

Always Been Yours Chapter 631

Chapter 631 Outburst

Kathleen couldn't retort at the well-thought-out argument.

On the other hand, Hathaway, who was at the side, readily agreed with Tessa's words.

She encouraged her as she felt that Tessa was an opinionated young woman. "Mr. Sawyer is indeed a remarkable man, but you're not too bad yourself, so don't put yourself down. In the future, you might achieve even more than I have."

When Kathleen heard her mother's words, she felt even more uncomfortable.

Her mother had never praised her like this, so why did her mother praise Tessa instead?

Even though she was fuming inside, she didn't say anything horrible throughout the conversation.

Later that day, Tessa wanted her teacher to stay for dinner.

"It's not every day you visit me, so please stay for dinner tonight."

"It's okay. I still have some matters with the orchestra to attend to. Now that I know you're okay, I should be going back." Hathaway shook her head and declined the kind offer.

Tessa couldn't insist on the matter when she heard that Hathaway had business to attend to, so she could only see them off.

Once in the car, Kathleen's smile immediately disappeared.

Hathaway noticed the change in Kathleen's emotions, and she couldn't help but look at Kathleen, asking in a puzzled tone, "What's wrong?"

"What's wrong? Fine, let me ask you. What do you mean by that? Who's your daughter, me or Tessa?" Kathleen couldn't suppress the fury inside her anymore as she questioned Hathaway with an angry look in her eyes.

Hathaway frowned, upset by her barbed words. "What's the matter with you this time?"

"Hah, that again. Every time I fight with Tessa, you always take her side. Now I'm really wondering if you're my mother." Furious and wronged, Kathleen looked at Hathaway. "You always say that I'm hostile toward Tessa, but have you ever wondered why I behave like that toward her?"

"Isn't it because of Scott?" Hathaway didn't even have to think before giving her answer.

Kathleen screamed, unable to control her rage anymore, "Scott is one of the reasons, but you're the fuse that started it! It's you!"

With a screech, Hathaway hastily stepped on the brakes at her outburst.

Before she could say anything, Kathleen glared at her with red-rimmed eyes, accusing her, "I don't care if other people love and support Tessa, but why did you do it too? You're supposed to be my mommy! Am I worse than Tessa in your eyes? Don't you know how others look at me when you do this? They will also think that I'm inferior to her!"

Hathaway was stunned at those accusations.

She never thought that her daughter would think of her like this, nor did she expect Kathleen to be hostile toward Tessa partly because of her.

“Kathleen, you misunderstood me. I never had that intention.” She tried to explain, but Kathleen was so furious that she couldn’t listen to anything Hathaway had to say.

In the end, the two parted ways unhappily.

As for Tessa, she knew nothing about the argument that had happened between the mother and daughter.

She rested at home for a whole day, and her fever had receded in the evening.

Just then, Mona called in to visit.

“Tessa, your house is huge.” Mona gazed at her surroundings as soon as she entered the manor, gasping in awe.

Unlike Kathleen’s jealousy, she genuinely admired the place.

The two chatted for a while in the living room; then, the butler walked over to them respectfully. “Miss Tessa, dinner is ready.”

Tessa nodded, then took Mona to the dining room.

Mona was amazed at the luxurious selection of food at the table.

“Tessa, your chef makes such delicious meals! They’re even better than the chefs in my brother’s restaurant.”

At the side, the butler heard her words, so he smiled as he introduced, “This meal is made by a nutritionist Master Nicholas hired especially for Miss Tessa. Every dish is made carefully, so I can guarantee that it’s delicious.”

When Mona heard that, her eyes shone even brighter. “Tessa, can I come over every day for meals?”

Tessa chuckled and agreed amicably when she saw the girl's eagerness. "Sure. You're welcome anytime."

After the meal, Mona stayed with Tessa for a while longer before leaving.

Just then, Tessa received another video call from Nicholas.

"Are you feeling better?"

"Much better."

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Chapter 632 Discharged

Tessa felt warm inside as she relished the man's love and care for her.

The two chatted sweetly for a while, then Nicholas urged Tessa to rest.

After the call ended, she took her medicine and slept.

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When Tessa woke up the following day, she recovered, and her fever had also gone down.

When Nicholas knew of it, he worriedly reminded her again, "Take good care of yourself. Don't make me worry so much."

"Don't worry, I'll take care of myself," Tessa responded with a smile.

The two talked for a while, then ended the call.

Later in the day, Tessa went to the orchestra, carrying her violin case on her back.

When the other members saw her, they went up to her in concern. "Tessa, you're here. Are you feeling better?"

"I'm feeling much better. Thank you for your concern." Tessa thanked them one by one.

In that period, Hathaway also came over to have a look, worried.

