

Chapter 263 Poach The Chef

Marco didn't know what Loraine was thinking about. He asked softly, "Loraine, you've tasted some of the best dishes here. How do you feel about them?"

With a slight cough, Loraine took her hand out of her bag and sat upright before speaking.

"They're very delicious. The preparation was fantastic. I guess they learned from the style of the famous foreign restaurant, the Geranium."

Marco nodded approvingly.

Loraine looked down at the almost untouched food in front of him and asked, "Why haven't you eaten?"

Thinking of the method that Carl had taught him to coax a woman, Marco said in a flirtatious tone, "It doesn't matter. I'll be satisfied as long as you enjoy the food."

But after the words left his mouth, he began to feel awkward. Loraine, on her part, got goose bumps all over her body and rolled her eyes in disgust.

"You're so picky. Even if the most expensive food is placed before you, I'm afraid you'll still see it as something simple."

Marco was taken aback. He couldn't help but think of

the dishes Loraine cooked while they were married.

Every time he ate her food, they always met his taste.

But he was so busy with his work that he seldom went home for dinner.

When she saw that Marco had nothing more to say, Loraine called the waiter to bring the bill.

Marco pursed his lips. He didn't want to miss this hard won opportunity to talk with her alone.

Looking at the dishes on the table, he suddenly came up with an idea.

"Loraine, didn't you just say that you were familiar with the cooking style of this restaurant? Do you want to see the chef?"

In order to develop the catering area of the new CBD, a group of excellent chefs were necessary. That was one of the purposes of Marco's visit to the restaurant –to poach a good chef.

Loraine felt it was a good idea, so she nodded in agreement.

The restaurant was no longer very busy, so within a few minutes, the chef, Tonio Pavani, was called out.

He was dressed in a white chef's suit and looked neat and energetic. He instantly won their favor the moment he appeared.

Marco nodded in satisfaction and addressed him, "Mr.

Tonio, I invite you to contribute in the development of the new CBD of Bryant Group. What do you think? As for salary, you can name whatever amount you want."

Tonio's expression changed slightly. He glanced at Marco from the corner of his eye and turned him down without any hesitation.

"Sorry, I'm not interested."

Marco frowned. "The salary Bryant Group will pay you will be more than ten times the amount you get here."

Tonio looked straight at him this time, but his eyes had a look of indifference in them. "I know you don't lack money, but I don't want it. Please leave if you've finished your meal. Don't insult me with your stinky money."

Marco's face darkened in anger and Loraine couldn't help laughing.

"What are you laughing at?" Marco demanded. The fact that she was laughing at him instead of speaking up for him made him feel disappointed and depressed.

Loraine tried to hold back her laughter and said jokingly, "It seems you only know how to use money to win people's heart."

"So you think you can do better?" Marco scoffed.

Without hesitation, Loraine turned to Tonio and said earnestly, "Mr. Pavani, I'm Loraine Torres of Universe Group. We are working together with Bryant Group to

develop a new CBD in Vagow that will have a series of commercial buildings, shopping malls, entertainment facilities and so on. The first thing we want to do is to build a top-notch catering area. After tasting your marvelous dishes, Marco and I decided to invite you to join us."

Seeing how friendly she was, Tonio dropped his guard and said, "I don't want to embarrass you by being boastful, but frankly, I've worked in several high-end restaurants before and I'm already tired of managing big restaurants. The brand premium is too much, which sometimes leads to overlooking quality food and good taste. So, I want to focus on cooking rather than making a lot of money."

"You are quite right! I can't agree more." Loraine nodded in concurrence, with a bright smile. "But Mr. Pavani, I'm telling you now that I want to have the best restaurant, not the most flashy or expensive one."

Tonio was obviously moved by this statement, and his expression softened a lot.

"Mr. Pavani, if you join us, more and more people will taste your food and your style will be widespread," Loraine added.

Feeling her sincerity, Tonio finally made up his mind and stretched out his hand.

"Well, if you promise to keep your word, I'll accept your invitation."

Loraine shook hands with him happily and they both

agreed on the day and time to formally discuss the partnership.

After Tonio left, Marco frowned in confusion. "I offered him the best conditions. Why did he refuse me and end up agreeing with you?"

Wasn't it a big deal for the CEO of Bryant Group to personally invite a chef?

Lorraine glanced at him and sneered, "You always act as if you're a dictator. You order people to do what you want. You're lucky he didn't kick you out. Look, people are not commodities. They need emotional communication."

Marco kept quiet and began to think back.

He regarded his marriage to Lorraine as a deal, right?

