

# In a Love Nest with the Aloof CEO Chapter 146 - 150

Luxe was the biggest luxury shopping mall in the entire country. There were rumors that Tobias had built it for Tanya, his fiancée, so she could shop and dine like a queen whenever she wanted to. This was every woman's dream—many of them envied Tanya for her good fortune, sighing that she must've saved the entire universe in her past life.

Unfortunately, there would never be a place for Skylar in their privileged lives.

A moment later, she threw herself onto the bed and turned her phone off. She didn't wish to discuss such heavy topics with Penelope in the middle of the night—they would only end up speculating endlessly.

Jeremy was snoring very loudly. Skylar tossed and turned in the lower bunk, unable to fall asleep. She kicked his bunk in frustration. However, Jeremy, who was sleeping like a dead log, did not feel a thing.

Skylar couldn't help but recall when Jeremy was lying in the hospital bed like an ill cat. He didn't even have the energy to breathe. In fact, he reminded her of a languishing flower that had been stripped of its petals and left to die in the wind.

The loud snores then were proof that he was as healthy as a horse. She traded her body for Jeremy's health! This was a stain on her existence that she would never be able to erase for the rest of her life.

That afternoon, the train finally pulled into N Province. She didn't sleep a wink throughout the entire night, pulling an all-nighter for the first time in her life. On the other hand, Jeremy slept very well. He woke up just as they were supposed to get off the train.

Jeremy followed after Skylar as they made their way out of the train station. The distance between them was neither close nor far.

According to the map, there was still a long way to their destination. The production team didn't send a car over to pick them up. Evidently, they regarded their actors with little respect.

Jeremy cursed under his breath, “They couldn’t even be bothered to send a sedan over. We have to pay for the transportation fees by ourselves! What sort of treatment is this?”

Skylar concurred with Jeremy, thinking that the crew disrespected them. However, she wanted to distinguish herself from Jeremy, not wanting to be under the same grading as him.

She managed to hail a taxi by the side of the road. The moment the car door swung open, Jeremy shot inside without even sparing her a glance and shut the door after him.

Skylar was furious. “What do you think you’re doing? I was the one who hailed this cab!”

Jeremy rolled down the window. “Well, I got in first. Get in! Who knows when is the next taxi coming? We can share the taxi fare.”

Skylar looked up at the sky in frustration. Dear God, what did I do to deserve this!

Don’t make Jeremy appear in front of me ever again.

Who would even bother splitting the taxi fare! Jeremy was one of the most miserly people she had ever met.

Tobias was right! How pathetic of me to fall for a thrash like Jeremy!

Skylar sat in the seat next to the driver—where the payor would usually sit.

When they arrived at the taxi terminal, Skylar swiped her card on the card reader while Jeremy got out of the car.

Skylar went to the boot of the car and took out her luggage. She called out to Jeremy and reminded him, “The cab fare costs twenty-eight. Please transfer me your share, thanks.”

Jeremy looked sulkily at her. “I can’t believe you’re really asking me for it! No matter how you look at it, we’ve been lovers for such a long time.”

A smile appeared on Skylar’s delicate face. “If I can even put a number to it, you owe me more than your share of cab fare. Stop spouting rubbish and pay up right now.”

Jeremy transferred the money over to her, looking extremely reluctant. His gaze fell on her luggage, which had a Louis Vuitton logo emblazoned on it.

“Where did you even get that luggage? I can’t believe you’re dragging around a fake branded item when you aren’t even famous yet. Look how vain and shallow you are.”

Skylar clenched her fists, feeling a sudden urge to slap Jeremy across the face. She calmed herself down and smiled broadly at him. “It was a gift from my boyfriend!”

A vein throbbed in Jeremy’s neck. How could she have the money for a luxurious suitcase if she could barely afford the plane ticket? It is all very suspicious.

The filming site was in the countryside—the production crew had selected the location half a year ago. During the entire way there, Jeremy complained about the producer’s decision to film in such a deserted area.