When she saw that Tessa was in great spirits, she encouraged the other members to practice well.

In the two weeks that followed, she spent almost entire days practicing.

This was the orchestra's first performance in public, so everyone treated it seriously and practiced with all their hearts.

They would take a long time to fix even the slightest mistake so they wouldn't repeat the same mistakes.

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Meanwhile, in the General Hospital back home.

Janet had been hospitalized for almost a month, and she had recovered considerably.

Even though her wounds were still on the mend, her life wasn't in danger anymore.

Because of this, Janet asked to be discharged, but the doctor actively discouraged that course of action.

"Miss Brenner, you're really not in the condition to be discharged. Even though your life is not in danger, your wounds haven't healed yet, so they might get infected."

"I'll pay extra attention so that my wounds won't get infected."

Janet insisted on leaving, so the hospital had no choice but to contact Nicholas.

"Got it. I'll send someone over to deal with this."

With that, Nicholas hung up immediately, then sent Edward to the hospital.

When Janet knew that the hospital had contacted Nicholas, she waited expectantly in her ward.

Now that she thought about it, she hadn't seen him in a long while.

Also, she actually wanted to be discharged because he didn't come to the hospital often.

If he didn't make his appearance, she had no way of getting close to this man.

Also, now that she couldn't move freely, Nicholas had promised Cole to take care of her. He would definitely let her stay in his home if she got discharged. Then, she could have more chances to get close to him.

She had planned everything carefully, but sometimes things just didn't go according to plan.

After Edward arrived at the hospital, he immediately went to the ward to see Janet.

When Janet saw that the visitor wasn't Nicholas, there was an unspeakable disappointment and sorrow in her heart.

Her discharge from the hospital was a huge event, but Nicholas only sent an assistant over. This man really didn't care about her... or was he just busy?

In the end, she couldn't hold it in anymore as she asked, "Mr. Jackson, is Nicholas usually busy?"

Edward didn't know what Janet was thinking, so he nodded and said, "President Sawyer is busy every day."

Janet felt much better after hearing that and insisted even more on getting discharged.

With Janet like that, Edward conveyed her wishes to Nicholas.

“Since she wants to get discharged, just do as she wishes.”

After ending the call, Edward did as Nicholas instructed.

After some negotiation, the hospital agreed to let Janet out, and the doctor would regularly visit the Sawyer Residence for checkups.

As for her accommodation, Nicholas had it arranged as well. It wasn't in Dynasty Gardens but a private villa nearby.

He would send servants and chefs to take care of Janet's everyday life.

After they got the procedures over and done with, Janet followed Sally out of the hospital.

Half an hour later, when Janet saw the exquisite and lavish manor in front of her, her eyes were filled with elation.

“Is this where Nicholas lives?”

“No, Master Nicholas lives elsewhere.” Sally looked at Janet awkwardly.

She had taken care of Janet for some time, so she could more or less guess what this Miss Brenner was thinking.

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Chapter 633 Foiled Attempts

Sadly, some things just couldn't be helped.

Nicholas already had someone he liked, so Janet's feelings were destined to be unrequited.

Janet didn't know what Sally was thinking.

When she heard Sally's words, her smile froze on her face.

She quickly recovered herself and assumed a natural expression as she smiled lightly. "I thought Nicholas would be here. Guess not."

Sally pretended not to notice the awkwardness in the air; she simply nodded and kept quiet.

Janet could hardly maintain the smile on her face when she saw that.

What's wrong with this servant? Doesn't she know how to continue the conversation?

In truth, she said those words on purpose so that Sally would expose Nicholas' address.

However, she didn't expect this servant to be so useless.

Even though she was angry, this servant was still helpful, so she suppressed her anger and asked, “Since Nicholas doesn’t live here, where does he live, then?”

“He lives somewhere not far away. You can see it from here.” As Sally spoke, she pointed in a direction.

Stunned, Janet looked in the direction Sally was pointing. She saw a manor not far off, more luxurious and grander than the one she was staying in.

She instantly felt upset when expectations and reality didn’t line up as she wished.

Initially, she thought she could develop her relationship with Nicholas by staying with him 24/7.

She never expected reality to hit her like this.

Was the man ignoring her... or was someone living with him already?

At that thought, she casually said, “I’m just one person, but Nicholas arranged an entire manor for me to stay in. It must’ve cost too much. But, on the other hand, that house looks quite huge, so he could’ve just given me a room there.”

“Um, Master Nicholas has many houses like this all over Southend.”

What Sally meant was that Nicholas didn’t buy this manor, especially to meet Janet’s needs.

Janet understood that, of course. Her gaze darkened, an unnamed fire burning bright in her chest.

Is this servant reminding me that I’m getting self-indulgent?

