

Chapter 41

Callum didn't bother answering Elspeth's question as he took out his laptop with his unhurt hand and started working.

She shrugged indifferently at his non-response. Then, she, too, took out the laptop she carried with her from her bag and wanted to uncover the mastermind behind the ambush. She found out about the men's criminal organization based on their facial features as well as their recent call records and monetary transactions. All the clues led her to Alphascape Group.

"Callum, do you know who the mastermind behind this attack is?" Elspeth asked tentatively.

"Alphascape," he answered curtly while typing on the keyboard swiftly.

She gasped in surprise. "How did you know?"

He replied in a mellow and calm voice, "Recently, our shares have risen sharply, and our venture in the jewelry industry is booming. We have almost monopolized the low-end jewelry market and are climbing closer to high-end products. Who do you think is the most worried party now?"

"Alphascape was upset because of the failure of the cooperation last time, and they didn't get a share of the pie. So now, they are jealous of our results. This is why you think they have the motive, right?"

"You're very smart." Callum smiled, which was a rare occasion.

Elspeth was surprised at his quick thinking. But then, she thought of something else and asked another question, “What are you going to do now?”

She had always been a vengeful person. She would not touch those who left her to her own devices, but if she were attacked, she would ensure that her attackers got a taste of their own medicine. Alphascape Group ambushed them, so she would not let them off the hook!

A piercing gleam flashed across his eyes. “I won’t spare them, of course.”

When she learned that he would make a move, she was relieved.

Margot called when Callum stayed in the hospital for two days. So, Elspeth improvised as she claimed that they couldn’t return home because they were working overtime in the office. Fortunately, Edmund was on a business trip in the past few days, so no one exposed their lie.

Only when Callum’s hand almost recovered did he officially return to work. Both Callum and Elspeth did not come to the office these days. When they returned this time, she realized that there were some unfamiliar faces in the company.

As soon as he returned to work, Callum held a senior management meeting to discuss the cooperation plan for the next phase. “At this phase, I will stabilize the low-end jewelry market and invest a lot of money to develop high-end jewelry...”

When he proposed his idea, her eyes lit up after hearing his proposal, and she recognized what he was planning.

“I don’t think it’s a good idea.” A doubtful remark suddenly echoed across the quiet conference room. Callum raised his eyes and looked at the man not far away, his gaze turning cold.

“What do you have in mind?”

Elsbeth shifted her gaze over. The person who raised his doubt was Houston Bishop, the head of the company’s HR department. He was always on his high horse, to begin with. Today, he was even more arrogant and rude than usual.

“Mr. Winthrop, have you forgotten how to make a proposal just because you skipped work for a few days? Our low-end market is not stable yet, and the products are selling like hotcakes. If we rashly introduce high-end products, the development may not be as expected, and we will lose a lot of money. Who will be responsible for such a possibility?!” Houston rebuked aggressively.

“No, we won’t,” Callum continued. “The continuous development of low-end products will only lose the consumers’ interests, not to mention that we will be limited to this market and miss the best chance to venture into the high-end market.”

Houston retorted sternly as if he hadn’t listened to a word, “I disagree. Why don’t you ask them? See what they have to say.”

Callum swept his gaze over and inquired, “Does anyone else have questions?”

One of the department heads said meekly, “Mr. Winthrop, I think Mr. Bishop is right. What if we really make a loss? Anything can happen...”

The rest of the people began to whisper to each other about this.

Elsbeth rose to her feet and donned a bright smile. “Allow me to elaborate on Mr. Winthrop’s views to you.”

Houston sneered scornfully, “Miss Lynwood, I know you’re taking Mr. Winthrop’s side, but you’re putting us in a difficult position if you help him unwisely.”

She ignored his claims and spoke in a gentle yet intimidating tone, “I believe you have heard of my mentor, who is an internationally recognized jewelry designer, right?”

Elsbeth’s mentor was the world-renowned jewelry designer Joanna. Her product could fetch hundreds of millions of dollars at times.

Everyone was too stunned for words as they quietly listened to her.

“She once told me that she started from the most basic market, but if she only produced low-end products, she would never be able to bring her designs to the next level, even if a lot of money is to be made by selling low-end products. So, we need a qualitative change and want to expose our products to as many people as possible. Jewelry itself is an extravagant item. Its consumers consist not only of ordinary people but also of the rich and powerful who can bring greater revenue to the company. These people won’t bat an eye at low-end products. So, we need to develop high-end products in order to attract this group of consumers and increase their purchasing power.”

After she finished her speech, everyone remained silent as they pondered over her words seriously. Nevertheless, Houston’s laughter pierced the air. “Sure. That makes sense, but I’m not convinced. Who knows if you’re only saying this off the top of your head?”

Elsbeth stared at him with a burning gaze. “I studied marketing abroad, and I ranked first in my major. Do you need me to say the rest?”

Her remarks rendered him speechless, and his face turned nasty as he couldn’t find a chance to add his two cents.

“Does anyone have any more questions?”

She swept her glance at everyone in the conference room, but they bowed their heads in shame. Finally, she set her eyes on Callum and winked at him mischievously. She felt a burst of joy when she spotted a hint of surprise flashing in his eyes.

Finally, he said, “That’s it, then.”

The meeting was adjourned, and everyone dispersed. Houston paced slowly to Elspeth and muttered, “Miss Lynwood, I want to talk to you.”

“Sure.” She smiled politely. “What do you want to talk about?”

“What is your relationship with Mr. Winthrop?”

“He’s my boss, and I’m his employee. What exactly do you want to say?”

Her calm and refined smile confused Houston, but he remembered his purpose clearly. He hurriedly donned a flattering smile and admitted, “I have to be honest. Mr. Winthrop is rather harsh and strict. You must have suffered a lot since you work directly under him.”

“Oh?” She raised an eyebrow. “It sounds like you have a hidden agenda.”

“You’re very smart, Miss Lynwood. I think you should know what I mean. I hope you can consider it well and give me a satisfactory answer.”

Chapter 42 Debunking

Elspeth tapped her chin and pondered aloud, “So, are you trying to rope me in?”

“Haha!” Houston laughed. “You never let me down.” He took his business card, placed it on the table, and slowly pushed it toward her.

“Miss Lynwood, I admire your ability and think you should not be limited to just the title of a director. Isn’t it nice if you could have the title ‘Vice President’ printed on your card?”

Houston left, and Elspeth was left alone in her thoughts.

Vice President... Houston is so greedy. He is eyeing the position of president.

When she returned home at night, everyone had gone to bed except Callum, who was sitting alone in the living room reading documents. She stretched her body lazily, sat next to him, and asked, “How’s your hand?”

“It’s fine,” he answered dispassionately, but his hand that was flipping through the pages paused for a moment.

She didn’t believe him and wanted to look at his hand for herself, but he dodged her.

“Just let me see it,” she muttered.

He quickly changed the subject. “What did Houston say to you today?”

She leaned back on the couch and curled her lips into a smirk. “What do you think?”

“To rope you in.”

Elspeth rolled her eyes and pouted. “How boring.”

Callum ignored her reaction and asked solemnly, “What are you planning to do?”

“What am I planning?” Elspeth looked at his eyes and smirked in amusement. “I’m gonna accept his offer, of course! He promised to make me the vice president. Only a fool would reject such a lucrative deal.”

He remained indifferent and calm. It was apparent that he did not believe her at all. “Why are you telling me this then? Aren’t you afraid that I will know your plan?”

“Callum, drop your act, okay?” She yawned lazily. “Just tell me your plan.”

