

## Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo Chapter 1236

On the other side, the group assembled, intending to depart to the Nepenthe Valley.

Suddenly, Nina mentioned, "Daddy, can we bring Monica along? She needs the antidote too."

"But she was the reason why you're like this. Now you want to bring her too?" Davin uttered, bewildered at the suggestion.

Nina frowned. "Uncle Davin, you're right. All this happened to me because of Monica, but she's a victim too! If it wasn't for Grandpa, her father would not have died, and her family business would not have been wound up. There's a reason behind everything she did to the Seet family, including me."

"Nina, she had tried to mess with the Seet Group even before all of that. Having poisoned you, I think she's had her revenge. Now, she's on her own," Davin replied.

"Uncle Davin, I don't think it's fair. She experienced the devastating pain of losing her father, but none of us have to go through that. In comparison with the Marston family, the Seet family is far better off. Hence, bring her along and save her life. At the end of the day, she is a person of bitter past, and I really sympathize with her."

Davin turned his head and looked at Evan. Ultimately, Evan was the one who would decide.

Evan was silent for a moment before uttering, "We shall do as Nina says. Bring her along."

Regarding the past grudges, Evan felt indebted to the Marston family as well. Although Monica was hated and despised, there was a reason behind her doings.

Levant, who stood at one side, also supported the idea. "Agree. As to whether she survives, that depends on fate. If we manage to save her life, then it will put an end to the long-lasting feud between the two families."

Nonetheless, Evan's gaze looked dull, and he kept quiet.

He had his own opinions on putting an end to the long-lasting feud.

A while later, the bodyguard brought Monica over. The woman's face was as pale as paper, and her hair messy and greasy; even Nina was terrified at the sight of her.

If the poison isn't neutralized, will I end up just like her?

At once, Evan noticed Nina's uneasiness and tried to console her, "Nina, once we reach the Nepenthe Valley, you will be cured. Don't worry too much about it."

"Trust us, Nina. Even though Crystal Rose is unpredictable, we have our ways to convince her to treat you."

Nina felt relieved upon being reassured by Davin and Evan. Then, she smiled blissfully at them and replied, "I'm not afraid. I trust Daddy and Uncle Davin."

"Why did you bring me here?" Monica looked at them, puzzled.

"We're going to save your life," Davin answered.

“Save me? Are you capable of doing that? If you really can save me, Nina won’t look this gauntly! Besides, that b\*stard only injected a very small dose of poison into me. I did not have any symptoms in the early stages. However, Nina is different. I mean, look at her—how is she better than me? Very soon, we’ll both be dead...”

“Nina is feeling much better than you. You’re looking lifeless! I suggest you shut up!”

Before she could finish her sentence, Davin interjected and told her off. He then instructed the bodyguard, “Watch her closely.”

The bodyguard quickly replied, “Yes, Mr. Davin.”

“Alright, let’s depart now,” Evan commanded.

They got into the car and sped toward Nepenthe Valley.

After almost a full day of traveling, they arrived at Nepenthe Valley in the evening.

They stood before the valley and stared at the endless stretch of road. Stupefied, they dared not act rashly.

Davin gazed at the wavy roads before asking worriedly, “Rumor has it that the Nepenthe Valley is a tough terrain. There will be ambushes along the way or even monsters! Once the night falls, we might fall into a trap, and that’ll be ugly!”

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Nina agreed with Davin. After all, everyone was there to save her life. Hence, if something bad were to happen to them, she would feel extremely guilty.

“Daddy, it’s getting dark. Let’s find a place to settle down, and we’ll start our journey tomorrow,” Nina suggested.

Evan paused for a second before agreeing, “That sounds good.”

Then, everyone got into the car, looked up for a place to stay for the night, and hurried toward the direction.

Though the accommodation was bedraggled, it was good enough to stay. And the food... Well, it was mediocre but was sufficient to fill their stomachs.

After dinner, Evan, Davin, and Levant sat together and started chatting.

Out of the blue, Davin mentioned Tiffany and Luke. He asked Levant if he planned to stay with them.

Levant rolled his eyes at him. “Everything is fine the way it is. Why do you find the need to mention Tiffany? Besides, Sheila hates me to her guts because of Tiffany, as if I owe her my life.”

It had always been the case—that Sheila would leap at the first opportunity to ridicule Levant.

