

Love's Perfect Match Chapter 11 - 20

Chapter 11

Edmund froze for a moment before letting out an awkward laugh. "Better not."

At Winthrop Corporation, he busied himself with work while Elspeth spent her entire day in the security booth again.

On the third day, she spent her day with Blake Winthrop.

He was a celebrity with millions of fans. Today just happened to be his birthday and the tenth anniversary of his debut. As such, he spent the day rehearsing for his concert that night, so he did not have time to care about her.

Around the afternoon, Ophelia came over to the Winthrop Residence around the afternoon before attending the concert with the rest of the Winthrops. Elspeth had woken up from her nap and came downstairs when she saw Ophelia approaching her with a smile. "Elspeth, we were just planning on going shopping for some clothes and getting a gift for Blake on the way. Why don't you join us?"

After pondering about it, Elspeth did not reject the offer and followed the others out of the villa.

When they arrived at the shopping mall, Ophelia pulled her into a branded women's clothing store and said, "Elspeth, you're so pretty. I bet you'd look good in this dress."

The four men waited by the entrance while Ophelia glanced at them before picking a dark green dress from the clothing rack. "This looks good. Why don't you try it on?"

Taking a look at that dress, Elspeth saw that it was the kind that looked mature.

Seeing that Elspeth did not speak, Ophelia grabbed another one and asked, “How about this?”

Elspeth narrowed her eyes at the wide and revealing dress, then retorted, “Ophelia, you don’t have to pretend to be nice if you don’t like me, and you don’t have to use such methods to humiliate me. Though I grew up in the country, my taste in fashion isn’t any worse than yours.”

“Elspeth, you must’ve misunderstood me...” Ophelia’s face fell. Indeed, she thought that since Elspeth came from the countryside, Elspeth would not know anything about fashion as she usually wore ordinary T-shirts. Who would have guessed...

On the other hand, Elspeth did not bother with how Ophelia was feeling and looked around the store. Then, she asked the attendant to bag up all the dresses she liked. When it was time to pay, she took out her phone.

At that moment, a pair of long, slender fingers handed a black card to the cashier. “Swipe mine.”

It was Callum.

The cashier was stunned for a moment when she saw his handsome face, but she quickly received the card.

“Thank you.” Elspeth coldly thanked him.

He replied flatly, “Don’t overthink it. It’s my dad’s orders.” After saying that, he turned around and left, leaving a speechless woman in his wake.

Meanwhile, Ophelia could not help clenching her fists at the scene as a trace of viciousness flashed across her eyes.

By the time they left the shopping mall, the two bodyguards behind them had their hands full of shopping bags, which could tally up to almost three hundred thousand worth of goods!

Max, who was by her side, could not help but taunt, “Some people are so shameless. Spending someone else’s money without any constraint. Unmannered, as one would expect from someone who grew up in a small town.”

It was obvious that he was implying Elspeth since he still hated her for saying he was immature! Although I’m the youngest in the family, I’m already eighteen.

When she heard that, she wanted to respond, but Ophelia by the side beat her to it. “Max, how could you say that? Elspeth is just buying a few things.”

“You call this a few things?!”

Elspeth snorted and questioned, “It’s not like you paid for them.”

Stunned, Max replied, “That’s Callum’s money!”

“You’re right. It’s Callum’s money. He didn’t even say anything, yet you’re here whining about it!” After she said that, she got in the car.

Meanwhile, the others behind her laughed. They did not expect her to be so unforgiving with her words and they found her quite interesting.

Chapter 12

Max’s face fell again as he tugged on Callum’s arm and complained, “Look at her. She spends your money like it’s her own. Most importantly, everything she bought is for herself. None of it is for Blake!”

Meanwhile, Elspeth rolled her eyes when she heard Max's complaints.

The night sky soon arrived and Elspeth changed into a simple black dress and followed the others to the concert venue after dinner.

Their seats were on the second row and Ophelia dashed over to sit beside Callum right after they found their seats. Not bothering about it, Elspeth decided to sit beside Edmund.

Soon, the concert began and Blake came on stage wearing a black suit. As a celebrity, he was indeed handsome. With the crazy intense crowd, Elspeth felt her eardrums were about to erupt from all the screams.

Within an hour, Blake had performed many songs and it was now time for the second act. The emcee came on stage and announced, "Today is Blake's tenth anniversary of his debut, so we have prepared a surprise session. Now, we're going to pick a lucky fan and have her come on stage to sing a song with Blake."

Thunderous applause sounded from under the stage while the fans were screaming so much that their throats felt sore. Then, they saw the rolling numbers on the screen finally stopping at number 26.

Those who did not get picked groaned in disappointment, but everyone was curious as to who was sitting in seat 26.

At that moment, Edmund piped up, "Woah. Elspeth, you're in seat 26!"

While Elspeth was still in shock, the emcee had already called out for her appearance. "Let's welcome the fan from seat 26 onto the stage."

With narrowed eyes, she wondered, Is this just a coincidence?

Sweeping her gaze around the few people beside her, she noticed the obvious gleam in Ophelia's eyes. It was then that she realized what had happened. Someone wants me to make a fool of myself. Under the pressure of everyone's gaze, she slowly walked up the stage.

When Blake saw who it was, he was surprised to see that it was Elspeth!

The emcee chuckled. "Wow! You're so pretty! May I know your name?"

"Elspeth Lynwood," she answered.

After she said her name, the crowd gaped.

Elspeth Lynwood? The Elspeth Lynwood who was promised to the Winthrop Family?
She actually looks so beautiful!

Almost half of the crowd sitting below were fans who considered themselves as Blake's 'girlfriends' and they were all discussing while looking at Elspeth with jealous gazes.

"Alright, then. So, we're going to sing Nancy Star's song, called 'Good Night'. Miss Lynwood, have you heard of that song? For this interactive session, we'll only be singing the chorus part of the song."

Nancy Star was a popular female singer, but she was very mysterious as no one had seen what she looked like. However, her voice was a worldwide sensation.

At that moment, the emcee had already placed the microphone beside Elspeth's lips. She pursed her lips, stating, "I've heard the song before, but I'm tone-deaf. I don't know how to sing. I'm sorry."

