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Looking at the seriousness in Tessa's eyes, Timothy inwardly sighed because he knew that she meant Nicholas and Gregory by that. He had a hunch that they had something to do with her sudden decision to further her studies abroad.

Unfortunately, it seemed like she didn't plan to tell him what had happened. So, he didn't press her about it in the end.

The next day, Tessa left the hotel early in the morning to look for an apartment. After viewing a few places, she decided on one located in the heart of the city. Although it wasn't a huge place, it had everything Tessa needed. Then, she moved her belongings in and cleaned up her future home.

Despite the room looking neat, it hasn't been occupied for a while. Therefore, many areas were covered in a layer of dust. After all the cleaning, a day had passed without her realizing it.

After dinner, Tessa sat on the couch, watching TV while taking a break. She couldn't focus on the TV program for some unknown reason, and her heart felt empty like she was missing something. Shaking her head, she tried her best to focus on the TV program, but to no avail.

Nicholas' tall and well-built figure kept appearing in her mind, and she could still hear Gregory's sad little voice in her ears.

“Miss Tessa, don't forget to look for me when you're done with your work. I'll be waiting for you, Miss Tessa.” *“Miss Tessa, I'll be a very good boy, so you must come and visit me.”*

Recalling Gregory's hesitant and tentative look whenever she left him, she felt agitated. It was as though an invisible pair of hands clutched her heart, making her feel painful and breathless with each breath.

A few minutes later, she took a deep breath and forced herself not to think about all these things. *I'm not good enough for the Sawyer Family.* She kept telling herself. *Leaving was the correct thing to do, and it was the best for everyone.*

She wasn't sure if such a hypnotic method was working, but gradually, her emotions started to calm down with each repetitive chant.

For the next few days, to stop her thoughts from running wild, Tessa had planned to go around a little for sightseeing to experience this city that was filled with musical and artistic values.

Located on the Danube River, Vienna housed many gorgeous buildings. Due to this city's strong classical music atmosphere, it was an attraction and gathering place for many musicians worldwide. It could be said that Vienna was a paradise for many who had a musical dream, especially because Vienna also had the world-famous concert hall—the Wiener Musikverein!

Tessa temporarily forgot all of her miseries as she stared at the elegant Wiener Musikverein in front of her. All she felt was the beating desire of her dreams. The stage filled her gleaming, dark eyes with a fighting spirit as she admired the sacred location in the middle.

“One day, I'll be standing right there, and everyone worldwide will come to watch my performance!”

After another day of sightseeing, she gradually adjusted her mentality regarding her choices and started looking for a band, planning to provide herself with a steady income.

She found a few bands looking for a violinist via the internet, and before leaving for the interviews, she practiced a little.

She propped up the violin in a brightly lit music room and played it gracefully. At this very moment, she seemed like a completely different person than her usual self, radiating confidence and greatness. After playing the piece, she slowly opened her eyes and placed the violin next to herself, bowing and saying, “That’s the end of my *performance*.”

“Miss Reinhart, judging from your basic performance skills, your foundation is solid, but that doesn’t mean anything here because there are many individuals with amazing foundations as well. Nobody likes a performance without any panache. So, we’re very sorry,” the interviewer commented objectively about her performance.

After Tessa heard that, the light in her eyes immediately dimmed, and she walked out of the room dejectedly. Even her shoulders, which were straight, were now hanging

She had failed five interviews already. It didn’t occur to her that the competition overseas would be much greater than back home, and the requirements were also much higher. However, on second thought, this made complete sense because this was Vienna. It was the place where musicians from across the globe gathered. There were many musical geniuses who wanted to make a name for themselves here.

Therefore, it was only natural that the competition was greater in any other place.

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Back at home, Tessa received a video call from her brother after she finished dinner.

Timothy would contact her every evening for the past few days to learn about her situation.

“Tess, how did the interview go today?”

“It’s alright, I guess. They told me they would get back to me,” Tessa lied as she didn’t want Tim to worry about her.

Then, she casually changed the topic and asked him about his life in Southend. They both chatted about their daily lives, and none of them brought up Nicholas or Gregory in their conversation in tacit understanding.

After she hung up, the smile on her face gradually fell, and she unconsciously rubbed her fingers on her smartphone’s screen. Despite appearing as though she had forgotten about Nicholas and Gregory’s existence, she was actually just forcing herself not to think or care about them.

After her phone call with her brother, the room slipped into complete silence as she sat on the couch quietly. As still as a sculpture, she pondered without knowing how much time had passed. Then, suddenly, the phone in her hands started ringing, breaking the silence.

Lowering her head, she saw that Scott had called her. Curious, she placed the phone next to her ear and answered the call.

“Hello, Mr. Brooks. It’s already so late. Is something the matter?”

“Nothing, I’m fine. Actually, I just want to ask if you would like to have a coffee together tomorrow.”

“I’m afraid not because I’m not in Southend now.”