Right then, Davin immediately tried to explain, “That’s because my wife is a great friend of Tiffany’s. And obviously, she will stand by Tiffany’s side and go against you. Needless to say, Tiffany’s enemy is her enemy as well. Hence, it explains why she treats you so badly. However, should you choose to marry

Tiffany, my wife's attitude toward you will surely change dramatically! Heck, she may even treat you like her own brother!"

Upon that, Levant sneered in response. "I'll need to marry someone that I don't love, just so that she will treat me like a brother? That's absurd! Who does she think she is!"

Evan, who kept quiet all the while, suddenly spoke, "If you don't love her, then why did you get her pregnant? That's irresponsible!"

"I..." Levant was speechless at that. There was a period of time when Tiffany was very close to him. One night, they were having drinks together, and in a drunken state, Levant mistook Tiffany as Nicole. That was why he slept with her, as he was under the impression that she was Nicole.

"It's all because of the alcohol!" he grunted regretfully.

Davin pursed his lips. "How can you blame it on the alcohol? You're obviously attracted to Tiffany. And after sleeping with her, you're now trying to escape the ensuing responsibility. You're a heartless wretch!"

"How am I heartless? Do you think it'll be better if I choose to marry her even if I don't love her? She should be with a man who truly loves her and wants to be together with her—a man who is responsible and mature. This way, she will have a happy married life."

Davin sized him up and asked curiously, "If you don't love her, then who is it that you love? Unless... it's Nicole?"

Davin then looked toward Evan. *This question will definitely pique his interest.*

Hearing that, Levant was speechless. Davin's question was impossible to answer.

After a short pause, Levant glanced at Evan, coughed, and responded with his head held high, "It's my own business, and no one has the right to interfere."

On the other hand, Evan did not respond. He slowly folded his sleeves and unbuttoned his collar.

Davin initially did not understand the abrupt gesture. However, after he noticed the scratches on Evan's arms and the bite marks on his neck, Davin quickly understood Evan's intention.

*What a way to display affection! Even when he's alone!*

Davin took a deep cough before asking on purpose, "Evan, the marks on your neck and arm... are those Nicole's doing?"

"Yeah! Her nails are quite sharp. Last night, things got a little bit too intense. She didn't do it on purpose," answered Evan. Then, he started massaging his neck, as if Levant would not notice it.

However, he didn't know that the bite and scratch marks had stirred up ripples of jealousy in Levant right at that moment.

"Well, d\*mn! Nicole and you must be inseparable!"

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As soon as Davin said that, he caught a glimpse of Levant, who looked pale and uneasy. The look on his face was horrible. At this very moment, Levant's heart had turned icy cold.

When he found out that Nicole was pregnant with her second child, he knew very well he should give up and move on. Be that as it may, he couldn't resist being uncomfortable when being shown the evidence of Nicole and Evan's intimate moments.

His affection toward Nicole was one of the worst hurdles that he had to overcome.

"Nicole and I are deeply in love. We will not be separated. Not this lifetime, next lifetime, or any lifetime, for what it's worth," Evan replied.

While the message was slightly less impactful, Levant was still jealous. He blurted, "Evan, are you trying to hint something to me?"

Evan replied, "Well, you're not wrong to think that way."

Levant answered unhappily, "I don't bear any hope toward being with Nicole anymore, so there's no need to send me such message!"

"Well, if you no longer hold any hope, why would you think that the message is directed toward you?"

"Exactly. If you've really moved on, then why won't you marry Tiffany? If a woman can't get the man that she loves, then she'll be pickier when it comes to her next partner. However, men are different. If a man can't get the woman he loves, he'll become less selective of his partner and will end up marrying any woman. If you've really moved on, then why can't you marry Tiffany?"

After a moment of awkward silence, Levant stood up and rebutted angrily, "These are two separate matters. Even though I'm not hoping to get together with Nicole, that doesn't mean I'll simply marry any woman. If that was the case, I'll be better off single and alone." Then, he stormed off furiously.

Davin let out a sigh while watching his retreating figure. It was so obvious that Levant had not moved on. What magical powers does Nicole possess? How is Levant so deeply in love with her?

He then turned his gaze toward Evan and reminded the latter, "Evan, you must treat Nicole well. Your love rival is playing for the long game. If there's any room for him to get between the two of you, then—"

"You're overthinking it. Nicole does not have any feelings toward him," Evan immediately brushed away Davin's concern.

