

Chapter 172 Cheating

There was so much pressure on Marina.

Faced with everyone's doubts, cold sweat began to break out on her forehead.

Lorraine looked at her calmly and asked with raised eyebrows, "Didn't you say you learned a lot of things since childhood? Why can't you tell the difference between the wine from Chateau Mouton and the one from Chateau Lafitte?"

Marina looked down in embarrassment. "I... I drank too much wine and got a little drunk. I was careless and I made a mistake."

"Really?" Lorraine asked causally, which only irritated the guilty Marina.

She was so angry that she jumped up and stamped her feet. "Lorraine, you just guessed it right just once. Why are you so proud?"

Laura also came to her daughter's defense, "Exactly. Marina has tasted so much wine. It's not a big deal if she made a mistake. It doesn't matter."

Indeed, Marina's explanation made sense. After all, she had drunk so many different kinds of wines, so it was normal that her sense of taste wasn't as sensitive

as it was at the beginning.

Lorraine didn't say anything but only smiled at the two.

"Enough! Stop pretending!" Grady suddenly shouted. "According to the original arrangement of the wine-tasting party, this should be the time to introduce a bottle of wine from Chateau Lafitte in 1869. But I asked the servant to change the order of the wines, and the bottle from Chateau Mouton was put in place."

Marina's heart skipped a beat. She broke out in a cold sweat and stammered, "Grady, you... What do you mean? I...I don't understand."

Overhearing their conversation, Florence immediately knew that something was wrong, so she asked, "What's going on?"

"Let Lorraine explain it for us," Grady said, giving Lorraine a glance full of gratitude.

Lorraine nodded and began slowly, "I was just a little curious. Just by taking a little sip of wine, Marina was able to immediately analyze the type of wine, its origin, and the period it was brewed. As we all know, it takes time for the fragrance and flavors of the wine to sink in, so one needs time to properly analyze the taste. She didn't look like she was tasting wine at all. She was more like..." She deliberately paused, effectively arousing everyone's curiosity and putting them in a state of suspense. "...reciting."

The moment she said the word, everyone gasped in

shock.

"So, Marina already knew the various wines and she was just calling out their names in the order at which they were arranged, right?"

"I think Loraine's words make sense. Just now, I was already suspicious. She could tell everything about the wine after only a single sip. I knew there was more to it than met the eye!"

"No! If it was true, then how did Marina know the answers?"

While they were discussing, Grady suddenly stood up and said, "Marina, I don't know how you and your mother found out the order of the wines to be tasted at the party, but this behavior is shameful."

At this point, Florence had almost figured out the whole story.

It was the first time that she had been fooled like this. She flew into a rage immediately and demanded a confession from Laura and Marina.

"How did you know such closely guarded secret? Give us an explanation right now!"

"We are being falsely accused!" Laura said in a hurry. "There must be some misunderstanding. How could we do such a thing?"

Marina concurred immediately, "Yes. You can't just

slander us with guesses. You need to have solid evidence!"

Hearing their denial, Florence became even angrier.

Undoubtedly, it was one of the domestic staff working for the Cruz family who had told them about the arrangement. She had to fish out that person.

Florence looked around and snapped at her staff, "Tell me! Who on earth gave her this information?"

All the servants lowered their heads in silence.

"None of you wants to admit it?" Florence snorted. "If you admit it right now, I can give you your severance pay. If you don't tell me, I will call the police. The Cruz family will not allow anyone dishonest to work here!"

Hearing that the police were going to be involved, one of the servants became so scared that her hands began to tremble, and the wine bottle in her hand fell down and broke into pieces.

The sound of shattering glass suddenly attracted everyone's attention.

Seeing that the whole thing could no longer be hidden, the servant fell on her knees.

"Mrs. Cruz, it's all my fault. I was tempted. I took the money from Laura Bryant and told her the order of the wines. Mrs. Cruz, please forgive me."

Chapter 173 The Final Winner

"Well, what else do you two have to say now?" Florence asked angrily, scowling at Laura and Marina.

The evidence was irrefutable. Neither of them could deny it.

"Security, get these two out of here," Florence ordered when it became clear that the mother and daughter had nothing to say in their defense.

Following her orders, the security men marched up to Laura and Marina.

The two women fell into a panic and quickly turned to Marco for help.