He raised an eyebrow, not expecting her to react so quickly. “Take the deal.”

“Why?”

“Beat them at their own game.” Callum had his own plan in place.

Elsbeth was intrigued. “Tell me how.”

“Promise to work with him and collect evidence. I will replace his pawns in the company, and then I will wipe them all out.”

Elsbeth chuckled. “So, you did notice that there are many new and unfamiliar staff in the office. I thought you only focus on your work and don’t recognize your own employees at all.”

He narrowed his eyes and dismissed her, “Alright. Go to rest now. We will have another fierce battle in the next few days.”

She nodded, stood up, and walked upstairs.

“Elsbeth,” Callum suddenly called her.

She paused, turned around, and looked at him cheekily, “What?”

“You’re really interesting.”

Elsbeth seemed to excel in all aspects and was unpredictable. He would never know what surprise she would create in the next second.

All in all, she was fascinating.

There was a hint of laziness in Elspeth's voice, "Hey, I'll think you're in love with me if you say that."

"In your dreams." He scowled at her words.

Elspeth giggled when she saw his expression changing so quickly. Then, she turned around and went to her room. As she left, he looked at her back silhouette, and his gaze gradually darkened.

In order to bait Houston to speed up his actions, they decided to put on a show, making Houston believe that they had a fallout.

The following day, Elspeth was in Callum's office and discussed the plan peacefully when she suddenly reprimanded shrilly, "I told you that's not what I mean. Why can't you understand anything I say?!"

Callum's voice was equally sharp and stern. "I'm telling you that you're nothing but a planning director. Therefore, you have no right to interfere with my actions!"

"Just because you're the boss, you can order me around?! What a joke! I quit! I don't want to stay here any longer!"

Bang!

It sounded like someone had smashed a glass to the floor, and the earth-shattering sound echoed throughout the office. Everyone could hear their fight loud and clear.

"You want to quit?! Suit yourself! The company will run smoothly without you!"

All the employees shivered and dared not speak.

Elspeth wanted to smash another vase, but Callum quickly stopped her. “Nope. One is enough. If our fight gets too intense, Houston may be skeptical.”

“Okay.” She beamed. “You’re very meticulous.”

Then, she stopped speaking, and the office fell into a dead silence.

After a while, she took out a bottle of water from her bag and sprayed it on her face, smearing her makeup and making it look like she had cried during the argument. Next, she grabbed her files and slammed the door loudly as she left the office.

When she returned to her seat, she called Houston without even fixing her makeup first. Finally, she told him with a faint sob that she wanted to work with him on one condition. Houston would pay the end of his deal by appointing her as the vice president after the matter’s completion.

She initially wanted to take his deal right away, but there was a possibility that he would be suspicious if she took it without any conditions. Therefore, she especially emphasized the deal he brought up earlier.

He was grinning ear to ear when he heard this, and he grew confident and gleeful. “Don’t worry. Once this matter is done, I won’t disappoint you.”

Even Elspeth wanted to work with him. It would be a piece of cake for him to acquire the company!

With that, he began to make his move concerning the company’s financial aspect. He fabricated the account to create a dismal phenomenon of a massive financial collapse.

Elsbeth and Callum knew precisely what he was planning. Nonetheless, they didn't stop him as they quietly watched him make his move while gathering sufficient evidence to put him behind bars.

As they expected, in the second meeting, Houston slammed the financial report on the table and ridiculed, "Mr. Winthrop, have you read the financial report for this quarter?"

"Is there any problem?" Callum did not waver from his position.

"We lost 300 million dollars in this quarter. Do you know how much 300 million is? Mr. Winthrop, I told you long ago that we can't simply develop high-end products. Look! We lost so much money! What should we do?"

Elsbeth echoed, "You do have to explain yourself."

Houston smirked smugly. "In my opinion, you are no longer capable of managing the company at your current level. Therefore, you should step down and give up your position."

Callum narrowed his eyes coldly. "Are you saying that I should hand over the company to you?"

"Oh, no, of course not. Why don't we listen to others' opinions?" Houston looked at his colleagues around him and beamed. "Do you think we should elect another person as the company's president?"

No one said anything to back him up. He frowned in confusion and asked again, but the answer he received was resounding silence.

She rose to her feet with a smile on her face. "You're done, right, Mr. Bishop? Do you mind if I say a few words?"

Houston felt panic surge in his heart and thought that things were drastically different from what he had planned.

Chapter 43 Selling Out Winthrop Group

Elsbeth slowly quipped, “Mr. Bishop, if I’m not mistaken, you must be wondering why these colleagues who you had bribed didn’t refute Mr. Winthrop as you expected, right?”

“What?!” Houston’s expression changed radially. “Miss Lynwood, what do you mean by that?”

She sneered, “I think you know exactly what I meant.”

“Nonsense! You’re making things up!” he shouted in a panic.

“Am I? Why don’t we take a look at this evidence?”

She took the documents and photos out of the folder and slammed them on the table with a resounding snap. The documents scattered, and the images showed that Houston sneaked into the finance department office and the exact amount of money he had embezzled.

“What else do you have to say?”

Houston’s face turned ghastly pale, and the terror under his eyes heightened when he saw the evidence. “No, these are all fake! Why would I hurt the company? Don’t you dare accuse me?!”

Then, he suddenly roared wildly as if he had grabbed a life-saving float, “Yes, you did this so that you could kick me out of the company! You’ll be punished for what you did to me!”

Elsbeth ignored his accusations as she raised her eyebrow and decided his fate. “If you have nothing to say, you can go and have a good chat with the police.”

Then, she sat down leisurely and smiled.

Houston had intended to run at the mention of the police but was detained at the door by the police, who arrived just in time. “Just you wait! I won’t let you off the hook!”

He glared at them fiercely, and the anger in his eyes was burning.

After Houston was taken away, Callum said a few words briefly before dismissing everyone and turning his attention to Elspeth. “I don’t think it’s that simple.”

“Why?” Her eyes darted around, and she was full of smiles. She was over the moon after getting rid of the scourge of Houston, and even her tone was gleeful.

“He is not that easily defeated,” Callum slowly said after pondering for a moment.

Elsbeth turned serious as she looked thoughtful. “You mean to say?”

“I think he may have other ways to turn the table.”

“What?” She frowned. “Are you saying that he will come back to bug us again? But he has been arrested!”

He carefully recalled the look in Houston’s eyes before he was taken away. “He must have other tricks up his sleeves.”

Sure enough, the news of Houston being cleared of suspicions and released came the next day.

She sat in Callum’s office and frowned in dismay. “He really has other plans.”

“He’s now a high-level executive at Alphascape.”

“Based on his character, he must have made a deal with them based on our information.” Elspeth gritted her teeth indignantly. “Houston Bishop! I should have beaten him up to a pulp!”

Callum pursed his lips tightly with a grave expression. “You don’t have to. It doesn’t matter where he goes. What is important is that he has information about our company. Since he’s now working for the Alphascape Group, he will certainly share this information with them, which is extremely unfavorable to us.”

“Such as...” Elspeth paused, but they both knew what he wanted to say. Alphascape Group would have detailed information about Winthrop Group’s jewelry plan and development plan for the next quarter.

“What did you do to Alphascape the other day?”

Callum’s eyes flashed slightly. “They lost three points of interest.”

“No wonder. They had suffered such a great loss, so they must have waited for the best opportunity to strike. Unfortunately, Houston just so happens to be their powerful weapon.”