He thought he could buy an obedient wife as long as he gave her money. He never really considered her feelings and emotions.

That was why they ended up getting divorced.

Now that Marco realized all this, he grabbed Lorraine's hand and said in a low voice, "I'm sorry, Lorraine."

Chapter 264 Shocking News

Lorraine cast a confused glance at the hand holding her arm.

Why did Marco suddenly react so strongly?

It was just that he failed to poach Tonio. What made him apologize to her?

Although Marco had previously treated her badly, he had never apologized to her.

Lorraine grumbled silently to herself. She made an unsuccessful attempt to remove his arm. She could tell Marco was very serious by the expression on his face.

She sighed helplessly and said, "You don't need to apologize. It doesn't matter even if you failed to poach the chef. Going forward, all you have to do is be mindful of your attitude and tone."

Nevertheless, she didn't believe that Marco, who was conceited, would genuinely take into account the feelings of others.

Marco didn't know how to respond to that.

They had different thoughts from one another. The eavesdropping Qbot was so agitated that it repeatedly vibrated inside Lorraine's bag.

Frowning, Marco glanced at her bag, and asked, "Is there anything urgent?"

Loraine felt a wave of panic wash over her.

She tried to control her expression as she replied, "Perhaps my uncle is calling me. Thank you for today's dinner. I'll take my leave."

Marco was baffled. He didn't realize what had happened until Loraine was gone.

Something was off. Loraine hadn't looked at her phone once throughout the entire conversation. How could she know that her uncle was trying to find her?

As soon as she left the restaurant, Loraine hailed a taxi to take her back to her apartment. She patted her chest as she entered her room and exhaled a sigh of relief.

She immediately pulled out her phone and started searching for the source of the vibration.

The cell phone's display was crammed with messages, and Qbot was still sending more. The notification bar slid down like water as the messages continued to pop up.

"Daddy is so stupid!"

"Daddy, don't you have a speaking mouth? Say something! I fell tortured!"

"Forget it. It's better if you don't talk."

"Mommy, why did you marry Daddy back then? How come he didn't take you home tonight? I'm so disappointed!"

Feeling a headache, Loraine sighed and said helplessly, "Marco isn't pursuing me right now. You don't need to put in as much effort to create chances for us."

Qbot put on an ignorant act. "Mommy, what do you mean? I can't comprehend!"

Loraine narrowed her eyes and said, "Qbot, I'm serious. I'll send you back immediately if you continue acting this way."

As expected, Qbot dropped the act and apologized. "Mommy, please don't get angry. I've gathered information about your breath, heartbeat, and pulse, and I will play some soft songs to help you get a good night's sleep."

Loraine nodded helplessly.

Thanks to the songs, Loraine did get some rest that night.

Unexpectedly, Bryant Group and Universe Group were two of the top searches the following morning.

Immediately after turning on her phone, Loraine noticed a news item listed as the top trending topic.

"Bryant Group's lab appears to be experiencing a problem, which may be related to its commercial

competition with Universe Group."

Loraine scowled and opened the article. The image of her and Allen walking into Bryant Group was the most shared post. Its words were misleading.

"An insider claims that there was a significant failure in Bryant Group's lab the day when Loraine and her researcher visited the company yesterday. It's hard not to doubt it."

Additionally, the post had a lot of comments.

"Does that mean that Loraine's dishonest competition is destroying Bryant Group? What a vicious woman!"

"A solid reputation always surrounded Bryant Group. Rarely did any laboratory failure make the news. How is it possible that something went wrong as soon as Loraine arrived?"

Many people firmly believed that Loraine's dirty deeds were the cause of the failure and kept placing the blame on her.

"It's horrendous. It's unethical to defeat her rival by playing dirty tricks! Ex-husband and ex-wife shouldn't have cooperated."

"I advise other companies in the industry to be on guard against Loraine. She's sly and manipulative."

When Loraine saw these remarks, she couldn't help but laugh. They simply accused her without any supporting evidence.

Qbot spoke for Marco. "Mommy, trust Daddy. He certainly didn't do it!"

Lorraine nodded. "I know."

Marco was not that stupid because teaming up the two companies was not simple.

There were a lot of people who wanted to sabotage the cooperation because they envied them.

Lorraine didn't want those people to get their way.

Thus, she logged in her account and denied, "I'm sorry, but some people truly have no brains. It's a pity I had nothing to do with the lab failure at Bryant Group. Rather, I helped them."

Someone asked doubtfully, "I don't trust you! Where is the evidence?"

After a while, Marco commented too.

"Lorraine, you're being humble. You have undoubtedly been a huge help to us. Thank you once more on behalf of Bryant Group. I'm hoping that going forward, our cooperation will go more smoothly."

