, even scanning her from head to toe.

“That’s a personal question!” replied Mila, holding on to her phone carefully.

“Then what’s your name?” asked Yoel as he scratched the back of his head. He seemed to have just remembered something important, which was what prompted the question.

“Mila Smith!”

Hearing that, Yoel’s eyes widened slightly.

‘Mila Smith... Why does that name sound so familiar...? Where have I heard it before...?’

‘Hold on... Aiden told me that Mr. Crawford’s girlfriend was doing her internship in Northbay...’

“...Are you from Mayberry University?” asked Yoel, slightly astonished by his own conclusion.

“I am!” replied Mila with a slight nod.

“F*ck!” Yoel was even more surprised now that his deduction was actually correct!

“Then you definitely know my brother, right? Gerald? You even have his photo in your phone! Could it really be that you’re his girlfriend? Do you know who Aiden and Zack are?”

“I know them, yes!” replied Mila, giving another nod.

Yoel almost jumped in place after hearing her reply.

‘Sh*t, she really is my sister-in-law! What have I done? How could I nearly have beaten her up?’

‘I’m screwed for sure this time!’ Yoel thought to himself as he turned to look at President Crawford meekly.

Seeing his reaction, she immediately stood up.

She had naturally overheard their entire conversation, and she too was surprised by the revelation as she walked toward Mila.

“Are you really Gerald’s girlfriend?” asked the president.

“Yes, she is! She’s Gerald’s girlfriend, Mila!” shouted Molly—who had taken a step forward at that moment—out of the blue.

Seeing that she could no longer deny it, Mila simply bit her lower lip slightly before nodding in agreement.

Mila had been extremely reluctant to admit it since she wanted to be more independent instead of solely relying on Gerald. It was the reason why she had endured all her hardships alone. She simply didn't want to only be known as eye candy for Gerald if she was to continue being his girlfriend.

Because of her lack of reliance on Gerald's name in her workspace however, the truth only served to amplify how stunned the people there were.

"H-hot d*mn! Is she really Mr. Crawford's girlfriend?"

"I guess so! While she really is beautiful, I wonder why she's working as a receptionist here...?"

As the others began discussing the current situation, Mila noticed that President Crawford was staring at her.

"P-President Crawford, I-"

"You don't have to call me President Crawford anymore. After all, if you're Gerald's girlfriend, you should be addressing me as your sister!" replied Jessica, a faint smile on her face.

"Sister... Are... Are you Jessica? Gerald's elder sister?"

At last, Mila finally knew who President Crawford really was.

Chapter 669

“That I am. He’s told you about me, hasn’t he?” replied Jessica with a faint smile on her face.

Mila was too astonished to immediately respond to her.

Gerald had indeed mentioned her before. He had told her that his sister treated him extremely well. What more, Jessica had been the one responsible for establishing the Mayberry Commercial Group in the past!

While Mila was aware that his sister was very rich, she hadn’t expected her to be this rich and influential!

At this point, Jessica could almost be considered to be a person of royalty! This made Mila even more nervous than she already was.

She had initially not felt the pressure of the Crawford family’s true wealth and influence since she never had her eyes set on Gerald’s money from the very beginning.

After all, it didn’t matter to her whether Gerald was rich or poor. All that mattered to her was that both of them retained a good relationship.

Due to that way of thinking, even though she knew Gerald’s true identity, she never really realized that there was this large a gap between them.

Now that Jessica was standing before her, however, the sudden realization of how different she actually was from the Crawfords was definitely stressing her out.

“Y-yes! He did mention you... He told me that you were in North Africa!”

“I was, I actually just returned a few days ago!” replied Jessica, still smiling.

After saying that, she turned to look at Yoel before smacking him behind the head once.

“Sister-in-law! I’ve clearly wronged you! I sincerely apologize!” shouted Yoel. He was so frightened that his face was deathly pale as he apologized.

Once that was done, Jessica then turned to look at the slap mark which was still visible on Mila’s face.

“Speaking of which, who slapped you? Now that I know that you’re my younger brother’s girlfriend, I won’t allow for such actions to go unpunished while I’m here!” said Jessica aloud, her voice suddenly turning cold.

“I-I’m the one responsible for that!” replied Hallie at that moment, her entire body trembling in fear.

Knowing Mila's background, Hallie had initially thought that Mila’s family was just doing some kind of business in Mayberry.

It was the reason why Hallie dared to bully Mila so unscrupulously.

However, it was beyond her wildest dreams to ever expect Mila to actually be Jessica's sister-in-law! What more, it turns out that Mr. Crawford really was Mila's boyfriend!

With the cat now out of the bag, Hallie was terror-stricken.

"You?" replied Jessica, glaring icy daggers at Hallie.

"How exactly did she slap you Mila? Return the slaps to her the same way she did to you!"

Mila could only bite her lower lip slightly. After all, she wasn't an aggressive person. However, given her current situation, she really didn't have a choice.

Regardless, it was true that Hallie had constantly been targeting Mila, getting even more daring after each of her consecutive plots against her.

Mila was well aware that since Hallie hadn't treated her kindly, she didn't need to either.

With that in mind, Mila slowly raised her hand before slapping Hallie right in the cheek.

Once the impact hit, Hallie immediately covered her now hurt cheek before bursting into tears.

On the contrary, Jessica couldn't help but have a much better impression of Mila now after seeing that.

Jessica then looked at Hallie before saying, "How insensible of you to lay hands on my brother's girlfriend... I definitely have to teach you a personal lesson! Hmm... How about this? You'll need to drink in order to compensate for slapping her!"

"H-huh? Thank you for letting me off easy!" replied Hallie immediately.

"Oh, don't thank me yet. Listen to the rest first! Here are ten bottles of whiskey... You have to finish all of them in a single gulp!" smiled Jessica icily.

Her subordinates then began dragging Hallie away.

Seeing this, Mila felt her right eyelid twitch slightly. If the issue wasn't handled well, Hallie's life could very well be in danger.

Though Mila agreed that Hallie needed to be taught a lesson, what Jessica had proposed was simply too cruel for her.

Even if she was to advise Jessica against it, she felt that Jessica's decision would still be indisputable.

It was also at that moment when she realized that Jessica was the complete opposite of Gerald. While Jessica was arrogant, reckless, and extremely domineering, Gerald on the other hand, was gentle, reserved, and humble.

At this point, it almost seemed as though Jessica felt that bullying others like that was simply the natural thing to do.

“Once the function is over, I’d like you to come along with me, Mila. I have something to discuss with you. Ah, also, don’t let Gerald know that we’ve already met each other!” said Jessica calmly as she continued chewing on her gum.

“Alright, sister!”

After hearing that, Mila started feeling equally worried and scared though she simply couldn’t tell why.

Moving back to Gerald...

Chapter 670

Early the next morning, Gerald—accompanied by Barry and Queta—went looking for the master that Barry had mentioned the previous night. The master lived in a scenic spot atop a mountain.

Since a bit more time was needed before they were going to get the final results, both Barry and Queta continued waiting there.

Gerald himself walked quite a distance away from the place to make a call to his sister. It was only last night when Gerald found out that she had finally returned from abroad.

He had always thought that he would be among the first to meet his sister as soon as she returned. After all, he missed her dearly since both of them hadn't met for so long.

During the call, Jessica told him that she was attending some kind of grand function. She also mentioned that she wanted to meet Gerald there.

However, after Gerald explained that he was busy doing something for their father, she didn't have much else to say.

A while later, Gerald ended the call and was just about to head back when he heard someone call out to him.

“Gerald?”

Turning around to see who had called him, he was stunned when he saw the familiar faces.

The group of young people—whom Gerald had seen—seemed to be playing and laughing around with each other, save for the one who had just called out to him. They had all clearly come here in search for amusement.

Of the five people in the group, Maia and Warren were among them. Jamier was there too, along with Gerald's old high school competition teammates, Vincy and Lennard.

“Humph! It really is him! What a coincidence! We really can bump into him just about anywhere we go!” said Maia as she couldn’t help but smile rather bitterly.

They were here because Jamier had told them that this scenic spot was quite famous. What more, it was mostly reserved for the well-off since the prices of things here were particularly expensive.

Aside from that, there was also another place called the Summer Resort which was located near the peak of the mountain. All sorts of high-end entertainment centers could apparently be found there.

One usually needed to have a certain level of influence and wealth in County Salford to even be able to go there to have fun.

Quite frankly, the scenery at the foot of the mountain was nothing compared to what one would be able to experience once they arrived at the Summer Resort.

Since Jamier wanted to prove his capabilities and have some fun at the same time, he had begged his father to allow all five of them up there to have a good time together.

After some difficulty, he finally managed to convince his father, which was why they were all ascending the mountain now. It was also why they had managed to bump into Gerald again while they were enjoying the scenery.

“I had initially wanted to invite you out to have fun with us, but I didn’t know whether you had anything going on since you came all the way out here to County Salford!” said Vincy with a chuckle.

While she wasn’t exactly too close to Gerald, both Vincy and Gerald retained an ex-classmate kind of friendship. Compared to the rest, she was in fact, quite nice to Gerald.

“I appreciate the thought, Vincy. I don’t really have much going on now. I’m just looking around!” replied Gerald quite cordially.

“Humph! I have to say that you’re not too bad yourself since you know about this famous scenic spot! However, I should remind you that you’re currently only looking at the scenery from the foot of the mountain!” said Maia as she smiled.

It was her usual straightforward style of speaking.

In her mind, she had already estimated—based on her knowledge of Gerald’s economic status—that he would only go to places that didn’t require entry fees whenever he went on trips.

After all, to enter such high-end places, one would first need to have at least some sort of connections or money like her, right?

Hearing her comment, Gerald could only shake his head with a bitter smile on his face.

‘As if there are places that you can go to that I can’t...’

Though he was clearly being looked down upon by Maia, Gerald didn't want to say much. He simply couldn't be bothered by her.

Other than Vincy, who had stopped to talk with Gerald for a brief moment, nobody else spoke to him.

Eventually, it was Lennard who tugged Vinvy away from Gerald, telling her not to continue speaking with him.

It wasn't long before the group of five arrived at the scenic spot's entertainment center.

"Pleased to meet you, ladies and gentlemen! Please present your VIP cards," said a staff member standing at the entrance. A few other staff members were also standing there, each awaiting other customers to serve.

"Here you go! All of us came here together!" said Jamier as he took a card out and showed it to the waiter.

"Alright! This way please," said the staff member respectfully.

This entertainment center had been established specifically to target rich businessmen and famous people, which explained why the VIP card was required. However, the target audience aside, the center was also open to sightseeing tours, which meant that not everyone needed a VIP card to enter.

Upon entering the place, Maia soon found herself being charmed by the magnificent scenery.

“Wow! Everything’s so beautiful!” said Maia rather excitedly.

The moment she turned around however, she became instantly stunned.

“What the hell? Did he actually enter this place together with us?”

Chapter 671

This was what Maia said as soon as she saw that Gerald had also entered the high-end entertainment center.

Gerald himself had simply been walking around, minding his own business before turning to look at Maia after hearing her shout. Contrary to Maia, he was as calm as a cucumber.

Maia however, wasn’t having any of this. To her, Gerald could only possibly have entered due to him following them closely while Jamier was showing the staff his VIP card earlier. The staff must have allowed him in then, thinking that he was part of their group!

Seeing Gerald in such a place simply made Maia feel uncomfortable.

“Hey, Gerald! Why are you here as well? Who even allowed you in here?” said Maia rather angrily.

Hearing Maia's interrogative question, Gerald felt stunned.

'Who allowed me in? I can come and leave as I please since the staff have been notified that I came together with Barry.'

'I naturally have free access to this place!'

In all honesty, Gerald was only passing through the entertainment center because he needed to. After all, it was the only way for him to get to the small manors at the peak of the mountain—above the entertainment center—where both Barry and Queta were still waiting.

"D*mn it, have you no shame at all? Don't you know that unless you're following a tour, you need a VIP card to enter this place? Not just anybody can enter as they want!" added Maia, her voice clearly filled with contempt.

"I am aware of that!" replied Gerald with a nod.

"F*cking hell! Since you already know about that, how could you just follow us in here after Jamier showed his VIP card? You can't just sneak into this place with us!" replied Maia.

While she hadn't really hated Gerald in the past, Maia still utterly looked down on him. After today's events, however, she was starting to hate him slightly.

‘Jamier didn’t even invite you! Only Warren, Vincy, Lennard, and I were supposed to come here to enjoy ourselves!’

‘How dare you even consider sneaking in with us? What’ll Jamier think about this?’

‘After all, he knows that Vincy, Lennard, and I are your high school classmates! How utterly embarrassing!’

‘If you had snuck into someplace else with us without Jamier being present, I wouldn’t have cared this much! Hell, I’d probably have approved of it as long as you were willing to expand your horizons!’

‘But this is different. What’ll Jamier think about Vincy and I now?’

All these thoughts made Maia even more embarrassed than before.

“I didn’t even sneak into this place!” replied Gerald helplessly.

He knew how much Maia had looked down upon him in the past. To think that it could actually get even worse!

However, he wasn’t lying either. He really hadn’t snuck in.

“How could you even say that at this point...? If you didn’t sneak in, do you have a VIP card?!” said Maia furiously.

“Well... No,” replied Gerald. After all, he didn’t really need one to enter.

“Then why are you still lying? You snuck into this place yet you still don’t want to admit it! I’m honestly speechless right now!” shouted Maia, so angry that she was even stomping her foot now.

If it wasn’t because of how aware she was of her status as a police officer, she would’ve already kicked Gerald at least twice by now!

What more, several other respectable-looking people—who were also walking around in the entertainment center at the time—seemed to be finding the scene rather hilarious.

Realizing this made Maia and the others feel deeply embarrassed.

Trying to deescalate the situation, Vincy then said, “It’s fine, Maia. Don’t talk to Gerald that way... Remember, we still used to be classmates! Also, Jamier? I hope you don’t think too much about it. Gerald must have just entered with us to have some fun!”

“I don’t really mind!” replied Jamier as he shook his head while laughing slightly bitterly.

“Humph! You’re lucky Jamier’s so generous! Otherwise, we would’ve kicked you out of here immediately! God, I feel so annoyed seeing him like this!” growled Maia as she stomped her foot a few more times before finally turning around to walk away.

Vincy could only look at Gerald rather pitifully.

After all, all of what Maia had said to him was equally unpleasant and hurtful.

Chapter 672

“I’m sure you know how straightforward a person Maia is, Gerald... After all, she’s been like that even from when she was still our captain! It’s just the way she is, so please don’t take what she said to heart!” consoled Vincy.

“Well, alright!” replied Gerald, peeking at Maia once before nodding at Vincy.

Since Vincy had been the only one treating him well, he chose to follow her advice.

Besides, if he really wanted to embarrass Maia, he could do so any time he pleased. However, he felt that that would be slightly childish of him, so he simply refrained from doing so.

Gerald wouldn’t usually have disputes with girls like her anyway.

“I hope you mean what you say... Speaking of which, if you’re not too busy, let’s hang out for a short while and catch up with each other! After graduating from high school, I asked about you and found out that you had been accepted into Mayberry University! I told you that you’d be able to do it back then!” said Vincy.

Back in high school, though she never actually said it, Vincy admired Gerald quite a bit. After all, Gerald was always studying and as a result, his results were top notch. What

more, she also knew that he was the kind of person who would always persevere to the very end, regardless of the task at hand.

Once, the two of them—who were competing together as a small team—ended up becoming champion in one of the many competitions they participated in. Back then, Vincy had been extremely excited since she got to hold Gerald's hand while receiving the award.

After all, she quite frankly had slight feelings for Gerald back then.

She honestly wanted to see Gerald finally get his moment and rise above everyone else.

However, that moment simply never came. As a result, her feelings for him were also short-lived.

In the end, Gerald was simply too poor. Although she continued treating Gerald well, she no longer tried to gain his affection.