Meanwhile, the crowd below turned into an uproar.

“Get off the stage! What an embarrassment. She can’t even sing. What do the Winthrops see in her?”

“Yeah. She should stop standing next to my idol. It looks embarrassing.”

“Elspeth, get off the stage!”

The woman under the spotlight narrowed her eyes, knowing that these people were happy to see her make a fool of herself on stage. However, she loved to prove others wrong. Taking away the emcee’s microphone, she looked at Blake and suggested, “I really don’t know how to sing, but I can accompany you.”

This song’s original soundtrack is accompanied by a piano. Blake looked at her doubtfully. You don’t even know how to sing. How are you going to play the piano? Is this some kind of joke?

Chapter 13

“Alright. Let’s all quiet down and enjoy Miss Lynwood and Blake’s... ‘Good Night’.”

Elspeth strolled toward the piano while the crowd settled down. When the intro sounded, Blake was shocked as he was not expecting her to know how to play the piano at all.

Following that, he focused his attention and began to sing. Neither had the two rehearsed the song or partnered up for a duet and yet their chemistry was undeniable. As Blake looked over at Elspeth in the black dress with the microphone in his hand, many loved that scene!

In the meantime, Ophelia was beaming. “I didn’t expect Elspeth to be this good at the piano. It seems like she should be above Grade Eight. Plus, they look good together, with one singing and the other playing!”

Despite her words, her heart was filled with hatred. This stadium was the property of Fleming Group, so it was easy for her to tamper with the lucky draw session. Her original plan was to have Elspeth make a fool of herself on stage, yet she did not expect this...

While listening to her words, Callum's eyes were once again fixed on Elspeth. Her wavy hair was casually let down and she looked mysterious yet stunning under the bright light, which made him curious to know more about her.

Yet, for some reason, she and Blake standing together on stage became an eyesore to him. Do they look good together? I think not.

After the song ended, the crowd applauded. Then, Elspeth went to the bathroom after leaving the stage and she was met with a woman in brown dress at the entrance.

The woman was wearing a mask, which covered her face, but she exuded an elegant and noble temperament, just like what one would find in the wife of a rich man.

"You're Elspeth, am I right? I really like your piano piece. This is for you."

While saying that, the woman gave her a delicately wrapped-up tulip, which stunned her. She then received the flowers in confusion. "Do you know me?"

"No, I don't. I just really liked your performance. I'll be leaving now. Goodbye." The woman turned around and her eyes were filled with obvious sadness.

Meanwhile, Elspeth was still frozen in her spot. As she looked at the bouquet, a strange feeling began to arise inside her.

Two hours later, the concert ended. Elspeth, Ophelia, and the other Winthrops left together while Theodore and Margot were still at the Winthrop Residence, preparing for their son's birthday dinner.

After the candles were blown out, everyone brought out their prepared gifts.

Although they were a wealthy and noble family, the atmosphere at the Winthrop Residence showed that they were a close and harmonious family. Meanwhile, Elspeth also calmly took out the gift she had prepared.

Thanking all of them, Blake began unboxing his presents. There were villa ownership certificates, expensive watches, yachts, and many other luxurious things.

When it was Elspeth's turn, she gave him a box that was neither big nor small. Everyone knew that she did not buy anything today and assumed that she might have just chosen a random item for a gift.

As such, Blake half-heartedly opened it but was instantly shocked.

It was a microphone from the brand Lare and the only one produced in the world. This microphone had previously appeared at an auction, but it was bought by a mysterious person for ten million. Since he had missed the auction, the microphone had been on his mind for a very long time and he tried all kinds of ways to buy it off that person at a higher price, but he never found the buyer.

Feeling doubtful, he asked, "Is this fake?" However, he knew at a glance that this was not a replica! With an excited tone, he confirmed with her. "My gosh, Elspeth. Is this really for me?"

Elspeth nodded. It's just a microphone. What's there to be so excited about? Ignorant brat.

"Where did you get this?" Blake asked curiously.

“I’m good at playing the piano, and the person who bought it knows me and gave it to me, hoping that I would join the entertainment industry someday. But, as you know, I can’t sing, so I’m giving it to you.”

After casually making up a reason, she continued, “Happy birthday. I’m worn out, so I’ll head upstairs and rest.”

Everyone was, once again, shocked by her. It seemed like all their presents were not as close to Blake’s heart as hers was. It was also then that the others began to see Elspeth in a new light. At first, they thought she was all looks, no talent, and uneducated. However, after spending these few days together, they found that she seemed different from what they had imagined.

Chapter 14

Elspeth woke up early the following day because she had to spend the day with Arthur, who was a doctor and Hamilton Hospital’s director. All five of the Winthrop brothers seemed excellent because Arthur was already a director at such a young age.

Despite his gentle and elegant appearance, Elspeth did not get to talk much with him ever since she moved to Winthrop Residence as he was not much of a talker.

The two drove a car to the hospital.

“I have two operations today and will be busy. You can stay in my office or go out if you’re bored, but remember to bring the bodyguards along.”

Elspeth nodded. After a whole morning of playing games, Arthur still had not finished his operations. Since she was too bored inside the office, she left the hospital and went for a stroll. When she returned home late at night, she still did not see him even until the next day, which was Max’s turn.

He was the youngest of all and still a college student. As the driver was on leave today and Callum just happened to pass by Max's school on his way to the company, the three finished breakfast and left the villa together.

Along the way, only Max's surprised voice could be heard inside the car. "Yo, sh*t. Callum, I just got the news that someone beat your record at Death Canyon yesterday."

The Death Canyon was a well-known car race track and Callum set the fastest time there in five minutes and thirty-two seconds. For that very achievement, no words could describe how much Max admired his eldest brother! Yet, now, someone actually broke that record!

Hearing the news, the man slightly raised an eyebrow.

"Callum, it was a woman! Unfortunately, she was wearing a helmet, so no one could see what she looked like."

The drowsy Elspeth was not participating in the conversation while Max at the front was busy chattering about how he wanted to find out who that woman was. Despite his investigation, he could not get his hands on her information.

