

Arabella 1851

Chapter 1851

Arabella had blossomed into someone far more delightful than Serena.

But he used to tease her and even thought of abandoning her at the mountain.

How could he have been so blind to the charm, the intelligence, the sweetness of his little sister? He had been such a jerk!

"By the way, Sean, you didn't tell me what you wanted to see me about?" asked Arabella as she finished her chores and looked up at him.

Sean explained, "The servant brought over those jackets, and I can't keep accepting things from you.

Take this card. I'm going to be getting a lot more from you, and this is a down payment. It's yours to keep."

In his heart, he knew he'd never ask for it back, nor did he care how much she spent or what she spent it on.

This was his way of giving his sister a welcome home gift.

Arabella glanced at the platinum card in front of her, and without a need for anyone to tell her, she knew it had at least 5 million dollars in it.

5 million was the bare minimum for that kind of card.

"It's just a few clothes, Sean. You don't have to be that polite with me." Arabella pushed the card back towards him.

"Keep it!" Sean insisted, placing it on top of her sketchpad, "I have other cards. Don't worry about me running out of money!"

As he spoke, he pushed a box of his other treasures towards her.

"These are from various auctions I've won bids at, you could call it my private collection. I want you to have them."

Arabella saw a variety of items including paintings, and priceless artifacts.

"I'm always out in Belloria and can't give these things the proper care. They'll be safe with you," Sean said, thinking he'd found the perfect excuse.

But Arabella was serious, "Sean, these gifts are too valuable. I can't accept them."

She had already accepted 5 million dollars from him and did not plan to take anything more.

Yet Sean was adamant, "You accepted gifts from our other brothers. If you don't accept mine, I'll be

heartbroken."

Arabella tried to interrupt him, when then she heard him say, "I really want to give them to you. If you accept them, it'll make me happy. Don't you want me to be happy?"

"I only have one sister. If I'm not giving these to you, then who else should receive these?"

Arabella smiled, "Once you have a girlfriend, you could give them to her."

"I have no idea when I'll be able to win over your future sister-in-law." Sean blurted out, then, suddenly remembering something, glanced at Arabella sheepishly.

Arabella smiled slyly, "Ophelia is coming to see me tonight."

"Really?" An excited spark appeared in Sean's eyes.

"The holidays are coming, and she's back in town. She said she'd stop by tonight. She'll also be there the day I announce my identity." Watching Sean with amusement, she added, "Do you like her?"

"No, that's not it." Sean, caught off guard by the news that the girl of his dreams would be visiting, hurriedly said, "Actually, there's something urgent I just realized I need to do. I have to go. And keep the stuff, okay? Don't you dare send it back, or I'll get mad!"

Sean left in a hurry, and Arabella couldn't help but chuckle. Without guessing, she knew Sean was

probably off to shave, shower, and spruce himself up.

Chapter 1852

Evening had fallen.

Arabella had barely finished her dinner when a message from Ophelia popped up on her phone. It

read, [Heading out now. I'll be at Reflections Villa in 20 minutes.]

With a swift thumbs-up emoji reply, Arabella looked up and announced to her parents, "Mom, Dad, a friend of mine will be stopping by for a visit soon."

"A friend?" Kenneth and Louisa were pleasantly surprised and excited to hear that their darling daughter had invited someone over. It wasn't an everyday occurrence.

"What does your friend prefer to eat and drink? I'll have it prepared right away," Louisa said, her own hunger forgotten amidst the surprise. Arabella hadn't had friends over since she moved back home six months ago, so this friend must be quite special to her.

"She's not picky, anything can be fine. There's no need to fuss," Arabella reassured her parents, standing up from the table, "You guys enjoy your meal. I'm going to wait for her by the entrance."

"It's chilly outside, put on an extra layer!" Louisa called out after her daughter. Once Arabella had left,

Louisa turned to Kenneth, trying hard to contain her joy. "Our daughter's finally inviting friends over.

This is wonderful. What do you suppose young girls like to eat and drink these days?"

