

A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love By Oopsie Daisy

Chapter 181

"Let's go in."

The teacher had to talk to the parents on the first day of kindergarten; both of them knew this.

"Yeah." Hesper nodded and asked Renee to go back by herself first, as she wanted to go to the mall to buy some delicious food with Renfrew after fetching him from school, only then would they go home.

Rickard observed Hesper secretly from the side- Her hair was tied up, which was rare to see. It made her look very similar to the version of herself from way back, when she was in her student days and only dared to follow him around quietly, and it looked just like a tiny ponytail.

Hesper seemed very happy that day; her brows and eyes looked unusually relaxed. She might not have even realized that, when the two of them were walking side by side, even the corners of her lips curled slightly upward.

"Go left." Hesper looked at Rickard, who was walking straight forward, and called out to him. "Rickard? What's occupying that brain of yours?"

'You.'

Rickard came back to his senses and did not say anything, just shook his head.

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Zikmund taught me this. Whenever I don't know what to say or how to prevaricate any of the situations that I'm in, I've been taught to not speak at all.'

"Pfft, you don't usually talk much anyway."

Hesper did not feel that something was wrong. She only thought that Rickard was thinking about work. She nodded. "Just go straight and the classroom will be upfront."

The two found Renfrew's classroom. The other children had already been picked up by their parents, so Renfrew was the only one that was still obediently sitting on his little chair, concentrating on building with the blocks in front of him.

"Are

you Renfrew's parents?" The teacher came over from the front door. When she saw Hesper and Rickard's faces, she could not help but freeze for a split second.

'No wonder Renfrew looks so delicate and handsome at such a young age. It turns out to be his genes.'

"Hi, Ms. Zeelen, how did Renfrew do today? Was he obedient?"

Hesper had not been a parent before, so she did not know what question to ask, but after giving it some thought, the questions that she could ask would only surround a few certain topics. Although, she was confident that Renfrew would not be mischievous.

Sure enough, Ms. Zeelen shook her head and said, "Renfrew's very obedient. I've been in the education industry for so many years and I've never seen a child who's as obedient as him. Let's not forget that he's the youngest in the class."

Hearing what Ms. Zeelen had to say, Hesper felt rather proud.

'I knew it. Renfrew would surely be very obedient in class!'

Rickard was listening quietly from the side. Ms. Zeelen could not ignore him. After all, his presence was so imposing, but he was playing the role of a listener so willingly...

'He must be a great husband and father. However...'

"But Renfrew faces a few serious challenges too. That's what I want to talk to you two about today."

Renfrew was still constructing the building blocks with a serious expression. Those small wooden blocks seemed to move very smoothly in his hands under his maneuver. In a short period of time, a very tall tower had been constructed, and it looked very stable, not shaking at all.

"As you can see, Renfrew is a very smart child. Or, in other words, his level of maturity is beyond his peers."

Chapter 182

"So, it might be difficult for him to integrate into the group because his mindset is not on the same level as the other children. I'm not saying that I think Renfrew doesn't fit well with the class but that he looks very lonely, which is definitely detrimental to the growth of a child. I had imagined many possibilities before you came. After all, most of the children in our school come from relatively wealthy families. Renfrew's personality most probably comes from his family, and judging from your interactions, I'm guessing that you seem to be at odds..."

Hesper walked out of the kindergarten holding Renfrew's hand. Seeing that the little fella was holding her hand and following her obediently, Hesper suddenly felt a little sad.

Ms. Zeelen's words continued to linger in her mind. Hesper knew that the superficial relationship that she had with Rickard might seem reliable and would make others envious; that was why they had agreed to come today.

After all, no one would want their child to look like they came from an incomplete or abnormal family.

However, the damage had already been done. The smarter Renfrew was, the more aware he was of how bad the relationship between his parents was, and the more he felt aggrieved for Hesper, the more lonely he would be.

Deep down, he would think that the relationships between people were untrustworthy.

"Mommy, are you unhappy?" Renfrew shook Hesper's hand, then took out a packet of biscuits from his small backpack.

It had blue packaging, and it looked like it was milk flavored.

