

Chapter 840 The True Colors Of Florence

After listening to Florence, Marco felt relieved.

It seemed she knew nothing about his real identity after all. She had just come to ask him for help.

He felt it was ridiculous that Clifford kept asking him to go back to the Cruz family while Florence was asking him to support Grady.

What would she think if she knew his true identity?

Marco sneered and looked up at Florence. With all her delicate makeup and luxurious clothing, her eyes were still full of greedy scheming.

He knew how to deal with this kind of person. If he refused to listen to her, she would not give up and would only continue to bother him.

Marco looked down and thought for a while. Then he said to her in a hesitant tone, "But..."

Florence's eyes lit up immediately. She thought she had succeeded in persuading him, but in her heart, she still despised him a lot.

Some people claimed that Marco must have been spineless to be Loraine's gigolo. From what she could see of him now, that assessment was correct!

A small favor was enough to make the bastard do what she wanted since he had lost everything. She never really spent much time and energy to persuade him.

Initially, because of Marco's anger and arrogance, she had thought that she would have to try very hard to convince him. But it turned out to be the opposite. Therefore, in the future, when Grady finally assumed the position of head of the Cruz family, Marco would not even qualify to be Grady's friend.

Nevertheless, as she thought of all these, she couldn't help but remember one important fact. Though Marco's current status was low, she knew that he was still quite capable of managing enterprises. If she asked him to work for the Cruz family by helping to run some of the family's enterprises, he might agree.

But in order for him to be truly obedient, they would have to completely break his dignity.

With a smile tugging at the corners of her mouth, Florence took a sip of her coffee and said in a low and serious tone, "Come on, Marco. I'm not exaggerating. I'm telling you the plain truth. It's time for you to make a plan for yourself. Do you want to be under the care of Lorraine all your life?"

Marco lowered his head and said nothing. Florence went on, "If you continue to be her gigolo, she will abandon you sooner or later, and you will be looked down on by the public. You saw those insulting comments online today, right?"

But Marco suddenly raised his head and looked straight at her. Perhaps she was overthinking it, but somehow, Florence felt there was a glint of mockery in his eyes.

Instead of continuing to pretend, Marco broke into a full smile and asked, "So, is this the reason why you got people to leak that story and slander me?"

Florence was shocked! She didn't expect him to say this. All along, she thought she had everything under control. But apparently, she was wrong!

She looked away awkwardly, and grumbled with anger written all over her face, "I don't know what on earth you're talking about!"

Marco sneered in response. He had come to see her today not because she had succeeded in fooling or convincing him.

He wouldn't let anyone blackmail him. Even if Florence had really known his true identity, he had been prepared from the beginning to turn her down and stop her from blackmailing him with this information.

Seeing how shocked she was, Marco didn't say anything. Instead, he just put his phone in front of her.

On the screen, there was the screenshot of a conversation where Florence was talking about hiring people to spread rumors about him and slander him.

When Florence saw this piece of evidence, her face turned red in shock and embarrassment.

Truly, she had hired those people to spread rumours about Marco when she saw that there was a lot of negative news about him online. Her main aim was just to take advantage of the trend and ride it, and she thought she had been discreet enough.

So how on earth did Marco get evidence of her actions so soon?

Florence looked at him. In addition to being confident and calm, Marco had also learned to endure.

This was a lot more terrible than him being arrogant, but Florence felt sad that she had not realized it on time. She tried to come up with an excuse to make herself feel better.

She told herself that with the support of Loraine, it would not have been difficult for Marco to get this evidence.

After telling herself this, she looked at Marco with a sneer and said ferociously, "I did it. So what?"

Leaning back on the chair, her face was now showing her contempt and arrogance. "Marco, you should be very grateful. Let me tell you this. My son will be the head of the Cruz family sooner or later. It's in your best interest to help us. Don't act so stupidly!" she warned.



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Chapter 841 Exposed It

Having made her threats, Florence regained her confidence and arrogance, and sighed inwardly with relief.

She was panicked, so she completely forgot that there was no need to be scared of Marco anymore. At least not with his current status.

