

Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo

Chapter 721

“Evan, where will you two live now? At Imperial Garden or Hillside Villa?”

“Hillside Villa!” Evan answered without any hesitation.

Susan furrowed her brows and asked, “Evan, where is Imperial Garden? It sounds like an amazing place. Could we live there instead?”

Evan barely glanced at her before replying in a firm tone that brooked no argument, “No!”

Imperial Garden belonged to Nicole and nobody but her was allowed to live there. If she were to return one day, that would still be her home.

The abnormally fierce look on his face surprised Susan. She bit her lip as tears welled up in her eyes, looking incredibly pitiful.

Clenching her fingers, she repeatedly reminded herself that everything was fine. She was his wife now, and that gave her plenty of time to make him open up to her and eventually, fall in love with her.

All she needed was time.

One year later, at K Nation.

It was a sunny day. Nicole was standing in the garden, watching as Nina and Maya played around the swings while Kyle and Juan practiced their Taekwondo nearby. Inexplicably, her heart swelled with warmth.

Time had flown by so quickly. Before she knew it, the four kids had been staying with her for a year now. Strangely enough, they still seemed to have no intention of going back to their own parents.

“Hey, you four, when are you going back home?”

The children tensed as anxious expressions appeared on their faces. They began to whisper among themselves.

“Mommy is trying to shoo us away again.”

“Sigh. It’s been a year yet we still haven’t managed to make Mommy remember us. What a failure!”

“I think this is pretty good though! At least Mommy seems happy.”

Nina rolled her eyes at her sister. Pursing her lips tightly, she explained, “That’s not true! Mommy’s not happy at all. Levant keeps bugging her and urging her to marry him! She doesn’t like him so she’s very upset about it!”

“Levant is a big, fat liar! He keeps lying to Mommy.”

“Yeah, exactly! What do we do? How can we help Mommy?”

Juan racked his brain for ideas before he suggested, “How about we bring Mommy back home? Take her far away from Levant.”

“Oh, that’s a good idea! If we take Mommy away, she won’t have to marry Levant anymore!”

John, who had been staying close by and listening to their discussion, had to agree that was a splendid plan. Another reason he approved of their decision was that he had not seen Evan in over a year. He wondered how the other man was doing.

“Nina, Maya, how about this? You two tell her that you want to go back to see your father. After that, insist that you want her to take you all back,” John proposed.

Nina snorted and retorted, “We’re not going back to see meanie Daddy!”

“Yeah! Even if we go back, we wanna stay with Mommy! I don’t want Daddy anymore!”

John thought it over before reassuring them, “It’s just an excuse to make her go back with you. After you return, you guys get to call the shots, don’t you?”

The girls pondered his words but did not immediately reply. It was only after their brothers nodded at them that they agreed.

Nicole had already been toying with ideas on how to escape her marriage to Levant. Thus, she readily agreed to the children's suggestion.

In the past couple of months, Levant had been persistently trying to find all kinds of reasons for them to get married. Every single time, she had to find a different excuse to reject him.

She was slowly running out of excuses to use. In fact, she had barely been able to refuse his most recent two advances. Temporarily leaving the country sounded like a great idea.

"Alright, I'll accompany you guys back home."

The quadruplets cheered at her agreement. They would not need to see that liar Levant again and their mother could escape his clutches. How very wonderful!

Worry clouded Stephen's mind the moment he heard that Nicole was bringing the children back to their home.

"Nicole, you really should stop pushing back your wedding date."

Although Stephen did not really approve of Levant, he had seen how well the younger man had treated Nicole in this past year.

Other than Evan, Levant was the only other man in this world who treated her so nicely.

Since Evan had already married someone else, there was no better choice than Levant.

Nicole grinned at him in response and swore, "I know, Dad. I'm just taking them back home. I'll be back in no time; you'll see."

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Stephen mulled over it before sighing. "Fine. Come back as soon as you can." He prayed nothing else would happen during this time.

After saying their goodbyes to Stephen, Nicole happily went back to her room to pack.

John watched Nicole and the four kids, his thoughts racing.

I wonder how Mr. Seet is going to react when he sees Mrs. Seet after so long. She hasn't managed to regain any of her memories in the past year. Would being back in a familiar place trigger anything? If it does, what will she do? She does have an explosive temper.

At this, John's brows creased in a worried frown.

Why is it so difficult for them to be together?

"John, what are you standing around for? C'mon!"

Seeing that John was still rooted to the spot, Nicole shouted back at him.

Her voice snapped him out of his thoughts and he hurried over to help them with their luggage.

Half an hour later, they were sitting in the private plane Stephen had arranged for them.

