

Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo

Chapter 571

“Alright.” Nicole nodded and held the girls’ hands as they headed for the dessert store.

Beside her, Nina’s gaze trailed towards Evan, Juan, and Kyle. A small frown settled on her brows as she saw them walking further away.

Why didn’t Mommy ask them to come along as well? What if we lose them?

Thinking of it, she tilted her head and asked, “Mommy, why don’t we ask Daddy to join us?”

But Nicole grunted and hastened her steps instead. “I’m not going to do that!”

She was still angry with him for trying to seduce Daphne yesterday.

Seeing her mother in a foul mood, Nina followed quietly without saying another word.

Over at the dessert store, Maya’s eyes glimmered with excitement the moment she saw the wide array of colorful and yummy desserts laid out at the counter.

To a small girl like her, such simple joy was heaven. Her mouth watered as she stared at the cheesecake. It had been a long time since she last indulged in desserts.

“Mommy, can I have a bigger piece?” she implored.

Nina rolled her eyes and smacked her lips when she heard her sister’s request. “You’ll gain more weight if you keep eating. You’ll become as big as a bear and you won’t be able to walk at this rate.”

Maya took a look at herself and let off a disgruntled scoff. It was true that she was on the fleshier side and that she had a small belly, but she felt Nina was exaggerating when she said Maya would not be able to walk.

“Yeah, yeah, I know you’re slim. You’re so slim you look like a monkey, like a stick, like a wire, like a spaghetti!” she derided.

Nina blinked her eyes sarcastically at her and looked at Maya in the eyes. “I might be a spaghetti, but I’m proud of myself!”

“You!” Maya pouted her lips and thought of how she could retaliate.

It was not like she could say she was proud of being an overweight bear.

She was lost for words.

“Both of you need to stop fighting. Maya, Nina’s words are harsh, but they are well-intended. Why not we eat less this time, but I promise to bring you here again?” Nicole suggested.

Maya thought about what her mother said and nodded obediently.

After having their picks, the three took their desserts and went over to the dining area. Maya stole a look at Nina and emulated how she ate like a fine lady, taking one small bite at a time.

Nicole smiled at Maya and patted her on the head. She knew Maya wanted to lose weight, but it was too difficult for her to say no to her cravings.

Her children were still learning how to be more disciplined and it was her job as their mother to push them a little.

As they were enjoying their desserts, Nina’s phone rang and Evan’s name showed on the phone screen. He was frantically looking for them when he realized he had lost them.

Upon finding out that they were at the dessert store, Evan quickly brought Juan and Kyle over.

“Mommy! Why didn’t you tell us you’re going to get dessert?” Juan complained.

“Yeah, Daddy was worried sick,” Kyle agreed.

Nicole took a glimpse at Evan and did not reply. Me? Getting lost? I’m an adult!

Besides, it's not like I want to see him.

Sensing there was something going on between their parents, Juan and Kyle exchanged sly looks and started scheming a plan.

Juan stepped forwards and pushed Evan towards the table. As Evan sat down beside Nicole, she quickly distanced herself from him.

Evan's look hardened when he sensed her trying to move away. He adjusted his seat and moved closer towards her.

But Nicole was not buying his advances to reconcile with her at all. "Don't come any closer. Can't you see there's a huge gap between us?" she warned in a low voice.

Evan shot her a clueless look and then shifted his gaze to the empty space between their seats. "A huge gap? What do you mean?"

"It's an invisible but irreconcilable gap," she replied coldly.

Evan smiled wryly while looking at her without another word.

It seemed like she still had not gotten over what happened yesterday.

But it was not like this was the first day Evan knew her. She was always this difficult whenever she got jealous.

He did not mind putting up with it since she was his wife. In fact, he was just going to wait and see how long her anger would last.

He decided to ignore her and turned towards the kids instead.

But alas, he was met with a ghastly sight. Kyle just cut his coconut cake into a weird shape while Nina spread cream and salad over the cookies. In the meantime, Maya was talking to her belly after having her cake pop; Juan was practicing Taekwondo while keeping an eye on his cake.

Evan almost facepalmed as he beheld the ridiculous scene. At one point, he even wondered who those kids took after and his gaze naturally moved towards Nicole.

It's obviously not me.

Come to think of it, it's no wonder they turn out exactly like their mother.

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Nicole could feel Evan's gaze driving through her as he eyed her from head to the toe.

