

The Formidable Son-In-Law: The Charismatic Lucas Gray

Chapter 171 – 202

Exposing The Truth

Chapter 171: Exposing The Truth

Lucas smiled as he pulled his shirt up. “See, I told you it was just a minor wound. Actually, it only looked really severe just now. But that was just a visual illusion, just like how they manipulate camera angles to make stab wounds seem more severe than they really are in TV shows.”

Charlotte suddenly assented in a moment of realization and heaved a huge sigh of relief. “That’s great! You really scared us just now!”

After hearing Lucas’s explanation, Cheyenne felt that it made sense too. But on second thought, she felt that it didn’t seem right. Even if it was a visual illusion, he had indeed lost a staggering amount of blood, and it even stained a large area of his shirt, which shouldn’t happen in the case of a minor wound.

But she did just see that the wound was just like a small abrasion.

At the thought of this, Cheyenne became confused, as she felt that Lucas wasn’t telling the truth.

Soon, they arrived back home.

The large excavator and ten-odd people from the engineering company responsible for demolishing the house had already scampered away when Lucas knocked Bryce out and was subsequently brought to the hospital by the beautiful sisters.

Actually, when Lucas had kicked the tall and strong bodyguard a dozen meters away, those people secretly swallowed their saliva and began to think of chickening out. They wanted to flee long ago, fearing that Lucas would kick them hard and make them faint too.

If they had known that the house they came to demolish today was inhabited by a terrifying person like Lucas, they would never have taken on the job!

Bryce and the tall and burly bodyguard he hired were still unconscious and lying motionlessly on the ground far away from them, in the same position they had landed in before. No one dared to bother about them.

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Karen had long fled, and she was nowhere in sight.

The old building in front of them had already been wrecked by the hydraulic hammer of the excavator, and one of the walls of the second floor had also been knocked down. Cracks also covered the ceiling and the ground around it. It was obviously too dangerous to be occupied anymore.

Lucas looked at the two people on the ground and then said to Cheyenne, "I'll be making a trip to the Carters' in a moment. You guys pack up a little, then go to work. Don't stay in this house for the time being."

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Cheyenne knew that Lucas was going to take Bryce back to the Carters and confront them. After hesitating for a while, she nevertheless asked, "Lucas, can you... let the Carters off once more?"

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Bryce had indeed gone overboard today, and everything the Carters had done previously had also broken Cheyenne's heart completely. But if Lucas really settled scores with them, they would all be in trouble.

Deep down, Cheyenne still couldn't bear for that to happen to them. After all, they were once her family members and relatives whom she truly wanted to get along with.

Before Lucas spoke, Charlotte protested in exasperation, "Cheyenne, things have already gotten to this point, yet you're still thinking about pleading for them. You want Lucas to let them off again? Think carefully about what they've done today!"

Cheyenne said bitterly, "It's not that I don't know. But after all, they were once our family..."

"What family? You're the only one who's foolish enough to treat them as our family. Do they see us as family?!"

Charlotte was overwhelmed with fury, and her face flushed red as she continued to chide, "Today, they came to demolish our house without saying a word and almost crushed us to death. Bryce even almost stabbed Lucas to death. Yesterday, they also sent someone to abduct Amelia. If not for Lucas, we wouldn't have made it back! You're

still considering them as family. How can there be such a despicable and horrible family who wants to harm their family all the time?”

Charlotte finally vented the anger toward the Carters that she had suppressed for a long time, not even realizing that she said something she shouldn't have.

“What did you say? Amelia got abducted yesterday, and you guys almost didn't make it back? What does that mean?” Indeed, Cheyenne immediately noticed that something was wrong after hearing what Charlotte said, and her expression turned sullen while she probed anxiously.

Only then did Charlotte realize that she had let her tongue slip and spilled the beans about what had happened to Amelia. She quickly covered her mouth and denied with a chagrined expression and shifty eyes, “Uh, it's nothing much. I misspoke. Cheyenne, just pretend you didn't hear it.”

But since Cheyenne had already heard it, how could she pretend that she hadn't?

“Charlotte, tell me honestly. What exactly did you encounter yesterday? Yesterday... Lucas came home late with Amelia, and she mentioned an Aunt Grace. Does that have something to do with this? Hurry up and tell me!” Cheyenne insisted and grabbed Charlotte's hands with a worried gaze.

Charlotte was full of frustration and regret that she had accidentally let it slip. Just as she was about to try and cover it up, Lucas sighed and said, “Forget it. Since you've already mentioned it, we can't hide it from Cheyenne any longer. Charlotte, just tell your sister everything that happened yesterday.”

With Lucas's permission, Charlotte nodded and recounted everything that had happened yesterday with righteous indignation. She told her everything, from when Lucas found out that someone had picked up Amelia from the kindergarten to when a stranger called her and threatened her with Amelia's safety to force her to go to Logan Hale's bar, where she ran into Scarlet Wright. She then found out that it was Scarlet who abducted Amelia, followed by the fact that they ganged up to make Charlotte strip before Lucas arrived in time to save her.

After hearing Charlotte's frightening recount, Cheyenne was so astonished and furious that she felt an urge to kill someone!

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In particular, when she heard that Charlotte was forced to undress, she was so enraged that she began shivering, feeling extremely guilty about the fact that she was totally clueless about the crisis that her sister and daughter had faced yesterday. She felt that she had been too negligent!

She took Charlotte into her arms while feeling she owed her too much even though she knew that nothing had happened to Charlotte afterward because Lucas had saved her in time.

“Where did you guys find Amelia in the end? She... she didn’t get frightened, did she?” Cheyenne asked through gritted teeth.

Charlotte didn’t know what happened later either, because at that time, she had already been escorted back home by Wade, and Lucas was the one who did everything to save Amelia afterward.

Lucas had given her a brief description of what happened later and explained that Grace Keller had been held in purgatory by Logan Hale in the secret villa he owned. He also said that Grace was nice and took care of Amelia, which was why Amelia didn’t get too frightened. Of course, he didn’t reveal what happened to Scarlet in the end.

Cheyenne only realized now that what Amelia had said yesterday about playing at Aunt Grace’s home and that Aunt Grace was very nice to her was what happened when she was abducted.

She lamented the fact that she had completely no idea what kind of danger her daughter had gone through yesterday nor the tremendous effort that Lucas had put in to save Charlotte and Amelia!

She had even misunderstood last night that Lucas was involved in an illicit relationship with another woman and got mad at him for a long time because of it. She totally regretted it!

Chapter 172: Cheyenne Comes to a Realization

All of a sudden, Cheyenne’s heart was filled with extremely unsettling mixed emotions.

Charlotte held Cheyenne’s hand to stop her and said seriously, “Cheyenne, you really should stop treating them as our family! Look at what they’ve done. Are they human at all? All they do is use us and bully us. Even Scarlet Wright has followed suit and abused her status as a relative of the Carters to abduct Amelia.

“If you still treat them as our family and continue to be merciful to them, yesterday’s and today’s incidents will happen again and again because they’re vile and incorrigible! That’s why Lucas wants to kill Bryce and demand an explanation from the Carters today. He wants to teach them a hard lesson to ensure that they won’t bully us again.”

Charlotte turned to look at Lucas and said with a look of determination, "So, Lucas, I support you if you want to go confront the Carters. We can't let them continue being lawless and trampling all over us. But Lucas, don't get any of them killed because it's not worth it at all. Other than that, you can do anything you want."

Cheyenne had been hanging her head low after hearing what Charlotte said. With a bitter smile, she said, "Charlotte, I always thought that I was the mature one between us since I'm a few years older, but I never thought that you'd have a clearer idea of things than I do. You're right. They've always been bullying and using us, and they even kicked us out when we defied them or when they deemed us useless. They've never treated us as relatives, and yet I keep sparing them on the account that we're relatives.

"Don't worry, guys. From now on, I will no longer be so silly. I'll put in effort only on those who deserve it," Cheyenne said. She turned to look at Lucas and said with a firm expression, "Regarding the Carters, we'll do what you deem fit. I agree with Charlotte. I'll support you in anything you do as long as you don't get any of them killed!"

Seeing Cheyenne finally coming to her senses, drawing a clear line between them and the Carters, and realizing that there was no need to go easy on them anymore, Lucas had a heartened smile.

Before, he had repeatedly let the Carters off because of Cheyenne's pleas on their behalf. This time, he finally didn't need to spare them any mercy.

He smiled. "Rest assured. I won't dirty my hands for their sake."

Lucas lifted the unconscious Bryce and the bodyguard from the ground and stuffed them into the trunk of his Jaguar one by one. He was just about to get into the car to leave when he suddenly thought of something and walked over again to hand a bunch of keys to Cheyenne.

"This house has already been wrecked, so we can no longer stay here. Take a day off from work today to pack your important belongings and move into my place."

Lucas was referring to his villa in the center of Pearl Lake. Previously, Cheyenne had been drugged by Gordon Douglas, and Lucas brought her over to stay for one night in the villa after rescuing her.

As soon as Cheyenne thought of the luxurious and beautiful villa that was as opulent as a palace, she immediately wanted to refuse, but Lucas tried to persuade her. "We're a married couple, and my house is yours. There's no need to divide things so clearly between us. Besides, can you bear to let Amelia continue to live in this dangerous house?"

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At the thought of the environment that her daughter was living in, Cheyenne hesitated for a moment but nonetheless grabbed the keys. "Okay then. I'll have to trouble you."

"Do we have to be so polite between us? You know the address of the villa. There's everything you'll need there, so you guys don't have to pack too many things. Just bring the important things you need."

After giving them some instructions, Lucas drove away from the Carter residence in his black Jaguar.

Only after Lucas left did Charlotte look at the keys in Cheyenne's hand and cluck her tongue against the roof of his mouth. "Wow, Cheyenne, does the villa belong to Lucas? When did he buy it?"

Cheyenne shook her head and said with a faint smile, "I don't know when he bought it. But it's very spacious there, and there's everything we need, so you can just bring some clothes and personal belongings over."

"Okay, then let's get ready to move right away!" Charlotte exclaimed with excitement, feeling rather curious about Lucas's new home.

"Move? Where to?" Suddenly, Karen, who had hidden somewhere, popped up out of nowhere.

"Mom! You scared me!" complained the startled Charlotte.

"Tell me quickly. Where do you want to move to? Did you two secretly buy a house?" Karen stared at Cheyenne in bewilderment before taking a few glances at Charlotte.

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They would basically hand over their salaries to me each month. Have they secretly stashed away lots of money without informing me?

Karen rolled her eyes. Cheyenne and Charlotte were both aware of what she was thinking.

Charlotte said in displeasure, "How can Cheyenne and I have so much money to buy a house? We hand over our salaries to you every month, don't we? The house belongs to Lucas, and he asked us to move in with him."

With a look of disappointment, Karen cursed hostilely, "Hah! I thought you guys were going to move into a fancy place, but it turns out to be that good-for-nothing's house. How much money can he have? How can he afford a decent house? It'd better not be a

rented house or some small and shabby place. If that's the case, I'm not moving! I don't want all of us to squeeze into a tiny house. If you want to move, go ahead yourselves. I'll pass."

Hearing Karen's habitual criticism toward Lucas, Cheyenne felt rather speechless. "Forget it. Since you don't want to go, you can look for another place to move into yourself. You have lots of money anyway. Charlotte, just bring some of the clothes you wear regularly. There are other necessities in the villa."

"Wow! Is it really a villa? Is it huge and gorgeous?" Charlotte immediately asked in surprise. Ever since she was a child, she had always envied the Carters for living in a cluster of villas, while they had to make do in an old and shabby house.

"Yes, it's spacious and beautiful. You'll know later when you get there." Cheyenne pinched her sister's face, and then they both returned to their rooms smilingly to pack up.

After hearing the word 'villa', Karen developed an interest, and her eyes started shining when she heard Cheyenne say it was very spacious and beautiful.

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She couldn't be bothered to think about how Lucas managed to get the money to purchase a villa. In her opinion, Lucas's property was akin to Cheyenne's, which also meant that it belonged to her too!

Since it was a large and gorgeous villa, it was only right for Karen to move in since she was Lucas's mother-in-law!

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Chapter 173: Moving into a New Home

Thus, when Charlotte and Cheyenne headed upstairs to pack their luggage, Karen hurriedly scrambled to her own room to take out a few large suitcases and woven bags, which she then desperately filled with items.

When Cheyenne and Charlotte headed downstairs with a small suitcase each, there were already a lot of Karen's suitcases in the living room. There were also five packages of various sizes.

Charlotte was almost angered to the point of laughing out loud. She mocked, "Mom, didn't you just say that you don't want to move in with us to a small and shabby place? Why have you packed up sooner than us?"

Karen had always been thick-skinned, and she said righteously, “Well, I still have to cook for the both of you, right? I really don’t know what sins I’ve committed in my last life to have given birth to you two burdensome children. I still have to serve you every day.”

When Charlotte heard this, she couldn’t help but roll her eyes and was about to retort, but Cheyenne tugged her arm to stop her.

Well, it couldn’t be helped since Karen was their mother!

Charlotte muttered something and then helped Karen carry the luggage to the car.

But the space in the trunk was limited, so it definitely couldn’t fit all of Karen’s luggage. Even if they filled all the space, there were still two large bags that couldn’t fit.

“Mom, what do you have in these big bags? There are too many! Leave these two bags of clothes behind.”

After a painstaking persuasion, Charlotte and Cheyenne finally convinced Karen to compromise and leave the two large bags of clothes behind, which they promised to come back later to collect on her behalf.

Soon, the three of them got into the car and drove to Lucas’s villa in the center of Pearl Lake.

Charlotte was responsible for driving while Cheyenne sat in the passenger seat and helped with navigation. She led Charlotte to the vicinity of Moon Palace Real Estate’s villas at Pearl Lake.

“Pearl Lake? Moon Palace Real Estate? Oh my god, Cheyenne! Is Lucas’s house really here? That’s impressive!” Charlotte exclaimed in utter surprise and disbelief.

Before Cheyenne could say anything, Karen, who was sitting in the back seat, scoffed and giped sarcastically, “Hmph, the villa cluster near Pearl Lake that’s developed by Moon Palace Real Estate? Those are the most expensive and lavish villas in Orange County, and only those whose net worth is over fifteen million dollars can afford one. That good-for-nothing Lucas Gray will never be able to afford it in ten lifetimes! Cheyenne, don’t be fooled by him. If we find out when we arrive that he doesn’t live there at all and end up getting chased away by security, that would be so embarrassing!”

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Cheyenne frowned in displeasure. “Mom, you don’t know anything about Lucas, so don’t say such nonsensical things, alright? I’ve been to that villa of his. He’s definitely not lying to you.”

Charlotte agreed and chimed in, "Yeah, Cheyenne is right. Mom, you actually don't know anything about Lucas. You always call him a good-for-nothing, but you're clueless about how impressive he really is! Since you detest Lucas so much and even suspect that he's deceiving us, I think you shouldn't go live in his house either, lest you keep picking on him. You won't even praise him after getting a benefit from him."

Karen immediately cursed furiously, "I'm your mother! Not only aren't you speaking up for me, but you're even contradicting me and angering me for an outsider. You're so unfilial! If I had known earlier, I wouldn't have given birth to you two!"

"Hmph, you shouldn't have given birth to us then! I don't want a mother like you either," Charlotte said furiously.

Ever since they were children, Karen often complained about how painstaking it was for her to raise them and how much they owed her. But she clearly didn't care much about them and would leave them hungry at home all day when they were kids. If not for the fact that their grandmother was still alive at that time and often visited them and brought them some food, they would have probably starved to death at home because of Karen.

When Karen got into a heated argument with Sharon Hart in the hotel previously, Charlotte went to her rescue. But Karen ended up wanting Charlotte to take a slap from the other party to make amends.

Since then, Charlotte had been absolutely heartbroken by Karen and no longer wanted to have a mother like her.

When Karen heard what Charlotte said, she immediately flew into a rage. "I had such a hard time raising you two. Is this how you repay me? Indeed, you two are ingrates. I'd rather have raised a dog than raise you two!"

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As Karen spoke, she even stretched out her hand from the back seat to try to smack Charlotte's head.

Karen's words were extremely nasty, and Cheyenne couldn't tolerate it any longer either. She turned around, grabbed Karen's hand, and hollered furiously, "Mom! What are you doing?! Charlotte is driving. Aren't you scared that we might get into an accident if you hit her?"

"Also, I'm going to make things clear. We're moving to Lucas's place. If you still want to continue insulting him, nitpicking on him, and picking fights all the time like you used to, don't move in with us. You'd better return to the old residence or go elsewhere. It's up to you."

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Cheyenne had a cold expression on her face, which was rather rare of her. She usually maintained an obedient image, and her sudden rage frightened Karen.

Karen was the type to bully the weak and fear the strong, so when she saw Cheyenne flaring up, she immediately became cowardly and muttered, "Hmph, you guys don't take me seriously anymore now that you've grown up, huh?" But she dared not say anything else.

After Karen shut up, they quietly drove to the vicinity of Moon Palace Villas.

It was an enormous upscale villa area that encompassed all of the vast area near Pearl Lake. This place had a cluster of beautifully designed European-style villas and courtyards situated in the heart of Orange County, where there was beautiful scenery and fresh air among the lake and the mountains. It was truly a pleasant and relaxing sight.

Moreover, although this area was vast, the area around each villa was also huge. So there were only a few villas here, which only the top tycoons could afford.

After they drove the car close, Karen couldn't take her eyes off the villas, which cost several or even dozens of millions each. They were beautifully designed and were the epitome of luxury and enjoyment.

They drove to the security guard post at the entrance of the villa cluster, where there were javelin-like security guards standing on both sides. They walked over, and Charlotte immediately tensed up because her car wasn't permitted to enter the villa cluster.

Cheyenne found a small oval metal button from the bunch of keys that Lucas gave her and pressed it gently. Upon detecting the signal, the automatic barrier at the entrance of the villa cluster rose, and they were allowed to drive in.

"Dear owners, welcome back to Moon Palace Villas." When the security guard saw that the sensors had activated, he naturally knew that the people in the car were the owners of a villa and so bent forward to bow to them respectfully.

"Hmph, since you know we're owners here, hurry and get lost. Don't get in our way!" Karen rolled down the rear window of the car and yelled at the security guard, who was standing at the roadside.

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The security guard opened his mouth slightly and was instantly stunned on the spot.

Chapter 174: Blocking the Gate

This security guard had been working here for a long time, and those who could live in Moon Palace Villas were wealthy and prestigious, so they were usually well-mannered. Even those who were less cultured would pretend to be poised and cultured in front of outsiders.

Yet Karen... opened the window and barked at him condescendingly like a shrew from the streets.

Besides, the security guard was standing far away on the roadside and had merely walked over to welcome them home cordially according to the company's instructions. He wasn't in their way at all.

Karen's behavior was simply a deliberate attempt to show her sense of superiority in front of the security guard.

Charlotte felt extremely embarrassed and humiliated while Cheyenne apologized to the security guard before they drove in quickly.

Karen was still unaware of what was going on as she was preoccupied with valuing the various upscale villas in her mind. From time to time, she would even make comments and mock those standing on the road opposite.

"Look at that fatso over there. She's so fat, but she still gets to live in such a luxurious villa. How lucky!"

"Look at that woman standing by the window sill over there. She has such a slender waist and the sultry face of a vixen. She must be the mistress of a married man. Tsk, tsk."

Unable to tolerate it anymore, Charlotte yelled, "Mom! Stop making such a din. I'm going to get lost because of the noise you're making!"

Only then did Karen stop.

But Charlotte really didn't know where to go at this moment.

"Cheyenne, do we keep driving along this road? If we go farther, we will reach the lake," Charlotte said while pointing at the map in the navigation system.

Cheyenne nodded. "Yes, just keep driving. This road will connect all the way to the lake island in the center of Pearl Lake. Lucas's villa is on that island."

“What?! The villa on the lake island in the center of Pearl Lake?!” Karen immediately exclaimed in surprise. She was so astonished that she almost stood up in the car.

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Her sudden exclamation gave Charlotte a great shock, and the car skewed toward the side as her hands trembled violently. Fortunately, she was driving slowly and hurriedly stepped on the brakes to prevent an accident.

Before Charlotte could complain and lose her temper, Karen continued to yell loudly, “There must be a mistake! There’s only one separate villa on the island in the center of Pearl Lake. It’s a villa that occupies the entire lake island. With the lake around it, it’s definitely worth more than one hundred and fifty-five million dollars! One hundred and fifty-five million dollars!

“And when I played cards with Mrs. Jones, I heard her mention that the villa in the center of Pearl Lake was purchased by a mysterious tycoon a month ago! The road to the center of Pearl Lake is also exclusive to the owner of that villa, and it’s guarded by many security guards. Even if someone tries to barge in, they’ll be chased out!”

With a wavering heart, Charlotte glanced at Cheyenne. Although Lucas was indeed not an ordinary person and definitely had lots of secrets, the idea of him having the financial means to purchase a 155-million-dollar villa still seemed outrageous to her...

Cheyenne said calmly, “Don’t worry. The villa in the center of the lake belongs to Lucas. Just keep driving!”

Charlotte thought about it and felt that since Cheyenne had already said so, the matter had to be true. This could only mean that Lucas’s financial power was far beyond her imagination. So she started the car again without hesitation and drove straight toward the lake island.

Sitting in the backseat of the car, Karen widened her eyes in astonishment, completely unable to believe what she heard.

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Meanwhile, Lucas made a phone call to Jordan before he drove to the Carters’ main residence.

And so, a large construction truck soon arrived at the entrance of the Carters’ main residence and blocked the gate.

The Carter residence was a manor-style villa complex. Apart from some distant relatives and William Carter’s family, the rest of the Carters’ direct descendants lived here.

Bryce's mother, Sarah Hadley, was about to go out shopping with another wealthy lady. Dressed to the nines, she was sitting in her BMW. But when the car reached the gate, it was completely blocked by the construction truck outside. There was no way she could drive out at all.

"Are you guys blind? Do you know where this place is? It's the entrance of the Carter residence! Who allowed you to park here? Hurry up and drive it away. Get it away immediately!"

Sarah got out of the car, stood behind the gate, and yelled at the top of her lungs while pointing at the driver of the construction truck outside.

But the driver of the truck didn't pay any attention to her, and the other young man sitting in the front seat with one leg crossed over the other turned his head away disinterestedly after taking a glance at her. He then tossed a few coins in his hand in boredom.

Sarah was immediately infuriated that they were ignoring her, so much that she grimaced.

She was the matriarch of the Carters and the only mistress of the household, whom everyone respected, flattered, and feared provoking.

In particular, after Cheyenne's family was kicked out by the Carters, her son, Bryce, became the next successor of the Carters since he was Dominic's only direct grandson. So feeling like she was about to become an empress dowager, Sarah had her nose in the air, was living delightedly every day, and treated everyone condescendingly.

But this scoundrel outside actually didn't take her seriously at all and even blocked her car!

"Hey! I'm talking to you. Can't you hear me? Hurry up and get that stupid truck out of the way. You're not allowed to park it here!"

Jordan simply glanced at Sarah in disdain and even snorted contemptuously.

Bastard! He clearly heard me. He did that deliberately!

