

Chapter 601

It was a call from Zack.

“Mr. Crawford, we have some leads regarding the jade pendant!” said Zack the moment Gerald picked the phone up.

“Oh? Where are you right now?” asked Gerald in return.

The expert treasure appraiser from Northway went by the name of Mr. Zayden Weyham. Gerald had met him before during the celebrity party, and they even toasted each other on that day.

Since he had some issues to deal with back then, Gerald had told Zack to bring Mr. Xiques along to meet Mr. Weyham. Mr. Xiques himself could only discern that the jade pendant was produced southwest of the Salford Province.

However, details about its origins had still been vague up to this point. Zack’s call was a sign that they were finally able to find something.

“I’m in Mr. Weyham’s manor with Mr. Xiques now. Would you like to come over now, Mr. Crawford?”

“I’ll be there soon!”

After hanging up, he told Yoel and the others about his plan before heading straight for Mr. Weyham’s manor.

Mr. Weyham and his family had a lot of influence as well as a good reputation. While they were well known for their business in Northbay, Mr. Weyham's business actually began in Mayberry. Since Mr. Weyham's hometown was also in Mayberry, it only made sense for him to return to his homeland now that he was much older.

During the celebrity party, the Weyhams were seen as a considerably famous and influential family.

Gerald would definitely refrain from treating such a family coldly.

In no time at all, Gerald arrived at Weyham's manor. He found Mr. Weyham having tea with both Zack and Mr. Xiques.

"Mr. Crawford!" said both Zack and Mr. Xiques respectfully as they stood up.

After nodding toward them, he turned to look at Mr. Weyham before saying, "Thank you so much for this, Mr. Weyham."

"No need to be so cordial, Mr. Crawford. Please, have a seat."

After a brief greeting, Mr. Weyham immediately cut to the chase.

"Mr. Crawford, this pendant comes from a family from Wendall City in the Salford Province. Though this kind of jade is extremely rare, I was lucky enough to go to Wendall City with my master about fifty years ago. Back when I first saw it, a young man local to

that city was wearing it. It should be the symbol of their family!” explained Mr. Weyham.

“And what family is that?” asked Gerald rather anxiously.

In all honesty, Gerald wasn't really interested in helping his father look for that Xara woman. However, Queta was almost the same as Xara, the woman his father had been looking for all this time. This was what made Gerald curious.

‘Is Queta my stepsister who shares the same father with me but has a different mother...?’

‘Why do I feel so close to Queta every time I meet her?’

Something was definitely fishy with the incident. Since his father wouldn't tell him the truth no matter how much Gerald asked him, Gerald would investigate the matter himself.

Weyham shook his head slightly as he said, “I was just discussing this with both Mr. Xiques and Mr. Lyle earlier. I was still pretty young then, and I only managed to glance at the young man who wore that pendant once. Make no mistake, I distinctly remember seeing that pendant then, but I really don't know which family in Wendall City he belongs to. I was even looking through a few large families in Wendal City with Mr. Lyle just now, but none of those large families have this kind of tradition!” said Mr. Weyham.

“I see... Well, since we know it comes from Wendall City, I'm sure it won't be too difficult to investigate into it!” replied Gerald as he smiled faintly.

As they began talking about other things, Mr. Xiques suddenly stood up and walked over to a pendulum clock. Staring at it curiously, he asked, "If I'm not mistaken, this pendulum clock is from the 1900s... Am I correct, Mr. Weyham?"

Mr. Weyham nodded before replying, "Indeed, it is! It was made in M country and back then, it was even placed in the president's office!"

"How did you even manage to get your hands on such a thing?" asked Mr. Xiques, astonished.

"It was a birthday gift from the Longs of Yanken!" replied Mr. Weyham with a chuckle.

Since Mr. Weyham mentioned the Long family so casually, it was obvious that Mr. Weyham wasn't aware of the conflict between Gerald and the Longs.

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Gerald only smiled faintly as he took a sip of tea.

"It's rather late now, grandpa... There are so many guests today..."

At that moment, a girl wearing pajamas slowly descended the stairs as she stared at Gerald and the others curiously.

"Ah, Lissa. Come over here and greet Mr. Crawford. Weren't you quite curious about him before this?" said Mr. Weyham as he smiled.

“He’s Mr. Gerald Crawford?” asked Lissa as she made it to the final step.

When she got to him, she scanned him from head to toe before frowning slightly. Immediately after, she chuckled before saying, “It’s nice to meet you, Mr. Crawford. I’m Melissa Weyham but you can just call me Lissa.”

“A pleasure to meet you too, Lissa. You can just call me Gerald!” replied Gerald as he extended his hand out to shake her hand.

Lissa was considerably beautiful and after talking to her for a while, he found that she was quite generous to others as well.

Gerald's first impression of her wasn't bad, to say the least.

What more, she was a pretty nice talker too. She talked about all kinds of things with Gerald.

“So you’re Mr. Crawford, huh. What kind of entertainment do you usually partake in?” asked Melissa.

“I don’t usually attend many activities, to be quite honest,” replied Gerald as he shook his head.

“Humph! I refuse to believe that! I’m sure you always enjoy yourself to your heart’s content!” As she said that, Lissa laughed heartily.

After a while, she seemed to remember something. This prompted her to ask, “Speaking of which, I got to know a few friends here in Mayberry. We’re going to have a gathering tomorrow afternoon and I’ll be treating them to a meal! If you’re free, would you like to come along, Gerald?”

Gerald remained silent at her proposal.

“How rude, Lissa! Why on earth would Mr. Crawford want to fool around with you and your mischievous friends?” replied Mr. Weyham with a bitter smile.

“Well fine then!” said Melissa as she pouted slightly.

Since Mr. Weyham had done him a favor, Gerald knew that rejecting his granddaughter would eventually make him feel awkward for doing so. In the end, Gerald nodded slightly with a smile before saying, “It’s fine. Tomorrow was it? I’ll be there.”

“He said it, not me!” said Melissa with a smile.

A short while later, Gerald left the manor together with Zack and Mr. Xiques.

Though he initially wanted to return to Mountain Top Villa to have a rest, he suddenly recalled that he had lent the villa to Xavia.

Due to that, he told Zack to arrange a room in a hotel that he owned. He would stay there for the moment.

When Gerald arrived at the hotel's entrance, he saw and heard a few security guards shouting, "Lousy beggar! Get lost already!"

They were busy trying to push away a dirt-covered old man who had extremely messy hair.

"What beggar? I'm no beggar! I just need to borrow a shower!" said the old man.

"To hell with that! Do you even know what place this is?" sneered the security guard.

"Humph! Let me tell you, I'm not any mere person! I'm Mr. Crawford's grandfather! Your boss is my grandson! Now hurry up and let me in!"

"This old b*stard! How bold!"

By then, the guards were ready to beat him up.

Gerald didn't really want to get involved in the mess. He didn't care about what the old man said and the guards were there to take care of him anyway.

However, when Gerald took a closer look at the beggar, he was stunned.

"Stop," said Gerald.

Gerald realized that the old man was the same one who had blackmailed him when he was still looking for Giya back then. Gerald would never have dreamed that the old man would actually come looking for him again.

“How come it’s you again,” said Gerald as he frowned slightly.

“Ah! My grandson! It’s wonderful that you’re here now! Humph! These guards won’t let me in! Tell them to let me in!” said the old man with his hands on his waist.

“Why do you want to go in there? What do you need this time? I’ve already helped you before and I even cured your injured leg! Stop pestering me, do you really think that I’m a nice man without any temper?” replied Gerald rather impatiently.

Gerald didn’t really mind helping people if they looked as pitiful as the beggar did. However, he had already helped him once. If the old man continued to abuse Gerald’s pity, he would definitely be crossing the line.

“Why would you say that, grandson? What do you mean I’m pestering you? You just resemble my lost grandson a lot! If he isn’t dead, he should be around the same age as you are this year!” said the old man, his tone suddenly grievous as he lowered his head.

“What nonsense are you spouting? That’s it, I’m beating you up!”

Just as they were about to hit him, Gerald took pity after hearing the old man’s tale and he raised his hand slightly.

“Yes, Mr. Crawford!” shouted both guards as soon as they saw his gesture. Both of them then returned to their initial positions.

Seeing that, the old man sat on the porch with a sad expression on his face.

Gerald just couldn't bear looking at the beggar's poor state so he fished out a hundred dollar note from his wallet.

“I get it, you want money too, right? But I warn you, this is the last time I'm giving any to you. Now leave!”

He was aware that it would become a bad habit of the old man to depend on him if Gerald kept giving him money.

Still, it wasn't like Gerald could stop himself from doing it. The old man was rather old and he couldn't just turn a blind eye and let others beat him up.

“It's not money that I want, my grandson! I just want to go in and have a bath! Just look at how shabby my clothes are!” said the old man with a chuckle.

Gerald then pointed at the old man before saying, “I'm warning you now. Don't address me as your grandson ever again! If it's just a bath you need, there's a bathroom nearby. Go ahead and take your shower there!”

After saying that, Gerald handed some money to the guards before turning away to leave.

The guards instantly understood what he meant, and said, “D*mn old man! Mr. Crawford is so kind! He’s allowing you to take your bath there, so come along already!”

He then began dragging the old man away.

“Thank you, my grandson!”

“I told you to stop f*cking calling me that!”

The incident wasn’t really a big issue for Gerald so he simply headed to his hotel room to take a shower and retire for the night.

Not long after his shower however, he heard a knock on the door. Upon opening it, he was shocked beyond words.

It was the old man again!

“D*mn it, what are you doing here? Actually, how did you get in here?” asked Gerald, slightly stupefied.

In order to use the elevator in this hotel, one would first need to have a hotel room access card. What more, Gerald was staying on the VIP floor. To get to this specific floor, the person would also have to pass through a security door.

Not only did the old man get past all that, he was also able to find the exact room Gerald was staying in!

The old man simply chuckled before saying, “I came to look for you, my grandson. Could you arrange a place for me to stay?”

“Also, I hope you haven’t forgotten that I’ve helped you before. I was the one who had given you the clues to look for that girl back then,” added the old man as he chuckled again.

“Now I just want to know how you got here,” replied Gerald as he scratched the back of his head in resignation.

While the old man certainly did look cleaner now, whenever he grinned, Gerald could sense that he was no nice man.

“If you’re talking about those glass doors, they were easy to get past. I just gently poked them with my finger. All of those machines out there are out of order as well, so that’s how I got up here!”

As soon as the old man was done with his explanation, a loud noise was heard.

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The door swung open and in rushed ten security guards, each armed with an electric baton. They had finally managed to track down the old man with the help of the surveillance footage.

“You old b*stard! There you are!”

The guards then immediately surrounded him.

“Apologies Mr. Crawford! This old man sneaked into the lobby after his bath when we weren’t paying attention to him! He apparently heard your room number from the female receptionist then he ruined all the machines needed to get up here! Apologies again, Mr. Crawford! We’ll beat him up then kick him out, right this instant!”

Gerald didn’t know how to respond at that moment. Everything about that old man just made him feel uneasy.

At that moment, Gerald’s phone began to ring. It was a call from Queta.

Gerald had earlier sent a Line message to her regarding all the new things he had discovered. She must have just read it.

Glancing at the old man again, Gerald then answered the call.

“I assume you’ve read the message, Queta?”

“I have... What should I do now, Gerald? Will I... Will I really be able to find my mother?” asked Queta anxiously.

“Yes, and don’t worry. I’m looking for her too. Just wait for a few more days for me to resolve all the things I currently have on hand. Once I’m done, I’ll go there with you! I’d

honestly be worried if you went to the Salford Province alone!” replied Gerald with a faint smile.

“Sounds good! I’m feeling much more assured now!”

After a brief chat, Gerald hung up. Seeing that he had ended his call, the guards were just about to drag the old man out when the old man suddenly began shouting, “Salford Province? My grandson, I want to go there too! That’s my hometown! Bring me along, my grandson!”

With a little struggling, the old man managed to break himself free from the grasps of the security guards. He then rushed toward Gerald before begging again.

“That’s my hometown! My grandson, could you take me home?”

Gerald scanned the man from head to toe after hearing his pleas. The old man looked like he was quite eager to go there. He seemed to be quite agitated as well.

As Gerald thought about it, he realized that he didn’t really have too bad an impression of that old man. He was just annoyed by how shameful and dastardly he was.

“Fine, I’ll get someone to send you there!”

“I heard what you said through the phone earlier. It seems like you and another young girl want to look for someone in the Salford Province! I’m quite familiar with the place, so I can definitely help you find that person! You’ve already helped me so much so I’ll definitely lend a hand in this!” said the old man.

Hearing this, Gerald felt as though the old man had finally said something sensible for once.

“As if Mr. Crawford would ever need your help! Get lost!” roared one of the security guards.

“Humph! Just ask him about my information reliability! If I didn’t tell him where that young lass was, do you think he would be able to find her that soon?”

“You!-”

“That’s enough. Just take him away... Get a room and some food for him. And find someone to send him back to the Salford Province tomorrow!” said Gerald as he shook his head in resignation.

Though the old man had claimed that he wanted to help Gerald, Gerald couldn’t help but laugh bitterly at the thought.

After that, he retired for the night.

A quiet and peaceful sleep later, Gerald received another call when morning came. It was Mr. Weyham’s granddaughter, Melissa.

It was then when Gerald remembered Melissa’s invitation to the gathering that she had organized.

Since he wasn't that close with Melissa, he immediately tried thinking up an excuse to reject her.

"Hello, Gerald! From the moment you agreed to attend my gathering, my grandpa's been quite happy! He's even told me to serve you well!" said Melissa through the phone.

It was now getting increasingly awkward for Gerald. Mr. Weyham had been there when he agreed so of course he knew about it. What more, Melissa was quite a sincere girl which made it even harder for him to reject her.

He eventually gave up and said that he would come soon.

Not too long after, he arrived at the gathering place in his car. He had made up his mind that he would leave after staying for just a short while.

The venue in question was the Mayberry Grand Hotel.

When he got to the door, Melissa was already there waiting for him.

Beside her stood a mature and rather sexy lady who seemed to be in her thirties. Her hair reached all the way down to her waist and she seemed to be quite slim as well. Overall, she looked like a woman with a good disposition.

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Her skin was quite fair as well.

When he saw her, Gerald simply nodded with a smile.

Melissa chuckled when she saw him do that. She then said, "She's my cousin, Gerald. She's a looker, isn't she? She came over to have some fun with me."

Gerald replied with a simple nod.

"But just so you know, she's already married! She was a beauty even during her school years and though so many years have passed since then, she's still as gorgeous as ever!" said Melissa in a teasing tone as she laughed.

"From her reaction, I'm now sure that you're Mr. Crawford. It's a pleasure to meet you! I'm Rosalie Owens but since I'm older than both of you, you can just call me Sister Owens!" said Rosalie with a smile.

"By the way, Mr. Crawford, I'm sure you already know that my cousin's family is quite powerful in Northbay! She's even teaching in a university there too!" added Melissa.

Gerald nodded again as he greeted, "It's a pleasure to meet you as well, Sister Owens!"

The three of them then entered.

Not long after, a luxury car that looked to be at least a hundred and fifty thousand dollars arrived at the entrance of the hotel.

The car's driver got out and respectfully opened the door of the passenger seat right next to the driver's. Out stepped a rich young man in a suit holding an expensive looking pocket watch.

"Mr. Long!" said the driver respectfully.

The person who had stepped out was Yunus Long, and he had a wicked smile on his face as he looked at the hotel.

He then moved to open the backseat door before saying, "We're here now Giya. Come on out now."

Giya simply got out without saying a word. She had only put on some light makeup, but she still looked very beautiful.

When Yunus saw her, his eyes immediately brightened.

The first time he met her, he felt that she was different from the other women. He could safely say this since he had indeed met a lot of different women.

Giya was in another league since she was the first woman he had met with such a good disposition. Because of that, he tried to woo her numerous times.

Since he was the third young master of the Long family in Yanken, as long as he approved of it, an endless number of girls would happily throw themselves onto him. At the time, he was even the one making a move on her. It was only logical for her to fall for him, or at least that's what he thought.

Giya however, hadn't even paid him any attention.

After some investigating, he came to learn that she had fallen for someone else. That was the moment when Mr. Long started pressuring the Quarringtons.

Eventually, he was able to force Giya to have a meal with him.

"Oh, don't be so unhappy, Giya! Though I'm a bit of a dandy, I'm still a rather good guy! You know, there are many people out there who appear nice but they're honestly just hiding their true colors! There aren't many people out there as straightforward and honest as I am!"

"Thank you but I'll be the judge of that!" said Giya coldly.

"Whatever you say. Now come on, let's go!" replied Yunus with a smile.

After saying that, he stretched his hand out and tried to hug Giya's waist but she immediately dodged away before glaring at him.

"Can't I even slightly touch you? You're my fiancée!" said Yunus.

"And who made that decision? I didn't agree to be engaged with you. Behave yourself, Mr. Long!" Giya said that rather tensely.

Aside from disgust, she had no other feelings for him.

Since her family was facing a crisis, her parents had advised her to be with him for their sake. She had honestly tried compromising with the Longs so that she could slowly, but eventually come to accept Yunus.

In the end, however, she knew she had failed. She only felt disgust toward him, and there was zero chance for any other feelings to develop.

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She was so disgusted by him that she had already begun filling her head with rather extreme ideas.

Giya had only attended the meal because her father had persuaded her to go that day. Thinking back, she wasn't even sure if she should have taken that first step.

“Well, it doesn't really matter. The engagement will happen sooner or later! Let's not talk about that now. Come, let's just go in already!” said Yunus as he brought her into the hotel.

Meanwhile, Gerald had just entered a private room. Melissa had invited quite a lot of people that day and aside from her cousin, Rosalie, most of the others were young people who looked to be around the same age.

Some of them seemed to be from Mayberry while the others came from elsewhere. The only constant was that they all treated Gerald extremely respectfully and cordially.

This was especially so for Melissa who had constantly been serving him food as she sat beside him.

Melissa had even invited Gerald to have fun with them that night, since there was another group of friends who would be attending then.

Though Gerald had initially planned to leave after sitting there for just a while, not long after they entered the room, Melissa ordered for the food to be served. As a result, he couldn't help but stay and continue having a few more drinks with them.

The group of people was rather good at drinking.

As everyone drank and chatted with one another, at some point, one of the guests started getting a little drunk.

It was Melissa's cousin, Rosalie.

"I don't think I can take anymore... I'm getting a bit dizzy so I'll just retreat to the car for now and get a nap. You guys go on ahead and continue drinking," said Rosalie.

"Huh? I thought you were a good drinker! Also why the car? There are rooms in this hotel. Let me just get one for you to take a rest in. Ah, I also have a bottle of soda with me. Here, drink some of it to make yourself more comfortable!" said Melissa as she opened the bottle and handed it over to Rosalie.

Rosalie simply nodded slightly. She really looked like she couldn't take anymore.

As Melissa told a waiter to prepare a room, Rosalie could barely stand properly. It was apparent that she was really bad at drinking.

“Hey Melissa, let me help you get Sister Owens upstairs!” volunteered one of the young men in the room.

While Melissa was beautiful, Rosalie’s looks surpassed even hers. Despite the fact that she was much older, she exuded a special charm.

Adding that to her good disposition, it was almost certain for every man who locked their eyes on her to eventually be charmed.

“Oh, get lost! Don’t assume I don’t know what you’re thinking! Let me tell you, my sister is an Owens and she comes from Northbay! She’s not someone you can simply take advantage of!” said Melissa, in an annoyed tone.

Though she said that, she definitely looked like she needed help. It would be both difficult and tiring for her to get Rosalie upstairs all by herself.

She then looked at Gerald before saying, “I trust you, Mr. Crawford. Could you help me get my cousin upstairs?”

“Sure thing,” said Gerald while nodding slightly.

Though it was rather inconvenient for him to do so, he couldn't just reject Melissa's plea. He wasn't thinking of any wicked thoughts either so he simply obliged.

Eventually, both of them managed to get Rosalie into a room on the seventh floor.

With the back of her hand placed against her forehead, Rosalie quickly fell asleep as soon as she got to her bed.

Melissa sighed before saying, "Let her take a rest for now... I didn't think she was this bad at drinking. On the contrary, you're quite good at that, aren't you Mr. Crawford?"

"I'm not too bad at it."

As he said that, the sound of retching could be heard. Rosalie was vomiting terribly and she looked extremely unwell.

"Oh god, are you alright cousin? I'll go get some medicine to help you sober up. Could I trouble you to help look after my cousin for a while, Mr. Crawford? I'll be right back!" said Melissa as she rushed out of the room.

Gerald however, didn't know how to look after her.

After vomiting for a while, Rosalie eventually fell asleep again in a daze.

Feeling it would be imprudent of him to remain in the room, he took the room's access card and stood by the door. Gerald would wait for Melissa to come back there.

Not long after, he heard Rosalie's voice from inside the room. However, her voice suggested that she was struggling. It was almost like she was being constricted by something.

Gerald didn't pay much attention to the sounds at first. He thought that it was just her being drunk.

However, the more he listened, the stranger the noises got. There seemed to be other noises coming from within the room as well.

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The more he pondered about the noises, the stranger the situation felt. Eventually, he decided to open the door to see what was going on. What he saw made his eyes widen in astonishment.

A strange man was trying to undress Rosalie in the room! Rosalie seemed to have been struggling for quite a while and tears were already in her eyes.

When the man saw Gerald, he simply smiled coldly before jumping off the bed and diving out the window.

But this was the seventh floor.

Gerald immediately rushed toward the window and looked down. However, there was no trace of the man at all.

'Where the hell did he go?' Gerald thought to himself, stunned.

Turning around to check on Rosalie, Gerald found himself blushing deeply. As he was just about to cover her up with some blankets, he heard footsteps coming from outside.

"For heaven's sake, why are you so annoying? Gerald's already looking after my cousin, there's no need for you to come along! You aren't getting anything by doing this!" said Melissa's voice a little down the hallway.

It would appear that the group he had been drinking with earlier had followed Melissa as well. From her tone, it was clear that they had insisted on coming along, possibly because they saw her leaving to get medicine earlier.

'D*mn it! What should I even do now?'

Gerald was stupefied. What kind of misunderstandings would arise if they saw him in a room with a half-undressed Rosalie?

What more, when he attempted to help put her clothes on, Rosalie simply looked at him with teary eyes and told him not to come any closer. To make matters worse, she started calling for help with a faint voice!

'D*mn it all!'

At that moment, knocking could be heard at the door.

“Gerald? Are you in there? Could you open the door- ...Wait, cousin? Is that you? What’s wrong?” shouted Melissa from behind the door. She had clearly heard her cousin’s voice calling for help by now.

“Gerald? Mr. Crawford? Are you in there?” asked Melissa in her shocked state.

“Yes, I’m still in here!” replied Gerald as he immediately went to open the door.

“What took you so long to open the door? Could you have been- Ah!”

Though she had initially meant to tease him, when she saw the scene before her, she immediately let out a scream.

Hearing that, the other people who came with Melissa peeked in and some of them began screaming as well.

Everyone there was now looking at Gerald in disbelief. Though Mr. Crawford looked like a gentleman, to think that he was actually such a cunning and dirty person!

“What... What did you do to my cousin, Mr. Crawford?!” shouted Melissa.

“I... You’re misunderstanding the situation! I didn’t do anything!”

“If it wasn’t you, then why would my cousin do something like that to herself?” retorted Melissa.

“Someone else was in here! When he saw me after I came back in to check on her, he leaped out the room’s window!”

Gerald was definitely having a hard time defending himself and explaining the situation properly.

“We’re on the seventh floor!”

