

Always Been Yours Chapter 601

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‘The Sawyer Group are capitalists, to begin with, and capitalists only value their interests. So, it’s common for them to eliminate the things which are not beneficial to them,

‘Exactly. Friendships and relationships are nothing in the face of profit.’”

In the vice president’s office of the Sawyer Group, Kieran listened to the report by his assistant and understood that the comments on the Internet would affect the company’s image.

He waved his hand as he gestured for his assistant to leave the room before he picked up his phone, planning to discuss with Nicholas what to do.

“Nicholas, the Internet is rife with rumors that we’re putting pressure on Stone Enterprise because of the failed marriage. If this continues, it will be bad for the company’s image.”

“What happened? Give me the details.” Nicholas’ cold voice echoed from the other end of the line.

Then, Kieran told him the results of his assistant’s investigations before he said through gritted teeth in the end, “My guess is, it’s very likely that the ghost writers on the Internet were bought by the Stone Family.”

Nicholas turned solemn as he also had the exact guess in his heart upon hearing Kieran’s irate words.

The Stone Family had found out that Hayley was hurt, and that was the truth.

It seemed like Hayley had contacted her parents the next day after she was injured; she twisted the truth of the matter by saying that Nicholas sent people to abduct her because he wanted her life.

As for other information, she must have kept mum about it.

Not knowing what truly happened, her parents were furious after listening to Hayley's version of the story.

As they loved her deeply, they wouldn't just let things slide when their daughter had suffered such a huge grievance.

Even though they didn't dare to fight head-on with Sawyer Group in the open, they were privately thinking of ways and means to defame the Sawyer Group while simultaneously taking up the position as the victim of this incident.

Meanwhile, Hayley was following the news on the Internet closely and she was delighted to see the other netizens going along with the ghostwriters to attack the Sawyer Group.

So, she picked up her phone and contacted Nero.

“Dad, I saw the news on the Internet, but I think we can do more than this. If we use the netizens' emotions, we may have unexpected results after this.”

Nero was agreeable to this and was about to call for his assistant after hanging up when his assistant came looking for him unexpectedly.

“Mr. Stone, we've already asked people to defame the Sawyer Group according to your orders. Their reputation is now affected, and it's beginning to cause a ripple on the stock market.”

“Good. Continue to monitor this, and it will be best to ask the ghostwriters to make more accusations about the Sawyer Group in order to draw out the netizens’ negative emotions.”

There were traces of calculation in Nero’s eyes as he was filled with malicious intentions, and even though his assistant thought it was inappropriate to do this, he didn’t say anything and simply left.

After all, he was just an employee and would do as his employer instructed.

On the other hand, Nicholas didn’t know about any of these and went on the Internet to look up the news back home after hanging up with Kieran.

When he read the comments attacking the Sawyer Group, the look in his eyes turned solemn and ice cold. Just when he wanted to ask Edward to take care of this, his cell phone started ringing and it was a call from Remus.

“Hello, Grandpa.”

“Did you know that there have been rumors about our company for several days in the country?” Remus’s voice, interspersed with anger, echoed through the call.

Nicholas narrowed his eyes at the comments on the screen as he replied emotionlessly, “I just found out about it.”

“Since you already knew about it, I want you to return to the country to take care of this immediately.” While Remus wouldn’t take no for a command he had given, he blamed Nicholas angrily at the same time, berating him, “I really don’t get it. What the hell came over you? Why do you keep picking on the Stones in every aspect? Do you know how much damage you’re causing to our reputation by doing this? Are you ignoring the dangers that this could cause to our company?”

Nicholas disagreed with Remus’ words because he didn’t think much of the dirty tricks the Stone Family was playing at this moment. “I’ll take care of this. You don’t have to worry about this matter.”

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After he finished speaking, he hung up directly, ignoring whether Remus had any more to say.

Initially, he wanted to let Edward take care of this, but he gave it a thought and changed his mind. Since the Stone Family was so keen to seek their end, then he didn't need to hold back, either.

With his cell phone in his hand, he called Kieran and said in an aloof voice, "Regarding the rumors about the company, do as I tell you."

After that, he told him about how Hayley hired an assassin abroad, and Kieran listened intently on the other end, holding his cell phone tightly.

Then, a short while later, he lashed out in anger, "The Stone Family is too much! Don't worry, Nicholas. I'll take care of this matter properly and stand up for Tessa!"

In the afternoon, news about Hayley's attempted murder abroad and becoming a wanted criminal was the headline in several news portals. The moment this information was published, the netizens were abuzz with activity.

'Is this news real? How did the young lady of the Stone Family become a wanted criminal?'

