

Heartstrings On Fire Chapter 21 - 30
Chapter 21

Agnes said, “He’s really not my boyfriend, so you won’t get anywhere with me. You won’t be able to score an exclusive interview with Jared.”

Upon hearing Agnes’ confirmation, Jenny felt somewhat relieved.

She had gone through hell and high water to snatch Elton from Agnes. If Agnes was already chasing after Jared, wouldn’t that mean she had done Agnes a favor?

Jenny said, “I can handle the interview. But since our boss wants us to work together, I hope you won’t let your personal feelings interfere with our work. This task has been fully entrusted to me, so you gotta play by my rules.”

Agnes didn’t take it to heart, because only Agnes knew how busy Jared was. A guy who sometimes had to travel to four different countries in a day, how could he possibly spare time for an interview with a small school media outlet?

And that was how the first day of school ended.

In the evening, Agnes returned to Maplewood Manor and saw a note from Jared on the fridge which read “Off to Melbourne for three days.”

Agnes heaved a sigh of relief, but strangely, felt a tinge of sadness. Thinking about what happened last night, it still felt like a stab in the heart.

Preston called that night, telling her to prepare for Tim’s birthday party in two days. Agnes flatly declined, saying she had already passed the invitation to Beatrice. He sighed but didn’t say anything more.

After hanging up, Agnes stared blankly at the note Jared left.

If Tim’s birthday party was in two days, and Jared was going to be away for three days, would Jared be there?

1-

If Jared wasn't there, how could the Whitfield family use this opportunity to set him up on a blind date? Or was Jared deliberately avoiding this arrangement by going on a business trip?

In the next two days, Jenny tried every trick in the book to contact the secretary department of the Tim Group, but all she got was a no

Jared was not accepting any media interviews.

During the Journalism Society meeting, Lily advised her to drop Jared and choose another task. Jenny, however, insisted, "I know that Tim's birthday party is tomorrow night. I have an invitation. As long as I'm there and see Jared, I'll find a way to convince him to accept our interview."

Everyone was surprised. Tim's birthday party was a family gathering at their mansion, the Whitfield Manor. There were rumors that the main purpose of the party was to set Jared up on a blind date. All the young ladies from the well-known families in Willowbrook Town had received invitations. Nobody expected Jenny to have one.

They didn't know much about Jenny's background, only that she and Agnes were close. Agnes was a genuine rich girl, so her family must have been well-off too. No wonder she had the guts to propose interviewing Jared.

Then someone asked, "Agnes, did you get an invitation?"

Agnes said, "No."

Jenny immediately replied, "Don't worry, I'll take Agnes with me tomorrow."

Agnes didn't expect Jenny to have gotten an invitation to Tim's birthday party. It must have been Elton who helped her.

At this thought, Agnes felt annoyed. She didn't want to attend the party, otherwise, she wouldn't have given her invitation to Beatrice so easily.

But the next day after class, Jenny stopped Agnes who was about to leave, “Pick up the photography and interview equipment at The Journalism Society. We’re going to the Whitfield Manor later.”

Agnes replied, “I’m not going. I don’t have an invitation, and I won’t be allowed in.”

Jenny confidently pulled out an invitation and waved it in front of Agnes, “Don’t worry, I have an invitation and I can get you in. Plus, we’re both responsible for this interview. You gotta help me.”

Agnes still coldly said, “I don’t want to go.”

Suddenly, Jenny pulled out several photos from her bag, “How about these photos then? Do you want them?”

What Agnes saw was a photo of her with Elton.

Chapter 22

In the photo, both the boy and the girl looked young. The boy had his arm around the girl’s shoulder, his smile bright and handsome.

Agnes wasn’t a fan of taking pictures, and this photo was only taken after Elton relentlessly begged her for one. They snapped two photos.

Both kept the photo in their wallets, always carrying it with them.

After that incident, Agnes tore her copy of the photo. She never expected Elton’s copy to end up in Jenny’s hands.

Agnes was heartbroken.

“Give it to me!” Agnes demanded.

Jenny laughed, “I’ll give you back the photo. Right now, my photo with Elton is in his wallet. As long as you go with me tonight and help me persuade Jared to do the interview, I’ll return your photo.”

In the end, Agnes caved, only because the photo was in Jenny's hands, which disgusted her.