It wasn't as though she looked down on him or anything. She simply still retained a rather immature mindset. Putting it frankly, she wanted a more heroic person to be her life partner.

Gerald however, was rather unwilling to join her, simply because he didn't want to deal with Maia any more than he needed to.

While he honestly wanted to refuse Vincy's suggestion right there and then, Vincy seemed to have wanted to have a nice long chat with him from the very moment they had met again the day before.

He couldn't really deny that he wanted to chat with Vincy as well. After all, it had been so long since they last met.

Thinking about this made it much harder for Gerald to decline her invitation.

Since the results of the jade pendant wouldn't be out till a bit longer, Gerald eventually nodded slightly in response, not wanting to disappoint Vincy.

"Vincy! You-!"

At that moment, Maia and the others were sitting beside a hot spring while taking photographs.

Seeing that Vincy had brought Gerald along, Maia was stunned speechless. She found it weird that Vincy would even want someone like Gerald around.

"Well, since he's already here anyway, let's just have a chat together! This is as good a chance as any to catch up with each other!" replied Vincy immediately.

Hearing that, Maia fumed slightly before turning to look the other side.

Jamier himself wasn't going to argue with Gerald. Instead, he turned to look at both Warren and Maia before saying, "What do you think? Isn't the scenery here fantastic?"

"It's definitely something!" replied Maia.

"Thanks for today, Jamier. You know, next time when you come over to Mayberry, I'll get my dad to use his connections to allow us to enter Wayfair Mountain Entertainment to have some fun! Just the few of us together!" said Warren.

"Are you talking about the one in Mayberry? That's the most luxurious place there! Take my word that you'll definitely be satisfied if you go there, Jamier. Honestly, even as a person from Mayberry, I've never actually set foot into Wayfair Mountain Entertainment. However, I've heard lots about it! It's not easy to enter if you're just some random nobody!" added Maia as she let out a heavy sigh.

The way he worded it earlier, Warren's father clearly had some kinds of connections. After hearing what Maia said, Warren simply patted his own chest twice before saying, "Not to worry, you'll definitely be coming along as well when we eventually go there to have some fun! It'll be just the five of us! You, me, Jamier, Vincy, and Lennard!"

It was obvious why he had deliberately mentioned those five names.

"Oh? Well now I definitely have to see Wayfair Mountain Entertainment for myself then!"

"Of course you do! Also, anyone who wishes to enter that place needs an admission ticket. You can't just sneak in all willy-nilly!"

As she said that, Maia rolled her eyes slightly at Gerald's direction.

It was clear as day that she was mocking him.

'What else can I say to that? Little do they know that I used to be the owner of that place!'

"...Hmm? Look over there, doesn't that girl look familiar...? Oh god. Vincy, hurry! Look there!" said Maia out of the blue as she started pointing excitedly at a girl standing next to the hot spring.

Chapter 673

"Isn't she the famous celebrity, YunaYames? D*mn! To think that we'd actually bump into her here!" exclaimed Maia, clearly surprised.

"While I was aware that this scenic spot was occasionally visited by some celebrities who wanted to have some fun after attending functions in County Salford, never would I have imagined seeing such high profile artists like Yuna here!" said Vincy, equally as surprised.

Her surprise was warranted. After all, she had studied and even established her own business in County Salford. There was little about the place that she didn't already know.

A burst of laughter soon followed.

“If I remember correctly, you’ve never really been the type to idolize celebrities, right Maia? The only exception to that rule was Yuna! You admired her so much during high school that you even pasted posters of Yuna by your bedside!”

Hearing that, Maia nodded in agreement before saying, “That’s right! I like her because of her self-discipline! I’ve seen all of her work and I even discipline myself according to how she does it!”

“Well, then what are you waiting for? Look, several people are already approaching her to get her signature! Let’s hurry over there and get one for ourselves...”

“Yeah, let’s go get her autograph together!” said Vincy. Judging from her tone alone, it was evident that Vincy really liked Yuna as well.

Jamier, Lennard, and Warren themselves weren’t going to object to Vincy’s proposal any time soon. After all, Yuna was akin to a goddess in the public’s eyes.

While lots of girls liked her, even more men saw her as the love of their dreams.

Gerald himself was a fan of Yuna’s.

After all, the celebrity was very beautiful and had an extremely charming disposition. However, the thing that attracted her fans most, was how down to earth and friendly she was.

If he remembered correctly, Yuna worked under one of Gerald's sister's film and television companies in Yanken.

"Come along now, Gerald! Let's go snap some photographs together with her! It's not every day we get to do this!" called out Vincy.

Gerald simply nodded silently, a smile on his face.

He was well aware that if he really wanted to have a photograph with Yuna, he simply needed to call her over. There wasn't really a need for Gerald to rush over to get such a chance.

Vincy herself immediately started jogging over to Yuna after calling out to Gerald.

Seeing that her attention was no longer on him, it was now or never for Gerald to finally be able to slip away.

However, the moment he turned around, he saw a few extremely well-dressed girls walking out of the entertainment center. Surrounding them were several bodyguards.

While the girls were all equally beautiful, they didn't seem to be celebrities themselves. From what Gerald could assume, they were simply a few run-of-the-mill rich young ladies.

Despite that, several of the men who had initially wanted to take photographs with Yuna froze in place once they noticed the girls. Some of them were even close to drooling.

Even Gerald seemed to be momentarily stunned. However, it wasn't because of their beauty. Instead, it was because Gerald had nearly mistaken the leader of the group—or at least he assumed she was the leader—to be Queta.

If he had to score how closely that girl resembled Queta, Gerald would've given a solid seven out of ten.

As the girls passed by Gerald, the Queta clone seemed to notice Gerald staring at her. In response, give him a look of disgust before leaving with her group.

'Both of them look so alike!' Gerald thought to himself.

Following that thought, he immediately started walking toward a viewing point at the side of the mountain. Though he managed to catch sight of the group of girls before they left, Gerald was astonished once again when he saw what sort of cars they were riding.

To descend the mountain, a large group of Rolls-Royce Phantom Extended cars had been prepared for the girls. Together, the cars looked simply amazing.

"Those girls are definitely equally powerful and rich! I've earned a hefty amount today! Wouldn't it be great if more ladies such as themselves came here in future!" said a voice at that moment before chuckling.

Looking to his side, Gerald saw that the voice had come from a plump, middle-aged man who was also looking at the leaving group of cars while simultaneously counting the stack of money in his hand happily.

Seeing how the man had earned at least a few thousand dollars from the girls, Gerald assumed that he was some kind of unlicensed tour guide.

“Sir, do you know which family that rich young lady comes from?” asked Gerald as he got straight to the point.

Noticing how well-dressed Gerald was, the man then scanned him from head to toe before saying, “Ahem! How am I supposed to know? I just know that their leader is rich and influential!”

As he said that, the plump man continued counting his money.

It was obvious what he was implying to Gerald.

Gerald then took three hundred dollars out from his pocket before handing it to the man while saying, “Maybe you know a little more about them now?”

The man happily took the money off Gerald’s hand before saying, “Just so we’re clear, I never asked for any money from you. You gave this to me willingly! Either way, if you’re talking about the richest young lady in the group, she’s come here twice before. Despite being a pro at being slick in County Salford, I’m saddened to say that even I don’t know which family she’s from. All I know is that she’s filthy rich and extremely influential.

Information about her isn't going to come easily, even if you directly enquire her about it!"

As soon as his sentence ended, the man then swiftly ran away!

Chapter 674

'...F*ck.'

Gerald was left speechless after seeing that.

He knew for a fact that the middle-aged man was lying. The man definitely knew more about the girl.

'Still, that girl really resembled Queta... Could she be the key to one of the clues...?'

Just as Gerald was about to run after the plump man to further enquire him about it, a sudden uproar could be heard coming somewhere near the hot spring area.

"Move out of the way! Mr. Linton is here! Step aside, all of you!"

Hearing that, Gerald turned around to see a few bodyguards clearing the crowd who were still trying to take photographs together with Yuna. It wasn't long before a rich heir entered the spotlight next, walking toward Yuna with both his hands in his pockets.

When the locals saw who had arrived, they immediately retreated to the side.

Maia herself—who had waited quite a long time just to take a photo with Yuna—was just about to snap a picture with her when a bodyguard knocked into her, sending Maia’s phone dropping to the ground.

“What on earth do you think you’re doing?” asked Maia anxiously.

“What are we doing? What are you doing? Mr. Linton wants to discuss something with Yuna! Now scram!” retorted the bodyguard angrily.

“Maia! Maia, over here! Quick!” called out Jamier who had been standing aside together with the main crowd, his face currently pale as a sheet.

While he had only gotten to know Maia for a short time, he knew very well that Maia was a person with a short fuse. To avoid her from doing anything stupid, he immediately rushed over to drag her to the side as well.

“What’s the big idea?” asked Maia, her expression cold.

“That man over there! That’s Mr. Linton, otherwise also known as Yoav Linton! He’s the young master of one of the most powerful families in County Salford! There seems to be some kind of beef between Yuna and him, so it’d be best for us not to meddle in their affairs!” answered Jamier hurriedly.

Gerald, who had just arrived at the scene, overheard what Jamier had to say. So it would seem that this Yoav person seemed to be a rather arrogant and ruthless man.

“What do you plan on doing?” said a man—who seemed to be Yuna’s agent—as he stepped forward the moment he saw the ruckus Yoav’s guards were creating.

From what Gerald could gather after hearing their discussion for a while, Yoav’s company had invited Yuna to be a spokesperson for them in the past. However, she had refused their offer back then.

Since Yuna was currently the spokesperson of his rival company, it would seem that Yoav had grown quite anxious about that.

The incident’s complications didn’t end there, however.

While Yuna was on her way to County Salford this time around, her path had been blocked by multiple cars. Essentially, Yoav’s men were trying to force her to step down from being a spokesperson for their rival.

However, Yuna was adamant with her final decision.

All this eventually led to the events of today.

Yoav himself was evidently as powerful and influential as Jamier had described. After all, even though a large group of people was currently observing the situation, none of them had even dared to take photographs of the scene.

“I’ve said it once, and I’ll say it again! I won’t do it!” replied Yuna stubbornly.

“You f*cking bitch! Don’t blame me for being ungentlemanly then!”

Upon saying that, a few of the bodyguards began intimidatingly pushing Yuna around.

Seeing this, Yuna’s own bodyguards stepped forward to protect her. It didn’t take long for conflict to break out, resulting in the bodyguards from both parties fighting each other!

As a few of the girls started screaming in fear, Maia simply said, “What savages...!”

It was at that moment when she saw Yoav reaching out to grab Yuna’s hair. Seeing that, Maia immediately made a dash for it, hurriedly pulling Yuna to the side.

As a result, Yoav—who had initially planned on tugging on Yuna’s hair to maintain his balance—soon found himself falling directly toward the concrete floor.

Being the arrogant man that he was, he had assumed that he only needed one hand to yank Yuna toward him, which was why he had his left hand in his pocket.

That proved to be a clear mistake, since he wasn’t able to break his fall with only one free hand!

Yoav’s head began bleeding the moment his forehead hit the ground.

“M-Mr. Linton!” shouted all of his guards simultaneously, all of them sounding equally terrified.

Chapter 675

Yoav had earlier been blinded by rage. To assert his dominance, he had slid a hand into his pocket, just to prove to Yuna that he could teach her a lesson without even needing to use both his hands.

To his surprise, not only had Yuna escaped his grasp unscathed, it was him at that moment who was bleeding out of his forehead.

His bodyguards were all paralyzed in fear when they saw this, and even Yuna’s guards froze in place.

Yuna herself had gone fully pale.

What a bloody scene this had become. And they were at County Salford too! It was definitely hard to say what would even happen next.

“Don’t let that woman escape! She was the one who had beaten Mr. Linton up!” shouted a bodyguard as he pointed at Maia.

“I... I didn’t beat him up!” replied Maia, her voice quivering slightly.

Maia was stupefied. She had only wanted to dissuade the situation from getting any worse. It was clear, however, that Yoav’s bodyguards all had their eyes set on her now.

Meanwhile, the area's staff members had finally arrived after hearing complaints about the conflict. Their first action was naturally to break the crowd up.

Simultaneously, a few of the area's medical staff were also dispatched to treat and bandage Yoav's wounds.

Even the scenic spot's managers had stepped forward to deal with the aftermath.

By the end of it, not many people remained in that area. Gerald and the five others, however, naturally had to stay there.

"Mr. Linton, please allow us to send you to this area's private ward to continue bandaging your wounds," said one of the medical staff.

"Fine, but these few people here aren't allowed to leave!" growled Yoav in a wrathful voice as he held on to his lightly bandaged head before being transported away in a stretcher.

"I didn't even beat him up! Why can't I leave?" retorted Maia angrily.

'What an overbearing person that Yoav is!'

Just as Maia was about to turn around to leave, she was immediately stopped.

“Miss, you and the others need to wait here for a little while longer. Please understand that if you simply leave like this, we won’t be able to give a proper explanation to the Lintons. For now, just remain here and we’ll see how things will be resolved once Mr. Linton returns.”

“I can prove it. She didn’t beat him up. She had simply pulled me to the side,” explained Yuna as she looked at Maia before nodding slightly, gratitude briefly reflected in her eyes.

“Miss Yames, please try to understand our situation. While we’ll definitely step in to prevent more fights from happening, we’ll first have to see how the Lintons react before the issue can be resolved!” replied the manager in resignation.

While it was true that the event had taken place in the scenic spot, even the manager wasn’t capable of dealing with such an issue.

Jamier himself had been breaking out in cold sweat this entire time.

‘If I remember correctly, Yoav has never suffered any losses before, not even when he was a child...’

‘Now that his head has been injured and he firmly believes that Maia was the one who caused it, since I’m together with Maia now, I’ll certainly be targeted as well!’

Jamier was extremely sure that his family was nothing compared to the Lintons. There was no way they would ever be able to recover if Yoav actually took offense to Jamier.

Fearing the worst, he then immediately called his father, stammering nervously the entire time.

As for Vincy, she had never found herself facing such a predicament. She was now so frightened that without any warning, she burst into tears!

However, her reaction was understandable. After all, she was a girl who had just graduated and started doing her own business. She had never gotten in touch with big shots such as the Lintons, which further fuelled her fear.

Even Lennard was terrified to the point of almost crying. Holding back his tears, he too called his father to ask for his advice.

“All of you don’t have to be afraid! After all, you really didn’t do anything! I’ll help you take the blame!” said Yuna, seeing how frightened they were.

The celebrity had noticed that all of them were in their twenties and assumed that most of them had just graduated from university.

Despite knowing that she was dealing with a big shot, Maia had still stepped in to prevent Yuna from getting hurt. How could Yuna simply bear to see her and her group take the blame for her?

It was only natural for her to want to calm them down.

While it was true that Yuna knew that Maia had done nothing wrong, her calm exterior was contrasted by the slowly growing fear in her mind at that moment. She too was honestly slightly afraid as she continued pondering how to deal with the situation.

A short while later, Yuna contacted her company before detailing everything that had happened to them.

“...Ah, I see! Very well!”

After talking for a while, Yuna’s expression turned somber.

“How is it, Yuna?” asked Maia in a slightly worried tone.

Chapter 676

Maia’s group then immediately surrounded Yuna.

Yuna herself shook her head as she rather anxiously explained, “Even the people at my company are quite anxious now. At the moment, they’re still thinking of ways to resolve the issue. They’ve even contacted Mr. Zatyra. However, since Yoav sustained actual injuries this time, my company’s quite worried that even Mr. Zatyra won’t be able to handle the situation all that well. What more, I’m just a simple celebrity, so he definitely won’t have a fall out with the Lintons just because of me. While it’s true that Yoav was the one who stirred the conflict up first, the fact that he’s the only one who got hurt complicates everything!”