Elspeth noted his serious expression as she emphasized, “In that case, they will definitely strike soon. So, we have to be ready when the time comes.”

“Just wait and see. We’ll make plans when they take action.”

She nodded, and complicated expressions flitted across her face.

After the conversation they had in the morning, she saw the news that Alphascape Group was going to launch a new jewelry set on her phone in the afternoon.

She was all too familiar with the design of the jewelry. It was designed to serve as a stepping stone for Winthrop Group's transformation into high-end products, but now, Alphascape Group stole her design and launched it quickly. But—

An idea popped up in her mind, and her frown eased.

Although the jewelry looked fashionable and chic in style, its huge drawback was that it would be highly uncomfortable for the person who wore it. She had yet to make any adjustments because she was busy dealing with Houston these past few days.

It was a subtle problem, so no one other than the designers would notice this problem. Alphascape Group might have shot itself in the foot by launching the product so hastily.

At the thought of this, Elspeth grabbed the draft paper and began to design. She made some form of adjustment to that plan, as well as the shape and style of the jewelry.

Finally, she went straight to Callum's office with the draft and told him that she would launch this piece as the modified version.

Callum's eyes dimmed slightly as he listened to her plan. "Are you sure? What if people suspect you of plagiarism? After all, Alphascape is the first who launched the product."

Of course, she had thought about it. "Yes, when it is launched, some people may suspect the product's authenticity, but don't worry about it. Since I've planned this, I have prepared a flawless countermeasure. I have indisputable evidence to prove that we are the rightful owner of the original draft."

Callum didn't say anything in response, so Elspeth smiled and reassured him, "You must not underestimate my ability. Don't forget that I was the one who drew the design. Relax."

“It’s not you that I’m worried about. I believe in you, but I’m just worried that this is part of their dirty tricks, and you won’t be able to handle it then.” He looked at her smile with a hint of worry in his eyes. “I’ll assign some bodyguards to be with you in the next few days in case you are harmed.”

How can she be so cheeky at a moment like this?

She was surprised by his decision. Thus, she chuckled and asked, “Why do you care so much about my safety?”

An awkward look appeared on his face. “It’s not what you think. I’m worried that something will happen to you and affect the company’s revenue.”

Elsbeth pestered him. “I don’t care. You’re saying that I’m important to you, right?”

When he heard her non-stop teasing, Callum was somewhat flustered. “Go back to work.”

“You’re so boring.” She pouted.

Only after Elspeth left did he calm down. Recently, his emotions had become easily influenced by her, and he didn’t know whether it was a good or bad thing. This feeling of being out of control was really annoying.

Chapter 44 Fire

Soon, under Elspeth’s machinations, the new product was launched and released for sale.

As expected by Callum, on the first day of the new product release, some people noticed the similarities between the two products. They even discovered that Winthrop Group’s latest product was a replica of Alphascap Group’s product! As a result, they began to wonder if Winthrop Group planned to destroy their own reputation.

The news became viral on the Internet. Everyone was discussing why this farce happened and how to deal with it.

‘I think Winthrop Group has tanked this time. Can’t they come up with some new ideas? How can they steal Alphascape’s design?’

‘Nonsense! Elspeth designed these pieces of jewelry. Do you think she will plagiarize her own work?’

‘Hey, don’t be so sure about that. There are all kinds of people in the world, and almost everyone has plagiarized something in their lives. So, you don’t have to defend her like a moronic fan.’

‘Hear hear! I’m taking Alphascape’s side this time.’

Most of the views on the Internet were in favor of Alphascape Group. Except for some people who stuck to their aspirations and fanatical worship of Elspeth, the rest accused her of plagiarizing other people’s works.

However, Elspeth could not be bothered at all. She even conversed happily with the members of the Winthrop Family when she was at home that weekend.

Max was rather anxious when he saw the news. “Aren’t you worried at all? This is a big deal. Your reputation may be tarnished completely.”

Elspeth took a sip of water and asked casually, “Do you think I will do something like plagiarize other people’s work?”

“Of course not!” He refuted, “You won’t do such a thing. I trust you.”

“So, don’t worry about it.”

Edmund mocked, “What if you can’t turn the tide, though? What happens then will be a different story.”

“Do you have any good ideas for me? Do share.” Elspeth glanced at him emotionlessly.

“It’s none of my business.” He chuckled. “I can’t help you.”

Arthur simply smiled without saying anything.

Blake knew how devastating the consequences of this kind of cyberbullying were due to his years of experience in the entertainment industry, so he was genuinely worried about her situation. “This is not easy to settle, and it becomes a bigger deal since the company is involved. Are you sure you can handle it?”

Elspeth gave him a reassuring look in response, yet Callum felt inexplicably uneasy as he watched the two interact. “She’s not as stupid as you think,” Callum blurted.

She grinned from ear to ear when she heard this. Indeed, Callum, who had spent the most time with her, knew her best.

“We’re going back to the office this afternoon.” Callum asked seriously, “Are you ready?”

Elspeth nodded and donned a triumphant smile. “Yup. Later, I’ll let Alphascap know the downfall of stealing my work.”

The members of the Winthrop Family were taken aback, not knowing what tricks they had up their sleeves.

Finally, at 3.00PM, they arrived at the new product launch as promised. This incident caused a great sensation on the Internet. Hence, many reporters at the press conference

aimed their cameras at Elspeth, hoping they could capture something sensational and become the first to publish the breaking news.

“Hello, ladies and gentlemen. I am Elspeth. I’m glad to meet with all of you again and introduce our new product, ‘Wonderlust Pearl’.”

As soon as she finished her introduction, the entertainment reporter asked eagerly, “Miss Lynwood, there are rumors on the Internet saying that Winthrop’s new release ‘Wonderlust Pearl’ and Alphascape’s latest product ‘Pearl of the Sea’ are the same product. Do you admit that you plagiarized it?”

Plagiarized? Elspeth raised her eyebrow slightly and donned a professional smile as she looked at the reporter’s face. “Of course not, because this is my design.”

“Your design? According to the timeline, Alphascape made the product announcement first, and then you announced the launch later.”

“Well, according to the timeline, it is indeed Alphascape who released the product first.” Elspeth tapped her chin and smiled faintly. “But just because they launched the product first doesn’t mean that they are the creator. I can provide some evidence to prove that I am indeed the creator.”

With that, she opened her laptop and cast the screen on the large screen behind her.

“As you can see, I have already started working on this design in September, which was three months ago.”

There was a specific timestamp on the blueprint draft, and it verified her remarks.

Next, the image changed, and it was her chat record with someone. “This was a conversation I had with my mentor in October, where she told me what I could do to make this blueprint more precise.”

The dialogue between the two people evolved heavily around the work, and this kind of detailed understanding of the product could not be faked.

“Finally, I would like to utilize the public resources to say something to Mr. Houston Bishop, who is now working at Alphascape Group.” Elspeth cleared her throat and enunciated, “Mr. Bishop, do you like my presentation?”

This press conference was a live webcast. After she said those remarks, there was an uproar on the Internet.

‘Houston Bishop? He used to work in the Winthrop Group, didn’t he?’

‘Yeah, I know him! He’s working at Alphascape now!’

‘I’m Winthrop Group’s internal employee! Let me tell you, Houston tried to rope people into his team, embezzled the company’s money, and even tried to usurp the position of the president. He was fired!’

‘Wow, this is so bizarre!’

Elspeth laughed out loud as she looked at the shocked expressions of everyone present.

“Look at them! Don’t they look like a bunch of ignorant fence-sitters?” She leaned in and whispered to Callum.

