

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

Chapter 351

But he dared not speak.

Ehren's health had been deteriorating rapidly recently, so sitting in the snow all morning was a little harsh on his body. And no matter how many layers he had on, all he felt was the chilly weather and freezing gusts.

"Our guest's here..." Ehren murmured.

Alfred was about to claim that there was no one there.

'Mr. Sulzbach can't see anything, so how would he be able to notice when someone's arrived?'

However, when he lifted his head, he saw a car pull over at the gate of the courtyard, and after a while, a young man got out of the car.

"Nate, it's been a long time."

Nathaniel frowned and stepped forward. Ehren was sitting in a wheelchair without even a blanket covering his thighs. The temperature in Emperion could go lower than negative ten degrees during this period of time, and Nathaniel had no idea how long the man sitting in front of him had been waiting for him in the snow.

"I already told you that I still have some affairs to deal with, didn't I? So why would you wait for me out here?"

A vague hint of anger could be seen flashing across Nathaniel's face. Alfred kept his eyes on him from the side without saying anything all this while.

'I've been working for Mr. Sulzbach for nearly a decade and this is my first time meeting this man. However, Mr. Sulzbach seems to have a very close relationship with him.'

Ehren gave off a feeble smile, but faint sparks could be seen shimmering in his sightless eyes. That's because I wanted to see you as soon as possible; even a minute sooner was good enough for me."

Alfred was speechless. Nathaniel nodded slightly at him, then grabbed onto the handles behind Ehren's wheelchair and pushed him into the corridor.

"Alfred, you should go back and grab some rest first. Nate and I have something to talk about."

Alfred bowed. "Alright, sir."

Although Ehren was blind, Alfred often felt that he was no different from any other person who could see... If anything, he was even more sensitive than an ordinary person, to the point where he could be a little scary at times.

When Hesper first came home, she did not notice anything wrong with the two children.

After placing Myriade's favorite soup onto the stove to boil, Hesper turned around, only to find that the two kids who would usually be watching the television together at this time of the day, were hiding in Myriade's room. The door was also closed, so she had no idea what they were

doing.

Although it seemed that it was not unusual for children to have little secrets among themselves, Hesper still had a hunch that something was wrong, so she went to the room and knocked on the

door.

"Ren, Zee?"

The sound insulation of the room was very well set up. After a while, the door opened from the inside and was left ajar, Renfrew poked his head out of the room. "Mommy? Is dinner ready?"

"No." Hesper rubbed his head with a grin. "What are you discussing with Zee? You guys are acting so mysterious."

Renfrew scratched his head, wondering if he should tell Hesper about the news, but the next second, Myriade came out the door and stared at Hesper with a pair of blue eyes that looked calm and enigmatic.

"Aunty Hesper, I'm leaving."

Hesper served the dishes and sat down with the two children.

"So, is this your last week in Genecity?"

Myriade nodded as she stared at the dishes in front of her. "In the future... I don't know when I'll be able to come to Halwanest again. My home is located someplace very far away from here, and for certain reasons, I can't leave home often."

Renfrew pursed his lips and did not utter a single word. Hesper took a glance at Myriade, then at Renfrew; it was obvious that the two of them looked extremely blue.

"It's okay, we can still keep in touch with each other, can't we? Although your home is far away from here, I can bring Renfrew to see you if I have the chance to do so in the future." Hesper rubbed Myriade's head gently. "It's always a good thing to be able to go back home, so don't feel sad because it's hard to say your goodbyes."

Chapter 352

Myriade wanted to tell them that their next meeting might be ages away, or perhaps... They had already become each other's enemies when the time came..

The moment would eventually come in between both parties; it was only a matter of time.

Thinking of this, Myriade felt a little sad.

"Aunty, why must you be Hesper Rivera? And why must Renfrew be yours and Rickard Duval's son? If not, perhaps I'd really choose to stay back here."

"Okay, let's eat" Hesper looked at the two children who looked very depressed. Although she felt no less than both of them, she was an adult and the eldest at the dining table at the moment.

If she were to give off negative emotions at this time, Renfrew and Myriade would feel even worse

about it.

After finishing her meal, Myriade went back to her room very early. Even though Hesper served her favorite candied snack later in the evening, she did not eat a few extra pieces like she usually did

Seeing this, Renfrew and Hesper exchanged gazes and then sighed.