Before they arrived at his college, Max changed the topic and turned to Elspeth. "Hey, country bumpkin. Have you taken a fancy to Blake?"

Hearing him call her 'country bumpkin' made her a little annoyed. "What makes your tiny brain think so?"

"You gave him such an expensive mic without batting an eyelid. Don't tell me you're his fan. Sh*t. I guess all women love celebrities."

Feeling speechless, she rolled her eyes and alighted from the car, not intending to argue with the idiot. Meanwhile, Callum's hands were tightening on the steering wheel. Does she really like Blake?

"Callum, I'm getting off now. Oh, right. You've got better connections, so can you help me find out who that woman is?"

Max, a race car fanatic, now had a new idol. She must be an elegant and pretty young lady. That's so cool!

Not bothering with his request, Callum reminded him instead, "Look after her."

"Man. No one's gonna come for her," Max complained while descending the car.

As colleges tend to have fewer restrictions, no one cared that Elspeth sat in Max's class. However, she felt that someone was watching her wherever she went. After all, the Winthrops had just announced that she would be engaged to one of their five sons, so she was the star of the show no matter where she was.

After attending one class session, she felt bored and heard a few young women saying, "Does she like Max? Jeez. How shameless of her. Why doesn't she look in the mirror and see how old she is?"

Elspeth was speechless. I'm only twenty years old, for heaven's sake! What's more, who spread the rumor that I like Max?

Feeling at a loss for words, she rose to her feet and went into the bathroom, but she was blocked just as she was walking out.

Standing in her way, a few young women in uniform stopped her while the one in the lead glared at her, asking, "Do you like Max Winthrop?"

“No, I don’t.”

“Ha. Elspeth, Max is the most handsome guy in our school. Why don’t you look at yourself and see if you’re worthy of him?”

Hearing those words made Elspeth even more speechless. Can’t these women understand words? I’ve already said I don’t like him!!

Chapter 15

“Oh, really? Who are you, then? Does Max know who you are? Are you worthy of him?”

The young woman’s expression froze, but it quickly turned into a sneer. “How dare you come to school with Max! Girls, let’s show her what we got.”

As soon as Max found out that Elspeth was cornered in the bathroom, he felt a little reluctant to head over. If it had not been for his father’s orders, he would not have cared about her safety at all! However, he was shocked when he arrived at the bathroom.

Sheila Lewson and her friends were school bullies who loved bullying others because they came from prominent families, but at this moment, they were running out of the bathroom with their tails between their legs. Some even had slap marks on their faces with messy, wet hair.

This very sight made Max’s lips twitch. Then, he saw Elspeth exiting the bathroom casually. She was still wearing the black t-shirt from this morning with her hair tied up in a ponytail, which made her look young and in high spirits. However, most importantly, she looked like she was unaffected.

“They…” He cast a glance at the fleeing Sheila and her companions.

“They were about to hit me, but I managed to beat them up first.”

According to his knowledge, Sheila was a trained fighter!

Elspeth added, “I didn’t expect that you’d have so many admirers despite being an average Joe. It seems like they’re not only dumb but also have bad taste in men.”

Hearing that remark, Max was furious. I shouldn’t have bothered with this woman!

For the rest of the day, no one came to bother her. The last session for today was physical education class and she watched the guys playing basketball while sitting on the bleachers.

A while later, she felt a vague pain in her stomach and frowned slightly. Oh no. I forgot to take note of the date...

She was not afraid of anything, except for her menstrual cycle as the pain was excruciating! While having one hand on her stomach, she slowly got up and left the basketball court for the convenience store outside of the school gates. However, she failed to notice that a few people were trailing behind her...

Two hours later, Callum had finished his work when his assistant came into his office. "Mr. Winthrop, I found it. The person who broke your record at Death Canyon last night was Miss Lynwood."

"Who did you just say?" He raised his eyes to look at the assistant.

"It was Elspeth Lynwood."

Callum was usually very calm when facing everything, but he actually felt surprised this time. It was Elspeth? Wasn't she with Arthur the whole day yesterday?

Since his hobby was racing, he was also curious about who had broken his record, which he had defended for a year. Therefore, he asked his assistant to investigate this matter. To his surprise, the results he got were beyond his expectations. Elspeth Lynwood. This woman is so mysterious. A smile flashed across his eyes, but the phone on his table suddenly rang.

"Callum, something bad happened. Elspeth is missing!" Max only found out about her disappearance after he finished playing basketball. She was not picking up her phone and she was also missing from home upon being notified by the servants. Since he was afraid of telling Theodore, he decided to call his eldest brother for help.

When Callum heard the news, his face fell.

Chapter 16

"Max, call the cops. Leave the rest to me."

The scene from the night at the bar appeared in Callum's head. He remembered how Elspeth had swiftly smashed the wine bottle into that man's head and that immediately calmed his mind. At least, I know she can protect herself.

"Alright, Callum."

Knowing his brother's swift and decisive nature, Max nodded and ran out despite secretly complaining that Elspeth was a troublemaker.

After Callum arrived at the college, he had someone pull out the surveillance footage from inside the campus and at the school gates. Finally, he saw Elspeth's appearance at 5.00PM.

She entered the convenience store and left with a black plastic bag before heading straight for the public bathroom. There was a blue figure tailing her from a distance. In other words, the last place Elspeth went before she disappeared was the public bathroom.

His eyes darkened as he led a group of people straight toward the public bathroom.

It was already 6.00PM, so there were not many people passing by here. When Callum and the others approached the place, they could hear the vicious laughter of a woman coming from inside the bathroom. "Hahaha. Why aren't you fighting back anymore? Weren't you full of strength earlier? Why don't you continue beating me up? You're such a shameless woman. How could you seduce Blake? I'm going to scratch your face off!"

When Callum heard the woman calling out his brother's name, he was sure that the woman was most likely one of Blake's crazy fans.

"Ugh..." A weak woman's groan sounded.

After listening to the voices, Callum could tell that there were about three people inside, being two men and one woman. Then, he mentally prepared himself. "Let's head in."

Once the bodyguard received his orders, he kicked the door open.