"This was given to us by Ms. Zeelen this afternoon as a snack, and I've saved it for you. Even Daddy doesn't have it."

Hesper tried her best to pull out a smile, squatted down, and rubbed Renfrew's head. "I know. But I'm not unhappy. I was just thinking about where I should bring you to eat later."

Renfrew was quite sensitive when it came to capturing emotions, but since Hesper said so, Renfrew nodded in response.

"Then can I have ice cream today? One scoop will do!" A hint of earnestness could be seen flashing across Renfrew's chubby face. "You're the best, Mommy...!"

Hesper chuckled for real this time, nodded, and promised him. "Ms. Zeelen praised you for being a good boy earlier today. As a reward, you can order two scoops."

The two of them bought a lot of snacks after eating outside. Renfrew could not eat too many snacks at his age; after all, these things were not beneficial for a kid.

But Hesper only wanted to buy everything that other children possessed for her son. As long as Renfrew did not say that he hated something, she would buy it for him.

It was already late evening when they got home. Renfrew had always gone to bed early, and coupled with the fact that he had attended classes in kindergarten during the day, his eyes were on the brink of closing when Hesper carried him back home.

Hesper gave Renfrew a simple bath. She had never done such a thing before, so she could only follow the instructions given in a video that she found online and gently rub Renfrew's fragile arms and legs.

"Mommy..."

After carrying Renfrew to the bed, Hesper was already exhausted. When she heard Renfrew calling her, she sat down on the edge of the bed. "What's the matter?"

Renfrew opened his big round eyes and stared at Hesper in a daze as if he was making sure that the woman in front of him was his real mother. He then gave off a satisfied smile.

"I love you... Mommy. I was really, really happy today. Going to kindergarten is very fun too.

A hint of soreness surged within Hesper's nasal cavity in an instant. Trying to suppress her tear glands, she stretched out her hand and gently patted Renfrew's body. "I love you too... I love you the most in the

whole world."

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Chapter 183

After listening to Hesper's words, Renfrew fell asleep in satisfaction. Hesper then turned off the lamp and walked out of the room, unable to hold her tears back anymore.

Rickard did not come the next day. Some urgent matters came up all of a sudden, and he had to deal with them. Even though he thought about coming over again, he could not just leave the company to fend for itself.

"Did Hesper and Renfrew arrive at the kindergarten safely?"

Benji gave him an affirmative answer and started to read through today's itinerary. He then saw Rickard frown and stopped.

"What's the matter, sir? Is there anything wrong with today's schedule?"

Rickard remained silent for a while and then voiced out, "It's too compact."

"What?" Benji thought he had heard wrongly for a moment.

'What the heck?! What did my workaholic boss just say? Did I just hear him complain about his schedule being too compact?'

"Sir, are you sick?" Benji looked at Rickard worriedly, but Rickard looked healthy and fine.

Thinking of this, Benji remembered that Rickard had to fetch Hesper too now.

When Rickard did not say anything, Benji suggested. "If you want to pick Ms. Rivera up from school, we can move this afternoon's video conference to the evening. What do you think about that?"

"School?" Rickard frowned. "What school? Is she studying in some school now?"

This time it was Benji's turn to stay silent.

'I got to know about this matter from the people studying at Genecity University. I assumed that Mr. Duval would know about it too. After all, before Ms. Lane gave birth to Young Master Renfrew, Mr. Duval invested in renovating the entire art academy of Genecity University. On the surface, he claimed that it was the grandeur that the missus of the Duvals deserves, but in fact, all he wanted was to give her a

surprise.

'However, Mr. Duval actually had no idea about Ms. Lane's decision to return to school?'

After listening to the whole story, Rickard was a little surprised too.

'Hesper's current educational background shows that she's an alumna of Evergreen College, which isn't something that can be used as a weak point to sabotage her when she's announced as the director of a company. I remember that she studied fashion design in college, so what she learned back then shouldn't be of too much help to her in managing Lane Holdings.'

"Is it possible that Ms. Lane likes that major?" Benji tentatively brought up.