Ever since she started studying design with Roberto, Hesper realized that what she had learned. before was merely the surface of the entire field.

Maybe she could only truly understand the cultures and ideas after traveling into the outside world and seeing what the world had to offer. In the past 20-plus years, she had only spent all those years in Genecity and Emperion. And although she had been acquiring and absorbing knowledge frantically like a sponge in the past three years, it was all theories.

"If possible, I still hope that you can leave Halwanest with me so that we can travel to more countries together." Roberto patted Hesper on the shoulder. "You're still very young. You should spend more time accumulating experiences."

Hesper understood what Roberto meant, but she still had a lot of work to attend to in Lane Holdings, and Renfrew still needed his mother by his side.

In any case, there was no way that she could give up everything now and travel the world with Roberto.

“Do you

still remember what I told you back then? That you look very very similar to my wife.” Roberto sighed with a helpless smile after hearing Hesper’s rejection. “Both of us faced this exact situation back then too.”

“My time in Halwanest wasn’t that long. In the beginning, I never thought that I would ever stay here for long.”

Hesper stared at Roberto silently and acted as the good listener that he needed at the moment.

Roberto lowered his head and continued. “This isn’t a romantic story. I wasn’t a well-known

designer back then, but a fledgling design student who wanted to see and experience

“We met at a design exhibition and fell in love because of the compatibility of our souls, but in the end, I chose to leave Halwanest for a brighter and broader future. Roberto frowned as if

sunken into a pool of painful memories.

“But I didn’t know that she was pregnant with our child at the time, and she planned to raise our child by herself. However, an accident happened when she was going into labor.”

Hesper was taken aback, as she had already guessed the ending.

“I attended her funeral months after our separation.”

When both of them were asked to choose between love and his future, Roberto chose his future over the love of his life, which left him with painful and lifelong regrets, meanwhile, Hesper was like Roberto’s lover who felt obliged to choose to stay behind because of love.

“But perhaps what I think and believe in is wrong. The road that you should take should indeed be the road not taken in my case.”

Roberto’s gaze looked gentle. “I also hope to watch you walk down this path and continue to stay. on it so that you can one day prove that I’ve chosen the wrong path in life.”

Hesper looked into Roberto's eyes and remembered that Myriade seemed to have such beautiful but melancholy eyes too. Both of them possessed smoky blue irises that always looked like they were covered by a layer of mist.

"I will continue to stay in Halwanest for a while longer. My wife's death back then seemed to be laced with a handful of questionable doubts. So although I did come to Halwanest because of Nathaniel's request, this matter is very important to me too."

'Sure enough, it's because of Nathaniel...'

Hesper did not know what she could do to thank Nathaniel, but in the next second, her attention was caught by a sentence that Roberto had brought up.

"Questionable doubts?"

Chapter 353

Roberto nodded, and his gaze turned a little cold. "The incident happened so abruptly back then, and I lost my wife and child in an instant, so the bolt from the blue and immense sorrow caused me to lose judgment."

"But after investigating over all these years, my gut is telling me that something doesn't seem right. My wife might not have died because of the accident."

Hesper knew that since Roberto was so sure, he must possess some important piece of evidence, so she took the initiative and suggested, "I have some connections here in Genecity. Perhaps you can tell me about this matter in detail, and I can help you with the investigation."

When she got home, it was already late.

All the lights in the house were turned off, so Hesper turned on the lights in confusion. The first thing that caught her eyes was a home that had been decorated from corner to corner. The color schemes looked rather exaggerated and childish, while the balloons were tied and stuck to the wall at rather awkward heights....

"Happy Birthday Mommy!"

"Happy Birthday Aunty Hesper!"

Renfrew and Myriade came out with the cake in their hands, and Hesper stared at the small cake

in front of her in a daze.

'It's my birthday today?'

Hesper was taken in by the orphanage back then, so it was only natural for no one to know when her real birthdate was. As for the orphanage, they could only pick the day when she was found and taken in and fill in that day as her birthdate, making it her official birthday.

Speaking of which, Hesper had not celebrated her birthday in a very long time. After all, it was not her exact birthdate, so it had lost the meaning of celebrating.

“Mommy, make a wish!”

