

## Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo Chapter 963

She thought about it and tried to find an excuse.

Finally, she announced, "I am here to apply for a job as a waitress."

"A waitress?" Avril snorted. "I did not expect Levant to be so busy. He even has to interview a waitress?"

Then, she furrowed her brows and stared at Tiffany rudely. She continued, "Hey, are you secretly trying to seduce him because you have the looks?"

Tiffany immediately denied, "No! You have misunderstood me."

"Well, Levant will not like someone like you. He likes a woman with long legs, but you don't have that. Your waist isn't as slim as he would like it to be either..." Avril commented.

Embarrassed, Tiffany rubbed her fingers awkwardly and stopped Avril mid-sentence. "I know how I look like. I don't have the intention to seduce him, so you have gotten it all wrong."

With that, she turned to leave.

Avril watched the woman leave in silence. Turning to look at Sheila, she questioned, "Why did she run away? I am not even done."

Sheila almost laughed at Avril's ignorance and sarcastically responded, "You were saying such 'nice' things about her that she felt so 'flattered' and decided to run off like that."

Avril got the hint.

My words were too harsh?

Even so, it was only a few words, and she did not have to respond that way!

Besides, I am telling the truth.

"I don't think she is here to apply for a job. When she replied to my question, she was avoiding my gaze like she was guilty of something," she stated.

Examining Avril's curious and suspicious expression, Sheila smiled. "If you are curious, you can ask Levant about her later."

Knocking on the door of the high-end suite, the three of them walked in.

Levant was surprised by their sudden visit.

"Is there anything wrong? Why did the three of you come together?" He asked as he was obviously nervous.

Instantly, Davin and Sheila turned to Avril. "It's her."

Following their gaze, Levant glanced at Avril and asked, "What is it?"

Avril avoided his gaze. She could not imagine how Levant would react if she asked to stay in his house temporarily.

While she was still contemplating what to say, Davin dived straight to the point. "She would like to stay here for a while."

Avril, who was still thinking, grew anxious. She did not know how Levant would react.

On the other hand, Levant paused for a moment before he casually uttered, "Do whatever you want."

That's his reply? Since when was he so nice to me?

Otherwise, is there something wrong with his brain?

Avril was shocked by his response. Earlier, she was afraid that he would reject her and even thought about renting a house somewhere if he refused. Well, that's good news. I can save some money now.

While she was secretly celebrating, she recalled the woman at the door earlier and wanted to know more about her.

When she described the visitor, Levant was sure that the lady was Tiffany.

Why does Tiffany want to look for me?

Avril was suspicious at how quiet Levant seemed and waved her hand in front of him to snap him out of his thoughts. "Do you know that lady outside? How is she related to you?"

Levant nodded. "Yes, she is my friend."

A friend?

"Why did she lie and say that she was here to apply for a job then?" Avril narrowed her eyes and seemed adamant to learn the truth.

Frustrated by the questions she had, he declared, "I can allow you to stay here, but you have to stay out of any affairs concerning me and my winery."

What the heck?

I'm just curious about who she is and why she is here. Why does he have to be so uptight?

Avril unhappily muttered under her breath and speculated that Tiffany and Levant's relationship was not so simple.

Her curiosity got the better of her, and she could not stay out of it. Hence, she was still determined to find out secretly.

Soon after, Davin and Levant sat down on the milky white, high-end leather sofa while chatting with each other. Meanwhile, Sheila looked around and suddenly thought about Davin's wine cellar.

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Before they left, Levant gave Davin two bottles of premium red wine from the wine cellar.

Seeing that, Sheila was quite happy. Tonight, she planned to have a candlelight dinner with Davin.

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“There are only two of us having this candlelight dinner. Why don’t we take a bottle each and take it home to our parents?” Davin dashed her hopes.

Sheila looked at the two bottles of red wine in her hands and looked up at Davin. Then, she challenged, “Are you really going to take this back for your family or, are you planning to go to the bar to offer them to your trashy friends?”

“What are you talking about? Of course, it’s for my parents!” Davin protested.

