

Mistaking a Magnate for a Male Escort

chapter 801

More importantly, without Zachary's approval, she would never be an official partner in the project.

From Charlotte's perspective, she felt that Zachary was raising such an unreasonable request at this point to make her quit.

"Fine, I accept the condition." Charlotte glared at him coldly. "I'll be back in Erihal tomorrow to get it done."

"Good." Zachary pursed his lips into a sly smile. "I hope to receive good news from you!"

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With that, he got to his feet and began walking off, saying, "We shall sign the papers for our business partnership once you get the authorization documents from the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Erihal."

As Charlotte watched him leave the place, she could not help but clench her teeth in annoyance. The cunning businessman she had just conversed with was nothing like the gentle, affectionate man from the night before.

He can't be the same person as Gigolo! That's simply not possible!

"Charlotte, are you mad?" Louis carefully tried to pacify her. "I prepared a banquet tonight for Mr. Lorenzo and Mr. Morgana. Will you join us?"

"Of course. I won't get distressed just because of something this small." Charlotte smirked.

"That's good to hear. Alright, I'll be going off to do some horse-riding with them now..." Louis heaved a sigh of relief.

"Okay, I'll be going to the South Sea. I'll see you tonight." Charlotte got up and strode off.

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Meanwhile, in Zachary's car, Ben asked, "Mr. Nacht, are you sending Ms. Lindberg away on purpose?"

After all the years he had spent working for Zachary, Ben knew his employer well enough to confidently say that he always drew a line between work and personal affairs, and he would not sabotage Charlotte with a request like that.

If he really felt that it was unfair for Charlotte to hold so many shares, he could have negotiated with her to reduce the number of shares she held or even asked her to invest more money in the project.

His seemingly unreasonable request for Charlotte to get support from the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Erihal was more likely a tactic to get her to leave H City for the short term.

"I guess you saw through my plans, huh?"

Zachary was reading some documents that Johann had sent him. It seemed like some issues had arisen yet again regarding the launch of the latest products.

"There are thirteen more days till the opening day of the territorial waters of the South Sea. Mr. Nacht probably won't return to M Nation anytime soon. Are you sending Ms. Lindberg away for the time being so that you can deal with Mr. Nacht first and prevent the two from meeting each other?" Ben asked.

"Yeah." Zachary nodded. "In the past few days, there have been multiple instances where the two of them almost met each other in person. If they do, all hell will break loose, and I'm not taking any chances!"

"That's true." As Ben recalled those stressful times, he felt a chill run down his spine.

"When Charlotte goes to Erihal, I'll take care of the matters regarding Henry and pay a visit to Phoenix City." Zachary had it all planned out. "I need you to check on what happened to Dr. Felch for me."

"Understood."

Two years ago, when Charlotte had gone missing, Hayley and Sam desperately wanted to bring Dr. Felch back to Phoenix City despite the fact that he had not even woken up from his coma back then.

Zachary did not force them to stay and simply gave them some money before they left.

He knew that they had lost all their trust in him after Charlotte's disappearance. Just like Olivia, the two of them even began suspecting him for plotting the deaths of Charlotte and Mrs. Berry for the sake of keeping her children.

As he had expected, when Hayley and Sam left H City, they immediately cut off all connections with the Nacht family.

Olivia had also left with her mother and never returned.

When he saw for himself how horrendous Charlotte's relapses were the night before, he was extremely shocked. In his head, he swore to himself that he would not let her suffer any longer from her illness, nor would he let her shun him for what he had done.

He needed to find Dr. Felch as soon as possible so that the poison lingering in her body could be removed.

Hayley and Sam would never help him with that because of the huge misunderstanding between them and the incidents in the past that had severely wounded Dr. Felch. As such, he decided that he had to take care of the matter personally to ensure that everything would unfold as planned.

The only catch about it was that in his absence, Henry might encounter Charlotte. In order to prevent that, he had to convince Charlotte to leave H City. At the same time, he needed to get Henry to return to M Nation as quickly as possible.

