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Such a tacky way of pleasing her simply didn't work for her.

At that juncture, those boys walked over to Emily and offered the drinks to her instead.

Emily first gave them a once-over before brushing her hair back. "I'm not that cheap," she rejected their gestures with displeasure.

There was no way she would take something which had been rejected by Janet.

The boys first exchanged a glance before they turned back to face Emily. "Are you sure you don't want the drinks?" they asked.

Madelained shooed them away with a disgusted tone, "Oh, please just leave us alone. Why are you guys offering us something Janet didn't want?"

"It's because the two of you are only worth rejected goods!" one of the boys snapped back resentfully.

Who did Emily think she was and what was so special about her?

Madelaine was left so exasperated that she was speechless.

Emily waved her hand dismissively. "Forget about them because I need to get ready for my 100 meters sprint now."

Although it was very tiring to run under such torrid weather, she counted herself lucky because she was only involved in one sports event.

She might not be as excellent in sports as her academic achievements but she was still confident that she could win at least a bronze medal in the race.

The sports day officially began following an announcement by Mr. Wilson, the sportsteacher.

As the sports events Janet was involved in were arranged subsequent to most other events, she decided to watch the performance of her classmates under the shade of a tree.

Indeed, all of them turned out to be weak and were way more inferior to the students from other classes in terms of their stamina.

After watching for a while, she expected that Emily would be the second one who would be able to get a medal for Class A after Gordon who had clinched the gold medal in the men's 100 meters sprint.

Amidst the rapturous cheers, Emily successfully finished third in her race.

Her victory boosted the confidence of the entire Class A who started clapping and chanting, "Gordon and Emily are so amazing!"

Some of the students from Class B couldn't help but roll their eyes at them.

"I can't believe they still have the face to cheer even though they have such terrible results."

"Those from Class A are outright nerds with embarrassingly lousy stamina."

"Gordon is the only who's athletic and I wish he were one of us."

"Anyway, those from Class A are just a dorky bunch who don't move around much."

Ignoring their disdainful remarks, Emily checked the time and noticed that Janet's events were coming up. Feigning kindness, she cried out, "Guys, let's root for Janet who's going to compete soon!"

It was out of Emily's expectation that the high jump, the long jump and the 2000 meters race that Janet was going to participate in were all going to be held at two in the afternoon when the weather would be hottest.

She was very pleased with the arrangement because the sunlight would be the most intense at that time. After going through the 2000 meters race, she was sure Janet would end up being sunburned.

While she was feeling elated at the thought, she was taken aback to see some of the guys from Class A as well as Mr. Wilson approaching Janet.

Mr. Wilson advised her good-naturedly, "Janet, it's time you do some warm-up because the high jump event is coming up. It's completely okay if you aren't confident with the event because none of the girls from Class A have ever won any medals for high jump before."

Abby chimed in, "Janet, if you really think you can't make it, you can just duck under the pole because that's what I did last year!"

"That's right. You may just do that and you don't have to force yourself if you really can't do it."

Upset to see everyone swarming around Janet, Madelaine seethed, "What do they see in that country yokel that makes her so special? I wish she would break her legs in the high jump event later."

Madelaine's comment caused Emily to be even more pissed off and her blood was boiling. She was speechless to see her fellow classmates all flocking to Janet right after they celebrated very briefly for the bronze medal she just won.

Janet nodded at everyone and declared, "Thanks everyone for your concern, and I promise I will try my best later! Although I've never tried high jumping before, I think I should be able to nail it..."

"Janet, I trust you." Abby's eyes on her crimson face shone with determination.

"Just go ahead and shine." Gordon patted Janet's shoulder.

When Janet reached the track, she noticed that the pole was placed at a height which almost reached her ears. If she was able to jump over that pole, she reckoned all her classmates would be awestruck and freak out.

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When Mr. Wilson blew the whistle a short while later, Janet moved her slender legs and started off with a jog to build up her momentum.

Emily chuckled while she was observing Janet, "With that height of hers, I'm surprised that she didn't actually opt to sprint fast to gain enough momentum before making the jump. Let's see how badly she is gonna fall later!"

Madelaine sniggered, "Emily, what we suffered before this is going to be avenged soon."

Even those from Class B couldn't help but shake their heads and taunted, "Emily, does your class really have no better candidate than her?"

"Hahaha, Class A is going to end up at the bottom of the ranking this year again."

"Look at that pair of slender legs of Janet's. She should count herself lucky if she doesn't hurt her legs after making the jump."

"Why is she running so slowly like a tortoise now when she moved so fast to punch someone?"

In response to their remarks, Emily raised her brows and lamented with a distressed expression, "I have no clue that Janet actually registered for the event because she did it secretly!"

Madelaine chimed in, "That's true because that country bumpkin just loves to seize every chance to be in the limelight whenever she can! Have you guys forgotten how Jennifer ended up being suspended after getting punched by her? Because of that matter, she was the talk of the town for some time!"

Those from Class B snorted and shook their heads contemptuously at them.