She took a deep breath and repeated to herself, ‘Don’t get angry. This servant is still useful.’

Just like that, she gradually calmed her anger. “I see. Does someone else live there?”

“Not really, just Master Nicholas and Young Master Gregory. Master Nicholas liked peace and quiet, so he didn’t like anyone bothering him. Only... Miss Reinhart had stayed there for a while, but she had moved there for her job as a private tutor.”

When Janet heard that Tessa had stayed in that grand manor, jealousy filled her soured heart.

Nicholas and I have been through so much, but I don’t even get the right to walk into his house?!

Also, that Tessa woman.

How is she better than me?

What right does she have to be liked by Nicholas? Why can she step into Nicholas’ private territory?

At that moment, Janet decided that since he wanted to keep her at a distance, she would get into his territory and claim him!

At Sawyer Group, Nicholas was wearing a black suit as he sat in his office. His perfect facial features were expressionless, as usual.

Just then, Edward knocked on the door and walked in.

“President Sawyer, the matters concerning Miss Brenner have all been settled.”

“Good, have the servants there take good care of her,” Nicholas said indifferently, without any intention to ask about Janet herself.

If Cole hadn’t pleaded with him, he wouldn’t have done anything about Janet.

Besides, Nicholas had done what he could to take care of Janet, so he had already done his best, and he could say that he had undoubtedly fulfilled Cole's request.

Edward nodded in confirmation when he heard that, then changed the subject to work-related matters.

After Nicholas settled the matters Edward reported, he changed the topic and asked, "Tessa will be performing at the end of this month, and I've asked you to spare some of my time around that time. How is the arrangement going?"

"The arrangements are all completed. So, you don't have to worry." Edward smiled as he replied. In his heart, however, he was amazed at how huge a change Nicholas had gone through after getting together with Tessa.

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Chapter 634 Visit

Before this, Nicholas was like an emotionless robot.

But now, he would take note of every special day and prepare various surprises for Tessa. Nicholas was such a romantic that Edward wondered if he had served a fake president before this.

Nicholas didn't know that Edward was secretly making fun of him in his mind.

So, when he saw no more items were on the agenda, he waved for Edward to leave and continue with his work.

In the evening, Nicholas had dealt with all the matters, so he went home early.

Since Tessa had been busy with her practice, their calls with her had significantly lessened. Because of this, Gregory was always in a foul mood.

He kept making a fuss and threw tantrums at home.

Nicholas decided to return earlier tonight and accompany the little guy for dinner.

Unexpectedly, as soon as he got through the door, he saw Janet sitting on the couch.

Janet also caught sight of Nicholas, and a brilliant smile immediately bloomed on her face.

“Nicholas, you're back.”

She joyfully got up from the couch. She wore a loose dress covering her bodacious figure, but her legs were long and slender, so she didn't look very skinny.

Her face was still pale, and her star-like crystalline eyes, paired with her short hair, which reached her ears, gave her an air of soft firmness.

She slowly walked up to Nicholas, the love and adoration in her eyes almost completely exposed.

The man, still in his black suit, looked tall and slender. His exquisite features lay beneath his short black hair, and his expression was calm and stately.

Nicholas looked at Janet and frowned slightly. "Why are you here?"

"In the afternoon, I have nothing else to do after settling in, then I thought about how you've been looking after me all this while, so I decided to come over and express my gratitude. So, I bought some fruits and children's toys."

When Janet spoke, her smile turned a little fainter.

Actually, she came over quite early in the afternoon.

She had already received information that, after Nicholas left for work, only a child called Greg would be here.

She wanted to spend some time with the child first and establish a relationship with him. However, she had been here for half a day, but she hadn't seen even a shadow of the child.

She had never seen such a rude child before!

Nicholas didn't know of this. He simply nodded and said indifferently, "Thank you."

With that, he walked toward the living room.

Janet noticed the briefcase in his hand, and her eyes shimmered as she reached out and smiled. "I can help you carry your briefcase."

"No need."

Nicholas dodged Janet's outreached hand.

Just then, Andrew walked over to him. "You're home, Master Nicholas."

Nicholas nodded slightly, then passed Andrew his briefcase as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

As Janet watched the differential treatment unfolding before her, she was terribly upset.

In the luxurious living room, because of her sudden visit, Nicholas could only stay in the living room to attend to her. However, he looked a little unhappy that he had to do such a thing.

"You've just recovered a little, so you're still weak. Don't run around so much."

Janet felt a little upset as she gazed at the man's cold and distant expression, but she quickly switched to a positive outlook.

At least this man still cared about her. Even though it was just on the surface, she was still quite satisfied.

She nodded and smiled as she said, "I know. Actually, I also came to see Greg. I've never met him before."