"If she's friends with Bella, then I'd wager they have similar tastes and interests," Kenneth speculated,

glancing at the half-eaten plate of food in front of his wife. "You can finish up your food. I'll have the

staff prepare some fruit and snacks. Bella's gone to welcome her, so her friend must be close."

Louisa couldn't sit still to eat, rising from her chair. "I'll go tell the boys to come downstairs. When their

sister's friend arrives, they should at least say hello, have a brief conversation. This is Bella's first time

bringing someone over; we need to make a good impression and show some warmth!"

The staff were left puzzled, unsure if they should clear the table or wait, as the couple had left their

meal halfway through, clearly too preoccupied to eat.

Arabella stood at the entrance of Reflections Villa, quickly replying to a message from Romeo. Soon,

the glare of headlights approached.

A sleek black sports car, its engine purring, pulled up in front of her.

"Hey, sweetheart," Ophelia said, greeting Arabella with her radiant smile, her hair rolled into a chic bun,

which added a playful charm to her appearance.

Her beauty was like a plum blossom thriving in the snow; subtle yet breathtaking, never clamoring for attention yet impossible to overlook.

"How long have you been waiting? Aren't you cold?" Ophelia asked as she stepped out of the car and gently rubbed Arabella's rosy cheeks. "I shouldn't tell you about my arrival time. You're nearly frozen.

And look at your little red nose!"

Pulling out a dozen gifts from the trunk, Ophelia struggled to carry them all.

Arabella quickly moved to help, teasing with a light smile, "What are you, Santa Claus with your bag of presents?"

"I've got to make an impression as your friend," Ophelia chuckled, realizing their combined efforts weren't enough. She had intended to call over a security guard for help, but as she looked up, she froze in surprise.

Following Ophelia's gaze, Arabella saw her parents and brothers emerging from the house to greet them, the reception grander than she'd anticipated.

"What's going on?" Ophelia was bewildered, having only planned a casual visit.

"You must be Bella's friend. I'm Bella's mother. It's a pleasure to have you," Louisa greeted with an elegant and warm smile. She intended to shake hands, but seeing Ophelia's arms laden with gifts, she quickly interjected, "Dear, you shouldn't have brought these gifts. Coming over is gift enough. Here, boys, help out!"

Chapter 1853

The brothers stepped forward to lend their hands, with Sean being the first to take the present from Ophelia's hands. When the girl thanked him, he was on the verge of introducing himself, but her hand was promptly taken by her mother in the next moment.

"This child, she's a real beauty, just like our Bella. Those features, that grace, simply stunning," Louisa said warmly as she gently took her hand. "It's chilly out here, let's head inside to chat."

"Hey there, I'm Bella's dad. Right this way." Kenneth said with a welcoming gesture and a beaming smile.

Ophelia hadn't expected such a grand reception just for coming to visit Arabella. She was utterly flabbergasted. "You're too kind, even coming out to greet me personally."

"You're Bella's friend; we're just as thrilled as she is that you're here. Welcome! Do come by more often when you have the time!" Louisa said enthusiastically, linking arms with her and Bella. "We'll grab a bite

in a bit, and then Bella can show you around. Oh, and these gentlemen are Bella's brothers—there's Hans, Chase, Clark, and Sean. There's also another brother named David, who's been tied up with work and hasn't made it back yet."

When she got to Sean, he instinctively held his breath.

Dressed to the nines tonight, he looked as though he'd just returned from an evening gala, shedding his usual aloof coolness for a more polished charm.

At first, his brothers were puzzled by his attire since it seemed a bit too formal for home.

It wasn't until he offered an excuse about attending a friend's wedding and carefully timed his return.

A closer look revealed that from his hair down to his shoes, including the color of his socks, everything was different from his usual style.

But with so many brothers to meet, Ophelia could hardly take it all in, nodding with a smile, "Hello, it's a pleasure to meet you all."

Sean was about to say something when he overheard her asking Arabella, "Why does your house have so many bodyguards?"

It looked like the place was on high alert, as if something had happened.