A few of the men rushed toward the window before shouting, “Holy, it’s so high up here! If anyone jumps from this height, they’ll be crippled for life if they don’t die!”

As Melissa covered Rosalie with some blankets, she said, “I trusted you, Mr. Crawford... To think that you were so dirty and wicket... I can’t believe my grandpa actually praised you for having good conduct! You’re as disgusting as they come!”

“She’s right! It never once occurred to me that Mr. Crawford was actually someone like this! He hid his true colors so well! At least the other rich heirs act straightforwardly!” said a girl disdainfully.

“I swear to god, I wasn’t involved in this! It’s all a huge misunderstanding! Go look at the surveillance footage! I was standing outside this entire time!” replied Gerald.

Someone then immediately went off to notify the manager. It wasn’t long before the manager arrived.

“Fetch me the surveillance footage for this floor right this instant!” ordered Gerald.

“Surveillance footage? Apologies, Mr. Crawford, but our surveillance system went out of order yesterday! I’m rather anxious about it since we still haven’t managed to repair it yet!” replied the manager.

“How do you know who I am?”

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This was the question Gerald posed as he looked at the manager.

The manager simply smiled apologetically before saying, “I’ve met you once at the chamber of commerce, Mr. Crawford. Also, your elder sister, CEO Jessica Crawford, has given me a lot of attention in the past! It would be impossible for me not to know who you are!”

“Humph! Stop trying to put up a show here, Gerald! Literally everyone in Mayberry involved in the business field needs to pay at least some respect to you! We know both of you are on the same side! Why’s the surveillance system broken now? Don’t you think it’s a bit too coincidental?” said Melissa rather angrily in a loud voice.

By then, several other people who were staying the night had walked out of their rooms to see what the commotion was about. It wasn’t long before the floor’s hallways became crowded. Soon after, the gossiping started as well.

“What’s going on?”

“It appears that some rich heir saw a drunk girl and dragged her into a room. Thankfully the girl’s cousin managed to stop him before he could r*pe her! But really though, what a wicked b*stard he is!”

“Oh lord, and here I thought I’d only be able to witness such things on television! I can’t believe it happened in real life too! Disgusting!”

As the discussions went on, some nosy person even contacted the news hotline.

While all that was happening, Yunus was having a meal with Giya on the hotel’s third floor. Mayberry Grand Hotel was a hotel that prided itself in its entertainment, leisure, and dining experiences.

The two were currently seated in a very grand looking restaurant. Despite that, Giya had only taken a few bites of her food.

At that moment, a group of customers entered the restaurant. After sitting down on the table beside the duo, they began discussing what had happened upstairs.

“Hey, have you heard? Something big is happening on the seventh floor!”

After listening in to snippets of what they had to say, Yunus sipped his red wine before saying, “Why are there so many wicked and dirty people in the world...” He then proceeded to smile subtly.

Giya on the other hand, frowned slightly.

“So what happened after that? Are they still arguing about that? Actually hold on, who’s the rich man in question?”

“I heard that he’s someone extremely influential and powerful! I’m not too sure, but some have said that it’s Mr. Crawford himself!” said one of the seated people.

“What? Mr. Crawford? That’s impossible, isn’t it?”

“Well of course it is! Why would he even do such a thing?” shouted Giya out of the blue as she looked at the people sitting next to them.

“...Huh? Why are you being angry with us? We’re just talking about what we heard. If you want to be sure, just go upstairs and check for yourself!” replied another man.

“Anyway, what does Mr. Crawford look like? Is he handsome? He’s particularly mysterious, isn’t he?”

“He’s rather handsome, but still, he did something so imprudent! I heard a few of them addressing him as Gerald or something. I say he’s definitely Mr. Crawford!”

When she heard Gerald’s name, Giya’s body trembled slightly.

“What... What did you say? What was his name?” asked Giya as she stood up.

“G-Gerald!” replied the person beside her, slightly intimidated.

“...That’s impossible. It’s definitely impossible!” said Giya in utter disbelief.

When she saw a few people heading upstairs, presumably to catch a glimpse of the scene, Giya ran to the seventh floor as well.

Yunus only smiled bitterly as he watched her leave. As he took another sip of red wine, he took his phone out and made a call. “You can come upstairs now!”

After that, he too began ascending the building.

“Move aside, please! We’re reporters!”

At that moment, the seventh floor was getting increasingly noisy.

The ones who had shouted were reporters from Mayberry News, and they were currently rushing toward the scene. With any luck, the incident would be the headline for the following day’s newspaper.

Gerald himself was surrounded by several people. He had neither the means to defend himself nor any logical way to explain the situation.

Giya on the other hand, had just arrived at the scene and she took a step back in disbelief the moment she saw Gerald.

“That’s... That’s impossible! It’s preposterous! Gerald isn’t someone like that!” murmured Giya softly to herself.

“Impossible? He’s right there! Caught red-handed! He had tried to do something improper to a drunk girl and even the victim is saying that he’s the perpetrator!” retorted one of the guests who had heard Giya’s comment.

“Lissa? Why are you here? What happened?”

The voice had come from Yunus who saw Melissa as he approached the scene. Behind him, was a group of bodyguards.

“...Eh? Yunus? I’m so glad that you’re here! It’s Sister Owens! Something has happened to her!”

Chapter 609

“What? Sister Owens is the victim?” asked Yunus, stunned.

“She is!” replied Melissa before explaining everything she knew about the incident. Rosalie was slowly sobering up by then.

Despite her dizziness, she still glared at Gerald with resentment. Though she had been very drunk earlier, she was aware enough to know that it was Gerald and her cousin who had helped her into the room.

While she was still dazed, someone forcefully tried to take her clothes off! Who else could have done so if not Gerald? Thinking about it made Rosalie's eyes water.

“How bold of you! I hope that you realize that the Longs have had a good relationship with the Owens for generations! How dare you do something so improper to Sister Owens! Audacious! The Longs of Yanken will definitely make you pay a heavy price for this, regardless of how powerful you are!” said Yunus coldly.

“Huh? The Longs of Yanken? Holy cr*p it's Mr. Long! This has become a much bigger deal now! Not only are the Owens involved, but also the Longs!”

“My god, though Mr. Crawford is quite powerful, how would he ever be able to endure the wrath from both Mr. Long and the Owens? This situation is really getting...”

The group of people there started whispering among themselves after hearing all that.

“Yunus, please seek justice on my cousin's behalf! She was nearly humiliated by this b*stard!” shouted Melissa.

“Oh don't worry, I plan to do exactly that!” replied Yunus as he smiled wickedly.

After saying that, he immediately sent a swift kick toward Gerald.

“Beat him up real good! I don't care how f*cking rich he is! He's bold enough to humiliate an Owens, is he? Beat him up without any mercy!” shouted Yunus.

Hearing his command, a few of his bodyguards immediately rushed forward and surrounded Gerald. The young men and women present were no longer afraid of Gerald either since Yunus was on their side.

Just as they were about to attack, Giya suddenly shouted, “Stop!”

She was in tears as she shouted.

“Giya? Why are you here?” asked Gerald, stunned when he saw her.

Though she didn’t verbally reply, she turned to look at Gerald. Her utter disappointment was apparent in her eyes.

She then said to Yunus, “Mr. Long, please let him off. I’m begging you...”

“Let him go? Humph! Giya, it’s not like I don’t want to help you, but this person is too wicked to be let off without being taught a lesson! I won’t be able to face Mr. Owens and the others if I don’t do anything now! Don’t meddle in this!” replied Yunus coldly.

“I’m begging you! Just let him go!” pleaded Giya.

Giya was in despair because of the unexpected incident. To think the person that she was in love with turned out to be such a disgusting man. She just couldn’t accept it.

However, it was even more difficult for her to just watch Gerald getting beaten up right before her eyes. She could feel herself ready to burst into tears at any moment.

Seeing her reaction, Yunus gave a faint smile.

“Alright then, Giya. Since you begged so hard, I won’t personally teach him a lesson. However, since he’s created so much trouble, the others are still free to do so!”

After saying that, he waved his hand at his subordinates and they immediately retreated from the scene.

“Giya! I didn’t do any of this! You need to believe me!”

Gerald was now starting to realize something.

‘Too many coincidences have occurred tonight. Why was that person in that room?’

‘And how could Yunus just so happen to be here at this very moment?’

These thoughts swirled in Gerald’s mind as he came to the conclusion that he was being set up. A specific target to be brought down.

Despite his realization, under these circumstances, he still wouldn’t be able to explain himself well.

“I’m not hearing any of it!” shouted Giya as she glared at Gerald one final time before pushing the others aside and rushing downstairs.

“Giya!”

Before he left with his bodyguards to catch up with Giya, Yunus motioned his eyes toward Gerald as he passed by a man dressed in black. The long-haired man with an extremely pale face had been standing in a corner this entire time.

“You’re not allowed to leave, Gerald! You owe my cousin an explanation regarding what happened today!” shouted Melissa.

A group of people actively prevented Gerald from leaving the scene.

Chapter 610

Just as Gerald felt like he had already hit rock bottom, he felt a chill run down his spine as a hand was placed on his shoulder.

When he turned around, he saw a man with hair as long as a woman’s standing right behind him. Gerald felt almost pressured by the man’s immense intimidation alone.

“Step aside! What are all of you doing here?” shouted an old voice out of the blue.

“What are we doing here? What are you doing here old man? Stop shoving others around!”

The crowd then began scolding the person who had first shouted.

“I’m here to look for my grandson! You’re all just standing in the way!” sneered the owner of the old voice as he squeezed himself into the room.

Seeing how shabbily he was dressed, the people in the room hurriedly opened a path for him as they tried to avoid him like the plague.

The long-haired man on the other hand, simply glared coldly at the old man as he retracted his hand.

“What are you doing? Let go of my grandson!” growled the old man as he stepped forward and shoved Melissa to the side.

Gerald could hardly believe his eyes. It was the old beggar that kept pestering him.

“He’s your grandson?” asked Melissa, stunned.

“Humph! What, don’t we look alike? My grandson, I went looking for you today but that group of people said that you weren’t there! I thought you had abandoned me and headed for the Salford Province alone! I’m glad you’re still here, now let’s go!”

The old man wasn’t even going to bother asking about the details of the incident Gerald had found himself in. He simply grabbed Gerald’s arm and began to pull him out of the room.

“Who said you could leave!” growled the long-haired man, his eyes both frigid and ferocious as he immediately tried to grab Gerald’s other arm.

His attempt, however, was blocked when the old man grabbed onto his wrist. After the old man lifted his hand away from Gerald's arm, the long-haired man instantly retreated backward, his back hitting the wall.

At that moment, the long-haired youth started sweating profusely. All he could do was stare at the old man in shock.

Gerald knew that his only way of escaping at that moment, was by relying on that old man. Thus, he simply remained silent as the old man led him to the exit.

"Are you alright, my grandson?" asked the old man with a smile. They were now standing beside a riverbank in a park.

"I'm fine. Thank you, sir," replied Gerald, his voice filled with gratitude.

If the old man hadn't appeared earlier, Gerald would probably still be there trying to explain himself. It was pretty clear that he wasn't going to be able to leave easily.

Despite feeling grateful, Gerald was feeling equally as confused.

'How is this old man always able to casually appear whenever I'm facing difficulties? He's also always indirectly helping me...'

'That's not all, how did he even know where to look for me today in that hotel?'

As Gerald thought about it, he looked toward the old man before asking, “Sir, how exactly were you able to find me today? Were you stalking me this entire time?”

As soon as Gerald asked that, the old man seemed somewhat embarrassed.

“In all honesty, I was. You’ve helped me before, remember. Since I knew you were in trouble, I couldn’t just turn a blind eye! I knew I had to help no matter what!”

He then smiled before continuing, “You allowed me to take that bath and even treated me to a meal yesterday. I suppose you could say we’re both even now.”

“You mentioned me being in trouble... How exactly did you find out about that?”

The old man suddenly seemed much more mysterious than Gerald had initially thought.

“Well you see, I was sleeping in the garage last night and I just so happened to hear a few people discussing how to frame you today! After I heard their plan, I immediately ran looking for you. As was expected, you fell right into their trap!” explained the old man.

The old man then elaborated a bit more.

While he was looking for a place to rest in the underground garage, he had heard Yunus making a call. It turned out that Yunus had conspired with Melissa to frame Gerald today!

All the puzzle pieces were coming together now. Both love and resentment had played a part in this event. No wonder Melissa had tried her best to invite him over to the so-called gathering she had organized. It was all just a giant scheme she had conspired with Yunus!

Every step had been meticulously plotted out.

Even before the old man told him about this, Gerald had already thought about this possibility. There were simply too many coincidences happening in one night for the incident to seem natural.

Now however, Gerald was being faced with a dilemma.

‘Why on earth would Melissa want to frame me? We don’t even hold any grudges toward each other!’

“Humph. Silly boy... You’re so much wealthier than they are but you’re too kind. They don’t need a valid reason to plot against you,” said the old man with a smile as he shook his head.

“Also, this incident is much more serious than how you’re imagining it to be. If I hadn’t dragged you away, your tendons would have been ruined by now. He was aiming to do it on purpose of course. And he would definitely have repeated the tendon injuring process many more times had I not saved you!” said the man based on what he could earlier see.

After hearing that, Gerald was filled with great fear.

Previously, the bulk of the troubles he faced were mostly related to interests. He was unwilling to make it difficult for others, so that he wouldn't be seen as cruel or ruthless.

Now however, Gerald finally understood what his sister had meant. If a person wasn't cruel enough, they wouldn't be able to stand firm.

Even if the person was an influential and powerful heir, they could still easily be ruined if they didn't project a ruthless and strong enough aura.

After heaving a long sigh, Gerald's eyes slowly turned icy cold.

Chapter 611

While that was happening...

"Mr. Long, I apologize but I've failed!"

"What? How did you manage to fail, Scorpion? Can't you take down a mere person like Gerald?" said Yunus through the phone, dumbfounded. He was in the washroom when he received the call from Scorpion.

"I apologize, but an expert helped him escape! If I hadn't retracted my arm in time it would've been broken by now!" replied Scorpion as he held the phone with his good hand. He was making the call from inside a car.

Scorpion's arm—which had been placed on a flat surface—was now pulsing, his tendons all protruding and red. It almost seemed like fresh worms had covered his entire arm. At the moment, he couldn't even move it.

His forehead was covered with cold sweat and he felt rather weak.

“D*mn it all! That b*stard's really f*cking lucky! But either way, we already have a good start! Once the headline goes public tomorrow, he'll definitely become extremely infamous! The Owens won't let him off easily and my family will just help them then! It's only a matter of time before we ruin him completely! Also, go get some rest for now, Scorpion!” said Yunus before hanging up the call.

As soon as the call ended, Yunus saw that Melissa was calling him now.

“Hey Yunus? Wasn't there too much of a commotion today? You just told me to trick him and get him into the room right? I distinctly remember that you said that my cousin wouldn't suffer any losses in this. Why did you end up doing that?” asked Melissa rather anxiously.

“What losses? Rosalie didn't go through any of that. She wasn't even humiliated! The most important thing is that we got the results we wanted. Isn't that what matters the most?” replied Yunus in a persuasive tone.

“Humph! How could you say she wasn't humiliated under those circumstances? She was half naked in the end! Don't forget she's an Owens! We need to settle this affair quickly or it's going to be difficult to explain all this to our families!” said Melissa before sighing.

“I really regret helping you now... You have no idea how much trouble I’ve gone through. I’ve been accompanying and entertaining Gerald since last night you know! I was so afraid that he would refuse to attend my gathering. If he really did end up doing that, I would’ve had to think of another way to get him to go there!”

“Also I hope that you realize that I’ve officially offended a rich heir in Mayberry because of you. He and his sister’s wealth isn’t too far off from what the Longs have! I missed a great opportunity to befriend a rich youth because of you!”

Yunus then burst into laughter before saying, “What exactly are you regretting about? You have the Longs of Yanken backing you up now! It’s like you’ve just gained the most powerful and influential people on your side! Regardless of where you are in Weston, everywhere there is under the influence of my family! I hope you realize that Gerald only has influence here in Mayberry! Alright, since you helped me get Giya this time, I promise to grant you a wish too!” replied Yunus as he smiled bitterly in resignation.

Only after saying that was he able to slowly coax and pacify Melissa.

Meanwhile, Gerald had just returned to his hotel. However, there was a distinct difference now. The entire hotel had been enclosed.

Zack, Michael, and the Drake & Tyson duo were already waiting for him inside.

They had received some news regarding the incident today, which led them to pay most of their attention on it.

Initially, they had thought that the Longs would be hesitant and not daring enough to actually make a move on Gerald. It turned out, however, that everyone's judgment had clearly been wrong.

"We've caught the news director, Mr. Crawford! The f*cker was already arranging for the news headline for tomorrow at home!" said both Drake and Tyson as they rushed into the private room.

"Bring him in!" said Gerald in a cold voice as he sat down on the boss's chair.

He couldn't help it. Since Yunus had spent so much effort to frame him, he needed to tackle the news issue first. Yunus's slander on Gerald could not be exposed under any circumstances.

"What are you all doing? Unhand me!" shouted a middle-aged man who was soon dragged into the room by a few bodyguards.

The man in question was the news director who had been bribed by Yunus. He went by the name of Leach.

"Nice to meet you Mr. Leach. I'm sure you already know why I brought you here today. Where are the things that your subordinates captured today?" asked Gerald.

"I have no clue what you're hinting at, Mr. Crawford. Also if I may, you'd better reconsider what you're doing right now! It's only fair, right, and proper for my subordinates to take photographs! I'll never hand over any photographs they take regardless of what you do to me!"

Chapter 612

Mr. Leach's tone was icy as he said that.

“Fair, right, and proper you say? As if! From what we've found, your subordinates had been lying in wait in their cars for at least two hours before the event even took place! Are you saying that they were able to foresee tonight's incident that early on?”

“While the surveillance system in the hotel was conveniently out of order today, they're still working just fine in other places! Let's just cut to the chase, Mr. Leach. I'm sure you know a lot more about today's incident than me, am I right?” interrogated Gerald.

This was the first time Gerald had ever been framed.

His sister had previously told him that doing business would be both a test, and a chance for him to gain experience. Gerald hadn't felt the weight of her words before this, but he realized just how true her statement was now.

Despite hearing Gerald's words, Mr. Leach refused to talk and simply averted his gaze.

To him, regardless of how powerful Gerald was, it was only a matter of fame. Sure, Gerald and his sister were famous, but the Longs from Yanken were different. They were an entire family.

Mr. Leach would much rather offend Mr. Crawford alone rather than Mr. Long and the rest of his family.

“Since you’re remaining quiet, I’m certain now that you’ve been trying to deliberately ruin me. It seems like I don’t need to play the nice guy anymore!” said Gerald.

“Humph. I know what you’re trying to do. I anticipated that something like this would happen so I’ve already informed my subordinates to expose the entire incident if I don’t return in an hour. While they’re at it, they’ll make a police report as well!” replied Mr. Leach.

“Oh, is that so? Mr. Leach you’re overthinking it. I only called you over to ask you a few questions. I’ve no intention of doing anything to you. You may leave now...” said Gerald with a faint smile.

After he said that, Mr. Leach was allowed to leave. Confused, he slowly got up to head for the exit but then he saw Gerald taking his phone out.

Gerald then began playing a video on his phone.

“Daddy! H-help! Save me!” screamed a girl’s voice in fear through Gerald’s phone.

When Mr. Leach heard her voice, he immediately rushed back in before anxiously saying, “What are you doing? Is that my daughter’s voice?”

“Humph! You don’t have to worry about her. Your daughter’s now in your village hometown. You know, our company’s film and television department have gone there to shoot a video about safety education. It was only natural for us to invite your daughter for the shooting since she’s so beautiful! Her role is of a young girl who’s been kidnapped and if her father isn’t able to meet a compromise with the kidnappers, she’ll

be killed!” said Zack with a smile before taking the phone from Gerald’s hand and showing it to Mr. Leach.

When he watched the video, he found that what Zack had said was indeed true.

Mr. Leach gulped slightly at that moment. Their implicit message to him was clear as day.

Mr. Long had indeed arranged for the entire incident to happen, just to slander Mr. Crawford. Mr. Leach knew full well that he was the one who was wrong here.

Even if someone wanted to take revenge on Mr. Leach, he knew he couldn’t say anything.

However, his daughter was safe now and she was even having fun with Mr. Crawford’s staff. Mr. Crawford had given him a great deal of respect and he couldn’t just keep his act up.

“...Mr. Crawford, when they claimed that you r*ped that girl at first, I certainly didn’t believe that. I felt like there was some kind of misunderstanding, and I now know that it’s a terribly, terribly huge misunderstanding!” said Mr. Leach, his face pale.

“You’re not the one at fault here, Mr. Leach. Also, we aren’t scummy enough to freely blackmail others like Yunus. Tell us how we should resolve this. Understand that if you do deliberately try to ruin me, I’ll definitely not be willing and happy about it!” said Gerald.

“Alright, I’ll tell all of you the truth now. Yunus told us to modify the photographs in order to slander you. His goal is to get the Owens to become your enemies! I, for one, believe that you would never do such a dirty and wicked thing, Mr. Crawford!” explained Mr. Leach, his entire body covered in cold sweat.

Now that Mr. Leach had told them the truth, Gerald looked toward Zack and nodded slightly. Zack then showed Mr. Leach another video.

As he watched the video, his eyes widened in disbelief. Mr. Leach was soon so angry that his entire face turned pale.

Chapter 613

“Are those... Mr. Long’s subordinates?”

The video displayed a house in the village, and in it, five men in black suits were simultaneously being tied and beaten up. All their faces were swollen by the time Gerald’s subordinates stopped and began standing guard over the captives.

There was no doubt about it. Those tied up men could only be Mr. Long’s subordinates.

“Mr. Leach, Yunus is an extremely wicked man. Since he was afraid that you’d go back on your words, he ordered for some of his subordinates to capture your daughter this afternoon! You’re lucky that our men got there first!” replied Zack with a smile.

After hearing his explanation, Mr. Leach was now able to piece together the entire incident.

“That Yunus! How wicked that man is! I was almost fooled by him! Mr. Crawford, I’ve severely wronged you this time!” said Mr. Leach as he apologetically bowed repeatedly in front of Gerald.

His apology was sincere. After all, it was Gerald’s indirect involvement that saved his daughter. Mr. Leach knew now that Yunus was the kind of person who would use all kinds of underhanded schemes and means just to achieve his goals.

If Yunus had actually been able to capture his daughter, bad things would definitely have happened to her if Mr. Leach had chosen to go against him.

Thinking about it alone made Mr. Leach shiver with both regret and fear. Simultaneously, he was also feeling guilty and thankful toward Mr. Crawford.

After a while, he lowered his voice before saying, “...Mr. Crawford, I have a recording here with me that I’m certain you’ll be extremely interested in!”

Hearing that, Gerald and Zack looked at each other silently for a moment. Gerald then nodded his head and Mr. Leach slid out a recording.

It seemed that Gerald no longer needed to worry about the news issue anymore. Mr. Leach himself seemed to know what he needed to do to handle the rest of the mess.

All that was left to do, was for Gerald to properly deal with Yunus.

At that moment, Gerald's phone suddenly started ringing. To his surprise, it was a call from Tammy. As he thought about it, he realized that he hadn't met her in a while, even though she was Giya's best friend.

He guessed that she must be calling because of what had happened today between him and Giya. Giya had definitely misunderstood the situation.

As soon as he picked the phone up, he could immediately hear Tammy's dissatisfied voice saying, "What is the meaning of this, Gerald?"

