

Don't Beg for Love Chapter 481

A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 481

Hesper opened the door with one hand, and she was petrified when she saw the man in front of her.

It had been a long time since Julian saw Hesper. His gaze turned gentle, and he stepped forward to give her a hug. "It has been a long time, Hesper. It's me."

Hesper blinked her eyes several times, as she did not expect a hug from Julian. When she finally came around to her senses, she pushed him away and observed him from head to toe. "You've been released at last. Are you okay?"

"I'm fine." Julian's heart sank when Hesper pushed him away. However, when he saw her expression, he knew that she must've deciphered his previous message.

This was something nobody would be able to understand aside from the two of them.

Hesper frowned and looked outside for a moment, then closed the door and led Julian into the room.

"You don't have any monitoring device on you, right?"

Julian shook his head. "Don't worry. I've completely cut ties with them. Otherwise, I wouldn't have come to you."

"That's great." After the initial surprise of seeing Julian had ebbed away, Hesper had calmed down a little bit. She told Julian to take his seat and fetched him a cup of water. "I've been thinking about you this whole time. It's great to see you safe... By the way, how did you find me?" Hesper asked as she looked at her face through the mirror.

She genuinely did not know how Julian managed to find her. After all, she had a different face now.

"About that..." Julian froze for a moment. If he had not known that Hesper lived here beforehand, he might not have recognized her at first glance. He

did not know what Hesper had done to her face, but it was vastly different from before.

“The people from Daybreak told me about it,” Julian said.

“Daybreak?”

Julian was a little bit surprised. “You know Daybreak?”

“Yeah. We’ve crossed paths before,” Hesper replied. “So the ones who took you away were Daybreak. No wonder I couldn’t get any news from you. It seems like it’s related to Myriade.”

“You know Myriade too?” Julian frowned. “Then, do you know...”

“Know what?” Hesper looked at Julian with some confusion.

“Nothing...” Julian shook his head. “It doesn’t really matter anyway. Do you still remember the things I told you before? My teacher can treat your leg injury. That’s the reason why I came to you this time.”

It was true that Julian had told her before. However, Hesper thought there was nothing they could do to her injury anymore since it had been so long.

She paused for a few moments before continuing, “Well, the condition of my leg is different now. A lot of things happened after you left, and there’s a chance that my leg is incurable.”

“How can we say it’s untreatable without trying?” Julian said, clasping Hesper’s hand. “My teacher will come tomorrow. Maybe your leg can still be saved. Trust me, okay?”

Hesper licked her slightly dry upper lips.

“I’m, I also really want to heal my leg injury, but I’m afraid it’ll be a fruitless effort.” Hesper lowered her head and fell silent for a moment. “If even your teacher can’t cure it, does that mean my leg will never be healed?”

The reason Hesper had been pretending not to care about her leg was that she did not want it to be a damp squib.

“Don’t worry. My teacher is an expert in treating leg injuries. I’m sure he can cure you,” Julian assured.

“Alright, then let’s give it a try,” Hesper replied.

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don’t Beg for Love Chapter 482

Hesper shrugged her shoulders at Julian’s somewhat surprised expression.

“Am I that kind of person who’ll just give up because I’m afraid of a few setbacks?” Hesper said as she patted her leg. “I’ll only fail once. I know how hard it’s for you to get this opportunity for me, so I won’t give it up.”

Julian felt somewhat guilty facing Hesper’s burning gaze.

To be precise, it was Rickard who got this opportunity for her, but he had Julian come forward to tell her about it so that she would accept it.

Even until now, Julian still could not figure out why Rickard would let him come and take all the credit despite knowing that he liked Hesper. Not only that, but Rickard bore a deep animosity towards him as well. Did Rickard not want Hesper to know that he had done a lot for her as well?

“Ian?” Hesper stretched her hand forward and waved it in front of Julian’s eyes. “Where are you staying now? Do you need me to send you back? Daybreak is pretty influential in Antellon. Although you’ve escaped from them, you still have to be more careful.”

