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Chapter 73 To a Pleasant Cooperation

"Don't be sad, Grandma. I'll try my best, so don't worry about me."

Seeing that Elise had softened her attitude, Laura knew that she had made the right move, and she quickly added, "Well, you said it yourself. I'll give you another chance, then. The next time you're back, you have to bring along your husband so I can meet him."

All of a sudden, Elise felt that she had fallen into a trap, but since she had already said it herself, she could only agree. "Okay, I'll try my best."

Upon getting her word, all the sadness disappeared from Laura's face. "Come here. Let me take a good look at you to see if you've grown any taller or chubbier."

Speechless, Elise could clearly feel that she had fallen for her trap, but even so, she had no complaints about it.

After having dinner with her grandparents, Elise went to her bedroom on the third floor. Opening the door, she immediately saw a huge poster with the letter H printed on the bottom.

Lifting her gaze, she stared at her own poster with an unreadable look in her eyes. However, very quickly, she looked away and scanned around the room. Everything in the room was exactly how it was when she left; it showed how careful Robin and Laura were in keeping her room.

Then, she paced to the storage space in her room and opened the door. The space was filled with digital albums and posters, and she found the limited edition of her own album she published back then.

"Since Mikayla likes it so much, I'll bring a few albums for her. I think Matthew likes it as well, so I'll bring a couple for him, too," she muttered as she took out a few albums and signed the letter H with a Sharpie pen. When she was done, only then did she leave the storage with the albums in her hands.

"Ellie!" Laura suddenly called out while pushing the door open.

Setting the albums aside, Elise asked, "What is it, Grandma?"

Laura walked into the room and passed her the lucky charm she got for her. "Elise, take good care of yourself out there. The most important thing is your safety," she said while putting on the lucky charm around Elise's neck. "Your grandpa and I are old, and we don't know how many remaining days we have. You're the only one that we worry about the most."

Throwing herself into her embrace, Elise said, "Grandma, I'll take care of myself, so stop worrying about me. You have to take care of yourself, too."

Laura stroked her head. "Yeah, I know how to take care of myself at this age. Actually, I came looking for you because I have a favor to ask from you."

While Elise was looking at her in confusion, Laura reached into her pocket and took out an antique-looking locket. "This was my dowry back then. My family was against my decision to marry your grandfather, and so many decades have passed since then, but I've not thought of going home to take a look. So, I don't know how my family is doing now."

This was the first time Elise heard Laura mentioning her own family, the Richardsons, and she couldn't help but ask, "Do you have any siblings from your family?"

"I have a younger brother, but I haven't contacted him over the years and don't know how he's doing now. Previously, I heard rumors saying that his family have moved to Athesea, and since you're there as well, I wonder if you can help me out," Laura said.

"Just tell me what I can do for you, Grandma!" Elise said with a rough guess in her mind.

Looking at the locket in her hand, Laura sighed. "Although I made the tough choice not to contact them for decades, they're still constantly on my mind. If you have time some day, please help me look for them."

"Okay, I got it, Grandma!" Elise replied.

Then, Laura added, "My brother's name is Leonard Richardson. Please send him my regards if you find him."

After making a mental note of the name, Elise said, "Don't worry, Grandma! I'll ask around Athesea when I'm back there."

Having received Elise's assurance, Laura nodded. "Great! Thank you, Elise."

"You don't have to be so courteous to me, Grandma! If you would like to meet them some day, I can even—"

Before Elise could finish her sentence, Laura interjected, "There's no need to meet up. I just need to know if they're doing well. That's all."

Even though Elise didn't completely comprehend it, she respected Laura's decision and put it on her mind to remember this matter.

So, Elise stayed a night at home and said goodbye to her grandparents the next day. Before leaving, she even called for a courier service to have those albums sent to the Griffiths'.

After leaving her home, Elise didn't return to Athesea. Instead, she changed into a new look with a different makeup and headed straight for the airport. With the Mesdra passport she had from years ago which was registered under the name Sare, she checked in for the flight and got her boarding pass.

At the same time, Alexander had also arrived at the airport together with his assistant, Cameron. "Mr. Griffith, here's your ID and passport. I've already checked in for you, and your boarding pass is here as well. Boarding will commence in another twenty minutes."

Alexander nodded in reply and checked the time on his wristwatch. "Did you contact the interpreter? What time will she arrive?"