As for Janet, she actually planned to give up by just stopping right before the pole but out of instinct and due to her muscle memory, she would automatically jump over any barrier in front of her.

After landing on the cushion on the other side of the pole, she deliberately wiped off some imaginary sweat from her neck and panted, "It's so tiring!"

The smirk on Emily and Madelaine's face disappeared in an instant.

"H-How's that possible?" Everyone rubbed their eyes thinking that they had seen it wrongly.

The moment Janet jumped over the pole had happened as fast as a lightning and her body didn't touch the pole at all.

Grabbing Madelaine's arm, Emily sputtered in a quivering voice, "H-Have my eyes failed me, or did Janet actually jump over that pole?"

Madelaine was also stuck in a trance before she rubbed her eyes and responded, "I-I've seen the same thing too."

By the time they managed to recover from the shock, Janet was already surrounded by all the students from Class A.

Abby squealed excitedly, "Janet, you're so amazing and you were as quick as lightning!"

"Janet, I'm totally blown away by your performance! You're such a surprise!" Mr. Wilson started showering her with praise.

Janet first gulped before responding shyly, "Is that so? I think I was just lucky because I only made that jump reflexively and I totally didn't expect to make it."

Cupping Janet's face in her hands, Abby kept on planting sloppy kisses on her cheeks and lauded, "You're not lucky, but outright talented! Goodness gracious, I'm so happy!"

Even Gordon looked dumbfounded because it had never occurred to him that Janet would be so good at sports.

Not only was she brilliant, but she was a talented athlete too!

"Oh, please spare me the embarrassment and stop praising me already. A-Abby, p-please fetch my water bottle over here." Janet pretended to talk breathlessly.

"Okay!" Abby scurried away from the crowd but to her dismay, she bumped into Emily who was walking over.

Emily snorted, "Didn't she just manage to do a high jump? I really can't see what's the big fuss all about! Seems like y'all have never seen much of the world, huh?"

Ignoring her, Abby rounded past her and headed straight for Janet's water bottle.

By the time she made it back, she was just in time to hear Madelaine talking to Mr. Wilson. "Sir, isn't it too early for a celebration since Janet still has two events later?"

Mr. Wilson broke into a wide grin and chirped, "I'm already satisfied with the gold medal Janet got for the high jump event. As for the rest, it's fine by me if Janet wants to pull out."

Emily retorted agitatedly right away, "Mr. Wilson, how can we do something like that? The students from the other classes will think of us as a bunch of cowards if Janet pulls out! No way, she has to take part in the other two events too..."

"Exactly. Everyone in the school will deem us as a bunch of cowards in the future!" Madelained nodded vigorously in agreement.

"Hmm..." Slightly concerned, Mr. Wilson looked at Janet and asked, "Janet, do you think you still have enough stamina for the remaining two events?"

Looking calm and composed, Janet took her water bottle from Abby and took a swig before she announced with a nonchalant expression, "I'll give it a try!"

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Emily was secretly delighted to hear that because she didn't believe Janet could really excel in everything.

The students from the other classes, who had started to run out of patience waiting for them to decide, urged impatiently, "Is Class A still in the game? If you guys are taking so long to make a decision, why don't you guys just pull out?"

"Exactly. Janet Jackson from Class A is such an attention-seeker to register for so many events, which is more than she can cope with."

"Can you guys move faster? The sun is going to set soon!"

After listening to their remarks, Janet walked away from the congregation of her fellow classmates and handed her jacket to Abby. "Let's get on with the competition," she spoke in a crisp and cold voice.

Gordon took the chance to examine her face when she walked past him and found that her face was actually slightly pale.

Why did she look that way?

Was she suffering from a heatstroke?

Standing at the area where the long jump event was held, Janet suddenly felt a dull pain from her lower abdomen when she was staring at the pool of sand some distance away from her.

After doing some calculation, she realized that it had been more than a month since she had her last period.

Could she be having it now?

During the time she was going through training in Markovia, she could easily train for more than ten hours continuously without feeling tired but every time she had her period, she wouldn't be able to make it.

Deciding that her body wouldn't be able to withstand it after some contemplation, she waved at Mr. Wilson and announced with a poker face, "Mr. Wilson, I want to withdraw from these two events!"

The students from Class B couldn't help but mock Janet when they saw her chicken out at the eleventh hour. "Geez, her stamina must be really weak to be so exhausted after having just a game. Why was she so powerful when she punched Jennifer Lewis then?"

Sensing that something was not right with Janet from how pale her lips looked, Gordon quickly approached her and questioned her in an undertone, "How are you feeling?"

Janet placed her hands on her belly and muttered, "Bring me to the school clinic."

Mr. Wilson too walked over and asked her worryingly, "Janet, are you alright?"

Gordon cleared his throat and answered, "Sir, I'm bringing her to the school clinic now."

Noticing the awkward expression on Gordon's face and realizing what it meant in an instant, Mr. Wilson responded, "Go ahead."

Gordon bent at his waist and carried Janet in his arms before heading in the direction of the school clinic.

Abby, who was left behind, was speechless.

What was going on?