"Something came up at home recently, which has prompted an increase in security—but rest assured, it's safe here. Feel free to relax and enjoy yourself. And if you get tired, you're welcome to stay over.

We've got plenty of guest rooms; pick whichever you like. I'll have Bella show you around later so you can choose." Louisa explained.

"You're so kind, thank you for your generosity, Mrs. Collins. My place is only a twenty-minute drive from here, which is quite close, and with the holidays coming up, I wouldn't want to impose. But thank you again for your warm hospitality."

"Thank me? Dear, you're being too formal."

For the first time, Ophelia was experiencing the warmth of the Collins family. She exchanged knowing looks with Arabella as if to say: OMG! Your family is just so welcoming and friendly!

"You don't need to change shoes; just come on in," Louisa invited her warmly as they entered the main house.

"No, no, no, I'll change them. Your floors are so clean, and the atmosphere is so cozy. You are all so warm and kind. Bella must feel so blessed and happy coming home to this."

Louisa beamed with joy upon hearing her words, "You're such a charmer. Oh, I just realized, we didn't even ask your name?"

"The daughter of the Almond family, Ophelia," Hans and Sean suddenly chimed together.

Chapter 1854

Kenneth and Louisa were surprised. How on earth did the two know Ophelia's name?

Hans, too, glanced at Sean with a hint of surprise. Ophelia's identity was not common knowledge, so

how Sean could know that, since he had always been in Belloria?

Had Ophelia visited Belloria, crossing paths with Sean in the process?

The other siblings exchanged curious and puzzled looks, turning their eyes towards Sean.

It was not strange for Hans, a seasoned businessman, to know the Almonds, but how did Sean come to know Ophelia?

Kenneth and Louisa hadn't expected that Bella's friend would turn out to be Ophelia Almond, the sole heiress of the Almonds.

"Your father and I go way back," Hans began, "We've had a few dealings in the past, and then his business focus shifted abroad, and we lost touch. I remember when we were out playing golf, he

mentioned you were still in school. He spoke so fondly of you, it's hard to believe you've grown up to be such a graceful young woman."

Kenneth, realizing she was the Almonds' daughter, looked at her with a newfound warmth, as if seeing an old friend's child.

"Just two years ago, I read in the news that your father handed over the reins of the family business to you. It was quite a significant event back then," Louisa chimed in.

Ophelia responded with a light chuckle, "Yes, a lot of people doubted me back then, thinking I couldn't fill my father's shoes."

"This proves that your father was a man of vision," Hans said. That was a rare compliment from him, especially for someone he had just met.

Since taking over the Collins family business, Hans hadn't worked with the Almonds directly. However, he had heard of the feats of the Almond heiress in their business circle.

At such a young age, she had propelled the group to new heights, turning skepticism into respect in just two years.

It was said that she was a sports enthusiast, a skydiving aficionado, a legend on the ski slopes.

A young woman of her caliber, sharing hobbies with his sister. It was no wonder they had become such good friends.

"Hans knows of me?" This time, it was Ophelia who was taken aback.

Hans nodded, "You're doing great, keep it up."

"Hans rarely dishes out praise. That means you must have a solid reputation in the business world,"

Arabella said with a smile.

Ophelia was thrilled to receive Hans' commendation. "Having Hans' approval means the world to me.

I'll definitely keep it up."

Sean, standing to the side, struggled to get a word in. Just as he was about to speak, the group had already made their way into the living room.

There were six elders seated on the sofas, of whom Ophelia was stunned at first glance.

Not only did Arabella's grandparents and aunts and uncles rise to greet her warmly, shaking her hand and engaging in friendly conversation, but they also treated her almost like a member of their own family!

Ophelia thanked them profusely for their hospitality and followed their lead, calling them Grandma

Darren, Grandpa Belinda, Auntie, and Uncle, just as Arabella did.

"In the future, you don't need to bring gifts when you come to our home. We're all delighted to have you

here. Feel free to visit anytime you like," Eunice expressed warmly with a smile. "Now, you and Bella enjoy your chat. We elders will leave you be."

Eunice and Bard were the first to head upstairs, not wanting to overwhelm the youngsters with too many people around.

