

Always Been Yours Chapter 321

Chapter 321 Hopes for the Future

She sounded a little embarrassed when she said, “I-I’m already dating him.”

“Both of you are seeing each other?” Timothy exclaimed in surprise.

Tessa nodded. “We decided to give it a try. Tim... will you support me?” At the end of her sentence, she gave him an uneasy look.

“Tess, no matter what you do, I’ll always support you.” Then, staring at his wary sister, he felt so sorry for her. “As long as you’re happy, nothing else is important, including me.”

Even though he couldn’t bear it, he already knew that it was only a matter of time before a day like this would arrive, judging from her past interactions with Nicholas. In addition, Nicholas was the best person he knew, and Gregory was a very likable kid, so his sister deserved the best in the world!

As for the different status between the two families, he didn’t think that it was a problem. So what if they didn’t come from a prominent and influential family? He was still a young man with a lot of time ahead of himself, and he would do his best so that his sister could become a part of a wealthy family and stand confidently in front of others!

Not knowing what was on his mind, she was still equally touched by what he said earlier. “You’re a great person, Tim.”

She took a deep breath, fought back her tears with a smile, and asked about his life back at home. Of course, Timothy would tell her all the good things that happened. “I’m doing fine here. The company is on track and showing positive results so far.”

The siblings chatted for a little longer before hanging up, and Tessa still had a smile after placing her phone aside. However, when she looked around the empty room, her smile fell slightly, and she walked to the balcony, feeling a little lonely.

The sky outside was dark as ink, and only a few stars were hanging in the night sky. Placing her hands on the balcony, she gazed into the distance as the wind whistled past, rustling her dark hair.

Nicholas is probably still on the aircraft at this time, she reckoned. What should I do? He’s only been gone for a day, and I can’t help but start to miss him already.

As time passed, Tessa didn’t know how long it had been until she sorted out her emotions. Then, after regaining her energy, she returned to her room to wash up.

While she was deeply asleep, her phone on her bedside table started to vibrate. She opened her eyes and reached out to grope for her phone in a daze. Then, she saw the name on the screen of her phone—Nicholas.

“I’ve disembarked.” Tessa had just placed the phone next to her ear when she heard Nicholas’ husky voice from the phone.

She immediately woke up as she heard his voice, and a sweet smile spread across her face. “Go home quickly and have a good rest. You can go to the company later. Don’t tire yourself out.”

“Okay.” After hearing Tessa’s raspy voice, he recalled that it was probably midnight in Vienna now, and he said with a hint of guilt, “Did I wake you up? Go back to sleep and contact me when you’re awake.”

“I’m not tired, and I want to talk to you.” Somehow, she found it unbearable to hang up now, and he heard her intention behind her tone.

Actually, Nicholas didn't want to hang up, either. Even though they had only been separated for a day, he couldn't help but start to miss her, and he never thought that he would miss a person so much in just one day.

A chuckle escaped his lips, and he said affectionately, "What would you like to talk about?"

"I successfully got myself a teacher today and became her protégé as well as a reserve violinist for the orchestra," she said, telling him the good news. "Miss Hathaway said that she will promote me to an official violinist from the reserve position when I have two-thirds of her skills. By then, I'll be able to make a breakthrough in the industry with my accumulated knowledge."

On the other end, he listened to her hopes for the future while pushing his luggage out of the airport. He narrowed his almond-shaped eyes as he gazed at the blue sky outside and suddenly felt like this bright sky was just as bright as their future.

"Congratulations on finding an amazing teacher." His voice was gentle and soothing to the ears as he added, "I look forward to seeing you perform on stage."

She rolled over and switched into a comfortable position in the dark room as she grinned like a child. "I hope that you can witness that day together with me."

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Chapter 322 His Mother's Genes

“Definitely.” His answer was firm and determined as though he was making a promise, which made Tessa feel very sweet inside when she heard it.

After that, they continued to chat for a while, but her voice was becoming softer and slurred with each passing second.

As Nicholas realized that she was sleepy, he chuckled and commented on it, “Just go to bed if you're sleepy.”

“Okay, and you shouldn't forget to rest. Don't be in a rush to work.”

This time, Tessa didn't insist, and after giving him some reminders, she snuggled in the sheets and drifted off to sleep happily.

...

Nicholas walked into the living room with his luggage back home at Dynasty Gardens, and Andrew immediately came up to him. “You're back, Master Nicholas.”

Actually, he wanted to help Nicholas with the luggage, but the latter turned him down.

Meanwhile, Gregory, who was playing Lego with Kieran, suddenly heard his father's voice, and he quickly jumped up from the couch, dumping Kieran aside.