'It doesn't seem like fake news because there's even a warrant from abroad.'

'I'm more curious about why she tried to kill someone overseas.'

'Yeah, why did she want to kill somebody? Why can't she just enjoy her amazing life as a young lady from a wealthy family?'

Kieran ignored the comments on the Internet as he instructed the company's PR department to release a notice soon after the news was out.

The brief idea of the notice was that the Stone Family was unhappy about the Sawyer Family canceling the marriage and, thus, defamed the Sawyer Group in the dark. Because of that, they would pursue the Stone Group for damages to their reputation.

The Sawyer Group also asked a food for thought question at the end of the notice. The general idea was, with the Sawyer Family's status in the business world, would they have wanted to have a woman with such misconduct as their family?

The netizens who read the announcement that was initially doubting if Hayley was really capable of murder were beginning to sway.

In the meantime, the bloodhounds within the media picked up on the fact that a juicy piece of news was just ripe for the taking and immediately took action. Therefore, in less than two hours, a well-known media confirmed that it was a fact that Hayley attempted to murder someone overseas.

As it turned out, these media managed to contact the Vienna police through various channels, and even a more prominent media company instructed their employees in their branch once in Vienna to do a live interview.

Soon, videos of the live interview also appeared on the Internet, and the netizens followed this topic closely. Very quickly, the clicks on the interview video had reached tens of millions.

In the video, the journalists interviewed the police officer who was dealing with Hayley's case at the time.

"Can you please tell us the motive behind Hayley Stone's attempt at murder?"

"This is what we're trying to find out as well," the officer said diplomatically.

The journalist continued to ask, “Then, can you please tell us who was the person she tried to murder?”

“I’m sorry, but we must protect the victim’s privacy.”

“Alright, we’ll change the question, then. Is there any progress on Hayley Stone’s capture?”

“Previously, we found some leads regarding her whereabouts, but she escaped after that. Thus, we suspect that she might have left Vienna and may have been smuggled into Xerthania.”

At this point, the netizens totally lost their grip on their rationality at this outrageous news.

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Ous news.

‘Are the wealthy so arrogant nowadays?’

‘I think Hayley Stone must have been hidden away by her family!’

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‘The Stone Family is simply too disgusting. They’re the ones who behaved immorally, but they made use of us to defame the Sawyer Family. So, I’ve decided that from today onward, I’ll boycott all the products from the Stone Family:

‘Boycott the Stone Enterprise.

The uproar on the Internet traveled into Nero’s ears very quickly.

“D\*mn it. Nicholas Sawyer actually leaked out all of this. Does he plan to burn the bridge completely with us?”

He ground his teeth in anger; in fact, he was so furious that he could throw up blood as he never imagined that Nicholas would do this.

As Nero read through the comments from netizens who were screaming to boycott the Stone Enterprise, he suddenly felt that he had shot himself in the foot.

That afternoon, the Stone Enterprise was greatly affected by this incident, and its stock value kept falling. Many journalists even went to the Stone Enterprise just to get a shot of the Stone.

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They were here to interview Nero about Hayley's whereabouts, and his assistant knocked on his office door before rushing in anxiously.

"Mr. Stone, there are a lot of media gathered downstairs who want to interview you."

"I'm not seeing any of them!"

He was undoubtedly in no mood to face these journalists now. In his opinion, they were here with bad intentions and were most probably here by Sawyer Group's instructions. After all, they had just used the same method before this to defame the Sawyer Group.

At this thought, he instructed with a grim look, "Tell the security downstairs to hold back all of the journalists. If anyone lets even one of them through, I'll fire them immediately!"

His assistant nodded and turned around to pass the instruction. However, the journalists who were denied entrance didn't lose their spirit outside the doors, and they waited for Nero to come out as they crouched at the entrance.

Regarding this, Nero didn't have the time to be bothered about it. That was because many companies cooperating with the Stone Enterprise canceled the partnership due to the news circulating on the Internet. After all, they thought this incident's impact was too significant.

"Mr. Simmons, what's happening on the Internet isn't exactly what it is. There are other factors at play... Don't hang up, Mr. Simmons. Wait a minute

“Mr. Wilsburry, you watched Hayley growing up, and with that sweet personality of hers, how could she even have the idea to kill someone...”

“This project is already half-done, and if we cancel it now, the investment from before would be for naught. So, please think it over carefully, Mr. Leighter.”

One after another, Nero kept picking calls to maintain partnerships. Unfortunately, despite being swamped with this, his efforts were in vain.

In the evening at the Sawyer Residence, Tobias and Stefania were also discussing what happened on the Internet.

Even though Nicholas wasn't in the country now, both suspected this had something to do with him. Therefore, when Kieran came home, they called him over.

