

The Three Little Guardian Angels by Ginger Bud Chapter 911

Chapter 911

Maisie followed Nolan to the precinct for some follow-up on the case. She also said she wanted to see Maizie.

Officer Zaleski asked an officer to take her into one of the interrogation rooms. Soon, a female officer led Maizie with both hands in handcuffs.

Her face looked pale and haggard, and she had lost the former vitality that she had. Her uncombed hair looked as messy and dry as hay, and her bright and beautiful appearance had long disappeared. She glared at Maisie and scoffed. “Wow, are you here to laugh at me?”

Maisie straightened her posture and explained calmly, “Must you make everyone around you sound so complicated?”

Maizie did not answer as Maisie looked straight at her. “I would never do anything to persecute you unless you’ve overstepped my bottom line in the first place. But other than those things that I’ve done to you, I really don’t understand where your hatred for me stems from.”

“The hatred that Willow and Rowena had against me was justifiable.

Willow’s hatred for me originated from the instigation and thoughts that Leila had instilled in her. Through Leila’s insistence, she wanted to take over my position in the family, gain control over the company, and obtain the benefits and identity that Nolan could give her. “And Rowena was stubborn as she thought she loved Nolan so deeply but could not get the same love in return. As such, her love for him transformed into her hatred for me.

‘But what about Maizie?’

Maizie laughed out loud. “I did it because I simply don’t like you. You’re an eyesore to me no matter where you go,”

“You don’t think I’m an eyesore,” Maisie interrupted her calmly. “You’ve always hated what others have whenever you feel that your life is unsatisfactory, when you’re not recognized and accepted by others, or when you don’t get the best the world can offer. It’s like the feeling of imbalance and the emotional surges within you whenever someone else owns a beautiful doll that you can’t have.” Maizie lifted her eyebrows. “Pfft! Do you really think you know me that well? What you want to say is that I’m jealous of you, but why should I be jealous of you?” “Do you know a thing or two about the psychological cues behind certain microexpressions? The inner side of your eyebrows is raised upward, which means you’re feeling uneasy when I’m around. You feel very inferior and flustered.” Maisie observed the change in Maizie’s expression with a calm face. “Maybe you’re indeed not jealous of me, but you’re surely competing yourself against me.”

Maizie’s expression stiffened gradually.

Maisie leaned back on the back of the chair. “You’ve always wanted to own whatever others have, and you’ll slander others whenever you can’t get something that someone else has. Didn’t you slander your classmate using the same way when you were in high school? Only because she bought the latest backpack and you didn’t, so you spread rumors saying that the bag that she had was a fake. After that, in order to win yourself some attention, you coaxed Mr. Hannigan into buying you a new backpack that cost more than hers. You were even reluctant to remove the label and price tag in order to show it off in front of your other classmates and make them laugh at that classmate of yours.”

Before Maizie could respond, Maisie looked at her with his chin propped against her palm. “Do you know why I know about this?” Looking at Maizie’s slightly stunned expression, she grinned. “It was your so-called besties. We are in the same group chat. All the things that you told them, you may think you were sharing the information with them, but to them, your sharing is nothing but show-offs.

How many men have you dated? How did you snatch your senior’s boyfriend from her back when you were studying? You wanted them to envy each and every success that you had had, but all they did was make a laughingstock out of you.”

Maizie was out of words for a long time, and her face turned embarrassed gradually.

“No one forced you to get to where you are at this point of life at all. Everything you’ve done in the past was motivated by your own

eer vanity. Do you think you really love Nolan?” Maisie stood up slowly. “You only want others to envy you and live a life where everyone else revolves around you. Unfortunately, no one would do that other than your parents. Other people have no obligation to revolve around you and worship you as if you’re God all day long. You belittle others too much and look too highly of yourself.”

After saying her piece, Maisie left the interrogation room without giving Maizie the chance to say anything.

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Chapter 912

This would also be Maisie's last conversation with Maizie after the latter was imprisoned.

Maisie was walking in the corridor, and Nolan's figure could be seen standing not far away from the end of the corridor. He was waiting for her

He smiled as she approached. "Done talking to her?"

Maisie nodded and stopped in front of him. "Yeah, I just had to figure out why she hates me that much."