Although he was whining non-stop, he was actually feeling overjoyed. He had been stewing in a state of excitement these past few days.

Acting in a movie produced by Daryl Williams was a straight ticket to stardom.

The bus shook all the way to the shooting location, finally arriving at Knoxville Town. The conditions in this shanty town were worse than her expectations.

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The moment they stepped off the bus, a cloud of dust and sand swirled around them. Apparently, this town was identified by the government as one of the poverty-stricken areas in the country.

There was a man in a white cap and grey waistcoat standing by the entrance of the town. When he spotted Jeremy and Skylar, he made his way towards them immediately.

They couldn’t tell how old he was. He had long and thick sideburns that extended down the sides of his face. There was something bulky shifting around in his coat pocket.

“Oh, the both of you came together! I’m Howard Cowley. I am tasked to pick the both of you up.”

Howard's eyes were fixed on Skylar as he spoke. He couldn't help but notice how supple her skin looked. How beautiful!

Jeremy was very eager to make himself stand out. He rushed forward and shook Howard's hand immediately.

On the other hand, Skylar merely smiled timidly at Howard.

Howard led them to where the production crew was. On their way there, he updated them regarding the important details of the shooting procedure.

Skylar turned to him and asked, "Has the director arrived yet?"

Howard smiled cheerfully at her. "Yes. Regarding your role as the lead actress, the production team has arranged for another candidate to film separately. The director will take a look at each of your scenes individually before deciding on the lead actress. You guys may go ahead and practice first. We will start with the supporting actors' scenes first."

Jeremy was pleased to hear this. "I knew it! A renowned director wouldn't take the lead actress casting so lightly!"

Howard's words proved Skylar's suspicions correct. Before this, she had wondered if her success had come too suddenly.

If she were Daryl's first choice for the lead actress role, he wouldn't be treating her so poorly—poor enough to have her book her own cab to the shooting location.

Perhaps he had been acting on impulse back when he chose her, and now he regretted it.

They finally arrived at the filming site. This was the first time Skylar had seen so many cameras around her. As the extras paced around the set listlessly, the director barked out orders to the other workers.

Hearing that Howard had brought the two of them there, Daryl walked over to them, chomping nastily on a pear. As she met his bleary gaze, Skylar felt a shiver run down her spine.

Daryl scanned her from head to toe. Skylar was in her casual wear.

A pair of silky white ankle stuck out from beneath the rolled-up cuffs of her jeans. Her features, which carried a schoolgirl-like innocence, made her look even more beautiful.

Daryl had wanted her to be his lead actress all along. However, the production team commented she appeared too modern, lacking the rustic appeal they were looking for.

Daryl thought that was hogwash. Unfortunately, Skylar wasn't famous enough for him to speak up on her behalf.

In the past, he would have fought bitterly to keep her as the lead actress. However, since he was making an art film this time, he had no choice but to bow down to the investors. Frankly, Daryl was very annoyed. If he knew this was going to happen, he wouldn't have invested so much time into looking for the perfect lead actress.

"Have the both of you taken a look at the script?" Daryl asked.

Skylar nodded. "Yes. I've read through the entire thing."

Daryl sighed deeply and said, "Well, don't bother reading it anymore. They've changed the lead actress."

Didn't Howard say that we would film separately and be judged based on our performance?

Initially, Skylar thought she might have a chance against the other actress if she gave her best efforts. The small spark of hope in her heart was extinguished almost instantly.

"May I know why?" Skylar wanted an explanation—she would be lying if she said she wasn't disappointed. "You could've told me about this beforehand so I could be mentally prepared."

Daryl replied calmly, "There's no reason behind it. It's quite common in this industry for lead actresses to be swapped out at the last moment. However, I do think you're quite suited for the role of the supporting actress. You're still young, and there will be many more opportunities ahead of you. Sadly, our investors have decided that you won't be playing the role of the lead actress."

