

A Spoonful of Sugar Don't Beg for Love Chapter 431

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Chapter 431

"Come in, the door isn't locked."

Isaac collected the documents and stood aside. Rachael walked into the office and placed the food on the table with a smile. "The cook said that I've improved a lot. It should taste... alright."

Isaac stood there silently. Matthew nodded and opened up the container then was surprised,

It was Seared Salmon, Hesper's favorite food.

"... What's wrong?" Rachael leaned in. "The fish is still in one piece. I brought it over right after I made it. Do you not like fish? Now that I think about it, I don't know what you like. Can you tell me the next time we dine together?"

"No." Matthew looked at her trying to impress him and sighed. After a long pause, he said, "Nothing's wrong, I love fish. You don't have to try and impress me. We're siblings... We'll need to live together."

Rachael smiled after she heard him say that. "That's great. I thought I did something wrong. When the cook told me that Hessa is a really good cook, I was thinking that doing this would make me look like a copycat."

"Alright," Matthew cut her off. "Don't overthink. Hesper is my sister and so are you. Everyone has their own talent, so there's no need to compare yourself to her."

"Sure!" After handing the cutlery to Matthew, Rachael looked happier. "I heard that the Duvals gave Hessa an agreement. Can I know who's running the project?...I'm just curious."

Isaac heard and said, "That belongs to Ms. Rivera and not the Duvals. We don't have the right to do anything about it or take it out."

"That's unfortunate; the Duvals are our competitor. If we don't take it, wouldn't it go to them?" Rachael held onto Matthew's arm. "I don't think she would mind. Didn't she hate Rickard Duval when she was around? I'm sure she'll be happy if we manage to snatch a project from him."

"Matt..."

"Ms. Lane, please don't put Mr. Lane on the spot. We won't be taking what belonged to Ms. Rivera out."

Isaac's voice sounded cold. Rachael didn't expect him to speak that way so she paused, then bit her lip because she felt like she was wronged.

"I'm sorry... I didn't know that Hessa was so important to you. It's my fault for not considering how she would feel because I was too focused on the benefits for the company."

Matthew took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

"Alright, let's put this aside for now. It's getting late, Rachael. I'll get the driver to drive you home."

Rachael's eyes turned red. "Do you think that Hesper is better than me? I shouldn't be Rachael Lane but the illegitimate one. It's all my fault."

Matthew frowned. Before he could speak, Rachael raised her hand to wipe her tears away.

Chapter 432

"Again."

Hesper laid on the floor when Seth's voice came from above. She waved her hand. "Give me some time, don't rush it."

Seth looked down at her and sighed. "Are you still not giving up?"

"Of course not. I knew it was going to be tiring before I started learning thissss..." Hesper flipped around and sat up. "I'm not going to give up."

Seth was surprised when he reached out to help her up.

"Thanks."

Watching her hype herself up even though she looked half dead, Seth was silent for a while before he said, "Your leg was injured in the past, right? It looks pretty bad."

"You could tell?" Hesper was surprised. "You're so skinny. I thought you only learned kickboxing for self-defense but it turns out you're quite good at this."

Seth cleared his throat awkwardly. "I'm very professional."

Remembering their previous topic, Seth spoke in a deep voice. "Your leg is still injured, so if you want to learn kickboxing, it might cause more friction. I don't think you should continue."

"Friction," Hesper repeated, then casually shrugged. "So what if I start limping? The injury is already there. I can't deny that what you said is true, but if I can't defend myself, I might lose more than a leg."

Seth didn't ask more questions. "I can only teach you simple self-defence but your body won't be able to endure high-impact training. You need to know that."

"Yes, I understand Hesper leaned closer with twinkling eyes. "So does that mean you're going to

teach me?"

"Don't get too close." Seth took a step back. "Yes"

A week after the murder downtown, the police called Hesper again.

The victim was the son of an affluent man in Antellon and was sent to jail because of bodily assault and sexual assault. However, he was bailed out by his family. The most recent crime he committed was armed murder with a gun, but he was released after pulling some strings.

It seemed as though the chances of him being murdered as revenge was very high. Hesper was just a student who just got there and wasn't linked to the deceased, so it was probably an accident.

It looked flawless. 013 had behaved recently, so Hesper started to consider if she was overthinking. After hanging up, she sent a text to Roberto.

[Roberto: Don't worry, even though Antellon isn't as safe as our country, the police aren't just

bitting around either. They're not going to randomly attack.]