“Is your brother the one who asked you to release the news on the Internet?” Tobias asked as he scrutinized Kieran sternly.

As Kieran didn't plan to hide the truth, he admitted, saying. “Yes, Nicholas is the one who asked me to do this, but the Stone Family deserves this.”

Then, he told them about how Hayley hired an assassin to murder Tessa overseas. In the meantime, he also explained to them that the Stone Family was the one slandering them on the

Internet.

As expected, the looks on Tobias and Stefania's faces turned incredibly sour at these information

Stefania couldn't suppress her anger as she exclaimed, “The Stone Family is simply unreasonable! And Hayley as well. I never imagined that a lady so young could turn out to be so vicious!”

“Exactly. Luckily Nicholas turned down the marriage back then and didn’t make her a part of the family. Otherwise, it will be bad for us. If we have offended her accidentally, the person she’s assassinating might be us. Her mind is simply too terrifying.” After he said that, he caught sight of the uneasy look on his parents’ faces, and his eyes blinked momentarily before he made use of the opportunity to persuade them. “Mom, Dad, I really think you guys and Grandpa should stop looking for a wife for Nicholas. Look at all these wealthy, rich girls. They aren’t as sophisticated and well brought up as rumored, and they’re destructive when they don’t get what they want. It’s terrifying”

In the luxurious living room, Tobias and Stefania were quiet as they both wore looks of unease on their faces.

Kieran knew that this incident had a considerable impact on them when he noticed their discomfort, and he didn’t say anything else. So, he silently left the room and returned to his bedroom to give Nicholas a call.

“Nicholas, I’ve done as you told, and I also used this incident to let Mom and Dad think about things. I think, very soon, they’ll be able to accept you and Tessa.”

“I got it.” Nicholas’ voice, which carried a hint of delight, passed through the call.

While he was highly satisfied with Kieren’s efficiency, he thought that the change in his family’s attitude toward his relationship with Tessa wouldn’t happen any time soon.

Despite that, nobody could make up his mind for him.

On the other hand, Tessa had no idea about any of these happenings at all because she had been busy for the past few days, leaving early in the day and coming back late.

After all, it hadn’t been long since Group Two was established. Even though the group members were very talented, they needed many practices and rehearsals to build rapport for their future performances.

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In a blink of an eye, another day was gone, and while everyone was packing and preparing to leave, Hathaway went over to them.

“Please stop what you’re doing. I have something to say,” she announced, clapping her hands to attract everyone’s attention.

Tessa joked when she saw the broad smile on Hathaway’s face, “Miss Hathaway, do you have good news to announce?”

“That’s right. I have good news to tell everyone.” With a nod, she scanned through everyone in Group Two and said happily, “After a meeting with the shareholders, we’ve decided to let Group

Two perform with Group One in Yvetlava at the end of next month.”

Excitement rushed through everyone upon hearing the fantastic news, and they all started cheering in jubilation.

“Goodness, we can perform so quickly! You’re amazing, Miss Hathaway!”

“What a surprise!”

“I love you, Miss Hathaway!”

Tessa was smiling happily as well, and as Hathaway watched everyone in excitement, she pretended to be strict and encouraged. “This is considered your first performance since you’re a group. So, you must practice well and deliver a perfect performance to create a name for yourselves.”

“Don’t you worry, Miss Hathaway. We’ll definitely put in double the effort to rehearse.”

Everyone promised unanimously, and that evening when Tessa returned home, she impatiently shared this good news with Nicholas.

“At the end of the next month, Group Two will be performing with Group One in Yvetlava!”

As he watched her face, which was brimming with joy, he seemed affected as well, and a faint smile appeared on his face.

“This is your first performance after joining Group Two. I’ll be there personally to watch it when the time comes,” he promised, taking her waist very naturally.

The smile on Tessa’s face widened, and she placed her arms around his neck, chirping in delight, “I’ll be waiting, then.”

When Gregory saw both of them in a hug, he went over to join them. “Me, too! I’m coming as well. Daddy, you must bring me along, and you’re not allowed to visit Miss Tessa alone without telling me.”

With both palms on Tessa’s thigh, he stared at Nicholas unblinkingly with his big, clear eyes.

On the other hand, Nicholas didn’t agree immediately because he actually didn’t plan to bring

Gregory along as he kept stealing ‘Tessa’s attention away from him.

Tessa read the situation and thought it was amusing and sweet at the same time, as it didn’t even cross her mind that Nicholas would be jealous of his own son.

At the sight of Gregory's pouty lips, she quickly tried to pacify him. "Don't worry, Greg. Your daddy will definitely bring you along as well. If he doesn't, I won't allow him to come, too."