If only Yoav hadn’t gotten hurt, Barry could’ve easily tackled the issue! Everything was so complicated now because of the injury he sustained.

They couldn't tell Barry to trouble the Crawfords either since that was pretty much equivalent to them resigning their jobs right there and then.

There was simply no one foolish enough to try taking the blame for such a major issue, especially since it only involved a single celebrity and a few of her fans.

"Then... What should we do?" asked Vincy, still in tears.

"Let's stay calm for now. I'll try using my own connections to help with the situation. Who should I ask for help from, Lila?"

Yuna's agent turned to look at her after hearing her name being called.

After a short pause, Lila then said, "Let's forget about the entertainment center for now. At the moment, I have a single person in mind. As long as we're able to get him to help us, we should probably be fine in the end. What more, all he needs to do is say a few things on our behalf!"

"Go on... Who is it?" asked Yuna.

"Remember when someone asked you for your contact information during your show the other day? Mr. Yoel Holden? If I recall correctly, back when he organized a grand party which you attended, didn't he say that you could ask him for help should anything happen?"

"Yoel Holden? That super rich person from Surgis City? That Yoel?"

It was clear that Maia and the others had heard about Yoel before. While they were surprised as they looked at each other, they were simultaneously overjoyed. If Mr. Holden really did lend them a hand in this, the entire situation would become so much easier to deal with.

“That’s the only option we have that I can see for now. You know, Mr. Holden knows quite a number of rich heirs. Even that grand party— that I mentioned earlier—was hosted by Mr. Holden for a mysterious rich heir. I can safely say that he has his fair share of tricks and connections up his sleeve. If we do manage to get him to help us, I predict that the situation can be resolved with just a simple phone call!”

“Alright, I’ll give it a try!” replied Yuna, nodding slightly as she began dialing Yoel’s number.

After a brief moment, Yoel picked the phone up.

While she was surprised that he had picked her call up so quickly, she wasted no time detailing the ins and outs of the incident.

A while later, Yuna ended the call with a smile on her face.

“Everything’s fine now. Mr. Holden told me that he’ll use his connections to help us resolve this issue!”

Hearing that, Maia and the others were delighted. This was especially so for Maia since her main reason for being in County Salford was still to undergo a secret mission.

She had been worried that all sorts of issues would arise to hinder her mission before Mr. Holden agreed to step in.

While they awaited Mr. Holden's next call, Maia and the others stood around Yuna who was describing the events of the party that Mr. Holden had previously hosted.

Since it was their first time talking so much with a celebrity whom they all idolized, it was natural for all of them to be excited.

Gerald on the other hand, was feeling quite uneasy just being there.

He had earlier been prepared to lend Maia and the others a hand if they were really at a dead end. After all, Yuna was technically his subordinate as well.

Even if Yuna wasn't present in the equation, he wouldn't have just stood there doing nothing if he knew they were in trouble.

After hearing that Yoel was willing to help them, Gerald knew that he no longer needed to make a move.

However, it wasn't long after Yuna's call ended when Gerald received a Line message from Yoel.

"Haha! I need your help with something, brother!"

Upon reading his message, Gerald couldn't help but smile bitterly. He could very well guess what that something was. However, he pretended not to know anything about the situation and proceeded to ask Yoel about what kind of help he needed.

As was expected, Yoel wanted Gerald to contact Zack so that Zack could, in turn, use his own connections to handle the Lintons.

Yoel himself liked asking help from Zack since he didn't usually prefer asking his father for assistance whenever he came face to face with trouble.

However, after asking for Zack's aid on numerous occasions, even Yoel became embarrassed to seek him out for help.

This was why Yoel was now asking Gerald for help instead.

"So be it!" replied Gerald, his smile still bitter.

Before long, he detailed the entire incident to Zack and Zack started working on it immediately.

Around half an hour later, Yuna was so anxious that she was almost about to send a message to Yoel to enquire him about the situation.

Before she was able to hit the send button, all of them saw the area's manager running toward them.

“Miss Yames, Mr. Linton just notified us that the entire issue has been resolved! He’ll forget about what happened today, so you may all leave now!” relayed the manager.

“Alright then. Thank you, manager,” replied Yuna before heaving a long sigh of relief.

Maia and the others on the other hand, simply looked at each other excitedly.

How impressive Mr. Holden was!

Chapter 677

“Thank you so much for dealing with the situation, Yuna! You really know lots of people!” said Maia excitedly.

“Why are you even thanking me? I should be the one thanking all of you! While I do want to at least treat you and your friends to a proper meal for helping me out, it pains me to say that I have to rush back to the company immediately first. How about this? Here’s my number. If you run into any trouble in future, don’t hesitate to ring me up!”

It was clear that Yuna was still feeling grateful to Maia for stepping in to save her earlier.

Since she also knew that Maia was a sincere fan of hers, it made sense for Yuna to be particularly concerned over her.

After leaving her contact information with Maia, she left the scene.

“I’m super envious of you Maia! To think that you’d actually manage to get into Yuna’s good books!” said Vincy as soon as Yuna left.

“It’s not that amazing... Either way, let’s leave for now! It’ll be embarrassing if we accidentally bump into those people again later!”

While Maia didn’t explicitly show it, she was beyond happy.

However, since it was true that none of the others were in the mood to enjoy themselves anymore, the decision to leave was unanimous.

Before leaving, however, Maia turned to look at Gerald.

“You guys leave first. I’ll be staying here!” said Gerald, thinking that Maia was indicating for him to leave with them.

“Humph! Did you honestly just assume that I wanted you to leave together with us? No, Gerald, I simply turned to look at you to tell you something! In the past, you had nothing else going for you aside from your above average academic results! Even then, you at least still had that! Now however, I truly have a reason to completely look down on you. After all, you’re the kind of scum who’ll only appear if good things are present! But when bad things happen, you’ll just silently stand at the side! You truly disgust me, you know?” sneered Maia with zero filter to her words.

“Don’t say such things to Gerald! Everyone was scared witless earlier!” replied Vincy.

“Indeed, I won’t deny that, but how come he was able to act so quickly when he first followed us in earlier? Ignoring that, maybe the rest of you didn’t realize it, but I saw Gerald sneakily moving to the side earlier. That son of a gun was definitely trying to sneak away if things didn’t go smoothly! I saw it with my very own eyes, you know? Don’t you simply find that frustrating?” growled Maia angrily.

What Maia had said couldn’t have been further from the truth. What she had assumed to be him trying to sneak away, was simply him moving to the side to send Zack that Line message earlier.

It was clear as day that Maia had misunderstood him. However, Gerald simply remained silent. He didn’t need to explain anything to her.

“Let’s just go have a meal somewhere, Maia. Don’t waste your energy trying to talk to him,” said Jamier at that moment.

Hearing that, Lennard simply began dragging Vincy away. In no time at all, Gerald was alone again.

Gerald could only sigh in his mind before laughing bitterly.

Looking at his cell phone, he then thought to himself, ‘Well this is just wonderful! To think that a scolding was my reward for helping her!’

However, he quickly let it slide. After all, he had more important things to deal with. He was still more worried about the incident regarding Queta.

With that, he hurriedly began ascending the rest of the mountain.

“Mr. Crawford!” called out the old man from earlier with a smile as he saw Gerald approaching.

The old man went by the name of Wace, and he was a master of calligraphy and antique collecting in the southwest of the Salford Province.

“So, have you managed to identify the origins of the jade piece, Mr. Wace?” asked Gerald.

Hearing his question, Mr. Wace then nodded before saying, “I have indeed! While it’s true that I recognized the pendant when I first saw it, I still needed some time to properly analyze it to be completely sure. Now, I’m certain without a doubt that this specific kind of jade pendant can only belong to the Fenderson family in County Salford. I know for certain since each descendent of the Fenderson family owns a similar jade pendant. Another interesting thing about this kind of jade pendant, is that it’s divided into three levels. Since this particular pendant is top-rated, I can only assume that its rightful owner is Xara Fenderson, a direct descendant of the Fenderson family!”

“The Fenderson family? While I’ve investigated several large families here, not once have I come across the name, ‘Fenderson.’” said Gerald as he nodded.

Mr. Wace simply chuckled when he heard that.

“I wouldn’t blame you for not knowing about them, Mr. Crawford. After all, The Fenderson family has been lying low for more than a few decades now. They’re so good at doing it that there’s barely any news about the family available to the public at all! In the past, the family was considered to be quite powerful and influential not only in County Salford, but also the rest of Weston. However, in just one night, all news about the family simply ceased to exist! Because of the lack of news from the Fendersons, nobody talks about their family anymore.”

Chapter 678

“...Ah, is that so?”

Hearing that, both Gerald and Queta were slightly disappointed.

Barry himself frowned while saying, “You mentioned that despite them being a powerful family, all news regarding them disappeared in a single night, correct? I wonder what drastic changes happened back then... Could the Fendersons have simply gone bankrupt?”

“That’s quite impossible. If they had truly gone bankrupt, how could they have silenced the reporters from reporting about the incident?” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

Mr. Wace smiled after hearing what Gerald had to say.

“Mr. Crawford’s right. For those from the older generation like me, we believe that the Fenderson family didn’t actually fall into bankruptcy. Instead, we think that they underwent the exact opposite of that. Rather than going bankrupt, the family instead amplified in power, or at least that’s what we assume. Regardless, the family never left the Salford Province, and they still reside here to this very day. Some have even

theorized that many of the properties belonging to the large families in the Salford Province are dependent on the Fendersons. However, no matter how much they investigated it, they still failed to find out anything relevant to the theory!”

‘How odd... Why would the Fendersons keep such a low profile for no good reason? However, based on the various clues I’ve come across, those from the Fenderson family have shown themselves before in a few events, or so Zack says. Mr. Weyham himself had met a rather exceptional youth wearing a similar jade pendant in Wendall City before...’ Gerald thought to himself.

As he thought about it, the girl from earlier crossed Gerald’s mind again. She simply resembled Queta too much for it to be a coincidence. Aside from that, she also seemed to have a very strong family background.

‘Tsk... Could it be that she’s actually a Fenderson...?’

Gerald could feel that he was close to the truth.

After that, he thanked Mr. Wace before leaving together with Queta.

Before parting ways with Barry, however, Gerald told him to enquire about the Fenderson family. Naturally, Gerald’s intent was to get him to investigate that girl though he didn’t go into detail about her.

“My grandson, how goes your investigation? Why are you only back now?” asked Finnley the moment they returned to the villa which Barry had arranged for them.

As soon as he saw Finnley, Gerald thought to himself, 'The Salford Province is Finnley's hometown. He's also quite a capable person... I wonder if he knows anything about this.'

"It's going well. Also, Mr. Quick, have you heard about the Fenderson family in the Salford Province before?" asked Gerald as he bit into an apple that Queta had just handed to him.

"What? The Fenderson family? Are you looking for someone within that family?" asked Mr. Quick in a shocked tone, his eyes widened.

"We are. Do you know anything about them?"

"Please tell us if you do know anything about them, Mr. Quick. It's very important to us!" added Queta as she handed an apple to Finnley as well.

"Hm... I... I've never heard about them! Despite living in the Salford Province for so many years, I've never heard about the Fendersons!" replied Finnley as he shook his head, looking quite perplexed.

Seeing this, Gerald and Queta simply looked at each other.

"Do you really not know anything about them?"

"I say only the truth!" replied Finnley, biting into his apple.

Hearing that, Gerald felt that the only remaining clue that they had about the family was also their biggest one. They needed to find out more about that girl, particularly her origins.

Sensing that he needed to be more specific, Gerald then told Barry to try identifying that girl.

Sometime later however, Barry was still unable to gather any information about her, even after using various methods.

Slightly disheartened, Queta then turned to look at Gerald before asking, “What should we do now, Gerald?”

In her mind, she kept thinking about the same things.

‘Who was the one who abandoned me in the past? And what drove them to do such a thing...?’

Gerald himself wanted to find out who exactly that woman was to his father. He also wanted to know whether Queta was truly his younger sister.

It was at that moment when Gerald paused for a moment before his eyes lit up.

“Worry not, Queta! We may still have another chance!”

“A chance?” asked Queta in surprise.

In his mind, Gerald thought, ‘That unlicensed tour guide I met with earlier might be our next best shot.’

‘Come to think of it, that slick plump man cheated me of three hundred dollars!’

Gerald recalled the moment when he had heard the uproar near the hot spring area just as he was about to give that man a piece of his mind. Because of that, Gerald had failed to get him to share more information about the girl.

However, Gerald was certain that that man definitely knew more about her. After all, the middle-aged man had said himself that the girl had been there twice.

After making up his mind, it wasn’t difficult for Gerald to locate where the man lived.

It was around noon when Gerald and his men drove to the unlicensed tour guide’s house.

Upon arriving, the tour guide—who was thankfully at home—recognized Gerald and instantly became nervous.

After all, he had only cheated the three hundred dollars off Gerald knowing full well that Gerald wasn’t a local.

Unfortunately, local or not, Gerald was now at his home with a group of black-suited bodyguards standing behind him.

“Um... Good day sir... What exactly are you planning to do?” asked the middle-aged man as he chuckled nervously.

“Oh, I don’t plan to do anything. I just came here to meet you!” replied Gerald as he slid his left hand into his pocket before casually entering the man’s house without even waiting to be invited in.

Once he was inside, Gerald immediately sat on the man’s couch as his subordinates entered as well. Each of his subordinates looked like men who shouldn’t be trifled with.

Finding the television remote, Gerald then began flipping through the channels. He was deliberately acting like he owned the place, not even bothering to say a word to the middle-aged man.

Seeing that, the man gulped, uncertain of what to do since he had no idea what Gerald had in plan for him.

Not knowing what else to do, he went toward Gerald before saying, “Um... Sir, I really don’t think I need that three hundred dollars anymore... If you look around, you’ll notice that my family’s condition isn’t all that optimal. In addition, there are both old and young ones living in this house... I’ll get straight to the point. I’m in quite dire need of money and I admit to cheating you of three hundred dollars... However! I’ve not touched a single penny of that money, and I’ll gladly return all of it to you!”

The plump man was obviously experienced in his craft. He knew how to read the situation well, and with Gerald here, the slick man knew that he couldn't afford to displease him.

Hearing that, Gerald simply pinched the bridge of his nose before smiling slightly.

"Oh, don't get me wrong. I'm not here to retrieve that money. On the contrary, if you're willing to cooperate and tell me a little more about something, I'll hand you even more cash!"

Hearing that, the plump man then forced a smile before saying, "Is this about that rich young lady from before? Why are you so interested in her, sir?"

"Hmm?"

Without even waiting for Gerald to say another word, a bodyguard standing beside him instantly glared at the middle-aged man.

"Ah, I understand. I shouldn't ask what isn't appropriate. I get it now. Regardless, I've truly only met her once. While I know that she's both rich and influential, I'm honestly clueless about her origins. However, I do know something else. She's about your age and she studies in the same school as my son! He even knows her!" replied the man as honestly as possible, knowing very well that he couldn't mess around with Gerald.

He then stood up and shouted, "Come over here, Marvin! These people aren't here looking for trouble!"

“Oh? I see! Coming!”

Soon after, the door to what seemed like a bedroom creaked open and out stepped a plump young man. His body's shape was almost identical to his father's.

Still, it was rather ridiculous how the middle-aged man had made it sound like people coming over to cause trouble for him was nothing new.

“Hurry up and tell this fine gentleman about the rich young lady from your school!”

“Well... She's equally as mysterious, powerful, and influential in our school. While she studies in the class beside mine, we have our union class together. However, she never says a word to us! All of us are quite frankly terrified of her and nobody really dares to take the initiative to speak with her, not even the teachers! Though who can really blame us when she's always surrounded by so many powerful bodyguards!” replied Marven with a chuckle.

“I do, however, sit in the row beside her at times to eavesdrop on her conversations with her friends. Due to that, I came to realize that they enjoyed traveling all over the place! It's also the reason why my dad was able to act as their tour guide at the scenic spot!”