Surprised, Scott uttered, “You’re not in Southend?”

“Yeah, I’m now in Vienna.”

However, unexpectedly, the words had just left her lips when Scott’s delighted voice echoed through the phone. “What a coincidence! Our band will be performing in Vienna in the next couple of days.”

“That’s truly a coincidence,” she said, surprised.

“Since that’s the case, let’s meet up then,” he said, taking this opportunity to ask her

out.

With a slight smile, she accepted his invitation. “Sure.”

Two days later, at the Vienna Airport, Scott, dressed in a light blue casual suit, slowly followed his other band members out of the airport.

His dashing and straight figure combined with his gentle and elegant aura attracted the attention of countless tourists who passed by. However, as though he didn’t realize their attention on him, he offhandedly passed his luggage to his assistant.

“I’m going to meet a friend and won’t be going with you guys to the hotel. So please just bring my luggage to my room.” After saying that, he went to inform the music director and left in a cab.

Meanwhile, he called Tessa and invited her to meet up in a coffee house.

Half an hour later, he sat across from Tessa in a coffee house with a minimalistic theme. They made a great-looking couple that was pleasing to the eyes—a handsome man with a beautiful woman—and the café’s customers glanced at them curiously. But unfortunately, the both of them didn’t notice any of it and had their coffee by themselves.

Placing down his coffee cup, Scott cast her an apologetic look, saying, “I’m really sorry about what happened that day.”

Knowing that he was referring to her dismissal, she shook her head nonchalantly. “It’s not your fault. I was the one who offended someone that shouldn’t be trifled with at the time.”

Scott’s brows locked together tightly, and just as he was about to ask who this overbearing person was, Tessa’s voice, which sounded a little bitter, echoed again.

“As for who that person is, I’m sorry but I can’t say it.”

Stumped for words, Scott didn’t know what he should say, and the atmosphere suddenly became pin-drop silent.

Sensing the awkwardness, Tessa changed the topic on purpose. “Mr. Brooks, will your performance this time be at the Wiener Musikverein?”

Surprised, he then chuckled. “Our director did want to perform there, but unfortunately, they didn’t allow us the chance.”

As she heard this, Tessa chuckled along, and she gave him words of encouragement. “Although there are no chances now, I believe that it won’t take long for them to perform at the Wiener Musikverein with the Berlin Philharmonic’s current achievements.”

At her words, a longing look appeared in Scott's eyes. Not only was the Wiener Musikverein Robert's target, but it was also his. Or perhaps, it was the target of all musicians. After all, it was a well-known fact for every musician that only after standing on the Wiener Musikverein stage would it be their first step to fame.

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“May your words come true.” Then, snapping back to reality, Scott passed a ticket to Tessa, smiling as he invited her. “This is the ticket to our performance. I hope to see you on that day.”

Taking the ticket, she broke into a smile. “Thank you. I’ll definitely be there.”

Seeing the pretty smile on her face, Scott was in a daze for a second but quickly jolted back to his senses and hurriedly kept his gaze away. Then, picking up his coffee, he took a sip to hide his gaffe earlier.

Meanwhile, Tessa didn’t realize that he was behaving out of the norm as she kept the ticket properly away in her usual handbag, and when she was done, Scott had already recovered.

Rubbing the rim of his coffee mug, he asked, “Why did you come to Vienna, Miss Reinhart?”

“I’m planning to further my studies at a music school here.” As she felt that there was nothing to hide, she told him the real reason.

Astonished, he asked, “Why the sudden decision to further your studies? I’ve never heard you mention anything about it before.”

A bitter look flashed past Tessa’s eyes for a split second as she heard his question. Then, she lowered her gaze and gave her coffee a gentle stir, saying softly, “Actually, it’s not sudden because I wanted to do this a long time ago. Unfortunately, many things happened back home, preventing me from doing so. So, to maintain my family’s livelihood, I could only give up on the idea

temporarily. However, things are different now. I don't have to worry over my brother any longer, and the situation at home is well at hand. So, it's only natural that I decided to make plans for myself this time."

After she finished speaking, she took in a deep breath and looked up at him with a smile.

Looking into her bright, dark eyes, he was stunned momentarily but later nodded in agreement. "You're right. It's time you make plans for yourself."

Grinning, Tessa took another sip of coffee, and they started chatting about their shared interest, which was music. Since it was a topic that the both of them enjoyed, they were very engrossed, and it was already evening before they realized it.

Scott gazed at her and extended his invitation with a gentle look in his eyes. "I wonder if I have the honor of inviting you for dinner tonight, Miss Reinhart."

After he had a conversation with her for half the day, his admiration for her had grown greater. Even though she was still somewhat lacking in music theory, he was sure that she would become an accomplished violinist in time, given her talent.

Not knowing that he thought so highly of her, Tessa blinked playfully at him and jokingly said, "It's my honor that a future violinist is buying me dinner."