"You're the best, Miss Tessa!"

A grin reappeared on his face, and he turned to show off to his father smugly.

After dinner, Tessa played with Gregory in the living room for a while and brought him to wash up for the night at 9.00PM.

In the dimly-lit child's bedroom, she gazed at his innocent and adorable sleeping face, and a smile filled with affection spread across her face. Then, she poked his chubby cheeks, and as though he could sense it, he muttered, "Miss Tessa..."

The smile on her face turned even warmer as she heard his sleepy mutterings, and she tucked him in gently before leaving the bedroom quietly. However, she didn't return to the master bedroom immediately and headed for the study instead.

In the study, Nicholas was seated at the desk in his pajamas, seriously dealing with the documents from work.

At the moment, he didn't appear as sharp as he did in his suit during the day but seemed more laid-back.

When he heard the familiar sounds of footsteps from the door, he looked up from the documents, and his stoic face turned warm instead.

"Why are you here?"

"I want to see you."

Despite what she said, there wasn't much excitement in her voice.

Nicholas realized this and immediately inquired, "What happened?"

“Are you leaving the day after tomorrow?” she asked sadly, pacing to him.

As he nodded, he could guess the reason for her downcast mood.

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Once again. Tessa's voice, filled with disappointment and melancholy, echoed in his ears. "Time is always passing so quickly. I feel that you're only here for a while, and then you're leaving again."

Nicholas chuckled gently as he pulled her into a seat on his lap and held her slender waist tightly. "Time is passing very quickly, but when I can see that my girl is working so hard and making such big progress, I'm rather proud of you."

She returned his hug and didn't say a thing because she was scared that she would burst out in tears unwittingly.

As she snuggled in his embrace, she placed her cheek on his sturdy chest and listened to his heart's strong heartbeat.

Just like that, they cuddled quietly, and their harmonious silhouettes were outlined on the white wall, making a very heartwarming sight. They didn't know how much time had passed, but Tessa gradually fell asleep in his arms.

After he gazed at her peaceful sleeping face for a while, he planted a kiss on her smooth forehead, lifted her around her waist, and went directly back to the room.

The next morning, even though Tessa really wanted to stay home with Nicholas and Gregory, she couldn't miss out on the practice with the band.

With no other choice, she waved them goodbye and had only just left when Edward rushed over anxiously.

After Nicholas asked the butler to bring Gregory out to play in the garden, he led Edward into the study. When they were inside, Edward waited until he had sat

down at the desk before reporting respectfully, “President Sawyer, we’ve found out the man who saved Hayley Stone the last time.”

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“Okay,” he uttered, “Who is he?”

“His name is Jacob Chambers, and he’s active in Europe. On the surface, he’s a businessman, but he’s running a few casinos in private. The people he’s in contact with are also from the underground, and he has a very complicated background,” Edward said, revealing all the information he knew.

After Nicholas had listened to the detailed report, a knot appeared between his brows. Judging from the information given by Edward, he reckoned that this man was a tough nut to crack.

It looks like the bodyguards from before are not enough to ensure Tessa’s complete safety. I have to make other arrangements, he thought as he unconsciously drummed his fingers on the desk while pondering the matter.

In the meantime, Edward waited at the side for his next instruction, and the study suddenly fell into complete silence.

Then, a few minutes later, Nicholas’ emotionless voice sounded again.

“Immobilize two guards

from Night Alliance and have them help out the other bodyguards to protect Tessa in the dark.”

Edward was secretly shocked when he heard those orders because he didn’t imagine that Nicholas would use the guards from the Night Alliance. As far as he knew, Night Alliance was a group Nicholas had put in a lot of effort to train and nurture while he was still in the army.

One could say that simply anyone from the Night Alliance was better than any top assassins in the world.

Despite his surprise, he knew that Nicholas was worried about Jacob using the opportunity to attack Tessa after he left.

“I’ll make the arrangements immediately,” he said and left.

On the same afternoon, the guards from Night Alliance arrived, and Nicholas quickly met them.

In the bright study, two extraordinarily well-built guards stood in the middle of the room, exuding a deadly air, but Nicholas’ air of dominance was stronger than theirs.

Like an emperor, he sat in his office chair with an emotionless face as he ordered, “Your mission is to protect Tessa at all times and make sure that she’s not in any danger while she’s studying abroad. Do you understand?”

“Yes,” both of them intoned seriously.

Nicholas nodded slightly before he added, “Report to me any time there’s anything out of the norm.”

Meanwhile, Tessa had no idea about any of these, and she had asked for leave in advance from Hathaway and the restaurant because Nicholas and Gregory would be leaving tomorrow.

