Pursing his lips, Zackery dared not speak further.

After fifteen minutes, Levant's phone began ringing. Glancing at it, Levant realized that it was a call was from Nicole.

Overjoyed, he picked up the call.

"What's up, Ms. Lane?"

"I'm outside the Levant Winery right now. I've got a few questions for you and I was wondering if you had the time."

"I've got time."

After hanging up the phone, Levant instructed the manager to escort Nicole in.

Now that Nicole had come just as expected, Zackery's heart erupted with glee. Puffing up his chest, he took a step forward as advised, "Mr. Levant, you can't treat her too well. Remember to keep your distance at all times. You mustn't do anything that would sully your reputation. You have to let the woman offer herself up to you."

Levant fell silent and then nodded his head.

He felt that Zackery's tricks were rather useful. After all, Nicole was now personally paying them a visit.

"Mr. Levant, Ms. Lane has arrived."

The moment the manager had finished speaking, Zackery immediately began studying Nicole from head to toe.

She had a snowy white complexion, exquisite facial features, and a curvy figure. Without a doubt, she was a beauty.

No wonder Mr. Levant is head over heels for her. Ever since ancient times, beautiful women have always seemed to have some kind of magical hold over men.

"Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Levant."

"Have a seat."

"Thank you."

After sitting down, she glanced at the manager and Zackery.

Levant immediately caught her drift. She wanted the manager and Zackery to give them a moment alone.

"You two head out first."

"Of course, Mr. Seet."

The considerate manager closed the door behind him after both of them had left.

"The reason I came looking for you was because I wanted to ask you some questions about my family. What else do you know?"

"Ms. Lane, I don't know much. If you really want to find out more, you can go investigate yourself."

"Am I really related to the ducal family?"

Although she could tell that Levant was unwilling to share too much, she still couldn't help but ask this question.

It wasn't every day one got to meet someone from the ducal family. Thus, she had to make full use of this opportunity and ask as many questions as she could.

She had so many questions that she was dying to have answers. Only then would she be able to understand what had happened.

With a faint smile playing on his lips, Levant gently placed a cup of tea in front of her.

"Ms. Lane, I understand how you feel. Your family, your biological father, the difficult relationship between your biological father and mother... I can help you investigate all these things. However, are you prepared to agree to my terms, Ms. Lane?"

"Terms? You still want me tie the knot with you?"

"That's right!"

Nicole clenched her fists discreetly. Marrying Levant was definitely not an option.

She knew perfectly well who was the person she loved.

And other than him, she wouldn't get married with anyone else.

Levant was clearly threatening her. But since both of them had their own agendas, she decided to beat him at his own game.

"We haven't spent that much time together and we don't know much about each other. I think it's a little premature to be talking about marriage at this point," she bargained, "Why don't we start from being friends first?"

As Levant gazed into her crafty eyes, he could tell at once that she was stalling him.

However, his goal wasn't the only reason he wanted to marry her. Deep down, this was what he really wanted as well. Thus, he was willing to accept her terms.

And everything would be perfect if Nicole were to develop feelings for him as well.

"Fine, I agree."

"Then... when will you be returning to K Nation."

If he were to return to K Nation, it would be in his best interests to do so after confirming Nicole's identity and with her tagging along.

"There's no rush. We can wait till you're willing to go back with me."

"Then when will you start helping me investigate?"

"Don't worry. Even if I don't go back, all I have to do is give the word and there would be someone who would conduct this investigation."

Nicole fell silent upon hearing this. It looks like from now on, I'm going to need to deal with Levant as I try to coax the information out of him.

Meanwhile, I can give a certain someone who's hiding his identity behind a hideous mask and lying to me yet another scare.

"Then it's settled. You'll get your people to help me investigate, I'll head back to the company first."

"Alright. Shall we have dinner together?" Levant asked as he looked at her, his eyes brimming with sincerity.

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In view of the deal they had just made, it wouldn't seem very nice of her to decline. Thus, Nicole smiled politely and nodded her head.

"Alright then. I'll see you tonight."

"What would you like to eat? I'll have my guys prepare it."

Have their dinner here in the Levant Winery?

This was Levant's turf. If anything were to happen, it would be too late to regret it.

After some thought, she said, "I feel like having fish tonight. Why don't we go to the Amazon Hotel?"

Upon noticing the hesitant look in her eyes, Levant immediately understood her concerns. She hadn't let her guard down towards him yet. However, he played along and nodded with a faint smile playing on his lips.

"Alright then."

He then walked her out of the winery and watched as her car drove off into the distance. Only after her car had been driven out of sight did he turn around and walk back towards the room.

Once Zackery saw Levant, he immediately walked over to fawn over him and take the opportunity to claim credit for his idea.