Scott couldn't help but chuckle. Then, he brought her to a high-end Western restaurant. Whilst having their meal, they chatted happily in a harmonious atmosphere.

Later, when they were finished with dinner, as Scott still had to practice for the performance, they didn't make any more plans. Finally, he returned to the hotel after sending Tessa back to her apartment.

In Southend's Regal Gardens, the doorbell rang after Timothy hung up from a call with Tessa. When he opened the door and saw the person standing outside, he couldn't help but look shocked.

"Greg, why are you here?" he asked, glancing behind Gregory but he saw no one else. In that instant, he knew that Gregory had come here alone again.

Immediately, a disapproving look appeared on his face. "Greg, didn't I already tell you that you shouldn't go places by yourself because there are a lot of bad guys out there?"

"Mr. Timothy, I didn't come alone. The driver dropped me here, and Daddy knows about it as well," Gregory explained, tugging the hem of Timothy's shirt.

Hearing that, Timothy breathed a sigh of relief and let Gregory into the house. Then, after placing a glass of water in front of him, he asked, "Why are you here at such a late hour?"

"Mr. Timothy, I don't understand a part of the program you taught me before, so I came here to ask you."

Even though that was what he said, his eyes which were scanning around the room, betrayed him. After looking around, he didn't see Tessa anywhere, and his eyes couldn't hide the disappointment he was feeling.

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Pretending not to see his indiscrete actions, Timothy asked, “Which part don’t you understand?”

“Uh, this part.” Then, he took out a notebook from his little backpack, carelessly flipped to a page, and pointed to a spot.

While Timothy checked the notebook, Gregory fixed his eyes again on Tessa’s tightly shut bedroom door. *Why isn’t Miss Tessa out yet? Didn’t she hear my voice?*

Half an hour passed by, and Timothy stopped his explanation and turned to look at the distracted Gregory, asking, “Do you understand it now?”

Snapped back to his senses, Gregory nodded sheepishly. “I got it, Mr. Timothy.”

Nodding, Timothy chose not to expose him. “It’s late. I’ll send you home,” he said, placing his notebook into the backpack before he stood up to send him off.

Unwittingly, Gregory started to become anxious because he deliberately used learning as an excuse to visit Tessa, but he didn’t even get to see her at all.

At the thought of this, he couldn’t help but ask, “Mr. Timothy, I’ve been here for so long, but why didn’t Miss Tessa even come out to see me?”

Seeing the eagerness in Gregory’s eyes, Timothy felt a little sorry, but when he recalled Tessa’s reminder, he toughened his heart and said, “My sister has gone to sleepover at a friend’s place.”

Gregory was taken aback, “So, Miss Tessa isn’t coming back tonight?”

“Yeah, she won’t be back,” Timothy answered with a nod.

The light in Gregory’s eyes dimmed immediately after he heard that, and he hung his head with an unmistakable look of disappointment. “I haven’t seen Miss Tessa for so many days, and I really, really miss her.”

Since Timothy didn’t know how he could comfort Gregory, he merely ruffled his dark hair gently and stayed by his side silently. Just then, the doorbell rang again, and when Timothy opened the door, he saw Nicholas dressed in a tailored black suit outside his door. His well-sculptured face was wearing an aloof expression.

“I’m here to pick up Greg,” he said, peering past Timothy and straight into the living room.

There was no one else besides Gregory in the living room, and Nicholas’ brows furrowed inscrutably. Finally, he said, “Come home with me, Greg,” in his usual calm tone.

“Okay,” Gregory replied as he trodded lifelessly to the door. Nicholas narrowed his eyes a little; Gregory would only have such a bleak look when he didn’t get to see Tessa.

“Are you home alone? Where’s your sister?” he asked casually.

“She’s not home,” Timothy answered and told him the same excuse he used on Gregory earlier.

Nicholas didn’t think too much about it and left with Gregory.

In the next few days, Gregory would come every single day to look for Tessa using learning as the excuse. However, he didn’t get to see her even once, to his dismay. And every single time, Timothy would tell him that she was staying over at a friend’s place.

Once or twice was fine, but when the excuse was used too often, not only was Gregory suspicious, but even Nicholas became dubious. He had investigated Tessa before, and he knew very well that this woman didn't have many friends in Southend. So, how could she stay at someone else's place for so many days?

Wait a minute... Is she avoiding us? As Nicholas came to an epiphany, his face turned grim as he was seated on a genuine leather office chair.

Suddenly, it came into his mind that during the past few days when he went to Tessa's place, besides the fact that she wasn't around, even a lot of her possessions were missing as well! Shocked, he concluded. *No, Tessa isn't just out of the house. She isn't living in the house at all!*

At this thought, he quickly contacted Edward. "Within an hour, I want to know Tessa's whereabouts for the past few days," he said, his voice interspersed with anger.

On the other end of the line, Edward heard the displeasure in his tone and immediately ordered someone to check up on it, thinking that something had happened to Tessa.

