

Always Been Yours Chapter 1371

The Tompkins nodded and offered an invitation to Tessa and Timothy. “Once Henry is better, the two of you and Mr. Sawyer should come over for a meal. I’ll be cooking my best dishes,” Mrs. Tompkins said.

“That sounds great. We’ll be there.” Tessa smiled as she accepted the invitation. The few of them continued to talk until Henry needed to rest. Thereafter, they left the hospital.

Nicholas had done a lot for them this time. Hence, on the way back, Tessa leaned against him and gratefully said, ‘Thank goodness you helped us this time. I would not have known what to do otherwise.’”

“Timothy could have resolved this matter himself even without me. However, with my help, the issue was resolved faster with fewer risks of accidents.”

Nicholas shook his head as he analyzed the situation for her. Tessa nodded in response, but she still felt very grateful. Later that day, they arrived home.

“The madam has brought the young masters back to the main house,” Andrew quickly reported. “They will apparently be back tomorrow.” Nicholas nodded and dismissed him.

Now, the only ones left in the living room were him and Tessa. He hugged her from behind and smiled. “We can finally have our own space.”

“What kind of father are you?” She coyly shot him a glare as she recalled what happened in the morning. He chuckled and picked her up..

Then, he brought her into their room and placed her on their huge, soft bed. “Let’s have a daughter, honey,” he said, pinning her down.

He stared down at her with love in his eyes as he seductively whispered, ‘Everyone says. daughters are their mother’s most precious little one.’

“That’s your goal, isn’t it?”

She burst out laughing, not at all mesmerized by the handsome man before her. He did not deny her accusation and continued, “Our daughter would certainly be more obedient than our sons.”

Listen to yourself, we don’t even have a daughter but you’re already playing favorites. The poor boys...”

She said that in a teasing manner. Her playful face merely made his heart melt with how cute she looked.

He was unable to resist the urge to dip his head down to kiss her pink lips. “It is their fault for being so unperceptive. They’re always ruining the moment and stealing you from me.”

“Are you jealous?”

She did not know if she should cry or laugh, but she was overjoyed deep down. He raised his eyebrows in silent affirmation. Either way, he was extremely dissatisfied with how his sons kept taking up Tessa’s time.

That made him even more certain he wanted a daughter. Their daughter would definitely be nothing like their annoying sons.

“Let’s have a daughter then,” he said before kissing her once more. The room was soon filled with the sweet sounds of fabric rubbing against each other.

When Tessa woke up the next morning, Nicholas was not in the room. She did not mind it though and merely lazed in bed. She did not want to move.

A while later, she struggled out of bed..

After a simple breakfast, Tessa readied herself for her physical therapy session. However, she soon received a call from Sofia. Sofia was very concerned about her health.

“Tessa, how is your recovery?”

“Not bad, I can walk now.” Tessa briefly explained her situation before asking after Sofia. The two of them made some small talk before getting to the point of the call.

“I’m calling you because the Janqash royal family is going to host a celebration. They’re inviting you and me to perform. I didn’t agree to it right away because I was worried about your health and told them I would ask you first.”

Tessa’s heart skipped in gratitude when she heard that. She smiled. “You’re so nice, Sofia. I’m lucky to be your student.” “Stop trying to flatter me,” Sofia said in a doting voice before getting serious as she changed the topic to the main subject of the call.

“I don’t want you to miss this opportunity. This performance could make you known to the European royal families. Your career will greatly benefit from this, and it will be a great achievement.”

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Tessa was touched by Sophia's words. She had heard about the Janqash royal celebration on the news. From what she knew, there were only two Xerthanian musicians who were invited to perform by the Janqash royal family before.

They were the famous musicians Dolores Justice and Clarence Jacobson. When she recalled the information she read online, she was even more tempted by the opportunity to perform at the Janqash royal celebration.

After her physical therapy sessions, she was fine to walk on her own. Hence, it should be fine for her to perform. Even so, she did not immediately agree to the offer.

"Miss Sofia, I'll tell you my decision later tonight. I have to discuss this with my husband." She said that because she respected Nicholas.

Sofia smiled and said in an understanding tone, "I'll let you two discuss, but please reply to me as soon as possible. The Janqash representative didn't give me a lot of time to think."

"I will." Tessa nodded.

After a few more minutes of chatting with each other, they ended the call. Later that day when Nicholas returned for lunch, he walked into the apartment to find Tessa sitting on the couch, lost in her thoughts.

He walked over and sat down next to her. "What are you thinking about?" he asked, concerned. "You didn't even notice my return."