“Daddy!” As Gregory recovered his original enthusiasm, he dashed toward Nicholas and hugged his thigh; his baby voice was so cute that it could melt anyone’s heart.

Kieran watched the close-knit father and son in front of him and couldn’t help but grumble as he stood up, “You heartless little one, you’ve never shown me this much passion after I played with you for two days.”

However, it was as though they didn’t hear him at all as Nicholas crouched down and picked up Gregory into his arms. “Have you been a good boy at home?” he asked, his expression soft.

“I was!” Gregory bobbed his head eagerly and adorably, putting his arms around Nicholas’ neck.

Next to them, Kieran watched everything with a stuffy feeling in his chest. They are father and son indeed, and their habit of throwing away used things is exactly the same. Unaware of the grievances Kieran had in his heart, Nicholas and Gregory continued to chatter away.

As they spoke, Gregory’s eyes were fixed on Nicholas’ suitcase, and he knew what was on his son’s mind when he saw that. He flicked the tip of Gregory’s nose with a finger and smiled. “Wait here.”

Then, he placed him on the floor, turned around, and placed his suitcase flat down on the floor.

Nervously, Gregory watched every move he was making, and his dark eyes were sparkling as though there were stars hidden behind them.

“Here, this is the gift Tessa prepared for you,” Nicholas said, taking out a beautifully wrapped gift box from his suitcase.

Delighted, Gregory ran up and hugged the gift in his arms. At the same time, he gave Nicholas a peck on the cheek. “Thanks, Daddy. You’re the best!”

Nicholas felt his heart turning soft as he saw the delighted expression on his face.

In the meantime, Gregory trotted to the couch impatiently and started to open the gift. When he finally opened the box, he saw a small, delicate music box in the shape of a golden violin, and he fell in love with it at first sight.

A brilliant smile spread across his face as he took out the music box. “Daddy, Uncle Kieran, look! Miss Tessa gave me a violin music box!” he said proudly, winding up the music box, and a light, cheerful melody started playing from it.

“It’s a song played by Miss Tessa! Daddy, Miss Tessa was playing this!” he exclaimed in surprise, his eyes sparkling when he recognized that it was Tessa who had played that tune.

Nicholas nodded. “This was specially recorded into the music box by Tessa.”

Hearing that, Gregory widened his smile.

In contrast, Kieran stood next to them with a stunned expression. “Nicholas, Greg’s musical talents are something else, aren’t they? How can he even tell who was playing the tune? This is too uncanny!”

However, his words of surprise only made Nicholas smile.

Truthfully, he was always baffled in the past, wondering whom Gregory inherited his musical talent from. But now he knew for sure that he had inherited it from Tessa, and it only made sense that he was this good.

After learning that Tessa had specially recorded the tune for him in the music box, Gregory held the music box in his hand like a great treasure.

“Daddy, may I keep the music box in the safe box in your study?”

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Chapter 323 Kieran Finds Out

This was his first gift from Tessa, and he must keep it very well.

Nicholas met Gregory's eyes, which were filled with anticipation, and he couldn't bear to turn him down at all. "Of course, and you know the password. Place it inside yourself."

"You're the best, Daddy!" Gregory cheered and trotted to the second floor with the music box in his hands.

Standing next to Nicholas, Kieran watched the father and son duo, and his lips twitched. "Nicholas, I remember that your safety box is the most advanced model globally. Isn't it a shame to use it to keep a regular music box?"

"That's alright, as long as it makes Greg happy."

Nicholas's tone was filled with so much adoration that Kieran couldn't refute, and he gawked at his brother speechlessly. But then, he realized that Nicholas' face, which was constantly emotionless in the past, now had a faint trace of a smile. He seems like a changed man after coming back to the country, Kieran observed silently. His entire being stinks like... a man in love.

Kieran was stunned at his train of thought. Thus, he couldn't help but ask tentatively, "Nicholas, are you and Tessa... dating?"

"Yes, we're seeing each other now." Nicholas admitted with a nod and added, "Don't tell this to anyone else because our relationship is a secret for now. I don't want anyone from our family to cause her any trouble."

"I got it."

As he saw the seriousness on Nicholas' face, he knew that Nicholas had fallen hard for Tessa, but he thought it was fine this way since Gregory liked her very much. Of course, the more important thing was that he finally didn't have to face his fearsome and terrifying brother every day.

After that, they spoke about what had happened in the company for the past couple of days until Kieran urged, "Nicholas, you just landed after more than ten hours of flight. So take a rest now and only come to the company tomorrow."

Nicholas nodded in agreement and was about to go upstairs when he received a call from Remus.

"Grandpa, what is it?"

"Tonight, bring Greg to my place for dinner."