So the plump young man was equally as witty as his father. It was clear that everything that he did served to help his father gain more business.

Regardless, after hearing what Marven had to say, Gerald became much more intrigued by the girl. What a mysterious person she was.

Chapter 680

By linking the new information with the clues he had previously discovered, Gerald could sense that it was just as Mr. Wace had said. The Fendersons were still powerful, yet they seemed like they were hiding from something.

Gerald also felt that he could inadvertently alert the enemy if he acted rashly by directly inquiring the girl about it. If that were to happen, he would only gain the complete opposite of what he desired.

As he came up with something in his mind, Gerald then asked, “Does she go to school daily and attend all her lessons on time?”

“Well she doesn’t really go to school daily. However, when there’s a lesson in her schedule, she’ll be sure to attend alongside at least one of her friends. Are you looking for her? I’ll warn you ahead of time that she’s extremely unpleasant to be around with. It’s near impossible for anyone to even make a move on her. You know, in the past, several rich heirs who felt like they were rich and powerful enough tried to gain her affection. For some reason, however, all of them eventually ended up refraining from trying to woo her! Due to their strange actions, everyone now avoids her. She truly is a cold and aloof beauty!”

“I see. What’s her name? And is her surname Fenderson?” asked Gerald again.

Marven simply shook his head before saying, “None of the teachers ever mention her name. As a result, none of us actually know what she’s called! However, on rare

occasions, I've heard her friends addressing her as Jasmine before. Regarding her surname, I really can't help you with that!"

"Well, alright then!" replied Gerald as he shook his head in resignation.

Quite frankly, Gerald wasn't really afraid of that girl's family's influence and power.

Honestly, he felt it would actually be quite lucky for him to actually be able to meet her again.

His mind was busy brimming with ideas at that moment.

"Which class are you in?" inquired Gerald.

Once Marven notified him about his course and year, Gerald gestured at his subordinates to hand them some money for their compliance.

With that done, he finally left the house.

Since he was trying not to alert the enemy, he needed to act as indirectly as he could. Once he managed to enter the school, he would then use that chance to get in touch with Jasmine.

As long as he kept his eyes on her, he would finally be able to track Xara down. This was his plan for now.

After returning to the villa, he immediately told Barry to make some arrangements. Gerald wanted Barry to use his connections to create a chance for him to get in touch with Jasmine.

Barry himself found no issue with that plan.

While all this was happening, the function at the television station in Hong Kong had just ended.

Before leaving, Gerald's sister had told Mila to meet her at a seaport in the evening.

Since Jessica was only going to remain there for a little while longer, Mila knew better than to be late for their meeting.

Nearing evening, Mila hailed a taxi to the promised location. When she arrived, she met a subordinate of Jessica's who had been ordered to wait there for Mila.

No ships were present and the only thing there aside from them was the vast ocean.

All of a sudden, a roar of laughter could be heard.

“Let's just wait here. You may not know about this, but Mr. Yan's pulled no small amount of strings in order to receive us this time around!”

It was at that moment when Mila saw a group of five girls talking happily among themselves. Each of them looked equally excited and they seemed to be walking in her direction.

When she finally recognized who one of the girls was, Mila was stunned.

The girl in question noticed Mila around that time as well. It was then when she stopped walking and her expression became quite interesting.

Chapter 681

“It’s you?”

“It’s you?”

Mila and the girl spoke in unison. The both of us obviously did not expect to run into each other.

“Alice, who is she? Why does she look so familiar?”

One of the girls asked curiously.

The leader of the girls was none other than Alice.

“Oh! She is Mila, the only student from our university who managed to secure an internship in the Hong Kong Television Station!” Alice replied a little enviously.

All of them were from the Department of Broadcasting and Hosting in Mayberry University. Therefore, Alice naturally had the opportunity to come and learn here too.

However, a team of thirty people would be assigned to television stations and also several newspaper departments based on a certain percentage. Only those with the best scores and results would be given the best learning opportunities.

“Oh! I know, Alice! Is she your ex-boyfriend’s current girlfriend?”

Several girls who were standing aside suddenly began looking at Mila with a different expression in their eyes.

After all, best friends would always be best friends. They would always side with their own best friends.

Since the ex-girlfriend and current girlfriend were both a little confused at this time, the situation was actually a little awkward.

Alice had nothing to hide from her best friends.

Didn’t the girls already talk about this when they first arrived in Hong Kong anyway? Of course, they talked about boys more than anything else. Moreover, they even started comparing their own boyfriends.

To be honest, compared to her friends, the first person that she dated, who was none other than Quinton was nothing worthy at all.

In fact, after some time, Alice had also begun to deny the fact that she had ever been in a relationship with Quinton.

After all, the only reason why she got together with Quinton was because she thought that he was the one who had helped her. Unexpectedly, the person who had helped her was actually none other than Gerald.

Moreover, who could possibly be even more outstanding compared to Gerald?

After all, Gerald was always so calm and restrained. Alice really liked his temperament too.

Therefore, even though the both of them were only together for one day, Alice was still very proud to tell everyone that Gerald was her ex-boyfriend. She even told everyone that he was her one and only ex-boyfriend.

Of course, when she revealed the fact that Gerald's identity was none other than the great Mr. Crawford from Mayberry City, her roommates were all in shock. They could only cry out and lament at the fact that it was a pity they broke up.

Haha!

Alice's heart started hurting when she thought about Gerald.

If nothing else happened back then, she would have already been married into a very wealthy and influential family now.

But...alas!

The word Gerald seemed to be like a haze after that and it made Alice live in the shadow all the time.

This was also the reason why she had chosen to come to Hong Kong. It was because she wanted to avoid any memories that she had of Gerald.

Therefore, Alice had an indescribable feeling when she saw Mila at this moment.

However, that kind of feeling was obviously less intense now compared to the past.

“Are you and Gerald still doing well?”

Alice asked with a touch of pride and arrogance on her face.

“Yes! We are doing pretty good!”

Mila also could not help but feel a little jealous when she saw Alice. After all, Gerald had once confessed his love for her at the corridor because of a misunderstanding.

Even though Mila knew that nothing happened at all between the both of them, she could not help but feel uncomfortable when she thought about it.

Therefore, Mila felt that there was no need for her to tell Alice that she had gotten into an argument with Gerald.

“That’s great then. I wish the best for the both of you!”

Alice replied as she smiled, with a seemingly indifferent attitude.

That’s right. If it were one month ago, Alice would certainly feel very uncomfortable and even jealous when she saw Mila.

She would feel very jealous and envious of Mila because she had stolen her boyfriend from her.

She had robbed her of the glory and wealth that she should have had. After all, she was the person that Gerald had been initially interested in from the very beginning.

“Hmph! So, you simply have a rich boyfriend in Mayberry City, right? Alice is not doing that bad either. She is favored by Mr. Yan from Hong Kong now. Both Mr. Yan and Mr. Crawford come from the same wealthy and influential family backgrounds. So, they are not that different anyway. Furthermore, Mr. Yan is from Harvard!”

The girls who were standing aside could not help but compare Gerald to Mr. Yan.

They wanted to win back some face for Alice.

“Oh!” Mila simply nodded slightly.

This was the reason why Alice had changed a little.

Yes, she used to think that Gerald was really superb and impressive. However, she could not get together with him because she was the one who had constantly despised and looked down on him from the very beginning. This was the reason why her love story ended so hastily.

Remorse was the best word to describe how she felt.

Chapter 682

However, Alice only came to a realization after she came out of the circle in Mayberry City.

It turned out that the world was really very big.

Gerald was not the only person in this world who had that kind of worth and value.

Therefore, Alice’s feelings for Gerald began to fade and she no longer had such strong feelings for him anymore.

“Ahhh! A cruise ship!”

At this time, one of Alice's friends who was standing beside her suddenly spoke as she started jumping excitedly.

"That is Mr. Yan's cruise ship! Alice, Mr. Yan is driving his luxury cruise ship to pick us up!"

There was a very luxurious cruise ship on the sea at this moment.

A young man dressed in a bathrobe was holding a glass of red wine in his hand as he stood aboard the cruise ship.

This should be the Mr. Yan that the girls were talking about.

"Mr. Yan is really handsome!"

"That's right! Alice is really very blessed! It was originally a very simple tea party, but Alice actually got acquainted with Mr. Yan there. Alice, I think that you should just accept Mr. Yan's pursuit!"

Alice's friends cried out in excitement.

Alice remained silent and she simply stared at Mr. Yan who was approaching them with a smile on his face.

The cruise ship arrived very soon.

Mr. Yan quickly came down from the cruise ship.

“Alice, sorry for being late!”

Mr. Yan said as he looked at Alice with a smile on his face.

“It’s alright!”

Alice gently smoothen her hair as she tucked it behind her ears.

“Mr. Yan, when will our cruise party start?”

The other girls asked excitedly.

“We can start immediately...okay?”

After Mr. Yan was done speaking, he was suddenly taken aback.

He looked at Mila who was standing aside at this time. She was obviously more beautiful and had an even better temperament compared to Alice.

“Alice, is this your friend too?”

Mr. Yan asked in surprise as he took off his sunglasses.

“No. I guess she is just here by the beach to walk around and relax!”

Alice replied with some dissatisfaction.

“Oh! Then, beauty, why don't you get on my cruise ship together with us then? We can have a cruise dinner party together!”

Mr. Yan suddenly bowed slightly before Mila as he extended a very gentlemanly invitation to her.

“No thanks!”

Mila only responded coldly with two words when she was faced with Mr. Yan's enthusiastic invitation.

This made the expression on Mr. Yan's face turn very ugly in an instant.

No girl had ever rejected him ever since he was a child.

Moreover, he was getting rejected publicly at this time.

“Beauty, I am afraid that you still do not know who I am, right?”

Mr. Yan could not help but shook his head as he smiled wryly.

He did not extend his invitation to her again.

“Mr. Yan, she already has a boyfriend. Her boyfriend is none other than Mr. Crawford from Mayberry City!”

One of the girls who was standing aside suddenly spoke up.

“Oh! It’s no wonder then!”

Mr. Yan smiled bitterly before he said, “However, even though he is a wealthy and influential man in Mayberry City, his influence and presence is only known there. Since you refuse to join us, I am sorry then! Alice, let’s go. I will bring all of you out to enjoy the sea breeze at night!”

Mr. Yan said as he looked at Alice.

At this moment, Alice smiled as she nodded.

On one hand, she was looking at Mila with a somewhat arrogant expression on her face.

It seemed as though she was trying to say, “So what if the man who abandoned me is finally a very capable and influential man? I can always find a man with even better qualities and abilities to pursue me!”

And you, Mila, would always lose out to me even though you are a goddess that even girls would always admire.

“Ahhh! Alice, look at that...that...what is that?”

At this time, the girls suddenly squealed again. However, this time, it was no longer out of excitement, but shock instead!

Chapter 683

The group of people was all surprised by the sound. When they looked up, they saw about a dozen of the top and most luxurious cruise ships appearing on the surface of the sea in the dim night.

Why was it the top and most luxurious?

This was because when they saw Mr. Yan’s cruise ship, they already thought that it was the most luxurious cruise ship that they had ever seen. However, looking at the dozens of cruise ships on the sea now, it seemed as though those cruise ships were all as dazzling and incredible as a galaxy battleship!

It was an extraordinary scene.

“Oh my god! How much would one of those cruise ships cost?”

The girls could not help but squeal in excitement.

Even Mila was taken aback at this time.

Mr. Yan was even more shocked and stunned. He was in a complete daze.

“Mr. Yan, are all of those cruise ships for the Cruise Ship Festival tonight? We are really very excited now!”

The girl asked Mr. Yan as she grabbed his arm excitedly.

That’s right. After all, only those really wealthy and influential businessmen and celebrities would usually be eligible to participate in the Cruise Ship Festival.

Any ordinary person could only watch this kind of event on television.

However, these girls really did not expect to see this kind of big scene when they were simply participating in the Cruise Ship Festival for the first time.

Alice also turned pale in excitement.

“No...no, these cruise ships were all designed by the world’s top experts and professionals. These cruise ships must be from Tiescol Island. Each and every single one of these cruise ships is priceless!” Mr. Yan replied enthusiastically.

After all, even though Mr. Yan was very knowledgeable and had already seen much of the world, this was the first time that he was actually witnessing a scene like this.

“Ahhh? Mr. Yan, what is this Tiescol Island that you are talking about?”

The girls asked as they have never heard of it before.

“Tiescol Island is a small island on the sea. I only heard this from my dad. There is an absolutely wealthy and world-class person who bought the entire island. That person built up the entire island and turned it into a place that seemed like a majestic palace on the sea. In short, the entire island was simply very luxurious and grand!”

“Ahhh? We have never heard of that before! Is there really such a big and grand house? What does it look like? Mr. Yan, can you bring us there to take a look at it?”

All the girls asked in anticipation.

Mr. Yan shook his head before he said, “I am afraid that would be impossible. To be honest, my dad was lucky enough to have seen it once. However, he could only stay on the island for less than a few minutes. He was not even allowed to take any pictures of it at all. However, my dad said that this short few minutes on that island was totally worth it in this lifetime. Therefore, I am also very surprised. After all, what is my dad’s identity? He was actually seriously in awe and he was filled with praise for that place!”

After Mr. Yan said that, everyone was filled with even more exhilaration and expectations.

Alice even thought to herself that it would simply be perfect if they could be lucky enough to see that island for themselves.

It was a pity.

“But don’t be so discouraged. Girls, I will try to bring you there later so that we can take a look at the scenery of the island. However, we can only look at it from a far distance!” Mr. Yan said with a wry smile on his face.

“That’s great!”

The girls were all very excited.

At this time, the top and most luxurious cruise ships had already arrived.

Mr. Yan, Alice, and the rest of the girls did not dare to continue speaking loudly anymore and they simply stepped to the side.

“Oh my god! Just take a look at the staff working on the Tiescol Island cruise ships! All of them are wearing extremely expensive clothes!”

“Of course, their clothes are expensive!”

“Damn it! I would be willing to just work as an employee on one of those cruise ships too!”

One of the girls could not help but say.

“Sure enough, there will always be people who are even greater and better than us in this world. Before this, I thought that Gerald was the best and most outstanding person. I only realized that I was wrong when I met Mr. Yan and I opened my eyes to a brand-new world. Now, I have encountered an even greater and more outstanding world today!”

Alice secretly thought the same with a very envious look in her eyes.

As for Mila, she was also clearly in shock. She also took a step backward as she stood at the side.

The cruise ship soon arrived.

There were more than twenty waitresses who came down from the cruise ship successively. They stood on both sides of the port. These waitresses were all dressed in a manner and style that were somewhat similar to those of the European aristocrats in the last century.

After that, a middle-aged man walked out of the cruise ship.

“Ahhh? They seem to be walking towards us!” The girls screamed in delight.

Alice on the other hand, also held her breath at this moment.

Chapter 684

After that, the middle-aged man walked past them directly.

After that, he came before the surprised Mila in a very respectful manner.

“Miss Mila, the eldest young lady sent me here to pick you up!”

The middle-aged man bowed very deeply and he was very polite to Mila. He naturally knew how Mila looked like and where she was waiting at this time.

“Pick...pick me up?”

Mila looked at the dozens of cruise ships that were docking and she was seriously stunned.

Gerald’s sister Jessica, was really rich!

“Of course, Miss Mila. We came here to specially pick you up today. I am really sorry to keep you waiting for a long time!”

As soon as she heard the steward’s words, the girl who was mocking Mila before this was so stunned that her mouth was hanging wide open!

She had been mocking her and making fun of her just now. As a result, she simply did not care about the Cruise Ship Festival at all.

Mr. Yan finally understood that it was no wonder why Mila was so cold and indifferent towards him earlier. He instantly understood the gap between him and Mr. Crawford at this time. He could not help but feel a little foolish for even attempting to show off in front of Mila just now.