Rickard subconsciously wanted to refute him, but he shut up all of a sudden and did not utter a single

word after that.

'I don't know what Hesper likes, or should I say, in the past, she never gave any hints on what she loved to do. She always acted like a puppet back then. All she did was tackle everything that came into her life submissively, and that was it.

'So does Hesper really like fashion design?'

“I recall that one of our subsidiary companies will be organizing a competition soon, and it’s about

costume design.”

Duval Group had been dabbling in the fashion field, but it was not the main source of the company’s

profit, so Benji usually wouldn’t report such matters to Rickard. Since it was related to Hesper, however, he thought it was something worth mentioning.

“We’ve reserved two spots for students of Genecity University, and a professor named Xavier Jenkins is in charge of the allocations. I heard that Ms. Lane was once one of Professor Jenkins’ favorite students, so she might participate in this competition.”

Rickard had not paid any attention to the mentioned competition, but when he heard that Hesper might participate in it, he froze for a split second.

“If your information is accurate, reserve a seat for me.”

“Yes, sir.”

At that moment, Hesper, whom Benji entrusted with great hope, was being scolded in Xavier’s office with her head bowed.

“I thought your wings had grown full-fledged back then, but you actually came back here to study.”

Chapter 184

Hesper was aware of Professor Jenkins’s eccentric behaviors, but she still could not bear being hit by his

wrath.

“Uh, looks like it’s already time for me to get to one of my classes. I’ll be going now.”

Jessie gave Hesper a ‘good luck’ expression then quickly escaped the room.

‘Is she kidding me?! Doesn’t she know about my father when it comes to giving someone a good talking. to? I was only standing by the side back there and it felt like I was the one who was being scolded, not to mention that he hasn’t even gone off the charts just yet. If Dad loses his chill and starts to rain fire and brimstone, I might not even be able to leave his office!’

“Please accept my apologies, Professor Jenkins.”

Xavier sneered, lowered his head, and took a sip of tea. "I thought I'd be surrounded by my children and grandchildren the next time I got to see you."

Before Xavier came to Genecity and became a professor, he had been living in Emperion. He was a local that spoke with an Emperionian accent, which made him sound more eccentric.

Hesper lowered her head.

It's true that I'm the one who was at fault in the matter that happened back then. I also now know how hard-won the spot in the competition that I gave up was. Professor Jenkins must've put a lot of thought and effort into securing that spot for me, and he was counting on me to come back with a championship title in order to make him look good.

'However, the matter between Rickard and me happened so suddenly back then, and the Duvals didn't really give me any other choice. They immediately removed me from the college without asking for my input. They didn't even give me a chance to explain the whole thing to Professor Jenkins before dragging me back.'

"I have only one question for you. Having decided to come back and study again, is it because you really want to learn something, some new skills, and want to pave a career path for yourself in this field? Or did you just happen to remember that there were a few subjects that you didn't get to finish back then, and now you came back here to dawdle?"

Xavier stared deeply at this protégé that he was most proud of back then.

'If I were to say that I wasn't disappointed in her back then, that would be a lie. After she left, I really wished I could go after her and ask her for the reason personally.'

However, even if there was a sense of disappointment, it had all disappeared the moment he saw Hesper standing in front of him with a deeply troubled look.

Hearing this, Hesper lifted her head. In her eyes, there were a lot of things that she did not have four years ago; confidence, clarity, and determination were among those things that were now present.

"Yes, I really want to learn, Professor Jenkins. I really love designing."

The firmness in Hesper's eyes did not lie. She had been looking through her previous designs, which were already a little hazy in her memory, but she still remembered how she had spent countless sleepless nights for any one of those drafts.

Her efforts were not fake; she truly liked it. That was why she would go to that extent.

Xavier looked at her for a while, then nodded. "Okay, I'll regard what you said as true. Just make sure that

you put in the effort and learn as much as you can in the future. As long as you still have the ability and the edge, I, Xavier Jenkins, will bring you to any suitable occasion that I can bring you to so that you'll get the exposure and, eventually, the fame."

After passing Professor Jenkins's test, Hesper walked out of his office, only to find that her palms were already soaked.