That way, he would be able to focus on the urgent matters at hand.

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In the afternoon, everyone was occupied with work.

Zachary was back at his company while Charlotte went to the South Sea to supervise the area.

On the other hand, Louis busied himself welcoming his five business partners and their family members. He was also hosting a small banquet that night to ease the tension between them.

Just as Zachary was signing his papers in his office, he suddenly received a call from Louis.

“Zachary, you must attend my banquet tonight, got it? I’ve done my part as per your instructions, so please do me a favor and come.” Louis nagged.

“Okay. It’s at seven, right? I’ll see you there.” Zachary did not want to listen to him ramble on and on.

“Alright, see you.”

After hanging up the call, Zachary got Ben to jot down his plans for the night. He then had a meeting with Johann and the others to discuss their latest products.

Before he knew it, it was already six at night. Zachary was still busy working.

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Ben tried to remind him that it was about time to go but dared not be too pushy about it.

In the end, Zachary finally looked up from his pile of papers at about six twenty. Upon looking at the clock, he hastened his steps and set off for Ashenville Garden.

By the time they left the company, it was already the rush hour, and they were soon faced with traffic congestion. At seven o'clock, they were once again stuck at the exit of the highway. A familiar silver Rolls-Royce came in sight.

Marino immediately recognized it and said, "It's them again. What a small world. I'm not letting them have their way with us this time."

"Gosh, you'd better be careful, lest we get into an accident and waste even more time," Ben said.

"I won't let that happen." Marino's competitive nature was showing, and he began speeding up to overtake the silver Rolls-Royce before zooming off garishly.

"Hah!" Marino was absolutely delighted. "I've finally won that devil of a woman!"

Zachary looked at the rearview mirror.

The silver Rolls-Royce had caught up with them, and the woman driving the car had a bitter expression on her face, looking like an angry cat.

In response, Marino stepped on the accelerator.

The two heated drivers exchanged gazes. Though they were in a furious car chase, there seemed to be some sort of chemistry between them.

Out of the blue, Zachary asked, "Marino, how long have you been with me?"

"Huh?" Marino blinked, then stammered, "E-Eight years, Mr. Nacht."

"He has been with you since he was thirteen," Ben added.

"Hmm." Zachary nodded.

Even as Marino continued driving, his hands began trembling uncontrollably. He thought he had just made a terrible mistake, and Zachary was about to kick him out.

"I have a task for you!" Zachary suddenly said.

"What is it, Mr. Nacht? I will do anything for you! I'm at your disposal. My life is also at your disposal, but please... don't kick me out..." Marino exclaimed emotionally.

He was almost choking and his eyes were turning red.

Ben also felt a little uneasy and turned to observe Zachary.

Just then, the silver Rolls-Royce sped past them.

Morgan stuck her hand out the window and gave Marino a thumbs down.

Marino gritted his teeth. He would have stopped the car and fought with her if he could, but he had more pressing matters at hand. Looking at the rearview mirror, he spoke to Zachary with a shaking voice. "Mr. Nacht, what's the task you have for me?"

"The woman on that car is called Morgan." Zachary pointed at the silver Rolls-Royce. "I want you to get her!"

Ben was stunned.

"Huh?" Marino gasped. His brows furrowed, and his expression turned stiff. "Even though she's annoying, but I... I don't think she deserves to die..."

"Nobody's asking you to kill her!" Zachary was rather exasperated. "I'm asking you to court her and flirt with her. Flirt! Do you get it?"

Marino was so dazed that it took him a few moments to get back to his senses. Flushing, he mumbled, "I... I don't know how!"

"Teach him." Zachary gave Ben a stern look.

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"What?" The corners of Ben's lips twitched. "I don't..."

"If you dare say that you don't know how to flirt, I'll cut your tongue off. If you don't know, then learn! It's that easy. Don't tell me it's more difficult than firing a gun?" Zachary snapped.

"I understand." Ben lowered his head.