Sarah was so furious that she clenched her teeth and immediately called security over. "Are all of you dead? Can't you see that some bastard has blocked our gate with his truck? Hurry up. I want you to beat him up into a pulp!"

After the ten-odd security guards heard her order, they stopped working and rushed toward Jordan, who was sitting in the front seat of the construction truck.

Looking at the nobodies who came over to send themselves to their graves in boredom, Jordan felt extremely disdainful. He didn't even move, but all the security guards who tried to approach him and drag him out were simply kicked by him and sent flying several meters away while shrieking in horror.

He clearly didn't seem to have applied much force, but his legs contained an immeasurable amount of power. The security guards were blasted away and were struggling hard to get up, but they couldn't at all.

The security guards were all put down within a few seconds, catching Sarah by surprise as she stared wide-eyed in shock. The faces of the Carters behind her turned sullen, but they dared not go forward to say anything at all.

"Hmph, a bunch of cowards," Jordan gibed, still sitting in the front seat.

Chapter 175: You're Actually Alright?

The Carters were so furious that they turned red. The security guards were all too weak in the face of Jordan, let alone them, who often indulged in alcohol and lust. They would never be able to fight him in this lifetime.

After knocking down the group of security guards, Jordan didn't do anything else and simply sat in the front seat of the truck, blocking the entrance of the Carter's main residence and forbidding them from leaving. As for the other gates of the Carter residence, Jordan had called people to guard them, ensuring that not a single Carter could leave.

This was the main task that Lucas gave Jordan.

He turned a deaf ear to the Carters' pressing questions and pretended not to hear them.

Seeing the entrance being blocked by the aggressive Jordan, whose origin they couldn't find out, the Carters had no choice but to go to Dominic for a solution because they didn't know who they had offended.

"Dominic, an arrogant young man showed up at our entrance with a large construction truck. He's blocking it with his truck and not allowing us to enter and exit!"

Dominic immediately flew into a rage. "Where are the security guards? Hurry up and get someone to chase him away."

A Carter said sulkily, "Dominic, we called the security guards, but that young man has impressive combat skills, and he managed to take them all down! Moreover, he managed to do it effortlessly. He definitely isn't someone ordinary people can deal with."

Hearing that the young man could fight, Dominic immediately shuddered a little. He wanted to ask if it was Lucas, but on second thought, he knew it was impossible because all the Carters knew that loser. The stranger obviously wasn't Lucas.

Since when are there so many people who can fight? Dominic gritted his teeth with a huge headache. But clearly, according to the news relayed by the Carters, this young man wasn't someone they could deal with.

"Hmph, although I don't know who he is, since he came alone and only dares to block the entrance, he must not have a powerful background. Don't panic. I'll contact the Hales and ask them to send some powerful people over to help us."

Dominic took out his cell phone and made a call.

When the surrounding Carters heard that he was going to ask the Hales for help, they were immediately overjoyed.

The Hales were one of the four major families in Orange County, and their businesses spread across many industries in the country, so they had a lot of remarkable bodyguards.

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Although the Carters had only become acquainted with a few associates of low status within the Hale family, Dominic thought that these connections should be enough for him to borrow some bodyguards.

Dominic tried to call them for a long time before someone picked up and asked in annoyance, "Who's there?"

Dominic hurriedly said, "Mr. Holmes, I'm Dominic Carter from the Carter Corporation. We met at the Hale residence yesterday..."

"What's the matter? Get straight to the point!" the other interrupted coldly.

Dominic's heart was full of frustration, but he nonetheless suppressed it with all his might and continued to smile while speaking to Mr. Holmes, who was tens of years younger than him. "Just now, a young man drove a truck over to block the entrance of our place. His combat skills are impressive, and our security guards can't beat him, so we thought of borrowing a few expert bodyguards from you. Mr. Holmes, we hope that you will teach that punk a lesson."

Upon hearing that it was just for a trivial matter, Mr. Holmes immediately said in contempt, "You can't even deal with a young man. The Carters are indeed useless. Wait, I'll send some people over to take a look."

With that, he hung up mercilessly.

Dominic seemed rather sullen. After the Carters left, he gritted his teeth and said resentfully, "Hmph, Anthony Holmes, what are you being so arrogant for? You're just a steward of the Hales! When we get acquainted with the direct descendants of the Hales in the future, I'll see how you can still be arrogant!"

But before the people sent by the Hales arrived, a sleek black Jaguar stopped at the entrance of the Carters.

Jordan immediately jumped off the construction truck and walked towards the Jaguar. He then bowed and said, "Lucas, you're here."

The door opened, and Lucas alighted from the Jaguar. He glanced at the towering wall and iron gate outside the Carter residence, and he couldn't help but be reminded of when Cheyenne had knelt there in the pouring rain, but no one came out to talk to her. She had waited for a long time, only to be told mercilessly that she had been disowned.

The gaze in Lucas's eyes suddenly turned cold, and he said to Jordan, "Ram into the house."

"Yes, Lucas!" There was a trace of excitement in Jordan's eyes as he gestured to the driver of the construction truck. Soon, the engine of the steel vehicle started. With loud rumbling, it drove straight into the walls of the Carter residence!

The truck rammed into the iron gate and deformed it. A large portion of the wall of the courtyard collapsed, and bricks came crashing down with loud sounds. Immediately afterward, the entire front yard of the Carter residence was in ruins.

"Ah! Get out of the way. The vehicle is ramming toward us!"

"Oh my god. That man drove the truck into our home! Are the Hales' people not here yet?"

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The Carters shrieked in horror and dashed toward the houses.

The smoke and dust slowly dissipated, and Lucas's toned and tall figure appeared in front of the Carters.

"Is that... Lucas Gray? Why is he here?"

"Didn't we kick him and Cheyenne's family out? How does he still have the cheek to show up here?"

“Could Lucas... have hired that young man outside?”

...

The Carters started speculating and making guesses, but the person who was most shocked by Lucas’s appearance was surprisingly Bryce’s mother, Sarah.

“You’re actually alright?” Sarah sized up Lucas and couldn’t help but look surprised and disappointed when she realized that his limbs were intact and there were no wounds on his body either.

“Are you very surprised and disappointed to see me standing here alive and well?” Lucas gibed with an indifferent gaze.

Sarah shuddered and took two steps back subconsciously.

She was indeed surprised that Lucas was unscathed.

According to her and Bryce’s previous plan, Lucas should have had his limbs broken and been severely wounded by the impressive bodyguard they had hired with a large amount of money.

But he was now standing right in front of her, perfectly fine and unharmed. *Did Bryce... fail to carry out the plan?*

When Sarah thought of this, her eyelids suddenly twitched, and her heart was full of uneasiness.

Chapter 176: Who Is Malicious?

Sarah Hadley looked at Lucas furiously and hollered, “You good-for-nothing, you’ve been kicked out of the family long ago, so you don’t have the right to set foot on the Carters’ turf again. What are you waiting for? Hurry up and get out of here.”

The Carters behind her also stood out one after another and cursed, “Exactly! Hurry up and get out of here!”

“Loser, get lost before you dirty our turf!”

When Jordan heard their insults, his gaze turned gloomy, and he roared, “Try insulting him again! Let me see how tough your bones are!”

Realizing that the terrifying young man was really Lucas’s subordinates, the Carters hurriedly fell silent and dared not insult Lucas anymore.

Lucas couldn't be bothered to talk to these cowards either. He simply shouted at the villa in the middle, "Dominic Carter, get your ass out here, old foggy!"

Upon hearing this, everyone was astonished.

The loser live-in son-in-law whom the Carters had disowned actually dared to call him, the head of the Carter family, by his full name. In their opinion, it was seriously brazen!

After hearing Lucas's disrespectful words, Dominic, who was standing in front of the window on the second floor of the villa and secretly watching the events unfold, flew into a rage, and the veins on his forehead bulged.

"Lucas Gray, you're really brazen. After the Carters kicked you out, you still have the audacity to show up at our doorstep." Dominic walked out of the villa with a gloomy and uncertain gaze as he glared at Lucas.

"You behaved in such an unruly manner at the Hale residence yesterday and caused such huge trouble. Not only did you hurt Bryce's head, but you even pressed Connor Hale's head into the bowl of soup in front of everyone. Hmph, just because the Hales let you off yesterday, it doesn't mean they'll let you off the hook again today! Just you wait. The Hales will exact revenge on you! Once they're here, I'll see what you can do then!"

Dominic had just contacted one of the Hales's stewards, Anthony Holmes, and was now hoping that he would send a few more powerful experts over to cripple the arrogant Lucas!

"Hah, the Hales? I'll see who else will come over at this time," Lucas said nonchalantly.

All of the Hales' direct descendants had all been taken away last night, and there were no senior members at all. But since the news had been sealed, the Carters hadn't learned about it yet.

..

"Lucas Gray, don't think that you're that powerful just because you've got some martial arts skills! The Hales just let you off for the time being because they didn't want you to ruin their joyous banquet! Don't think you're that powerful. Once the people sent by the Hales are here, I will definitely tell them truthfully how contemptuous you are toward them!" Dominic felt that Lucas absolutely wouldn't be able to fight against the Hales.

Beside them, Jordan snorted with laughter and said in contempt, "Dominic Carter, you've lived for decades, but why are you becoming more and more backward? You're just like a kid. After losing a fight, you went to complain to someone. Do you want the Hales to be your father? Well, I doubt they'll want you."

“You!” Dominic was so angry that his face flushed red as he pointed at Jordan and Lucas. He could only say resentfully, “Hmph, when the Hales come later, I’ll see how arrogant you two can still be!”

Lucas sneered. “Since you want to wait for the Hales to come, go right ahead. But before that, I still have something to settle with you.”

He raised his chin at Jordan, who immediately understood. He then strode toward Lucas’s Jaguar and took out a large cardboard box.

Jordan hurriedly tore the box. Immediately afterward, five red marbled urns were placed in front of Dominic.

At first, Dominic and the Carters couldn’t tell what it was. They merely thought that Lucas had asked Jordan to throw the box in front of them for some inexplicable reason. But after Dominic saw the patterns and words carved on the urns, his expression changed instantly. He said through gritted teeth, “Lucas Gray, how dare you send so many urns to us? What are your intentions? Are you cursing us to die?”

The other Carters were also extremely indignant as they accused, “Who would send urns to someone? You’re too vicious!”

“Exactly! He’s clearly trying to curse us! This is too malicious and vicious!”

“Lucas Gray, are you even human? How dare you send such things to us?!”

...

The Carters all seemed to have righteous indignation, except Sarah, whose heart contracted violently with a nervous look on her face.

Lucas sneered. “Wow, you also know it’s malicious to send urns. These urns were sent to us by one of you, so I’m just returning them to their original owners!”

Many Carters seemed rather puzzled, including Dominic, who frowned. But Sarah seemed even more nervous.

Lucas saw all their expressions and then winked at Jordan.

Jordan opened the trunk of the Jaguar and threw out two limp people, flinging them onto the spot in front of Dominic. They landed right on top of the urns.

When the two people crashed onto the ground, there were no other sounds except two loud thuds.

All the Carters turned to look curiously at these two people curiously, whose life or death was unknown.

One of them was tall and sturdy and seemed to be of mixed ethnicity. None of the Carters knew who he was, but they were very familiar with the other one. It was Bryce Carter, the next successor of the family!

“Bryce! Bryce, are you alright!?!” After Sarah saw Bryce’s face, she was so shocked that she turned pale and suddenly leaped forward to hug his body while yelling loudly.

The Carters were also extremely surprised. *How did Bryce... end up in Lucas Gray’s trunk? He even got thrown out in a bloodied state...*

Standing right in front, Dominic was infuriated when he saw his beloved grandson being thrown in front of him like a dead dog. He roared, “Lucas Gray! What have you done to my grandson?!”

Chapter 177: Accomplice

Dominic only had one biological son, and that was Bryce’s father. Unfortunately, he got into a fatal accident at a young age, and thus Dominic had only one direct grandson, Bryce. Although Bryce was extremely incompetent and often got into trouble, Dominic rarely reprimanded him and was certain that Bryce was his only successor.

He naturally loved and valued his only grandson.

But Bryce was now lying motionlessly on the ground, and it was unknown if he was dead or alive. Dominic was furious to see this.

Sarah shook Bryce a few times, but he remained unconscious. She had no idea how he had been knocked unconscious by Lucas and immediately glared at Lucas, wishing she could stab him with her gaze!

“Lucas Gray, you bastard. How dare you beat my son up into such a state? I’m definitely going to make sure you die a horrible death! I’m going to crush you into pieces!” Sarah cursed viciously while holding Bryce’s head.

With a gloomy expression, Jordan hollered, “Shut up! If I hear you cursing Lucas again, I will beat you up even though you’re a woman!”

Sarah was so frightened that she shuddered. Usually, she commanded great authority in the Carter family and was almost above everyone. The rest of the Carters would all have to speak to her politely and deferentially. But Jordan simply disrespected her and even warned her with a menacing and murderous gaze in his eyes. She was certain

that if she really shouted at Lucas again, Jordan would definitely rush forward and beat her up...

Since she couldn't do anything to Lucas and Jordan, she could only turn her head and complain to Dominic sobbingly, "Dominic, you must get justice for Bryce! He's the only direct descendant of the Carters, but he was beaten into such a terrible state. Who knows how badly he's injured or if he can even regain consciousness... If Bryce really dies just like that, what are we supposed to do?!"

Dominic was exasperated now too. Bryce was his only grandson, and if something terrible were to happen to him, he definitely wouldn't let Lucas off!

But Lucas had impressive combat skills and was ruthless enough. Besides, he also had a powerful subordinate like Jordan. With the power of the Carters alone, it was simply impossible for them to do anything to Lucas and Jordan. They could only wait for the experts sent by the Hales.

"Lucas Gray, what the hell do you want? Why did you beat up my grandson like this for no rhyme or reason? If you don't give me an explanation today, I won't let you leave this place!" Dominic warned menacingly.

Lucas sneered. "No rhyme or reason? Old fogey, do you really not know why your grandson got beaten up?"

Lucas took a step forward and questioned, "Early this morning, Bryce Carter brought a group of people with an excavator to Cheyenne's home and ordered them to smash a wall of the house with the excavator. Do you dare to say that you don't know about this?"

Dominic said righteously, "That old residence is a property of the Carters in the first place. Since you people have been disowned, you naturally have no right to continue staying there! It's up to me to demolish my house. What's wrong with that?"

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Lucas stared straight into Dominic's eyes. "In that case, was it also your decision to get the excavator to demolish the house regardless of whether there were still people inside at the time?"

Dominic frowned. He had indeed agreed to Bryce's request and gave him the title deed of the house, which Bryce then used for the application of a certificate from the engineering company. He would rather demolish the house and flatten it to the ground than let Lucas and Cheyenne's family continue staying in it.

But Lucas seemed to be saying that Bryce had ordered his people to demolish the house when they were still inside it.

If something went wrong, it might have resulted in several deaths!

That kid went overboard!

With a trace of displeasure on his face, Dominic gritted his teeth and retorted because he didn't want to criticize his grandson in front of Lucas. "What happened afterward? Nothing happened to your family, right?"

Dominic was making guesses. He reckoned that if Cheyenne's family had really been harmed, Lucas would have definitely come here in a rage and made a complete mess or killed all of them.

Dominic had already developed some intelligent observations after experiencing several encounters with the ruthless and merciless Lucas.

Lucas could tell from Dominic's expression that it was Bryce's presumptuous idea to demolish the house forcefully. After he figured out that Dominic didn't issue that order, his urge to kill him lessened.

"Let me ask you again. Bryce Carter sent these urns to us and even said that he forgot to send a smaller urn for my daughter. Was that your idea too?"

Only then did Dominic realize that his grandson had also done such a thing. It was no wonder that Lucas said that he was just returning the urns to their original owners when they accused him of being malicious.

"Bastard, where did you learn such despicable tricks?!"

Dominic's face turned pale and extremely ugly. The Carters who just accused Lucas of being vicious looked at each other in dismay, not daring to say anything.

After all, the Carters had done that vicious act themselves.

If Lucas hadn't returned the urns to them, they probably wouldn't have known how uncomfortable and infuriating it was to have ash urns laid out in front of them.

At this moment, Dominic suddenly looked at Sarah, who was at the side. "Did you instigate Bryce to do those heinous things?"

Although Sarah was his daughter-in-law, she hadn't been behaving properly, especially after Bryce was confirmed to be the next successor in line of the Carters. Since then, she had been high up in the air and was condescending to everyone else except Dominic, whom she was somewhat respectful toward on the surface.

Last night, Sarah heartbrokenly brought Bryce back from the hospital and then whispered to him about something for a long time.

Thus, he reckoned that she must have instigated Bryce to get up to such despicable means!

Startled by Dominic's stern questioning, Sarah hurriedly defended herself, "Dominic, this matter really has nothing to do with me! Besides, what right does Lucas Gray have to say that Bryce was the one who sent them those urns? Maybe he staged it and made this all up himself! Anyway, Bryce is still unconscious now and can't defend himself."

Sarah's words were reasonable and justifiable.

But when Dominic saw her shifty gaze, he knew that she was definitely lying and that she had definitely instigated Bryce to do those things!

Chapter 178: Crippled Limbs

However, Dominic couldn't do anything to Sarah in front of Lucas now. Otherwise, the Carters would truly be embarrassed.

"Lucas Gray, are you done? Did you come all the way here and create such a huge ruckus for such a trivial matter? You even beat my grandson up because of that?" Dominic questioned.

"Trivial matter?" Lucas chuckled.

His face suddenly darkened, and he kicked the stone lion at the entrance of the Carter residence into smithereens!

Bang! With fear written all over their faces, everyone was dumbfounded as they stared at Lucas's leg in disbelief.

He managed to turn a stone lion into smithereens with just one kick. If he kicked a living person, they'd definitely have their bones broken!

Dominic was also startled by Lucas's sudden kick. He tried to suppress the fear within him before saying unreasonably, "Is that not the case? At least, you are still standing here alive and well. Your family is fine too, aren't they?"

With an icy cold gaze, Lucas sneered. "If your grandson just wanted to regain possession of the house, I would have taken everyone away without hesitation. But what did your grandson do? Our family was still inside the house when he got his men to smash one of the walls with the hydraulic hammer. If we were a little unluckier, we might have been buried alive in the house! Bryce Carter was obviously out to kill us!

“When you Carters saw these urns, you said that I was vicious. But your grandson was the one who deliberately sent them to my family and even said that he wanted to prepare one for my daughter. What was his intention?”

“Besides, he even brought along a bodyguard he hired and hid a sharp dagger with him. If I were just an ordinary person, I might have already been killed by your grandson!”

“But you’re calling all of this a trivial matter? Is it just because I managed to escape those scheming tricks and I’m still standing here alive and well?”

“Let me tell you. We’re alive and well because we’re capable enough! If I were to use the same tricks to deal with you people, if you get lucky and escape them, it’d be a trivial matter. If you can’t and unfortunately die, you deserve it. Do you agree?”

Lucas’s tone became increasingly harsh toward the end, and he was boiling with fury, like a volcano with boiling lava, so much that Dominic and the others dared not look at him.

They couldn’t say anything to refute him at all.

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Lucas and the others were safe and sound because they were capable of remaining unscathed, but there was no way to erase the fact that Bryce had done those things.

If they dared to retort, Lucas would undoubtedly deal with them using the means that Bryce had resorted to to harm them!

Lucas didn’t even have to bring a bodyguard with him. All he needed was to give Jordan an instruction, and the Carters would definitely have a hard time!

Dominic paled as he questioned uncertainly, “What... what do you want then?”

Lucas glanced at Bryce, who was on the ground. “Since Bryce Carter was the one who caused the incident today and even threatened to break my limbs, I will pay him back in his own coin and cripple him! Are you Carters going to do it, or do you want me to do it instead? But I’ll make it clear beforehand. If I do it, it won’t be as simple as just breaking his limbs.”

As soon Dominic heard Lucas’s demand, he flew into a rage. “Don’t even think about it! Bryce is my grandson. No one can cripple his limbs!”

If Lucas really crippled Bryce, what would happen to him in the future? How could a lame person rule the Carters in the future?

Thus, Dominic refused his demand without even thinking about it.

“In that case, it seems you want me to do it,” Lucas said with raised brows and took two steps forward with a gloomy gaze.

Dominic immediately stood in front of Bryce and threatened loudly, “Lucas Gray! Don’t be so overbearing. I’ve already contacted the Hales. They will send people over soon. If you dare to do anything to Bryce, I won’t let you off!”

Lucas sneered. “Hmph, you’re making yourselves sound so benevolent. I didn’t provoke you guys prior to this, and I even let you off again and again on Cheyenne’s account. But you keep coming to provoke me time and time again.”

As Lucas spoke, he continued to walk toward Bryce.

“You... don’t come over! If you dare to lay a finger on my son, I’ll go all out against you!” Sarah was sitting on the ground and hugging Bryce’s head. Seeing Lucas walking over aggressively and giving her a sense of oppression, she couldn’t help but shudder and scream in fear.

“Ah!” Jordan lost his patience. He walked over, picked Sarah up, and tossed her aside. He then kicked Bryce in a certain spot in his waist.

Bryce shrieked in pain and sat upright.

Sarah was about to yell at him when she suddenly saw that Bryce had regained consciousness. She ignored everything else and leaped over in surprise and joy. “Bryce! My precious son, you’ve come to!”

Bryce looked around and realized that he was back at the entrance of the Carters’ main residence. But before he could heave a sigh of relief, he saw the tall and strong Lucas only a few steps away from him. Lucas was walking toward him with an oppressive aura.

In an instant, he recalled those things he had experienced before he lost consciousness!

Bryce remembered that the bodyguard he had spent a lot of money on was kicked away by Lucas more than ten meters away and that he tried to hold Cheyenne hostage but accidentally stabbed Lucas in the chest with his dagger!

But Lucas was now unscathed and walking toward him step by step like a vengeful, sinister ghost.

“Ah! Don’t come over here!” Bryce was immediately frightened to death as he desperately tried to crawl backward.

Dominic shouted to stop him, “Lucas Gray! Stop! Someone, hurry and stop him!”

Jordan stepped forward, rubbed his fist, and roared, "Who dares?!"

The security guards Jordan had kicked away earlier hesitated to move as soon as they saw him stand out. They looked at each other, but none of them dared to go forward.

Dominic was infuriated, but there was nothing he could do. He could only watch Lucas walk toward Bryce Carter.

"I initially didn't plan to let you continue living in this world, but Cheyenne asked me to spare your life. Just now, I told your grandfather that I'm going to cripple you to pay you back in your own coin," Lucas said to Bryce indifferently.

Bryce shuddered and pleaded with a pale expression, "Lu-Lucas, I'm really sorry. Let me off once more! I swear that I will never provoke you again!"

Lucas chuckled in contempt and said in an icy cold voice, "You said this several times this morning. But in the end, you pulled out a dagger and stabbed me in my chest while my guard was down. Do you think that I will still believe you?"

With that, Lucas stepped on Bryce's wrist and crushed it hard.

"Ah!" With the clear sounds of bones breaking, Bryce shrieked loudly in immense agony!

Chapter 179: A Frog in a Well

"Bryce!"

"My son!"

Both Dominic and Sarah yelled anxiously while dashing toward Bryce and Lucas.

