

## Repaid 161

### Chapter 161

Cordy shook her head. "I'm fine."

She was just scalded a little by the boiling water, and it only hurt for a split second-she could bear with it.

However, she felt genuine danger as John got even closer.

He was already tall, while she was dainty even though he put her on the bar-she did not even reach his height even though she was sitting so high up!

He did not seem to hear her either, and he was studying her fair, delicate fingers for injury. After ensuring there were no red burns on her hand, he eventually said, "Ms. Sachs, you're always bumbling around, aren't you?"

He was being critical, but somehow, he sounded ever so tender.

"I'm not!" Cordy retorted, though she suddenly lost confidence after that.

She just realized that she messed up as many times as she cooked for John at her place.

Meeting John's meaningful gaze just then, she admitted, "It's just around you."

She never messed up around others, after all.

curling upward-clearly satisfied by the answer. "I'm honored that you feel natural around me, Ms.

Why did he always jump to

out, "The pasta will

the bar, but John stopped her. "Don't

will taste horrible if it gets mushy,"

"You just stay

treated like a child again, just like Richard,

pasta out of the pot and served them

they were done, he picked up Cordy

eggs, and some ham, but

the living room couch, perfectly comfortable as he picked up the remote and clicked through

helpless, since she was

Starstream Group by day, and she

designs aside from

refusing to leave

John said, as if he had another eye

the way he put it... Whose house was

soon skipped a

because he knew she would be busy and he was

touched, she turned and headed inside

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But at that split second, a deep man's voice spoke from behind. "So you're into that, Ms. Sachs?"

Cordy's heart almost jumped out of her chest.

She quickly turned, and realized that John had appeared behind her without her knowing!

She did not see him come in at all, though she might have been too engrossed to notice his arrival

Still, that was not the point, as the woman in the video was still moaning endlessly.

Cordy quickly turned around to turn off the video, but she was fumbling so much she could not seem to click out of it at all, and was so flustered she started to sweat all over her brow

That was when a large hand suddenly grabbed her hand, steering the mouse in turn to close the video.

And with that, the study fell silent, while Cordy wanted somewhere to hide.

intimacy with men and would actually react adversely to it...

was no explaining

she hung her head, flushing up to her neck, John called out, "Please look up,

become an ostrich if she

had to explain herself or the misunderstanding would last

soon as she did

and their

unexpected, catching both of them off guard... but it

air suddenly seemed to turn thin as everything else turned

and Cordy

too well that John would go for more

did pull away... he would,

her lips as if in reflex, but that small twitch of a

his eyes and lips seemed to be burning up, as if on  
large hand on the back of her head, and even being inexperienced as she was,  
heart raced without control, while

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John's presence was menacing as he demanded, "What are you doing here?!"

Zoe did not dare to speak at all, since she never moved out of Cordy's house even after John prepared another for her.

At the same time, Cordy took a moment to gather herself before stepping out of her study-she could not stand seeing Zoe trembling in fright like a small animal.

"It's late. You should go," Cordy told John.

John pursed his lips-he still seemed to feel Cordy on his lips.

But he did not have a taste!

Still, scowling, he growled, "What are you doing here?"

It was likely that he would remain upset if he did not get to vent his frustrations.

"..." Not knowing how to answer at all, Zoe turned to Cordy for help.

"I told her to come," Cordy said. "I was worried because she would be alone, so I let her stay with me."

have problems living alone? She ran away from home at eighteen!" John

don't you move in with Cordy? If you can, I'll move out!" Zoe suddenly snapped, having

turned green, Cordy was left in an awkward

got in a fight, should

shooting all day, so I need a bath. You

said then, quickly

John might really

even as she left, he bellowed after her, "You'd better delete that crap

a double take

Linda-her

and she had simply left it

that would be shot in

was certainly impressed by her manager's dedication, but was there a reason that stuff

John's words,  
he so sure that  
the feeling that he genuinely and unconditionally trusted  
did she really feel the  
She had no idea...

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Even so, John could still feel his heart racing.

Back in Cordy's house, Zoe stepped out of Cordy's study once she deleted the videos, asking, "Is he gone?"

Cordy quickly came to her senses, composed herself, and returned inside her study. "Yeah."

"Was I imposing?" Zoe asked, actually a little guilty just then.

"No, it's fine." Cordy denied it.

Still, Zoe watched her face for a moment before teasing, "That's not your first kiss with him, is it?"

Cordy was taken aback, but she shook her head. "No."

The last time, John basically caught her off guard.

She only felt shock and rage at the time.