After she finished work in the evening, she went straight back to the villa. Perhaps knowing that he would be leaving tomorrow, Gregory was especially clingy to Tessa tonight.

“Miss Tessa, will you sleep with me tonight? You’ve been sleeping with Daddy these days, and I would like to sleep with you for a night, too.”

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Tessa couldn't bear to reject him as she saw his eyes that were filled with eagerness. "Okay, I'll sleep with you tonight."

After she spoke, she was worried that Nicholas would disagree and planned to appease this man calmly. However, she noticed that he didn't look like he had any objections.

Puzzled, she peered at him and wondered, Since when did this man become so easy-going?

Naturally, Nicholas sensed her puzzled stare, but he didn't plan to explain anything.

That night, Tessa accompanied Gregory to sleep.

The tightly closed door opened softly in the middle of the night, and the light from the hallway poured in.

Tessa was a light sleeper, so she woke up immediately upon hearing just a little noise, and saw a tall, familiar figure standing next to the bed.

She instinctively peered at Gregory before sitting up and asking in a hushed voice, "Why are you here?"

"I'm here to take you back," Nicholas said as his eyes drifted to Gregory's sleeping form.

Unfortunately, Gregory was soundly asleep, and there was even a smile on the edges of his lips, utterly unaware that Tessa was about to be taken away by someone else.

On the way back to the room, she circled her arms around his neck and giggled. “I’m afraid Greg will be mad at you again when he wakes up tomorrow morning.”

“It’s alright. I’ll just coax him afterward. Besides, I didn’t agree to let you sleep with him.”

He spoke confidently, and it suddenly dawned on Tessa that he didn’t argue with Gregory earlier because he had a contingency plan if Gregory were to pull something like that earlier.

Then, they returned to the bedroom and spent the night in each other’s company.

The following day, despite feeling sore all over, Tessa still got out of bed with Nicholas.

When Gregory saw his dad and Tessa appearing together, he was hopping mad, as expected.

“You’re a meanie, Daddy! You took Miss Tessa away while I was asleep!” He exclaimed in anger as he glared at his father angrily. He was so aggrieved that he was close to tears.

Unaffected, Nicholas answered calmly, “Did I agree to let Miss Tessa sleep with you?”

Gregory thought about it, and it seemed like the answer was no. All of a sudden, he felt the anger pent up in his chest had no outlet.

Tessa was amused when she obs

mused when she observed the father-son duo arguing. In the end, she held Gregory in her arms to coax him.

After breakfast, she sent both of them to the airport a little while later. Before boarding, Nicholas kissed her forehead and reminded her, “No matter what happens, don’t forget to give me a call, and don’t try to deal with everything yourself. It will make me upset.”

Meanwhile, in the bedroom of a private villa in the suburbs, Jacob was having breakfast with Havley when a butler dressed in a tux came in after knocking on the door.

“Sir. Charlie is here.”

“Tell him to come here straight away,” Jacob instructed without even looking at him.

Charlie was his close aide whom he had sent to keep an eye on Tessa, and no matter what information he had, he felt that Havley should know about it, too.

Soon, a tall and burly foreign man knocked and came in. “Hello, Boss, Miss Stone,” he greeted politely

Stoically, Jacob glanced at him and asked, “What’s happening with Tessa Reinhart?”

“This morning, Nicholas Sawyer left Vienna together with his assistant. Only Tessa Reinhart and a few servants are left in the villa now. Should we act?” Charlie reported, telling him the information from his surveillance.

However, before Jacob could pass his order, Hayley hissed through gritted teeth, “Tonight, get that slut back here! I want her to live a life worse than death itself!”

Charlie didn't acknowledge it but glanced at Jacob instead. Naturally, Hayley noticed this and knew that it was unrealistic of her to give orders directly to Jacob's men when she was unrelated to him now.

"You said that you'll help me to deal with them." So, she swiveled her head to Jacob abruptly as she stared at him fixedly.

Reruming her gaze, Jacob didn't deny her statement. "I did promise you that I'll help you to deal with them, but not now. The most important thing now is your injury. As for that Reinhart woman, we have all the time in the world to take care of her once you're healed. Don't you wish to do this yourself?"

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As Jacob expected. Hayley was wavered by the last thing he said. If she were given a chance, she would definitely like to take care of Tossa, that bitch herself!

Nevertheless, Tessa was in the dark about all of these, and after Nicholas was gone, she packed her days full to the point that she had asked for several days of leave consecutively in order to better rehearse with her bandmates.

One afternoon while everyone was taking a break, Mona came to look for Tessa.

She directly took a seat beside Tessa as she asked, “Tessa, my cousin would like to ask if you’ll still be performing at the restaurant.”