An hour later, he read the information in his hand in shock.

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Edward didn't imagine that Tessa had left the country a week ago and even settled down abroad. Nevertheless, he hurriedly sent the information packet to Dynasty Gardens, not daring to withhold the information.

Nicholas sat at the desk dressed in casual home attire in the black and white minimalist study, emanating an ominous air around him.

“Where's she? Did you find her?”

Sensing the pressure in the air, Edward immediately reported the results of his investigations respectfully. “I found her. Miss Reinhart bought a ticket and left the country a week ago.”

As soon as he said that, the temperature in the room dropped a few degrees lower, and as expected, Nicholas' face was terrifyingly solemn. *Great, just great*, he thought sarcastically. *This woman actually left without a word!*

Edward asked cautiously, peering at his boss, who had an unusually glum look on his face, “President Sawyer, should I bring Miss Reinhart back?”

“For what?!” Nicholas snapped, his voice filled with anger as he cast an icy stare toward Edward.

Secretly, Edward sulked, thinking, *You'll still have to get her back in a couple of days' time. After all, Young Master Gregory can't do without Miss Reinhart.*

Speaking of the devil, Gregory pushed the door open with red-rimmed eyes. At first, he wanted to look for Nicholas to help him think of a way to meet Tessa.

However, he didn't expect to overhear the news that she had already left the country instead.

“Daddy, is Miss Tessa not coming back anymore?” He gripped his pajamas mournfully and started to whimper as he said, “Am I not going to see her again in the future?”

Nicholas kept quiet, unsure of what he should say, and Gregory understood the look in his eyes. Then, in an instant, he started bawling. “Why did Miss Tessa leave? Is it because I'm not a good boy? Daddy, will you get her back for me? Please?”

The way he twitched and jerked while crying looked so heartbreaking that Edward couldn't bear it and hurriedly crouched down. While wiping his tears away, he assured him, “Young Master Gregory, maybe Miss Reinhart went abroad because of

some business and would be back after a few days.”

As soon as Gregory heard that, only then did he try his best to stop his cries. “Hic... Really? Will she be back after a few days?”

Even though he was asking Edward, his tear-filled eyes glanced over at Nicholas seated at the desk.

Realizing this, Edward turned to look at his boss as well, squinting at Nicholas in hopes that he wouldn't expose his white lie from earlier. However, Nicholas ignored him entirely and kept his eyes on the pitiful Gregory as his heart filled with resentment and anger at Tessa, who left without a word.

A few years ago, she abandoned her son because of money, and she's still the same a few years later! This woman is just as heartless as she was before.

“Daddy...” Gregory cried when Nicholas didn’t answer him for a long time.

Then, meeting Gregory’s eyes, Nicholas was soft–hearted for a split second. Still, he finally steeled his heart and warned strictly, “You’re not allowed to think about Tessa Reinhart and you’re also forbidden to go to their place to look for Timothy Reinhart from now on.”

Stunned, Gregory cried and yelled angrily, “Daddy’s a meanie! You can’t stop me from seeing Miss Tessa. I want her and I don’t want to be separated from her.”

After saying that, he turned around and dashed off. He wanted to find Tessa and didn’t want to be with his mean father.

“Gregory Sawyer, stay right there!” Nicholas shouted loudly.

Unfortunately, Gregory didn’t care and dashed out of sight. Nicholas chased after him with a stone–cold face with an air of fury surrounding him. Noticing the situation spiraling out of control, Edward followed behind closely.

After they came out of the study, Nicholas saw Gregory making a scene, crying as he ran for the main doors. Then, he immediately ordered the servants, “Stop Young Master Gregory!”

The second he said that, servants from all sides lunged forward and surrounded Gregory

“Go away, all of you! I want to look for Miss Tessa,” Gregory bawled, shoving the servants in his path.

Despite his efforts, he was too young and too weak to shove them aside. At that moment, he knew it was a futile effort and that he couldn’t leave on his own without help.

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Abruptly, Gregory turned around. Then, feeling heartbroken and angry, he shouted at Nicholas, “Bad Daddy! I hate you!”

As soon as these words left his lips, Gregory rushed to the second floor like a tornado. Then, he returned to his room and slammed the door hard.

Bang! The whole second floor shook like an earthquake had taken place.

Nasty was not enough to describe the sullen look on Nicholas’ face. There was even a feeling of helplessness in his heart.

At that moment, Nicholas knew very well that his relationship with Gregory, which took much effort to become somewhat of a father and son again, would return to square one after today. But, even so, he did not regret it at all. I will never allow anyone to harm Greg! Even if that person is his biological mother!

“President Sawyer—” Edward wanted to say something. However, he was interrupted by Nicholas before he could finish his sentence.

“You have no business here. Leave.”

Looking at the glacial look on Nicholas’ face, Edward could only bite back the words that he was about to say. Then, he nodded and left.

“In the future, Greg is not allowed to go out without my permission.”

