

Chapter 67 She's Not Up to His Standards?

"Miss, what are you doing? You can't touch the piece unless you're buying it!" the security guard in charge of the area yelled out. "Put that painting down, or you'll be treated as a thief!"

Calista was startled by the cry that echoed throughout the floor. It was only then that she realized she had taken the painting off its hook at some point.

She grew aware of how tense she was.

She hurriedly suppressed her complex emotions and said hoarsely, "I apologize. I got a little too excited I would like to buy this painting. Can you please help contact the seller?"

The skeptical security guard called for the person in charge. They promptly arrived after learning that she wanted to buy the painting. They contacted the person who provided the painting.

Knowing that the person who offered up the painting was at the exhibition, the person in charge said, "There's a buyer here who would like to buy the painting you put up for sale, Ms. Everhart. Would you like to come to discuss the price in person?"

Calista frowned. She had a suspicion forming in her head. Everhart wasn't a particularly rare surname. Someone with

that name who had this painting in their possession.

It had to be Nikolette. She gently ran her fingers against the rabbit lamp the girl was carrying in the painting. This was Calista's mother's painting. The girl depicted in it was her.

She was only eight years old when her mother passed away. Due to her age, she was in no place to care for her mother's belongings.

Later, Zachary Everhart, her father, brought both Nikolette and his wife abroad. She rushed home when she received the news. But by then, the Everhart residence had changed hands. Everything that was inside was gone.

She called Zachary to ask about her mother's belongings.

But the man responded disdainfully, "What's the point of keeping a dead person's things? It's bad luck."

It didn't take long for Calista to spot Nikolette entering the hall.

The woman wore extravagant makeup. She was dressed in a white sweater with a gray A-line skirt. The length of her skirt only reached halfway down her thighs. It revealed her fair and slender legs.

Her attire seemed calculated. She could tell at a glance that it was for ulterior motives. Nikolette walked over and greeted the person in charge.

"Is she the one who wants to buy the painting?"

They nodded.

"Yes. Feel free to discuss amongst yourself."

Nikolette crossed her arms and raised her chin.

"50 million dollars. No more, no less."

It was obvious that she was making things difficult on purpose. Fifty million dollars was enough to buy an art piece from a renowned artist.

But, Calista's mother wasn't a professional artist and had no reputation in the art world. Given the circumstances, a painting like that was worth no more than 100 thousand dollars at most.

Calista knew things wouldn't go smoothly the moment she saw Nikolette. With her half-sister's temperament, there was no doubt that she would take the opportunity to cause trouble.

Nikolette grew even more brazen when Calista didn't speak.

"What's wrong? Can't cough it up? Hah, so what if you're married to Lucian Northwood? You can't even get him to like you. You're just a poor piece of trash that doesn't have five million dollars to your name!"

When she learned that Calista was to be married to Lucian, she proposed to their father to take her elder sister's place. But it was to no avail. Nikolette had held a grudge over it.

It made her feel better to know everything that had been going on between Lucian and Calista when she returned from abroad. It wasn't surprising to hear that she was leading the life of a discarded wife!

Nikolette lowered her voice and continued to provoke her.

"Your mother left quite a few things behind. Perhaps it was related to her profession, but they were all valuable items. Dad had them moved elsewhere before the company was declared bankrupt."

As she spoke, she lifted her hand.

"See this bag in my hand? I should thank her. All I had to do was sell off a piece of her belongings for it."

A smack reverberated through the air. Nikolette had barely finished speaking when she was backhanded across her face!

The sound alone indicated how harsh Calista had been when she slapped her. A clear palm print immediately appeared on her face.

A chorus of disapproval could be heard from around them! Nikolette's head was spinning from the slap. It took her a while to regain her senses.

"How dare you, Calista?"

She wasn't expecting Calista to resort to violence out in

public. Wasn't she the Madam of the Northwood family? Wasn't such unreasonable behavior tarnishing their family name?

"I could do worse. I have nothing to lose!"

Calista's icy gaze pierced through her as she stepped closer. She raised her hand again. Nikolette thought she was going to hit her again and shielded her head. She screamed.

"Security! There's someone here who can't afford the price and is trying to strong-arm a sale! Hurry up and get her out of here!"

Calista scoffed and held her arms out.

"Let me ask you one more time. How much is that painting?"

She didn't want to give Nikolette a single cent. But, her mother and Zachary had been legally married before she passed away.

That scumbag had half of the inheritance rights. If she fought them to the bitter end, those dogs would rather destroy the painting than give it to her!

Nikolette knew that she held the advantage over Calista and lorded it over her.

"I refuse to sell it. I'm not giving it to you for any price!"

Amid the tense atmosphere, a man with a warm voice suddenly cut into the conversation.

"Excuse me, can I buy that painting?"

Both women turned to see a casually dressed Paul Baker making his way through the crowd.

He had gotten a general idea of what was happening from the whispers among the crowd. He didn't pay Calista any mind and directed a smile at Nikolette.

"May I ask how much are you willing to sell that painting for?"

One could tell what their family background was like just by their temperament. The way they held themselves never lied. Nikolette's eyes lit up the moment she saw Paul!

She was here to find herself a wealthy husband. Paul was undoubtedly the best candidate among the people she met today.

She ruffled her hair to hide her reddened cheeks. She gave him a coy look.

"The painting wasn't done by a professional artist. it's nothing to write home about. You can have it for 100 thousand dollars."

Paul nodded and motioned for a staff member to handle the formalities. Once he got the painting, he handed it off to Calista right in front of Nikolette.

"Here."

Calista wasn't going to cause a fuss now that the painting was presented to her.

"I'll transfer the money to you later."

The man smiled.

"Sure."

Nikolette was dumbfounded by the sight before her.

"How ... dare you?"

Paul was someone who looked gentle on the surface. But, he wasn't a person that was easy to get along with. Lucian and Cade were waiting for him on the second floor.


Paul had only done it as a favor because he happened to be around. After he had done his part, he didn't bother speaking with Nikolette. He said his goodbyes to Calista and left.

Calista was also leaving until Nikolette chased after her.

"That was Paul Baker, wasn't it? Here's the deal, Calista. Introduce me to him and I'll ask Dad to return your mother's remaining belongings to you!"

The Everhart family and the Baker family had business dealings in the past. But Nikolette's social circle back then was not the same as Calista's. That's why she never got to know Paul.

But, just because she didn't know him didn't mean that she

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had never seen him on the news before. Nikolette asked because she believed Calista would agree to it. All she was asking for was an introduction. She wasn't asking her to do anything excessive.

Calista stopped in her tracks. Disdain flickered in her cold eyes.

"You're not up to his standards."

Before she could finish, she turned around to see two men standing inches away. It was Lucian and Cade! Calista frowned. Had they always been here?

Lucian was staring at her coldly. He wasn't visibly angered. But his words were cutting.

"If she's not up to his standards, who is? You?" 



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