Tessa didn’t give her an immediate response. In fact, she was also considering whether she should continue with her performance at the restaurant. But, on the other hand, she didn’t have that much time to spare anymore.

“Mona, if possible, I would like to resign from this job. As you know, I’m busy with rehearsals every day and don’t have the energy to perform at your cousin’s workplace.”

Surprisingly, Mona nodded in understanding before she continued, “It’s fine. I’m just asking on his behalf. He could already guess your answer, but he just feels it’s a shame. So, he told me a second option and wants to know what you think about it.”

“What is it?” she asked, looking at her good friend quizzically.

“If you’re agreeable, Wilbur said that you can change your performance timings to a few times in a month, and your wages will still be the same. He even said that a

few guests were waiting in vain for you for days,” she said truthfully and couldn’t help but burst into a giggle at the end of her sentence.

For some unknown reason, she felt pity for those guests.

Tessa giggled along as well, feeling a sense of achievement. Wasn’t it a recognition of her talent that she was able to make the guests fall in love with her music?

After some consideration, she answered, “If Wilbur is alright with this idea, then I’m fine with it as well.”

“That’s more than he could ask for. Of course, he’s okay with it.” Then, she stood up and waved goodbye at Tessa. “Continue with your practice. I’ll relay your answer to him.”

That night after rehearsal, Tessa planned to make a trip to the restaurant to apologize to Wilbur personally. After all, he had taken good care of her when she started performing at the restaurant.

When Wilbur found out the reason behind her visit, he chuckled nonchalantly. “It’s fine. This is not a big deal.”

“Even so, I still have to apologize to you. The original agreement was a performance every day, but it became once every two days, and now, it’s a few times a month. I feel terrible about it.”

“You don’t have to take all these to heart. Speaking of which, our restaurant is the one that benefited from you. Now, our business is getting better, and there are even many foreign guests who came here because of you,” Wilbur said, sharing the current situation of the restaurant with her.

Aliuie surprised, Tessa didn’t even think that foreign guests would be coming because of her.

Seeing the surprised look on her, Wilbur laughed and said, “What? You don’t believe me?”

“I just think it’s a little exaggerated.”

“Not at all. In the afternoon, after Mona told me that you’re willing to come a few times a month, I discussed it with the owner, planning to make the tables on days when you’re performing as reservations only. This idea turned out to be a big hit, and the tables were all booked within an hour.”

After listening to him, Tessa was even more stunned, but she quickly felt calm about it.

Then, they spoke for a little longer, and he suddenly said with a smile, “Since you’re already here today, would you like to perform a song as well? A lot of people are waiting for you outside.”

Since I’m already here, I’ll perform tonight, she thought. “I’ll have to trouble you to arrange a time for my performance, Wilbur.”

Wilbur grinned so hard that there were wrinkles on his face. “No trouble at all. I’ll get it done right away,” he said and quickly left the office as though he was worried that Tessa would go back on her word.

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Tessa couldn't help but chuckle when she saw how Wilbur reacted to her green light to his suggestion.

That evening when it was time for her to perform, she saw that all the seats in the restaurant were taken, and there were even others waiting in line outside.

Inside, the guests immediately welcomed Tessa warmly when they saw her coming out. Even though she was taken aback, she quickly regained her composure because she had seen a scene more magnificent than this, and this was nothing to be nervous about.

After that, she picked up her violin and walked onto the stage, and the guests stopped clapping upon seeing that.

Soon, the musical sound of the violin filled up the entire restaurant, mesmerizing all the guests, and when the piece ended, a round of thunderous applause broke out again.

Tessa bowed and was about to leave, but many people came forward to present her flowers.

There was even a good-looking gentleman dressed in a suit and tie who went on one knee in front of her to propose with a diamond ring.

“Miss Reinhart, I hope that you'll marry me. I've been deeply attracted to you since you started performing at the restaurant. Maybe you don't know me, but I've watched every one of your When the words left his lips, the diners around were stunned, and so was Tessa.

She stared at the man unblinkingly, utterly confounded by the turn of events. She was so embarrassed that she was at a loss of what to do and how to react.

Luckily, a gentle voice this time saved her.

I'm sorry, but she is already taken.”

The surrounding guests reflexively

turned to their sides and gave way when they heard the voice, only to see Angus walking out from behind with a strong aura.

He calmly walked past the man on one

knee, stood next to Tessa directly, and

gazed down at him, emanating the air of

a nobleman.

The man dazedly looked at the dignified

Angus. “I'm sorry, I didn't know about

this,” he said apologetically, getting up

from the floor and didn't make a scene.