“Yes.” He knew that she would be able to settle the situation smoothly, but he didn’t expect her to be so meticulous and perfect.

“Wow! This is the first time you’ve answered a question like this. You usually would have called it boring.” She was genuinely astonished by his response but still satisfied with the current situation.

He didn’t even bother to deign her with her look as he turned around and left. She shrugged and didn’t mind his response, or the lack thereof. After all, he was an indifferent and emotionless man. He would do something heartfelt and affectionate when pigs could fly.

On the other hand, Alphascape Group was completely defeated this time, and they could no longer dominate the jewelry market from now on.

The dust settled. In the next few days, she felt that her life was tranquil and calm, and it was so quiet that it was abnormal.

Houston was a vengeful person. After he suffered such a devastating blow this time, he would definitely devise a more vicious plan. However, it had been a week, and he had been unusually quiet.

Elsbeth was puzzled but did not let her guard down.

This afternoon, she came to the office to deliver documents to Callum. As soon as she left the office, the fire lights on the ceiling flashed, and then a huge siren reverberated in the building.

Chapter 45 Take a Bet

“Fire! Fire!” someone shouted in the office, and the entire staff panicked as they rushed toward the door.

The office was on the eighth floor. Due to the fire, they couldn't take the elevator. As the crowd stormed down the stairs, they found that the fire had spread to the fourth floor. They couldn't see the situation ahead due to the dense smoke that spread in the stairway, which was suffocating, so they were forced to turn back.

Elsbeth didn't run down the stairs with them. Instead, she turned around and saw that Callum was standing beside her with two wet towels in his hand. "Cover your mouth with this. Don't breathe in smoke."

She took out her phone to call 911. Then, as she looked at the chaotic employees, she raised her voice and shouted, "Guys, calm down! Panic would do you no favors and may bring you danger. If you don't want anything bad to happen to you, calm down and listen."

The people raised their heads and looked at her. Although they were terrified, they chose to believe in her.

"Now, grab the towel or cloth around you, wet it, and cover your mouth and nose. Next, wet yourselves as much as possible to avoid being burned by the fire and lower your body temperature. Finally, everyone, please line up in an orderly fashion and go down slowly. Don't rush down the stairs in a group. If the fire is too big, we'll stop and think of other ways."

Thanks to Elspeth's instructions, the originally chaotic staff began to move in an orderly manner.

They were about to evacuate safely when the timid young girl in the last row panicked and lost her handkerchief when she saw the fire was burning. In an instant, she breathed in the dense smoke, rolled her eyes, and coughed violently.

Elspeth frowned and handed her towel to the girl.

“Thank you, Miss Lynwood. What about you?” The young girl gratefully covered her mouth and nose with Elspeth’s towel, but she was worried as she looked at Elspeth while covering her face with her hand.

“Don’t worry. I’m in better shape. I can pull it through.” Despite that, Elspeth obviously felt a great discomfort tickling her throat and had the urge to cough.

Callum shoved his towel into her hand and said dispassionately, “Use mine.”

She shook her head and pushed the towel back to him. “No, I don’t want the one you used.”

“I don’t want to repeat my words.” His voice was mixed with a hint of irrefutable insistence.

She pursed her lips in resignation and took his towel.

As she covered her mouth with the towel, a faint scent of mint filled her nose. It smelled like the scent of the toothpaste he often used. Oh my, I’m using his towel. Is this considered an indirect kiss?

At the thought of this, she shook her head lightly. What the hell am I thinking about at a moment like this?! Focus, Elspeth, focus!

As they walked down the stairs, she could clearly feel that Callum was walking unsteadily and couldn’t keep up with the pace.

“Hey, are you okay?”

He couldn't speak, so he reached out and squeezed her hand, indicating that he was conscious. Before he could retract his hand, she grabbed his hand and held it tightly. Her hand was small yet slender. As her warm fingers tightly clasped his big hand, he felt inexplicably relieved.

"Come on," Elspeth said softly. "Don't be left behind."

She held his hand and walked down the stairs step by step.

Under Elspeth's practical and logical guidance, everyone successfully evacuated the building.

As soon as he walked out, Callum felt highly dizzy and slid directly onto the stone bench beside the road.

"Are you alright? Hold on. The ambulance will be here soon."

He nodded. "I'm fine." His voice remained steady, although a little weak.

"This fire happened so suddenly. I bet that Houston was behind this." Elspeth's glare turned cold and vicious when she mentioned Houston.

Callum lowered his eyes to converge the coldness on his face. "Don't worry. When we find out the source, we will—"

Before he could finish, he felt an abrupt burst of pain in his body. The pain was so intense that he almost fainted.

When she noticed his abnormality, she looked at his back and found that there was a large burn on his shoulders. The burn wound and flesh were bloody. The clothes melted and stuck to the flesh. It was a very horrible sight.

Elsbeth's expression suddenly became serious, and she chided him in agitation, "Callum! Why didn't you tell me that you were scalded?!"

He was so severely injured, yet he didn't even say a peep and forced himself to walk out of the building.

As she looked at the wound and thought about the towel he gave her, she felt distressed and guilty.

"What's there to say?"

"What the hell?! Have you ever taken your body seriously? Do you really think you're invincible?"

Callum didn't know what to say when he saw her going berserk.

Fortunately, the ambulance came just in time to defuse the intensified atmosphere between them, and he was rushed to the nearest hospital.

After the doctor examined his wound, he frowned tightly. "This is a severe burn. There is no way to fully recover, and you may have a permanent scar here. However, it will fade if you apply some ointment to it."

Callum nodded indifferently. It wasn't a big deal to have one more scar on his body anyway.

Elsbeth looked at Callum, who was sitting on the bed, and commented seriously, "I can completely heal your scars."

He hesitated for a moment and blurted, "You can?"

She observed the degree and size of the burns and automatically generated a treatment plan in her mind.

When the doctor heard this, the doctor couldn't help bursting out in laughter. "Miss, I know and understand that you are eager to save your sweetheart, but you can't bluff."

Callum's heart skipped a beat when he heard the word "sweetheart".

"I'm not bluffing." Elspeth insisted.

The doctor was taken aback and said with a hint of mockery, "No offense, but I don't think you've ever practiced medicine. Even if you did, you should know that it is impossible to fix his skin according to current medical technology."

"Doctor, just because you can't do it doesn't mean others can't. You're too narrow-minded."

Her remarks instantly provoked the doctor's desire to win. Thus, he sneered, "You know, you can't take back what you've said."

"Yes, I know."

The doctor was enraged by her calm and relaxed appearance. "What an ignorant and cocky brat! How can you be so confident?!"

"If you don't believe me, why don't we make a bet?" Elspeth smiled politely at the doctor. "If I can't cure him, I'll apologize to you, but if I can cure the burn on his body..."

"If you can cure him, I'll retire immediately," the doctor interjected.

Chapter 46 Pay It as It Lays

“Nah, you don’t have to retire. Just give me some medicine.” A light flashed in Elspeth’s eyes, and she smiled lightly.

The doctor was a well-known doctor in this hospital. So, when he heard that she wanted medicine, he frowned in confusion. “What do you want it for?”

“I have my reasons. Just say if you want to give it or not.”

The doctor’s eyes darted around as he thought about it for a moment and nodded in agreement.

Elspeth smiled in satisfaction as she took out a porcelain-white bottle from her pocket. The whole bottle was crystal clear with a slight blue tint.