Skylar had read the script of the supporting actress. She couldn't help but feel that she was nothing but a common wench who moaned and griped and seduced men. What an awful character!

In the end, the supporting actress was the one who ended up with the lead actor. Skylar knew that she would be getting a lot of hate mail once the film aired.

Seeing her hesitate, Daryl said immediately, "You can choose not to accept this offer if you don't want to. After all, we haven't signed a contract yet. If you choose to return home now, the production team will absorb the cost of your plane ticket home."

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Daryl had seen many arrogant newbies in the industry—some of them refused to take up smaller roles, believing that anything else but lead roles were beneath them. He had a strong dislike for this sort of people—how important did they think they were?

Skylar tugged at her sleeves and replied immediately, "When can we sign the contract? If I don't grab this chance now, someone else might come along and take it."

Daryl beamed proudly at her. This girl was smart enough to know when she should treasure an opportunity.

He still felt a little sorry for her. He had directed commercial films for years before his career in making art films. These sort of films showed off his artistry but often did mediocly at the box office. This meant that the investors called the shots—he had no choice but to accept whoever they had selected as the lead actress.

Daryl looked at Skylar's pretty face and saw that fatigue was written all over it. Kindly, he said, "Why don't you take a rest now and familiarize yourself with the supporting actress' lines? It'd be great if you could finish memorizing them in three days. Any problems?"

Although she was panicking inside, Skylar nodded at him. Memorizing everything in three days was going to prove particularly difficult, and she couldn't guarantee that she would be able to do it.

A murmur ran through the room as the crowd of people parted to let someone through. Behind Skylar, Daryl explained, "This is the new lead actress, Katrina Hudgens. You'll be acting in a lot of scenes together, so make sure to run through your lines with each other."

By the time he finished speaking, Katrina had already walked up to them. Her manager, Lisa, and her personal assistant followed behind her.

Although it was cloudy, her personal assistant was holding a huge umbrella over her head.

Skylar recognized Katrina instantly. She used to be the most popular girl at the acting academy. She was beautiful beyond comparison and had a figure that was tall and alluring like no other. Avery might consider herself a great beauty, but Katrina was far more beautiful than Avery could ever be.

However, despite knowing her name, Skylar had never seen her works.

After she got together with Tobias, Skylar had read up on some tabloid news about him. Katrina was photographed meeting up with Tobias—the two of them had gone into a hotel and only left together the next morning.

Katrina had always been very ambiguous about the rumors swirling around Tobias and herself. It only made people more intrigued.

Even now, everyone still knew Katrina as Tobias's secret mistress.

Katrina peered haughtily at Skylar and asked Daryl, "Was she the original actress for my character?"

Daryl replied, "I suppose so. She's a newbie and has never acted in a film before. Do set a good example for her as her senior!"

Katrina smiled blandly. "I see."

She didn't look at Skylar again. Instead, she looped her arm around Daryl's shoulders and said in a low, seductive voice, "Well, I can be considered a newbie myself. Mr. Williams, please take good care of me."

Skylar couldn't help but stare open-mouthed at her. Katrina's face was mild and sweet, but her mannerisms were provocative beyond belief. No wonder she managed to seduce Tobias.

Skylar wondered what Katrina's relationship with Tobias really was back then. Were they a couple, or were they merely friends with benefits?

Skylar left the scene quietly by herself, without a personal assistant or a manager to accompany her. She couldn't help but think of herself as a decapitated fly.

Katrina's lips curled into a smile. She turned to Lisa and said, "I wonder what Daryl was thinking. How could he have selected her as the lead actress? What's wrong with his eyes?"

Lisa replied mockingly, "I heard she isn't even signed to an agency. In fact, she's completely new to the industry. She's still a freshman in university."

Katrina's eyes narrowed as she smiled and said, "No wonder she looks so young."

