

Chapter 111: Letting Slip

Sometime later, the lecturer, who had relatively high cheekbones, walked up the wooden podium. She cleared her throat and said, “Good morning, kind, charitable ladies. I am Xaviera Hedda. What I am about to share with you today are my experiences in managing family expenses. There are three parts, the first being how a family with an annual income of a hundred pounds should balance food, housing, clothing, and employing helpers. The second would be where a family earning two hundred pounds yearly should be increasing their expenditure to appear more decent...”

Melissa listened attentively. She had her brothers’ annual income at her fingertips.

It’s already over two hundred pounds... she thought, half in relief and half in fear.

She was relieved and satisfied with her current life, but was also afraid that this way of life would vanish in the blink of an eye.

At this point, the wine red-haired Selena covered her mouth. She told her two friends quietly, “She seems to be a believer of the Lord of Storms. She’s wearing a Storm badge.”

Melissa looked over and saw Xaviera wearing a badge depicting violent winds and tumultuous waves on her left chest.

She quickly explained, “Mrs. Shaud who told me about this seminar is also a follower of the Lord of Storms. I don’t think it’s strange that the speaker is a follower too.”

“Yeah, I don’t think there is a problem here. We are here to learn how to budget,” Elizabeth concurred with Melissa.

“But other than Melissa, we don’t need to, nor do we have the right to govern our families’ finances.” Selena pouted.

Elizabeth rebutted without hesitation, “But we’ll get married eventually and form our own families.”

Selena had been a little afraid of Elizabeth after the incident of the demon mirror divination. She nodded in embarrassment and pretended to listen to the lecture attentively.

The lecturer, Xaviera, raised her right hand and said, “The premise of any form of budgeting is to respect the opinion of the man of the household. They are the source of income, the pillar of the family. They face anxiety, stress, troubles, and disorder in society in order to obtain everything for us. Thus, we have to create a serene home, one free from troubles from the outside. This will allow them to relax when they come home, allow their souls to be cleansed, allow them to be more prepared to face the challenges to come...

“So, as the famous philosopher, sociologist, humanities scholar, and economist Mr. Leumi once said, a woman is the angel of a household.”

Selena stroked her cheek and traced her dimples as she whispered with a little excitement, “Leumi, the person who said that humans are born free?”

Elizabeth hesitated before answering. “Yes, but he is a believer of the Lord of Storms.”

At this point, the lecturer, Xaviera, continued, “Mr. Leumi also informs us that females are innately flawed when it comes to intelligence and logic. In that case, unable to judge for themselves whether they should accept the judgment of father and husband as that of the church....” [1]

Melissa, Selena, and Elizabeth looked at each other, speechless, after hearing such a description.

“Let’s go?” Selena finally suggested.

Melissa and Elizabeth nodded.

“Alright!”

They took their veiled hats and bent over, sneaking over to the side door in an attempt to leave without attracting any attention.

When they cautiously arrived outside and could finally stand up straight, they suddenly heard a burst of applause coming from the small hall.

Melissa instinctively looked back into the hall.

She saw Mrs. Shaud, as well as many other ladies, clapping.

Phew! Praise the Lady... Melissa exhaled. She left the uncomfortable place together with Selena and Elizabeth.

“Shall we go to Harrods?” Selena suggested as she stood under a

tree. She had already forgotten about what had just happened.

Melissa fell silent for a few seconds before saying, "I plan on returning home to study."

"Study..." Selena fiddled with her wine-red hair, as if she had returned to her regular life.

"Also, I have to buy bread, beef, potatoes, and fruits... Klein needs to work today, Benson went to the municipal library. So, yeah, I have to go back!" Melissa suddenly realized how much she loved her textbooks, her gears and springs.

Selena decided to keep her distance from the unusually weird Melissa. She turned to look at Elizabeth and smiled dutifully, "Shall we go to Harrods together? Even though I've spent all my savings, it's still wonderful to window shop."

"Sure." Elizabeth accepted the suggestion, then asked casually, "Melissa, does your brother, Klein, have to work on Sundays?"

"Yes, he rests on Mondays, different from ordinary jobs." Melissa unknowingly raised her head slightly.