As for Alice, she was naturally in disbelief.

“You...why are you picking her up and why are you using such a luxurious entourage to pick her up?”

Alice was really feeling very anxious at this time.

Regardless of whether Mila was her love rival or just an imaginary enemy, no one would ever want their enemy to be so much stronger compared to themselves.

Furthermore, at this time, Mila was so strong to the point that it was already completely incomparable.

This would affect a person's mood directly. This was exactly what Alice was feeling at this moment.

Who was Mila? She was her own love rival, and she was her ex-boyfriend's current girlfriend.

However, she was actually receiving this kind of exclusive treatment now.

She was obviously feeling very jealous and envious.

Therefore, she could not help but asked the steward this question directly.

“Haha! This is our young master, Mr. Crawford's girlfriend. So, we naturally have to give her the best and most extraordinary treatment!”

As for the steward, he only answered Alice's questions because he thought that they were all Mila's friends.

Boom!

Alice was in shock and her face turned pale in an instant.

The thing that she really did not want to hear and the thing that she feared the most finally happened.

She did not even feel so anxious or excited just now.

The reason why she was so eager to confirm these facts with the steward was because she had been wondering whether Mila was receiving this kind of treatment because of Gerald.

After all, Mila's family was not that incredible.

However, what should she do if it was really because of Gerald then? What should she do then? Ahhh!

Alice felt as though she was going insane.

"Is the Mr. Crawford that you are talking about, Gerald Crawford? You are all so powerful, so why are you giving that Mr. Crawford from Mayberry City so much face? Why?!"

Alice was acting a little hysterically at this time.

"That's right, miss. Mr. Crawford is none other than our young master, Mr. Gerald Crawford. This island was bought by Mr. Crawford's elder sister as a place for her to take a short break and vacation!"

The steward replied once again.

"Ahhh! What?"

“Gerald’s elder sister is that very powerful world class person?! Does that mean that Gerald can also live on that island if he wanted to then?”

Alice asked and her eyes were red at this time.

“That’s right. However, if Mr. Crawford really wanted to live on an island, he could just buy another island of his own. Anyway, that small amount of money would not even be worth a single penny to Mr. Crawford!”

“What?!!!”

At this time, the five girls who were standing in a row had their mouths wide open in shock.

As for Alice, she felt as though she was already out of breath. She felt that she would only be able to completely rid herself of this feeling by jumping into the sea and drowning herself to death.

It turned out that Gerald’s identity was not simply Mr. Crawford from Mayberry City...

Chapter 685

They watched Mila leave.

The girls had already stopped talking. Aside from feeling very envious, there was also a hint of jealousy in their eyes.

Only Alice had a very complicated mood at this time.

If only she had just focused on a person's character from the very beginning.

If that was the case, she would have chosen to get into a relationship with Gerald back then.

After all, she had never been in love before at that time. She wanted to get into a relationship. That was the reason why she had asked Naomi to introduce a guy to her.

Naomi even called her the night before her birthday just to talk to her about Gerald.

“Alice, just meet him. He will also come for my birthday party tomorrow. How do I put this? He is a very dedicated and loyal person. He is also very handsome. After all, this will be your first time falling in love. Therefore, you should look for an honest and good man so that you can keep him under control! If that is the case, then Gerald will certainly be the best candidate! He will definitely treat you very well!”

“Pfft! Alright then. Since you already said such good things about him, then I will just meet him tomorrow then! Hehe!”

At this time, Alice was actually looking forward to it. In fact, she even felt that it would not be an issue if Gerald were poor.

However, after meeting them and after hearing all the embarrassing things that Danny had been saying about Gerald, Alice could not stop herself from despising and looking down on Gerald.

She felt that even if she had to find a boyfriend, it would probably be better for her to find a wealthier boyfriend then.

Alice's view and perception of love began to change a little from that moment.

Therefore, she really could have gotten together with Gerald back then.

And everything that belonged to Mila now would have been hers then.

Money would just be a set of numbers to her in future. It would have lost all meaning. She would not even need to save up any money to be able to buy any luxury goods in future.

But...it was a pity that there were no buts!

It was already too late.

Alice clenched her fists tightly and she felt very dissatisfied deep inside.

"Alice, they have already left. So, why don't we leave now too?"

The few girls have already lost their interest to get on the cruise ship.

Otherwise, should they really get on the cruise ship, just so that they could see what other people's island looked like?

Hahaha! That was Gerald's elder sister's island but she could only look at it from the sidelines.

She could not help but feel a little useless as she thought about it.

"I will not resign to fate!"

Alice looked at the cruise ships that were disappearing into the night as she reminded herself secretly.

At this time, Mila had already landed on the island.

The entire island was just as luxurious and grand as Mr. Yan made it out to be. It looked like an extremely large and luxurious palace.

It was so beautiful and shocking!

She had already entered the estate but she would need to need to ride on a special car to get to where Jessica was.

It took about a thirty minutes ride before Mila finally arrived at a villa in the estate.

After that, she stepped out of the car.

“Hurry up and let me have a look! I want to see what my sister-in-law looks like! I want to see her!”

“What’s the hurry? She will already be coming here soon.”

When Mila stepped out of the car, she saw a girl fighting with a boy.

The girl was trying to snatch a cell phone from the boy.

That boy was a chubby person and Mila had already met him before. He was none other than Yoel.

“Oh! Sister-in-law is here!”

When Yoel saw Mila, he hurriedly ran over to her.

After all, everything that happened during the day had really scared Yoel to death.

“Mm! Yes!”

Chapter 686

Mila hurriedly nodded.

“Ahhh? She is Mila? Godbrother’s girlfriend?”

That girl also ran over to Mila immediately.

She was biting her lip out of curiosity as she looked Mila up and down.

She looked like she was about eighteen years old. She was very adorable and she was also quite beautiful.

“My name is Melinda. Hello, Mila!”

Melinda said as she shook hands with Mila.

It seemed as though the both of them had a pretty good impression of each other.

Jessica was obviously looking for Mila for some reason. So, Melinda and Yoel did not say much and Mila went in directly.

“The eldest young lady took Melinda and Yoel in as her godsister and godbrother. Yoel is in a much better situation compared to Melinda, who is a little more pitiful. She was abandoned when she was three years old and Miss Crawford adopted her and brought her back with her. She loved her and doted on her very much. Melinda is usually very naughty but she actually has a very kind heart!”

The steward hurriedly explained as he led Mila in.

After that, they came to a very luxurious study room.

The steward knocked on the door.

“Come in!”

Mila walked into the room alone.

She saw Jessica lying on a recliner on an open-air rooftop, with a glass of red wine in her hand as she looked out.

“Hello, Jessica!” Mila greeted as she nodded.

“Mila, you don’t need to be so polite with me. I understand your situation too. You can just treat me as your own elder sister. So, why don’t we chat a little then? Besides that, you are my brother’s girlfriend. Don’t you think that I am obligated to entertain you because of your relationship to my brother? Sit down!”

Jessica put down her wine glass before she stood up.

After that, she smiled slightly as she looked at Mila.

“Sis, what do you want to talk about?” Mila asked.

“Well, although I have already gotten some intel, I think that it is still better for you to tell me everything in person. So, why don’t we talk about how you and Gerald met then?” Jessica replied.

Mila could not understand Jessica’s intentions and what she meant.

So, she simply told Jessica about how she met Gerald and also the details of their experiences together.

After listening to Mila, Jessica simply nodded and said, “So, you mean to say that the both of you have never experienced or gone through anything unforgettable together then. The both of you simply met just like that?”

“Yes, but sis, I think that the most important thing is for two people to be in love when they are together. Why do they have to experience or go through some unforgettable things together? In contrast, I feel that every moment with Gerald is unforgettable because of how he loves me and because of the way he treats me!”

When Mila heard Jessica’s question, she could not help but feel a little insecure deep in her heart.

This was because Jessica’s words pierced directly through her heart.

“Then, let me ask you another question. You are in a relationship with Gerald. So, have you ever thought of getting married to Gerald in future? If that is the case, are you thinking about it now or have you already thought about it before this and feel that both you and Gerald were destined to be together from the very beginning?” Jessica asked.

Mila immediately understood the meaning behind Jessica’s words.

If she were just together with Gerald to be in a relationship with him, then Jessica would not put too much thought into this matter.

However, if Mila wanted to get married to Gerald and subsequently become a member of the Crawford family, then things would not be that simple anymore. Moreover, Jessica was also afraid that Mila was only in a relationship with Gerald because of his money.

“You are also a very intelligent girl, Mila. So, I believe that you understand what I mean. You should also know very well that Gerald can actually be very silly and gullible when it comes to the relationship between a man and a woman. Gerald had been missing out on a lot of love and affection when he was younger because of certain rules and regulations in our family. So, he would feel exceptionally touched whenever a girl treated him well, even if it was just a very simple gesture!”

“I actually want to find out whether Gerald really loves you and I also want to find out what you like about Gerald. Of course, that would depend on whether you have any intentions to get married to Gerald. I will not ask any further questions if the both of you do not have any intentions of getting married. However, if you have the intention of marrying Gerald, then I will have to ask you a lot of questions then. This is because there are really a lot of rules and regulations in the Crawford family. These rules are also very

strict! Therefore, sometimes, I think that it is better to experience short-term pain rather than long-term pain!” Jessica replied.

“Sis, do you mean to say that Gerald and I will not end up getting married in the end? Do you believe that I only got in a relationship with Gerald because of money?” Mila asked.

Jessica smiled wryly before she said, “To be honest, yes. At the very least, based on some of the information that I obtained, that seems to be the case. Of course, I also know that you have an outstanding personality and character and you will not lie to Gerald. However, I am afraid that my parents will never allow you to get married to Gerald. After all, you have only witnessed the tip of the iceberg of the Crawford family’s strength and power. Therefore, you can already imagine how powerful and influential the Crawford family is. So, the Crawford family naturally have their own way of doing things and their own set of rules!”

Chapter 687

Mila could clearly understand what Jessica was trying to tell her now.

Jessica had also given her a very clear hint.

Mila could not help but feel that her heart was really in a lot of pain at this moment.

She originally thought that things would be very simple and that she would end up getting married to Gerald and that they would be able spend the rest of their lives together then.

However, looking at the way it was, it seemed as though this was completely impossible.

Gerald did not tell her everything in the past. Therefore, Mila only thought that he was just a very wealthy and influential person in Mayberry City.

But how would any ordinary person possibly know anything about his true identity and background?

“So, Mila, I hope that you will put some thoughts into this matter when you go back. You should think about how you are going to carry on your relationship with Gerald and which direction you would want to take in this relationship.”

Jessica patted Mila on her shoulder before she said, “You can stay here on this island tonight. I will bring someone to send you home tomorrow. Besides that, you can come to my Tiescol Island whenever you want to in future. However, Mila, there is something that you have to promise me. It is regarding the thing that I have mentioned to you before. I hope that you will not tell Gerald that the both of us have met up with one another today!”

Mila naturally nodded in response.

It was obvious that Jessica actually really liked Mila. However, Jessica was also helpless when it came to certain matters. The specific end result would depend entirely on Mila and Gerald’s reaction and decision.

Jessica was only telling them about this matter in advance because she loved and cared about them.

That night, Mila could not fall asleep at all.

She had thought of calling Gerald several times. However, she could not help but think of the fact that Gerald was always helping her from the very beginning.

After all, from the beginning to the end, she had not been able to do anything for Gerald at all. Instead, Gerald was the one who had been doing everything for her all this while!

It was the same case now. Mila had required Jessica's help even when she was in Hong Kong. Otherwise, she would not even have been able to deal with someone like Hallie on her own.

If she really wanted to be together with Gerald and spend the rest of her life with him, then she would have to learn how to be independent. That way, she would be able to share Gerald's worries and help him in future instead of adding to his burden.

Mila could only silently remind herself...

At the same time, Gerald had just gotten into his bed.

He picked up his cell phone and he was going to call Mila, as it has already become a habit for him to do so.

The both of them have not contacted each other for two to three days now. He would be lying if he said that he did not miss her at all.

However, after thinking about it, Gerald decided to forget it. After all, Mila might still be angry. He would only explain things to her in person when he headed to Hong Kong in a few days.

He would also stay with Mila in Hong Kong for a few days then.

However, Gerald still took the initiative to send a text message to Mila to tell her to rest earlier and so forth.

Ugh!

The matter had already been settled and Gerald would get into Salford University tomorrow as a transfer student. He would then use his identity as a transfer student to find out more information about that girl.

The university also paid a lot of attention to this matter after finding out about Gerald's identity. Of course, Gerald told the university to maintain a low profile and he did not want the university to publicize this matter. After all, he was not really a transfer student.

As for the class? Gerald was assigned to the same class as Marven.

Marven was the illegal tour guide's son. He was a chubby and intelligent young man.

Gerald made an appointment with Marven early in the morning the next day and they headed out together.

“Hey! Young master, this is our university! Let me show you around our university today!”

“I am not a young master. You can just call me Gerald...” Gerald replied with a wry smile on his face.

“Alright then, Young Master Gerald!”

Gerald was speechless.

After that, the both of them headed to their classroom together.

At this time, there were already many people inside the classroom.

As soon as they saw Marven leading Gerald into the classroom, everyone immediately knew that this was the transfer student that the teacher had mentioned would be officially joining their class today.

The teacher was also waiting inside the classroom since early in the morning.

“Ger...Gerald, your seat has already been arranged in advance. You can take a seat first!” The teacher said.

Chapter 688

In fact, Gerald had already mentioned that he would not need any special attention or care from the university. After all, he was simply coming here under the pretext of a transfer student for a few days.

However, Gerald was obviously receiving preferential treatment.

He was sitting at the spot that was directly at the front of the classroom.

“Teacher, that seat does not belong to him! It belongs to Fabian. Why do you have to give him Fabian’s seat?!”

At this time, a girl suddenly stood up and asked disgruntledly as she pointed at Gerald.

“Isabelle, Gerald has just transferred here. How can you speak in that manner? Gerald can just sit here first. I will arrange another seat for Fabian when he comes back from his competition.”

The teacher replied helplessly with a wry smile on her face.

“Why?!”

Isabelle continued asking anxiously as she stared at Gerald with anger and disgust.

“Isabelle, you are the class representative. So, why are you speaking in that manner? Alright then, it is already decided!”

After the teacher was done speaking, she smiled at Gerald before walking out of the classroom.

After that, the class was filled with the classmates' whispering amongst themselves.

Most of them were talking about the fact that it seemed as though Gerald would not have a good time here and so forth, since he had already offended the class representative.

After all, people generally tend to bully strangers.

This was true no matter whether it was in school or at the workplace.

So, everyone instinctively displayed an inexplicably hostile attitude towards Gerald, who was the new transfer student, as though they were afraid that Gerald would try and snatch things from them after coming here.

However, Gerald did not care too much about all this.

After all, Gerald was very clear about his purpose for coming here. Therefore, he naturally would not pay any attention to this kind of trivial matter.

Isabelle said many horrible and offensive things to Gerald after he sat down. Gerald could not be bothered about it.

When class was over, Isabelle whispered some things to some of her friends. After glancing at Gerald, Isabelle and her friends headed to the washroom together.

As for the other students in the class, none of them were willing to talk to Gerald at all.

“Mr. Craw...umm I mean Gerald!”

Amongst all of the classmates, Marven was the only one who knew that Gerald had a very strong and powerful background. If it weren't because of Gerald's refusal to reveal his true identity, Marven would have already stood up and fought back for Gerald when Isabelle was attacking him just now.

“You don't have to take the class representative's words too seriously. There is something wrong with her! In fact, there is something seriously wrong with her!”
Marven said,

“Hahaha. It's okay. By the way. What is wrong with the class representative, Isabelle?”
Gerald asked as he smiled wryly.