"Mr. Seet, Ms. Lane is a real beauty. No wonder you like her. I told you she would come, didn't I? And she did. Both of you are a match made in heaven."

Levant glanced at him. "You've done well this time. You'll be rewarded duly. But for now, I want you to come up with something romantic enough that will just sweep her off her feet for tonight's dinner."

"Romantic? Don't worry, Mr. Seet. Leave it to me."

"Great."

As he watched Levant go back into his room, Zackery sighed quietly. I'm going to have to quickly look up Ms. Lane's tastes in order to tailor a night to her liking.

That evening, Levant specifically gave Nicole a call before work ended as he was afraid that she would forget about their dinner together.

"I'll pick you up later."

Taking a look at the time, Nicole replied, "I might still be busy for a while. You don't have to pick me. I'll drive there myself."

"Alright, I'll wait for you there then."

Hanging up the phone, Nicole finished up the work on hand before calling up her four kids to tell them that she wouldn't be having dinner at home that night.

"Where will you be eating, Mummy?"

"At the Amazon Hotel."

"Who are you going with?"

Yoda's definitely by the phone, she thought. Thus, she replied, "Mummy's going on a romantic date with Mr. Levant. Don't worry about Mummy. You four have your dinner and behave, alright?"

Once she had finished, she hung up the phone.

She had been quite loud. It was as though she had been shouting into the phone. And Yoda heard every single word. His hideous face immediately tensed up. It was a rather frightening sight.

I certainly hadn't expected her to have the guts to keep her word! The audacity of that woman! She is asking for it!

The four kids exchanged worried glances.

Maya asked the other three, "What should we do? Mummy's going on a date."

"Sabotage the date," Juan replied in a matter-of-fact tone.

"That's right!" Kyle exclaimed with a furious expression on his face, "It'll be best if we could make Levant suffer a little. That way, he wouldn't dare to ask Mummy out ever again."

Yoda suddenly whipped out his phone and typed out a sentence. "I'll go!"

"You? Will you be able to do it?"

"I would!"

"Why don't we tag along? Levant will definitely bring along some bodyguards. And you'll be alone..." Juan said worriedly.

"It'll be easier if I go alone. You guys have sabotaged him before. He'll definitely be on his guard this time."

Juan and Kyle exchanged a glance. Both of them felt that Yoda had a point.

"Then if you run into any danger, just give us a call and we'll go help you!"

Yoda nodded.

Nicole soon drove down to the Amazon Hotel.

As she approached the private room Levant had reserved, she began feeling a little nervous.

I was so loud over the phone just now. Did Evan hear me? Will he come?

I've got to think on my feet later on. If Levant tries anything funny, I definitely won't yield, even if it means giving up on the information he might have about my biological family.

After coming to this conclusion, she pushed the door open and entered the room.

The moment she entered, she immediately jumped with fright. There were bubbles floating all around. These bubbles glistened with a rainbow hue under the lights. It was actually a rather romantic scene, something she certainly hadn't expected to see.

It was clear that Levant had put quite a bit of effort into this.

"Come over and have a seat."

Nicole walked over to the table.

On it laid a candlelit dinner meticulously prepared by him. In the middle of the table was an enormous fish that seemed rather out of place.

While she was leaving the Levant Winery that afternoon, she had lied about craving some fish so that they could have their dinner here at the Amazon Hotel. She certainly hadn't expected him to prepare such an enormous fish for her.

"I don't know if this dish will be to your liking. Come, dig in."

"Thank you."

Nicole picked up a pair of bamboo chopsticks and tried a mouthful. "This is the unique taste of the food here."

"As long as you like it."

As Zackery watched on from the side, his lips curled into a smile.

They look so much like a loving couple. This is a brilliant opportunity. Should we up the ante so that Mr. Levant can win her over on a single date?

And the sooner Mr. Levant accomplishes his goal, the sooner I'll be able to get my handsome reward!

Upon coming to this realization, he discreetly withdrew from the room to make the necessary preparations.

As Levant gazed into Nicole's angelic face just inches away from where he was, his pulse began to race.

He unconsciously wanted to open up to her.

"Ms. Lane, may I address you by your name?"

After a moment's consideration, Nicole nodded and replied, "You may."

Levant smiled. "Then I shall address you as Nicole. Do you know the kind of environment that I grew up in?"

"Sir Musgrave's home must be no ordinary place. I'm sure that there must have been lots of rules?"

"That's right. Sir is a very stern person. I respect him and I also fear him at the same time. He has sacrificed a lot for the family, including a lifetime of happiness. But I'm luckier than him. I met you, fell in love, and can even ask you out."

"...."

Hey, we both have different motives. This is just an act we're putting on.