"Okay..." Marino replied nervously, his entire face wrenching up.

Soon, they arrived at Ashenville Garden. Zachary initially wanted to change into a new set of clothes before going there, but Louis had called him yet again to urge him to hurry up.

"You're half an hour late. Everyone's waiting for you."

"I'll be there soon." Zachary was heading straight for the banquet hall.

Ben asked one of the bodyguards at the hot spring resort to send a set of clothes over.

When Zachary arrived at the banquet hall, he found another car that belonged to the Nacht family parked behind his. Cynthia had also arrived.

"Why did you come?" Zachary could not help but frown.

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"I was just going out to have some fresh air when I heard that you needed some clothes to be delivered to you. So, I just came over." Cynthia smiled as she gestured to Zachary.

"There's no need for all the trouble." Zachary did not overthink her unexpected arrival despite feeling somewhat annoyed.

Ben walked up to her and took over the clothes.

"You should go back and rest now," Zachary said, walking off.

To his utter horror, the group of guests in the banquet hall suddenly came out to welcome him, and a woman called Mrs. Morgana immediately spotted Cynthia. "Hey! Isn't this Mrs. Nacht?" she yelled.

"You're right! It's her!" Mrs. Lorenzo seemed rather excited too. "This is Mrs. Nacht indeed! I saw her on the news! Mr. Nacht, I didn't know that you were bringing your family along for the night as well! That's great. We can all get to know each other!"

Zachary immediately gave Ben a steely look.

Ben started panicking and urged the bodyguards to bring Cynthia back.

However, at that very moment, a foreboding, crisp voice echoed from a distance. "What's with the secrecy? Can't we take a look at her?"

Just as Charlotte had gotten changed and came out, she heard the commotion outside the banquet hall.

The woman in question that those people were buzzing about had not gotten out of the car, and Charlotte could not see her face.

That sparked Charlotte's interest in the mysterious woman Zachary was trying to hide.

For Zachary, the last thing he wanted was for Cynthia and Charlotte to meet.

If Charlotte listens in on the gossip those guests are rambling on about and deduce that the Nacht family had replaced her with Cynthia...

Before Zachary could do anything else, Cynthia's medical staff was already escorting her out of the car.

She smiled and waved at the guests who were talking about her.

Zachary's expression instantly darkened. Grabbing onto Cynthia's arm, he desperately wanted to shove her back into the car.

However, in the eyes of the onlookers, they saw it as a kind act to support Cynthia.

Oh, what a loving couple!

The worst had happened, and it was too late to reverse it.

Charlotte had finally gotten a better look at Cynthia's face. The moment her eyes landed on the woman in the distance, a complex yet strange feeling that could not be described with words began surging through her veins.

A nauseating sensation overwhelmed her body, and something cold was oozing out from her nose.

"Charlotte!" Louis came rushing over and put his arm around her shoulder to support her.

When Zachary noticed that Charlotte was having a nosebleed, he also ran over to her but was suddenly met by Charlotte's scathing glare.

Her eyes were burning with the unmistakable flames of vengeance and hatred.

Zachary froze in his tracks. His eyes widened in shock.

Did she remember something?

Or... Did she find out about something?

"Charlotte, are you okay?" Louis was also taken aback by Charlotte's expression.

A stinging pain grappled with Charlotte's brain. She felt a sudden surge of emotions just seconds ago, but everything was fading away again.

"You should go in and rest first." Louis promptly brought Charlotte into the house.

Upon seeing Charlotte's sudden breakdown, the other guests at the scene had no idea how to react and simply stood there silently.

As Zachary watched Charlotte go further and further away from him, he felt like he was sinking into a bottomless, dark abyss.

He was stricken by the realization that Charlotte might have already found out about Cynthia replacing her two years ago before she had even lost her memories.

Otherwise, she would not be so innately curious about the woman by his side, nor would she react that way upon seeing Cynthia.

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Zachary felt someone tug on his arm from behind.

"F*ck off!" he roared.