A small smile played on Marco's lips. "What do you think will happen if I tell the world that you hired people to slander me? What would the Cruz family say about that? Would they let the next master be someone with such a mother?"

Florence sent a sharp glare at Marco as her face darkened. Yes, there weren't a lot of descendants in the Cruz family, so a ton of people wanted to claw their way into the race to be the next heir as well.

She wouldn't have asked Marco for help if not for the fact that Ariadna was indebted to him, which might increase Grady's chances of becoming the next Cruz family heir. There was no way that she was going to allow a scandal to ruin her image and implicate Grady in it.

"You wouldn't dare, Marco," she said through gritted teeth.

Seeing that she had run out of options, Marco stared at her coldly. He didn't need to act nice anymore. With a devilish smile on his face, he lazily got up.

"It's really all up to you, Mrs. Cruz. Just stay out of my business, or else..." He trailed off, dragging the last word out slowly. "Well if that's all, I'll be leaving first then."

Florence had interrupted his plan to cook for Loraine. At this rate, if she kept bothering him, he was going to have to do something awful very soon.

"Marco!" Florence yelled frantically, forgoing all attempts to remain reserved. She was too anxious to be graceful. "Think about it! The Cruz family will most definitely give you some money to repay you! Use your brain! Just join me! Support Grady!"

As expected, she had snapped. She didn't know what else to do.

Marco turned his head slightly to get a good look at her desperate state. "I don't need anything from the Cruz family. I don't want to even match with Ariadna."

If he had known, he wouldn't have done the stupid matching test when he discovered his relationship with the Cruz family. It had caused him so much trouble, even implicating Loraine.

Marco sent Florence one last look of warning before walking out.

Florence's face turned red from anger. She dramatically swept her arm over the table, making all the items on it shatter on the floor while she cursed in resentment. "Marco! You bastard! Who do you think you are?! Just because the Torres family has your back?! Don't forget the Torres family is nothing when placed side by side with the Cruz family!"

Marco was already long gone and could not hear her raving like a mad woman.

A while passed and Florence finally relaxed a bit. She suddenly remembered what Marco had said. He didn't want to match with Ariadna? She remembered the rumor that spread back then. Apparently, Marco had investigated the Cruz family... so

the rumor was most likely true.

There had to be some kind of secret behind it!

A lot of people seconded the fact that Marco wasn't actually a match with Ariadna but just replaced the actual person because he had the Torres' power backing him up.

Florence didn't go with the business men who went to question the Torres family back then because she had had an argument with Loraine. And when she asked for the details of the questioning, nobody gave her a reasonable response.

In her own opinion, Loraine probably suppressed the news.

Florence sneered. Loraine was really something as she planned all of this to pave the way for Marco and ensure that he would claim the credit and align himself with the Cruz family.

The more Florence pondered, the more confident she became in the accuracy of her guess. She glared at the door where Marco had walked out from. "All right then, Marco. Don't help me. It'll be a shame for the Cruz family to know that you lied about being the one who helped Ariadna..."



Chapter 842 Happiness

With an angry look on his face, Marco left the cafe in a bad mood.

Before Florence called him out here to tell him nonsense, he had been planning to learn how to cook a new dish for Loraine.

Now that he had told her off, he hoped Florence would convince the head of the Cruz family to forget about him.

As he stood there by the side of the road, a black luxury car quietly rolled to a stop in front of him. Marco opened the door and climbed in. "Mr. Byrant, are you going back to the Torres family?" the driver asked politely.

Marco nodded, and then said, "The people that were assigned to keep an eye on Florence, ask them to withdraw. Let only one person stay on that task."

When it came to his relationship with Loraine, Marco was very careful. That was why he assigned a lot of people to keep an eye on Florence.

Unexpectedly, she turned out to be just a noisy troublemaker that posed no threat!

But still, he was very cautious. He wouldn't just leave her alone to do whatever she wanted. He knew that even a seemingly harmless person like Florence was capable of causing big problems.

"Okay, boss." The driver nodded in understanding and made a mental note to carry out the instructions.

