

The Divorce 221

Chapter 221 To Turn the Tables

Given her clear purpose for meeting me, why couldn't I turn the tables and gather some clues myself?

I nodded calmly. "Ms. Stella, your mind is truly impressive."

"Oh, it's nothing. After all, no one can break through his walls. No one at all," she said. She looked at me with a malicious glint, suggesting that I was the "no one" she referred to

After all, on his birthday night, Atlas exploded in rage. I believed Stella knew what had happened

"Atlas knows what he wants. His father, Louis, built the empire" Stella's tone was confident. I knew she had an influence on the Pierce family

*So, the Pierce family has its own company?" I was intrigued. A conglomerate as large as ATL Empire couldn't have sprung from nothing.

"Our grandfather ran the Pierce family's company until he turned sixty Then Uncle Louis took over. He transformed it significantly within a few years.

She paused "Later, for some reason, Uncle handed the business to my mother and started the ATL Empire himself. Do you know why it's called ATL Empire it's quite a mouthful

Stella looked at me, and I feigned a casual interest

"Atlas, Tammy, Louis," she said with a laugh. So, the name came from a combination of Atlas and his parents.

Stella continued, "Uncle Lours wanted his own domain, a world based on his small family. But who could've guessed he'd meet such an untimely end?"

I started to see Stella differently, seeing a sinister side beneath her refined exterior

However, I focused on a key point—that Louis handed the company to Celine for some reason. There had to be an explanation for this

"Mrs. Celine must've been impressive to take over the family business. Usually, such legacies go to sons,"

I remarked.

"Mom is strong-willed and doesn't yield to men. Of course, she wasn't satisfied with how things were with the family business. She had her own ideas!" Stella's response lacked caution

So, after Mr. Louis passed away, Mrs Celine took over ATL Empire?" I asked casually. "Didn't she already have control of the original company?"

+15 BONUS

"Ah.. there were only two siblings in the Pierce family, so naturally she'd take over. She merged the family company with ATL Empire. Quite the force to be reckoned with!" Stella's eyes gleamed with admiration.

I understood there must have been a calculated motive behind Celine's forcefulness.

"What a pity that they met such a tragedy!" I sighed.

“Everyone has their fate,” Stella said calmly.

“What about your father?” I nudged her.

Stella seemed rather indifferent to her biological parents’ deaths. She lowered her gaze and said, “It’s been too long. I was young, so it all feels a bit...distant.”

Distant! How could one’s parents feel distant?

Her actions and words made her seem somewhat unfeeling towards the deaths of her biological parents.

“So that’s why you said you’d give ATL Empire to Mr. Atlas. According to what you’ve told me, the ATL Empire originally belonged to Mr. Atlas, so returning it to him would be the right thing to do,” I pointed out.

I was sure she’d never say such a thing in front of Celine. As expected, she looked flustered.

“My mother did want to give it to Atlas, but she was cautious since it represents two generations’ efforts. She couldn’t give it away to just anyone. That was her bottom line. If Atlas resists, someone might end up like Annalise.”

*What do you mean?”

Chapter 222 New Year’s Gift

Stella’s eyes turned cold as she looked at me.

I began to piece things together and concluded that Annalise’s death wasn’t as straightforward as it

seemed.

Stella quickly corrected herself, “What I meant was that there could never have been a future for them. It wouldn’t have worked out even if she hadn’t died!”

“If Annalise held such a special place in Mr. Atlas’s heart, it must’ve been tough for you, too,” I pointed out. “It affects you directly.”

Her composure wavered, but she masked it with a bigger smile. “I don’t concern myself with such things. Even if a thousand Annalises appeared, he’d still be mine. I won’t allow anything else.” Her arrogance

knew no bounds.

I nodded. In reality, she had a point. The formidable Pierce family stood solidly behind her.

“How did Annalise die?” I brought up a topic I had avoided. However, Stella kept bringing her up, indicating she wanted to tell me something more.

I wanted to hear Stella’s version of Annalise since I had already gleaned some clues from her slip-ups. Annalise’s death was undeniably linked to Celine.

Stella stated matter-of-factly, “She fell off a cliff and died. When they found her, my mom had Atlas identify the body. They say it was a horrifying sight.”

“How could Mr. Atlas bear it?” I felt a twinge, imagining how Atlas must have felt then.

“It was like the end of the world for him,” Stella said, her eyes holding a cruel glint. She spoke with eerie

satisfaction.