"Stay as long as you like, treat this place like your own home, no need to be formal," Bard added kindly before leaving.

Chapter 1855

"Thanks, Uncle and Auntie," Ophelia said. Hardly had she finished speaking before Bernard came over with a fresh cup of tea and Cornelia followed, presenting a plate of pastries.

Ophelia quickly stood up to accept them, saying, "Grandpa and Grandma, you're too kind. I can manage on my own, but thank you."

Bernard and Cornelia fussed over her a bit more, saying, "Well, you and Bella have a nice chat. We're

going to head upstairs."

"Take care, Grandpa and Grandma," Ophelia called out as they left.

Ophelia watched their retreating figures. But she barely had a moment before Arabella's maternal grandparents came over with a fruit platter, urging her to help herself generously.

"Thank you, Grandpa and Grandma. It's just, I feel bad seeing you serving fruit to someone younger like me," she said, her voice with genuine concern.

"That's what we should do, dear," they replied warmly. "It's more appropriate for us the elders to look after you. Now, you and Bella enjoy your time. It's not often we have you over, so don't rush off. Both our family, and Bella in particular, are happy you could come."

"I'll stay a while longer," Ophelia assured them, grateful for their hospitality.

Louisa, afraid she would impose on their gathering, also parted with Kenneth. They soon left the living room, leaving behind the brothers and the two girls.

With the elders gone, the atmosphere became more relaxed.

"Bella's never been one to invite friends over, so the family's excited, maybe a bit too eager. Hope we didn't startle you, Ms. Almond," Hans said.

Ophelia was quick to reply, "Oh, not at all. I'm just so happy for Bella. To come back to such a loving family, and to see how much you all care for her. It makes me happy, too. Bella's been through some rough times, but it looks like she's finally found her silver lining."

Then she quickly changed the subject, not wanting to delve into past sorrows, adding, "This family's hospitality is truly something else, a cut above the Murphys. The Murphys were awful, except for Grannie Grace, of course."

She shot Arabella a smile, careful not to offend.

She knew all too well the place Grannie Grace held in Arabella's heart.

The brothers were surprised by Ophelia's candor in openly criticizing the Murphys in front of everyone.

It was clear she harbored deep resentment on Bella's behalf.

"Thank goodness fate turned the tables, letting them get a taste of the hardship Bella endured,"

Ophelia added, her words full of empathy for her friend.

"Bella's lucky to have such a caring and genuine friend like you. I'm pleased for her," Hans said with a soft smile. "I hear you've just returned from abroad, Ms. Almond. You were pursuing opportunities

overseas?"

"Yes, I was involved in a project in Belloria, but someone kept throwing wrenches in the works, so it hasn't been going smoothly," Ophelia explained—that accounted for her extended stay abroad.

"Someone causing trouble? Bella's brother Sean has some influence in Belloria; he might be able to help. Who's been giving you trouble?" Hans asked, then turned to Sean, "Did you know Ms. Almond before this?"

"Not personally," Sean replied. He knew of her, but she was unaware of him.

To the outside world, he was just the infamous Sheen, and she was none the wiser.

"Well, this is a good time to get acquainted. It'll be great to have someone to watch your back in Belloria. From my knowledge, you both share a passion for sports and racing," Hans said, looking between Sean and Ophelia. "My brother's team, Drift Swifts, has made a name for itself in Belloria.

Ever heard of it, Ms. Almond?"

Chapter 1856

Drift Swifts! So, Sheen was Sean?

Ophelia's eyes widened in disbelief as she glanced over at Arabella, who seemed to be in on the secret all along.

A smirk played on Arabella's lips, leaving Ophelia feeling like the only one left in the dark.

But something didn't add up. If Drift Swifts was Sean's brainchild, then he must be the "Sheen". So why on earth had he been at odds with his own sister?

When Bella stepped in to race on Ophelia's behalf, she'd even mentioned that her brother was a real piece of work..

And before that, the siblings had been at each other's throats!