"You've never met him?"

Nicholas was a little puzzled when he heard that.

When he returned, he could clearly see that Janet had been here for a while.

At that thought, he turned around and asked, “Andrew, where’s Greg? How come I don’t see him?”

“Master Nicholas, Young Master Gregory had been staying in the music room all afternoon. He refused to come down,” the butler said truthfully.

Nicholas frowned slightly, somewhat sure in his heart of what was going on now.

“I’ll go have a look.”

With that, he turned and walked up the stairs.

In the music room, Gregory was polishing the violin he usually played. With his serious expression, he looked like he was shining a treasure.

When he heard footsteps at the door, he instinctively looked up.

However, when he realized that the visitor was his daddy, he gave a ‘hmp’ on purpose, then pretended not to see anything as he looked down and continued polishing his violin.

When Janet saw the man’s figure disappear at the top of the stairs in the living room downstairs, she bit her lip and followed him.

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Chapter 635 First Impression

Janet walked over to the piano room without entering. She stood outside and watched the man and the boy as a series of complex emotions flashed across her eyes.

Nicholas didn't know that she had been following behind him. He stood beside Gregory while questioning the young boy, "Why are you hiding here?"

"Miss Tessa has been too busy to talk to me recently, so I have no choice but to come here and stare at her belongings since I miss her." Gregory pouted as he spoke, and the disappointment was evident on his chubby face.

The boy's words amused Nicholas. "You sure have an interesting way of missing someone."

"Miss Tessa taught me well." Gregory stuck his chest out while speaking proudly. "I learn best when Miss Tessa's the one teaching me."

Nicholas' expression softened upon hearing the boy's words. "Stop pouting. It's time for dinner. Come downstairs with me."

"No." Gregory turned to face his back against Nicholas before he continued sitting on the floor and cleaning his violin.

A hint of exasperation surfaced in Nicholas' eyes when he saw how Gregory acted. "Stop cleaning. I'll bring you over to visit Miss Tessa at the end of the month," he said.

The young boy's actions came to a halt before he gave his father an uncertain gaze. "Are you serious?"

After all, Nicholas had refused to bring him over no matter how much he had begged him in the past. So, he found it hard to believe the man's words now that the man was offering to bring him over to visit.

Nicholas could tell what Gregory was thinking, and he found it amusing. I can't believe Gregory thinks I'm lying because I rejected his request several times. I wonder who this brat got such traits from.

He frowned at that thought. "Since when have I ever lied to you?" he asked.

Gregory knew that his father wasn't lying after hearing this question, and the young boy's dim gaze lit up immediately. "That's great! I finally get to meet Miss Tessa!" He let out a cheer of joy.

The boy's happiness seemed to be contagious as Nicholas spread his lips into a wide grin after seeing the look on the boy's face. "Are you going to be a good boy and go down for dinner now?"

"Sure. Of course," Gregory uttered as he placed the violin aside and got to his feet. He tottered over to his father before speaking in a childish voice. "Carry me, Daddy."

Nicholas had no reason to reject Gregory's request, so he bent down and lifted the young boy off his feet.

They had been about to head downstairs when they turned around to find Janet watching them. Both father and son froze for a moment.

Even Janet looked somewhat surprised as she gazed at Gregory. This was her first time seeing the kid—she hadn't expected Gregory to look exactly like Nicholas.

When she first found out about the child, she felt a strong sense of jealousy and hatred. At that point, she had the urge to murder both the child and the woman who gave birth to him. She felt like she was the only woman with the right to bear Nicholas' children. However, she didn't take action in the end.

Back then, one of her men told her that Remus had gotten a surrogate mother to give birth to Gregory and that Nicholas didn't actually care or love the child. That was why she had suppressed the urge to kill anyone. However, it now seemed like whatever her worker had told her had been inaccurate. It was clear that Nicholas was emotionally bonded with the child. Nevertheless, that didn't matter—the Sawyers had more than enough money to rear a single child.

Regardless, Janet couldn't bring herself to be fond of a child that wasn't a product of her and Nicholas. But now that she wasn't officially with Nicholas, she had no choice but to put on an act. Even though she didn't actually like Gregory, she had to pretend to be a nurturing and loving woman. “You must be Gregory. How adorable!”

“Hello, Miss.” Gregory didn't know who the woman was, but he greeted her politely before turning to look at his father. Who's this? Gregory questioned the older man by giving him a look.

Nicholas immediately understood what his son was asking for. “This is my friend. She's the one who was previously hospitalized.”

A look of realization flashed across Gregory's eyes before he stayed still in Nicholas' arms without commenting any further. Janet didn't seem to mind this. It's the kid's first time seeing me, so he's probably still shy around me.