Skylar walked into the hostel that the production crew had put together half a year ago. Although it was nowhere as luxurious as a hotel, it was much better than staying in one of the mud-brick houses the locals lived in.

The rooms were decorated very poorly—there wasn't even a place for her to wash up aside from the communal bathroom upstairs. Apparently, only the higher-ups in the production crew had individual bathrooms and even mini-fridges in their rooms.

Skylar put down her luggage and took out the script. She had memorized the lead actress's lines so perfectly that she could recite them in her sleep. However, she had been removed from that role last minute. What am I supposed to do now?

She threw herself onto the bed, which was so hard that she nearly cursed. She felt as though she had just fallen into a pit of mud bricks.

It certainly looked like Skylar was down on her luck that very day.

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She covered her face with the script and shut her eyes in a daze, her fingers gripping her phone tightly.

Suddenly, there was a loud vibration in her palm. As though she had been injected with stimulants, she jolted out of her reverie immediately.

She sat up on one arm. When she saw that it was Tobias, she let out a sigh that she had been holding in.

She cleared her throat and accepted the call.

“Are you there yet?” His familiar voice made some of her anger dissipate.

“Yes, I just got here. W-Why are you o-only calling me now?” Skylar stuttered horribly as she tried to ask him.

“If I didn’t give you a call, are you planning on waiting forever? How can you stand being so stuffy all the time? You can give me a call too, you know.”

Skylar froze a little. Had Tobias been waiting for her to give him a call all this time? No wonder he was only calling her now.

“Where are you?” Skylar asked.

“I’m in Thailand. There’s some private business I have to settle. Why, do you miss me?”

Skylar wanted to say something in response, but she held herself back from doing so. In her opinion, Tobias was exactly like the flying man up in the sky. What is he doing in Thailand? He just went to Rome a month ago!

Skylar said uncertainly, “I might be back earlier than I thought.”

She didn’t tell him that her role as the lead actress had been given to someone else instead. She couldn’t help but fear that Tobias might think of her as being incapable of accomplishing anything at all.

Tobias promised, “I’m afraid I’m stuck here for the time being. I’ll visit you as soon as I return home. Wait for me!”

Feeling rather shocked, Skylar said, “This place is filthy as a pigpen. Are you sure you want to visit me? There’s dust everywhere and a limited water supply. I don’t even have a bathtub in my room.”

Tobias replied nonchalantly, "I'm not going there to take a shower, am I? I might not even be able to go if work gets too busy for me."

Talking to him was like getting aboard an emotional rollercoaster. Skylar's mood changed consistently with every inflection in Tobias' voice.

She hesitated a few seconds before saying, "I have something to ask you. Do you know who Katrina is?"

In a low voice, Tobias replied, "No, I don't. Why are you bringing this up suddenly?"

Skylar chuckled bitterly to herself. Had Tobias really forgotten about her, or was he merely pretending? As expected, an eminent person has a short memory.

He was photographed leaving the hotel with her sometime back. How can he not know her?

Tobias hung up the phone. He had never heard of a person named Katrina before. Although it was rather strange that Skylar brought her up so abruptly, he didn't bother asking her about it—she would tell him if she really wanted to.

Skylar stayed in her room and perused the script deep into the night. She was a fairly smart girl with a powerful memory—however, having to memorize such a large volume of information in such a short amount of time made her brain feel like goo. Besides, all her lines were long-winded and complicated.

She had taken on several minor roles before, but none of them had this many scenes. If she wanted to excel, she had to bring out the vileness of this character. In fact, it would be best if the audience felt like slapping her after watching the film!

She took a shower and returned to her room. Feeling much better, she picked up her phone, turned off the lights, and lay down on her bed.

Her phone screen lit up with another notification.

It was from Tobias: Are you asleep yet?

He had sent it at midnight—half an hour before she stepped into the shower. Skylar felt a little regretful. She should've taken the phone into the shower along with her!