Could it be that Bella hadn't recognized her own brother? And that Sean was clueless to the fact that he was bullying his own sister?

It sounded like a soap opera plot, far too coincidental to be true.

Sean's attempt to stop Hans from blowing his cover was in vain. He noticed that Ophelia was quite surprised, and her eyes filled with unspeakable thoughts. Had Drift Swifts left a bad impression on her?

Ophelia hadn't expected the infamous Sheen to be Arabella's brother. No wonder everyone said he was a force to be reckoned with, with an impressive background that made people hesitant to cross him.

Who would dare mess with Sheen?

Especially when the young master's tactics were known to be ruthless and merciless, his fierce reputation well-established.

"I can't believe Drift Swifts is founded by Sean."

Ophelia felt a sense of relief. Thank goodness Bella had won the race. If it was an outsider who had shown up Sean, well, who knew how grim their fate would be.

"It seems Ms. Almond has heard of them?" Hans, unaware of their previous encounters, gave her a warm smile, as if looking at his own sister.

"Then you must have heard of my brother's right-hand man—Eagle. If things weren't so complicated, Eagle could handle it alone."

"Hans!" Sean couldn't believe Hans had revealed "Eagle" as well. Now he was finished.

When Ophelia heard the name "Eagle," she thought she'd misheard!

The very person who was a thorn in the side of her project was called "Eagle"!

Eagle was arrogant and lawless, a man no one in both the underworld and the legitimate world could touch.

He and his crew had been harassing her project repeatedly, forcing it to a standstill. She despised this

Eagle to the core.

And now Hans was saying this man was Sean's subordinate?

Why would Sean meddle with her project? What had she done to displease this man?

The look Ophelia gave Sean was beyond surprise and shock.

Sean felt that he couldn't clear his name even if he jumped into the Mississippi River. He could do

nothing but suggested, "Let's give Bella and her friend some space to catch up. We shouldn't intrude on their reunion."

"Let's first hear about the troubles Ms. Almond is facing. No rush." Hans's voice was still caring, showing no intention of leaving.

"I won't bother Sean—ah, I mean, Brother Sean, with my little issues."

Hearing Ophelia's repeated "Brother Sean," Sean became a bit restless, "Stop calling me like that."

Ophelia flinched at his tone—she was right. Sean didn't like her one bit! He must have been tolerating her for Bella's sake all along!

From the beginning, Sean had been mostly silent.

And now, he was speaking with a hint of impatience.

It must be her calling him “Brother Sean” that had bothered him.

Chapter 1857

"Look, Sean, I should have called you by ‘Mr. Sean’. I'm so sorry," Ophelia quickly corrected herself,

her cheeks coloring with embarrassment.

Hans shot his younger brother a warning glance that said, "That's Bella's friend. And you're scaring her!

What's with the attitude?"

"That was your fault, Sean. She was just trying to show you some respect, calling you ‘Brother Sean’

because of Bella. And here you are, freaking her out. Apologize to Bella's friend!" Clark couldn't stand it

any longer, emphasizing that Ophelia was “Bella's friend”!

That's MY sister's friend, so you'd better be nice!

There was also pressure from Hans's demanding stare: “Apologize.”

It was as if they all thought Sean was out of line. If it was that Sean didn't want to help Ms. Almond or

he found it bothersome, he could've just said so. There was no need to be so cold that he wouldn't

even let Ophelia call him by “Brother Sean.”

Feeling utterly wronged, Sean didn't know how to explain that he didn't want to be brothers and sisters with Ophelia, and now he had caused a huge misunderstanding. Ophelia, too intimidated to even glance at him, picked up her cup and took a few sips of coffee to distract herself. Poor Sean was at a loss for words.

Arabella, however, read the situation and offered a gentle smile. "Didn't Hans just suggest that Sean get to know my friend, make a new buddy? What Sean means is, since they're friends, there's no need for formalities like brother and sister, just first names are fine, right, Sean?"

"Yeah, exactly, that's what I meant! My sis gets me!" Sean was eager to clear up any misunderstanding, his tone shifting to a more careful and almost timid inflection.

