

Chapter 54 Who Are You Trying to Seduce

Alicia didn't realize she had exposed too much.

She had intended to repulse Caden by showing him the book, aware of his disdain for duplicitous people.

During his school years, Caden had been extremely popular, attracting many admirers and inevitably causing rivalries.

Groups of girls would often gather around him, their laughter and chatter reminiscent of birdsong.

Known for his quick temper, Caden was unreserved in his criticisms, and manipulative individuals were usually the first to feel his scorn.

His sharp remarks left others wary of approaching him flirtatiously or overtly.

Caden turned away dismissively. "I have no interest in such trashy reading material."

Alicia, settling back into her seat with a smile, teased him, "It seemed like you were interested. Perhaps you've developed a taste for deceitful types now?"

In a measured tone, Caden responded, "And whom might you be attempting to charm with these tactics?"

Alicia shot back, "Definitely not you."

"Good, that's just what I wanted to hear," he replied.

What a jerk!

As they neared the Yates Mansion, Alicia seized the moment to engage in some quick reading.

The author's talent was evident, presenting the material succinctly and highlighting key points for clarity.

During the brief drive, Alicia absorbed a considerable amount of information.

Upon reaching the mansion, she noticed the crowded driveway and expressed surprise.

"Why are there so many cars here?" Her curiosity piqued, she inquired, "Is there a special event at the mansion today?"

Caden, detached as ever, informed her, "Jerald was discharged today. He came home this morning, and many relatives have come to visit."

This news caught Alicia off guard.

She had known from Joshua about Jerald's recovery at the mansion but hadn't realized it was occurring today.

The gates stood open, welcoming a stream of guests bearing extravagant gifts, with tables laden with an assortment of packages.

Alicia glanced at the two books in her bag, pondering her next move.

Caden shut the car door, his expression unreadable, neither welcoming nor dismissive.

Alicia approached Caden quietly. "I wasn't aware your father was being discharged today, so I didn't bring any gifts. Did you manage to bring something?"

Above them, leaves rustled, casting dappled shadows across Alicia's face, enhancing her features uniquely.

"I did," Caden confirmed.

Alicia felt reassured.

Caden, always proud and generous, seemed to have brought an abundance of gifts.

Before she could voice her thoughts, Caden anticipated her needs.

"Would you like me to lend you a couple of boxes to save face?"

Alicia laughed softly.

She acknowledged his insight. "It's clear why you're Mr. Ward. You understand everything."

Caden smiled slightly. "I might help, but my favors aren't free."

Alicia stood taller, reaching for her phone.

Caden quickly interjected, "It's not money I'm interested in."

If not money, then it must be something else.

Caden seemed poised to make an unwelcome request.

Alicia prepared herself, preferring to endure embarrassment rather than comply.

As she was about to enter the mansion, Caden spoke up. "I'm only asking for a few words."

Alicia stopped, wary. "Are you being generous?"

"Sometimes," he replied casually.

"What exactly do you want me to say?" Alicia inquired.

Caden gave her a pointed look. "Miss Bennett, with your eloquence, can't you offer a kind word when seeking a favor?"

Alicia paused, momentarily taken aback.

Was that all?

After a brief hesitation, she smiled. "Thank you for your assistance today, Mr. Ward. I owe you a meal sometime."

Caden responded with a nonchalant gesture of rolling up his sleeves. "That'll suffice."

Relieved, Alicia turned towards the trunk.

"Where are you headed?" Caden inquired.

"I'm going to fetch the gifts."

"They're not in the car. I have them with me," he informed her.

Confused, Alicia looked at him. "You have them with you?"

"Yes, I came with goodwill," Caden asserted.

Speechless, Alicia followed him, her expression turning sour. "You tricked me!"

Caden's tone was relaxed. "Isn't goodwill itself a gift?"

"You were just playing with me," Alicia retorted.

Quickly, Caden moved ahead with long strides.

Alicia hastened to follow.

Although she lacked gifts, she thought they might both share the embarrassment if Caden also had nothing.

However, Caden's long strides meant Alicia had to jog to keep pace.

Frustrated, she yelled, "Caden, slow down!"

Caden entered through the main doors, his eyes scanning the room until they landed on Joshua, who was busy with guests.

He halted suddenly.

Alicia, caught off guard by his abrupt stop, collided with his back.

His solid build sent a jolt through her, causing her forehead to throb.

Clutching her head, she groaned in pain.

Caden looked back at her exaggerated response. "Really, so dramatic? Seems like 'The Trick of Manipulators' was quite fitting."

Alicia snapped back, "What nonsense! I'm actually hurt, okay?"

Caden quipped, "Even that response was perfect."

Absurd.

Just then, a deep voice interrupted, "Alicia."

Regaining her composure, Alicia turned to find Joshua approaching.

