

Chapter 403

They cruised down the road leading to the hotel where the benefit gala was being held. When it came to charity auctions and benefit galas in the upper-crust society, the charity aspect was often overlooked in light of the distinguished guest list. More valuable than any of the antiques and items in the auction were the connections one could make during an event like this.

As such, the benefit gala became a hotspot for powerful figures in politics and business to gather and acquaint themselves with those who could launch their careers and social lives into new heights.

It went without saying that Elliot was the main target for the social climbers this evening

Presently, Aliona was seated in her hotel room, checking her make-up in the mirror. She had seen Elliot's name on the guest list, and she was delighted when she found out that he did not have a plus-one. If things went well, she could seize the chance to become his date for the evening.

Just then, the hotel manager whom she had ordered to keep her informed on the arrival of the guests called and said, "Miss Dora, Mr. Presgrave has arrived."

"Alright," she replied as a smile curled on her lips. After checking herself one last time in the mirror, she grabbed her sequined clutch and rose to leave the room.

She was dressed in a ravishing red dress tonight that gave a subtle view of her cleavage. Any man who saw her would undoubtedly be attracted to her.

When she was in the elevator, she gazed at her reflection and admired her flawless presentation. She wondered if she would catch Elliot's eye as soon as she showed up in front of him, and there was a confident voice in her head that told her she would.

Upon reaching the conference hall downstairs, she descended the stairs that led to the crowd that had gathered below. She was the princess of Dora Group, and she was set to impress those who beheld her.

However, just as she was walking down the steps, she caught sight of something that made her so angry that she nearly tripped on the hem of her skirt. Disbelief colored her face when her gaze fell on the woman who was currently holding onto Elliot's arm.

What the hell is Anastasia doing here?

Aliona swallowed her rage and continued her elegant descent, but she was already

fuming. Anastasia's name had not been on the guest list, which meant she should have been denied entrance the moment she showed up at the entrance.

Then again, Elliot was powerful and intimidating enough to bring in anyone he pleased without needing further verification.

At the thought of this, Aliona took a deep breath and steeled herself as she walked toward Elliot. She was determined to trample all over Anastasia tonight.

Downstairs, Anastasia could sense hostility being directed at her, and she looked up to meet Aliona's spiteful gaze as the latter made her way down from the landing. When Aliona looked at her, it was with unbridled contempt, but when she looked at Elliot, it was with adoration.

"You're here, Elliot."

"Miss Dora," Elliot greeted perfunctorily as he nodded in acknowledgment.

Aliona's icy gaze flickered over to Anastasia. She smiled as she asked, "I didn't think you'd be here as well, Miss Tillman. If I'm not mistaken, your name wasn't on the guest list."

Anyone who heard this would feel a rush of humiliation, but Anastasia took it in stride as she feigned exasperation and said, "Oh, I wish I didn't have to come, but President Presgrave insisted and dragged me into this. I'm a little embarrassed, honestly."

The smile on Aliona's face turned frigid. "Is that true?"

Elliot took Anastasia by the hand at that moment and interjected, "Come on, let's go say hi to Mr. Dora."

Anastasia nodded and turned to look at Aliona, who was standing in their way. With a delicate raise of her brow, she said flatly, "Excuse us."

Aliona could do nothing but step aside to let them pass, watching as they happily made their way over to Lucas to greet him.

Her fists clenched at her sides as fury burned in her. She hated how Anastasia always cropped up unexpectedly and thwarted her schemes. Frustrated, she fished out her phone and dialed a number before she barked, "All of you, meet me at the lounge on the third floor right now."

She had called one of her henchmen that she had stationed at the event to ensure

Elliot would sleep with her tonight.

Aliona looked stormy as she sat on the couch in the third-floor lounge and said to the four bodyguards who had appeared before her, "You guys saw that woman who was clinging onto Elliot just now, right? She's his date for the evening, and I want you to find a way to throw her out."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Better yet, kill her if you get the chance," she added viciously. However, she had only just said this when she decided that laying low for tonight would be the wiser thing to do. She shouldn't make any

dramatic moves if she planned on seducing Elliot. After she changed her mind, she said dismissively, "Forget it. Just throw her out of here."

She was belligerent that a woman like Anastasia, who couldn't even begin to compete with her, was lording Elliot over her head like she had already won.

Back at the conference hall, Anastasia was appraising Lucas with concern. He might be the one who had put this charity auction together, but he didn't look to be in high spirits at all. In fact, he seemed exhausted. "Mr. Dora, take it easy and make sure to get enough rest," she pointed out gently.