The woman stopped laughing and looked at Callum with a displeased expression.

"What are you? How dare you disturb my good time!"

He raised his eyes, swept his gaze over the woman, and boomed, “How dare you beat up someone under the Winthrop Family’s protection!”

Seeing the dignified man before them, one of the bullies in the back stammered, “T-That looks like the eldest son of the Winthrop Family, Callum!”

Anyone who had seen the news would have recognized the man who frequently gave speeches there. On the other hand, there was a group of strong bodyguards standing behind him. In comparison to them, the two bullies seemed like weak chicks.

Callum then raised his hand, which his assistant immediately understood and ordered the bodyguards to capture the three.

When the woman saw this scene, her eyes, which were filled with lunacy, immediately recovered into sanity. She made the decision to kidnap Elspeth on impulse, but she did not calculate the consequences of her action, which she clearly could not afford.

“I’m sorry, Mr. Winthrop. I-I was impulsive.”

However, Callum merely replied in his cold and emotionless voice, “Leave that for the jury.”

One of the bullies kneeled on the ground. “I’m sorry, Mr. Winthrop. I was blind and accidentally offended Miss Lynwood. Please spare us!”

“Tell that to the cops.” He continued to ignore their pleas before carrying Elspeth in his arms.

At that moment, the police sirens sounded and the three fell limp on the ground with pale faces.

Once the police brought the three away, only Max, who only just rushed over, and Callum, who had Elspeth in his arms, remained.

“This woman is so much trouble. She must’ve done it on purpose to make our lives miserable!” Max was frustrated at the thought of getting a scolding from his father upon his return home.

“Alright, Max. That’s enough. Let’s bring her to the hospital.”

“You can bring her there yourself. I’m not going!” After saying that, he marched away in anger.

Meanwhile, Callum looked down at the heavily injured Elspeth, who seemed to be in pain, and brought her to the hospital.

Relying on his relationship with Arthur, he brought her directly to his office. Then, Arthur carefully checked on her condition and frowned. “What’s the matter with her? Is she severely injured?”

Seeing her all curled up in pain, Callum wore a serious expression.

“She suffered many blows to her body and has a slight concussion.” Arthur finished his words and coughed lightly. “But she’s on her menstrual cycle and has severe cramps, so that explains why she’s in so much pain.”

As soon as Callum heard the words ‘menstrual cycle’, the tips of his ears turned red, but he still maintained a stoic face. “Is there any way to lessen her pain?”

Sticking both hands into his pocket, Arthur shrugged. “The only possible way is for her to bear the pain. Alright. I have another operation pending, so you stay with her for now and remember to help her with her admission to the hospital. Her wounds would take some time to heal.” Subsequently, he pushed the door open and left, plunging the room into immediate silence.

“Water...” While slowly opening her eyes, Elspeth still had her hand covering her stomach as she weakly requested, “I need some water.”

Once Callum left, her phone began to ring. “Elspeth, are you alright? I heard you were admitted to the hospital.” Harper’s voice sounded anxious and worried.

Feeling perplexed, she asked, “How did you know about it?”

“Didn’t you see the posts on Facebook? You were kidnapped by Blake’s crazy fan. Then, the paparazzi caught Callum saving you and carrying you to the hospital. The internet is literally filled with news about you and Callum now.”

Elspeth browsed the web, and just like Harper said, this matter had dominated the top three on the hottest news list.

Among the lines were Callum being worried for his fiancé and the two were actually having an underground relationship. On top of that, the netizens even created a ship name, Calysie, for them.

“Get someone to remove these hottest news articles. Also, you have to manage the company on your own for a few days, but you can call me whenever there’s a problem.”

“I understand.” Then, Harper added hatefully, “By the way, I’ve already dealt with the crazy fan privately. She won’t be able to leave her metal cage for the rest of her life.”

Elspeth hummed a reply, but she felt that this incident was not as simple as she thought.

“Also, Winthrop Group wants to establish cooperation with us and it’s very profitable, but he has one condition—to meet the president of Azure Corporation.”

Frowning, she asked, “He demanded to meet me?”

“I know it’s inconvenient for you, so I declined the cooperation and said there would be another chance in the future.”

“Very good.” Elspeth hung up and smiled. He wants to meet me? Callum, we still have a long way to go.

Chapter 17

Early in the following day, Callum appeared in the ward again.

“I feel flattered that the workaholic, Mr. Callum Winthrop, has disregarded his work just to visit me.” With a smile, Elspeth peeled off another wedge of orange. “The fruits are sweet. Would you like some?” After saying that, she plucked a banana and gave it to him.

Not caring about her outstretched hand, he looked at her with cold eyes. “My dad made me do this. Don’t overthink it.”

“You don’t want it? Fine.”

“I have a question for you.” With pursed lips, he thought about it for a moment and could not help but ask, “You actually broke my record at Death Canyon. How did a small-town girl like you get started on racing?”

This woman is too mysterious. She clearly has an ordinary background, but why does she always do something unexpected?

Elspeth laughed. “It’s just something I do to pass the time. Why do you care?”

Slightly shocked, Callum looked at her relaxed state and let his imagination run wild. Not only is she friends with Harper Summerfield and knows Albert Beischel, she also plays the piano well and even broke the record I set at Death Canyon. This ordinary small-town girl is not ordinary at all.

“Elspeth, I hope you don’t bear any ill intentions.” Those words sounded like a warning, but he could feel a gentle tug at his heart.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

A series of orderly knocks woke him from his thoughts.

After announcing her presence, Ophelia pushed the door open and entered. When she saw the two being alone, jealousy surged inside her, but she maintained her smile and went forward to pull Elspeth’s hand. “Why do you look so pale? Are you badly hurt?”

Her grip was very tight and Elspeth smiled while looking in Callum’s direction. Then, she immediately understood the situation. A woman’s jealousy is so terrifying.

“I’m fine. Also, Miss Fleming, you don’t have to grab my hand so tightly. If I didn’t know better, I’d think you hate me.” She simultaneously pointed out Ophelia’s thoughts upon retrieving her hand.