“Did you witness it yourself?” I looked at Stella, searching for answers.

She scrutinized me as if trying to discern my intentions. “I couldn’t bear to look. I only knew that Atlas was in despair.”

“Perhaps, for you, this was a fortunate turn of events,” I remarked, voicing a harsh truth even though I wasn’t sure why I said it.

Suddenly, Carol knocked and entered. ‘Ms. Chloe, it’s time for your meeting.’”

I was happy with her quick thinking and nodded. “Alright, I’ll be there in a moment.”

Then, I turned to Stella and said, “I’m sorry, I have a meeting. We can catch up over tea sometime.”

Stella had no choice but to stand up. “Of course, I’ll take my leave. I just dropped by to see you. Oh, and...

She reached into her bag and produced a small, elegantly wrapped gift. She placed it on my desk and said, “You can leave it in your car. It has a particularly refreshing scent.”

“Thank you very much!” I smiled. “I didn’t even get the chance to prepare anything!”

“Don’t mention it, just a little trinket!” She remarked before making her graceful exit.

“Carol, please escort Ms. Stella out,” I instructed.

When Carol returned, she muttered, “She just wouldn’t stop talking. Who does she think she is?”

I smiled at Carol, giving her an approving look. "That was clever of you! Well done!"

Carol burst out laughing

Then I pondered for a moment. "Get Grayson for me."

He entered promptly, and I gestured for him to take a seat. I decided to speak candidly despite my hesitation.

"Grayson, there's something I'm not sure how to tell you."

"Just tell me what you need, Ms. Chloe," he replied, unwavering.

He seemed to sense my apprehension and put me at ease. "I'm loyal to my boss. Since Mr. Atlas recommended me to you, I pledge my loyalty to you. You're the only one I'll take orders from!"

His words moved me. "Help me investigate Ms. Stella thoroughly. The more detailed, the better."

"Yes!" He nodded, then left to carry out his task.

As I watched Grayson depart, I reassured myself that taking risks was sometimes necessary.

Chapter 223 Haki Back

I had known about Grayson's capabilities since I saw his tile. He had received specialised training but Atlas had clarified that I couldn't reveal any of Grayson's information

Publicly, Grayson was portrayed as a high achieving student from a prestigious school, the only child of an average family in Fonwood. That was the extent of his reputations

I did feel uneasy using Grayson to investigate the Pierce family when Allas had assigned him to me

Most companies tended to slow down from Christmas until New Year's Day. However, All Empire caught us off guard. They insisted on starting work immediately on projects that were supposed to begin after the New Year. They even shortened the timelines

It was unreasonable given the upcoming New Year holiday, which typically disrupts work for 20 days. They showed no leniency, citing that properties were already sold and new owners were eager to move in

Meanwhile, the Echelon Group project remained ongoing and couldn't be paused.

I called Atlas, who was abroad, but didn't tell him about my concerns. Instead, I approached Nick, who

also seemed troubled by the situation. Though he didn't say much. I understood his concern. There was

no room for negotiation.

Ryan tried to find a solution, and Grayson talked to various external resources. However, we hit dead

ends.

Nevertheless, time waits for no one. The New Year was fast approaching. After the holiday, business would slow down everywhere.

On top of that, starting work at this time meant I had to advance the workers' paychecks. It was risky since the workers might not return on time after the holiday.

ATL Empire seemed ruthless. Sometimes, I questioned why I had to push myself so hard. Couldn't I enjoy a peaceful and uncomplicated life?

However, dwelling on such thoughts was useless. It felt like I was being forced into a corner with no way out.

Just when I felt overwhelmed, Atticus extended an unexpected helping hand.

One day, I received a call from him inviting me to meet. It felt somewhat peculiar. Aside from our collaboration on the duplexes, I had no further dealings with him and no intention of working together

again

+15 BONUS

I feared that Echelon Group might become another ATL Empire. If that happened, I would be caught in a crossfire. I couldn't betray Ryan.

These people were truly something else. They traveled so far just to discuss something. Like my last meeting with Celine, I wouldn't have been taken advantage of if the meeting wasn't so far away. I still didn't know who wanted me gone.

So I brought Grayson this time. He was already there when I arrived at the club.

Upon seeing us enter, Atticus politely gestured for me to sit down. He poured a cup of tea and got straight to the point.