"What did you do to Giya? She's been crying endlessly from the moment she got home just now! Today was supposed to be an extremely joyous day for her since she got first place for this semester! She had even been entitled the most outstanding student of recommendation to be admitted to the university! We had initially planned to host a celebratory party for her! How did things end up like this?"

"There's been some misunderstandings and I wasn't able to explain anything to her in time!" replied Gerald.

At first, Gerald cared quite a bit about how Giya viewed him since she was, after all, his friend.

Even before Tammy called, he had already thought about giving her a well-deserved explanation. With the current turn of events, it wouldn't be too difficult for him to do so anymore.

However, Gerald was unable to simply shake off the fact that Giya had been sharing a meal with his enemy. The more he thought about it, the more angry and resentful toward her he became.

He had treated her as his friend, but she ended up being together with Yunus.

‘What more is there for me to explain?’ Gerald thought to himself.

“Misunderstanding? What misunderstanding? I’ve asked her but she was unwilling to tell me anything. You’re being vague as well, so if it really is just some misunderstanding, just come over quickly and explain the whole story to her. We’re at Giya’s home now!”

Tammy was well aware of the relationship between Gerald, Mila, and Giya. However, the one causing Giya to have such excruciating pain was still Gerald. As Giya’s best friend, Tammy just couldn’t bear to see her suffering like that.

That was the reason why she snuck out to give Gerald a call in the first place.

“I refuse to go,” said Gerald in a soft voice.

‘There’s no need for me to get further entangled within this mess. I’ve already stood against the Longs for Xavia’s sake. Now there’s Giya.’

Gerald felt uneasy being in the midst of this issue, mostly because Giya was involved in the equation

“What do you mean you’re not coming? Look, I know you have Mila, but please! Even if you don’t want to continue being her friend, you need to explain the situation to her properly! After all, all of this started because of misunderstandings, no? She had fallen in love with you back then because you randomly gave her that jade bracelet! I know now that you’re Mr. Crawford and that you’re amazing and all, but don’t you think it’s a bit imprudent for you to just play with a girl’s heart like that?” replied Tammy, her voice anxious.

“I didn’t play with anyone’s heart!” said Gerald.

However, what Tammy said was enough to make Gerald reconsider. It was true that his entire relationship with Giya has started just because of some misunderstandings.

Nothing he had done at the time was on purpose.

Chapter 614

Gerald sighed to himself.

‘I’ll just go and explain it to her... I’ll reveal to her what kind of person Yunus really is!’

“Fine, I’ll head over now!” said Gerald.

It was now already six in the evening and this time, Gerald didn’t go alone. The Drake & Tyson duo followed him all the way to Giya’s home.

When they arrived at the front gates, the duo waited outside as Gerald entered.

“There, there, Giya... Please don’t be sad anymore... Though I’m not quite sure what happened between the two of you, today’s still the day you received the title of most outstanding student of recommendation to be admitted to the university... It’s a day for celebration, isn’t it?” persuaded Tammy.

“Besides, maybe one day Gerald will come to realize just how good you are!”

Giya simply sneered when she heard that.

“Stop trying to persuade me, Tammy. The thing that happened between me and Gerald isn’t as simple... Actually, forget about it. I don’t want to talk about it anymore. Whenever I think of him now, I just feel disgusted!” said Giya as she took a deep breath.

At the moment, Giya was feeling rather frightened of all men in general. After all, she had earlier seen with her very own eyes that no matter how nice a man looked, he would eventually just turn out to be some sc*mbag in secret.

If she hadn’t witnessed the scene for herself, she wouldn’t ever have believed that Gerald had done such a thing. To think that the person she used to like was no different from all the other men.

“Alright, alright, I won’t talk about it anymore... However, that doesn’t change the fact that you should be happy today! I’ve even prepared a surprise for you!” said Tammy as she sipped some red wine.

Just as everyone became curious as to what the surprise Tammy had prepared was, the doorbell was rung.

“The surprise is here! Coming!” said Tammy excitedly as she headed toward the door.

Feeling that she shouldn't show any further negative emotions, Giya broke into a faint smile as she looked at the door.

However, when she saw Gerald standing at the door, her smile gradually faded.

Tammy laughed out loud before saying, “As they say, the person who starts it must end it! I called him over so that you two can talk it out! You can settle any unhappy misunderstandings with each other now!” said Tammy.

“Why did you come?” asked Giya. Her usually charming face was now as cold as ice.

“I came to explain about what happened today. It's all just one big misunderstanding,” said Gerald.

“I don't want to hear it so you don't have to explain anything. If there isn't anything else, Mr. Crawford, then please leave. Seeing such a despicable person standing before me hurts my eyes!” replied Giya, her words icy cold.

Gerald took a deep breath before saying, “Look, I just want to sort out the misunderstandings...”

“I really don’t think that’s necessary, Mr. Crawford. It’s not a big deal whether you explain it to me or not anyway. Also, it’s already night time. It’s improper of you to be here since there are only girls here. I also don’t want Yunus to think that I’m still contacting you! So if there’s nothing else just leave already!” said Giya, colder than ever.

After hearing that, it was crystal clear to Gerald.

‘Now that I think about it, it is rather ridiculous. It was unnecessary for me to come here to try to explain myself in the first place.’

‘What more, she’s already addressing him as Yunus now instead of Mr. Long. I guess she’s finally found her true love.’

“Very well! I won’t bother you anymore!” said Gerald with a bitter smile before turning to leave.

“Hold it!” shouted Giya as Gerald stopped.

“There’s something I want to return to you.”

Chapter 615

The object in question was the jade bracelet that Gerald had given to her before.

“From this moment onward, we’ll cease to have a relationship! Humph! To think that I kept this jade bracelet with me till now... At first, I thought that it would be a nice memento to keep with me since we would never be able to be with each other! However, mementos aren’t necessary anymore! You can have it back!” said Giya coldly as she handed the bracelet over to him.

“Fine by me!”

“Also, Gerald, I hope that you’ll delete my contact number after this. You stick with your Mila and I’ll stick with Yunus. We’ll have no reason to see or even talk to each other again after that!”

“Will do!”

Gerald didn’t really have much else to say. After taking the bracelet, he simply greeted Tammy and the other girls with a silent nod before immediately leaving the premise.

“...What? Why... Why did he let you go so easily, Giya? What exactly happened between you two?” asked Tammy, her confusion apparent in her voice.

“It’s nothing, just stop asking about it. By the way, Yunus gave me a rather luxurious gift to me this afternoon. I’ll bring it over for all of you to see. Wait here while I go get it!” said Giya as she wiped her tears away and forced on a smile.

Seeing how hard Giya was forcing herself to smile, her friends just couldn’t bring themselves to eat, drink, or enjoy themselves.

“Giya, could you please not be like this? Look, if you don’t want to talk about it, that’s fine, but could you please refrain from torturing yourself? We all know that you don’t like Yunus. You clearly like Gerald so why are you lying to yourself like this?” said Tammy.

“I’m not torturing myself at all! You’re all just overthinking this. You know, I think I finally understand now. I’ve never really liked Gerald the way a woman likes a man. Now that I think about it, all those feelings I had for him were probably just out of pity and compassion! I never loved him in the first place!”

“Regardless, I’m already quite happy and relaxed now. I no longer have to worry about or miss him anymore! I can be together with Mr. Long and the Long’s daughter-in-law! Humph! To be frank, aren’t you all jealous of me?” said Giya with a smile.

Tammy and the others could only look at each other helplessly. Nobody knew what to say so they remained silent.

Gerald on the other hand, knew that everything between him and Giya had finally ended. He couldn’t really put a name to the emotion he was feeling.

It was neither joy, nor sorrow. To put simply, the feelings he felt were complicated.

When he got back to the hotel with the Drake & Tyson Duo, Gerald received a call from Zack regarding the search for the person who had leaped from the hotel’s seventh floor window.

Though Zack had implemented several tactics—some more forceful than others—to find that person, he was unable to find the perpetrator.

From what they could speculate, the person they were looking for had to be a skilled climber. It would also be natural to assume that he was very cunning as well.

While Gerald was fine with not getting instant results—since they had already received the needed clarification from Mr. Leach earlier that Gerald was indeed being slandered—the person who had leaped out the window still needed to be caught eventually.

Noticing that Zack was blaming himself, Gerald simply advised him not to be too anxious.

The night was peaceful for Gerald and he headed to bed early.

However, more chaotic things were happening amidst the peace.

As an unknown person sat beside a river, he slyly said, “I’ve done what you wanted, Mr. Long. But I’ve yet to see the money that I’ve been promised.”

“Humph! Have patience! Your main goal is still to find a proper place to hide in. Worry not, the pay isn’t going anywhere!” sneered a cold voice on the other end of the line.

Chapter 616

“The thing is, I don’t feel easy about this at all, Mr. Long. I hope that you’re aware that because of you, I ended up not only offending Mr. Crawford, but also the Owens family. You know, Mr. Crawford’s men were looking for me all over Mayberry City yesterday. If Miss Rosalie actually decides to look into the case in future, then I’ll surely be done for!”

The speaker, then added, “I’ve already given up everything just to help you this time, so fork out the cash as soon as possible. The sooner I leave this godforsaken place, the better. It isn’t a stretch to say that the Owens family will eventually find out who really

laid their hands on Miss Rosalie. Should that happen, chaos will surely ensue. After all, the Longs and the Owens have had so many business dealings together!”

“D*mn it, Harry! Are you threatening me?” replied Yunus as he snorted coldly.

Yunus had indeed been the one who had set up both Rosalie and Gerald back in the hotel. It was part of his plan to gather capable allies in order to finally bring Gerald down. After all, the Owens and the Longs held almost equal amounts of power. With the two great forces combined, Yunus would definitely be able to finally defeat Gerald.

If everything went according to plan, not only would he have saved the damsel in distress, but he would also have helped the Long family regain their power and industries in Mayberry City.

The Longs would finally get their chance to take revenge after Jessica drove them out of Mayberry City’s commercial industry in the past.

Once that happened, it would pave the way for Yunus to inherit a greater share of his family's succession in the future.

Naturally, Harry was also aware of the grudge between the Crawfords and the Longs.

He knew how Yunus had easily gathered so many supporters and helpers in Mayberry City within such a short amount of time. The Long family had, after all, been part of Mayberry City in the past, and the connections and relations that they had built back then still stood to this very day.

“Look, I don’t really like threatening you either, but I don’t really have a choice here. If I don’t get the money soon, I might not even survive long enough to get it! Just so you know, Gerald’s sister isn’t back yet. What do you think is going to happen to me when she returns and finds out that I had colluded with you to frame her brother? Have you forgotten what she did to the Long family back then? Do you need me to refresh you on what exactly happened?” said Harry.

“Alright, alright... Where are you? I’ll send someone over to hand you the money now. Make sure you keep your mouth zipped tight and leave as soon as you receive the money!” replied Yunus coldly.

After hearing that, Harry immediately shared his location with Yunus. It didn’t take long for two Maybach cars to appear before Harry.

Out stepped an old man followed by a few bodyguards dressed entirely in black.

The moment all of them stood in front of Harry, he began chuckling before saying, “Now this is how it should be! Setting up others to take the blame is my forte. All of you have certainly made the right choice in hiring me! I assure you that they won’t be able to obtain a single strand of evidence at all! Haha! Regardless, let me count the money first!”

Harry then took the money and started counting, a smile on his face.

“It certainly was a wise decision to hire you. You’re definitely skillful, we’ll give you that. However, you talk a bit too much. Since both the Crawfords and the Owens are involved in this matter, my young master is slightly worried that you won’t be able to keep your

mouth shut in the long run!” sneered the old man who looked quite similar to a steward.

“Worry not! My lips are sealed!” replied Harry as he continued smiling.

At that moment, the old man looked at his subordinates. Among them, was the long-haired Scorpion.

Seeing their cue, all of them immediately pounced on Harry, subduing him in seconds!

“The f*ck? Are you guys seriously trying to silence me for good? D*mn it all!”

“Hahaha... Apologies, Harry. On the bright side, your sacrifice here today will ensure that the Owens and the Longs will work together just fine. We’ll finally be able to take down the Crawford family! Also, while we’re at it, you should never have threatened Mr. Long in the first place! End him!”

As soon as his sentence ended, Scorpion—whose hands were bandaged—began strangling Harry.

“F-f*ck all of you!”

In his attempt to escape with his life intact, Harry managed to kick Scorpion away. With his neck now momentarily freed from Scorpion’s grasps, Harry then immediately dived into the river, securing his temporary escape.

“D*mn it all! How could all of you be this careless?! That person can’t be trusted at all! If we don’t get our hands on him today, we may never have another opportunity like this again!” yelled the steward at his subordinates.

As for Harry, he remained in the water for a long time before finally crawling ashore.

Once he was sure that the coast was clear, he started cursing fiercely.

“That d*mned Yunus Long! What a b*stard he is! To think I nearly died because of him today! Fine then! Since I can’t make money off of you, then there’s no need for any further hesitation! You dare lay your hands on me? I’ll be laying mine on your woman then! Just you wait!”

Chapter 617

While all this was happening, Giya’s friends were still with her in the Quarrington family villa.

The girls were drinking and singing together, seemingly having a lot of fun. In truth, they were all trying very hard to cheer Giya up so that she could forget all of her sadness regarding Gerald.

Since Giya’s parents had earlier left for Yanken, Tammy and the other girls had agreed on staying the night to accompany her.

“Say Tammy, I need to use the bathroom... Will you accompany me?” asked Giya.

“Sure thing!”

Both of them then headed to the bathroom upstairs together.

However, not too long after, a scream could be heard coming from upstairs!

Shocked, everyone immediately rushed toward the source of the scream. However, once they got to the bathroom, Tammy and Giya were nowhere to be seen.

“Tammy? Giya?! S-stop messing around with us! Where are you two?”

The girls began shouting as they searched around the villa. After quite a bit of time had passed, they concluded that their disappearance was no prank. They had really vanished without a trace!

At that point, most of them were so anxious that they were already on the verge of bursting into tears.

“W-what should we do now...?”

“What else can we do? We need to call someone!”

Moving back to Giya and Tammy, they awoke sometime after in what seemed to be an abandoned house in the middle of nowhere.

All they remembered was that a shadowy figure had appeared before them as they were about to enter the bathroom. The last thing they could recall before passing out, was feeling a sharp pain behind them.

“L-let us go! Who are you?!” yelled Giya fearfully.

“Yeah, let us go this instant! We’re warning you, Giya’s well connected with several rich and influential people! If you still refuse to let us go, then you’ll definitely be done for!” added Tammy, her voice quivering slightly.

“Hahaha! Oh no... I’m so scared... Please, I know who you are, Miss Giya. I’m well aware that you’re Mr. Long’s fiancée. To tell you the truth, that’s the main reason why you’ve been kidnapped in the first place! I’ll cut straight to the chase, Miss Giya. I need you to force that b*stard Yunus to fork out the money he owes me! As soon as I get my money, I’ll leave immediately without even touching a single strand of hair on your head, Miss Giya!”

Of course, the kidnapper in question was none other than Harry.

After all, he was the kind of person who lived for money, and he would do anything to get his hands on more. Even now, he was only threatening and blackmailing Yunus to get the cash he had been promised.

He wasn’t really trying to ruin their relationship. That was why he had yet to reveal the truth about the set up for both Gerald and Rosalie that Yunus had orchestrated together with him.

Aside from that, Harry was also aware that if word got out about his involvement in the case, he would simultaneously be offending the Crawfords, the Longs, and the Owens. He would definitely suffer a horrible death should that day ever come.

Harry was smart enough not to act based on his emotions, which led him to eventually come up with his current idea instead.

“Hehe... You truly are beautiful, Miss Giya. I’m certain that Mr. Long will give me any amount of money in exchange for his beautiful fiancée’s safety!” said Harry as he gently squeezed Giya’s cheeks.

“Pfft! Mr. Long isn’t the only person who’ll be coming after your neck! There’s another equally rich and influential heir who’s close to Giya! And his name is Mr. Gerald Crawford from Mayberry City!” exclaimed Tammy.

“What? Gerald?!” replied Harry, a stunned expression on his face.

If it wasn’t because of Gerald, he wouldn’t have been reduced to his current state where he had to constantly hide in the wilderness.

Harry was well aware that the Crawford family should not be underestimated under any circumstances.

“Stop it, Tammy! I told you, I have nothing more to do with that person anymore! We are no longer connected in any way! Why on earth would he possibly help me now?” said Giya as she looked at Tammy.

“Humph! I doubt that! Even if you’re no longer friends, I believe that Gerald will still save you in the end!”

Chapter 618

Tammy sounded confident with her words.

“It’s not like I want to see that s*umbag ever again anyway!” replied Giya.

“Hey, hey! Are you two done talking yet? If you aren’t aware, you’re being held hostage! Are you pretending that I don’t exist now? Huh?!” said Harry angrily.

Hearing that, Tammy was so frightened that she immediately went silent.

Rubbing the bridge of his nose, Harry then took Giya’s cell phone from her.

“Look, I don’t care which rich heir you’re talking about, I just want my god d*mn money!” grumbled Harry as he looked through Giya’s contacts to find Yunus.

“Giya? Why are you calling me out of the blue?” asked Yunus in an affectionate and doting tone as soon as he picked up Harry’s call.

“Cut the cr*p already! Giya’s in my hands now. If you don’t want your precious Giya to encounter any ‘accidents’, I propose that you hand the money you owe me right this instant! I’ll free them after that!” cursed Harry through the phone.

“What?! Harry?! You’re brave, I’ll give you that! But to think that you’d actually kidnap her when I just spared your life!” replied Yunus, his voice cold as ice.

“Spared my life? Hahaha! Let me tell you something, Yunus. I’m going to settle both the old and new accounts with you today! I also want triple the amount of the original sum of money that you still owe me! Consider it to be compensation for the emotional and psychological damage that you’ve done to me! If you’re having second thoughts, I also have all the footage of you doing all your bad deeds in the past! If you want me to hand those recordings over to you, deliver the money to me. Personally! Both of us can settle the score between us after that, once and for all!” sneered Harry as he explained his terms.

Now that Harry had seen Yunus’s true colors, he wasn’t going to fall into the same trap twice in a row.

While Yunus’s men were quite powerful, would they really be able to capture him?
Haha!

Harry was sure that Yunus understood what was at stake now.

“I won’t be going there personally. However, I will be sending someone over to hand you the money! Where are you?”

“As I said before, you have to hand it to me personally! There are still some things that I need to talk to you about, face to face. I assure you that if you don’t come alone, you’ll definitely regret it in the future! Also, it seems I forgot to mention this earlier! You come alone!”

“Say what you want, I told you I’m not going. My decision is final! If you want, you can come over instead to deal with me!” replied Yunus as he laughed.

“D*mn it! Are you seriously not planning to come over?! If you’re persistent with your decision, then I guess I’ll forgo the money... However! Do you truly believe that I won’t take out my dissatisfaction on your fiancée? She’s quite the beauty, you know!”

“Four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. That is all I will give, and when you receive it, I expect both my fiancée and the recordings to be handed over! There is no further room for discussion! Also while we’re at it, you should take the time to consider your own eventual fate as well!”

After saying that, Yunus immediately hung up.

“Hello? Hello?! D*mn it! What a brute! He doesn’t even care about his own woman at all!” shouted Harry, his face red from anger.

Giya herself had heard the entire conversation. Though she had never liked Yunus in the first place, she still felt a chill in her heart after listening to their call.

Sure enough, regardless of how good a sc*mbag pretended to be, they would still be a sc*mbag in the end. It was usually during moments of crisis when their true natures would finally be exposed.

“Hahaha! I’ll just tell you now that Yunus and I were never on good terms! If you’re still planning on using me as a hostage to threaten him, dream on!” said Giya as she smiled wryly.

“What else can I do? I can’t just leave empty-handed! I’ve simultaneously offended three wealthy and influential families! Four hundred and fifty thousand dollars isn’t going to cut it!” replied Harry as he anxiously scratched the back of his head.

All of a sudden, he started patting his thighs. It seemed like he had arrived at a sudden realization.

“F*ck! I almost forgot! If all else fails, then I should just try to make a fortune off Mr. Crawford! If the Long family is willing to hand me four hundred and fifty thousand dollars, then Mr. Crawford should definitely be willing to pay even more! After all, he’s richer than they are! If I’m lucky, I could even rack the numbers up to seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars! Now that would be a worthy transaction! What more, I already have all the information that he wants anyway! Hahaha!” said Harry aloud as he smiled.

He then walked toward Giya before saying, “Miss Giya, please give me Mr. Crawford’s contact number.”

“I hate to disappoint you, but I don’t have anything to do with that man anymore. In other words, I don’t have his number with me! Also, don’t you think it’s a bit ridiculous to use me as a hostage to threaten him?” sneered Giya coldly.

“Haha! And what’s so ridiculous about that? Well, even if he doesn’t come for you, he’ll definitely want the valuable information I have on hand. After all, he’s probably still struggling to clear his name after Mr. Long and I set him up for that attempted r*pe case involving Rosalie back then! He’ll definitely come anxiously looking for me once he realizes that I have all the information he needs!”

Since Harry was planning to leave the country anyway once he succeeded with his plans, he no longer had to worry about keeping any secrets. At this point, offending others was the least of his worries.

As soon as Giya heard this, she immediately raised her head before saying, "...What... what did you say?"

Chapter 619

"Well... I guess there's no harm in telling you the truth at this point. After all, it'd be better for you to know what kind of person Mr. Long really is since you're marrying him soon. I have to say though, Mr. Crawford really is too careless. He barely ever has guards escorting him wherever he goes! Mr. Long was aware of this so he one day approached me, saying that he had something to discuss..."

By the time Harry's story ended, Giya's heart was beating extremely rapidly.

"So he was innocent after all! You did this! Why did you have to set him up?!" shouted Giya, her eyes bloodshot.

She was experiencing a great surge of emotions in her heart.

How could she have been so stupid?

She had known Gerald for quite a while now. How could he ever be the kind of person Yunus had framed him to be?

Gerald had even tried to defend himself, saying that he wasn't the one who had committed the act. He must have only tried to prove his innocence to her because he

considered her to be a good friend. What more, he even specifically went over to find her, but what did she do?

She didn't even give him a chance to explain himself. What more, she even called him a disgusting jerk! He must have felt extremely disappointed back then!

She was his only friend yet she refused to believe him...

Why... Why had she driven him away back then? Why did she refuse to let him explain himself?

"Gerald... I've misunderstood you... I'm... I'm so sorry...!" said Giya as tears started running down her cheeks.

"Alright, that's enough! I don't care about your misunderstanding with him! I just want my money already! Once I get my hands on it, no one will be able to find me. You can continue your squabble with him all you want after that! Now hurry up and give me his phone number!" ordered Harry.

"I don't have it! Even if I did, I wouldn't give it to you! I'm not letting you hurt him!"

"For f*ck's sake, were you even listening? I'm not going to hurt him! Rather, I'm giving him a chance to prove his innocence! Just give me the d*mn number already! Don't blame me if I stop being gentlemanly! Do you believe that I'll take care of your friend first if you plan to delay this any longer?" said Harry as he unbuckled his belt.

"W-wait! No! No! No!" yelled Tammy in fright.

“G-Giya, it really seems like he doesn’t have any other intentions aside from getting money! Why don’t you just give him Gerald’s number so that he can come save us?” said Tammy, almost in tears.

“Haha... Tammy, even if I tell him that we’re in danger, Gerald won’t come to save us... I broke his heart too badly this time... We can’t even be friends anymore!” replied Giya, her eyes red.

“Even if he does come, it’ll just be because he wants to clear his name of this huge mess!”