"Get out of the way!" Jordan roared and stopped them, causing the hearts of Dominic and Sarah to immediately palpitate as fear arose within them. Indeed, they dared not take half a step closer.

Watching his grandson's wrist being trampled in front of him by Lucas, the good-for-nothing he had kicked out of the family, Dominic boiled with fury that was almost ruining his rationality.

But he had no choice but to clench his teeth as the loose skin on his cheeks started trembling. After a long time, he said, "Lucas Gray, hurry up and let go of Bryce, and I can pretend nothing happened! Otherwise, when the Hales' people get here, they won't spare you! The Carters will deal with you too!"

Lucas sneered and mocked, “Just you wait and see what the Hales and the Carters can do to me!”

Dominic could tell from the gaze in Lucas’s eyes that he really didn’t take the powerful Hale family seriously at all, let alone the Carters.

Lucas didn’t care about his threat!

Lucas moved his foot onto one of Bryce’s legs, and before he even started pressing down, Bryce had already started shrieking miserably.

“Lucas, I beg you. Please... just let me off! I really know I was wrong!” Overwhelmed with pain, Bryce burst into tears and shivered while begging for mercy.

At this point, he looked extremely disheveled, and his eyes were full of regret, but Lucas didn’t plan to let him off just like that.

Bryce was the type who would never learn his lesson. Whenever he was in a disadvantageous situation, he would swallow his pride, beg for forgiveness, admit to his mistakes, and then promise that he would never do it again. But every time Lucas forgave him on Cheyenne’s account, he would forget the previous lesson and then provoke Lucas again. He would then repeat the same trick and challenge Lucas’s bottom line again and again.

Besides, Lucas was truly infuriated by what Bryce had done this morning. He was already showing the greatest mercy to Bryce by letting him live on Cheyenne’s account. Otherwise, Bryce would have definitely disappeared from this world by now.

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“You want me to let you off? I can, but your grandfather has to beg me!” Lucas glanced at Dominic at the side and then suddenly smiled peculiarly.

Hasn’t Dominic Carter always treated Bryce Carter as his only grandchild and regarded Cheyenne as a stepping stone and a pawn? I’ll see how far he can go for Bryce Carter!

After hearing what Lucas said, Bryce felt like he had seen a glimmer of hope while he was feeling hopeless. He hurriedly yelled at Dominic, “Grandpa! Grandpa! Did you hear that? If you beg Lucas, he’ll let me off! Grandpa, go beg him quickly! Otherwise, he’s going to crush my leg!”

Dominic’s face trembled a few times, and he was seething with anger. He was furious at both Lucas and his grandson.

Why should I beg Lucas Gray?!

He's just a live-in son-in-law I kicked out of the family. He comes from a humble background and is a nameless and penniless punk. He's so arrogant and domineering just because he can fight!

Lucas had gone to the Carter residence, but they couldn't find anyone to retaliate against him. This alone was already embarrassing enough. It was akin to an insult and a slap on Dominic's face. If he still agreed to Lucas's demand and swallowed his pride to beg him, what would that make him, Dominic Carter?

Besides, Bryce was really unruly. After hearing Lucas's demand, he not only didn't refute, but he even asked Dominic to swallow his pride and beg Lucas... *Is he the beloved grandson I pinned my hopes on, pampered, loved greatly, and even drove away Cheyenne's family without hesitation for? Is he the grandson I tried so hard to support and groom into the next successor?*

At this moment, Dominic's heart was full of disappointment toward Bryce.

He clenched his teeth and stayed silent. Of course, he wasn't going to plead with Lucas.

"It seems that you don't matter that much to your grandfather. In fact, his pride and dignity probably matter more than your leg," Lucas deliberately said while stepping down onto Bryce's leg.

"Ah! Ah! Grandpa! Grandpa, hurry up and beg him. Hurry up and beg him... Ah!"

Bryce's desperate pleas in panic suddenly turned into a miserable howl with the clear and crisp sound of his bones breaking. His deafening cry seemed to cut the eardrums of the people around him.

Bryce's leg and wrist were crushed by Lucas, and so were his tendons and muscles. Even the most advanced medical technology couldn't save him.

"Lucas Gray! You..." Dominic gritted his teeth and stopped himself from cursing, but he couldn't suppress the resentment on his face.

"He still has an intact leg and arm. So, are you going to beg me or not?" Lucas smiled and once again raised his foot to step on Bryce's other leg.

In the eyes of all the Carters around, his smile was simply like the smile of the most terrifying demon, making them shudder.

It was their first time knowing that there was such a terrifying side to the person they had always despised and treated as a good-for-nothing.

Bryce was already overwhelmed with pain, and his consciousness was growing fuzzy. He could only turn to look at Dominic pleadingly.

Dominic knew that Lucas was forcing him to succumb, but he still couldn't force himself to do it. He couldn't imagine what a terrible situation it would be if he did so and begged Lucas for mercy!

"You want me to beg you? Impossible! Even if I die, I won't beg you! If you want to break Bryce's limbs, you'd better remember how you're breaking his legs right now. When the Hales' people come later, I will make sure I take revenge for Bryce and do the same thing to you!" Dominic glared at Lucas with immense hatred in his eyes.

Lucas couldn't help bursting into laughter. "Now that things have come to this, you're still thinking of relying on the power of the Hales to deal with me? What a joke!"

"What do you mean by that? Do you think that you can retaliate against the Hales with your combat skills? You're the ridiculously naive one!" Dominic exclaimed firmly with a frown.

Lucas looked at Dominic sympathetically and sneered. "What a frog in a well. You already witnessed at the Hales' banquet last night just how I offended them. Logically speaking, they would have never let go of someone who dared to provoke them like that. Yet I'm still standing here today alive and well. Can't you figure out the reason for this?"

Chapter 180: Someone Sent by the Hales

Translator: Atlas Studios Editor: Atlas Studios

Lucas's words made Dominic feel uneasy. In fact, he was indeed extremely surprised to see Lucas showing up unscathed in front of him today.

The fact that Lucas had disrupted the banquet held by the Hales yesterday and even pressed the head of Connor Hale, the next successor of the Hale family, directly into a bowl of soup made him confident that the Hales certainly wouldn't let him off!

After thinking about it for a long while, Dominic thought that the Hales definitely hadn't exacted revenge yet because they were busy with the banquet yesterday and hadn't had the time to deal with Lucas!

"Punk, I suggest you better not be too arrogant. Don't think that the Hales are scared of you just because they haven't come looking for you yet! Once they come later, you'll be in tears!" Dominic barked sinisterly.

"Haha, such a fool." Lucas sneered. He couldn't be bothered to say much to Dominic.

Dominic was still clueless about the fact that the Hales had fallen, and neither did he know about the things Lucas had done at the Hales' banquet last night.

In the opinions of people like Dominic, who were like frogs in a well, the Hales were just like the relatives of royalty, as they were one of the four major families of Orange County. It was as if no one could disobey their orders as long as the people sent by the Hales arrived.

I wonder how Dominic Carter will react after finding out what happened to the Hales last night.

Seeing how stubborn Dominic was, Lucas didn't say anything else and simply stepped hard onto Bryce's other leg, crushing the bones into bits!

"Ah!" Bryce shrieked, and his eyes rolled into the back of his head as he fainted.

His legs were both broken, and one of his wrists was just crushed by Lucas's foot. The other arm still hadn't recovered after being snapped and broken by Lucas some time ago.

It was reasonable to say that Bryce's limbs had all been broken.

Dominic glared at Lucas with extreme resentment and hatred that seemed to be on the verge of erupting from his eyes.

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After seeing the miserable state her son was in, Sarah shrieked at the top of her lungs. Then she rushed at Lucas and waved her hands to scratch his face. But before she could get close, Jordan kicked her to the ground, causing her to pass out.

At this moment, a silvery-gray Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicle drove over and stopped outside the Carter residence. Soon, a short and chubby middle-aged man got out of the car, followed by two tall bodyguards clad in black suits and shades.

As soon as Dominic saw the person who came, he immediately acted as if he had seen his savior. He hurried over and greeted respectfully, "Mr. Holmes, you're finally here to save us! This arrogant punk Lucas Gray just broke my grandson's limbs in front of us! Moreover, he's extremely disrespectful to the Hales..."

"Shut up!" The short and fat middle-aged man, Anthony Holmes, roared sternly to stop Dominic from complaining after hearing Lucas's name. When he saw the familiar-looking young man standing just a short distance away and staring at him with an ambiguous smile, he immediately shuddered!

It's really him!

This fool Dominic Carter actually asked me to bring my people over to deal with Lucas Gray. Does he have a death wish?

At this moment, Holmes had an urge to kill Dominic!

“Mr. Holmes, you...” Being rebuked out of the blue by someone decades younger than him, Dominic was naturally extremely irked. But he knew that he couldn’t afford to offend the short and chubby Holmes, so he had no choice but to suppress his dissatisfaction and ask with a smile.

“Get lost!” Holmes obviously couldn’t be bothered to care about Dominic. He pushed him away and then scurried toward Lucas. He bent forward and said respectfully, “Mr. Gray, I’m really sorry. If I had known that this old foggy Dominic Carter wanted to deal with you, I would have never agreed to his request! Don’t worry. I’ll have someone cease all cooperation between the Hales and the Carters!”

Then he said to the bodyguards clad in black, “Didn’t you hear what I just said? Hurry up and call the other people who hold authority in the Hale family to cease all cooperation with the Carters!”

Holmes’s words made the Carters, who were waiting for the Hales to ‘get rid of evil’, utterly astonished. Their hearts fell to rock bottom!

In particular, Dominic watched everything in disbelief, his eyes almost popping out!

He couldn’t believe what he heard. But Holmes had repeated himself, so he had no choice but to believe it!

Dominic looked at Holmes anxiously in disbelief. “Mr. Holmes, are you... mistaken about something? Lucas Gray made so much trouble at the Hales’ banquet last night, and he even disrespected Mr. Connor Hale... I asked you to come over to teach him a lesson because he not only offended the Carters but also the Hales! Why are you treating him so respectfully and terminating all cooperation with us?”

Holmes looked at Dominic like he was looking at a fool. You want to teach Lucas Gray a lesson? You should count yourselves lucky that he hasn’t killed you yet!

All the people who stayed behind at the Hales’ banquet last night had witnessed how Lucas defeated the top henchman of the Hales, John Hans, and even beat up the 20-odd fighters who besieged him.

Moreover, around two hundred soldiers clad in a dark green army uniform and armed with guns appeared later to arrest all of the Hales. No one would believe that they had nothing to do with Lucas.

Only fools would want to go against such a terrifying person like Lucas Gray!

He, Anthony Holmes, would never do such a stupid thing! “Fool! Mr. Gray isn’t someone the Carters afford to offend! Don’t implicate me if you have a death wish!”

Dominic was incredibly stunned. What... identity can Lucas Gray possibly have? He's just a good-for-nothing I kicked out of the family!

Just as Dominic was about to argue, another silvery-gray Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicle stopped at the Carters' entrance, and an elite businessman clad in a suit alighted.

Dominic was shocked again. "Mr. Cohen, what brings you here?"

He hurriedly greeted him, but Cohen likewise pushed him away and ran straight toward Lucas. He bowed and said deferentially, "Hello, Mr. Gray! I am the person in charge of the Sky High Corporation that belongs to the Hale family. I heard that you're handling something here, so I specially came to visit you. If there's anything you need, just leave it to me!"

As the general manager of the Sky High Corporation that belonged to the Hale family, Cohen was extremely subservient and respectful toward Lucas!

Dominic felt his heart jump even more.

He was still puzzled by what Holmes had said and was wondering if Holmes was mistaken about something. But Cohen behaved in the same way. This just meant that Holmes didn't make a mistake but that something major had happened, and he was still clueless about it!

Chapter 181: A Bunch of Fools

Dominic was even more frightened by the several silvery-gray Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicles that drove in one after another. They were obviously the standard vehicles allocated to the senior executives of the Hale family. All the people who alighted were the general managers and leaders of all major enterprises under the Hales. They walked past Dominic one by one and bowed to Lucas respectfully.

"Wh-what exactly is going on here?!"

"Why are these people so... so respectful toward Lucas Gray? It's like he's some prestigious and mighty bigshot."

"Yeah, I know that Mr. Farrer. He's always so lofty and condescending toward us, yet he's now smiling so subserviently to Lucas Gray..."

"Oh my god. What's wrong with this world? This is too surreal!"

Dumbfounded, the Carters watched the scene taking place before them and gathered together to discuss it among themselves. They were all looking in shock at Lucas and the senior executives of the Hale enterprises, who were all surrounding Lucas like he was a revered leader.

The scene in front of them was simply beyond their understanding!

Even Lucas didn't expect that all the executives of the Hale family would come to him and express their intentions to stand on his side.

Although Lucas didn't reveal his identity at the baby shower thrown by the Hales yesterday and even refused to admit that he had summoned the soldiers when Bruce Hale pleaded with him, many of them had guessed that he played a crucial part in that operation.

Moreover, Lucas's terrifying combat skills also spurred them to unanimously choose to stand on his side and try to rope him in. Even if they couldn't win him over, they definitely couldn't offend him!

Just when Dominic was overwhelmed with uneasiness, Holmes, whom he had called over earlier, walked toward him with a hostile expression.

"Dominic Carter, you're such a vicious old foggy! You are well aware that Mr. Gray is a prestigious figure not to be trifled with, yet you deliberately lured me over and tried to get me to help you deal with Mr. Gray. You're really malicious!" Holmes hollered furiously while pointing at Dominic's nose.

He had brought a few bodyguards with him because the Carters had given him a large amount of money in exchange. But when he heard that the person the Carters wanted him to help deal with was Lucas, his heart dropped. By the time he turned around again, Lucas was already standing near him and looking at him smilingly. He instantly regretted his decision and was thankful that he had decided to tag along on a whim!

Otherwise, he wouldn't have known that his bodyguards were to offend Lucas. If Lucas decided to settle scores with him afterward, he would be in trouble.

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At the thought of this, Holmes resented Dominic greatly.

The rest of the Hale family were rather hostile to Dominic too.

After the two hundred soldiers had taken away all the Hales at the banquet yesterday, the executives and managerial staff of the various enterprises under the Hale family were all flustered, anxious, and in a state of confusion.

After they left the Hale residence, they had gathered together quietly and spent the rest of the night discussing their following plans. Although they hadn't thought about the future of the companies, they came to a unanimous decision that they definitely couldn't provoke Lucas Gray. In fact, if it was necessary, they might even express some good intentions to him to get him to stand on their side.

Otherwise, the companies that had lost the leadership of the Hales would become highly coveted by everyone in Orange County.

Now, the Carters actually almost used the Hales and turned them into Lucas's enemy. This made all the people in charge of the Hale businesses extremely exasperated! They couldn't forgive the Carters!

"Dominic Carter, I'm telling you, the company belonging to the Hales that I'm in charge of will terminate all cooperation with the Carters!"

"Me too! The Carters have approached me on several occasions to seek cooperation with the Dragon Co. I hereby give you my answer. Dragon Co. will never cooperate with the Carters again!"

"Same goes for Feather Co! From today onward, I will blacklist the Carters!"

...

One after another, the top executives of the Hale businesses made their stand to forever draw a line with the Carters and blacklist them.

When Dominic heard all of this, his face instantly paled, and his lips trembled.

Previously, Dominic had been going around and using money to forge connections with the senior executives of the Hale companies in hopes that they would consider the Carters when selecting partners to cooperate with. Many were willing to do the Carters a favor for the sake of the money.

According to the plan that Dominic had previously come up with, he would first obtain the chance to cooperate with the Hales and then find ways to gradually get closer to the direct descendants of the Hales in order to soar high and restore the Carters' power as a third-rate family in Orange County. He thought that it was even possible to bring their power a notch higher!

However, all the executives of the Hale enterprises had now blatantly turned down the Carters and cut off all possibilities of cooperation in the future!

Why?

Is it just because I offended Lucas Gray?

But Lucas Gray is really a good-for-nothing!

Dominic couldn't even think of the reason. But since the matter had come to this, he could only ask reluctantly, "We were clearly on good terms before, so why? Is it just because of that good-for-nothing Lucas Gray I kicked out of the family?"

"Good-for-nothing? Hah. Indeed, you Carters are all completely ignorant fools! Mr. Gray has the ability to make the Hales disappear from Orange County overnight, yet you guys kicked him out of your family. You people are foolish beyond redemption!"

Holmes looked at Dominic as if he was looking at a dimwit. The Carters had such a powerful son-in-law, but they chose to kick him out of their family. It was simply pathetic!

If the Carters had known about Lucas's power and treated him better instead of offending him endlessly, they would have become an extraordinary and supreme existence that no one in Orange County would dare to disregard.

Unfortunately, there was no turning back, and the Carters had only themselves to blame for being stupid!

After hearing from Holmes that the Hales had disappeared from Orange County overnight, Dominic was stunned and stupefied with disbelief!

In particular, Holmes even said that Lucas was the one who caused the destruction!

"How... how is this possible? How is this possible?!" Dominic's legs went limp, and he collapsed to the ground while muttering to himself incessantly. He didn't dare to believe his ears at all.

Chapter 182: Regret

To Dominic's immense disbelief, the senior executives of the Hale enterprises, including the general managers, looked at one another again after drawing a line with the Carters. Then they walked up to Lucas and bowed to him, seemingly already having made up their minds.

"Mr. Gray, I am Anthony Holmes, the general manager of the Fly Corporation under the Hales. I'm willing to plead allegiance to you!"

"Mr. Gray, I'm Chester Cohen of Joy Co. that belongs to the Hale family. I'm also willing to submit to you!"

"I'm Fred Crawford of Feather Co., and I'm willing to submit to you too!"

"I'm Jim Sullivan of Dragon Co., and I'd also like to plead allegiance to you!"

...

These elites clad in suits all bowed down to Lucas and pledged allegiance to him. It was extremely spectacular!

Dumbfounded, all the Carters were at a loss for words. *Is Lucas Gray... really the loser live-in son-in-law we kicked out of the family?*

Meanwhile, Dominic was sitting on the ground, his face as pale as a sheet. He grabbed the broken stone fragments on the ground, and a sharp edge stabbed him, causing him excruciating pain. Only then did he snap out of his trance and realize that everything happening wasn't a dream but reality that he couldn't accept.

This scene in front of Dominic told him that Lucas was definitely not a loser like what he had thought!

Now, Dominic finally stopped being prejudiced and began to think about everything that Lucas had shown previously. The more he thought about it, the more he realized that Lucas had displayed his abnormality long ago. But unfortunately, Dominic chose to ignore it time and time again.

It started from when the Carters got the Stardust Corporation's intent of cooperation and signed the contract. At that time, he let Bryce take on the role of general manager of the Brilliance Corporation, which he had promised to give to Cheyenne, and ended up receiving a breach of contract notice from the Stardust Corporation in the afternoon even though they had signed the contract in the morning. In the end, the Carters even lost the entire Brilliance Corporation.

Later on, Cheyenne became the general manager of the Brilliance Corporation.

There was the time when they received an invitation from the Stardust Corporation and thought it was a great honor. But to their surprise, they were arranged to sit near the entrance and ended up being mocked and humiliated. In hindsight, he realized that the Stardust Corporation had done that all for the sake of standing up for Cheyenne!

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Later on, Ethan Sawyer, the wealthiest man in Orange County, said that the gifts he instructed his subordinates to deliver to the Carters were meant for Lucas and not betrothal gifts for Charlotte.

There was also that time when Chris Douglas and Gordon Douglas showed up at the Carters to beg Lucas for forgiveness.

Lucas had given them numerous warnings. But they continuously ignored them and kept on bullying Cheyenne and her family, only to face numerous crises afterward, such as the closure of their factories, the bank's demand for loan repayment, the termination of cooperation by many companies, and so on.

Countless memories of the previous events surfaced in Dominic's mind. Before, he thought that there had been mistakes or that they were purely coincidences. But it turned out that he had actually kept consciously or unconsciously ignoring the possibility that Lucas might really be powerful.

But today, Dominic finally confirmed that Lucas was the one who did all of these things!

Dominic's heart was struck by a wave of chilliness and regret.

Lucas was closely associated with the Stardust Corporation and the richest family in Orange County, the Sawyers. He also had the terrifying ability to cause the Hales to collapse overnight and make the senior executives of the Hale companies pledge allegiance!

Yet this powerful figure turned out to be the former son-in-law of the Carters!

If they had treated Lucas and Cheyenne's family a little better and stopped trying to kick them out, the Carters would have already developed extremely well just with Lucas's help!

Dominic felt like his heart was about to bleed. For the sake of the development of the Carters, he had completely exhausted himself and racked his brains to think of all suitable solutions. He even lowered his pride to curry favor with those executives younger than him and accepted their mockery.

The Carters could have had a brilliant future, but unfortunately, they ruined it for themselves!

Sitting on the ground, Dominic looked absolutely crestfallen, and his face was deathly pale. It was as if he had aged a few years in an instant.

He smiled bitterly and glanced at Lucas. But he was well aware that at this point, it would be a far-fetched idea to think that he could try to get Lucas and Cheyenne to reconcile with the Carters. They had already completely fallen out, and their relationship was strained beyond salvation.

Having figured this out, Dominic stood up while swaying from side to side. He straightened his back and looked at Lucas. "Lucas, I have to admit that I did belittle you in the past. I always thought that you were a good-for-nothing. But now..."

He coughed twice, but the corners of his mouth curled up into a bizarre smile. "But if you think that I will apologize to you, bow down to you, and beg you to spare the Carters, you're wrong! Even if I die, I will never succumb to you!"

Dominic sounded firm and decisive, seemingly having a strong backbone.

Lucas sneered. To him, regardless of whether Dominic apologized or not, it didn't matter at all.

The fact that the Carters did those horrible things to Cheyenne and his family had already made him decide that he would never let the Carters off and would definitely destroy them.

Since that was the case, Lucas couldn't care less about what Dominic's attitude was.

After hearing what Dominic said, Holmes frowned, walked over, and shouted, "Dominic Carter! Watch your attitude when you're talking to Mr. Gray!"

Dominic said indifferently, "The Carters no longer need the help of the Hales. What does my attitude have to do with you? Get lost! Get out of my home!"

Holmes didn't expect Dominic, who had always been subservient toward him, to suddenly become austere and hostile toward him. Infuriated by Dominic and eager to please Lucas, he raised his arm and slapped Dominic on the face. "Old fogy! How dare you talk to Mr. Gray and me like that? You must be tired of living..."

Before Holmes could finish speaking, a hand suddenly appeared and gripped his wrist tightly, preventing his slap from landing on Dominic's face.

"Enough! You're in no place to interfere with the affairs of the Carters!" Lucas glared at Holmes coldly and threw his hand away.

Chapter 183: Level the Villa

This look shocked Holmes greatly, causing him to shudder. He felt at ease only when he saw Lucas turn his head away and not hold it against him.

With a cold gaze in his eyes, Dominic suddenly said, "Lucas Gray, if you want to use this trick to make me thankful to you, you can save it. My opinion of you will never change!"

Lucas chuckled slightly. "You're reading too much into things. I don't care what your opinion is. I just feel unjust for Cheyenne. To you, Cheyenne is just an outsider and a pawn that you can use, but she has always treated you guys as her family.