But it was not because of nervousness but excitement. Looking at the familiar campus outside the window and the lush avenues that were reflecting the sunlight, Hesper took a deep breath.

She had not thought she could still pursue her dreams at such an age.

As soon as she saw Hesper coming out, Jessie immediately ran over. She tried to hear what her father said in the room through the cracks in the door, but the soundproofing of the office was really top-notch.

She tried standing there and listening for a long time, but not a word was heard.

"So, how did it go? Father didn't say anything to humiliate you, did he?"

Chapter 185

Hesper shook her head. In fact, she understood the underlying message in Xavier's tone. Mostly, he just sounded like he was exasperated because she had failed to meet his expectations; other than that, he did not intend to blame her. He might be strict, but he had always been an excellent teacher.

Jessie clicked her tongue and shook her head lightly. "I don't believe that my father can spit anything positive out of his mouth. If all you do is show him respect, then he'll only think that you're a pushover,"

"Ahem, ahem." Hesper looked at the man who opened his office door silently and tried her best to wink at Jessie, warning her about her father's presence.

However, Jessie had started badmouthing her father and she felt unstoppable, so she did not even pay attention to Hesper's expression for a while.

"Jessie Jenkins, I never knew that you have so many things to say, huh?"

As soon as Xavier spoke, Hesper could not help but burst into laughter. Jessie's face turned pale instantly.

"...Dad?"

Xavier leaned against the door frame with a smile and said indifferently, “Yo, did you hear what you just said? How could I be worthy of being called your dad?”

“My class is about to start, so I’ll take my leave, Professor Jenkins!” Hesper suppressed a laugh, gave Jessie a ‘good luck’ look with a smirk, then disappeared from the corridor in an instant with her schoolbag in her arms.

“Dad, I’m sorry!”

Hesper had almost forgotten the theories that she had learned while she was studying in college, but fortunately, she had not forgotten the knowledge that she picked up back then. It was just that the written theories were no longer something that she could reiterate off the top of her head.

After all, so many years had passed, so Hesper was also prepared for the fact that she might not be able to keep up in class at first. However, because she received a lot of education when she was living with the Lanes in the past few years, her sensitivity toward fashion was levels above any of the other students in the course. After all, one could only accumulate social experience through exposure and time. It was not something that could be understood through verbal communication.

Many people in the class began to inquire about the background of this transfer student who had suddenly joined their class halfway through the semester, but in the end, all they could find out was that she was a senior who had dropped out of school.

The students who knew Hesper back then had long graduated and Hesper lived off campus, so even after a week of school, she was still very unfamiliar with the students in her class.

“You might not know this, but several young boys from other departments have come over and inquired about you.” Jessie cracked her fingers. “Let’s do some math. You’re four years older than them, aren’t you? Tsk tsk tsk, sure enough, looks are the most important aspect in courtship. The age difference is nothing when compared to how someone looks.”

Hesper felt that the gossip that Jessie was blabbering about was very interesting, but there was still no sense of reality.

‘I used to be someone invisible when I was studying in this college. Now, in order to study with peace of mind, I don’t plan to take any limelight. But how did I become the “playgirl who flirts with all men” that Jessie just mentioned?’

“I can see that you have no idea that so many people are talking about you on campus. Some of them even claim that you look very similar to the newly appointed president of Lane Holdings’ branch office in Genecity.”

It did not seem too far-fetched for someone to recognize her, but this statement made Hesper think about how she presented herself.

'In order to avoid creating a scene, should I start wearing a mask to class in the future?'

Jessie, not noticing Hesper's strange expression, went on talking about the next topic.

"Although Dad hasn't told me this, I know all about the resources that he has in his possession." Jessie bumped Hesper's shoulder. "Do you know that Duval Group has reserved two participation spots in the competition that they're about to organize for my father?"

"Do you want to fight for one of the spots? It's the Duval Group that we're talking about. The company's name in itself is already an extremely valuable asset!"

Chapter 186

"Mommy, something seems to be bothering you today!"

Seeing Renfrew running out of the kindergarten with a small backpack, Hesper wanted to restrain her troubled expression, but Renfrew still noticed it keenly.