“Oh, for the love of god! Just give me the number so that I can take the money and leave! It’s that simple!” said Harry, his voice growing wearier by the minute.

“I... I have his number! You can have it!” said Tammy, finally giving in.

A little while later, Gerald picked his phone up before asking, “Hello? What’s wrong, Tammy?”

“Heh... Hello, Mr. Crawford, it’s me, Harry! How are you?”

“Harry?”

“Have you forgotten about me already? We met briefly at noon in the hotel!”

“It’s you!” shouted Gerald as he immediately sat up on his bed.

“That’s right! I’m aware that you’ve been searching all over Mayberry City for me, so after giving it some thought, I’m hoping that you’ll be willing to negotiate and strike a deal with me! Also, Miss Giya and Miss Tammy are with me now. Just thought you’d like to know about that,” replied Harry.

“You dare to even kidnap Giya? What’s your motive?” replied Gerald coldly.

“Alright, so here’s the thing. Since Miss Crawford had looked out for me so much before, let’s just say that I’d feel slightly guilty just leaving things as they are. Why don’t we do this? See, I’ve taped the entire incident and I’m willing to hand over all the evidence as long as you’re willing to provide me with a sum of money! Once I get that money, you’ll be able to prove your own innocence!”

“I’ll ask you again. Why did you kidnap Miss Giya!” repeated Gerald.

“Oh, don’t worry about her. I assure you that she’s completely fine. However, you’ll need to hand the money over to me. Personally. I won’t accept any bank transfers and you’re not allowed to have any bodyguards around. I know how powerful Drake and Tyson are!”

As she listened to their conversation, Giya could only bite her lower lip softly.

“Fine. I’ll be heading over now, but you better release them immediately after!” replied Gerald without the slightest hesitation.

Though Gerald was still feeling slightly disappointed with Giya, he knew he would never be able to forgive himself if Giya were to end up facing misfortune because of his lack of action.

Chapter 620

While it was true that Gerald felt that Giya shouldn't have distrusted him since he had already helped her so much in the past, he didn't really feel any enmity toward her.

In fact, he honestly didn't want to cause any further harm to her.

The way he saw it, since he no longer had anything to do with her anymore, she would no longer need to suffer because of him.

“That's what I like to hear! You know, now I feel a little guilty for setting you up like that... Regardless, I'm currently at...”

After Harry relayed his location and detailed a few more things, both of them hung up.

Giya now had tears trickling down her cheeks.

“He... He doesn't hate me at all! He's still willing to put himself in danger because of me!” said Giya to herself as she felt her heart melt.

Moving back to Gerald, he notified Drake and Tyson about some things before personally driving to the location he had been given. It wasn't long before he arrived with a bag of money in hand.

As Gerald stepped out of his car and stood in the middle of the wilderness, Harry was already observing his every move through a pair of binoculars.

“Heh, I see you, Mr. Crawford... True to your word, you didn’t bring anyone else with you!”

Once he was sure that Gerald was truly alone, he sent Gerald another location and ordered him to immediately rush over there next.

D*mn it! This guy really knew how to scheme! Gerald could only helplessly obey his orders.

Eventually, he finally stood face to face with Harry. Harry himself bore a wretched expression on his face.

“A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Crawford!” said Harry as he bowed slightly before Gerald.

“Cut the cr*p. Release them immediately! Also, where’s that recording that you promised?” asked Gerald as he threw the bag of money over to Harry.

“Relax, everything’s here! You’ll definitely be able to prove your innocence with this!” replied Harry as he smiled.

After hearing that, Gerald then walked over to Giya and Tammy to loosen the ropes that Harry had used to tie them up.

He also helped them remove the tape covering their mouths. Harry had earlier attached them to the duo in fear that the two girls would start screaming at any moment.

“Gerald!” shouted Giya the moment she was freed from her restraints. She clung on to him and started sobbing immediately while saying, “I’m sorry! I’m so, so sorry! I should have believed you! I even pretended that I was in love with Yunus just to make you angry! I’m so sorry...”

Both of Gerald’s arms were raised from the elbow. He was momentarily unsure of how to even react to Giya’s actions. However, he knew better not to return her hug.

Eventually, Gerald gently pushed her away with a subtle smile on his face before saying, “As long as both of you are safe, it’s fine. For now, let’s leave this place!”

“Wait! There’s one more condition I’d like to add, Mr. Crawford!”

“What else do you need?” asked Gerald, a frown on his face.

“While I may escape today, should the eldest young lady ask about this in future, under no circumstances should you reveal that I was the one who had orchestrated all this. My identity should remain strictly secret. While you may be kind and generous, Miss Crawford bears a completely different personality. If she ever finds out that I did all this, I’ll definitely be torn to shreds with no less than a thousand blades! I beg of you, Mr. Crawford. I truly have no other ill intentions, so I hope that you’ll keep my involvement a secret in order to spare my life. You can direct her to the Long family if you need a culprit! After all, I’m only doing all this because they hired me to!” said Harry as he ended his explanation with a gulp.

Gerald simply nodded slightly before leading the two girls out of the abandoned house.

From a window, Harry continued spying on them through his binoculars. He was clearly afraid that Gerald would secretly send someone after him.

After taking a few steps out of the house, Gerald smiled faintly before shouting, “You’re only looking left and right, Harry! You’re going to miss key details if you’re only limited to that field of vision!”

“...The f*ck? What do you mean by that, Mr. Crawford?”

After hearing that, Harry had a gut feeling that something was terribly wrong.

It was also at that moment when he heard a slight droning sound from atop the house. Harry was dumbfounded when finally turned to look at the sky.

Chapter 621

About thirty helicopters were encircling the abandoned house!

Tammy was equally as dumbfounded as Harry, and she immediately covered her mouth with both her hands the moment she saw the helicopters.

Dear lord! Though Tammy had grown up in the city, even she hadn’t personally witnessed such a magnificent scene like this!

“You... You went back on your word!” shouted Harry, terrified.

D*mn it! His plan to escape after receiving the money was now down the drain!

As he said that, several bodyguards were already using rope ladders to descend the helicopters. In no time at all, Harry was completely surrounded.

“It really is you, Harry! And here I thought you wouldn’t dare return after going missing for such a long time! I have to say, I would never have expected you to go this low! You even set Mr. Crawford up! Aren’t you terrified at all that Miss Crawford will find out about this?” asked Zack with a sneer as he walked closer to Harry. Drake and Tyson followed closely behind him.

It was obvious that Zack and Harry were acquainted with each other.

Harry himself knew that there was zero chance of him escaping the situation the moment he saw Drake, Tyson, and Zack together.

He knew it was far too late for him to try to explain himself. If Zack informed Jessica about the matter, she definitely wouldn’t let him off that easily. In fact, Harry had no trouble imagining a scenario where he ended up dead with several missing body parts.

To him, he felt that the only possible way to avoid that outcome was to allow himself to be captured without any resistance.

“Heh. I’m only doing all this to survive after the eldest young lady banished me. Regardless, while I was part of the elaborate plan to set Mr. Crawford up, I assure you, Mr. Lyle, that I’ve granted him a lot of mercy. Just so you know, not only did Mr. Long

order me to set him up, but he also told me to knock him unconscious so that I could make his situation even worse! However, I turned that suggestion down immediately! As you can clearly see now, I've also taken the initiative to hand Mr. Crawford the evidence needed to prove his innocence!" explained Harry hurriedly, a smile on his face.

"Also, Mr. Lyle, weren't we once brothers working for the eldest young lady? I remember saving you once in the past. Can't you spare me this time? In case you think I haven't changed, I was only a kid back then. I'm all grown up now!"

"Oh? So you still remember the time when you were still her subordinate! I assumed that you had already forgotten all about those days! Regardless, as for how we're going to deal with you, Mr. Crawford will have the final say in this matter!"

At that moment, Zack and the others were standing by Gerald's side.

"Harry used to work for my sister?" asked Gerald in surprise. No wonder he seemed so afraid of her.

"That is correct, Mr. Crawford. Michael, Harry, and I worked under her when the eldest young lady was still in Mayberry City. Back then, Harry was still in his early twenties. Disaster struck when he got one of our female employees pregnant while he was drunk. The eldest young lady was so enraged by that that she immediately told him to get lost the moment she found out about it!" replied Zack as he continued looking at Harry, a cold smile on his face.

"So that's the whole story! Well, since he's already handed the evidence over to me, I won't pursue the matter or hold anything against him anymore!"

To be completely honest, Gerald had really wanted to find the person who had set him just to give them a tight slap on their face.

Now that Harry was staring while smiling at him in person, however, Gerald simply didn't want to continue talking to such a shameless man anymore.

“Humph! You're lucky today! Leave with the money and get lost already! Your life will be spared this time!”

Though Zack was angry, he was simultaneously feeling slightly relieved. After all, both of them had worked together before and Harry wasn't wrong either. He had indeed saved Zack's life before.

The truth was that Zack had secretly been afraid that Gerald would cruelly order him to kill Harry there and then.

“I... I'm not leaving!” replied Harry.

“What more do you want?”

“Mr. Crawford, as you can clearly see, I have nowhere else to go now. Please allow me to work by your side. I promise that I won't make any more mistakes in future. I beg of you, Mr. Crawford! Please let me work for you!”

Harry was being dead serious when he said that.

Even when he had first met Gerald in the hotel, he could already tell that Gerald was a generous person with a rather benevolent personality.

That was the reason why he had secretly disobeyed the order to harm Gerald, despite agreeing with Yunus to do it. He just couldn't bring himself to hurt such a person.

Chapter 622

What more, he was terrified of what Jessica would do to him if she ever found out that he had hurt her brother!

However, he also didn't do it because Jessica had treated him kindly before.

Regardless, he hadn't initially dared to return before this chain of events took place. He truly only wanted to get his money and leave this godforsaken place.

He had previously made sure to keep a record of everything that happened while he was dealing with Yunus. He had predicted that if everything went smoothly, Gerald would continue being misunderstood for about a week. If things had gone according to plan, he would have eventually handed the recordings over to Zack anyway once he had successfully hidden himself.

It was just his luck to end up in his current situation. Since there wasn't going to be an easy way out of this anyway, he knew there was nothing to lose in asking Gerald to take him in.

"You?" replied Gerald as he couldn't help but smile wryly.

“Forget it. Just leave while you can! Worry not, I’ll forgive you today and I’ll tell my sister not to hold you accountable for your actions as well.”

Since Harry’s face looked naturally wretched, Gerald found it hard to tell whether he truly meant what he said or if he was simply fooling around.

“Wait! As a form of courtesy, I’ll also present you with another big gift, Mr. Crawford! I’m certain that you’ll like it!”

Hearing that, Gerald and Zack exchanged glances. Eventually, Gerald nodded before saying, “Fine. My final decision depends on what the gift is!”

After saying that, he turned around to look at Giya and Tammy.

“Mr. Lyle, please get a car to send the girls home first!” said Gerald, his voice slightly cold and indifferent.

While Giya had hoped to talk more with Gerald, expecting him to show at least a little more concern, he didn’t say a word to her.

Soon after, a car drove over to them. Gerald then entered and left immediately.

Of course, he was doing all of this on purpose. After all, he felt that it would be best for him to continue displaying this attitude so that he would be able to avoid any further misunderstandings in the future.

Giya could feel her heart aching slightly as she watched the car drive off. Was this the future of her relationship with Gerald? Was he going to continue being this cold and indifferent toward her?

Had he lost any affection he had for her as a friend as well?

Haha... That was probably the case.

Gerald had simply arrived to retrieve the evidence that he needed. He was only saving her because she just so happened to be there. Why was she even overthinking it?

Who was she anyway? Did she honestly think that Gerald was going to risk his life for her? Was she really feeling touched because of this?

'Giyayou stupid girl... Gerald only has Mila in his heart... It's obvious that he's using the situation to his advantage to put some distance between you and him...'

She could only bitterly remind herself of the reality of the situation.

To think that she had thought that there really existed a person who was willing to sacrifice their life for her. It was all just a bunch of deceptive lies!

After returning home safely, Giya found herself tossing and turning in bed for most of the night. She was only able to fall asleep nearing dawn.

However, she was woken abruptly by a loud noise outside at around nine in the morning.

“You have to figure out a solution to this matter, Walton! After all, we followed you and left the Quarrington family together in the past! You’re responsible for all of us! If you fail to do that, we won’t be able to sustain our family any longer!”

Giya’s parents had returned, and together with a few of her aunts and uncles, they all seemed to be having a discussion with Walton regarding how they should deal with the issue between the Longs and Quarringtons in Yanken.

In the past, Walton had led this particular group of people away from the Quarrington family out of rage regarding some matters. However, they were now in a situation where they could no longer sustain the company that they had co-founded together.

Since he was the one who had led them away from the rest of the Quarringtons back then, he naturally had to take responsibility over everyone who was currently present.

“There doesn’t seem to be any results in Giya and the third young master of the Long family’s relationship! We simply can’t allow this to go on! Yunus’s birthday banquet is going to be held at Wayfair Mountain Entertainment today and he’s already invited Giya to accompany him there! He’s obviously still waiting for Giya to accept his marriage proposal!”

Everyone was discussing the same thing.

“Alright, that’s quite enough. All of you are already aware that Giya had run into some trouble last night. While she made it out safely and is currently resting in her room, it saddens me to say that Mr. Long didn’t even do anything to help my daughter at all! It’s beyond upsetting!”

Walton and the others had rushed home early that morning the moment they found out that Giya had been involved in a kidnapping incident.

Before anyone could even begin discussing the kidnapping, the door creaked open.

Giya then stepped into the room with a bitter expression on her face.

“Mom? Dad? You don’t have to worry. I’ll attend his birthday banquet today.”

Chapter 623

“Giya? Why aren’t you resting in your room? Why did you come out?” asked Walton, his voice clearly distressed.

Seeing her, some of her extended family members coughed before saying, “You know, Giya really is a good girl. She’s well aware that we can’t afford to offend the Long family. What more, hadn’t Mr. Long spent millions of dollars to save you when you were kidnapped? He definitely loves you a lot!”

In the room, Walton was the only one who knew the reality of the situation. Since he was worried sick, Giya had detailed the events that had taken place the night before to him. The others were completely oblivious to the truth of what had really happened.

Hearing the comments from her uncles and aunts, Giya only laughed as she expressed a wry smile. She understood what they were trying to tell her.

Despite that, Giya wasn't angry at them at all. She was aware that the pressure from the Long and the main Quarrington family was really suffocating both her own, and her extended family.

What more, she knew that her uncles and aunts still needed to support their own families. That was the gist as to why she wasn't holding anything against them.

Besides, she just couldn't care any less about her situation anymore. What else could she do?

Gerald didn't seem to care about her anymore. After all, he already had his beloved Mila.

While she had initially thought that there would still be a chance for her and Gerald to be together in the past, she didn't even want to think about it anymore.

The way she saw it, the only way she could possibly be of any use in this situation was to sacrifice herself. At least then she would finally be able to help her family attain peace!

After taking a deep breath, Giya smiled before saying, "Dad, mom, I'll go get ready first so that we can attend Yunus's birthday banquet later!"

She then returned to her room.

Seeing his daughter like that, Walton couldn't help but feel slightly depressed.

Meanwhile, Harry was together with Gerald and in his hand was a USB flash drive.

"Hehe... This is my gift to you, Mr. Crawford. I'm sure you'll be very interested in it," said Harry as he slid the USB into a laptop and began playing a video.

After watching the entire thing, Gerald couldn't help but sneer before asking, "Did you record this last night?"

"Heh, I did! I may not have many skills, but if it's regarding despicable or sneaky acts, no one can compare to me!" replied Harry as he patted his own chest twice.

"That's quite enough. There's no need to brag about that!" replied Zack as he smiled wryly.

"Either way, we now have enough evidence on hand. Together with the footage, we should finally be set to beat him in his own game!"

"Indeed!" said Gerald as he smiled while nodding.

At that moment, Gerald's phone began to ring. It was a call from his godbrother, Yoel.

"What's wrong, Yoel?"

“Brother! We got beaten up! Aiden got beaten up the worst!”

“What?! How bold! Who did it?” asked Gerald angrily.

“Who else could it have been? It’s that b*stard Yunus of course! He’s hosting a big birthday banquet today and almost every influential and powerful individual in Mayberry City has been invited over! The only people he specifically excluded from the event were people associated with the Crawford family! Because of that, Aiden and I brought some men over to cause some trouble for him...”

Yoel then quickly explained everything that had happened to Gerald.

Essentially, both Yoel and Aiden had been dissatisfied since Yunus was clearly targeting the Crawford family through the event.

The Long family was powerful after all, yet Yunus still chose to host his banquet in Mayberry City. What more, he was even hosting it at Wayfair Mountain Entertainment! The place Jessica used to run!

It was clear as day that Yunus was deliberately targeting Gerald.

Still, Aiden and Yoel had gone there looking for trouble without even telling Gerald beforehand. Since it was being hosted by Yunus, it was to be expected that many Long family members would also be present. That obviously contributed to the huge loss they ended up suffering.

“For now, both of you should come back and look for me first!” replied Gerald.

He wasn't going to just let this slide. After all, he treated both of them like his own brothers.

“We're already downstairs! I'm supporting Aiden right now!” replied Yoel.

“I'm coming down now!” replied Gerald as he led Harry and the others downstairs.

True to Yoel's word, both of them had been terribly beaten up. Aiden's face was very badly bruised and most of it was already swollen. Even Yoel had a few bruises on his face.

“I'm so sorry, Mr. Crawford! I've embarrassed you today!”

Chapter 624

Aiden's voice was dispirited, almost as though he had just lost a great battle.

“It's fine. Just hurry up and get inside first!” replied Gerald as he patted both their shoulders before heading inside with everyone else.

“Gerald! Gerald!”

However, before he managed to get far, he heard a female's voice calling out for him.

Turning back to see who it was, he was surprised to see Felicity standing there.

Though he hadn't met her in quite a while, he was still slightly taken aback at how much her beauty had increased within that period of time.

"Felicity? What are you doing here?" asked Gerald.

He wasn't sure how she had managed to find him. Thinking back, however, it was probably because his home address was no big secret.

"Humph! Since I hadn't managed to catch you at all after returning to school, I decided to personally come over to see you!"

For a period of time, Felicity had struggled with herself when she found out about Gerald's true identity. Though it took her a while, she eventually had a complete change of heart and attitude toward Gerald.

Back when she was still unsure whether Gerald was truly Mr. Crawford, she had constantly been confused as to whether she was truly in love with Gerald or not.

However, that changed the day she saw all those people bowing before Gerald in that small neighborhood. It was at that moment when she no longer felt conflicted about her feelings.

"Well now you've seen me! You've achieved your goal!" replied Gerald with a wry smile on his face.

“Pfft! Since when have you become this way? I know, you must have several girls by your side now so you’ve forgotten all about your classmates! Regardless, there’s actually another reason I came looking for you today!”

Gerald simply nodded, signaling for her to go on.

“So here’s the thing. I recently started a celebrity company and I’m an anchor now. Since my company is under yours, I thought that we could go to Yorknorth Mountain to try attracting more attention and customers! However, the people there told us that we weren’t allowed to enter!” replied Felicity.

“I can help with that. From now on, you’re all free to enter!” said Gerald with a smile.

Felicity pursed her lips slightly when she saw how kind he was treating her.

While she was filled with joy, her heart bore equal amounts of sorrow.

She was naturally happy because Gerald wasn’t blaming her for being so rude and mean to him in the past. He was still treating her as a classmate and friend.

However, she was also sad because she couldn’t help but recall the time when they were just starting university. Back then, Gerald would constantly sneak peeks at her. As a girl, she definitely understood what that meant.

Gerald was interested in her.

At the time, however, how could she possibly have been interested in someone like him? Looking back at it now, she was filled with regrets.

It would've been great if she had gotten together with Gerald back then!

“Speaking of which, could you do me a favor as well?” asked Gerald out of the blue while Felicity was still reminiscing in her head.

“...Huh? A favor? Is there anything I can help you with?” asked Felicity, visibly surprised.

“Yes. Why don't you come in first? We can further discuss the matter inside!” replied Gerald with a smile.

While this was happening, a crowd had already formed in Wayfair Mountain Entertainment, and the banquet was getting livelier by the minute.

Ever since Jessica disbanded and auctioned off the initially named Mayberry Commercial Street so that Gerald could focus on starting his own business, Wayfair Mountain Entertainment had been auctioned off as well for management purposes.

Since Yunus had inexplicably decided to host his birthday banquet here of all places, everyone attending naturally knew what this meant.

To put bluntly, the Long family was going to plant their flag here again in the future! They were going to rise again from where they once fell in the past!

“Ah, Mr. Long! So many people came over today! They’re all certainly giving you a lot of face!” praised a servant as he looked at how festive the banquet was.

“Haha! But of course! Also, have Giya and her family arrived?” asked Yunus.

“I’ve asked about them and it seems that they’re all on their way here. Looks like she’ll finally be yours, Mr. Long!”

“Humph! I treat her so well and I’m even willing to lower myself in front of her. To think that she was in love with Gerald before this! If I hadn’t pressured her, she would’ve just continued treating me as though I didn’t exist! Yet the more she acts that way, the more I want her to be mine! D*mn it! I’m only getting angrier by talking about this! I don’t want to talk about it anymore!”

“Oh no-!”

At that moment, a waitress had been trying to refill Yunus’s wine glass. However, she accidentally knocked the wine glass over!

“D*mn it! Don’t you have any-”

While Yunus was already prepared to launch an onslaught of curses, the moment he saw how beautiful the waitress was, he immediately stopped.

Chapter 625

“Well hello there, beautiful. How did I miss you earlier?” asked Yunus.

“O-oh... Well you did seem busy just now... What more, some people were causing a scene earlier... I can understand why you didn’t have the time to pay attention to me!” replied the girl as she smiled slightly. She looked even more beautiful when she smiled.

As the girl was about to continue pouring wine for Yunus, he grabbed hold of her hand before saying, “Hold on a minute, look here! You spilled some red wine on me earlier! Such a simple apology simply won’t cut it! If you want my anger to be subdued, you’ll have to find another way to please me!”

“Um... Then, what else can I do to make you happy, Mr. Long?” asked the girl shyly.

“Hahaha! That’s what I like to hear... Come to the back with me!”

Since there was still more than an hour left before the birthday banquet would officially begin, Yunus had made up his mind that he would have some fun with this girl first.

“Now, Mr. Long?” asked the butler, clearly aware of the time.

“Don’t worry, I’ll keep my eye on the time. I’ll be back soon!” replied Yunus as he began leading the girl to a room further back.

At that moment, a woman abruptly stood in front of Yunus before saying, “What are you doing, Yunus?”

“Ah, sister-in-law! I have something to attend to now. Worry not, I’ll be back soon! Haha!”

The woman in question was none other than Xavia. Behind her, stood Natasha—her younger sister—along with several of Natasha’s classmates.

Xavia’s eyes reflected her feelings of contempt. She naturally knew what Yunus was about to do with that girl.

To make matters worse, she had gotten into an argument with Yunus last night. The cause of it was because she had planned to invite Gerald to his birthday banquet today.

Her intention was simple. She simply wanted to show off to Gerald, and in order to do that, he first needed to be present.

The location was perfect for her plan as well. This was Wayfair Mountain Entertainment. The place where she had suffered her darkest and deepest sorrows!

It was the best place for her to give Gerald a slap to his face!

Quite honestly, she knew she wouldn’t be satisfied just slapping him once or twice. She wanted to completely embarrass him. To make him awe at her when she was at her peak so that he would come to regret everything that he had done to her!

‘See Gerald? So what if you left me? I’m leading an extremely glorious life now! Are you regretting all your actions now, Gerald?!’