When the car finally rolled to a stop near the the Torres' house, Marco got out and walked the rest of the way.

He was now a "poor" man. If the Torres family saw that a luxury car had brought him back, it would easily cause trouble.

As he walked, he tried to calm himself down so that he would be able to totally devote himself to cooking.

Thinking of the food he had been planning to make before he went out this morning, he couldn't help but pull out his phone and call Loraine.

He broke into a smile when the line finally got connected.

"Marco, what is it?" Loraine asked in a gentle tone. He replied with a grin on his face, "I'm learning to cook. But apart from the main meal, do you want desserts or something?"

In her office at Universe Group, Loraine raised her hand to stop her subordinate who had been reporting some data to her. She now focused all her attention on Marco. With a big smile on her face and her hands fiddling with her pen, she replied in a whisper, "Yeah, but I seldom eat desserts nowadays. Why do you ask?"

The two subordinates who were in the office looked at each other and smiled knowingly. It seemed their boss was in a good mood today. Perhaps they wouldn't have to work overtime today.

Meanwhile, after hearing the question, Marco hesitated for a while. Then he decided not to tell her that he was learning to make dessert. After all, Loraine was a good cook. He didn't want to make himself look like an idiot in front of her.

So he changed the topic. "Has work been stressful today? Are

you tired? Or did I interrupt you?"

He couldn't help but smile as he said this. Universe Group had recently entered a partnership with Solar Company, so it was impossible for her not to be busy. Somehow, he felt responsible for making her so busy and he couldn't help but feel a little guilty. "I missed you, so I couldn't help but call. I'm sorry if I'm bothering you," he apologized.

It was quiet in the office. Though his voice was low, Loraine was afraid that her subordinates would hear everything he was saying. With a blush on her face, she covered the speaker of her phone and waved off her subordinates. After they had gone, she turned her attention back to her conversation with Marco.

"What's wrong? Marco, did something happen to you?" she asked in concern.

Her intuition was always accurate, and right now, she had a vague feeling that something had happened to him.

Besides, she knew him very well. If nothing had happened, he would not call her during working hours and start speaking his mind so straightforwardly.

Hearing the concern in her tone, Marco was speechless, but his heart was filled with sweetness because of how considerate and gentle Loraine was. This was one of the reasons why he was determined to always make sure that their relationship was going well. He couldn't afford to let anything go wrong between them.

"It's nothing, Loraine," he assured her. "I just wanted to know your preferences. I sincerely hope you and I will be happy forever."

Loraine was confused when she heard this. She became even more convinced that something must have happened to him.

But before she could ask him again, she heard a knock on the door. It was one of her subordinates.

"Miss Torres, the doctor said that the handover can be done in three days," a young woman said as she peeked into the office.

Marco overheard this statement, and he sighed impatiently. But it quickly dawned on him that he had not only become happier with Loraine, he had also become quite impatient whenever her attention was diverted from him even for a short period.

Now that he'd come to this realization, he tried his best to stay calm as he heard Loraine say a few words to her subordinate. A moment later, she came back to him. "Marco, are you still there?"

"Don't worry, Loraine," he said gently. "Go on with your work. I'll cook and wait for you at home."

But after a short pause, he asked, "Will you go to the hospital later?"

Though Loraine felt he was acting a little strange today, she tried not to ask him again if something had happened to him. Instead, she decided that she would talk to him when she got home. So, she simply replied, "Ariadna has gradually recovered, and there is no need to use the robot after the operation. I'm going to pick it up myself."



Chapter 843 Putting In A Good Word For Solar Company

The ninth-generation surgical robot had been lent to Universe Group by Solar Company. Being the CEO of Universe Group, it was Loraine's responsibility to return the robot to Solar Company.

Hence, it was compulsory for her to go to the hospital to retrieve the robot by herself.

Since they were talking of the robot, Loraine couldn't help but mention Solar Company. "Look, something strange has been going on. After that display of arrogance by Miss Hoffman, our conversations with staff of Solar Company have been very smooth lately."