Ophelia's face immediately fell, but she managed to keep her smile again. "I'm just worried for you. Mr. Winthrop would be devastated if something happened to you."

With a smile on her face, Elspeth retorted, "You haven't even married into the Winthrop Family, yet you're already worried about Mr. Winthrop's feelings. How thoughtful of you."

Isn't she just a pick-me girl? Who doesn't know how to do that?

"Elspeth, you seem to not like me..." While Ophelia spoke, her eyes welled up with tears.

"Miss Fleming, aren't you being a little too presumptuous by saying I don't like you because of a few words I said?" It was rare for her to meet a woman who liked putting on airs like Ophelia.

"I only wanted to visit you, but I didn't expect you to say such hurtful words. I guess I'm bothering you here. I'd better leave." She then stood up and acted like she was about to do so.

Noticing the situation, Callum frowned and criticized, "Elspeth, watch your words. Ophelia is only here to visit you."

"I don't need her to do that. I'm not feeling well, so Mr. Winthrop and Miss Fleming, please don't disturb my rest." Elspeth immediately sent them away so that she would not have to bear the anger.

When Callum noticed her slightly angry countenance, his eyes darkened a little.

“Okay. We’ll be leaving now. Have a good rest, Elspeth.” Since Ophelia wanted to drive them apart so desperately, she hugged his arm and left the room after getting the ‘permission’.

Once the two left and the world was quiet once again, Elspeth found that she could not calm herself down as she suddenly realized that she had forgotten something important.

Only a few people knew that she was at the college with Max, so how did that crazy fan know her exact location and find the perfect time to kidnap her?

A brave thought appeared in her head, so she called to ask the police to question that crazy fan. Soon, the name ‘Ophelia Fleming’ appeared on her phone and her eyes immediately turned ice cold.

Just as she had expected, the person behind this was that pick-me girl! Again and again, you’ve crossed my line, Ophelia. We shall see how this goes.

Days later, Fleming Group inexplicably met with a financial crisis and some of the company’s higher-ups began selling their shares.

Since they could not hold on anymore, they requested the Winthrop Family for help to save their company. Margot was worried about her future daughter-in-law, so she asked Callum to assist her and the Fleming Group’s crisis was finally over.

Due to her family matters, Ophelia did not have the time to visit the hospital and pretend to be nice. In other words, Elspeth could finally get some peace and quiet.

Today, Arthur came to do his rounds and did a checkup on her condition. Subsequently, he removed his stethoscope and grinned. “You made a fast recovery. You can be discharged today.”

“Alright. Thanks.”

“Is Callum not coming today?”

Thanks to the Fleming Group’s crisis, he had not visited her for days nor was she not looking forward to it either. She continued to eat her breakfast while casually replying, “That’s his business. You’ve asked the wrong person.”

Not expecting the answer, Arthur chuckled and changed the topic. “So, after five compulsory dates with us, who are you most satisfied with?”

With a raised eyebrow, she laughed. “Well, who do you want me to say?”

She speaks so well-roundedly. This is not going to be easy. Then, he smiled amicably and responded, “Since you’ve put it that way, I won’t bombard you with any more questions. After all, I’m not interested in you.” After saying that, he turned around and left.

By the time it was afternoon, Callum still had not shown up, so Elspeth discharged herself and rode the Winthrops’ car back home. Since her body was almost fully healed and staying home all day was not an ideal option, Theodore suggested letting her work at Winthrop Group, which received different responses.

Max’s reaction was the loudest. He glanced at Elspeth, who was calmly drinking tea on the couch, and reasoned, “She’s just a woman from a small town. How can she possibly know how to run a company? Dad, you’re overestimating her!”

“Do you think you can, then?” Elspeth found it funny to see him acting so irritated.

“The bar is low. Of course, I’d be better than you in any way!”

Meanwhile, Callum remained silent as he watched the scenario. He had a feeling that she would bring him some sort of surprise.

Theodore had a stern expression as he looked at Max with eyes filled with displeasure. “Even though she came from a small town, you shouldn’t throw sarcastic remarks at her. There’s no dinner for you tonight. Head back to your room and reflect on what you’ve done!”

On the other hand, since Blake had accepted her microphone, he was naturally nicer to her. He even helped put in a good word for her. “I think we should let her give it a try. Otherwise, she’d only be staying at home all day, which is quite boring.”

It was then that Callum finally spoke up, “Let her try as an intern. If she can’t do it well, we’ll find something else for her.”

The final decision had been made and nothing could change that decision.

Chapter 18

“Callum!” As much as Max was furious, Callum was still the one who established Winthrop Group, so he did not have a say in this situation and could only clench his fists in anger.

Meanwhile, Elspeth looked at Max’s angry expression and smiled casually. “Hey, you look like you’re not having it.”

“I don’t know how you managed to convince my father, but you’ll only be bringing trouble to the company. Who knows how you’d sabotage the company as soon as you step foot into it?”

“Don’t be so quick to deny someone.”

Not wanting to argue with a child, she stopped talking after that. It was confirmed that she would be joining the company anyway, so no matter how angry Max was, he could only accept the fact.

Staying true to his words, Callum knocked on Elspeth's door the following morning so that they could head to the company together. It was her first day, so he had arranged for her to join the design department as an ordinary employee.

She smiled and greeted her fellow colleagues. Just as she sat down, a stack of documents was heavily dropped onto her desk before her.

“Alright. These are the things you're going to be working on. Finish them by 12.00PM and email them to me. Don't think you can have it easy just because someone is back—Elspeth?” The ranting Ava Wiley suddenly stopped talking as she was stunned when she saw the familiar, beautiful face before her.

“It's been a while, Ava.”

Elspeth naturally remembered the woman before her. Back then, Ava relied on the fact that her father was the principal and bullied her because the guy she secretly liked had a crush on her; they even fought with each other. After that, Elspeth was expelled and went abroad. It was not until she finished her double major that she returned to the country.

What a small world it was as they met again at this very place. However, the current Elspeth was different from before, yet she was still as stubborn as ever. With a sneer, she looked at Ava's distorted face and laughed. “What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?”