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After leaving the Blackthorn Security Company, Klein took a public carriage to Howes Street.

He tried his hardest to suppress his emotions, to not think about the issue of the Antigonus family's treasure. He tried to focus his attention back onto the matter of acting.

It was important to fully digest the potion as soon as possible! Improving himself was extremely important no matter when it was!

Acting as a Seer, heh! I'm not professional enough. The fortune tellers back in the Foodaholic Empire had to go through the almanac all the time before they accomplished anything... Klein held his cane as he sat inside a carriage.

He had decided to divine if it was beneficial for him to travel to the Divination Club today.

That was more befitting of a Seer!

As he was getting off the carriage, Klein took out a halfpence coin. His field of vision narrowed, his pupils becoming darker as he silently recited, *It is suitable to head to the Divination Club today.*

It is suitable to head to the Divination Club today.

...

Dang!

Klein flicked the coin up. He didn't look at the rotation of the coin, calmly extending his hand instead.

Thunk! The halfpence landed in the middle of his palm.

This time, the number 1/2 was facing up.

With the number facing up, that means that I would encounter an unfortunate incident at the Divination Club today... Klein thought for a moment before he turned to the opposite side of the street. He waited for the public carriage that was headed for Daffodil Street.

He felt more and more like a charlatan.

...

Howes Street, at the entrance to Harrods Department Store.

Selena was just about to enter the building when she suddenly froze and looked to the side.

“Did something happened?” Elizabeth asked, puzzled.

Selena puffed her cheeks and said, “Elizabeth, I thought about my mysticism teacher, Mr. Vincent. He passed away just like that, the morning after my birthday...”

“Could it be because I peeked and used his secret incantations? I’ve always felt guilty and uneasy because of this... Besides, I’ve been rather unlucky recently.”

“So?” Elizabeth asked quietly.

Selena bit her lips and said, “I wish to do a divination at the Divination Club over there and see if Mr. Vincent’s death had anything to do with me.”

From what happened at my birthday banquet... I have this nagging feeling that Elizabeth is hiding something from me... I remember the back of the man in a tuxedo...

“Can’t you divine it yourself?” Elizabeth asked in surprise.

Selena sighed, imitating her father.

“Sigh, I cannot divine it given my current condition.”

“Alright, let’s head to the Divination Club first.” Elizabeth agreed to her friend’s suggestion.

They headed over to the side and made their way to the Divination Club on the second floor by following the stairs.

“Hello, good afternoon, Miss Angelica. It’s a pleasure meeting you again.” Selena gave a lively greeting at the reception area.

Angelica smiled and said, “You should be able to find me here as long as you come after lunch.”

Selena exchanged niceties before lamenting Hanass Vincent’s death, she then said, “I need to have a divination performed.”

“You know the rules of the club. Here is the list of members willing to do it... It’s the weekend, so most of our members are here,” Angelica explained like clockwork.

Selena and Elizabeth huddled their heads together as they scanned the list of names and description together.

“I used to just ask for my teacher directly. To think that the club would have this many members willing to do divinations compared to last year,” Selena said excitedly.

Suddenly, she paused for a few seconds and said in puzzlement, “Klein Moretti, Klein Moretti? Isn’t this name the same as Melissa’s brother?”

Elizabeth froze. She looked repeatedly at the name ‘Klein Moretti’ and nodded, “That’s true...”

“Miss Angelica, is this Mr. Klein Moretti around?” Selena asked with a sparkle in her eyes.

Angelica shook her head.

“My apologies, Mr. Moretti didn’t come to the club today.”

“Alright, we’ll find someone else.” Selena didn’t mind not seeing the person, but she laughed at her friend. “I know that this can’t be Melissa’s brother, but having seen this name, I naturally thought of a newspaper; a headline worthy of the Intis Press.”

The Intis Press was created by Emperor Roselle, famous for its attention-grabbing headlines. It was one of the most famous newspapers in the Northern Continent.

Elizabeth asked inattentively, “What headline?”

Selena cleared her throat and said, “Is it the decay of morals, or a problem with society? History graduate actually ends up doing divinations over the weekends to make a living!”

1. Adapted from *Emile, or On Education*.