Marco was secretly pleased to hear this. But he didn't tell her that he was the one behind their change of behaviour. Instead, he took the opportunity to put in a good word for the company. "Solar Company is really good. The partnership between Universe Group and Solar Company is not only a win-win one, it also builds better relationships between staff members of both companies."

Loraine's eyebrows shot up in surprise. Back in the day, it was virtually impossible to hear Marco, the arrogant CEO of Bryant Group, praise anyone or anything. But recently, he had been showering praises on Solar Company.

So she asked him in a playful tone, "Mr. Byrant, why do you think so highly of Solar Company? I'm beginning to suspect that you've been hired to promote them."

Marco tensed up instantly. For a split second there, he almost thought that Loraine had discovered his identity.

After taking some time to catch his breath, he replied smilingly, "I was just expressing my opinion. I don't think any company that can partner with you would be bad."

Scared that Loraine might doubt him, he quickly added, "I used to be the CEO of Bryant Group, so I know what I'm talking about."

Loraine found this amusing, but she also felt that there was something strange. She had come to realize that any time she mentioned Solar Company, Marco always exhibited an unusual reaction.

Maybe it was because he and Sullivan were very good friends. So, she didn't think too much about it and instead, just responded perfunctorily, "Of course, no one can doubt your wisdom."

Marco breathed a sigh of relief when he heard this. But he knew she was being sarcastic, so he responded with a laugh. Nevertheless, he didn't dare continue this topic. Instead, he quickly said, "Go ahead with your work. Let me not disturb you anymore. I'll just wait for you to come back."

What came to Loraine's mind as he said this was that if she went home in the evening, Aldo and her two uncles were not at home, so it would just be the two of them.

A blush crept up her face as her mind ran through the possible scenarios that could play out. Embarrassed about her line of thought, she quickly said goodbye to Marco and hung up. But when she looked up, she saw that Jolie, who had earlier informed her about the situation with the robot, was still standing there. In fact, she was leaning against the door, winking at her playfully.

Jolie was not just her subordinate, she was also her friend. Hence, she was bolder than other employees in her interactions with Loraine. "Miss Torres, why are you so happy?" she asked teasingly. "Are you getting married? Don't forget to invite me to the wedding."

Loraine's face turned red and she said with a smile, "How dare you talk about your boss' private affairs? Don't you want to get your bonus this month?"

Jolie immediately raised her hands in mock surrender. "Oh, please forgive me. I won't say anything about what I heard here to anyone else," she promised.

"Whatever," Loraine chuckled. "By the way, why are you still here? Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

With a big smile on her face, Jolie entered the office and handed Loraine some documents. The documents contained details of the projects Universe Group and Bryant Group had partnered on.

"Bryant Group has just been acquired by Solar Company. I came to ask you what we should do concerning our previous partnership with Bryant Group," she clarified.

Jeroy had talked about this issue with Loraine earlier at the hospital. Solar Company felt that the partnership should continue, which would be a win-win for both sides.

But because of what Jefferson had done, Loraine had ordered her employees to terminate all existing partnerships with Bryant Group. Now, Bryant Group had a new owner, so Jolie decided to come to ask for directions from Loraine.

After listening to her, Loraine thought for a while. She remembered what Marco told her before.

He'd said that there was no need to damage current or future interests for the sake of old grudges.

Moreover, he didn't care about Bryant Group anymore.

So, with this in mind, Loraine said to Jolie, "After the robot has been returned, find time to talk this issue over in great detail with Solar Company. If we have the chance to continue the partnership, we will do so."

Jolie nodded in understanding. Being Loraine's friend, she took the business concern very seriously. She took a furtive look around and then closed the office door. Then she sat down and said in a confidential tone, "Loraine, the problem is that the other shareholders don't seem to have any intention of continuing the partnership. Why are you willing to continue working with them?"

The reason the shareholders were unwilling to continue the partnership was simply because most of them were worried that the reputation of Bryant Group would influence the stock price of Universe Group, while some believed that Solar Company would not be serious about Bryant Group's old projects.