"Mommy's fine. It's just something from work."

On her way there, Hesper could not take her mind off the competition that Jessie had brought up.

'It's clear that Duval Group's influence in Genecity is still greater in all aspects. Especially when it comes to this joint competition. Because Genecity University has been steadily exporting talents into society. every year, this design competition that Duval Group and Genecity University co-organized initially has gradually become more and more authoritative in the industry.

'However, with the delicate relationship that I have with Rickard in the way, it'll be extremely awkward if I used this competition as a springboard to get myself into the public's sight.'

On the way, Hesper also searched for more authoritative and well-known competitions that had risen to fame in the industry in recent years, only to find that they were all competitions held by foreign. organizers. But domestic aesthetics had always received discrimination from other races at the international level; being looked down upon was no longer news to local designers.

'So the competition that Duval Group is organizing is the opportunity closest to me.'

"Daddy?" Renfrew suddenly called out.

Hesper lifted her head and instantly saw Rickard walking toward them from across the road.

Rickard had not been able to come and pick Renfrew up recently, so Hesper thought that he had only promised Renfrew to come for a day and he would not appear again after that. She did not expect to see Rickard now.

After a few days of not seeing each other, Rickard seemed to have lost a little weight. And before Hesper could take a closer look, Rickard had already strode up to her. A fragrant whirl wafted from the hem of his coat and toward Hesper.

It was difficult for her to describe the smell, as it did not smell like any other men's cologne.

"Daddy, you haven't come to see Renfrew recently. I'm so sad."

Renfrew rushed over and tugged at the corner of Rickard's shirt. Rickard was rather at a loss. In the end, he could only stretch out his hand and rub Renfrew's head as Hesper did before.

Renfrew had never treated him so intimately before.

Hesper did not say much. She drove there to pick Renfrew up by herself that day, and it seemed that Rickard had not driven there. So, she politely asked, "Do you need a ride?"

Rickard was a little surprised by her question. Then, he nodded. "Yes."

Rickard's body looked a little dusty. Hesper subconsciously felt that something was wrong, but since he did not utter a single word, she did not take the initiative to start a conversation.

After all, their relationship had not reached the point where they needed to greet each other.

Rickard rubbed his brows wearily. He originally thought that he and Hesper would be taking care of Renfrew during this period, but his grandfather's sudden illness casually took up all his time.

And Ernest's condition was very severe too...

"Daddy, are you worried about something too?"

Renfrew saw that something was off with Rickard, so he sniffed him carefully with his tiny nose and pinched Rickard's collar in a worried manner. "Daddy, are you sick? I smell disinfectant."

Rickard did not intend to say anything about Ernest's condition at first, but he did not expect Renfrew's sense of smell to be that sharp.

Seeing that Rickard did not deny or admit it, Hesper frowned. Although Rickard did not look quite right, he did not look sick either.

'If that's the case, who's fallen ill? Julie, or Sophia? But if that were the case, there would be no need for Rickard to hide anything from me.'

Chapter 187

"Is Grandpa sick?"

Rickard remained silent and did not deny it, which, in Hesper's eyes, was equivalent to him admitting it.

Hesper pulled the car over and parked in a parking space on the side of the road, then turned around and looked at Rickard with a worried expression. "How did Grandpa fall ill all of a sudden? Didn't his condition stabilize after he went abroad and received treatment?"

When Renfrew heard that his great-grandfather was sick, he immediately looked at Rickard.

'Among the Duvais, other than Daddy, Great-grandpa is the only person who treats me well!'

The reason why Rickard did not want to mention it was of course, that he did not want Hesper to get distracted by worrying about this matter. But the main reason was that Ernest now knew what happened before Hesper left.

He had locked the recording pen that Hesper left behind back then in his study, but when Ernest came to find a document the other day, he accidentally found the recording pen that had been locked away in the drawer.

After listening to the recording, Ernest was exasperated. He then sent someone to investigate all the events that took place back then. And because of that, his heart disease, which had stabilized after the treatments, relapsed abruptly. He had not made a complete recovery since then.