Cynthia shuddered, and she turned pale.

The two female medical staff beside her also shook in fear, holding in their breaths.

Zachary's fury also scared away the guests at the scene.

After a long, dreadful silence, Zachary finally took a deep breath before turning to look at Cynthia.

With tears welling up in her eyes, Cynthia quivered as she gestured to Zachary. "Zachary, did I do something wrong? Did I do something to anger you?"

For some reason, Zachary could not bear to lash out at her any longer.

Frowning, he ordered, "Send her back."

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"Understood." The medical staff promptly helped Cynthia back into the car.

The bodyguard closed the doors and drove off.

All the while, Ben was observing Zachary's facial expressions very closely. Eyeing him tentatively, he said, "I don't think Ms. Lindberg has recalled anything just yet. This is no time to be panicking like this. How about we go in and check on her?"

Zachary strode off without even looking at him.

On the surface, the banquet hall still seemed rather lively, with the incredible piano pieces filling up the entire room. However, the guests dared not dance or enjoy themselves at all due to the unmistakable tension lingering in the air.

Zachary hurried over to the lounge. The door was left ajar. Louis was doing all he could to take care of Charlotte. "How are you feeling? Do you need me to call an ambulance?"

"I'm fine..." Charlotte had regained her composure. After drinking a cup of warm water, she finally looked up. Catching a glimpse of Zachary at the door, her gaze turned cold. "Mr. Nacht, don't you need to keep your wife company? Why are you here?"

Zachary wanted to ask her how she was feeling, but somehow, he simply could not say those words. "Ms. Lindberg, you're in poor health. You should go back and rest soon."

"Your wife is the one in poor health." Charlotte raised her eyebrows. "I don't care if I'm at the workplace or on the battlefield. I, Charlotte Lindberg, am never backing down!"

"That better be the case!"

Zachary locked gazes with her solemnly, then left.

He slouched as he walked off and clenched his fists.

Even though he was worried sick for her, he could not even go up to her and comfort her in his arms, nor did he have the chance to explain himself.

That, to him, was the most painful feeling ever.

"What's going on?" Louis turned to look at Zachary as he left, sinking into deep thought. After a short pause, he mumbled softly, "Why does everyone say that the woman in the car is Zachary's wife? Didn't his wife go missing?"

"You should go first. You need to welcome the guests outside." Charlotte did not catch what Louis was saying and urged him to attend to the people outside. "Don't let the unfortunate events from last night repeat themselves. Don't let Zachary ruin this banquet."

"Right... Okay, I shall head out first." Louis shakily got up. Before leaving the room, he looked back and asked, "Are you really okay?"

"I'm fine. I'll fix my makeup and join you." Charlotte smiled at him.

"Okay." Louis left hurriedly.

As the door to the lounge closed, Charlotte's expression turned bitter. "Run a background check on that woman," she ordered.

"We've already done it." Lupine was quite an efficient worker. "She's from the Blackwood family. She's the half-sister of Sharon Blackwood whom you have seen before. They share the same father. Here's what I've found."

Charlotte swept her eyes across the papers and smirked. "Hmph. She's a mute."

"The Nacht family is one of the most powerful and wealthy families in the country, yet they choose to arrange for their heir to marry a mute?" Morgan was rather baffled.

"Dig out everything about their marriage from two years ago! All related news articles, including videos and photos of the wedding. I want them all!" Charlotte snarled.

"Got it!" Lupine sprang into action.

A maid helped Charlotte fix her makeup, and she left the lounge after adjusting her hair and clothes.

Meanwhile, in the banquet hall, the tension seemed to have eased.

Louis began to strike conversations with the guests.

Furthermore, Mr. Morgana and Mr. Lorenzo also told their wives off in a corner. They even went so far as to tell the two ladies to seal their mouths tight for the night.

Mrs. Morgana and Mrs. Lorenzo had never ceased to offend Zachary since the night before. Being aware of that, the two ladies sat down in a corner, not speaking a single word even to each other.