Nolan held her hand and kissed her on her fingertips. "No matter what others think, my wife is always the best."

She stood on tiptoe to move closer to him.

Am I that good?"

Nolan wrapped his arms around her waist as a hint of amusement flashed across his eyes. "Other than the little tigress that I have to face head-on from time to time, you're just fine."

She choked on her own saliva. "Who are you referring to as a tigress?"

He did not say a word, but the hilarity that beamed through his eyes and brows intensified.

"Ahem, it seems that I've come at the wrong time," Officer Zaleski interrupted the two of them awkwardly, and Maisie pushed Nolan away in an instant. "We're still in a precinct!" Nolan joked about their encounter. "It's not against the law for husbands and wives to show their affection to each other in a

precinct, is it?"

Officer Zaleski was astounded for a split second, waved his hands, and chuckled. “We’re not that inhumane as long as you don’t go overboard, but it depends on the occasion, so please do take it easy.”

Maisie lowered her head, rubbed the tip of her nose, and secretly bumped Nolan with her elbow.

‘It’s all his fault.’

Nolan looked downward, smirked, then suppressed his smile after a short while and asked, “Have you found out anything from Tony?”

Officer Zaleski nodded. “We did find out something. Tony admitted that he did transfer some of his assets to Maizie on the day he got arrested.”

Maisie was a little surprised to hear that.” Tony transferred his assets to Maizie before he was arrested? Did he know that he would be arrested that day?”

‘Wasn’t Maizie the one who set him up and tricked him into showing up?’

Officer Zaleski explained in embarrassment, “Tony didn’t transfer his assets to Maizie because he knew he would be arrested, but because he knew that Maizie was pregnant.”

Maisie was astonished. “So Maizie was pregnant with his child?”

Officer Zaleski nodded.

‘It all makes sense now. Why would Tony take the risk to come forward to meet Maizie? Why would a person as vigilant as Tony believe in her just because she’s his goddaughter?’

‘It turns out that Maizie told him that she was pregnant. Tony isn’t married and has no children. Even though the child was just an accident, it was still his offspring. So after learning about this, he transferred part of his assets to Maizie, thinking that it was for the

‘He took the risk to come forward and meet Maizie and was then arrested by the police. He even tried his best to clean Maizie’s name after getting arrested. Maybe he really thought that Maizie would give birth to the baby and raise it on his behalf. But what he didn’t expect was that Maizie would use this child as a bargaining chip to get herself into the Bouchers.

‘He obviously had the opportunity to be born into this world and live on, but he was killed in the womb by his own mother instead. How sad is that ?

The weather got colder and colder, and

winter came in a blink of an eye in November. Gideon, the murderer, was sentenced to death with a two-year suspension, and Maizie was sentenced to 10 years in prison because she was the one who had hired the murderer.

The most interesting matter was that the lawyer who prosecuted Maizie at that time was Francisco, and because the circumstances of hiring a killer to murder someone else were serious, the sentence that Maizie received was imprisonment of more than 10 years.

Maizie did not refute, and Mr. and Mrs. Hannigan did not raise any objections, although that was not the ruling that they wanted to see.

Richard had been in low spirits because the great-grandson that he was looking forward to back then turned out to only be

a facade that Maizie staged. Thus, Yael and Christina both placed their work aside and stayed by his side.

And Helios also postponed the establishment of his own business to a later date.

Meanwhile, the overseas projects under Eastwood Enterprise and Tristan officially started, and Nolan and Maisie attended its opening ceremony.

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Anthony approached them with a wine glass. “Nolan, you’ve come to support the project.” Nolan smiled and took the wine glass from the waiter. “Hi, Uncle Topaz. Your project has officially started, so, of course, I have to come to show my support.”

Maisie grabbed a wine glass too.” Congratulations, Mr. Topaz.”

Anthony smiled and toasted with them.” Thank you for all your blessings.” Tristan walked toward them with a young female companion. The woman standing beside him was probably in her 20s. She did not look extremely eye-catching but had an elegant temperament. Nolan clinked glasses with him. “It seems that you’ve found another pretty woman, Mr. Knowles.” Tristan smiled and replied, “An old bachelor like me can’t compare myself to those of you who have a family. So how can I attend such an occasion without a female companion?” Anthony smiled and turned to look at Tristan. “Mr. Knowles, if you were willing to settle down and get married back then, you might already have a mansion full of children and grandchildren now.” “I’ve been living abroad since I was a child, and I’ve never had the dream of having children and grandchildren. As a man, what I prioritize the most in my life is freedom.