[Hesper: Hmm, I guess I worry too much.]

Even though the danger was still lurking around the corner, when she knew that what happened wasn't related to her, she still gave a sigh of relief.

The man's bloodshot eyes that glared at her before he died would sometimes appear in Hesper's dreams. If some unrelated person lost their lives because they were trying to send a message, she wouldn't be alright with that.

The days passed and the first semester ended. Hesper familiarized herself with Fredonia and life in Antellon.

Chapter 433

"Are you happy that you're finally on a break?"

It was peak summer. Hesper and Roberto walked out of the campus together. When she heard the question, she tilted her head and thought about it. "I'll be graduating in a little over a year and I'll be able to start working then. Of course I'm happy."

"You're right, I've forgotten that you're rich."

In the past few months, Hesper made quite a lot of money at Eustoma and even made a name for herself in the design world. However, to avoid letting Matthew find her, she used the name River A.

There was an agreement to be signed later, so Pennleigh came earlier to the gates to fetch Hesper.

Ever since she found out that he was well-off, he had no reason to hide it anymore. He would drive a different luxury every time he went over and even Hesper was shocked at how luxurious they

were.

Rickard and Matthew weren't crazy about cars. Even though they had their own collection, they would always drive the same ones out. That was how Pennleigh went from a younger brother to a flirtatious younger brother in Hesper's eyes.

"Do you think he has a crush on you?"

Hesper turned to see Roberto who was smiling then sighed. "Don't try to push that narrative. Pennleigh is like a younger brother to me; he's adorable. You seem to think that everyone is a good match for me. You did that with Nathaniel too."

They both got quiet at the mention of Nathaniel.

"He asked if I had any news about you a few days ago."

Hesper knew that Nathaniel and Matthew weren't going to give up on finding her, but she had never been as relaxed in her life as she had been now. She didn't have a lot of worries and only focused on making money so that one day she could have Renfrew there with her.

Pennleigh waited for her for too long, so he walked over. "What are you guys talking about?"

When he saw their expressions, he didn't know what to think.

Hesper shook her head. "Nothing. Where's the agreement? I'll sign it now."

"...So secretive. Were you talking about me behind my back?" Pennleigh handed the contract to her. "This is a wedding gown, and the bride has a lot of requests. I'll send the details to you later."

Hesper raised her brows.

Custom-made orders were special clients and it was normal for them to have requests. However, this was the first client even Pennleigh frowned upon.

"I wasn't going to give this order to you at first, but only you could fulfill the requests." Pennleigh sighed. "They wanted an oriental one and a western design and even requested it to be done by the same designer. Only you can design a good traditional piece in our studio."

Hesper took the agreement and read the terms. They looked fine until she got to the final page and saw that the name of the client was...

"Juniper Wight?"

Never would she imagine that she would see Juniper's name there. Hesper put her hand on Pennleigh's shoulder. "Could you send the requirements to me?"

Pennleigh was right. There were a lot of requests, but it sounded like Juniper.

Hesper was curious why Carter Wilson would actually marry her. Everyone thought that they weren't serious about their relationship, but it turned out that they were really getting married.

Chapter 434

“Is there a problem?”

Hesper shook her head. “I know this person. Everything else is fine.”

“Oh...” Pennleigh was confused. She said that she knew the client, but then she also said that there was no problem... So was there a problem or not?

Once the break began, Seth would temporarily go home. He didn't know why but he felt relieved.

“Was training me so tiring? You just haven't seen me for a few months and you look so much more relaxed.”

Hesper pretended to be annoyed. After Seth heard that, he went back to having a poker face and said after a long pause, “What do you know? Focus on your posture. We'll spar later.”

Hesper felt that they had gotten closer, but he immediately went back to being cold. She didn't want to read too much into it.

“By the way, I need your help on another thing.”

Hesper asked Seth to not tell anyone about her changing her face, even if it was Nate. However, now that Seth was going back, he might spend a lot of time with Nathaniel, so she was worried that he might let slip.

“I know, I won't tell Nate,” Seth said.

Hesper nodded in relief. “I know you're tight-lipped. Thanks, Sethy.”

Hearing that, Seth suddenly paused and, after a while, said, “Nate... used to call me that too.”

It didn't sound right. When Hesper saw him lowering his head in thought, she guessed that they weren't as close as they used to be. Otherwise, with that many options back home, Seth didn't have to travel overseas to study.

