

# Bring Your A Game, Mr Chapter 15

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Chapter 15 Let's See Who Has the Last Laugh!

Alexander was confused to see Danny walking out alone. He asked, "Where's Elise?"

"She already went home," Danny replied with a smile.

Alexander already knew all about Danny's mischievous little tricks. "Tell the truth!"

Danny had no choice but to speak honestly after failing to trick Alexander. "She went to the washroom."

"Let's wait for her."

Danny got into the car grumpily. However, there was still no sign of Elise even after he played a few rounds of mobile games. He instinctively grumbled under his breath, "What's taking her so long?"

In the meantime, Alexander noticed the darkening sky and started to worry. "Do you have her phone number?"

"I assumed a country bumpkin like her to be too poor to afford a phone. Why don't you ask someone else?"

And so, Alexander called every one of his brothers, but no one had any idea how to contact her.

Thus, he pulled some strings and did all he could to search for Elise. Usually, someone who'd just arrived from the countryside would never run around recklessly in the city. She can't be in danger, can she?

An uneasy feeling rose up his chest, and he started to worry about this wild young woman from the countryside.

If something really happened to her...

"Didn't I tell you to look after her in school?"

Danny was shocked by his brother's sudden scolding. Alexander usually had a steady temperament, but it seemed like he was quite upset today.

Danny felt wronged when he saw Alexander reacting that way. "I couldn't have followed her into the women's washroom, right..."

Just then, Alexander realized that he had spoken a little too rashly. He said calmly, "I've already put people on a search for her. Let's hope she'd simply lost her way."

.....

Elise felt her surroundings go dark all of a sudden. When she came to, she was somewhere that was pitch black. Her hands had been tied up and her eyes had been covered; there was also something in her mouth and she couldn't speak a word.

She was in a spacious room, and the air around her smelled dry and dead. It was obvious that it was an abandoned space where no one had visited in a long time.

Nevertheless, she managed to calm down very quickly. Luckily, her phone was still with her—they probably didn't expect that she'd even have one.

Right then, the voice of a girl could be vaguely heard from outside of the room. "Take care of it well, and you can go abroad after this is settled. I'll help you, so just clean it up nicely."

Elise was wondering who the voice belonged to when the door opened with a creak. The sound of a few sets of footsteps approached her, accompanied by a cold breeze of the night.

"She's actually pretty hot if you just look at her body," the man commented with a scoff as he crouched down a little.

Nicole mocked, "I can't believe you're even interested in someone as lowly as her."

"Come on, Miss Snyder. I was just kidding," the man cooed pretentiously.

Nicole glanced at Elise who had curled up into a ball. She let out a dismissive scoff and said, "How dare you try to get your hands on Danny? Who do you think you are?"

The voice was familiar in Elise's ears. This voice... Isn't this Nicole?

Is she jealous of me for being close with Danny?

Before Elise could recover from her thoughts, a slap landed on her cheek.

"What makes you think you're good enough for the Young Master of the Griffith Family?!"

Elise was caught off guard by the smack. She didn't have much time to think since her cheek was burning with a stinging pain—at that moment, escaping was her top priority. She pretended to be afraid, but she was silently reaching up to grab the phone in her clothes. "Who are you guys? What are you going to do to me?"

"We're going to take your life, of course!" Nicole pinched Elise's chin forcefully as she taunted.

The man beside her was shocked. "Say what? Hey, murder wasn't part of the plan when she asked me for help back then."

"It's just a joke. We just need to teach her a lesson on what she should and shouldn't touch." Nicole snickered wickedly.

Who's 'she'?

As Elise gave it some thought, Nicole landed a kick on her.

She took the opportunity to collapse to the ground, swiftly pressing a button on her phone as she did so and successfully sending out a help signal.

Pfft, are you kidding me? Let's see who has the last laugh!

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Meanwhile, a notification sounded on Jamie's phone with a *ding*. He had a feeling that something was off. After all, this alert could only mean that his boss was in danger...

He quickly tapped into the app on his phone, and the message clearly stated that his boss had been kidnapped.

"Oh, poor you, Boss!" Jamie stared at the pinned location on the map as he wiped away an invisible tear. He lamented, "It seems like Boss has made an enemy in school! She can only count on him this time."