"What if? You can never say for sure. Some women are soft-hearted and can marry a guy in the heat of the moment."

At that, Evan stood up. "Don't worry about it. Nicole is not Renee. She has her own principles and will not be moved so easily."

When Davin heard that, he became offended. Is he implying that Renee got together with me in the heat of the moment?

As if! For your information, Renee is very much in love with me! Besides, I'm still a very attractive man!

Watching Evan's silhouette as he walked away, Davin chased after him and yelled, "Evan, you're wrong! Renee is truly in love with me, it wasn't a rash move..."

He followed Evan to the guest room, trying to explain his relationship with Renee along the way.

Evan, on the other hand, didn't seem to be bothered. He ushered Davin back to his room to rest.

"Evan, don't you get it? Renee is—" Davin continued to babble relentlessly.

Evan had to interject, "It doesn't really matter. Let me ask you this—If I record what you're saying now and send it to Sheila, can she understand?"

It was effective. Almost immediately, Davin stopped talking. Then, he bowed before retreating back to his room.

Sheep can never find out about this, or all hell will break loose!

The following day...

At the break of dawn, the group had their breakfast and headed toward the Nepenthe Valley.

Davin suggested letting a few of the bodyguards check if the path ahead was safe. They reckoned they should only continue if it was safe enough to do so.

Evan, however, felt that it was unnecessary. Even if there was a problem, it was a risk that they must take to retrieve the antidote for Nina.

Thus, they warily maneuvered the bumpy and curvy road. With their senses heightened, they cautiously observed the surroundings.

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The few bodyguards led the way. After walking for half a kilometer, a few masked men dressed in black blocked them in their paths.

"Who are they? They don't seem friendly..." Davin whispered.

Having scrutinized the men, they noticed that they all have a symbol wrapped around their sleeves – Crystal Rose.

Levant asked, "So, they're the followers of Crystal Rose?"

Instantly, the man dressed in black asked, "What do you want?"

"We're here to look for someone!" Draven replied.

"Who?" the unknown man continued asking.

"We're looking for Crystal Rose, the Lady of the Nepenthe Valley."

"I don't know what you're talking about. Leave now!"

Davin stared at the symbol on their sleeves. "Nonsense! You're her men! You're all adorned with her symbol!"

The men dressed in black coherently looked toward their sleeves. Impatiently, they growled, "What symbol? Leave now!"

Right then, Evan's bodyguard instinctively moved forward, standing in between Evan and the mysterious group of men. "I suggest you move out of the way! Don't block our paths!"

One of the men replied, "I think they prefer violence. Then, that is what you will get!"

Soon after that, a fight started almost immediately.

Draven, whose skills surpassed the Hidden masters, was impeccable. His mastery of the grapple and dodge techniques were beyond perfection. His opponents were dumbfounded. Not one of their aims landed on him despite how hard they tried.

Meanwhile, Davin sneered and mocked, "Don't worry. Take your time. It's a shame that you're only punching the air. You seem quite strong, though. If you continue this way, you'll be exhausted soon enough."

The leader of the men in black stared ferociously at Davin. He then took a deep breath and lifted both of his arms, hitting left, right, and center.

However, his efforts were to no avail. Even worse, Draven managed to make him stumble, and he slammed onto the ground forcefully.

Davin could help but sympathize with him, "Didn't I just tell you to take your time? Why did you act contrary to my advice? My, my, look at you now. I say, it must surely hurt! Anyway, be careful, or else it will only get much more painful."

"Shut up!" the man was embarrassed and yelled in response.

"Why is it that you can't accept the truth? If that's the case, stop lying on the ground and stand up. Stand up and get beaten up like a man!"

The man in black gritted his teeth and got up. Just as he managed to regain his balance, Draven launched a ferocious kick that sent the man flying.

At one side, Davin shook his head and sighed. "Looks like it's over. He can't take it anymore!" He then continued to insult the man, "Hey, can you still take a hit?"

The man gritted his teeth and glowered at Davin hatefully. The next second, he retrieved a knife and hurled it in Davin's direction.

Fortunately for Davin, he nimbly avoided the knife. He was nonetheless shocked by the sudden attack. "Gosh, I nearly took a direct hit. That was a close call!"