"I called her, but nobody picked up the phone," Cameron answered nervously.

Hearing that, Alexander knitted his dark brows tightly together and whisked out his phone to call the number that he was given before. A couple of rings later, someone picked up his call and he asked, "Hello, am I speaking to Sare?"

Recognizing that it was Alexander's voice, Elise suppressed her own voice, and almost immediately, a neutral and rather hoarse voice echoed through the call. "Yes, I'm Sare! Mr. Griffith, I'm already at the airport."

When he heard that she was already here, the expression on his face relaxed a lot. "I'm at boarding gate number 153. Are you coming over?"

After checking the boarding pass in her hand, she explained, "I'm sorry, Mr. Griffith, but since I'm in economy class, I won't be boarding together with you. We'll meet during the transit in Singapore later, then."

"Why don't you come over, and I'll get my assistant to upgrade you to business class?" Alexander suggested straight away. "In that case, we can also discuss the job onboard."

Thinking that she didn't have to pay for the upgrade fees herself, Elise immediately agreed. "Sure. I'll see you in a while."

After hanging up the call, Alexander waited in silence. Barely three minutes had passed when a slender figure walked toward him steadily. The woman had chestnut brown hair and was wearing black sunglasses. Although she was casually dressed, the elegance she was exuding was impossible to hide. Stopping in front of Alexander, Elise spoke first. "Hello, Mr. Griffith."

Looking up, Alexander saw an elegant and charmingly matured woman, whom he would not associate with the ugly Elise that he remembered. He stood up from his seat and greeted her in a gentlemanly manner. "Nice to meet you, Miss Sare."

Smiling gently, Elise extended her hand at him. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Griffith."

Returning her smile, Alexander shook her hand, but the moment their hands touched, he felt an inexplicable familiar feeling surging within him. With a calm expression, he surveyed the

person in front of him and said composedly, "Your reputation precedes you, Miss Sare. Hopefully, we'll have a pleasant cooperation during the next few days."

"I hope so too!"

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Chapter 74 The CEO Is Drunk

After Cameron was finished with the upgrade procedure, Elise and Alexander soon boarded the flight headed for Singapore. More than ten hours of flight and transit later, they finally reached Aris.

The moment Elise got off the plane, she was incredibly exhausted, but she was the only one amongst the three of them who could speak Arisian, so she was the most important person in the group; despite her sleepiness, she had to help them to communicate with the locals until they reached the hotel. Upon contact with the bed, relief washed over her, and she fell into a deep slumber.

Elise spent one whole day adjusting to the jetlag and only recovered on the third day. After waking up, she saw the message Alexander had sent her earlier. 'Miss Sare, I'll meet you at the hotel lobby at 8.00AM.'

She replied 'okay' after reading the text and then put down her phone. Then, she quickly washed up, changed into a set of formal business attire, and put on the glasses she had prepared earlier, making herself look like a professional career woman.

When she reached the lobby, Alexander and Cameron were already there waiting for her.

"Miss Sare!" Cameron greeted and passed a schedule to her. "This is Mr. Griffith's itinerary for the day. You'll need to accompany him the whole time as his interpreter, so your workload will be very heavy today. Are you okay with that?"

Taking a glance at the schedule, Elise thought that it wouldn't be a problem and answered, "It's alright. I'm okay with it."

With that reply from her, Cameron breathed a sigh of relief. He had been working as Alexander's assistant for years, and he knew his work attitude very well. When it came to work, Alexander had always been meticulous, and previously, Cameron was worried that Elise might delay the progress of their work, but he could now set his mind at ease after hearing her answer.

The three of them got into an MPV car, and Elise started to brief them on the culture and geographical climate of Aris. "Aris is a small country with a population of not more than ten million. Located in the Eurasian continent, it has a temperate continental climate with cold winters and warm summers. The annual temperature difference is rather huge; it is dry most of the time and it rains very little. It's summer now, so the precipitation is low and the air is quite dry. So, you can bring a bottle of warm water with you to quench your thirst, Mr. Griffith."

"You seem very familiar with Aris," Alexander pointed out casually after hearing her explanation.

Composedly, she answered, "When I was in university, I fell in love with the fruit, medlar, and thought it would be a good idea to find out more about the local culture of Aris. As for learning the local language, it was only because I can gain more credits in university for learning a minor language."