“Cough. Cough. Well, how should I put this? If I were to say that she is snobbish and would stand up for what is right, that would not be right. However, it would also not be right to say that she is selfless and treats everyone equally. She would only stand up for just one person, and she would only treat one person very well! However, she does not attach any importance to anyone else at all. Take me for instance. She has never paid any attention to me or any of the other boys in our class!” Marven replied.

“Oh? Don’t tell me that the only person that she cares about in her heart is that guy called Fabian?”

Gerald replied with a smile on his face as he shook his head helplessly.

After all, Gerald could see that he had incurred Isabelle’s hatred and dissatisfaction because it seemed as though he had taken the seat of this person called Fabian. That was the reason why Isabelle had begun targeting him.

“That’s right. It’s none other than Fabian. Oh my. I don’t know what is wrong with Isabelle. She has been completely smitten by Fabian and she is absolutely in love with him just because Fabian’s family is a little rich and likes showing off. Hence, Isabelle has already been interested in Fabian ever since her freshman year and she had been pursuing him until her senior year! All that she cares about is Fabian. Not to mention you, there was one time when Isabelle slapped one of her good friends who had grown up together with her, just because she said that Fabian was not a good person. This greatly stunned her friend! So, you can just imagine how obsessed Isabelle is over Fabian then. This is the only reason why she is treating you like this now!”

“Well, it seems as though I should avoid her in future then!” Gerald replied with a wry smile on his face.

After all, Gerald was here to look for someone and he did not want to cause any trouble while he was here.

As he was still talking to Marven, Isabelle and her friends returned to the classroom...

Isabelle walked towards Gerald angrily as her girlfriends tagged along.

Gerald had placed his backpack on the table at this time.

After that, one of the girls walked over to him with her arms crossed in front of her chest. She pretended as though nothing was happening as she pulled Gerald's backpack and dropped it to the ground.

At the same time, one of the other girls hurriedly and obviously deliberately, stepped on Gerald's backpack.

"Oh! I am so sorry, Gerald. I accidentally stepped on your backpack. It is dirty now. Should I wash it for you?"

The girl asked as she looked at Gerald with an apologetic expression on her face.

Gerald obviously knew that the girls were doing this intentionally. He could only think that he was really unlucky to have offended a group of girls on his first day here.

Gerald could fight them back easily.

However, Gerald did not come here to show off. Therefore, Gerald could not really be bothered with these girls.

He only shook his head with a wry smile on his face as he said, “Thanks, but you don’t have to do that!”

After he was done speaking, Gerald stretched out his hand as he tried to grab his backpack!

“Don’t have to? How can we do that? Isabelle, what do you think we should do then?”

The girl with the long hair asked as she looked at Isabelle.

“That’s easy!”

After she was done speaking, Isabelle took a water bottle before she poured water directly on Gerald’s backpack.

Many of their classmates watched this scene unfolding before them in delight. This was a very cruel way for Isabelle to display her power and authority in this class.

“Hmph. Stella’s family is very powerful in Salford. Stella is also good friends with Isabelle. It is obvious that Stella is trying to get justice for Isabelle!”

“That’s right. This guy is really unfortunate. This is simply great. He did not only offend Isabelle, but he also offended Stella too! There will be good shows for us to watch in future!”

The classmates discussed this matter amongst themselves in a low voice.

After that, Stella cast a look at Isabelle, as though she was trying to prove her point.

Look, Isabelle! He does not even have the guts to fight back.

After that, the girls returned to their own respective seats.

“Gerald, Stella has a rather strong family background but I think that they do not have as much money as you do. Moreover, it seems as though they were all bullying you on purpose!” Marvin told Gerald in a low voice.

Gerald smiled before he shook his head and said, “It’s okay!”

After he was done speaking, Gerald picked up his wet backpack before placing it on the windowsill to dry it.

After that, he asked Marvin to accompany him to the washroom.

“Damn it! He is not even angry after we did that to him!”

One of the girls was completely at a loss for words after seeing that Gerald was not angry, and he did not even feel humiliated at all even after what they did. Instead, he could still smile as though nothing was wrong.

Stella and Isabelle were also feeling a little anxious.

At this time, their joint classes were about to begin. After the short farce, everyone headed to the classroom immediately.

Gerald also pretended to head to the joint classroom to keep up with his act. He did not even bring any books along with him.

When everyone was walking towards the joint classroom together, they were all chatting enthusiastically amongst themselves. However, as soon as they entered the joint classroom, everyone suddenly closed their mouths and they were all completely silent as though they had already arranged to do so in advance.

Even Stella and Isabelle were also completely silent at this time.

Gerald had also been chatting with Marven as he walked into the joint classroom.

When he took a look at the front of the classroom, he saw that the teacher had not arrived in the classroom yet.

But why was everyone so quiet and well-behaved then?

However, Gerald quietly understood the reason when he looked at the first row of the joint classroom.

There were two girls sitting in the front row of the joint classroom.

They were both exceptionally beautiful.

In fact, Stella and Isabelle could also be considered as very beautiful girls.

However, they would fall behind if they were to be compared to these two girls.

At this time, the two girls had also obviously noticed Gerald's gaze.

Chapter 690

When the girl who was more beautiful raised her head and saw Gerald, she looked away in a cold and nonchalant manner.

The other girl was a little surprised when she saw Gerald.

Marven nudged Gerald, to give him a hint that this was it.

How could Gerald possibly not recognize them?

These two girls were not just any ordinary passers-by to him. These were the capable and powerful girls that he met up on the mountain that day. That was the girl who looked a little like Queta.

However, Gerald did not continue staring at them.

Instead, acted nonchalantly as he quickly withdrew his gaze.

Gerald sat one row behind the two girls together with Marven.

Could she really be from the Fenderson family?

The more he looked at her, the more Gerald felt that the girl really looked like Queta. The girl named Jasmine was really very cold and arrogant. Gerald noticed that even though she was really beautiful, she did not seem to portray much emotions or expression on her face at all.

However, her companion seemed to be much more active and approachable.

Marven enjoyed doing funny things and making jokes to draw other people's attention to him when they were in class.

That girl laughed a couple of times because of Marven's jokes and silly acts.

Very soon, the first two classes ended just like that.

University classes generally ended really quickly.

The two girls also left immediately.

“Jasmine, do you think that guy is interested in you? Hehehe. When we ran into him the last time, he was also staring directly at you! When he saw you in the classroom just now, he was also staring at you and he had his gaze fixed on you! I can guarantee that he is definitely in love with you, just like all the other boys!”

The two girls continued chatting amongst themselves as they walked towards the upper floor of the campus.

“I think that he is looking at you instead!”

Jasmine blushed in embarrassment. It was obvious that she was very sensitive and shy when it came to this kind of topic.

“Pfft! You might not know this but I was actually glancing at the guy from the corner of my eye during class just now. I realize that Chubby Wadley and that guy were both observing you and secretly looking at you! That Chubby Wadley used to hide at the back to peek at us in class in the past. This is simply perfect now! He has a companion do the same thing as him now!”

The girls knew Marven’s name but they were already used to calling him Chubby Wadley. If Marven knew that the two goddesses would always make fun of him when they were free, he would certainly be feeling very ecstatic.

“I am not worried about Chubby Wadley at all. After all, the reason why he tried to get closer to the both of us in the past was simply because he was a little curious about us. After that, when he found out that we enjoy having fun, he simply wants to get some business for his father who is working as a tour guide. After all, it is not that easy for

their family to make a living. So, Chubby Wadley is actually a very filial child!” Jasmine replied.

“So, you speak louder on purpose sometimes just because you think that he is a very filial kid?” The girl asked.

Jasmine nodded.

“Actually, I am a little worried about that guy next to Chubby Wadley. I don’t know why but he gives me a very different vibe and feeling from the very first time I saw him. I don’t know how to explain what kind of feeling I have. Mindy, do you feel the same way too?”

“Ahhh? Me? How do I put this? Perhaps maybe just a little. However, it is obviously not as serious as you make it out to be! I just think that he should be a pretty interesting person!”

Mindy replied as she grinned.

“I think that we should be more careful. We should not think of causing any harm to others, but we should also attach more importance to defending ourselves. It is so difficult for us to finally have this opportunity to come out and study. Therefore, we should be more careful and alert!” The girl said.

“Alright then, I...ehh? Jasmine, look! It seems as though Chubby Wadley and that guy are behind us!”

Mindy said in a lower voice.

“We don’t have to care about them. Come, let’s go and get a drink!”

After Jasmine was done speaking, the two girls walked into a café together.

“Ehh! Gerald, look! Isn’t that the goddess? It seems like they are going to grab some coffee!”

Marven and Gerald did not notice the two beautiful girls just now. Gerald only noticed the two girls when Marven mentioned this matter to him.

“Hehe! Why don’t we follow them into the café so that we can eavesdrop on their conversation then?” Marven asked.

“I don’t think that is such a good idea. What if they notice that the both of us are following them on purpose? That will not be good then!”

Gerald replied as he smiled wryly.

“Don’t worry, Gerald. As long as I am around, they will not find out or notice that the both of us are following them on purpose! I used to eavesdrop on their conversation in the past and they do not even know that I was doing that. Hahaha! My dad was able to earn a lot of money from them because of that! So, you don’t have to worry about anything at all! Come, let’s go!”

Marven said as he patted his chest.

Chapter 691

Not sure what else to say, Gerald simply followed Marven into the café.

“F*ck! They’re really tailing us!” whispered the cold and unapproachable Mindy as she saw Marven and his friend enter the café through the corner of her eye.

“Looks like I’ll need to investigate that man’s background as well!” whispered Jasmine—who was sitting across the table—in return.

“There’s no need for that, I think. Judging by his looks alone, he seems to be the honest kind of guy. You know, the type of person who’ll immediately spill the truth out when he’s enquired about it? If you ask me, I say you’re just being overly sensitive about this.”

“You’ll definitely scare the cr*p out of him, just like you do to all other men. I mean let’s be honest, how many men haven’t fled for the hills after meeting you? And I’m not even talking about those trying to woo you! I’m referring to those who’ve had an interest in me!”

“And while it’s true that we can now come out to study and get a degree and all, is there really a difference between us and the other women who just stay at home?” replied Mindy sounding slightly displeased.

“I can’t believe you actually said that! If grandpa heard that, he’d definitely yell at you without a doubt! In fact, it wouldn’t be farfetched to assume that he’d even stop paying for your tuition fees! Remember what he said! We have enemies lurking behind every corner, so you better watch out!” reminded Jasmine.

“I get it, I get it... I guess you’re right...”

After that, Mindy simply stopped talking.

Meanwhile, Gerald and Marven had just taken a seat at the table next to theirs. Quite honestly, Gerald wasn’t looking forward to any of this.

Deep down, he had a feeling that something set him apart from these people. In fact, his gut was telling him that that would be the eventual cause of their imminent quarrel.

However, Marven’s confidence alone made it extremely difficult for Gerald to turn his offer down.

While his ears were perked, Marven was disappointed when he realized that the girls weren’t chatting at all.

At long last, however, he was finally able to hear them say a single phrase.

“Let’s go!”

As soon as he heard that, Marven watched as both of the girls finished the rest of their coffee before getting up and leaving the café. As per usual, Jasmine’s face was stone-cold.

This time, however, Gerald received a scornful glare from Mindy before the two girls left for good.

“Wow! She was totally checking you out, Gerald!” said Marven sounding genuinely impressed.

“What a pity though... We didn’t even get a chance to hear them speak at all! It hardly makes any sense! Why did they choose to whisper to each other this time around? I swear I could hear them speaking normally the last time I tailed them!” added Marven with a sigh. What a let-down.

Gerald simply patted his friend on the shoulder while shaking his head in sympathy.

Regardless, if his hunch was correct, then their plan had already been uncovered by the girls! Sadly, Marven truly seemed to be completely oblivious to this.

After parting ways with him, Gerald didn’t even bother attending his afternoon lectures, opting instead to return home.

It was around then when he realized that he really had to find a chance to have a chat with Jasmine.

As he thought about it, his phone started ringing.

To his surprise, the caller ID displayed a special number. It was a call from the Drake & Tyson duo. Since they rarely called him unless there was truly an emergency, Gerald immediately picked the call up.

“What is it?”

“Mr. Crawford! You need to return home right this instant! A few people have been tailing you and I can only assume that they’ve found out about your real identity!” replied Drake, sounding rather urgent.

“...Huh?”

After hearing that, Gerald slowly tried to look behind him without making it too obvious. However, all he could see was a crowded street. He was still on campus after all, so sights like this were common.

The Drake & Tyson duo had been able to tell that he was being tailed through the use of the highly-sophisticated safety device which Gerald always carried around. Through it, they were able to constantly monitor his movements and alert him to any peculiarities they detected.

“I’ve sent some men over, Mr. Crawford! Please refrain from lingering around outside any longer!”

“Roger!” replied Gerald before hanging up. He then immediately hailed a taxi to head home.

He had been careful not to reveal his identity to anyone, right? Who on earth could be tailing him?

“Big brother! That kid’s slipped away!”

Chapter 692

The voice had come from a young man who was part of a group consisting of similarly aged people. All five of them bore equally cold and murderous gazes as they stood within the sea of people.

“Why are all of you still standing there? Go after him!” yelled one of the young men who seemed to be the group’s leader.

However, before they even could make their next move, the group of five realized that they had already been surrounded! A fight soon broke out and chaos ensued, preventing them from continuing with their mission.

“F*ck off!” roared the leader angrily as he shoved his unknown assailants aside, desperately trying to escape the havoc.

By the time he was finally able to free himself, Gerald was nowhere to be seen.

Enraged, the group’s leader then began stomping his foot against the tar road to release his frustration.

As that was happening, within a manor well-hidden from the public view, a group of teenagers approached a butler before one of them asked, “Where’s the young mistress?”

“She’s at the dojo,” replied the butler.

After having their question answered, the group of twelve then began making their way there.

Meanwhile, Jasmine was busy sparring others in the dojo. Her hair had been tied up in a ponytail and she sported a crisp, white, martial arts robe.

Her opponents were seven young men who usually ran missions together with the five others who had been sent to chase after Gerald. Though she was clearly outnumbered, Jasmine was still the one doing most of the beating up.

Mindy was there as well, though she was simply munching away on potato chips while occasionally cheering Jasmine on as she continued punching the wind out of her opponents.

“You’re getting increasingly better at this, young mistress! Judging by how quickly your progress is coming along, soon, I don’t think that I’ll even have anything more to teach you!” said her master who had been observing her spar from the very beginning.

As soon as the master’s sentence ended, the group of twelve from earlier arrived at the dojo. Upon seeing Jasmine, all twelve of them bowed in unison.

All of the youngsters in that dozen were world-renown champions in Taekwondo and Karate. They were all Jasmine's masters as well.

"Hah, you're being too humble... As for the seven of you, go ahead and have a rest first!"

"You're pretty powerful, aren't you? Despite being severely outnumbered, you still managed to come out on top! I wish I was as strong as you!" exclaimed Mindy.

"Well, I did try to get you to learn with me... As usual, however, you were too lazy to even try in the first place!" replied Jasmine with a wry smile.

"Humph! But of course I'm not going to train like you! After all, I think I'm more suited to being a quiet and innocent little girl. Plus, it's not like I have your level of stamina! Still, it's rather hilarious how you look just like a defenseless damsel in distress when those men from before could barely lay a finger on you! It reminds me of how you pulverized the lower halves of those students back then!" said Mindy between giggles.

"Hey, they asked for it! That's enough, I don't want to talk about that anymore!"

As Mindy continued smiling, she turned to look at the five young men who had just entered the dojo and were now standing at the side of the ring.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"Young mistress! We've failed our mission!" announced the group's leader.

“Failed? Well I can’t say that I’m surprised! Just how many missions have the twelve of you even managed to complete up till this point?” replied Jasmine as she looked at the seven others whom she had sparred against earlier.