She opened the bottle, poured the emerald green medicinal ointment onto Callum’s back, and gently rubbed it. A cold sensation spread across his body, and he instantly felt the burning sensation on his back lessen significantly.

“I’ll apply the ointment to you once a day from now on, and you’ll recover after a week.”

“A week?!” The doctor’s eyes widened in disbelief and bewilderment. “Impossible! It is impossible for a skin transplant to recover and be as good as new in a week.”

Elspeth closed the bottle cap and put it back into her pocket. “Of course the scar won’t fully be gone. That would be far too unrealistic. It needs long-term treatment. It is good enough if he can recover 70% to 80%.”

“Alright. I’ll wait and see the exact result after seven days.”

“Of course.” She raised her chin proudly.

After the doctor packed up his things and left, Callum stared at her deeply and asked, “Why did you make that bet with him?”

Although he knew that she was unpredictable, there was nothing she could do to treat large-scale burn scars except for skin grafting. Could the magical ointment grow new flesh? No, that was ridiculous.

“Because I have the confidence to win,” she said, utterly self-assured, and her eyes shone brightly. She seemed to be fearless.

“I hope you don’t make a fool of yourself.”

“Sure. Just wait and see.” She snorted.

He didn’t say anything, but the emotions were rummaging inside him.

Elspeth would apply ointment to Callum’s wound for the next seven days. The cold sensation gradually disappeared day after day, and finally, he didn’t feel anything at all. He began to wonder if the ointment had lost its effect. Nonetheless, he couldn’t see the condition of his back, so he could only wait until she revealed the result after seven days.

Seven days later, the doctor arrived as promised. He went to the bed and took off Callum’s top to check on his back. Just one look left him in a shock.

“A-Are you sure he’s still the same man?”

That day, he clearly saw how severe the burns on Callum’s back were. Even he couldn’t guarantee a cure, which was why he dared to take the bet. Nevertheless, the scar on his back was so faint that he even poked it doubtfully.

“Amazing! This is so amazing...”

The doctor couldn’t help but admire Elspeth’s superb medical skills. It was extraordinary for a girl in her twenties to have such uncanny skills.

Callum could hear the shift of the tone of Vance Tate, the doctor, so he was astonished too.

“So, your promise still stands, right?” Elspeth didn’t care if she won her bet. She only cared if the bet would be honored.

“Of course!” Vance nodded excitedly. “What do you want?”

She rubbed her chin, thought for a moment, and said, “I want a hundred years old Ganoderma.”

“What?” Vance was taken aback and frowned. “I—”

“Hold on. Don’t tell me that you want to go back on your words, Dr. Tate?”

Vance pursed his lips in embarrassment. Finally, he sighed dejectedly. “Alright, come with me.”

He led Elspeth to the hospital’s pharmacy. As soon as he turned on the light, they heard a roar. “Vance! I almost had a heart attack! Why did you appear like a ghost?!”

Vance smiled apologetically at her before looking in the direction of the sound and snapping, “Norman, we have a guest here. Can you show me some respect?”

“A guest?”

Suddenly, Elspeth felt a gush of wind swirl over her, and in the next second, someone gripped her hand tightly.

“Are you the guest that Vance was talking about?”

She didn’t know what kind of response she should give the man because she didn’t know who the person was, nor could she move as the person gripped her hand tightly.

“She is incredible! She can treat burns; the scars are almost as good as new! This is amazing! I’ve practiced medicine for decades, and this is the first time I saw such a miraculous scene!”

Norman Frost chuckled. “Incredible? Miraculous? The wound is curable in terms of traditional medicine, but—” He turned to Elspeth and asked, “Who taught you these? Who is your mentor?”

“Sonny Schwartz.”

“What? Sonny Schwartz?!” Norman gasped in astonishment when he heard the name.

“Do you mean Sonny Schwartz, the renowned and talented doctor in traditional medicine? And you are his apprentice?”

She was slightly bewildered by his reaction but nodded nonetheless.

Renowned? Talented? He is nothing but an old man who enjoys drinking and will make a fuss when he loses at chess.

“She asks for a hundred-year-old Ganoderma. Do you think we should give it to her or not?” Vance interrupted and mentioned the request.

“Haha! Of course, we should! But can you please lend me your notes on burn medicine for me to study?” Norman had loved traditional medicine since he was young and had studied it for decades. He wouldn’t let the chance of getting to know a novelty medicine slip out of his hand.

“Sure!” Elspeth agreed without hesitation.

It was almost impossible for a person to formulate precisely the same medicine without a specific formula and guidance. If Norman could produce it, it meant that he was also highly talented, and it would be far from a waste for such a person to have the recipe.

After she received the Ganoderma as promised, she departed happily. She called Harper and passed the Ganoderma to him for temporary safekeeping before returning to the hospital.

At this moment, a commotion was happening at the hospital entrance.

Two women were arguing and making a ruckus. One of them was wearing a mask, sunglasses, and a hat. She looked rather stunning but patiently refuted the other party while remaining polite and calm. On the contrary, the other woman kept shouting at the top of her lungs like a barbaric hillbilly. She even cursed the other woman with vulgar words.

Elsbeth didn’t intend to meddle, but when passing by them, the hillbilly suddenly gasped as if she was suffocated and then collapsed to the ground. She lay on the ground, foaming at her mouth and breathing rapidly. It seemed like she had an asthma attack and would stop breathing any minute.

The elegant woman was shocked and wanted to check on her, but the hillbilly’s friend pushed her away and began to curse her.

Elsbeth turned around to take a closer look and felt that the woman looked somewhat familiar. If she was not mistaken, the woman was the one who sent flowers to her after she sang a song with Blake at his concert the other day.

At the thought of this, she couldn’t give the woman the cold shoulder.

“Let me check on her,” she stepped forward and said gently.

“You? Who the hell do you think you are, young lady?! Do you know about medicine? If something happens to my friend, I’ll ruin every single one of you!”

Chapter 47 Saving a Person’s Life

Elspeth disregarded the woman’s chatter as she walked to the sick woman and prepared to perform first aid when someone tugged on her arm again.

The woman’s friend bellowed, “Hey, don’t you understand what I’m saying?! Stop messing around! You’ll be held accountable if you can’t save her!”

Elspeth glared at her coldly. Her fearsome glare frightened the woman, who immediately released her. “Okay, you can hold me accountable, but if you stop me again and her condition deteriorates, you’ll be held accountable.”

The woman was shocked by her remarks and hastily retracted her hands.

Elspeth squatted down and checked the woman’s condition carefully. After she realized that the woman’s condition wasn’t serious, she took out a pill from her pocket and stuffed it into the woman’s mouth.

“Hey!” Her friend shrieked. “What did you feed her?”

Elspeth had had enough. She turned around and threatened, “This is a hospital. If you scream at me again, I’ll ask the security guards to kick you out!”

The woman shrank away sheepishly. “I-I didn’t mean it. Who knows what you fed her? You would kill her if the pill didn’t work.”

Elspeth couldn’t be bothered by her. So, she turned back to check on the patient. For some reason, the patient began to pant even more, and her body trembled violently as if she had some kind of reaction to the medicine.

“Look at what you’ve done! She gets worse! What an ignorant brat! You kill her, do you know that?!”

The friend finally felt confident to curse Elspeth now. I knew that this brat was unreliable from the beginning! I made the right choice by yelling at her!

“Come and save my friend! This girl is killing her!” she wailed, worsening the situation.

A cold gleam flashed across Elspeth’s eyes. “It’s too early to tell.”