Revenge was the only thing on her mind.

However, Yunus had other things on his mind. He had held his birthday banquet here because he specifically wanted to target Gerald.

This was the gist of why they ended up quarreling the night before. Naturally, Xavia wasn't able to outtalk Yunus.

Because of that, she simply left together with her sister. At the time, she really couldn't be bothered with him.

"U-um... Mr. Long? What exactly are we doing here in the guest room? Don't you have a lot of guests waiting to meet you outside?" asked the girl.

"Hehehe... Don't tell me you don't know why we're here! Now get in!" said Yunus as he grinned. Upon saying that, he shoved her into the guest room.

"W-what are you trying to do?!" shouted the girl in horror.

"S-someone! Save me, please!"

"Heh! I've already booked the entire venue today! Who would actually dare to-"

At that moment, the door was suddenly kicked open! Five men then rushed in immediately.

“Sister?! D*mn it! How dare you touch her! Are all of you recording this? You must be tired of living, huh?!” shouted one of the men viciously as he walked up to Yunus.

As he said that, the other men were busy taking their cell phones out to record the scene happening before them.

“B-brother! You’re here! I was so scared just now!”

Chapter 626

The girl then hurriedly ran to her brother’s side.

Yunus himself had been taken aback after seeing so many things happening at once. When he finally turned to look at the angry man’s face, he was shocked beyond words.

“H-Harry?! Why are you here? How did you even get it?” asked Yunus as he started breaking out in cold sweat.

“Oh? What a pleasant coincidence! So you’re the culprit, Mr. Long! So you dared to insult my beloved sister, huh? I’m going to f*cking kill you right here and now!” roared Harry as he kicked Yunus directly in the chest.

Yunus found himself flying to the other end of the bed. When he finally landed, he immediately clutched on to his chest. He felt as though he would start vomiting blood at any second.

“Hold him down!” ordered Harry as several of his men immediately pinned down Yunus’s arms and legs.

Yunus's face was pale with fright. He then started yelling, "Guards! Guards, get in here right now!"

He yelled so hard that even his voice started sounding hoarse.

"Scream on! Scream as loud as you want! As long as you're in this room, nobody's going to hear you! Not only did you send your men after my head, you almost took advantage of my sister as well! You're an unforgivable piece of sc*m, Yunus Long!" shouted Harry as he slapped Yunus's cheek.

"I-I was wrong, Harry! Also since when have you had a sister? I didn't know about her at all!"

At that moment, Yunus couldn't afford to retain his usual dominant personality anymore.

In reply, Harry gave Yunus another hard slap before saying, "Questioning me now? After treating my sister like this? You're truly done for today!"

"L-like I said, I was wrong, Harry! Harry, listen to me, both of us have had our fair shares of grudges and grievances. While you may want to take your revenge against me, I know that deep in your heart, all you're really after is more money, right? I can give you all the money you want! Also, it's my birthday today and the elders of the Long family are present as well! Why don't we discuss things civilly?"

Yunus was well aware that he had been set up. He had walked straight into their trap so that they could frame him.

He was currently filled with regrets for not holding back his lust earlier.

“Also, Harry! You know who I am, right? I’m sure you’re aware that it won’t do you any good to offend me... What more, Wayfair Mountain Entertainment has security cameras everywhere. It won’t be long before my men realize what’s going on! When they finally get here, things won’t end well for you! So how about it? Why not just take the money and leave now?!” explained Yunus hurriedly.

“Thank you for your concern, Mr. Long. I have to say, it’s amusing how you’re still trying to scare me right now. First of all, we came in through the back door. Secondly, I don’t think you’re aware of who supervised the installation process of all the security cameras in the building,” replied Harry before sneering coldly.

“...Y-you don’t mean...”

“That’s right! It was me!” shouted Harry as he landed yet another slap on Yunus’s face.

“W-what do you want then?” asked Yunus as he gulped.

“Oh, I only need you to do something very simple! See, you’ve insulted my sister today and I’ve caught you red-handed! I don’t need your god d*mn money! I need you to kneel in front of me and call me master three times in a row! Actually hold on, master would be too easy. Let’s go with grandpa instead to make things more interesting! While we’re at it, you’ll also need to say how much of a brute you are at the end of each

of those three sentences. I'll forgive you once you've done that. How about it?" sneered Harry.

"In your dreams!"

Immediately after he said that, Yunus received his fourth slap of the day.

"Do you think I'm playing around? I'm going all out today, Yunus! In the worst-case scenario, I'll just perish together with you! I know very well that a b*stard like you won't let me off easily anyway!" said Harry as he took a knife out.

When he saw the look on Harry's face, Yunus realized just how serious the situation had become. At this point, Harry looked like he was willing to do anything.

"A-alright! I'll do as you ask, Harry! I'll do it!" shouted Yunus as he knelt down in fright.

"...Grandpa, I'm a brute!"

As he repeated the sentence thrice, the other men continued recording every pathetic second of it.

However, nearing the end of his last sentence, Yunus suddenly raised his head and threw the bedsheets at Harry!

While the others were momentarily stunned, he got up, opened a window, and then jumped out!

“D*mn it! Don’t let him get away!” yelled Harry after recovering from his shock. He and the others then immediately began chasing after Yunus.

However, Yunus had already started shouting the moment he made his escape. All the noise naturally caught the attention of the bodyguards in front.

“Mr. Long!”

The shout had come from Dante who had a large group of bodyguards together with him.

Chapter 627

“Harry! The guards are here!” said one of Harry’s men.

“D*mn it! We’ll definitely be outnumbered! We’ll have to retreat first!” ordered Harry. Together with the girl, the group then swiftly made their way out of Wayfair Mountain Entertainment.

“After them! Hunt them down and kill them all!” shouted Yunus angrily.

This was the first time Yunus had ever been treated this way. The immense humiliation was near unbearable for him.

As his guards chased after Harry and his group, Yunus’s butler approached him before asking in a worried tone, “Are you alright, Mr. Long?”

“How the f*ck could I possibly be fine? You were the one who had chosen this crappy place to host my birthday banquet in! If it wasn’t for this venue, Harry and his men wouldn’t have possibly been able to sneak in this easily! Do you even know I almost died?!”

Despite the fact that his butler looked to be almost sixty, Yunus still slapped him hard on the face.

Feeling embarrassed, the butler then immediately said, “I-It’s all my fault! I’ve clearly wronged you, Mr. Long!”

“...If I may, it’s still your birthday today, Mr. Long, and several wealthy and influential figures are waiting inside to meet you... Why don’t we go back in first?” suggested the butler.

Hearing that, Yunus grumbled angrily before walking back into the building while adjusting his necktie.

“Hey, hey! Look there! That’s Mr. Long’s fiancée, right? Miss Giya?”

“Indeed! You know, I’ve heard rumors of her extraordinary beauty and excellent temperament. Now that I’ve seen her in person, I can certainly agree with what I’ve heard!”

Several of the businessmen and celebrities at the venue were looking at, and discussing Giya and her family who had naturally also been invited to the birthday banquet.

“Speaking of which, have all of you heard? Miss Giya seems to have a rather close relationship with Mr. Crawford! Their relationship is quite ambiguous and from what I’ve been told, she almost became Mr. Crawford’s girlfriend!”

“‘Almost’? I heard that she’s already Mr. Crawford’s woman! A more extreme rumor is that she’s already pregnant with his child! The two of them possibly being a couple is no big secret anymore!”

“What?! Is that really true?!”

“Hey, quiet down! What’ll happen if Mr. Long’s men hear any of that! Even I’ve heard some rumors about Miss Giya and Mr. Crawford being together! However, regardless of what we’ve heard, Miss Giya is still obviously Mr. Long’s woman now! ”

The crowd then continued discussing the matter in low voices.

Giya herself was currently walking around with Tammy and her other friends. No matter where she went, she could hear snippets of their discussions about the relationship between her and Gerald.

Had it not been for the occasion, she would have already cursed everyone who was bad-mouthing her. All she could do was blush in silence.

Even Xavia had overheard the discussions running rampant among the crowd.

Hearing all that only served to make her angry.

She was supposed to be the protagonist today! However, with Giya here, it was clear that she wasn't going to be in the spotlight. The realization of this only made her even gloomier.

What more, they were all saying that Gerald and Giya had a close relationship! Xavia's discomfort grew even worse from that.

After all, to everyone, Giya was better than her in every aspect. And that wasn't the worst part. Despite being so capable, Giya was actually on good terms with her ex-boyfriend!

All this irritation made Xavia extremely frustrated. She couldn't help but glare daggers at Giya whenever she saw her.

It was at that moment when Yunus re-entered the scene.

When he saw Giya, he couldn't help but feel slightly resentful.

Regardless of how much he pursued her, she always retained her cold and indifferent expression when she was together with him. Despite her knowing that Yunus was celebrating his birthday today, the event did little to change her attitude toward him.

Yunus was also irritated by the fact that he had earlier been terribly insulted and humiliated.

As he sat down on the main seat in frustration, a few members of the Quarrington family walked over to greet him.

However, he only continued sitting in silence, not even bothering to reply to any of them.

At that moment, Xavia walked over to him before saying in an envious voice, “You know, Yunus, it’s your birthday today, but it seems like your fiancée is a little unhappy. Also, do you know what everyone was saying earlier?”

“Go on.”

“Almost everyone was insisting that Giya actually likes Gerald! Some of them were even saying that you forced Giya to be together with you! I’ve even heard some news saying that you were the one who had caused Gerald and Giya to break up!”

Chapter 628

“What utter bullsh*t! Who said that?! I’m killing all of them!” growled Yunus angrily as he slammed both his hands on the table.

Everyone was shocked and nobody dared to say another word.

His reaction made everyone remember why they had attended his birthday banquet in the first place. Their true goal was to get into Yunus’s good books after all.

Seeing that everyone had ceased their gossiping, Yunus then looked at Giya before saying coldly, “Come over here and sit next to me, Giya! I want these people to know that you’re my woman! You’re Yunus Long’s woman I say!”

Giya frowned when she heard him say that. Rather than obeying his orders, she simply turned to face the other way.

When they saw her reaction, many of the guests began smiling in excitement.

Giya had clearly given Yunus a mental slap to the face! She wasn't giving him any respect at all!

Yunus had already been very unhappy today.

Not only had his annoyance grown after hearing what Xavia had relayed to him, Giya had just given him the cold shoulder!

To top it off, he was now feeling even more pressure since everyone was intensely staring at him!

His rage at that moment knew no bounds.

"I told you to come over here! Didn't you hear what I said?!" yelled Yunus as he got up and walked over to Giya. The moment he was in front of her, he grabbed her by the arm and violently began tugging her toward his seat again.

"What are you doing?! What are you behaving this way?" shouted Tammy as she and the other girls glared angrily at Yunus.

They had initially thought that since it would be impossible for Giya and Gerald to be together anymore, being together with the young master from the Long family would be the second-best thing, as long as he was a good person.

They could clearly see now how much of a sc*mbag Yunus really was.

“She’s my god d*mn fiancée! She has to do whatever the f*ck I tell her to! And now, I want her to sit beside me to pour me some f*cking wine! F*ck Gerald! Gerald’s nothing but trash in my eyes!” roared Yunus as he continued tugging her arm.

All of the Quarrington family members had ugly expressions on their faces. However, as was expected, nobody dared to speak up.

Xavia smiled triumphantly as she watched the scene before her play out.

Once they arrived at the main seat, Giya sat on the chair next to it while holding on to her wrist. Yunus had clearly grabbed on to it too roughly.

“It’s my birthday today! Could you stop being so cold to me for once?! Smile, god d*mn it! Smile as you pour my god d*mn wine!”

Nobody could understand why he was suddenly losing his cool. However, nobody was complaining either. After all, they were all enjoying their front row seats to this drama!

The bitterness in Giya’s heart peaked at that moment. However, she knew that she didn’t really have a choice in the matter.

Forcing on a faint smile, she then began pouring some wine for Yunus.

“Fantastic!” cheered and applauded the people from within the crowd.

Xavia herself smiled subtly as she said, “Haha... My sister-in-law is too good for someone like Gerald. Why would anyone say that she loves him? From what I can see, it’s clear that she’s head over heels for Yunus! If none of you are buying that, why not Giya and Yunus kiss in front of everyone then? Haha! That’ll be the biggest birthday present for Yunus!”

After hearing what she said, everyone started cheering and applauding again.

“She’s right! Go on! Kiss! Kiss! Kiss!”

“Humph! If it’s a kissing scene all of you want, then a kissing scene you’ll get!” sneered Yunus as he attempted to hug Giya so that she would be forced to kiss him.

However, Giya immediately avoided him before shouting, “What do you think you’re doing? Have you gone mad?!”

She just couldn’t stand him anymore.

“Oh? What’s happening here?” said Xavia as she faked her surprise.

On the contrary, everyone else truly was surprised.

“My word, what is wrong with you, sister-in-law? You’re not giving Yunus any face at all, despite the fact that he’s celebrating his birthday today! Humph! Does your heart truly still belong to Gerald?” added Xavia.

Hearing her statement, Yunus’s anger rose even more as he glared at Giya.

Chapter 629

“How dare you try to avoid me?! You’re to obey everything that I say! If you can’t do even that, I’ll make sure that the Quarringtons cease to exist in Mayberry City!” roared Yunus furiously as he yanked on Giya’s hair out of anger.

He then pulled her into his arms, forcefully positioning her into a hug. Giya however, wasn’t having any of that.

“Release me you lunatic!”

As Giya struggled desperately to free herself, she began subconsciously raising her hand...

And a moment later, a slap could be heard.

Giya had just slapped Yunus’s face.

“...You... You hit me? You actually dare to hit me?”

Yunus was so shocked and angry that he could almost feel himself ready to spurt out blood.

Everyone else could only stare wide-eyed at what they had just witnessed.

“Are you alright, Giya?!”

It was Tammy and the other girls who had broken the silence as they pulled Giya away from Yunus in their effort to protect her.

“...Kneel... Kneel before me immediately! Otherwise you’ll definitely regret it!” growled Yunus, his anger limitless as he cupped a hand on his hurt cheek.

As he said that, the other members of the Long family had also gotten up, slowly gathering around them.

After all, Giya had just slapped Yunus in public. It was equivalent to her slapping the faces of all the other Longs as well!

“I’m terribly sorry, Mr. Long! Giya was rude and disrespectful to you! I’m so sorry, Mr. Long!” said Walton as he immediately rushed forward to apologize to Yunus.

He had gritted his teeth while also clenching both his fists as he said that. After all, no father would be able to tolerate seeing their daughter being treated like this.

As for the other members of the Quarrington family, all of them were extremely afraid that things were just going to continue getting worse.

At that moment, Giya's third uncle began walking toward Yunus with a smile on his face, clearly trying to de-escalate the situation.

However, before he could even say a word, Yunus punched him out of the blue!

"Get lost!" roared Yunus as Giya's third uncle fell to the floor.

"Third uncle!" cried out Giya.

The other Quarringtons were now beyond terrified.

Turning to look at Giya, Yunus then began slowly walking toward her.

Suddenly, he felt something hit him on the forehead!

"F*ck!" shouted Yunus as he placed a palm over his forehead. Looking at the floor, he realized that he had been shot with a plastic pellet!

"Who the f*ck did that?!" cursed Yunus aloud.

In response, another plastic pellet was shot! This one hit Yunus's forehead as well.

Now knowing which direction the pellets had been shot from, Yunus looked toward the venue's main entrance.

He saw a few men standing there, their possible leader holding on to a toy gun which was still pointed toward Yunus. When the hell had they come in?

“Haha! Bullseyes for both shots!”

Said the person who had shot the pellets as he threw the toy gun aside before starting to laugh.

“D*mn it, it's you again? Are you sick of living or something?”

Yunus recognized their faces. They had earlier come to cause trouble, after all. However, they had been promptly beaten up by his men before they managed to escape.

Of course, the group standing at the building's main entrance was Yoel and the rest of his men.

After hearing Yunus say that, Yoel began walking toward him with both hands in his pockets. His group of men followed closely behind him.

“I'm glad you noticed! I'm feeling quite uncomfortable now, you know? Come on! Beat up again, please!” replied Yoel as he sneered.

“Why you... Men, get them-”

Before Yunus was able to order his men to beat them up, his butler hurriedly ran over to stop him.

“Mr. Long, please don’t act recklessly. Let’s see what he’s up to first!” whispered the butler.

“Yunus Long! If you know what’s good for you, then you better release my sister-in-law! Otherwise, you’ll be done for today!” shouted Yoel as he pointed toward Giya.

“What?!”

Everyone present was shocked.

“Oh dear, Mr. Long has really gotten himself in a very messy situation this time!”

“I agree! The Long family is really going to embarrass themselves this time!”

Just like before, the crowd had already started discussing the current situation among themselves.

As for Aiden, who had previously been injured, he nudged his shoulder against Yoel’s before giving him a look. It was his way of reminding Yoel to pay attention to what he said, even if they were here to cause a scene today.

The entire operation was a very big deal.

“So it seems that the rumors are true! Is the young master of the Long family really interested in other peoples’ leftovers?”

The discussions were going more rampant than ever in the crowd.

At that moment, Giya looked at Yoel before saying, “Sister-in-law...? What are you talking about?”

“Heh... Well, it doesn’t really matter! Regardless, since we’re all already here, I definitely won’t allow you to get hurt any further!” replied Yoel.

Yoel was so angry that his face was now beet red.

“I see... No wonder Yoel and his men came over to cause a scene earlier! They were trying to take Miss Giya away! The young masters must’ve been angry! After all, Yoel is Mr. Crawford’s godbrother!”

“Indeed!”

However, before they were able to continue discussing any further, a woman suddenly said, “Hah! How brave of you to come all the way here just to create a ruckus! But why isn’t Gerald here? Why’s he only sending his men? Get him to come personally if he wants trouble! Also, don’t simply refer to others as your sister-in-law!”

Chapter 630

The woman in question was Xavia.

She didn't know why, but she felt extremely uncomfortable when she heard Yoel referring to Giya as his sister-in-law!

“F*cking hell! They're really tired of living, aren't they?! This is the second time you've tried to cause a scene at my birthday banquet! I'm beating all of you to death if it's the last thing I do!” yelled Yunus angrily.

By then, all of the present Long family bodyguards had surrounded Yoel and his men. There seemed to be at least a hundred of them.

This was such a huge scene that all the businessmen and celebrities there were taken aback.

“Oh dear lord! You have so many men with you! I'm terrified! Pop quiz time! Do you know which family has more men with them in Mayberry City?” said Yoel with a laugh, his hands in his pocket.

As soon as his sentence ended, a whistle was blown.

Following that, a large group of men began rushing in from the main entrance without warning!

An estimated five to six hundred men had also surrounded the building's exterior, all of them working for the Crawford family.

With countless men suddenly standing behind Yoel, Yunus was left completely taken aback.

Even Xavia shut up when she saw all the men that Yoel had suddenly summoned.

Based on the current situation, it was visibly clear that it would be impossible for the Longs to win this battle.

'All these men belong to Gerald... Since when has he become like this?' Xavia thought to herself.

By then, several of the Long family's seniors were looking around them anxiously.

"Third young master, please don't act impulsively! They're deliberately trying to provoke you now! If you make the first move, they'll have a reason to start fighting back!" said one of the senior members hurriedly.

"Please be patient, Yunus... I'd like to see what they're planning on doing next..." said another Long family member anxiously.

"Mr. Lyle is here!" shouted someone from the crowd at that moment.

As soon as they heard his name, the crowd automatically began making way for him to pass through.

Zack and Michael could be seen standing at the end of the newly cleared path.

“Mr. Lyle! Mr. Zeke!” greeted a few of the businessmen there as they, too, stood aside to ensure that there was an open path in front of the two men.

All of the Long family’s members were now aware that Zack was present as well.

Among the Longs, a middle-aged man suddenly stood up and quickly walked over to him.

“It’s been a while since I’ve last met with you, Mr. Lyle. It’s the Long family’s third young master’s birthday today you know? What exactly do you mean by this current scene?”

It was obvious that some of the senior members there knew Zack.

“Oh, it doesn’t mean anything. And yes, I’m aware that Yunus is celebrating his birthday today so I just came along to have some fun! Happy birthday, Yunus!” replied Zack with a smile.

“Then how would you explain all the guards here?” asked the same man again.

“Oh, them? Well, all of them used to work in Mayberry Commercial Street. They were all equally excited to hear that the Long family’s third young master was celebrating his

birthday at Wayfair Mountain Entertainment. After all, this used to be our old home! That's the only reason why we're all here today. Don't you think you're being a little too sensitive, Mr. Long?"

"Regardless, since we're already here to celebrate his birthday, don't you think you should invite all of us in for at least a drink?" replied Zack.

Yunus could barely hold his anger back when he heard this. However, he wasn't a fool. He knew well enough not to make a move against Zack.

He could only turn his head to the side in anger.

"But of course! The Long family has always been hospitable to our guests! Please, come with me, Mr. Lyle!" said the Long family senior hurriedly.

Not too long after, Zack, Yoel, and a few others found themselves sitting at a table next to Yunus's.

Yunus was feeling extremely depressed at that moment. Just as he was about to take a sip of red wine, a loud smacking sound was heard.

Something had hit Yunus's cheek!

When he looked up, he saw Yoel and Aiden aiming peanuts at him!

“D*mn it!” growled Yunus as he glared at both of them with a vicious expression on his face. All he could do was clench his fists tightly while taking deep breaths, hoping that it would allow him to control his temper.

However, moments later, a piece of braised pork hit Yunus directly on his forehead!

“You f*ckers!” yelled Yunus as he immediately stood up in anger.

“Yunus! Calm yourself!” said another senior member of the Long family as he placed his hand on Yunus’s shoulder to prevent him from doing anything rash.

Chapter 631

While the other Longs were also furious at Yoel’s provocations, they knew better not to say anything in their current situation.

“There’s no need for that, Mr. Lyle. Please restrain your people!” said one of the Long family’s seniors.

Zack smiled before adding, “Yeah, Yoel. Stop being so rude!”

Yoel only kept quiet once he was told to do so.

Meanwhile, Gerald was standing at the corner of the large golf course behind his hotel. He seemed to be waiting for someone.

“Are the helicopters on their way?” asked Gerald through his phone.

“We’ll be arriving soon!” replied both Drake and Tyson simultaneously.

Gerald hadn’t really wanted to take the helicopter today, but Zack had insisted that he do so. He needed to appear powerful in order to deter the Longs. Hence, he needed to be high profile.

Since he was going to confront the Long family anyway, Gerald simply agreed. He couldn’t care less anymore about retaining a low profile.

As he awaited his ride, Gerald looked around the golf course. Several groups of people were scattered across the course, enjoying their individual games of golf.

“Our sincerest apologies, good sirs, but we have to clear up the golf course soon. Could you please leave for the time being? We’re truly sorry for the inconvenience.”

This was what a few employees had set out to relay to those currently playing in the course.

“Huh? Leave? We just started!”

“That’s right! You can’t expect us to just be alright with that! I’m still with my client! Give me your manager’s contact number! I want to speak to your manager!”

“Yeah! We’ve paid so much to enter the club and we don’t even have the right to stay? I’m definitely not leaving!”

The customers were furious.

“We finally got to play with Ms. Karen you know? And now you’re making us leave? That’s preposterous!” said one of the girls rather unwillingly.

“Chase, Sherry, what do both of you think?”

“Yeah, we aren’t done playing yet. Since the others haven’t left either, we should continue as well!” replied Chase.

This particular group consisted of four people, with three females and a male.