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As Zachary watched Charlotte walk up to him from a distance emanating a savage aura, his eyes lit up as if he remembered something. He quickly turned to Ben and said, "Tell Bruce to destroy all evidence relating to my wedding from two years ago. Don't let anyone find a single trace of anything."

"Got it." Ben immediately got going.

Zachary was well aware that the woman before him was no longer the Charlotte Windt he had known in the past.

With that fiery temper of hers now, she would go on an uncontrollable rampage to seek revenge on him and his family if she were to get her hands on any evidence.

"Mr. Nacht! a toast to you!" Just then, Mr. Morgana had come over with his wife, wanting to apologize. "My ignorant wife had said some foolish words. I'm really sorry about that."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Nacht. I'm terrible with words..."

The two ladies began apologizing to Zachary, holding up their wine glasses.

"If you're bad with words, then shut up," Zachary replied coldly.

The two ladies blinked, their faces burning up in embarrassment.

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Mr. Morgana and Mr. Lorenzo also exchanged awkward looks.

Zachary broke the silence by clinking glasses with them before walking away.

After he left, the two husbands turned to their wives. "If you say something without thinking again, I'll sew your mouth shut personally!"

"Everyone knows how big-mouthed you are. Nobody would take you for a mute even if you don't speak up."

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Meanwhile, Charlotte had begun to network with the guests at the banquet. Despite the fact that she just had a nosebleed a few moments ago, she recovered quickly and was now conversing with the guests with ease.

Those around her began toasting with her and even had discussions about their future partnerships.

Zachary stared at her in silence from the side. He could not help but lament in his head how blind he was back then to not notice her aptitude for business.

Oh, how she has changed in the short span of two years...

"Zachary, come sit at the table. Let us have dinner!"

Louis pulled Zachary over and called for the other guests to follow suit.

At the long, rectangular dining table, the male and female guests were seated on opposite sides facing each other.

Louis sat down at the head of the table, with Zachary and Charlotte sitting on his sides.

After getting all the guests to settle down, Louis began making a short speech and even gave an impromptu piano performance. Everyone began enjoying their meals which were elevated by the elegant music in the room.

Zachary caught sight of Charlotte sipping on her wine and said, "You should drink a little less if you're not feeling well."

"You should leave those words for your wife." Charlotte twirled her wine glass gracefully, curving her lips. "I'm not the type of woman to buy into those words."

"She's not my wife," Zachary explained in a low voice.

"Hah!" Charlotte sneered and glared at him with a look of disdain. "Are you treating me like an idiot or something?"

Zachary felt stumped and gave up explaining for himself.

When Louis's piano piece came to an end, he returned to his seat and held up his wine glass to toast to a smooth-sailing partnership and to welcome Charlotte to the project.

Charlotte stood up and raised her glass.

All heads at the table turned toward Zachary.

Under the scrutiny of so many people, Zachary had no choice but to stand and clink glasses with her.

Upon seeing that, the rest of the guests at the table all seemed to heave a sigh of relief.

Earlier on, they heard from Louis that Charlotte and Zachary had resolved their conflicts and that Charlotte would be able to officially join the project once she obtains the authorization documents from the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Erihal.

From their knowledge, it would not be difficult for someone from the Lindberg family to do so.

Hence, they were congratulating her in advance.

Moreover, given that Zachary did not openly express any displeasure toward her, it would mean that he had come to accept her as a business partner in some way.

And so, the atmosphere in the room finally livened up, and everyone seemed to be more relaxed.

It finally felt as if a banquet was being hosted.

After having a few drinks, Louis plucked up his courage and invited Charlotte for a dance, to which she happily agreed.

The two of them danced a graceful waltz, accompanied by the romantic piece played on the piano. They looked like a match made in heaven, winning applause and words of praise from the guests.

As Zachary looked on, he could barely hide the bitterness on his face. He had not expected Louis to persist with his advances despite his attempts to keep him away from Charlotte. It seems like I have underestimated my rival...