At this moment, the patient suddenly stopped breathing rapidly and slowly opened her eyes with a puzzled look, not knowing what had happened.

“You’re fine now. Please control your emotions and always bring your asthma medicine with you. You won’t be so lucky to bump into me next time.” Elspeth stood up and gave her some advice.

The crowd began to applaud and exclaim in awe when they witnessed how Elspeth had saved the woman with just a tiny pill.

“Wow, she’s amazing! So she’s much better than my grandkid, who plays games all day long!”

“Yes! All doctors must be like this. I wonder if she’s a doctor here.”

“No way! She’s too young to be a doctor. I think she’s still in high school...”

Everyone looked at her in admiration and then looked in askance at the woman who was making a fuss earlier. “What a shameful woman!”

The woman knew that she had embarrassed herself and hastily got up from the ground.

As more people gathered around them, Elspeth waved them off. “Alright, nothing to see here. Please leave.”

The crowd gradually dispersed, leaving only Elspeth and the three women.

The patient with asthma was a little embarrassed. “Thank you. If it hadn’t been for you, I might have died.”

Elspeth waved her hand. “You don’t have to thank me. Instead, you should thank her.” She pointed to the elegant woman.

“Her?!” The patient’s eyes widened.

“Yes. I knew her, and it was because of her that I helped you.” You gave me flowers, and I helped you this time. We’re even.

Then, Elspeth checked her watch and said, “It’s getting late. I need to go now.” With that, she turned and rushed toward the hospital ward.

The elegant woman quietly shed tears as she watched her leave, but Elspeth couldn’t see her tears.

Callum was in the ward dealing with documents when she came in. “The doctor said that I am almost healed, so I can be discharged in a while.”

“Wonderful.” She nodded absent-mindedly.

He noticed Elspeth as she was in a trance and went to the heart of the matter. “You’re thinking about the fire, aren’t you?”

“Yeah. I haven’t been thinking about it for the past few years. Now that it suddenly came to my mind, I felt that it was rather strange.”

“Your feeling is justifiable,” Callum said in a cold voice. “The building’s prevention and control measures are in place, and there are people to check the situation daily. There is no possibility of a fire. The fire first started on the first floor, which is a shopping mall. Maybe someone lit the fire when no one was looking.”

At the thought of this, Elspeth narrowed her eyes slightly. “W-Was it Houston?”

“I’ve been checking the surveillance videos of the first floor and spotted him in those quiet corners.” He opened his laptop and showed the video to her.

“Huh! He’s throwing the helve after the hatchet.” She snorted. “I’ll make him lie in the bed he had made!”

He was discharged from the hospital at noon and returned to the company. She went to the rooftop and called Harper, “Where are you?”

“What’s the matter, Miss Lynwood?” The noisy background echoed from the other end of the line when Harper answered the call.

“Are you at the bar picking up girls again?” She raised an eyebrow.

He chuckled. “Bingo.”

“Okay, I have an assignment for you.” At the thought of Houston’s malicious actions, she lowered her voice and said, “I want you to get rid of someone.”

“Who?”

“Houston Bishop. He set fire to the company. You know what to do.”

Harper immediately answered, “Alright! I’ll make sure he reaps what he sows.”

Elspeth ended the call and returned to her office.

As soon as she sat down, her colleague, Abbie, came to her seat with a phone and giggled, “Elspeth, you’re in the news!”

“What news?” Elspeth was confused.

Abbie clicked on a webpage and showed her screen to her. “Look! A stranger saved an asthma patient in front of the hospital, and she didn’t tell anyone her name. Even though we couldn’t see your face in the photo, I knew at first glance that this woman was you!”

Those who knew Elspeth could immediately recognize her signature wavy chestnut-colored long hair.

Not just Abbie; even the netizens had also recognized Elspeth in the photo.

‘Isn’t this Elspeth? My idol!’

‘She’s so beautiful and kind! But, more importantly, she seems to know everything!’

‘Oh my, can I marry her, please?’

‘In your dreams!’

...

Elspeth couldn’t tell how she felt about the news. Then, all of a sudden, in the corner of the photo, she spotted the elegant woman standing not far away from her and looking in her direction. She couldn’t see the woman’s expression clearly, yet she could feel a hint of tenderness from her.

“Elspeth? Elspeth!” Abbie waved her hand in front of Elspeth’s face to regain her attention.

“Yes? I’m fine.” Elspeth shook her head and showed a faint smile.

Abbie breathed a sigh of relief. “Thank goodness. By the way, I heard that someone from the TV station will come to interview you in the afternoon, but...”

Chapter 48 Tit for Tat

“But what?” Elspeth was intrigued.

Abbie looked around. Only after making sure that no one paid attention to them did she lean over and whisper, “But the TV host is Blake’s diehard fan. You previously shot that intimate commercial with him, so I bet she will attack you instead.”

When Elspeth heard this, she didn’t think it was something to be wary of. On the contrary, she looked forward to the afternoon interview. “Alright then. Let’s see how she will attack me later.”

Sure enough, a TV host came to the office to interview Elspeth at 3.00PM. She was wearing a tight-fitting professional suit that wrapped around her curvy and slender body snugly. It was an enticing sight.

The male employees in the company stared at her in awe, hoping that she was there to interview them instead.

The host sashayed, swaying her body as she went. The minute she saw Elspeth, she felt a strong sense of intimidation. She’s so gorgeous! Her face and facial features are so exquisite, and even her hair carries a touch of elegance. So, this is my rival in love...

“Hello, my name is Lenora Owen, and I’m the host of the local TV station.”

“Hello.” Elspeth nodded at her with a smile. “I’m Elspeth Lynwood.”

“Without further ado, I’ll start the interview right away.” Lenora glanced at the cameraman on the side and signaled him to turn on the camera.

“It comes to my attention that you don’t know the patient. May I know why you decided to save that lady at that time?”

“I was bored and just happened to witness her collapsing,” Elspeth answered without hesitation.

“Did you accept the lady’s thanks and money after that?”

“She did thank me, but I didn’t accept any money from her.”

“Don’t you want any monetary reward from her?”

Elspeth looked at her aggressive stance and knew that this was her so-called attack. So, she changed the subject and asked, “Will the government give a monetary reward for the citizen’s bravery?”

“Of course!” Lenora secretly mocked Elspeth for being petty while donning a professional smile on her face. “In fact, it’s quite a lot of money too!”

“If I ask other questions, you’ll be able to answer me, won’t you?”

“Certainly!” Lenora was highly confident.

“When exactly will the money be paid out?”

Lenora had never considered this question. A qualified host would not allow the interviewee to divert the topic of discussion to this area, but she had asked unprofessional questions in order to humiliate Elspeth. Much to her bewilderment, Elspeth picked on her weakness. What a smart b*tch.

Her expression changed slightly. “I’m not so sure about that.”

Elspeth feigned confusion and puzzlement. “What? Didn’t you say you could answer me on everything? So, why can’t you answer my question? Are you a newly appointed host?”

“I—” Lenora was rendered speechless, and her expression turned slightly gloomy.

“The government rewards 1,000 dollars per person for their bravery and righteousness, but I have enough money to go by, so I won’t do a good deed deliberately for 1,000

dollars. Also, Miss Owen, please rehearse before the next interview. Don't embarrass yourself."

Then, Elspeth turned to the cameraman and raised an eyebrow. "Please edit this scene out of the footage. I don't want Miss Owen to be humiliated."

Lenora's face flushed red due to rage, and she almost couldn't control her temper.