Sheila sharp eyes scanned him from head to toe and still felt a little uneasy, so she proposed to go back with him.

“You want to follow me to Seet Residence?” Davin was bewildered.

Sheila nodded.

“Yes. It’s that a problem?” She probed.

Of course.

Davin forced a smile and agreed reluctantly. Then, he obediently returned to Seet Residence with Sheila.

As the second young master of the Seet family, he was flirtatious and playful. However, Sheila is controlling him even before they got married, and in his opinion, she was too unreasonable.

It looks like I have to find a way to reinstate dominance in our relationship.

When they returned to Seet Residence, Jonathan and Sophia saw Davin and Sheila with two bottles of wine, so they happily ordered the kitchen to prepare more food to go along with the wine. Additionally, they insisted on Sheila staying for dinner.

Sheila did not reject and agreed without a second thought. She even suggested for Nicole, Evan and the quadruplets to come over for dinner.

“I will call Nicole and ask them to join us for dinner too.”

“Alright, you can give them a call while I make more food in the kitchen,” Sophia said.

Sheila nodded and called Nicole.

Hearing the offer, Nicole pondered for a moment before she used her dad as an excuse to decline it. She told her that she did not want to leave her dad alone at Imperial Garden.

Sheila was very understanding and replied, “Sure, we can meet up another time then.”

“Okay.”

With that, Nicole ended the call and sighed. She only declined because she was not feeling well. Crawling out of bed, she looked at her reflection in the mirror. She looked ghostly and could feel her heart palpitating quickly.

She did not know what was going on. Why was she feeling tired and weak the whole day? Was she going to hallucinate again?

She took a deep breath and looked at the tranquilizer prescribed to her by the doctor. I need more of these.

Getting out of bed, she walked out of the bedroom listlessly. She felt dizzy and in a daze as though she was dreaming.

When she reached the stairs to head down, she suddenly froze.

The stairs...they look like they are disappearing. It looks like a fairy bridge...is there something wrong with my eyes?

She closed her eyes and opened them again, but it was the same as before. What on earth is going on?

As a result, she hesitated to head downstairs. However, she suddenly heard Maya crying, and she sounded very miserable. It made her heart ache.

"Maya..."

She shouted and started to run down the stairs. Unfortunately, she missed the first step and fell down the stairs. In pain, she let out a yelp.

Ouch!

My shoulder hurts, but my face hurts even more.

A wave of fear swept over her, and she was worried that she would be disfigured.

The maids who heard her screaming rushed over to help her up. "Mrs. Seet, what happened? Are you okay?"

With a trembling hand, she reached out to touch her face. She could see blood on her fingers.

"Oh, I'm bleeding." There is blood on my face. Will there be a scar?

"Mrs. Seet, you are injured. Let's head to the hospital!"

Since Nicole got a cut on her face, she was concerned. Nodding, she stuttered, "Let the chauffeur send me there now."

The maids helped her downstairs, and when Stephen saw blood on her face, he worriedly rushed over to check the situation.

"Dad, I'm fine. I am going to the hospital now," Nicole assured.

"I'll accompany you there," Stephen offered.

"Dad, I think you should stay here to look after the children."

"They are still in school and have yet to return," Stephen explained.

Nicole was stunned. Earlier, she rushed downstairs anxiously because she thought she heard Maya crying. Did she hear it wrongly?

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The stairs...it was like a bridge.

Maya did not cry because she was not home.

Am I hallucinating?

Her heart pounded in her chest. The hallucinations that would appear from time to time were simply a nightmare for her. I will find out what is wrong with me when I get to the hospital.

When she reached the hospital, Stephen accompanied her to the doctor's room.

"How did you injure yourself?" The doctor asked.

"I tripped and fell down the stairs," Nicole confessed.

"I'll deal with your wound first then."

Nicole thanked him, "Alright, thank you."

As he watched the doctor disinfect his daughter's wound, Stephen grew more worried and bombarded the doctor with questions, "Is the injury serious? When will it heal? Will it leave a scar?"

"It is not a small cut. We will have to wait to see if it will leave a scar," the doctor clarified.