Nicholas frowned and declined as he didn't feel like going. "I'll be busy tonight—"

"Is there anything more important than having dinner with me? You have to come with Greg tonight!"

As though he was worried that Nicholas would turn him down again, Remus hung up directly after saying his piece.

When Kieran saw Nicholas putting the phone away with a frown, he asked in curiosity, "Nicholas, what did Grandpa say in the call?"

"He wants me to bring Greg back for dinner tonight," he exasperatedly answered, rubbing the spot between his brows.

At this, Kieran suddenly thought of something, and he chuckled sheepishly. "I think Grandpa definitely wants to speak with you about your marriage this time, Nicholas."

Nicholas cast him a death stare as he heard how gleeful Kieran sounded. “Are you pleased by this?”

Kieran’s sense of self-preservation kicked in the next second after being startled by his terrifying gaze. “No... Not at all.”

Nicholas snorted, then said, “Tonight, go to Grandpa’s place in my stead, and I’ll increase your annual leave from one month to two months.”

For a few seconds, Kieran was dumbstruck, then he slapped his thigh in joy and shouted, “You better mean it, Nicholas!”

Nicholas glanced at the excited Kieran calmly. “Don’t worry. I don’t break my promises.” After saying that, he ignored Kieran, turned around, and went upstairs.

In the living room, Kieran was overjoyed after hearing his brother’s promise. With just one dinner, he could exchange it for a month of annual leave. There could be no better deal than this, and he hoped that more of such good deals would happen in the future.

...

On the same night at the Sawyer’s Residence, Kieran saw that besides his own parents and Remus, Hayley and her parents were there as well.

He slightly raised his brows and secretly sighed, relieved that Nicholas didn’t come, or else he would be pushed into marriage by these people.

“Everyone, I’m home,” he greeted, but Hayley and the others didn’t take their seats.

When Remus saw that it was Kieran who had arrived, he knitted his brows together and grunted unhappily, “Kieran, why are you back alone? Where’s your brother?”

“Grandpa, Nicholas is busy. Just a couple of days ago, he was away on a business trip, and many things were piled up in the company awaiting his decision. In addition, he has another international conference in the evening, so he asked me to come and have dinner with you.”

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Chapter 324 I Miss You, Too

Kieran smiled and helped his brother with a bluff, but Remus didn't believe him at all. "I think he's not busy but just avoiding me on purpose," he sneered with a trace of anger.

Kieran scratched his nose lightly and continued to weave a story for Nicholas. "Grandpa, why would he do that? He's indeed swamped with work right now."

Remus glared at him and whisked out his cell phone to call Nicholas as he couldn't be bothered to waste his time speaking with Kieran.

"I would like to find out just how busy he is that he doesn't even have the time for dinner.

Kieran could only hope that Nicholas would cooperate and not expose his lies despite his awkwardness. But perhaps God really heard his prayers, for Remus couldn't get through to Nicholas' number as the line was busy the whole time.

The look on his face turned solemn, and he had a stronger hunch that Nicholas was trying to avoid him.

On the other hand, Kieran breathed a sigh of relief and became calmer. As he took a seat next to his parents, he said playfully, "That's not right, Grandpa. We're both your grandchildren, but you don't seem happy to see me. This is making me feel sad."

After saying that, he even made a sad expression, but the next second, Stefania slapped his thigh and warned, "Don't clown around."

Kieran rubbed on the sore spot where he just received a slap and felt unjustified but didn't dare to joke around anymore.

Meanwhile, Hayley was filled with disappointment as she sat in the corner. She had thought that she would be able to meet Nicholas with Remus around tonight. But, seeing the disgruntled look on Remus' face, she smiled gently and said, "Old Master Sawyer, it's fine even if Nicholas isn't here. After all, he's busy, and we shouldn't bother him."

Remus relaxed his expression a little as he heard her, feeling that Hayley was a very sensible and understanding person, which was the same thought in Stefania and Tobias' minds. The more they looked at Hayley, the more satisfied they were with her. Whether it was her family background or upbringing, they fitted with their expectations of their future daughter-in-law.

"Since Nicholas didn't come today, I'll make another appointment for you next time so that Nicholas can spend some time with you and both of you youngsters can have more contact," Stefanie said with a smile.

Obviously, she wanted to match Hayley up with Nicholas.

Meanwhile, Kieran observed the people who were chatting happily around the table, especially his parents' attitude toward Hayley, and he immediately realized that something was amiss. Even though his expression remained unchanged, he couldn't help but start to worry for his brother.

In between, he found a chance to slip out of the dining room and tipped off Nicholas. 'This is bad, Nicholas. Hayley had won over Mom and Dad, and now, Mom wants to match you up with her.'