“What I want to tell you is that if Cheyenne hadn’t pleaded for the Carters in front of me twice and asked me to let you off, the Carters would have long been annihilated! You and the rest of the Carters have all done Cheyenne wrong!”

Dominic suddenly widened his eyes in shock, and he subconsciously wanted to refute Lucas and say that Cheyenne and her family were the ones who owed the Carters something. He wanted to say that it was only right for them to repay the Carters!

However, he couldn’t bring himself to say it.

Does Cheyenne’s family really owe us anything?

Even if William Carter was not his biological son, Dominic was the one who decided to marry his mother and take him as his own son.

On the other hand, Cheyenne and Charlotte were even more innocent. Although they were raised with the Carters’ money, most of the money was left to them by William’s mother, and only a small portion was from the Carters.

Besides, Cheyenne had single-handedly created the Brilliance Corporation when she was in college and helped the Carters earn countless benefits and profits that far surpassed the meager amount they gave them.

Thus, Cheyenne didn’t owe the Carters anything!

Instead, it was the Carters who had done numerous terrible things to Cheyenne. They ruined her reputation, robbed her of her company, and even made her continue slogging her guts out for the Carters. When they discovered that she had been disobedient, they even kicked her out!

But the Carters managed to survive until now all thanks to the pleas for mercy of this granddaughter whom Dominic had used, despised, and even disowned...

After thinking about it carefully in hindsight, he finally realized that he was outrageously wrong!

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He and the Carters indeed owed Cheyenne a lot!

Dominic finally looked remorseful. He was just about to say something, but he suddenly heard mechanical sounds coming from outside the Carter residence. It was as if a large machine had begun to make the ground shake.

Everyone looked over in the direction of the sound, only to see more than ten large and tall excavators lined up at the gate of the Carter residence.

Excavators?

When Dominic saw the machines, a thought quickly popped up in his mind.

Is... Lucas Gray... going to...?!

As he expected, Lucas looked at these excavators and ordered indifferently, "Level it."

With this order, the large and cold excavators drove into the Carter residence mercilessly. The tall walls collapsed, and rubble and dust spread all over the yard.

Upon seeing Lucas order the excavators into the Carter residence, the senior executives of the Hale enterprises were smart enough to retreat and stand far away outside the gates to watch the situation.

Dominic knew that Lucas was exacting revenge on the Carters for Bryce's act of trying to demolish Cheyenne's home with an excavator. But there was nothing he could say. He could only stand still and close his eyes.

It was all karma. Lucas was now in power. If he wanted to take revenge on the Carters, what else could he do?

The remaining members of the Carter family were running around the front yard and screaming in panic. These villas were their home, and they obviously couldn't tolerate having their home leveled by the excavators.

Of course, they didn't dare to stop those tall machines. They could only beg Lucas, "Lucas, please don't destroy our home!"

"Lucas, we may have disliked you in the past, but we've never done anything horrid to you! It was Bryce who offended you. We don't care how you retaliate against Bryce, but you can't drag the entire family down with him!"

"Lucas, please stop on the account that we used to be family. Otherwise, all the children in our family will become homeless!"

...

The Carters all surrounded Lucas and were trying to dissuade him. Some tried to shirk responsibility, some tried to play the kinship card, and some even carried their children to Lucas and pleaded with him to let them off.

Actually, the Carters might not be kind people, as they had previously mocked him and Cheyenne and even kicked them when they were down. But what angered Lucas was the behavior and misdeeds of Bryce and Dominic. The other members were actually implicated by them.

Seeing the Carters gathered around Lucas begging him for mercy, some of whom were even ready to kneel down, Dominic widened his eyes in anger and roared, "Shut up! No one is allowed to beg him again, and no one is allowed to kneel down in front of him! The Carters might have made mistakes, but we must have a backbone too! So what if the houses are gone? As long as we're still alive, we can always build our home again!"

Lucas was indeed surprised that Dominic could still have such a strong backbone in such circumstances.

The excavators raised their long mechanical arms high and soon demolished a villa after a few prods. The entire villa was torn down to the ground and destroyed beyond recognition!

Bang!

A massive sound erupted. Everyone looked over, only to have their jaws drop as they watched the exquisite and beautiful villa turn into ruins. In the blink of an eye, smoke and dust rose and filled the entire residence.

The demolished villa was the one that Bryce and Sarah Hadley owned.

Unfortunately, both of them were still lying unconscious on the ground and didn't witness the scene with their own eyes. Otherwise, they would have wailed and cursed their hearts out.

While the other members of the Carter family were staring at the excavators uneasily and worried about their own villas getting demolished, the excavators suddenly stopped and then turned around to leave instead of driving farther.

Everyone watched the scene in shock. Only after the ten-odd excavators left the yard did they snap back to their senses. Lucas had only leveled Bryce's villa and let the rest of them off!

Dominic also widened his eyes in shock, totally not expecting this.

He originally thought that Lucas would definitely demolish everything since he had come to take revenge with more than ten excavators! But Lucas actually only demolished Bryce's villa and spared the rest of the Carters' villas.

At the thought of this, Dominic felt even more complicated.

Lucas looked at Bryce, whose limbs were broken and was still lying unconscious on the ground, and then at his demolished villa. He then said calmly, "From now on, the Carters and I are even. We will no longer have anything to do with each other."

With that, Lucas turned around and walked outside of the Carter residence.

When he saw the executives of the Hale enterprises, he paused and said, "I hope I won't see anyone going against the Carters in the future for my sake."

The hearts of these executives all skipped a beat. They all understood that Lucas was deliberately saying this to them.

Although they felt that Lucas was still too kind to the Carters, they didn't dare to disregard his warning. They hung their heads low and chorused in unison, "Please rest assured, Mr. Gray. We understand!"

Lucas nodded at Jordan, who was following him, then got inside his black Jaguar and drove away from the Carter residence.

Jordan followed closely behind and ordered the construction truck and all the excavators to drive away.

The executives of the Hale enterprises outside each got into their own silvery-gray Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicle and drove away one after another as well.

Anthony Holmes was the last to leave. Sitting in the backseat, he sneered at Dominic, who was outside the car. "Dominic Carter, take your family in hand, or Mr. Gray will not be so benevolent and let you people off again next time!" He then left.

After the vehicles that had crowded around the entrance of the Carter residence left, the silence was restored. Only the ruined villa and the Carters, who were standing rooted to the ground with peculiar expressions, were left.

Dominic also stood still quietly without moving.

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Not only did Lucas not destroy the Carters, but he also warned those in charge of the companies under the Hale family not to deal with them for his sake.

Honestly speaking, Lucas had indeed given them a chance of survival.

Otherwise, if he had demolished their entire residence and allowed those executives to deal with them, they would really have been wiped out.

Only after a long time did Dominic let out a long sigh with a bitter smile on his face. "I've lived for almost seventy years, but I didn't expect that I'm really no match for a young man at the end of the day."

One of the Carter inched over cautiously and asked, "Dominic, should we engage a construction company to rebuild that villa?"

Dominic thought about it and shook his head resolutely. “No! Let it remain as ruins. No one is allowed to touch it!

“I want all the Carters and future descendants to remember today’s lesson. From now on, all of you have to develop better characters and strive to become better. Don’t... don’t follow in the footsteps of this unfilial grandson Bryce and refrain from offending others. Don’t pretend to be lofty and look down on others condescendingly!”

After seeing how determined Dominic was, the other Carters stopped thinking about sponging off the family and living idly. They also stopped thinking self-righteously that they were prestigious in Orange County.

Today’s incident was an unforgettable lesson for all of the Carters.

Who would have thought that Lucas—whom they had all mocked, humiliated, ridiculed at every turn, and called a good-for-nothing—would now become a mighty figure who possessed enough power to annihilate them easily?

From now on, they would all have to bear in mind this lesson and remember to never underestimate anyone easily!

“Um... Do we send Bryce to the hospital?” Another person came over and asked conscientiously.

After all, Bryce’s limbs were personally crushed by Lucas, who had stated blatantly that he would cripple Bryce.

Dominic sighed, closed his eyes, and said relentlessly, “No, leave him be.”

After saying this, he turned around and walked back to his house without taking another glance at Bryce on the ground.

However, Dominic’s back looked much older and stiffer.

After Lucas finished his affairs with the Carters, he directly drove back to the villa at the center of Pearl Lake.

Meanwhile, Cheyenne, Charlotte, and Karen had already arrived at the villa.

The island in the center of the lake was rather large and covered an area of several hectares. There was a majestic European-style palace-style villa standing tall in the middle, enjoying the serenity of the lake.

There was a four-story main villa in the middle of the palace-style villa and two smaller three-story villas on the sides. The design was ingenious, and the villas connected to form a beautiful piece of architecture that resembled a gorgeous castle in a fairytale.

Around the villas, there were outdoor swimming pools, playgrounds, rose gardens, fruit orchards, parking lots, a private dock, yachts, and other amenities. There were also rare greenery and ornaments everywhere. It was obviously the upscale property of a mega-rich tycoon.

Karen was fascinated as she looked all around with a sense of novelty and amazement while exclaiming in awe incessantly. She was also constantly estimating the value of various things.

“Wow! How much does this massive swimming pool cost?”

“Look, this street lamp has gems embellishing it! There’s such a huge gemstone. It must be worth at least tens of thousands of dollars, right? But it’s left lying on the street. Isn’t he afraid that someone might steal it?”

“Tsk, look at the top of that villa. That gilded villa is so dazzling. Is it plated or pure gold? This must cost a bomb too!”

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Charlotte was also looking at everything in the dream-like villa with eyes full of amazement. Her heart was full of joy.

She had always known that Lucas wasn’t an ordinary person, but she had never thought that he was actually so wealthy that he could afford such a dreamy villa that occupied an entire lake island!

When Cheyenne opened the door to the villa with the key and stepped inside with the two of them behind her, the opulent decor, exotic treasures, and valuable antique paintings displayed everywhere almost blinded Karen!

“Oh my god! How much does this cost? Oh my gosh, this is the first time in all the years I’ve lived that I’ve seen such a luxurious and splendid house! Is this really our home now?” Karen screamed in euphoria as she spun around in the middle of the hall with her arms outstretched. She then plopped herself onto the soft leather couch in the middle of the living room. As soon as she did, an intense wave of bliss surged in her heart.

“Mom, this is Lucas’s house, not ours,” Cheyenne couldn’t help interjecting when she saw Karen’s behavior.

“No, what is his belongs to you, so this house is ours! Even if you divorce him now, half of this villa will belong to you!” Karen said self-righteously as she lay on the couch comfortably.

Cheyenne frowned, completely disapproving of Karen’s words.

She had always been an independent woman, and she had never coveted what belonged to others. Although Lucas had indeed told her that what was his was hers too, she couldn’t treat his property as hers with peace of mind.

After all, although they were lawfully married in name, they were not truly husband and wife.

Cheyenne didn’t play a part in helping Lucas acquire the assets and properties he now owned, so she didn’t think she deserved to possess a portion of it.

But Karen thought otherwise. In her head, she had even already started thinking about how to encroach on the lake villa and make herself and her daughter the owners.

While Karen was excitedly pulling Cheyenne and Charlotte around the villa to explore the other rooms, a silver Maserati sports car began driving in from the road outside the villa.

As soon as the security guards, who were guarding the road and were supposed to stop the car, went over, they saw a balding, chubby middle-aged man sitting in the driver’s seat and a fashionably dressed, long-haired beauty sitting beside him.

“How dare you stop me too? Do you want to get fired?” The middle-aged man glared at the security guards.

The guards recognized him and bowed to him respectfully. “Mr. Taylor!”

Even though Taylor didn’t have a permit to use the road that led to the lake villa, none of the guards dared to stop him. They simply watched as he drove to the villa with the beauty.

The long-haired beauty was leaning against the chubby Taylor and wrapping her arms around his while pointing at the villa in the center of the lake that looked like a castle from a fairytale. She chirped merrily, “Hubby, is that castle there our home? It’s really beautiful! Hey, it seems someone has already moved in!”

She pointed to a few figures on the terrace on the third floor of the villa with a look of displeasure.

Taylor put his arm around her waist and squeezed a few times, causing her to giggle coquettishly and twist her body sultrily. He said with an arrogant expression, “So what if

someone has moved in? The Taylors are the developer of the entire Moon Palace Villas and the villa by the lake. As long as I wish, they will have to obediently move out! Baby, don't worry!"

"Yes! Hubby, you're the best!" The long-haired beauty smiled sweetly and gave Taylor a loud kiss on his face.

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"Hehe, I have something better. I'll let you try it tonight!" he said with a wicked smile.

"What nonsense are you saying in broad daylight?" The long-haired beauty's delicate and coquettish laughing filled the air in the sports car.

In a room of the villa, Cheyenne unpacked some clothes and other items from her suitcase and then took out the bedsheets and aired them. But she suddenly heard the sound of a car driving in from outside.

Thinking that the only person who could drive in at this moment should be Lucas, Cheyenne walked out of the villa directly. She was about to ask him how the matter at the Carters had been settled, but she saw a few strangers standing at the entrance of the villa.

She saw a fat, big-bellied middle-aged man and a scantily clad, long-haired beauty beside him, as well as two tall and burly bodyguards behind him.

"Who are you people?" Cheyenne asked with her guard up. If she remembered correctly, the road outside the villa and the lake surrounding it were all of Lucas's private property. In that case, how could outsiders come here?

Cheyenne's appearance immediately made the fat Taylor's eyes light up as he gawked at her from head to toe with a lustful and burning gaze, unconsciously revealing the lecherousness within him. "Hey, beautiful, how are you? Nice to meet you, I'm Scott Taylor. How do I address you?"

The long-haired beauty immediately sulked and glowered at Cheyenne, who was much more gorgeous than her despite having not dolled up. She hugged Scott's round arm and whined, "Hubby, why are you..."

"Shut up!" Scott interrupted without mercy. He glared at the long-haired beauty, causing her to fall silent while shuddering.

Although she addressed Scott as 'hubby', she was not actually his wife but just one of his countless mistresses. She had exhausted all her efforts to hook up with him and get him to promise to let her move into the big villa.

However, Scott was extremely lustful and promiscuous. When he saw the beautiful Cheyenne, who was much more attractive than the woman beside him, he immediately dropped the latter!

The long-haired beauty was furious, but she didn't dare to lose her temper at Scott, so she could only glare daggers at Cheyenne.

Scott's unrestrained ogling was repulsive, and his words were even more frivolous, so much so that Cheyenne frowned and took two steps back. She said in disgust, "This is my home and private property. Please leave!"

Scott immediately burst into laughter. "Private property? Your home? I doubt it. I think it's going to become my home soon."

Cheyenne's brows furrowed even more tightly. "What do you mean?"

At this moment, Charlotte also walked out of the villa.

She also thought that Lucas had returned and was about to come out to greet him. But she didn't expect to see several strangers standing in front of the villa entrance, who seemed to be talking to Cheyenne. She immediately asked curiously, "Cheyenne, who are they?"

A look of amazement once again appeared on Scott's chubby face. *This one's a beauty too, and her features are similar to the other one's. They're obviously a gorgeous pair of sisters!*

"Beauties, what are your names? Let's get to know each other!" Scott scanned Charlotte from head to toe dreadfully.

Cheyenne immediately pulled Charlotte behind her to block Scott from gawking at her. "No matter what you meant just now, we don't welcome you, and we don't wish to get to know you either. Please leave immediately!"

Scott guffawed nonchalantly. "Haha, like I just said, this villa will be mine soon! The surrounding Moon Palace Villas and this villa are all developed by the Taylors, and I'm the scion of the Taylors! Now that my woman has set her sights on this villa, I'll have to take it back and get you to move out!

"Haha, but well, this villa is big enough. If you don't wish to move out, you can live with us too!" Scott chuckled sinisterly and looked at Cheyenne and Charlotte with burning desire and great interest in his eyes.

Chapter 186: Grabbing Arrogantly

Cheyenne immediately furrowed her brows. She didn't expect the person in front of her to be one of the Taylors, one of the four major families in Orange County.

Charlotte also understood the lewd meaning in Scott's words, and she immediately hollered furiously, "Fatso! What nonsense are you babbling?! Even if you are the developer, this house has been sold to my brother-in-law. He now owns this place. It's his private property! Hurry up and scram!"

When Scott heard the word 'fatso', he immediately flew into a rage. The fat on his face trembled as he glared at Charlotte menacingly. "Bitch! I dare you to say that again!"

Scott was short and fat like a ball, and the fat on his face was all scrunched up and squeezed together, making him look particularly hideous. He hated being called fat and being insulted because of his weight. Whenever that happened, he would blow a gasket.

When Scott hit the roof, the two bodyguards in black behind him stepped forward. Cheyenne and Charlotte were immediately overwhelmed with a strong sense of oppression.

Cheyenne hurriedly pulled Charlotte backward, stared at the people in front of her, and questioned sternly, "What do you want? Do you want to hit us?"

Scott looked at Cheyenne's angry face and suddenly felt that she was rather pretty when she was angry. He smiled evilly. "Hit you? No, no, you two are delicate and soft. You should be pampered! She offended me just now, so you two have to make it up to me!"

His tone was so lewd and revolting that Charlotte couldn't tolerate it any longer. She popped her head out from behind Cheyenne and shouted, "Fatso, look at yourself. You're as fat as a pig, and you're so lewd and disgusting! Make it up to you, my foot! Once brother-in-law comes back, he'll beat you into a pulp!"

Scott's face instantly turned red, and he roared at his bodyguards, "Go, bring her here! I'll see if she can still be so arrogant!"

A tall and burly bodyguard in black immediately reached his hand out to grab Charlotte.

Charlotte didn't expect them to really get physical and immediately dodged in panic.

Seeing that things were getting out of hand, Cheyenne realized that she and Charlotte were facing several people, two of whom were tall professional bodyguards. Besides, with her understanding of her mother, she knew that Karen wouldn't necessarily come forward to help them in an unfavorable situation.

Lucas had yet to return and couldn't help them now even though he was powerful. Cheyenne could only quickly take out her phone to call the management office of Moon Palace Villas. "Hello, I am the owner of the lake villa of Pearl Lake. Someone has barged in and is causing a scene here. Quickly send security to deal with it!"

But as soon as the person on the other end heard that there was trouble at the lake villa, he hung up without hesitation.

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What a joke. The security guards just let Scott Taylor in, so they naturally knew that there would be trouble sooner or later. But they couldn't do anything about it. All the staff were paid by the Taylors, so they obviously wouldn't interfere.

"Hello? Hello!"

Cheyenne was still holding her phone in puzzlement when Scott started laughing out loud arrogantly. "Hahaha, like I said just now, this entire area is developed by the Taylors, and the estate managers are just dogs raised by my family. How dare they meddle with this?"

Only then did Cheyenne and Charlotte know why Scott could drive all the way here even though there were security guards guarding the road.

At this moment, that bodyguard had grabbed Charlotte's slender arm and was about to pull her toward Scott despite her painstaking struggle.

"Cheyenne!"

"Charlotte! Let go of her!"

Charlotte was so panicked that she desperately tried to break free from the bodyguard, but she was too weak and couldn't pull away from a professional bodyguard.

"Bring her over too! Today, I must let them both know how to behave!" Scott said with a sneer.

The other bodyguard walked out from behind him and grabbed Cheyenne's arm.

However, an even sturdier arm reached out from the side and grabbed that bodyguard's wrist before pushing him backward several meters.

Immediately afterward, the burly arm clamped down on the wrist holding onto Charlotte and gave it a tight twist, causing the bodyguard to wince in pain. He could only release his hand and let go of Charlotte.

A tall and burly man stopped in front of Cheyenne and Charlotte to shield them!

“Wade! It’s you!” Charlotte recognized the buff back that resembled a steel tower and couldn’t help exclaiming in surprise.

On the other hand, Cheyenne was holding onto Charlotte while apprehensive and wary of the buff and muscular man who popped up out of nowhere.

“Cheyenne, don’t worry. Wade is Lucas’s subordinate. He’s here to protect us! With him around, this fatso can’t bully us anymore!” Charlotte said happily.

Only then did Cheyenne feel a little more at ease, but she was also feeling a little uncomfortable.

She knew nothing about Wade, but Charlotte recognized him immediately and even knew that Lucas had sent him. *When did Charlotte get to know him? Is there some secret between them?*

“Who’s this punk trying to ruin things for me?” Scott was so close to nabbing the two beauties. But to his surprise, a burly man appeared and ruined things for him. He was instantly furious.

The man in front of him was more than two meters tall and incredibly muscular. He knew that Wade wasn’t a simple person, but the bodyguards Scott brought were from an internationally renowned bodyguard organization. They had extraordinary combat skills and had a good chance of winning since they outnumbered Wade.

Thinking of this, Scott no longer hesitated and ordered, “Go! Take that reckless man down together!”

“Yes!”

The two bodyguards rushed toward Wade at the same time. One of them punched Wade’s upper body while the other gave Wade a sweeping kick. They were rather coordinated.

Wade could tell from their sharp moves that they weren’t ordinary bodyguards and indeed had powerful combat skills. He couldn’t help but become serious as well.

Cheyenne had long hurriedly pulled Charlotte to hide behind one of the two thick Roman pillars outside the villa gate as soon as they started fighting to avoid getting affected by the fight. She also didn’t want to give Scott the chance to do anything to them.

Wade fought against the two bodyguards alone, and there were sounds of fists hitting flesh during the exchange of blows. Wade was surprised, and he thought that the

strength of the two bodyguards before him was really not bad. Though their strength and speed were inferior to his, they were sharp, ruthless, and hard to deal with.

But he didn't know that the two bodyguards opposite him were really frightened!

Both of them were elite international bodyguards, and usually, they could beat up a group of ordinary bodyguards. But now that they were joining forces, they couldn't even beat Wade. In fact, they even felt excruciating pain and numbness in their bodies whenever Wade punched them. Wade was really terrifying!

At this moment, a black Jaguar approached the gate of the villa silently.

The door of the car opened, and Lucas got out with an icy cold aura!

Chapter 187: Seizing the Villa

Lucas saw an unfamiliar Maserati sports car parked in front of his villa from afar. And when he got closer, he saw the two bodyguards fighting Wade, as well as the couple beside them, whom he had not seen before.

Lucas narrowed his eyes and alighted from the car with an icy cold aura. After Wade saw him, he threw a few hard punches, causing the two bodyguards to stumble backward several steps, and then walked to Lucas and said respectfully, "Lucas, you're back."

"Yeah." Lucas stared at the situation in front and then asked indifferently, "What's going on?"

Wade hurriedly gave him a brief explanation of what happened. "A while after Miss Carter and her family arrived, this man, who claims to be the scion of the Taylors, barged in and said lots of nasty things. He said that he wants to snatch this villa away and nab Miss Cheyenne and Charlotte."

When Lucas heard this, anger surged within him, and he exuded a murderous aura while glaring daggers at the fat man not far in front of him.

Scott's body suddenly stiffened under Lucas's murderous gaze. Feeling extremely embarrassed, he hollered in fury, "Punk, what are you looking at? Listen up. I'm a Taylor, so you'd better..."

Before he could finish, he suddenly felt his vision blur, and in an instant, Lucas's figure appeared in front of him like a phantom.

Smack!

With a hard and loud smack, Scott's chubby body flew away like a ball and slammed hard against the trunk of a parasol tree a few meters away!

