

Chapter 119 Press Conference

Heather walked up to Rupert and glared at Annabel jealously. With her eyes gleaming with obsession, she looked at Rupert's handsome face and said, "I saw in the news that Benton Group is currently going through some difficulties. If you want, Norman Group can step in to help—"

"That won't be necessary!" Rupert cut her off rudely.

Heather's smile froze for a second. She then continued, "But I saw that Benton Group's stock price is falling at a fast pace due to the Ice and Fire issue. A cooperation with a strong company like Norman Group will help turn the tide for your company. The stock price is sure to get back up if that happens."

"What? Are you trying to say Benton Group's stocks won't rise back without the help of Norman Group?" Rupert sneered and looked at her coldly.

A chill knifed through Heather's back when she saw the ice in his expression. She replied in an aggrieved tone, "No, that's not what I meant. I was just trying to help, Rupert."

"Save your help!" Rupert's voice was as cold as ice. "I have something important to do. Please leave."

Heather stamped her feet in anger and glared at Annabel before she turned around and left.

"You hurt her feelings. Aren't you going to run after her?" Annabel tilted her head and took a glance at Rupert, pouting her lips in the direction where Heather went.


"Are you kidding me?"

"What's the big deal? After all, she came here to help you out of the goodness of her heart. Aren't you afraid that she would be heartbroken?" Although Annabel thought she was just being sarcastic, her words dripped with jealousy.

She still couldn't forget the image of Rupert dancing with Heather at the party. It annoyed her for some weird reason.

"You think so?" Rupert rubbed his chin and pretended to think about it. Then he uttered, "You are right! I had better go after her!"

He sprang to his feet.


"How dare you?" Annabel blurted out without thinking when she saw that he was really going out. 

It became pretty obvious that she was jealous. Rupert chuckled and quipped, "Look who's jealous!"

Shame made Annabel's cheeks turn red when she came to her senses.


What was wrong with her? Why did his actions always get to her? It was so weird!

"Again, I'm not jealous!" yelled Annabel, glaring at him.

The corners of Rupert's mouth curled into a smile. He leaned close to Annabel and said in a magnetic voice, "Annabel, I danced with Heather that day because I was angry that you were with Rory." 

His gentle breath sprayed on her neck, tingling all her senses. Subconsciously, Annabel pushed him away. She wavered.

Did he just say that he had nothing to do with Heather?

A touch of warmth inexplicably swirled in her heart. She took a deep breath and said lightly, "You can dance with whomever you like. It's none of my business." 

His eyes were as deep as the sea that could drown her.

When he spoke again, his voice was like the music from a cello. "I promise to dance with only you from now on."

Those words increased the warmth in Annabel's heart. She almost lost herself.

However, she quickly snapped out of it.

She sneered, "What about Candy? What if she comes back one day? Won't you dance with her?"


Candy...

Rupert fell silent.

Annabel was disappointed to see how his face fell.

His silence was loud enough.

Annabel smiled bitterly. Why did she set herself up to be heartbroken? After all, she already knew the answer.

Candy was the love of Rupert's life. How could he pick her, a temporal substitute, over Candy? 

As the pain in her heart intensified, Annabel pointed at the table and said coldly, "You'd better hurry up and read these materials. We can't afford the failure of this afternoon's press conference. That said, I'll go back to my desk."

She turned around and left in a haste.

The press conference began at exactly two o'clock in the afternoon as earlier scheduled.

In the conference hall, the reporters were already present with their cameras and recording devices. They fought to get good positions near the stage so they wouldn't miss any word that would be said today.

Sitting in the corner, Annabel quietly stared at the dazzling man sitting on the stage.

Under everyone's expectant gaze, Rupert stood up and cleared his throat. "Good day, everyone. Thanks for coming to today's press conference."

After a pause, he continued, "As you may have guessed, the main purpose of this press conference is to address the

ongoing troubles involving a new jewelry collection released by our company. It's no news that several complaints have been made that people got poisoned by the radioactive material allegedly present in the Ice and Fire jewelry series. We are very concerned about these complaints and are committed to getting to the root of this. After investigating for several days, we found that all the pieces of jewelry with this problem were produced in our branch factory in France. In contrast, the ones produced here have been certified perfect. Here is the test report."

Rupert signaled to his assistant. Taking the hint, Finley clicked the Enter key on his laptop. The test report was projected on the wide screen a second later. "This is the test report gotten from a reputable authority in the quality assurance field. It shows that the jewelry pieces produced here are perfect. You can wear them without worrying."

"Mr. Benton, now that it has been confirmed that the issue is coming from the branch factory in France, what do you plan to do about that?" A reporter fired the first question.

Rupert adjusted the microphone and replied coldly, "We have recalled all the defective products and destroyed them. I'll personally investigate the root cause of counterfeits. I will leave no stones unturned. Those behind this will be brought to book. As for the victims, we have already begun

negotiating with them and reached agreements for compensation. I sincerely apologize to them!"

Rupert's speech won warm applause.

An overzealous reporter further queried, "Mr. Benton, do you have any idea who is behind this?"

"Not yet, but I'm confident I will find that out once I travel down there. If it turns out that the issue came from within, I'll deal with it accordingly," Rupert said firmly.

"Could there be a traitor in your company, Mr. Benton?" another reporter asked.

Rupert answered calmly, "I can't rule out the possibility, or say yes for sure. I can only give you an honest answer after the investigation."

The press conference ended on a good note. Once Rupert's speech was televised, Benton Group's stock price stopped dropping and began to rise.

Annabel breathed a sigh of relief.

Nonetheless, the press conference was just one step in the direction of clearing the company's name. The trip to France was key.