Jenny was chuffed to bits and laughed, "You go get the equipment ready. We better get that interview with Jared tonight. Even if we can't, we **can** still shoot the Whitfield family's carefully arranged blind date banquet. That's news too."

Jenny had two reasons for bringing Agnes along. One, to confirm if Agnes and Jared had anything going on. Another reason was that Jenny knew her influence alone wasn't enough to persuade Jared to do the interview, but Agnes was different. As a socialite of Willowbrook Town and a former intern at Jared's company, she would be able to convince him.

If Jenny could score an exclusive interview with Jared, she could win the approval of the Taylor family. That was her goal.

When Agnes came over with the equipment, Jenny had already changed her clothes and was waiting in the taxi.

Jenny put on a fishtail evening dress and delicate makeup. She was naturally beautiful, but she looked even more stunning with makeup.

In comparison, Agnes' outfit was much simpler.

Jenny glanced at Agnes and said, "Get in."

The car traveled along the road; it was already dark by the time they reached Whitfield Manor.

The Whitfield Manor was located downtown. It had a combination of various architectural styles. The main villa was a white, single-family house hidden amongst lush trees. The Manor was glitzy and brightly lit, a luxurious palace. Two black-clad guards were at the entrance, and guests needed to show their invites to get in.

Agnes and **Jenny** were the only ones who came by taxi, so they had to get off and walk to the entrance.

When Jenny produced the invite, the guard glanced at it and said, "This invite is fake, miss. Please go back."

Jenny objected, “How can it be? I was invited by your master. Why would you say my invite is fake?”

While Jenny was arguing with the guard, Agnes picked up the invite and looked **at it**, “This is indeed fake. A genuine Whitfield family invite has a distinctive mark from Tim in the lower–right corner. Yours doesn’t.”

She had seen the real invite before.

Jenny turned to Agnes, “You knew all along, why **didn’t** you tell me earlier? Did you intentionally set me up for embarrassment?”

Chapter 23

Agnes was at a loss for words. She didn’t want to argue with Jenny, she just said coolly, “Let’s jet, we **can’t** get in anyway.”

The taxi had already left, so they had to fob it to find another one.

Jenny, on the other hand, was fuming. The invite was indeed a fake, a replica of Yolanda’s that Jenny had sneakily snapped a pic of and had duplicated.

She thought she could bluff her way in but got busted way too easily. And Agnes saw it all

Agnes wanted to bail, but Jenny was hell–bent on getting in. “I did this for the club. We’re already here, and I can’t just walk away. I have to get us in.” Agnes retorted, “And how do you plan on doing that without an invite?”

Jenny pointed to a big tree in the corner of the outer wall and said, “We could scale the wall.”

Agnes snapped, “Are you out of your mind? There are cameras here, what if we get caught?”

Jenny countered, “I’ve checked. That tree is a blind spot for the cameras. Today, I’m meeting Jared, and nothing you say is going to stop me, Agnes.” Agnes retorted, “Aren’t you pregnant? How are you going to climb a tree that high?”

Jenny paused, then said, “That’s why you need to help me. If I fall, it could hurt me and Elton’s baby. You don’t want Elton to hate you forever, do you?”

With that, Jenny was already at the corner, starting to climb the tree. Agnes wanted to wash her hands off this madness, but climbing a tree and hopping a wall could be dangerous even for a non-pregnant person, let alone a pregnant woman like **Jenny**.

Although she was reluctant, Agnes didn’t want Jenny to have an accident. Knowing Jenny’s stubbornness, she wouldn’t give up until she got what she wanted.

Agnes walked over and climbed the tree in a few steps. She had always been agile, so climbing a tree was a piece of cake for her.

Agnes pulled Jenny up and prepared to hop the wall first, then help Jenny. But just as she jumped down, a dog came bounding towards her..

A big Golden Retriever knocked her over before she could get her footing, licking her face non-stop.

A dog foiled their plan.

Instantly, a bunch of black-clad bodyguards surrounded them. Jenny was still hanging from the tree, caught by the security.

The corner of the mansion was in chaos. The butler of the Whitfield Manor was notified and hurried over, discussing with the head of security about what to do with them.
“Agnes?”

Just then, Agnes heard someone calling her name. She turned around, and it was Ryder.