It was not long before he finally commented, "It makes total sense why these four turn out to be weirdos."

Nicole glared at him from the corner of his eyes as she thought about what he said.

You make it sound like it's all because of me? It's not like I can have kids on my own?

You can't just blame everything on me!

Nicole looked at her cake nonchalantly and dug her fork into it. "Stop acting like you don't know they inherited your genes. Who knows if your genes are faulty?"

Evan leaned closer and ogled at her. "Well, we'll know if there's a problem with my genes if we have a few more kids."

Beside him, Nicole drove her fork right into the middle of the cake. "Get lost!"

She was still mad at Evan and there was no way she would want to sleep with him.

“Can’t y’all just eat properly? What a waste of food!” she reprimanded the kids.

The four of them looked at one another, thinking why Nicole would lash out at them because of desserts.

Desserts were meant to be eaten and they totally did not see why Mommy was angry.

Nina decided to just stop eating and put down her cutlery. “Fine, I’m not eating anymore. Why not we go get some makeup stuff?” she asked Nicole.

“Okay!” Nicole replied curtly.

After they were done having desserts, Evan went over to the counter and ordered two more cakes for takeaway for Maya.

Maya jumped around him happily, saying Evan was the best Daddy on earth.

Later on, he got Nina her makeup stuff and even bought Juan and Kyle some of the latest toys. After a whole day of shopping, the family went home with their car full of shopping bags.

When Daphne found out about it, she immediately went to the duchess with a litany of complaints. After all, Daphne had always hated Nicole and her four kids.

“Aunt Portia, don’t you think this woman is too vain and irresponsible? All she knows is to bring the kids in and out of the estate and shop to their heart’s content!”

The Duchess sighed in agreement. “Sometimes I wonder what Levant sees in her.”

She could not wrap her head around how a woman of four children could even dream of being a part of the Musgrave family. It was obvious that she had Levant under her spell that he could not even think straight.

“Aunt Portia, you have to do something. People in the estate have been gossiping about this. Imagine what will people make of the Musgrave family if they hear about these rumors!” Daphne incited.

Portia could not agree more with what she said. The Duchess simply could not imagine what people would say about her if they found out that her son had fallen for a woman like Nicole.

The next day, she rose early and paid Nicole a visit at her house.

Daphne followed along, anticipating a good show so she could jeer at her.

She had never seen Levant being this nice to any woman in her entire life. If Levant really loved her, he would leave the estate out of anger if Nicole got chased out.

If that were to happen, she would inherit the duke's title.

Daphne had been brewing her plan all along and she could not wait to seek Hector's advice on what to do next when she saw him again.

He must have left suddenly because he was startled. She bet he would come back to her after he thought things through thoroughly.

The fact that Hector risked his life to save her meant he genuinely cared for her.

She was certain he would be a great help to her. After all, he had feelings for her and no one could resist the status that came along with marrying into the Musgrave family. Daphne felt they were meant to be.

Levant, you only have yourself to blame for what's gonna happen to you. You betrayed me and there will be a reckoning.

I will make sure you live to see a man far more superior than you taking the title you've always coveted. And he will be the man that I choose to spend the rest of my life with.

The four kids were playing happily when Portia and Daphne arrived.

Hearing their high-pitched screams and laughter, the duchess could not help but put on an irritated frown.

"How atrocious! I can't believe these brats have turned a majestic estate into a nursery home. These unruly kids don't deserve to stay here," she commented with a high and mighty tone.

"I can't agree more, Aunt Portia. We really need to get rid of this uncultured lot," Daphne said, adding fuel to the fire.

She knew she had to leverage the duchess' rage against Nicole and the children so they would be chased out as soon as possible.

"Come over here," the duchess shouted at the kids.

Hearing the duchess' beckoning, the kids stopped and turned their heads towards her.

They were startled to see the duchess, Daphne, and a few other servants walking towards them. Judging from the way Portia looked, the kids knew they were up to no good.

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"We need to keep our guard up," Juan whispered as he looked at their aggressive faces. "I bet the bad woman's friends won't be any nicer," he added, looking at Daphne.

The other three nodded and let go of their toys as they stood up.

"You guys must be Nicole's kids," the duchess said as she approached them.

They nodded in silence.

The duchess glared at them fiercely when none of them greeted her. "Don't you guys have a home? The estate is not a place for y'all," she insulted.

The kids obviously understood what she meant from her despicable tone—she wanted them out of the estate.