"I heard you've been facing difficulties with your projects recently?"

I smiled and didn't attempt to hide anything. If he could directly address the issue, he must have known already, Pretending otherwise would only complicate matters.

I didn't sugarcoat it. "Yes. The timelines have been squeezed too tightly, and with the upcoming holiday, there'll be a shortage of workers for a while. The early stages are still unstable, so it's proving challenging."

He fell silent and gestured for me to drink the tea. Then he said, "I can lend you Echelon Group's construction team, and you can handle the wages."

I nearly choked on the tea.

This was indeed a lifesaver. It came so effortlessly. Someone was rushing to clear obstacles for me.

Naturally, I looked at the man before me in astonishment.

Perhaps my expression was too exaggerated, but he looked at me with a faint smile. "What's wrong? You don't trust me?"

"N-No!" I quickly waved my hand. "The thing is, what about your project?"

He gave a confident, casual smile. Reclining on the sofa, he said, "I recently bought a plot near the city. and the planning is underway. This project will keep me busy for the next two years, so I'm clearing the way. It's my top priority for the year."

He looked at me with a gleam in his eyes.

"I will not be working on any other projects in the meantime. The initial stages of the project will be wrapped up after the New Year, providing a period for reorganization. You can manage it. It also allows

me to use your help to care for my people. It's a win-win situation!"

Atticus spoke casually, but I sensed this matter wasn't so simple.

Chapter 224 Out of the Frying Pan Into the Fire

I wondered why Atticus was going to such lengths to help me when we didn't know each other well. It had to be more than it seemed

Yet, I couldn't figure out his motive. What could he gain from assisting a small, relatively unknown company like mine?

He studied me for a moment and then chuckled. "You're unsure, aren't you? Consider it a repayment for the favor you did for me before. I don't like having debts to anyone, especially not to a woman."

"In the professional world, Mr. Atticus, don't treat me like just a woman!" I replied half-jokingly.

"You? Not a woman?" He laughed heartily. "Who could ever think otherwise?"

After a laugh, he added, "Don't dwell on it too much. This is a small matter, hardly worth mentioning compared to the favor you did for me. Besides, you'll cover the wages, so I think it's a fair exchange. This

industry isn't that big, after all. Let's support each other."

"Alright! Thank you, Mr. Atticus! I'll remember your kindness. If there's anything I can do for you in the

future, I won't hesitate to help."

I knew not to overanalyze the situation. Overcoming this challenging period was the priority. When faced

with a life-or-death situation, I wasn't one to nitpick.

Moreover, he extended a helping hand voluntarily. Rejecting his offer would be disrespectful and could lead to my downfall.

After discussing the details, I left the club. It was a business meeting, and there was no need for idle chit-

chat.

Once I got into the car, I told Grayson, "It's sorted out!"

However, even Grayson sensed something was amiss. Back at the company, we held a meeting to address the situation. Ryan, too, felt things weren't as straightforward as they appeared, but we had no other option

After all, if we were going to gamble, we had to go all in.

As soon as we solved one problem, another arose. The problem with the construction team was fixed, but there was a problem with the aluminum steel windows on the suspension bridge.

The construction team told us the measurements didn't match, making window installation impossible. Knowing Fred's meticulous nature, this problem seemed impossible.

rushed to the site. The blueprints matched the window dimensions but didn't align with the openings.

ATL Empire blamed us, claiming there hadn't been on-site measurements. However, the blueprints from the design institute were perfectly aligned with the detailed construction plans.

That was when it hit me. The information on our approved blueprints had been cleverly changed. Only the information on the blueprints that Fred received was incorrect.

I told Fred to stop production immediately.

Representatives from all three parties convened at ATL Empire to discuss the issue. I couldn't change the dimensions without unanimous agreement, and the blueprints came directly from their hands.

Moreover, before sending them to Fred, our technicians had double-checked everything. The situation reeked of suspicion.

Ryan was worried I might not handle it well and wanted to go with me. However, ATL Empire requested my presence specifically,

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Even if Ryan were present, I knew it would just be adding another person to share the burden and humiliation. There was no need for both CEOs to receive an earful over a minor issue. In reality, they were

looking for me.

I didn't hesitate for a moment and drove straight to ATL Empire. There had to be a solution.

However, I noticed something peculiar when I arrived at the conference room.

A problem like this could be handled entirely by the project department. However, upon entering the conference room, they appeared to be preparing a tribunal.