Ophelia hadn't expected Arabella to come up with such a smooth explanation on Sean's behalf.

What Arabella didn't know was that Sean had been putting up roadblocks on her projects behind the scenes.

If she found out, she'd definitely think Sean disliked Ophelia personally!

But for Arabella's sake, Ophelia maintained a polite facade, "I guess I misunderstood you, Sean. But

since you're Bella's brother, it feels rude to just call you by your first name. I'll stick with 'Brother Sean,' if that's fine."

"That's not fine!"

That formality just made things worse, more distant, more alienating!

But Sean's adamant response took everyone by surprise again.

His brothers suspected he was losing his mind because he was acting so strangely tonight.

Arabella, on the other hand, understood what he was getting at and said with a soft laugh, "Sean just feels like we're all family here, no need for such formal titles. Ophelia, you can call him 'Sean,' and Sean, you can call my friend 'Ophelia.'"

"All right, Ophelia," Sean began, suddenly picking up some cupcakes from the table and placing them before her, "Emm. I'm not great with words, so please don't take it to heart. Bella, what flavor does your friend like?"

"Strawberries," Arabella reminded him.

Without hesitation, Sean moved the plate so the strawberry-filled cupcakes were right in front of Ophelia, waiting for her to take one.

If he weren't afraid of being considered dirty, he would have liked to pick the cake up himself and deliver it to her.

"These cupcakes are freshly made, they're really good," Sean said. Trying to coax a more pleasant expression from Ophelia, he looked at Arabella for confirmation, "Right, sis?"

"Yeah, Sean's right. They're delicious. Go help yourself, try one."

Ophelia couldn't help but feel that Arabella was acting out of character tonight!

Having known Arabella for years, Ophelia had never seen Arabella go to bat for a guy like this!

But for the sake of her friend, Ophelia took a cupcake. "Thanks, Mr... Thank you."

Sean didn't hear her call him by his name, which left him feeling a bit downhearted, but at least she was talking to him now, and his mood quickly improved, "No problem, we're all friends here!"

And with that, it became clear to the rest of the brothers.

Sean had a thing for Ophelia and didn't want to take "brother"!

It seems his little sister knew him well enough to help him out right from the start!

Chapter 1858

"It's delicious," Ophelia cooed, delicately nibbling on a pastry, her every move embodying a charm that

Sean found unexpectedly adorable.

"Sean, have a bite yourself," Arabella interjected, playfully snapping him out of his reverie.

It was impolite to stare at a girl for too long.

Realizing his lapse, Sean quickly diverted his gaze and grabbed a pastry at random, stuffing it into his mouth. "Not bad," he mumbled.

Ophelia's expression soured at his choice.

"The one thing Ophelia can't stand is pineapple," Arabella revealed, making Sean's chewing come to an awkward halt. The pastry in his mouth had a pineapple filling!

"If you like it, you should have more," Arabella quipped with a teasing tone, prompting Sean to swallow the pineapple pastry in a hurry. "No, no, on second thought, it's not as good as that strawberry cupcake we shared last time. It lacks that certain something."

His buddies couldn't help but smirk at his rapid backpedaling.

"Bella, Hans, Clark, grab some, will you?" Ophelia offered, extending the plate towards them.

Arabella picked one, and the other guys followed suit.

Sean watched them with puppy eyes, berating himself for not waiting—what a missed opportunity for a

girl to serve him.

"Pastry from Ophelia's hands tastes even sweeter," Clark commented light-heartedly, eating his piece and throwing Sean a teasing glance.

"And Ophelia, do you have a special someone yet? If not, I'd be glad to set you up," Chasel chimed in with a wink.

"No need, Chasel, I'm focused on my career right now. Love isn't on the menu at the moment," Ophelia graciously declined.

Conversing with the guys was somehow easier than dealing with Sean.

"What's your type, though? I know plenty of eligible bachelors. We could keep an eye out for you,"

Hans joked, with a tone that was unusually playful for him. "Surely not the self-centered, moody, and flaky type, right?"

