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Chapter 46

"Yes, her melodies are inspiring and full of artistic conception that resonates easily with the audience. It's just a pity she hasn't released any new songs recently."

Elise nodded gently. "They *are* pretty lovely melodies. It just so happens that I have an exclusive EP of hers at home. I'll give it to you another day later."

"Really? That's great! Who knew we had a common interest?" Then, Matthew sighed. "If only she could release new songs, that would be awesome. Then, I could take you to one of her concerts to support her."

Inevitably, he was excited to gush over an idol of his; yet, Elise fell deep into thought again and didn't speak up again.

The atmosphere returned to normal just like that. It wasn't until the car pulled into the courtyard of the Griffith Residence that she returned to her senses. By then, he was already opening the car door for her. "We're home. Come on, then."

As she hopped out of the car, she replied, "Thank you!"

"No problem," Matthew answered while smiling at her for the first time. "That's what I should be doing, anyway. It happens to be my turn to send you to school tomorrow, so head to bed earlier and I'll see you tomorrow."

"Okay," Elise answered. "Good night. I'll see you tomorrow."

After that, she returned to the room and locked the door before she started to remove her makeup. Her delicate, fresh face was revealed the moment all of the makeup was removed.

As she looked at her reflection in the mirror, she pursed her lips and thought about Jonah's gift to her because it was truly too precious. *If I actually leave the Griffith Family one day, won't I be disappointing him?*

The fact was that she already arrived at a decision to momentarily keep the shares on his behalf, but fully return it to him once she left the family.

After she made peace with her decision, Elise felt much lighter as she went to bed and slept soundly until morning.

The next day, she wore her makeup and dressed for school before she headed downstairs. Much to her surprise, there was no breakfast prepared at home this morning

It was right at this moment when Matthew entered with freshly bought breakfast. "As the cook's busy today, she didn't have time to make breakfast. Since I happened to be heading out, I bought some food as well. See if it suits your appetite."

With that, he placed the box he was carrying on the table. Upon opening it, Elise saw that it was filled to the brim with all sorts of exquisite breakfast dishes. It seemed he had bought an item from every available category at the breakfast cafe.

As she perused the dishes, she yanked a large bear claw and told him, "I'll just have this."

Matthew happily passed a napkin to her whereby she sat down to start eating. Yet, even though he sat opposite her, he didn't move to take his share of the breakfast.

Since she was feeling somewhat discomfited, Elise gobbled her food and wiped her mouth with the napkin before saying, "We're running out of time. I have to leave now, or I'll be late."

After he took his car keys, he led her out of the door as he answered, "Don't worry, I won't let you be late."

Just as he had promised, he sent her to school on time.

The moment she arrived at the school campus, she realized that the atmosphere felt somewhat different today. As she headed to class, there were girls huddled together and seemingly deep in discussion.

Before Elise could even reach the classroom, Mikayla rushed over with exuberance and gushed, "My husband is coming to our school this afternoon to film an MV, Elise. I'm so thrilled!"

"Um, who's your husband?" Elise asked wryly, causing Mikayla to blush.

“Why, he’s Jack Griffith! I’m his superfan.”

Suddenly, Elise understood why the school atmosphere was somewhat different-it was without a doubt because Jack was coming to her school to film an MV.

“Elise, come with me to watch my husband filming later in the afternoon. It’ll be my first time seeing him up close and personal and whenever I think about it, my heart races like mad.”

For some reason, Elise was tempted to respond that she had dinner at the same table as Jack last night and was tired of seeing his face.

However, as she saw how enamored her best friend was, she didn’t have the heart to shatter her best friend’s dreams and instead replied, “Alright, I’ll come with you to see your husband if I have the time later.”

Looking so excited that she could leap at any given moment, Mikayla squealed, “Thank you, Elise!”

Then, they headed toward the classroom, arm in arm. What they failed to notice was that Jasmine had trailed behind them all along and upon seeing their interaction, she was green with jealousy.