“Don’t worry,” Julian replied. He was pretty certain that Daybreak would not have the nerves to do anything stupid since Rickard was there.

After that, he continued, “The reason Daybreak took my teacher and I is to make us treat someone’s illness. Now they don’t need us anymore, they naturally let us go.”

Hesper did not suspect anything. Julian had finished his job here, so he stood up.

“My teacher and I will come tomorrow to start your treatment. When will you be free?”

Hesper had already recovered, and she had to deal with Evon, so she had to go to work tomorrow.

“Let’s do it in the evening. I’ll try to schedule my work during the day,” Hesper said. “Thank you, Ian.”

Julian was silent for a moment before saying, “You shouldn’t thank me. Anyway, I’ll see you tomorrow.”

*

Hesper was surrounded by her colleagues when she arrived at her company the next day.

“Are you alright, Ms. Rivera? We all heard that you’re sick, and we’re worried about you.”

“That’s right. Who the hell locked you up like that? You didn’t know about it, but when we came to work that day and saw the mess, we thought something big had happened and were scared to death.”

A gush of warmth filled Hesper’s heart. “Thank you, guys. I’m fine, but as for why I was locked up…”

She looked at Evon who had been sneaking a peek from outside the crowd, and smiled. “I don’t really know either. Maybe I accidentally offended someone since I’m not very good at talking.”

“Don’t be modest, Ms. Rivera. There aren’t many talented, hardworking, and good-natured people like you,” Andries said, sounding a bit indignant. “Thank goodness you smashed the door and got out. That person was too malicious.”

“Okay, let’s not talk about it now.”

Pennleigh walked over to the crowd and clapped his hand. “I’ll give Ms. Rivera a good explanation for this matter. All of you should get back to your work. Ms. Rivera hasn’t fully recovered yet. We should let her rest more.”

“It’s okay, you don’t have to worry about me,” Hesper said, intentionally speaking louder. “I already know who that person is. Although there was no electricity in the company, the surveillance cameras outside were still working well.”

“That’s great.”

Hesper's gaze swept over Evon in the distance and she saw him avoiding her gaze, seemingly aware that she was looking at him. He quickly turned around and left.

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 483

Pennleigh nodded and patted Hesper's shoulder. "I'll discuss this matter with Ms. Rivera. We won't wrongly accuse any innocent people, and we'll definitely bring the culprit to justice. It truly astounds me that there is such a vicious person in Eustoma. This is something unacceptable. After confirming his identity, I'll hand over the relevant evidence to the police."

Hesper felt somewhat complicated looking at Pennleigh now, but it was not the time to talk about this.

The crowd started to disperse, and Hesper followed Pennleigh into her office. The office had been renovated and looked no different from before she left. Pennleigh turned around and closed the door.

"Do you have any ideas on how to deal with Evon?"

Hesper raised an eyebrow and said, "Do you think I've been at home all this time thinking about how to deal with Evon? Dealing with him is too easy. He couldn't even sit still just now, right?"

Pennleigh did not notice Evon just now, but he nodded at her words. "Okay, I believe you."

After that, both of them fell into an awkward silence.

"Umm... I'm almost done with Juniper's wedding dress, so I only have Elise's project left," Hesper said after some hesitation. "After I've finished everything, I'll leave Eustoma."

"Why?" Pennleigh asked, frowning. "If it's because of Evon, as I said before, I'll fire him and hand him over to the police. If it's about something else, I... I

mean everyone in Eustoma, including me, will help you to solve it. So why have you suddenly decided to leave?"

Hesper looked straight into Pennleigh's eyes and shook her head. "You like me, don't you, Mr. Pisano?"

Pennleigh initially had a lot of things to say. He wanted to convince her to stay, but he was stumped when he heard Hesper's question and looked at her blankly.