Everyone couldn't help but gasp in shock when they saw what happened.

When they finally recovered from the trance, the whole field went uproarious at once.

Janet opened her eyes and looked up at Gordon's face. Under the dazzling sunlight, his face looked even more well-defined and there was a trace of dominance in his beautiful eyes.

No wonder he was so popular among the girls.

"Goodness sake, did Gordon Yaleman just carry Janet in his arms?"

"How could something like that happen? My heart is breaking into pieces."

"Does Gordon have a thing for country bumpkins?"

"Janet is so lucky to be in Gordon Yaleman's arms."

"I'm sure this will become the hottest topic on Twitter by tomorrow."

"You should log into your Twitter account now and take a look at what is happening—the discussion has already started gaining heat."

"How could something like that happen?" Looking extremely pale, Emily couldn't figure out why Gordon would carry Janet.

Did he have a crush on her?

That was impossible. In her opinion, Janet must have pretended to be sick so that Gordon would sympathize with her.

"She's so shameless!" she muttered under her breath through gritted teeth while watching them getting increasingly smaller as they walked further and further away.

Inside the office of Lowry Family Conglomerate, Mason was leaning against a chair made from genuine leather. Looking sleepy with his eyes half-closed, he started recalling his encounter with Janet that night and the comment she made before leaving.

She had said he was shameless.

Was that really the case?

At that juncture came the sound of someone knocking on the door.

In a deep and husky voice, he spoke, "Come in."

It was Sean and he was sure Mason had no idea of what had gone viral on Twitter judging from how unperturbed he looked.

Hence, he decided to remind him out of kindness, "Young Master Mason, haven't you seen what went viral on Twitter today?"

Mason looked up and raised his brows puzzlingly at him.

Sean cleared his throat before he imparted, "I just read from Twitter that Miss Jackson was carried by a guy classmate to the school clinic because she seemed to be unwell."

Mason's pupils shrank slightly when he heard that. Without even bothering to put on his suit jacket, he made a dash out of his room and instructed Sean, "Get my sportscar ready and let's head to Star High School."

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Inside his sports car, Mason made a call.

From the other end came a voice belonging to a middle-aged man who spoke in a cautious and respectful tone, "Mr. Lowry, how can I help you?"

"I heard that a student was sent to the school clinic. Is that true?"

The crease on the principal's forehead smoothened considerably when he realized that was why Mason called. He was so anxious and worried just now assuming that there was some serious trouble.

He responded in an airy tone, "Yes, we're having our sports day today and a girl was sent to the school clinic because she was exhausted. Mr. Lowry, is there any issue with that?"

The principal's answer caused a slight furrow on Mason's forehead. "I'll be there later. Please make sure no one else knows about my presence and I don't care what method you are going to use."

The principal was stunned for a second before he answered hesitantly, "Mr. Lowry, the sports day is still ongoing at the moment and I'm afraid the entire school will notice you if you drive over here."

Mason snapped frustratedly, "That's why I wanted you to come up with ways to keep it a secret. Can you understand me?"

"Y-Yes, I can. I'll do it now, Mr. Lowry." The principal was so frightened by Mason's menacing voice that he broke out in cold sweat.

Within the next minute, the principal's voice came blaring out from the speakers all over the campus. "The remaining sports day events are canceled temporarily. All students are required to return to their respective classrooms within the next five minutes and anyone who makes it back later than that will be expelled!" He added shortly after that, "Except the student who is receiving treatment in the school clinic!"

Gordon heard the principal's announcement not too long after he carried Janet to the school clinic. The doctor advised him, "Gordon, you should return to the classroom too. Don't worry because I will take care of her."

Janet too nodded at him and urged, "Go ahead. My condition is not too serious."

Heeding their advice, Gordon left and walked back to Class A several minutes later.

At the sight of Gordon, the girls in Class A started whispering among themselves.

"I couldn't tell that Janet was such a seductive slut from her face at all. She pretended to be weak in front of Gordon but everyone knows how great she is at punching people."

"I agree with you. She always sticks to Gordon like glue too."

"She's such a show-off. Why did she register for three sports events although she knew she couldn't cope? It's so obvious that she did that so that she would have the chance to be the damsel in distress saved by Gordon."

"As far as I know, she's an outright attention seeker. I heard that Emily tried to stop her from joining so many sports events but she insisted on doing so. In the end, Emily had no choice but to cave in."

As most of the girls in the class were Gordon's fans, their remarks were filled with resentment toward Janet and their tone was brimming with jealousy.

Listening to their comments, Gordon frowned in irritation. He stared at Madelaine and confronted her in a cold voice, "Wasn't the list composed and submitted by Emily and you at that time? Why do they think it was Janet who registered for the three sports events herself?"

Madelaine and Emily glanced at each other before snapping back in unison, "She could have withdrawn from the competition if she didn't want to go or thought she was not good enough, but she wanted to show off!"

"If Janet ends up having any serious injury, I won't forgive the two of you."

Madelaine and Emily shrugged indifferently in response to his threat.

What was wrong with Gordon to be so protective of that country bumpkin?