Due to the current state of her family affairs, her followers had disappeared one by one whereas Elise and Mikayla were merely growing closer to each other. It caused Jasmine to be furious, for what right did Elise have to be better than her everywhere she went?

“You’re an eyesore, Elise Sinclair.” Jasmine’s fists clenched in the silence. Since the public speaking competition during Chinese Week was around the corner, it would be a pity if anything were to happen to Elise...

At this thought, the seeds of an evil idea began to sprout in Jasmine’s mind.

Today was the day that Elise discovered that Jack was indeed popular since she could hear people discussing him no matter where she went.

He appeared at her school at exactly three in the afternoon.

The places that he passed by were packed with people, especially the teacher’s building where he was scheduled to film. Although the building was normally not in

use, it was overcrowded today and no matter how she squeezed through the crowd, Mikayla failed to lead Elise there.

"If I knew it was going to be so crowded, I would have arrived earlier. Now, I won't even be able to see a silhouette of him." Mikayla felt somewhat vexed, for this was a rare opportunity to see her idol, yet she was unable to move through the crowd.

As Elise stared at the throng of people before her, she couldn't help tugging at the hem of Mikayla's shirt. "Are you sure we still want to head in?"

Without any hesitation, Mikayla nodded. "*We must*. How could we miss this rare opportunity to see my husband?"

An unimpressed Elise stared at Mikayla in the silence.

Yet, Mikayla was her only friend, so she had no choice but to bite the bullet and drag Mikayla through the crowd.

They finally reached the front row of the audience only to be notified that the shoot was closed to the public. And just like that, Mikayla deflated like a burst balloon. "If I knew that, I wouldn't have squeezed here. Now, *I still* won't get the chance to see him."

"It's okay," Elise comforted. "If you really want to see him, I still have another method."

Instantly, Mikayla's eyes widened. "What method? Quickly tell me!"

"Have I told you before that I'm somewhat acquainted with him?"

The moment Elise said that, Mikayla's face lit up. "Really? *Truly*? You're not teasing me, are you? You and my husband know each other? That's great!"

Under Mikayla's watchful gaze, Elise fished out her cell phone and gave Jack a call. Less than five minutes later, his assistant appeared to personally escort them to the set.

"Please come this way with me, Miss Sinclair." The assistant then led them through a side entrance.

Throughout their entire journey, Mikayla was so excited that she nearly swooned and WC

passed out when she finally saw Jack with her eyes.

“Husband!” she cried, drawing the eyes of everyone on set.

It was only after that when she realized what she had shouted and quickly changed her greeting. Then, she skipped over to him and introduced, “Jack Griffith! I’m your loyal fan, Mikayla.”

Jack politely answered, “Nice to meet you.” Then, he looked at Elise. “Do you need something from me?”

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“My friend is a fan of yours and she wanted me to bring her to see you,” Elise explained.

“You’re way more handsome than on television,” Mikayla gushed; she was blushing as she stared into Jack’s glimmering eyes.

Her response made Jack smirk devilishly. “Thank you. You’re quite attractive yourself.”

“We’re about to begin filming, Jack. Quickly come over.” As the deputy director had summoned Jack, he made his leave and returned to the set. Both Elise and Mikayla had a firsthand experience of watching the entire filming process.

Only a few short scenes needed to be filmed multiple times before they could wrap up the shoot and call it a day. Mikayla couldn’t help but sigh. “This is my first time seeing my husband hard at work. He’s so handsome that I can burst into tears.”

At this moment, the deputy director rushed over and he carefully regarded both Elise and Mikayla before finally selecting Mikayla. Then, he spoke, “We need a supporting actress for this particular scene. Why don’t you give it a shot?”

“Can I?” she cried out in surprise.

In truth, it was Elise that the deputy director had taken note of from afar since she had an alluring figure and carried herself well. It was such a pity her face... fell way short of the mark.

Thus, he had to resort to his second choice and rely on Mikayla. "Just give it a try. There are two or three scenes in total."