Levant scoffed. "This is on you. You talk too much."

Yet, Davin cheekily replied, "I'm just telling the truth! Look at how pissed he is! Was I wrong to say it?"

The man was fuming with anger. Being humiliated in front of his subordinates, he would have lost the respect to be their leader. I might as well risk everything!

Right at that moment, the man was willing to sacrifice his life to take down Davin.

He mustered every ounce of strength and stood up clumsily. However, Draven effortlessly pinned him down. This time, regardless of the humiliation by Davin, he no longer had the energy to stand up.

The rest of the men in black struggled but lost eventually. At last, all of them collapsed onto the ground.

“I don’t understand. These men are supposed to guard the entrance? What is Crystal Rose thinking?”

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“Don’t be too full of yourselves. We’re the easiest opponents you’ll face. As you progress into the valley, someone will definitely defeat you!”

The man in black snarled, exposing the fact that they were mere pawns. There would be many more skilled fighters waiting for them along the journey.

Davin wanted to enquire more about the path ahead – the possible ambushes, the number of fighters. However, despite repeated attempts to interrogate, he couldn’t obtain any information.

Their responses were the same. “Nepenthe Valley is basically hell. Once you get in, there’s no getting out!”

“Come on. First, you can’t defeat us, and now you’re trying to scare us off? Do we look like cowards to you?”

Evan’s gaze intensified. He reminded everyone to be careful before proceeding in their journey.

The valley was hushed, and they could not hear anything at all. The more it was the case, the more wary everyone was.

“By right, there should be some animals in the valley. Even if they weren’t on land, there should also be some flying in the skies. But there’s absolutely nothing! I don’t understand!” Levant looked around the lifeless Nepenthe Valley and asked quizzically.

“I agree. Do you think that Crystal Rose is ferociously bloodthirsty? Even the animals feared her, and the birds dared not fly across the valley.”

“We will get our answers once we meet her.”

“In that case, let’s pick up our pace.”

The bodyguards suddenly reminded, “Mr. Evan, Mr. Davin, we can’t go any faster. Nina is really weak right now. If we speed up, she might not be able to handle it.”

Evan turned his head back and looked at Nina, who appeared sallow and sickly. “Are you tired? Do you need to rest?”

However, Nina shook her head. “I’m not tired. I can still go on.”

Evan suggested, “I think you should just let the bodyguard carry you on his back. They can take turns, and it shouldn’t be a problem.”

The bodyguards replied intermittently, "No problem at all. We're willing to carry Ms. Nina!"

"Right, we are!"

At the same time, Monica had tiredly collapsed on the ground. "You guys go ahead. I can't do this anymore."

Davin scornfully remarked, "I thought you're fine just a moment ago? It seems to me like you just want someone to carry you too!"

Monica had been pushing herself for quite some time, but she was now exhausted. She didn't even have the energy to rebut Davin's statement and just stared at him, distasted. With her head lowered, Monica did not utter another word.

At that moment, Evan instructed, "Carry her on your backs too. Look at how skinny she is. She shouldn't be too heavy."

The bodyguard heeded his instructions and replied, "Noted, Mr. Evan."

Monica was, however, taken aback. Why is Evan treating me so nicely?

She said, "Don't think that I'll forgive the Seet family just because you're helping me now. Even if you guys manage to save me, I will get my revenge one day!"

Evan's glacial stare landed on her, but he chose not to respond. He continued walking straight ahead, and the others followed suit.

Another hour passed, and they reached a heavenly place with birds chirping and flowers blossoming. It was a complete and radical change of surroundings, to everyone's surprise.

"Oh my god, all the while, there wasn't a single living thing. It was as if every step was an inch forward into the depths of hell. But now we're in such a beautiful place. This is like heaven!"

Evan muttered, "It clearly shows the wretched personality of Crystal Rose! We must be extremely careful with our moves!"

Just as he finished his sentence, a few women approached them gradually. They were sizing Evan and the group up, their eyes scanning them from top to bottom. Then, with a beaming smile on her face, one of the women said, "You're all our guests. Please come in for a cup of tea."

I don't get it. What's with their kind gesture?

Levant noticed the shock on Davin's face and reminded him softly, "For every kind gesture, there must be an ulterior motive. I think, by inviting us into their place, they must be plotting something evil... Perhaps... to capture us?"