Hesper already had the answer inside of her heart. She pressed her lips thin and said, "I've never intended to take advantage of anyone's feelings. All this time, I've long considered you as my little brother. I don't want to give you the wrong idea, making you invest in this relationship, so the best option for both of us is me leaving Eustoma."

Pennleigh scoffed at himself.

"You really aren't going to give me a chance, are you, Hesper?"

Lowering her head, Hesper gazed at the tip of her shoe. "I'm sure you know what's going on between Rickard and me. Honestly, the real situation is even more complicated than you imagine. You can even use the word "messy" to describe our relationship. Besides, I have Renfrew. Are you sure you can accept it? Even if you can, then would your mother be able to?"

Pennleigh hesitated for a moment before shaking his head. He did not get sidetracked by Hesper and looked at her stubbornly.

"Those aren't the true reasons. The truth is that you don't have any feelings for me, right?"

Hesper did not want to reveal the harsh truth to Pennleigh, but she had to. Otherwise, things might get out of her hands. With that thought in her mind, she looked at Pennleigh squarely and nodded. "Yes. I've never considered you as a potential lover in my future. I only see you as a little brother."

Pennleigh nodded. "Thank you for your honesty."

Both of them were adults. Since Hesper had made things so clear for him, he found no reason to press on the matter.

“Although your reasons are justifiable, as the owner of Eustoma, I hope you can stay since you’re very talented. Besides, Eustoma is a great starting point for you. If you go to another company or studio, you may not have such a suitable environment as you have now.”

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 484

It went without saying that Hesper understood everything that Pennleigh said. Before she received any recognition from her clients, the very reason she could get any designing jobs in the beginning was mainly due to Eustoma's reputation.

Pennleigh and Eustoma had provided a lot of opportunities for her, but she was not going to stay in Antellon forever. When the semester ended, she would graduate, which also meant she would have to go back to her home country.

If she continued to stay in the comfortable environment provided by Eustoma, she would not be able to advance further.

“Alright, let's stop worrying about something that hasn't happened yet. At the very least, I still have to finish the project I have in Eustoma first. Otherwise, I may not be able to explain myself to Elise,” Hesper said as she patted Pennleigh's shoulder. “People come and go all the time, Mr. Pisano. As a boss of a company, you should be very familiar with it, so you don't have to feel too disappointed.”

Pennleigh gave a bitter smile.

It was true that Hesper had her own considerations, but the initial reason for her decision was definitely to distance herself from him.

“Don't look so gloomy. Come, it's time for a great show.”

After she had finished speaking, Hesper rose to her feet and exited the office with Pennleigh following closely behind.

*

Evon behaved like a cat on hot bricks ever since he returned to his office.

'Does Hesper really have evidence? Although this area is sparsely populated, there is a possibility that a surveillance camera was installed somewhere... Even though I wasn't too careful when I did it, I didn't expect her to think of that...'

While Evon was pacing back and forth in his office, someone knocked on the door.

"Who is it?" Evon felt a chill down his spine. When he saw the figure outside the frosted glass door did not resemble Hesper's, Evon took a deep breath and said, "I'm busy right now, so come back later."

"It's me!" Andris's voice rang out, puzzling Evon. He did not know why Andris would come to him at this time. Ever since Hesper came to Eustoma, their relationship had deteriorated.

Seeing Andris's determined stance outside the door, Evon frowned and opened the door. "What are you doing here? Can't you see that I'm busy? If you have anything important to tell me, then hurry up and say it now."

Andris looked at Evon's furrowed brows and sneered. "What's the matter? You look rather worried. Could it be that you're worried Hesper might expose you?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Evon said sternly, "This matter has nothing to do with me. I didn't do it. Why are you suspecting me? Do you have any evidence?"

"Do you still remember that day when Hesper's dress was destroyed?" Andris asked. "I was there for it. I happened to be backstage and saw the person who poured ink on her dress when no one was paying attention. I didn't expose you because I had no evidence. But now it has happened again."