The moment she heard that she could film with her idol, nothing else mattered. So, she quickly agreed before following the deputy director to have her costume and makeup done.

Elise had originally come to watch Jack film for Mikayla's sake and now that Mikayla was off to film her scene, she decided to return to class. After bidding Mikayla adieu, Elise made her move to head to the classroom.

Yet, now that it was close to the end of the school day, Rita suddenly rushed up and said, "Mikayla suffered an accident during the filming, Elise. Go and check on her!"

Upon hearing the news, Elise felt her heart drop. "What?! What kind of accident?"

There was a flicker in Rita's gaze, but she still answered, "She fell and suffered a rather bad injury while shooting the scene. She's behind Teaching Building 1."

After hearing that, Elise was naturally anxious and immediately rushed off toward Teaching Building 1.

The moment she left, Rita went to look for Jasmine. "I did as you told me to. Elise is on her way there."

Jasmine's eyes darkened. "Good job." As she said those words, she removed the bracelet on her wrist and shoved it into Rita's hand. "What happens next will depend on you."

Even though Rita closely stared at the bracelet, she still had her doubts. "Maybe we shouldn't do this, Jasmine. What if we slip up?"

"Relax, I only wish to teach her a small lesson. Nothing bad will happen and even if something *did* happen, I'll take the fall for it. What are you afraid of?"

Upon hearing Jasmine's response, Rita relaxed as she tucked the bracelet into her pocket before she spun on her heel and left in the direction Elise was headed for.

Meanwhile, by the time Elise arrived at Teaching Building 1, the film crew had already left. Since this building was normally not in use, it was deserted now that the crew was no longer there.

"Where are you, Mikayla?" Even after she searched through the entire building, she failed to locate Mikayla.

By now, Elise started to feel like something was amiss, so she pulled out her cell phone to make a call. However, a second later, a dark shadow approached and whacked the back of her head with a wooden club. As the pain overpowered her body, Elise's knees gave way and she collapsed to the ground.

In her half-conscious state, Elise heard a woman saying, "Take her somewhere remote." So, she tried to keep her eyes open to see who it was, but her body became weighted before she fell into an unconscious state.

Now that Jasmine stood above her, she gave an evil smile. "Don't blame me for this, Elise. You asked for it."

Matthew had been waiting at the school gates for Elise at the end of the school day. While she was at school, he even dug out H's limited edition album that he had previously buried so that he could listen to it with Elise on the way home. Unfortunately, she failed to appear even after he had waited for over an hour.

Feeling somewhat surprised, he took his cell and gave her a ring, only to hear the cold, automated female voice responding, "Sorry, but the number you have dialed is temporarily unavailable."

The moment he heard that, Matthew was somewhat irritated, but Danny happened to arrive at the school gates. Although they didn't have a good relationship at home and were only cordial to each other without ever actually speaking, he knew Danny was in the same class as Elise. So, he took the initiative to strike up a conversation for the first time in ages. "Danny, have you seen Elise?"

Because Danny had headphones on, he didn't hear Matthew's question. And so, he removed them and asked, "What did you say?"

“Have you seen Elise?” Matthew repeated. “I’ve been waiting for over an hour, but she still hasn’t showed up.”

Danny didn’t seem to find it strange. “Maybe she went home first. Or, maybe she’s over at a friend’s house. Why don’t you give her a ring?”

“Her phone is switched off.”

It was only then that Danny frowned. In all the time he had known Elise, she had never turned her phone off.

“I’ll help you to ask around.” After he fished out his phone, he had asked a few good friends before he obtained Mikayla’s number. However, she informed him that she was also looking for Elise. By now, he had also sensed that something was fishy. “She couldn’t have gotten into trouble, could she?”

However, Matthew’s gaze only grew darker as there was only one possibility in his mind. Elise currently held 30% of the Griffith Group’s shares in name-an amount

that was enough to shake the entirety of Griffith Group. That possibly meant someone would have a reason to harm her.