The moment they stepped off the plane, Nicole had John call Evan.

John took out his phone and did as told, telling Evan of their arrival. After a brief moment, he ended the call and pointed over at a nearby cafe. "Ms. Lane, it's going to be twenty minutes before Mr. Seet gets here. Let's wait for him over there."

The children instantly agreed so Nicole nodded as well.

“Okay. Let’s go.”

John went off to order a cup of coffee while Nicole sat down with the kids at a table. They started to prattle, telling her about all the fun places in the country.

When they were done, Maya mentally sighed. Mommy was the one who took us to all those places last time. But now she doesn’t remember a thing! How are we supposed to help her?

Nina grabbed Nicole’s hand and asked her earnestly, “Stay with us, please?”

Stay with them at Evan’s house? That’s not very appropriate and convenient, is it?

Just as she was thinking of how to answer, Evan arrived.

“Daddy!” Juan called out sweetly.

To his surprise, his siblings rolled their eyes at him.

Daddy is a meanie! Why are you acting so cozy with him!

Hearing the shout, Evan turned around. His gaze brushed past John and the children before fixing on Nicole.

He noted how she seemed to have lost weight since they last met one year ago. However, her face was still as beautiful as he remembered, with a pair of bright and intelligent eyes.

Their gazes locked together. Nicole could see the passion and affection in his dark orbs. Her heart pounded in her chest and she hastily ducked her head.

I must be seeing things. There’s no way Evan will look at me like that! Ugh, it’s already been a year yet I still have such crazy thoughts when I see him. Snap out of it, woman!

When Evan came to a stop before them, Nina glared at him before pointedly turning her head away.

Kyle’s expression was cold and hard as he stared at his father.

Maya had to remind herself that her father had been a bad, bad man. Remembering what he had done to their mother, she scowled at him.

Juan grinned a little nervously. He was worried if he expressed his delight at seeing his father, he would become the public enemy among his siblings. Without any other option, he lowered his head to avoid looking at Evan.

Nicole was taken aback by the children's reactions. She was tempted to ask if the man was actually their father or their enemy. They haven't seen each other in a year! Just what grudge are they holding against him to treat him like that?

Sensing the tense atmosphere, John chatted with Evan briefly before excusing himself.

Nicole shifted uncomfortably at the awkward silence that surrounded them. She opened her mouth and said, "I've brought your four children back. However, what kind of a father are you? How could you not worry about letting them live with a stranger for a year!" She was clearly complaining on behalf of the kids.

Your four children. A stranger.

From these words, Evan could tell Nicole had not regained her memories.

Pinning her with a loving look, he expressed from the bottom of his heart, "Thank you for what you've done. It must have been hard!"

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Evan's gratitude made Nicole feel a lot better. Things really had been hard in the past year.

“Your children are incredibly mischievous and cunning. It truly has been rather difficult to look after them. If you want to repay me then arrange for me to stay in a good hotel for the next few days.”

This isn't an outrageous request at all for taking care of your kids for a year!

At this, Nina instantly piped up that she wanted to stay with Nicole. Beside her, Maya nodded as well.

Having always been a boy of few words, Kyle used his actions to express his intentions as he moved to stand beside Nicole.

Grinning slyly, Juan suggested, “It's not comfortable to stay in a hotel at all! Daddy, is anyone living at Imperial Garden? Why don't we all stay together at Imperial Garden?”

Of course there was no one staying at Imperial Garden.

That place was Nicole's.

Evan did not even need to think about it as he nodded. “Okay, I'll take all of you there.”

Nicole was honestly perplexed by the man. How can he agree to let them continue living with me? Isn't he going to bring them home to enjoy a luxurious life?

After that, the children stuck like glue to her sides, escorting her into Imperial Garden.

The moment she stepped foot inside the yard, a wave of hazy images flashed through her mind. The images seemed connected to this yard somehow but she could not be sure.

Suspicion rose in her and she wondered if she had been to a similar yard before she lost her memories.

In the living room, she had barely taken a seat when Nina sped upstairs. A few seconds later, the little girl zoomed over to her before tugging her into the master bedroom.

Although Sylphiette had trashed the room, the family photo of Nicole, Evan and the four kids on a family outing was still fine. All of her clothes were also untouched.

Nina pointed the photo out to Nicole, who was shocked to see who was in it.

“That woman in the photo looks exactly like me!”

The little girl looked her right in the eyes as she replied, “That’s because it is you!”

“It’s me?”

Doubt surfaced in her mind. If that woman really was her, why had Stephen never mentioned anything before? What about her engagement to Levant? How did that happen?

“Mommy, look! All the clothes in the closet are your favorite styles and colors!”