But they knew they should not leave until Mommy had found out who her father was.

Maya blinked her beautiful eyes at the fierce duchess before saying politely, “We do have a home. We won’t stay here for long.”

The duchess scoffed at her naive reply in disdain. “Good. Then your Mommy and y’all should take leave now.”

Beside her, Daphne put on a smug smile looking at the kids. But just as they thought they could walk all over the kids, Nina came forward and confronted them.

“You have no right to ask us to leave. Mr. Levant invited Mommy over. That makes Mommy his guest. I don’t see why we should leave unless Mr. Levant says so,” Nina spoke up in a determined and confident voice.

Standing right in front of Nina, Portia chuckled in disbelief. She was not expecting a little girl like Nina to retaliate.

“Do you think you can use Levant to shut me up? Do you know who I am? I’m his mother! He has to listen to me!” The duchess raised her voice.

The kids looked at each other in surprise. This is Mr. Levant’s mother?

Maya pursed her lips and started a discussion among her siblings. “Mr. Levant is so nice to us, I can’t believe he has such an evil mother.” She purposely said it loud enough just so the duchess could hear it.

“I know right! I don’t believe this woman. She must be a fake. There’s no way Mr. Levant has a mother like her,” Nina agreed.

What the kids said hit Portia’s sore spot and she was infuriated.

Her biggest regret in life was not having a kid of her own—and Levant was not her biological son.

She clenched her fists in uncontrollable rage as the kids exposed the biggest pain in her life. “Seize these impudent kids and throw them out of the estate! Now!” she shouted at the servants.

The kids widened their eyes in bewilderment when she heard the duchess’ order.

There was no way they would allow this evil woman to throw them out like this. They knew Mommy would be worried if she could not find them when she returned.

“Run!” Juan shouted as he saw the servants charging towards them.

The four children started running as the servants hastened their steps behind them.

Seeing them catching up, Kyle came up with a plan. “Juan, we need to bind them up! Maya and Nina, run towards the rockery and hide in the holes!”

“Yes!” they all shouted in unison.

Immediately, Nina held Maya’s chubby hands and the two girls dashed towards the rockery as the boys went in another direction.

Juan and Kyle looked around as they ran and their gaze landed on some colorful accessorial rocks on the ground.

“Who’s better at aiming?” Juan asked.

Kyle spared him a quick look and smirked. “I’ll challenge you!”

“I’m down!” Juan exclaimed.

The two boys made for the pile of rocks and sought refuge behind it.

Behind them, the servants pursued them tirelessly. “They’re behind the rocks!” one shouted.

But before they could even come closer, Juan picked up a rock and threw it in the face of a servant.

The rock hit the man right in the eye and sent him crying out as he covered his eyes in agony. “You son of a b*tch!”

Kyle quickly followed suit and took up a bigger stone before aiming for the man’s other eye.

“Ouch! My eyes!” the man shrieked as his two eyes started swelling up after the attack.

“You scoundrels! Wait till I get my hands on you!” the vexed servant cried out.

Juan gave Kyle a thumb’s up and complimented him, saying, “I think you’re better than me!”

Kyle shot him a proud smile and tilted his head in confidence. “Of course. I used a bigger stone and I aimed better!”

“I don’t believe I can’t outdo you!” Juan challenged.

“I dare you!” Kyle replied.

But before they could reach out for their next stone, a few sturdy servants overshadowed them and had the two surrounded.

Now that they were besieged, the two boys clustered together and devised a new plan. “We’ll see who’s faster. You’ll take those two and I’ll tackle these two,” Juan proposed as hot sweat rolled down his forehead.

“Alright!” Kyle replied as he panted.

They picked up as many rocks as they could barehanded and flung them towards the servants. Their aims were fast and accurate, and the servants waved their hands around frantically trying to block off the rain of rocks flying towards them.

“Cover your eyes!” one of them shouted.

The others quickly did so and covered their eyes with their hands as the kids sent rocks flying incessantly in their direction.

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But Juan and Kyle were not dumb. They improvised their strategy as the servants protected their eyes and aimed for their heads instead.

The servants could not take it anymore and started scattering like lost sheep as they held their heads. The two boys exchanged quick looks and picked up more rocks as they chased after them.

“Juan, I think you’re faster at throwing!”

“And I think you’re better at aiming!”

“But we still need more practice!” Kyle concluded.