Why are you saying all those cheesy stuff? It's as if we're really a couple on a date.

An uneasy feeling began to creep in.

Furthermore, putting the fact that he had to marry her aside, even if he really did like her, she felt that it was more of lust rather than love.

Upon noticing the disdain on her face, he smiled nonchalantly and continued, "I've come to realize that you're the one, so I will definitely be sincere and true to you. Nicole, give me a chance. I can give you a completely different life."

Nicole only felt uneasy as she gazed into those loving eyes.

"Levant, we've just started getting to know each other. I think it's best if we refrained from such talk."

"You're right, I was overthinking things. I just wanted my feelings to be made clear so that you'll be able to understand how I feel about you."

Nicole's lips twisted into a strained smile. "Let's eat first. I'm famished."

"Of course."

Levant then proceeded to help her put food into her bowl. Nicole glanced at him and said, "I can do it myself."

Meanwhile, Zackery was walking towards the private room with a bottle of red wine in his hand and a wide smile on his face.

Just then, someone suddenly cut in front of him and blocked his path.

"Who are you?" Zackery exclaimed.

"....." Without any response, this person just stood in front of him wordlessly.

Zackery still had urgent business to attend to and this person was holding him up.

"Who the f*** are you?" he bellowed.

"I'm the one who's going to teach you a lesson!"

The moment this person had finished, he swiftly knocked Zackery out and proceeded to drag him into an empty private room.

Gazing at the bottle of red wine that had been spiked, an ominous expression flashed across his eyes.

After finding himself a set of clothes that the waiters were wearing, he changed into them and entered the private room with the bottle of red wine in hand.

The moment he entered, he was greeted with the sight of Nicole and Levant having their meal.

As the both of them talked and dined by candlelight, it certainly did seem like they were having a romantic date.

As he approached the both of them, Levant glanced at him and said, "I didn't order any wine."

"It was a Mr. Williams who told me to bring this here. He left after receiving a rather urgent phone call and instructed me to inform you about it."

His deep baritone voice immediately caught Nicole's attention.

Raising her head, she was greeted with the sight of a strange face. He was neither Yoda nor Evan.

But this voice...

As the waiter lowered his gaze, icy daggers seemed to fly out of his eyes.

How familiar.

Upon meeting her gaze with the man before her, Nicole was certain that he was indeed her target – Evan.

So he actually came. Good, he truly does not disappoint. Hmph. Let the show begin.

Meanwhile, Levant was feeling confused about the bottle of wine that Zackery Williams had sent him.

What should I do with this?

"Well, since someone has made the effort to send a bottle of wine just for me, it'd only make sense to have a taste," he said to himself.

Nicole turned to him, wanting to talk. Upon seeing that, Levant immediately assumed that she wanted to try the wine as well.

The "waiter" standing by poured them each a glass of wine.

After taking a whiff of the wine, Nicole held up her glass, smiling at Levant. "Let us toast to the amazing dinner that you have prepared for us tonight. I'm really enjoying myself."

"That's good to hear."

As they clinked glasses, Nicole shifted her gaze and raised an eyebrow at the "waiter" standing beside them.

The "waiter" stared back coldly, his eyes turning dark. Hmph. Flirting with another man right in front of me?

I'll give you a good lesson today, woman.

Meanwhile, Nicole downed her drink in one shot and smirked at him, saying, "Pour me another."

Levant was a little puzzled about the situation. For him, the wine was not exactly of high quality. Compared to the wine at his own winery, it tasted completely average. Nicole likes it that much? Or is she just happy to drink with me?

The thought of it excited him a little.

On the other hand, the "waiter" seemed to be ignoring Nicole's words – he simply stood there, gazing at Nicole, as if to give her a warning.

Nicole squinted her eyes. Before she could repeat herself, Levant spoke, "Can you pour us another glass each, please?"

This time, the "waiter" nodded and promptly came over to fill up Levant's glass.

"Don't forget about mine." Nicole grabbed her wine glass and pressed it down firmly onto the table, beside Levant's.

As the "waiter" began filling her glass, Nicole pursed her lips in satisfaction. However, the next thing she knew, the red liquid was splattering onto her body.

"Oh no. I'm so sorry Miss," said the "waiter", feigning an apologetic voice.

Nicole furrowed her brows, all flustered, and said, "Did you do that on purpose?"

Don't even try to explain to me that you got jealous or something!

Unbeknownst to her, a toppled wine glass was only the beginning of what was about to unfold.

"I'll go to the bathroom for a bit." Nicole quickly got up and stormed off.

Levant gave the "waiter" a grumpy look. "What's wrong with you? Hey, can we get someone else here?" He gestured at him.

"I understand."

Evan was hoping to hear just that.

After all, he had more important matters to take care of.