Those words felt like a thorn stabbing into Nicole's heart.

All she thought about was whether Evan would still love her if she had a scar on her face.

Men are judgmental. She was not confident that Evan would still love her if it left a scar.

Even if he did not mind, she could not accept it. As a woman, her face was her most important feature. She could not bear the thought of having any scar on her face.

"Doctor, please make sure it does not leave a scar. I don't want to look ugly." Nicole pleaded.

"I will do my best," the doctor assured.

"Thank you."

After the doctor treated the wound, he wrapped it up with gauze and gave her some medicine while explaining certain precautions she should take.

At that moment, Nicole stretched out her arm. "Doctor, I think I have a superficial wound on my arm. Will you please take a look at it?"

"Okay."

Not long after, her arm was bandaged. She looked at the white gauze around her arm and could not care less.

In contrast, she reached out her arm and gently touched the bandage on her face with concern. Instantly, she felt her heart sink.

She could not help but pray silently. Please let there be no scars. I really like how I look. I don't mind if my arm ends up with a scar, but there is no way I can accept a scar on my face. Please God, I beg you!

"Nicole, is there anywhere else you feel unwell?" Stephen asked with concern.

That led to Nicole's confession about the hallucinations she had. The doctor gave her a check-up but found nothing abnormal. He told her that it might be due to stress and advised her to rest well.

Nicole did not feel assured as she did not think it was due to stress and lack of rest. However, she was also wondering what could be the reason behind her hallucinations.

Once she returned to Imperial Garden, she headed straight to her bedroom.

Firstly, she did not want to let anyone see the bandage on her face. Secondly, she felt uneasy that her head was still not cleared and wanted to rest instead.

Watching her enemy scurry up the stairs, Susan, who was in her disguise, smiled smugly. Her eyes lit up in excitement while she watered the bonsai.

She had barely started her scheme, but she managed to make Nicole hurt her face. God must be watching over me.

If I increase the dosage the next time, I'm sure she'll end up in a worse state.

Evan, when Nicole is covered in bruises and no longer acts like she is in the right frame of mind, we'll see if you still love her.

Meanwhile, Nicole was in bed, still feeling uneasy. She stretched out her hand and read her pulse but found no abnormalities.

Hallucinations.

What is causing her hallucinations?

She thought long and hard about it but found no answer.

Slowly, her eyelids grew heavy, and she no longer had the energy to think anymore, so she closed her eyes and fell asleep.

At night, Evan came home and heard about Nicole's injury. Immediately, he rushed to the bedroom.

At that moment, Nicole was dreaming about a flood. The water level was rising and swallowing everything before her. Anxiously, with Maya and Nina in her arms, she ran for her life. When she turned back, a huge wave blanketed them. She yelled, jolting out of her dream.

She scrambled to sit upright. Her face was pale, and she was covered in sweat. Evan immediately grabbed her hand.

"Nicole, what's wrong?"

Nicole looked up to see Evan beside her. With fear written across her face, she blurted, "I had a nightmare."

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Evan wrapped his arms around her to comfort her. He softly cooed, "Don't worry, it's just a dream. Don't be scared."

Slowly, she remembered that her face was injured. She peeled away from Evan's embrace and looked at him. She asked, "Evan, I have a cut on my face, and the doctor said it might leave a scar. What should I do?"

Evan squinted. He knew that most women would treat their faces as the most precious commodity. In other words, it was as important as their lives. If there was a scar, Nicole would be devastated.

He looked at her calmly. "Nicole, I will find the best doctor to treat you. I will make sure that there will be no scar on your face."

Nicole was waiting to see his reaction, but those words were slightly hurtful to her. Perhaps she was too sensitive, but she felt that he only suggested that because he could not accept any blemishes on her face.

It seemed like men are only concerned about looks.

Unhappily, she grumbled.

On the other hand, Evan studied her expression. Did he not give her enough assurance, and she was still worried about a scar on her face?

"Nicole, believe me. I will make sure you look just like before."

Nicole matched his gaze and pouted. Disappointedly, she muttered, "If I don't look like what I used to be, will you love me any less?"