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Chapter 636 Ulterior Motives

“Gregory looks so much like you,” Janet uttered with a smile as she went down the stairs with Nicholas. Nicholas nodded for a moment before he lowered his head to speak to the boy in his arms. “What have you done at home today?” he asked.

“I finished my homework in the afternoon, and I stayed in the piano studio to think about Miss Tessa in the evening,” Gregory told his father about his day in a soft voice. When Janet saw how the father and son seemed absorbed in their two-person conversation, she felt terrible for herself as she couldn’t seem to be a part of it. She bit her lips in jealousy. He’s just a child that a surrogate mother gave birth to. Who is he to get so much of Nicholas’ attention?

Once they got to the hall, Nicholas brought Gregory to the couch. Janet gazed at the identical father-and-son couple as she thought, If I want to be with Nicholas, I’ll have to win over the young boy first.

“This is my first time seeing you, and I don’t know what sort of toys you like, so I bought a few different ones, Gregory. I hope you like them.” Janet pulled out a few toys that she had bought. She placed the mixture of toy cars and airplane figures on the table. Gregory took a look at them and glanced at the woman as he felt a peculiar feeling in him. For some reason, I feel like this lady is... trying to please me.

Gregory blinked for a moment—the intelligent boy had quickly guessed that this woman had some ulterior motive. Janet had no idea that Gregory knew what she was trying to do. She curled her lips into a smile that she thought looked gentle and kind while she tried her best to get close to the small boy. But Gregory was familiar with such tactics, so he wasn’t intrigued at all.

“Thank you for your kind gestures, Miss. However, I stopped playing with such toys when I was three,” he replied. Janet froze upon hearing the kid’s words, and the smile on her face turned stiff. Despite the awkward situation, she tried her best to maintain her smile while she continued the conversation. “What do you like, then? I’ll buy you something else next time.”

“I like violins, but my grandma collects tons of them, so I don’t need anymore.” Gregory rejected her with a straight look on his face. Janet was rather exasperated at this point, but she still kept a warm smile on her face. “It sounds like you really love violins.”

“Of course. Miss Tessa is a great violinist,” he replied with his chin stuck up high to form a proud look on his face. “I’m going to be as great of a violinist as her someday,” he said. Janet could no longer keep the smile on her face when she heard Gregory praising the woman. She knew who Gregory was referring to, but she hadn’t expected the kid to have so much love for Tessa.

Janet couldn’t help but glance at Nicholas at this point. As expected, there was a pleased and contented smile on Nicholas’ face when she looked at him. This made Janet unable to contain the jealousy she felt at that moment. I don’t understand. How is Tessa better than me?

So, Janet tried even harder to get close to Gregory after that. “Gregory, do you want to hear about stories of your dad in the army?” she asked. She figured that boys would typically look forward to becoming a part of the armed forces. It was true that Gregory was rather curious, but he didn’t want to give the woman a chance to please him. “Thanks, Miss. I’ll ask Daddy about it when I want to hear stories.”

The more Janet arrived at a dead end with the kid, the more she felt a strong sense of dislike toward him. All that this boy talks about is Tessa. It sounds almost like she’s his biological mother! As much as she didn’t like the boy, she tried her best to control her emotions. She knew that she had to do so since she wasn’t with Nicholas yet.

A while later, Andrew walked over before speaking in a respectful tone. “It’s time for dinner, Master Nicholas.”

Nicholas nodded before turning to gaze at the woman, who didn’t seem like she had any plans of leaving. “You can eat with us,” he offered as a kind gesture.

“Thank you for having me.” She nodded while smiling. She could tell that Nicholas had wanted to send her off, but she pretended not to notice anything. After all, she knew that Nicholas was a mannered man who would ask her to stay for dinner. When Gregory saw the sly look in Janet’s eyes, he stuck his lips out as he scoffed to himself.

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Chapter 637 The Best Woman

This evil woman has to be interested in Daddy. I can't allow things to go her way. Daddy belongs to Miss Tessa! During the meal, Gregory ate his food silently without speaking to Janet at all. The young boy was really cold to her. Nicholas was just as quiet—he patiently peeled a few prawns for his son without saying anything.

Janet gritted her teeth when she saw the two interacting with each other. Her grip on her chopsticks tightened as she felt a strong sense of annoyance. Although the father and son didn't converse much, they gave off the feeling that they were both a part of the same family while she was just an outsider.

Nicholas placed some meat in Gregory's bowl, and Gregory munched on it before pouting and throwing an intentional glance in Janet's direction. "I still think Miss Tessa is better at preparing this dish." Nicholas nodded in agreement upon hearing the boy's words. Although their chef wasn't bad, the way that Tessa prepared this dish was somewhat different. She made it taste more like home.