The rest of the students in Class A shook their heads and lamented, "Look at that. Janet must be a scheming b*tch to make Gordon care so much about her."

Abby stormed out of the classroom angrily as she could no longer put up with their degrading remarks about Janet.

They shouldn't talk like that even though they were Gordon's fans!

Noticing Abby leaving the classroom, Gordon followed suit.

Mr. Smith was just entering the class and he stared at the two and asked quizzically, "Are the two of you skipping my class?"

All he had in response was utter silence.

Meanwhile, another man had arrived at the school clinic just several minutes after Gordon left.

Staring at him dazedly for several seconds, Janet asked in a rigid tone, "Why are you here?"

Mason didn't answer her.

His chest couldn't help but tighten when he saw her pale face.

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Mason stared at Janet who was lying at a 45-degree angle on the bed with a deep crease on his forehead. "How's her condition?" he asked.

The doctor answered him candidly, "She's only having her period. In fact, I can see she doesn't take care of her body well enough because she should know that she has to refrain from doing vigorous exercise during her period."

The doctor then glanced at Mason and frowned with dissatisfaction as he criticized, "As her boyfriend, why didn't you remind her of that? I heard from her classmates that she just participated in the high jump event... Fortunately, her body is strong enough or she would have suffered something serious!"

Mason parted his lips intending to say something but thought better of it in the end.

Staring at Mason, the doctor jotted down something on a piece of paper before she instructed, "Please buy everything onthis list."

Mason took the piece of paper with his slender fingers and glanced at it to find that everything stated inside was something he was familiar with. As he had done something similar before, he could handle the task well.

"Oh, please buy her some new panties too because she has to change the one she's wearing now. I think you should get her the disposable type because normal panties have to be washed before wearing and she can't wait that long."

Two crimson patches appeared on Mason's cheeks right away.

Janet too turned her face away from Mason in embarrassment.

Mason gulped as he was stupefied.

Seeing that he was rooted to the spot, the doctor urged him to get going. "Why are you behaving so shy about it? As a couple, I believe the two of you have already seen each other's bodies."

Turning her head around, Janet's beautiful face was as red as a tomato when she cleared her throat and clarified, "He isn't my boyfriend."

The doctor sized them up before shaking her head in confusion. "Young couples like the two of you always break up easily once you guys start fighting with each other. Why didn't the two of you just tell me that you guys already broke up with each other?"

Mason went speechless.

"Go on and buy the stuff now!" The doctor badgered Mason before turning round to advise Janet, "Girl, you're fine now and you may go back to your class after your boyfriend brings back all the things you need."

With that, the doctor walked away.

"You can take a short nap and I'll wake you up when I'm back." Mason was worried that she couldn't put up with the pain because after all, he had witnessed how hard she battled with it before.

"I'm not that weak," Janet countered stubbornly with her head tilted to one side.

Mason stared at the girl who pretended to be strong with a frown, wondering when she would drop all her pretence and show her true side to him.

"You should at least take a rest. I'll get going now." He closed the door after walking out of her ward.

Fortunately, the students were still having classes at the time he left the school clinic. Otherwise, Janet would become the talk of the town again if he was seen.

Obviously, all credits went to the principal for doing a great job at keeping his presence a secret.

As soon as he walked out of the school gate, he found Henry and Sean waiting for him.

Henry asked in a teasing tone despite knowing the answer to his questions, "Young Master Mason, how can you decide to skip the meeting at the office just like that? Why are you at the school of our future sister-in-law?"

Sean cleared his throat as a warning for Henry to tone it down before taking the driver's seat.

Ignoring Henry, Mason instructed Sean to drive him to a supermarket in order to get the stuff on the list.

All eyes were on Mason and the other two as soon as they stepped into the supermarket.

The cashiers and the staff members started whispering to one another.

"The three guys over there are so good-looking!"

"Look at the eyes of the tallest guy! They are so beautiful!"

"Goodness gracious, I swear I can do nothing but admire that pair of long legs for a year's time."

The three guys were all charming in their own unique way.

Mason was the type who could switch on his mysterious and dark charm any minute. Henry had beautiful facial features that made him look like he was capable of scoring with any woman while Sean was especially attractive with his mature and wise look.

Henry pursed his lips in resignation when he noticed that their arrival had caused a major disruption to the operation of the supermarket. "Young Master Mason, why are we shopping at such a small shop? You can just reserve the entire shopping mall if you need to buy stuff."

"Shopping malls are too far away from here," Mason answered him in an indifferent voice.

Following the signs, he made his way to the section of the supermarket where undergarments were sold.

The female staff member who served them was obviously so smitten by the three of them that she couldn't even speak coherently, "S-Sirs, w-what do you need? I-I can offer you guys some assistance."

Mason then stuffed the list into Sean's hand and asked him to read it aloud.

Sean did it despite the embarrassment.

The female staff member then quickly put all the items stated by Sean into a carrier bag.

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Just moments before Mason paid for his purchase, something dawned upon him that prompted him to make his way back to the undergarment department and scanned his surroundings.