However, Loraine had already heard the news from Jeroy and had also gotten Marco's advice, so naturally, she didn't worry about it at all. She calmly took a sip of her tea and said with a smile, "Don't worry. Just do it. I'll persuade the shareholders to continue to partner with Solar Company. Trust me, it will be highly beneficial and not harmful in any way."



Chapter 844 Get-together

The next day, Marco made plans to hang out with Slater and Jimmie at their favorite bar.

He didn't really initiate the meeting. After his countryside trip, his leg injury, and getting involved with the Cruz family, Marco hadn't confided in his buddies. Slater, learning about this from others, got really upset, leading to an intense argument in their group chat.

So, Marco felt it necessary to invite them to reconcile.

Though Marco owned the bar, it wasn't common knowledge. He used it mainly for getting together with his friends.

They had a special private room there. Even if the long-term staff didn't recognize him as the boss, they treated him like a VIP, serving drinks then leaving him be.

But today, a new waitress behaved differently. After serving drinks, she lingered, her gaze fixed on Marco.

Marco, lounging on the sofa with his legs crossed, looked effortlessly stylish in a casual white shirt. He absentmindedly rotated his wine glass, appearing lost in thought.

The new waitress witnessed all of this and felt her heart pound.

Capable at reading people in this lavish setting, she sensed his high status.

He was young, attractive, with a mesmerizing gaze. His distant, tender look suggested he'd be a caring partner.

She hesitantly approached to pour his drink, thinking of ways to start a conversation. But Marco's sharp look stopped her.

He covered his glass and said firmly, "No service is needed here. Didn't your manager tell you?"

The waitress, holding the bottle, was instantly embarrassed and confused.

Right then, Slater and Jimmie arrived, quickly understanding the situation.

Jimmie, always the smooth talker, stepped in with a friendly smile, easing the tension. The relieved waitress quickly left.

Slater, more laid-back, grabbed a wine bottle, lounged on the sofa, and teased Marco, "You hardly call us out, yet you're still distant."

Marco gave him a chilly stare, causing Slater to cough and temper his approach. However, he quickly took the opportunity to dig into Marco's personal matters, complaining, "You didn't even inform us about your significant injury earlier. Is it because you had a motive to move into the Torres' house?"

"Is Loraine treating you so well that you didn't want us coming over?" Slater, gauging Marco's tolerance, remarked with a dash of annoyance. "Opting for love instead of friendship, I suppose?"

Marco just rolled his eyes and exchanged a resigned look with Jimmie.

Jimmie chuckled and lightly tapped Slater's forehead, playfully finishing Marco's sentence, "Slater, I always thought you considered yourself quite the expert in love matters. Surely, you wouldn't want an extra person tagging along on your dates, would you?"

At Jimmie's teasing remark, Marco gave an approving nod, while Slater, the so-called third wheel, turned red with embarrassment. He straightened up, ready to argue, but Marco effortlessly halted him.

Marco, getting straight to the point, inquired, "Jimmie, you're in the loop about the Solar Company's takeover of the Bryant Group, aren't you? I could use your assistance with that."

This news caught Slater's attention. He thought it over briefly, then his eyes widened in astonishment. "The Solar Company? Marco, isn't that your firm? How on earth would you take over the Bryant Group?"

Marco hesitated, his face growing stern, and he stayed silent.

Slater, not probing further, elaborated, "My dad was eyeing Bryant Group's headquarters, considering a purchase. He was just about to make his move when he discovered he was too late. Little did he know, it was your doing!"

Jimmie's expression grew contemplative. Knowing Marco better than Slater, he probed further, asking, "Marco, what prompted you to suddenly decide on acquiring the Bryant Group?"

He paused and then added, "You know, I had once pondered suggesting that you take over the Bryant Group. It seemed like a smart move, but I figured you'd want to steer clear of the Bryant family, so I held back. I never expected you'd go ahead with it on your own."

Marco's expression darkened a bit as he massaged his temple, feeling somewhat overwhelmed. He clarified, "The decision to acquire was actually Doris'. She chose to go ahead with it herself."

Chapter 845 Showing Off His Bracelet

Jimmie and Slater, Marco's closest friends, were two of the few people who knew that he was the CEO of the Solar Company.