"Oh, you're back." She smiled sweetly at him. "Something seems to be bothering you. What happened?" he asked, repeating his question from before.

“It’s nothing much. Miss Sofia called me today. She said the Jangash royal family has invited Miss Sofia and me to perform at their celebration. She said that I might be able to mingle with the rich and powerful in Jangash if I go. It would be great for my future career, and it would be a great achievement.”

She then turned to shoot him a questioning look. “I personally want to perform. Can I?”

“Why not?” There was a smile twinkling in his eyes as he looked at her anxious face. She was stunned by his question. He then warmly continued, “I said I would support you in everything you want to do.”

She was so very moved by his words. She wrapped her arms around him in an embrace, but she was still nervous.

“I will be leaving for quite a long time. Gordon. still hasn’t been weaned off breast milk, and he’s so young. I might be gone for a few weeks.”

“There’s a simple solution; bring Gordon along.”

He ducked his head to kiss the tip of her nose as he lovingly stared at her. “You brought Gregory with you when you went to Vienna to chase after your dreams. Now, you can bring Gordon with you.”

If what he had said before made her heart skip in gratitude, what she felt now was definitely greater than what that simple word could. convey.

She wrapped her arms tighter around him. “Why are you so good to me?”

“You are my wife. I want to be good to you.” He then pulled her onto his lap. Her heart melted into a puddle of goo with joy and love as she leaned into his embrace.

“Back then, I said that you could chase after your dreams as usual after giving birth to the baby,” he continued. “The children and I will not be your burdens. On the

contrary, we will stand beside you as you accomplish your dreams. We will follow you wherever you go.”

“What have I done to deserve such unconditional love?”

Her eyes burned with tears as her heart melted even further.

He chuckled and kissed her forehead before warmly saying, “You’re worth it. From the day I married you, I have wanted to spoil you and give you the world.”

“Aren’t you afraid you would spoil me rotten?” She could not resist looking up at him.

“Not at all,” he firmly declared. “I actually want you to be more self-centered. Did you know? Sometimes, you are so considerate that my heart aches for you. I love it when you’re brazen and fearless.”

That evening, Stefania brought Gregory and Gordon home. The family sat in the living room and spent a few minutes chatting.

Tessa then recalled the discussion she had with Nicholas this afternoon. Subsequently, she told Stefania about it, thinking Stefania needed to be notified.

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“Mom, I received a call from Miss Sophia today. The Janqash royal family invited Sofia and me to perform at their celebration. I’ve agreed to do it.” “You’re leaving to perform?”

Stefania was stunned, immediately shooting Tessa a look of disagreement. “You have yet to fully recover. How can you perform?” “My body is fine now,” Tessa smiled as she explained.

She knew Stefania was only worried about her. Stefania still did not agree with the decision. “Even if you’re in full health, Gordon is so young.”

“That’s not a problem, Mom.” Nicholas took over explaining and defended Tessa. “I said that none of these will be reasons to tie Tessa down. I will support her no matter what she wishes to do.”

Stefania did not know what to say to that. She went quiet. It was evident that she still did not want Tessa to perform at all. Seeing that, Tessa turned to shoot Nicholas a helpless look.

He looked at her reassuringly before continuing to say, “I know you’re worried about the children. Don’t worry. We will be going with her. I won’t separate the boys from their mother.”

Upon hearing that, Stefania knew that there was nothing she could say to sway their decision. “Enough. I know you’ve made up your mind. I’ll accept it.” “You’re the best, Mom!”

Tessa happily cheered. Stefania burst out chuckling when she saw how overjoyed Tessa was. Then, she wiped the smile off her face as she sternly said, “While I have agreed to let you do this, I have a condition.”

“I’ll agree to anything you want.” Tessa did not even hesitate before saying that.

Stefania glanced at her before stating, “I want you two to take care of the children, especially Gordon. He is at the age when he needs to be cared for by someone the most.”

“Don’t worry. We’ll take good care of them.”

Nicholas made the promise as he held Tessa’s hand.

Stefania heaved a sigh when she saw their response. When she next spoke, she sounded like she was somewhat sulking and reluctant to let them leave. “I can forgive you for leaving, but you’re taking

the children away from me as well. My days will be so cold and lifeless.” Nicholas and Tessa exchanged a look. They were at a loss for words.

Fortunately, Gregory moved over to comfort Stefania. “It’ll be fine, Grandma. Once we’re there, Gordon and I will call you every single day. You’ll be able to see us all the time!”