Sean thought to himself: Come on, Hans, you might as well just say my name!

"I'm not sure who I'll end up with, but I don't think it'll be the kind you described," Ophelia replied with a light smile.

Sean could almost hear the sound of his heart cracking.

The brothers chuckled, enjoying the show.

"I agree, that type is unreliable. But Bella's fiancé is quite the catch—he's passed our tests with flying colors," Chasel said with a smile.

"And I'd say Bella's fiancé is beyond reproach: handsome, caring, always puts Bella first, and has the strength and capabilities to match her. Such men are rare in this world," Ophelia added, surprising everyone.

"You've met Bella's fiancé?"

"Yes, we greeted each other while Bella was on a video call with him," Ophelia explained, then turned to Arabella with a twinkle in her eye that Sean found impossible to ignore.

Damn, how can she smile like that?!

"Of course, your brothers are also outstanding talents," Ophelia quickly added, fearing she had praised Bella's fiancé without equally complimenting the others, sincerely listing their attributes.

"Hans is distinguished, mature, and modest, with superior conversation, cultivation, and insight."

"Chasel is handsome and courteous, with a dignified presence and strong leadership qualities."

"Clark is dashing and humorous, with a heart full of love and well-rounded talents."

"Whoever ends up with you guys is sure to be lucky."

"Ophelia, you're too kind!" Clark burst out laughing. "I'll go to bed smiling tonight."

"It's a real joy to receive such high praise from you," Chasel agreed, visibly pleased.

Chapter 1859

"Ophelia, you're an absolute catch as well," Hans said with a light chuckle. "You're bound to find

someone who really gets you, to share the road ahead."

Sean stood to the side, looking visibly down.

Why didn't he get a compliment?

Doesn't he have any redeeming qualities?

Just as he was about to ask Ophelia, Clark spoke up, "We've been nattering on for ages, let's not hog

your time with Bella. Hans, Chasel, Sean, let's make tracks."

Sean hadn't exchanged a single word with Ophelia before she took Arabella's hand and said, "Then

show me around, will you?"

Arabella's lips curled into a smile. "Sure thing."

The two walked off, Ophelia's hand in Arabella's, and Sean's chance for a chat vanished into thin air.

"Ophelia is just too adorable. Who'd have thought she'd find so many compliments for me? I'm very pleased," Clark said with clear mischief in his tone, and then he took a bite of a pastry. "But why does it taste less sweet than it did when Ophelia handed it to me?"

Sean fought the urge to punch him.

"We all got praise, except for Sean..." Chasel said, his eyes twinkling with amusement as he looked at Sean. "Oh, Sean, what does it say about your charm when a sharp-tongued young lady can't muster a single word of flattery for you?"

Sean clenched his fists even tighter.

"Alright, let's lay off Sean," Hans interjected, giving Sean a sliver of comfort. At least Hans was on his side!

Just as Sean was about to express his gratitude and mention their earlier teasing, he heard Hans add,

"Sean really isn't in the same league as that girl."

Sean: ?

The laughter from Chasel and Clark was uncontrollable, the proverbial hammer from Hans striking

Sean the hardest blow.

In the garden.

Ophelia was astounded by the exotic flowers and rare plants before her.

"Your family sure knows how to live it up, cultivating all these precious plants."

Even the Almond family, known for their own extravagance, didn't splurge on such delicate and costly flora for their gardens.

Ophelia couldn't help but crouch down, "Just these few plants could buy an ordinary Joe a set of wheels, extravagant, truly extravagant."

It was the epitome of opulence.

"Like them? I'll dig a couple up for you to take home." Arabella wasn't just being polite; she genuinely called for a small pot and trowel, ready to get to work.

Ophelia widened her eyes.

"Don't worry, my parents would be thrilled if I dug up a couple of these plants to give to a friend. Are there anything else you fancy? I'll dig them up, too."

Ophelia was charmed by the gesture and felt truly fortunate to have a friend like Arabella, who was straightforward and didn't beat around the bush.

This kind of demeanor was refreshing and endearing.

