Chapter 51 More Than Qualified to Be a Judge

It was out of Eugene's expectations. However, he found that it made sense too—with her abilities, she was more than qualified to be a judge. There were a total of five judges, and Olivia sat right in the middle. After sitting down, she playfully smiled at him when she noticed that he was still watching her. In response, the corners of his lips naturally lifted too.

Curtis nearly cried tears of joy upon seeing the smile on the president's face. Recently, Eugene rarely smiled. Occasionally, he even became distracted and lost focus during work. I was right to ask him to come and watch the finals of the competition.

At that moment, the host on the stage began his opening speech. "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished leaders, and esteemed guests. Thank you all for taking the time to attend the 2019 Glamor Vogue Grand Fashion Design Competition! I am the host for today, Seth White." As soon as those words sounded, a round of applause rang out.

Then, the host smiled and continued, "This competition has lasted for three months, from the day we started accepting registrations to the day of the semi-finals. Among the thousands of works that we received, only the top ten works that were rated the most popular and the best-looking were selected! Today, those designs have been transformed into ready-to-wear outfits! And, we are going to showcase each and every outfit today! Now, allow me to explain the scoring rules: the judges hold a total of 8 points, including 3 points for design originality and creativity, 3 points for the presentation and showmanship, and another 3 points for attention to detail and craftsmanship. Last but not least, we have 2 points for popularity, which will be decided by our audience. Take a look at the voting device in your hands; you can vote for any of your favorite designs by the designers! With this, I officially announce the start of the 2019 Glamor Vogue Grand Fashion Design Competition! Let us welcome the first of our designers on stage! Welcome, Jasmine Thomson!"

After the host got off the stage, the surrounding lights dimmed suddenly, leaving only the U-shaped stage lights on. Then, four girls walked out, one after the other, as soothing music played softly in the background. They didn't walk as quickly as they normally would on the runway. Instead, they took their time—almost as if they had to think before taking the next step.

Jasmine Thomson's designs were bold and bright. Her four designs utilized four colors and portrayed a good sense of depth. Olivia studied the models on stage without blinking, feeling somewhat pleased. Although the design had some flaws which interrupted the flow of the works, the overall creativity was good.

The presentation of the four outfits took around ten minutes. After that, the host invited Jasmine onstage. When Jasmine came onto the stage, she went through the routine of bowing, greeting the judges, expressing her gratitude, and introducing herself. During this entire spiel, she didn't even dare to lift her head to look at the judges.

It wasn't until she heard Olivia's voice, "Tell me about the concept behind your four designs." Then, she raised her head in confusion. When she saw Olivia, she was so shocked that she froze in place. Isn't that Anna's sister? Isn't she participating in the competition? Why is she a judge?

Upon seeing her standing there in a daze, the host kindly reminded her, "Miss Thomson, please tell us about the concept behind your designs."

At that moment, Jasmine panicked as she began to explain, "I-I'm from the north. In the north, the four seasons are very distinct, and that became the inspiration for my designs. I used light green to signify spring, hoping to make people slow down their pace in life, ease up on the pressure of competition, and pay more attention to the essence of life..."

Olivia nodded while listening to her introduction. "Okay, that's good. Your ideas and concepts are good. Still, your designs are a little rough on the edges. There is room for improvement in your designs."

Jasmine bowed. "Thank you."

Following that, the host said, "Judges, please score her!"

Jasmine clenched her fists nervously, secretly regretting her rash actions just now. So many people went over during the commotion, but only I blabbered the most. Will this judge give me grief out of spite? Thus, she waited anxiously with a bitter expression.

Of the five judges, Olivia gave a score of 7.5 while the other four judges gave a score of either 7 or 7.5. Combining those scores with the results of the popularity vote, Jasmine received an overa

Chapter 52 What Would Come, Would Come

Jasmine had not expected to score so high. She was so stunned that she blanked out for a moment. I can't believe she not only did not give me grief out of spite, but she also gave me such a high score.

Thus, she gave a deep bow. Her bow was mainly to show her gratitude toward Olivia for being fair and not holding any grudges against her

Afterward, the live show continued.

There were a total of ten designers, and Olivia had already seen nine of them. Even so, she had yet to see Anna's design.

She was quite curious about what kind of designs Anna could come up with. However, she didn't know what Anna was trying to do after pulling that farce today. Therefore, she was feeling rather anxious about it.

Finally, she finished scoring nine of the designers. Then, she massaged her temples. After watching the runway for so long, her eyes were beginning to tire.

Eugene had been watching Olivia the entire time. He didn't even spare a single glance at the fashion show going on. Listening to the suggestions and opinions she gave those designers, he found his perception of her professionalism increasing the more he listened.

He, who usually couldn't bear staying at gatherings for more than an hour, had stayed in his seat for nearly two hours now.