Tessa breathed a small sigh of relief when she saw the situation untangle itself and said courteously, “Thank you for your affection, but I already have a fiancé. I'm really sorry.”

“It's not your fault. I'm the one who didn't find out about the situation before this and caused you this trouble.” Embarrassed, the man glanced at Tessa and said earnestly, “No matter what, I'll still support you.”

After he said his piece, he placed the flowers on a table at the side and left. As she watched the man leaving, Tessa wasn't sure how to feel, but at the same time, she felt completely relieved.

She smiled graciously when she saw that

there were still other diners around. "Thank you for liking my performance, and I really appreciate your support. Please return to your food before it turns cold."

The diners didn't bother her anymore despite their curiosity about her relationship with Angus upon hearing her words.

Hence, they nodded in acknowledgment of her statement and returned to their seats. Even so, it couldn't stop the gossip in their hearts.

Tessa invited Angus when she noticed the curious stares from the people around them, "Would you like to chat in the lounge?"

Naturally, he accepted her invitation and couldn't help but gasp when they were in the lounge, saying, 'I didn't imagine that you're so popular now!'

This was a surprise to Tessa as well as she recalled what happened earlier, she said in gratitude, "Thanks for helping me out earlier. Let me buy you a meal when there's time."

"If that's the case, then you owe me two meals in total, Miss Reinhart," Angus said, grinning at her.

She was slightly taken aback before remembering that she had also said she would buy him a meal when they were at the bar.

Therefore, she couldn't help but chuckle as she said, "That's true. I'll make up for these two meals when I'm on my break."

“No hurry. You can make up for them whenever you’re free.”

Angus didn’t mind it that much, and she

nodded. So, they chatted for a little longer until the sky outside was completely dark.

Finally, when Tessa checked the time on her wristwatch, she politely excused herself. “It’s late. I have to go home now.”

‘T’ll drop you off since it’s already so late.”

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As Angus spoke, he got up from his seat. But then, something came into his mind, and he asked, “By the way, are you coming to the restaurant less in the future?”

“I guess so. After all, I’m officially in the orchestra, and the daily practice is intensive. So, I really don’t have much time,” Tessa answered.

Angus sounded regretful as he said, “That’s such a shame. It looks like I can only listen to your performance when you perform with your band.”

“Well, that’s not true. I promised Mr. Wilbur that I’ll be here a few times a month.”

Then, she briefly told him about her conversation with Wilbur earlier in the evening.

After he heard the agreement between them, he couldn’t help but feel amazed. The owner and manager of this restaurant are excellent businessmen. Despite that, he chuckled and joked, “Well,

I’ll have to ask someone to reserve a seat for me on the day of your performance. Otherwise, I won’t get a good spot.”

“It’s not that exaggerated.” She packed away her violin as she chuckled at his actions and put it on her back, ready to leave.

Angus sensed her intent and followed her. “I stopped my car on the street opposite the restaurant. Later, wait for me at the door for a while, and we can leave when I drive my car over.”

“Thanks for the offer, but my butler is already here to pick me up,” she turned him down with a smile.

Out of wits, he could only watch as Tessa left in her car.

Back in the villa, Tessa received a video call from Nicholas. “We’ve already disembarked and are going home now.”

“Take a good rest at home, and don’t be in a rush to go back to work,” she reminded him with a smile.

Next to Nicholas, Gregory said sweetly, “Miss Tessa, don’t worry. I’ll help you to keep an eye on Daddy. If he misbehaves, I’ll tell you.”

“Okay, keep an eye for me, Greg.”

Nicholas was speechless at their conversation, but his eyes gleamed with warmth, and they only hung up after chatting for a little longer.

After that, Nicholas brought Gregory back to Dynasty Gardens to rest and unpack.

The next morning, after breakfast, Stefania came over for a visit because she missed her grandchild, whom she hadn’t seen for a few days straight.

“Greg. I’m here to see you.” She immediately picked him up in her arms when she stepped into the living room.

“Why are you here, Grandma?”

Gregory smiled brightly, placing his arms around her neck as his dark eyes sparkled.

“I’m here because I missed you,” she answered, sitting on the couch with him in her arms. “Did you miss me, Greg?”

“Yes, I miss you so much!”

“You’re lying. Why didn’t you visit me if you miss me?” she complained.

He blinked in confusion as he replied in his cherubic voice, “I’m not lying, Grandma. I really missed you a lot.”

After he said that, he took the initiative to kiss Stefania on the cheek to console her.

It was rare of him to be so initiative, and she couldn’t be happier about it, hence forgetting about everything else.

Just then, Nicholas had just dressed up and was coming downstairs with a briefcase when he saw his mother and son playing around.