Just

as he was about to send the location to Alexander, he recalled their grudge from before. Aside from that, he was also afraid of exposing Elise's true identity, so he decided to send Danny a message with an anonymous account in the end.

"Please be safe, Boss!"

Danny was contacting all of his friends to find Elise's whereabouts. All of a sudden, he received the message from Jamie's anonymous account. He jolted and said after a short moment, 'Alexander,

someone sent me a location and said that Elise's there right now. Should we go?"

Alexander took the phone from his brother. Even though a sliver of suspicion passed over him, he eventually decided to head over and try his luck. "We will. What if she really is there?"

Right now, he had to go even if it was false information!

Alexander opened the car door and started running toward the pinned location while Danny hastily chased after him.

They arrived at a secluded area of the school according to the tip. This dormitory hadn't been repaired in many years and was now an abandoned building.

It wouldn't be surprising for no one to notice a thing if someone were to be locked up here.

Alexander rushed into the dormitory and opened every door along the way, frantically searching for the figure of that person.

Danny followed after him as he panted, a sense of guilt rising in his chest. Even though they were constantly bickering with each other on the daily, he wouldn't be able to forgive himself if she was really in danger.

Elise could taste the foul and metallic flavor of blood in her mouth. The bitter sensation stung her throat with every word she spoke. "I can't say you're not amazing, Miss Snyder. You actually pulled the kidnapping card again. I really can't think of a reason for you to hate me this much, though." Elise intentionally spoke loud and clear to stall for time.

Nicole let out a few snickers. "Elise, you stole my position as number one in the competition and even got so close with Danny. Now you're telling me that I hate you for no reason at all?"

"You're the only one who cares about getting number one in that stupid competition. I couldn't care less about it."

preparing to land another slap on Elise's face.

Before she could do so, a loud *bang* sounded—the door was pushed open, and Nicole turned around in shock.

The man beside her rushed forward to block their path. "Who are you guys?"

Danny went up and slammed the man to the ground. Alexander pushed Nicole away without a word and went straight toward Elise.

Elise's eyes were covered and her mouth was stuffed as she cowered by the corner like a hurt little deer. A look at her couldn't help but make others want to protect her and keep her safe.

Danny exclaimed in astonishment, "Look what you've done, Nicole!"

"Danny, ...

Danny didn't want to hear anything from her. He interrupted her and yelled, "Don't bother explaining. I don't want to hear any of it!"

As Alexander stared at Elise who was lying in his arms, his voice took a colder turn once more. "I'm not interested in what happened between you and Danny, but don't think you can get away with just a few words when you've laid a finger on someone from the Griffith Family."

Danny angrily threw a few punches at the man and left with Alexander after letting off his steam.

Nicole was utterly flabbergasted by what happened before her. She nervously took out her phone and called someone. "What should we do? Elise was rescued by Alexander Griffith.."

"She was rescued?" The woman sounded quite shocked on the other end of the line, but she regained her composure fairly quickly. "Just do as I say. *We're* walking on thin ice right now, so I'll help you for sure..."

Alexander gazed down at Elise who was in his arms. The young woman's lips were pale and her forehead was beaded with cold sweat. Her groans sounded painful yet tender, and she seemed to be in a muddled state of mind with her eyes squeezed shut. However, her hands were still grabbing onto his shirt tightly.

In fact, Elise only intentionally provoked Nicole with her words when she vaguely heard noises of doors being opened outside earlier. And it turned out that she was right.

She let out a long, sharp hiss. Right now, her face was still quite painful.

Alexander put her down on the back seat of the car. When he spoke, his voice was surprisingly gentle. "Do you... need to go to the hospital?"

"There's no need for that." Elise was a little shocked.

Alexander frowned momentarily and sent her back to the Griffith Residence without saying anything more.

When she was back in her room, Elise finally whipped out the phone she hid in her clothes and saw the explosion of text messages that Jamie had sent her.

Are you okay, Boss? Have you been rescued?’

Elise replied, ‘That I have, but it wasn’t a small price to pay in exchange for it!

Jamie sent her a crying emoji along with the text, ‘That’s awful, Boss! Is there any thing I can help with?’

I’ll handle it myself. You don’t need to know about it!

‘Alrighty, Boss. Let me know if you need anything, Jamie replied cheekily.

Elise made a call after taking care of her energetic lackey.

The receiver sounded very angry when she picked up the call. It was as though she was the one who had suffered through the incident.