Meanwhile, the host smiled again and introduced the final designer, "Next, let us welcome our last designer, Anna Maxwell, and her design team! Their works have been well-received among the audience and have taken the top spot among the rankings! Now, let us welcome them onstage!"

After that, a gentle melody played by a harp sounded throughout the front hall, matching perfectly with the models who came walking out slowly.

The four models wore four different styles of dresses, each incorporating the four gentlemen of the seasons: the plum blossom, the orchid, the bamboo, and the chrysanthemum. The colors and designs of each outfit were distinct and stood apart from each other—they were elegant and noble whilst still incorporating the cultural heritage of the country.

As soon as they appeared on stage, it gave off a dazzling feeling.

When Eugene heard Anna's name, he scowled. Why is she here too?

However, his expression changed completely when he saw the models walking out. Then, he took out his phone and looked through it. At the same time, Curtis leaned over, asking, "President Nolan, don't you think the plum blossom-themed design looks awfully similar to the design in Miss Maxwell's portfolio?"

He glanced at Curtis. "You think so too?"

Curtis nodded, but his gaze did not leave the model. "It's identical."

Just then, Eugene found the picture of Olivia's design on his phone. It really is like two peas in a pod—they were exactly the same!

This is clearly plagiarism!

He cast his glance at Olivia and saw that she had already stood up. "Stop!"

Everybody was confused by her actions, and they all looked at her.

Olivia was so angry that her face looked pale. I was wondering what kind of design Anna could come up with. Instead, she turned out to be so brainless! It's blatant copy-and-paste; she didn't even make any changes to it whatsoever!

At the same time, the model stopped in her tracks and stared at Olivia suspiciously.

The host didn't understand what was going on. Walking over to her, he asked, "Miss Maxwell, what's wrong?"

"Whose design is this?" Olivia raged.

The host seemed taken aback for a moment. "All four designs were designed by Miss Anna Maxwell."

Then, she said, "Bring her here!"

Anna, who had been watching everything going on in the front hall from backstage, couldn't help feeling uneasy.

She had assumed that Olivia was a participant. Therefore, she was banking on the fact that when Olivia claimed she had stolen her designs, she could counter by saying that Olivia was adopting malicious methods to kick her out of the competition by deliberately slandering her. After all, Olivia had no proof. How could I have known that she turned out to be a judge?

Thus, when she heard the host asking for her to go on stage, she knew that what would come, would come—the inevitable was about to happen.

Taking a deep breath, she glanced at Sarah, who was standing beside her.

Sarah came over immediately and helped her walk out to the front hall, step by step.

Anna was limping; the slap mark on her face was still clear as day. She had a band-aid on her forehead. No matter who saw her current state, they would probably ask after her.

The host frowned slightly and asked in a gentle voice, "Miss Maxwell, what happened to you?"

Chapter 53 The Four Gentlemen of the Seasons

Anna smiled at the host and nodded. "I'm fine." Then, she bowed and greeted everybody in all directions before finally turning her gaze to Olivia, shouting in a pitiful voice, "Olivia, please let me finish taking part in this competition. If there's a problem, we can go home and talk, okay?"

Olivia glared at her with a cold expression. "Now, you want to go back and talk? When you stole my designs, why didn't you say anything to me then?"

After that, the entire venue fell into an uproar.

Before they could even understand what was going on, or whether there would be any unfairness in a situation where one sister was taking part in the competition while the other was a member of the judges, the elder sister revealed that the younger sister had plagiarized her work!

What?! These stories are turning out to be more shocking than the next!

Meanwhile, the sponsors whispered among themselves, "This is interesting! A participant stole the designs of one of the judges?"

"That's impossible! Who would dare to be so fearless?"

"Well, it can't be that the judge is lying, right?"

"Don't you think the injuries on that designer seem strange? In my opinion, there's probably something else going on behind the scenes."

Their voices were not soft, and Eugene could hear them very clearly. Thus, he looked back at them and said faintly, "The participant plagiarized those designs!"

Those people glanced at each other. Eugene Nolan is speaking to us!

Normally, there was no chance for them to even make contact with him. Now that they had a ready-made topic in front of them, somebody trying to weasel a relationship with him immediately leaned over and asked, "President Nolan, do you know something?"

"I saw these designs a long time ago," he replied.

Curtis raised his brows secretly. It looks like the president favors Miss Maxwell quite a lot. I can't believe he couldn't even bear listening to a few comments from the people surrounding him. Since when has he ever been this chatty before?

The audience was buzzing, and the situation on the stage was also at a stalemate.

"Olivia—" Anna's tears flowed freely without saying another word; she looked extremely pitiful. "Please don't try to stop me anymore. For the sake of this grand competition, I've been working my butt off since September. All these years, I've always done whatever you asked me to. I'm begging you; please listen to me this time!"