“Why are you here, Mom?” he asked, coming down the staircase gracefully.

Stefania regarded her gorgeous son as she said with a smile, “I’m missing my grandson, so I came over”

He nodded dispassionately, and when he was about to leave, she stopped him by calling, “Hang on. I have something to speak about with you.”

“What is it?” He immediately stopped in his tracks and turned to her.

When she noticed this, the smile on her face slid off, and she asked seriously, “I’m asking you, is Tessa the only woman for you?”

“Yes,” he answered curtly but sounded exceptionally firm.

His resolute answer gave rise to a surge of complicated emotions in her heart.

“Even if you really want to marry her, have you thought about what you will do with her current profession if she’s really married into the family? Is she going to be flying between here and there the whole time? What about Greg at that time, then? I won’t allow it if there’s no one to take care of him.”

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At the end of her sentence, Stefania furrowed her brows in dissatisfaction, but Nicholas didn't think that anything his mother mentioned was a problem at all.

“There will always be someone to take care of Greg. There's Andrew and the others.”

However, Stefania was still unsatisfied. “This and that aren't the same thing!”

Meanwhile, Gregory looked around for ideas to appease his grandmother's ruffled feathers.

“Grandma, I'm fine. When Miss Tessa isn't around, I can be with Daddy. Moreover, we also have the servants at home and Andrew. So, I won't be left alone.”

The child was very understanding as he stood entirely on his father's side and Nicholas gave him a look of approval. On the other hand, Stefania couldn't win against the two in a verbal spar, so she could only set aside the topic for now.

A while later, Nicholas went to work and had meetings the whole morning. However, when it was almost noon, Edward knocked and came in.

“President Sawyer, someone is here to look for you, and she's a woman...”

Toward the end, he trailed off and peered at his boss hesitantly.

Nicholas knitted his brows when he noticed Edward's tentativeness. “Who is it?”

“It's Janet Brenner. Miss Brenner...” he answered honestly.

Nicholas was startled by the answer and inquired, “What brought her here?”

“She didn’t mention the reason.” Then, an equally confused Edward glanced at Nicholas, who had tightly knitted his brows, and asked, “Are you going to meet her?”

Nicholas thought for a second and instructed, “Let her in.”

“Okay.” Edward nodded and left.

A couple of minutes later, he brought a tall, slender woman having a stoic expression and wearing stilettos into the room.

The woman looked about twenty-five years of age, and she kept her hair in a neat bob. Her well sculptured features were sharp, but they retained the softness of a woman, and she looked charming

She was dressed in a black fitted suit that looked tidy and suave beyond words and carried a strong, determined air about her.

This woman was Janet Brenner.

“President Sawyer, Miss Brenner is here,” Edward announced politely.

Janet lifted her eyes at the introduction and saw Nicholas seated at the desk in the spacious office, sitting on a genuine leather office chair in his tailored black suit.

Even though he was seated, his perfectly proportioned body was as evident as his height..

As though borne from the hands of a master, his face was so intricate, and he was exuding an alluring air with the dignity of an emperor.

Janet realized that he was even more mature and attractive than she remembered him as she observed the man before her. “It’s been a while, Nicholas.” She curled her red lips into a smile as she paced a few steps forward gracefully.

Unfortunately, Nicholas merely nodded in composure. “Take a seat. Get Miss Brenner a cup of coffee, Edward.”

Edward nodded in acknowledgment and returned a short while later with two cups of coffee in his hands. After he placed them down gently, he stood at the side, awaiting his next task.

Finally, Nicholas gave a cursory glance at the woman seated across from himself as he asked indifferently, “Aren’t you supposed to be abroad? Why did you show up here all of a sudden?”

At that, Janet placed the coffee cup down and returned his gaze with concerned eyes. “I suddenly appeared because I heard that you immobilized the guards from the Night Alliance. Because I’m a little worried about you, I specially asked for leave to visit you to find out if something happened to you.”

In her opinion, it must have been a grave matter if he had immobilized the guards from the Night Alliance.

Nicholas figured out why she was here and said nonchalantly, “I’m alright.”

Janet was used to his aloof behavior, but at the same time, she couldn’t help but feel disappointed because she thought that he would be happy to see her after not meeting her for such a long time. After all, they were partners who had been through life and death together.

Even though she felt uneasy, she didn’t show a trace of it on her face.

Curious, she asked, “Since you’re alright, then you’re using the guards for=”

“I’m only using the guards to protect someone.”

Nicholas wasn’t keen to hide the truth, but Janet was a little shocked by his answer. “Someone from your family?”

One had to be aware that just any of the guards in the Night Alliance was comparable to the top assassins of the world.