Bang! The tree shook, and countless leaves fell from the impact.

"Ah!" The long-haired beauty standing beside Scott screamed.

The two bodyguards clad in black widened their eyes and seemed to be in disbelief!

They were top international bodyguards whose skills had already surpassed the majority of people, but Lucas had moved so quickly that they couldn't see anything at all. It was as if there was only an afterimage that flashed past, and in an instant, Lucas suddenly appeared beside Scott. Immediately afterward, the chubby Scott flew away!

The speed was simply terrifying!

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Scott spat out a mouthful of blood and slowly sat up from the ground. Only after feeling the stinging pain on his face and the sharp, penetrative pain in his back did he snap back to his senses and realize that he had been hit by the punk Lucas!

Not only did he hit him, but he even slapped him on his face!

Scott held the tree trunk and got up from the ground with great difficulty. He then touched the blood flowing from his mouth and became furious. Glaring at Lucas with a gloomy gaze, he said through clenched teeth, "Asshole, how dare you hit me?! Do you know who I am? I'm from the Taylor family, one of the four greatest families of Orange County!"

Lucas glanced at him in disdain and said coldly, "I don't care who you are. This is my home, and you're trespassing on private property. You even tried to harm my family. If you're tired of living, I can grant you your wishes now!"

Although the Taylors were one of the four major families of Orange County, Lucas didn't care about his status or feel wary of him at all.

The Hales, who were also one of the four major families of Orange County, were destroyed overnight last night.

The Taylors were nothing.

"Punk, don't go overboard! I'm telling you, the Taylors developed this villa, and I'm going to take it back from you now! Move out right now!" Scott roared while pointing at Lucas.

Lucas sneered and stared at Scott like he was looking at a fool. "Even though the Taylors were the developer of this property, I bought it a long time ago, so it's now my private property. The title deed is under my name, and the Taylors were just the developer. What right do you have to take the house back?"

Scott was used to being a tyrant and instantly flew into a rage after this. Lucas made it sound as though the Taylors were only responsible for building the villa!

In fact, Lucas didn't say anything wrong. But Scott was just putting on airs and taking himself too seriously because of his family's status.

"Lucas Gray, don't go too far! The Taylors have taken a fancy to your villa, and they want you to hand it back. We're already showing you enough respect! You should know that no one in Orange County will have it easy after offending us!" Scott threatened while clenching his teeth.

"Hah, it's my first time hearing that robbing someone is giving them respect. If you say so, then if I show up at your place, claim that I've taken a fancy to your home, and make your family vacate, does it mean I'm giving you respect?" Lucas gibed in derision.

"You! You're just a punk who has no status and background. How are you worthy of being compared to the Taylors? Lucas Gray, don't think that you're a big deal just because you're friends with Flynn Davis! Let me tell you, even if Flynn Davis stands right in front of me now, he wouldn't dare to be so arrogant! The Stardust Corporation has long been separated from the Huttons. Even though he's the general manager there, the Taylors aren't scared of him!"

Lucas sneered in his heart.

Back then, the Stardust Group was backed by the Huttons, so the various families of Orange County dared not offend it. But now that the news of the Stardust Group's separation from the Huttons had spread, these families became more and more arrogant, seemingly not taking the Stardust Corporation seriously anymore.

Hmph, the Huttons are nothing. One day, I'll make sure these people regret what they said today!

"In that case, do you think that you can be tyrannical and act audaciously without restraint as long as you have a powerful background and status?" Lucas questioned with raised brows.

Scott said arrogantly, "Of course! We people from powerful backgrounds are certainly more noble and prestigious than you! Haha, are you disgruntled? I like watching how you people can't do anything about me even though you hate me!"

Lucas sneered. "The Hales said the same thing to me last night, but before long, they were destroyed overnight. Are you eager for your family to end up like theirs?"

Scott's face instantly turned a little sullen.

Some people from the Taylors had attended the Hales' banquet last night, but Scott didn't.

He only found out about it this morning when someone secretly informed him that the Hale family had offended a mysterious figure who caused all the direct descendants to be taken away by the military, causing the entire Hale family to be wiped out overnight. But the details couldn't be revealed due to the military's gag order.

After Scott heard what Lucas said, the first thing that he thought was that Lucas was just cursing his family. He flew into a rage and barked, "Punk, how dare you curse the Taylors!?! The Hale family ended up in such a terrible state because they offended a powerful figure they couldn't afford to offend. Do you think you're that big shot and can wipe out the Taylors? Dream on!"

Lucas felt that Scott was as dense as a pig, which simply matched his appearance, and immediately lost interest in talking. He simply pointed at the entrance and said calmly, "I can't be bothered to talk to you. Now, get lost from my home immediately with these dogs of yours!"

Chapter 188: Trouble

"Damn it!" Scott cursed in rage and was about to get his bodyguards to deal with Lucas and show him his prowess. But to his astonishment, the two bodyguards approached him and whispered into his ear, "Mr. Taylor, that punk has strange combat skills, and we can't tell how strong he really is. If he joins forces with that tall and burly one beside him, I'm afraid the two of us can't beat them."

Although they sounded slightly cowardly, the bodyguards had to speak up now. Otherwise, they would be beaten up later and be even more embarrassed. If Scott were beaten up badly, they wouldn't have it easy either.

"Damn it!" Scott cursed again with a sullen expression.

He was not completely ignorant. If he were to insist on fighting despite knowing that he would definitely lose, he would be asking for it.

With this thought in mind, Scott suddenly had an idea and said, "Lucas Gray, I'll be honest with you. It's not the Taylors who have taken a fancy to your villa but another

bigwig. I had no choice but to come here and ask you to move out. As for the price, we can return you the original sum you paid.”

Lucas narrowed his eyes at Scott. He somewhat believed his words.

After all, the lake villa was originally built and developed by the Taylors, so if the Taylors had taken a liking to it, they could have chosen not to sell it to the public in the first place.

He had previously asked Davis to purchase the best villa in the city, so Davis bought this one. He didn't use any connections with the Taylors.

Now that the Taylors suddenly wanted him to move out and free up the house, he indeed couldn't rule out the possibility that someone else had taken a liking to the villa.

But whatever the reason was, it had nothing to do with him.

“As I've just said, this is a private property that I bought, and I don't want to transfer it to someone else,” Lucas said indifferently.

“Lucas Gray, to be honest, that person is a big shot you definitely can't afford to provoke. You have to consider carefully! How about this? I'll compensate you an additional one million dollars on top of the original amount you paid for this villa. How does that sound?” Scott said with a smile.

“One million? Since I could spend over a hundred and fifty million on this villa, how could I care about one million? Since I said I'm not selling it, I won't. You may get lost now.” Lucas sneered in disdain and asked him to leave harshly.

Scott narrowed his eyes. His features were already squeezed together by the fat on his face, and now, his eyes were like slits. “Lucas Gray, I'm asking you once more. Are you really not going to let me have the villa?”

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Lucas had already run out of patience. He suddenly roared with a dark expression, “Can't you understand English?! I'm giving you ten minutes to get lost immediately!”

If not for the fact that Cheyenne and her family had just moved here today, Lucas would have dealt with Scott ruthlessly for trespassing and trying to take Cheyenne and Charlotte away!

Scott sneered. “Sure, that's what you said! When the big shot comes, I'll see if you can still be that stubborn!”

With that, Scott took his bodyguards and the long-haired beauty beside him away and drove off in his Maserati.

After they left, Wade finally asked in bewilderment, "Lucas, are you going to let them off just like that?"

"Huh?" Lucas glanced at Wade.

Wade hurriedly lowered his head and said in horror, "Lucas, I'm not trying to tell you what to do, but I'm a little confused. You're letting him off too easy. Besides, we haven't found out who that big shot he mentioned is. If a powerful enemy really comes looking for us..."

Lucas guffawed. "Powerful enemy? I doubt there's someone in this world who's powerful enough to be my enemy!"

Tyrannical!

Domineering!

An overbearing and condescending aura emanated from Lucas!

Wade froze, and soon, there was fervor in his eyes as he looked at Lucas with even more respect. *This is the powerful and domineering man I've chosen to be loyal to forever!*

Seeing that Scott and his group had left, Cheyenne and Charlotte came out from behind the pillar. They walked toward Lucas and asked, "Is everything alright?"

Lucas smiled. "I'm okay, don't worry."

Charlotte rolled her eyes at Lucas and joked, "I'm not worried about you. I'm asking if that fatso is alright! Haha, but no matter what, he deserved it! How dare he come and be rude to me and Cheyenne. He must have a death wish!"

A glimmer of cold light flashed in Lucas's eyes. *It seems that the property managers at the entrance aren't reliable. I have to tighten security at the entrance too.*

Previously, there was no need to worry about anything because he lived here alone. But now, Cheyenne, Charlotte, Amelia, and Karen were moving in, so he had to deal with the security issues sooner.

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But he would arrange them later.

“Have you looked around the villa? Picked out the room you like?” Lucas asked Charlotte.

The reason he only asked Charlotte was that he had already decided which room was Cheyenne’s—the one she slept in previously. The large closet in that room was filled with many high-quality clothes that Lucas had specially prepared for Cheyenne and Amelia.

As soon as he mentioned the villa, Charlotte immediately forgot about the annoying fatso and grabbed his arm excitedly. “Lucas, you’re really amazing! I didn’t expect you to buy such a large and luxurious villa in such a low-profile manner! This is just like a palace in a fairytale. I never thought that I would be able to live in such a beautiful place one day!

“Lucas, I really admire you so much! Despite having such a wonderful place, you actually didn’t mind living in that tiny house with us every day... Oh my god. I know, you must have done all this for Cheyenne, right? Cheyenne, look. Lucas did all this for you. Are you touched?”

Cheyenne blushed shyly and lowered her head in embarrassment. But soon, she looked at Charlotte’s hand placed on Lucas’s arm and silently pulled it away. She poked her forehead and said smilingly, “You talk too much! Have you finished unpacking all your things?”

Lucas noticed what Cheyenne did, which was a somewhat childish act of jealousy that made him overjoyed.

“Hehe, yes! Speaking of which, this house is huge. It must take a lot of work to clean up! How about this? I’ll hire a housekeeper to clean this place and do the household chores. Consider it my rent. What do you think, Lucas?” Charlotte asked playfully with a grin.

“There’s no need. I’ve already employed housekeeping services. Just rest assured and stay here,” Lucas said with a smile.

As they spoke, they walked into the villa.

Meanwhile, Scott, who had just left the villa, made a phone call in his car. With evil intentions, he said to the person on the other end, “Mr. Kingston, I’m sorry, but that Lucas Gray doesn’t know any better and refuses to agree to give up the villa. I couldn’t get it settled. I’m really sorry!”

Chapter 189: Private Property

After a while, the person on the other end of the line said indifferently, "In that case, I will personally go and see what kind of person that Lucas Gray is!"

The call immediately ended. Scott could hear the displeasure in the other party's threatening tone, making him grin widely gleefully.

"Lucas Gray, let's see if you can still be arrogant! When that big shot comes looking for you, let's see if you can continue being smug! I'll make sure to pay you back tenfold for this slap you gave me!" Scott said sinisterly while touching his stinging cheek.

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At this moment, in a luxurious villa in the center of San Francisco, a young man in his thirties was blowing out smoke rings from his mouth while pressing the cigar in his hand directly onto the arm of a beautiful woman beside him.

Sizzle

When the burning hot cigar pressed against her skin, it emitted a nauseating stench of skin charring. But the beautiful woman merely bit her lip hard and shuddered continuously, not daring to make a single sound.

"Lucas Gray, huh? Hah, I, Kyle Kingston, have always gotten what I want!"

...

Meanwhile, Lucas had just brought Cheyenne and Charlotte into the villa when he saw Karen straightening her back and standing upright behind the door.

A look of derision appeared in Charlotte's eyes when she saw Karen's behavior.

She had long known that with all the commotion outside, there was no way Karen hadn't heard it when she was in the villa. But she hadn't dared to show her face.

Since the previous incident at the restaurant where Charlotte stood up for Karen but was instead pushed out by her to be slapped to atone for her mistake and then abandoned by her, Charlotte had been utterly disappointed with Karen.

When her mother saw the few tall men standing outside, whom she knew worked for the Taylors, one of the four major families of Orange County, she simply cowered and hid behind the door while watching her daughters get bullied!

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If Lucas hadn't sent Wade to their rescue and arrived in time himself, she and Cheyenne would have been in an unimaginable plight now!

But Karen didn't even bother to look at Charlotte or show her any concern. She just dashed forward and questioned Lucas sternly, "Lucas Gray, tell me honestly. How much money have you got in your secret stash?"

Karen looked extremely hostile and interrogated Lucas as if he was secretly hiding her assets behind her back.

Cheyenne's face immediately turned sullen, and she snapped, "Mom, what are you saying?"

Charlotte said mockingly, "Cheyenne, can't you tell? Mom is coveting Lucas's money. And to her, it would be best if she could pocket all of it!"

Karen glowered at Charlotte scornfully before saying to Cheyenne, "What did I say? I merely asked Lucas how much money he still has in his hand so that he doesn't hide it and deceive you! Well, when he married you six years ago, he was so poor that he didn't have any money at all! But now that he's rich, his money is considered a matrimonial asset. Even if you get divorced, you'll at least be entitled to half of his assets when the time comes!

"I'm just sparing a thought for you. Don't be so clueless about who cares for you and who doesn't! Hurry up and ask him to take out all his title deeds, bank cards, and credit cards. We have to calculate how much money he has in his hands so that when you get divorced in the future, he can't deny it. That way, you won't be at a disadvantage."

Karen looked extremely self-righteous as she extended her hand toward Lucas to make him take out all his bank cards and credit cards.

Cheyenne was almost dumbfounded by her mother's actions. "Mom! You... How can you say something like that? Lucas earned all his money by himself. What does it have to do with us? Besides, what right do you have to covet a portion of his assets? This is... too shameless of you!"

She was about to cry in exasperation because of how thick-skinned Karen and found it extremely embarrassing as well.

How could she covet Lucas's money right in front of him?

Moreover, he was obviously kind enough to let her family move into the villa, yet Karen not only didn't reciprocate his kind intentions but even disgraced all of them in front of him.

But Lucas smiled at Cheyenne comfortingly to tell her that she didn't need to take it to heart.

In fact, he had long gotten used to Karen's odd behavior and wasn't surprised when she made these absurd remarks. He definitely wouldn't take her words to heart.

Karen used to berate and criticize Lucas every day in the past. If he really held it against her, he would have been angered countless times.

Charlotte sneered and mocked, "Enough with that excuse of being worried that Cheyenne will suffer a loss. You just want to take Cheyenne's and Lucas's money! You keep saying you're waiting for their divorce, but you clearly just don't want to make life easy for Cheyenne! Mom, you'd better behave yourself. We've just moved into Lucas's place today, yet you're already acting up. Be careful not to offend Lucas and end up getting kicked out! When you do, I won't put in a good word for you at all!"

Karen barked furiously, "Shut up! I'm your mother and have raised you since you were born, but both of you are getting angry at me for an outsider. Do you have any regard for me as your mother? You're really such ingrates!"

Cheyenne was so furious that her nose turned a little sore and her pretty eyes welled up with tears, but she clenched her teeth to keep herself from crying.

Charlotte rolled her eyes and scoffed, "Psht! You say that all the time. What kind of mother are you?"

Karen immediately flew into a rage. "Fine! All of you are so capable that you don't respect me anymore, right? Lucas Gray, listen up. If you don't give me a clear declaration of your bank accounts and other assets, just you wait and see how I'll deal with you!"

She turned around furiously and returned to the room she just chose.

Cheyenne felt greatly ashamed of her mother's behavior and was really sorry to Lucas. She couldn't hold it any longer and teared up uncontrollably. She turned to the side and used the back of her hand to wipe away her tears.

Charlotte hugged Cheyenne's shoulder and comforted, "Cheyenne, stop crying. She's always been like that. She's never cared about us. All she cares about is money. It's not worth getting upset because of her."

Despite saying so, Charlotte couldn't help but have her eyes turn red when she thought about what happened last time. Karen's behavior had really broken her heart, but such a person was their mother!

Looking at the pair of sisters hugging each other, Lucas sighed in his heart.

Although Karen had a horrible personality, it was a miracle that she could raise such reasonable and sensible daughters like Cheyenne and Charlotte.

After a while, Cheyenne got a grip on her emotions and suddenly said to Lucas, "Lucas, on behalf of my mother, I apologize to you for what she said just now. I think we'd better let her move out. I'll find her somewhere to move to."

Chapter 190: Personnel Transfer

When Charlotte heard Cheyenne's words, her eyes widened a bit in surprise. But she soon processed what she said and felt that it was indeed a good idea.

"I agree. But Cheyenne, do you still have enough money to buy a house for Mom?" Charlotte raised a very crucial question.

Cheyenne pursed her lips and said with a bitter smile, "I can't afford to buy a house, but I can rent one for her for the time being. She has plenty of money on hand anyway. If she wants to buy a house, she can get one herself."

Although she had been working for many years, she would basically hand over almost all of her salary to Karen each month. Except for some allowance, she didn't have much money left.

Charlotte sneered silently and said, "Yeah, she's holding both of our money. If she doesn't like the rented house, she can buy one herself."

Lucas looked at Cheyenne and said in a tender voice, "Cheyenne, you don't have to do that. Like I said before, you are my wife, and your mother, too, is my mother. As long as she doesn't hurt you and Amelia, I won't mind it even if she says harsh things to me."

"But... she's always so mean to you. I really feel sorry to you." Cheyenne hesitated as she felt aggrieved for Lucas.

Lucas smiled. "She's a separate individual from you. You don't need to feel sorry to me on her behalf. Besides, the most she can do is make harsh comments. She wouldn't dare to hit me. I won't stand to lose anything, and I'll still be as tall and handsome as ever. What are you afraid of?"

Cheyenne blinked and finally realized that Lucas just cracked a joke. She couldn't help but burst into laughter and glare at him jokingly. "How are you tall and handsome? You're very thick-skinned. Hmph."

She looked really lively and energetic!

Lucas was dazed by her smile, and he spaced out for a long time.

"Haha!"

It wasn't until he heard another laughter that he returned to reality.

Charlotte covered her mouth and giggled. "Cheyenne, look. Lucas is mesmerized by you!"

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Cheyenne's pretty face flushed red, and she reached out to pinch Charlotte's face. "You naughty girl! How dare you tease me? I'm going to deal with you!"

Charlotte hurriedly ran away while saying, "Okay, okay. I'm not going to play gooseberry! I'll get going now. It's time to go to work!"

She ran out of the villa. But when she turned around and saw Lucas and Cheyenne standing together, she somehow felt a great sense of envy rise within her.

Their relationship had unknowingly improved greatly at some point!

In the villa, Lucas kept staring at Cheyenne affectionately, unable to keep himself from smiling.

Feeling shy from the way he was looking at her, she glanced at him before asking gently, "What are you looking at?"

Lucas's lips curled into a radiant smile as he said softly, "This is the first time you've smiled in front of me. You're so beautiful when you smile!"

Cheyenne looked at Lucas's smile and was a little stunned too.

Is he smiling so brightly and contentedly just because of a casual smile of mine?

Have I been that harsh to him that it's the first time I've ever smiled at him?

Cheyenne thought about it carefully and realized that it really seemed to be the case.

Ever since Lucas returned, she had been resenting him. And later on, she started giving him the cold shoulder, merely treated him as a stranger who happened to be Amelia's father.

Afterward, they encountered all sorts of incidents that involved the Carters and her career, all of which made her emotionally exhausted. But whenever she encountered trouble, Lucas would be by her side to encourage her, comfort her, and give her help time and time again. It also made her increasingly trusting toward him and reliant on him.

Now, she could smile sincerely in front of him.

In this instant, the ice sealing Cheyenne's heart for a long time suddenly melted.

She once again looked at Lucas, and her lips arched into a gorgeous smile. "Silly."

Seeing that Karen was cooping herself up in her room out of spite and refusing to come out, they knew that she was definitely not going to make lunch for them. So Cheyenne and Lucas decided to leave her alone and drove out to have lunch elsewhere.

After a pleasant lunch, Cheyenne asked Lucas to send her to the Brilliance Corporation for afternoon work.

...

Meanwhile, a serious meeting was taking place in the conference hall of the Stardust Corporation.

Everyone in Stardust Corporation knew that their mysterious chairman, whom they had never met, would never attend any of the company's meetings, so the person in charge of the conferences was always Flynn Davis.

"Okay, that's all for today's report. All departments should continue to work hard according to the previous plan. Next, I would like to announce an important personnel transfer."

After Davis finished, the people attending the meeting were suddenly riled up and all ears, waiting to hear the announcement with bated breath.

The fact that the general manager personally brought up the transfer meant that it was definitely not a trivial matter! Besides, nothing major happened within the Stardust Corporation lately, so they all guessed that it was probably a major promotion!

They wondered who the lucky one was.

Everyone looked excited and expectant.

At the center of attention, with everyone staring at him, Davis took out an appointment letter composedly and announced solemnly, "After the company's careful observation and discussion, we have decided to appoint Charlotte Carter as the deputy general manager of the Stardust Corporation. She will be responsible for assisting the general manager in the daily management of the company!"

It caused a huge uproar!

Everyone broke into commotion and seemed to be in huge disbelief.

Some even asked in confusion, “Charlotte Carter? Who’s that? How did she suddenly become the deputy general manager of the company?”

It was no wonder that this person asked this. It had only been a little over a month since Charlotte joined the Stardust Corporation. Prior to this, she was just an employee holding an entry position in the business department and didn’t even have a managerial role. Given that there were thousands of employees in the Stardust Corporation, it was only normal for there to be many who didn’t know her name or who she was.

After hearing the announcement, Charlotte herself was extremely astonished as she widened her eyes in shock.

Although Davis had privately approached her before and said that he wanted to promote her, Charlotte knew that he only wanted to promote her through the back door for the sake of doing Lucas a personal favor. Thus, she resolutely declined Davis’s kind intentions and told him that she wanted to be promoted by virtue of her own abilities instead of personal connections.

But Davis now suddenly announced her promotion by several levels, from an entry role to the deputy general manager of the Stardust Corporation. This was a tremendous leap that even the word ‘leap’ seemed to be insufficient to describe it.

At this moment, someone suddenly stood up in the conference hall and said loudly, “Mr. Davis, I object to this personnel transfer!”

Chapter 191: Intimate Photos

The crowd was already bewildered and intrigued by the sudden personnel transfer. When they heard someone objecting, everyone immediately turned to look at the person who spoke.

The person who spoke was a middle-aged man in his late forties. He was short and fat with a protruding belly, and he had a bald spot in the middle of his head. He was Oliver Harvey, the director of the sales department of the Stardust Corporation.

Harvey was a senior employee of the Stardust Corporation. Having been with the company for more than ten years, he was quite esteemed too. Everyone even considered him the most likely person to take over the position of deputy general manager.

So when he stood up and opposed the decision of the higher-ups, it held a lot of weight for the attendees of this meeting.

Davis narrowed his eyes slightly before leaning back in his chair with his hands crossed and placed on the conference table on stage. "Mr. Harvey, may I know what your reason is?"