Davin agreed with what Levant had said, but...

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He scrutinized Levant and replied, "I think you're the one who deserves the most to be captured!"



Levant couldn't wrap his head around the statement. "Me? You think that those gorgeous ladies would like me?"

Immediately, Davin shook his head and replied, "No. It's because you're the most gullible of us all!"

Levant scowled at him and argued childishly, "I think you're even more gullible than me!" Then, he glared at Davin fiercely before ignoring him afterward.

Meanwhile, Evan scanned around the heavenly place and tried to unravel its mystery. Knowing that Crystal Rose must be here somewhere, they must continue their journey regardless of the possible threats. Deep down, he, too, was curious of the shenanigans planned by Crystal Rose.

Evan answered, "Since the Lady of the Valley is so sincere, we are obliged."

The group followed Evan closely behind. They passed through a flowerbed and headed toward a luxurious wooden house.

Davin exclaimed, "The flowers planted in the flowerbed are glorious! It's bright red like blood. Guys, come and take a sniff. They even smell like blood! Could it be that they're painted using blood?"

Everyone paid more attention to the flowers after being prompted by Davin's remark.

The woman replied, "That's an overstatement. This flower is called the blood flower, and it has always been this red. Please, come in."

The door opened widely. Draven, however, suggested abruptly, "Mr. Evan, since the place isn't that big, why don't the bodyguards and I stand guard outside?"

Evan nodded. "I think that's a good idea." Next, the bodyguard lowered Monica and Nina to the ground. After that, the two of them entered the wooden house together with Davin, Evan, and Levant.

The pompous decorations brightened up the ambiance, creating a rather homey and comfortable vibe. Davin was surprised and couldn't resist asking Levant, "Hey, do you think a lovely place like this can be the residence of a weird, wretched lady? It's clean and neat, and everything is organized perfectly."

Levant stared at him but kept quiet.

"Please, have a cup of tea," the woman with a white blouse said.

The woman, with her soft and silky hands, poured cups after cups of freshly brewed tea and left it on the table.

Evan looked at the tea and turned his gaze away while asking, "If I drink the tea, can I meet Crystal Rose?"

The woman, who appears to be the leader, beamed. "I'm not the one to call the shots. Nonetheless, the tea is really good. Please help yourselves."

Good tea?

Because of her answer, Davin became really suspicious of the tea. Is it poisoned? Hence, he softly reminded everyone, "I think it's best if we refrain from drinking it. Who knows if there's poison in the tea."

Evan and Levant looked toward Davin. After that, they started drinking small sips of the tea.

Davin's eyebrows knitted together. "Why did you drink it? Are you not afraid of being poisoned to death?" Anyway, Davin would never touch the cup of tea. He was skeptical of the place and refused to let his guard down.

Since Evan and Levant drank the tea, Nina, who was also thirsty, picked up the cup and started drinking.

Monica looked at the three of them drinking their tea before turning her head toward Davin. She, on the flipside, agreed with Davin that they must exercise an abundance of caution in a dodgy place like this.

Davin cheekily teased Monica, "It looks like you're afraid of being poisoned as well. You must really be afraid of dying."

Monica rolled her eyes at Davin and replied, "It's not about dying. I just don't like tea."

Hearing that, Davin couldn't help but rebuked her, "Just admit it. You're afraid of dying! Stop faking it!"

Monica lashed out, "Davin, you're not drinking the tea as well! Since we're both afraid of dying, you don't have the right to mock me!"

"I've been very honest, unlike you. Yes, I'm afraid of dying, but you, on the other hand, refused to admit it. Remember this—if we manage to get you cured, there shall be a truce between the Seet family and the Marston family."

"You wish!"

"It's not really that hard to figure out the math. Think about it. Although the demise of your father was caused by my father, Nina was poisoned by you. A life for a life. If you think that it's not enough, we're now saving your life! Besides, although the Marston family business is now wound up, you have been causing chaos to the Seet Group all this while. Hence, I think it's more than enough! Both families should just bury the hatchet and move on!"

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"Even if the entire Seet family was wiped out, it still won't be enough to pay for my dad's life," Monica uttered.

Upon hearing that, Davin replied, "Monica, aren't you being too much? It's just normal if we decide not to save you! Evan, you saw it with your own eyes how evil she is! Let's not save her."