Furthermore, the Tuckers had money, so why did Seth have to make his own?

“Alright, focus on your training.”

Hesper pouted. “Yes, Mr. Tucker.”

Even though it was a wedding dress for Juniper, the order was by Eustoma and it was the work of designer River A., so Hesper would still complete it responsibly.

Juniper had a lot of requests, but Hesper learned a lot while she worked with Eustoma, so she managed to handle all of them.

She had a lot of time to finish it. It was due in February of the next year. Even though Hesper still didn't think that Carter was sincere in marrying Juniper, that was the reality. Juniper was an evil person but she managed to keep him around.

When she thought about it that way, she paused then scoffed.

The gods must be crazy.

Juniper had gotten everything that Hesper wanted. She did horrible things yet was able to turn her life around.

Pennleigh walked past Hesper's office and saw her zoning out at her desk, so he knocked on the door and walked in. "What's on your mind? I watched you zoning out for so long."

"I'm thinking about the design," Hesper lied. "Do you need my help?"

"Oh..." Pennleigh cleared his throat and scratched his head. "Yes. My mom is here again and heard that you're on a break, so she insisted that you come over for a meal."

Chapter 435

Hesper removed her glasses and rubbed the bridge of her nose.

A few months ago, Pennleigh's mother, Isobella invited her over too. Hesper used her studies and work as an excuse and said that she didn't have time to visit.

However, she didn't expect her to still remember her.

"My mom really likes you. She always asks about you whenever I text her." Pennleigh paused after that, then continued. "I can't take it anymore."

If she said no again, it would start to sound rude. Hesper rejected her on multiple occasions, so this time Isobella only invited her when she was sure she had time.

Hesper could tell that Isobella liked her. Maybe because she didn't have her own family, Hesper had always respected the elders and didn't want them to hate her.

"Why not..."

"This weekend?"

-They spoke at the same time. Pennleigh was embarrassed. "I'm sorry, if I didn't come up with such

a brilliant plan, you wouldn't have to be dragged into this."

Dragged?

Hesper beamed. "Not at all, it's just a meal."

"...Really?"

Hesper was confused.

When they got to Pennleigh's home, Hesper realized that she underestimated the situation.

Pennleigh was from an affluent family, that Hesper knew. However, when she walked into the building that looked like a castle, Hesper realized that they were filthy rich.

"...This is my dad's preference. He's half Halwanese and half Fredonian. You haven't met him before, but he has a pleasant temper, much better than my mom's."

Hesper hadn't witnessed Isobella's bad temper. Even though she turned her down multiple times, Isobella was still very friendly to her.

Pennleigh knew what she was thinking and he looked confused too. "I don't know why she likes

you so much either."

Since it was an invitation by someone older, Hesper didn't use her disguise. Instead, she put on light makeup, which was part of etiquette.

After walking into the hall with Pennleigh, Isobella saw Hesper from afar and immediately greeted her. "Here! The two children are finally here. I thought they'd arrive later."

Hesper smiled and looked toward the crowd, then chuckled and asked in a tone that only Pennleigh could hear, "Are these all your family members?"

Pennleigh signed. "They're not. They're more than that. All you need to know is that you're not going to get away tonight. I'll be behind you, so just go ahead."

Hesper thought that 'just go ahead' didn't sound very reassuring. It sounded more like a tease. Then Isobella walked over.

"You seem to be very close with Penn, Hesper."

Isobella looked at Hesper, then paused.

“Hesper?”

Hesper nodded, “Yes, Mrs. Pisano. Do I... look funny?”

Another woman stood behind Isobella and held her hand after they walked over. “You’re too modest. You said that even though your daughter-in-law’s looks are average, she’s good in every other way. But from what I see, she’s a beauty.”

Hesper and Pennleigh exchanged looks while Isobella smiled and pushed Pennleigh aside and grabbed Hesper’s hand. “Hesper doesn’t put too much effort into

absolutely stunning when she does.”

a dressing up usually but looks

Even though she was obviously showing off, when Isobella looked at Hesper, she felt that Hesper did look a lot prettier than usual.

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Now that she thought about it, the only thing that Isobella didn’t like about Hesper was that she didn’t have the looks to match Pennleigh.

Men are all visual animals. How could she guarantee that even her son would be loyal for the rest of his life just because of love? Beauty was different though; beauty would always be beauty.