'He saw everything?' Evon frowned and understanding instantly dawned upon him. That explained the reason why Andris's attitude toward Hesper suddenly changed and he began to distance himself from him after the incident.

Andris Delacroix was someone with a hot temper and straightforward personality.

“It was me last time, but I’ve got nothing to do with it this time.” Evon lowered his voice and grabbed Andris’s arm. “You’ve got to believe me. I just wanted to get that job. You know I need money. I just need that money. But it really wasn’t me this time. Think about it, Addy. What beef do I have with Hesper that would make me do something like that?”

Evon looked into Andris’s eyes. “You need to trust me. I really need this job, man. You know it better than anyone else. Please, I beg of you. Don’t tell on me...”

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 485

Before Andris could say anything, Hesper and Pennleigh walked in.

“Seriously, Mr. Etienne? Do you really think I don’t have any evidence?”

Hearing what Hesper said, Andris pulled his arm out of Evon’s clutches and looked at him with disgust. He had almost been convinced by Evon just now. How could he believe in a bad person like Evon who would stop at nothing to achieve his goal?

Hesper walked inside and looked at the panicked Evon sternly. “It seems to me that you still think you can get away from this, Mr. Etienne. But if I didn’t get my hands on the surveillance footage from that time, how would I make such a statement in front of everyone?”

Looking at the defeated expression on Evon’s face, Pennleigh could not help but sigh inwardly. If he had not known in advance that Hesper actually did not have any evidence, he would have thought that she really had gotten the surveillance footage.

“If you really have the evidence, then show it to us,” Evon said.

Chuckling, Hesper nodded. “You know what, Mr. Etienne? There’s a saying in my country that matches your situation right now. It’s called ‘refusing to give up until all hope is lost’. Okay, then. I’ll show everyone what happened backstage during the bidding session six months ago.”

She took her phone out and opened up the backstage surveillance footage that Renfrew gave her. She showed it to Evon and said, “You must be very surprised, right, Mr. Etienne? You’re very familiar with the studio. The footage shouldn’t have been stored anywhere, so how did I get it?”

“How is this possible...”

“Mr. Etienne, do you know why I didn’t expose you in public back then when I clearly had this evidence?”

“You should’ve exposed him and had him kicked out of the company,” Andris chimed in. “We don’t need someone morally corrupt like him here in Eustoma.”

Frowning, Hesper sighed. “As you said, after a series of investigations, I found out that Mr. Etienne really needs this job at Eustoma. You’re the breadwinner in your family. If you lose your job, nobody will be able to bring food to the table in your family. I also saw your daughter on your profile. She’s such an adorable girl. That’s why I didn’t expose you.”

Hesper withdrew her phone and looked at Evon intently. “Honestly, it’s easier than you think for me to get the surveillance footage. If you really think that you can get out of this safely, then I suggest you drop that thought, Mr. Etienne.”

Pennleigh turned around to look at Hesper and blinked twice.

Even he had not known the situation in Evon’s family. Hesper’s words showed that she had connections to investigate these things, and moreover, she already had the surveillance footage as evidence. Evon would not be able to escape this time.

As expected, Evon took a deep breath and lowered his head.

“Yes, it was me,” he said, gritting his teeth. When he raised his head again, his eyes were bloodshot. “Do you know why I did it? Before you came here, I was the most popular designer in Eustoma. What makes you think that you

could get an important client like Elise? It's only because Mr. Pisano likes you!"

Before Hesper could say anything, Andris interrupted and spat at him. "Evon, you're the one who destroyed her work because you couldn't defeat her, and now you're trying to shift all the blame to her again? Anyone with eyes can see that she's a better designer than you!"

Hesper waved her hand and looked at Evon. "Actually, I didn't have any footage at all for the latest incident, so thank you for your confession."

Evon's eyes widened with shock.

Hesper smiled at him. "I'll hand the recording over to the police. Thank you for your cooperation, Mr. Etienne."