"How...?" Hesper felt extreme remorse at that moment.

'If I hadn't left the recorder behind, Grandpa's illness wouldn't have relapsed...'

"It's not your fault. Grandfather... He's made them kneel in the courtyard for three days. But such a penalty

is still too lenient for them."

'Regardless of whether Hesper is someone that Grandpa loves, Mother and Sophia definitely didn't bully. Hesper just for fun. They wanted to actually kill her back then! Grandpa won't allow someone who doesn't take human lives seriously to stay in the Duvals!'

Even so, Hesper still felt very guilty.

'If it weren't for me, Grandpa wouldn't have fallen ill. He's already so old. He's taken so many medicines and undergone so many diagnoses and treatments to finally get his condition under control. Any stimuli might overload his body, let alone such an urgent relapse.'

"Would you like to pay Grandpa a visit?" Rickard asked suddenly. "He's always missing you, but because we're... divorced... Coupled with the fact that you've found your family, he didn't want to have to disturb you."

"Of course, he's the person who raised me." Hesper's eyes were bloodshot, and she felt even more guilty."

I should've visited him as soon as I came back. It's just that I was so selfish and only thought about myself. What does any of this have to do with Grandpa.?" 1

"He's obviously one of the people who love me the most in the world."

"Then let's visit him tomorrow."

The next day happened to be a public holiday, so Hesper nodded immediately. "Renfrew, you should come along too. Grandpa probably hasn't seen you in so long."

"Okay, I'll go too!"

Rickard gazed at the two of them and then nodded in agreement. "Grandpa will be exhilarated to see you."

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Hesper could hardly sleep that night. All she could think about was how Ernest protected her in the past.

'If it wasn't for him, Julian and I might have had to grow up in the orphanage. I might not have had the opportunity to attend college, and Julian wouldn't have been able to become a doctor.'

'...Oh yeah!'

Hesper sat up, grabbed her phone, and hesitated for a bit.

‘Speaking of doctors, Julian’s master... Since he was even able to cure my legs, perhaps he could do something about grandpa’s illness!’

She took a glimpse at the time; it was already midnight. She fidgeted with her phone in her hands before hesitantly sending a text message.

Chapter 188

The next day, Hesper and Rickard got ready very early in the morning and went to the Duvals’ ancestral mansion to visit Ernest together.

Originally, with his current health condition, Ernest should have been hospitalized for close observation, but he claimed that he had been staying in the hospital for too long, and he was about to forget what the outside world looked like, so he insisted on staying away from the hospital.

Apart from that, Ernest’s doctor was not someone from the hospital, and the treatments that he had received when he was abroad were levels apart from the current medical standards in the country. It was just that it was more convenient to run full body checkups and tests while he lived in the hospital.

Rickard could not argue with his grandfather, not to mention that he did not dare to anger him at this time. After all, Ernest had already rejected his request to visit him several times because he had been deceived into wronging Hesper back then.

“Has Grandpa woken up?”

Ernest usually upheld a very regular schedule, but Hesper took a glimpse at her phone and saw that it was only five o’clock in the morning. Even Ernest would never get up so early in the past.

...Grandpa is waking up earlier and earlier as the days go by,” Rickard explained while picking up the drowsy boy who was sitting in the child stroller and could not open his eyes.

At this time of the morning, the air around the mansion was extraordinarily fresh. It was already autumn; and the wind was a little chilly.

Hesper also knew that it was not a good sign for the elderly to wake up so early. It only went to show that the quality of Ernest’s sleep was getting worse and worse.

“Did you not sleep well last night?”

As soon as Hesper appeared in front of him that morning, the first thing that caught Rickard’s attention, was the dark circles under Hesper’s eyes. Although it had been covered with a layer of light makeup, Rickard still felt Hesper’s fatigue sensitively.

Hesper did not sleep well, but she did not want to talk about it. She then thought of something and skimmed through the notification bar on her phone.

‘Julian hasn’t replied to my messages yet.’

She had forgotten about the time difference when she was sending the message last night.

‘Logically speaking, it should be daytime abroad at that time. So why hasn’t Julian replied to me?’