Harvey smiled and said to everyone else in the conference hall, "As we all know, Miss Charlotte Carter has been an employee of our company for less than two months, and she's still just an ordinary employee. In such a short period of time, she was promoted from a junior position to the deputy general manager of the company. In my opinion, this is too drastic of a speed. Hence, I oppose this decision."

Many executives secretly nodded in agreement.

The deputy general manager of the corporation was a significant role and could even be considered the goal of each of the executives. When the position of deputy general manager was finally vacated, all of them were eager and excited, hoping that they could fill it.

But the position that they all dreamed of was now in the hands of a young girl who had been an employee of the company for less than two months and was only in her twenties. They were naturally disgruntled and opposed to that decision.

In fact, Harvey's words simply struck a sour note in their hearts.

When Davis saw Harvey openly opposing his decision and even stirring the emotions of many employees in the conference hall, his face turned sullen.

He stretched his hand toward James Denning, his secretary, who then immediately placed a document in his hand.

Davis threw the document onto the center of the large and wide conference table and said coldly, "This is the information that I got someone to collate. All of Charlotte Carter's attainments and performance since joining the Stardust Corporation are stated clearly in there. You may pass this around so that everyone can take a closer look.

"Yes, Charlotte might be young and relatively new to the company. But the contracts she has clinched with her own efforts in such a short period of time account for more than half of all the contracts signed with the company during this time! Which one of you can achieve this?"

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Once Davis said this, many of them seemed rather astonished.

Has Charlotte Carter clinched more than half of the contracts signed with the company during this period of time? What outstanding performance!

Some people were in disbelief and thus opened the document that Davis had someone pass around, only to be stunned by the shocking number of contracts signed and the value of the contracts.

They didn't expect that this nameless newcomer, who had only joined the company a short time ago, was actually that competent!

After seeing the change in everyone's expression, Davis said, "Charlotte Carter's outstanding performance is the reason I decided to promote her to deputy general manager, despite her being a new employee who's less experienced than many of the senior staff here. She's definitely competent enough!

"I would also like all of you here to understand that as long as you are hardworking and competent enough, you will be given the opportunity to shine in the Stardust Corporation instead of relying on spending time to accumulate more experience for a promotion! Since Charlotte Carter has managed to be promoted with her own abilities, each one of you here can too!"

"In addition, I would also like to say that the promotion of Charlotte Carter is not my personal decision, but a consensus that the chairman and the board of directors have reached after discussion. It is entirely in line with the company's promotion criteria and rules."

After Davis said his piece, many of them were full of zeal, especially the middle and lower management staff.

Since Charlotte, a newcomer of the company, could be promoted to deputy general manager because of her outstanding performance, they believed that as long as they worked hard and strove to become better, they would be able to perform well and get promoted too.

All of a sudden, the majority of people felt greatly encouraged, and Charlotte's super promotion had undoubtedly become an excellent example for them to learn from.

Davis once again scanned the expressions of the people in the conference hall and felt relieved. He stood up and said, "In that case, that's all we have for today's meeting. The meeting is adjourned."

"Wait a minute!"

Just when Davis wanted to pack up and leave the conference hall, a voice sounded out of the blue and interrupted him. It once again attracted the attention of all the attendees of the meeting.

Standing in place, Harvey sneered. "Flynn Davis, you sound so righteous and morally upright, but don't you think I don't know the nasty things you've done in secret!"

As soon as he said this, everyone was astonished!

One reason was that Oliver Harvey actually had the guts to address Davis, the general manager, by his full name. As if that wasn't rude enough, he even said those things to him!

Nasty things? Has Flynn Davis really done something shameful and sordid?

Before Davis and the others could say anything, Harvey continued, "Hmph, don't think I'm talking nonsense. I have evidence against you! Once everyone sees it, you will understand why Charlotte Carter got promoted to deputy general manager!"

He took out a large briefcase from below his seat, which he had long prepared. He then took out a large stack of photos from it and waved his hand to scatter them all over the conference hall.

Some people subconsciously picked up a few photos, only to look flabbergasted and widen their eyes in disbelief after seeing the contents carefully.

"Wow!"

"Oh my god! How is this possible?"

"Wow! This is too... inappropriate!"

Everyone exclaimed one after another. Immediately afterward, they began to cast dirty looks of disdain and shock at Davis and Charlotte.

Charlotte's heart dropped, and she intuitively felt an ominous hunch. She reached out to take one of the photos, and as soon as she saw the picture clearly, blood surged to the top of her head while her body turned cold!

Charlotte was photographed lying beside Davis with a coquettish smile on her face and one arm wrapped tightly around his neck. Their faces were almost pressed together, and they looked extremely intimate!

Chapter 192: Who Instigated You?

"This...!" Charlotte's eyes widened in shock, and her hands trembled as she immediately dropped the photo of her and Davis sharing an intimate moment.

But the photos were already strewn all over the floor of the conference hall. And apart from the one Charlotte just saw, there were many more explicit and intimate photos of her and Davis!

Everyone looked at Charlotte and Davis with peculiar gazes.

No wonder Oliver Harvey said that we would understand why Charlotte Carter could become the deputy general manager after seeing these things. It turns out that she slept her way to the top!

So much for being deceived by Flynn Davis's words and foolishly thinking that Charlotte Carter really relied on her abilities to obtain her promotion!

Even Sophie Evans, Charlotte's best friend, was extremely astonished. She wanted to defend Charlotte at first. But with so much concrete evidence and photos, she really couldn't defend her. She could only glare at Charlotte, seemingly expecting better from her and trying to ask her why she had done such a thing.

Harvey looked at the expressions on everyone's faces before saying with a smile, "I believe I don't need to say anything else. You should be able to understand why a newbie like Charlotte Carter could suddenly soar so high and become the deputy general manager of the Stardust Corporation."

Everyone in the conference hall looked at Charlotte with contempt and disdain in their eyes.

In the workplace, it was a relatively common practice to sleep with others and rely on various connections to achieve results and get promoted through the back door. But it was indeed quite rare for someone's illicit affair to be exposed in such an exaggerated manner as Charlotte's scandal did. At least, in the last ten years or so, there had never been such a case in the Stardust Corporation.

Sophie gritted her teeth and couldn't help but stand up for her best friend, Charlotte. "But Charlotte Carter's excellent work performance is placed clearly before you! We've all just seen the data in the document. The huge number of contracts she clinched alone, as well as the value of those contracts, is proof that she's very competent. It's not impossible for her to be promoted!"

Harvey sneered. "How naive of you! The photos are right before you. They're proof that Flynn Davis is having an illicit relationship with Charlotte Carter. It's also very possible that Flynn Davis abused his authority as the general manager to let her sign those contracts! Otherwise, how could a newbie like Charlotte Carter, who just joined the company a short while ago, manage to clinch so many major partnerships?"

"Flynn Davis, do you dare to say that you didn't help Charlotte Carter sign those contracts at all?" Harvey turned to Davis and compelled him for an answer.

Davis's face turned extremely sullen. In fact, Charlotte was indeed a very competent employee who was worth grooming. But it was definitely impossible for her to clinch so many major deals in such a short period of time.

During this process, he had indeed given her a lot of help and secretly let her complete the signing of many contracts using the connections that he had formed for the Stardust Corporation over so many years.

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But he had done these things according to Lucas's instructions and had also been very secretive about them. Even Charlotte herself was unaware that he had helped her, what more others.

Besides, there was a huge problem with those photos!

Davis was certain that he and Charlotte were innocent. They had only met twice in total at the office, and there wasn't any personal contact and intimacy between them at all. Besides, he knew that she was Lucas's sister-in-law, so how could he have an illicit affair with her?

"Those photos have all been digitally doctored! Mr. Davis and I are innocent. We've never done anything like that!" Charlotte shouted in exasperation, her beautiful and delicate face flushing as she crushed the photos in her hands!

She was clearly an innocent girl who had never even had a boyfriend, but now she became a woman who sold her body to climb up the ladder in the eyes of everyone. How could she accept that?

"Haha, Charlotte Carter, there's no point in tearing up these photos. There are at least a couple hundred in the conference hall. Can you tear up all of them? Let me tell you. The truth is right in front of us. And that is, you resorted to dirty tricks like seducing Flynn Davis and bewitching him with your beauty so that he would promote you to deputy general manager. Stop trying to argue or defend yourself!" Harvey glared at Charlotte with a look of contempt and disdain.

"They're definitely fake. I never did such a thing. Why should I accept being slandered? I can go to the police and have these photos analyzed by professional criminal investigators to find out if they're real or doctored!" Charlotte yelled through gritted teeth while boiling with fury.

Harvey snorted coldly and continued to insist, "Hmph, since you claim that these photos are digitally doctored and that you and Flynn Davis aren't in an illicit affair, how do you explain his decision to promote you directly to deputy general manager today? You're just a new employee who's only been with the company for less than two months. Even if you're very competent and have outstanding achievements, you should at most be promoted to a senior managerial position. How is it possible for you to reach the top in a single promotion? The Stardust Corporation is not one of those small private companies out there! Who believes that there's nothing going on between you and Flynn Davis?"

The employees in the conference hall nodded profusely in agreement with Harvey's words.

Indeed, even if Charlotte achieved brilliant results that were enough for her to be promoted, it shouldn't be to the extent of a promotion to deputy general manager! Besides, the photos were right in front of them, and everyone instinctively believed what Harvey said to be the truth.

In terms of competency, they were not necessarily inferior to Charlotte, so why was it that she could clinch so many deals and become the deputy general manager? There had to be something more!

It was only human nature to believe what you wanted. The vast majority of people would believe that there had to be something fishy going on when it came to an unusual promotion linked to sexual favors.

Looking at everyone's expressions, Charlotte was enraged and flustered. The more anxious she was to explain, the harder it was to explain things clearly.

Besides, everyone already began speculating and pointing fingers at her. They dared not say anything more to Davis since he was the general manager, but they had no scruples about Charlotte.

At this moment, Davis, who had been staying silent, suddenly smacked the conference table and hollered, "Quiet!"

Everyone in the conference hall fell silent.

Davis looked at Harvey and questioned coldly, "Oliver Harvey, you'd better tell me honestly who instigated you to do this?"

Everyone was stunned again as they wondered what Davis meant by this.

Could there be some conspiracy behind this?

Chapter 193: Smash Them One by One

Harvey panicked, but he soon calmed down and looked at Davis sneeringly. Without any respect on his face, he continued, "Flynn Davis, are you ashamed and furious because I exposed your scandal? Are you trying to frame me then? I, Oliver Harvey, have been with the Stardust Group for more than ten years. Who can order me around?"

"I just can't stand the fact that you gave Charlotte Carter a top position in exchange for sexual favors! If you just wanted to give your mistress a little more help and promote her

to a manager or something, I might have chosen to turn a blind eye and just ignore it. But you promoted her straight to deputy general manager! Do you know how important the deputy general manager is to a corporation? Very often, a wrong decision made by the deputy general manager will result in huge losses for the company! I really don't want to see the Stardust Corporation getting destroyed by a despicable scumbag like you!

"So, even if you want to fire me now, I must tell the truth! The employees of the Stardust Corporation are one big family who work hard together. The corporation doesn't belong to you alone! You can't be presumptuous, corrupt, and nepotistic! You can't ruin the Stardust Corporation!"

Harvey sounded extremely righteous, especially when he called Davis a despicable scumbag who put the interests of the entire Stardust Corporation at stake for the sake of his own selfish desires and made himself out to be a fearless person who was willing to risk getting fired for the sake of defending the company's interests.

Many of the employees present subconsciously inclined toward Harvey.

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Davis narrowed his eyes and clapped his hands twice. "Oliver Harvey, I've really underestimated you. With those excellent acting chops of yours, it's such a pity that you didn't become an actor! However, don't think that you can twist the facts and frame me by putting on an act in front of everyone!"

Then Davis suddenly hollered, "Someone, arrest him!"

Davis was usually a kind and relatively nice person. But at this juncture, his face was incredibly gloomy, and his voice was like a thunderbolt. He was emitting such a terrifying aura that everyone subconsciously got out of their seats.

Several tall security guards immediately walked in and went directly toward Harvey according to Davis's instructions.

"What do you want? What are you trying to do?! I'm the director of the sales department!" A look of panic appeared on Harvey's face as he barked at the security guards.

However, the security guards simply ignored him and expressionlessly grabbed Harvey's arms.

"Flynn Davis, what the hell are you trying to do? We are in a civilized society under the rule of law. Are you trying to get your people to nab me and force me to keep my lips sealed? Unfortunately, there are many colleagues here who can bear witness to this scene. Are you trying to commit murder in public? What are you waiting for? Hurry and

let go of me,” Harvey roared while struggling desperately to break free from the security guards.

Unfortunately, he couldn't resist the strength of these tall security guards and couldn't break free.

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According to Harvey's initial plan, he would find a way to incite feelings of resentment toward Davis within everyone in the Stardust Corporation after 'exposing the scandal' between Davis and Charlotte during the meeting. He had thought that it would be best to blow things up and get the higher-ups involved so that Davis would be stripped of his position as general manager. Harvey could then take over as the general manager.

He had been performing well, but Davis suddenly became harsh and even ordered security guards to bring him up to the stage and hold him down!

“Tell me, who instigated you to do this? Come clean and give me an honest explanation! Otherwise, don't blame me for being merciless!” Davis ordered coldly as he glared at Harvey.

“Hah! Flynn Davis, do you think you're a king? Do you think you can do whatever you want? Listen up. If you dare to do anything to me, I will definitely sue you!” Harvey threatened while glowering at Davis.

“Hmph, it looks like you're not planning to say anything.” Davis ignored his threat and simply pushed the ashtray on the conference table over. “Keep smashing his fingers until he's willing to talk!”

The security guard on standby at the side immediately obeyed. He picked up the large crystal ashtray, walked over to the other two security guards holding Harvey down, and cooperated by firmly pressing the latter's hand down onto the conference table.

“Let go of me! You... you can't do this! Flynn Davis, you... you're breaking the law!” Harvey's face paled as he swallowed his saliva and shuddered.

“Smash it!”

The security guard immediately raised the ashtray high and slammed it down on Harvey's hand under his horrified gaze!

Bang! The thick and heavy corner of the ashtray smashed hard onto his left pinky!

“Ah!” Harvey screamed miserably, and his pinky finger became a badly mangled mess under the heavy and sharp ashtray corner. Even the white bones under his flesh were exposed.

All the people in the conference hall were so frightened and horrified by the bloody scene that they inched closer to the exits.

None of them expected that Davis would really instruct someone to smash and break one of Harvey's fingers!

Some female employees even closed their eyes in fear, not daring to look at the scene at all. Some timid ones were even frightened to the point of having their legs turn into jelly and wishing that they could burst into tears.

They all wanted to leave the conference hall, but none of them dared to leave without Davis's permission. But now, they had gained a new understanding of him.

Their general manager, who was usually nice and personable, was actually that intimidating and menacing when he was furious!

Sophie grabbed Charlotte's hand tightly. Both of their faces had turned pale, and their palms had become sweaty too.

Of course, Davis also knew that his current behavior might traumatize many of the employees present, but he had to force Harvey to confess even if he had to use brutal means. He had to make him clarify the truth in front of everyone.

Otherwise, even if he got hold of evidence against Harvey slandering them, there would be no means for him to explain the matter between him and Charlotte.

If Lucas found out that Charlotte was implicated in this scandal, he would definitely not let him go!

So no matter what, Davis had to make Harvey talk!

"Tell me. Who told you to fabricate those digitally doctored photos to frame and smear me?" Davis questioned compellingly again.

He deliberately chose not to mention Charlotte's name just so that he could make Harvey direct his revenge against him alone, lest she got subjected to everyone's criticism in the future.

"I... I've just said, I can't stand your behavior, so I wanted to reveal the evidence of your crimes! But you're trying to force me to confess. You're... shameless!" Cold sweat covered Harvey's face, but he was insistent.

"You really won't be scared until you face death, huh?! Keep going! Break every single one of his fingers! Let's see how tough your bones are!"

Davis waved his hand, and the ashtray in the security guard's hand slammed down again. This time, it smashed Harvey's left index finger!

"Ah!"

The pain in his fingers made Harvey shudder in pain, but he was horrified. Davis's attitude was too cruel and terrifying! Harvey completely believed that if he gritted his teeth and insisted on keeping mum, Davis would definitely break all his fingers!

When Harvey saw that the ashtray in the security guard's hand was about to slam down on his hand again, he teared up and was finally frightened enough to yell, "Stop! I'll tell you! I'll tell you everything! Stop!"

Chapter 194: The Culprit

Seeing Harvey finally compromising and deciding to reveal the truth, Davis was slightly relieved and raised his hand to gesture for the security guard to stop for the time being. "Speak up. However, if I discover that you've lied or hidden the truth, I'll cripple your limbs immediately!"

Harvey was now extremely terrified of Davis, fearing that he would get the security guard to smash his hand again. He frantically said, "It's Dave Lewis who works for the Huttons. He instigated me to do it! He told me that as long as I could falsely accuse you of having an affair with a female employee and abusing your authority and then make a big deal out of it so as to tarnish the reputation of the Stardust Corporation, they would pressure the chairman to remove you and make me the next general manager. They would also groom me and give me a role in the Hutton Corporation in DC..."

Davis snorted coldly. *Indeed, it's the Huttons behind this!*

"What about those photos then?" Davis once again questioned. His main agenda was to clear Charlotte's name.

"Dave Lewis was the one who got someone to doctor them after asking me for some photos of the both of you! He threatened me and told me that if I didn't obey him, he would find a way to drive me out of the Stardust Corporation and make it impossible for me to have a foothold in Orange County! Since he's one of the Huttons, I really didn't dare to defy his orders!"

Afraid that Davis wouldn't believe him, Harvey hurriedly added, "Mr. Davis, I swear that what I said is true! I have a voice recording of Dave Lewis threatening me during a conversation I had with him on my phone! If you don't believe me, just take it out and listen to it!"

Harvey's hands were still firmly pinned onto the conference table by the security guards, rendering him motionless.

Davis glanced at his secretary, James Denning, who then immediately went over and took out the phone from the pocket of Harvey's suit. He then found the voice recording easily.

Indeed, just as Harvey said, all the words that Lewis said to threaten and coerce him had all been recorded clearly.

After listening to this recording, everyone in the conference hall understood that someone had indeed instigated Harvey to deliberately fabricate evidence to frame Davis and Charlotte. The explicit photos of them behaving intimately and the accusation of him gaining personal benefits by abusing his power were all false!

Moreover, Charlotte Carter, who had clearly earned her promotion with her own abilities, was smeared and accused of getting promoted because of personal connections and nepotism.

All of a sudden, everyone looked at Charlotte with an apologetic gaze and at Davis with some more respect.

Charlotte felt tears well up in her eyes. She had almost become a pawn in a power struggle! If Davis hadn't resorted to those cruel means to force Harvey to confess, she would have really been unable to defend herself!

"Hmph, now everyone knows that the Stardust Corporation has already separated from the Huttons. Yet they're still poking their nose into our business and tried to create an internal conflict here. Oliver Harvey, as an employee of the Stardust Corporation, you actually tried to help a villain accuse me falsely. The Stardust Corporation will not tolerate having someone like you! From today onward, you're fired!" Davis hollered coldly.

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Upon hearing this, Harvey regretted his decision and knelt in front of Davis to beg for mercy. "Mr. Davis, please let me off this time because I was threatened! I promise that I will never do such a foolish thing again. I'll definitely devote myself to the company and contribute wholeheartedly! Please don't sack me on account that I've worked hard for the company for the past decade!"

He had been with the Stardust Corporation for more than ten years. And he had also climbed so far up the ladder to the position of director of the sales department. His annual salary and various bonuses and commissions added up to about one million dollars, which was enough for his family to live well.

If he got fired, he could kiss goodbye to all that money!

He was already in his late forties. If he got fired, it would be impossible for him to get such a high-paying job in the future. Besides, if word about what happened today spread, he would even have a hard time getting an ordinary job in Orange County!

Besides, his son was going to get married soon, and he had just taken out a loan to finance the purchase of his son's villa. He even bought a luxury car to make himself seem loftier. He had to pay tens of thousands of dollars in loan repayments for the mortgage and the car. If he lost his job, he wouldn't be able to afford these expenses!

Therefore, Harvey was now kneeling in front of Davis and bawling with repentance, begging him to let him keep his job with no regard for his image.

Davis didn't waver at all. He said coldly, "It's precisely because you were threatened and I considered the fact that you had worked hard for the company that I decided to only fire you! Otherwise, I would have called the police and have you arrested for malicious slander and attempting to destroy the company! If you still want to continue making trouble, I won't mind putting you behind bars."

Harvey's heart pounded as his face turned ashen.

He understood that Davis was definitely not lying. If Davis really decided to hold him liable, he wouldn't be able to escape the crime.

Besides, once he was behind bars, he would be tainted with a criminal record and never be able to raise his head high for the rest of his life.

Despite feeling reluctant, regretful, and indignant, Harvey could only hang his head low and slowly leave the Stardust Corporation.

After Harvey left, Davis once again looked around the conference hall and warned, "I don't want something like what happened today to repeat again in the future. If anything like this happens again, I won't go so easy on you. I hope everyone will remember this!"

The crowd had seen the terrifying side of Davis today, and they nodded profusely while promising that they would never do anything to let the company down.

"Okay, that's all for today's meeting. Charlotte Carter earned her promotion to deputy general manager of the Stardust Group with her competency. I hope you will all keep that in mind and make her your role model and learn from her. As long as you do your best, the company won't mistreat you! Meeting adjourned."

With that, Davis took the lead to leave the conference hall, leaving everyone behind to congratulate Charlotte.

As soon as he returned to his office, Davis found that Lucas had already arrived and was sitting in front of his desk.

“What’s going on?”

Davis quickly walked up and reported to Lucas everything that happened in the conference hall just now, including each and every detail. He also played a copy of the voice recording from Harvey’s cell phone for Lucas.

Hearing that it was the Huttons behind it, Lucas said with a menacing gaze, “Hmph. I haven’t gone to settle scores with them yet, but they’re already poking their nose so far. How brazen!”

Chapter 195: Jumped to His Death

Flynn Davis was naturally aware of the grudges between Lucas and the Huttons. Looking at Lucas’s face, he said carefully, “Mr. Gray, I’ve heard of Dave Lewis, whom Oliver Harvey mentioned today. But as far as I know, Dave Lewis is only someone in charge of a branch company of the Huttons. This time, he actually interfered with the Stardust Corporation. There must be someone else behind this. You must be careful!”

Lucas narrowed his eyes. “You don’t have to worry about the Huttons. I’ll handle them myself. Just take care of the affairs of the Stardust Corporation here in Orange County.”

Davis understood what Lucas meant and hurriedly acknowledged. “Yes!”

Just as he was feeling worried and wondering if Lucas was displeased with him, he suddenly heard Lucas say, “You did a good job dealing with Oliver Harvey today. Don’t worry. As long as you are loyal to me and do your job properly, I won’t mistreat you.”

Flynn was overjoyed to hear this. Lucas hadn’t only given his approval and affirmation of his actions, but he also considered him one of his people. This was a great gift!

The reason Lucas was willing to make Flynn work for him in the beginning was that he had gotten hold of some evidence against him. While Flynn was working for Lucas, he was often anxious and on tenterhooks, fearing that Lucas would one day abandon him.