His kind words made Stefania smile once more as warmth filled her heart. She tenderly pulled him into his arms. “Gregory is still the best. You are so good to Grandma.”

“Of course! You love me, and I love you too, Grandma!”

Gregory continued to reassure her. Soon, Stefania was all cheered up. For the next few days, Nicholas was busy sorting out work arrangements.

On the day of the flight, Kieran and Timothy went to the airport to see them off. “Look after the company. Contact me if you need anything,” Nicholas instructed Kieran. “Don’t worry.”

Kieran nodded. Meanwhile, Timothy was saying his goodbyes to Tessa. “Take good care of yourself. Don’t push yourself too hard in practice. Pay attention to your body.”

“I know. Take care of yourself as well. Don’t overwork yourself every single day. Spend more time with Sabrina.”

Tessa had instructions for her brother as well due to worry. Soon, it was time for them to board their flight. It was only then that they parted ways..

Finally, after over ten hours, Tessa landed in Jangash and reunited with Sofia and the others. Immediately after leaving the airport, Nicholas and Tessa headed straight over to the place they would be meeting Sofia.

“Sofia.” Tessa happily shouted out in greeting after stepping out of the car. “Hello, Granny Sofia,” Gregory obediently greeted.

“Hello, Greg.” Sofia tenderly stroked Gregory’s head. When she looked up to find Nicholas walking over with Gordon in his arms, she was stunned.

She had truly not expected a man as high and mighty as Nicholas would personally take care of his children. At that sight, she smiled at him. “Tessa is so lucky to have a husband like you.”

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“I think so too, Nicholas replied to Sofia with a smile. Sofia burst out chuckling when she heard that. She then held out her hands and asked, “Can I hold the baby?”

“Of course.” He handed Gordon over to her. Gordon was not afraid of strangers. His clear eyes turned to stare straight at Sofia. The innocent look in his eyes melted her heart.

“You have gotten so cute.” She could not bear to let him go at all. Occasionally, she would tap him on the nose with the tip of her finger. Thinking she was playing with him, he happily laughed.

After exchanging their greetings, Sofia brought Tessa to the hotel. It was one of the Sawyer Group’s hotels in Janqash.

After they settled into their room, Gregory and Gordon were left in the care of the nanny they brought along. It was all done so that they could have some peace of mind.

Later on, Sofia pulled Tessa over to the living room to chat.

“You have been resting for way too long. I’m afraid you might be a little rusty. We’ll be retraining you during the time before the performance.”

“I’ll go with whatever you have planned.”

Tessa obediently nodded. She had indeed gotten rusty, and her expressiveness was not at its best. Soon, the two were done discussing Tessa’s training regime.

That evening, while Tessa was lying in Nicholas’ arms, she told him about her practice schedule.

“This performance is really important to us, and I’ve been resting this whole time. I’ll be very busy with extra training. However, I have the schedule all sorted out. I will make sure to spend time with you and the kids.”

“You can spend time with us anytime you want, but I do not want you to exhaust yourself just for this performance. Do your best, but do not overexert yourself. You’ve just recovered from your injuries.”

He gave her instruction after instruction while keeping his arms wrapped around her.

She knew he was saying all that because he was worried, so she made a promise. “Don’t worry. I will not fool around with my health. All my training will be limited to what I can physically handle.”

Tessa spent the next few days with Sofia in the studio, training and rehearsing for the performance. During this time, Sofia had strict expectations. of Tessa.

She would make Tessa repeatedly practice just over a trivial mistake. After a few hours, Tessa was dead on her feet. Thankfully, Sofia kept Tessa’s recent recovery in mind and would let her take a break in the afternoon.

In the afternoons, Tessa only spent two hours in the studio before being driven back to the hotel by Nicholas.. She would thereafter immediately exercise for an hour according to her physical therapy treatment plan.

Her day only ended after she was done with her physical therapy. Evenings were when she spent time with the children.

Gregory was a good kid who understood how exhausted she was, so he would offer to give her a massage. On this night, Gregory did just that..

“Mommy, what do you think about my massages?” “They’re amazing. You’re so smart, Sweetheart.” After praising Gregory with a bright smile, she turned to tease Gordon who was in her arms.

While her days were rather tiring, she at least had a good work-life balance. During the first week, Gregory would video call Stefania every single day at the same time..

Naturally, Gordon was involved in the calls as well. Tessa would also tell Stefania about her day. They would happily chat away while Nicholas talked to Timothy about business over the phone.

The couple had warm looks in their eyes. Their gazes only turned sharp and solemn when talking about work..

