

Mistaking the CEO for a Gigolo

Chapter 616

The man soon realized that something was wrong. His legs felt heavy, as if someone poured lead into them.

That was when he realized in horror that the floor was covered in glue, rendering him immobile.

He narrowed his eyes. "Are you having fun?"

His voice was inordinately deep. Nicole stared back with an innocuous expression, pretending that she had no clue what was happening.

Evan could have easily removed his footwear and left the scene. But he waited. He waited to see what other tricks she had up her sleeve.

Seeing that her husband made no further moves, Nicole got down the bed.

Is the glue really that adhesive?

Or is he such a big germaphobe that he doesn't want to touch the ground with his bare feet?

If that was the case, Nicole reckoned that this was the perfect opportunity to do whatever she wanted.

Tiptoeing and pinching his well-defined face, she cooed, "Oh Evan, I must thank you for your help these past few days. You have gone to such great lengths to care for me in every way possible. You even got me my favorite dish – 'anything'."

The man picked up on the sarcasm in her tone and knew she was going to start an argument.

And he was all ears for it. Let's see what you're unhappy about.

"Well, you ordered 'anything', so of course I'd do my best to satisfy your cravings."

Very literal of you.

“When I was too weak to do anything, you barred entry to all my male friends. They couldn’t even enter my ward. Do you realize that you’re essentially robbing my freedom to make friends?”

“Yes, I think I’m justified to limit your freedom to make boyfriends.”

Seriously?

Boyfriends? They are just normal friends!

Nicole could not tolerate Evan’s actions. Not only did he bar Stephen from visiting the ward, but he also even made sure that the person delivering the hospital meals were all female.

She scoffed, “At this rate, I will end up with zero male presence in my life.”

“And you should be grateful for that! I’m making sure that you don’t fall into a scam or something. I can’t wait until you return back to your home country. Life should return to normal after that.”

That was news to Nicole. “Huh? When am I going back?”

“Three days later. There will be a special helper tending to you there.”

“Three days later?” That’s fast.

Her hesitation did not escape Evan’s eyes. “You have a problem with that?”

She knew Evan was being jealous again.

She pouted indignantly. I’m just surprised at how tight the schedule is! Don’t give me that judgmental look!

Then, a spiteful thought struck her. Since you can’t stop assuming that I have a thing for Sir Musgrave, then I’m going to make your assumptions come true.

“Hmm... Before I depart, I think it’s polite to visit the estate and give a farewell notice to Sir Musgrave. After all, his blood literally flows in me right now, so I think it’s not very nice if I just left without a word.”

Evan narrowed his eyes.

Well, letting her witness the aftermath would be good too. By then, Jeremy should have wiped out the whole estate.

“Sure, I’ll follow you too,” he replied.

Nicole did a double take. He actually agreed?

His easy consent came as a surprise considering how Evan had just sworn never to let the two meet again a few days ago.

His odd attitude raised some alarm. He must be hiding something, she thought.

“Evan, if you’re scheming anything, just remember that Sir Musgrave has saved my life! If you hurt him in any way, you’re basically betraying his kindness, and I will never forgive you!”

Evan was rendered speechless by her outburst for a moment.

Processing her words, he gave to a sobering verdict. So you still care about him after all!

Shooting her a cold gaze without saying a word, he removed his footwear and strode out of the room.

Everything happened so quickly that Nicole did not react in time.

He walked out barefoot? And wait... No! Don’t go, I’m not done with my punishment yet! Come back!

Watching the door shut, she sighed. Looks like Nina’s props will have to wait... Perhaps tomorrow would be a better time. Regardless, there will be a chance in the future, I suppose. Watch out, Evan!

At the estate, woes plagued Daphne. Her long discussion with the psychologist whom Lady Musgrave recommended left her with the disheartening realization that Hector had ulterior motives for getting close to her.

She mocked herself for being so foolish for thinking that the man was her Mr. Right who she was ready to spend the rest of her life with.

Now that Hector had returned, her agony only compounded. She had to see the man and be constantly reminded of her unrequited love. Only time could heal her current pain.

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Daphne practically spent two days sulking on her bed. Her emotions were laced with both anger and lingering feelings towards Hector.

She knew that he had other motives. But deep down, she still wanted to be with him despite everything. I'm seriously going crazy, she thought.

She tried to rationalize that she was feeling this way out of spite. It's because I hate him! And because I want vengeance, I will make him fall in love with me intentionally and make him go through the same torture and betrayal I've felt.

But honestly, she knew her logic did not make sense. If she really hated him, she would have let things be a long time ago. All this rationalization was nothing but self-deceit.