At her reply, Alexander couldn't help but steal a peek at her. This girl looks like she's only around twenty years old, so I didn't think that she had already graduated from university. "Looks like you did really well in your studies."

"I was rather bright and skipped a grade in the middle, so I managed to start university earlier," Elise answered honestly.

"Where did you attend university?" Alexander asked next.

"University of Edinburgh."

At the mention of Edinburgh, Alexander seemed very interested. "What a coincidence! I did my double degree in Cambridge back then."

As Elise had already seen his resume a long time ago, she was more than aware of his education background, and she didn't appear surprised to hear him mention it now. "Anyone who could enter Oxbridge are talented people. It's easy to tell that you're a person who did really well in your studies."

Even when complimented, Alexander didn't appear flattered. "You're indeed a professional interpreter, Miss Sare. You're a very good conversationalist."

Elise smiled politely, and time seemed to pass very quickly while they were chatting. In just half an hour's car ride, they reached their destination.

The project that the Griffith Group would be working with the Aris government was an oil exploration project, and hundreds of millions had been invested. Knowing that Alexander would be arriving, the Aris government had sent their representatives to await him at the entrance, and the sounds of firecrackers greeted him when he arrived.

"This is a local culture of the Arisians," Elise hurriedly explained. "Lighting the firecrackers shows that they're welcoming you."

It wasn't until the sounds of firecrackers had died down that Alexander finally got out of the car. With bright smiles on their faces, the government representatives walked toward him and extended their hands at him as they spoke in fluent Arisian. "Welcome to number one mining factory of Aris to monitor the work, Mr. Griffith."

The second Elise heard that, she immediately translated it for Alexander and helped him to exchange some opinions with the Arisians. After that, she followed them as the government representatives led them into the mining area to observe the work.

The whole while, she was serious in her job as the interpreter and managed to achieve a good flow of communication between both parties. Very quickly, it was noon, and the government representatives brought them to a restaurant which they had arranged beforehand.

"Mr. Griffith, the local food here is a little sweet. I'm not sure if it will be to your liking," Elise whispered softly into Alexander's ears.

In reply, he said, "I've lived in southeast Asia for a period of time. I think I can take it."

When he said that, he thought that the sweetness level of the food would be similar to food from the Philippines, but little did he know that all his appetite would be gone after he tried the local cuisine. This is more than a little sweet—it's over-the-charts sweet! he thought.

Sitting next to him, Elise noticed that he couldn't get used to the local flavors. So, she made use of the time when she made a trip to the bathroom to order a bottle of yogurt drink for him from the reception. "Have some yogurt to drink, Mr. Griffith. I'll take you to a restaurant which serves spicy food when this is over."

His stomach couldn't help but rumble at her words. Since he hadn't eaten anything the whole morning, he was already famished, but none of the dishes from the spread on the table was to his liking. Taking the yogurt drink from Elise, he said, "Thanks."

The culture at the dining table was more or less the same regardless where they went, and as representatives from the government, the Arisians kept refilling Alexander's glass. As the locals had a liking for fruit liqueurs with a low alcohol content, Alexander didn't even feel tipsy after a few glasses.

Next to him, Elise advised, "Mr. Griffith, don't have too much of this fruit liqueur because the effect of the alcohol hits very badly afterward."

However, he merely took her advice nonchalantly. "It's just a few rounds of fruit liqueur. It will be okay."

Hearing that, Elise decided not to say anything else anymore. After all, he was the boss, and she was just his employee.

When the lunch was over, she went up next to him and asked in a whisper, "Mr. Griffith, are you alright?"

Right now, Alexander's face was already blushing bright red, obviously from the reaction to the alcohol. "I think I'm fine," he muttered, but he clearly sounded unsure of himself.

Hurriedly, Elise took out a box of mints and passed it to him. "Have a few mints and try to sober up a little. You didn't eat much at lunch earlier. I know a rather good restaurant here; I'll bring you there to give it a try."

Since Alexander was famished and had quite a lot of fruit liqueur earlier, his stomach was already burning, but he had to maintain a calm composure. Hence, he pretended everything was fine until he got into the car, and his head started spinning when it drove away.

Seated beside him, Elise didn't even have time to react when she heard a barf and realized that Alexander had thrown up. This scene was more horrible than the last time when he was drunk.