Evan was taken aback. "No matter how you look like, I will always love you."

"Liar! All men like beautiful women. I don't think you will love me if there is a scar on my face."

"You don't believe me? Well, then I shall not care about the injury on your face. We will leave it as it is, and you can see if I still love you like before."

In order to test him, she had to sacrifice her looks. That seemed too big of a sacrifice for her.

By leaving her injury untreated, what if there were a scar and Evan stopped loving her like before, she would be at the losing end.

That's not fair!

Nicole whined, "I shall believe you for the time being. Evan, if I end up with a scar on my face, you cannot call me ugly, and you cannot despise me."

"Don't worry. That won't happen." Evan smiled.

He gave her a deep and sincere gaze as though he was conveying that he would surely keep his promise.

A smile appeared on Nicole's face. She got up and was about to get out of bed when she saw her quadruplets walking in a line.

They stood in front of her and examined her injury.

Maya's tears welled up in her eyes. "Mommy, does your face hurt?"

"No, it doesn't," Nicole replied softly.

Nina was heartbroken. "Mommy, how did you get injured? Don't worry, even if you have a scar on your face, I will cover it with make-up for you. I will make sure that no one can see it."

After listening to Nina, Nicole silently thanked God. She was grateful to have a daughter that was talented in make-up skills and beauty products.

Juan asked, "Mommy, I heard you tripped and fell down the stairs. Are you feeling unwell? Otherwise, were you not paying attention? Is there anything that is bothering you? Maybe we can help with it!"

I was not distracted, but I was hallucinating.

I have no idea how I started to hallucinate, so my children would not know either. I guess it's better not to mention it.

"I did not watch my steps and tripped. I will be careful next time, so you don't have to worry."

Kyle, who was the most observant, stared at her and could tell that she did not look well. She looked pale like she was sick.

"Mommy, I think you should ask Daddy to get the best doctor to give you a check-up tomorrow," he suggested.

Sure.

If the doctor can diagnose the reason behind her hallucination, that will be the best for her.

Otherwise, if I hallucinate again, I'm worried that I may get injured again.

I tripped this time, but I may drop into the pond the next time. If that happens, I might lose my life.

Evan thought what Kyle said make sense too. Agreeing with his son, he affirmed, "Tomorrow, I will get John to arrange for a highly skilled doctor to check on you."

"Sure." Nicole nodded.

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The next day.

It was 10 a.m. John had invited the most famous doctor in town to Imperial Garden to run an examination on Nicole.



“Doctor, I’ve been hallucinating at irregular times these days... Is there anything wrong with my brain? Or could it be some form of mental problem?”

“Just relax. Let me have a look.”

Then, the doctor asked a series of questions and carried out a few physical checks on her. “There seems to be nothing wrong with your health. Everything appears normal,” he said after a brief moment of analysis.

Nicole gave a somewhat confused frown. “I’m normal? Why have I been having hallucinations then?”

The doctor was quiet for a second before he answered, “It could be a result of external triggers instead of physical health factors.”

External triggers?

She couldn’t understand what he meant. “I can’t remember being triggered by anyone whenever I have these episodes. It feels like they just happened out of the blue.”

“What I meant was,” he answered mindfully, “There’s a possibility that it could be due to some form of shock on your consciousness or the nervous system, which might have resulted from something you ate or came into physical contact with. It’s likely that your body isn’t showing any symptoms as of now after you’ve recovered from such triggers.”

She pondered upon his words in silence.

Her eyes darted around as she tried to trace back on her memories. A few minutes had passed, yet she failed to recall anything unusual about her food or anything she had touched.

“Doctor, I don’t think I’ve eaten or touched anything weird like you said,” she replied as she looked up. “I can’t think of any possible reasons.”

Another brief silence followed. “Hmm... In this case, I shall go back and do some more research on this matter. In the meantime, please continue to be wary of your surroundings and let me know if you notice anything. Perhaps we’ll get closer to the answers from that.”

She nodded. “Thank you, doctor.”