Later that evening once all business talk was over, Timothy suddenly frowned and blurted as if the thought just struck him, “Nicholas, I received news a few days ago that Harper was let out of prison.”

Nicholas scowled. However, he had expected this. After all, the Quinns were the second most powerful family in Southend after the Sawyers.

After a pause to think, Nicholas said, “Harper is infamous for being spiteful; he’s always insistent on getting back at others. Be more careful during this time.”

“I know. I’ll be careful.” Timothy nodded. The two men continued and spent a few minutes chatting before ending the call. However, Nicholas was still worried, so he called Kieran.

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“Harper is out of jail. Based on his personality, he would definitely go after Timothy. Help me keep an eye on him. Do not let anything happen. to Timothy. It will negatively affect Tessa,” Nicholas instructed.

“Roger. I promise the mission will be a success,” Kieran acknowledged the instructions in a joking manner. After inquiring about the company’s situation, Nicholas hung up.

For the next few days, Tessa practiced and took care of the children as usual. In the blink of an eye, all of the invited performers for the royal celebration had arrived.

On that day, she was practicing when Sofia walked into the studio with her phone in hand.

“Tessa, there will be a dinner party tonight for the performers. You don’t need to head back. this afternoon. We’ll be going straight to the dinner party afterward.”

“Very well. I’ll tell Nicholas.” Tessa nodded. before calling Nicholas. He soon answered the call in a warm and soft tone. “What is it?”

“There will be a dinner party tonight for the celebration’s performers. I won’t be heading back this afternoon and will be going with Sofia tonight.”

Tessa briefly explained the situation. Nicholas agreed to the change in plans but was still worried enough to say, “Don’t drink too much alcohol. You have just recovered.”

“I know.” She smiled and nodded, That evening, she changed into a new dress and headed to the dinner party with Sofia. The party was held at the palace. Everything at the party looked so lavish and shiny.

There were quite a few people inside the venue by the time Sofia and Tessa arrived. Everyone was dressed in grand outfits while happily chatting with each other in tiny groups, which gave rise to a cheerful air in the room.

Looking around the room that held the best musicians in the world, Tessa knew she was right to agree to the performance. Sofia did not know what Tessa was thinking. Soon after entering the hall, she led Tessa around to greet her acquaintances.

“This is Tessa Reinhart, my new protégé. She has more talent than all of my students combined,” Sofia flaunted Tessa.

“I have long since heard about your extraordinary student. Finally, we get to meet her. She’s a good one,” her acquaintances complimented.

All the elite musicians that were present at the venue praised Tessa. Every time this happened, she would politely greet them and leave them with a good impression of her.

After they had greeted almost everyone Sofia knew, Sofia turned to Tessa and worriedly said, “I’ve introduced you to basically everyone you should know. Find a place to sit down. Don’t overexert yourself.”

Tessa did not reject the suggestion as she was indeed quite exhausted. Hence, she headed to the gardens outside. It was quieter than inside the hall.

Under the moonlight, she admired the night sky while enjoying the chill breeze. The sight of her sitting on the bench in a gorgeous dress made her look so tranquil yet beautiful.

However, it did not last long as the tranquility was quickly disturbed. At that moment, a tall non-Xerthanian man appeared in the gardens. He seemed to be around twenty-five years old and was dressed in a black tailcoat trimmed with gold thread.

His beauty was absolutely ethereal and out of this world. Tessa was startled since she had not expected to see anyone in the gardens.

He was similarly stunned and stared at her for a moment before politely smiling at her. She nodded in return with a smile. Then, she subtly observed the newcomer.

The gold threads in his tailcoat imbued his entire being with a noble quality that was elegant and refined.

Perhaps because he sensed her gaze, he smiled at her once more. When he eventually spoke, his voice was exceptionally magnetic. “Are you here for some fresh air as well?”

“Yes.” She nodded, unprepared to say more. However, he persisted in continuing the conversation. “Are you a musician as well?” “What about it?” Tessa turned to look at him in bemusement.

He smiled and shook his head. “Nothing much. I just saw you walking with Miss Sofia.” “She is my teacher.” There was a faint smile on her lips as she replied. He nodded. “I see.”

At first, Tessa thought the pause marked the end of the conversation. To her surprise, the man continued, "Truth be told, I thought you stand out among the guests.

tonight." It took Tessa aback and she shot him an incredulous look. Is he making a move on me? After all, I heard people here are quite open.

Before she could bring herself to answer him, he elaborated in an amused tone, "You people have different faces from us. You're more dainty and elegant."