This time, she gave her silent approval.

why it

not help teasing

reaction.

actually unsure

kisses were barely a brush, after all...

that stud." Zoe simply acknowledged John's prowess since she was

of his would have left anyone

if Penny didn't mention it to me," Zoe said, changing the

widespread coverage thanks to your work as a brand

Corp," Zoe said supportively. "Seeing Kyle

Starstream rose

wanted was to fulfill her late mother's wish to bring Starstream to new heights, but her mother had met with an accident that took her life soon after she founded the company. Otherwise, her industry, given her ability.

and Mandy Jessop," Zoe added in concern. "A two-faced witch and a schemer? They're definitely up to "I know." Cordy nodded.

would not just be a competition after she saw that Show as well.

would not be difficult to beat them-she just had to make threat.

## Chapter 165

Noel and Mandy were certainly in a good mood after Cordy dropped in rank.

In their heads, that-and elimination-was the true extent of Cordy's abilities.

The last round was a fluke, and she once again lucked out this time.

And the next round, she would be gone!

Cordy, however, seemed to stay immune to her drop in ranking or any criticism the public threw her way.

After she was done with the second round, she placed all her focus on her work.

Then, when she had free time, she would prepare the design for the next round.

in her office when her phone suddenly

to check who it was

have to do this, Cordy."

men with inferiority complexes got smug about the simplest

same time, Kyle was laughing coolly. "Don't think I can't tell. You had to work with Starstream Fashion's designers for that dress in the first round. But they're nothing without Noel, and they'll only get you past the first round. I heard your rank already dropped in the second... If I were you, I would have forfeited instead of embarrassing

said coolly. "You really should be keeping a close eye on your darling Noel instead. I mean, now that she's getting really popular, she might dump you in

We're getting along perfectly and we'll get married once Noel wins this. You won't

get the confidence that I

might have been sad before, since she

everything he did only left her creeped out, and anything she felt toward falling for him in the first place, allowing him to wound more self aware, Cordy. Don't think you can strut just because you hooked up with John Levine. I don't mind telling you that he already has a fiancée, but had gone to Rocktown for a business trip a couple days ago and inadvertently even fit to wipe her shoes,"

## Chapter 166

The theme of the design was not announced this time either.

The contestants would be given the theme on the spot, and they had to come up with a design with the fabrics provided by the studio.

Moreover, they would also be changing partners for said round.

Since contestants were allowed to choose partners freely, everyone had been sticking to the partners they had from the first round. After all, they would have developed a sense of teamwork, and the designer would have a better understanding of what fit their partners.

The sudden change was obviously to increase the difficulty of the competition.

Over at the CEO's office of Jessop Corp, Mandy was throwing a fit. "What are they thinking?! Why would they set the rule of changing partners for the last round?!"

The rule change had caught Kyle and Noel by surprise too.

Mandy kept complaining, saying, "Kyle, you know Noel must win this time, but I won't be winning with her if we're not in the same group! That's unacceptable! Aren't you close with the production team? Can't they annul the rule?!"

think, but they're saying that the script has

Mandy huffed, not having

been confirmed. Moreover, you're not the key in this competition- Noel is," Kyle snapped, ignoring Mandy as he turned to Noel.

being Cordy, who

meant she won enough votes from the live audience

now-was Cordy doing

have the money to pay off the production team for such an elaborate script,

was the case... Cordy would have been hiding

design templates Starstream Fashion came up with. She knew very well it was

it really

thought about it,

could not afford to let Cordy crush her in

not getting Cordy eliminated in the earlier rounds because she was made to believe that Cordy would definitely be

before, but now that they were the last round and with it being in

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That was when Noel said hesitantly, "Actually, I have an idea."

"What is it?" Both Kyle and Mandy were immediately interested.

Still, Noel pretended as if she had a hard time saying it. "But it's unfair to my sister if we go through with it..."

"You're still worried about her now?! Has she ever worried about you?!" Mandy cried indignantly. "She doesn't even consider you family-remember how she humiliated you and Kyle at that press conference? You can't be soft now, Noel!"

"Alright," Noel said begrudgingly. "I'll do anything for Kyle."

But when she told them about her idea, both Kyle and Mandy were actually stunned by it.

They could actually do that?!

Noel continued to look burdened. "D-Don't you think it's too much?"

"How is that too much?" Mandy quickly said. "We have to do this because Cordy messed around first. If she's cheating, then we're just returning the favor! Fair's fair!"