Ryder looked different, dressed **in** a suit, his hair meticulously styled. He looked even more handsome than usual. He emerged from the shadows, like a prince from a fairy tale appearing in real life.

When the butler saw Ryder, he respectfully addressed him as “Mr. Ryder“.

Mr. Ryder?

Both Agnes and Jenny were shocked. Though Ryder was already a big shot at Lakeside College, no one expected him to be connected to Hillcrest City's well-off Whitfield family.

Media reports said that Tim had a son and a daughter. The son, Jared, was born in his later years, and the daughter, Alyssa, was 17 years older. Alyssa only had one son, but he had never been exposed to the media, rumored to be studying abroad.

Now, with the butler addressing Ryder like that, it meant that Ryder was Alyssa's son, Tim's grandson, and the only third-generation member of the Whitfield family.

It dawned on Agnes—no wonder she had felt a sense of familiarity when she first saw Ryder. Turns out, Ryder and Jared bore a striking resemblance to each other.

Chapter 24

Ryder strolled over, eyed Agnes **and** asked, "What are you doing here?"

Caught off guard. Agnes stammered, "It's a long story"

The butler inquired, "Mr. Ryder, do you know them?"

Ryder pointed at Agnes and said, "She's a friend"

He then glanced at Jenny and declared casually, "Don't know this one though"

The butler got the drift immediately, and his attitude towards Agnes changed, "Since you're a friend of Mr. Ryder, you can go in. But as for you, miss, without an invitation, you need to leave. If you try to sneak in over the wall again, we'll call the cops."

Jenny got kicked out.

Standing outside the Whitfield family mansion, Jenny was fuming. She couldn't believe that Agnes had somehow gotten in with Ryder. Inside, it was all glitz and glamour, but she had got no part in it!

Ryder took one look at Agnes' arm and said, "You're hurt. Let me get you some ointment."

Agnes looked down and saw that she has scratched her arm on some roses when she jumped down.

Agnes insisted, "It's fine, I should go."

But Ryder had other plans, he grabbed her hand and stated, "Come with me."

And just like that, Agnes got dragged into the Whitfield family's mansion.

Once inside, Agnes was blown away. The mansion was enormous. The ground floor alone was like a huge ballroom full of elegant people. It overflowed with champagne, crystal chandeliers casting light like cascading tassels, with guests everywhere, laughing and chatting.

Looking around, Agnes couldn't help but be astounded.

The Pritchard family's mansion was also grand, but compared to this, it seemed a bit behind the times. It was like being in a palace, so dazzling.

Ryder escorted Agnes up in the elevator to avoid the crowd **in** the main hall.

On their way up, Agnes tentatively asked, "Is Jared here today too?"

Ryder glanced at Agnes, "Why? You're interested in taking up the position of Mrs. Whitfield's too?"

Agnes quickly chuckled, "No, I was just curious. Everyone's saying your family is looking for a wife for Jared today, I just wanted to see who he ends up choosing?"

Ryder coolly responded, “He won’t choose any of them. He already has someone he likes; he has liked her for many years now.”

Hearing this, Agnes felt a sting in her heart. She thought to herself, “Jared already has someone he likes? Then why did he want to marry me?”

Ryder led Agnes to a room and said, “Wait here, I’ll find you some clothes. There are many guests at the Whitfield Manor today, but this is the quietest place. No one will come in.”

Agnes nodded, “Thank you.”

Ryder left, and Agnes entered the room.

It looked like a bedroom, simple but tastefully decorated. The color scheme of black, white, and grey reminded her a bit of Jared’s style.

One side of the room had a large floor-to-ceiling window. From the side of the bed, she could clearly see the bustling scene in the hall below.

Sure enough, it was a gathering of the who’s who, everyone showing off their stuff.

Agnes spotted a few familiar faces, Yolanda, Cecile, even her dad and Beatrice.

Suddenly, Agnes felt a pang of regret. She really shouldn’t have come in; plus, she was not that close with Ryder.

In this unfamiliar room, Agnes didn’t dare to touch anything. She just stood by the bed, quietly looking out the window.

Not long after, she heard some noise at the door. Agnes thought it was Ryder returning, but when she turned around. She was shocked to see Jared standing in the doorway!

Chapter 25

Agnes froze, thinking she must have been dreaming.

Jared spotted Agnes and he was taken aback too.