Hesper took a deep breath, shook her head, and looked at Rickard. “Let’s not talk about that and visit grandpa first.”

The Duvals’ ancestral mansion was planned and built by Ernest himself. Every detail had to be reviewed by Ernest before it could be implemented back then. Hence, once he passed down his position as the Duvals’ patriarch, as long as he was in Genecity, he would return there and enjoy his stay in his personal paradise.

“Mr. Duval, Mrs. Duval, and Young Master Duval.”

After ringing the doorbell, Aunt Curie came out through the well-wrought iron gate. Wendy Curie was Ernest’s housekeeper, and she was the only person who had been working by his side for decades, so the Duvals long regarded her as one of the family members.

Hesper had not seen Aunt Curie for a long time, but time had hardly left any traces on her. Perhaps she was undefeated even when she was going against time; in short, Aunt Curie still looked very elegant and

pretty.

“I’m no longer the young lady of the Duvals, so there’s no need for you to address me so politely. Just call me Hesper, just like how you did it when I was a girl.”

Wendy nodded, graciously agreeing instead of arguing about Hesper’s title. “Mr. Duval Sr. has been waiting for you in the yard. He woke up even earlier than usual after he heard that you were coming.”

The three of them followed Wendy into the courtyard. Wendy said, “I’ve prepared some snacks. You must not have eaten yet.”

Hesper had not had time to eat, and before leaving, she only gave Renfrew some biscuits and milk. The main reason was that the appointment was fixed at a time that was indeed too early. If Renfrew ate too much, it would be bad for his stomach.

“Thank you, Aunt Curie.”

Wendy gave her a look of reproach. "There's no need to thank me. It's been quite some time since we last met. You've definitely become a lot more aloof, huh?"

Chapter 189

Ernest was waiting for Hesper in the pavilion located in the middle of the garden. His eyes lit up when he saw the three of them.

"Grandpa..." Hesper suddenly felt a little nervous and timid as she approached Ernest...

'I left without even leaving a message behind back then, and I haven't contacted him throughout all these years. Although the rest of the Duvals had done me wrong in the first place, Grandpa has always treated me with absolute kindness.'

Ernest seemed to have seen through Hesper's worries and waved his hand. "It's okay, I've found out about everything that happened three years ago. I wouldn't blame you even if you didn't come back to see me. What happened back then is all their fault, along with this grandson of mine, who was blind. The Duvals are the ones who have done you wrong."

Hesper shook her head, while Rickard listened quietly, and Renfrew rubbed his eyes in his daddy's arms while watching his mother and great-grandpa chatting in a daze. The little rascal looked unbelievably obedient.

Ernest did not bring up anything that happened in the past. He and Hesper only talked about the things that happened in the past three years.

It was not easy for Hesper to get to where she was now in just three years. And because she did not have anyone to talk to all this while, she slowly talked about some things that she had gone through those years under Ernest's earnest guidance.

"Nice, girl, you've truly grown a lot in these three years!" Ernest stretched out his hand and stroked Hesper's hair. "I originally thought you would be under the Duvals' protection until the day I die of old age. I never expected you to find your family and also have your own career and business someday in the future."

"Great, that's great too."

Hesper had always felt that she had never been a particularly lucky person, but meeting Ernest and Matthew was the greatest fortune she had ever encountered in her life. Both of them had lent her their helping hands while she was going through the gloomiest times, which prevented her from sinking into an abyss for the rest of her life.

The two talked about many things in life. Wendy brought Renfrew, who could no longer stay still and quiet, away from the pavilion. Rickard sat by them and listened to the conversation between the two while handling work.

“About what happened back then...” Ernest mentioned out of the blue, and Hesper did not know what to say for a while.

She would never forgive Julie and Sophia, even if it was for Ernest’s sake, so she worried most about putting Ernest in a difficult position.

“I’ll apologize on their behalf. And I, Ernest Duval, will never come up with excuses to cover for them,” Ernest said.