“Let’s look for her before we start worrying.”

Yet, Danny was unable to heed Matthew’s advice and only hurried to call Alexander. “Elise might have gotten into trouble, Alexander. Can you send someone to help us search for her?”

Even though Alexander was in a business meeting, he ended the meeting without any hesitation the moment he received the call from Danny. Then, Alexander asked, “What happened? Give me more details.”

So, Danny related the sequence of events to Alexander while Alexander mobilized all of the forces that he could in that given moment. At the same time, he sent his men out and continued to speak to Danny.

Alexander’s men first checked the school’s surveillance system to locate Elise’s last known position. Then, they tracked her from there and finally narrowed the area where she could be.

“The car that took her out of school disappeared near Silvermoon Mountain, Alexander. Could the vehicle have brought her there?”

With slightly darkened eyes, Alexander answered, “I’ll head there with my men right now. No matter what, we must find her as soon as possible.”

Since Danny never expected him to be so invested in the matter, the man added hurriedly, “I’ll go with you.”

The two brothers trekked into the mountains with a group of men.

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When Elise woke up again, she noticed that her surroundings were pitch black. She slowly sat up and realized that her hands were tied with ropes, so she couldn’t move.

“Is anyone there?!” Elise shouted hoarsely to her surroundings, yet the only answer she got was her own echo.

Roughly guessing the situation she was currently in, she struggled with all her might. Not even hesitating to jerk her wrists so violently that the ropes cut against them, she managed to break free in the end.

Already adapted to the darkness, she looked around and found that it was a shabby hut. Then, she got up and walked to the door to open it. As the frosty wind of the dark night whistled by and froze her cheeks, accompanied by the howling of some wild animals coming from afar, Elise’s heart sank. “When I find out who did this, I’ll kill them!”

Suddenly, she saw two tall men coming toward her, so she hurriedly closed the door and retreated, feigning that she was still tied up.

“It’s tough to stay on this mountain even for a few days.”

"It's okay. When we finish this, we can take a good rest for a while. Hold on a little longer; it's only two or three days more. It will soon pass."

Elise listened to their conversation, which got louder as they got closer to the hut. Then, the door was opened, and as the harsh light hit Elise, she subconsciously stretched out her hand to shield.

"You're awake." One of the men spoke, then threw a cold bun he brought in front of Elise.

"Eat it; don't starve to death."

Elise did not look at the bun on the ground but raised her eyes to look at the two men and said, "Why did you kidnap me here?"

The man did not answer her words but just said, "Don't ask what you shouldn't ask. We only did it for the money, so we don't know anything else."

Elise lowered her eyes and said, "If you let me go now, I can give you a large sum of money."

The two men laughed at the same time when they heard that. "Girl, do you think we're such untrustworthy people? You'd better stay here and shut it; don't think that what little you have can help you."

"How about 1 million?" Elise felt that once she said this, the two men would have an instant shift in attitude.

They exchanged a look with each other and then said, "You're teasing us! A million? In rocks, right?"

"No, real money! As long as you release me, I will leave you alone, and I will even give you 1 million in cash."

The man who was head of the group was already interested, but looking at Elise's cunning look, he thought better of it. "Don't brag. You have a million? I'm not interested. Just stay here, and when the time is up, we will naturally let you go back."

When Elise saw that this trick did not work, she thought of nothing more. Since the other party did not look like they wanted to hurt her, she decided to be patient and did not say anything more.

About an hour later, the two people guarding her went to the door.

“Hey, do you think what that girl said about the 1 million is true?”

The other man chided, “What? How can you take a little girl’s words seriously? Stop thinking nonsense; we should wait until the completion of all this.”

“Okay, then I’ll guard this place for the first half of the night, and then you come to replace me later.”

With that, one of them went to rest. As Elise listened to one set of footsteps walking away, her spirits lifted a little. If there was only one person watching her, then her chances of escaping were much better.