Noel then turned toward Kyle, who immediately agreed to it as well. "She only has herself to blame. We won't have to go that far if not for her."

as ever even though she clearly came up

plan.

heart was

to play with her, she would only ever

And yet...

really have

with by John left her feeling cathartic, it also meant that

deciding to

Show was finally underway, and the atmosphere at the studio was tense since it was

only three pairs

Cordy, Noel, and another fashion designer of mixed ancestry named Andal Scott, those three celebrities, Stella was the least popular and Mandy buying popularity for Noel and Mandy.

were skyrocketing all over the internet- Mandy, especially, had used her down-to-earth, straightforward maiden impression in front

of Solo Show began at 8

an internationally renowned fashion designer whose name

phone was ringing

four, and it

comes the bloodbath!

beautiful tonight!

Chapter 168

John murmured, "Hmm?"

At the same time, his eyes were glued to Cordy on the screen.

Standing under the stage lights, she was astonishingly beautiful.

"Getting to the finals is nothing." Randy said just then. "Being able to stay in last place with such precision is so much more divine!"

Having worked for John over the years and eventually being promoted to become his special assistant, Randy was certainly competent.

He was almost positive that Cordy had deliberately maintained her rank so that she was just short of elimination, while avoiding any attack by those who had financial backers.

One might even say that she rose to the pinnacle with almost no cost at all, and it was no different from slamming the Jessops' faces on the floor and wiping it.

John's lips curled up into a smile as well-Cordy was definitely far smarter than he thought.

At the studio, the three designers had exchanged partners.

she was paired with Mandy, who was the most popular

was still partnered with Kathy Barnes, whereas Noel was

two phases for

first decided the third-placer, and the winner would only be

phase began, the designers were to use the fabrics they had on the studio to design a dress in thirty



was no theme-the judges and audiences' response  
the fabrics available, and she did not hesitate as she went to  
her a look before  
Mandy's connection to the production team, they had already found out  
and she told Stella to change into  
out, the crowd was roaring with approval, clearly astounded by Noel's  
she found out about what they  
that she did not have to worry about Cordy  
her.

fact, she had been giving Cordy  
that was when the crowd roared again, and they were

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There was no question that Cordy had won this phase with overwhelming approval, hence proceeding to the next round.

The crowd was roaring with approval.

And yet, the judges did not rate Cordy's design highly, dismissing it as having nothing unique, only that its overall presence was commendable. It was therefore fortunate that their rating was only twenty percent of the total score, and Kyle's sabotage beforehand changed nothing.

Meanwhile, panic was showing all over Noel's face.

At that rate, even if she had a flash of inspiration in the final phase, she was not going to win against Cordy.

She turned to look at Mandy, who was absolutely satisfied with Cordy's design.

In fact, it was the first time she felt so beautiful!

If it had been anyone else, she would have appointed them as her personal tailor.

But it had to be Cordy... and she could not even hate this design!

noticed

would never allow

Noel with tacit understanding, and Noel gained some confidence in

turn on the

started to gush in, all of which were

kicking things off

is Cordy's design simple?! Don't they know that less is more?! They have even less of an understanding of art than

have to admit

was still rambling on, but no one was

to the live

Cordy Sachs' design was simply

designs had something to them... Now that

That dress has so much going for it,

must be holding back her true potential, just

lose

over Cordy and Noel, but the approval for Cordy was

round proceeded to the second phase, and it

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Hence, Noel confidently waited for Cordy to present her designs.

In fact, Noel was convinced that she might not have to scheme against Cordy to beat Cordy this.

time.

Just then, the crowd was applauding, and Noel turned to find Cordy stepping onstage.

Mandy was still in the backstage changing room, so the crowd was relatively calm.

After a few minutes, the curtains opened, and the crowd was once again roaring in approval as Mandy arrived on stage, once again stealing the limelight.

It was a red gown, covered from top to bottom with bright red roses, and yet showing no vulgarity. Not only was it fresh and novel, but it was also stunningly attractive.

Noel's design only had amplified aesthetics, and any audience would only admire its elegance from afar. On the other hand, they would have a pressing need to possess the gown Cordy designed, so that they could put it on and wow the crowd.

Naturally, Cordy's design was far more breathtaking, and Noel had already expected that.

be precise, she

she turned to glance at Mandy, Mandy returned her

others' perspective, it would just be a normal

their

Mandy was wearing, just as she could feel the audience's

no other surprises, she would be

the gown Mandy was

put on the gown she designed in the dressing room, and once

Cordy immediately sensed trouble after Mandy still not coming out despite her

return inside

would sew it back up while saying Mandy accidentally ruined it. It would just be a few marks deducted at worst, with nothing

not expect Mandy to change into

and not something they put together hastily-the gown Mandy

the assistants would help Mandy get

but the switcheroo was very likely since there were no cameras in the

so, Cordy kept a stiff upper