Chapter 225 Wrong Data on the Drawings

I laid eyes on Atlas, whom I hadn't seen in half a month, I had no idea when he had returned to Foswood. Seated next to him was the imposing figure of Celine.

It was evident that today was going to be challenging. When someone wanted to find fault, they would find a way.

Celine's sharp eyes swept over the attendees at the meeting before finally fixing on my face, her expression disdainful.

"Ms. Chloe, please explain the situation to everyone present," she said calmly.

I knew this was the calm before the storm. Clearing my throat, I meticulously recounted the entire situation in sequence. I had Carol hand over the blueprints to Celine.

Each person in attendance was also given a copy of the incorrect data images. I had come prepared, especially with the one containing the falsified data. Except for one piece of data, everything else was the same.

Celine glanced at the original erroneous blueprint, furrowing her brows. Kenzie sat next to her, looking stern.

Everyone was perplexed after reviewing my explanation and the provided materials.

Celine had each member of the relevant departments speak. They all emphasized their department's diligence in double-checking their work.

I remained silent, observing their responses and Celine's expression.

Atlas took two phone calls in the middle of the meeting. He would grunt in response, never saying anything on the phone, and then return his attention to the discussion.

He looked somewhat indifferent to the meeting.

In the end, no conclusion was reached. Everyone agreed that there was indeed an error in the data.

What was strange, though, was that only the blueprints given to Fred were incorrect. Even the archived blueprints we submitted to Fred were correct.

This was starting to raise eyebrows.

Blueprints don't just mess themselves up. The wrong data was modified on the original blueprint, not with a pen afterward. That made it hard to detect.

Of course, Celine wasn't buying this explanation, and she blamed our negligence. Her argument was persuasive and logically sound.

ATL Empire audited the blueprints and sent them to us after approving them. Then, our technicians double-checked them before sending them back to Fred.

Based on this account, the relevant departments at ATL Empire were entirely blameless. It was clear that the responsibility could only fall on us or Fred.

I staunchly defended Fred, and Atlas finally spoke up.

"Ms. Chloe, what evidence do you have to prove that this isn't Mr. Fred's fault?"

I replied, "Mr. Fred runs a professional company with years of experience and a meticulous production process. After committing to high quality, which manufacturer would allow product issues?"

Atlas clearly didn't like my response. His eyes were icy as he asked, "Is that your position?"

I confidently said, "Yes."

"In your perspective, is there no third possibility?" His eyes looked at me with restrained anger.

Suddenly, I realized I couldn't be sure the blueprints hadn't been leaked.

My eyes involuntarily turned to Kenzie.

Chapter 226 Pointing Fingers

I looked straight at Kenzie and realized it made her uncomfortable. She even glared at me with displeasure before looking at the blueprints.

I answered Atlas's question, "I can't guarantee someone hadn't leaked the blueprints because we didn't only hand them to ATL Empire's project department. Indeed, that was my negligence."

Atlas asked sternly, "So who else can access the blueprints, Ms. Chloe?"

His question sounded doubtful, encouraging me to continue. Suddenly, my phone vibrated, but I ignored it

for now.

I delivered a set of blueprints, inspection reports, manuals, certificates, and all relevant documents to ATL Empire's Design Division myself," I deliberately mentioned the Design Division to draw everyone's

attention.

As expected, my words caused immediate discontent from Kylie Mckinney, a member of the Design Division. She said, "That's a bit much, Ms. Chloe. We came to this meeting to review the blueprints for you.

"Why are you pointing fingers at us? That seems unfair. Also, you've never given the blueprints to the

Design Division for review."

Those from the Design Division were rightfully arrogant since they held a prominent position globally. They contributed to many iconic buildings worldwide. Therefore, I knew they didn't need to involve

themselves in this mess. They even refuted my statement with hostility.

Still, that was what I wanted.

"Please don't be hasty. I'm not trying to point fingers. Instead, I was just stating facts." I smiled while maintaining a friendly demeanor. I continued, "I gave the blueprints to..."

I intentionally dragged my words and kept my eyes on Kenzie. She narrowed her eyes and looked at me

coldly.

"I gave them to Ms. Kenzie," I didn't give her a chance to object and continued, "Ms. Kenzie asked me to deliver a set of blueprints to the Design Division but didn't say why."

Kenzie nodded, "Yes, I asked for the blueprints to review their design scheme. Later, I gave them to Mrs.