“Nicole Snyder, was it? I’ll take care of it right away, Ellie...”

“Thanks a lot, then!” Elise replied sweetly in a cute voice.

“By the way, Ellie, I’ll be visiting an old friend in Athesea quite soon, so I’d love to see you as well, the woman on the other end said in a pampered tone.

“Sure, sure. I’ll bring you around and we’ll have fun together.”

Just then, a knock sounded on her door. Elise put away her phone and curiously opened the door. What came into view was the face of a man as cold as ice.

“Here’s the patient, doctor. Please take a look at her.”

“Miss Sinclair, right? May I come in?”

“Yes, of course.” Elise didn’t want to reject the family doctor when she saw him holding bags of equipment in his arms, so she could only let him inside.

The doctor briefly took care of Elise’s injuries and prescribed her some medicine after making sure

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that she was fine. “It’s nothing serious for now. You’ll be fine after some medicine, but we can do a full check-up if something comes up in the future.”

Elise hastily sent off the doctor. “All right, thank you for the trouble. Bye!”

The doctor then left promptly. Now, Alexander and Elise were left alone in awkwardness. He said all of a sudden, "Were you on the phone with someone earlier?"

Elise pretended to be clueless about it. "Oh, that? It was just a spam call."

Alexander knew that he wouldn't get any answers out of her and said, "Give me your phone number, then. That way, I can be more efficient when you need anything in the future."

"Sure, sure," Elise quickly agreed in order to make Alexander leave her room as soon as possible.

Elise took Alexander's phone and her slender fingers tapped quickly on the screen for a few moments. Then, she shoved the phone back to him. "Good night, Alexander."

Alexander didn't want to stay long when he saw her grinning face. "Remember to take your medicine."

After being forced to leave, he went straight to his study. At the same time, he received a call from his assistant. "No one's home at the Snyders', President Griffith. How odd—could they have fled ahead of time?"

*It's just been a few hours and the Snyders are nowhere to be found. Who could've gotten the news so quickly and struck first?*

He recalled Elise being on the phone earlier. She was speaking in such a light and cheerful tone; it was obvious that it wasn't a spam call. Besides, the way she was so secretive about it meant that something was definitely fishy.

His assistant continued, "Should we continue looking into it?"

Alexander lowered his eyes as he replied, "Don't look into the Snyders for now. Do a background check on Elise Sinclair instead..."

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Elise heard Danny's voice the second she woke up the next morning. "The Snyders all disappeared out of the blue last night, Alexander. They were even on the news today."

Elise chimed in, "They probably ran away out of guilt."

Danny was quite a dense fellow, so he didn't give it much further thought. "That sounds about right. There's nothing my brother can't do when he puts his heart to it, after all."

Alexander didn't reply to Danny. He had tasked his assistant to look into Elise's background yesterday, but to no avail. Recalling that unsatisfying result, he decided to test the waters. "Looks like you already knew about this beforehand, Elise."

Elise simply replied lightheartedly, "I just found out about it too. I wouldn't have spent all night tossing and turning if I had known that from the start." Then, she rubbed her head to keep up the act.

Alexander glanced at her furtive expression; she seemed like she was hiding something. He became all the more suspicious, but he could only let it slide since he didn't have any evidence.

At school, everyone was astonished by the news of Nicole being expelled. As a result, no one dared to pick a bone with Elise anymore after the incident. Elise felt like she went back to the old days of being a boss-life was such a bliss when she could get everything she wanted.

Days passed and she eventually had the thought of moving to the school dormitory altogether; nothing much would happen as long as she made the least amount of contact with the Griffiths. Unfortunately, her suggestion was ruthlessly rejected by Jonah. "Jack and Brendan are coming back soon. You should make a trip back home; I'll arrange for you all to meet."

Elise wasn't at all interested in this arranged marriage of hers, so she was about to leave without dressing up. However, she was stopped by Jonah. "I've bought you many new clothes, Elise. Go ahead and dress up before you head over. I even hired a makeup artist for you."

Elise immediately turned down his offer. "I'll handle it myself, Grandpa Griffith. There's no need to trouble others."

She'd blow her cover as soon as someone touched her face. And so, she took off her disguise and put on a foundation that had a lighter shade to brighten up her complexion just a little.

