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Coollest Girl in Town Chapter 667

Chapter 667 Are You Able to Compensate?!

Alexander and Elise dressed up to attend the cocktail party two days later. As it was a private party and not opened to the media, it didn't receive such huge publicity, and the guests could enter the manor and look around at will after checking in at the entrance.

Regardless of the type of collector, they all had a certain amount of capital in their hands.

Judging from the manor and villa details, Elise could tell that Jonas's net worth was not lower than the Griffiths in their heyday, but he had always been low-key and was never interested in the rankings of the rich. Hence, nobody knew how many assets he had under his name.

Holding Elise's hand, Alexander followed the trail of the other guests. Finally, after they grabbed their own glass of champagne, they reached the gallery where the paintings of various famous artists were displayed.

The paintings were encased in glass on a special shelf, and every painting had unique security equipment, which made it convenient for guests to admire the painting while preventing theft.

However, there was an obvious flaw with it; once someone broke the glass, the painting inside would be easily damaged.

Elise stopped in front of the drawing, 'Ink Peonies', then looked at the other paintings around it and realized they were masterpieces by renowned painters from the last century or famous pieces from post-modern geniuses. For her first painting to be on display here, it could be considered as a very high valuation of her work.

"Do you like it?" Alexander was already thinking of ways to persuade Jonas to let him have the painting when he saw the smile on her face.

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Elise shook her head with a smile. "I can't see why this painting is so great. It's better to just keep it for people who understand it to admire it."

Just then, a girl in a ball gown stepped out from behind her with her head tilted to the side. After she had taken a good look at Elise's face, she beamed in excitement. "It's really you, Miss Beautiful!"

"You are..." Elise trailed off in confusion.

"It's me!" She flashed Elise a captivating smile that showed off her white teeth and adorable little canines. "Do you still remember that someone was chasing you in the mall, and I was the one who helped you to escape?"

As the memories flooded back to her, Elise pointed a finger and asked tentatively, "You're the girl at the barbeque restaurant?"

"Yes, that's me." She bobbed her head and appeared a little embarrassed as she tucked away her fringe behind her ear when it came loose. "I still haven't had the barbeque until now."

"I see. Are your friends really busy?" Elise asked softly.

The girl shook her head, pursed her lips, and said, "After I dropped out of school, I lost contact with my classmates and friends, and there's no one I can ask out to have a meal with."

All of a sudden, Elise felt sorry for her, but she didn't know how to comfort her.

Alexander read the situation and decided to let them have some time alone. "I saw a few people I know, so I'm going over to say hi. Both of you have a good chat," he said as he walked away.

After he left, the girl didn't seem so reserved anymore, and she took a step closer to Elise, introducing herself, "I'm Stephanie, and you're Elise, aren't you? Elise Sinclair, I've watched your variety show, and I couldn't even recognize you when you dressed up like that the other day. I'm so sorry about that."

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Elise pursed her lips into a smile and didn't deny anything she said. Then, Stephanie continued cautiously, "Miss Sinclair, may I add you on WhatsApp? I promise I won't annoy you all the time."

After all, Elise owed her a favor, so she didn't turn her down and added her contact after taking out her smartphone. Then, they started chatting about everything and anything.

From their conversation, Elise learned that Stephanie was an art student, and she majored in oil painting, with a liking for Western culture. Just like Elise, she was here because of the invitation from an art competition.

Half an hour later, they finished their champagne, and Stephanie stopped a waiter close to them. Then, with Elise's glass in her hand, she went over to him and exchanged it for two new drinks.

Tiana arrived late, but she immediately caught sight of Elise and Stephanie chatting away happily the minute she walked into the gallery.

There were only that many people in the art industry of Tissote, with a lesser amount of socialites within. But, as everyone knew, there were always pretty girls in the art field, so Stephanie had always been Tiana's biggest eyesore the whole time.

Furthermore, Elise had just snatched the title of 'National Goddess' from her—a title which she coveted so much, and a sense of danger started to build up aggressively within her when she saw the both of them hanging out together.

She looked around from a distance for a while, and while there were many people everywhere, she slowly moved closer to them. Then, when she passed by Stephanie, she quickly reached out and gave her a hard push.

Stephanie lost her balance and fell forward as she was caught off guard in stilettos.

Although Elise had quick reflexes and held her steady, Stephanie still bumped into the display case in front of her. When she regained her balance again, the 'Ink Peonies' had fallen as well, and the glass case was shattered into pieces with a few sharp shards of glass cutting through the painting instantly under such a huge kinetic force.