However, Nicholas didn't see the message he sent him because he was on a video call with Tessa. Tessa had been practicing with Hathaway and learned many things for the whole day. So, she couldn't help but share everything she had learned with Nicholas and Gregory.

The music notes coming from the violin, which were sometimes quick and light, echoed through the screen, and when she finished playing a piece, Gregory clapped in enthusiasm. “That’s amazing. You’re amazing, Miss Tessa!”

Tessa placed down her violin and had a stunning smile as she gazed at Nicholas with her clear, bright eyes. “What do you think?”

“It’s enjoyable to the ears.” Although he couldn’t comment professionally, he told her his objective opinion.

And these simple words were enough to pump Tessa’s heart full of satisfaction.

They gazed deeply into each other’s eyes through the screen, and even the air was sickly sweet at this time. On the other hand, Gregory didn’t realize the emotions flowing through the both of them at all. He rested his chin on his palms and stared at Tessa on the screen with a sentimental expression. “I miss you, Miss Tessa. I miss you so, so much.”

Jerked back to her senses, Tessa caught sight of the pitiful look on his face, and sadness washed over her chest. “I miss you too, Greg. I miss you very much.”

Then, the boy looked at her expectantly and exclaimed, “Come back and visit me, then!”

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Chapter 325 Hayley Is a Rare Gem

At the same time, Tessa really wanted to return as well, but when she recalled her situation, she suppressed the impulse in her heart.

“Greg, I still can’t come back yet, but I promise you that I’ll visit you right away when I can,” she said, looking at him apologetically.

Even though he was disappointed, Greg said sensibly, “It’s okay, Miss Tessa. You can come and visit me when you’re finished.”

As she saw how sensible Gregory was, Tessa felt her heart wrenching slightly despite her relief. However, she quickly accepted it because this short period of separation was for the sake of a better future.

After hanging up the call reluctantly, she let out a huge breath. Although her life was very fulfilling now, she didn’t know when she would be able to meet Nicholas and Gregory in person again.

On the other end, Nicholas sent Gregory to play by himself before he read Kieran’s text, but he didn’t consider the fact that his family wanted to match him up with Hayley seriously. In this life, besides Tessa, he had no interest in other women at all!

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The next morning at Dynasty Gardens, Stefania walked into the living room dressed in a white, lacey dress. When she saw Gregory playing with a Rubik’s cube on the couch, a warm smile broke out on her aloof face. “Greg, I’m here to visit you.”

“Grandma, what brought you here?” Surprised, he tossed aside his Rubik’s cube and jumped off the couch before trotting to her.

She crouched down, picked him up into her arms, and chuckled. “That’s because I’m missing my adorable grandson,” she said, pecking him affectionately on his soft cheeks.

In her arms, Gregory giggled, and Nicholas caught sight of this heart-warming scene when he came downstairs. His emotionless face turned a little softer, and he asked in surprise, “Mom, why are you here?”

Instead of answering him, she placed Gregory down and instructed, “Andrew, bring Greg for his breakfast.”

In reply, Andrew nodded and led Gregory into the dining room. A small knot formed between Nicholas’ brows as he could tell that Stefania had something to say to him by deliberately drawing Gregory away.

“Just tell me directly what you have to say, Mom.”

“Yesterday, your father and I met Hayley and her parents,” Stefania said, sitting on the couch and gesturing at him to take a seat across from her.

However, Nicholas was motionless, and his expression turned a little more grim from her words.

Not seeing the unhappy look on his face, she continued, “Both of us think that she’s an amazing girl, and she was very considerate when you didn’t show up last night. She’s a rare gem and a good, sensible girl. So we think she’s very suitable for you.”

“Mom, did you forget about Roselle Gingham?” Nicholas snorted. “Back then, you thought that she was a good girl as well, but look what she did in the end. Did you forget all of that?”

The muscles on Stefania's face stiffened, and she cleared her throat as though trying to hide the awkwardness on her face.

“Roselle Gingham was an accident.”

“Mom, no matter if she was an accident or not, I won't accept anyone that Greg doesn't accept,” he said and left without even having breakfast, not giving Stefania the chance to say anything else.

On the couch, Stefania sighed in exasperation; in her opinion, this was only an excuse he was using to turn her down by saying that he would only accept someone whom Gregory liked.

Just then, a tiny head popped out from behind the couch. As Gregory was worried, he had slipped back into the living room and was eavesdropping from behind the sofa.

When he saw his grandmother sighing, he quickly ran to her. “Grandma, I don't need a mommy. All I need is Grandma and Daddy. It's great like this now,” he said, throwing himself at Stefania's knees, acting spoiled.