Henry and Sean first exchanged inquisitive glances before catching up with Mason. What greeted them next was the sight of Mason picking up a pink panty with his slender finger and eyeing it puzzledly. He was wondering what size Janet wore.

Henry couldn't help but burst out laughing when he saw him. "Young Master Mason, I can see that you're buying panties for our future sister-in-law. Hmm... what color do you have in mind?" Then, he took over that pink panty from Mason and started examining it.

Mason's face turned sullen in an instant. Then, he walked out of the area and said to the cashier, "I'll take all the panties except the one that the pervert is holding."

Appearing affronted at once, Henry confronted Mason, "Young Master Mason, who are you referring to?" What he said cracked Sean up, thinking that it served Young Master Moss right for touching the stuff chosen by Young Master Mason.

Mason raised his brow at Henry and stared at him coldly. "How many women have you touched with your hands? They are disgusting." Henry was left speechless. Shouldn't he at least make some effort to protect his image in public?

When Sean was carrying one shopping bag after another into the car, the passersby eyed them curiously. In the meantime, Mason put on a pair of sunglasses because he didn't want to be bothered by their stares.

When he made it back to Star High School, he took one panty of each size because he had no idea what size she wore. At first, he thought of giving her a call to ask her but he was too embarrassed to do so...

"Wait for me at the gate." After leaving behind that instruction, he made his way to the school clinic by himself. He then found Janet lying on the bed with her back facing the door inside and she seemed to have fallen fast asleep. Listening to her steady breathing, he walked over to her bed in light footsteps and then to the water dispenser to fetch her a cup of water.

"Who's that?" Janet woke with a start and her eyes were tinged with a trace of caution. She turned around and found herself staring right into Mason's eyes.

He narrowed his eyes at her, surprised by her alertness as she could still hear his footsteps despite him having made them as light as possible.

After making sure that the man was Mason, Janet rose to her feet and took the cup of water from him. "Why are you still here?" she looked up at him and asked.

With a roguish smirk, he bent down to stroke her beautiful pointed nose and taunted, "How cruel you are. You just can't wait to chase me away as soon as I have bought you the things you need, huh?"

Janet, whose face reddened slightly, ignored him. He then threw a carrier bag onto the bed and muttered, "There are some new panties inside that you can change into." Looking at her two crimson cheeks, he closed his eyes and turned around to face her with his back. However, he didn't hear the sound of her getting changed even after a long while.

"What's the problem? Is the size not right for you?" Mason parted his lips slightly and spoke in a slightly husky and alluring voice. His voice traveled slowly into the air which was charged with sexual tension and it made her heart flutter.

Janet thought she was great at keeping her cool but at that moment, his voice sent a ripple in her heart which was usually as calm as a pool of still water. A tingling sensation surged through her body as though there were feathers brushing against her heart. "How am I supposed to get changed when you're here?" Janet sounded anxious.

"I'm not peeping," Mason raised his brows while saying calmly.

Janet ended up being speechless because she had no idea how to refute him. Closing her eyes, she took a deep breath before bellowing at him, "Just get out."

Not surprised at all by her outburst, Mason let out a chuckle instead of getting angry. "Get it done quick then. I'll be waiting for you outside."

In a deft movement, it didn't even take her two minutes to change into a fresh set of garments and she felt much more rejuvenated after taking the painkiller and a bowl of brown sugar water. Then, she opened the door and shook her head in resignation when she saw the man who was waiting for her outside. She walked over to him and patted his shoulder. "Thank you very much for your help today. You should return to your office now because I have to get back to class."

Mason responded to what she said with a frown. "Do you feel better now? Are you sure you are fit enough to attend the class?"

"Do you think I don't know myself well enough even though I'm a doctor?" Janet retorted stubbornly.

With a sly smile, Mason countered, "Are you trying to make me crazy over you by appearing weak and vulnerable in front of me on so many occasions?"

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Taking a sharp intake of breath, Janet suddenly felt a pressing urge to land a punch on Mason's face.

"Ahem..." The sound of the doctor clearing her throat came from some distance away. "Girl, do you feel better now?"

"Yes. I'm going back to class now." After saying goodbye to the doctor, Janet then made her way to the building where the classrooms were located.

"Remember to tell your teacher if you feel unwell again," the doctor urged.

"I will." Janet's figure moved further and further away.

Standing rooted to the spot, Mason had a deep crease on his forehead because he couldn't figure out why it was so hard to melt her heart.

The doctor stared at him and offered him a piece of advice with a smile, "Everything will be fine if you pay more attention to your girlfriend. As long as you're willing to make the effort, I believe you will be able to get her back."

Mason raised his brow and answered in a contemplative tone, "Yes, I will do that."

As soon as Janet returned to the classroom, her presence drew everyone's attention immediately.

"Janet, do you feel better now?"

"Janet, are you alright?"

Janet nodded in response to their questions before returning to her seat.