He gestured back with a smile as he stood up. “This is my duty. Besides, Mr. Seet has been very kind to me, so don’t mention it.”

After sending the doctor off, Nicole began to think through his words over and over again.

Could it be that she had really eaten something wrong? Or maybe she had indeed touched something which she shouldn’t have? She paced back and forth in the living room throughout that morning, attempting to grasp any clue she could’ve missed during the discussion.

Later that evening, she was extremely cautious of everything laid out on the dinner table. With a silver needle, she poked around on every piece of food before putting it in her mouth.

Her four kids stared at their mother while watching her meticulous antics. Then, they began to feel anxious.

“Mommy, is there something wrong with the dishes?” Juan asked as his bright obsidian-like pupils fixated on her.

The other three looked on worryingly in silence.

She didn’t know the answer either. The only thing she knew was that the doctor had instructed her to be careful at all times.

“Who knows,” she replied bluntly while she continued stabbing around on her plate. “We’ll only find out after testing them.”

Seeing her mother’s paranoid acts, Maya suddenly felt a tingling sensation crawling across her skin. She remembered the prickling pain back then when Susan had stung her with a needle.

Fear welled up in her crystal clear eyes. “Mommy, stop...” she pleaded with a shaky voice, “Stop poking the dishes. It’s painful to them!”

Nicole paused abruptly.

Her little girl was so surprisingly kind... She even worried if the dishes could feel the pain.

Nicole looked up and saw the dreadful look in her daughter’s eyes. She recognized where that fear had come from.

Maya must’ve been traumatized still, hence her dramatic reaction.

Pain nibbled at her heart. With a sigh, she placed the needle down and pinched her daughter’s cheeks lovingly. “Alright. Mommy’s not going to poke them anymore, okay?”

Maya nodded in relief. A mist had fogged up in the girl’s glistening eyes.

She couldn’t help feeling a sense of remorse as she put the needle away. She ended up triggering her daughter’s trauma due to her worries. However, she was still concerned if the dishes could’ve caused her hallucinations. She thought about it and came up with an idea.

She could let Maya spend the next couple of days over at the Seet Residence! This way, she could avoid upsetting her girl while giving herself a little more time to figure out the answers.

As soon as dinner was finished, she gave Sophia a call.

“Of course they’re welcome to stay! I haven’t seen the kids in days and I’d love to spend some time with them as well. I can head over and pick them up anytime!” Sophia’s voice rang cheerfully across the phone.

“Alright then. Thank you so much!”

“Oh please, you’re more than welcome to ask away whenever you need anything! Once we catch Susan and settle the case of Evan’s grandfather, you both should get married...” Sophia said. She continued with a hint of regret in her voice, “I’m sorry, Nicole. The past few years must have been so tough for you. I can’t wait for the day when you’ll finally have your wedding with Evan and officially become a part of our family.”

Nicole smiled. "Don't worry, Sophia. Evan treats me well, and I'm grateful for our four kids too. Things haven't been easy, but I feel blessed."

Despite all the ups and downs, she was contented that her children and the man she loved were still by her side. They had united as a family after all.

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At Sophia's mention of the wedding, Nicole realized that she was actually looking forward to it.

She too, hoped that she could one day stand side-by-side with Evan at the altar, showered with blessings from family members and loved ones.

She wanted to be known as Mrs. Seet, the rightful wife of Evan Seet, in the near future.

The next morning, Sophia had shown up at the door. Maya was slightly hesitant at first when she was told that they were going to the Seet Residence. But at the thought of being able to play with Davin and Sheila, her eyes lit up with a glow.

Juan was indifferent about staying over at the Seet Residence as he was equally fond of Davin and Sheila. It didn't matter to him wherever they were heading to, as long as he'd get to have fun with them.

Nina, on the other hand, gazed worriedly at the wound on Nicole's face. She wanted to stay back for her.

Kyle preferred to stay behind at the Imperial Garden as well for a different reason, he didn't like Uncle Davin that much anyway.

Nicole thought that it would make no difference for Kyle and Nina to remain home as long as Maya stayed away for the time being.