He quickly left and caught up with Nicole, grabbing her arms roughly to drag her into another private room.

Bang! He slammed the door shut.

Nicole took a good look at Evan's face, smiling in amusement. So you changed your mask?

Hmph. Since you're refusing to show your face, I'll just play along with you.

Holding onto his arms and pulling him even closer, Nicole yelled, "Oh my! How can this waiter do this to me? I'll report this to your boss!"

Evan simply stayed silent as he listened to her shrill screaming.

Not getting the reaction she wanted to see, Nicole gave him a cold stare.

"Get out of my way! I'm getting out of here!" She said as she tried to walk away. However, Evan reached out to grab her hand once again.

"What are you trying to do? Let go of me!"

Of course, Evan turned a deaf ear to her protests and spoke to her ear, "How very bold of you tonight, to be going on a date with another man?"

It was a deep, magnetic voice that Nicole was more than familiar with.

And yet, the face in front of her was like that of a stranger.

Nicole eyeballed him pretentiously, saying, "You sure are a nosy man, aren't you? Do I even know you?"

"Do you know me? Hmph. You'll see very soon." Evan kept his voice calm.

Nicole rolled her eyes and strode off toward the door without speaking another word.

However, she found herself fumbling with the lock, and could not get the door to open no matter what.

Nicole felt her heart rate rise.

I have a bad feeling about this.

Panicked, she turned around to look at Evan. He was looking down at her intently.

"So, tell me, what's the consequence of going on a date and drinking with another man?"

"Drinking... hold on a second." Nicole finally wrapped her head around what was going on.

"Yes, do go on."

"You... you shameless man! You spiked the wine?" She spluttered.

"Me? It's not really my thing to play dirty tricks like that. In fact, there is no need for me to employ such tactics, don't you agree?"

He ripped his mask off to reveal that elegant, charming face of his.

"Evan, you're finally showing your face."

Nicole gritted her teeth as she uttered those words. She could feel her body heat up as if she were in a sauna. Even her forehead was covered in sweat.

The touch of Evan's fingers grazing her face felt cold but stimulating – something she desperately needed at that moment. His gaze was firm but gentle.

All that Nicole could think of was Evan's touch.

Whatever drug was in her wine, it was strong and it hit hard.

However, Nicole did not want to give in. She suppressed the urge to embrace Evan, brushing his hand away.

"Evan is already dead to me. There's no use in doing this to me. Sir, who are you, even?"

Why didn't you tell me that you are still alive?

Why are you just following me around, donning that scary mask of yours? Why are you avoiding my questions and brushing away my suspicions? Nicole's hopes of a happy reunion with him had been crushed again and again, leaving her with nothing but disappointment and frustration.

It must be fun, playing with my feelings.

Alright then, guess I'll play along with you. I'll play your little game too.

Seeing the sorrow in her eyes, Evan could tell how devastating the news of his death was to her.

His heart throbbed.

He knew all too well that her feelings for him were genuine and passionate.

And as for her date with Levant, or her trying to get him to take off his mask, he could also understand where she was coming from.

Despite so, he found himself at a loss for words.

Though he was glad that he could finally show himself, his heart was heavy.

"Nicole," he whispered her name softly, reaching out for an embrace.

Nicole looked away, still trying to avoid him.

The only response that Evan could hear was her panting. Her face was flushed, and her pupils dilated. He could tell that she was suffering from the effects of the drug.

"Hey, we need to find a way to get that substance out of your system first. I'll listen to everything you say after that, okay?"

"Leave me alone!" Nicole was not listening.

Evan sighed. Damn it! It's my fault. I shouldn't have let her drink it, knowing that Zackery Williams spiked the wine.

He exhaled deeply and pulled her into his arms with force.

Nicole tried to resist, but she did not have the strength to do so.

Instead, the feeling of her body rubbing against Evan made him even more turned on.

Gazing intensely at her, Evan spoke into her ear, his voice all raspy, "Good girl, I know you want it."

"You bastard!" Nicole hissed, before biting his shoulder.

Evan groaned, but did not let go.

Tasting traces of blood in her mouth, Nicole relaxed her jaw. However, she was still upset at Evan. Tears welled up in her eyes as she began throwing punches at him.

"Good girl. You can hit me later, okay? You don't have the strength now."

Nicole did not respond.

She could feel Evan's hot breaths by her ear, tickling her senses.

As the effects of the drug intensified, Nicole finally gave in under Evan's provocative touch.

In an instant, the temperature in the room rose as their bodies tangled with each other.

With her brain all fuzzy, Nicole began to doubt if all of that was really happening. She gave herself a pinch, but she could barely feel the pain.

She hastily grabbed Evan's arm and bit down hard. "Does that hurt?"