Her skin condition was quite perfect by itself, but it wasn't noticeable since she'd intentionally made her skin appear darker. Now that she had brightened it up a bit, a fraction or two of her beauty was able to shine through the makeup.

She looked slightly more pleasing to the eye than before. *This should do it.*

The driver brought Elise to Griffith Residence after she was done preparing herself.

Both Alexander and Danny felt strange to see Elise all dressed up. Even though her complexion was still dark and patchy, her facial features appeared a lot more exquisite after her skin became a few shades lighter.

Jonah was very pleased to see Elise dolled up beautifully.

On the other hand, Elise didn't like the feeling of attending a forced date, so she picked a corner seat and planned to stay quiet throughout the entire gathering. To her surprise, she was arranged by Jonah to sit next to Jack.

"You two haven't met, right? Come and sit closer together so you can get to know

each other better."

Jack took a glance at Elise. *What a strange complexion—how ugly.* She looked nothing like the female celebrities that he was used to filming movies with. A bitter smile appeared on his face, but he still greeted her politely out of courtesy, "Hello there."

Elise said without even looking at him, "Hello."

Jack was extremely unhappy with that. He was none other than a famous celebrity; his fans wouldn't be able to calm down for an entire day after exchanging a word with him, but this country bumpkin wouldn't even look him in the eye.

Jack tried to bring up a topic that would pique her interest. "Have you seen any of the dramas that I star in, Miss Sinclair?"

Elise stared at the smug smile on his face and rolled her eyes. "No, I haven't."

Jack wasn't about to relent. "Do you have a favorite actor then, Miss Sinclair? Perhaps I can introduce the two of you."

Elise was about to get a seizure from the amount of times she rolled her eyes. Her aunt was an international award-winning actress; was there even a celebrity she hadn't met in person?

"Not interested," Elise spat coldly.

Dissatisfaction filled Danny's chest when he saw Jack acting all interested in Elise. "Have you become immune to beautiful women from seeing all those gorgeous actresses every day, Jack? Since when have you become interested in ugly women? Your taste has become quite unique, I see!"

Jack wasn't planning to give up even though he was being ignored by Elise and continued talking to her. "I have a fan meeting going on later. Why don't you come along with me?"

His character had always been cold and he never liked talking much; just a word or two out of his mouth was enough to make his fans shriek and cheer in glee.

However, this woman was acting all high and mighty in front of him. He was eager to prove his worth as the Best Actor. He thought that his fans would definitely wow her into recognition.

Since Elise didn't have much going on these days, she took up his offer.

With the kidnapping incident in mind, Jonah told Alexander to follow along just in case. "Take good care of Elise. I don't want the same thing happening again."

"Yes, Grandpa."

"Jack! Jack! Jack!"

Amidst the ear-splitting screams and cheers of fans, a figure slowly entered their view.

The flashing lights of cameras started going off all at once as Jack stood onstage wearing a smart looking suit. Right now, he was the brightest star of all under the sunlight which illuminated him softly.

"Hey guys, it's Jack." After going through the introductions, Jack put on a dazzling and charming smile.

He cleared his throat and leaned close to the mic as he said, "Today's my first time having a fan meeting event in Athesea, so let's have an interactive session to celebrate!"

The fans below the stage exploded in an instant, and their high-pitched cries filled Elise's eardrums.

"I believe everybody's seen my new drama, right? I'd like to have a live reenactment of the most climactic scene of the series today. I'm going to randomly pick a few people in the audience to be my co-stars." Jack then gestured for his manager to come up the stage.

The manager held up a poster after being signaled. "There's a QR code on this poster and you can join the selection process by scanning it. After you've done that, the system will automatically select a few lucky winners to take part in the activity onstage."

Upon hearing that, the fans whipped out their phones and scrambled forward to scan the QR code.

"Has everyone scanned the code?" The manager pointed at the QR code on the poster as the fans answered a

t once. He passed the poster to an assistant to put it away and started to announce the winners.

In truth, the so-called “winners” had all been handpicked beforehand, yet they had to put on a surprised act the moment their names were announced.

The manager proceeded to allocate the selected participants their identities, lines, and props. The remaining audience below the stage began to get fired up again. “What about the female lead?”

The fans’ reaction was exactly as Jack anticipated it to be. He said slowly, “To prevent my fans from getting jealous, I’m going to pick the female lead from one of our staff members.” Following that, he gestured toward Elise who was standing by the side and even raised his brow at her mockingly as he did so.