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 486

"Do you guys know how awesome Rivera was just now?" Andris shared with everyone about what happened in Evon's office just now. Evon was taken away by the police several minutes ago, so everyone now knew who was the one that locked Hesper up in the office.

It was just that none of them expected that Evon would do something like that just out of jealousy.

"Alright. This matter is resolved now. All of you can return to your work."

If it were not because she had been pushed to the corner, Hesper really did not want to have a fall out with her colleague, especially since she was leaving Eustoma soon. Now that Evon had to leave Eustoma because of this incident, Hesper felt somewhat guilty for Pennleigh.

Pennleigh could see through her worries, but at this point, it was completely meaningless to say anything.

“There’s a new project available. Do you want to work on it?” Pennleigh said as he sent the client’s information to Hesper.

Hesper lowered her head and was a bit puzzled. “Rachael Lane? She contacted me privately and asked me to take her private order, but I didn’t agree. Then she deleted my contact. I didn’t expect her to come straight to Eustoma.”

“Rachael Lane?” Pennleigh was not familiar with the families in Halwanest, but he deduced that she was one of the Lanes from her name. Judging from the fact that Hesper had stayed with the Lanes for some time, he was certain that they must’ve feuded in the past.

“I’ll reject her for you then.”

Hesper thought for a while and nodded. “I’ll let you handle this matter. Besides, I’m not going to accept new projects for the time being. I have something else to do at night.”

“What is it?” As soon as the question left his mouth, Pennleigh realized that he might have been too nosy. He looked at Hesper nervously. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to pry into your personal matters...”

“It’s okay,” Hesper replied. She was not that paranoid to the point that she would suspect anything, so she answered honestly, “Someone has found a doctor who can treat my leg injury, and although I don’t know the result yet, I’ve decided to give it a try.”

Pennleigh heaved out a sigh of relief after he heard what Hesper said. He nodded. “It would be great if your leg injury could really be healed.”

Hesper hesitated for a moment before nodding. “You’re right.”

*

When Rachael received the message from Eustoma, she was attending a shareholders’ meeting.

Rachael had not been very savvy about the company’s affairs since her return, which had made her grandfather worried. To give her some say in the company, Arthur had given her a five percent stake.

“Miss, your phone is ringing,” Isaac reminded her. The old men on the board were not easily fooled. Since Rachael had not put her phone on silent before entering the meeting, she might get scolded for it.

Unexpectedly, Rachael thought that Isaac was telling her to reply to it, so she took out her phone and read the message from Eustoma saying that they were not going to accept her job. Her brows furrowed deeper and she ignored Isaac’s gesture to put the phone down, typing with her head lowered.

[Rachael: Is this how Eustoma does things? I demand an explanation from River A.!]

[Rachael: She told me before that if I wanted to book her services, I had to go through the studio. What does she mean by rejecting me now?]

[Rachael: Is she kidding me now?]

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don’t Beg for Love Chapter 487

“Ahem!” Isaac nudged at Rachael when his attempt to notify her failed. Rachael was in a bad mood right now. When Isaac nudged at her, she raised her head and glared at him. It was only then that she realized Isaac’s expression was ugly.

Even though Rachael was the true heir of the Lanes, she did not dare to say anything when Isaac’s expression turned dark. Suddenly, she realized that her surroundings were a bit too quiet. She looked around and remembered that she was here to attend the shareholder meeting.

“It seems like you’re really busy, Ms. Lane. These messages keep coming in one after another. I’m sure they’re even more important than managing Lane Holdings, right?” A certain shareholder chuckled mockingly.

In fact, who was in charge of Lane Holdings was the least of these shareholders’ concern. As long as they could earn enough money, they did not care who owned the company.

However, the company's profits had obviously declined ever since Hesper left, and Rachael did not seem to know anything. Not only was she unable to speak or act properly, but she was also naive.

"Sorry, sorry." Rachael knew she had done something wrong and kept apologizing while Isaac sighed behind her.