"Are you alright?" All Elise was concerned about was whether Stephanie had sprained or bruised herself.

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"I'm alright." Stephanie shook her head in frustration and muttered, "However, I'm afraid that... I've ruined the painting."

Elise took a quick glance at it on the floor and came to the decision that the painting was indeed utterly ruined. However, she still said in an assuring tone, "It's just a canvas. What's more important is that you're alright."

Stephanie sighed heavily and looked behind herself in confusion but saw nothing.

That's weird, she thought. I clearly felt someone pushing me earlier.

"What's wrong?" Elise asked, sensing something amiss.

Before Stephanie could say anything, the party host, Jonas Hymer, had rushed to the scene with a group of close friends.

When he saw the mess on the floor, the knot between his brows tightened, and his expression turned even more sullen.

At the same time, Alexander heard what happened and rushed to the scene as well. He walked to Elise, then softly put his arm around her, giving her an assuring hug.

A long moment of silence washed over before Tiana popped out from a corner and walked forward with a sorry look. She swept away the glass and then picked the drawing up with a regretful look. "This is the best drawing by SQ so far. What a shame..."

The other guests also chipped in to express their regrets about the situation as well.

"SQ has the most potential to support the painting field within the country, and she only has a few pieces of artwork. One destroyed makes it one less art piece in the world by SQ!"

"I remember when Mr. Hymer brought this painting back from an auction abroad, he spent almost ten million on it. After these few years, the price must have doubled a few times. This is a huge loss indeed!"

"What a shame for the painting!"

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As Jonas listened to their comments, his face flushed with anger, and his expression was incredibly nasty.

Stephanie stepped willingly forward as she knew she was in the wrong and apologized sincerely. "I'm sorry, Mr. Hymer. I was the one who destroyed the painting accidentally. Once I'm back, I'll definitely ask my father to compensate according to the market price."

"Compensate?" Jonas' eyes were fierce and rounded as he glared at her. "How are you going to compensate me? Maybe SQ is no longer living in this world, and their works are priceless. Do you think you can pay for this and call it a day?!"

His attitude pissed off Elise very much, and just when she was about to help Stephanie out of the situation, Alexander held her back and opened his mouth first.

"It's fate that we're able to attend your party, Mr. Hymer, and everything happens for a reason. So, why don't you take a step back and restrain your anger?"

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Chapter 668 Ancestral Craftsmanship

"It's not your collection that was destroyed. But, of course, it's easy for you to say that." Jonas didn't buy into his act at all. "Even if you want to be generous at the expense of others, you have to see if you have the right to!"

After ruining his treasure in his house, he was still expected to let it go. How was that possible?

Before this, Elise still held a little hope. She felt that anyone who knew how to appreciate her work must be good to get along with. But, now that she saw Jonas' behavior, her fantasy was suddenly shattered.

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Besides everything else, she was furious when she saw him attacking Alexander.

Elise suddenly removed Alexander's hand that was holding her back and strode forward, then said bluntly, "It's reasonable to compensate for the damage to your personal belongings according to the cost. We've apologized and promised to compensate, but you're reluctant to forgive a girl and are rude to your guests. Is this how distinguished you are, Mr. Hymer?"

"Distinguished?" Jonas let out a sarcastic laugh. "Fine, I don't want compensation. Let her restore the painting to its original state. Is that distinguished enough?"

"What's done is done. Why do you have to force her to do something that's beyond her power?" Elise asked dispassionately.

"So, you know that it's something that's beyond her power? I have a lot of money, but only one of these paintings exists. Every time the artist gets a burst of inspiration, it means the birth of a new life. If she destroys my painting, she's committing murder!" The more Jonas spoke, the more emotional he became; even the blue veins on his forehead were bulging.

Stephanie lowered her head and had nothing to say. She reckoned she deserved to be scolded for the trouble she caused.

Jonas didn't want the money; he wanted the painting. However, she ruined the painting and repairing it didn't make much sense. The situation seemed to be frozen in this state.

Elise didn't expect that Jonas would throw such a massive tantrum because of her painting. So it was rather hard for her to speak up for a while.

At this moment, Alexander put forward an idea. "Mr. Hymer, if you don't mind, I have a few collections that aren't bad. So you can go to my house and choose one to fill the vacancy. Plus, this lady's compensation will make up for the loss. How about that?"

"If any painting can replace it, will there be any criminals who are executed by the law?" Jonas' tone was harsh, and he refused to back down.