Shooting Davin a look, Monica did not reply.

After Evan, Levant, and Nina finished their drinks, the woman in white suddenly came forward.

"Everyone, I was just informed that Lady of the Valley had allowed you to visit her."

"She's willing to see us?"

“That’s right. Please follow me.”

The few followed the woman in white through a zig-zagged pathway and arrived at a bamboo forest. There was a couple of stylish-looking bamboo houses there.

“Go on ahead. The person you’re searching for is right inside.” After the woman in white finished her words, she walked away.

Evan and Levant led the way, while Davin, Nina, and Monica followed close behind them. When they walked up to the bamboo house, a voice suddenly boomed inside. “I know you mean no harm. Thus, I don’t want to make your life hard either. Please leave!”

Staying silent for a moment, Evan replied, “We’re very sorry to have to disturb you. However, you’re our only hope. I heard that you’re the only one that knows how to cure bone erosion poison. If you agree to save my daughter’s life, I’ll be greatly indebted to you.”

“Are both of the women infected by bone erosion poison your daughters?”

When Monica heard that, she roared, “Who said that I’m his daughter? I have nothing to do with them!”

“If that’s the case, why did you come together with them?”

Evan answered, “It’s a bit complicated to explain. Could you please come out and take a look at them first?”

The door to the bamboo house swung open, and a woman clad in black clothing walked out. Instantly, she attracted the attention of everyone.

When one looked carefully, they would observe that she exuded a refreshing vibe. It was not hard to deduce that she was undoubtedly a beauty when she was younger with her above-average looks. As for her age, Davin speculated that she was around the same age as his mother.

“So you’re Crystal Rose?”

“That’s correct!”

Right after she finished talking, Davin and Monica felt a feeling of dizziness and quickly tumbled to the ground.

When Evan witnessed that, he stared at Crystal Rose in shock. “What did you do to them?”

“Do you have evidence that I did that to them?”

At that, Evan furrowed his eyebrows. She has a point, as I did not see her attacking them. However, why would the two of them faint so suddenly?

Noticing his confusion, she decided to explain, “They fainted because of the blood flowers planted in the garden.”

Upon hearing that, the remaining few recalled the beautiful blood-red flowers. Indeed, there was something off with those flowers. However, all of us had taken the same pathway getting here, so why were they the only ones who fainted?

Crystal Rose continued with her explanation, "Before you arrived at the bamboo forest, you were asked to drink a cup of tea. As the tea was the antidote to the blood flowers' poison, you were able to pass through scot-free. They both must have thought there was poison in the tea given to them and went without it. Contrary to their wild imaginations, the cup of tea was actually an antidote." Then, she stared straight at the three of them. "Therefore, I would advise you not to act presumptuously in Nepenthe Valley. It might backfire on you."

The three of them exchanged glances. It seems like Crystal Rose is certainly no ordinary person!

"Since you're able to find this place, I'm sure you've heard about my rules as well. If you want to ask for a favor, you have to meet my requirements."

Evan replied, "Yes, I'm well aware that you have three requirements. Firstly, you would only treat women, and we have met that. As for the following requirements, we'll try our best to achieve them."

Crystal Rose sized them up carefully. "It must have been a long journey for you to get here, so I won't deliberately make things harder for you. For my second requirement, I have three things for you to do. With the achievement of each, I'll detoxify thirty percent of the poison out of their bodies."

"Please enlighten me about it," he replied.

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"First off, I want you to clean every spot of Nepenthe Valley to show your intention."

However, Levant was obviously unhappy about it. "We're the guests, so don't you think it's inappropriate to ask us to do chores? Aren't you just treating us as your maids?"

"So you're unable to accept something as simple as this? If you can't accept it, please leave right away!"

Seeing her determination, Levant was taken aback and looked toward Evan. As Evan was the one that needed the woman's help, he was also the one making the final decision.

After thinking for a moment, Evan decided to go along with it. It was not a difficult task, and it was reasonable to do so for the detoxification of Nina.

"I can agree to this, however..." Evan lowered his eyes and stared at the two bodies on the ground. "Could you please give them the antidote?"

Crystal Rose looked toward the ground and answered, "No problem." After saying that, she ordered someone to fetch the antidote tea and feed it to the duo. "You can ask your bodyguards to carry them to their rooms. They'll awaken in a moment." Then, the two were brought to their respective rooms.