I think I'd definitely find it quite annoying if I were to have a wife who would order me around all day long." When he was young, Tristan had always been a playboy, and he was a handsome, charming, and casual man. He was also influenced by more open-minded education and did not have the traditional concept of starting a family.

However, that was what he told everyone else, but no one knew whether he had ever thought about doing so.

Maisie asked with a smile, "Mr. Knowles, aren't you going to introduce your partner to us?"

Tristan wrapped his arms around his female companion. "Her name is Zeta Yanev, and she's from East Winston."

Zeta nodded shyly and greeted them in English with a smile. Maisie looked at her and was pleasantly surprised. "Your English is very fluent, Ms. Yanev." She responded, "I studied English in college, and I like Zlokova's culture very much."

After chatting with Maisie for a while, seeing that Tristan had left for somewhere else to toast with his friends, Zeta bid them goodbye and caught up to Tristan to be by his side. Maisie leaned over to Nolan's side. "I didn't expect Mr. Knowles to be still quite attractive to younger ladies even though he's already in his fifties."

"Zeta should be around 27 or 28 years old, about the same age as me, while Tristan is already in his 50s. However, he does pay a lot of attention to the maintenance of his appearance, so he doesn't look old at all, and it's not exaggerated to say that he's in his 40s."

Nolan squinted slightly. "I'll still be attractive when I'm at his age too."

Maisie met his gaze and chuckled. ‘Did that jealousy just come out of nowhere?’

The opening ceremony reception ended at 10:00 p.m.

Quincy parked the car outside the main entrance, and Nolan got into the car with Maisie after bidding goodbye to Anthony,

As soon as they got to the entryway at the Blue Bay villa, Maisie, who bent over to take over her heels, kneaded her sore ankles.

It had been too long since she last wore high heels to a banquet. If she knew that it would go on until so late, she would not have worn high heels.

Nolan suddenly picked her up, sat her down on the couch, squatted in front of her, and lifted her slender ankles. Her heels looked red and slightly swollen. ‘‘Why didn’t you tell me this at the banquet hall?’’

‘‘How could I tell you that?’’ She could not help but laugh. ‘‘If you were to know how I felt, you would’ve brought me back halfway through the ceremony. It wouldn’t look too good for us to leave halfway.’’

He massaged her feet for her and smiled.’’ It’s on the verge of turning into a pig’s hoof.’’

She snorted softly. ‘‘Are you saying that you dislike them?’’

Nolan lifted her in the air by her waist, spun around, sat down on the couch, supported the back of her head with his palm, pushed her head forward, raised his head, and kissed her.

His aura was strong and intense.

He let go of her after kissing her until she ran out of breath. He then ran his fingers over her bright red lips and gave off an obscure smile. “Even if you were to turn into a pig, I’d never dislike you.”

Maisie hit him in a flirtatious manner.” You’re the one who’s going to turn into a pig. If either one of us has to be turned into a pig, it’d better be you.”

The hilarity that was beaming from his brows and eyes intensified as he stared at her furious look.

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Chapter 914

Bassburgh had always been warm during winter and cool during summer. The roses in the garden located just outside the window still looked delicate and beautiful under the meticulous care of the gardener during the winter.

Maisie had been giving herself a time off recently and had left her company to Lucy to manage, and she took some time to visit Sapphie at Uncle Kennedy’s today.

Sapphie was already half a year old, and her soft hair had grown a little longer. Her facial features were not fully grown just yet, except for her bright, big eyes that seemed to be able to fit the whole galaxy in each of them, and they would bend into two crescent moons whenever she smiled. “This little girl will definitely grow up to be a gorgeous lady.” Kennedy held Sapphie in his arms and was unwilling to part with her. Although he was not her biological father, he already regarded Sapphie as his own daughter after all the company that he had shown her throughout the past few months.