They weren't really close to Doris. They had only met up with her a few times, and Slater found her particularly irritating despite her beauty because she never hid the fact that she disliked him. He had once tried to court her, but she openly rejected him without the slightest bit of hesitation.

"I have zero interest in worthless shitheads who only rely on the wealth of their family to survive." Those were her exact words.

Jimmie shook his head but soon stopped when he remembered what Marco had said. It might be a bit dangerous if Doris had any ulterior motives, seeing as she'd been in charge of the Solar Company's overseas operations.

She attempted buying the Bryant Group, which Marco wanted nothing to do with. What else was she capable of doing in the future? Did she also make some decisions by herself when she was abroad?

Slater turned to Marco. "What the hell does she think she's doing, Marco? This is pure betrayal!"

Marco wasn't okay with her recent actions, but he had faith in the partners he chose. He let her act independently after all. Yes, she'd been acting quite weird, but he didn't believe she would actually try to betray him.

Jimmie stared at Marco and suddenly remembered Doris' confession back then. She had been keeping a low profile after Marco had turned her down. No one would have even believed that she liked him at a point in the past.

Jimmie had thought she was over it, but now it didn't really seem like it. He stared at Marco, considering whether he should ask or not. "Could she have heard the news about you and Loraine? Maybe that's why she's doing this... To get to you."

"Probably..." Marco said, his gaze fixed on one spot as he continued to think. Doris' purchase of the Bryant Group was for his sake.

He didn't really need help to deal with the Bryant Group though. In fact, he had been waiting to destroy every single connection he had with them for good. Now she had ruined it.

Jimmie took a small sip from his glass in silence. He'd been Marco's friend for ages, but he didn't know what to do. "Need me to do anything?"

Marco gave a nod and instructed, "The Bryant Group and the Universe Group still have some ongoing collaborations that are yet to be completed. The Solar Company has taken over Bryant Group, so I'm going to need you to coordinate and transition those contracts and partnerships to the Universe Group and the Solar Company instead."

Both companies were connected to Marco in some way. He did not want his identity being revealed, so Jimmie would be the best candidate to help him deal with the issue and cover his identity.

Jimmie immediately understood his concern and agreed to help.

"I still don't get what her deal is, though. I thought Doris was supposed to be patient. She's definitely not acting like herself." Slater sighed.

Marco stared at the floor in thought. Doris was probably doing it because of the growth in his relationship with Loraine.

His gaze landed on the small bracelet on his wrist, causing him to smile as he gently rubbed his finger over it. "Well, it doesn't matter now. Doris won't be a problem anymore, since I've reassigned her already."

The two men sitting across him noticed the way he smiled softly at the tiny bracelet.

"What's up with the tacky bracelet, Marco?" Slater asked through furrowed brows. It didn't look expensive, so he didn't understand why Marco wore it so proudly.

Marco's movements halted as he glared at Slater.

Not paying attention to the look he was being given, Slater continued, "You never used to show off your accessories even when you wore watches costing millions of dollars. So why are you showing this off? When did you even start wearing bracelets?"

Jimmie sighed, once again not believing how dumb Slater was.

Marco's gaze returned to the bracelet. "It's understandable for you to be so dumb since you've never had a girlfriend before... Loraine made it for me."



Chapter 846 Learning To Make Dessert

Slater became speechless. The mere mention of the fact that he had never had a girl before made him feel depressed again. He looked at Marco, who had a sly smile on his face, and then at Jimmie, who was gloating over his misfortune. Slater couldn't help but feel confused.

It had taken Marco quite a long time for him to get back together with Loraine. When this eventually happened, Slater and the others didn't mind Marco's public display of affection. Now that it concerned him, why was Jimmie treating him like this?

When Slater thought of the anonymous lady, he became more and more convinced that Marco and Jimmie had conspired to make fun of him. So he pouted and said sourly, "I know you and Loraine are in love. But maybe you should stop showing off!"

Marco smiled and glanced at his wristwatch to check the time. Then, he suddenly changed the topic. "Do you know any excellent dessert chef?" he asked.