Emily and Madelaine were just talking about Janet. At the sight of her, Madelaine immediately snorted, "I wonder why someone insisted on taking part in three sports events although there was no way she could cope with them. In the end, she was exhausted after going through just one sports event and ended up fainting in Gordon's arms. What a scheming b*tch!"

Emily went along with what she said by responding in a feign annoyed tone, "Madelaine, you shouldn't think of Janet that way. Although she did register for the events herself, you can't be so sure that it was just a part of her plan to make Gordon sympathize with her, can you?"

Abby glared at Madelaine and seethed, "Can you predict the exact day you will be having your next period? There's no point in criticizing her. Didn't you register to take part in the competition too? Did you win any medal for our class?"

Madelaine exchanged a glance with Emily before she asked, "Is she really having her period?"

A babble of voices broke out among the girls in the class as soon as they heard that.

"Oh, seems like her energy only ran out so soon because she's having her period."

"No wonder. She can easily beat three people at one go in other times."

"I see. Still, I'm glad that we got at least one gold medal because of her."

"Exactly. Otherwise, our class will become the laughing stock of the entire school again."

The rest of the students started steering the conversation away from Janet and toward Madelaine as they started taunting, "Madelaine, didn't you take part in the long jump event as Janet's substitute? Are your knees all red and swollen now?"

It was unbeknownst to Janet that after she was brought to the school clinic, Mr. Wilson asked Madelaine to take part in the long jump event as her substitute. Yet, she ended up

suffering a hilarious fall in the pool of sand and her misfortune had become a great joke for everyone in the school.

Having listened to them describing what happened to Madelaine during the long jump event, Janet smirked and stared at Madelaine disdainfully. "I must say you are a much better athlete than me because I don't even know how to pull off such a bad fall in the sand."

Her comment sent everyone into fits of laughter.

As exasperated as she was with their jeering, Madelaine could only suppress her rage because she dared not refute what they said.

Emily then shot Madelaine a supercilious glance, thinking it embarrassing that she didn't even manage to get a medal from the event.

Yet, her mind was preoccupied with the painting competition tomorrow because many big shots of Sandfort City would be there. If she won, it would be a great chance for her to befriend those big shots and Old Mr. Collins would also accept her as his apprentice regardless of what happened before.

That was a chance that many girls out there were dying to have.

Soon, Sunday arrived.

Emily started dolling herself up in her room early in the morning, making sure she would be the prettiest among the three participants in the painting competition later.

Both Megan and Jade were very nervous. As someone from their family would be Old Mr. Collins' apprentice today regardless of the outcome of the contest, both of them were looking forward to the prospect no matter which one of the three emerged as the winner.

Deep down inside, Megan wanted Emily to win because she was the one who brought her up. She had arranged music and art lessons for her hoping that she would one day become an outstanding talent in the future.

If Janet ended up winning, she could accept it too because after all, she was her real daughter.

As for Jade, from all perspectives, she hoped Janet would win because she was her favorite granddaughter. She was very impressed with how marvelous Janet's painting was and she believed she was good enough to win the contest.

More than ten luxury cars were parked outside Leaping Dragon Hotel before the painting competition started.

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Those who had no clue what was going inside would assume a grand wedding was held inside.

As the organizer of the painting competition, Old Mr. Collins was so revved up about the event that he arrived at the hotel very early to usher the guests. He couldn't wait to see who would emerge as the winner of the contest and be his apprentice.

Standing at the gate of the lobby, Old Mr. Collins saw a red Rolls-Royce pulling up in front of him.

At the sight of the luxurious car, he immediately stepped forward to greet the guest sitting inside.

It was Henry from the Moss Family who alighted the car.

"Young Master Moss! What an honor to have you here." Old Mr. Collins was pleasantly surprised when he was informed of Henry's attendance the previous night. He was extremely thrilled to have someone from the Moss Family attending his small-scale painting competition.

Feeling awkward, Henry thought to himself that he was only here to show his support to Janet, the darling of Young Master Mason.

Yet, he still put on a composed look and said to Old Mr. Collins, "I heard that the girls who are participating in this contest are very talented painters. So, here I am to see how good they are."

Old Mr. Collins broke into a wide grin and answered, "They are very talented indeed. Young Master Moss, this way please."

Then, he had a hotel staff lead Henry to the ballroom.

Much to his surprise, he spotted Young Master Sanders as soon as he turned around.

"Goodness gracious, Young Master Sanders! Your presence really graces the occasion. Why didn't you inform me beforehand of your attendance?"

Lee dressed up for the occasion by wearing an all-black suit. He looked up at Old Mr. Collins and said, "Someone told me that the girls in the contest are all amazing painters. So, I guess I mustn't miss the chance to admire their talents."

Old Mr. Collins went speechless wondering why they all offered him a similar explanation.

Also, he was baffled as to why all of them suddenly had so much free time to be here.

Again, he put on an ear-to-ear grin and said, "Please come this way."

Still rattled by their attendance, he turned around and started pondering over who they were rooting for.

Shortly after that, he saw a red Porsche coming in his direction again.

When he took a closer look at the bunch of people getting out of the car, he found all of them to be strangers.