Maisie smiled and suggested, “I can’t wait to give Sapphie pretty dresses and dress her up beautifully when she’s two to three years old

Maisie had not had the time to dress Daisie up when she gave birth to the triplets before this. She regretted it every time she thought of

“By the way. Uncle Kennedy, will Aunt Samantha come to take care of Sapphie during this time?”

Kennedy lowered his gaze and gave off a smile. “She really likes this child and will come over whenever she’s free, but I can’t trouble her all the time, can I?”

Maisie gently rubbed Sapphie’s chubby cheek with her fingers and said with a pregnant smile, “Uncle Kennedy, it’s not easy for you to take care of her alone. And Aunt Samantha seems to be more than willing to help you troublesome, but Aunt Samantha may not think the same.”

“Zee, you’re teasing me again.” Kennedy was helpless. He could totally get what Maisie was trying to say.

Maisie chuckled and said nothing.

‘Although I wish to make a match out of the two of them, I won’t force the issue. After all, they’re the ones who would be in the relationship. I can’t just match Uncle Kennedy with Aunt Samantha just because I want them to keep each other company.’

Ryleigh called her at this time, so she walked aside to answer the call, and Barbara’s voice came from the other end of the phone call.

After listening to what Barbara had to say, Maisie bid Kennedy goodbye and drove to a restaurant by the bay.

The ladies were sitting outside on the open-air balcony, and Barbara waved at her.

Maisie sat down and looked at Ryleigh, who was lying on the table and had not uttered a single word. “What’s wrong with her?”

Barbara grabbed her coffee mug, took a sip from it, and sighed. “I guess it’s a big deal.”

Maisie took a glance at Ryleigh, who was lying there without saying a word, squinted, thought of something, and leaned closer to Barbara. “Could it be that matter?” “It’s not just that. This is some serious shjt.” Barbara put the coffee down with a solemn expression. “Was Joe Watson your classmate?”

Maisie asked how Joe was related to the matter, and Barbara told her that she and Ryleigh had been drinking at the Glitz a week ago when they met Joe, Ryleigh’s former classmate, and invited him over for a few drinks.

When they had left the club, Joe was the one who sent them back. He had first sent Barbara home and then Ryleigh. Maybe because Ryleigh had quarreled with Louis earlier on that day and she was not in a good mood, she did not want to go back home yet. Thus, she ended up in Joe’s place the whole night, playing console games.

“Your cousin has found out about this, so...” Barbara’s sentence faded out, and Ryleigh sat up in an instant. Her eye sockets were so swollen that they looked like puffs, and they had narrowed both her eyes into only two black lines, making her look as if she was in the blues.

She startled the two sitting next to her, and Barbara patted her chest. “Oh my God, don’t make a fuss. Aren’t we thinking of a way to help you out?”

“What can you come up with to help me? He can think whatever the hell he wants.” Ryleigh grabbed the juice on the table and finished it in one go. She sounded rather convincing, but her expression showed otherwise.

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Maisie rubbed the bridge of her nose.” Ryleigh Hill, are you dumb or what? You’re engaged to Louis, and you dare to stay at Joe’s place for one whole night after grabbing a drink with him? Do you know what the public will do to people like you? They’ll slaughter you on the Internet.”

“I was in a bad mood that day.” Ryleigh propped her head against her arm and stared blankly at the table. “His exgirlfriend had to attend a dinner, and why didn’t he think about my feelings and our engagement when he went to the banquet with her as her male companion?”

Maisie narrowed her eyes.

Ryleigh laughed out loud abruptly. “The engagement is just a facade. If it weren’t for the marriage that the two families arranged, his ex might even be able to get back together again with him.”

Maisie supported her chin with her hand. “If Louis really wants to go back to Xyla, your engagement with him would’ve gone down the sewage ages ago. Maybe there’s another reason for him to accompany Xyla to the dinner. Didn’t he explain it to you?”

Ryleigh did not say anything.

Barbara looked at her. “She didn’t even give Mr. Lucas the chance to explain before dragging me to Glitz for a drink, and that was how things went downhill since then.”

Ryleigh calmed herself down, suppressed all the facial emotions, and tried her best to force a happy smile. “Okay, let’s not talk about these things today. I’m starving already, and I want to eat. Waiter, can I have the menu?”

Maisie and Barbara exchanged gazes.