Slater was stunned. "Why do you ask? I thought you didn't like sweet food?" he asked in confusion.

But Jimmie had already figured it out. "It's for Loraine, isn't it?" he asked Marco. "I know one expert chef at a five-star hotel. I'm learning how to make dessert from him. You can join me if you want."

Marco's eyes lit up immediately when he heard this. Just



yesterday, he had plucked up enough courage to make egg tarts. Unfortunately, in the process, he almost blew up the Torres family kitchen.

When Loraine finally returned from work and asked him about the dessert he had made, Marco, who had since instructed the domestic staff to clean up the kitchen, lied to her, telling her that he hadn't started cooking yet.

Marco had always been good at teaching himself things. But cooking had humbled him. It took a while, but he had finally realized that it was impossible for him to make dessert by himself. Hence, he needed a teacher.

Not minding what his friends might think, he openly stated, "Well, I'll go with you. I also want to learn."

Jimmie nodded in understanding, but he was trying to hold back laughter.

At this point, Slater was the one that was left out of their caucus.

Glancing at them, he couldn't help but complain, "What the fuck is wrong with you two? How can a CEO and a top lawyer in the country go learn how to make dessert? Can't you guys just buy it if you really want to eat it? If you can't afford it, I can. All you have to do is ask. Don't be too scared to ask!"

Marco kept drinking calmly as Slater spoke. At some point, Jimmie spoke up, saying to Marco in a pitiful tone, "I've told you earlier, you shouldn't think twice before asking me for help. It's useless to expect any from him."

As Jimmie said this, he looked at Slater, who was still shocked at such a direct insult. Nevertheless, he sighed and went on, "How can he know what love is? He only knows how to have fun!"

Marco nodded in agreement and said, "Well, it's not his fault. Among the three of us, only Slater hasn't been in love yet. So he can't understand what it's like."

At this point, Slater felt he had been mocked for too long and flew into a rage. But he was outnumbered by the two of them. Hence, he was furious but helpless.

Holding back his laughter, Jimmie patted Slater on the shoulder to comfort him. Then he quickly changed the topic. "Marco, the Cruz family is going to host a banquet in a few days. We've received the invitation, and I think Loraine must have been invited too. Will you go?"

As far as he was concerned, Marco and Loraine were always together. If Loraine received an invitation letter, Marco would certainly go with her.

Marco never heard Loraine mention anything about this banquet. He thought for a while before replying, "Well, if Loraine decides to go, I'll accompany her."

Though he had no interest in seeing any member of the Cruz family, he was quite worried that Loraine would be forced to attend the banquet alone.

At this point, Slater suddenly interjected, angrily asking Jimmie, "Aren't we supposed to be good friends? Why do you only care about Marco and ignore me?"

Jimmie seemed to find his statement funny and he responded teasingly, "Both Marco and I will go with our female companions. What about you? If you can't find a female companion, you can't go. Of course, I don't need to ask you if you have any, because I know you don't."

Slater was so angered by this statement that his face turned



red with anger. As a young member of the Lee family and the heartthrob of the night clubs in Vagow, how could he not find a female companion? He had many women around him already for crying out loud!

But Jimmie seemed to see through Slater's mind and he warned in a firm tone, "Don't bring an arm candy. A woman you pay to accompany you cannot attend such a banquet. You should know that."

Having been exposed, Slater said angrily, "Both of you are neglecting me just because of women, eh? I don't mind Marco being like this. But you, Jimmie, have always been quite the player. So why are you treating me like this?"

"Stop talking nonsense," Jimmie retorted. "I've turned over a new leaf now, and I behave myself. If my girl hears what you just said, you'll have to issue a public retraction."

Despite being once a top lawyer, Jimmie didn't feel ashamed of the fact that his girlfriend could punish him. Instead, he saw it as a sign of his moral superiority and a bright smile spread across his face.

As for Slater, he didn't respond immediately. He first emptied his glass of wine and gnashed his teeth. "Isn't it just a female companion?" he shrugged. "Each of you have one. How can I not find one? Just wait and see!"