Renfrew leaned over with the cake in his hands and blinked his big eyes. “Myriade and I have spent a lot of time choosing this cake. I don’t have any money... So Myriade is the one who bought all of this.”

Hesper looked over at Myriade, who turned her head away in embarrassment. “I have a lot of money anyway, so...”

“Thank you, Zee.”

Myriade puffed out her cheeks and looked a little irritated.

“I’ve already corrected her many times, saying that it’d be better for her to call me Myriade, but she still won’t and keeps on calling me Zee.’

But in an instant, her gaze became awkwardly gentle again, and the tips of her ears flushed.

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‘Although she always forgets what to call me... I’ll forgive her. It’s also common for adults to be forgetful at times.’

Under the expectant eyes of the two children, Hesper closed her eyes, trying to dissipate the warmth that she was feeling at the bottom of her eyes.

‘If I have to make a wish... I wish for all the people who love me and whom I love to stay safe and live a good life.’

Hesper thought of this and immediately felt that she was being a little too greedy.

‘It’s already difficult for one to guarantee safety in life, so how can I hope for my loved ones to live a good life on top of that?’

So she changed it into another wish.

“I wish for my loved ones to always be by my side.”

Renfrew sounded a little anxious. “Mommy, you’re not allowed to say your wish out loud, or else it

won’t come true!”

Hesper shook her head and said with a smile, “Renfrew, wishes are all fake. I believe that we must fight for everything in life. Those who pray to the gods won’t get their wishes answered, so I want to make my wishes come true myself, one after another. I’ll keep everyone that I love by my side.”

Chapter 354

It was the weekend again, and it was already late winter. Although the temperature in Genecity. would not drop as low as it did in Emperion, the outdoor temperature was not high. Hence, Hesper had to be very cautious every time she brought the two children out.

There were two more days before Myriade had to go home, and Hesper had thought about taking her to some places to have some fun, but Myriade had never been to any place, so her lack of imagination was no less than that of Hesper years ago.

In the end, Renfrew made the final decision to go to the amusement park.

Although Renfrew had already been there with Hesper before this, thinking that Myriade had not even been to an amusement park or watched fireworks before, Renfrew pitied her.

In fact, Myriade was a very competent and powerful person.

Renfrew had long realized this. Many adults thought that he was talented because he already knew a lot of things that even they did not know of, but he actually learned all of them from Myriade, so she was the truly talented person between the two of them.

But no matter how powerful she was as a teenager, she could not get through life without getting.

to witness fireworks.

It was already evening by the time the three of them arrived at the amusement park. Because Hesper was afraid of heights and there were very few entertainment facilities that the two kids could experience, after talking about it for a bit, the three of them decided to only go on the merry-go-round and then go to watch the carnival float parade and the fireworks.

After paying the entrance fee, Hesper walked up to the carousel, holding one kid in each hand.

“Huh? It’s you guys,” the ticket inspector said all of a sudden.

Hesper raised her head. The inspector's ability to remember people's faces was pretty brilliant. Unfortunately, the person standing in front of her was the one who lectured her the last time she was there.

Renfrew also remembered her and nodded obediently. "Yes, it's us!"

The ticket inspector would encounter at least hundreds if not thousands of people each day. The only reason she remembered Hesper and Renfrew was that their family was too good-looking, so it was difficult for her to forget about them.

"Where's the child's father? And this girl, is she your relative's daughter?" The ticket inspector was

as enthusiastic as ever.

Hesper avoided the first question, paused for a split second, then grabbed Myriade's hand. "No, she's my daughter."

Myriade was taken aback. Seeing Hesper's teasing gaze as she glanced down at her, she could not help but feel devastated deep down.

'Seriously, she looks very much like my mother! Why must you be Hesper Rivera? God, why must it be Hesper Rivera?'

For the rest of the ride, Myriade looked very absent-minded, and Hesper could tell that she was not in the mood. Fortunately, the carnival float parade that followed was very lively and boisterous, and it managed to drag Myriade's attention back to reality.

Looking at the float performance in front of her, Myriade finally gave off some of the excitement and enthusiasm that a teenager should have.

"Guys, wait here a moment. I have to answer a phone call." Hesper grabbed Renfrew and Myriade abruptly and asked them to stay out of the crowd. "Don't run around. I'll be back very soon. Stay right here, okay?"