Celine.”

I didn't expect Kenzie to admit it so quickly. Her admission exceeded everyone's expectations. Meanwhile, I picked up my phone and casually checked it.

+15 BONUS

Yes, I've had the blueprints all along. Is there a problem with that?" Celine questioned assertively. I knew she was challenging me, as if she said, "What can you do about it?"

Everyone in the room was stunned. Indeed, I felt some pressure, but it was a matter of great importance that I couldn't shrink from. "Mrs. Celine, I'm merely explaining the whereabouts of the blueprints.

"I must express my disappointment in ATL Empire if you show such an attitude. My understanding of cooperation is that we should solve problems together. I believe we're in the same boat and should help

each other.

"However, everyone seems to be shifting the blame instead of devising a solution. Is this how ATL Empire resolves its issues?" I spoke as I looked firmly into Celine's eyes, causing her expression to turn cold.

I added, "ATL Empire has already decided not to hear my opinion. Do you even respect my company? It seems you just want to blame us."

I glanced around the room and said, "All right, let's investigate this matter ourselves. I promise to provide

a satisfactory answer to everyone."

Immediately after, I raised my phone and tapped the screen, saying, "I have good news to share with everyone. We've located the delivery man responsible for handling the blueprints."

The meeting room fell silent.

Chapter 227 Looking Out for Themselves Only

I shocked everyone with my actions. Dylan had just texted me on WhatsApp, and I knew he must've made some progress. So, I couldn't miss the opportunity to showcase it.

"So, we won't trouble ATL Empire anymore," I said, putting away my phone, "As for what happened after we sent the package, I will investigate it thoroughly and provide everyone with an explanation."

I caught a subtle twitch at the corner of Atlas's lips, but he quickly gathered himself.

"Next, I'd like to ask ATL Empire's project team to confirm a new and accurate set of blueprints for us. I'll deliver them to Urban Builders' technical department directly." My tone was calm but confident.

Even Celine had to comply.

However, I needed to clarify one thing, "Of course, whoever caused this issue should take responsibility for it. If Tanum Corporation is at fault, we won't avoid it. I apologize for any inconvenience. We'll take our

leave now."

I got up and prepared to leave with Carol.

Atlas sneered and said, "Sit down."

Although his voice wasn't loud, it was compelling. I could only sit back down.

He glanced at everyone before saying, "ATL Empire won't need you to investigate this matter. However, today's meeting has opened my eyes. I never expected my company to do something so embarrassing.

"You're all fragile when faced with right and wrong, each pointing fingers at another. Who the hell taught you that?!" His words were sharp, especially to those who had spoken earlier.

Everyone exchanged glances. Atlas's imposing demeanor made them feel a sense of impending doom. No one dared to speak as they awaited his judgment.

"I pay you well and clear your names at the first sign of trouble. It seems everyone here is adept at protecting themselves. If so, find another boss to depend on." Atlas sent shivers down everyone's spines.

He looked cold and menacing as he spoke. Although everyone understood the meaning behind his words, no one dared to make a sound. They only wondered how he would deal with them. Suddenly, a loud

ringtone broke the silence.

Atlas glanced toward the source of the sound and growled, "Get out."

His voice was domineering, and the phone owner paled. He panicked and covered his phone before

"Dylan, find out who altered the data and punish them severely, no matter who it is!" Atlas ordered and got up to leave.

I noticed Celine's annoyed expression. I stood up, gave her a slight nod, then turned to leave with Carol. However, I was confident that Atlas might use this incident to do something. It seemed I had played my

cards right again.

I knew someone had deliberately caused all this and that it was related to the blueprints I had given to Kenzie. Still, I wouldn't just sit idly by and let anyone decide the outcome, not even Atlas.

Chapter 228 A Familiar Place

When I returned to my office, I sought Grayson and gave him a task. Coincidentally, he also handed me a report of his investigation. I was surprised to receive it so quickly. I couldn't help but admire his efficiency

and praise him.

However, Grayson was serious when he said, "Don't get too excited, Ms. Chloe. This is just surface-level information, and there seem to be no issues at all. Still, my gut feeling tells me something's off."

The investigation report was about Stella, detailing her birth, parents' passing, adoption, and school history.

"It's right here." Grayson pointed something out. "It says she attended primary school here, one of the most famous schools in Nocturnia. However, I couldn't find any pictures of her from that period..

