

Chapter 404

Lucas was touched by Anastasia's gentle reminder, and he gave her a grateful smile as he said, "Thank you for your concern, Miss Tillman." He would never have agreed to Riley and Aliona's plans had they not used his son's life as leverage. He could never bring himself to do this to Elliot, but as things were, he had no choice.

There was nothing he could do but watch Aliona succeed in her plot against Elliot. Resigned, he looked at Elliot and said meaningfully, "The young woman on your arm right now is as gorgeous as she is kind. Make sure to keep her."

"We'll invite you to our wedding for sure, Mr. Dora," Elliot replied with a good natured laugh.

Anastasia, on the other hand, blushed. There he goes with that nonsense again, she thought in exasperation, though there was no denying the fondness she felt for him.

"Very well, and I'll be sure to show up for the occasion. Have fun this evening."

Not long after, the first session of the auction kicked off. Elliot wasted no time in bidding for a diamond bracelet for Harriet, and he was the highest bidder at three million. Next to him, Anastasia pursed her lips as she tried to reign in her shock.

This was closely followed by his bidding for an antique, and it was sold to him at a whopping eight million. A gift for Harriet, he had told Anastasia.

She swallowed. The man was shopping like how she would at a thrift store at this point of the auction. He didn't even blink when he bid millions on the items.

“You’re welcome to put up your card when you see something you like,” Elliot said quietly as he leaned closer to her. Most of the things he had bid on were more suited to geriatric tastes, so he didn’t manage to get anything for Anastasia.

She shook her head and pointed out, “I’d rather not take advantage of your money, Elliot. It’s bad behavior.”

“You’ll be my woman someday anyway; think of it as indulging in advance,” he countered with a confident smile.

She didn’t know how he could be so confident that they would get married one day, but she had to admit that confidence certainly boosted a man’s charms.

At that moment, she glanced over at Aliona, who sat toward the front of the crowd.

She had turned around several times to cast enquiring looks at Elliot, and it was clear to see that she was trying to seduce him.

Anastasia whispered in amusement, “I think Miss Dora has feelings for you.”

“Those are nothing compared to the feelings I have for you,” Elliot said matter-of-factly as he turned to look at her with a devilish gleam in his obsidian eyes.

A smile touched Anastasia’s lips, and he took the chance to wrap an arm around her shoulders, pulling her close to kiss her on the forehead. She froze at first, and when she glanced at Aliona again, she met the latter’s scornful and mutinous gaze.

She hated Aliona for her disgusting two-faced demeanor.

Aliona, on the other hand, sneered when she saw how tenderly Elliot had kissed Anastasia on the forehead. He'll be mine by the end of the night. Mark my words, Anastasia. Just imagining the devastated look on Anastasia's face filled her with satisfaction. After the first round of the auction was over, Aliona leaned close and whispered to Lucas, "I think it's time you introduce me." Lucas sighed wearily and rose to go up on stage, whereupon he announced, "Thank you all for being here tonight. Next up, I have an important announcement. I would like to introduce all of you to someone, namely my daughter, Aliona."

When her name was called, Aliona rose in her seat and elegantly made her way up the stage. Then, she hugged Lucas as she said sentimentally, "Thank you, Dad. I love you the most."

Lucas was decidedly uncomfortable in her embrace, but just as he was about to pull away, she whispered in her ear menacingly, "I'll be handing you a glass of wine later, and I want you to give it to Elliot."

"I want no part in this," Lucas rejected in hushed tones.

"Oh, but that won't do. You must be the one to give him the wine," she drawled as she dug her nails into his shoulders, threatening him.

"Fine," he bit out forcefully and unwillingly,

Below the stage, everyone thought that it was a harmless and loving embrace between a father and his daughter. They were all clueless about the truth of their exchange.

Meanwhile, Anastasia was seated as she took in the scene. She had to give it to Aliona for being so dedicated in her pursuit of Elliot.

Now that the first round of the auction was over, the guests resumed their relaxed chatter and glass-clinking, hoping that they could seize every chance to strengthen their social network during the benefit

gala. Some of them circled Elliot, who was the main target of these social climbers tonight, while trying to get acquainted with him.

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They even tried to hand him the precious goods they had bid for during the auction as gifts, but Elliot turned them all down.

Just then, Lucas walked up to him with two glasses of wine in hand, one of which had been spiked by Aliona.