For safety’s sake, she still contacted Jamie first.

She took off the bracelet she wore and sent an SOS signal to Jamie. After sending it,

she put the bracelet away, and only then she seriously surveyed the surroundings. Waiting until the man outside could not stay awake and was feeling utterly sleepy, Elise found a thick wooden stick and held it behind her. Then, she quietly slipped out of the wooden hut, found the man, and smashed him with the wooden stick ruthlessly.

It was an unexpected move, so the man simply did not have time to react and so he flopped to the ground directly. Without the slightest delay, Elise ran down the hill to escape.

At the foot of the mountain, Alexander and Danny led their men in preparation to go up the mountain. On the way here, Alexander had studied the terrain of Silvermoon Mountain and knew that there were only two roads that could reach the top of the mountain, one was the wider road that circled around the mountain, and the other was the smaller path at the back of the mountain.

“Danny, you go up along the wider road, and I’ll go up along the trail; we will meet at the top of the mountain. If something unexpected happens in the middle of our journey, use the fire signal, as there is no communication signal in this mountain.”

“Okay, Alex. Be careful.”

With that, the two of them launched into action separately.

The night in the mountains was extraordinarily cold, but while Elise shivered and shook, she never stopped running down the mountain. As she was too anxious to escape, she did not pay attention and tripped over some rocks, causing her to lurch forward and fall down. Rolling along the steep road, she finally hit a large tree and stopped, luckily managing to avoid falling off the cliff.

Gasping, Elise lay on the ground, looking at the bright moon overhead. Then, she was just about to get up when she vaguely heard footsteps gradually approaching. As her heart thumped fast, she hurriedly held her breath, not daring to make any sound.

"Young Master Griffith, the night is cold. Put this jacket on." A subordinate handed over the jacket, but Alexander refused.

"I'm fine, and you guys should layer more on. How far do we have to go before we reach the top of the mountain?"

"We have already done two-thirds of the journey, so there is still only a little way left.

But the more we ascend up the mountain, the more difficult the road is, so we have to be careful."

"Got it; tell everyone to pay attention to safety."

Alexander had just finished speaking when someone suddenly rushed over. "Young Master Griffith, there is a discovery ahead."

Hearing this, Alexander took a big step forward and rushed over.

"Young Master Griffith, look, there's a shoe here. It looks like Miss Sinclair's."

Hurriedly, Alexander picked the shoe up and looked at it. It was indeed Elise's. "Quick, check if there is anything else of note around."

"Young Master Griffith, look here. It seems that someone fell; could it be Miss Sinclair?"

In a daze, Elise seemed to hear someone calling her name. She thought she had fallen and was hallucinating until a tall figure appeared in front of her and called out to her in a familiar tone, "Elise?"

Only then did Elise open her eyes and see Alexander's face. "Alexander, why are you here? I'm not hallucinating, right?"

When Alexander saw that he had found Elise, the weight in his heart lifted, and he promptly helped Elise up from the ground. "Are you okay?"

Elise subconsciously shook her head at Alexander.

"I'll help you up."

Elise nodded, and she was just about to stand up when she stumbled, and her body lurched forward. At once, Alexander caught her and said, "Are you all right?"

The two of them were so close that Elise could clearly hear his heartbeat. She hurriedly pushed him away and replied, "Yes, it's just that my leg hurt a little from the fall, so I didn't manage to hold my balance just now."

After hearing this, Alexander hesitated for a second and then squatted down and picked her up into his arms.

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"What are you doing, Alexander? Let go of me." Elise struggled in embarrassment. If it weren't for the darkness, everyone could see her cheeks that had become as red as tomatoes.

Alexander frowned and asked, "Didn't you say your leg hurts?"

Elise replied, "But I can walk."

"It's not a problem for me. The road is slippery in the dark, so I don't want you to fall again. It's not a long way, anyway."

Since Alexander said so, Elise had to swallow her words and obediently stayed in his arms. She let him carry her over to a boulder, where he squatted down to check her injuries.