Although he didn't know them, he was sure they were no average people.

Frowning in confusion, Old Mr. Collins approached them and asked, "I'm sorry, you are?"

The girl standing in front of him fished out a name card and handed it to him. "I'm Lara, the top executive broker in Sandfort City."

Old Mr. Collins adjusted his spectacles as his brain had difficulty processing the information. What the heck is an executive broker?

However, he still decided to let her in for the sake of the luxurious car parked behind her. "This way please."

"Thanks," Lara replied nonchalantly while chewing on gum.

One of her underlings who was following behind her asked her puzzledly, "Lara, how did you get yourself that name card?"

Lara tapped the boy's head and answered him impatiently, "Have you forgotten what I do for a living?"

The boy instantly nodded at her with enlightenment.

When more and more big shots gathered at the lobby outside the ballroom later on, Old Mr. Collins gave up ushering them and went into the ballroom instead because he started getting confused.

He had never seen or heard of any of those big shots outside.

The fact that his small-scale painting competition had attracted so many of them left him in utter bewilderment. Were they all here because of him?

Despite the many questions in his mind, he was still overjoyed to see them there because the more people who attended the painting competition, the more respectable his social status was.

At that juncture, Emily, Janet and Chloe arrived at the hotel.

Emily was astounded the moment she stepped into the ballroom.

Tugging at Megan's arm, she exclaimed, "Mom, why are there so many people here? Henry Moss from the Moss Family is here too! Look over there!"

Megan looked in the direction where Emily was pointing at and spotted Henry.

"There! The young master from the Sanders Family is here too!" Emily nearly squealed in excitement.

Janet sneered when she listened to her exclamation and moved her eyes elsewhere.

Chloe, who had never witnessed such a grand occasion, was so shaken that her palm was sweaty. "Mom, why is the contest this year attended by so many people?" she asked Shirley in a doubtful tone.

Shirley chuckled before she gave a cursory glance at all the big shots inside the ballroom smugly. "Chloe, there's no point in being scared because all of them are here to admire your work out of respect for our family and Old Mr. Collins."

Chloe smoothened the creases on her blouse and asked, "Really?"

These bunch of people seemed to be loaded and Chloe thought it would be great if any of them took a liking to her.

Hence, she had to make sure that victory was hers by bringing her A game later.

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Shirley held her chin up smugly and glanced at Janet in a disdainful manner as she answered, "Of course. Otherwise, do you think they are all here to see a country bumpkin painted?"

Chloe too stared at Janet contemptuously after listening to Shirley.

She had heard from her mother how shabby Janet looked before. Today, it was her first time meeting Janet in person and she realized that her mother's description of her was accurate. Seeing how badly dressed Janet was, Chloe was confident that she looked way better than her.

Janet's eyes turned menacing the moment she heard Shirley's comment. In a level voice, she told Jade, "I need to use the bathroom."

Shirley snorted icily and pointed at Janet as she taunted, "Look at her. That country bumpkin must have wet her pants because of how grand this event is."

Chloe chuckled in response to her mother's remark.

Without anyone of them realizing, those bunch of big shots vanished from the ballroom at the same time together with Janet.

They gathered at a corner of a corridor where Janet glowered at them and confronted, "Why are you guys here?"

Lee curled his lips upward into a smile and said, "I heard that you're going to showcase your skill today. So, of course I have to be here to admire the work of 'Master Nato' who has not produced any new artwork for a very long time."

Janet couldn't come up with anything to say.

Shortly after that, Lara too said with a smile, "I'm here to make you look like a popular star." Then, she pointed at the group of underlings she brought with her.

Janet was left speechless. When Lee and Lara walked away, she bumped into Henry.

"Why are you here too?" Janet squinted her eyes and looked at him indifferently. After gazing at him for several seconds, she moved her eyes away.

Henry chuckled, "How can I be absent at the painting competition in which one of the contestants is my future sister-in-law?"

Janet held her chin up and shot him a supercilious glance before she cursed under her breath, "Stop talking crap!"

Henry shrugged before pointing at someone standing behind her. "Janet, look who's here."

She turned around and saw Mason flashing her a faint smile and giving her a penetrating stare.

She was not at all surprised to see him there.

"I'm going back to the ballroom," Janet spoke nonchalantly before tucking her hands in her pockets and made her way toward the ballroom.

"Young Master Mason, let's go inside too," Henry invited.

Mason nodded at him and followed behind Janet.

While they were making their way toward the ballroom, their tall and muscular bodies in suits left all the guests captivated.

"My goodness, so many big shots are here for Old Mr. Collins."

"Hey, look at that man walking beside Young Master Moss. Is he Mr. Lowry?"

"Mason Lowry? Seriously? Why is he here?"

"Gosh, all of them are so good looking! Are they here for Old Mr. Collins or the Jacksons?"

"Are the Jacksons on such good terms with those big shots including Mr. Lowry?"

While the guests were absorbed in heated discussions, the painting competition was about to begin.