Although Ryleigh pretended to be unconcerned on the surface, she really cared a lot about it deep down. After eating, Maisie drove Ryleigh back to the academy to pick up her backpack.

Maisie asked, “Do you need me to send you back?”.

Ryleigh waved. “I’m fine. I drove here by myself this morning. Don’t worry, I’m fine.”

Maisie watched as she entered the academy, then stayed back for a moment before driving the car away.

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Ryleigh was on the ground floor of the office building when she looked up and saw Xyla coming downstairs.

Her footsteps froze in place for a split second. She then bit her lip and went upstairs in a hurry, pretending that she did not see her.

Xyla stopped her when she passed by. “Ms. Hill.”

Ryleigh stopped and turned around.” What’s the matter?” Xyla sensed her hostility, but she responded with a smile. “I have something to tell you.”

“Forget it, I know what you want to say.” Ryleigh crossed her arms and turned her face away. “Don’t worry, I’ll terminate my engagement with Louis. You and Louis have my blessing.” Before Xyla could speak, Ryleigh had already turned around and was about to leave. However, Louis was standing at the stairwell entrance, and it seemed that he had been there for quite some time.

He also seemed to have heard what Ryleigh just said, and his expression dimmed instantly.

Ryleigh was stunned and froze in place for a short moment, but the draught in the corridor dragged her back from the trance, and she dashed past Louis’ side and headed upstairs.

Ryleigh did not dare to stop, let alone look back. She ran back to her office and closed the door. The lecturers in the office had already gotten off work, and no one was there to witness her in a daze.

She took a deep breath to calm herself down before starting to pack her backpack.

She walked to the stairs and saw Louis still leaning against the wall, waiting for her, and she turned back immediately. Louis went after her, caught up to her, dragged her backward, and pushed her against the wall. “Are you serious about canceling the engagement?”

Seeing that Ryleigh did not speak, he clutched her shoulders with his palms. ” You really are still thinking about Joe Watson, aren’t you?” “What nonsense are you talking about ? Joe and I are just ordinary friends,

and nothing is going on between us. Even if something is truly going on between us, you have no right to control how I make my choices, so let me go!”

Ryleigh’s shoulders hurt from his grasp. After a few more struggles, Louis clasped her hands, lifted them above her head, lowered his head, and sealed her lips.

She could only protest with a series of muffled groans, but he forcibly pried open her lips, leaving no gap for her even to

breathe.

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Ryleigh wanted to take deep breaths, but she couldn’t move because he held her so tightly. Louis only let her go when she stopped struggling.

He held up her chin and got close to her lips, pushing the hair off her lip. “I wouldn’t give him a chance even if you liked him. I won’t agree to call off our wedding.

“Ryleigh, your heart can only belong to me.” Ryleigh’s tears rolled down her face, unable to voice out the sadness in her heart.

He kissed the tears on her cheeks away but continued kissing down her neck, then picked her up and walked toward the office.

The pain took her breath away, and she almost bit his lips open. Louis kissed her cheek from behind her, tilting his head.

The light behind the curtains turned blurry, shining on the overlapped silhouette reflected in the window.

Until the evening, Ryleigh sat in the passenger seat wrapped up in Louis' coat. Her eyes were on the view outside, her face looking tired and pale.

Louis sent her home, carrying her in. He looked relaxed as usual when he was speaking to Russell.

Russell gave Ryleigh a lecture because he was worried about her staying out all night, but she didn't say anything the entire time.

Louis brought her upstairs to her room. Ryleigh took off his jacket and tossed it to him. "Close the door when you leave."

She walked into the bathroom.

When she got out of the shower, Louis was still there. She climbed into bed and tucked herself in without even glancing at him.

Louis sat quietly at the edge of the bed for a while, then pulled her blanket up higher." Rest well."

When she heard the door close, Ryleigh pressed her face into the pillow and sobbed quietly.

That night, Louis went to Glitz and was alone in the room. Helios entered, placed his glass of wine on the table, and sat down. "What's wrong?"

Louis poured out a glass, threw his head back, and drank it all

Helios smiled. "Because of Ryleigh."

Louis turned to look at him. “Do you think tying her down with the wedding agreement is too much? I can’t feel that she cares no matter what I do. She’s happier with Joe Watson than when she’s with me.”