Now that he had earned Lucas’s approval, Flynn was as happy as a lark!

But at this moment, Flynn’s secretary, James Denning, who had always been reliable and composed, hurriedly came in. Before he could even catch his breath, he said to Flynn, “Mr. Davis, I just received a piece of bad news. Oliver Harvey... is dead!”

“What?!” Flynn sprung up abruptly, and his jaw dropped in disbelief.

“Didn’t he just leave the office alive and well? Why did he suddenly die? How did he die?” Flynn asked with a sullen expression.

“After Oliver Harvey left the office, he stayed somewhere for a short while before going to the roof of the commercial building across from us and jumping off. He fell to his death and landed near the entrance of our company. Before he died, he also yelled something...” James’s forehead was covered with cold sweat, but he was still coherent in his speech. But when he was about to reveal Harvey’s last words, he hesitated.

“What exactly did he say? Tell me quickly!”

“He said... he chose to jump to his death all because you forced him to, and he also said lots of nasty things detrimental to you and the Stardust Corporation. There are already reporters outside,” James finally answered truthfully.

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Flynn’s heart immediately sank.

The terrible things that Harvey said before his death would undoubtedly bring tremendous trouble to the Stardust Corporation.

If those reporters, who were just in pursuit of clout, were to make up things and spread rumors, the Stardust Corporation would face public criticism and sink into controversy.

Oliver Harvey wants to ruin the reputation of the Stardust Corporation and mine even at the cost of his own life, huh?

What should we do now?

Flynn was flustered and at a loss for what to do.

At this moment, Lucas, who was sitting in front of the general manager’s desk, said calmly, “Let’s call the police first.”

James was shocked. Only then did he realize that there was someone else in Flynn’s office—the chairman who rarely appeared!

As Flynn’s secretary, he naturally knew of Lucas’s identity. But Lucas rarely appeared in the office, and even if he occasionally came, he would speak directly to Flynn. So James didn’t have many opportunities to talk to the young and mysterious chairman.

“Mr... Hello!” James was unsure if Lucas wanted to reveal his identity yet, so he could only address him with a vague term.

Flynn ordered gloomily, “Hurry up and do what Mr. Gray instructed.”

James hurriedly turned around to go and call the police.

Lucas glanced at Flynn. "Since this matter has blown out of proportion, the incident that happened in the conference hall just now can't be covered up anymore. The police may summon you for investigations anytime soon, so go to the police station now and take the initiative to cooperate with their investigation."

After thinking about it briefly, Flynn understood what Lucas meant. Since Harvey had claimed that Flynn forced him to his death before he jumped off the building, the police would definitely investigate Flynn, especially since something like that happened in the conference hall. Instead of being taken away passively by the police, it would be better to take the initiative to explain the situation clearly to them before that happened.

"Yes, Lucas. I'll go to the police station and cooperate with the investigation. Well, as for the office..."

"Don't worry about it. I'll have someone handle it properly," Lucas said with composure.

After hearing this, Flynn no longer worried about anything. He bowed to Lucas before leaving the office.

After Flynn left, Lucas immediately called Jordan. "Investigate carefully who Oliver Harvey met or spoke to after leaving the Stardust Corporation. Find out about the situation of his family and his finances too."

"Yes, Lucas!" Jordan immediately acknowledged without asking the reason.

Indeed, Lucas suspected that there was something fishy about Harvey's death.

According to Flynn's account, it seemed that Harvey was terribly afraid of death and definitely wouldn't end his own life.

Besides, it was also said that Harvey's son was about to get married soon, so it was even unlikelier that he would choose to end his life and abandon his family now.

The only possibility was that someone found out that his plan had failed and threatened him with something during the brief period of time after Harvey left the Stardust Corporation. Then he forced him to take his own life so as to smear the Stardust Corporation.

It seemed that it wasn't hard to guess who the instigator was.

Lucas smiled coldly with an indifferent gaze. "Since you want to attack me, let me see how tough you are!"

After calling the police, James spoke to a few reporters outside and then immediately returned to the general manager's office, only to discover that Flynn was surprisingly no longer here. Lucas was the only one here.

"Call Charlotte Carter and tell her to come to the chairman's office," Lucas ordered indifferently.

"Yes... I'll get to it at once."

Even though Flynn wasn't here, Lucas was the chairman of the Stardust Corporation, so he dared not be negligent.

Soon, Charlotte came to the chairman's office.

She was feeling extremely anxious and had no idea why the chairman, who had never appeared publicly in the office before, would ask to see her. But when she saw the familiar face sitting before the chairman's desk, her anxiousness and worries immediately turned into extreme astonishment.

"Lucas? Wh-what are you doing in the chairman's office?"

Chapter 196: The Hand In the Capital

Lucas smiled faintly without explaining much. He simply said, "I guess you already know what happened to Oliver Harvey. I told Flynn to go to the police station to cooperate with them in the investigation. So, you will be the acting general manager and manage everything of the Stardust Corporation from now on. Can you do that?"

Charlotte widened her mouth in shock, and countless thoughts ran through her mind.

Lucas suddenly appeared alone in the chairman's office of the Stardust Corporation, and he seemed to be used to issuing orders too...

Thinking of a certain possibility, she couldn't help but inhale sharply and look at him in astonishment. "Lucas, are you...!"

Lucas nodded casually. "Yes, but we'll leave that for later. Can you do what I just asked of you?"

Charlotte bit her lower lip tightly and was at a loss for an answer. Before this, she was merely a junior employee of the Stardust Corporation, yet she was suddenly promoted to deputy general manager today, which was already an unexpected surprise. Now, Lucas handed her the even more shocking task of being the acting general manager!

Charlotte honestly wasn't sure if she was cut out for the job. And even now, she still felt that everything that happened today was extremely surreal.

Seeing Charlotte hesitating and not answering right away, Lucas shot her an approving gaze.

When an opportunity was presented before you, some people would immediately agree to it regardless of their competency, while some would be too cowardly to agree. In the end, they would eventually lose the opportunity.

Charlotte was obviously contemplating carefully and trying to evaluate if she could take on the role or not.

Lucas said, "You don't have to be too stressed. First of all, there's something more to Oliver Harvey's death than what meets the eye. But it has nothing to do with you at all, so you don't need to care.

"Besides, I asked you to take over the position of general manager temporarily because Flynn will be away for a while, and there must be a leader in the company. After what happened with Oliver Harvey, I can't trust the others in the office except for you. Another reason is that I believe you have the ability to take on this role. Just gather your courage and do it. It won't matter if you don't do a perfect job. After all, it's your first time."

Upon hearing this, Charlotte smiled and felt a lot less stressed.

The reason she didn't dare to agree to Lucas immediately was that she was afraid she was too inexperienced and would end up doing a terrible job. But Lucas's words were a great encouragement to her.

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Moreover, the fact that Lucas said that he trusted her and her abilities made her feel excited and confident.

"Of course, you will experience some difficulties at first. First, the employees might not be too convinced of your abilities, and second, Oliver Harvey's incident will definitely be blown out of proportion. By then, the entire Stardust Corporation will face the pressure of public opinion. Third, some people in the company who are out of line might deliberately try to make things hard for you. So pay attention to these three points I've mentioned and deal with them properly.

"That's all I have to say. Now, do you have the confidence to take on this task?"

Sitting in front of the chairman's desk, Lucas gave off an invisible domineering aura. He was completely different from the Lucas Charlotte remembered.

He had the majesty of the chairman of the Stardust Corporation.

After pondering for a moment, Charlotte nodded firmly. "I'm confident that I can do a good job. Rest assured, Mr. Chairman!"

Lucas smiled and seemed to have expected this. He felt that he had made the correct judgment of Charlotte.

"Alright. I'll have someone relay this order immediately. From now on, you're the acting general manager of the Stardust Corporation. Get to your duties!"

Lucas called James, the general manager's secretary, over and gave him some instructions before standing up to pat Charlotte on her shoulder with an encouraging smile. He then turned around and walked out of the room.

"Lucas... where are you going?" Charlotte asked in surprise.

"It's almost dismissal time at the kindergarten. I'm going to pick up Amelia and take her home."

"..." Charlotte was speechless. She thought that Lucas would stay in the office after such a major incident happened today. She didn't expect that he would just leave so casually.

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Soon, Flynn arrived at the police station to cooperate with the police in the investigation of Harvey's suicide. The news that the Stardust Corporation would be presided over by Charlotte, the new acting general manager, soon spread throughout the company.

After hearing this, numerous people had various thoughts in their mind, and many were displeased and unconvinced that Charlotte could take on the job. But when they heard that it was an order from the chairman himself and that there was an official document, they dared not show their displeasure.

But it was common for many people in the workplace to defy orders from the higher-ups and even disregard them. Thus, this undoubtedly caused a lot of hindrance for Charlotte.

Lucas was naturally aware of these things, but he didn't take any countermeasures and simply handed the Stardust Corporation entirely to Charlotte, leaving it in her care.

For Charlotte, it was both a Herculean task and a great opportunity for honing her skills.

If Charlotte could be trained into a competent leader, Lucas would be able to hand over his business in Orange County to her in the future.

After all, Lucas wouldn't stay in this city forever, and he would one day return to DC to face the Huttons head-on.

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At this moment, in a luxury villa belonging to the Huttons in DC, a young man was sitting leisurely on the terrace of the second floor and swirling a glass of red wine in his hand.

There was another young man in his thirties standing behind him with his head hung low. He reported softly, "Mr. Leighton, Oliver Harvey from Orange County has jumped to his death, and I have, as you instructed, engaged many reporters and hired some netizens to blow the matter up. Once things escalate out of control, the Stardust Corporation's reputation will be tarnished, and that good-for-nothing Lucas Gray won't be able to do anything while watching his hard-earned business collapse."

"Haha, Dave, you've done a good job." The young man complimented and then gracefully sipped a mouthful of red wine before continuing, "In order to avoid letting them investigate you, you'd better go abroad to lay low. I've prepared the plane ticket and money for you. You will leave tonight."

Edward Leighton nodded slightly, and then a person beside him who seemed to be a bodyguard handed an envelope to Lewis.

Lewis was overjoyed and took the envelope containing the plane ticket and check with both hands. He then bowed and thanked him, "Thank you, Mr. Leighton! It's my greatest pleasure to work for you!"

"Go ahead. Come back and continue working for me after the matter blows over. Don't worry. I won't mistreat my subordinates," Edward said warmly with a smile.

"Yes! I'll get going then. Goodbye, Mr. Leighton!"

Lewis turned around to leave gleefully with the envelope in hand. He didn't even notice Edward winking at his bodyguard behind him.

Chapter 197: Tactics Behind Closed Doors

The bodyguard in black hurriedly caught up with Lewis.

Right after Lewis arrived home, he took out the envelope and was about to see how much money was on the check when two strong arms suddenly held him back. Afterward, they pinched his jaws to pry his mouth open and tossed a pill into it.

"Argh! You... Who the hell are you! Quick, let go of me..." Lewis exclaimed in horror.

But before he could finish, he felt a pain in his chest so excruciating that it felt like it was getting torn apart. The pain was so intense that it robbed him of his ability to speak!

At the same time, Lewis's heart thumped rapidly like a drum as blood flowed in reverse within his body. He immediately fell to his knees, and his limbs convulsed violently while the green veins on his face bulged. His face was twisted into a grimace, and he looked extremely terrifying! But he soon foamed at the mouth and became motionless.

With a straight face, the bodyguard in black took the envelope from underneath Lewis. After removing any traces he left, he returned to the villa to report to Edward.

Edward took out the check in the envelope and casually gave it to the bodyguard as a reward. He then picked up the flight ticket and tore it into pieces.

"You'll truly lay low only when you die. Don't worry. I'll take care of your funeral."

Lucas was sitting in his black Jaguar, which was stopped in front of the kindergarten, waiting to pick Amelia up. At this juncture, his phone suddenly rang. It was Jordan.

"Lucas, I've sent someone to investigate. The last call Oliver Harvey received before he jumped off the building was from DC. After checking, I found out that the phone number is registered under Dave Lewis. But..."

"Keep going."

"Yes! But my subordinates in DC told me that just over ten minutes ago, he died in his home from a heart attack. After the police's preliminary investigation, they ruled out the possibility of homicide and eventually deduced it to be an accidental death," Jordan said.

Lucas wasn't surprised to hear this, but he narrowed his eyes slightly.

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It seemed that the other party was even more ruthless than he had imagined as he resolutely cut off all leads.

"Lucas, do we continue investigating the cause of Dave Lewis's death?"

Lucas tapped his finger twice on his phone. "No, tell those in DC to be careful and pay attention to Dave Lewis's funeral. Don't worry about the others for now, lest you alarm them."

After ending the call, Lucas looked out of the window in the direction of DC with a sharp gaze in his eyes.

In fact, he could already guess something without detailed investigation.

He had left the Huttons for nearly twenty years, and many people in the Huttons had simply forgotten about him, the former scion.

But the patriarch of the Huttons suddenly behaved out of the ordinary and asked him to return to the family. He even wanted to hand over the family to him. In the eyes of many Huttons, Lucas would damage their interests tremendously, so they absolutely didn't want him back.

So even if Lucas didn't have any plans to take over the Huttons, those people were worried and wanted to use some tactics to suppress the Stardust Corporation he had just obtained.

But the fact that an employee had been fired and jumped to his death was obviously not enough. He was certain that there would be more to the matter of Oliver Harvey!

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Lucas asked Jordan to pay attention to the situation secretly, but he didn't want to intervene at this moment. He decided to leave those matters to Charlotte to handle, thinking that it would be good training for her.

At this moment, the doors of the kindergarten opened, and a teacher led the children out. Lucas got out of the car, walked over, and quickly brought Amelia back to the car.

Immediately afterward, the two of them went to the Brilliance Corporation to pick up Cheyenne, who just got off work.

Lucas then drove to the villa in Pearl Lake with his wife and daughter.

Amelia, who was playing with Cheyenne affectionately in the back seat, suddenly looked at the scenery outside the window and asked in bewilderment, "Daddy, aren't we going home? Where are you going?"

Lucas smiled. "Amelia, from today onward, we're moving to a new place!"

"New place?" Amelia was stunned, but she soon exclaimed in excitement, "Wow! That's great! We're moving to a new place! Daddy, Mommy, where's our new house? Is it big? Is it nice?" Amelia raised her little head and bombarded him with lots of questions.

Cheyenne stroked Amelia's little head and said with a smile, "The new house Daddy bought is huge and beautiful, just like a castle from a fairytale! You'll definitely like it when you see it!"

"Wow, a castle! Does that mean I can be a little princess?" Amelia was so excited that she leaped up in the backseat. She suddenly exclaimed at Lucas, "Daddy, you're awesome! You're so much better than Fatty's Daddy!"

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Amelia's puerile voice was full of pride.

Seeing how gleeful his daughter was, Lucas was pleased, but he also felt a little melancholic.

Ever since she was born, Amelia had lived with Cheyenne and the Carters in that shabby house nearly three decades old. It was run-down and situated in an old residential district.

Although the interior had been renovated and the yellowed and cracked walls had been repainted, there were still lots of peeling and spots on the exterior walls.

Amelia had invited her kindergarten classmate home once, but when she saw the exterior walls of the Carter home, she blurted, "Amelia, your house is so ugly!"

Later on, Amelia also told Cheyenne and Lucas that when she grew up and could earn her own money, she would buy a big house for them.

Of course, it was just the mindless words of a child, but Lucas was heartened yet heartbroken to hear them.

When Lucas saw his daughter smiling joyously because of the new house, his heart was full of contentment.

Soon, the three of them drove back to the Pearl Lake villa.

When Amelia saw the beautiful villas and manors in front of her, which looked like palaces from fairytales, she leaped up in elation. "Wow! It's really a big beautiful house! I'm so happy!"

Watching Amelia running into the dreamy and gorgeous house like a pretty fairy, Lucas and Cheyenne looked at each other in contentment.

Lucas accompanied Amelia on a tour around the new house while Cheyenne prepared dinner.

By the time dinner was ready, Charlotte still hadn't returned home yet.

"Strange, why hasn't Charlotte come home yet?" Cheyenne muttered to herself. She grabbed her phone to call Charlotte.

But as soon as she unlocked her phone, she saw countless notifications.

"A huge scandal broke out in the Stardust Corporation. The general manager of the Stardust Corporation abused his authority to promote a female employee in exchange for sexual favors!"

"The Stardust Corporation forces a veteran employee to confess in public and drives him to jump to his death in order to clear his name!"

"Female employee successfully rise! The general manager of the Stardust Corporation has been arrested while lover Charlotte Carter rises to the position of acting general manager, sparking public debate!"

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The countless pieces of news were all negative news about the Stardust Corporation.

Cheyenne naturally knew that the Stardust Corporation belonged to Lucas, so her heart dropped as she began to get nervous after seeing the negative news.

But when she saw Charlotte's name, her vision blurred, and her face immediately paled!

Chapter 198: Between a Married Couple

Cheyenne thumped herself down onto the couch and immediately panicked while being distracted. Recalling that Lucas was still playing with Amelia upstairs, she hurriedly exclaimed, "Lucas! Come down quickly!"

Lucas could tell that something was wrong when he heard the anxiety in her voice. He immediately ran downstairs and hurriedly asked, "Cheyenne, what's wrong? Did something happen?"

With trembling fingers, Cheyenne handed her phone to Lucas as she said anxiously, "Lucas, quick, look at this. Something has happened to the Stardust Corporation! And Cheyenne... Why would Cheyenne have a lover and become the acting general manager? What's all this about?"

Only then did Lucas realize that it wasn't that something had happened to Cheyenne, but rather, it was because she saw the news about the Stardust Corporation.

He patted her shoulder and said comfortingly, "It's fine. Don't worry. Let me explain it to you slowly."

Lucas told Cheyenne everything that happened, from Charlotte's promotion to the position of deputy general manager by virtue of her outstanding work to Oliver Harvey slandering her and Flynn using some digitally doctored photos. He also included the matter of Harvey being instigated by someone into jumping to his death and framing the Stardust Corporation.

Cheyenne's expression changed continuously with his explanation. Sometimes she was surprised, sometimes furious, and sometimes worried.

After finishing, he saw her frowning, obviously still extremely worried. He comforted again, "Everything is really fine. Flynn Davis didn't get arrested. He just took the initiative to go to the police station to cooperate with the investigation. He'll be released in a few days. As for Charlotte, she's very competent, so I'd like to take this opportunity to let her gain some good experience in managing the company. Nothing will happen.

"As for the news reports, all of them are untrue. I believe Charlotte will soon take care of it. Actually, someone has been plotting against us this time to deal with the Stardust Corporation."

Cheyenne suddenly asked, "You just said that the person who instigated Oliver Harvey works for the Huttons, right? Why are they trying to deal with you?"

Lucas sighed. "Because I used to be part of the Hutton family."

"What?!" Cheyenne sprang up and looked at Lucas in disbelief. "You used to be one of the Huttons? The famous Huttons in DC?"

After seeing him nod, she came to a sudden realization. "No wonder... The Stardust Corporation used to belong to the Huttons, but now it belongs to you... Lucas, what else are you hiding from me?"

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Cheyenne stared at Lucas with reddened eyes, feeling extremely uncomfortable.

She was clearly married to him, but there were still so many of his secrets that she wasn't aware of. She only found out about his family background today.

Besides, he had more secrets, some of which even Charlotte knew, but she didn't. The feeling of being distrusted by him and having many secrets between them made her feel hurt.

"Cheyenne, I didn't mean to hide it from you. It's just that the situation over at the Huttons is very complicated, and I don't want you to worry," Lucas said helplessly.

Cheyenne instantly raised her head and kept her reddened eyes fixed on his face. She gritted her teeth and said, "You keep saying that you hope I can accept you and that we can truly be like a married couple, but you keep hiding things from me. Do you really consider me your wife? Am I the kind of woman who can only accept your help and protection without being able to share your burdens with you? If that's how you see me, you should leave me before it's too late!"

Lucas hurriedly explained, "That's not what I mean! I just think that these are my personal issues, and I don't want you to be bothered by them. I just want you to live happily in peace."

Hearing this, Cheyenne became even more furious. "If you think that's all your business and you don't need me to be involved, should you also stay out of my affairs in the future? If we can't share weal and woe, what kind of married couple are we?"

Lucas's heart trembled. Previously, he had always thought that he owed Cheyenne and Amelia too much, and so he had always been trying to do his best to make it up to them so that they could live happily. He didn't want to let Cheyenne know of the dangers and troubles he faced outside.

Thus, he hadn't told Cheyenne about Amelia's abduction or the matters with the Huttons.

Only now did he understand what she thought.

It turned out that she had always wanted to share weal and woe with him. It turned out that she had long regarded the two of them as a real married couple who could trust and support each other wholeheartedly.

Lucas looked at Cheyenne emotionally and said with utmost sincerity, "I'm sorry, Cheyenne. It was my mistake for thinking that way. From now on, I won't hide anything from you. You're right. This is the way things should be between a married couple."

Cheyenne was not a petty woman. After they cleared the misunderstanding, the anger in her heart subsided.

"Since you are one of the Huttons, why is your last name Gray?" Cheyenne asked curiously.

After a moment of silence, Lucas answered softly, "When I was seven years old, both my mother and I were kicked out by the Huttons. And since then, I took on my mother's last name. The Stardust Corporation didn't originally belong to the Huttons. It was single-handedly founded by my mother when she was young. But the Huttons encroached on it later on."

"Ah!" Cheyenne exclaimed and covered her mouth. She never thought that Lucas's relationship with the Huttons would be like that!

Besides, the fact that the Huttons had encroached on the Stardust Corporation, which Lucas's mother had established, was very similar to the Carters snatching away the Brilliance Corporation from her!

But Lucas's mother had her business snatched away from her and got kicked out of the family with her child. From this point of view, it seemed that Lucas's mother had had it worse than her.

Cheyenne looked at Lucas and wanted to comfort him, but she didn't know how she should begin.

Noticing her expression, he smiled. "It's alright. It's all in the past now. Amelia should be hungry. Let's have dinner. I'll talk to you about the other things later."

After putting Amelia to bed after dinner, Lucas sat in the living room and told Cheyenne truthfully everything about his past.

There were no longer any hidden secrets between them after this conversation, and their relationship became even closer.

The following day, the family of three washed up and headed downstairs, only to see Charlotte rubbing her eyes while making her way downstairs on the other side.

"Cheyenne, Lucas, good morning!" Charlotte yawned and greeted both of them.

Cheyenne looked at her worriedly and asked, "Charlotte, you must have come home really late last night, right? I saw the news about everything that happened in the office yesterday. Was it troublesome to deal with?"

Charlotte smiled. "Cheyenne, don't worry about it. Lucas has given me a rare opportunity, and I will definitely be able to handle it well! Just rest assured! Speaking of which, you two are really good at hiding things. You didn't even tell me anything! I was so shocked when I saw Lucas at the office yesterday and found out that he's the chairman of our company!"

Cheyenne glanced at Lucas beside her and said embarrassedly, "Charlotte, it's not suitable for too many people to know about Lucas's identity, so... I..."

"It's okay, Cheyenne. You don't need to explain. I understand everything," Charlotte interrupted and then put her arms around Cheyenne's neck with a smile. "Don't worry. I'll keep this a secret and won't let others find out. Hehe!"