"Finish your food. You'll get to eat Miss Tessa's cooking soon," Nicholas said while putting some vegetables into Gregory's bowl. The young boy nodded obediently before he continued eating his food. Janet's mouth was sour with jealousy when she heard the two of them talking. After they were done with the food, all three of them returned to the hall.

Janet didn't feel like leaving just yet, so she tried starting all sorts of conversations with Gregory and Nicholas. The father and son responded courteously, but their patience wore out as time passed. "It's getting late. You should go home to get some rest." It was clear that Nicholas' patience was at its limit.

The smile on Janet's face stiffened when she heard the man's words, but she quickly returned to her usual expression before speaking in a gentle tone. "Is it okay if I stay with you guys, Nicholas? The villa over there is too huge, and I'm not used to staying in it alone."

Nicholas knitted his brows upon hearing her words. Janet thought that she had a chance, so she quickly added to her statement. "Don't worry. I won't wander around after moving in."

"If you feel like there are too few people around, I can arrange for more workers to stay there and care for the place," Nicholas spoke in a tone that brooked no argument. "Please send Miss Brenner home, Andrew."

"Yes, sir." Andrew nodded dutifully before turning to send Janet off. She was fuming at this point. I've already made things so clear, yet Nicholas doesn't seem to be doing anything at all. Am I so much worse than Tessa? Little did she know that she meant nothing to Nicholas at all. Furthermore, Nicholas didn't like the idea of other women moving into his place for too long.

When Gregory saw the woman walking out of the hall, he let out a soft mumble. "She's finally gone."

"Do you not like her?" Nicholas turned to gaze at the young boy beside him. Gregory nodded. "I don't like her."

"Why not?" Nicholas asked.

"I'm not sure. I just feel like she has bad intentions," Gregory explained.

Nicholas smiled when he saw the way Gregory scrunched his face up. "I'm guessing that you're not fond of anyone else in this world apart from Miss Tessa, huh?"

“That’s true. Miss Tessa is my favorite person in the world. No one compares to her.” Gregory stuck his chin up proudly. Nicholas burst out in laughter before ruffling the young boy’s black hair. “Do you want to talk to her?”

“Yes! Yes! Yes!” Gregory shouted in excitement. Nicholas pulled his phone out and gave Tessa a call upon seeing how elated the boy became. “It’s been so long since I last saw you, Aunt Tessa. I miss you so much!” Gregory spread his lips into a wide grin when he saw Tessa through the video call.

Tessa’s smile was just as bright as the boy’s smile. “I miss you a lot too.” She had been busy with practice throughout this period, so she hadn’t phoned Nicholas as often. However, that didn’t mean that she had missed them any less. Both Tessa and Gregory kept talking about how much they missed one another—Nicholas found it hard to interrupt their conversation.

Gregory clutched the phone without allowing his father a chance to speak at all. “I know you’ve been busy recently, Aunt Tessa. So, I practiced all of the songs that you taught me previously. I’ll perform them for you when I go visit.”

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Chapter 638 Stradivarius Violin

The look on Gregory's face made it evident that he was just waiting for Tessa to praise him. Tessa couldn't bear to let the kid down, so she gave him a flying kiss through the phone. "Mwah! I'll be waiting for you to come over and perform for me."

Gregory's cheeks were flushed with shyness when he heard what the woman said. Then, with his tiny hands holding the phone, he responded childishly. "I want to give you a kiss too." Then, he pouted his soft lips and placed them close to the phone's camera. Tessa felt like her heart had melted into a puddle at that moment. "How could you be so adorable, Gregory?!" she cried as she kissed him again through the phone.

They were so immersed in the conversation that they had forgotten entirely about Nicholas. He sat by the side and watched them interacting with a smile on his face. His eyes were full of love for both of them. After a while, Tessa and Gregory were finally done showering one another with love. Only then did Nicholas manage to get his phone back from Gregory. A look of sympathy flashed across his eyes when he saw Tessa's skinny face through the call. "You need to take care of your health and eat more."

Tessa's face had been tiny, to begin with, but she looked skinnier than ever now. "I know. Don't worry about it." Tessa's eyes twinkled as she looked at Nicholas, and the smile on her face seemed especially sweet. Yet, for some reason, Nicholas felt somewhat exasperated and annoyed upon hearing her response. "You always tell me that you know how to care for yourself, but you forget about it the moment you end the call," he grumbled.

"I promise to take care of myself this time. The most tiring period of practice is over now, anyway." Tessa knew that Nicholas was worried about her, so she

comforted him in a gentle tone. “Our teacher told us that our practice schedules will be a little less packed from now on,” she said.