“Still, your husband is so great, Ms. Karen! I would’ve never dreamt of coming to such an amazing golf course if he hadn’t brought us here!” said another girl.

“Haha, well, my husband had to accompany an important client here today. Since they were going to play golf and we weren’t doing anything, I just thought it would be nice for all of us to come here together. Even though you were all just my students in junior high school, we’ve been in touch for so many years that I now treat all of you like my own siblings!” replied Karen.

Seeing that they couldn’t make the customers leave, the employees simply left. Their task wasn’t to force the people to leave. They simply had to reduce the number of people on the golf course by informing them that they were clearing up the course soon.

If they were really going to clear up the entire golf course, the task wouldn't be handed over to simple employees.

“Gone at last! What nuisances! Either way, both of you are getting married soon, right? Chase, Sherry? You could consider taking your wedding photographs here. The course is so beautiful that even I feel better just by looking at this scenery!” said one of the girls excitedly as she took her phone out and snapped a picture of the surrounding area.

“I'm going to take more pictures of the scenery! Like... Here! And here! And there as well!” said the girl with every photo that she took.

“Woah!” said the girl out of the blue. Frozen in place, she squinted at one of the pictures she had just taken.

“What's wrong, Lucille?” asked Karen, Sherry, and Chase as they turned to look at her.

With a shocked expression, Lucille then pointed toward a direction before saying, “Ms. Karen... All of you, look! That person standing in the distance... Doesn't he look a bit like Gerald?”

“What? Gerald?”

Shocked, everyone then turned to look at where Lucille was pointing at.

It was true. The person standing at the corner of the golf course with his hands in his pockets, was indeed, Gerald.

“Is that really him? What is he even doing here?” asked Lucille curiously.

Chapter 632

“Who knows? I heard that he knows quite a lot of people! If I were to guess, he’s probably here... to pick golf balls for them? Haha!” said Karen.

“That does sound logical. I remember he said that he was doing his own business when we last met at our class gathering! Ridiculous!” sneered Lucille.

When Gerald was still in junior high school, three of the people in the group were his classmates and the fourth was one of his teachers. They had met him the last time Gerald went back to his old house to celebrate his birthday.

The day they met was coincidentally also Chase’s birthday, and the day Gerald found out that the girl he had liked in high school—Sherry—was now together with Chase.

Gerald had left the gathering early back then since there weren’t a lot of common topics to talk about. What more, Gerald was rushing to celebrate his own birthday as well.

After he left, Chase and the others planned to visit Sunny Springs. However, after having their dinner and arriving there, they found that there wasn’t much to look at anymore.

It was then when Karen had told them to wait for the day her husband needed to accompany his client again. She would be able to bring them along to a five-star golf course then.

All that led to the current events.

“So, Ms. Karen, do you think we should greet him?” asked Lucille.

“Why not? Look over there guys! He’s really picking golf balls for others!” said Karen as she pointed and laughed.

“Hey you! Could you bring that golf ball to us?”

Just as Gerald hung up, a ball rolled up to his foot. Apparently a girl who was practicing her golf club swings accidentally swung it there.

A guy then pointed toward Gerald. He clearly wanted Gerald to bring the ball over to him, so Gerald simply followed his orders.

“The hell? What kind of worker even is that!” said the same guy as he rolled his eyes toward Gerald.

“Oh, honey! Don’t be mad, you’ll scare him off!”

“You’ll have to constantly make use of people like him! If he isn’t disciplined enough, he’ll be cutting slack every day!”

Gerald simply smiled bitterly as he heard them talking. He didn’t really want to start an argument with them.

As he was making his way back to his initial spot to enjoy a moment of silence, Lucille and the others came up to him.

“Haha! What a coincidence, Gerald!”

All of them were watching when Gerald was scolded after picking the golf ball up.

They had initially thought that Gerald was doing well with his business, but once they saw that scene, all of them became equally excited.

“Oh? It’s you guys?” said Gerald, slightly surprised.

Not only were his high school mates here, but also Sherry, the girl he used to like.

“What? Are you afraid that we saw what you were doing? I thought you were doing your own business! Is this the business you were talking about? Picking up golf balls for people?” said Karen as she continued mocking him.

Sherry on the other hand, simply looked at him and shook her head. People without a future certainly wouldn’t change much!

“Ah, Karen! Here you all are! I’ve been looking for all of you!” said a young man wearing a suit as he walked over to the group.

“What is it, hubby?”

“Well, we’re short of a ball picker over on our side. Could you help me get one from the front desk?” replied the man.

“Haha! There’s one here right now! This person here used to be my student and now he’s picking up golf balls for a living! Just take him...”

“Him? Alright then, come along with me!” said the man as he nodded toward Gerald.

Gerald simply shook his head before saying, “Sorry, I don’t have the time...”

He was speechless.

Chapter 633

After ending his sentence, Gerald simply stood aside with a bitter smile on his face. While several misunderstandings were at play, he didn’t feel the need to explain everything to them.

“What’s his problem?” asked Karen’s husband, clearly upset.

“Oh, don’t bother about him! He’s just being a jerk again!” replied Karen, equally as upset.

All of a sudden, someone shouted, “Hot d*mn! That’s a lot of helicopters!”

“Huh? Where?”

“Holy! There’s at least thirty-six of them up there and they’re all forming a formation!”

Everyone there was stunned. Though this place was mostly reserved for wealthy people, those present there today were generally younger, which explained their shock.

Even Karen and the others’ attention was drawn toward the helicopters.

“Aren’t those helicopters used by the military, Hubby?” asked Karen, her voice clearly indicating her shock.

Her other students were simply too stunned to say anything.

“Of course not. While they surely are military grade helicopters, citizens can use them too. Still, I wonder who could have brought so many helicopters into Weston...”

Though Karen’s husband was knowledgeable, even he was surprised.

“I really want to know who those helicopters are for... The kind of formation they’re making could only be reserved for the richest of the rich!” said Lucille as she jumped up and down excitedly.

She even took out her phone to capture pictures of them. What an exciting day!

“Honey, look! The helicopters are about to land on the golf course!” said the lady who had misdirected her swing earlier.

“No wonder the workers told us to leave earlier. Someone powerful must be here today! I’m glad we didn’t leave. I have to know this person!” replied her husband, shocked.

Though they were indeed rich, they weren’t that rich! How could a person even have that much money!

“Good day, sir! Might you have any idea of who’s here today?” asked Karen’s husband as he walked over to the couple. He had overheard them discussing the helicopters as well.

He could tell that they were rich just from how they were dressed, which led to his assumption that they would probably know more about the situation.

Karen and the others simply followed behind him.

“I can’t really tell!” replied the man with a smile.

Karen’s husband then started making some small talk with the man about the wealthy people living in Weston.

Chase and the others could only look at them with admiration. This was a conversation between successful people. They could create a conversation out of the simplest of things.

It was the true power of having connections.

After all, Chase wouldn't be able to be at such a high-class place if he wasn't close to Ms. Karen.

Even Lucille was proud of being there.

Eventually, the helicopters managed to get in formation and they all landed on the golf course.

Everyone on the golf course was filled with excitement. Even those staying inside the hotel came out to watch.

“Look there! Some people are coming out of a helicopter!”

It was Drake and Tyson. Both of them were leading a row of bodyguards out of one of the helicopters.

“Oh my god! They're all so cool and handsome!” shouted Lucille excitedly.

Even Sherry was swooned at the sight of the bodyguards.

Drake and Tyson however, simply ignored them. After putting on some sunglasses, they walked toward Gerald.

“...What?”

Karen and the others were utterly confused.

“Mr. Crawford!” shouted Drake, Tyson, and all the other bodyguards in unison.

“Glad to see you’re all here!” replied Gerald as he nodded.

“Mr... Mr. Crawford?!”

Chapter 634

Karen and the others were beyond shocked when they heard the name being shouted out.

What was going on? Why did they address Gerald as Mr. Crawford?

Were those helicopters really here to pick Gerald up?

All of them had pained expressions on their faces, and this was especially so for the girls in the group. The pain they felt was excruciating. After all, all three of them had constantly looked down on Gerald. They just couldn’t believe that he was actually such a powerful person!

“Impossible... How is any of this possible?!” said Lucille.

Gerald didn't even bother looking at them. He was already prepared to leave.

"Gerald!" shouted Lucille, desperation in her voice.

"Yes?" replied Gerald as he turned to face her.

"You... These helicopters... They came to pick you up?" asked Lucille in a nervous tone.

"Yep!" said Gerald while nodding slightly. He then glanced at Sherry and Karen but he didn't say anything else. Slipping his hands into his pockets, he finally walked toward the helicopter, greeted by a row of bodyguards.

As for the young couple from earlier, both of them were equally shocked and scared. They had ordered a big boss to pick their golf ball up for them!

However, Gerald was simply too lazy to even bother with their reactions anymore. He was no longer as troubled as he used to be when it came to him showing off his wealth.

As Sherry and Karen continued to stare in confusion, the helicopters soon took off again.

Moving back to Yunus's birthday party, Yunus was still extremely upset after hearing everything that Yoel and Aiden had said.

Adding on to what Harry had said earlier, Yunus could feel that something wasn't right. This was because while Gerald's people looked like they were ready to cause trouble, Gerald himself had yet to arrive.

“I think Mr. Crawford is definitely coming over to snatch the bride away! He’ll definitely be coming for Ms. Giya!”

“That’s right! She’s so pretty... Plus, the Crawfords and the Longs have resented each other for a long time. No wonder Mr. Crawford is so upset!”

At that moment, almost everyone there was gossiping.

“What should we do, Yunus...?”

The question had come from Melissa who had just approached him. After all, Yunus wasn’t the only one who had turned his back against Gerald. Melissa had done so as well.

She was getting increasingly worried after seeing what had happened earlier on.

Gerald used to treat her well. He had even gone to the event she had organized just to save her some face.

While she felt guilty about it, she still opted to help Yunus in the end since Gerald didn’t have a background like the Long family did.

The situation there was extremely awkward now. Nobody dared to speak until one of the seniors of the Long family, Jerry Len, spoke up.

“Everyone! Today is young master Long’s birthday! It’s a wonderful sight, seeing all of you here today. Even Mr. Lyle is here to celebrate this wonderful occasion with us! Hence, I’m happy to announce that we’re officially buying Wayfair Mountain Entertainment as our primary investment project! Next, I’ll be showing all of you our following business plans for Mayberry!” said Jerry as he looked at Zack.

“What!”

Everyone there was starting to realize that the Longs were serious about taking their revenge after being forced by Jessica to leave Mayberry in the past.

They were also aware that Jerry had only spoken because the Long family had something up their sleeves to show all of them. But what could it be?

Seeing that everyone was curious, Jerry immediately clapped his hands. A brief moment later, the droning of helicopters could be heard coming from the mountains.

It wasn’t long before the crowd was able to see six helicopters hovering above Wayfair Mountain Entertainment. A roll of red satin hung under each helicopter and each roll held an individual word. When placed in order, they would form the name of the Long family’s project. The rolls of satin also made it look as though six red dragons were flying in the sky.

“Holy! That’s Master Long’s helicopter squad, the Flying Dragon Fleet! He rarely uses any of them and only brings out all six on big occasions! Each helicopter is worth a lot!”

“The Long family has such great power...”

Chapter 635

“Woah!”

While Melissa had been afraid at first, she was shocked out of her fear when she saw the helicopters flying in the sky.

Looking at everyone’s expressions, the Long family seemed to have finally managed to save themselves some face. This made Jerry smile happily.

However, much to everyone’s disappointment, before the helicopters could properly display the words on the red satin rolls, all of them landed immediately instead.

“Huh? What’s happening?” asked someone, shocked.

“The hell? Quick! Go check out what’s wrong!” shouted another person from the side.

It was at that moment when a shocking sight could be seen from afar. A speck of black seemed to have formed in the sky, and it was slowly getting bigger as it swiftly approached Wayfair Mountain Entertainment.

That speck in question was actually Gerald’s thirty-six helicopters! While none of the helicopters looked as grand as the ones owned by the Long family, in the end, thirty-six helicopters were still much grander than just six.

“What... What on earth is happening? Whose helicopters are those?”

Everyone was brimming with curiosity as they stood up. No wonder the six helicopters landed immediately.

As Jerry turned to look at Yunus, utterly confused, he could see that Yunus's own face had already turned as white as a sheet. The same went for Xavia.

“What the hell?” said Xavia as she, too, got up from her seat.

In Yanken, the Long family was both wealthy and powerful, which was why they could afford those six luxurious helicopters in the first place. The helicopters they owned weren't regular ones by any means. They couldn't just be bought off the market.

Not even everyone from the family could sit in them, but Xavia was lucky enough to have boarded one of them once.

Despite all that, they still lost in number. Who could have thought that there was someone even more powerful than them!

“Who is it?”

Everyone was still flabbergasted by the scene. Everyone except for Giya. She knew for a fact that it was Gerald orchestrating the entire scene.

One of the helicopters descended slowly, before finally landing right outside the function hall's entrance.

Once the helicopter was on the ground, Gerald stepped out of it slowly. Together with him, was Drake, Tyson, and Harry.

“Mr. Crawford! Oh my god it’s really him!” shouted some of the people excitedly.

Gerald only smiled subtly. While the Long family’s bodyguards were still trying to stop Gerald’s people before this, the moment they saw him, the bodyguards immediately stepped aside.

“Mr. Crawford! Mr. Crawford!”

On the other hand, several of the wealthy businessmen there were already shouting his name.

Giya herself called out his name in a gentle tone, “Gerald!”

Gerald was quite surprised when he saw her. Since he was only there to create trouble for Yunus, he wasn’t really expecting to see Giya there.

“Mm!” said Gerald as he nodded his head slightly before walking toward her.

The entire hall went silent.

Today was the day the Crawfords showed their true power, and they were indeed, very powerful.

“Allow me to say a few words, Yunus!” said Gerald.

While Yunus was supposed to be the spotlight of the day, Gerald simply patted him on the shoulder before signaling for him to move aside.

Yunus could only glare angrily at him. He had never been treated like this before. The nerve Gerald had to tell him to stand aside! It was extremely clear that Gerald was humiliating him.

However, Jerry simply grabbed Yunus by the arm and pulled him aside.

It was evident, at least for now, that the Longs weren't going to be able to win a fight against Gerald and his people.

Gerald then turned to look at Melissa whose face was drained of all color.

He smiled at her before saying, “Everyone! It's Yunus's birthday today and I mean no harm! I've only come to give him a few presents! Naturally, the presents are also for the Owens family who has had a major misunderstanding with me!”

“...Huh? Present?”

Everyone was extremely curious.

The Owens themselves—Rosalie included—were seated right beside him.

Chapter 636

While the Owens hadn't said a thing from the very beginning, Rosalie had been glaring at Gerald with eyes filled with hostility from the moment he appeared.

If the Crawfords wanted to cause trouble now, the Owens couldn't really do much about it.

“I believe that some of you may have already heard about the misunderstanding between me and the Owens, and I'm sure that everyone wants to know what exactly happened. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you, the truth!” said Gerald with a laugh.

The moment he said that, Gerald's men took that as their cue to start playing a video. It was projected on the big screen located in front of the venue.

In the video, a car could be seen parked on a bridge. It was night time and both Yunus Long and Melissa Wayham were present. Moments later, a car drove toward them and out stepped the director of Mayberry News.

“Lissa, I'll leave the matter regarding Rosalie to you. Your job is just to get her and Gerald together in a room. As for you, Mr. Leach, your job is to expose them when they're together! You don't need to worry about the rest, I'll take care of that. I guarantee that there's no way that Gerald will be able to clear his name off this!”

“No problem, Mr. Long!”

As they started talking about other things in the video, Rosalie and the other Owens had already stood up in anger.

Rosalie even glared daggers at Lissa, her eyes burning with hatred.

While Lissa's face was red as a tomato, Yunus's was deathly pale.

That rendezvous was supposed to be a secret. How on earth was Gerald able to capture footage of that scene in advance? It was impossible!

Yunus then scanned the crowd before eventually resting his gaze on Mr. Leach. He was standing among the group of people who had arrived with Gerald.

"How could you, Mr. Leach?!"

"How could I what? You animal! No, you're worse than an animal! You know, from the very moment I met you, I knew that you weren't a good person!" sneered Mr. Leach in response.

Mr. Leach was a cunning person who often worked with two strings to his bow. This was the only reason why he had managed to work with someone like Yunus Long.

"Jerry Len, Yunus Long, and Melissa Weyham! All three of you have almost tarnished the Owens family's name with this humiliating act! Our family will never allow you to get away with this! We apologize sincerely for our misunderstanding with you, Mr. Crawford! Now, if you'll excuse us, we'll be leaving immediately!"

One by one, the members of the Owens family—including Rosalie—stood up and left in a rage.

“By god! Yunus Long is such a sc*mbag!”

Several celebrities and businessmen were also already gossiping about him.

“You... You son of a b*tch! How dare you!” roared Yunus as he dashed toward Gerald, furious.

However, before he could even touch Gerald, he was greeted by a mighty kick. It was so powerful that Yunus could feel blood in his mouth.

Looking up, Yunus realized that the silhouette he saw before being kicked turned out to be Drake.

“Speaking of which, I have another gift for the rest of you businesspeople as well!” said Gerald with a smile.

As soon as they heard him say that, everyone’s eyes became glued to the screen, all of them filled with anticipation.

The next segment seemed to have been secretly filmed through a window at night. The contents of the video were extremely inappropriate, to say the least.

One of the wealthier attendees was particularly infuriated as the video played on. He turned to look at the beautiful young mistress who had been standing next to him before slapping her on the cheek.

“Shame on you!” roared the same man.

The contents of the video didn’t really need much further explanation.

Essentially, today, all the attendees were being shown every single dirty little thing that Yunus had done before.

Even Jerry and the other heads of the Long family were disgusted by what they had seen. Their faces were boiling red. Today, their family’s name had been completely tarnished.

Many people had already lost their respect for the Long family, and it was all because of Yunus Long.

“Even if I die today, I demand a thorough explanation from the Long family!” yelled one of the businessmen furiously.

Disgust and hatred could be seen in the eyes of all the other wealthy attendees.

“U-uncle Len! You have to help me! I’m being set up here! It’s all an elaborate setup!” shouted Yunus in fear.

“And here I thought you were the smartest among the three siblings. Never would I have imagined that you’d be the ultimate let-down! I’m reporting this matter to grandpa immediately, Yunus!” said Jerry as the corner of his lips twitched.

“Alright, alright, settle down people. By the way, there’s another video that I wish to show specifically to the Long family! The video’s quite recent so I’m sure your grandpa will be even happier when he sees this!” said Harry.

The moment his sentence ended, the next video began playing.

“...Grandpa, I’m a brute! Grandpa, I’m a brute!”

In the video, Yunus could be seen seemingly shouting for his grandfather three times in a row as he knelt.

Jerry looked like he was ready to explode in anger. He then pointed toward Yunus, his finger trembling in rage.

“You... You...!”

Chapter 637

Xavia hadn’t expected things to go this way.

She had only wanted to use this opportunity to widen her social circle with the attendees.

If Gerald hadn’t attended the event, her plan would’ve gone smoothly.

Nobody could have ever anticipated that the event would end up in such a tense situation.

“Humph! You’re such a disgrace to the Long Family, Yunus Long! I can’t believe you would do such a thing!” said Xavia in disgust as she spat at him.

Her response was an immediate slap to the face from Yunus.

Yunus’s eyes were bloodshot as Xavia, overwhelmed by the force of his slap, fell atop one of the tables.

“You f*cking b*tch! Keep your mouth shut! All you do is ramble on and on! I’m sick of all that! Who do you even think you are to lecture me like that? I’m only saying this once. You’re my sister-in-law merely because I acknowledged you as part of our family! If I hadn’t brought you in, you’d just be another stray b*tch trying to claw your way in!”

“You... You dare hit me?” said Xavia as she held onto her bruised cheek in disbelief. The corner of Xavia’s lips had already begun bleeding as well.

Jerry didn’t even bother saying anything after witnessing this.

The Long family was very big. Being a family with three grandsons to be future heirs, the distribution of wealth and power was rather complicated.

While Jerry himself wasn't one of the three young heirs of the Long family, they had sent him over this time to oversee things.

After seeing how Yunus was behaving, Jerry was boiling mad at him for tarnishing the Long family's name.

Then again, if Yunus was to lose favor among the other family members, there could still be hope for Jerry.

Since Jerry didn't have any relation with Xavia, he didn't really care about her.

At the time, the video from before was still playing on screen.

Gerald himself was watching the situation unfold before his very eyes in an indifferent manner.

He and Xavia were no longer in a relationship. He had also stopped blaming himself for being the cause of their breakup. There was really no need for him to feel guilty for a woman like her anymore.

Gerald could only hope that she wouldn't step foot into his world again. It would be much better for them to go their separate ways.

What a complicated situation.

“F*ck you! The Long family fed and clothed you! Things wouldn’t have gone this way if you had only listened to me! This is entirely your fault, you b*tch!” yelled Yunus as he slapped her again.

Nobody stepped in to help her, not even her younger sister who was standing right beside her. She was paralyzed in fear.

As Xavia continued cupping her cheeks, she looked toward Gerald.

Gerald simply avoided making eye contact with her.

It was at that moment when she understood that nobody was coming to help her. She simply nodded before running out of the hall while bawling her eyes out.

As soon as she left, a wine bottle came smashing down against Yunus’s head.

One of the businessmen had stepped in to fight Yunus.

Seeing this, Zack and Gerald simply looked at each other with a smile. Both of them then shook their heads before moving to the side to watch the fight further unfold.

“Thank you for what happened today!” said Giya as she approached Gerald.

“What are you thanking me for?” asked Gerald as he smiled subtly.

“For helping me out!”

“I think you’ve misunderstood something, Giya. I wasn’t particularly aiming to help you. I just came here to clear my name!” replied Gerald with a smile.

He then began leading his men away from the scene.

Gerald was fully aware that this was only the beginning of his feud with the Long family. Zack had already told him about the previous disputes the Crawfords had with them.

Now that his sister wasn’t around, the Long family was definitely going to continue trying to get their revenge for what had happened in the past.

From buying Wayfair Mountain Entertainment to Yunus trying to frame him. All of these were just signs of the many things to come.

Chapter 638

Gerald’s main purpose of attending the event was just to intimidate them.

He wanted the Longs to know that they were messing with the wrong person, and that they should re-evaluate their decision of pursuing their revenge against him.

Now that he had completed what he had set out to do, Gerald was ready to leave.

Sometime after getting into his car, he noticed that someone was tailing him.

Looking into his rear-view mirror, he realized who was in the car, so he simply paid the vehicle no further attention.

Once he arrived at the hotel's entrance, Gerald was just about to enter when a girl's voice called out to him.

“Are you planning to just ignore me forever, Gerald?!”

Of course, the person in the car earlier was Giya.

“There's no reason for us to maintain our relationship anymore. Yunus should no longer pester you either, so isn't that good enough?” replied Gerald.

“Can't we even just be friends anymore?” replied Giya.

She was discontent with the way Gerald was currently treating her.

Pausing for a moment, Gerald eventually turned around and simply walked away from her without saying another word.

The truth was, Gerald was feeling quite upset about the entire thing. After all, Giya was a nice person and she even treated him well.

This was the exact reason why he had to be firm with his decision. He could no longer afford to be the obsequious person he had been before.

“S-stop right there you son of a b*tch!” shouted Tammy as she huffed and puffed while running toward Gerald.

“You’re such a bad person, Gerald! How could you do this to Giya? Do you know how much she always mentions your name in front of us? While it’s true that you’ve had some trouble with Giya misunderstanding you, you should also know how terribly sad Giya was! She had even gone to find Rosalie in hopes that she would forgive you and not pursue the matter any further! Though the Owens hadn’t promised her that they would forgive you, that still doesn’t mean you can treat her like this!” shouted Tammy.