After giving his order, Nicholas also turned around and went back to his study.

Two days later, Timothy realized that Gregory had not shown up for several days. And thus, he vaguely figured out a few things. That night, Timothy told Tessa about this matter when he was on a video call with her.

“Tess, President Sawyer seems to have noticed your departure. He didn’t let Greg come to find me these days.”

Upon hearing that, Tessa stayed silent for a moment. Later, with a hint of bitterness in her smile, she said softly, “It’s fine even if Greg didn’t show up. After all, we’re from two different worlds. They are bound to simply be passers-by in our lives.”

Timothy quietly looked at Tessa on the screen. I can sense the reluctance in Tess’s words. It’s just that I have no idea why she insisted on leaving. But since Tess doesn’t want to talk about it, I won’t push for answers until she’s ready to talk about it herself.

As he thought about that, Timothy changed the subject. He asked Tessa about the progress of her college application.

“Tess, have you successfully registered for college?”

In the past few days, Tessa had been applying for enrolment into Vienna Conservatory. It was just that the progress was not looking well. The college admission qualification in Vienna was challenging to obtain. Tessa had been running around places for so many days but still couldn’t make heads or tails of everything during that process.

In actuality, she felt somewhat frustrated with her lack of progress. However, in order to not worry Timothy, she pretended to be okay. “I’m still waiting for the news, but I’ll find a way. So, you don’t have to worry about me.”

Seeing that Tessa was looking confident, Timothy did not say anything. Instead, he chatted about some family affairs.

It was some time later when the call was finally over. As Tessa held the phone, the smile on the corners of her lips slipped off her face as she returned to the bedroom.

After that, Tessa threw herself on the bed. She stared at the ceiling above her head, feeling lost and miserable. Right now, her mood was very down. She was feeling down not only due to the college affairs. However, it was more because she had a hunch that this time, she might never cross paths with Nicholas and Gregory ever again in the future once she parted with them.

“Greg must be sad,” Tessa whispered sadly. Her heart throbbed in pain as her mind was full of Gregory’s reluctant look when parting with her every time. As for a particular callous guy, Tessa decisively chose to forget about him.

The atmosphere in the room fell into somber silence. Tessa did not know how long the time had passed when the phone that she had left aside rang, breaking the silence.

Grabbing her phone, Tessa checked who the caller was. She was a little surprised when she found out it was a call from Scott. Logically speaking, tomorrow is the performance day for Scott and his orchestra band. They should be rehearsing at this hour. Why does he still have time to call me at this hour?

Feeling perplexed, Tessa answered the phone, “Mr. Brooks, is something the matter?”

“Miss Reinhart, I might need your help with something. The assistant concertmaster of our orchestra was temporarily unable to perform due to a car accident. Unfortunately, the orchestra could not find a replacement for the time being. So, I recommended you to Mr. Miller. Since this is a rare opportunity, do you want to come and give it a whirl?” Scott told Tessa the whole story.

As Tessa listened, her heart was pounding. Once, I had practiced the notes on the music sheets day and night just to be able to perform as an assistant concertmaster. But an accident occurred when I was one step closer to achieving my goal, and the

position of the assistant concertmaster that I had earned through blood, sweat, and tears was given to someone else.

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Although it had been a long time since the incident, Tessa had always regretted it in her heart. At that moment, she wanted to promise Scott out of impulse. However, her pragmatism held her back.

Tessa hesitated for a split second. Then, she politely declined, “Mr. Brooks, I’ll definitely help if it’s another position in the orchestra. However, I may not be able to help you if it’s the position of an assistant concertmaster. I have no experience performing as an assistant concertmaster, and I have no experience collaborating with the others in the orchestra. So I’m afraid I’ll only hold you guys back.”

“Every musician accumulates their experiences performance after performance. And if you don’t come and try it out, how will you know that you won’t collaborate well with us?”

Unwilling to give up, Scott continued to persuade Tessa, “Besides, there will be many orchestra leaders among the guests who will come and watch the performance tomorrow night. If your talent got scouted by them and they put primary focus on your training, you would be able to spare yourself five years’ worth of struggle!”

“Let me think about it again.” Tessa was a little tempted.

Sensing that Tessa was a little enticed, Scott continued persistently, “Also, Mr. Miller even recognizes the teachers of the Vienna Conservatory. Didn’t you say that you have been looking for admission qualifications? As long as you’re willing to help us, you may have a chance when the time comes.”

This time, Tessa had absolutely no reason to reject Scott's offer. *These days, I have gone to many places for the sake of the admission qualifications. But I was left out in the rain. So now that I finally have an opportunity, it's only natural for me to grab it.*

"Alright. I'll try."

After hanging up the phone, Tessa cleaned herself up and rushed to the studio temporarily rented by the Berlin Philharmonic.

Under the front desk lady's guidance, Tessa arrived at the studio's door. However, before she could knock on the door to enter, noises of arguments came from the ajar

door.