Old Mr. Collins stood on the stage and declared, "Ladies and gentlemen, the painting competition will begin in no time. While the contest is ongoing later, I hope everyone can maintain a silent environment to avoid disturbing the contestants while they are painting. Next, let me introduce the contestants—Emily Jackson, Janet Jackson and Chloe Jackson. Like what I pointed out last time, whoever wins this contest will be my apprentice. I don't intend to go back on my words."

After listening to Old Mr. Collins, the quests started talking about the three contestants.

"I bet Emily will win the contest because I heard she is really talented in drawing."

"Someone told me that she has no integrity for having submitted a stolen work to Old Mr. Collins and nearly misled him into accepting her as his apprentice previously."

"Just criticize her all you want. I think she still has what it takes to be here even if she stole someone else's work before."

"I think Chloe Jackson will be great. Since her mother has arranged plenty of drawing lessons for her ever since she was little, I expect her to be good."

"Who's that Janet girl?"

"Seems like she's the one who gave a painting which was striking similarly to one painted by Master Nato to Jade as a gift during her 70th birthday celebration."

"How's that possible? Can anyone actually draw like Master Nato? That must be a joke!"

"Haha, it's unlikely enough that Janet Jackson actually knows how to draw as a girl who grew up in the countryside, let alone have the ability to draw like Master Nato. She must have copied a genuine work of Master Nato's."

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The lighting of the ballroom was dimmed all of a sudden while the guests were still busy whispering to one another.

Only some very faint lights remained offstage.

By the time the light was turned back on, three young girls had materialized onstage.

Wearing a black dress, Janet looked straight ahead with composure before sitting down at her designated seat.

Paint of various colors as well as paint brushes could be found on the desk.

Henry and Mason took a seat in the last row, and Henry stared at the girls on the stage with anticipation.

Then, he raised his brow and asked Mason who was beside him, "Young Master Mason, do you think Janet will win the contest?"

Mason curled his perfectly sculpted lips up into a smirk and kept his eyes glued to Janet. "What do you think?" he asked Henry back in a breezy tone.

Henry shrugged and replied, "How do I have any clue since I've never seen Janet's work? I can't say anything for sure because the other two girls from the Jackson Family are very outstanding too."

In fact, an opinion had already formed deep down inside him and he thought Janet was not here to win.

After all, the other two girls had gone through proper drawing lessons before and both of them were undoubtedly good at drawing. As for Janet, she used to stay in the countryside and it was hard to tell how great she actually was.

"Ha!" Mason let out a chuckle. His eyes did not move away from Janet for a single second.

While the guests offstage fell silent, the three contestants on the stage were busy thinking about their strategies.

This time, Old Mr. Collins wanted their paintings to be related to animals and their works would be evaluated based on two yardsticks: creativity and vividness.

The time limit was set at two hours and they were required to stop painting once the time was up.

Old Mr. Collins' requirement was quite challenging for Chloe because she was more used to painting with a point of reference. But now, she had to create the entire painting on her own which required great imagination.

Emily felt her chest tighten when she heard the requirement. Did they have to produce something creative within two hours? It was too short a time for her because she usually needed a whole day's time to complete a painting and the fact that she wouldn't have something to refer to just added to the level of difficulty.

After she heard the rules, Janet reacted to it with composure and looked fixedly at the blank canvas.

In fact, two hours to her was akin to two days to other people.

Cocking her head to one side, she stared at the blank canvas and just seconds before she was about to start painting, she put down her paintbrush again.

Shoving the papers, ink and paints all to one side, she cleared out a space on her table on which she placed her elbows to support her chin. In the meantime, she closed her eyes which looked as clear as water.

From time to time, Emily and Chloe would peek at her. When the two of them saw what she was doing, both of them covered their mouth and sniggered.

The guests offstage started mocking Janet too.

"Is Janet Jackson serious?"

"Are my eyes still functioning well or has Janet Jackson just dozed off?"

"Hahahaha, she's so hilarious! Seems like she knows herself well enough to realize she has no hope in winning so she decided to just give up altogether!"

Shirley scoffed, "Megan, I must say I'm very impressed by how strong your daughter is psychologically. Since she can fall asleep in an environment like this, what makes her different from a pig?"

Her remark put Megan in so much embarrassment that she started wiping away the cold sweat that had broken out on her forehead.

Many of them started laughing at the girl who was snoozing onstage.

Half an hour later, Old Mr. Collins couldn't stand it anymore and approached her to wake her up.

Janet looked up at him puzzledly with a pair of groggy eyes.

Old Mr. Collins sighed, "Aren't you going to start painting? You only have one and a half hours remaining."

"Okay!" Janet immediately took some paint and started mixing colors randomly.

Seeing that, Old Mr. Collins shook his head in resignation.

To him, what she was doing was pure absurdity.

As time passed, the three girls on stage churned out their works.

Because the desk was on the stage, no one in the audience could see what they were painting, which added an element of mystery to the contest.

Old Mr. Collins made an announcement as soon as the time was up and the three girls immediately stopped painting.

While Emily and Chloe modded at their works in satisfaction, Janet rose to her feet and whispered something to Old Mr. Collins.