Renfrew and Myriade nodded without knowing what was happening and sat down next to a souvenir store, waiting for Hesper to come back to them.

"Hello? Mr. Sanchez, have you gotten the item ready?"

Roberto responded with a hum from the other end of the phone. "Because the schedule is relatively compact, I just finished it. I'm already at the entrance of the amusement park. You can come and pick it up."

Hesper took a glance at Renfrew and Myriade.

Those two are not as old as I am even if I were to add their ages together. If an adult were to try and kidnap them, they would have no chance at fighting back.”

Hence, she could only say, “I’m so sorry, Mr. Sanchez, but I can’t go out right now. Can you send

the item in?”

“Okay, it’s fine. There’s no need for you to be this polite with me,” Roberto said. “Just share your location with me, and I’ll deliver it to you.”

“Thank you, Mr. Sanchez!”

Hesper hung up the phone, shared her location, and then observed Renfrew and Myriade from a corner of the amusement park.

The souvenir vendors next to them kept calling out to attract customers. Renfrew and Myriade could not help but go into the store to have a look out of curiosity. They had everything in the store, but most of them were only toys that were there to scam kids.

Myriade stared at one of the daggers, which looked very pleasing to the eye. She had been”

exposed to a lot of cold weapons during her time in Daybreak, so she was naturally attracted to something like this.

Chapter 355

‘I wouldn’t be able to bring this onto the plane, would I...?’

Myriade was a little hesitant. Renfrew became attracted by the cotton candy machine next to him, so he left Myriade squatting in front of the booth, observing the dagger.

‘It’s really small and delicate. Who cares if I’m not allowed to bring it home? It looks good, so I’ll buy it.’

Roberto followed the location that Hesper sent him and finally found her among the crowd. Just as he was about to walk over, he turned his head to the side and suddenly met a pair of very familiar-looking eyes.

The owner of those eyes also stared at him in surprise or more like complete disbelief.

“Yuna...?” Roberto murmured, and in the next second, the young owner of the pair of familiar eyes dashed toward him, and an excruciating pain instantly occupied all his sensations.

“Aaaah—”

The person standing next to him screamed. Hesper heard the sound and looked over, but because many people were running around, the crowd was too congested, and she was a little far away, she could not see clearly what was going on over there.

‘Crap! Renfrew and Myriade are over there...’

“He’s been stabbed!”

Renfrew was still staring at the cotton candy machine in a daze, but when he heard the screams and turned his head, he saw a scene that would haunt him for life.

The severe pain caused Roberto to bend down, and the dagger that stabbed him in between his ribs was firmly held down by a girl as if she was trying to pierce the blade into his body as much as possible. Those smoky blue eyes that looked exactly like his were bloodshot and filled with hatred.

“Yuna...”

With the last bit of her rationale, Myriade put on the hood of her down jacket.

The new down jacket that Hesper bought her looked as pure as snow, but it was now stained with bright red blood... Everything seemed wrong at that moment.

“What makes you think you have the right to bring up my mother’s name?” Myriade paused for a split second between each and every word, and she sounded like a frantic little beast. “You hypocrite. If you want to put on a show, go to hell and show it to her, Father.”

When Rickard got the news, Roberto had already been pushed into the operating theater.

Hesper and Renfrew sat in front of the operating theater, and when she saw Rickard, she only looked up, took a glance at him wearily, and did not say anything.

“Hesper...”

Rickard wanted to say something more, but he knew that no matter what he said at this moment, it would be useless.”

‘Hesper’s current attitude shows that she’s already found out about Myriade’s identity, which means... She knows that I’ve been using her again. Whatever reason I give her now, she wouldn’t

care.’

Going back to half an hour ago, Hesper finally managed to force her way through the crowd, only to see Roberto lying in a pool of blood. A figure in a white down jacket disappeared into the crowd instantly.

“Mr. Sanchez!”

Hesper helped Roberto up, and the people around them fled in all directions. She raised her head in panic and saw Renfrew crying not far away. He had a cell phone in his hand and dialed a number.

“Is this 911? Someone is dying...”

Chapter 356

Before escaping the scene, Myriade gazed at Renfrew for the last time, but her sight was blurred by the tears in her eyes.