"Today we're going to discuss Lane Holdings' future development direction for the next six months. The previous projects have been completed satisfactorily, but it seems that you haven't secured any new projects in the first half of the year, Ms. Lane."

Rachael's heart skipped a beat when someone mentioned her name.

She did not know anything about managing projects. When she was asked to entertain some of their clients, she did not have the slightest clue of what they were talking about. The good thing was that she still had Renee to help her entertain those clients, or else it would have been a complete disaster.

She did not even know how to make a quote. How could she negotiate with a group of people who were talking about things she could not understand?

In the midst of her panic, Rachael suddenly remembered the projects Hesper had left before she left. Those were projects that Rickard gave them. Rachael had already consulted Juniper before and knew that those projects would keep her well-fed and clothed for several months if they were launched.

"I... I have some ideas," Rachael stammered.

Isaac frowned. He knew better than anyone else what Rachael did everyday, so there was no chance that she had any idea of what to do.

"Really? Enlighten us please, Ms. Lane."

Without looking at Isaac, Rachael said, "I know that before Hesper left the Lanes, she had many projects that were handed over to her by Rickard. They're all in Matt's hands, but he has never told anyone about them."

"Ms. Lane!" Frowning, Isaac grabbed her and whispered, "Didn't we already talk about this before? Those don't belong to you. You can't touch them."

Ignoring Isaac, Rachael continued, “The Duval Group and Lane Holdings are competitors. Although Rickard hasn’t done anything now because of our relationship, who knows when the Duvals will turn around and bite us? If we don’t start those projects, will we just let them fall into the hands of our competitors?”

“Rachael...”

The shareholders looked at each other in silence. It was true that Matthew had never mentioned these projects to them, and what Rachael said made perfect sense. Although Hesper had already left the Lanes, the benefits she had gained still belonged to the Lanes, right?

Isaac could tell from the expressions of the shareholders that they had all taken Rachael’s words to heart.

Rachael felt a little pleased with herself.

‘Hesper, haven’t you been making me live in your shadow? So, I’m sure you won’t mind if I use some of what’s yours, right?’ she thought to herself.

“Who gave you the permission to use what Hesper owns?”

Rachael’s smile froze. She raised her head and saw Matthew, who had not been to the company in a long time.

“Matt...”

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don’t Beg for Love Chapter 488

Ignoring her, Matthew turned around and glanced at the group of shareholders impassively with a frown on his face.

Matthew’s authority in Lane Holdings was second only to Arthur. However, Arthur had not been to the company in a long time due to his old age, so Matthew basically had absolute authority in the company.

Upon seeing Matthew's face, the board members knew that this matter was unlikely to succeed.

Everyone knew that Matthew adored Hesper a lot. If anyone wanted to touch her belongings while she was away, they had to get Matthew's permission first.

"Matt..."

Rachael did not expect Matthew to suddenly come back to the company. After all, he had been busy searching for Hesper lately. Otherwise, Rachael wouldn't have dared to propose touching Hesper's project right then.

Seeing that things were going nowhere, Rachael decided to shatter the silence. "Why can't we touch her projects, Matt? You're the most important person for Lane Holdings, yet you're away from the company all day looking for her. Yes, I admit that I'm incompetent and can't bring any profit to the company. But can you say to everyone here that you haven't done anything wrong?"

Matthew was silent for a moment. Seeing the situation, Isaac asked the board members to leave.

Since it was the Lane family's matters, the board members left one after another, as they did not want to enrage Matthew. Very soon, only Rachael and Matthew were left in the spacious meeting hall.

At first, Rachael had blurted out those words out of a whim, but now, seeing the expression on Matthew's face, she was starting to feel uneasy.

"Are you mad, Matt?" Rachael asked.

Matthew looked at Rachael for a while and shook his head. "Do you hate Hesper?"