"Luckily, they are just some superficial injuries. You'll be fine after putting on a little medicine back home."

"Oh, thank you, Alexander."

Alexander got up and instructed the subordinates behind him, saying, "Contact Danny and tell him to rendezvous at the foot of the mountain."

"Yes, Young Master Griffith."

Then Alexander looked at Elise and said, "I'll carry you down."

He was not asking Elise's opinion but rather only informing her, but Elise hastily refused. "No need for that. I can walk by myself."

However, Alexander did not give her a chance to refuse. Instead, he squatted down in front of her.

Elise hesitated for a moment before climbing on Alexander's back. Then, Alexander carried her down the mountain. It was the first time she was carried by a man like this, so a strange feeling surfaced in her heart, as if she was a deer caught in the headlights.

Elise, what are you thinking? Retract those thoughts of yours!

Chiding herself in her heart, Elise allowed Alexander to carry her along the

mountain path all the way to the bottom of the mountain. Soon, he safely brought her back to the Griffith Residence, where Elise's accident had already alarmed Jonah. Fortunately, Elise had already been found, but the elderly man had been waiting in the hall all this time until Elise returned.

"Ellie, you are back. How are you? Nothing serious, right?" Jonah asked with concern as soon as he saw Elise.

"Grandpa Griffith, I'm fine! All thanks to Alexander."

Jonah's eyes darkened. "Who is it that's brave enough to mess with one of the Griffiths?! Alex, you must find out for me. This matter will not be tolerated."

"Yes, Grandpa. I will have someone look into it," Alexander said with a serious face.

"Well, you have worked hard today, so go back to rest early," Jonah said and looked at Elise. "Ellie, sorry that you've been frightened by all this, but don't you worry. I will definitely get you justice."

"Thank you, Grandpa Griffith!" Initially, Elise did not want the Griffith Family to interfere.

This is my own issue after all. But! No matter who they are, I will not let them go! Never in a million years!

After Elise returned to her room and locked the door behind her, she contacted Jamie.

"Boss, are you okay?"

"Yes, do me a favor. Elise slowly typed out a few lines and sent them, then finally

closed her computer. As she did so, the corners of her mouth raised up, accompanied by an aura of danger.

The next day, Elise took time off and did not go to school. Jasmine looked at the empty seat and couldn't help smirking in satisfaction. Without a doubt, her mood was much better now.

Haha! I bet that woman is locked up in a hut on some mountain right now!

When the Chinese Week's public speaking competition was over, she would get

someone to release Elise. By then, the outcome would have been decided, and even with the best abilities, Elise could not change anything.

However, Jasmine did not notice that in addition to Elise's absence from school, there was another person who also did not arrive.

"Be honest with me, and I might be able to give you a chance." Rita was accosted as soon as she left her house. She didn't expect to see Elise, the girl she didn't want to see the most, appearing right at this moment. Elise's voice was flat but dangerous, and for a moment, Rita was so surprised that she could not even say a word.

Elise looked at her with a dark face. "What? Are you very surprised to see me?"

Rita nodded, then shook her head. Finally, she dropped to her knees in front of Elise out of fear. "I'm sorry! I was wrong, and I should not have listened to Jasmine to do that to you..."

In the next few minutes, Rita immediately gave a complete account of all that had happened.

"Jasmine said that she only wanted to lock you up there and not harm you. She only wanted to teach you a lesson and release you after two days. I was blinded by the money she offered and agreed. Please, let me go. We're classmates, after all." Rita's voice broke as she spoke in tears. If she had known that Elise was so capable, she would never have done the dirty work for Jasmine.

"I can let you go, but you have to do something for me."

Rita looked as if she had found a life-saving chance and hastily asked, "What is it? As long as you let me go, I will do anything."

So, Elise leaned forward and whispered something in her ear.