As the man talked, his eyes, which were deep blue as the sea, fixed on her with evident amusement.

Tessa blinked, immediately getting what he meant. She sighed in relief before returning his words with a grateful smile. "Thank you for the compliment."

Finding the man an interesting guy, she couldn't help but ask, "Tessa Reinhart. A pleasure to make your acquaintance. May I know your name?"

"The pleasure is mine. I'm Hobbs." He cast her a faint smile. However, Tessa was shocked to hear his words. Before attending the banquet, Sofia had briefed Tessa on the royal family of Janqash.

And Hobbs was one of the men with ranks from the royal family. He really is a real nobleman! After learning his identity, Tessa couldn't help but pay attention to her manners and behaviors to avoid getting on his bad side.

"It's nice to meet you, Mr. Hobbs." As she spoke those words, she rose to her feet.

Meanwhile, he could tell that Tessa was a little uptight, so he reassured her with a smile, “Don’t fret. Just see me as another friend of yours. Please be comfortable with yourself. I’d rather stand.”

He seems like an easy-going guy. Nodding, she sat back down again. However, her nerves remained.

As observative as Hobbs was, he noticed her stiffness once again. Thus, he changed the topic by asking. “How long have you been practicing under Miss Sofia’s guidance?”

“Around one year,” Tessa answered honestly. He nodded. “You must be quite talented, or else you wouldn’t be able to show up on such an occasion with only a year’s practice.”

“There’s still a lot to learn. I’m nowhere near Miss Sofia’s level.” Tessa dismissed his praise with a humble smile. Hobbs arched his eyebrows at her words but didn’t comment further. Instead, he continued, “I love music, especially classical music.”

He sized her up when he was talking. The woman in front of him was sitting upright on the couch. She had a pretty face, and her calm temperament set him at ease.

For a moment, he was mesmerized by her beauty. When he came back to his senses, he curved the corner of his lips. “I assume you are a classical music performer, right?”

Tessa blinked once as she didn’t see the point in hiding the truth. “You’re right, Mr. Hobbs.” He nodded again and allowed the silence to settle between them, mainly because Sofia was approaching.

Due to the night closing in, Sofia didn’t notice Hobbs, who was standing on the side, when she urged Tessa to go. “Tessa, the host is here. Let’s go inside, or else people will think we are rude.”

“All right.” Tessa nodded. Then, she gestured to Hobbs, excusing herself before she followed Sofia back to the banquet hall.

Meanwhile, in the banquet hall, Prince Abott and Princess Freya of the Janqash royal family were surrounded by a crowd of musicians and noblemen.

Tessa returned to the hall to find the atmosphere more lively than before.

“I heard Princess Freya is fond of music. Besides, there’s a celebration going on. Thus, Prince Abott specially invited these musicians to perform for her,” Sofia explained without Tessa having to ask.

As Sofia explained, Tessa shifted her gaze to the beautiful princess in the center of the crowd. The prince must love her very much. Among the crowd, Freya greeted every person who approached to make their acquaintance. Her elegant movements were flawless.

After a while, she went onstage hand-in-hand with Abott. She stood upright on the side as she listened to him making his speech. “Welcome, everyone. I’ll be glad if my guests can make some friends during the banquet.”

His speech was short. After asking his guests to make themselves comfortable, he walked down the stage with Freya. Instead of retiring for the night, the pair took a stroll in the hall.

When Abott noticed Sofia among the crowd, he approached her with Freya in tow.

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“It’s been a while, Miss Sofia.” “Glad to see you again, Prince Abott,” Sofia greeted Abott politely before turning to the side and greeting Freya.

The three spoke in a casual tone, indicating they already knew each other before today’s banquet. On the contrary, Tessa was quite nervous as royalty was now standing right in front of her.

But soon, she found Hobbs, the man she met in the garden a while ago, standing nearby. Meeting her gaze, he inclined his head slightly. At the same time, Freya and Sofia were exchanging words.

“I was worried sick when you didn’t give a concrete answer to my invitation to perform during the celebration. I almost thought that you wouldn’t agree with it. It’s been a while since I listened to your live performance, and it’s been on my mind this whole time. I’m really looking forward to it.”

“I’m glad you like my music, Princess Freya. However, at that time, I had to make sure my apprentice could come with me.” Sofia looked happy when she explained things. Everyone could tell she was in a good mood simply from her expression.

After all, turning the princess into a fan was a huge achievement. Her words took Freya aback. “Did your apprentice not want to perform?”

“It’s not about that. Something happened to her quite a while ago, and she only recovered recently. When I knew the invitation involved her, I was worried that she couldn’t perform due to her health.”