"Alright, you both can stay home as you wish. Juan and Maya, go get your stuff ready and then follow Grandma to the Seet Residence."

Maya began to doubt again when she realized Nina wouldn't be going together. Seeing that, Sophia reached out and lifted the girl up in her arms.

"Maya darling," she consoled her grandchild. "Why won't you come with Grandma? I've prepared some beautiful gifts for you; they're waiting for you at my house. Besides, you'll get to spend quite some time with Uncle Davin and Aunt Sheila! They would love to play with you and take you out for shopping and yummy desserts. Besides, Grandpa's been missing you a lot too!"

Maya finally gave in. She didn't want to let her Grandma down. Plus, it sounded like a lot of fun!

Ever since their siblings left, Kyle and Nina had been surprisingly at peace with each other in spite of their usually cold attitude.

Nina hummed her favorite rhyme in a gleeful and somewhat off-key tune. It's a precious opportunity. She thought to herself. Evan always favored Maya over her on most days. But now that she was away, she would be the only daughter left to have all her Daddy's attention!

It was late afternoon. She had cooped herself up in the study room after lunch, practicing makeup as usual. Suddenly, the doorbell rang. Muffled voices and footsteps of the maids could soon be heard from outside. Curious to find out who the unexpected visitor was, she got up and opened the unexpected guest.

Her father had gone to work although it's a weekend. I should probably let Daddy know about this, she thought.

She closed the door quietly, picked up her phone, and dialed her father's number.

Evan had been working on an urgent proposal for the company. At the sight of Nina's ID flashing on the screen of his phone, he picked up without a moment of hesitation.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Umm... There seems to be a guest in the house, Daddy," Nina whispered.

"Who is it?"

"I heard the maids say it's Mr. Levant. Apparently he's here to visit Mommy since he found out that she's injured."

Evan clenched his grip on the phone upon hearing the name.

Without any further reply, he hung up the phone. He then stood from his seat, grabbed his coat, and proceeded towards the door of his office without a second thought.

John had been standing aside, awaiting his boss' decision on the plan. He stared in a daze as Evan walked out of the office hurriedly.

He had only regained his senses a few seconds later. Then, he immediately ran after his boss.

"Mr. Seet! Where are you going?"

"I'm going home." Evan did not even bother looking back as he answered monotonously.

"H-home?" John was taken aback. He processed it for a second while picking up his pace as he followed after his boss. "But Mr. Seet, the meeting is going to begin soon! What do we say to the board members if you leave like this all of a sudden?"

Evan shot him a sidelong glance. "You'll explain to them on my behalf."

John was at a loss for words.

The upcoming meeting would involve the discussion on the proposal they were working on. Above that, all the core board members of the company would be present! How was he supposed to face them and explain the president's sudden absence?

"Is it an important matter, Mr. Seet? Why don't you leave it to me? That way you can proceed with the meeting."

His offer was answered with a cold, sharp glance from his boss.

John stopped in his tracks. He realized what that glance meant. It's an urgent personal matter which he couldn't have handled on Evan's behalf.

He sighed as Evan disappeared out of the office. He walked back into the president's office, racking his brain on how he should deal with the meeting that was about to start.

Meanwhile, back at the Imperial Garden.

Levant took a light sip of tea, and placed the cup back onto the table gently. He observed the bandage on Nicole's cheek intently. "Does it still hurt? Should I get a doctor to take another look?" he asked in a concerned tone.

Nicole sat upright on the opposite couch with a calm demeanor. "It's fine. I've got it treated already."

"I've asked Avril to help search for the best medicine. I will deliver it here tomorrow." His voice remained gentle, yet there was an added hint of persistence.

"No, it's alright, thank you. I already have everything I need."

Nicole forced a faint smile while maintaining a distance from him throughout.

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Levant couldn't help but remember the old times with Nicole back in the Wicked Palace. They had spent so much time together, and she was even willing to marry him at one point.

There was no denying that he hadn't been completely honest with her. Nevertheless, the indescribable joy filled his heart when she had agreed to marry him and when she had wanted to live together with him even if it was just a decision made on the spur of the moment. Those endearing memories were still fresh in his mind.