She wondered if Tobias was asleep yet. If her memory served her right, this was the first time he had talked with her deep into the night. Before this, they had only chatted sparsely about very meaningless topics.

Skylar rolled to one side and tapped out her reply with one hand.

Not yet. Are you asleep? Why did you suddenly think of contacting me?

She spent a few more minutes searching for the right emoji, eventually settling for a cross-eyed cat.

Tobias replied: What a strange question. You're the one who told me not to disappear on you and to contact you regularly.

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His words were cold and to the point—it was nothing as romantic as she had envisioned. Skylar scolded herself for being so petty. Tobias was treating it like a chore instead of messaging her willingly. Did he feel forced into it by me somehow?

Skylar replied: Can I ask why you're in Thailand, by the way? For in-vitro fertilization? Getting sex reassignment surgery done?

Her fingers flew across the keyboard as she typed frantically. She wanted to find a common topic of interest with him. Truth be told, it was rather pressurizing to have a conversation with a man that was ten years older than her—she couldn't think of what to say at all.

Should she be like those university couples and send him lovey dovey messages? No, that was way too cheesy.

Tobias replied immediately: I don't need that. Besides, I have no wish of becoming a woman. I'm here for a tattoo.

Skylar rolled around in bed excitedly. She didn't feel tired anymore.

She couldn't help but associate tattoos with backstreet gangsters, who covered their entire bodies with skulls and other morbid images. This was the complete opposite of Tobias's vibe—he was mature and civilized. Since it was quite improbable that he would have gangster friends, how did he ever think of getting a tattoo?

A sudden realization dawned on her. Had Tobias decided to get a tattoo of her name to prove his love for her? However, this sort of idea was quite preposterous. Skylar was not one of those girls who lost all sense of logic the moment they got into a relationship.

However, although she tried to hold herself back, her fingers were very honest.

She replied: What tattoo did you get? You don't have to do that for me...

The chat window showed that he was typing a reply. However, it disappeared after a short while.

Skylar held onto her phone tightly, looking at the screen without blinking. However, Tobias didn't reply for another thirty minutes. Had her words baffled him?

In the dead of the night, the crickets were chirping loudly. The surrounding was so quiet that Skylar could even hear her own breathing.

After an hour had passed, she decided to message him again.

Skylar typed: ???

Waiting for him to reply was agonizing. Her heart kept beating furiously. She tossed and turned a few times as she yawned loudly. After turning around a few times, she finally fell asleep holding her phone.

When she woke up the next morning, Skylar felt around the bed for her phone before she even opened her eyes. When she finally did, the sun was already shining outside. Fatigue made her lie in bed for a little longer. When she saw a new notification on her phone, however, she jolted awake immediately.

Tobias said: Sorry, my phone ran out of battery last night while I was out.

That message was sent at eight in the morning. Women were much more analytical when they were in love. Like Sherlock Holmes, Skylar started to pull apart Tobias's words in her

mind. He was out at one in the morning. However, most youngsters would never let their phones run out of battery. They usually carried a charger or a power bank with them wherever they went. Does Tobias have neither one of them?

Has he been drinking at one of Thailand's bars yesterday night?

Tobias used to be a VVIP at Elysium. Every time the boss knew of his arrival, he would run out and greet Tobias as though he were the president himself. Men would get bored easily if they only drank at bars. There were definitely women around yesterday night.

The more she thought about it, the more troubled Skylar felt.

She felt a little bad for treating Tobias so unfairly. After her relationship with Jeremy, she had become much warier of her men, especially her boyfriends. As she thought about it, she realized that Tobias wasn't exactly innocent either. After all, he didn't have the best reputation in this regard.

If she were a man and had Tobias' net worth and irresistible face, she would have gotten herself a harem by now. How could he stand being tied down by one woman?

Perhaps the reason behind Tobias and Tanya's delayed wedding was because he didn't want to be tied down just yet. Perhaps, he still longed for the world of wine and women.