He smiled sadly, then downed a few more glasses.

Helios took his glass away. “How do you know she doesn’t have feelings for you?”

Louis chuckled. “If she cared about me, she wouldn’t have kept quiet when she saw Xyla asking me out. She even said she would cancel the wedding so we could have our way. Why would she pick me if not because of the agreement between our families?”

Louis’ body froze. Helios moved his hand away and looked away before calmly saying, “You said she didn’t care, but don’t you know why she was drinking at Glitz the other night?”

Louis paused.

Helios smiled. “Who are you to attend an event with Xyla? You even dated before, so Ryleigh was feeling insecure. If she didn’t care about Xyla and you, she wouldn’t have come here to drink.”

Louis suddenly snapped out of it and put his hand on his forehead. He hadn’t told her about going to an event with Xyla.

Louis wasn’t trying to hide it from Ryleigh. He was just there to help, and nothing was going on between him and Xyla. They were just friends.

And he had been too angry that Ryleigh spent time with Joe, so he didn’t listen to her explanation.

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Just like when Xyla had come to say thanks, she was just in the office for less than 10 minutes and nothing could have happened.

Everything that Helios said made Louis think about Ryleigh's reaction, and she seemed to care.

His hand was still on his forehead, then his head started to hurt. "I have no intention of getting back with Xyla. It was just an event for her new movie. She had another date that night, but something came up, so she came to me instead."

He had agreed because he owed her, and it wasn't too much to help.

Helios put his hand on his shoulder and patted it. "I know you owe her, but it's best to explain to Ryleigh. She doesn't know what happened between you, so it was normal that she misunderstood."

The next day...

The music academy was planning the Christmas event. The students registered to join the clubs, but they were mostly for solo instruments—most of the students went for piano and violin.

In comparison, there were a lot fewer people who signed up to be part of the orchestra.

A few lecturers sat at the registration counter on their phones. They would hand out forms to those who were interested to join and seemed to have a lot of time on their hands.

Ryleigh returned after handing out some flyers and took up a new stack. One of the lecturers couldn't help but advise, "Forget it, Ray. There's no point. The young people aren't really interested in orchestras."

"Yes, it's just a waste of time. Only eight signed up. The solo instruments almost have 100 sign-ups. That's such a huge comparison."

Ryleigh rolled her eyes and hugged the flyers. "It's better to get a few than just sitting here and doing nothing."

She made the lecturers look awkward but didn't wait for them to react and left.

"Tsk! Who does she think she is, acting high and mighty after just being here for a few months?"

"Ignore her. Let her give them out. Which moisturizer have you been using lately? My skin has gotten so dry..." The few lecturers started discussing skincare and ignored Ryleigh.

The lecturer who had advised Ryleigh just now looked toward Ryleigh, who was passionately handing out flyers and talking about the orchestra with the students. She hesitated before taking a few flyers and following along.

Ryleigh was surprised because she didn't expect her to join her.

The lecturer smiled. "It's better if we do it together. We still have three days to get enough people."

Ryleigh flashed a friendly smile. "Thank you."

It was good that it wasn't the hot summer. The two of them stood outside for half an hour and almost finished handing out the flyers but only convinced two students.

The lecturer handed a bottle of water to her. Ryleigh paused, then took the bottle and smiled. "Thanks, Ruby."

There had been criticism ever since she joined, so she wasn't close with the other lecturers.

This one named Ruby Severy had been on a year-long maternity leave when she joined and had returned a month ago. The bass and opera were her specializations.

Ruby had over 10 years of experience in the orchestra scene.

"Don't worry about it, we're all colleagues." Ruby was very friendly and made Ryleigh feel very comfortable.

While they were chatting, Ryleigh saw Mr. Charles Nixon and Louis walking over while having a great conversation. The few lecturers who were doing nothing started pretending to be busy when they saw

Charles.

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Charles saw them but didn't show it on his face. He smiled and asked Ryleigh, "I guess we didn't get a lot of students to sign up."

Ryleigh smiled awkwardly. Ruby was Charles' student. She laughed and said, "Sir, Ray has been working really hard at recruiting. We have three

days. If we get a few today and a few tomorrow, we might not get a lot, but it could be enough for a performance.” Charles nodded happily. “It’s alright, I believe in you. The development of the orchestra in this academy relies on you.”