True enough, the duo woke up groggily about half an hour later.

Davin was flabbergasted. "I remember myself losing consciousness and falling."

"That's right. You fainted."

"Fainted? Why would I have fainted?" Confused, he mumbled to himself. "It must be Crystal Rose! Did she do something to me?"

When Levant saw how suspicious he was, he grinned. “No. She didn’t do anything to you. You just fainted suddenly.”

“Huh? Why would I suddenly faint without any reason?” Davin was filled with confusion.

Levant smirked. “You shot yourself on the foot. We were poisoned by the blood flowers when we passed by the garden. However, the tea given by the woman back in the wooden house was the antidote. You and Monica fainted because both of you were wary and did not consume it.”

So that’s the reason why? Davin was taken aback by his explanation.

He shot a curious look at Levant. “I was shocked that you and the others gulped it down without a second thought. Perhaps you knew that it was the antidote? If you did, why didn’t you tell me?”

“We didn’t know that. However, I had a feeling that Crystal Rose would not want to kill us without any reason. Even if she wanted us dead, she would meet with us first before going through with her decision.”

Davin was rendered speechless. You’re a smart one, huh?

After shooting Levant a look, Davin remained silent for a moment before asking, “Did Crystal Rose mention anything else to you? Did she agree to treat Nina?”

“She did! However, she had a condition on doing so.” Knowing that it would pique Davin’s interest, Levant continued explaining, “Which is to clean up Nepenthe Valley.”

“What? Cleaning up Nepenthe Valley?”

“That’s right. Your brother, the bodyguards, and Nina are hard at work. You should quickly go on and help them.”

Upon hearing that, Davin’s brows knitted together. I have no idea how to do house chores! After all, all of the housework in the Seet Residence were done by the maids. There was never a need for him to lift a finger.

“I don’t know how to clean!”

“Your brother said that you can learn it just by looking at them.”

Unable to refute, Davin stalled for time by complaining about feeling weak and wanting to rest for a while. After that, he plopped down onto the bed.

His actions exasperated Levant. Finally, Davin was only willing to climb out of bed and head to the garden after being called by Draven.

Evan and Nina were helping out there. Even Monica, who also fainted, had joined them. Thus, he had no choice but to follow them.

“Mr. Evan, you should leave everything to us instead,” Draven offered.

“I’m just here to monitor the progress, nothing more than that.”

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Glancing at the trellis Evan organized earlier, Draven understood that he was anxious to obtain the cure for Nina. Thus, he did not continue pressing.

In the evening, the entire Nepenthe Valley was spotless and approved by Crystal Rose.

“Not bad. I can give them thirty percent of the cure tonight.”

Immediately, Nina’s eyes shone with hope while Monica was filled with happiness after knowing she was saved.

That night, the duo followed Crystal Rose into a secret chamber. There, the latter ordered someone to prepare two wooden buckets filled with precious herbs, and the entire room was filled with its rich scent.

“You guys can go and soak inside for two hours. After that, I’ll check your pulse and give you the medication.”

Monica and Nina exchanged glances. The former was obviously hesitating, staring at the wooden bucket with a frantic look on her face.

Meanwhile, Nina answered, “Okay,” and proceeded to soak herself in the herbs.

Crystal Rose shot a look at Monica. “Do you still want the cure? If not, you can leave right now.”

Since Monica was left with no other choice, she decided to go along with it.

“Y-Yes. I want to.” After saying that, she dipped herself into the wooden bucket.

Two hours seemed to pass by longer than usual. Nina had her eyes closed, silently sitting inside the wooden bucket.

On the other hand, Monica was growing antsy and antsy. “Do you feel a kind of weird sensation? Like ants are biting all over your body?” She could not help but ask.

Nina shook her head. “Nope. I only feel that the water feels warm and relaxing.”

Relaxing? Why don’t I feel the same way? Perhaps there’s something wrong with the water?

At that moment, Monica was growing more and more anxious by the passing minute. Seeing that they were the only ones inside the chamber, she clambered out of the bucket and walked in front of Nina. After taking a good look, she realized that the water inside was entirely the same color and smell as hers, even having the same temperature.

Why are we having different experiences soaking inside if that’s the case?

“Nina, how about we exchange buckets?”