"What are you talking about, Matt? I was doing it for the sake of our company. How could I hate Hesper?" There was a clear hint of panic in Rachael's gaze for a moment. She reached out to grab Matthew's sleeve. "I really don't."

In fact, Matthew already knew the answer in his heart. Rachael had every right to hate Hesper, but she had no right to touch her belongings.

“You keep your hand away from the projects. I’ll discuss this matter with Grandpa, but I’m pretty sure that he won’t allow us to touch Hesper’s things,” Matthew said as he withdrew his arm from Rachael’s clutches. After a short while of contemplation, he patted Rachael’s shoulder.

“Don’t overthink it. You’re one of the Lanes and my sister. Everyone likes Hesper, but that won’t change anything.”

‘Everyone likes Hesper but not me, huh?’

Before Rachael could ask the question in her mind, Matthew had already turned around and left the meeting room.

*

Hesper was going to start her treatment that night, but her plan was thwarted by a phone call.

“Ms. Lanning?” Hesper nodded after listening to the person on the other end for a moment. “Okay, I’ll come over now. Will you send me the address, or do I wait for you to come to the company to pick me up like last time?”

It was almost time to get off work. Pennleigh knocked on the glass door. Hesper picked up her bag and walked out, feeling helpless when she met Pennleigh’s gaze.

“Elise invited me to a small gathering. I guess I’m working overtime tonight.”

“What about your treatment?” Pennleigh asked.

Hesper shook her head helplessly. “Well, clients are always right. I’ll push my treatment to tomorrow. I’m going to make a phone call. You can go first.”

Meanwhile, Rickard was sitting on the balcony, looking at the bouquet of roses that Hesper placed by the door. She probably looked them up online and knew that roses were plants that liked sunlight, so she put the flowers in the yard every day before going to work.

“What’s the matter? Did you receive any messages from Hesper?”

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 489

Julian walked over with a complicated expression donning his face.

“Do you sit here every day to monitor Hesper?”

Rickard turned around. The emotions that were at the depth of his gaze were unreadable. “That’s none of your business. Has Hesper come back? She should be off work by now.”

Julian was silent for a moment before saying, “She just called and said she needed to call off the treatment tonight because something came up.”

“Okay,” Rickard replied flatly.

Julian did not move either and continued to stand behind Rickard, staring at him.

“What kind of deal do you have with Daybreak, or should I say Riley?” Rickard asked.

Julian clenched the knife in his hand, and his whole body trembled when he heard the question. Although Rickard was facing away from him, Julian felt as if he was being watched, as if all Rickard could see through all of his moves.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he replied.

Rickard sneered and did not say anything anymore. Mrs. Potter came in with the medication, and Julian took the chance to get away.

Mrs. Potter could see that Julian, who had just moved in, did not go along very well with Rickard, and the main reason was due to Hesper.

“You should take the medicine first. Your cold hasn’t completely gone away yet,” Mrs. Potter said.

Rickard nodded and calmly drank the medicine. “Help me check if there’s a nearby flower shop that sells roses that are easy to care for.”

“Huh?” Mrs. Potter was stunned for a moment. After realizing that she was being unprofessional, she cleared her throat and said, “Okay, I’ll check right away. I’ll give you an update tomorrow morning at the latest.”

To prevent Rickard from climbing over the wall to switch out the flowers again in the middle of the night, Mrs. Potter was determined to find a rose that was easy to take care of.

*

Returning to Elise’s house again, Hesper seemed to have a higher level of clearance than last time. After disinfecting as usual, Hesper entered the room where Elise was sitting on a small sofa waiting for her. Upon seeing Hesper, Elise’s eyes brightened.

“Hesper, come here quickly.”

Hesper walked over hesitantly and noticed that there was a small case in Elise’s hand.

“Mrs. Lanning…”

“Call me Aunt Elise,” Elise said, correcting Hesper. She dragged Hesper’s hand and gave the case to her. “Open it up and see if you like it.”

Hesper took the case and asked hesitantly, “It’s for me?”