Nicholas smiled upon hearing this. He wasn’t genuinely mad at her—he just wanted her to know how much he cared about her health. She quickly changed the topic when she saw that he was smiling again. “I’m planning to bring the violin that you and Timothy bought me over to Mr. Louis for it to be serviced.”

“Sure. I’ll tell the caretaker to send you over,” Nicholas uttered with a nod. After that, they chatted for a while before Tessa urged Nicholas to get some rest. It was getting late for him, after all.

He was also starting to feel tired, so he got Gregory to say goodnight to Tessa before they ended the call. After the call, Tessa tidied her place up a little before she brought her violin out for orchestra practice. That evening, she brought three violins over to Louis’ manor after practice was over.

“What brings you here?” Louis gazed at Tessa puzzledly. He knew that Tessa had been extremely busy in recent days. She would drop by during her off days in the past, but she had barely shown up recently since she had been so busy.

“I have a favor to ask from you today, Mr. Louis.” She beamed as she placed the violins on the desk. He took a look at them before responding with a disdainful scoff. “I knew you wouldn’t come for no reason,” he spoke playfully. Despite this, he stood up and walked over to check the instruments. “You didn’t destroy all three of these violins, did you?”

“They’re not spoiled at all. I just wanted you to service them a little, Mr. Louis.” Tessa hastily explained herself before opening the violin cases for all three of them.

All three violins had unique styles, but Louis quickly noticed the distinct details in each of them. The last violin particularly excited Louis when he first saw it. “This is one of Stradivarius violins!” He stared at Tessa in disbelief.

As a famous luthier himself, he was familiar with famous violinists all over the world. A violin as unique as Stradivari's violin was one that any violinist would hope to own in their lifetime. Louis previously heard that someone had kept a Stradivarius violin as a keepsake for themselves. Still, he would have never expected to see it with Tessa.

He ran his fingers gently across the violin's surface before he gazed at Tessa. "Can I try playing this?"

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Chapter 639 A Master

“Of course.” Tessa had never seen Louis this excited, and she understood how much he must like this violin. She had no reason to reject his request. Upon getting her consent, he cautiously lifted the violin into his hands as if it was some precious treasure.

Right then, Angus walked into the hall with a long black windbreaker draped over him. He happened to see the look of mesmerization in Louis’ eyes as Louis brought the violin out of its case. “It’s been a while since I saw this look on my uncle’s face. I’ve missed this.”

Tessa smiled as she turned around to look at the owner of the voice. “You’re here, Mr. Angus.”

Angus’ eyes gleamed when he saw the smile on the girl’s face. He was about to say something when a soothing tune rang in his ears. He watched Louis press the violin against his shoulder and begin to play it with elegant movements. Angus let out a sigh when he saw the look on Louis’ face. “It’s been so long since I last saw Louis play the violin. I believe it’s his hobby to get the chance to play such exclusive instruments.”

Tessa instinctively took a look at Angus. He met her gaze before shifting to look at his uncle with a rather complicated expression on his face. “Louis had a dream to pursue music when he was younger, but he got involved in an accident that injured his hand. He wasn’t able to play the violin for long since then, so he gave up on it. This is one of his biggest regrets.”

Therefore, Tessa turned to Louis with an empathic look on her face upon hearing Angus’ words. She could understand how much it hurt to be forced to give up on

one's dream. In the past, she had been close to having to give up on her dream. However, she felt the sudden urge to do something upon thinking about this.

She paid attention to the tune of the song that Louis was playing to realize that it was 'Canon in D'. There were a lot of emotions unleashed through the melody of the song. As she listened to the man play, she gazed at the other violins and came up with an idea then. She lifted another one of the violins and began to match her rhythm with Louis'. They played a duet for the second half of the song.

With the addition of Tessa's playing, the song that had been pleasant, to begin with, sounded even better than before. It had a moving tune, and Tessa had brought all the best parts out with her playing. Angus stood by the side and listened to them attentively. His gentle gaze fell upon Tessa after a while. Once the song was over, Louis still seemed rather hesitant to put the violin down.

Tess noticed this, so she made an offer. "What about another song, Mr. Louis?"

Louis was tempted, but he eventually smiled and shook his head. "Forget it. I'm getting old, so I don't have the energy anymore. One song is fine, but I can't do more than that now."

Tessa didn't force him into anything after hearing his explanation. Instead, she lowered the violin and let out a sigh. "I've always known how good you were at fixing violins, but I had no idea that you were so good at playing them too. You're at the standard of a master," she uttered.

"Stop trying to please me. I'm not going to fall for your tricks," he replied. Despite sounding rather disdainful, Louis' smile revealed his genuine emotions. "I'm not trying to please you. I'm just being honest. You can ask Mr. Angus if you don't believe me," Tessa said with a smile as she turned to look at Angus.