Isobella spoke to the older guests most of the time, so Hesper just stood there in the background. She was used to that. She would say a few words whenever they chatted with her. That was something she knew well.

“Pennleigh, your dad wants you to go upstairs to speak to him.” Pennleigh was having fun watching Hesper but was soon held back by Isobella. “Tell your dad how you’ve been recently. There’ll be one more guest who’s coming later. Do your best.”

“Guest?” Pennleigh frowned, but before he could say anything, Hesper felt someone shove her and squeeze between her and Pennleigh.

“Penn, I haven’t seen you in so long!”

A girl threw herself onto Pennleigh like a butterfly. Hesper realized what was going on and took a step back to enjoy the chaos. She finally realized that she was supposed to be Pennleigh’s girlfriend.

“...Penn?”

Pennleigh pushed the girl away. "Alie, you're an adult now, so behave yourself."

The girl named Alie shook her head and continued to hold onto his hand tightly. "Penn, we haven't seen each other in such a long time. I missed you so much. I heard that you were coming back. today, so I flew all the way from Halwanest just to see you."

Hesper realized what was going on. Alie probably had a crush on Pennleigh, and when she heard that Pennleigh now had a girlfriend, she rushed over to show her who was there first.

"Enough..." Pennleigh pulled his hand away, pulled Hesper who was enjoying the chaos over, and said, "This is my girlfriend, Hesper.

Alie finally let go and looked toward Hesper. When she realized that Hesper was actually pretty,

she scoffed.

"You think you can have him all to yourself just because you look pretty? I've been in his life for years. You're not going to take over my place in his heart."

Other than thinking that it all was ridiculous, she also felt sorry for the young lady.

Trying to keep someone who had no feelings for her around just because they knew each other for a long time was such a naive thought.

Pennleigh would rather ask her to pretend to be his girlfriend than ask Alie, who he had known for a long time. That showed how uninterested he was in her.

"Aelinor." Pennleigh's face dropped. "That's enough. Hesper is my girlfriend. Apologize to her."

surprised because she was just an imposter who was just there as an accessory. She thought being warned was ridiculous, but she wasn't going to hold it against a young adult.

Penn!"

"Apologize."

Seeing that Pennleigh was indeed angry, Isobella came over to calm the situation.

"Alright, why are you bickering with a child? You should know better than her. Hesper, I apologize."

Hesper immediately waved her hand. "You don't have to. I know that Alie just couldn't accept someone suddenly coming out of nowhere as Pennleigh's girlfriend, I understand."

“Who says you could call me that?”

Chapter 437

“Aelinor, are you-

Hesper grabbed Pennleigh and made eye contact with him. When Pennleigh saw her eyes, even though he didn't stop frowning, he didn't say anything more either.

Isobella saw that and appreciated Hesper even more.

“Alright, go upstairs. I'll take care of Hesper.”

Pennleigh didn't really want to but still nodded, then looked at Hesper. “I'll be back soon.”

Hesper smiled and felt that Pennleigh was speaking like she was a child. The funny thing is, to her, Pennleigh was the child. She nodded. “Go, I'll be waiting here.”

Aelinor watched them whisper to each other and stomped her foot in jealousy.

If Pennleigh didn't treat her as a younger sister just because she was younger, Hesper wouldn't happen! Penn should be hers and hers alone!

“How long do you plan to stay here? Where's your mother?”

Aelinor turned to face Isobella and put her head on her shoulder. “She went traveling with dad. You're here and you treat me like I'm your daughter. That's why my parents are so comfortable leaving me with you.”

When Aelinor spoke, she had her eyes on Hesper half the time, but Hesper couldn't care less.

about that.

To be exact, she had no reason to be jealous of Aelinor for how important she was to Isobella or

Pennleigh.

She was just there to put on a show.

If Aelinor managed to convince Isobella to force them to 'break up', Hesper would thank her for helping her solve a problem.

“Hesper, another guest will be arriving later. I'm sorry for meeting both of you on the same day,” Isobella said. “However, you don't need to be too constrained. Just make yourself at home.”

Hesper nodded but based on Isobella's reaction, she could tell that Isobella saw the next guest as someone important, so it couldn't be just anyone.

That was even better. Everyone would stop staring at her.

Hesper thought this as she stood at the edge of the crowd. She wanted to be a wallflower until Pennleigh came back, then she would make an excuse and leave.

"Hey."

Hesper looked up. Aelinor was standing in front of her with her chin held high.