Although this was not the first time she received a gift from her client, she had not even started on Elise’s dress yet, so it was inappropriate for her to take her gift.

Elise smiled brightly and said, “You should try it on. My husband went to an auction house the other day and saw this. When I heard the introduction, I felt that it was particularly suitable for you, so I asked him to buy it.”

Since Elise had already told her how they got this for her, Hesper felt it would be inappropriate for her to reject the gift. She opened the case and found a bracelet lying inside. There were several blue gemstones embellished on it, and it looked like the sea under the starry sky.

Both the quality of the gemstones and the design of this bracelet were far superior than the bracelet that Juniper had bought before.

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A Spoonful of Sugar: Don't Beg for Love Chapter 490

Hesper had some knowledge about gemstones, so she could tell that the price of this bracelet must be very high.

“This is too valuable; I can't take it.” Hesper closed the case and pushed it back to Elise. “I haven't completed the design for you yet, so please forgive me for not being able to accept it.”

As if she had known that Hesper would not accept the bracelet, Elise smiled and shook her head. “Don't worry, Hesper. It's true that this bracelet is expensive, but price is just a number to me. I think you look good wearing it, so I'm giving it to you. You should take it.”

Even though it sounded a bit aggressive, Hesper knew that Elise was right.

“Then, thank you so much, Aunt Elise.”

Hesper took out the bracelet from the box and quickly put it on. Elise was right. The sapphire was clear and beautiful, and it matched Hesper's fair skin very well.

“See? I know you'd look good wearing it.”

Smiling, Elise took Hesper's hand and admired the bracelet carefully for a while. After that, she looked up and said, “Although we've only met once, you seem so familiar... Did I disturb you by asking you to come over so late?”

It was true that Elise was disturbing her, but Hesper could see that Elise really liked her from the bottom of her heart, so she shook her head and said, “No, I still have work to do when I go back.”

“That's great... Opps, I mean...” Elise paused for a moment. “You didn't stay for a meal last time, so I wonder if you'll stay this time?”

“Okay. Thank you so much, Aunt Elise.”

Hesper had a special feeling as well when she was looking at Elise. It was as if they were supposed to be very close; she had never had this kind of feeling before.

Perhaps it was because Elise treated her really well.

Hesper shook her head to chase those thoughts out of her head.

“Ma’am, Ms. Rivera, the dinner is ready,” a maid said as she knocked on the door.

Grinning happily, Elise said, “Right on time. Let’s go. Oh yeah, by the way, my husband is home. But you don’t have to feel too stressed out. He’s actually a nice guy.”

Hesper nodded. Elise’s husband must be a very gentle person since he adored Elise very much. However, her thoughts were quickly dispelled when she saw her husband in the dining room.

“This is River A. She’s the wonderful designer that I told you about before,” Elise introduced as she led Hesper to her seat. Hesper observed the man at the head of the table. His face was cold, but when he heard Elise’s voice, he turned his head and his expression softened slightly. That being said, he was still far from being gentle.

“This is Charles Deschamps, my husband,” Elise said.

Hesper nodded slightly as a gesture of greeting, and Charles replied with a nod as well.

Elise shook her head and grabbed Hesper’s hand. “He’s a bit shy. You don’t have to feel so stressed. Just treat this place as a friend’s house.”

‘Shy?’

Hesper could not help but glance at Charles and found him also frowning at her. There was a subtle hint of helplessness and adoration in his eyes.

For some reason, Hesper suddenly found it a bit funny, so she lowered her head and stopped looking at Charles.

Now she could see that Charles really loved Elise. Although he looked cold on the surface, whenever he was looking at Elise, the coldness on his face melted away instantly.

Judging from Elise's age, she could have had a child like her, but Hesper had not heard of them having children during her two visits, so she guessed it might be due to Elise's physical condition that they had not been able to have any.

Apparently, everything came with a price. Both of them loved each other very much, but they could not have any kids.

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