Truthfully, he had made a promise with Nicholas not to reveal Tessa's existence, so he was cooperating from all aspects, but Stefania knew nothing about this.

She silently sighed again and placed Gregory on her lap as she said gently, “Greg, I just wish for one more person to love you.”

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Chapter 326 Please Let Roselle Off

“I don’t need anyone else. All I need is Grandma!” Gregory reached out his arms, held Stefania around her neck, and showered her with sweet mutterings. “You’re the best grandma in the world. Nobody can take your place!”

“Oh my, did my Little Greg have too much candy today? You’re such a sweet-talker.” Stefanie momentarily forgot that she was here to match up Nicholas with Hayley as she was overjoyed from being coaxed by Gregory.

Meanwhile, Nicholas went straight to the company after leaving his home. However, it wasn’t long before Edward knocked on his door and came in. “President Sawyer, our lawyer has started the case against Roselle Gingham, and her parents came here early in the morning hoping to see you.”

“I’m not available,” Nicholas said coldly.

He knew clearly why the Gingham couple wanted to meet him, but he couldn’t let Roselle off when she had extended her claws time and time again toward Gregory.

Edward nodded, then turned around and passed the instructions to the receptionists downstairs.

Upon receiving the order, the receptionist politely said to the Gingham couple, “I’m sorry, but our president isn’t available.”

Yana and her husband, Declan Gingham, had a rather nasty expression when they heard that.

After the police arrested Roselle, they went from place to place trying to pull strings to get Roselle off the hook, but the Sawyer Family was simply too

influential. Finally, out of wits, they could only come to look for Nicholas, hoping that he would let Roselle go for the sake of the friendship between their families in the past.

But they didn't expect that they couldn't even meet Nicholas in person!

When they were out of the Sawyer Group, Yana started condemning them. "This is too much. Why does the Sawyer Family have to go this far when Roselle has already learned her lesson? What do they take the friendship between our families as?"

Although Declan was quiet, the look on his face was dreadful. In the end, they had no other choice but to look for Stefania.

...

At the entrance into the yard of the Sawyer residence, Stefania had just returned from Dynasty Gardens in high spirits because of all the sweet-talking by Gregory until she caught sight of Yana and her husband at her doors unexpectedly right after she got out of the car.

Immediately, her face fell, and her tone was harsh as she asked, "What are you people doing here?"

The fury in Stefania's heart ignited at the sight of them as she was unpleasantly reminded of the things their family did to Gregory. Now, she especially regretted bringing the mother-daughter duo back home, which was as good as inviting the monsters under the bed out into the open.

Yana suppressed her dissatisfaction when she saw the unhappy look on Stefania's face and put on a sycophantic smile. "Stefania, I know that Roselle has gone overboard, but she has learned her lesson. So will you please forgive her this time?"

“Yana Johnson, I truly wonder how you can be so shameless as to come begging me for forgiveness again and again.”

Stefania shot her a glare filled with rage, and she glowered at Yana fiercely.

Yana felt incredibly embarrassed as she stood there with a frozen face at Stefania’s words. For a moment, she had the urge to tear her relationship with Stefania into shreds, then turn around and leave. However, at the thought of her daughter’s situation, she bore with it in the end.

Instead, she once again pleaded, “Stefania, please forgive Roselle again, alright? For the sake of our friendship of more than a decade, and I promise you that I’ll keep a stricter watch on her after she’s released.”

“If I forgive Roselle, my Greg would have suffered in vain! Furthermore, it’s not the first time you guys have done something like this. The last time we let you off was due to the remaining tatters of our friendship, but if you ever think it would be the same as last time, don’t hold your breath!”

It didn’t occur to Stefania that Yana would still have the audacity to bring up their friendship, making her incandescent with fury.

Yana was so livid at Stefania’s words that they silenced her for a moment. Meanwhile, Declan found it even harder to say anything as he stood by her side. He never imagined that Roselle had actually tried to harm Gregory before the incident this time.

Stefania ignored how uneasy the Gingham couple appeared and gave them a full-blown dressing-down, “Leave this instant. If I see you lurking around my house again, don’t blame me for calling security!”

Yana and Declan could only leave since they were already at the end of their rope, sulking. After all, they still had their dignity, and if they were thrown out... Saying that they wouldn’t be able to live their lives in Southend would be an understatement.

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Chapter 327 Hayley's Plan

On the way home, Yana kept cursing Stefania while in the car. "That b*tch Stefania wouldn't be able to put up such high airs if she hadn't married into the Sawyer Family, taking a b*stard born from some unknown woman as a treasure. But, of course, it will be the best if it's one day proven that that b*stard doesn't even belong to her son at all. Oh, I would love to be the fly on the wall when that truly happens just to see the look on her face!"