Remembering that she was the supervisor here, Ava regained her confidence and reprimanded, “I'm telling you, I'm your supervisor here, so don't play any tricks with me. I have many ways of chasing you out of here if you don't do your job well!”

Wow. She's already using her position to threaten me.

"Then, you'd better secure your seat tightly." Elspeth laughed.

After she said that, Ava instantly became furious. Not having it, she started taunting and mocking her by revealing events from the past. "Who do you think you are to criticize me? Who knows where you've been since you dropped out of junior high? Who knows? Maybe you've found yourself a sugar daddy. Otherwise, how would you have gotten this job?"

"A sugar daddy?"

Assuming that she had hit Elspeth's sore spot, she continued, "I've heard that you and the security guard, Mr. Beischel, have a close relationship. Maybe... It was him who pulled the strings to let you have this job. You're so disgusting, accepting every man that comes to you. Oh, Elspeth, it's only been a few years, yet you've already stooped so low."

Her rants attracted the other employees' attention and they were all listening intently.

Originally, Elspeth was not bothered by what Ava was saying, but when she heard Albert's name, her gaze immediately turned sharp. "You said I found myself a sugar daddy?"

Noticing that the atmosphere suddenly turned chilly, Ava shivered, but she soon remembered that she was higher in the hierarchy here while Elspeth was merely a mistress with a sugar daddy, so the rage inside her burned again. "What about it? You have the guts to do it, but you don't have the guts to admit it?"

Since Elspeth was taller than Ava, she leaned forward slightly and sneered, "Would Mr. Winthrop throw a fit if he finds out that his future daughter-in-law is called a sugar baby?"

“You... are the Miss Lynwood on the news who’s engaged to a Winthrop son?”

Ava rarely paid attention to the news, so she only knew a little about this from others. Never would she have expected that the one getting engaged to the Winthrop Family would be Elspeth, whom she had looked down on since they were young!

If it was just Elspeth in the picture, Ava could accuse her however she wanted, but if the Winthrop Family was involved, then...

As she thought about their capabilities, she could not help but shiver in fear.

Meanwhile, Elspeth was reluctant to continue reminiscing about the past with her ‘old classmate’, so she concluded without bothering to look at her. “Glad you’re well-informed now, but Miss Wiley, you’re disturbing my work.”

That sentence was the final blow for Ava. Her expression darkened as she opened her mouth to say something, but she could not find any words to do so. She then straightened up and threatened, “You! I’m telling you, even if you’re going to be a part of the Winthrops and have their protection, this company does not accept people with no abilities. Those who can’t contribute will be thrown out of the company!”

Still, Elspeth was unperturbed by her threats and merely smiled. “Okie. We’ll see.”

After glaring down at her, Ava clanked her four-inches-tall high heels and angrily left while conjuring up a plan to vent her anger.

By 11.00AM, Elspeth had sent all the files to her an hour before the deadline, but they were soon returned to her with no comments and only one simple word, ‘Redo’.

What a textbook approach to vent your anger, Ava.

She was very confident in her proposal, so she sent it back to her without editing anything. Of course, it was returned to her yet again. By now, she did not want to communicate with Ava anymore, so she brought her proposal and went straight to the president's office.

Callum was working when he saw her enter. "What's the matter?" he asked coldly.

Placing her proposal before him, Elspeth smiled and rested her chin on her hands.

"Callum, the director of your department thinks my proposal isn't good enough. Why don't you have a look at it yourself?"

She was wearing a formal suit with a low collar, so the vague view of her figure made him afraid to gaze straight at her when she leaned forward.

His pupils suddenly darkened as he looked away from her and focused on the proposal on his table. "Alright, I'll take a look."

While casually flipping through it, his eyes gradually brightened up as he skimmed through the content. The ideas inside were unconventional and utilized clever ways to achieve their goals. Not only that, there were also some views which he shared with her. After he finished, he looked at her and asked, "Is this the task Ava assigned to you?"

"Yeap." She nodded with a smile.

He then notified his assistant to get Ava. When she arrived and saw Elspeth, she glared at her before asking carefully, "Mr. Winthrop, what's the matter?"

Callum questioned her in a stern tone, "Is this the task you assigned to a newbie?"

Trembling, she replied, "Mr. Winthrop, I..."

“This is the most important proposal for this season, yet you assigned it to a newbie just to make things difficult for her? Ava, do you have any idea what you’ve just done?”

Though he was not one who lost his temper often, Ava, however, could feel the coldness in his voice today and became so terrified that she started shivering.

“I’ll deduct two months’ worth of your salary.”

As much as she was exasperated by that decision, she could not voice out anything but complained secretly. Truth be told, she wanted to slap the smirk off Elspeth’s face so badly.

After she left, Callum resumed his attention to Elspeth.

“Mr. Winthrop, you’re so impartial in giving out punishments and rewards.” She was not very satisfied with the results, but it was enough to teach Ava a lesson for the time being.

Looking at her giddy face, he was lost in his thoughts. Another surprise... Elspeth, you have not disappointed me thus far.

Chapter 19

Seeing that Elspeth had done such a good job, Callum decided to assign the project to her.

For the last two days after Ava received her punishment, she would run away with her tail between her legs whenever she saw Elspeth, but her gloomy eyes always made Elspeth feel like she was devising something big.

At the pantry, Elspeth coincidentally bumped into Edmund beside the coffee machine. He batted his eyes at her and raised an eyebrow. “I heard that Callum actually punished Ava for you. Seems like you’re quite important to him.”

Hearing the sarcasm in his tone, she kept her cool despite being bothered by it. “What’s the matter, Mr. Edmund? Are you sad that your brother gave me more love than he’s ever had in his life toward you?”

Edmund’s expression froze for a moment. “Miss Lynwood, you’re quite the jokester.”

“Weren’t you the one who started it? I’m just giving you a taste of your own medication.” Elspeth calmly brewed herself a cup of coffee. When it came to being sharp-tongued, she had never lost the upper hand.

“You’re fun, Miss Lynwood. It’s no wonder why you got special treatment from that workaholic, Callum.” Though he still had a smile on his face, the words he spoke were not very pleasant to the ear.

“Thank you, but you’re talking a little too much.” She was the first ever to state he was nosy, as well as the first to win against him.