Glancing at the clothes, Nicole was amazed to see that it was indeed her preferred styles and colors. What was even stranger was the sense of familiarity that niggled at her as she stared at them.

She reached out a hand to stroke a pink skirt that caught her attention. The instant her fingers brushed against the fabric, another jumbled series of images appeared in her mind.

The images were of her hanging up these clothing, yet they seemed hazy and unreal. When she tried to focus on those images, her head felt like it was splitting open. She stumbled a little at the pain.

“Mommy, what’s wrong!”

“I’m fine.”

Now she finally understood why the children kept calling her “Mommy.” She looked exactly like the woman in the photos.

However, the fact that the clothing and design of the room matched her tastes was an incredible coincidence—too coincidental. Suspicion rippled through her.

She headed back downstairs. Evan had not left yet but was lounging on the couch. The casual posture did not diminish his noble and elegant air though.

Nicole sat down opposite him, twisting her fingers together uneasily. After a while, she focused her attention on Evan and asked, “Err... Mr. Seet? That woman in the photo upstairs that looks a lot like me... Is she your ex-wife?”

Evan felt a lump lodged in his throat. How was he supposed to describe their relationship?

“Ex-wife” did not sound like the right term because they had never actually gotten their marriage certificate.

His eyes darkened slightly and he replied solemnly, “She’s my only wife!”

She knitted her brows at his strange wording. Only wife? Then what about the woman he married, Susan?

Right then, she was certain that him running into her at K Nation and becoming her bodyguard most definitely had something to do with this mysterious woman.

“Daddy, hurry up and tell Mommy that the woman in the photo is her!”

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Evan’s expression was blank while his emotions raged in him. He was feeling extremely conflicted. He wanted to tell Nicole the truth yet he was worried she would remember her past.

If he said anything that might make her regain her memories, she would be utterly heartbroken at their current predicament. Especially since he was now married to Susan.

A moment later, he spoke in an icy voice, “That’s not her!”

His children had obviously not expected he would say that. Their loud protests rang out simultaneously.

“Daddy, you’re lying!”

“You liar, Daddy!”

So it really was not her. His answer caused an inexplicable sense of disappointment sweeping through Nicole.

“Thank you for arranging this wonderful place for me to stay, Mr. Seet.”

“You’re welcome.” This place belongs to you in the first place.

“Daddy, maybe you should stay here with us?”

Juan’s suggestion caught Evan off guard.

Nicole frowned, thinking that it was a bad idea. Evan was already a married man. It would not be appropriate for him to stay with them.

Noticing her expression, Evan replied, "I have to go back to Hillside Villa."

Seeing as his first plan failed, Juan tried again. "Daddy, the roses at Rose Garden are blooming, right? Could you bring us there tomorrow?"

If we bring Mommy to all the places we've stayed in before, maybe she might recall something!

After some thought, Evan nodded.

Juan then asked Nicole for her opinion. She mulled over it before questioning, "Is Rose Garden fun?"

The young boy nodded. "Very! The flowers there are so colorful and beautiful!"

Well, I came here so I could escape Levant and get my mind off of him. As long as it's fun, I guess it doesn't really matter where we go.

Thus, she agreed.

Although Maya begrudged her father for marrying another woman, in the end, he was still her father. After a couple of hours of playing with him, she tugged on Evan's arm, not wanting him to leave.

"Daddy, could you eat dinner with us?"

Evan took in the hopeful glint in her eyes. It had been a year since he had eaten with his four children, so he was reluctant to deny her this. Besides, he wanted to stay with them too. He nodded to show his agreement.

He made a call to have his chef and maids come over. After a mad scramble, a feast was spread out on the table.

They had only just sat down when a maid hurried over to inform, "Mr. Seet, Ms. Susan is here."

Evan's eyes darkened. Before he could do anything, Susan sauntered over. In an overly sweet and affectionate voice, she greeted, "Evan."

Then, she sat herself down at the table.

The quadruplets looked at her before scoffing as hostile expressions appeared on their faces.

To them, any woman who dared to snatch their mother's place was an enemy.

Nicole swept an assessing gaze across Susan. Dressed in a pale pink dress, the latter looked a lot more feminine now than she had at the wedding. Her silky hair draped across her shoulders loosely while her eyes shone brightly. There was a sheen to them that almost looked like tears, giving her a pitiful look. She was like a fragile flower that screamed for someone to protect her.

At that moment, she had to admit that Evan had a good taste to marry a woman as beautiful as Susan.

"Evan, I couldn't stop worrying about you when you didn't come back. So I decided to come over and have a look."

"Yeah," Evan muttered.