Olivia pointed at the models and sneered, "Are you sure these are the designs you labored over since September?"

Anna nodded. "Of course. The staff at my studio can testify for me. Also, the judges of this grand competition are my witnesses too. They chose my designs out of thousands of others!"

The audience began whispering among themselves again. "Why wouldn't Olivia allow Anna to enter the competition?"

"Maybe she's afraid of her sister threatening her position."

"Who is this Olivia Maxwell anyway? I've never heard of her."

"I've never heard of her either. She probably came here because she couldn't survive on her own anymore."

"I remember back when the grand competition was promoting itself; didn't they say they successfully invited the world-renowned fashion designer, Angel?"

"Who knows? It was probably a marketing gimmick!"

At the same time, Olivia stared at Anna. Then, a wicked smile tugged at the corners of her mouth as she slowly took a seat. "Fine. Then, please explain to me the concept behind your designs; tell me what inspired you as well as the original motivation behind your collection!"

Anna saw Olivia sitting down, and her heart relaxed slightly. She had done a lot of preparation for these questions—so much so that she could recite them fluently from memory. Pointing to the outfit the model was wearing, she explained, "The plum blossom, the orchid, the bamboo, and the chrysanthemum are referred to as the 'Four Gentlemen of the Seasons' in traditional art.

They have long been symbols of the feelings and ambitions of this country's people, representing their fascination for the highest level of mankind's character and nature. The plum blossom is graceful and proud, blooming in winter; the orchid is elegant, ethereal, and noble; the bamboo is modest, humble, and tenacious; the chrysanthemum is cold, chaste, simple, and elegant.

They carry the same theme—uprightness, purity, humility, and perseverance against harsh conditions. They are loved by all. Therefore, I wanted to convey my personal respect for them through my designs."

Olivia nodded, laughing. "You did your homework. That design concept must have taken a lot of Googling on your part, huh?"

Chapter 54 False Accusation

Anna stared at Olivia, tears quickly pooling in her eyes and threatening to fall. With an expression that screamed 'pity me', she said, "Olivia, I know you don't like me competing with you. But, I love designing too! This will be the last time, okay?"

The anger in Olivia's heart surged. Even so, she looked calm on the outside. If she wants to act, I can act better than she can. "Do you mean this is the last time you plagiarize?"

Thus, Anna pretended to be agitated, and her tears poured out. "I didn't plagiarize anything! I designed all of these! Olivia, it doesn't matter even if you don't like me, but you can't falsely accuse me!"

In response, Olivia sneered, "To be honest, you could have just asked me if you wanted to use my designs. There was no need to put on such an elaborate melodrama. Crying so pitifully in front of everybody, then turning around to steal and plagiarize... It's just... utterly shameless."

"Olivia, when did I do that? That was you..."

As Anna spoke, she sneakily signaled Sarah with her eyes. Sarah immediately understood her intentions. Thus, she spoke up, "Mr. Host, I have a recording. Can I play it for you?"

Then, Anna pretended to stop her. "Sarah, don't!"

Sarah played along too. "Miss Anna, I can't let somebody accuse your hard work of plagiarism. I want everyone to know the truth!"

After the host asked the director for his opinion, he said, "Sure!"

Thus, Sarah hit the button on her phone's recorder, and the sound of the quarrel between Olivia and Anna in the lounge played out...

After hearing the recording, everybody exchanged glances with each other. They couldn't have imagined that Olivia would act so violently or threateningly in private.

The crowd took a look at Anna, a weeping beauty, then looked over at Olivia, an arrogant and high-handed woman. Comparing between the two, it was inevitable for them to have a prejudice toward the two ladies.

"Isn't that judge picking on the participant a little too much?"

"I can't believe she refused to allow her sister to participate in the grand competition just because she's worried about competition!"

"No wonder Anna is covered in wounds."

"Did you hear that sentence in the recording where she said 'I can handle you alone'? Isn't that clearly indicating that she intended to use her power as a judge to ruin the girl's reputation?!"

"Yeah, that's completely cruel! Moreover, she's the elder sister too!"

Anna listened to the criticisms flying about around her, feeling extremely satisfied with herself. Even the gaze she turned on Olivia was considerably provocative. So what if I stole her designs? Does she even have any tricks up her sleeves? In the end, she is still not in a position to complain about anything—she can only suffer in silence! Not only can she do nothing to me, but I'm afraid she also has to take on the crime of engaging in malpractice, favoritism, and slandering her own sister!

Olivia sneered lightly. No wonder she was acting so strangely; she was waiting for this chance!

She looked at Anna like she was watching a crazy clown jumping to its death; even the faint smile curling at the corner of her lips seemed mocking. "The inspiration behind the four designs for the four gentlemen of the seasons—the plum blossom, the orchid, the bamboo, and the chrysanthemum—came from my three best friends in university.