Alexander couldn't bear it anymore after hitting a snag twice, but he had no better solution.

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The other guests began to exchange whispered discussions.

“Everyone knows that Jonas is obsessed with paintings. SQ’s work has been his favorite in the past few years. So it’s no wonder he’s so angry.”

“That’s right. Jonas has spent more time with these paintings than he had with his own children. Who on earth can still calmly bargain after losing a child?”

“It’s all this woman’s fault! She wasn’t cautious!”

When Tiana noticed this, her lips curled up.

Stephanie, oh, Stephanie. From today onward, you will really have a ‘reputation’.

Elise saw that Stephanie’s eyes were red, and her heart softened, so she could only bite the bullet and take responsibility for the matter.

“Actually, Mr. Hymer, I was joking with you just now. Miss Stephanie didn’t drop the painting. I pushed her, so she knocked into the display cabinet and ended up destroying the painting.” Elise forced a smile.

“Elise...” Stephanie raised her head in confusion, her eyes glistening and filled with puzzlement.

The two of them were clearly standing side by side just now. From Elise’s position, she wasn’t at the angle to push her. She didn’t want the beautiful Elise to get into trouble because of her.

Elise discreetly shook her head, motioning for her to stay silent.

“A joke?” Jonas’ tone became even colder. “You used SQ’s painting as a joke?”

“Calm down. Calm down.” Elise waved her hand, trying to get him to take it easy. “I was just angry that you were deceived, Mr. Hymer, so I helped you ruin this fake.”

“You’re saying that my painting is a fake?” Jonas skeptically raised one eyebrow.

“Exactly.” Elise nodded affirmatively.

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“What? A fake? How’s that possible? Jonas bought a fake?” The crowd began murmuring, all expressing their disbelief.

However, Jonas was bold enough to say sarcastically, “My painting has been professionally appraised. Do you think you can get away with saying that it’s a fake?”

“Don’t worry. Since I dare to say that, naturally, I have my reasons. I brought the artwork that is at the peak of SQ’s career. Mr. Hymer, are you really not planning to take a look?” Elise deliberately cast a bait to divert his attention.

Jonas thought for a moment, then loosened up. “Okay. I’d like to see what you are. Go and get the painting. I’ll wait here.”

“Wait a moment,” Elise responded with a smile, then glanced at Stephanie again to reassure her before pulling on Alexander and preparing to leave.

“Wait.” Jonas stopped her. “You’re together. You’re not tricking us into staying here while you escape, are you?:

Elise frowned. “Mr. Hymer, isn’t it better for there to be more trust between people?”

Jonas shook his head, indicating that he wasn’t going to let them leave simultaneously.

“How troublesome,” Elise muttered, then walked over and grabbed Stephanie’s hand. “I’ll go with her and leave my husband here. Will that work?”

Alexander was baffled.

Jonas nodded and said impatiently, “Be quick.”

Elise took Stephanie’s hand and hurried off.

In the garden, she randomly approached a servant and successfully sweet-talked them into bringing them to the study of the villa.

Unsurprisingly, Jonas, as obsessed with paintings as he was, had space and tools for painting in the study room.

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Elise hurriedly found the inkstone and stuffed it into Stephanie's hand. "We're pressed for time. Help me grind it."

Stephanie stuffed it back into her hands, then began to talk to herself as she paced in place. "Time is indeed running out. There's no other choice. I can only try to restore SQ's work based on my memory. But, my ink painting skills aren't good. Even if I did it, it'll probably only be 50% similar. We have no choice. This is the last resort. Elise, you grind it. I'll—"

Stephanie was speaking halfway when she turned around, only to see that Elise was already standing at the table with a few brushes in her mouth. Both her hands were moving in sync as she painted gracefully.

She was instantly stunned, completely attracted by Elise's painting.

"We need to rush. I'm running out of ink. Don't just stand there," Elise urged solemnly.

Stephanie returned to her senses and hurriedly ran over to hand her a brush.

Ten minutes later, a lifelike 'Ink Peonies' appeared on the paper.

Even though Stephanie didn't know much about ink painting, she was shocked by the lifelike appearance of the peonies.

"Elise, you..."

Elise set the seven to eight brushes in her hand down on the table, then stretched and asked, "Similar, right? Let me tell you. My ancestors sold fake paintings. When it was my turn, I specialized in copying the paintings of these modern artists, so I'm very familiar with SQ's 'Ink Peonies'!"