The only truth that remained was that she still loved him.

She loved him so much that she had no qualms in taking drastic actions to eliminate her biggest rival, Nicole.

She called out loud, "Can somebody come?"

A servant appeared. "Yes, Ms. Ankins?"

"Get Andy here."

After a while, the man arrived. He was her trusted aide whom she entrusted him with the following orders – keep an eye out for Nicole at the hospital and find an opportune timing to take her life. If he could make Hector lose his memories, that would be even better.

This way, Hector would belong to no one else but her.

"I can pay you as much as you demand, so long as you execute your mission properly," said Daphne.

"Don't worry, Ms. Ankins. I will do my best."

Andy left Daphne's room beaming, relishing in the idea that he would soon be a wealthy man. The joy was so overwhelming that he had a definite spring in his step.

That was when he bumped into Jeremy.

Jeremy did his research prior to arriving at the estate. He paid particular attention to Daphne's room because Evan's hit list included Daphne and Portia. That was why he was in the area.

Noticing Andy's peculiar attitude, the astute Jeremy knew that something was up.

He wasted no time in digging out the man's background information. Then, he proceeded to get the alcoholic drunk. With that, Jeremy managed to get to Andy to spill the beans in the end almost effortlessly.

Daphne's plan dismayed him. What a terrible woman. I really should teach her a lesson.

That night, the skies were pitch black. The usual tranquility was destroyed by chilling gusts of wind.

A shocking affair had shaken the entire estate. Portia was almost assassinated. If not for the doctor's efforts, she would have been gone.

What was even more surprising was that Andy was identified as the culprit, while Daphne was identified as the mastermind.

When they were called for questioning, Daphne was completely dumbfounded.

"Uncle Stephen, Levant, please believe me. I-I didn't instruct him to kill Aunt Portia!" cried the lady.

"Andy, is that true?"

But Andy was so wasted at that point in time that he had no idea what exactly happened. He did not even remember how he ended up at the crime scene.

"Be honest, Andy. Is this your own idea, or are you acting upon Ms. Ankins' instructions? Be truthful if you wish to have your life spared."

Weighing the pros and cons, Andy took the path of betrayal and shoved the responsibility to Daphne.

Daphne was taken aback. "Nonsense! Why would I order you to hurt Aunt Portia?"

Believing Andy's confession, Levant's gaze turned menacingly cold. "Daphne, did Aunt Portia mistreat you in any way? She literally treats you like her own daughter. Does your conscience not hurt when you were plotting this?"

"N-No! It's not that. I didn't plot anything!" Daphne desperately defended herself.

"Andy went to your room this afternoon, so that means you did communicate something to him."

At this point, Daphne decided that owning up to her original plan was far better than being accused of plotting her aunt's death.

And since Nicole was still safe and sound, this meant that her hands were still clean.

"I instructed Andy to go after Nicole! I never told him to hurt Aunt Portia. Uncle Stephen, Levant, you must believe me! I never intended to do anything to Aunt Portia!"

Stephen's face blackened the moment he heard Nicole's name.

He could not believe that Daphne wanted to hurt his own daughter. This lady is going to pay for her actions.

Levant was equally surprised and exclaimed, "Daphne, I wouldn't marry you even if Nicole doesn't exist! There's no point going after her!"

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Daphne sniggered upon hearing that.

"Hold on. Do you seriously think I'm going after Nicole because of you? You're overestimating your own appeal! I'm doing it to get her husband, who's far more superior than you. Tsk... That's why that Nicole has no feelings for you. If I'm in her shoes, I won't pick you either!"

Levant was rendered speechless by her words.

Every syllable was like salt being rubbed on his wound. His fists clenched involuntarily.

After all that I've done, Daphne still fell for Evan? What's so good about that man? In what way is he better than me?

Stephen took note of Levant's reaction, convinced now that he did indeed develop genuine feelings for Nicole.

If Evan isn't in the picture, they would have made a great pair. But sadly, God likes to play tricks on mankind.

Stephen was well-aware that Nicole chose Evan over Levant when she left that day.

Since she already made her decision clear, the old man wanted to respect it. After all, as a father, all he wanted was for his daughter to be happy. He had already lost Rosalie, so making Nicole unhappy was the last thing he ever wanted.

If you can't give up your love for her and go on the wrong path please don't blame me for not taking your side, Levant.

Stephen caught himself drifting away with his thoughts and immediately halted. It was more important to deal with the fiasco unfolding right before him first.

Shooting a glare at Daphne, he roared, "The estate does not tolerate such wickedness!"