Sure enough, Elise knew that nothing good would come out of Jack inviting her to his own fan meeting. She stared at the triumphant look on his face as she cursed him out violently inside.

The manager was unsettled when she saw the strange makeup on Elise’s face. After all, she wasn’t in the list of candidates that were supposed to go onstage. More importantly, this was none other than the role of the female lead. Thus, he leaned into her ear and said, “You don’t have many lines, Miss Sinclair. Just follow Jack’s lead and you’ll be fine.”

Elise was very unhappy to be forced to do something she didn’t want to do, but she still tried her best to complete the performance with Jack.

During their final scene, Jack smiled with tears in his eyes and turned around. He shut his eyes slowly as he willingly welcomed death. This was the biggest highlight of his new drama, and his fans were totally brought into the moment—all of them were sobbing painfully below the stage.

At that moment, one of the extras approached Jack with a dagger in his hand, wearing a malicious smile on his face.

The dagger glowed dangerously under the sunlight. Elise felt that something was off and immediately rushed forward to push Jack away. She stealthily dodged the blade, but the dagger still managed to leave a cut on her delicate skin, and blood started oozing out rapidly.

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Jack stiffened for a moment before quickly getting the security guard to seize the phony reporter. He frowned as he looked at her bleeding wound. "How are you feeling?"

Elise smiled. "You should take care of your fans first."

Jack nodded and signaled his manager by giving him a look.

"Sorry, but today's meet and greet is canceled. See you all another time."

The fans screeched and shrieked. Jack's manager simply got the security to surround them.

Jack then helped Elise to the dressing room.

*Smack!* A sheaf of papers was thrown onto one of the tables in the dressing room. Papers scattered haphazardly across the surface, having been dislodged from its neatly arranged pile.

The manager felt dread coursing through his body. "We've investigated things thoroughly: your antis are behind this."

Jack was livid. "And you call yourself a manager? Allowing people to smuggle a knife to a meet and greet?"

"My apologies. I didn't go through the fans' belongings thoroughly thinking they were just props." The manager was filled with remorse.

Alexander looked at the injured Elise from where he sat. His heart felt tight, as though some invisible rope had bound it up. With each step he took toward her, that rope tightened its grip on him.

"Enough. I'm going to send her to the hospital now. You handle whatever you need to do properly." An undercurrent of fury peeked through Alexander's frigid tone. With that, he bent down, scooping Elise into his arms before he left the dressing room.

The manager only dared to speak again once Alexander had left. He handed a cell phone to Jack.

After the meet and greet had been canceled, Elise's name became trending due to the obsessed frenzy of the fans. Slurs and allegations were hurled at her all across the internet.

'You can tell with one look that that woman's in league with that perpetrator. She failed at being a stan, so she did this instead to garner sympathy.'

She's a master alright!

The manager weighed the situation. "How about I get a good PR agent to make an announcement?"

"You don't have to," Jack said as he quickly typed up a Tweet and posted it.

'Elise saved me. Please stop spreading false claims! And stop ruining her life!'

The manager took the cell phone back, but he didn't understand Jack's actions. "You've never mentioned anyone in your Tweets before. Why did you do such an illogical move? At this rate, your fans are going to drop you. You do realize you're in the midst of a popularity boom, right?"

Jack's voice darkened. "Don't try to boss me around just because you're my manager. If my brother hadn't recommended you, I would've long since gotten someone else."

It had been a long time since someone had been this kind to him. Elise had rushed over to push him out of the way, and even when she was injured, she still smiled at him. He couldn't let a girl like this to be thrown out to the wolves and suffer all that hate speech.

Once Elise was brought to the hospital, the doctor performed a full checkup on her. "Fortunately, it's just a minor wound. It didn't cut through your muscles or tendons. Some ointment will be enough."

Elise had just stepped out of the orthopedics department when she caught sight of Alexander sitting on the bench by the door. His eyes bore right into her, his expression mildly incensed. "I've never seen anyone this idiotic."

"What do you mean?" Elise was puzzled. *He's angry? Hey, I'm the one getting injured here. Why's he angry instead?*

"Have you forgotten the amount of injuries you have? Yet you still pounced forward!" He froze for a moment after the words left his mouth. He seemed to have unwittingly been concerned for her.