Marina grabbed her brother's arm and begged pitifully, "Please Marco, stop them. I don't want to leave! Marco, help me!"

With a worried look, Laura added, "Marco, please put in a good word for us. Do you want to see your sister and mother thrown out like this?"

But Marco was highly disappointed in them. "I warned you to behave yourselves, didn't I? I can't help you this time."

With that, he shrugged off Marina's hand and stood up.

Then he said to Florence in a serious tone, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Cruz. It is their fault. I'll ask my men to take them home now."

"Marco!"

"Marco!"

Both Marina and Laura shouted at the same time as they looked at Marco in astonishment. They didn't expect him to be so heartless.

Though Florence was angry, she had enough presence of mind to not disobey Marco. So, she nodded in agreement with a long face. "Alright. It's your family. You can deal with them yourself."

Marco signaled for his men to come over. Immediately, they came forward and led the pale-looking mother and daughter away.

Now that the two troublemakers had been removed, the party became peaceful again.

At this point, Marco apologized to all the guests present.

"I'm so sorry to interrupt the party. I will present a gift as compensation," he said to Florence.

With a hand signal from him, one of his men brought over a bottle of wine. Looking at the translucent bottle, the guests could see the bright color and the high purity of the wine. It had great quality.

Someone at the banquet exclaimed in surprise, "Oh my God! Isn't that the Screaming Eagle Cabernet Sauvignon? It's known as the King of Wine in Matias and was sold for an astronomical price at the auction!"

Florence also stared at the bottle in surprise.

She liked this wine. Back then when it was on auction, she wanted to buy it, but unfortunately, it was snapped up by an anonymous buyer.

She didn't expect that buyer to be Marco.

Thanks to this bottle of unparalleled good wine, the topic of the party returned to wine tasting, and the atmosphere gradually improved.

The guests continued to enjoy the wines and talked happily amongst themselves. Many of them recognized several kinds of wines, but they were not at the level Loraine was.

After tasting the wines, Grady stepped forward and announced, "On behalf of the Cruz family, I declare that Loraine Torres is the final winner of this wine-tasting party!"

Nobody disputed this. All the guests agreed with the decision.

It was obvious that there was no one better than Loraine at wine tasting.

Seeing that there were no objections, Grady looked at

Florence and said, "Mom, please bring out the prize for the winner."

But Florence had a long face.

The other ladies present also looked very unhappy.

Most of the ladies who had been invited to the party more or less knew that the purpose of the event was to select a wife for Grady. The so-called wine-tasting event was to be used as a ploy to test the family background and talent of each young lady.

The fact that Grady declared Loraine as the winner meant that he wanted her to be his wife.

Florence forced a smile and said awkwardly, "You silly boy, today's wine-tasting party is just to share our collection of wines with everyone. There is no winner or loser. Stop kidding!"

"I'm not kidding," Grady responded with a serious look.

Florence's eyelid twitched, and she still tried to muddle through.

"Loraine tasted only one wine. So, we can't prove that she is the winner."

But Grady didn't agree. The mother and son stared at each other, neither party willing to give in to the other.

Loraine, the main character of this argument, looked indifferent.

She never intended to ask for a reward and neither did she care whether there was a prize or not.

But Wesley didn't want his beloved niece to miss any chance to get a prize, so he said, "Since Mrs. Cruz doesn't recognize Lorrie's abilities, maybe we should continue with the competition. Who else here thinks she can defeat Loraine? You can come up and challenge her."

Saying this, he looked around the banquet hall, but no one indicated interest in challenging his niece.

Though the girls were not satisfied with the result, they all knew that they couldn't hold a candle to Loraine. So, they didn't dare to challenge her for fear of losing face.

At this point, there was nothing Florence could do, even though she refused to admit Loraine was the winner.

"In that case, please bring the gift I prepared," Florence ordered, giving a sly wink to the butler, indicating that he should replace the real gift with a cheap one.

Wesley caught the secret communication and immediately knew what Florence was planning.

He raised his voice and said, "Considering the wealth and prestige of the Cruz family, I'm sure the gift will not be ordinary."

Florence's expression froze.

Considering Mr. T's identity as a great artist and Loraine's abilities in appreciation, Florence knew that it would be insulting to hand her a cheap gift.

She gritted her teeth and said, "Of course, we will only offer the best of what it has." Then she turned to the butler and ordered him to go get the gift.