The plum blossoms bloom in the snow, and the sword lilies hidden in the valleys remain tucked away; the wind breezes through the bamboo forest, bringing with it the faint fragrance of purple chrysanthemums! We had similar personalities. Whether we were cold and desolate or laid back and alone, we held the pride of not being touched by the

world—we maintained our freedom of purity and authenticity. That's why, when we graduated from university, I designed these four evening dresses as graduation gifts for the four of us. Anna, in the beginning, you only committed plagiarism. But now, you have added defaming a judge to your list of crimes."

When Anna heard that, she panicked a little. I can't believe that these designs have been converted into finished products. Moreover, she gave it away as gifts? Or, is she simply saying that on purpose?

"Olivia, you claim that these designs are yours and that you created finished products from them and gave them away as gifts. Then, why don't you bring out those so-called evening dresses of yours and let everybody see for themselves? Is it truly the same as my designs? Or, is this another idea you came up with to stop me?!" Her voice was very loud and extremely agitated.

I don't believe she can find somebody on the spot to cross-check this!

Olivia was so furious that she laughed coldly. "You won't believe it until you see it, huh?"

Chapter 55 The World-Renowned Fashion Designer, Angel

As soon as Olivia said that, a deep man's voice sounded from the opposite side of the room. "Do you still need to find somebody to cross-check the designs? I have your plum blossom-themed design with me right now. Curtis, show it to the audience!"

Thus, Curtis responded and took Eugene's phone backstage.

When everybody looked over to see who it was, they were shocked to discover that it was Eugene Nolan.

Anna looked outraged. Who is that man? Why does he have a copy of the plum blossom-themed design? Isn't that Olivia's design? Or, is he just deliberately taking Olivia's side?

Olivia was slightly shocked too. Why does Eugene have a copy of my plum blossom-themed design?

While everybody was still swimming in the confusion, a drawing of a design appeared on the large screen—it was the exact same design of the plum blossom-themed dress the model was wearing, without any changes.

Anna was horrified, but she continued to argue, "What does that prove? My designs of the four gentlemen of the seasons have been posted on the official website of the competition for more than a month! It's possible that somebody stole it from me and placed it in their portfolio! How can you prove that this design was created before mine? Excuse me, mister, but please be a little more meticulous when you speak! Otherwise, I'm going to sue you for slander!"

Eugene sneered, "Slander? Whether or not it is slander, you can see for yourself." Then, he looked at Curtis. "Curtis, zoom it in."

When the picture on the screen was enlarged, it clearly revealed that the date of delivery was 10 August 2019.

Sitting in the VIP seat, his aura flared around him as he looked at Anna and said, "Do you see it clearly now? You started designing this in September this year. But, I received this resume in August. Tell me; which one came first?"

Anna swayed slightly, screaming in her heart, How could somebody else have the exact same design as I did?

However, she put on a strong and calm appearance and furiously rebuked him, "Who are you? What relationship do you have with my sister? From how I see it, you are probably somebody my sister deliberately hired to confuse the audience, aren't you? Who can prove whether this picture of yours is real or fake?"

"I can! I submitted that resume." Olivia stood up and glared at Anna with a cool gaze. "In the past, your designs might not have been the best, but at least they were your original designs. Now, not only did you plagiarize my work, but you also falsely accused me. This isn't just a matter of poor moral character anymore, it's plain slander and false accusation. You wrote and acted out your own scripted play where I'm a horrible sister that picks on you. I'm sure it was all done to ensure that I don't have any evidence to prove that this design is mine. That's why you were so confident! Well, it's a pity for you because I do have evidence!" After saying that, she used the grand competition's special-use phone and dialed Kate's number. "Kate, do you still have the bamboo-themed evening dress I gave you as a gift during our graduation?"

She put the call on loudspeaker, and Kate's voice was transmitted clearly to the audience. "Of course. I kept it since that was your gift to me!"

Thus, Olivia said, "Send me a group photo of the four of us wearing the outfits from the four gentlemen of the seasons' collection. Also, take a photo of your bamboo-themed photo and send it to me too."

Kate replied, "What's wrong? Why do you need this?"

Olivia replied, "There's a participant here who not only plagiarized my work but also falsely accused me."

Kate's laughter rang out from the other side of the phone. "What? She can't have accused you, the world-renowned fashion designer, Angel, of plagiarizing her designs, right?"

Olivia looked at Anna and sneered, "She wouldn't dare! But, she claims that I deliberately stopped her from joining the competition because I was afraid of having her as my competition! I don't want to be thrown under the bus for that, so hurry up and send me those pictures!" After she ended the call, she looked at Anna again and said, "Relax; I'm going to convince you so thoroughly that you have no choice but to admit it!"

When those words sounded across the room, the entire venue fell silent. Anybody with an ear had heard it.

D-Did her friend just mention that s-she is Angel?!