After that, Sofia gestured to Tessa, who stood beside her. She then introduced Tessa to the couple. “Here she is. Meet Tessa Reinhart, who is also my last student. She is more talented than the students before her, so I’m expecting her to take over my place when I retire.”

Tessa wasn't expecting Sophia to think so highly of her, so she didn't immediately respond to the words. When she came back to her senses, she greeted Freya politely, "It's a pleasure to meet you, Princess Freya."

"The pleasure is mine. Sofia thinks highly of you, and I'm already looking forward to your performance. Some time ago, I happened to come around to the piece you published online. I must say it's very nice."

At that moment, Freya recognized Tessa as the talented musician who made her name widely known around the world a while ago. However, the group only managed to exchange.

a few words because the other musicians kept approaching them to greet the royals. In the end, Sofia took their leave with Tessa in tow.

Later that night, Abbott dismissed all the guests who tried to approach him. He found a secluded corner to share drinks with his best friend, Hobbs.

Nudging Hobbs with his elbow, he teased, "Did you have your eye on anyone among the guests tonight?" Upon hearing his words, Hobbs recalled his encounter in the garden earlier. There's indeed one gentle girl...

Abbott's eyes shone in excitement when he noticed Hobbs' hesitation. It was obvious that his best friend had someone in mind. "If you are interested in any of them, you can tell me. I'll help you to reach her."

"Nope." Hobbs snapped back to reality and denied it.

Abbott didn't care to trust his denial. Instead, the prince wagged his brows. "You don't need to be shy. If there's someone, tell me. You don't have to worry about your family. I'll deal with it."

The Hobbs Family was a family of noblemen. As Hobbs claimed his father's title and grew up with Abbott, the two were close, which explained Abbott's antics.

Afraid that Abbott would make a fuss over it, Hobbs raised his hands and surrendered. “Spare me from your matchmaking game. I’m not interested in anyone.”

After he finished the words, he took Abbott’s chance to reply by adding, “Here comes your princess. You can be lovey-dovey all you want, just don’t you dare think about meddling with my love life.”

Freya arrived at the table to see Hobbs fleeing the scene. She shot a confused look at Abbott. “Am I some kind of monster? Why did he run away?”

“Nonsense, darling. He’s just sensitive to love.” Abbott gently pulled Freya into his embrace. The banquet went on until midnight. Sofia sent Tessa back to the hotel herself.

Meanwhile, Nicholas had been waiting for Tessa in the room. When Tessa walked into the room, he immediately greeted her out of concern, “Welcome back. How are you feeling?”

“I’m fine. Not too tired, Tessa assured him before jumping into his arms and giving him a kiss.

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Nicholas smelled alcohol on her, so he frowned. “Have you been drinking?” “I haven’t. Just a little champagne,” Tessa answered honestly. She even shook her head to get her point across.

He finally nodded in satisfaction. After all, she wasn’t fully recovered yet, so she had to avoid alcohol. He cast a look at the time and noticed it was already late at night. Thus, he urged, “You should take a bath. I’ve gotten everything ready.”

“Thank you, darling. You’re so sweet.” Tessa couldn’t refrain from giving him another kiss. He’s so thoughtful. After the bath, Nicholas asked her about the banquet. ‘How did it go?’

“It went well. The prince and the princess were there too. Besides, she’s a fan of Miss Sofia.”

Tessa shared all the interesting stories with him. “Miss Sofia told me that the royal family only invited that many musicians to perform during the celebration because Princess Freya is fond of music. Prince Abott made such an arrangement to make her happy. I bet he loves her very much.”

Nicholas wrapped his arms around her and leaned his forehead against hers before asking.

“Are you envious of them?” The question drew a chuckle out of her, and she raised her head to meet his eyes. “But I already have you. I don’t gain happiness from them, you know. It’s just touching me.”

Her words put him in a good mood. After that, Tessa asked him about their children’s well-being. “Did Gordon cry when I went out?”

“He cried a little, but I managed to stop him. After Gregory and he played along for a bit, I asked the babysitter to tuck them in bed.” He briefed her on what happened when she wasn’t around.

Their hotel room had two levels. The children were sleeping in the nursery upstairs. At the moment, the babysitter was looking after the children upstairs.

Even so, Tessa walked upstairs to check on them. The babysitter quickly rolled out of the extra bed when she saw Tessa pushing the door open and walking inside. “Young Madam.”

“It’s fine. You don’t need to get up. I’m just checking on them.” Gesturing for the babysitter to relax, Tessa walked deeper into the room to see her sons.