“Kyle, I know Taekwondo, so I’ll go after them and bind them up. I’ll leave Maya and Nina to you!” Juan figured out an ultimate strategy.

But Kyle disagreed and refused to leave his brother alone.

Beside him, Juan smiled warmly at his brother’s comradeship.

“Dang it! We just ran out of stones!” Juan suddenly realized.

The two quickly turned around and ran in the opposite direction.

Sensing the sudden stop of attack, the servants finally opened their eyes and saw the kids running away from them.

“Ha! Look at your eyes! You’ve got two black eyes like a panda! You look so funny now!” one of the servants laughed, pointing at another servant.

“Pot calling the kettle black! You’re not any better. Yours are all swollen!” the second one mocked in return.

“Geez, my eyes feel so painful. Will I go blind?” another complained.

“Stop talking and start chasing them! The duchess is still waiting for us to hand the kids over!” yet another servant reminded.

“Seriously, these kids are a pain in the ass! They really know what they’re doing, man!” the first one said.

“You can say that to ‘em when you get ‘em!”

Speaking, the servants set out and hurried towards the two boys.

Meanwhile, Juan and Kyle could not find Maya and Nina when they reached the rockery. They looked around anxiously, wondering if they had lost their way.

“It’s either they’re lost or they were caught,” Juan speculated as his gaze wandered around the rockery.

“Nina’s there, they won’t get lost,” Kyle replied.

“It’s difficult to say what’ll happen with Maya around,” Juan said.

“Why not we call them? Nina has a smartwatch,” Kyle suggested as he bent down to look at every nook and cranny.

Juan called her and they got in touch in no time. Nina told him their location and the boys ran off right after they found out where they were.

By the time the boys reached, they were surprised to see there was no one else in the spacious room except for their sisters. “There’s no one else here?” Juan queried.

“Yeah. No one’s here, that’s why we came in,” Nina answered.

“Then we’ll hide here until the old witch stops looking for us.”

Little did they know, Stephen heard them loud and clear as he stood in front of a portrait behind the screen. He was deeply engrossed with the painting when he heard hasty footsteps in the room and decided to just stay put and find out what was happening.

He glued his ears against the screen as he tried to eavesdrop.

The kids piqued his interest when they talked about an old witch coming after them.

The duke readjusted his position and peeked through the gap of the screen.

The four kids looked fine and beautiful. Stephen thought their parents must be a handsome pair.

He surveyed each of the children and his gaze eventually fell on Nina and Maya. The frown on his brows deepened as he dug his gaze through them. *Hm, these two girls look exactly like the woman Levant invited over.*

Their eyes look so much like Rosalie's and the woman's.

He sighed and turned around, looking at the person in the portrait in resignation.

"What can I do, Rosalie? I hope you don't mind these kids coming in. I've never allowed anyone in. But they look so much like you," he whispered softly.

A sad smile curved on his lips and a glimmer of regret shone dimly in his old eyes.

On the other side of the screen, Juan straightened his back as he heard some movement in the room. "I think I heard someone talking," he hissed.

"What? Who? I didn't hear anything," the others whispered back.

They hushed and pricked their ears, trying to listen for voices. But instead, they heard footsteps approaching.

They cocked their heads towards where the footsteps came from and jumped when they saw Stephen coming from behind the screen.

"Wh... Who are you?" Juan asked nervously.

“Me? I’m the master of this estate,” the duke answered.

“You own this place...?” Juan mumbled.

“This is his territory, and he must be really fierce. That’s why no one else dares to come in. We’d better be careful,” Juan said to the rest.

A subtle smile settled on Stephen’s eyes when he heard those kids talking.

“What are you guys doing here? Where did y’all come from?” he asked.

Juan eyed him suspiciously and evaded the duke’s stare as he replied, “We’re guests here. And we came from our house.”

Stephen raised his eyebrows at the boy’s careful answer. But that did not stop him from probing further.

“What’s your name?” he asked.

The kids knew well enough to never give their names to strangers. “I’m the eldest, he’s the second, she’s the third, and she’s the fourth,” Juan answered warily.

Yet, Maya was not satisfied with such an underwhelming introduction of herself and asserted, “I’m not just the fourth kid. I’m a little fairy!” she added.

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“Come on, you’re a big-faced!” Nina begged to differ.

Maya glared at her resentfully when Nina teased her. It seemed like Nina was no longer afraid of her Maya Punch.