Ruby started having a conversation with Charles at the side, leaving Ryleigh and Louis standing in their spots.

Ryleigh was stuck between leaving and staying, but when she was hesitating, Louis put out his hand.

She asked, “What are you doing?”

He said, “Give me your hand.”

She hesitantly put out her left hand, but before it was fully stretched out, Louis pulled her wrist forward.

Before she could react, he slowly tied a bracelet with purple pearls around her wrist.

She was stunned.

Louis fastened the clasp. “It looks good on you.” Ryleigh took her hand back and held it. She looked around her and then at the pearl bracelet, which was cool to the touch. “You ... What is the meaning of this?”

“Don’t you like it?” Ryleigh was stunned, kept her head low, and fell silent. Louis walked closer to her, “It’s to apologize.” “Apologize? She looked into Louis’ eyes and remembered how he had treated her. Her face started burning up, and she avoided his gaze. “I need to get back to work.”

Louis suddenly tugged at her arm, and before she could ask, he pulled her away in front of everyone.

The garden behind the classrooms was really quiet, with no one in sight. Ryleigh gently tugged her hand back. “Why did you bring me here, Louis?”

Louis stopped walking, cornered her in front of a wall, cupped her face in his hands, and leaned closer. “Give me a chance to explain about Xyla?”

Ryleigh kept her head low and whispered, ‘What is there to explain?’

“We’ve ended things long ago, and it wasn’t like you imagined. We would never get back together because...” He paused.

Ryleigh was nervous, but she wasn’t sure for what.

That was until the voice above her head slowly said, “Because you have taken my heart.” Ryleigh stopped breathing and looked up at him and straight into his solemn eyes. He saw herself in his eyes, just like how all he could see was her at that moment.

She parted her lips. “You-“

Louis pressed his finger to her lips, “Listen, I was in a relationship with Xyla, but it wasn’t exactly a romantic one. She pursued me, and I’ve rejected her, but she never gave up, so I agreed to give it a try,”

Ryleigh beamed and pushed his finger away. She was very surprised. “So you were toying with her feelings?”

“No...” Louis looked down. “I tried to convince myself into accepting her and loving her, but I couldn’t.”

“Then why were you together for six years?” Ryleigh pouted.

He helplessly chuckled. “More like I wasted six years of her life, so I owe her this. That was why I agreed to attend the event to repay her and to do her a small favor.”

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Louis lowered his head and looked at Ryleigh. “But what happened between us is all in the past now. I won’t talk to her anymore if you don’t like it.”

Ryleigh didn’t expect him to follow her wishes and didn’t know what to say at that moment. It even made her feel that she was being petty and finding fault where there was none.

“Ryleigh,” Louis held her cheeks and leaned closer, “We never did anything in our six years of relationship. You’re the only one I’ve touched.”

Ryleigh’s face turned red, and she raised her hands and pushed him away. She then lowered her head and said, “Enough.”

Louis added, “Yesterday was the first time...

I hurt you. I’ll do better- Mm.”

Ryleigh covered his mouth, her face red as a tomato. “I said stop.”

Louis held her hand and kissed her fingers. Her mind went blank and almost started smoking.

He continued kissing her, forgetting how fierce he had been the night before, and was instead gentle.

Ryleigh fell into his arms and forgot to push him away.

After Ryleigh and Louis got back together, her mood went from moody for the past two days to looking as though she was love-struck, grinning every now and then.

Maisie and Barbara couldn't stand it.

Cough, if you're back together, it's time to think about marriage." Maisie picked up her teacup and took a sip from it.

Ryleigh's smile froze when she heard the word 'marriage' and immediately snapped out of it. "Marriage? That's too soon." Barbara chuckled. "You've been engaged for three years. That's not soon."

"But I'm not ready yet." Ryleigh lowered her head and tugged at her shirt. She had cold feet. Barbara laughed. "Sure, don't you come crying if he leaves one day." Ryleigh pouted but didn't say anything.

Maisie put down the teacup and looked at Barbara. "Don't just focus on pushing Ryleigh. You're not going to get out of this either."