"Mr. Miller, how can an unknown violinist be the assistant concertmaster of the orchestra at this hour? Isn't this like ruining tomorrow's performance?"

"I also disagree with this decision."

"What's more, we've been practicing day and night for these performances. We have already developed a tacit understanding. The violinist is an interim member. Can he collaborate well with us? Mr. Miller, I think we can't let there be a flaw in the performance even if there's no assistant concertmaster this time."

At once, members of the Berlin Philharmonic expressed their dissenting opinions.

Robert kept listening to them silently. He waited until everyone finished expressing their opinions. Then, he turned to look at Scott. "You're the one who recommended that violinist. So, what do you say?"

"I trust my friend. If everyone is unconvinced, you can all wait for my friend to come over and play a live performance. We shall let our skills speak for

themselves!” Scott said with a determined voice as his dark eyes glanced at the band members.

Meanwhile, Tessa felt a little moved outside the door when she heard Scott standing up for her. *Since Mr. Brooks believes in me so much, I can't let him down.*

Tessa took a deep breath, knocked on the door, and entered. “Mr. Brooks, I’m not late, am I?”

Pretending she did not overhear the argument from earlier, Tessa carried the violin case on her back. She stood tall at the door Her face without makeup was even more beautiful than the female band members adorned in makeup presently. Her looks amazed many people.

Scott was dazed for a moment. Then, he quickly snapped back to reality and smiled lightly. “No, you’re not late. In fact, you came just in the nick of time.”

Upon hearing that, Tessa nodded. Then, she turned her gaze toward everyone else. She greeted Robert, “Mr. Miller, we meet again.”

Robert looked somewhat awkward. After all, they had parted on terrible terms not too long ago. He never thought that the ‘assistance’ that Scott invited was actually Tessa.

At this moment, the band members who were initially stunned also recognized Tessa. So, one by one, they started whispering.

“She’s the ‘cavalry’ invited by Mr. Brooks? Is this a joke? How can a mere student be the assistant concertmaster?”

“No, I can’t let Mr. Brooks act recklessly. He’s going to ruin the performance.”

“Mr. Brooks, I don’t agree if you let a student Mr. Miller expelled take over the position of an assistant concertmaster.”

“I don’t agree either.”

The objections of the members of the Berlin Philharmonic continued to sound around the studio. However, neither Scott nor Robert said anything.

Tessa knew that they were waiting for her to deal with this matter. Immediately, she took off the violin case that she was carrying on her shoulder. Then, she scanned the agitated crowd indifferently.

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“I am aware that everyone has great doubts about my capability. So I’ll tell you what: I’ll play a song, and we’ll use our capabilities to prove everything! How about that?”

Upon hearing that, everyone gazed at one another in silence, and they agreed to Tessa’s proposal in the end.

After a few minutes, Tessa adjusted the strings and put the violin on her shoulders.

“Hey, look at the violin in her hand. Isn’t that Nirvana that Maestro Flores once used?” Someone recognized the violin in Tessa’s hand, and there was a sudden uproar.

“I hope this woman’s capability is worthy of the famous Nirvana violin.”

As Tessa listened to the discussion around her, her initially quiet heart gradually became tense. Finally, she took a deep breath as she tried to mute the surrounding sounds. Then, she began to pull the bow against the violin’s strings.

The piece that Tessa would be playing this time was ‘Violin Concerto in D major.

Tessa knew that if she wanted these people to recognize her capability, she had to show them her skills. And ‘Violin Concerto in D major’ had very high requirements in terms of rhythm.

Accompanying the soft sound of the violin, the people who were previously discussing the matter of her ownership of such a famous violin immediately quieted down. Then, one by one, they closed their eyes and listened to her play.

Perhaps it was because of her nervousness that Tessa's performance was not stable at first. Many people frowned, and some even looked derisive. Fortunately, Tessa did not see that. Otherwise, it would affect her performance even more.

Tessa, of course, also knew that she did not play well at the beginning. Therefore, she tried hard to adjust herself, while she played the piece. As she gradually got into a better headspace, the faces of the people who initially belittled her became serious. After all, to be an official member of the Berlin Philharmonic, every musician must have had the utmost talent in music.

As of this moment, they could all feel that Tessa's musical talent was not inferior to any of theirs. On the contrary, even the emotions conveyed by Tessa's musical sense were more powerful than theirs. The light and agile musical notes continued to sound in the studio, showing the fullest extent of cheerful, lively, and youthfulness.

As the song ended, Tessa let out a sigh of relief. Then, she put down her violin and bowed. "My performance is over."

Clap! Clap! Scott was the first to clap in support. Then, the others came back to their senses and applauded her performance.

Listening to the round of applause, Tessa felt very relieved. *It seems like I've passed the challenge!*

After the applause ended, Scott left his remarks for Tessa's performance.

"Compared to last time, your performance has improved a lot this time, especially emotionally. It feels complete this time."