“Okay, don’t think about it any longer.” The young man draped his overcoat on the blood-stained Myriade. “You’ve come this far, haven’t you? There’s no turning back now. Just remember that you and the mother and son aren’t the same kind of people.”

Myriade was holding a box that fell from Roberto’s hand, and the helicopter hovering in the sky descended. The man then boarded the helicopter with Myriade, and the ground shrank little by little in her eyes.

With trembling hands, Myriade opened the gift box in front of her, and there was a postcard on the top. A few words were written on it with a marker: “A gift for you, Zee.”

Myriade recognized the handwriting; it was written by Hesper herself.

The gift was a very beautiful dress, and it was pure white.

Myriade burst into tears, and the man took her into his arms and patted her on the back lightly. Both of them did not utter a single word throughout the whole journey.

Although Roberto had lost a lot of blood, Myriade only assaulted him out of anger and did not stab him in a deadly spot. Apart from that, the dagger was forged for its appearance more than its practical functionality. So it was fortunate that none of Roberto’s organs suffered any fatal

injuries.

After paying for Roberto's medical bills, Hesper went to his ward. Due to excessive blood loss, Roberto would remain unconscious for a while.

Hesper let out a long sigh and sat on the bench a little tiredly.

Renfrew cried for a long time when he first arrived at the hospital, but now, he had stopped crying and making noise. He was unexpectedly quiet instead.

Hesper held his hand and could feel that he was trembling.

"Mommy..." Renfrew opened his mouth but did not say anything in the end.

"Rickard Duval, do you have something to say to me?"

When they were on their way there, Hesper had already asked Renee to look into Myriade and the organization behind her, Daybreak. And probably because the incident happened so suddenly and shocked many people, even Daybreak had shown a lot of flaws that day.

Rickard was the one who personally brought Zoya to Halwanest and then allowed her to come find Hesper and Renfrew.

Hesper was not an idiot. She managed to piece together all the anomalies that took place before

this.

Why Rickard didn't take Renfrew back to the Duvals... And how he claimed that he doesn't want Renfrew to get hurt when he sees him attending blind dates. Those were all lies made up by Rickard. Both Renfrew and I have been used by him. This is the truth."

"I wouldn't respond like this even if you'd used me or plotted against me. I don't even know what to say to you. Do you know that, Rickard Duval?" Hesper closed her eyes and shook her head. "You even got Renfrew involved in your plot. Rickard Duval, you're truly a beast."

Rickard frowned. "Hesper, things aren't as simple as you think."

He did not expect that Myriade would suddenly lose her cool.

"Everything was going so well, and I'd soon be able to find more information about Daybreak, find that mysterious doctor, and treat Hesper's leg injury...'

"Then how should things be? Please don't tell me that you're doing all this for me or for Renfrew!"

"Stop quarreling already." Renfrew lowered his head and said in a muffled voice, "I don't believe that Myriade is a bad person. Myriade has been accompanying me for as far back as my memories go. I refuse to believe that she's a bad person..."

Hesper hugged Renfrew distressedly. In fact, all the memories that they had had with Myriade during this period flashed back in her mind.

'How could it be? She's a girl who obediently called me aunty and shared her candies with us... How could she have been thinking of harming us all this while?"

Chapter 357

It was already the next night when Roberto woke up. Hesper, who had been staying in the hospital, was the first person to find him awake.

"Mr. Sanchez..."

Roberto opened his eyes and patted Hesper's hand. "I'm fine."

Hesper was still blaming herself for what happened to Roberto. If it were not for her, Zoya would

not have had the chance to make a move on Roberto. If she had not asked him to come to her, Roberto wouldn't have gotten involved in the incident.

"..."

Seeing that Hesper hesitated to speak, Roberto shook his head. "What happened has nothing to do with you."

"...What?" Hesper could see that Roberto was not trying to comfort herself.

Roberto did not explain his encounter to Hesper directly but asked, "Do you know the young girl's name? And do you know her?"

"Yeah... I know her." Hesper nodded. "Her name is Zoya, Zoya Taylor."

Roberto nodded, and his gaze overflowed with emotions that Hesper could not comprehend. "It's a very romantic name. That's nice..."

"Mr. Sanchez?"