After venting out her anger, she finally felt much better, and when she calmed down, a worried look washed across her face at the thought of Roselle's situation that wasn't getting any better. "Hubby, what should we do about Roselle? Without the help from the Sawyer Family, it will be difficult to get her out."

Declan muttered with a solemn look, "What else can we do? We'll have to keep thinking of other ways."

"But we already used up all the ideas that we came up with. So what other solution can there be?" With her tightly knitted brows, Yana was unable to hide the anxiety on her face. "Hubby, you have to think of a way to get Roselle out. She's still young! She can't go to jail!"

"What's the point of being scared now? You shouldn't have done those things in the first place!" Declan became even more annoyed and frustrated by Yana's urging when he thought of the things Roselle did. "We had a good relationship with the Sawyer Family at first, but it's now completely ruined by the both of you just like that."

"Well, you didn't raise your objections when we did those things back then, did you?" she retorted indignantly.

He glared at her and snapped, “I didn’t object because I thought your objective was to marry into the Sawyer Family, but I never imagined that you chose to harm Gregory, of all people! I really wonder what the both of you were thinking about!”

On the top floor of the Sawyer Group, Hayley stepped out of the elevator wearing a light-colored dress paired with stilettos. She carried a food warmer in her hands, and she smiled as she walked toward the president’s office elegantly.

Knock, knock.

“Come in,” Nicholas said nonchalantly on the other side of the door.

Hayley opened the door, stepped in, and saw the dashing man working seriously at the desk. Golden rays of light poured into the room through the window and fell on him, making him look holy as if a layer of golden light showered upon him.

While she was dumbstruck at the sight, Nicholas lifted his head and met her eyes which were filled with admiration. Then, he asked indifferently with furrowed brows, “Why are you here?”

The sound of his voice jerked her back to her senses, and she waved the food warmer in her hands awkwardly.

“I thought you must be very busy after coming back from a business trip. So, I specially asked my chef to prepare your favorite food and brought it here because I’m worried you’ll skip your meals,” she said, opening up the food warmer and spreading the food across the coffee table in the office to display her virtuous side.

However, he was unmoved by any of it and turned her down emotionlessly. “I’m sorry, I have a lunch appointment with a client in the afternoon.”

The smile froze on Hayley’s face, and a wounded look flashed across her eyes, but he didn’t care as he continued with his work at hand. After that, he grabbed his jacket on the back of his chair and walked away from his desk, leaving her standing alone in the spacious office with an unpleasant expression.

When she sensed that he was avoiding her on purpose, she felt unjustified, but he was the man she had her eyes on. Therefore, she must have him no matter what!

Just when she was gathering the things and preparing to leave, she caught sight of a document on the desk from the corner of her eyes.

Narrowing her eyes slightly, she walked over briskly. It seemed that Nicholas was interested in a project from another foreign company and had asked the planning department to develop a proposal to win the project.

After she took a glance at the company's name, a shrewd light flashed past her eyes with delicate makeup. She remembered that she had a classmate who happened to be a managing director in this company, and an idea hatched in her mind at that instant.

On that night, she contacted her classmate and received a lot of insider information from him. Then, she went straight to her father's study with that information.

“Dad, I might need your help for something.”

She was a schemer at heart, so she didn't plan to introduce Nicholas directly to her friend. Instead, she wanted her father to casually bring up this matter when he visited Tobias.

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Chapter 328 A Cooperation

The next day at the Sawyer Group, Hayley's father, Nero, went to look for Tobias to speak about business, as she mentioned.

When both men were chatting casually, he pretended to say unintentionally, "I heard that Nicholas has his eyes on a project from a foreign company. It seems like it's a project with bright prospects that many companies are interested in."

"That's true," Tobias admitted with a nod.

Nero chuckled and said, "Well, we recently found out that the managing director of that company happens to be Hayley's classmate."

"Really? That's such a wonderful coincidence." Despite the smile on Tobias' face, he secretly cursed, You wily old fox.

He was aware that Nero was saying this to him on purpose, as well as the reason why he was doing this. This wily old fox wants to create an opportunity for Hayley so that Nicholas will think highly of her.

Even so, he still made a mental note of this, and Nero didn't continue this particular conversation after that. After all, he should stop after making his point. Otherwise, it would seem like they were throwing themselves at the Sawyers if he said more.

Later, after Tobias had seen Nero off, he went straight to Nicholas' office.

Nicholas was a little surprised to see his father's arrival in the spacious and bright president's office. Nevertheless, he stood up from his seat, greeted his father, and showed him to a seat on the couch.

After placing a glass of water in front of Tobias, he asked, “Why are you here, Dad?”