Stephen looked at the playful kids and chuckled.

He found these kids amusing and likable the very moment he saw them. It was probably because he met them at his favorite place—or perhaps it was because the girls bore a resemblance to Rosalie.

But regardless of what the reason was, Stephen felt the kids were inexplicably endearing to him.

“I heard you guys talking about an old witch. Who’s she?” he asked.

“Mr. Levant’s mother!” Maya shouted without any reservation as she rolled her eyes hard.

She was a forthwith girl and she was never good at concealing her feelings.

Huh? Portia?

What did she do to the kids? Why did they hate her so much?

“What did she do to y’all?” he asked again.

“She asked the servants to catch us and throw us out of the estate!” Maya replied without holding back.

“Yeah. She’s so fierce! I can’t believe she’s Mr. Levant’s mother! She’s an old witch,” Nina agreed.

Their comments were harsh, yet Stephen felt the duchess should have known better to know what she should and should not do.

“Y’all don’t have to worry. She won’t do it again,” he replied with a serious face.

“You know her?” Juan asked.

“You can come to this place and look for me if she does that again,” Stephen replied.

Among the kids, Kyle had been silent throughout. He scanned the room and realized although the room was minimally furnished, it was luxurious and meticulous nonetheless. Even the bonsai were well-trimmed.

He finally opened his mouth and said something. “Does anyone ever come in here? What about the duchess?”

“This is my private space. No one dares to enter this room,” Stephen replied.

The girls blinked at him in admiration when they heard his answer.

They guessed this old grandpa was probably someone powerful. That was why everyone was afraid of him.

As for Juan and Kyle, they started surmising who this old man was.

But because the kids were afraid of him, they stayed hiding in the room for the next hour without asking who he was. It was not until they felt the coast was clear that they thanked him politely and bid him farewell before going out to look for Mommy.

Right after they closed the door behind them, Kyle turned around and looked at the other three gravely. “Mommy already has a lot on her plate trying to find out about her family. We mustn’t tell her anything that happened today, okay? We don’t want her to be worried.”

Everyone nodded in agreement.

Over at the outside, the duchess went amok when she found out none of the servants managed to get hold of the kids. Not only had they failed her, but they had also made a joke of themselves by getting hurt.

“Useless! I feed y’all for nothing!” she bawled at the timid servants.

They held their breath in her raging presence and none of them dared to look at her.

“What are y’all waiting for? Eh? Go over to the courtyard and wait for them!” she shouted at the motionless servants standing like logs in front of her.

But just as the servants were about to go towards the courtyard, Stephen's bodyguard came over and issued an order.

"Ma'am, the duke has an order," the bodyguard reported coldly.

"What is it?" the duchess asked impatiently.

"The four children are the duke's guests and he wishes for them to be treated with respect," he replied.

Stephen's guests?

Since when is that bunch of brats his guests?

"The kids have no manners and they even challenged me. I don't see why I should treat them with respect," she replied snarkily.

But the messenger cocked his head higher and reasserted the duke's order. "Sir Musgrave has already made it clear that you should know better as an adult to not mind the kids' blunder," the man reiterated.

Portia's countenance fell as the bodyguard repeated what her husband said. She felt immensely humiliated in front of the servants.

Why is he on their side? Who is Nicole to him? Who are those kids to him?

They are not related to him in any way! Unless... unless there is something that he's not telling me.

Portia clenched her fists trying to swallow her anger.

Just wait and see, Nicole Lane. You might have Levant on your side, but I'll make sure you get out of this place with nothing!

If you dare get Stephen involved, don't blame me when I end your life!

But Portia knew she should lie low for now in order for her bigger scheme to work. Besides, it was not like she could openly disregard what the duke said. She had no choice but to obey him. “Tell Sir Musgrave that his message is well-received.”

The bodyguard nodded without another word and walked off to relay the message.

When Daphne found out about what happened, she saw her chance and quickly came to provoke Portia.

“Aunt Portia, I bet Nicole and the kids are some sorceresses. It’s totally unreasonable for Levant and Uncle Stephen to be on their side!” she pointed out.

She noticed the duchess’ face turned sour and was emboldened to further incite her against Nicole. “Remember when you asked Uncle Stephen to persuade Levant to send Nicole away? Not only did Uncle Stephen ignore you, but he also even sided with the kids. It was so obvious that he didn’t respect you—and it’s all because of Nicole. I can’t believe she has the guts to even...”