"Also, I only found one picture of her during high school, yet she lists Phy as one of her hobbies.

Why would a girl with such a hobby have no pictures or videos of herself?" Grayson looked at me with a questioning expression as he spoke.

"Ms. Chloe, don't you think something's amiss? That detail makes me uneasy. Please give me more time to investigate further.

Indeed, I also felt something was wrong. I marveled at Grayson's attentiveness and said, "Perhaps Stella didn't like photography back then or..."

"No, I understand. You're saying the Pierce family's records are usually secured and difficult to find. Surprisingly, Stella's information is readily available," he said with sparkling eyes.

"Look, I have her graduation photos from every previous year at this school. I also have year-end photos. for each academic year," Grayson continued, handing me two yellowed photos.

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I looked at them and felt a tug in my mind. The scenery in those photos seemed oddly familiar. I glanced at Grayson and said, "Is... this school in Nocturnia?"

"Yes!" he nodded.

I chuckled and felt a bit perplexed. "Why does this place feel so familiar?"

"Perhaps you've seen it in some documents before." He smiled.

I had never traveled abroad, so it was a bit ridiculous for me to think that way.

After looking at the photos, I nodded and said, "Well, continue your investigation. It might be the

breakthrough we need. Also, check on Annalise Snyder!"

Sure. Grayson nodded. "I'll get back to work,"

I leaned back in my chair as he left. I felt a throbbing headache coming on as I had been too busy lately. I rubbed my temples and sighed before picking up the pictures again. I closed my eyes and imagined a scenery, but I wasn't sure what it was.

My head hurt even more immediately after. I quickly opened my eyes and refused to think more about it. Soon after, I saw the beautifully wrapped box on my desk. It was the New Year's gift Stella gave me.

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I opened the box and saw an air freshener inside, I sniffed it, and it had a pleasant scent. Although I rarely used such things, I thought giving it away would be disrespectful, so I placed it back on the desk.

After some thought, I brought it down when it was time to get off work. I remembered Stella telling me it would smell nice in my car.

ATL Empire was efficient, especially after Atlas's outburst I received the correct data before leaving work and sent it to the technical department. However, I conducted a thorough review before delivering it to Urban Builders.

When the courier left, I called Fred and reminded him to be vigilant about his surroundings. That was because Atlas had asked if I could guarantee that everyone at Urban Builders was trustworthy.

I didn't know if his words were deliberate or if he had discovered something. Regardless, it was best to be cautious.

During my second visit to Urban Builders, Fred confided in me all night. He discussed the first time I waited for him in the rain. It was a turbulent time for the company because his younger brother, Hugo, had attempted a power struggle.

Although he failed, he had a group of loyal followers that needed rooting out.

Fred took my advice seriously, saying, "You're right. I've considered identifying those people and firing them."

I felt relieved after dealing with certain things. Suddenly, I received a call from Atlas. I was pleasantly surprised and answered the call,

Chapter 229 Complaints

“When did you get back?” I asked joyfully..

“I’ve been back for two days now,” Atlas replied flatly. Although he sounded calm, I felt disappointed. It seemed I wasn’t that important to him since he could come and go without notifying me.

My mood plummeted, and I said nothing.

He continued, “You don’t need to worry about that and just focus on your work.”

“What do you mean?” I replied, slightly annoyed.

“Do you have time to worry about me?” he spoke forcefully, avoiding my question.

I knew he was in a bad mood, so I didn’t respond. Instead, hung up, thinking he should know what it feels like for me to hang up on him, I waited a while, but he didn’t call me back. I felt even more dejected.

While scrolling through my phone, I realized I hadn’t seen Ivanna and Lauren for several days. I called them, but Ivanna’s line was busy. Immediately after, I called Lauren, and she answered with a complaint,

“You finally remembered me!”

“Why are you like Ivanna? You’re always complaining like her,” I retorted, and she chuckled.

Lauren said, “I hear you brought your parents back, but I haven’t seen her yet. I don’t even know when

you're home."

"Can't you visit her when I'm not home?" I replied disdainfully, which made her cackle.

Soon after, she mentioned a clubhouse where we could soak in the hot springs and enjoy good food. She

asked if I wanted to go there to relax. I hadn't experienced such leisure since I typically had a strict

schedule. I was either at work or with Ava

Relaxing in such a place piqued my interest, so I agreed and suggested we invite Ivanna. However, Ivanna's phone remained busy, causing me to wonder who she could be talking to for so long.