In surprise, Agnes questioned, “What are you doing here?”

Jared composed himself, strolled in leisurely and closed the door. He nonchalantly responded, “This is *my* room.”

Only then did Agnes realize, Ryder had brought her to Jared’s room for cover.

Seeing Jared approach, Agnes felt a sudden surge of nervousness.

He took off his coat, revealing a crisp white shirt that made him look incredibly handsome.

Jared asked, “What brings you here?”

For some reason, Agnes felt a wave of unexplained anger.

Agnes retorted, “I’m here for your matchmaking banquet. All the eligible single girls of Willowbrook Town are here for you to pick and choose. Quite a showstopping event.” She huffed discontentedly after she finished.

A smirk played at the corner of Jared’s mouth as he lightly pinched Agnes’ puffed-up face, “Little one, are you jealous?”

Agnes denied, “I am not jealous.”

Suddenly serious, Jared said, “**It’s** you who doesn’t want to make our relationship public. How about this, come downstairs with me now and I’ll formally introduce you to my father and sister. Your father is also here, we can tell them we’re married, and you are my wife. That way, they won’t arrange these chaotic matchmaking events for me anymore.”

With that, he grabbed Agnes’ hand and headed for the door.

Agnes suddenly felt scared, and she stopped in her tracks, “No, I’m not ready yet. And this isn’t the right occasion.”

Agnes was dressed casually today. She had just climbed over the wall, wrestled with a golden retriever in the garden and was covered in mud. She couldn't possibly appear before the Whitfield family elders and the other influential families in such a state.

Jared turned around, putting on an innocent expression, "See, I've been waiting for you to be ready, always accommodating you. You should compensate me, don't you think?"

Agnes felt something was off, but she asked as Jared suggested, "How should I compensate you?"

Jared stepped closer, pinning her against the enormous window behind her, and planted a passionate kiss, "We haven't seen each other in three days. Have you missed me?" Agnes was dizzy from the kiss, but she managed to say, "This isn't right. What if someone knocks on the door?"

She was worried Ryder would show up.

While continuing to kiss her, Jared murmured, "The door is locked, and the soundproofing is excellent."

"The window is transparent, people could see..."

"It's one-way glass. You can see out, but they can't see in."

Although she knew they couldn't be seen from the outside, Agnes could see everyone in the hall from the corner of her eye. It **felt** as if they were under everyone's watch... Agnes mentally couldn't handle it, so she pleaded, "I can't..."

Jared didn't want to force her, so he finally let her go, leading her by the hand to the dressing room.

He pulled out a gown.

Agnes thought it was beautiful, "Is this for me?"

"Who else would I keep clothes for in my room, if not for you, my dear Agnes?"

Chapter 26

That ballgown seemed to be tailored just for Agnes, showing off her killer curves perfectly.

Agnes naturally had an amazing figure, it was just that she usually wore baggy casual clothes, so it was hard to tell.

Though she **felt a bit** odd in the tight dress, her usual clothes had been ripped off by Jared. Thinking of their close encounter, Agnes' face felt as if it was on fire. He had already left.

Agnes waited for a bit, but Jared didn't come back.

In the end, Agnes decided to sneak out. If Ryder saw her looking like this, she wouldn't be able to explain.

Agnes decided to leave first, then call Jared.

When Ryder brought Agnes here, she wasn't spotted, so she decided to go back the way she came. However, just as she stepped out of the elevator, preparing to sneak out, she was spotted by Yolanda.

"Agnes, is that you?" Yolanda called Agnes' name from behind..

Agnes stopped in her tracks; Yolanda had already walked over.

Yolanda stood in front of Agnes, looking her up and down and said in surprise, "Agnes, I didn't expect it to be you. You look stunning today. I could hardly recognize you." Agnes awkwardly smiled, "Thanks."

Yolanda suddenly grabbed Agnes' arm, "Didn't expect you to be here. We interned together, found out we were in the same school, and now we're here together. We must be fated. Oh, I just saw your dad, let me take you to him."

Agnes' heart sank. Yolanda had already called out to Preston at the other end.

It was too late for Agnes to escape now.

Preston and Beatrice were talking to Tim, and Yolanda's shout had made everyone look over,

Yolanda walked over with Agnes' arm in hers.

Preston was also surprised when he saw Agnes, “Agnes, how come you’re here?”