After letting out a long sigh, Roberto asked Hesper to take a seat before he spoke. "Do you still remember what I told you about my wife's death? I didn't tell you much when you asked me more about her the other day, but I'll fill you in now."

"I learned that my wife's ashes were not safeguarded in the cemetery when I came back to pay her a visit at her grave a few years ago." Roberto paused for a short while before continuing. "The only things that were buried back there were her clothes. So I'm guessing that she didn't die back then and that the car accident that took place was only a hoax, but I can't think of a reason why

that would be.

"My wife's name is Yuna Taylor. The Zoya Taylor that you mentioned... She might be our daughter."

Hesper was so shocked by the news that she was at a loss for words.

'I'll admit that I was fascinated when I saw that Zoya's blue eyes look exactly the same as Mr. Sanchez's, but I never thought of this possibility. Isn't this a little... Unbelievable? But if Zoya is really Mr. Sanchez's daughter, why would she want to kill him? They've never even met each other before this, so what's up with the intense hatred?'

"Although it's only an inference, that short glimpse that I got of her within the crowd was already enough to tell me that she must be somehow related to me. She herself even called me 'Father' during the incident."

"Wait a minute, Mr. Sanchez..." Hesper was a little confused. "The most important thing now is for you to take good care of your injury. Whether Zoya is your daughter or not, she's still not the simple girl that we know."

"She comes from Daybreak, a very mysterious and dangerous organization. My son learned hacking skills from her, the ability that she possesses isn't something any ordinary child should have," Hesper said. "If she really hates you because of some sort of misunderstanding, you won't be able to talk any sense into her."

“I saw a young man leading Zoya out of the crowd,” Roberto said. “That man looked rather familiar, but I was already losing consciousness at that time... But that man really gave me an extremely familiar vibe.”

Hesper shook her head and covered Roberto with the quilt. “You shouldn’t be thinking so much right now. Taking good care of your body is more important than anything else. As long as Zoya is still alive, we’ll eventually find her, won’t we?”

Renfrew walked into the ward, just in time to hear Hesper’s words.

In the past two days, he had been sending countless messages to Myriade, but without exception, all of them received no reply at all.

His encyclopedia, his most important guidance in life, had disappeared from his world in such a hasty manner after everything they had gone through.

Chapter 358

After Zoya left, life gradually got back on track.

Rickard had taken Renfrew back to the Duvals. Hesper never once mentioned that she wanted to see Renfrew ever since the incident, nor did she contact Rickard again. Renfrew was very sensible. and would video call Hesper every day.

Looking at Renfrew, Hesper could feel that he had become more taciturn as the days went by.

Myriade’s departure was a major blow to him. Rickard found him a new coach after that, and Renfrew did not reject him. Even with the new teacher, he still showed incredible talent.

Just understand the situation that you’re in and know when to stop.

Knowing what happened during this period of time, Matthew only sighed on the other end of the call. “Rickard is a heartless person. Must you measure just how huge of a role emotions play in his world through the disappointments that you experience from him over and over again?”

It was rare for Hesper to feel this frustrated, but she had to admit that what Matthew said was

correct.

‘Deep down in Rickard’s heart, profit will always come first. It’s his natural instinct, and it’ll never be changed by anyone’s will. Even love won’t cut it in this case.’

“Okay, I understand.” Hesper did not want to discuss this matter again and changed the subject.” I’m going back to Emperion in the near future. There are some things back

home that I haven't gotten my head around. I'll leave my work in Genecity to Renee while I'm gone."

"You're coming back?"

Matthew felt that Hesper's sudden return to Emperion was a little strange. "What are the things that you want to get your head around?"

'There are plenty...

There were too many things that Hesper still did not understand, but the most recent one was Shawn. It was about his strange attitude toward her.

After what happened with Zoya, Hesper had learned not to judge a book by its cover. People who looked harmless on the surface might be the ones who were capable of stabbing her from behind.

Hesper had to figure out what the deal was with Shawn.

After she briefed Matthew about her concerns, he pondered for a moment. "Uncle Theo doesn't go out very often now. He usually spends time with Grandpa. If you were to deliberately approach him all of a sudden, you might invoke suspicions. So allow me to recommend someone to you- Uncle Simon."

Hesper was puzzled. "Uncle Simon? But I'm not very close with him, and... Didn't he say that he was about to go abroad soon during Grandpa's birthday party? I thought he left after the party."