"That's plenty, these two will keep me busy enough. Enjoying your food and taking your plants, I'm already being quite impolite."

After Arabella finished digging, she had someone place the plants in Ophelia's car and then washed her hands before they continued their stroll. "What's there to feel awkward about? What's mine is yours."

Hearing this, Ophelia felt a lump in her throat. She remembered when Arabella faced tough times in the Murphy family, how she'd told Arabella more than once that everything the Ophelia family had was hers too, including her parents, ready to share, if only Arabella wanted it!

She had repeatedly urged Arabella to leave the Murphy family and had even convinced her own parents to consider adopting Arabella.

But Arabella had stayed for Grannie Grace's sake, never taking up the offer.

Ophelia never imagined that the words she'd once said would be echoed back to her by Arabella, word

for word.

Chapter 1860

"Everything I have is yours too—feel free to take anything you fancy when you come over to my place!"

Ophelia said with a warm smile, her arm linked with her friend's, "No matter when, no matter what

happens, I'll always be your rock-solid support. The whole Almond has your back! Of course, with your

current mojo, you hardly need our little hill for support, haha. But just so you know, I'm always here for

you!"

Arabella's eyes softened, "I feel the same about you."

As they strolled and chatted, Ophelia suddenly remembered something and asked, "Oh, by the way, at

what point did you learn that Sean started Drift Swifts?"

"After I came back to our country."

Ophelia nodded in realization, "That explains why you guys weren't at each other's throats. It was all a

misunderstanding because you didn't know each other's true identities. What a huge

misunderstanding!"

Arabella's lips curled into a smile, "You seemed pretty shocked to find out Eagle works for Sean, huh?"

"Bella, you won't believe it, that Eagle guy has been the thorn in my side, blocking my projects!"

Ophelia exclaimed, still reeling from the revelation. "How much must your Sean despise me, sending Eagle to hassle me time and again. Sean and I are incompatible, like oil and water—first it was the car race, now our projects..."

Ophelia couldn't help but add, "If I'd known Sean was your brother, I would've picked a day when he was out to come knocking!"

Continuing her analysis, she said, "No wonder at the last race, you mentioned he asked about me. I thought it was because I was trying to win over his track and make it public, and that caught his attention. But it turns out, he's the one holding up my projects."

"Sean doesn't hate you," Arabella suddenly revealed. "On the contrary, he has a certain fondness for you."

"You mean fondness in what way?"

"Why else would he block your projects for no good reason?"

It was all to keep her in Belloria longer, so he could watch her from a distance, to keep up with her.

"I think he just can't stand me! I called 'Brother Sean' one too many times earlier, and he seemed pretty

annoyed."

Arabella laughed but didn't spell it out.

Sean's feelings were for Sean to express.

After a tour in the garden, Arabella led Ophelia to her room.

"Wow, your room is like three times the size of mine." Ophelia gasped as she stepped inside. "Your family really spoils you—every single decor piece looks exorbitantly priced."

Not just the decor, even the simplest items like the tissue box and the bedside lamp were top-notch brands.

And that's not to mention the bedding.

"Is this your walk-in closet?" Ophelia was speechless as she took in the sight.

Even as an Almond heiress, her home didn't boast such an array of beautiful clothing and accessories.

The closet was impressively large, with a variety of garments, shoes, and handbags all neatly organized.

Each item looked brand-new.

"You haven't worn any of these, have you? They look so fresh." Ophelia picked up a dress and felt the high-quality fabric.

"These look just like your designs? Oh, I remembered. A while back, didn't you say your parents and then your fiancé each ordered a batch of a hundred items for you. They didn't happen to place the order with QY, did they? So, how much did you make out of this."

"Ms. Almond, stop teasing me."

"Compared with you, I feel like a pauper! Honestly, I've never had so many clothes at once in my life!"

After the tour of the closet, Ophelia was full of wonder. "Now I finally get why Kelly said you made the right choice coming back to this family. From the moment I arrived, I could feel the tender loving care from your family. It's not just about the emotional support, but in the material way, too. I'm feeling like chewing out the Murphys again."