Soon, he pulled himself back into reality. The woman in front of his eyes right now was no longer the same Nicole who had almost married him. How he wished he could travel back in time to the days when he still had the chance to realize the wedding. If he had known better, he wouldn't have let the opportunity slip through his fingers. He would've taken Nicole Lane as his rightful wife as soon as he could.

Woe to him for not acting in time.

Perhaps it's true that sometimes one would only learn his lesson after losing the thing or person who was precious to him. Unfortunately, there was no way to turn back time.

Sometimes, the reality was harsh. The glow in his eyes dimmed as regret took over the happy memories he reminisced about earlier.

In this very moment, the woman he adored so much had become the fiancée of Evan Seet. The soon-to-be wife of his cousin brother.

Nicole felt increasingly uncomfortable with his continuous gaze.

"I'll go get you some fruits," she excused herself as she stood up. Levant immediately rose from his seat and reached out a hand towards her.

“It’s fine, Nicole. Can we just sit and talk properly?”

“What are you even trying to talk about?”

A deep and cold voice rang from behind. He spun around, and there came Evan who was walking steadily into the living room.

Why did he come back all of a sudden? He secretly lamented in his heart. Nicole was rather surprised too.

Evan approached them in a confident stride. He reached out an arm and pulled Nicole into a partial embrace against his shoulder. “What are you trying to talk about with her?” he asked as he directed his piercing glare onto Levant.

Levant understood clearly what the man in front of him was trying to imply. His actions spoke for him. What are you trying to say to my wife?

After a brief silence, Levant forced a calm and collected smile. “Oh, I was about to tell her that you both will surely be happy together.”

Surprised at his answer, Nicole looked up at him quietly.

His expression was a mix of sincerity and agony. His face was tensed up into a knot.

Evan curled a corner of his lips into a smirk. “We will be happy for sure, so long as you don’t show up too often.”

Taken aback for a second, Levant decided that he no longer needed to be courteous. He settled back onto the couch in a carefree manner. “Come on, am I not welcome in my own cousin’s house?”

Evan squinted his eyes slightly, irritated at his question as he thought of what Levant had done before.

He too, had no need to withhold any hostility towards the uninvited guest. He looked down at him and replied in a dominating tone, “No, you are not. You may take your leave now.”

Levant returned his glare with an adamant look. He remained seated in a silent protest.

“Somebody, come at once!” Evan ordered in a loud voice.

Upon the master’s summon, five maids came in an instant and stood in front of him. Levant just looked on as he was dumbfounded.

“Wh-what are you trying to do? Evan Seet, don’t you forget that I’m your cousin! Don’t you know how to treat a guest properly?” he exclaimed.

“Oh, by the way...” he quickly added. “I heard that you had sent my sister over to the Seet Residence that midnight. Looks like I’ll have to make a request for Sophia to teach you some manners.”

Evan was not in the least bit interested in talking to him since the beginning.

But now that Levant had brought up the topic about Avril, he decided to not hold back on his insults.

“Like brother, like sister. It seems,” he snorted. “One got intoxicated and threw herself into a man’s arms in the middle of the night. The other invited himself to another man’s house to flirt with his wife. Looks like I’ll have to ask my dear Uncle Morris to teach his children a lesson. Otherwise, he’d be so embarrassed to find out about all these things.”

Levant was stunned. What did he just say? Avril intoxicated herself and went to a man?

His sister’s actions were completely unexpected. This is really embarrassing!

Regardless, he was firm on his decision to see Nicole. He was just showing his concern as a normal person and there’s nothing wrong with that.

He met Evan’s eyes with a steady glare. “Visiting someone unwell isn’t the same as some... calculated seduction. Nicole’s injured, so what’s wrong with me paying her a visit?”

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Evan remained silent.

He raised a brow and threw a look at the maids, who nodded in understanding. Entrusting the rest into his servants’ hands, he held Nicole’s hand and led her upstairs.