It was a rude gesture, but Hesper didn't care. She was going to pretend that she wasn't there.

"Hey, you should reply when I'm talking to you. Haven't you been taught manners?"
Aelinor didn't

ep her voice down, so a few people around them looked around. That was when Hesper turned to look at her.

"It's rude to address someone just by saying 'hey'. Where did you learn your manners?"

You-

Isobella paid attention to what was happening there. When she saw how childish Aelinor was, she sighed.

If they compared family backgrounds, Aelinor's family would be the perfect match to theirs. Even though Aelinor was a little spoiled, Isobella had known her since she was a child.

Chapter 438

However, when she compared them now... The difference was staggering.

Was it because of their difference in age? Hesper came from a normal family but she was much more graceful than Aelinor, as if she wasn't someone who was still in school but someone who had worked for years.

Isobelle smiled and shook her head.

What was she thinking? Hesper had more experience in life, so she was more mature.

Hesper stared at her toes in boredom but heard someone coming down the stairs. She looked up and saw Pennleigh jogging down the stairs, looking anxious. When their eyes met, he frowned.

“What’s the hurry?” Isobella grabbed his hand. “You should be more mature at your age.”

Hesper watched what happened. Pennleigh seemed to have something to say to her, but Isobella stood between them, so he could only stare at her from a distance.

Hesper understood something from his hesitation in speaking, but what was he trying to tell her? Hesper blinked a few times and still didn’t understand.

“You haven’t been home for a while now, have you? You should spend more time with Aunt Isobella!”

Aelinor looked back at Hesper smugly. She wasn’t going to let her speak to Penn. Hmmph!

Hesper couldn’t care less about Aelinor’s childish behavior, but when she remembered how anxious Pennleigh was when he came downstairs, she started feeling uneasy, as if...

Something bad was going to happen.

“Mr. Duval? Welcome to Fredonia.”

Hesper hid behind Aelinor and hoped that ‘Mr. Duval’ wasn’t Rickard.

Aelinor was confused.

However, hopes and reality were always different. After a moment, Rickard’s voice was heard in the quiet air. “Thank you, Mrs. Pisano. Is Mr. Pisano in the study?”

That was the first time Hesper heard Rickard speak Fredonian. The country that was known for being romantic had the most romantic-sounding language too.

Isobella and Rickard chatted for a bit when he suddenly looked toward a woman in the corner and thought that she looked familiar.

“This is my son, Pennleigh.” Isobella introduced them and could tell that something was bothering him, so she followed his direction of sight. She saw Aelinor and... Hesper who was hiding behind Aelinor?

“Mr. Duval?”

Isobella didn’t know what was going on, but she walked over and asked Aelinor and Hesper to join them.

Aelinor, from the Lavigne family. She's a student at Genecity University and came back for the summer break.

After introducing Aelinor, she pulled Hesper, who had her face turned away. She didn't know why she was doing that. "Are you alright, Hesper?"

Hesper's heart dropped and she sighed when she heard that. She wasn't going to get away with it.

When Rickard heard 'Hesper', he was stunned as he looked at Hesper who looked up at him. Rickard balled up his fist when no one was looking.

"This is my son's girlfriend, Hesper Rivera."

"...Girlfriend?" Rickard repeated, then looked toward Pennleigh who he wasn't paying attention to before this. "Girlfriend?"

Isobella wasn't sure why he was shocked, but Rickard quickly composed himself and took a step back.

"I'm going to speak to Mr. Pisano first and I'll catch up with young Mr. Pisano and his... girlfriend later,"

Hesper couldn't see, Rickard's face grew dark as he sat down next to Petruccio.

than Rickard, Aelinor kept her eyes on each and every move of the couple too. Seeing how they were acting so intimately as if no one else was around, she clenched her jaw so hard her gums almost bled.

How was Hesper better than her?

She

grew up with Pennleigh, so how could someone who knew him so recently manage to take him away?

"We rarely have so many guests here. Even Penn doesn't come home often," Petruccio said. Hesper looked up. Pennleigh was right; Petruccio really did look very kind.

Chapter 439

Hesper looked up and into Rickard's eyes.

Hesper knew Rickard didn't believe she was Pennleigh's girlfriend. She also knew that her peaceful life in Fredonia was going to be ruined.

Even though Hesper acted weird, Isobella didn't think much about it and went to the kitchen to talk to them about lunch later.