This was true as the day that incident happened, Giya had personally met up with Rosalie. Despite her efforts, the Owens had been reluctant to let go of the matter that easily.

“Aside from that, there’ve been rumors in Mayberry that Giya is your girlfriend! They all thought that the reason you attended Yunus’s birthday ceremony was to make a scene for Giya’s sake! While I know that the rumors don’t affect you, have you actually thought about what Giya will be going through now? How the Long family now thinks of her? What do you even suppose Giya should do now?”

“That’s quite enough, Tammy! I already know why Gerald is ignoring me!” said Giya as she wiped her tears.

Staring straight at him, Giya then added, “I... I know I was being selfish. However, I have one final request from you, Gerald. Remember that time I was hospitalized after being kidnapped? You told me that you would do one thing for me as long as you could manage it. Tell me Gerald, does that statement still stand?”

“It does,” replied Gerald with a nod.

Gerald also remembered that Giya had gone over to look for him back then to escape her marriage. Once she arrived in Mayberry, she had been kidnapped because he hadn't paid any attention to her.

He had blamed himself for the entire situation back then, which was why he had told her that she could make a single request which he would then try to fulfill.

At the time, Giya had playfully said that since Gerald had been the one who suggested it, he wasn't allowed to take back what he had said.

Gerald however, knew that he had meant every word that he said.

While that promise had laid dormant all this time, it had finally resurfaced again.

“Tell me what you want. As long as I can do it, I'll help you with it!” said Gerald.

After all, a promise was a promise. In addition, Gerald just couldn't bear breaking her heart any further. He didn't even know how to refuse her anymore.

“That's good to know... Rest assured, once you fulfill that favor, I'll never pester you again. I'll disappear from your life for good!”

“So... What exactly is the favor?”

“I want you to marry me!”

“...Come again? Marry?”

Despite having mentally prepared himself for whatever she was going to throw at him, Gerald still ended up being shocked when he heard those words.

“Ah, there’s no need to be afraid. I don’t mean an actual marriage. I just need you to fake a marriage with me in front of the Owens and Long family. Will you be able to do that for me?” asked Giya.

Chapter 639

To Giya, her request was fairly simple.

She understood that she wasn’t perfect, but was she so bad that Gerald didn’t even want to look at her for one final time?

Still, it made her feel a little better since he was still willing to consider her favor.

From her point of view as a girl, though fulfilling the request wouldn’t entirely grant her contentment, it was the only way for her to completely end her relationship with Gerald.

She wasn’t really trying to conspire anything bad at all.

Giya simply wanted Gerald to do something for her. To prove that he still cared for her. With any luck, she hoped that that would finally be able to satisfy her.

That was the gist of why she had made that request.

However, Gerald was visibly hesitant about agreeing to it.

While he had pretended to be other peoples' boyfriends before in the past, those favors weren't too hard for him to handle. It was the least he could do to help out his friends.

However, faking a marriage was a completely different thing. It would be something actually difficult for Gerald to pull off.

While he could choose to refuse her request, he acknowledged that he had indeed promised to fulfill a single request from her before this.

What more, he held no grudges against Giya. Gerald himself was honestly still holding on to both his feelings of gratitude and regret toward her.

"Really though, it's just a fake marriage! I won't ask for anything more after that. I'll need about a day to get ready for it, but before that, tell me. Are you willing to fulfill my request? Again, I repeat my promise that as long as you do this for me this time, I won't bother you ever again in the future!" said Giya as her eyes began to water.

"..Mmm... Um..."

After a long, agonizing pause, Gerald finally nodded in agreement.

“...However, I have one condition!” Added Gerald.

“Go on!” replied Giya as she bit her lower lip.

After considering his words for a while, Gerald finally said, “Apart from the Long and Owens family, nobody else should know about the fake marriage!”

“I agree with your term!”

After saying that, she took in a deep breath before putting on a somber expression on her face.

“...Alright then, Mr. Crawford. I won't take any more of your time today. It will be held tomorrow and don't worry about the arrangements. I'll handle the rest myself!”

Upon ending her sentence, Giya and Tammy then left.

Gerald on the other hand, laid down on his bed as soon as he got back to his hotel room. He was dead tired and wanted to at least get a short rest.

Sometime while he was resting, he heard a knock on the door. When he opened it, he was greeted by the old man.

“Grandson!”

“Mr. Quick! Why are you here?” asked Gerald as he subtly smiled.

The old man standing before him was no ordinary person. In fact, he was no longer a beggar either.

Since Mr. Quick had helped him back then, in return, Gerald had treated him extremely well.

Not only did Gerald promise to take him back to his hometown in Salford, he even gave him money and ordered his men to take good care of him.

After getting to know him a little better, he also received the old man’s name. His full name was Finnley Quick, a name that sounded quite imposing.

Perhaps it was Mr. Quick’s old age that made Gerald feel like he was quite muddle-headed. Gerald found it hard at times to distinguish which of what Mr. Quick said was true or false.

Gerald pitied him very much.

Regardless, he was surprised that Mr. Quick hadn’t gone back yet. The old man was quite mysterious. He could precisely locate Gerald wherever he was every time!

“You said we were going back together!” replied Mr. Quick with a smile.

“I... Well yes, I’ll be going to Salford, but only tomorrow or the day after!”

“That’s quite fine by me. I’ll wait for you! Also, if you don’t mind me being a burden, I could even help you!” The smile on Mr. Quick’s face remained as he said that.

“Alright, alright, I understand, Mr. Quick... For now, you should probably get some rest first. I’ll pay for your meals from the past few days soon!” said Gerald as he shook his head with a slightly bitter smile.

“I’ll be waiting for you then! Remember, either tomorrow or the day after!” replied Mr. Quick as he left the room enthusiastically.

Naturally, Gerald wasn’t going to allow the old man to go searching by himself.

After all, Mr. Quick had already helped him a few times, and Gerald was truly grateful for his help.

He remembered the time when he was surrounded in the hotel. Had Mr. Quick not rushed over to save him, who knows what would have become of him?

Chapter 640

However, due to his old age and muddle-headedness, it would be quite a bit of trouble if Gerald was to follow him around. Gerald wasn’t trying to be rude, but he just couldn’t bear the thought of letting him suffer!

Early the next morning, Gerald received a call from Tammy. She had of course, called to discuss the fake marriage.

To keep the marriage a secret from the public, Gerald had told neither Zack nor Michael about it.

Gerald understood the reasoning behind Giya's request. The main purpose of the fake marriage was to let the Longs and Owens know that they were engaged.

"I'll be picking you up, Gerald! Wait downstairs!" said Tammy.

"Alright, alright, I'll be down in a minute!" replied Gerald as he smiled bitterly.

The entire plan was quite simple. They were just going to have a banquet in a hotel so that Giya's family could finally settle down.

By the time he got downstairs, Tammy was already there waiting for him. They were ready to depart.

As they were about to leave, Gerald noticed someone standing in front of a car that had been parked at the hotel's entrance.

It was Natasha Yorke.

As soon as she saw him, Natasha jogged over to Gerald.

“Gerald! I came over to look for you but your bodyguards wouldn’t allow me to enter! Humph!” said Natasha.

Gerald’s bodyguards were well aware that Natasha was Xavia’s sister. Regardless of whatever reason she gave them, they persistently denied her from entering.

They didn’t even bother informing Gerald about her arrival.

“What is it?”

“Quick! You have to save my sister! She’s going to take some cyanide in an attempt to commit suicide! We fought last night yet I still failed to persuade her! You’re the only person who can stop her!” said Natasha, her voice anxious.

“Then let her do it. Do you really think I can stop her?” replied Gerald as he smiled bitterly.

“How could you be so heartless...? Do you have any idea why my sister’s taking things this far? She wants you to take her seriously! What more, didn’t you see how Yunus beat her up at the banquet yesterday?”

“Yunus wanted my sister to lure you out so that he could do bad things to you! But my sister refused to do it! Look at you now! You’re all fine and dandy while my sister’s in deep trouble! Are you still going to turn your back against her now?”

“As I said, she has nothing to do with me. If you’re willing, pass this message from me to her. If she wants trouble, that’s fine by me. However, never stir up trouble in my villa ever again!” sneered Gerald as he walked away.

“You... You b*tard! You’re a monster, Gerald! You’re on your way to marry someone when my sister’s about to commit suicide!” screamed Natasha at him.

“Huh? Who told you that I’m getting betrothed?”

“Stop pretending! The Long family already knows all about it! I can’t believe that you’re lying straight to my face!” bellowed Natasha.

“I don’t care if you know, honestly, now stop wasting my time!”

Xavia had indeed been humiliated yesterday after being beaten up by Yunus in front of the crowd. In the past, Gerald might still have felt pitiful and sorry for her.

But not anymore.

He then left the hotel with Tammy as Natasha stomped her foot in anger before finally leaving.

A little while later at Mountain Top Villa, a housemaid informed “Madam, your sister has arrived!”

“Huh? Did Gerald come with her?” asked Xavia.

“Only your sister, madam! Gerald isn’t present.”

“Im... Impossible!” screamed Xavia angrily as she pushed the maid aside and walked to the door to see for herself. True to the maid’s word, only Natasha could be seen ascending the stairs. There was no sign of Gerald at all!

“That... That son of a b*tch! When did he become this heartless...?” said Xavia, her face filled with dismay.

Chapter 641

Xavia had already planned everything out.

She knew that the moment Gerald found out that she was in danger, he would definitely come running over to save her. Xavia had no doubts about it given how well she knew his personality in the past.

Once he arrived, she would begin crying and throwing tantrums before threatening to commit suicide. After seeing that, he would definitely be saddened and try to console her!

After that, she would finally have her chance to be together with Gerald again.

While Xavia seemed like she utterly hated Gerald at first glance, her main and only aim was to make Gerald regret leaving her.

Though she had managed to corner Gerald up in the bar that day, she had never planned to order her subordinates to beat him up. The most she had wanted to do back then was to mock him slightly before asking him how it felt to have fallen right into her hands.

She wanted Gerald to be filled with grief.

To her surprise, Gerald hadn't even bothered checking in on her today! Not even after hearing about her suicide attempt!

“Ahh! I'm so god d*mn angry!”

Though the Longs were powerful, Xavia knew in her heart that the Longs were no match against Gerald.

“Sister, I said everything you told me to, to a T! However, it really seemed like he was getting ready to be engaged!” said Natasha.

“Humph! I'm not buying it! As if he would ever get engaged to Giya! It doesn't make any sense!”

Though she said that, Xavia was quite anxious as well. In fact, she had been nervous from the moment she learned of the news last night.

After all, the news had been specifically spread around to the Quarringtons and the Longs. Since the Long family knew about it, it didn't take long for the information to reach Xavia.

Without warning, Xavia suddenly picked up a vase before smashing it on the floor!

She then sat on a sofa, speechless in her despair.

While this was happening, a roar of laughter could be heard at Mayberry Airport.

“Wow! Mayberry is so beautiful! Much more beautiful than Hong Kong!”

“Indeed. We chose to come here for a reason you know? By the way, Mila, you and your husband had better take us around to maximize our enjoyment here! Remember, we only managed to get a few days off! However, we really wanted to go to Mayberry with you to have a look around! We haven’t even returned home yet, so you better not disappoint us!”

The conversation had come from a few girls who were currently dragging their luggage bags out of the airport as they continued chatting excitedly among themselves.

“Speaking of which, Mila, you’ve told us before that your boyfriend is a rather exceptional person. Why didn’t you tell him to pick us up?”

The one who had asked was a cute girl who seemed to talk excitedly regardless of the situation. She had a bowl cut and her face was slightly chubby, easily making her the cutest among the six girls in the group. From the tone of her voice, she also sounded slightly naïve.

“Don’t you remember what Mila said before? Her boyfriend doesn’t really get women so he’s rather insensitive! He’s so straightforward that he doesn’t even know how to surprise her romantically! Well, it’s not a sin to be an insensitive man, but at least one of the partners in a relationship should know how to give pleasant and romantic surprises to the other! If both partners don’t know how to do that, how would the relationship even be sustained? That’s why we have our Mila here to focus on giving her Gerald surprises!” said another girl whose hair hung to around her waist. She was smiling the entire time she said that.

“Oh! I get it now! It’s like what happened a few days ago right? When Mila gave Gerald a special call on his birthday? She had told him that she would be having a short holiday in a few days, but Gerald had only said that he would meet Mila after that! I felt like smacking my forehead after hearing that! He hadn’t even taken the initiative to make any requests even though Mila had purposefully mentioned the short holiday!” said the bowl cut girl from earlier as she laughed out loud.

“That’s right! At the time, Mila hadn’t managed to hold herself back so she ended up telling Gerald about it! Personally, I think that it would’ve been better if you hadn’t told him about the holiday. You could’ve just given him a surprise from your sudden return trip! Those are the best! Then again, now that I think about it, it would be better if you guided him more since he’s already so insensitive. If you don’t, I fear that his straightforwardness will only get worse!” added yet another of the six girls.

Hearing what the other girls had to say, Mila felt like their logic was sound. Still, she hadn’t really thought about it back then.

When she had called that day, she had only mentioned the holiday because she wanted to see how Gerald would react after hearing about it.

‘Well, it’s fine. He’s just as straightforward as ever.’

Regardless, Mila had indeed wanted to return for quite a while now to give Gerald a surprise. After all, the present Gerald had changed quite a bit compared to his past self.

Mila herself wanted to be a more supportive girlfriend, so she felt like she should put in more effort in hopes that he would also learn to do the same. Once that was achieved, they would then be able to manage their relationship even better.

“Humph! Well, in my opinion, Mila’s just bragging. She may have claimed that her husband is quite powerful in Mayberry, but I couldn’t find any information about Gerald online at all!”

Chapter 642

Another girl from the group had said that, her arms crossed.

All six of them were housemates who were both learning new skills and doing their internships at Hong Kong Television Station.

However, they were now on holiday to enjoy themselves as a group.

The girl who had claimed that Mila was simply bragging was named Wanda Wabsor. Though her figure was similar to Mila’s, the same couldn’t be said about her appearance.

If they needed to select the station beauty in Hong Kong Television Station, Mila would undeniably get chosen since she was the most beautiful woman there. Wanda herself could barely hold second place in the beauty department.

Since all of them were housemates, not only did they live together, but they also had to learn and work in the same space most of the time. In short, they had to see and talk with each other a lot.

Being girls, it was quite hard for them to avoid feeling jealous among themselves.

However, it would be far-fetched to say that they resented each other. The most they did was mock each other playfully. Regardless, they were still happy being together.

“Oh, Wanda! Don’t say things like that! Mila would never brag! You can tell just by how loyal Mila is toward Gerald!”

“That’s right! Just look at the television station we work for. So many people have tried to gain Mila’s affection, but what does she do every time? She rejects them all! She only ever thinks about that insensitive man! When you look at it that way, Mila’s such a good girlfriend!”

The responses had come from two other girls from the group.

“Humph!” After hearing that, Wanda simply kept her mouth shut. This was honestly another reason why Wanda was jealous.

For girls living outside, it was quite normal for them to have at least some sort of ambiguous relationship with other guys, even if they already had a boyfriend.

Wanda herself had a long-distance relationship with her own boyfriend.

However, even she had some ambiguous relationships with a few guys. By that, it meant that she would neither reject nor accept the actions of some of her admirers who tried to gain her favor.

Mila on the other hand, was different. Regardless of how earnest and sincere her admirers were, Mila was always resolute with her response.

‘Sorry, but I already have a boyfriend!’

In a way, it made Wanda feel like Mila was simply too perfect.

“Humph! Well, it’s fine if you don’t want to continue talking about it. Anyway, how are our living arrangements?” asked Wanda.

“Well, I don’t have many bedrooms in my house... Actually, I have another place in mind. Let’s go to Gerald’s house! His house is quite spacious and he has a lot of bedrooms too!” said Mila.

A roar of laughter ensued.

“Mila, we all know you just want to meet Gerald sooner. You don’t even want to return home yet! That’s fine though, since it definitely beats just staying in the hotel with nothing to do. Let’s accompany Mila to visit Gerald!”

After that, they hailed a taxi before excitedly heading to Mountain Top Villa.

“Holy! Would you look at that! This... How could such a luxurious villa be built on top of a mountain? It almost seems like its peak is amidst the clouds! Mila, is this really Gerald’s house? Are we going to be staying here?” asked the girl with the cute face from before whose name was Molly Sabell.

Earlier while they were in the taxi, the taxi driver had mentioned that Mountain Top Villa cost around a hundred and twenty million dollars. Hearing that, they had been excited to see the villa for themselves.

They honestly hadn’t expected to be even more surprised now that they were standing in front of the real deal.

Wanda was filled with jealousy. So it turned out that Mila’s husband truly was a powerful and rich heir, just like she had claimed!

‘Why is she so lucky?’ Wanda thought to herself.

“Come on, let’s go in already!” said Mila as she held her besties’ hands before walking toward the villa’s door together.

Once they arrived at the door, Mila was giddy with excitement. After all, she hadn’t met Gerald in three months now. What if he wasn’t home?

Even though Mila had her own key, she still opted to ring the doorbell first.

When they heard footsteps from the inside rushing over to open the door, Mila's excitement grew with every passing step.

Chapter 643

"Who is it?" asked a maid just as she opened the door.

When she saw Mila, she was visibly stunned.

'What was such a beautiful girl doing here?'

"Um... Who are you looking for?" asked the maid.

"Is Gerald home? I'm looking for him!" replied Mila with a slight smile.

"Who's there, Hope?" said an impatient sounding voice from inside the villa.

"They're here to look for Gerald, Miss!" answered the maid.

"Huh?"

Hearing that, Xavia walked over to the door...

When she saw Mila, she was momentarily shocked speechless! Naturally, the same could be said for Mila when she saw Xavia.

“Mila!”

“Xavia!”

Both of them shouted each other’s name in unison.

Mila for one, definitely knew who Xavia was. After all, Xavia was Gerald’s ex-girlfriend. It was impossible for Xavia not to know who Mila was as well.

In fact, her knowing about Mila was exactly why she was sure that Gerald marrying Giya was nothing but a rumor. After all, Gerald already had Mila as his girlfriend.

‘D*mn it all!’

What more, Xavia was aware of how much Gerald loved Mila! At least that was what she still assumed to be the case up till this point...

While finding out about the engagement had initially surprised her, if Gerald really was going through it, that would only mean that he must have broken up with Mila. After all, she knew that Gerald wasn’t the kind of person to have an affair with another girl.

Far from it, in fact. Gerald was extremely serious when it came to dealing with his relationships. Otherwise, he would’ve never even considered the thought of getting engaged with Giya.

'But since he's broken up with Mila, why did Mila come over to look for him?'

'F*ck! Could Mila's end goal be the same as mine? Does she want to get back together with Gerald too? Doesn't that mean that I'll have another enemy to deal with who's even more powerful than Giya?'

'After all, Mila is very beautiful... While it's true that I can use my past with Gerald to my advantage, what other tactics do I even have? I'm definitely no match against the two of them!'

'This just won't do! I must make her leave at once!'

Xavia then began plotting against Mila right there and then!

"Why are you here?" asked Mila, a frown on her face.

"Why wouldn't I be? I've gotten back together with Gerald! I'm pregnant too, so I'm staying here now to take care of both me and my baby!" sneered Xavia.

"Quit spouting nonsense!" yelled Mila who had gone pale from fright.

But then again, if she was just spouting nonsense, what was she doing in Gerald's house?

“I don’t care about whatever you have to say! Oh, and I’m marrying him soon. How about you? Why did you come back to look for him? Whatever your intentions are, you’d better give up!” replied Xavia as she rolled her eyes.

“What happened Mila? Who is she?” asked Molly angrily.

“She’s Gerald’s ex-girlfriend!” wailed Mila as she burst into tears.

“F*ck! What a sc*mbag!”

At that point, the others could already piece together the situation.

“Let’s go, Mila! You shouldn’t show your tears in front of such people!” said Molly as she glared at Xavia.

“So it turns out that Gerald had been lying to you this entire time! To think that he was getting married soon to someone else while he was still constantly contacting you! It’s true that there really are no nice men in the world!” said Molly.

Chapter 644

Mila simply took in a deep breath before saying, “I’m going to call Gerald now! I want him to tell me in person what exactly happened!”

After saying that, she took out the key to Mountain Top Villa before throwing it directly at Xavia. Xavia was obviously stupefied by this.

'F*ck! Why does it now seem like Gerald hasn't broken up with her yet? In fact, they still seem to be deeply in love with each other!'

'What exactly is happening? Did Gerald really become a sc*mbag?'

As Xavia thought about that, Mila had already tried giving Gerald a few calls. However, he answered none of them.

"Why isn't he answering any of my calls? He used to always answer my calls immediately!" said Mila anxiously.

So it was as Xavia said. Gerald really was having an affair with her all this time!

Mila could only laugh bitterly in her mind.

All of a sudden, Xavia came up with a nasty plot. Just as Mila was about to leave, she shouted out, "Mila, wait!"

"What more do you want?" yelled Molly coldly in response.

Hearing that, Xavia bit her lower lip slightly before shedding some tears.

"Mila, though we've never contacted each other before, I do feel that you truly are a really nice girl. I said all that to you earlier because I couldn't bear to tell you the truth! You'd be too greatly disappointed!"

“Humph! She’s just being a hypocrite while shedding crocodile tears! Pay her no attention!” replied Molly.

“Mila, while it’s true that I live in Mountain Top Villa and Gerald has given me a luxurious life, do you know how much of a sc*mbag he actually is? He refuses to get back together with me, simply because he’s already moved on! Even though I now bear his child, he won’t let me return just because I’m his ex-girlfriend!”

“Also, I have a great secret to share with you, Mila!” added Xavia.

“What is it?” asked Mila.

Mila then lowered her voice before saying, “It turns out that Gerald is actually Mr. Crawford of Mayberry! He’s filthy rich! However, he only told me about this after I got pregnant with his child, which is why I’m not sure whether you know about this yet.”

Mila then looked at Xavia for a brief moment before nodding. She was starting to slightly believe her.

After all, Gerald had initially told her that his identity should never be exposed.

However, even Xavia knew about it now. What more, she was also living in Mountain Top Villa! That fact alone clearly pointed out the issue.

“Then again, since you managed to come here, it must mean that you already know about Gerald’s true identity as well! If that’s the case, I’ll just cut to the chase. Men usually turn wild and bad once they become rich! Once I got pregnant, I thought that I could finally fulfill my wish of getting back together with him! Alas, it just isn’t possible. That’s because he’s now together with yet another girl!” said Xavia as she wailed even louder.

“Another girl...?” replied Mila, her voice now weak.

“That’s right. Now, if Gerald had truly wanted to be with another girl, I’d gladly have given up. However, he told me that he wanted me to continue being with him. He lied straight to my face while he was still together with that other girl! What more, he’s getting engaged to her today! I didn’t dare stop him in fear that he would beat me up!” said Xavia in between sobs.

Mila felt like she had just received a great blow.

“Where is the engagement being held? I’m meeting him immediately!” said Mila coldly.

“He’s at...”

Xavia then told Mila the venue where Gerald’s engagement would be held.

She had initially planned to go there to create a mess. However, after thinking about it for a while, she realized that she would only achieve the exact opposite of her desired results if she went there looking for trouble.

That was the reason why she had given up on the idea and simply went to bed.

Unexpectedly, Mila had turned up at the villa out of the blue. What great timing!