"Trust me, Uncle Stephen! I-I really didn't intend to do anything to Aunt Portia! I only sent Andy to deal with Nicole- Aunt Portia is with me on this plan! She wants to get rid of that vixen too!"

Daphne was still under the impression that Stephen did not trust that her prime target was Nicole and not Portia. She thought that admitting to harming Nicole was much less consequential. Unfortunately, she was very wrong.

Stephen regarded Nicole more than anyone else- including Portia.

"Regardless of who your target was, your intention to harm others already warrants an eviction! Leave the estate now!"

Daphne had never seen Stephen so angry before.

Thoroughly intimidated, she decided that leaving the estate for now was the best option. She could get her family to speak up for her afterwards.

What she did not know was that she had pushed Stephen beyond his limit. After she left, Stephen ordered people to go after her.

It would be hard to explain to the Ankins family if something happened to Daphne while she was in the estate. But stepping out of the estate grounds, anything that happened to her was none of his business.

This is the price you're paying for wanting to harm Nicole.

Jeremy finished executing Evan's orders on the second day of arriving at the estate.

He found a chance to meet up with Evan to convey all that had happened.

"But Lady Musgrave is still alive?" asked Evan coldly.

Only Portia's death could appease him after what she had done to Nicole. Evan was surprised that Jeremy seemed to have shown mercy on her. It was very unlike his usual way of doing things.

But Jeremy had an explanation for it. "Mr. Seet, death is an easy way out. Think about it, wouldn't it be better if we prolong her suffering before actually taking her life?"

His argument was fair enough. There was indeed no rush into ending Portia's life. Jeremy isn't so merciful after all.

"Daphne is thrown out from the estate?" Evan asked.

"Yes, she was. But there's something I don't understand. After she left the estate, she was drugged and turned into a lunatic. I snooped around and to my surprise, it turns out that it was Sir Musgrave who ordered the attack!"

Evan was surprised. A lunatic? I can't believe that old man is capable of this.

Jeremy offered his two cents on the situation. "I suspect that Daphne met such a tragic fate because she wanted to go after Nicole."

"You mean... Sir Musgrave ordered the execution to protect Nicole?"

Evan spoke his thoughts. "Yes! After all, you can't enact any more harm if you've lost the mental capacity to do so."

Hearing this, Evan's face darkened.

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If Sir Musgrave had the intention to acknowledge Nicole as his daughter, it was unlikely that he would give up on it.

It's best to leave this place; the sooner the better.

Ever since Daphne was sent away, Levant had been feeling quite disquieted.

Noticing that Levant was disturbed, his subordinate came forward and reminded him, "Mr. Levant, judging from the way the duke paid attention to Ms. Lane, I think he is well aware that Ms. Lane is his biological daughter."

"So?" Levant mumbled.

"So, when the duke passes his title to Ms. Lane and Evan Seet, you're going to be left with nothing!"

"Do you think he would pass the title to me?"

Will he really forgo the father-and-son bond that we have shared all these years?

He was taken back to the estate when he was very young. The duchess had been telling him that he would inherit everything within his sight, and that he would be a duke in the future; the master of the estate.

This concept had been ingrained in his mind.

All these years, he had been working toward becoming a wise duke.

All of a sudden, he was told that somebody would replace him. Everything that he had been working for no longer belonged to him.

It was as if fate had played a cruel trick on him. I would not succumb to fate!

Even though we're not related by blood, I've been calling him my father all these years. Does he have no regard for my feelings?

"Mr. Levant, I'm afraid I have to say that it's wishful thinking on your part. Didn't you hear Sir Musgrave outside of his study the last time? Sir Musgrave is looking for his daughter so that he could compensate her by passing the title to her! You're not his biological son. It's impossible that he would pass it on to you."

"I heard that Nicole is getting discharged soon. We'll see how it goes then."

If the duke is really asking Nicole and Evan to inherit the estate, and disregarding my feelings by doing so, then there's no need for me to consider the bond between us.

"Mr. Levant, we have to plan for the worst."

"Don't worry. I know what to do."

His subordinate did not say anything further and retreated to one side.

At night.

Evan went back to the ward. "We're leaving tomorrow. I'll accompany you back to the estate to bid farewell," he said.

The two women who were scheming against her had received due retribution.

He had no other concern in bringing her back to the estate.

Nicole contemplated for a moment before nodding her head.

“Give a call to the duke. We’re going to visit at night after all.”

“Okay.”

Evan dialed the duke’s number and told him that he would bring Nicole to bid goodbye to him later.

Stephen was overjoyed to received Evan’s call. He hurried for the maids to start preparing Nicole’s favorite foods.

“Sir, are you aware of what Ms. Lane likes to eat?”