Standing next to Preston, Beatrice saw Agnes. Jealousy flashed **in** her eyes. She wondered why Agnes, who usually seemed indifferent, had secretly come to Jared’s blind date party and dressed so attractively.

Beatrice had to admit, Agnes did look stunning. Even without makeup, she was fresh and charming. Especially her innocent and bright eyes that always seemed to sparkle. She naturally had a face men would fall for, which was why Beatrice was jealous.

Even though they were sisters, Agnes was naturally beautiful, and attracted men’s attention even without makeup: Beatrice was not bad looking, but standing next to Agnes, she looked plain.

Ryder was not far away. The moment he saw Agnes, he quickly came over to explain, “She’s my classmate. I invited her.”

Everyone showed an expression of understanding.

Tim smiled and said to Preston, “Mr. Pritchard, you are really blessed, having two such beautiful daughters. I’m envious.!”

Preston laughed and replied, “Thank you for your compliment. By the way, I forgot to introduce my eldest daughter, Agnes. I didn’t know she was friends with Mr. Ryder.” Tim glanced at Ryder and smiled, “This is the first time my grandson brought **a** friend home.”

Chapter 27

Ryder, with his stern face, seemed to ignore everyone else, only addressing Agnes, “Come with me.”

Agnes nodded, gave a quick greeting briefly, and under everyone’s gaze, followed Ryder to **the** balcony.

The balcony was relatively quiet. A glass door completely isolated the hustle and bustle inside.

Ryder broke the silence, “Where did you sneak off to? I’ve been looking for you.”

She had just.....

Agnes's face began to heat up, thankfully concealed by the night.

1

Agnes fibbed, "After you left, I heard footsteps in the hall. Thought someone was heading my way, so I took off to the backyard for a bit. Got lost, didn't expect it to be such a maze."

Agnes laughed nervously, "The Whitfield's backyard is seriously massive."

Ryder squinted, his gaze falling on Agnes's dress.

Agnes was obviously lying because he knew his mother had planted some wild cherry trees in the backyard a few days ago. There were too many people today, so the backyard entrance was closed today to prevent any damage!

Ryder, although clueless about why Agnes was lying, didn't expose her, just asking, "Is your hand alright?"

Agnes glanced at her hand, where she had scratched it when climbing over the wall, and laughed it off, "Just a scratch. It's okay."

Ryder nodded, then asked, "Preston and Beatrice are here today. You could have come in through the front door. Why did you climb over the wall?"

Agnes felt a bit awkward, "Well..... I had some stuff to deal with."

It wasn't that Agnes didn't want to tell him. She just didn't know how to say to him.

Ryder said, "If it's hard to say, just forget about it."

Just then, someone called Ryder's name. Seemed like one of his buddies.

Agnes said, "Go ahead, don't mind me. I'll be leaving later."

Ryder nodded, "If you need anything, just call."

Agnes nodded, and Ryder turned around and left.

Agnes let out a sigh of relief. She wasn't too familiar with this Icy man. Other **than** their not-so-pleasant first encounter, they had never crossed paths before.

Agnes didn't expect him to help her out today.

Agnes was already dressed quite lightly. The night wind blew, and she felt a bit cold but didn't feel like going inside.

Agnes spotted Jared from a distance, and even though he was quite far away, Jared seemed to naturally radiate light. Among the crowd, she could spot him instantly. That's what one call standing out from the crowd.

At this moment, he was holding a glass of champagne, surrounded by many famous ladies.

Agnes's mood was strangely heavy.

"Agnes, didn't expect you to be so cunning."

Agnes was going to leave, but Beatrice came storming over.

Agnes said, "Beatrice, I'm your sister. You shouldn't talk to me like that."

"Agnes, don't act all high and mighty. You're just a burden to the Pritchard family. I'm warning you, I'll be the Mrs. Whitfield, and you don't even think about competing with me."

Agnes retorted, "Even if I'm not competing with you, that title isn't necessarily yours. Have you noticed how many people are here tonight. Did Jared even glance at you?" Beatrice was furious. She came tonight all dolled up, but Jared, indeed, hadn't looked her way. Surrounded by all those noble ladies, she couldn't get close to Jared, so she could only vent her frustration to Agnes.

Chapter 28

Beatrice said angrily, "Agnes, what gives you the right to look down on me?"