In the afternoon, Rita went to school as usual, and the first thing she did when she arrived at school was to return the bracelet Jasmine gave her. "Jasmine, this bracelet is too worthless. It's not worth my effort!"

Jasmine looked at the bracelet with some surprise and raised her eyes to look at Rita coldly. "What's wrong? You think it's too cheap? This is the bracelet my father spent tens of thousands abroad to buy for me, and now it can be worth a lot of money, even in antique stores, right?"

Without answering Jasmine's question, Rita coldly snorted. "I have done such a difficult task for you, but you only give such a little thing to me. Are you serious? I don't care; you have to give me more money. Otherwise, I will tell the whole world about what you did."

Jasmine did not expect Rita to threaten her with this matter, so she silently clenched her fists, "Rita, I've never expected you to actually do this to me. You're so good at pretensions before."

"Oh, just say whether you'll give it to me or not! I want 100,000, and it must be given to me within today, or..."

Rita was blunt enough she just wanted money. If it were before, Jasmine would not care about such little money as 100,000, but now, her family had suffered a major change, and her father had given her much less pocket money. Therefore, she now relied on selling bags and jewelry to maintain her luxurious life.

Where can I get 100,000 for Rita? "I don't have that much money."

As expected, Rita didn't buy her excuse. "Who are you kidding?! Everyone in the class knows that you have hundreds of thousands of pocket money a month. I just want 100,000; it's not too much. If you honestly do not want to give it to me, it doesn't matter. What's the big deal? I'll just go to the police to tell them everything, and I suppose you'll just end up in prison."

"You b*tch!" Jasmine was furious, but now that Rita was blackmailing her, she had no choice but to grit her teeth. "Okay. 100,000, right? I can give it to you, but how do you guarantee you won't come after me after taking this money?"

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"Bring me the money first. As for the future, I can't say for sure. It depends on my mood," Rita replied to Jasmine in a casual tone.

"Rita, you'd better not go too far." For the first time, Jasmine felt that she had been blind before and honestly thought that Rita was a doormat in the past. But now she realized that Rita was actually a hungry wolf under a sheep's skin.

"Have I? Then, do you want me to try harder? Jasmine, my patience is limited. You must give it to me today, or the consequences will be borne by yourself."

With these words, Rita walked away, leaving Jasmine glaring after her, but there was nothing Jasmine could do. Where would she get the 100,000? Jasmine took her bag of jewelry to a pawnshop and barely managed to scrape together 50,000. However, she was still 50,000 short, and when she was at a loss, a man suddenly called out to her. "Girl, how about a loan?"

"A loan?" Jasmine suddenly brightened up. "How do I do this? How much can I borrow at most?"

The man smiled and said, "This will depend on your needs. No matter how much you require, we can solve your urgent needs."

Thank God! The heavens have heard my plea and sent me an angel in disguise!

Jasmine followed the man to find out about borrowing money. When she returned to school, she threw the bag of cash containing 100,000 directly in front of Rita. "Here's 100,000 for you; don't come to me again."

Rita was surprised to see that Jasmine had gotten 100,000 for her in such a short time, but she still accepted the bag. "Thanks. If you need my help again, feel free to look for me."

Jasmine clenched her fists; she was very unwilling to give up the money, but she still maintained a smile on the surface. "Let me tell you that this is the last time. You'd better hope I don't have dirt on you in the future."

With these words, Jasmine turned around and walked away.

Rita held the bag of money, then put it away. Later, she took it to Elise and said, "This is what she gave me, Elise. I also did what you said, so can we just write it off between us?"

Elise did not even look at the bag of money as she smiled coldly. "Don't worry. I am a woman of my word. I can let the grudge between us off, but from tomorrow onward, you should not go to school anymore. This 100,000 will be your travel expenses, and don't come back in the future."

Hastily, Rita refused her suggestion. "No, I can't take this money. I will ask my father to transfer me to another school, so don't worry."

Elise sized her up, feeling that the girl in front of her still had some conscience, after all. However, things were no longer under Rita's control; according to Jasmine's nature, although the money was given to Rita, she might do something to Rita in the near future.