The cameraman awkwardly mumbled, "B-But this is a live broadcast, not a recording."

"Hurry up and shut it off! Can't you see how mad Miss Owen is now?"

Lenora suddenly came to her senses and realized that this was a live broadcast. She swiftly regained her composure and apologized, "I'm sorry. I made a few blunders earlier, so I wasn't pleased with myself. Please forgive me. Well, that's it for today's broadcast. Miss Lynwood, thank you for the interview. We'll see you again next time."

Then, she winked at the cameraman, signaling him to turn off the camera immediately.

On the other hand, Elspeth stretched her body lazily. "Is that it? I'm going back to work now."

"Wait a minute! Why did you humiliate me just now?!" Lenora's face turned nasty, and her gentle demeanor was thrown out the window.

Elspeth was dumbfounded. Is she actually trying to shift the blame right back to me?!
"Miss Owen, I think you knew very well why I said those things."

Lenora scowled. "You're not stupid, after all. Alright, I'll come clean to you since you know it all. But, I'm warning you to keep a distance from Blake. This is your last chance, or I won't let you off the hook!"

"You honestly read too much into things, Miss Owen. Blake and I are just friends."

"You're bluffing! Will friends shoot ads as a couple? Drop your act already! If I catch you seeing Blake again in the future, you're so dead."

Elspeth simply cast an indifferent glance at the camera and smirked. "By the way, there's something I forgot to tell you. I think your camera is still on."

Lenora froze in horror. Then, she turned to look at the camera, and her face turned stark white when she spotted the flashing red light on the camera. Did everyone hear what I said?! Everyone heard my undisguised love for Blake and my vicious threat to Elspeth!

A horrified Lenora surged forward to turn off the camera before turning back to glare at Elspeth. “You did this on purpose, didn’t you?! You knew that the camera was still running, so you wanted to embarrass me!”

Elspeth shrugged and smiled indifferently.

Due to Elspeth’s popularity, many people watched her live interview. At this point, although the camera was turned off, they knew what had happened. As a result, Lenora’s reputation was utterly ruined.

‘Look at your favorite host! Haha, she always wears that gentle and soft-spoken appearance. This is new!’

‘She’s so petty! Oh my, she’s disgusting.’

‘I want to puke! How dare she like Blake?! Does she think Blake will like her back?!’

‘Elspeth is so dashing! ‘I have enough money to go by’! Wow, she’s so cool...’

The embarrassed Lenora didn’t want to stay there any longer. Since Elspeth disregarded her thoroughly, she wiped her tears in agitation and left with the cameraman.

Elspeth shook her head as she watched her leave. Then, she remembered that she needed Callum’s signature on one of her documents, so she took the documents and went to his office.

“Callum, I—” Before she finished, she spotted Callum’s phone on the table, and on the phone screen was the live broadcast that had just ended. She smiled brilliantly. “Aw, you watched my interview! Do you care that much about me?”

As soon as she said this, he quickly shut down the website and said faintly, “It popped up by itself.”

“Wow, your phone is quite user-friendly.” She smiled ambiguously. “What did you think about my interview?”

Chapter 49 The Crisis of His Ex

“Not bad.”

“See! You watched my interview! Just admit it!” Elspeth flicked her hair, her smile mysterious and ambiguous.

“If you don’t have anything else to say, go back to work,” Callum ordered her to leave for fear that she would use this chance to tease him again.

“Aw, don’t be so indifferent. Are you a man? How can you be so calm when a gorgeous woman is flirting with you?”

She clicked her tongue and was about to leave when Edmund walked in on her and said, “This year, there are a total of one hundred people to participate in the interview. Eighty failed the written test, and the remaining twenty were waiting in the interview room. When can you go over?”

Houston was supposed to be in charge of the recruitment, but after he was fired, they didn’t have a qualified staff to serve as the head of the HR Department, so Edmund was temporarily put in charge of recruitment.

Elspeth blinked as she quickly recalled that it was indeed the annual recruitment day.

“I’ll go over later.”

Edmund spotted Elspeth too and teased, “Well, you guys seem to spend a lot of time together now. I think you don’t have to get along with us anymore. Just marry Callum.”

Although he was prompting her and Callum to be together, she could hear an intense mockery in his tone.

A cold light flashed across Callum’s eyes. “You talk too much.”

Edmund shrugged casually and turned to say to her, “You see what he’s like, right? This is a friendly reminder from me to you. Don’t regret it when you choose to be with him and are bullied.”

“It’s none of your business,” Elspeth answered with a smile that didn’t reach her eyes.

“How can you say that to me? I’m telling you this out of the goodness of my heart. I’m sad, Elsie.” Edmund pouted pretentiously. When he turned and spotted Callum’s cold glare, he sheepishly dropped his act and exited his office.

“I’m interviewing potential candidates. Do you want to join me?” Callum suddenly invited Elspeth along, which made her a little flattered.

“Me? Are you sure? But I thought you didn’t want to see me that much?” Most of the time, whenever she teased him a little, he would order her to leave. He had always been so serious and boring.

Callum stood up, grabbed his coat, and walked toward the door. “I think you’re pretty good at reading people. So, come if you want, but forget it if you don’t want to.”

“I’ll come!” Elspeth beamed happily at that.

The interview venue was located on the second floor. Twenty candidates were waiting outside, all of them fresh graduates.

“Now, you’ll enter one by one according to the order.”

After they interviewed several people in a row, he wasn’t satisfied with any of them, and the frown on his face never left.

“Hey, don’t you think you’re too harsh? I think there are a few who are quite good.” Elspeth cupped her chin and asked while they were taking a break.

“I don’t think so. Those who were interviewed just now either didn’t have any working experience, were stuttering, or were too arrogant. It won’t do the company any good if we hire these people. So, I won’t hire them if they don’t fit the requirements. I don’t need to hire these unqualified people to fill up the numbers.”

Elspeth understood his implication, but Harper had single-handedly managed her business affairs. There was nothing much she needed to worry about except for the big decisions that he couldn’t deal with himself. At the thought of this, she felt a little ashamed of her capability to read people or lack thereof.

The next candidate was a girl with shoulder-length hair. Her temperament was outstanding, and her facial features were tender and sweet. She had two shallow dimples beside her lips when she smiled. In fact, she was the most beautiful candidate today.

Elspeth could clearly feel that Callum's body suddenly became stiff.

"What's wrong? Are you shocked by her beauty?" she mocked in a low voice, but Callum suddenly regained his composure and flipped the candidate's resumé and information. Then, after a long while, he looked up and asked, "When did you return?"

Elspeth blinked in surprise. He knew her.

"Mr. Winthrop, I don't think this question has anything to do with today's interview." The woman ruffled her hair and looked aloof. "I think you should ask me some questions related to the interview."

Callum slammed the file shut and scowled indignantly. "I know you did not come here to interview for a job. So tell me, why did you come back?"

The girl covered her mouth and giggled, "I came back to keep an eye on you on behalf of my sister. After all, you're my... brother-in-law."

Brother-in-law? Elspeth was a little confused. She looked at the girl in front of her and felt an inexplicable sense of crisis and intimidation.

Callum began to breathe heavily. "I'm not your brother-in-law! Don't call me that."

"Okay." The girl raised her eyebrow. "Judging from your reaction, I think you've forgotten my sister, so I don't want to waste any more time here."

Callum didn't say anything in response, but he was no longer as calm as before.

"I'm leaving now. I'll tell my sister to forget you."

The girl stood up and wanted to leave when Callum called out to her. "Ginna, I no longer have a relationship with your sister, and we'll forever be strangers in the future."