Levant’s angry demands could be heard behind them. “What do you think you’re doing? Let go of me! I can leave on my own! I said, let go of me!”

As he was whisked away from the living room, Levant shouted one last time towards Evan, “I’ll remember this, Evan Seet! You better watch your back!”

Nicole glanced back at Levant as they made their way upstairs. For a moment, she felt somewhat bad for him.

“Do you really have to do it this way? He’s your cousin, your mother’s nephew, after all... “ she asked while looking up at Evan.

“You’re speaking up for him?”

Evan’s reply sounded nonchalant, but she could tell there was a subtle hint of jealousy.

She kept quiet. She didn’t want him to end up doing something reckless out of jealousy. It’s best to not say anything more and risk provoking him further.

“If we showed him hospitality, he’ll come here everyday,” he added.

Only then she understood why Evan did that. He was trying to prevent Levant from crossing his boundaries.

It would indeed become a nuisance if he really were to show up everyday.

I guess it’s better that way then. She quietly agreed.

She shot an approving smile at him and raised a thumb.

Back at the winery, Levant’s face put on a ghastly expression as he entered the house.

Avril could tell that he'd undoubtedly had an awful time at the Imperial Garden.

She walked up to him. "You're back early! Didn't they invite you to stay for dinner or something?" she teased.

Levant brushed her off with a warning glare as he continued towards his room.

Unsatisfied by the silent treatment, Avril followed closely behind. "You've been chased out of the house, haven't you?" she mocked.

Her accurate speculation had only added onto Levant's frustration.

He shot her a death stare. "Mind your own business. You're surely one to talk... Didn't you intoxicate yourself and throw yourself into someone's arms in the middle of the night? You know the consequences if Dad finds out about such an embarrassing deed."

A look of horror paled her face.

How did he know about that? It must've been someone from the Imperial Garden who had spilled the beans.

But who could it have been?

Who would have so mercilessly exposed the ugly truth about her?

"Who told you about that?" she questioned without hiding the rising anger in her tone.

Levant paused in front of the door to his room. He turned around and saw the horrified look on Avril's face. At that moment, he had an idea. If he were to pin the blame on the man she liked, perhaps it would help extinguish all the adoration she had harbored towards him.

On top of that, she would even possibly start hating him. That way, it could help her let go of her feelings towards that person. That would be a good thing for his sister.

With that, he decided to make the duke a scapegoat.

"It was my adoptive father, the very man you liked, who said it himself," he uttered plainly as he entered the room and slammed the door shut behind him.

Avril stood on the same spot, flustered by what she had heard. It was Stephen?

How could he have simply told such a thing to another person?

A sudden chill shot through her body. It felt as if a big, ugly scar on her body had been exposed to the entire world, and it had become the center of attention that had drawn criticisms from everybody. She felt suffocated. She rubbed her palms together as her body shivered at that thought.

Stephen Musgrave. How dare you!

She felt a sudden urge to go and confront him, to ask him why would he do such a thing. At the same time, she knew she couldn't bring herself to do that. It was an embarrassing truth which she couldn't hide nor deny.



How dare you stab me in the heart like that, Stephen? How could you? I'll never forgive you!

She turned and stormed out of the hallway. Her mind was filled with so much resentment towards the duke that she hadn't paid any heed to her surroundings. Suddenly, a heavy jolt snapped her out of her angry thoughts.

She had knocked into another person. It was Tiffany, whom she had once met.

"Can't you walk properly? Are you blind?" she chided.

Tiffany stared back in an awkward silence.

She was confused and somewhat offended. What's wrong with this rude woman? Wasn't she the one who bumped into me in the first place?

As she studied Avril with a quick glance from head to toe, she recognized her.

This woman had asked her a couple of questions when they were outside of Levant's room the other day.

Could this woman be his wife? she wondered.

"What are you looking at? Didn't you hear me talking to you? Are you mute?"

Tiffany was pulled out of her thoughts by Avril's arrogant voice. "I'm sorry," she muttered softly. She definitely didn't like the way she was talked down upon, but she wasn't here to cause a scene. Especially not in the presence of the man who had once helped her.