I drove to Lauren's provided location, which was quite far away. I didn't need to plan things since Lauren knew all about the place. As I drove, I realized the place wasn't too far from Atlas's house in Pleca Park. No wonder there was a hot spring there.

When I arrived, I received a call from Ivanna. It seemed her lengthy conversation had finally ended. I complained, "Who have you been talking to? It's been almost an hour!"

"Hey, I don't want to talk about it. That lady's a handful. She's all sunshine and rainbows if you talk to her

If I was complaining, she was ranting. I asked, "Who are you talking about?"

"One of the rising stars at my company. Only a few knew about her all these years. Her acting skills are so-so, but she's gained popularity somehow. That's how the entertainment industry works, I guess.

"You never know what the audience will like the next moment. Anyhow, she's finally getting some

attention.”

“Is she one of yours? If so, that should be good,” I tried to comfort her.

“I’m sure it is, and I’ve been wondering if she spent the past few years secretly studying how to become a star. Her sudden transformation is unreal-” Ivanna vented, sounding exasperated.

“All right, calm down. Can you get off work now?” I interrupted her.

“Yeah, you’re right. I need to let off steam. What is it?” Ivanna’s tone became calmer.

I told her where Lauren and I were meeting, and she happily agreed. “Wait for me! I’ll see you there soon!”

After hanging up, I remembered to call my mom and tell her I wouldn’t be home for dinner. I also told her I would be out with Ivanna and Lauren. I was about to get out of my car when I saw something and stopped.

Chapter 230 What a Coincidence

I saw a black Maybach pulling up at the entrance. A tall and well-built figure appeared. He was charming in his black trousers and black shirt with two undone buttons. The man had meticulously groomed jet-black hair and wore sunglasses.

He drew the crowd’s attention when he removed his sunglasses. Soon after, he opened the car door and assisted an elegantly dressed woman. Her attire seemed exaggerated, with sunglasses, a scarf, and a mask.

However, the figure was alluring, and I knew she wasn’t Stella. She gracefully exited the car and wrapped her arm around the man’s arm. She appeared delicate and charming.

I recognized Atlas but not the woman. My heart ached, and I realized why he sounded so impatient earlier. It seemed he didn't want me to waste time worrying about his whereabouts because he was busy pampering and accompanying that woman.

Although Atlas sounded irritated earlier, he was now smiling. I stared at him and the woman in a daze as they strolled into the clubhouse.

My heart was in my throat while my hands and feet grew cold. I felt numb and didn't know how long I sat in my car. Suddenly, my phone rang and brought me to my senses. I glanced at my phone and realized Lauren had likely grown impatient from waiting. 1

"I'm at the entrance. I'll come in soon," I said before hanging up.

Since the clubhouse was close to Pleca Park, Atlas intentionally chose to come here. I chuckled bitterly and became a little teary-eyed. It was ironic.

As I was about to exit my car, Ivanna knocked on the window. I quickly opened the door, got out, and joked, "You're fast. What, did you fly here?"

"Fast? I've been driving for thirty minutes!" she exclaimed, "Why do you look like shit?"

I tried to hide it, touching my face. "Do I? I fell asleep just now."

"I can't wait for Lauren to scold you." Ivanna held my arm as we entered the clubhouse. She blabbed about the rising star under her care, but I heard nothing because my mind was too occupied.

Sure enough, Lauren scolded me as soon as we met. I only chuckled without defending myself.

The clubhouse was spacious. After having some light snacks, we changed into disposable bathsuits and headed to the hot springs in the courtyard. Surprisingly, the disposable bath suits were elegant and high-

quality no wonder the upper class liked coming here.

I looked around but didn't see Atlas and the mysterious woman. Lauren noticed my restless gaze and asked, "Who are you looking for? Did you see someone you know?"

I shook my head. "No, I'm just admiring the scenery here. I should bring my parents and Ava here

someday."

"That's a great idea. Whenever you come, count me in!" Ivanna added, "This place is lovely. There are so many hot spring pools here, and they offer various services, too. We only have a regular room.

"The VIP rooms come with private pools; what people do in those rooms is beyond our knowledge, Ivanna grinned.

However, it caused my heart to drop, thinking Atlas had probably booked a VIP room. What else would a man and woman do in a private room? The thought of it made me uncomfortable.