Now that he was at a disadvantage, his expression fell. “Alright. I won’t disturb your coffee break.” Then, he left with a cup of coffee while Elspeth watched his back, seemingly lost in thought.

On a positive note, Winthrop Group’s business partner appreciated Elspeth’s proposal and they made a hefty profit this season, so the company decided to hold a banquet to celebrate the company’s development.

Although Callum knew Elspeth was not the country bumpkin they thought she was, for the sake of the Winthrop Family, he still decided to bring her to purchase an evening dress.

Having learned from her experience last time, she chose a dress she liked and left it to him for checkout. “Callum, I like this green one. Thank you.”

When Callum looked at the sacramento green wavy gown that was decorated with turquoise, he shook his head at the bright and chic dress. “I think this looks better on you.” He then reached into a rack of clothes and pulled out a wine-red long gown. The gown’s hemline was styled in a rose pattern and bright diamonds embedded diagonally on one side.

“Callum, you can just tell me if you don’t like me. Why let me wear such a seductive dress instead?” Elspeth had never worn a dress as red as this one because her preferred style of clothing was clean and simple.

Hearing her doubt with his fashion taste, he felt gloomy. “We wouldn’t be here shopping right now if I dislike you.”

Elsbeth’s mood mellowed out as she looked at Callum’s serious expression and taunted, “So, you’re seriously helping me out with an evening dress? Ooh, Callum. Don’t tell me that you’ve developed feelings for me. Otherwise, why would you care so much about me?”

“You’re in your head,” he said while tossing the dress into her arms.

“Gosh, you’re so boring.” After shrugging her shoulders, she brought the clothes into the fitting room. Minutes later, following the creaking sound of the door opening, a wine-red figure appeared right before him.

Since Elspeth had tied her hair up for easier dress fitting, it naturally revealed her slim neck. The extreme fairness of her skin and the seductive red of her dress accentuated her aura as it filled the space.

Despite having seen countless beauty, Callum was still stupified by her appearance.

“Stunned?” She wore a mischievous smile as she stretched out her hand and waved it before the man’s face.

Calmly withdrawing his gaze, he replied, “I just find it perplexing that the designer of our proposal has a problem knowing what clothing suits her.” His words were obviously implying that she did not have taste in fashion.

“Jeez. Why are both of you so sharp-tongued?” She rolled her eyes resignedly while complaining.

Hearing that, Callum’s eyes fell on her again while asking curiously, “What did he say to you?”

“It was nothing. We bumped into each other and chatted a little, but you Winthrops tend to say hurtful words all the time. It’s like I’m in a diss battle simulation or something.”

Finding her description hilarious, Callum looked at her resigned expression and explained, “Edmund has always been like that. You’ll learn to get used to it, so don’t mind him.”

“You know what? I’ll take this. There’s still half an hour before the banquet starts, so let’s not waste any more time.”

“Sure.”

The two returned to the company together and found the entrance already swarmed with reporters. When the reporters saw them, they quickly surrounded the two.

“Are the rumors true? That you guys secretly fancy each other?”

“Is ‘Calysie’ real?”

“Can the two of you give a statement about that?”

...

Callum’s cold gaze swept across the crowd, silencing everyone. Then, he took advantage of that brief moment and led Elspeth into the company.

Though it was said to be a banquet, it was more appropriately described as a small business gathering. Callum was the star of the show, so no matter where he was, he would be surrounded by a group of people, trying to get him to share his experience.

Meanwhile, Elspeth secretly slipped away to hide in a corner to rest as she began enjoying the desserts on the table. She had not been sitting long when Ava walked over to her alluringly. “Hey, isn’t this our protagonist today, Elspeth Lynwood? Why aren’t you with Mr. Winthrop?”

Although her words sounded sarcastic, there was obvious jealousy in her eyes. Even a country bumpkin like her has the chance to become Mr. Winthrop’s fiancé, so why can’t I have a chance too?

“Miss Wiley, how’s your life been without any salary?” Elspeth did not bother much about her comment and casually expressed her ‘concern’.

Just as Ava recalled that incident, she shot Elspeth a dirty look. “Elspeth, don’t you celebrate too early. Ophelia grew up with Callum and she’s the only one the Winthrops will recognize as his wife. You’re just an orphan, so you’re not worthy of marrying such an excellent man!”

Shaking her head, Elspeth retorted, “I never said I was going to marry Callum. What’s more, you’re talking as if you could do better than me!”

“You!”

“All five of them are excellent in their own fields, so are you implying that besides Callum, the rest of them aren’t as good?” She attacked with pinpoint precision after finding the flaw in her words, making Ava stammer and unable to respond.

Knowing that Elspeth was good with words, Ava stopped arguing with her. She then thought about her plan and smiled wickedly. “Stop picking up fights with me. I’m telling you. You’re going to get thrown out of here sooner or later!”

“I stand by my words. If you can, give it a try.” Elspeth smirked.

Knowing that she could not win against Elspeth, Ava had no choice but to leave the scene in defeat.

When it was time for the main event, Callum got on stage and began to announce their performance for this season. Suddenly, an unfriendly voice came from a corner.

“I think that there’s a problem with this season’s performance!”

Once those words were out, everyone was shocked and the surrounding area became silent.

Callum looked over and without any emotion, he asked in his deep voice, “What are you trying to say?”

When Ava heard his question, she immediately stood up. “I’m making a claim that Elspeth has stolen someone else’s proposal!”

Chapter 20

“Do you have any proof that she plagiarized someone else’s work?”

Gritting her teeth, Ava submitted the evidence she had compiled while Elspeth narrowed her eyes at the scene. So, this is her plan...

“The creativity of this design comes from Anny’s work. She’s a famous college student from abroad. This woman who came from the countryside clearly plagiarized her work!”

One was from a prestigious college while the other was a country bumpkin, so everyone could distinguish the situation at this point.

“That’s some acting skill Elspeth has!”

“It’s fine if she can’t do it, but why does she have to plagiarize?”

“How can someone like her stay in the company?”