"Evan, when are you going back?"

"After dinner."

"Can I stay here to eat with you? We can go home together after we finish."

Evan did not get a chance to reply as Nicole spoke up warmly, "Sure you can, Mrs. Seet."

Both Susan and Evan were stunned at the address.

In Evan's heart, the position of Mrs. Seet would always belong to Nicole. He did not expect she would address someone else as that.

His heart felt like a fist was squeezing it tightly and he found it hard to breathe.

Immense pleasure shone in Susan's eyes.

She snuck a glance at Evan, noting his tension. It was clear he did not like Nicole addressing Susan as Mrs. Seet.

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Since the children were repulsed by Susan's presence, they rushed through their dinner before disappearing upstairs.

Susan did not care about what they thought of her. All she cared about was how Evan was treating Nicole.

The way he looked at Nicole was different—a realization that had Susan feeling distinctly uncomfortable.

After they finished dinner, Susan told Nicole she wanted to have a look upstairs. This was the first time she had been here and she wanted to see how Imperial Garden differed from Hillside Villa.

Nicole did not even think twice before agreeing to her request.

The two women headed to the second floor. When Susan caught sight of the photo in the master bedroom, her fingers curled into fists by her sides.

She purposely let out a loud sigh before commenting, "You really do look a lot like Evan's ex-girlfriend."

“That’s Evan’s ex-girlfriend?”

Susan turned to look at Nicole with teary eyes, nodding. “Yeah. Unfortunately, she was involved in a car accident a few years ago and died tragically. Evan felt the kids were too young to lose their mother so he’s been trying his very best to find someone who looks a lot like her. He’s hoping to find a substitute who would be willing to look after the kids.”

So Evan has been treating me as a substitute all along. No wonder he looks at me with such affection! He’s taking me for someone else!

Nicole subconsciously clenched her fingers as an inexplicable sense of disappointment coiled in her.

Noticing how Nicole’s face had fallen, Susan grabbed one of her hands in both of her own. “Ms. Lane, maybe you could stay here and be her substitute? You could look after the children while also helping Evan deal with his regret. As long as you’re willing to do this and do it well, I’ll definitely make it worth your while.”

Stay here to be a substitute? I’m the daughter of a duke! I have my own feelings—my own path to walk. Why should I stay here and be the substitute for a dead person? I would have to be crazy to do something so humiliating to myself!

“I’m sorry. I can’t agree to that because I’ll be going back to K Nation in a few days.”

Susan’s eyes flashed and she tightened her grip on Nicole’s hand. “Evan is a man who places a lot of value in his relationships. He’s always felt regretful of his ex’s death. Please don’t take it to heart if he does anything untoward to you in the next few days!”

In other words, any affection he shows me is not specifically aimed at me. I’m just a substitute to him.

Nicole smiled blandly and replied, "I trust that he won't cross the line. Don't worry, I won't think too much of his actions either."

"That's great."

Susan's words had successfully planted the idea of being a substitute in Nicole's mind.

Now, Nicole knew that she wasn't hallucinating when she saw the affection in Evan's gaze. The truth was that he had been looking at someone else instead.

Just the thought of this had anger rising in her.

Damn you! How dare you think of me as a substitute for your ex? You b*****d!

She tossed and turned in the bed, her mind going a mile per minute as she planned her return to K Nation. She wanted to end her life as a substitute as soon as possible!

While she really did like the children a lot, she was entitled to living her own life. She was not obligated to be their substitute mother!

She woke up in the middle of the night feeling parched. Blinking her eyes blearily, she crawled out of bed and made her way to the small pantry. To her displeasure, there was no water in the water boiler.

She exited the pantry grumpily and made her way to the stairs. Just as she was about to head downstairs, she abruptly stopped in her tracks.

This was the first day she was living here in this house. There was no way she would be familiar enough with the layout of the second floor to know there was a pantry just around the corner. Not to mention that she clearly knew where the water boiler was.

Confusion and suspicion swirled inside her.

But no matter how hard she racked her brains, her mind came up blank on the reason why.

A long while later, it clicked. Maybe she had noted it subconsciously when she came upstairs earlier!

That sounded like a flimsy excuse and she knew it. However, she could not think of any other explanation.

Shrugging, she continued her way downstairs to get a glass of water. When she was done, she returned to her room and flopped back on her bed. She pulled the blankets up over her head and was soon deep in slumberland.

The next morning.

She was awoken by a loud knocking on her door before the voices of the kids drifted in.

“Mommy, Daddy promised to take us to Rose Garden today! You have to wake up!”

“Mommy, wake up! It’s time to eat breakfast!”

“Mommy!”