Stephen went silent. He had no idea what she liked to eat.

He failed as a father.

“Forget it. She must have had her dinner by now. No need to prepare anything.”

“Noted, Sir.”

The maids retreated, leaving Stephen deep in his thoughts as he gazed at his watch.

Twenty seven minutes until I get to see Nicole.

He hoped that the twenty seven minutes would pass by faster.

“Do we need to bring anything to his place?”

“There’s no need to bring anything. Seeing you is the best gift that he could ask for.”

Nicole felt like Evan's words were quite bitter.

However, she was glad that she could bid goodbye to the duke before leaving. Hence, she did not wish to argue about this with him.

She put on her clothes and straightened herself out. Just when she was about to follow Evan to the estate, the bodyguard rushed inside her ward.

"Mr. Seet, someone important is here."

"Who? I'm going out with Mrs. Seet. I'll see the guest later."

"Yes, Mr. Seet." John cast a glance at Nicole. "It's Mrs. Seet's acupuncture mentor, Wesley."

Nicole was excited to hear that it was her mentor.

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"Where is my mentor? Please bring me to him."

Nicole could still vividly remember how difficult it was for her to take care of three kids when she was abroad alone.

If she had not bumped into her mentor when she was at the lowest point of her life, she wouldn't know how she could pull herself through those days.

She would always feel grateful toward her mentor; her savior. Always.

"He's right outside."

"Quick! Take me there!"

When Evan and Nicole followed John out, Wesley was nowhere to be seen.

"Where is he?"

"Ms. Lane, Mr. Monroe had something urgent on and he left. He asked me to pass on this letter to you and mentioned that the thing that you wanted to know was inside. He asked you to take good care of yourself, and said that he would visit you when he has the time."

He left?

Why is he not meeting me first before leaving?

He sure has weird temperament.

Nicole stared at the letter.

"I think the letter is about your identity and background. Do you want to have a look at it now?"

She lifted her head to look at Evan. Her hand clutching the letter was slightly shaky.

She had been dying to know the jerk who abandoned her mother back then. However, when the answer was right in her hand, she had mixed feelings about it.

Nicole was wondering what kind of person her father was.

“Are you going to read it? If not let’s go say goodbye first. We’ll look at this after we’re back.”

Nicole hesitated for a moment. “I’m going to read the letter. I’ve heard that my father has something to do with the Musgrave family. If he were really someone from the Musgrave family, maybe I could ask for Sir Musgrave’s help to punish the jerk!”

Evan’s gaze sank. The plan to head back home would probably be postponed if her father were indeed someone from the Musgrave family. Besides, if Sir Musgrave intends to seek justice for her, then the two of them are more likely to see each other more often. It’s going to be much harder for me to prevent the two from seeing each other if they have this valid reason to meet.

Nicole opened the letter and read every word. She was astounded as she read along.

How did it boil down to this?

How-

Evan noticed her odd reaction and took the letter in her hand. He had the same expression on his face after he was done with the letter.

So Sir Musgrave is nice to her because of this.

Nicole’s father is Sir Stephen Musgrave.

He had been misunderstanding Sir Musgrave's intention all the while. So Sir Musgrave's affectionate gaze is out of fatherly love.

He lifted his head to look at Nicole. She was shocked beyond words.

Never in her wildest dreams would she think that Sir Musgrave was her father.

"So the jerk who abandoned my mother was him!"

Evan reached out to embrace her. "Nicole, I don't think he's the kind of heartless jerk that you think he is."

Nicole knitted her brows as she looked at him with a stern expression. "I thought you didn't like him? Why are you helping him?"

He did not like Sir Musgrave because he thought the latter had an ulterior motive.

However, upon the startling revelation, all his prejudice toward Sir Musgrave had dissipated into thin air.

"Nicole, he's been really nice toward you, to the extent that I'm feeling quite jealous. That's why I think, to a certain extent, he cares for you and your mother."

"He cares for my mother and I? That's why he abandoned my mother? Does caring for us mean that we could forgo his heartless act of abandoning my mother?" Nicole was fuming with anger.

"I'm just analyzing the situation from an observer's perspective. I think you would have to ask him to be sure of what really happened back then."

Nicole suddenly recalled that she had given him a call, and that she was going to the estate later.

He must be waiting for us.

Great. I might as well take this opportunity to settle the scores with him.

Evan was all jittery when he noticed Nicole boiling with rage as she got into the car.

It would not be a happy reunion at the estate later.

Let's hope that things would not get too ugly.

Evan had a hunch that the duke would not be a heartless jerk who would abandon the mother of his child.