“There’s something I would like to discuss with you.” After taking a seat, Tobias told him his purpose for the visit. “Earlier, Nero came over to speak about the cooperation between our families. I know that you’re not interested in Hayley, but the business with the Stone Family has to continue.”

“I’m not against our families’ continued cooperation,” Nicholas said composedly.

“I know that you’re not against it, but I want to speak about something else.” Tobias paused for a moment and then told him the news he had received from Nero earlier. “I know that you’re interested in a project from a foreign company, but there hasn’t been any progress the whole time. So, I think you should use Hayley as a bridge between your company and that foreign company you had your eye on for a while. Then, later, ask her out for a meal when you’re free.”

Nicholas clearly didn’t seem willing with his furrowed brows, and Tobias could see it. “I know you couldn’t be bothered to resort to such a method, but there are quite a few companies within the country who have their eyes on this project as well. Of course, our company has no lack of capabilities, but if it’s experience in the industry we’re talking about, then the Sawyer Group is a newbie in this category.”

Even Nicholas had to admit that this point certainly caught his interest because the prospect of that company’s project was very promising, but to the Sawyer Group, it was new territory. In order to obtain that project, they had to use a different way.

As he sensed that Nicholas was a little swayed, Tobias continued, “Furthermore, the Stone Family is also interested in this project, and they want the two families to work together. So, you don’t have to overthink it.”

When Nicholas heard that, he agreed to it. After all, he had no reason to turn it down since it was a cooperation with a clear-cut line between private and work affairs.

After Tobias left, Nicholas returned to his desk and contemplated before giving Tessa a video call.

“Hi, Nicholas.” Tessa was wearing pajamas on the screen, and the smile on her face was stunning and alluring.

Due to the time difference, it was already night time in Vienna.

As he saw the smile on her face, Nicholas couldn't help but smile as well, saying gently, “What are you doing?”

“I just washed up and am about to get into bed,” she answered truthfully and asked, “Where's Greg? Why isn't he with you?”

For the past few days, when they were in a video call, Gregory would always be next to him, and she found it a little odd that he wasn't there now.

“He's at home while I'm still in the office,” Nicholas explained, smiling.

“I see,” she uttered. “What time are you going home, then?” she asked.

“I'll be meeting a client with Hayley tonight, so I'll be going home later,” he said honestly. He didn't want to hide this matter from her for some unknown reason.

Tessa was quiet all of a sudden as she heard the news. “Just the both of you?” she asked, not realizing that she sounded a little jealous.

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Chapter 329 Why Me?

“Yes, just the two of us.” Nicholas nodded, but as though he was worried that Tessa would misunderstand, he quickly explained earnestly, “This client is one of the major development projects that the company has set its sights on for the second half of the year. This project can not only broaden our market overseas, but it can also add another industry under the Sawyer Group’s belt. Hayley knows some insider information, and since both our companies want to cooperate, I have to meet up with her.”

After hearing that Nicholas had broken down into details of his company’s development plans for the second half of the year, Tessa couldn’t help but giggle. She knew that he said so much just to put her mind at ease, and because of this, she suddenly felt that she was being taken seriously.

Even though his explanation touched her, there was still a trace of doubt in her heart.

“Nicholas, I have a question.”

“What is it?”

“I think, be it Roselle or Hayley, they have better qualifications than me, but why are you only interested in me?” After saying that, she fixed her gaze on him with an expectant look in her eyes.

He raised his brows in surprise as he wasn’t expecting her to ask such a question, and he asked himself, Why?

After he pondered over it for a while, something came into his mind, and he said, “I’ve never been involved in a relationship before this, so there are many things which I don’t really understand. But now I know that regardless of how

outstanding Roselle and Hayley are, I'm just following my heart in this. My heart says it's you that it wants, so I want only you by my side." At this point, he gazed deeply into Tessa's eyes through the screen. "When I see you, it makes me feel like you're the only one for me in this life."

Thump, thump.

At that moment, she could feel her heart beating against her chest, and after a few seconds, she composed herself. Then, finally, she couldn't help but murmur, "Yet here you are, saying that you know nothing about relationships, but nobody will believe it if they see how well you flirt."

"What did you say?" Even though he heard her saying something, he couldn't clearly hear what she said.

She was startled as she didn't think she actually said aloud what she was thinking.

"Uh, nothing." In order to avoid being questioned, she hurriedly changed the topic. "It's getting late for you. Aren't you going to prepare to meet your client?"

He pretended not to notice her sudden subject change and glanced down at his watch. "It's still early. How was your practice today? Did anyone cause you any problems?" he asked in concern.

"I'm Miss Hathaway's protégé. Nobody dares to make any trouble for me."