Those were clearly words said out of concern, but they sounded like they were filled with reproach. Elise felt like she had been wronged for no reason. She had no idea what to say.

Fortunately for Elise, a nurse came over with the medicine that the doctor had prescribed for her, breaking the stiffness in the air. "You're her boyfriend, yes? This is some anti-inflammatory medication. Please help her with this."

Alexander frowned, but he didn't speak.

The nurse didn't figure out the true meaning behind Alexander's expression as she put her hands on her hips and chewed him out.

"I could hear you two arguing when I was inside earlier. Your girlfriend is hurt. Do you think this is the time for fights? If that wound goes untreated, it's going to get inflamed."

Alexander still did not speak. He took the medication from the nurse, a cold look on his face.

Elise watched as the nurse chastised Alexander. She felt like she had been saved, and she smiled and thanked the nurse. "Thank you. You're such a sweet lady."

Alexander showed no indication of speaking, but his magnetic voice boomed above her head. "Sit down. I'm going to apply the medication."

"And I don't want you to be the one applying it for me," Elise said stubbornly.

Alexander stiffened. He couldn't place the expression that he was currently wearing.

When Elise noticed Alexander staring at her, she stared back at him, unwilling to show weakness. Much to her surprise, he suddenly leaned in close to her.

"What's the big deal?" Elise's heart hammered in her chest as her eyes widened like dinner plates.

Alexander fell into a trance when he was staring at Elise earlier, and he unconsciously leaned toward her. When he finally realized what he had done, he promptly put some distance between them again. His tone was as cold as ever when he spoke. "Your mind is slow. If you keep dragging things out, that wound is going to become inflamed."

Alexander's words were intimidating yet logical. Elise obediently stuck her arm out.

Alexander cut away the fabric by the wound with a pair of scissors. The skin revealed under her sleeve was milky white and striking, a few shades paler than the skin tone of her face. He smiled, and without saying another word, he continued to help her apply the medication. When he recalled the different Elise he had seen in his bedroom that night, he fell into pensive thought. *Looks like something's fishy here.*

Elise turned her head to the side, trying to force herself to stay silent through clenched teeth.

As he applied the medication, Alexander noticed Elise's brows knitting together slightly. He then deliberately softened his movements. "All right. All you need to do after this is get some proper rest. Also, don't go out so often for the time being."

Elise was puzzled beyond belief when she heard Alexander say that seemingly out of the blue.

"You ruined Jack's meet and greet. His fans are not going to forgive you so easily."

"What kind of logic is that? I saved their darling idol, and they instead decided to turn around and eat me alive?" Elise truly couldn't understand the minds of brainless stans.

"You're going to stay at the hospital for now." Clearly, Alexander didn't want to keep elaborating. "If you need anything during your stay, call me. Or tell Danny."

When Elise recalled the incident, she felt all her hair stand on end. *I suppose staying at the hospital isn't half bad. At least I don't have to interact with the Griffiths.* "Hm... Okay then."

And so, Elise ended up staying in a VIP ward that Alexander had arranged for her during her recuperation. Every day, she woke up to the smell of antiseptic. She'd never hated hospitals as much as she did then.

One day, the door to her room suddenly swung open while her mind was wandering. A woman with a beautiful figure then entered the room.

Elise was still puzzled over the woman's identity until she saw the woman taking off her disguise to reveal a familiar face.

"Aunt Cynthia, why are you here?"

The visitor was none other than international superstar, Cecile Sinclair, or Cynthia Sinclair as she was known off-stage.

Cynthia's thick, blonde hair brushed past her shoulders in bouncy waves. Those thick lashes, that seductive gaze, and those thick and sexy lips all harmonized together into a stunning, charming face that drew others in...

She blinked those lovely, expressive eyes of hers, and her lips parted slightly as she said, "...Ellie?"

Only then did Elise snap out of her daydream. *Oh, right. I still have my makeup on. Of course Aunt Cynthia couldn't recognize me at first glance.* She only managed to explain everything that she had gone through after a lengthy explanation.

"I think I get it." Cynthia nodded.

"Oh, by the way, how did you know that I was injured?" *Has news about the incident even spread to other countries?* Elise was shocked.

"Dad told me that you got hurt, so he wanted me to come back and see you so that he can get some peace of mind."