"That was his original plan, but Grandpa forbade him from leaving. He could only choose one or the other. Either to get married instantly and then leave Emperion, or to stay back at home and

stay single." Matthew held himself back from laughing. "It's impossible for Uncle Simon to want to get married, so he could only compromise and stay back here for a while."

"I see..."

Matthew responded with a hum and then explained calmly, "Uncle Simon knows that you're not Rachael. Except for me, he's the only one among the Lanes who knows your true identity."

Hesper was stunned for a moment.

I've met Uncle Simon a few times before this, and he's never shown any flaws at all."

At that time, Hesper only thought that Uncle Simon was just an easy-going man, so he did not have much to say about the niece who came out of nowhere. She never thought that he actually knew her true identity.

“Uncle Simon is different from any ordinary person that you know. He rarely shows interest in anything, apart from psychology. And in the past...” Matthew paused for a split second before continuing. “He was in the military back then.”

“What?”

‘But I’ve never felt the slightest hint of military temperament from Uncle Simon... Although, speaking of, many of the Lanes were in the army back then. Grandpa was originally a soldier, Matthew’s father died amidst a military mission, and now Uncle Simon, who seems to have nothing to do with the military, turns out to be an ex-soldier too.’

Chapter 359

“No one knows the exact reason why, but Uncle Simon submitted an application to leave the army after Father’s accident. Grandpa has always thought that he’s a deserter, but I don’t think he left. because he was worried for his life.”

Matthew’s voice sounded somewhat helpless. “However, Uncle Simon has never explained himself. After the incident, he went abroad and rarely comes back.”

“Uncle Simon and Uncle Theo are very close. So, if you could build a good relationship with the former, you won’t have to worry about getting to know more about the latter.”

Hesper said that she understood what she had to do after returning to Emperion, and the two of them moved on to briefly talk about work arrangements. After all, Hesper would return to Emperion for a period of time soon. She should deal with some of the tasks on hand in advance so that Renee would not have to bury herself in work when Hesper was away.

“Hesper.”

“Huh?” Hesper lifted her head. “What’s the matter?”

Matthew shook his head. “It’s nothing, I just hope that you’re not draining yourself too much.”

“...Mhmm.” Hesper could not help but feel that there was an underlying message lying underneath Matthew’s concern, but she could not figure out what he wanted to say. However, it was pointless for her to think too much, so she simply stopped thinking about it.

Roberto had recuperated a lot throughout this period of time, and the wound had scabbed over. Hesper could not continue to take care of him, as she was about to go back to Emperion, so she went to visit Roberto one last time in the hospital before leaving.

As soon as she entered the ward, she heard an ongoing conversation and was surprised to see Nathaniel standing in front of the bed.

“What are you doing here?”

Hearing Hesper’s question, Nathaniel waved his hands helplessly. “Obviously, I’ve come here to visit Roberto. I heard that he was injured, so as a friend, I just had to come and see him.”

Hesper had been a little occupied lately, so she forgot that Roberto and Nathaniel were friends for

a moment.

It was just that Nathaniel seemed to be coming to Genecity very frequently recently, and something bad seemed to have happened every time he came by, so whenever she saw him, Hesper could not help but feel that something had gone wrong.

“Guys, I know the relationship between you two, so why act so aloof?”

Roberto’s question made Hesper feel a little embarrassed. She did not know where to start with her explanation.

While she was still pondering, Nathaniel had already taken the initiative to explain. “The engagement between me and Hesper is just a unilateral wish of our parents. Hesper didn’t even grow up with the Lanes, so she and I don’t really know each other very well. We’re just friends.”

Hesper immediately nodded in agreement.

Roberto looked at the two of them, then sighed. “I thought you two were close to getting married. You look as if you’d make a perfect match. But in the end, it turns out that you’re just friends.”

Hesper realized something at this moment.

‘Recently, more and more elderly are starting to push me when it comes to my love life. But Nathaniel and I are still tied together by the engagement agreement, so it’s not a particularly unusual thing for everyone to misunderstand our relationship. I should probably find a way to dissolve this agreement when I go back to Emperion this time.’