"Really?" Tessa looked back at Scott in surprise. Then, the smile on her face became even brighter. Like a tiny flower blooming in spring, Tessa's dazzling smile made the others unable to take their eyes off her. Even Scott could not help but be mesmerized.

Meanwhile, Robert also made a decision. “I have decided that Tessa will take over the position of assistant concertmaster for tomorrow’s performance.”

At this moment, Tessa’s black eyes burst into a pure brilliance and joy.

“Thank you, Mr. Miller!” Tessa excitedly thanked Robert.

“Don’t mention it. Right now, time is money. You need to be familiarized with the repertoire by this afternoon and evening.”

After Robert decided to hire Tessa, he arranged training for Tessa vigorously and resolutely. He did not let Tessa relax for even a minute.

For the next whole day and night, Tessa spent her time rehearsing.

In the luxurious president’s office of the Sawyer Group, Nicholas, as usual, wore a black bespoke suit.

He was sitting at a large desk, and even so, one could still see his tall and straight body. At this moment, Nicholas’ domineering aura filled the entire office.

When Edward knocked on the door and entered, he could feel the invisible pressure circulating in the air. He straightened his mind, walked to the center of the office, and respectfully reported to Nicholas, “President Sawyer, the latest partner for our

branch in Europe requested to meet you before they agree to sign the contract.”

Nicholas frowned in displeasure. Noticing Nicholas’ frown, Edward immediately explained to him, saying, “President Sawyer, he’s a member of Asiatic Inc. He wants to meet you because he also knows a lot about your achievements, in the hope of making friends with you.”

At the mention of that, Nicholas' expression relaxed. *The position of Asiatic Inc. in Europe is similar to Sawyer Group's position in Southend. Undoubtedly, befriending such people is very beneficial to our branch's development in Europe.*

Chapter 299

“When did the other party ask to meet?”

“Preferably, tomorrow.”

“I got it. Go and make the necessary arrangements for the job, then wait for further instructions from me.”

“Okay.” Edward accepted the order and left.

Nicholas tidied up slightly before picking up his car keys from the table and left in large strides. That evening, he returned to the Dynasty Gardens and brought the sulking Gregory directly to the Sawyer Residence. After all, he was going on a business trip for a few days. Therefore, he would not be at ease if he left Gregory at home alone. That was why he decided to send Gregory to his parents.

After making arrangements for Gregory, he contacted Edward and told the latter to meet him at the airport. That night, the two of them took an overnight flight to Europe. By the time the plane landed, it was already daytime in Europe.

After washing up quickly, Nicholas went to meet their client with Edward in tow. Their client was the CEO of Asiatic Inc., Mr. Harry Sullivan.

During the banquet, Harry and Nicholas chatted away happily. They clicked immediately even though it was their first meeting, as though they were old friends, not strangers prior to this meeting. Harry originally wanted to bring Nicholas to the clubhouse in the evening. However, Nicholas was not interested and declined the offer.

Harry was not bothered by Nicholas' refusal and continued to invite Nicholas to other venues. "Mr. Sawyer, do you have an interest in listening to a musical performance? There is a performance in Vienna tonight. It will only take us two hours at most if we drive there. We can still make it in time."

Being invited so graciously, Nicholas could not refuse without seeming rude. Thus, he nodded in agreement.

The concert hall was full of guests, and they filled every corner of the quaint and gorgeous building with a cultural atmosphere.

"President Sawyer, this way, please." After getting out of the car, Harry made a gesture of invitation to Nicholas.

Nicholas nodded and followed Harry into the auditorium. Then, he saw the posters advertising the performing orchestra along the corridor. It turned out to be the Berlin Philharmonic. He raised his eyebrows slightly, suddenly feeling that it was much too coincidental.

Tessa was in the backstage area. She had no idea that Nicholas was here too. Thinking about the upcoming performance made her so nervous that her entire body trembled.

Upon noticing her uneasiness and restlessness, Scott walked over to her with a warm smile. He was dressed a lot more formally than usual for the performance today. The black and exquisite tuxedo he wore made him seem noble and gentlemanly. He asked, "Nervous?"

Tessa made a non-committal sound in reply and worriedly added, "Mr. Brooks, what if I make a mistake during the performance?"

Looking at the girl's uneasy expression, he encouraged her. "Don't think about that. Relax. You have to believe in yourself. You can do it."

That's right. I should believe in myself. She took a deep breath and tried to calm down. Surprisingly, with each breath, she gradually became less nervous. She looked at him gratefully and smiled. "Thanks for comforting me, Mr. Brooks. I'm much better now. We're going to perform on stage soon; I'm going to recheck my violin."

He nodded and watched her work.

That night, the Wiener Kursalon was fully packed. Many well-known orchestra members were among the guests who came to appreciate the performance. They exchanged greetings and interacted with each other. The atmosphere was very harmonious.

At 9:00 PM sharp, the musical performance officially began.