"I haven't seen Grandpa in a long time. I wonder how he's doing," Elise muttered to herself.

"Relax, he's doing fine physically."

Cynthia poked at Elise and said in a pitying tone, "You, on the other hand, why didn't you take better care of yourself? You also got severely injured that other time when you took a knife for someone else. Don't get yourself involved in the future when there's danger."

Elise hugged Cynthia affectionately. "Got it, Aunt Cynthia."

Elise was thinking of having a nice, long chat with her aunt when someone suddenly knocked on the door.

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The first one to step inside the room was Danny, who walked with wide strides, all while he nagged, "Can't we take turns to visit her instead of coming in all at once?" He had just taken a few steps when his body stiffened.

"Holy crap. Isn't that the world-renowned movie star, Cecile Sinclair?"

At that, the rest of the Griffiths following behind him froze as well. Jack nearly dropped the gifts that he had brought, shocked as he was once he got a good look at the woman by Elise's side.

Everyone seemed to have been thoroughly shaken by this. Only Alexander's expression was still as even as ever. *Elise, who exactly are you?* he wondered.

Elise herself was also surprised. She was unsure how to break the tension,

Cynthia patted Elise before she stood up and fluffed her hair. Then, she slowly spoke.

"Greetings, I am Elise's aunt, Cecile Sinclair, but off the stage, I am just Cynthia."

"Her aunt?" Jack couldn't believe his eyes. *No wonder Elise ignored me back then. It's because her own aunt is an international superstar. And there I was, brazenly telling her that I would bring her around to meet her favorite actors.* At that thought, Jack felt even more ashamed.

Alexander glanced at Elise, whose gaze was darting everywhere. After a moment of contemplation,

he slowly walked over and extended his hand like a gentleman. "Nice to meet you. You're here to visit Elise too, right?"

"I happened to be in the country, so I came to visit her." Cynthia extended her hand in response to his politeness. She eyed the man before her. *His eyes betray nothing. And he's able to maintain a level head even when faced with something like this. Such a polite gentleman. He's a good match for Ellie.*

"Are you here to visit Ellie, too? My, my, Ellie's the apple of my father's eye. Every one has been worried out of their minds ever since she got injured," Cynthia said with a tone that indicated her seniority over Alexander.

"I apologize for making you and your family worry. It won't happen again." Part of the reason that Elise had gotten hurt this time was because he hadn't taken good care of her.

"I'll leave things to you, then." Cynthia smiled breezily after she heard Alexander's promise. She walked over to Elise's side and teased, "Ellie, it seems to me the Griffith Family has some fine heirs. I think you two would get along well."

Alexander's expression turned a fair bit chillier when he heard that.

"Aunt Cynthia, but that's..." Elise stuttered, her words tripping over each other.

The tiny room was already cramped enough with all the people squeezed into it. Now, the atmosphere had turned even stranger.

"Since your aunt is here, we'll have to welcome her properly as hosts," Matthew suddenly said with a gentle tone, having remained quiet all this while. He lifted his head, only for his gaze to directly meet Elise's.

His gaze... was completely different from Alexander's; it actually had a hint of brightness in it.

Matthew shifted his gaze over to Alexander, his tone still gentle and polite as he spoke. "What do you think, Alexander?"

"All right. You handle the arrangements," Alexander replied simply.

Elise gave Matthew a once-over. On the surface, he and Alexander were brothers. But in reality, they seemed to have more of a superior-subordinate relationship. It was probably because they had worked together at the same company for a while.

"Would you like to come with us for lunch, Miss Sinclair?" Matthew suddenly asked. Even his voice sounded bright and smiley.

*Lunch!*

Elise was extremely excited at that thought. Her appetite was terrible after eating several days' worth of bland food. Now that she got the chance to feast, she was, of course, going to take it.

"Of course!" Elise answered without another thought.

However, Cynthia looked at Elise before asking, conflicted, "But, can you leave your bed this soon after your injury?"

"I happened to read this book on geomancy before. It said that being in the company of others can speed up the healing process," Matthew said casually.

Spending time in the company of others? Only Cynthia, who spent most of the year overseas, would believe this kind of outrageous lie.