“We have a solid reason as to why we failed this time! While we were going after him, a group of men attacked us! By the time we finally managed to escape the chaos, the target had already left in a taxi!” explained the young man in a rather desperate voice.

“Hahaha... It’s alright. Honestly, I was hoping that all of you would fail anyway. Also Jasmine? I really think you’re overthinking this. I’m telling you, that guy was simply Marven’s friend. They probably just found you incredibly attractive so I see no reason for you to go full Sherlock on him. Besides, I want to talk to Marven too!”

“Don’t you even dare or I’m telling grandpa that you keep talking with random outsiders! You’ll be grounded for sure once that happens!” yelled Jasmine angrily.

“Fine, fine, I was just joking, alright?” responded Mindy.

“Regardless, for now, you guys should just let the matter rest. There’s no need to make a commotion out of this yet!” replied Jasmine.

“Understood, young mistress!”

Pursing her lips, Mindy then walked over to the trashcan to dispose of her half-finished bag of potato chips.

Noticing this, Jasmine simply shook her head as she approached the sulking girl.

“What’s the matter? Are you honestly angry just because I yelled at you?”

“No I’m not... I’m just slightly frustrated! Why can’t I be like everyone else? This cr*p has been going on since we were children! Just why?!” said Mindy as tears began welling up in her eyes.

When she heard Mindy’s words, Jasmine’s expression immediately darkened as she was reminded of their childhood.

Chapter 693

“Jasmine? Mindy! Where are you two going?” shouted an old man rather coldly.

“We’re going out to play, grandpa!”

“No you aren’t! Both of you, get back here right this instant! These kids are never to leave the house, not even a single step! Do I make myself clear?” shouted the old man as he turned to look at a few servants.

“Understood, master!”

“But... but why, grandpa? Why can the rest of our friends go out to play? Why can’t we do the same? We want to go to kindergarten and have fun with our friends!” replied Jasmine who was around the age of six then. Despite her young age, she was already starting to question her grandpa’s decisions.

The only response she received, however, was a tight slap across her face!

That was the first time Jasmine had ever been hit.

Their grandpa loved them dearly. Apart from the stars and the moon, he would do his best to give them anything they pleased. In all honesty, Mindy and Jasmine were blessed with the greatest gift that any child could ever hope for.

However, all that came at a cost. Since birth, they had been forbidden from ever interacting with the outside world.

Once she finally felt the impact of the slap, young Jasmine would then break into tears.

The slap would remain fresh in her memory, deterring her from ever leaving the house for a good few years. However, the outside world was simply too mystifying and full of wonders. Eventually, her curiosity got the better of her.

She was twelve when she and Mindy finally attempted sneaking out again to have a peek at the world beyond their house's compound.

Their plan, however, was discovered by grandpa.

It was that day when grandpa issued the strictest rule their family had ever seen.

Despite being only twelve, Jasmine was whipped mercilessly by him! She was whipped so badly that by the time her grandpa was done, the skin on her back had split and she was bleeding badly.

However, that moment was equally punishing for her grandpa as well, the old man almost allowing himself to shed tears of grief as he continued whipping his beloved granddaughter.

“...Grandpa wants to let you go out to play as well... But... But you have to remember who we are! We have enemies everywhere! Please understand that what I’m doing is for your own good! Why can’t you kids understand that?!”

To this very day, the scars from that punishment remained on Mindy and Jasmine’s backs, and they would forever haunt them, a constant reminder of the shadows of their childhood.

It was only when Jasmine and Mindy were old enough and had more common sense regarding how the world worked when their grandpa finally allowed them to pursue their education beyond the house’s walls. They were finally getting a chance to see the outside world!

Of course, there was one golden rule to that. They weren’t allowed to befriend any outsiders.

Thus, just like many of the other Fendersons, the two girls had an incomplete childhood and the beginning of their lives were left completely stunted.

This was all the 'enemy's' fault whom their grandpa kept mentioning about.

Though he kept emphasizing on the dangers their enemy posed, their grandpa never actually told either of the girls what was actually going on.

Being the traditional-minded male he was, he simply assumed that they didn't need to bother themselves with the issue since they were both girls.

It was because of that that Jasmine felt so bitter about the whole thing.

Why weren't they allowed to know? When their childhood had been completely taken away from them just as much as the previous males in the family? Shouldn't they have just been allowed to have an actual childhood then?

Her dissatisfaction made her strive to become great in every aspect she could think of. She wanted to prove that she was no less worthy than a man!

Back in the present, Jasmine took in a deep breath before looking at Mindy.

"That's quite enough, Mindy... There's no need for us to look back at the past. After all, we're in much better positions today!"

"Yeah, yeah, I know Jasmine... I know how you hate the enemy much more than I ever could... Either way, we'll someday make them pay dearly for all the suffering they've put us through!" yelled Mindy decisively.

“We definitely will! Though grandpa still isn’t willing to tell us the truth about the enemy, we’ve been preparing for that day for a long time now. That day will definitely come soon!” replied Jasmine as she patted Mindy on the shoulder.

The next day, Gerald arrived at his classroom only to find that Isabelle was the first person he would see.

To be quite honest, she looked pretty decent. It was her temper that put him off the most. However, she seemed to be in a rather good mood today, even joking around with a few of her friends.

The moment she saw Gerald, however, she rolled her eyes before standing up.

“Ah, Marven and Gerald, what a coincidence! Both of you should have seen the cart filled with bottled water on your way up, right? They’re for our class so both of you should bring them up for us!”

Hearing that, the rest of their classmates pursed their lips, trying hard not to smirk.

Naturally, Gerald was slightly pissed at this. He was well aware that she was trying to pull a prank on them.

Marven himself hardly made any effort to conceal his irritation. “Why only us? There’s no way in hell that only the two of us will be able to lift all that up the stairs!”

“I beg your pardon?”

“He said, we won’t be able to lift all that up the stairs!” said Gerald as he repeated Marven’s reply.

Chapter 694

After saying that, he went to his table to take a seat.

Isabelle almost exploded in anger after hearing their responses. Their retaliation was completely unexpected! Especially from Gerald. He had been a thorn in her side from the very beginning. His reluctance to obey her bidding was akin to stepping on a landmine.

How dare he challenge her pride in front of everyone else!

She was so pissed that she immediately tossed her tumbler in his direction! Thankfully, its liquid contents were only able to splash on the floor in front of his desk.

“Repeat that one more time to my face! Go on! I dare you!”

Gerald simply stared at the fuming girl. In the end, she was just another spoiled upper-class brat who thought the entire world revolved around her.

“With pleasure! I could say it ten more times if you need me to! Listen closely now, wouldn’t want you to miss it this time! I said that we won’t be able to lift all that up the stairs! What else do you want from us?” replied Gerald, the irritation in his voice extremely apparent.

After all, he had already grown accustomed to dealing with such people.

As soon as she heard his reply, Isabelle immediately stormed out of the room, smoke coming out of her ears.

Stella, who had been observing their entire interaction, instantly shot a death glare at Gerald.

“I-it’s all over for us now! Isabelle’s definitely getting some people to beat us up this very moment!” said Marven, his voice hinting that he was moments away from wetting his pants.

“Like I care. I’m not afraid of her!” replied Gerald as he tried to calm his friend down.

“I-I heard that her cousin’s from the sports team! He’s pretty bad*ss!” added Marven, his voice quivering tremendously.

Gerald himself was thinking that this was way too early into the game for him to lose his cool. He needed a way to redirect all this anger so that he could keep a clear head.

If she really was sending some people over to beat him up, that would probably be his best opportunity to vent out his frustration by beating the cr*p out of them instead!

It wasn’t long before the thundering of several footsteps could be heard running up the corridor.

When the class's door was opened, a group of men burst in! Isabelle had indeed managed to gather quite a number of underlings.

“Hah! She really did gather people to beat them up! I knew Isabelle wasn't going to let Gerald slip away unbruised! Looks like we're going to have a free show!” said one of the students in the class.

“Your sister is my sister as well, brother! Who's the lucky b*stard that gets to be beaten up today?!” roared a man as he stood before the class while scanning through the faces of all the students. He seemed to be talking to Isabelle's brother who stepped in front of the group at that moment. Her brother seemed to be the group's leader.

“Oh gosh, he's so tall and handsome!” squealed a few of the present girls as they eyed the group's leader.

“I recognize him! While he's a newly transferred student, i've heard that Wyatt treats him respectfully!”

As the girls continued whispering among themselves, Isabelle lifted one of her crossed arms and pointed at Gerald.

“Warren! Wyatt! That's the b*stard I was talking about!” screamed the angered girl.

Hearing that, Gerald got up from his seat, only to momentarily freeze when he finally paid attention to the group leader's face.

The leader was equally as stunned as Gerald was.

“Warren?”

“Gerald?”

Warren was completely taken aback. After all, he, Maia, and a few other girls had been sent here under the guise of transfer students to undergo a mission.

But why was Gerald here? It just simply didn't make any sense!

Seeing how stunned Warren was, Wyatt then curiously asked, “Hmm? Do you know that guy, Warren?”

Isabelle herself was starting to get nervous. If both of them were acquainted with each other, did that mean that Gerald would get away scot-free this time?

“In a way, I suppose!” replied Warren.

It was obvious that Warren wasn't going to be beating Gerald up any time soon. After all, Gerald knew about his true identity.

If Gerald leaked that information out, he'd surely be done for. What more, Maia and the other girls were still in the school as well!

'D*mn it, why did this have to happen...' Warren thought to himself.

"What a coincidence! Come on over, Gerald! Let's you and me have a little chat in private!" said Warren.

Chapter 695

With that, both of them then left the classroom.

"I thought you were here on vacation. Pray tell, why are you doing in this university?"

"To get an education of course. Actually, I should be asking you that question. What are you doing here?" replied Gerald.

While they didn't particularly hold any grudges against each other, Warren didn't particularly like being around Gerald, and the same went vice versa.

"Since we're already talking about it, I'll just make things clear to you now. For starters, I'm not the only one here. Maia and a few others came together with me. I can't tell you what exactly we're doing here, but if you know what's best for you, you'd better keep your mouth zipped tight when it comes to us. Our identity is not to be revealed under any circumstances! This is my first and final warning, so you better remember that!"

Once he was done with his explanation, Warren then turned around before walking away from Gerald.

'Maybe they're here because of a mission? Not that I really care,' Gerald thought to himself as he laughed bitterly while shaking his head.

Just as he was about to return to class, he felt a tug on his sleeve. When he turned back to look, Gerald noticed a rather shy-looking girl, meekly holding on to his sleeve. Despite her shyness, she was holding on to him pretty tightly.

“H-hey there, handsome! We’re currently collecting donations for charity! Regardless of how much you donate, we won’t complain! We’re just trying to help children in the countryside who can’t afford to pay for their education!”

Seeing that she was volunteering for a selfless cause, Gerald felt bad even thinking about turning her down. What more, she was obviously fighting against her shyness just to gather more funds for the charity.

The money wasn’t going to be spent wastefully either. Similar to Scothow Elementary, the school he had built himself, the money would be used for a good cause.

Reassured that donating would be the right thing to do, he then nodded to the girl’s delight.

“H-how much would you like to donate?” asked the shy girl.

At that moment, a few other girls who were also working as volunteers began flocking around him. They had noticed that one of them had managed to get someone to donate, so all of them had bright smiles on their faces.

“Hmm... Let’s go with fifty thousand dollars!” replied Gerald with a chuckle.

“...W-what? Fifty thousand?”

All of the girls were equally taken aback by his response.

Donation campaigns like this were common across most universities. They were usually aimed to help poorer students living in the countryside.

Such campaigns tended to garner quite a bit of support, and most of the students from this university were similarly willing to partake in donating for a good cause.

While this was true, the majority of the students would only be willing to donate a couple of bucks at best, the common trend being less than a hundred dollars per donation. Not that they were complaining. After all, it was the thought that counts.

However, to think that they were now being presented with a fifty thousand dollar donation...

These girls had been working hard to collect donations for at least half a month now. This was their first time meeting such a generous student!

“M-mister! Are you really serious about donating fifty thousand dollars?”

The girls could hardly believe their ears.

Gerald simply laughed in response as he pulled his credit card out, ready to make his donation.

Once they presented him with the transaction machine, Gerald began pressing its buttons without the slightest hesitation.

“A receipt for a transaction of five hundred thousand dollars!” announced the machine in a robotic voice.

“...Huh?”

The jaws of all the girls were now hanging wide open.

“Cr*p!” said Gerald, equally as shocked.

Since he was feeling more philanthropic lately, he truly wanted to donate the fifty thousand dollars he had promised. He would never have dreamed that he would accidentally push an extra zero on the transaction machine! This was a mistake on his behalf!

He blamed it on his constant obsession over Jasmine of late.

While he didn't exactly mind the mistake, he still needed to maintain a low profile in the university.

“S-sir, it seems that you’ve made a mistake! I’ll go make the necessary arrangements immediately! We’ll return the extra amount to your account as soon as possible! Might you be free this afternoon? We’ll have to go to the main office to deal with this since they’ll need your signature to approve the refund!” apologized one of the volunteers profusely.

“...Ah, that’s going to be a hassle! You know what, just take it! Five hundred thousand it is!” said Gerald as she shook his head. After all, there wasn’t much of a difference between five hundred thousand and fifty thousand dollars to him. It was just a single digit!

The volunteers were stunned speechless by his act of extreme generosity.

Gerald then proceeded to note down his major and class. Just as he was about to write down Marven’s name, he saw a group of people walking over to him with cameras and voice recorders in hand. They seemed to be reporters of some sort.

They must’ve come here after hearing how much he had donated to the charity! Their sudden appearance surprised him so much that he accidentally dropped the pen he was holding.

“Hold it! I’m fine with donating as long as you abide to a single rule! I wish to strictly remain anonymous!” said Gerald before immediately running off.

“I-I see! But even if we don’t announce it, could we still have your name?” asked a confused volunteer as she watched him run off.

Gerald simply waved a hand without even turning to look back before disappearing into another corridor.

Chapter 696

Sometime after Gerald left, a few other volunteers began feeling sorry for themselves. After all, they wanted to meet the millionaire too!

It was just their luck that they weren't present at the time Gerald left that massive donation.

They could've used that chance to get to know him! Alas, by the time they finally found out about the massive donation that had been made, Gerald was already long gone. Soon after, the volunteers then left the area.

It was around then when loud cheers could be heard coming from inside a classroom.

"Unbelievable! Stella's donated four and a half thousand dollars to charity today!" exclaimed a few of her classmates in excitement.

Stella had earlier noticed that there was a donation campaign going on when she arrived at the university. Seeing no harm in donating for a cause, she did just that.

While the donated sum was nothing much to her and she hadn't really hadn't intended to bring the topic up as they were chatting, a slip of her tongue caused her besties to hear about the massive amount she had donated.

The information then spread like wildfire among her classmates and it wasn't long before the entire class erupted in surprise.

Their reactions were well warranted. After all, she was a university student just like them, yet she had the capability of donating four thousand and five hundred dollars! What more, the majority of students either donated very little or didn't provide any support for the charity at all.

Regardless of their reactions, it truly wasn't that big of a deal to Stella.

"Speaking of which, didn't Fabian say that he would be coming to school today? Why isn't he here yet? He's just returned from a Taekwondo championship and he got second place you know!" said Isabelle as she glanced over at the classroom's entrance.

"Oh, be a little more patient!" teased Stella.

"Humph! How could I be? If he doesn't come soon, someone else will start thinking that he's hot stuff or something!" replied Isabelle as she looked at Gerald's direction.

As soon as she said that, the class door slid open.

"Brother Fabian!"

"Fabian's here!"

The moment they saw him, almost all of the students in class began announcing his presence in exhilaration.

“Brother Fabian! What took you so long? Class is about to start!” said Isabelle while standing up as she, too, yelled in delight.

“Yeah, I’m only a bit late because I got caught up by a few ladies trying to get donations for charity downstairs,” replied Fabian as he shook his head with a smile.