“I heard from Matthew that you’re going back to Emperion soon. Is there any urgent matter that you have to deal with back in Emperion?” Nathaniel asked. “If necessary, I can lend you a hand.”

Nathaniel’s network in Emperion was indeed much wider than hers, but after giving it some thought, Hesper rejected his proposal.

'This matter is related to Shawn, which might involve the Lanes' reputation. My identity is also something that I can't just share with Nathaniel so casually. Getting him to help would only lead to more chaos.'

Hesper shook her head. "Thank you for your offer, but there's no need for that. They're just some minor affairs.

"To be honest, the thing that worries me more is my work in Genecity. Lane Holdings' branch office has just started to show some growth in numbers yet I'm already leaving the city for Emperion. This will definitely delay a lot of tasks."

Chapter 360

Coming out of the ward, Hesper and Nathaniel walked side by side in the hospital.

Nathaniel took the initiative to break the somewhat awkward atmosphere. "I've heard about the matter with Daybreak. Are you okay?"

Hesper shook her head. "How am I not okay? As for the girl... She was quite well-behaved when she was staying with me. But I really didn't expect things to turn out like this. I even got Mr. Sanchez hurt.

"Let's not talk about this anymore. You've been coming to Genecity quite often recently. Is there something that demands your attention here?" Hesper turned her head. "I remember that you were always in Emperion before, and occasionally, you'd go abroad to study. Before, you claimed that you hadn't been in Genecity in a long time."

Nathaniel was taken aback for a moment. Then he lowered his beautiful eyes and gazed at

Hesper helplessly.

"Do you really not know why I'm always here?" Nathaniel approached her abruptly.

Hesper's heart skipped a beat, but after seeing Nathaniel's half-smile, she let out a sigh of relief and frowned. "Stop making fun of me."

Nathaniel distanced himself and rubbed Hesper's head. "I can see that you're not in a good mood, so I chose to tease you a little. I'm here because an old friend has returned to Halwanest and he has some things to do in Genecity, but due to personal reasons, he couldn't come here himself, so he entrusted me to come and help him out."

"I see." Hesper knew that Nathaniel had always attached great importance to the people around him, be it his family or friends, so if he was here to help others out, it sounded rather reasonable." If there's anything that I can help with, just ring me up.

H

Nathaniel nodded. "Of course, but I can handle it for now. This friend of mine has quite a bad temper, so if I were to tell others about this matter so easily, my actions might provoke unnecessary emotions and chaos."

Hesper raised an eyebrow.

When Nathaniel mentioned that "friend" of his, Hesper seemed to have felt a faint hint of affection

in his tone.

"The friend you're talking about is a lady, isn't it?" Hesper teased.

"Huh?" Nathaniel was astonished for a split second, then he chuckled as if he had thought of something funny. "If he were to learn that you called him a lady, he'd be so angry that he would pop off of his wheelchair."

Nathaniel's words sounded a little off, and Hesper realized something.

'So this friend that Nathaniel just brought up should be someone younger than him, shouldn't he? And he's someone with a disability and can't walk. It really sounds like he's grown up being spoiled by the people around him.'

"When you return to Emperion, there's no need for you to hold back if you run into any problems. As long as it's within my capabilities, I won't say no to you." After walking a few steps forward, the wind subsided, and Nathaniel turned his head, his gaze full of tenderness. "Trust me."

After taking care of all the work in Genecity, Hesper could finally return to Emperion with peace of

mind.

It was almost New Year's Eve. Hesper seemed to have accomplished a lot during her time away from Emperion and had a strong reason to support her decision to come home for a while. Hence, although Wilfred was still being sarcastic and cynical when she was around, Hesper could not even bother to go back and forth with him. Arthur's love for her was her strongest prop in the Lanes, so no one could really hurt her.

"Hesper, have you lost weight again lately?"

Hesper was helpless. "You already said that I lost weight the last time I came. It's winter now, so it's normal to be a little slimmer... Don't worry, Grandpa, I've been eating well in Genecity."

Arthur rubbed Hesper's arm, which looked as slender as a stick, and shook his head in disapproval. "You youngsters don't care about anything else when you're busy. From what I can see, you're just saying that to prevaricate me. You look even thinner than when you came back for my birthday."

Hesper had indeed lost a lot of weight recently, so when she heard his complaint, she could only lower her head with a guilty conscience..