Despite that, Elise still gave Matthew a thankful look. *Thanks a lot!*

The mood at the table soon livened up. But for some reason, Elise thought it didn't seem like a welcoming party for Cynthia. *This feels more like a recruitment process. And Aunt Cynthia's the recruiter, recruiting the perfect husband for me,*

"Alexander, Ellie's hand still hasn't fully healed yet. Do you mind helping her get some of that pork?"

And so, an extra piece of fatty meat suddenly appeared on Elise's plate while she was still chewing the pork that she had gotten earlier.

"You're welcome." Alexander said casually.

*You're welcome, my foot! I absolutely hate meat with fat on it. How did you manage to even find such a huge chunk anyway?* Elise bemoaned internally.

Elise propped her chin on one hand as she casually scanned the people around her. Other than Alexander and herself, everyone was happily chatting.

"Are you feeling unwell?"

Elise jolted. She didn't expect Alexander to suddenly speak.

Before she could respond, she heard Cynthia answer, "Ellie's injury probably hasn't healed yet. Why don't you send her back?"

Or, as she was implying, she wanted to match Alexander and Elise together. Elise could feel awkward tension in her face. *Why does everybody think I fancy Alexander?*

"All right." Alexander had no reason to refuse.

"Sorry for the bother," Elise said as she gave a pained smile to Alexander, whose expression remained the same.

Elise felt awkward. *I appreciate the sentiment, Aunt Cynthia. But this doesn't make me feel any better.*

They ended up getting a taxi because Alexander had drunk some wine earlier during lunch. Elise and him got into the back seat. She unconsciously scooted over to the side, and then she scooted even further...

Alexander's brows were slightly furrowed as he looked at her. "Are you afraid of me?"

Elise grinned awkwardly.  
"I'm just worried that you'll end up sitting on my clothes, haha."

Alexander turned his head toward her and smiled. "Really now?"

*Is he actually smiling?*

Elise thought her eyes were playing tricks on her. Still, that smile of his did seem a little terrifying.

Elise coughed, having been caught off guard by that smile. She tried to shift her thoughts to something else instead of having her mind continue to linger on Alexander next to her.

Not long after that, she fell asleep.

As she drifted in and out of sleep, Elise saw a familiar sign flashing past her eyes. She then completely forgot that Alexander was sitting next to her. "Stop the car here. I wanna have some beef stew."

By the time Elise remembered that Alexander was beside her, it was too late.

He went silent for a moment, and then he said to the taxi driver, "Please stop by that stew shop."

And so, the driver turned back and stopped the taxi by an old road sign.

"Sorry about that. I won't take up too much of your time," Elise said while she opened the car door and sprang out without stopping to take a breath. She rushed straight into the store.

"I'd like this and this... And that one too..." Elise ordered everything on the menu without batting an eye, but then she noticed that there was another person standing behind her.

"Why are you here too?"

"I'm hungry as well. Can't I get some food too?" Alexander asked.

"Fine, fine." Elise wiped the sweat off her forehead before taking out her phone to pay for her food. "Please get me another one. Same as my own order."

The shop owner's movements were well-practiced. In the blink of an eye, he whipped up the two orders and handed them to Elise.

"This one's for you." Elise handed one of the bowls to Alexander.

Alexander frowned. In all actuality, he wasn't hungry.

"It's nothing much. Just some thanks to your family for inviting my aunt out for lunch. If you think this

isn't enough, I'll treat you to a nicer meal in the future," Elise explained patiently.

Alexander glanced at the bowl of stew that was offered to him before reaching out to accept it. "You don't have to," he said blandly.

Elise began to dig into her food. As always, the best foods were all hidden in little hole-in-the-wall places. She dipped her spoon into the stew repeatedly, spooning up bits and pieces of meat and vegetables each time without a care in the world.

Alexander eyed her, and the icy look in his eyes abated a little. His voice also took on a warmer tone. "Can I get this to go?"

Elise felt that he was missing the point and wasting the food. "Don't you know that you have to eat it while it's still hot?" she asked.

"No," Alexander answered in his low voice.

Elise was stupefied by this, but then she turned back to her food and continued stuffing her face.

After Elise was sent back to the hospital, Alexander stared at the stew she had given him and lapsed into deep thought. *Is this thing really that delicious?*

He scanned the bag before opening it. The stew was still a little warm. Half-confused, he copied Elise and tried a small spoonful of it, carefully chewing on the meat that he had scooped up.

"It's actually quite tasty..."