Chapter 265 Spot The Lie

Marco's comment to Loraine undoubtedly confirmed what Loraine had said. People who had doubted her were put to shame. They were shocked by the sudden turn of events.

Immediately after this, another piece of news popped up online.

Someone had posted a photo of Loraine and Marco having dinner in a restaurant that night.

The restaurant was very popular and famous, so as soon as the photo was posted, many people quickly testified that the two did indeed have dinner at the restaurant that night, and they were there to witness it.

If what had been claimed online was true about Loraine maliciously causing the failure of Bryant Group's lab, how could the two of them sit together and have dinner?

It became even clearer at this point that the two of them were not pretending to show that there was nothing wrong between them. Truly, they were not affected by the lab failure.

Since this issue had been completely settled and understood, the focus of the masses' attention immediately shifted to another thing.

"What exactly is going on between Loraine and Marco?"

"If it's just an ordinary business partnership, will the two of them have dinner alone in a private restaurant? This is obviously beyond the normal working relationship!"

"Forget it. Who was the one spreading the story that Loraine sabotaged Bryant Group's research?"

"Since they used the surveillance photos of Loraine in Bryant Group, then the person that spread this fake news must be someone inside the group. This makes this whole thing highly intriguing. What could be the person's motive?"

Before long, more and more people began to come to the conclusion that the person was actually the real saboteur. And clearly, the person's plan was to frame Loraine.

People immediately began to check the list of visitors that had come to Bryant Group that day.

Some insiders secretly cooperated with them and provided them the required information. Soon, they found that, except for Loraine and her team, there was only one other visitor, Laura Bryant.

"Who is this Laura?"

"Isn't she Marco's mother?"

"I don't think she has anything to do with this. How could she destroy her own company?"

There were all kinds of guesses and theories online, but the topic was becoming increasingly viral.

Meanwhile, Laura was about to go out when Marco came back and stopped her.

"Why did you leak the information about the lab to the public and try to frame Loraine for it?" Marco demanded without any preamble, his face darkening in anger.

Laura was shocked, but she quickly hid her bag behind her and said, "I don't know what you're talking about. I didn't do anything."

Fearing that Marco wouldn't believe her, she quickly added, "Besides, I own shares of Bryant Group. How can I leak confidential information about our own company? That would be very bad, I'm sure."

"Is that so?" Marco sneered. "So, you didn't spread the rumor because you were scared of being blamed by the board of directors, eh?"

Hearing this, Laura broke into a cold sweat. But she still pretended to be calm. "Marco, don't you trust your mother? I'm not stupid! I know there are surveillance cameras in the company, and yet you think I made up such a clumsy rumor?"

But Marco didn't believe her even one bit. The disappointment in his eyes was very evident. He had planned to give Laura a chance to confess, but she had thrown it away.

"Since you knew that Qbot is the flagship achievement of the company and we need it to remain confidential at all costs, you decided to make trouble for Loraine because you were sure that we would never release the surveillance footage to disprove the rumor, right?"

Without the surveillance footage, Loraine wouldn't have any evidence to prove her innocence. As a result, no one would believe her, no matter how much she explained.

Laura's scheme had clearly been a very vicious one.

Unfortunately for her, she never expected that Loraine would have dinner with Marco that day, which was more than enough to convince everyone that Loraine was not guilty.

Now that her lie had been exposed by Marco, Laura's face turned deathly pale.

Marco looked at her in contempt and shook his head.

"Mom, did you spread that rumor to frame Loraine?" he asked through gritted teeth.

Laura still tried to push her luck to see if she could get away with it. "Stop talking nonsense. I—"

"Did you think I'd confront you without evidence? This is the proof that you contacted someone to spread the fake story online." As Marco spoke, he took the phone even closer to her face so she could see the screen clearly. "Mom, I'll handle this matter fair and

square. I'll hand the evidence to the board of directors. You can explain yourself to them."

The evidence was solid and irrefutable. Laura now realized how much trouble she was in and she began to beg. "Marco, I admit it's my fault this time. I was possessed. Please don't give the evidence to the board of directors. It's a family matter. Let's solve it by ourselves please."

Marco's face remained unchanged and expressionless. His eyes were cold and sharp, and his lips drawn into a thin line.

When Laura saw the determination in his face, her heart sank and she screamed, "Marco, you can't treat me like this! Remember, I'm your mother!"

All of a sudden, the voice of an old woman cut in.

"If he can't, then I can."

Laura turned around in shock.

The next moment, Liza slapped her hard across her face.