Under the warm light, she saw Gregory sleeping on the bed, while Gordon was resting in the cradle next to the bed.

It seemed to her that her children were having a good sleep. Their smiles indicated that sweet dreams visited them in their slumber. The sight touched a soft spot in Tessa’s heart.

After kissing them good night, she retired to her room. She spent the following days practicing for the performance. In the blink of an eye, the day of the Janqash Royal celebration arrived.

Tessa and Sofia arrived early because they were performing in the palace. After getting out of the car, Sofia reminded Tessa again, “Stay close to me, okay? Don’t wander off.” “Of course.” Tessa obediently nodded.

The two had to go through strict security to get into the palace. After all, the quests attending the celebration today were the royal families of Jangash. Therefore, the security was stricter than usual.

Passing through the entrance, the spectacular grand hall came into view, showing off the amazing Janqash craftsmanship to the visitors..

As she made her way backstage, Tessa discreetly scanned her surroundings without drawing the royal guards' attention to her.

Meanwhile, the backstage was bustling as the performers got ready. Even so, everything went smoothly. At that moment, a tall woman stepped out of the dressing room.

She was wearing a flamboyant court dress and a pair of lace gloves. Her wavy hair poured out from under her top hat. The overall set off the vintage and luxurious style of the costume.

There was makeup on her delicate face, and it was a bonus to her beauty. The black veil on the hat covered half of her face, giving her a mysterious vibe.

The moment she showed up, a crowd formed. around her. "Miss Elisa, you look stunning in that dress." "People will be impressed by you tonight." "Miss Elisa, let me help you to the chair."

People continuously offered to help her, trying hard to get on her good side. Meanwhile, the woman enjoyed other people's compliments and flattery.

Elisa was a student of the famous musician from Rasnos. She made her name known around the industry at a young age, and her peers always looked up to her.

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As a result, she was held in high regard by everyone over the years, leading her to believe that everyone had to please her wherever she went.

When Tessa entered, she happened to witness the rest of them complimenting Elisa. That caused her to frown slightly, but she wasn't surprised.

After all, this was a common occurrence in society. Tessa wasn't familiar with everyone in the room. Hence, she didn't greet anyone and went straight to her dressing table.

There was only a short time left before the performance began, and she needed to apply her makeup quickly. Unfortunately for Tessa, Elisa noticed her at this point.

Elisa knew Tessa. As Sofia's protégé, Tessa had received the praise and commendation of many musicians at the previous banquet. Many people were optimistic about Tessa's future accomplishments.

When Elisa recalled this, she felt annoyed. Those compliments ought to be hers. To her, Tessa's fame was merely a short storm of hype because her mentor was Sofia.

With Tessa having just ignored Elisa without even greeting her, the latter was even more irritated, and her expression turned cold.

Though many of the performers today were senior musicians, Elisa considered herself to be the most experienced among the younger generation.

Hence, Tessa's attitude of ignoring her was like a slap in the face to Elisa. Furthermore, Elisa had also heard that unlike her, the reason Tessa could perform in today's event wasn't because of her capabilities.

Instead, Tessa was specially invited by the host. This made Elisa even more displeased. Thus, she looked at Tessa, raised her voice, and intentionally said, “I really don’t know why some people get invited.”

With such words, together with Elisa’s expression, everyone in the room knew to whom she was referring. They knew Tessa too. However, they were already on Elisa’s side, so they began to say things that were similar to Elisa’s words.

“It’s truly weird. I wonder what tricks she used.”

“I wonder what the host was thinking. Miss Elisa is obviously more outstanding but they went with an insignificant musician who has only recently gained popularity.”

“And she’s rude. She didn’t even greet her seniors.”

Though they didn’t say her name, Tessa knew they were talking about her. Despite this, she simply smiled and dismissed all of their words as sour grapes.

She remained seated calmly at the dressing table, signaling to her makeup artist to finish applying her makeup. Seeing that, Elisa was furious.

She felt that Tessa did not take her seriously even though she was Tessa’s senior.

However, to maintain her elegant and demure image, Elisa did not say anything further. That being said, she wasn’t going to let Tessa off easily either.

A hint of evil flashed across her eyes as she stared fiercely at Tessa. Then, she shifted her gaze to her assistant, as if hinting at something. Her assistant understood it right away and quickly left when no one was looking.

Seeing that Tessa was ignoring them, the others became bored and changed the subject of their conversation. Throughout their conversation, they laughed loudly, as if to emphasize Tessa’s exclusion.