Pennleigh looked sorry. "I'm sorry. After I heard my dad say Rickard was our guest, I wanted to ask you to leave but was stopped..."

"It's alright, you don't have to explain. I get it."

Rickard suddenly showing up was very much a coincidence. Hesper knew that she had terrible luck, so she couldn't blame Pennleigh or anyone else.

However...

Rickard finding out where she was made her feel embarrassed.

She was no longer Ms. Lane who had the same status as he did, but was instead in an awkward position. It was as though she was an imposter.

"You could leave if you want to. I'll say something came up."

Hesper shook her head. "Rickard saw me, so there's no point leaving. He'll find me sooner or later. I'm not going to leave Eustoma. You know that all my hard work since I came to Fredonia was done there, so I need this job."

"I'm sorry." Pennleigh lowered his head.

If he didn't ask for Hesper's help to put on a show for his parents, she wouldn't have met Rickard.

Hesper shook her head. "Don't worry about it. It is what it is, so instead of worrying, you should play your part as my boyfriend so we can make Rickard jealous."

Hesper paused after saying that. Was she admitting that she was important to Rickard?

...That was arrogant.

Hesper chuckled but still decided to do what she said. Even if Rickard didn't believe them, at least he wouldn't be enjoying lunch.

Rickard knew that Hesper was in Fredonia because Renfrew would let slip some information. about Hesper to prove that she was doing well, so there was no need to worry about her.

Respecting Hesper's wishes, Rickard didn't try to find her and gave her all the time she needed to grow, so she was able to stand in front of him proudly.

He didn't expect to meet her here.

“Mr. Duval?” Rickard snapped back. Petruccio Pisano was a little surprised. “What’s on your mind?”

Imoen you years and this is the first time you’ve been distracted while we’re talking about

Distracted? Rickard shook his head. “Nothing, just some... family issues.”

Like why Hesper was Pennleigh’s girlfriend.

Rickard didn’t believe any of that because all Hesper wanted was to bring Renfrew over or to take

revenge on them. As for relationships... Rickard didn’t believe that Pennleigh was Hesper’s type because he had heard of him before.

He didn’t sound very mature.

Chapter 440

Meanwhile, when he realized that he had to pretend to be in love with Hesper, Pennleigh frowned and looked at Hesper. “Do you think he would believe us? Why would you fall for me?”

“It’s simple. I was in distress and you helped.” Hesper was determined to make Rickard Jealous; it didn’t matter if he believed them. “You don’t have to say anything. All you need to do is pretend to be loving. He’s not going to ask us about our relationship in front of everyone here. You’re the host and he’s a guest.”

“Um... alright.” Pennleigh leaned closer, his light grey eyes smiling as he looked at her. “How do we pretend to be loving?”

‘He’s gotten into character very quickly,’ Hesper thought.

When Rickard and Petruccio walked down the stairs, they saw Pennleigh and Hesper standing very close to each other. Pennleigh saw them, raised his brows, and leaned even closer to her.

Rickard didn’t buy the childish act because he knew Hesper had loved him for years and wouldn’t be interested in a young man like him. However, one second after that, Hesper raised her hand and played with the back of Pennleigh’s head.

Even though Rickard still didn’t believe that she would fall for someone else, he felt a pang in his heart.

“That’s my son, Pennleigh. I don’t think you’ve met.”

Petruchio walked behind him and saw Rickard looking toward the couple. He paused, then continued. "I don't know who the woman next to him is... However, I heard that he was going to bring his girlfriend over today, so I'm guessing that's her."

Rickard cleared his throat, looked away, and pretended nothing happened. "Have they been together for long? They look... close."

Petruchio was curious because Rickard sounded jealous. However, he heard that Rickard's first love just got engaged recently, so seeing the couple might have triggered some feelings in his

heart.

He didn't know that Mr. Duval was a love-sick man...

Petruchio sighed. "I heard my wife say that they've been together for around half a year. She loves the young woman. I heard that she works at Penn's company and brought in quite a profit. She's a good woman."

Around half a year? That was soon after Hesper got to Fredonia.

Pennleigh pulled back and beamed. "How did you know that Rickard was coming down? You didn't even turn around and see his expression. He didn't look very happy. Does he still have feelings for you?"

Hesper lowered her gaze, so she didn't see the curiosity in Pennleigh's eyes. "Don't overthink it. If we still had feelings for each other, we wouldn't be where we are now. I have no feelings for him anymore."

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