The proud and charming look she had made it hard for Nicholas to look away, and he thought that she was so attractive no matter how much he looked at her.

Then, they chatted for a little more, mainly with Tessa speaking about her learning experience and the fun things she observed from the band. Later, they said goodnight to each other and hung up.

As Tessa lay in bed to rest, Nicholas contacted Hayley to make an appointment for tonight.

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Hayley and Nicholas sat inside facing each other in a traditionally decorated VIP room of a Chinese restaurant.

Hayley had spent three hours solely dressing up for dinner tonight, but when she saw the aloof man in front of her, a sense of frustration started to build up in her. Right now, she had to admit that her charm, which she was so proud of in the past, was nothing at all in his eyes.

He gestured for the menu from the waiter and passed it to her, utterly oblivious to her train of thought. "Please order what you would like to eat, Miss Stone."

Looking at the menu in front of her, she blinked and accepted it. Since she couldn't attract Nicholas with her beauty, then she would show him the virtuous side of herself.

After placing the order, she turned to him with a smile. "I ordered a few dishes that you like, which I usually hear from Mrs. Sawyer, and I also informed the restaurant not to make it too spicy."

He nodded expressionlessly and went straight to the point. "How much do you know about the project?"

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Chapter 330 A Business Dinner

When she saw how business-like Nicholas was, the smile on her face wavered, but she quickly recovered herself. “I don’t know that much, but I can make an appointment to meet up with my classmate,” she said.

After dinner, they walked out of the restaurant together, and their striking appearance attracted the attention of many passersby. There were even some who whispered, saying that they were very compatible.

Hayley smiled alluringly as she heard those whispers and tilted her head at Nicholas. “Nicholas, it’s still early now. Would you like to go for a walk?” she asked.

He declined the offer immediately. “No, thank you. Greg is waiting for me to come home.”

However, his rejection didn’t strike her as a surprise because she was just trying her luck by asking earlier. “That’s okay. Since you’re not free, we’ll come out again next time,” she said, following him to where he parked his car. Afterward, she went straight to the passenger seat, opened the door, and sat inside.

Nicholas paused and frowned as he saw her actions while getting into the car.

Naturally, Hayley felt the annoyance exuding from him, but she pretended not to notice and flashed him a smile. “I’ll have to trouble you to drop me home tonight, Nicholas. My driver went back after he dropped me off.”

He pursed his lips together at her explanation but didn’t refuse her a ride, and the car was completely silent when they were on the way.

At this moment, she turned her head, glanced at his sculptured features, and asked, “Nicholas, are you avoiding me?”

His brows knitted at the question, and he asked instead, “Why should I avoid you?”

“I thought that you have no reason to do that, too. After all, I’m not that scary, am I? It’s not like I’m a cannibal.”

She stared straight at him and didn’t hide the adoration in her eyes because she hoped that he would give her some response, but the man in front of her remained unmoved.

Finally, she couldn’t help but ask, “Nicholas, I don’t think I’m that bad, so why do you refuse to accept me? Are you concerned about Gregory? If that’s the case, you don’t have to worry about anything because I will care for him as if he is my own. So even if we’re married in the future, I can accept not having a biological child of my own.”

“Miss Stone, this has nothing to do with Greg, but I’m the one who’s unwilling.” Then, he cast a fleeting gaze at her, and he decided not to beat about the bush. “I don’t like playing games, and even more so for my marriage to be a chess piece for others.”

The expression on Hayley’s face turned sour, and she clutched her handbag tightly. After all her efforts for so long, this man didn’t have a sliver of feeling for her.

As though he didn’t see the look on her face, he continued, “Actually, with your conditions, you can have any man you want, so you don’t waste your efforts on me.”

“But you’re the one I want.” She looked at him determinedly as she bit her bottom lip.

However, that only made his tone turn icy cold. “But I don’t want you!”

Once again, the car slipped into complete silence, which made Hayley feel incredibly unbearable. This was the first time in her life that she was repeatedly rejected.

After a while, the car stopped in front of her house, and she couldn't help but feel aggrieved when she saw the expressionless man in the driver's seat. She placed both hands against the car window and asked, "If you don't like a woman like me, then what type of woman do you like?"

"That has nothing to do with you." Nicholas felt that this was his private affair, so he didn't need to explain himself to anyone.

Hayley's face twisted into a scowl as she felt mad with frustration, but it didn't bother him one bit as he said before turning the car around to leave, "I hope that you won't appear before me with this idea in your mind in the future. If you keep this up, I'll send others to speak with you about work."

As she watched the elegant, black Maybach disappear at the street's end, she gradually calmed down.

Unfortunately for him, the more he turned her down, the more interest she had in him.