Seeing how bubbly and cheerful Charlotte was, showing that she was unaffected by the accusatory news, Cheyenne finally felt relieved.

Lucas smiled and said to Charlotte, "I've handed over all the matters at the office to you. Have you encountered any trouble?"

Charlotte originally wanted to say that she was able to handle it all. But thinking that Lucas was not only the chairman of the company but also her brother-in-law, she felt that there was no need to be scrupulous about anything.

"I basically haven't encountered any problems, except that many of the senior staff don't quite approve of me yet because I was promoted to deputy general manager previously, and now I'm even tasked to be the acting general manager. They've been rather perfunctory with the orders I give them, and it's causing a great hindrance for me, greatly lowering my efficiency."

Lucas said casually, "Since you are now the acting general manager, you possess all the rights of the general manager. Just relax and do what you have to. If anyone tries to abuse their seniority to make things hard for you by delaying their tasks, find a way to subdue them. If anyone goes overboard, you also have the right to fire them directly."

"Really?" Charlotte smiled and said coyly, "I was just waiting for you to say that! In case I accidentally get into any trouble, you have to help me out, Lucas!"

Lucas smiled. "Okay, go ahead and perform as you please. You don't have to be too worried or scrupulous. Furthermore, you should also pay attention and groom some people you think are trustworthy. For example, your best friend, Sophie. If she's competent, you should try to train and promote her to work for you."

After giving Charlotte some tips, he drove Cheyenne to work, Amelia to the kindergarten, and then left.

After everything that happened last night, the controversy revolving around the Stardust Corporation had spread widely, especially because of the instigation of someone and the heated debates on the internet.

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Meanwhile, Aston Brooke rushed back to LA overnight and reported everything, including the current situation in Orange County and the latest scandal that broke out at the Stardust Corporation, to his old grandpa, Andrew.

“That means the reputation of Lucas and his Stardust Corporation have been ruined because of Oliver Harvey’s suicide. I reckon they’ll suffer heavy losses and have a hard time handling it.” Andrew poured himself a cup of premium coffee and took a sip of it leisurely.

Aston smiled gloatingly. “Yes. According to the staff of the Stardust Corporation, the person who instigated Oliver Harvey to do that is someone named Dave Lewis, who works under the Huttons. The Huttons are targeting Lucas Gray so soon. Clearly, he’s not going to get to be arrogant for long.”

Andrew smiled. “Yes. That punk still had the audacity to demand that we pledge allegiance to him. He doesn’t have the self-awareness to know that he isn’t worthy!

“How are the leaderless businesses the Hales left behind doing now?”

Aston hurriedly said, “I’ve previously contacted the managers of all the major businesses under the Hales, but they turned down our offer. Besides, they don’t seem to be leaderless either. In fact, they seem harder to deal with than before.

“According to the information I’ve found, it seems that those managers have some connection with Lucas Gray, and who knows if he’s already acquired all those businesses.”

Andrew snorted coldly. “He’s got quite a huge appetite. Isn’t he scared of biting off more than he can chew? Immediately go back to Orange County and take everything from Lucas Gray while he’s overwrought! That punk probably won’t be able to make a comeback this time. It won’t matter even if you fall out with him!”

Aston had long been jealous and resentful toward Lucas, so he agreed merrily. “Yes! Rest assured. I’ll definitely seize the opportunity to snatch the Hales’ businesses back from Lucas Gray!”

At this time, Lucas had already driven to a prison in the outskirts of the city.

In just a few days, the patriarch of the Hales, Bruce Hale, who used to be energetic and full of vigor, had already aged greatly. Wrinkles covered his face, and his back had become a little hunched. He seemed to be old and dying.

Currently, there was a tall, muscular, and tattooed man standing in front of Bruce.

“Old fogey, I told you to tell me where you hid all the money in your family, yet you’re still so stubborn! Do you believe that I’ll beat you to death?” The burly man raised his huge fists and swung them in front of Bruce.

With an extremely bitter expression on his face, Bruce said, “Our family has been arrested, and our properties no longer belong to us, so how could we have any money left?”

“Damn it. It seems you won’t be scared until you’re facing death. Tell me honestly!” the burly man hollered furiously and slapped Bruce on his face.

“Don’t think I don’t know. The Hales are so rich, so you must have secretly hidden money somewhere! I don’t care if you’re hiding cash, jewelry, or antiques, just hand them over! Otherwise, I’ll beat you up and kill your grandsons and children too! Anyway, I’ve killed many people, so I’m not afraid to kill a few more since I’m facing a death sentence anyway!” the middle-aged man roared.

After being slapped, Bruce cocked his head to the side as blood flowed down the corners of his mouth.

He pleaded, “We really don’t have any hidden cash! Our whole family is here now, and we don’t know when we’re going to die. Even if we have hidden money, we can’t spend it, so why should we hide it from you? Besides, you’re just like us. Once you come in, you won’t be able to leave anymore. Even if you have money, you won’t be able to spend it. So we might as well get along well, don’t you agree?”

“Get along, my ass!” As soon as the burly man heard what Bruce said, he kicked him in the face, disregarding the fact that Bruce was already an old man in his seventies.

“Ahhh!” Bruce shrieked in pain and fell to the ground. He clutched his stomach while wailing.

The burly man was furious and wanted to kick him again. But the gates of the prison opened at this moment, and a prison guard who looked rather stern barked, “Why are you making such a ruckus? Anyone who dares to get up to any nonsense will be dragged out and killed immediately!”

Everyone in the cell suddenly fell silent while the burly man stood against the wall with a fierce expression. But he didn’t dare to contradict the order or get physical.

The prison guard shifted his attention to the old man sitting on the ground and shouted coldly, “Bruce Hale, come out. Someone wants to see you!”

Chapter 200: Seeing the Light of Day Again

It took Bruce a long time to react, and there was some light in his cloudy eyes.

The past few days, they had been locked up in this heavily guarded death row prison after the military arrested them, and no one was allowed to come and visit them.

All the Hales, including Bruce, felt that they would die here in silence without anyone finding out. They were full of fear and despair, but to Bruce's surprise, someone was here to see him.

Bruce propped himself up and slowly climbed up from the ground. Then he followed the prison guard to the reception room outside with anxiety.

When he saw the handsome young man sitting at the table, he was so excited that he leaped toward him like he had found his lifeline. "Mr. Gray! Mr. Gray, I know we made a mistake before. The Hales failed to realize how formidable you are and ended up offending you! I'll kowtow and apologize to you, so please give us a chance and let us off!"

Then he really knelt directly on the ground and kowtowed to Lucas.

Lucas frowned, avoided it, and said indifferently, "I came here today with the intention of giving you a chance. But whether you can grasp this chance or not is all up to you."

Bruce hurriedly said, "Okay, okay! Mr. Gray, please feel free to tell me what it is. As long as you can forgive us and set us free from this prison, I'm willing to do anything!"

Bruce meant every word. During the past few days, he and his family had been living in immense agony, as they had been bullied, humiliated, and saw no hope in getting out alive. In fact, they didn't even know when they would suddenly receive the news that they would be executed.

Such a life was simply too dismal and terrifying, and they didn't want to stay here a second longer!

Lucas smiled indifferently. "You're aware that you and your grandson have both offended me, so you can't be forgiven easily. Now, I'll give you two options. One, I'll let you off, but the rest of your family will die. Two, you die here yourself, but I'll pardon the other Hales and get them out of here.

"Make your choice."

Bruce's eyes were overflowing with dismay, and his lips twitched twice, seemingly wanting to plead with Lucas again. But he knew that Lucas wouldn't change his mind.

He closed his eyes in despair and soon opened them again. He looked at Lucas and asked, "If I choose the second option, will you really let the rest of the Hale family off and set them free without pursuing the matter any longer?"

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Lucas nodded. "Of course. I've always been a man of my word."

"Okay, I'll go with the second option then. I hope you will honor your promise. I'll atone for my sins using my life!" Bruce said firmly.

Lucas chuckled. "I couldn't tell that you're willing to sacrifice yourself for the greater good."

Bruce didn't know if Lucas was mocking him or not, but he said with a bitter smile, "I've already lived for more than seventy years, and I've seen everything and lived long enough. If I can use my life in exchange for the safety of my descendants, it will definitely be worth it. Thank you so much for giving me the chance to choose, Mr. Gray."

Lucas raised his eyebrows. "I caused your entire family to be locked up here. Don't you hate me?"

After a long silence, Bruce answered, "Honestly, I resented you in the beginning. But after the past few days of pondering, I've understood everything. It was clearly the Hales' fault for offending you first. We provoked you, and I continued to make a mistake by failing to discipline my children and grandchildren. I even tried to suppress you with force. Indeed, we were at fault, and we have brought this upon ourselves!

"You've also spared my one-month-old great-grandson and given me a chance to choose. What right do I have to hate you?"

When people were on the brink of death, they tended to say pleasant things. Since Bruce had already chosen to die, everything he said was sincere and from the bottom of his heart.

After a moment of silence, Lucas suddenly smiled.

He stood up and looked down. "I'm very satisfied with your answer. In that case, I don't mind giving the Hales another chance."

He nodded at the prison guards by his side and ordered, "Release all the Hales."

Bruce's jaw dropped in shock. When all the Hales returned to the family villa and he saw his little great-grandson, he finally snapped back to reality.

Lucas actually held such great power that he could release the Hales from prison. In fact, he even benevolently spared Bruce, who thought that he would die after choosing the second option.

All the Hales cried tears of joy while hugging their family members and bawling out loud.

In just a few days, they had experienced lots of ups and downs. They thought they were going to die in prison, where they couldn't see the light of day. But there was a sudden twist of fate, and they were allowed to return to the luxurious Hale villa.

After hugging his wife and son in exhilaration, Connor gradually calmed down and said through clenched teeth, "Lucas Gray is to blame for everything that happened to us! Grandpa, we can't let him off!"

"Shut up!" Bruce bellowed and raised his hand to give Connor a tight slap on his face. "Sinner! All this trouble was caused by you and your incompetent brother! Yet you still don't know how to reflect on yourself!"

"All of you, listen up. The only reason we were able to get out of there is that Mr. Gray is generous enough to let us off the hook! All of you are to remember this kindness! In the future, I will immediately disown anyone who dares to disrespect or offend Mr. Gray!"

Bruce's voice was terribly stern. He had been the patriarch of the Hale family for years, and the prestige and authority he had accumulated over the years was extraordinary. He managed to calm everyone down immediately.

The others also found out at this point that they had managed to get out of that hellhole all thanks to Lucas!

Be it Lucas's incredible combat skills he displayed at the banquet the other day or the relationship between him and the military, all of it made the Hales extremely terrified and cautious.

At the thought of everything that had happened the past few days, Connor hurriedly said with lingering fear, "Grandpa, I was muddled! I'll definitely obey you and respect Mr. Gray! I won't dare to offend him again!"

The rest of the Hales also promised that they would definitely not trifle with Lucas again.

"Also, all of you are to remember this lesson! From now on, no one is to act recklessly, bully others, and behave brazenly in the name of the Hales! If I find out, I'll punish anyone found guilty! Do you hear me?"

Chapter 201: The Brookes' Choice

Bruce emphasized once again loudly.

This time, the disaster was because Logan had thought that Lucas was just a nobody not worth mentioning and had provoked him. This led to many other issues in the aftermath.

From this incident, Bruce also deeply realized what Lucas had mentioned before about the importance of family education.

After having been taught a massive lesson, the Hales were full of regret, and they frantically nodded in agreement. "Yes!"

At the same time, many people couldn't help but think of the culprit who caused all the trouble, Logan.

Since the time Jordan had beat up Logan and severely injured him at the baby shower, Logan had been in the intensive care unit of the hospital. When the military took them away that day, it didn't take Logan along.

"Grandpa, what about... Logan?" Connor asked cautiously.

Bruce's face twitched a few times with some reluctance, but he eventually gritted his teeth and said ruthlessly, "Inform the hospital to give up treatment on him and have someone prepare his funeral!"

Then Bruce turned around and hobbled away.

The Hales left in the hall were stunned. Bruce was undoubtedly announcing Logan's outcome.

All of them had mixed feelings, but they understood the reason for his choice.

They knew that Logan had to pay the price for being the culprit of the trouble!

It wasn't only to give an explanation to Lucas but also a warning to all of the Hales.

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Soon, Lucas caught wind of the news that the Hales had given up on Logan's treatment.

He was sitting on a couch in the chairman's office on the top floor of the Stardust Corporation office building with a smirk on his face. "Seems like Bruce Hale may be old but not muddled."

Leaning sideways on the other couch, Jordan was quickly twirling a fountain pen between his fingers. "Lucas, aren't you afraid that the Hales will secretly be up to mischief while pretending to be respectful toward you on the surface, just like the Brookes?"

Lucas smiled. "As long as they still have brains, they won't do that."

Beep. Beep.

The intercom rang. James Denning said respectfully, "Mr. Chairman, Aston Brooke of the Solar Corporation is here. He says he wants to see you for something."

Jordan snorted with laughter. "Hah, speak of the devil. That brainless fool is here."

Lucas smiled and said to James, "Bring him up."

Soon, Aston, dressed in a suit, walked in through the door.

"Haha, Lucas Gray, it's been a long time since we met. How are you doing lately?" As soon as Aston entered the office, he greeted him with a smile. But the fact that he called Lucas by his full name showed that he was acting all high up in the air, and he didn't hide the gloating look in his eyes at all.

Immediately afterward, he sat straight down on the couch opposite Lucas with one leg crossed over the other in a roguish manner.

Lucas watched Aston with a cold gaze in his eyes, but he wasn't angry. Instead, he asked with a playful expression, "What are you here for today?"

"Of course it's for something important. First, I want to see how you and your company are doing. After all, the news on the internet is spreading like wildfire. And as a friend, I of course would like to show some concern. Second, I also want to talk to you about the cooperation between us," Aston said slowly and leisurely.

"Oh? What's there to talk about regarding the cooperation?" Lucas asked, pretending to be confused.

Aston smiled. "Lucas Gray, let's just be straightforward and honest. Previously, the Brookes only agreed to let you have an advantage on account that you were related to the Huttons. That's the only reason we decided to give you forty-nine percent of the shares of the Solar Corporation's Orange County branch.

"But now that the Stardust Corporation has separated from the Huttons and has even become their enemies, we've changed our mind. Furthermore, the general manager of your company has now been arrested and is even embroiled in a huge scandal. This

has caused the Stardust Corporation's stock prices to plummet, resulting in heavy losses. Do you still think that you're qualified to cooperate with the Brookes now?"

Lucas raised his eyebrows and said derisively, "Oh? What do you want then?"

Looking as if he was taking pity on them, Aston said, "The Brookes aren't the type to kick others when they're down. How about this? I'll give you two options. One, return all the shares of the Solar Corporation's Orange County branch to us and compensate us with three million dollars in cash for the breach of contract. Our cooperation will then cease.

"As for the second option, well... The Stardust Corporation might go bankrupt, but we're willing to invest four million dollars into the Stardust Corporation. However, we have to own sixty percent of the shares and enjoy all the decision-making rights!"

"Haha!" Jordan, who had been sitting quietly in the corner of the office, couldn't help bursting into laughter.

"What are you laughing at? I'm talking to Lucas Gray. Do you have any manners at all?" Aston berated in displeasure. In his eyes, Jordan was just Lucas's subordinate whose status was akin to that of a bodyguard.

Jordan said with a playful smile, "I'm just laughing at how thick-skinned you and your family are! Your branch company is just an empty shell, and it only got a firm foothold in Orange County because of Lucas. But you still have the cheek to ask us for three million in compensation for breach of contract. You're really shameless!"

"Also, the market value of the Stardust Corporation is several billion dollars. You want to use four million to exchange for sixty percent of the Stardust Corporation's shares? Fancy you having the gall to say that! Utterly shameless!"

Jordan clucked his tongue against the roof of his mouth while staring at Aston as if he wanted to seriously see how thick-skinned he was.

Aston's face turned gloomy, and he glanced at Jordan in disdain before saying to Lucas, "Lucas Gray, your subordinate is really ill-mannered. You ought to take him in hand!"

Lucas smiled calmly. "He's like my brother. His words are exactly what I mean."

"You!" Aston was immediately rendered speechless. After a while, he sneered. "It seems you have an issue with the options I've offered. I'll make things clear beforehand. Now that the Brookes are still willing to invest in the Stardust Corporation, it means we still think you're somewhat capable!"

“If you go up against the Huttons, you’ll just be fighting a hopeless battle, and it definitely won’t end well. Sooner or later, the Stardust Corporation will be destroyed and go bankrupt! If I were you, I would be smarter and get rid of the Stardust Corporation before it’s too late. That way, you can at least get some money to survive!”

Lucas looked at Aston like he was an idiot and suddenly smiled. “I don’t think I’ve ever mentioned that I wanted to cooperate with the Brookes.”

Aston narrowed his eyes. “Oh? Looks you’re choosing to draw a clear line with the Brookes, huh? That’s fine. I just said that as long as you return all the shares of the Solar Corporation’s Orange County branch and compensate us with another three million dollars in cash, we will go separate ways and no longer have anything to do with each other!”

Lucas smiled and shook his head. “No. I’m not going to return the shares to you. I’m not going to give you a single cent.”

Chapter 202: The Hales’ Submission

Aston’s face turned gloomy, and he threatened, “Lucas Gray, don’t make me do this the hard way. You’re just a good-for-nothing the Huttons chased out. What right do you have to be arrogant to me? I’ll make sure you return everything you’ve taken from us. If you don’t return our shares, I’ll make sure you get it!”

Lucas leaned on the couch and said with a smile, “I mentioned before that the Brookes could only be servants to me, the master. It seems that you people are biting the hand that feeds you.”

Aston stood up abruptly and hollered in rage, “Lucas Gray, do you still think you’re some big shot? If you were still one of the Huttons, we might still do you a favor on account of them! But who are you now? You still want the Brookes to pledge allegiance to you? Are you worthy of it?”

“Listen up. Your company is going to fold and go bankrupt soon. The Brookes will acquire all the businesses under the Hales and become the new nobles of Orange County! I’ll crush all of you like you’re ants! By then, I’ll make you kneel in front of me and recognize the difference between a master and a slave!”

Jordan’s face turned cold, and his body moved. He felt an urge to teach this scoundrel a lesson for insulting Lucas.

Lucas raised his arm to stop him.

"It turns out the Brookes are still coveting the businesses of the Hales. Do you guys think that all the Hales have been wiped out?" Lucas asked with raised brows.

"Hmph, all the Hales have been arrested. They might have already died long ago! There's only a one-month-old baby left now. What can he do? But this is all thanks to you. If not for you, the Hales wouldn't have ended up in a leaderless state. I'm telling you, the Brookes are definitely going to seize their assets and businesses!"

Aston had already fallen out with Lucas, and he naturally had no concerns anymore, so he revealed the greedy intentions of the Brookes without restraint.

"Hah, you're really confident, huh?! I shall see if the Brookes can encroach on the Hales!" An old but majestic voice suddenly came from the doorway.

Aston cocked his head to the side and happened to see Bruce Hale coming. He immediately blurted in astonishment, "You're not dead yet?"

Bruce sneered. "Of course! Are you disappointed that I'm still alive and kicking? The Brookes sure have a good plan. You want to encroach on the Hales' properties, huh? Unfortunately, you can keep dreaming!"

Then he no longer paid attention to the look of astonishment on Aston's twisted face and walked directly to Lucas. He bowed to him and then respectfully handed him a pile of documents. "Mr. Gray, all the industries under the Hales have been inventoried. Here are the title deeds and information of all the companies we own, as well as the detailed balance sheets and financial reports. If you'd like, I'll have someone bring the remaining documents over for you to take a look.

"These are the transfer contracts. Once you sign them, everything that belongs to the Hales will be transferred to you!"

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"What?!" Aston exclaimed in shock as he subconsciously took a couple of steps forward to see if the documents in Bruce's hand were real or not.

But while staring straight at the documents, he forgot that there was a coffee table in front of him and ended up tripping over it. He was thrown off balance and fell straight onto the ground in a disheveled manner. The drinks spilled all over him, and he lost his composure.

But Aston couldn't be bothered about his image, as he was utterly dumbfounded. He stared at the documents in Bruce's hand in disbelief.

“Bruce Hale, are you mistaken about something? Lucas Gray is the culprit who caused your entire family to be taken away. How can you hand over all of your family’s properties to him?”

The Hales were one of the four major families of Orange County, and all their properties were worth a massive amount of money. They were second only to the Sawyers!

If the Hales really gave all of their properties to Lucas, his strength would skyrocket!

The properties of the Hales, the Stardust Corporation Lucas owned, and the Brilliance Corporation affiliated to it, and his ties with Ethan Sawyer would undoubtedly make Lucas the most powerful person in Orange County!

Even if the Huttons wanted to continue dealing with Lucas, they probably wouldn’t be able to do anything to him!

Besides, the Brookes had just fallen out with Lucas. Once he dominated Orange County, he would definitely annihilate all the properties of the Brookes and kick them out of the county.

In that case, all the time and efforts that the Brookes had put in during this period of time would have gone down the drain. They might even face Lucas’s revenge!

Thinking of all the possibilities that could happen, Aston was so frightened that he turned pale and hurriedly tried to sow discord between the Hales and Lucas. It would be best to make Bruce change his mind!

If he wasn’t rational enough, Aston would have rushed forward to grab Bruce by the collar and ask him if he was so old and muddled up that he would hand over all his assets to Lucas!

Bruce coldly glanced at Aston and snapped, “I’m talking to Mr. Gray. Who are you to interfere and make comments? This is the Hales’ business. Even if your grandfather, Andrew Brooke, comes here, he wouldn’t be qualified to speak to me!”

Aston was infuriated, but he dared not say anything, fearing that he would offend Bruce.

Just a few minutes ago, he had used similar words to reprimand Jordan. But now, he was berated instead. It felt truly shameful.

Bruce stopped paying attention to him and respectfully placed the stack of documents in front of Lucas before saying sincerely, “This is the decision that all the Hales have reached unanimously. Please accept it, Mr. Gray.”

Lucas was actually quite surprised by Bruce’s behavior.

He knew that the Hales would reflect on themselves and even swallow their pride to ask for cooperation. But he never thought that the Hales would give him all their assets.

He stayed silent for a moment, and instead of signing those contracts immediately, he asked, "How is Logan Hale doing now?"

Bruce shuddered because he thought that Lucas was still bothered by Logan's actions. He hurriedly said in fear, "Mr. Gray, I apologize to you again on behalf of my unfilial grandson for offending you! Don't worry. I've already told the hospital to give up on all treatment for Logan. Soon, he will no longer appear in this world."

A look of misery flashed in his eyes.

After all, Logan was his grandson, whom he watched grow up. But he had no choice but to do this because Logan had recklessly offended Lucas and caused huge trouble. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to answer to Lucas.

Boom!

The news Bruce revealed was like a thunderbolt striking directly at Aston's heart!

He would have never imagined that Bruce would go so far as to sacrifice his own grandson in order to appease Lucas!

He knew that Logan and Connor Hale were Bruce's only grandsons!

A freezing chill shot up from Aston's feet to the top of his head. He only realized now that he seemed to have been wrong, horribly wrong!