Indeed, in comparison to them, Tessa was exceptionally quiet and even appeared lonely. But this didn't bother Tessa at all.

"Miss Reinhart, you can change into your gown now," the makeup artist said softly after the final step of the makeup was completed.

Tessa responded with a nod. Then, she turned around and headed to the changing room. When she came out, Sofia happened to walk in her direction.

Sofia smiled as she looked Tessa over from head to toe. "This gown suits you. You are stunning." "I think it's nice too." Tessa smiled and nodded, showing no signs of humility.

Sofia laughed at that. "How do you feel now?"

"Are you nervous?" she asked. "I'm not. I'm doing well. Don't be concerned about me, Miss Sofia." Tessa then took the initiative to link her arm through Sofia's with a smile on her face that made her appear relaxed.

Seeing this, Sofia felt relieved. They both then walked back to the makeup artist. When Tessa reappeared, almost everyone in the room was astounded.

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Elisa, in particular, was stunned. When she looked at Tessa, her eyes turned reddish with envy. She did not expect Tessa to be so captivating after applying her makeup and putting on her gown.

The spotlight was supposed to be hers, but it was immediately snatched by Tessa. It was probably because Tessa would be performing classical music tonight, which was why her gown was plain and simple yet elegant.

That made her appear fresh and pure in comparison to everyone else in the room, who was dressed grandly. Furthermore, because she had recently given birth, her body was extra curvy, making her appear enticing.

On the other hand, Sofia was completely unaware of everyone else's gazes.

Satisfied with Tessa's state at this point, she nodded and said, 'You are the final performer. Maintain your calm demeanor and wait patiently backstage.'

"I will, Tessa said as she nodded obediently. Meanwhile, Elisa, who was on the other side, curled the corners of her red lips. She then looked profoundly at the straps of Tessa's gown on her shoulders..

She turned her head, signaling her assistant to come closer, and asked in a hushed tone, "Is it done?" "Yes. I simply left a few connecting strands. The shoulder straps on Tessa's gown will snap when she performs later."

It turned out that the assistant had gone off to tamper with Tessa's gown earlier. Elisa immediately felt her mood lift, thinking that Tessa's gown would fall off during the performance later and make her a disgrace.

She was curious as to how Tessa would clean up her mess after destroying the celebration and offending Janqash's royalties!

The more Elisa imagined it, the happier she felt. It was as if she had already witnessed Tessa being shamed. The smile on her face grew wider as well.

Tessa did not notice that. After she sent Sofia off, she sat quietly in her seat while texting Nicholas. Later in the evening, the official celebration performance began.

The event hall was packed with royals and nobles dressed in finery and sipping fine wines Hobbs was here as well. He was walking around the hall in a fitted black suit.

His upright figure, good-looking appearance, and distinguished and noble identity attracted countless women who flocked to him to strike up a conversation.

However, he was not interested in these normal women at all. On the other hand, Elisa, who was standing behind the stage, couldn't take her gaze away from Hobbs the moment she saw him.

"Hobbs is here," she mumbled to herself. Truth was, she wanted to perform at today's event because of Hobbs. She had seen him once and he had remained in her heart ever since.

She fell in love with him the first time she saw him. And because of his noble status, Elisa felt they were compatible. After all, only people with a distinguished identity like Hobbs were worthy of her. His looks were a bonus.

Just as she was lost in her thoughts, her mentor's voice resonated. "Elisa, perform well later. Don't be nervous." Elisa smiled and nodded in response. "I know. Don't worry."

Of course, I have to perform well to get Hobbs' attention! Once I have his attention, I can look for an opportunity to talk to him later.

The performance on the stage was ongoing, but Elisa was completely focused on Hobbs. She only gathered her thoughts when it was her time to perform. "Now, let us welcome Miss Elisa, who will be performing The Sea's Prayer'!"

After the host's announcement, Elisa walked slowly onto the stage with her musical instrument in her hand. Her every move was gracious and elegant.

Thunderous applause rang out from beneath the stage. After a bow, she started her performance, and a beautiful melody soon followed.

Elisa was undeniably talented and skilled, and her performance captivated everyone in the hall. Almost everyone was completely engrossed in her flawless playing of the melody.

However, no one knew that she was not focusing wholeheartedly on her performance. While performing, she was also casting casual glances at Hobbs. Hobbs, on the other hand, paid no attention to her.

Instead, he appeared to be looking for something in the hall. No matter how hard he looked, he couldn't seem to find the person he was looking for. With that, he eventually left with a frown on his face.