Dressed in a plunging V-neck black evening gown, Tessa filed onto the stage with the rest of the Berlin Philharmonic members. The form-fitting dress revealed her exquisite figure to the fullest. She had teased her thick hair into light curls that fell softly around her cheeks. Her palm-sized face bore a light but gorgeous layer of make-up, making her seem dignified instead of coquettish.

Even when she stood beside Scott, she was not overshadowed by the light radiating from him. On the contrary, the two of them standing together made a very pleasing sight.

"Who is that girl next to Mr. Brooks? Why is she standing in the assistant concertmaster's spot?"

"When did the assistant concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic change?"

"Wasn't Annie Patel the assistant concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic? What happened to her?"

A series of discussions swept across the audience.

Seated among the VIP seats on the second floor, Nicholas immediately spotted Tessa in the crowd at a glance and froze when he saw her. It never occurred to him that she would be here, much less performing as a member of the Berlin Philharmonic.

However, when he looked at the handsome man standing side-by-side with her, the perfect-couple image they gave off suddenly seemed extremely irritating to him. He felt white-hot rage in his heart at the sight of the two of them for no apparent reason.

Chapter 300

Harry, sitting next to Nicholas, was a little stunned when he noticed Nicholas's unmistakable irritated aura radiating from his person. Following Nicholas' line of sight, he saw Scott standing tall and straight among the crowd. He asked tentatively, "President Sawyer, do you know Mr. Brooks?"

Nicholas denied it without even thinking, "I don't know him.

Harry didn't really believe those words, but he tactfully said nothing after looking at Nicholas' cold expression mixed with a hint of anger.

Nicholas' gloomy and icy gaze shifted from Scott to Tessa. *Could she have left without a single word because of this man? But... didn't she say the Berlin Philharmonic fired her? So why is she performing with the Berlin Philharmonic again?*

At this moment, he felt as though he had been deceived. When he thought about how Gregory could neither eat nor sleep because of this woman, Nicholas could not suppress the rage in his heart, and the atmosphere around him became even colder than before.

Another person entered the VIP seats at this moment. It was Harry's wife, Georgia Gardner. She was a beautiful and delicate lady.

"President Sawyer." Georgia greeted Nicholas with a smile after Harry introduced them. She observed Nicholas discreetly. She could sense that the man was radiating an indescribably arrogant and domineering aura that compelled a person to submit to him.

Nicholas nodded with an indifferent expression, not wanting to talk. Knowing that Nicholas was not in a good mood, Harry tugged at his wife so that she did not disturb Nicholas.

In the next second, Georgia's voice sounded again in surprise. "Huh? Isn't Annie Patel the assistant concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic? Why have they replaced her tonight?"

Unfortunately, nobody could answer her doubts. The performance soon began. After the conductor commenced the performance, the lights on the stage gradually dimmed. Only a few beams of silver light remained, shining down on the seven leading performers standing on the stage. Under the illumination of the lights, they were akin to pure and holy messengers of music sent by God...

A deep melody carrying a hint of cheer came from the stage, instantly attracting the audience's attention. Following that, a shocking auditory feast began. Many people closed their eyes and listened with bated breath.

On the stage, Tessa was tense under the illumination of the silver ray of light. She was so nervous that her palms were sweating profusely. Fortunately, despite her nervousness, she had no problems keeping up with the rhythm. Nevertheless, there were some flaws to her performance.

Scott was standing next to her. Due to their proximity, he soon discovered the problem. He looked up and glanced at the nervous-looking woman with a slight frown on his face. Then, he pressed his bowstring more firmly against his violin to increase the volume and drowned out the problems that came up with her playing.

Naturally, she noticed the change in his playing and glanced at him in surprise. Their gazes met. He parted his lips and whispered soundlessly, "Relax. Enjoy the performance."

She immediately felt grateful toward him, knowing that he was covering up for her mistakes. Closing her eyes, she strove to calm herself down. She gradually got better under his guidance, even immersing herself in the performance.

Although this is not the Wiener Musikverein, I am still very satisfied. At least, I've taken a small step forward toward my dreams. So, I will treat tonight as a dream and enjoy this experience to the fullest.

It might be due to the change in mentality, for at this moment, Tessa was like a butterfly that had broken out of its cocoon. The atmosphere around her changed, and she began to bloom with a brilliance that belonged only to her. Her superb performance gradually attracted the audience's attention, and they started discussing it among themselves.

“Although this assistant concertmaster's performance is pretty good, I still prefer Annie's style.”

“I wonder what's the deal with this assistant concertmaster. I didn't hear anything about Annie leaving.”

“The Berlin Philharmonic didn't give any notice either, even though they made a substitution on the spot.”

“Perhaps something happened at the last minute. Let's not talk about this. We should just concentrate on enjoying the music.”

An older man spoke up, and the chatter in the audience gradually subsided.

As Nicholas was sitting in the VIP seat on the second floor, he did not hear any of this discussion.