Discussions broke out throughout the room, but Callum avoided everyone’s gaze and looked at the accused in question. “Elspeth, do you have anything to say for yourself?”

Looking into those smiling eyes, he had an inexplicable sense of calmness. It was as if he was sure that she had done nothing wrong in this matter. Still, he wanted to hear her argument before anything.

Smiling, she nodded. “You’re right. I did borrow some inspiration, but I didn’t expect you to be so meticulous.”

Ava thought she was nearing success and started speaking without any restraint, “Mr. Winthrop, not only is this country bumpkin free-riding, she plagiarized someone else’s work! Someone like her shouldn’t stay in the company, so I suggest that you fire her!”

Meanwhile, Callum lightly furrowed his brows while waiting for Elspeth to speak.

“Then, what if... I’m Anny?”

That had Ava bursting out in laughter. “You’re Anny? Stop joking, Elspeth. If you’re Anny, I’ll immediately tender my resignation and hand over my position to you!” How could Anny, the genius who finished her double major at an early age, be willing to become an ordinary employee after returning from her studies?

“Are you sure about that?” Elspeth asked slowly.

Feeling that she had the upper hand, Ava raised her chin and confirmed, “Yes, I’m positive!”

After that, Elspeth went on stage, took out her phone to connect it to the big screen, and made a video call. Seconds later, a kind-looking, old foreigner appeared on the screen. That old man was none other than Professor Andrew, who had won two Nobel Prizes!

How did Elspeth know such a person?

“Professor, I’m sorry to disturb you in such a way.” Elspeth smiled to show her apology.

On the other hand, Professor Andrew did not seem to mind as he became full of smiles after seeing her face. “Anny, it’s been a long while since you last contacted me. I’m so delighted to receive your call that I no longer feel like doing my experiments.”

“Oh, no, Professor. Your experiments need you!”

While the two were happily chatting in Edanian, the crowd went silent and no one dared to make a sound. Those who were able to enter Winthrop Group were basically graduates from prestigious colleges, so they were able to understand most of what the two were conversing about.

However, the thing they found most difficult to understand was not the conversation but the fact that Elspeth knew such a person. Also, from how Professor Andrew had greeted her, she was indeed Anny!

At that moment, Ava's victorious mood instantly collapsed as she looked disbelievingly at the big screen. Looking at Elspeth, she felt herself crumbling into insanity. I lost. Completely.

Soon, Elspeth hung up the phone and glanced at the pale Ava with a smirk. "Do tell me, Ava. Am I plagiarizing if I'm inspired by my own creation?"

Ava had her mouth agape, but she could not utter a word at all.

On the other hand, the word 'surprise' was not enough to describe the feeling Callum had right now. Indeed, this woman will always bring me unexpected surprises.

"Ava Wiley, head to the finance department tonight to receive your salary and leave." Callum despised having such arrogant people like Ava in the company. At last, he sealed her fate with one single sentence.

Now that the farce had ended, he decided to send Elspeth home, but she rejected his offer as she had something even more important to do. She came out of the door and ascended a car, which Harper had been waiting inside for a long time. "Elspeth, how's your condition?"

She chuckled. "I've been alright for a while now. Let's hurry up or we won't make it before it ends."

Nodding, Harper stomped on the accelerator and the car sped off.

The place they were heading to was an underground black market and there would be a high-tech computer being auctioned there tonight. It was said that the computer was left by the world's best hacker and it was the only one of its kind.

She enjoyed tinkering with such things, so she needed to get that computer.

Arriving at the scene, they were lucky enough to make it before the last item was presented—the computer. The starting bid for it was ten million, which received a lot of responses from the crowd. Meanwhile, Elspeth stayed patient and waited until there were lesser bidders before starting her bid.

“A hundred and twenty million. Would anyone like to add to the bid?”

Harper slowly raised the paddle. “One hundred and thirty million.”

“A hundred and thirty million. Any more? A hundred and thirty million, once. A hundred and thirty million, twice. A hundred—”

“Two hundred million.”

The smile on Elspeth's face froze and she looked over in the distance to see a very familiar figure. Unfortunately, there were many with glasses at the scene, so it was difficult for her to distinguish who it was.

“Three hundred million.” Harper continued to bid.

Three hundred million for a computer was slightly exaggerated, so the others stopped adding to the bid, except for that unfamiliar man with spectacles. He raised his paddle and said, “Four hundred million.”

Four hundred million? Turning to face Elspeth, Harper asked if she wanted to increase the price, but she shook her head and surrendered. “Let that person have it.”

With a tap of the mallet, he no longer raised his paddle and the computer now officially belonged to the other person. After the auction, he was about to send Elspeth home when they were blocked by a group of men as they arrived at the entrance.

The man in the lead was a man with blonde hair, blue eyes, and a pair of glasses. He was manifesting a temperament that indicated that he was no ordinary man. “Elspeth, it’s been a while.”

Even with the glasses on, Elspeth could recognize who it was at a glance. She suddenly called out in surprise, “Mark! Why are you in Damoria?”

They learned from the same master and were both top hackers.

Chuckling, Mark Griffin replied, “I’m here to get this computer. Have you forgotten? It’s your birthday in two days. I know this is right up your alley, so I came all the way to Chars just to get it.”

“How long will you be staying here?”

“Not long. I’m leaving tomorrow. I was planning to mail this to you, but it seems like I can just give it to you now.”

Feeling frustrated, Elspeth answered, “If I had known it was you, I wouldn’t have competed for it. It’s a waste of all that money.”

Mark caressed her head. “It’s alright. It’s just four hundred million. All that matters is that you’re happy.”

Meanwhile, a figure moved in the corner, but it quickly disappeared. The two spent some time chatting until Mark had to leave to catch his plane, so Elspeth returned to the Winthrop Residence.

Early the following day, Elspeth came downstairs for breakfast and was met with strange gazes from everyone.

Max snorted. “How surprising. You’re actually smart.”

She took a seat and ignored his sarcastic remark.

“Alright, stop it.” Theodore glared at Max and cleared his throat. “Since today’s the weekend, I’ve decided that we’re going hiking as a family.”

Pfft! Everyone on the scene dropped their jaws in shock.