As soon as Beatrice finished speaking, she was about to hit Agnes. She had been in a foul mood all evening, and Agnes just added fuel to the fire.

Agnes blocked Beatrice's move out of habit, "Beatrice, stop always trying to hit people. Do you think you can beat me?"

Beatrice was shaking with anger, "Agnes, you... you're just insufferable..."

"Ms. Pritchard, so you're here." A deep and clear voice came from behind them.

Agnes and Beatrice turned around at the same time, and Jared stood, less than two meters away on the terrace.

When did Jared come over?

Realizing this, Beatrice quickly withdrew her hand and said in a delicate voice, "Sis, what are you doing? You're hurting my hand."

Agnes was speechless.

But Jared was slowly walking over, his eyes fixed on Beatrice.

Beatrice's heart was racing. The man in front of her was every woman's dream. His gaze made her deeply attracted to him. He was so noble and superior as if he was born to be admired.

"Mr. Whitfield..." Beatrice began, her cheeks flushing.

She was surprised that Jared knew her and came to find her. She couldn't control her joy

Jared had already walked up to them, a faint smile on his lips, still looking at Beatrice,

"Ms. Pritchard, you're really eye-catching today. May I have the pleasure of dancing **with** you?"

Beatrice was overwhelmed with joy. Jared was actually inviting her to dance. What did this mean?

There had been rumours that Tim's birthday party was actually Jared's matchmaking party. If Jared liked any girl, he would invite her to dance the opening dance to announce...

Now that Jared was inviting her to dance, did it mean she was the one chosen by Jared?

Beatrice was over the moon, quickly extended her hand, and said eagerly, "I'd love to."

Jared's hips curved up slightly, but he suddenly turned around in the next second, took Agnes's hand directly, and even kissed it gently, "Ms. Pritchard, please." Agnes was also stunned because even she thought that Jared was speaking to Beatrice. After all, he looked at Beatrice all the time and didn't even glance at her. But the **plot** took a sudden **turn**, and Agnes couldn't react for a while. She could only let Jared lead her away from the terrace...

It took Beatrice more than ten seconds to realize what had happened. She clenched her fists and bit her lips until they bled. A sense of deep humiliation swept over her. Jared had chosen Agnes! Had Jared deliberately misled her and then humiliated her just now?

Maybe he had heard their conversation just now, which had greatly reduced his liking for **her**.

Her lips were filled with the taste of blood. Beatrice was furious. All this was because of Agnes. Agnes was always submissive, but she had just angered her.

Perhaps Agnes had seen Jared coming and had deliberately acted like this. She didn't expect Agnes to be so cunning, and she didn't expect to have helped her! Thinking of this, Beatrice was both angry and resentful. She just wanted to rip Agnes to pieces!

Chapter 29

Jared walked into the hall holding Agnes' hand. It took a while for Agnes to realize the situation.

All eyes **in the** room were on Agnes.

The ladies from their social circle stared at her as if they were shooting sharp arrows.

Agnes felt uncomfortable and tried to pull her hand out of Jared's, which made him turn to her and ask, "What's wrong?"

Agnes replied, "I really don't want to be the center of attention. Maybe you should let go of my hand.'"

Jared frowned but released her hand anyway.

Agnes added, "I'll head out first. You go ahead with your stuff."

Agnes was torn. On the one hand, she didn't want to be in the spotlight, but on the other, she couldn't bear to see Jared flirting with other girls. So, she chose to avoid this scene.

Jared asked, "Where are you off to?"

"I'm heading back to school. It's getting late, and I have classes tomorrow, Agnes replied.

Jared was silent for a moment before saying, “Wait for me. I just have to say hi to a few people. Then I’ll leave **with** you.”

Agnes looked up in surprise, “Can you do that?”

Everyone knew that although this was Tim’s birthday party, it was also a matchmaking event for Jared. **In** a way, he was the host. Could he just leave before the party ended?

Jared replied casually, “If my wife finds it boring, I can’t help it. Accompanying my wife is the most important thing.

Agnes’ heart pounded as she saw the slight smile playing on Jared’s **lips**.

Jared added, “Wait for me here. I’ll be back soon.”

Jared returned sooner than expected and said to Agnes, “Come with me.”