Ginna chuckled. "Strangers? Hah, my pitiful sister. She is blindly in love with a heartless man." With that, she turned and left decisively.

Even if Elspeth didn't know the whole story between the two of them, she could more or less figure out the drama.

Ginna was probably the sister of the woman Callum loved. He might have broken up with the woman for some reason, but they still loved each other.

Elspeth's heart skipped a beat when she saw Callum, who was usually calm and composed, suddenly lost his temper. Although he called the woman a stranger, she could tell that he still cared about her.

"Callum..." Elspeth called out his name.

Callum turned around, and there was a hint of subtle sorrow in his eyes.

"Are you alright?"

When he raised his eyes, his gaze was cold. "Let's postpone the interview and call it a day."

Elspeth looked at him in a daze and nodded.

The interview was cut short because of Ginna. A well of complicated emotions surged within her, and she couldn't explain how she felt right now.

It happened to be the end of the working hour too, so she decided to go home instead of staying in the office for overtime.

She was home early, and Arthur was alone at home. "Why are you here? Aren't you supposed to be in the hospital?"

Arthur chuckled. "I exchanged my shift with my colleague, so it's my break today."

Elspeth nodded and was about to head to her room when her legs unconsciously paused. She turned and looked at Arthur a little awkwardly. "I want to ask you something."

"What is it?" Arthur sipped his coffee and asked gently.

"Uh... Did Callum have an ex-girlfriend?"

Chapter 50 Arthur's Provocation

Arthur was slightly surprised by the question but still asked patiently, "What? How did you know?"

Elspeth deliberated over it until she decided it wasn't such a big deal to tell him, so she confided in him. "At the interview today, a girl named Ginna Walker called Callum her brother-in-law, and he responded in an exaggerated manner."

Ginna...

He raised his eyebrows and smiled. "Callum did have a girlfriend before, and her name was Emma Walker. Ginna is Emma's younger sister."

She bit her lower lip before asking, "Why did they break up?"

He glanced around and then lowered his voice. "Since Emma wants to pursue her dreams, she refuses to be confined to the country, whereas Callum doesn't want to be separated from her. Emma was the one who suggested a breakup, but Callum hasn't been in a relationship in years."

Although Elspeth now completely understood the story, she felt empty in her heart. "Does that mean Callum used to like that girl a lot?"

Arthur smiled matter-of-factly. "Of course, he does. Otherwise, why wouldn't he date other women after so many years? Besides, even though Callum wasn't a gentle soul in the past, he used to smile a lot."

He stopped before going further. Looking at Elspeth's absent-minded look, he comforted her with a smile. "I know you might have feelings for Callum, but... no one knows how he feels about his ex. Don't worry too much about it; he treats you differently. Perhaps, you might be the one for him—"

Before he finished speaking, she interrupted, "It's fine. You don't have to explain."

If Callum liked his ex so much, how could he still hold anyone else in his heart? That wasn't right. If anyone else was interested in him, she wouldn't want him anymore.

Elsbeth turned on her heels and returned to her own room. She sat in the room but continued to feel uneasy, so she turned on her laptop and began searching for Callum's past relationships. For a top hacker like her, finding out any information was a piece of cake. It didn't take her long to find out everything that had happened between Emma and him.

They met in college and were each other's first love. Then, they spent four happy years together in college. However, Emma wanted to go abroad for career development after graduating, so she broke up with him. Looking at Emma's photo, Elspeth thought she looked gentle and sweet. In terms of appearance, she was no less inferior to Ginna, whom she met in the afternoon. Photos of the two holding hands, eating together, and riding the bicycle made up Callum's first love experience.

Elsbeth raised her head and sighed deeply.

Suddenly, a reminder message popped up on her screen. She withdrew her thoughts and read the message from Harper. 'Elsie, I've already prepared the Ganoderma for you. Let me know when you're free to pick them up.'

It wasn't until that moment that she recalled that the Ganoderma she intended to make into medicine for that old man, Sonny Schwartz, was still at Harper's place.

'I'll stop by later. Let's meet at the bar.'

Harper replied with an 'OK' before Elspeth turned off her laptop.

After packing and preparing to leave, she bumped into Callum, who had just returned home.

“Where are you going?”

“That’s none of your business. Isn’t it?” she snorted.

He didn’t understand why she sounded harsh, so he frowned. “It’s already 7.00PM. Do you have to go out at this hour?”

Elsbeth looked at him coldly. “I’ll repeat what I said. That’s none of your business. You should take care of your own affairs.”

Callum instantly understood what she meant. “Are you talking about what happened in the afternoon?”

She laughed mockingly. “You’re such a busy man, Mr. Winthrop. I have no right to ask you about it, anyway. You should be more mindful of your ex-girlfriend, Emma.”

When he heard the name, his aura instantly cooled. “Who told you her name?”

Seeing his impatient expression, Elsbeth sneered, “Do you think I can’t find out myself, Callum?”

Taking a deep breath, he calmed himself down. “Whether someone told you or you found out yourself, don’t bother paying attention to her anymore, and don’t mention her name in front of me.”

She looked away and countered, “Callum, I’m not interested in your ex-girlfriend at all.”

After saying that, she walked past him and left Winthrop Residence.

While in the cab heading toward Luna Bar, Elsbeth felt an indescribable feeling. She could understand Callum’s indifference and alienation before, but today, he was upset

with her because of his ex-girlfriend. The more she thought about it, the more infuriated she became.

When she arrived at the bar, Harper noticed she wasn't in a good mood, so he opened a bottle of wine for her. "Elsie, what happened? Did someone wrong you at Winthrop Residence?"

She took a sip from the wineglass and responded, "I'm fine. Have a drink with me tonight. I'm not going back."

"However, there is one important thing now. Through our cooperation with Winthrop Group, Azure Corporation's domestic development momentum has surpassed that of foreign countries. We can consider moving the headquarters back here and develop domestically."

Elspeth wasn't even in the mood to talk about work. "Sure. Just figure it out yourself."

After downing a few glasses, she still felt too sober. Suddenly, a gust of fragrant breeze wafted in her direction, making Elspeth raise her head. A figure in white was currently standing before her. There was a smile on the unfamiliar yet familiar face.

"You must be Elspeth Lynwood."

She remained unmoved. "Miss Ginna, may I ask what you want to see me for?"

"I came here because I'd like to chat with you."

Ginna took advantage of the situation and sat down beside her. When her gaze fell on Harper's face, she showed a somewhat hesitant expression.

Elspeth then uttered softly, "Harper, give us some privacy."

After Harper left, Ginna revealed her real purpose for talking to her. “Miss Lynwood, I know you because you are indeed popular.”

“That’s certainly not the case, Miss Walker. I’m just an ordinary person.”

Ginna covered her mouth and chuckled, “Ordinary person? That’s not necessarily true. You must be capable of attracting so many men pursuing you. Besides, you’re talented. Not to mention the sons of the Winthrop Family, even I can’t help my heart from beating for you.”

Although they were words of praise, her sentences were full of sarcasm, making Elspeth feel uneasy.

“Did you come here to propose to me your business?”

A hint of light lit up in Ginna’s eyes. She then snickered, “You’re a smart person indeed. If that’s the case, I will stop beating around the bush.”

“Go on,” Elspeth uttered without blinking.

“You know who I am, don’t you? My sister and Callum have been together for a long time, and they are both in love with each other. I hope you don’t meddle in their relationship, Miss Lynwood.”