Hesper’s eyes could not help but widen when he continued. “As long as you don’t go too overboard, I won’t interfere with your plans of taking revenge on them. All I want to tell you is that you should never let your

hatred for them cloud your judgment. You’re still young, and there are so many things in life that you have yet to see and experience. Those vast possibilities in life are far more important than hatred.”

Hesper’s eyes suddenly turned bloodshot.

There are actually more people who have my back in this world...”

Ernest smiled and pinched her cheek. “Don’t forget that I’m also your family. So, if you’re bullied by others in the future, you could always come back to me. I’ll speak up for you.”

Rickard’s gaze was fixed on the two of them. Ernest had long realized that his grandson was unable to focus on his work; he could not help but feel exasperated.

‘Back when Hesper was willing to do anything to just stay by his side, this bastard didn’t cherish her. Now he dares to give off such a look? What a useless piece of trash!’

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Chapter 190

As noon approached, Ernest invited the three to stay back for lunch. Wendy claimed that Hesper must give her current cooking skills a try, as they had not seen each other in ages. If they were to leave without eating a meal, Wendy would take it as blatant disrespect.

Hesper could not argue with them and thus, agreed with the suggestion, as there was no urgent matter. that she had to attend to.

However, her phone vibrated twice suddenly. Hesper frowned, lowered her head, and glanced at the notification that appeared on the screen. As expected it was a message from Julian, who had gone off the grid for a long time.

“I’m sorry, Hesper. I didn’t see your message because some things came up. Professor Miles thinks that I should go and take a look at Mr. Duval Sr. first, but because of these incidents... I can’t show up now. I’ll explain this matter to you later. Is Mr. Duval Sr.’s condition very serious now? But I won’t be able to travel

back for at least another two weeks.”

“Hesper?”

Hesper kept her head down, staring at her phone.

Rickard felt a little dissatisfied toward a piece of gadget for no reason, but he did not express it. He just walked up to Hesper and grabbed her arm. “Let’s go in. It’s windy out here.”

The weather was getting windy, and Hesper only wore a knitted skirt for the sake of looking fashionable and beautiful. It was indeed rather cold when the wind gusted through her.

“Okay.”

Hesper got into the mansion while typing, asking Julian to not worry too much as Ernest’s condition was relatively stable now.

‘Julian rarely hides anything from me. After all, we’ve depended on each other so much since we were kids. However, this time, he can’t even reveal the true message that lies underneath his words... But that’s normal, as Julian isn’t good at lying. Some kind of trouble must’ve come up. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have.

said that.’

Julian sent another message to Hesper. She was about to tap on it when Rickard jerked her sleeve.” Grandpa is talking to you.”

“It isn’t something important. Wendy is just asking if there’s anything you really want to eat. She says that she’ll make whatever you want,” Ernest replied, disdaining Rickard’s petty tricks.

Although Rickard was his grandson, he was also one of the people who did Hesper wrong back then.

‘It would be a big mistake if this brat was only doing all this on a whim, without knowing the difference between an infatuation and love, only to hurt Hesper again right under my nose.’

Hesper also felt a little embarrassed. At the end of the day, Wendy was her elder, and she felt sorry for letting her cook for her, so she took the initiative to say, “I’ve also

learned to cook a few dishes in the past few years, Aunt Curie. Let me help you out in the kitchen. We could even catch-up a little while cooking together.”

Rickard originally wanted to go into the kitchen with her, but he did not know a thing about cooking. The only thing that he would be able to do is cause trouble.

Thinking of this, he could only stop moving forward.

“Dick.”

Rickard was a little surprised when Ernest called him all of a sudden. After all, he had not even taken a glance at him ever since he entered through the gates. And Rickard knew his grandfather well enough to know that he must blame him deep down for what happened three years ago.

Ernest gazed at Rickard, who was standing in front of him. This grandson had once made him feel really proud, and Rickard was indeed worthy of his pride. He had always been at the top of his class when he was studying in school, and ever since he took over Duval Group, he acted decisively and vigorously at work without making any major mistakes.

“Do you know what I want to talk to you about?”

Rickard knew that it must be related to Hesper; he hesitated for a moment before nodding. “You want to talk about what happened to Hesper three years ago.”