Seeing that Gerald was now sitting where he usually sat, he then moved to sit beside Isabelle.

“Oh? You donated as well, Fabian?” asked Stella as she grinned.

Fabian simply nodded in response.

Not only was he tall, lean, and quite good-looking, Fabian was also the richest guy in the class. What more, he was also good at sports! It was no mystery why he got so much attention from his classmates.

“How much did you donate, Fabian? Rumor has it that the one who donated the most will be invited to show their face during the donor appreciation event due this afternoon!” said Stella in admiration.

“I didn’t donate much. Plus, I’m not really interested in such events!” replied Fabian as he shook his head.

Why did people even care about such events?

“Oh come on! Don’t just leave us hanging, Brother Fabian! How much did donate exactly?” pestered his classmates.

“It was just fifteen thousand dollars!” answered Fabian who saw no other choice than to tell the truth.

Upon hearing his reply, silence immediately ensued.

The silence didn’t last long, however, as yells and cheers soon filled the entire room.

Fifteen thousand dollars! By god!

“You donated fifteen thousand dollars, Brother Fabian?!” screamed several of the girls in unison.

Of course they were going to be shocked at that massive donation!

Stella herself was so thrilled that she couldn’t even bring herself to say anything for a brief moment.

“B-Brother Fabian... That’s incredible! We love you so much!” exclaimed Stella when she finally managed to find her voice again.

Chapter 697

The entire classroom was still in a daze after all that exhilaration.

The news had obviously gotten to the ears of their class lecturer as well. Since Stella and Fabian were getting honors and both of them were in his class, that meant that even he was going to become well-known!

An announcement soon came, stating that everyone from the degree program needed to attend the donor appreciation event. Such an event was a big deal in the campus since only a few other events—like sports day—gave students a chance to increase their popularity.

Upon hearing that, the duo's classmates were all in for it! After all, how couldn't they be after finding out that two of their classmates were soon going to be famous?

It was after a short lunch break when everyone from the degree program started heading toward the school hall.

Gerald, however, started heading for their classroom instead.

"Aren't you attending the event, Gerald?" asked Marven.

"I'm not!" replied Gerald.

He had attended numerous events like this in the past. This was nothing special to him. To him, the act of donating was simply a way to express love and care for others. Since

he had already done that through his donation, he didn't feel the need to attend such an event with the others.

"But Gerald, look! The two goddesses are attending as well!" said Marven as he pointed toward the school hall's entrance.

Squinting his eyes, Gerald realized that he was right.

"Come on, let's just go! Since everyone else is going, we won't look good if we choose not to attend, right?" added Marven.

"I guess... Alright then!" replied Gerald as he shook his head helplessly.

Marven had a point. It wouldn't do him any good to be seen as a weirdo. After all, he still had to mingle with the students there for quite a while.

Thus, Gerald ended up following Marven into the hall.

Once they were inside, they saw the two girls sitting alone in the last row, being low-key as usual.

Nobody even dared to sit remotely close to them, preferring to stand rather than to do so.

"Darn it, there aren't any seats left!" said Marven as he scratched the back of his head.

“What do you mean? There’s plenty of empty seats there!” replied Gerald as he looked toward Jasmine’s direction.

Before Marven could stop him, Gerald was already walking toward them.

“Well hello there beautiful, I assume these seats aren’t taken?” said Gerald with a smile.

His statement, however, garnered no response from both girls. They simply continued staring ahead coldly.

Marven himself was now nervously tugging on to Gerald’s elbow, desperately trying to hint at him to sit anywhere else but there. After all, if they triggered the two goddesses, both of them would be as good as dead.

Gerald, however, simply shrugged nonchalantly before pulling Marven to sit right next to him.

Jasmine could feel her eyebrows raising though she continued remaining silent.

Once everyone arrived, the event then officially began. To start off the event, the principal gave a speech which was then followed by another from the student representative.

During the speech, it was mentioned that only ‘excellent donors’ would have their names announced. ‘Excellent donors’ were those who donated over fifteen dollars.

It was also stated that the names would be announced randomly instead of in ascending order of how much one donated. While that was so, the exact amount donated by the 'excellent donors' was still going to be mentioned.

It didn't take long for someone who donated a hundred and fifty dollars to be announced. When the students heard that, whispering could be heard among the crowd.

The whispering intensified into exclamations of awe and surprise when another person was announced to have donated over four hundred and fifty dollars.

Among the 'excellent donors', Gerald heard Maia and Warren's names being mentioned as well.

It would appear that both of them had donated nine hundred dollars respectively.

Naturally, this stirred a sensation among the students when they heard such high numbers being donated.

"Now, according to this list, a total of twelve students donated nine hundred dollars and above! Because of that, we hope to invite them up to the stage to each accept a certificate of honor!"

The host then cleared his throat before reading out, "Mr. Warren and Ms. Maia! Please come up to the stage!"

What followed was an eruption of applause as both Warren and Maia walked up the stage.

“Woah! Brother Warren looks so hot!”

Chapter 698

The statement had come from Isabelle who was currently clapping loudly as she watched Warren ascend the stage.

Seeing her reaction, Gerald simply rolled his eyes.

“How did you get acquainted with Brother Warren, Isabelle? I thought he just got transferred here very recently!” asked one of her friends curiously.

“Haha... Well, you know that my brother is friends with our school’s popular Jamier, right? Since Jamier and Warren are good friends, it’s only natural for me to know him!”

“I see!”

“Speaking of which, see that girl beside Warren? I think her name is Maia. She’s pretty, isn’t she? I have a hunch that she probably likes Warren a lot since they even transferred here together!” added Isabelle.

Though Warren was garnering all the attention for now, in her mind, Isabelle was sure that Brother Fabian would still be the eventual star of the day.

With that, she stopped talking and began focusing on listening to the announcements again.

After a few more people got on stage, the host then said, “From the Department of Economics and Management’s third class, we have Ms. Stella who donated four thousand and five hundred dollars! Ms. Stella, please join us on stage!”

Hearing that, the crowd in the hall instantly went wild with cheer! Even the lecturers sitting up front seemed to be talking about her.

Sensing that the cheering wasn’t going to end any time soon till she stood among the other top donors, Stella simply got up and began walking rather nonchalantly toward the stage.

At the same time, Isabelle was getting giddier by the second. After all, it would be Brother Fabian’s turn to go up the stage next!

Upon reaching the stage, Stella stood right in the middle, cuing the crowd to slowly dwindle their cheering.

Finding his chance to speak, the host—who seemed to be getting increasingly excited—then announced, “Next, also from the Department of Economics and Management’s third class, please welcome Mr. Fabian who donated fifteen thousand dollars! Mr. Fabian, please come up the stage!”

Immediately after hearing that, the entire hall fell silent.

Fifteen... thousand dollars?!

The cheer that came after was the loudest one yet. Accompanied by the thunderous roars of applause, it was a wonder why all the glass windows in the hall didn't shatter!

Everyone's eardrums were ringing from all the noise.

After all, someone had donated fifteen thousand dollars! Of course that would get the crowd excited!

"God d*mn! That's a lot!"

"Of course it is! It's Fabian we're talking about!"

"I knew that Fabian was rich, but by god! Fifteen thousand dollars is something else!"

At that moment, several people from the crowd were exclaiming in awe.

Isabelle herself was shaking Fabian by the elbow, looking way more thrilled than Fabian was.

"Brother Fabian! Brother Fabian! Your name's been announced!"

Seeing everyone's reaction, Fabian simply shook his head while smiling helplessly.

'It's just fifteen thousand dollars... Was there honestly a need for everyone to find that so surprising?'

Sliding both his hands into his pockets, Fabian then began walking toward the stage as girls continued to scream with glee at him.

Once he was on stage, the host then announced two more massive donations.

Two girls from the fourth class had donated twenty-three thousand dollars each! However, the host didn't mention either of their names, nor did he invite them up the stage.

Even so, everyone already knew who the donors were, and everyone in the hall took turns peeking at the two girls sitting in the last row. They were all fully aware that Jasmine and Mandy were the donors.

Though their donations were clearly superior to Fabian's, the uproar that ensued wasn't as great as his. After all, everyone in Salford University knew how rich they were. What more, they had already made several contributions in the past as well.

While the inclusion of their donations had lost their surprise factor, applause were still made since they were still contributing for a good cause.

When it came to the twelfth student, however, the host seemed to be at a loss.

“Well this is a new one! While this student donated the most this time around, he only wrote down his class and which department he was from! Since he was unwilling to provide his name, we’ll just have to respect his decision to remain anonymous! Regardless, I hope that everyone gives a loud round of applause once I announce his class!”

“Huh? Which class does he come from? How much did he even donate?” chatted the students among themselves curiously.

Everyone was looking forward to the final announcement, especially Fabian, Stella, Maia, and Warren as they exchanged gazes with each other on stage in anticipation.

Chapter 699

“Also from the Department of Economics and Management’s third class, the top donor donated a grand total of... Five hundred thousand dollars!” shouted the host excitedly.

The students’ response to that announcement was an immense roar of both shock and awe.

Five hundred thousand dollars?!

To think that they had already considered Fabian’s fifteen thousand dollar donation to be over the top! Even after adding what the two goddesses had donated, their total amount still couldn’t beat the amount of cash the top donor had given to charity!

Five hundred thousand dollars... In cold hard cash, that amount could easily reach even the hall’s ceiling!

The students weren't the only ones in awe either. Even the school's leaders and lecturers got up from their seats, clapping in utter shock at that colossal amount.

While all this was happening, Warren and Maia were busy peeking at Fabian and Stella.

Fabian and Stella themselves looked completely astounded. Someone from their class had donated five hundred thousand dollars?

"Did you hear that Isabelle? The top donor is from our class!" yelled a few of Isabelle's classmates.

"I did! But... But who could it have been?" replied Isabelle in her excitement.

Five hundred thousand dollars... That was no small amount, even for the richer families!

As the excitement in the hall continued to grow, Jasmine and Mandy found themselves looking at each other.

While both of them rarely spoke a word to the other students in school, be it during their regular or union classes, they knew the backgrounds of most of their classmates extremely well.

Take Marven Wadley for example. Though both parties had never spoken to each other before, the two girls saw him as a classmate and they had even helped him on several occasions in the past.

While Marven hadn't struck it as odd that his father had been encountering less and less problems—despite working as an illegal tour guide—recently, it was honestly all thanks to Jasmine's secret interventions.

That was proof of how well both of them knew their classmates' backgrounds.

It was also the reason why they were so sure that none of their classmates—who weren't already on stage—had the capability to freely donate five hundred thousand dollars.

“Mr. Fabian and Ms. Stella, both of you are from the third class as well, right? The top donor seems to be someone from your class!” said the host as he looked at the two students.

“...But... Nobody from our class would have that kind of money to donate, right?” asked Stella.

“I wonder... Hold on, there's a chance that my dad could've made that donation. After all, he was the one who had notified me about the fundraising event in the first place!” exclaimed Fabian as he realized the possibility.

Since the cheering had earlier died down into whispers discussing the top donor's true identity, the hall had been silent enough for everyone to hear Fabian's surprisingly loud claim.

Everyone was now looking at him, including Maia.

Before she had transferred over, she had heard that there were a few popular jocks from the department of Economics and Management.

There was Jamier from the last batch, Fabian from this one and also Wyatt's. All of them had been born with a silver spoon.

"Well, why don't you call your father to confirm it?" suggested Maia.

"Yeah, it'd be better to confirm it! Make that call, Fabian!" said a few of the school's higher-ups as well.

Hearing that, Fabian then reached for his phone and began calling his father.

Meanwhile, the third class's lecturer walked over to his students, a huge grin on his face.

"While we're waiting, where's the mineral water we carried over earlier? Be a dear and bring them over, will you?" said the teacher as he looked at Isabelle.

"...Ah. I was so excited that I forgot all about it!" replied Isabelle as she gently smacked her forehead.

"Well we'll just get... I'd say six classmates to carry the bottles over then! Where are Marvin and Gerald?" asked Isabelle as she scanned the crowd, trying to find them.

“Hmm? Ah, they’ve hidden themselves in a far corner!” said a girl who then pointed in their direction.

“Humph! I told you two to carry the water bottles earlier but you didn’t! Now I have to find four other students to help you with the task... Can’t you two do anything right other than laze around?” said Isabelle while giving them a disgusted look.

Before they could even reply, she immediately left, yelling at another four classmates for them to join the duo.

Gerald was no stranger to classmates like Isabelle. To girls like her, all other guys aside from the person she was into would never be good enough for her.

Then again, it’s not like her approval meant anything to Gerald.

Chapter 700

Since he was definitely going to look bad if he didn’t fetch the water this time around, Gerald and Marven left the hall. In his mind, Gerald was honestly sighing in relief that his name hadn’t been called out earlier as the top donor.

Mandy, on the other hand, felt that something was off as she watched Gerald and Marven leaving the hall.

“Hey, Jasmine? Earlier when Gerald walked past me, I could feel my heart thumping rapidly! Hell, for a second there, I even considered the thought of wanting him to stay by my side! What on earth was that feeling...? While we haven’t really acquainted ourselves with him, why does he already feel so familiar...?” whispered Mandy.

“I get what you mean. While he dresses like a regular person, he sure doesn’t feel like one! We don’t know anything about his background yet either...” replied Jasmine with a nod.

As both of them continued discussing Gerald, all six of the boys were already carrying the water bottles back to the hall.

They were also tasked with distributing the water bottles to the school authorities and a few workers involved with the event.

While they had water bottles in hand once they arrived at the hall again, none of the school authorities or workers seemed to be thirsty anymore.

It was probably because Fabian was still on the call on stage.

Isabelle herself was now on the stage standing right next to him, even though the call had absolutely nothing to do with her.

Once the call finally ended, disappointment was felt across the entire hall. The money hadn’t been donated by Fabian’s father after all.

Then who could’ve done it? The revelation that Fabian’s father hadn’t been the donor only further increased the audiences’ curiosity.

Seeing that his father hadn't played a part in the donation, Fabian then turned to look at Stella before saying, "Perhaps It was your father who donated, Stella? After all, he's always been passionate about events like this, right?"

Stella nodded before replying, "Yeah, I'll call my dad now to confirm it!"

While everyone's eyes were peeled on Stella this time, a sudden yelp momentarily drew their attention away from her.

The person who had yelled was none other than Marven!

He had initially been holding on to all the water bottles as Gerald distributed them. Unfortunately for him, a girl carrying a gown—who was re-entering the hall—couldn't avoid him in time and accidentally bumped into Marven.

Marven was unable to hold on to all the water bottles, causing a few of them to tumble all over the floor.

"A-ah! I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to!" squeaked the young girl in fright.

"It's fine. You go on ahead and complete your errand first!" said Gerald as both he and Marven began picking the scattered water bottles up.

As Gerald went over to pick a bottle that had rolled close to a row of students, a girl—who was close to that bottle—handed it over to him.

When their eyes met, the girl immediately realized who Gerald was.

“...Huh? It’s you!” exclaimed the girl as she covered her mouth in surprise.

Gerald was equally as surprised.

It was the same girl who had collected the donation money from him earlier!

Since Gerald had been so focused on gathering the fallen bottles again, he hadn’t noticed her in time. Who would’ve thought that she was right here!

It was now getting increasingly awkward for Gerald.

“I finally found you! Can I please have your name now?” shouted the girl happily, not realizing how loud her voice was.

“What’s happening over there? Louise?” said one of the event’s higher-ups in a rather annoyed tone.

“N-no, you see sir! H-He’s the one...!” stuttered the girl.

Before she could even calm herself, a few more gasps of joy could be heard. The other volunteers who had also earlier been present when Gerald made that massive donation had just entered the hall, and they were all pleasantly pleased to see him again!

Seeing the girls' reactions, the entire hall could only watch in silence.

Even those on stage were looking at Gerald.