“Jasmine is not someone who will give up easily. Take the money and just save yourself.”

With that, Elise felt that she had done her part in reminding Rita and her conscience was clear. Next, it was time to settle accounts with Jasmine. For two days in a row, Elise did not go to school, and Jasmine did not notice anything wrong. She thought that Elise was still locked up in a dark room in the mountains, so she relaxed and prepared for the Chinese Week’s public speaking competition.

The Chinese Week’s public speaking competition was crucial, as there would be many college professors hidden among the audience to spot good candidates for the next year’s cohort of freshmen. Thus, it was no secret that this was why there were so many people who wanted to participate in this competition.

The venue for the Chinese Week’s public speaking competition was booked to be held in the city’s largest gymnasium, gathering teachers and student representatives from all the city’s famous high schools.

“Jasmine, don’t be nervous when you go on stage later. Just perform as usual.” The language teacher instructed in the background.

This feeling of being valued by the teacher was very much appreciated by Jasmine, who said, “Don’t worry. I will work hard, and I will definitely strive to get a good grade.”

The language teacher gave her a slight pat on the shoulder. “Good. Good luck then! I look forward to your performance.”

Jasmine smiled proudly and looked toward the spotlight in the middle of the stage, where she was going to stand in just a moment to enjoy the attention of everyone present. In fact, she seemed to have imagined the scene where she was holding the gold trophy

“Elise is also going to participate in the competition, but she hasn’t come over yet, so you sit here while I’ll go outside to take a look.” When the teacher mentioned Elise, at once, the expression on Jasmine’s face suddenly changed. Fortunately, she hid it well, and in a flash, all the emotions on her face disappeared.

“She may already be outside. You go ahead! I’ll be fine on my own.”

“Okay, then I’ll go over first. Relax!”

As Jasmine looked at the teacher's back, her gaze deepened. *Will Elise even be able to come to the competition? It all depends on her luck. In fact, Elise is probably still shivering in the cold.*

Then, Jasmine faintly withdrew her gaze and looked at herself in the mirror. She had always been proud of her looks. Even though she was not the best-looking girl, she was far more beautiful than the ugly Elise.

Jasmine was slated to be in the middle of the order, so it took a while before it was her turn. As soon as she got on stage, she looked at the audience down the stage. Smiling, she held the microphone close to her and began fluently. "Good evening, everyone. My name is Jasmine..."

The eyes of the audience were collectively gathered on the stage, while even the judges were all nodding approvingly. At this moment, Jasmine's heart surged with satisfaction. However, at this moment at the entrance, Elise and Mikayla walked in and took their seats directly in the front row. Elise looked at Jasmine on the stage coldly and indifferently, as if she was looking at a clown.

The moment Jasmine saw Elise, her face suddenly changed, and her speech became a bit slurred. Soon, she stopped speaking. The audience below glanced at each other and could not help but ask, "What is going on? Why isn't she saying anything?"

"It can't be that she forgot the words because she's nervous, right?"

"Her performance was not bad; I thought she would be better."

"It's a pity. Her earlier performance was quite good."

As the crowd gossiped among themselves, Elise looked at Jasmine on the stage with a smile. As for Jasmine, she simply opened her mouth, but her mind was blank, and no words came out. She tried hard to restrain her emotions and continue her speech, but now her mind was in turmoil, and she stuttered. Finally, once she wrapped up her speech, she hurriedly ran down from the stage.

"I thought she would be so bold, but she's just a wimp." Mikayla couldn't help but spit.

Elise, however, pulled her. "Let's go. We'll go and meet her."

So, Elise and Mikayla went backstage together.

At this moment backstage, Jasmine had come back to her senses, but her own performance was really terrible, and she got the lowest score so far.

Feeling dejected, she sat on the stool with her face stiff, but her mind was not on the public speaking competition. Instead, she was wondering how Elise appeared at the competition?