“However, you must promise me that you’ll never let him know that I told you any of this. If he ever finds out about it, I’ll be beaten to death!”

“Got it!”

After she said that, Mila and her friends immediately left for the venue.

On their way there, Mila was still filled with disbelief. She had always given her full trust to Gerald. She simply felt that she wouldn’t have had the wrong impression of him for so long.

She was definitely not going to misunderstand Gerald simply because of what Xavia said.

This was why she wanted to go there to see for herself first. She needed to know if Xavia was really telling the truth.

“Humph! How ridiculous! You cherish him so much to the point where you talk about him at least eight times a day! In the end, he doesn’t even care about you!” sneered Wanda.

“Could you please stop talking for a moment, Wanda? Mila’s already having a hard time,” replied Molly.

After a short drive, the car finally stopped in front of the hotel’s entrance.

“Mila, this should be the place!”

Chapter 645

Meanwhile, Gerald had been putting up quite a show together with Giya.

Giya herself seemed to have lied to her parents.

Knowing this, Gerald found it increasingly awkward to keep up the façade. Hence, he was now trying to find an excuse to leave already.

When she saw this, Giya held on to Gerald’s arm intimately before saying, “Mom, Dad, I’ll be seeing him off first. I can handle it so both of you can just stay here!”

After saying that, both of them then walked out of the hall together.

Once the hotel’s entrance was within sight, Gerald immediately said, “It’s high time you returned my cell phone to me!”

Earlier, Gerald had constantly looked at his phone while he was chatting with the others. To preserve the image of intimacy between him and Giya, the other Quarringtons had temporarily confiscated his phone.

They added that he shouldn't be playing with his phone so that he could focus more on chatting properly with them.

Gerald hadn't said anything about it at the time.

After that, they continued chatting for a little while longer and having their meal, it soon led to the current situation.

"Now what kind of tone is that?" replied Giya as she placed the phone in Gerald's hand, her other arm still locked together with his.

"Why did you switch my phone off...?" said Gerald helplessly as he tried to retract his arm.

However, she refused to let him go. Her charming face clearly reflected her stubbornness and reluctance to part with him.

After all, Giya had agreed that after today, both of them would cease to have any form of relationship with each other. At best, they could only remain as friends.

How could Giya be willing to simply accept that?

Despite knowing why she wasn't letting go, Gerald didn't want to continue retaining such an ambiguous relationship with her. This was why he was being so firm and resolute with the matter.

“I don’t want to let go!” said Giya.

“Gerald!”

When Gerald looked up to see who had shouted his name, he was stupefied.

“...Mila? You... When did you return?”

Gerald’s heart plunged into despair at that very moment.

While he was both surprised and pleased to see Mila, the situation he was currently in made their reunion incredibly awkward.

“What... What are you doing?” said Mila as she pinched her palm hard. She was hoping that the pain would allow her to control her tears from bursting out at any moment.

Molly and her other friends on the other hand, were glaring at Gerald fiercely.

On their way there, they had persistently consoled Mila that Gerald wasn’t such a person. They had even told her to have confidence in him.

After all, they had eavesdropped on Gerald and Mila’s conversations before. Just from listening to the way Gerald talked back then, they could tell that he was an honest and naïve man.

They were at least certain that he wasn't the flirtatious kind of rich heir.

However, now that they had witnessed this scene, Molly and the others were simply astonished beyond words. What a sc*mbag!

"Mila! It's all just a misunderstanding!" said Gerald as he finally yanked his arm free from Giya's grasp.

"I heard that you're getting engaged with someone today... Is that true?" asked Mila.

"No! Just please listen to my explanation first!"

Gerald was feeling extremely anxious. After all, if his relationship with Mila was ruined because of such a trivial affair, Gerald knew for a fact that he would end up being filled with remorse.

"Is she Mila?" This was all Giya managed to say. After all, Mila's arrival had been extremely sudden.

Scanning Mila from head to toe, Giya could see that Mila was a natural beauty. Her disposition was very charming as well.

No wonder Gerald loved her so much.

Chapter 646

While Giya was looking at Mila, jealousy reflected in her eyes, very strong emotions were also overflowing in Mila's heart.

"You... You've let me down! You disappoint me greatly Gerald! I don't ever want to see you again!" shouted Mila as she shoved Gerald harshly before turning around.

Mila then ran away while covering her mouth as Wanda scowled, "You disgusting sc*mbag! So what if you're rich?!"

Even she couldn't help but scold Gerald in Mila's place.

After all, they were all girls. They would definitely resent sc*mbags like him!

Gerald himself had gone pale from anxiety. He simply couldn't imagine why Mila had suddenly made her appearance there and then. However, that could wait.

Gerald immediately began chasing after her.

Giya was also facing an onslaught of complicated emotions. Since she couldn't process all of it at once, she simply redirected all her feelings into anger.

With Gerald now gone, she simply turned around and re-entered the hotel.

It was sometime later when Mila and her friends were all huddled together in Mila's bedroom.

Seeing Gerald standing outside, Molly drew the curtains back slightly before saying, “Mila, please don’t cry anymore... That man still has some kind of conscience. He rushed all the way here and he’s now standing outside your house!”

“Just tell him to leave already! I don’t ever want to see his face again!” wailed Mila as she hugged both of her knees while crying in bed.

Her friends could only look at each other. While all of them were angry, they were simultaneously thinking of how pitiful Mila was.

Mila had, after all, been thinking about Gerald this entire time. She had even wanted to meet him first above all else upon returning to Mayberry! In the end, however, she had to witness such a terrible scene with her very own eyes.

“Humph! I’ll go downstairs and demand a clear explanation from him!” said Molly, her voice slightly anxious as she descended the stairs.

“Are you that sc*mbag, Gerald?” asked Molly coldly, her hands on her waist.

“I am. Is Mila alright? Everything you saw was just a misunderstanding!” said Gerald, getting straight to the point.

“Misunderstanding? All of us saw it clearly! That woman was intimately locking arms with you in the hotel earlier. How could any of that be a misunderstanding? Are you going to tell me now that your entire engagement with her is a fake?”

“Before that, are you Mila’s colleague from Hong Kong? And yes, everything was faked. Could you please tell Mila that?”

“I’m not going to tell her anything. Who knows if you’re telling the truth? Don’t even try anything funny, I’ve already seen several tricks used by sc*mbags before! Regardless, you’re an extremely greedy person! You already have a girlfriend yet you still yearn for other girls!”

“Quite frankly, I don’t care whether you’re telling the truth or not. I’m not sure if you’re aware of this, but do you know how well Mila treats you Gerald? There are countless people at the television station who have tried to gain her affection, you know?”

“However, she knew that she had you, and she was satisfied and grateful for that. Because of that, she was always extremely careful whenever she dealt with her admirers. Whenever anyone tried to overstep their boundaries, she would immediately reject them mercilessly!”

“I’m sure you’re aware that you’re currently in a long-distance relationship with Mila. If Mila had wanted to have an ambiguous relationship with any of the guys there without your knowledge, it’s not like you’d be able to find out. However, she stood her ground every time, making sure to be both cold and aloof toward every guy who had ever tried to woo her. Now, she doesn’t have a single male friend at our television station! Are you even aware of any of that?” explained Molly angrily.

While it was true that she could have refrained from saying those hurtful words, she found no real reason not to hold back.

She simply felt that the entire situation was unfair for Mila.

“I’m well aware!” replied Gerald as he nodded.

While he definitely already knew how committed Mila was as a girlfriend, hearing the extent of how much she valued him made him touched. Simultaneously, it also made him filled with a deep sense of self-reproach.

What Molly said was right. Mila had always treated him the same way.

Gerald on the other hand, had crossed the line a few times before during incidents that involved him helping his friends. However, when it rained, it poured, and each of those incidents always ended up with him going too far.

However, Mila could refrain from having any male friends at all, just for Gerald’s sake.

‘Why can’t I make less contact with girls for Mila’s sake as well?’

At the end of the day, Gerald just couldn’t help but feel guilty. He just hoped that he could explain himself well enough for Mila to potentially forgive him.

“...Either way, that really was a fake engagement... See, that girl from earlier? She’s just a friend of mine...”

After that, Gerald then slowly detailed everything that had led to that incident to Molly.

Molly kept her gaze fixed on Gerald's eyes the entire time. By the time he was finally done explaining, she realized that he really wasn't lying.

'Could he really be telling the truth? Then again... There's one more thing that doesn't add up. Let's see how you explain yourself out of that.'

Chapter 647

"What? You're just lending that villa to that girl?" said Molly after hearing Gerald's explanation about Xavia.

Regarding Xavia being pregnant, Gerald wasn't too sure about that. However, it wasn't too hard for him to imagine her plotting up such a lie. He could deal with her later.

For now, Gerald simply wanted Mila not to misunderstand him anymore.

"Alright, I can sense that you're not lying. I'll try to advise Mila on this. You'd better not be feeding us any lies. Do you know how much Mila hates being lied to?"

Despite having only a brief conversation with him, Molly was near certain that Gerald wasn't the kind of reckless or flirtatious rich heir. On the contrary, he seemed to be quite a nice and friendly man.

If he was honestly saying the truth, then Molly was definitely willing to help him out.

Hence, as Molly returned to Mila's bedroom, Gerald remained downstairs.

A short while later however, she came down again before saying with a sigh, "I'm sorry, but I can't help you Gerald. Mila simply refuses to listen to me... She doesn't even want to see you at all. I'm afraid you've hurt her too much this time. You'd better leave for now..."

After saying that, she returned upstairs.

Gerald could only sigh in response. He was filled with grief.

He had always yearned for Mila to return. Now that she was back, they had met during such terrible timing.

At that moment, Gerald's phone began ringing. It was a call from Queta.

"What's wrong, Queta?" asked Gerald as he felt a gentle smile form on his face. After all, he had always treated her just like his younger sister.

"Mr. Crawford, I'm not Queta. I'm Lisa, her colleague. We've met before!" said the girl on the other end of the line.

However, something about her tone hinted that something urgent was up.

"I remember you. What's wrong?" asked Gerald immediately.

"It's Queta. Something's happened to her and she's now in the hospital!" explained Lisa, her voice more anxious than before.

“What?”

Gerald was shocked to hear this.

He then stared at the stairs for a brief moment. At first, he considered shouting so that Mila would know that he was leaving for something important. However, he feared that it would only annoy her more if she heard him shouting.

After all, she was still deeply resenting him now. In the end, he concluded that it would be better to first check in on Queta first

“So what exactly happened? Tell me clearly!” said Gerald as he began leaving Mila’s house.

“Well, she was fine up till noon today. It all started when Queta suddenly said that she was feeling sick while we were having our afternoon classes. I had initially gotten some hot water for her, thinking that she was just having a regular fever. Unexpectedly, she fainted not too long after! I’m now in the hospital with her and she’s already regained consciousness. However, she’s still very weak.”

“Why did the incident happen in the first place?” asked Gerald anxiously as he hailed a taxi. After learning more details, he then rushed to the hospital that Lisa and Queta were in.

“What did that sc*mbag say?” asked the other girls as Molly returned upstairs.

“He didn’t say too much, but it seems like he’ll wait there till Mila’s willing to meet him!”

“I doubt it. Is he really that loyal?” sneered Wanda as she drew the curtains open again to look outside.

The first thing she saw was Gerald getting into a taxi before leaving immediately.

“Humph! I told you! It’s only been a short while yet he’s already hailed a cab and left! Just look at that, Mila!” said Wanda as she pointed at the leaving taxi.

Mila took a peek outside the window and when she realized that what Wanda had said was true, she became so anxious that she began scratching on her bedsheets.

‘Yes, I’m furious. And yes, I was the one who said that I didn’t want to listen to your explanation... But how could that possibly be true?’

‘Even if you hadn’t wanted to explain yourself, you could’ve just waited downstairs for a little longer. That would’ve proved to me that you still felt the same for me...’

‘But now you’ve left. What now?’

Mila was filled with excruciating pain at that moment.

While this was happening, Gerald arrived at the hospital.

Chapter 648

Queta's face was as white as a sheet when Gerald saw her in the ward. She looked terribly weak. Thankfully, just as Lisa had said, she had already regained consciousness.

"How are you feeling?" asked Gerald as he walked toward her bed.

"I'm not too sure either... At the time, without any warning, it simply felt like all the blood had been drained from my body. My vision went dark and the next thing I knew, I had already fainted," said Queta in a soft voice.

"And what did the doctor say?"

"See, that's why both of us are so anxious. While a few doctors have discussed her condition, they still haven't been able to detect the cause of her illness! At the moment, none of them even dare to continue treating her yet!" said Lisa.

Hearing that, Queta's eyes began watering slightly. After all, even she was slightly terrified.

Regardless of how strong she usually was, facing such a situation was still going to be hard on her.

"I see..." said Gerald as he nodded. He then looked at Queta, feeling sad for her.

After stepping out of the ward, he immediately contacted the Drake & Tyson duo. They were ordered to send in the professional medical team from the base.

The duo wasted no time after receiving their order and not too long after, the professional medical team arrived at the scene.

Since everyone from the team was quite famous, it was certain that the hospital would give their full cooperation with them.

After a two-hour check-up session, the medical team approached Gerald, looking rather glum.

“Mr. Crawford, it saddens us to say that we haven’t encountered symptoms like the ones Miss Smith is currently experiencing before this. Even though we’ve used both Western and Chinese medicinal means to attempt to diagnose Miss Smith’s illness, we’ve still failed to make any progress,” said a few members of the medical team as they shook their heads.

“What? Even you’ve reached a dead end?” replied Gerald, feeling greatly disappointed.

“Apologies, sir. Might I suggest calling the medicinal team from your family instead? They have higher medical skills than we do!” added an experienced and rather old looking Chinese medicine practitioner in a shameful voice. He seemed to be their leader.

“Alright, I got it. You may leave now!” said Gerald as he nodded slightly.

While he hadn't been able to confirm his true relationship with Queta yet, Gerald still treated her like his younger sister. Even if she ended up not being related to him, Gerald would still consider her to be a close friend.

Now that she was in trouble, how could Gerald just sit back and do nothing?

"Please take care of Queta for the moment, Lisa. I'll try to think of something!" said Gerald.

"I will, Mr. Crawford."

Gerald then made his way back to his hotel. Once he got there, he started sending out orders and making arrangements for Zack and the others.

Zack was placed in charge of looking up the family's famous doctor.

He also called his father to notify him about the incident.

However, just as Gerald was about to leave again, he was immediately greeted to the sight of someone squatting right outside his hotel room.

The old person was even holding on to a sack that seemed to contain a blanket and his luggage.

Of course, the person in question was none other than Finnley the old man.

“My grandson, what were you up to today? Didn’t you say that you’d go home today?” said Finnley as he smiled happily when he saw Gerald.

He then stood up while still holding on to his sack.

Scanning Finnley briefly from head to toe, Gerald noticed that the old man had even stolen a blanket belonging to the hotel!

“Finnley, I hate to disappoint, but I really don’t have the time to send you home now. I have too many things on my hand at the moment... How about this? If you really want to go home now, I’ll just order someone to drive you back to the Salford Province first,” said Gerald rather impatiently.

Gerald currently had a lot on his plate, and he was clearly feeling the immense pressure.

He knew that if anything were to happen to Queta, he would feel extremely uneasy when he actually looked for that woman later on.

“I refuse! You told me that you’d send me home in person!” said Finnley as he shook his head.

“Fine, but you’ll have to wait for a few more days then. Something’s happened to my best friend so I can’t afford to go yet!” replied Gerald.

Just as Gerald was about to leave, Finnley firmly grabbed on to Gerald's shoulder out of the blue.

"Hmm? Something's not right... My grandson, who did you meet today?"

Chapter 649

"What's the matter?" asked Gerald who was caught slightly off-guard by the question.

He didn't know what was wrong with the old man. While Finnley looked both elderly and thin, his grip was surprisingly strong. After grabbing on to Gerald's shoulder, Gerald was unable to move even if he wanted to.

'How is he even this strong?'

"Just curious. Again, who did you meet today my grandson? I can smell an unusual scent from your body..." asked Finnley as he chuckled.

"Define, 'unusual scent'," replied Gerald as he looked at Finnley who suddenly appeared a lot more excited and mysterious.

'Maybe his muddle headedness is acting up again!'

"It's the scent of venom-based poison!" said Finnley in a sudden hushed tone.

"The person you met today is suffering from venom-based poison! You probably came into contact with that person which is why you have such a venomous scent on you!" added Finnley.

“D*mn it, have you been watching too many Thai movies?” said Gerald helplessly.

He simply felt like leaving at that moment. However, after giving it some thought, Gerald felt that Finnley’s strange deduction wasn’t completely unwarranted.

While the doctors from before had failed to pinpoint the cause of her illness, Finnley’s theory did in fact match with some of her symptoms.

Gerald knew about this since he had heard about venom-based poisons before sometime in the past. Essentially, it worked similar to some viruses and bacteria, only the poison was instead excreted from a parasite that made its home in the human body.

His options were running low and Finnley sounded quite confident with himself.

‘What if he really has some kind of way to cure her?’

“...Alright, since even the doctors have failed to diagnose her illness, could you please have a look at the patient?”

“Of course! I know about literally everything! As I’ve told you before, I’m not a beggar. I was quite powerful in the past!”

If it wasn’t because Gerald was running out of options, he wouldn’t be wasting his time with Finnley now. Then again, Finnley’s hometown was southwest of the Salford Province. Maybe he really did know something about the illness.

That was the other reason why he was willing to at least give Finnley a try.

When both of them arrived at Queta's ward, Gerald saw that one of the older and more experienced practitioners of Chinese medicine from his medical team had stayed back to take care of Queta.

He seemed to be performing acupuncture for her at that moment.

Several other Chinese medicine practitioners were also standing close by, respectfully observing and learning from him.

Even the Drake & Tyson duo were there.

Peeking into the ward, Finnley immediately sneered before saying, "What's the use of poking her body with those pathetic needles? What you're doing is utterly meaningless!"

After he said that, both Gerald and the old man entered the ward.

"Who are you? How could you spout such nonsense to the exceptionally skillful Dr. Hudson? Somebody, kick him out immediately!" said a person standing at the side. He seemed to be the president of the hospital and he looked quite unhappy after hearing Finnley's remark.

Dr. Hudson had been quite famous for several years now. His juniors were rightfully angry as well since they had been both delighted and grateful to be even able to witness his medical skills in action.

How could they just allow some old man to condemn him?

Dr. Hudson himself frowned slightly at Finnley's comment.

However, since Mr. Crawford had been the one who had brought him over, the doctor could only suppress his anger.

"Based on what you said, I'm assuming that you know a thing or two about medicine too, am I correct?" said Dr. Hudson as he snorted.

"Still, for an elderly man, you're still acting quite imprudently!"

"I'm far from imprudent! Now step aside!" said Finnley as he shoved Dr. Hudson to the side.

He then immediately took out the silver needles that Dr. Hudson had earlier inserted into Queta's arm.

"You-!" said Dr. Hudson in anger as his cheeks flushed red.

Chapter 650

"What about me? You've just been jabbing her with needles when she's clearly suffering from a venom-based poison! All you've done is increase the speed of her blood

circulation! Isn't that just giving the parasite more chances to move around uncontrollably around her body?" replied Finnley.

"Girl, when you were around eight, did you go through something similar to what you're experiencing now? Though you were probably mostly just dizzy back then, it happened again when you were twelve, right? Only then, you felt even more lightheaded than before. Things should have gotten worse once you got to the age of sixteen. If my deduction is correct, you should have felt extremely lightheaded while simultaneously feeling that your limbs were worryingly weak for that period of time. Since your condition's only continued to worsen every time it shows itself again, straight out blacking out now when you're twenty-two shouldn't come as a surprise!" added Finnley as he turned to look at Queta.

Still lying on her hospital bed, Queta was shocked to hear Finnley's analysis.

"How... How did you know all that?"

Gerald himself was looking at Finnley, utterly astonished.

'How could he have managed to guess all that from just a simple glance? This mysterious old man is really something else...'

Thinking back, he remembered that Finnley hadn't given off such an impression to him the first time they had met. Far from the powerful and smart old man Gerald now saw him as, back then, Finnley was simply a beggar with an injured leg who had forced Gerald to bring him to a doctor.

While he was starting to get curious about Finnley's true background again, he refrained from asking about it for now since it would only be an inconvenience during these critical moments.

Still, if Finnley really was really able to cure Queta, that would definitely be for the best.

"Well, since you're my grandson's best friend, I'll treat and remove the venom-based poison for you!"

"Thank you so much, sir!" said Queta gratefully.

"There's no need to thank me. Ah yes, I'll need all of you to leave for now. I'm going to be performing a different kind of acupuncture to remove the venom-based poison, so ordinary people are prohibited from observing!" added Finnley.

As soon as they heard that, everyone turned to look at Gerald. After all, if the person with the highest position trusted Finnley, so would they.

What more, Gerald had been the one who brought Finnley over and the old man made both logical and knowledgeable statements as well.

Gerald had no reason not to agree to Finnley's terms, so he simply nodded and began leaving with the others.

Dr. Hudson himself couldn't say much about the matter. He simply shook his head with a sigh before walking out of the ward.

“Wait!” shouted Finnley as he stopped Dr. Hudson from leaving.

“I could see that you were quite skillful. You can stay here to help me!”

“You need my help?” asked Dr. Hudson in slight disbelief.

Hearing that, Finnley looked at Gerald.

“Well, since he’s allowed you to help him, go for it Dr. Hudson. I’d personally breathe a bit easier knowing that two experts are doing their best to treat her,” replied Gerald.

After all, with both Finnley and Dr. Hudson working together, it would be similar to implementing double safety measures.

While Gerald left for real this time, the Drake & Tyson duo continued staring at Finnley coldly, their arms crossed.

The old man always had some kind of trick up his sleeve, and the duo had long been annoyed about that. What more, Dr. Hudson was their colleague. Seeing him being fooled and teased by that old man definitely made them even angrier.

After glaring at him for a little longer, the two finally began to leave when suddenly, they heard the old man say, “Tsk... These silver needles are useless!”

Finnley had been looking at the pack of silver needles that Dr. Hudson had with him when he said that. After discovering that they were useless, however, he simply threw them away in resignation.

“You...! That’s going way too far!” yelled Dr. Hudson, his hands shaking in rage.

“Humph! I’m telling the truth! Those needles there were all garbage! I need actual needles like the ones the brothers there have! You two, take your silver needles out now!” said Finnley as he looked at both Drake and Tyson who were still standing at the door.

Once they heard what he said, the two men looked at each other in dismay. Their expressions had changed drastically as they looked at Finnley.

“What are you looking at? Come now, don’t hide them up your sleeves anymore! I’ll return them once I’m done!” said Finnley as he moved toward them slowly.

Before they could even react, Finnley was already in front of them! He then snatched their packs of silver needles with extreme ease!

“You!”

“Brother!”

Drake’s forehead was filled with cold sweat as he stopped Tyson from making a move.

While the old man frankly seemed quite ugly and ordinary, his actions were fast and precise. They were so fast and precise, in fact, that Drake was now feeling equally scared and nervous.

Drake had never experienced such feelings before.

Glancing one last time at Finnley in disbelief, he then dragged Tyson out of the room.

Dr. Hudson himself placed his arms behind his back as he stood at the side. He simply couldn't believe that such an old, beggar-like man like Finnley could have any sort of capabilities at all!

However, Finnley's method of inserting the silver needles was simultaneously precise, skillful, and dazzling.

It didn't take long before Dr. Hudson began to realize what technique Finnley was using. The moment he did, however, the doctor's mouth began trembling slightly as he muttered, "Is... Is this Deadly Acupuncture Therapy?"