Barbara paused, and with Ryleigh laughing, she was going to say something but stopped, putting her hand to her forehead." Forget it." Ryleigh leaned closer to her. "Forget it? You've kissed my cousin, and now you plan to abandon him?" Barbara was rendered speechless.

Ryleigh continued. "I lost % 100 because of that. You should make it up."

Babara took a sip of her tea to avoid answering.

Suddenly, there was a commotion at the restaurant.

Everyone looked toward the noise and saw a woman splash tea all over a man's face.

The man shot up and yelled, "Are you crazy?" "Why would you trigger me if you knew that I'm crazy? I must have been blind to fall for a con like you." The woman picked up her bag and stomped away.

The man took some napkins and wiped off the tea on his face. He noticed that all eyes were on him and yelled back, "What are you looking at?"

Barbara was shocked when she saw his face and immediately calmed down.

Maisie noticed that, and when she was going to ask, the man looked at Barbara while he was leaving and walked past their table.

The man gave a broad smile and walked over, wiping off the tea on his shoulder. "I thought my eyes were playing tricks on me. Isn't this Ms. Yelena Chase?"

Ryleigh questioned, "Barbara, do you know him?"

Barbara's hand on the table curled, but she didn't answer.

The man looked at Maisie and Ryleigh and clicked his tongue. "These two beauties are your friends? Introduce us, won't you?"

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Barbara answered with no expression, "I don't know you that well."
"Now that my buddy Eric has passed, you've forgotten me too?" The man put his hand on her shoulder and got closer to her. "You still look so beautiful after so many years."

His hand moved downward. Maisie suddenly stood up, grabbed his wrist, and kicked him in the knee. The man fell to the floor. "You just got splashed with tea, and you're touching my friend in public now. That's sexual harassment."

Maisie's voice attracted more stares. The man looked embarrassed, got up from the floor, and laughed. "B*tch, stay in your lane."

He swung at Maisie, who avoided it and pushed him toward the floor after that.

Everyone around them stood up to get a look. Some took out their phones to take pictures while others cheered.

Ryleigh walked up and kicked him. "That's for trying to bully women."

"You... You better watch your backs!" The man stumbled and scurried away.

Maisie looked at Barbara, who looked pale." He was one of those men?"

Barbara nodded. "His name is Johnny

O'Neil, in the same gang as them. I didn't expect him to still remember me."

After that incident, they had broken up because they were afraid that it would catch attention. She didn't expect to bump into Johnny here.

She couldn't recover from the trauma those men had caused her even after so many years.

Ryleigh sat down, looking absolutely unhappy. "That b*stard still tried to touch Barbara. I should have given him a few more kicks."

The trio left the restaurant after their meal, and they suddenly saw a few men walking toward them when they got to the garage. One of them was Johnny, who was trying to get someone to get back at them.

Johnny was walking in front of the gang and yelled at them with hands on his waist, "Weren't you batches acting proud just now? Aren't you good at fighting?"

Ryleigh answered loudly, "How is a bunch of men bullying a few women something to be proud of?" "So I should just let you b*tches bully me?" Johnny spat and rolled his wrist. "I'm going to teach you a lesson."

The few men were getting closer when Ryleigh suddenly threw her bag at them and whacked them. "Get closer if you dare. Help-"

The man was kicked and collapsed on the ground with a heavy thump. Saydie, who suddenly showed up, was nimble yet strong. She grabbed the men by their wrists and twisted them. The sound of bones cracking was followed by painful yelps. The car parked behind them started honking the horn. Nina then poked her head out and pointed at the men. "I've called the police. You're not getting away!" Johnny's expression changed drastically, and he didn't want to continue attacking when he saw the men he had brought being badly beaten up.

He immediately asked them to back away.

After Maisie checked if Barbara and Ryleigh were okay, she patted Saydie's shoulder. "Thank goodness you showed up in time."

Helios lowered the car window. “Are you alright?”

Ryleigh walked to the window and smiled at him. “How did you know that we were in trouble?”

Helios maintained his expression. “I was passing by.” “Passing by? What a coincidence.” Ryleigh didn’t buy it.

Nina glanced at her watch and turned around. “Hels, Mr. Hitchcock is waiting.”

He nodded and looked at them. “I need to go. See you later.”