Angus nodded in agreement. "I think Miss Reinhart is right. You might not be a musician, but your skills are definitely at the level of a master," he said.

“Whatever Miss Reinhart says probably sounds right to you.” Louis beamed at his nephew before his gaze fell on Tessa. A somewhat hesitant look surfaced on his face for a moment before he seemed to make a decision in his mind. Then, he turned and walked to the cupboard before retrieving an old music sheet from inside.

“This is for you. I’ve kept a lot of these sheets for a long time. I hope you can give them life again,” he said while handing them to Tessa. Tessa was shocked. The sheets were clearly valuable, and Louis mentioned that there were countless famous pieces inside. She couldn’t imagine how much these sheets were worth.

“I really appreciate this, but these sheets are too valuable. I can’t take them.” Tessa handed the sheets back to Louis.

However, Louis insisted on giving them to her. “Alright. Since I gave them to you, you should just take them. I wouldn’t have given them to you if I didn’t like you. Others can never get this even if they wanted to!”

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Chapter 640 Another Woman

Louis' words amused Tessa, and she began to contemplate whether to actually take the music sheets that he was offering her.

Angus seemed to have realized the look of uncertainty on her face, for he offered her some advice. "You should take it since Louis is offering to give it to you. He can't play the violin, so it'd be a waste to just keep them here with him."

Since Angus and Louis were convincing her to take the sheets, Tessa felt she'd be making things hard for them if she disagreed.

Louis shoved the sheets into her hands at that moment. "I'm telling you to just take this," he uttered.

She hugged the sheets against her chest. Louis' offer touched her, so she rushed forward to throw her arms around him. "You're the best!"

Louis froze for a moment before he spoke in a disdainful tone. "What's up with all this hugging?" He clearly didn't mean what he said. He had never had a partner in his life, and his true love had always been the violin. Now that Tessa was clinging to him, he felt as if he had a daughter who was craving his love. Although he spoke as if he weren't a fan of her actions, the smile on his face looked especially warm and kind.

Angus couldn't believe what he saw as he watched them from the side. He knew his uncle the best, after all. Throughout the years, no family member could tolerate his uncle's eccentric temper. Because of this, many of the family members had distanced themselves from Louis. Even Angus had to bear the consequences of his

uncle's nature just to get close to the man. However, Tessa's appearance in their life seemed to have changed Louis.

At that moment, Angus changed the way he gazed at Tessa. Tessa didn't seem to realize anything—she simply calmed herself down before handing the three violins to Louis. "I'll need your help for these three violins, Mr. Louis." She glanced at him playfully.

Louis accepted her request. "I'll make sure to take good care of these three violins. Then, after I check and ensure that all three of them are in good condition, I'll give you a call."

Tessa nodded before the three of them went to sit in the hall for a chat. Soon enough, the housekeeper came over. "It's time for your meal, Mr. Louis," he said politely.

Louis nodded before turning to extend his invitation to Tessa. "Why don't you have dinner with this old man?"

Tessa had no reason to decline his invitation. Angus couldn't help but tease Louis when he saw how much Louis liked Tessa. "Are you only asking her to stay for dinner?" he asked.

"Well, are you going to leave if I don't ask you to stay for dinner?" Louis scoffed. He clearly knew what was going on in his nephew's head. "I wonder who insisted on staying around even when I chased him away."

"I was wrong, Louis. Stop bringing the past up." Angus held his hands up to show defeat. He didn't want Tessa to know about the embarrassing stories of his past.

Tessa pressed her lips into a smile as she watched the interactions between the two men. Soon enough, they headed over to the dining area. During their meal, they didn't have the habit of eating without any conversations, so they chit-chatted about music while eating.

After the meal, Tessa sat around for a while before excusing herself to head home. After getting home, she cleaned herself up before giving Nicholas a video call. On the other end of the line, Nicholas was having breakfast with Gregory.

He gazed at Tessa fondly while asking about her day. "How was your practice today?"

"It was pretty good," she replied before picking some exciting stuff to tell him. Gregory leaned in to get some of her attention as well. While they were chatting, Janet walked over with a lunchbox. "I'm here to visit you guys, Gregory and Nicholas." She beamed.

Tessa heard the other woman's voice, and she froze for a moment before looking at Nicholas. Nicholas observed the look in Tessa's eyes as he was worried that she would misunderstand the situation. "I'll explain things to you in a while," he whispered.

Then, his expression darkened as he raised an eyebrow and stared at the other woman annoyed. "What are you doing here?"

Janet didn't realize that Nicholas was on a video call with Tessa, and she felt rather awful when she heard the unwelcoming tone that Nicholas used with her. "I didn't have much to do, so I thought I would come over to look for you and Gregory. By the way, I made some dessert for you guys. Try it!"