“You can ask Crystal Rose about it first. If she agrees, I’ll exchange it with you.”

Monica was taken aback and planned to find a reason to persuade her. However, Crystal Rose suddenly walked inside and scolded, “Who told you to come out?”

“I don’t feel good, so I wanted to come out and ask Nina how she felt.”

“Both of you are using the same herbs, so there’s no way one will feel uncomfortable. It’s your fault if you have a low tolerance toward the medication. Get back to your bucket. You’ll need to stay for another hour.”

Upon hearing that, Monica was speechless. However, she decided not to defy Crystal Rose, for she was the only one who could save her. Thus, Monica returned to the bucket.

After Nina finished soaking, Crystal Rose checked her pulse and prepared a mixture of precious herb powder for her.

“Once you take this herb powder, you won’t feel as exhausted the next morning. Look, your complexion is not as ghastly as before either.”

“Thank you.”

“No need. You still have new conditions to fulfill tomorrow, so head back and get a good rest.”

Once Nina headed back, the three men looked her up and down and realized she indeed looked better than before.

“Nina, how do you feel?”

“I’m feeling way better than before, having more energy too.”

“That’s good news. It seems that Crystal Rose certainly lives up to her name! However, it’s unsure what tasks she’ll ask us to do tomorrow,” Davin grumbled. Suddenly, he asked, “Where’s Monica? Did she not come back with you?”

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“Yeah. She still needs some time as Crystal Rose ordered her to soak for another hour.”

“For another hour? Why?”

“Because she was caught leaving her wooden bucket and was thus punished.”

After hearing that she was punished, Davin could not help but sigh. “Suits her right! Someone as ungrateful as her should be duly punished!” After that, he looked toward Evan. “Evan, aren’t you afraid she would still hold a grudge against us even if we managed to find a cure for her?”

The gleam in Evan’s eyes dwindled. “She won’t do that!”

“How are you so sure about it? You heard her saying she would continue to take revenge on us despite saving her life!” Davin retorted.

“She won’t,” his brother answered in a determined tone.

Looking at Evan’s resolvedness, Davin was curious why. Did he perhaps think of a good idea?

Davin then continued, “Are you thinking of doing something to her? Like maybe save her life before killing her off?”

“You’ll know about it in the near future.” Evan shot him a meaningful look.

Davin knew that he was scheming something just by his look. As for what it was, the former would have to sit back and watch.

“Nina, it’s getting late. Go on and get some sleep.”

“Okay. Everyone, good night.”

After Nina returned to her room, the adults continued chattering for a moment before retiring for the night.

The following day, someone knocked on their door to announce breakfast was ready early in the morning.

Gaping at the bland dishes, Davin and Levant felt a loss of appetite.

“It’s not enough nutrients if we only consume leaves. Do you serve anything else?”

“No! People here eat it for all three of our meals.”

All three meals? How could the inhabitants of Nepenthe Valley put up with this?

As Davin and Levant were used to eating lavishly, they were unaccustomed to eating simple meals. Thus, they started to discuss the ways to improve their meals.

“How about we hunt for some wild animals?” Davin suggested.

“That’s a great idea. I saw that there were rabbits beside the wooden house. Do you prefer it to be steamed or braised?” Levant replied.

Before Davin could give his preference, the woman in white spoke up. “The animals in Nepenthe Valley are used in experiments here. Therefore, it might be unsafe for you to consume it as they might have poison in them.”

“Huh? Why would you do something like that?”

“Of course, it’s to try out our antidotes. Otherwise, how would we be so talented in this aspect?”

“So that’s their reason behind them being so talented in formulating antidotes. However, there must be many animals sacrificed for the sake of it. That woman is way too cruel,” Davin muttered to Levant.

However, the woman in white answered before anyone else could. “The main purpose of us doing this is to save lives. If compared, a human’s life is definitely more precious than an animal’s. Besides, less than a hundred animals were killed in the experiment. Which, I dare say, is nothing compared to those slaughterhouses.”

Levant and Evan exchanged glances. After seeing how fierce the woman was, they did not continue arguing with her. Since the animals in this valley cannot be eaten, we’ll have to think of another way.

Looking opposite him, Davin was absolutely horrified seeing Evan and Nina having finished their portion of vegetables. I didn’t know my older brother was such a pro! How on earth could he finish eating something as plain as that?