He led her to the underground parking lot and drove through a special passage. They quickly left the mountain road behind the bustling Whitfield family mansion. Not long after they got in the car, Preston called Agnes.

Agnes told him she had something to do at school and had to leave early.

After hanging up, Jared asked, “Agnes, are you hungry?”

Agnes seemed a little distracted and replied without thinking, “Not really.”

Jared said, “Agnes, I’m hungry.”

Agnes looked up to see Jared’s teasing gaze, a look she knew all too well.

Whenever Jared was up to something, he would have this expression. His whole body seemed to radiate male hormones, making him incredibly attractive.

Agnes' heart started to race, and she blushed, stammering, "You just...I'm exhausted today..."

Jared suddenly smiled, "Agnes, I said I'm hungry. What were you thinking?"

Agnes froze, feeling extremely embarrassed.

What was she thinking? Jared just said he was hungry. How did she think about...that?

Agnes was shocked by her own thoughts.

Jared seemed in a good mood and laughed, "You erotic girl!"

Erotic girl...

Agnes' face turned as red as an apple.

Jared stopped joking, "I am actually a bit hungry. Do you know any good places where we can grab a bite?"

Agnes eagerly tried to change the subject and quickly responded, "There's a great burger joint near my school. Do you want to try it?"

But as soon as she said that, she realized... would a foodie like Jared really go to a place like that?

Agnes didn't expect that Jared nonchalantly said: "Let's go grab some burgers."

Guided by Agnes, their car quickly pulled over near the school.

Chapter 30

Just as they were about to get out, Agnes felt slightly annoyed.

Seeing as they were all dressed up, and the area was mostly dominated by Lakeside College students, they'd definitely attract attention if they passed by like this. Suddenly, Agnes had an idea and told Jared. "Walt in the car for me. I'll be right back."

With that, she stepped out of the car

She came back quickly, arms full of clothes she bought from a small clothing store nearby, all student gear.

"We're attracting too much attention in these outfits," Agnes said. "Let's change into these. And it's kinda chilly outside. These should keep us warm."

What she brought were two sets of casual hoodies.

Jared glanced at them and chuckled, "Are these couple outfits?"

Agnes was taken aback. She hadn't noticed when she bought them. Just randomly picked two and came back. But the colour, style, and pattern on the chest were all the same. They were obviously couple outfits.

Agnes didn't explain, only said, "Just put it on. It's free size."

The windows of Jared's car were made of special material, One could see out but not-in, so changing inside the car was no problem at all.

Jared smiled, unbuttoning his shirt to put on the new one, every movement graceful.

For a while, Agnes found it hard to look away.

After changing, Jared glanced at Agnes and said, "If you keep staring, I might start charging."

It turned out he knew all along that Agnes was watching.

Agnes got flustered. She quickly turned around to change her clothes.

But then she seemed to have thought of something and told Jared, "Turn around.

Jared smiled and asked, "Why? You were just watching me. Plus what haven't I seen of you?"

Agnes blushed like a ripe tomato, at a loss for words.

Even though they did have some intimate moments...

But back then, she was almost in a daze.

Seeing Agnes blush so hard she could bleed, Jared found her adorable and couldn't help but tease her.

But in the end, Jared gentlemanly turned around.

Agnes was flustered for a while, then started to change her clothes carefully.

But the back of her dress had a zipper that she couldn't reach no matter how hard she tried. The more flustered she got, the harder to get it off.

Just as Agnes was getting annoyed, Jared's calm voice came, "Need a hand?"

In the end, Agnes reluctantly let Jared **help** her.

But after Jared pulled the zipper, his hand didn't leave. Instead, it slid into her dress and wrapped around her waist.

Before Agnes could react, Jared leaned in for a kiss.

Agnes immediately felt her mind go blank. Her breathing became erratic.

It took a few minutes before Jared finally let her go, his voice deep and steady, "Alright, change your clothes."

Agnes was still in a daze.

Jared loved seeing her like this. Utterly adorable.

Jared chuckled, "Or should I help you change?"

Agnes finally snapped out of it.

She quickly stripped off her dress and put on the hoodie.

While Jared enjoyed the whole process **with** a smirk.

Sometimes, Agnes really couldn't stand it.

How come she get so easily swayed by his actions, and yet this man, in that situation, could still stay so calm and composed. It was... So embarrassing!

After changing clothes, the two hopped out of the car.