

The Divorce 331

Chapter 331 Strange Information

“Hey, how many folks are here for the meal? Most are curious to see Matthew’s son! Initially, it was all a setup by Liora. She knew what kind of situation Melanie was in when she gave birth!”

“So it was Liora?” I had thought it was Stella behind this.

“Keegan has officially become a shareholder in Ardora Construction and invested a whopping seven million dollars. He even brought in a major project! That’s why Matthew’s head is in the clouds right now!”

“That’s why Matthew mentioned he has two major projects on hand. Seems like it’s true.”

Johnson was a bit disgruntled as he grumbled, “Some people have all the luck, even the small-minded ones.”

“That’s not necessarily true!” I retorted.

I was secretly overjoyed because this was fantastic news. It would be ideal if Keegan was in charge of

Matthew’s projects.

I wanted to make these three forces unbeatable. This was all thanks to Liora’s trap today. She helped me make up my mind.

Little did I know that plans were about to change, and someone else was even quicker on the draw than I

The next day, I went into the office. I received a call from Bryan, the CEO of Alliance Corporation, whom Atticus had introduced me to at the banquet. He wanted to talk about the project.

With all the chaos of the past few days, I had completely forgotten about it. After ending the call, I hurried

to Ryan's office, only to discover he wasn't there.

His secretary informed me that he was out discussing a project, so I drove to Alliance Corporation with

Carol

Before I even reached Alliance Corporation, Grayson's call came in. He had been busy, and I hadn't seen.

him for two days.

He mentioned that there was something important he needed to discuss with me. I quickly checked the

time and realized I was running out of it.

Since I had already scheduled a meeting with Bryan, I asked Grayson to wait for me at the office.

Our meeting with Bryan was pleasant. He briefly introduced the project, and I shared our firm's

credentials. Both parties were eager to move forward with the collaboration

Bryan was genuinely sincere, providing me with some relevant documents. Without lingering, I arranged for our next meeting and took my leave.

I said my goodbyes to Carol and left. What Grayson wanted to talk to me about weighed heavily on my mind.

When I returned to the company, Grayson glanced at the time and said, "Chlo, could you please take me to the airport? There's a project in Solaris that I want to try to secure. Let's discuss it on the way."

We headed back downstairs together. When we got into the car, Grayson said, "Chlo, the information I've been looking into regarding Annalise... Something feels off."

Grayson's words caught me off guard.

I looked at him in surprise. "What do you mean by that?"

I had already had a hunch that something was amiss with Annalise. While I had no connection to her personally, this intuition was powerful.

Grayson frowned, and his face was grave.

He shook his head in disbelief and spoke cautiously, "How do I put it? It's as if she's been stripped of her identity, only existing within that welfare home. Outside of it, there's no trace of Annalise to be found in any records, let alone any connection with Mr. Atlas. And to suggest that they shared any kind of affection?"

Grayson continued to shake his head. "It's simply impossible. Aside from that welfare home, there's not information on Annalise anywhere else!"

His words led me to a bold hypothesis.

“Could it be that this person was fabricated?”

Chapter 332 Inexplicable Affinity

Grayson looked at me as if he had entertained a similar suspicion. Then, he asked, “So, who fell off the cliff? There were witnesses and physical evidence. Even Mr. Atlas saw it with his own eyes!”

“How could this be?” I tightened my grip on the steering wheel.

It was more of a mutter to myself, but suddenly, a memory surged. It was something Atlas had said to me.

I recalled him telling me, “Annalise means nothing to anyone, especially not to me!”

In light of Grayson’s words, Atlas’s statement held a different meaning. It appeared that Atlas was

keeping something from me.

He had said he would reveal it once the clues connected. Coupled with Grayson’s revelations, I was now thoroughly convinced that the information they had found didn’t add up.

“What about Rory? Any leads on him?”

This man held a certain allure for me. After all, he was Stella’s father.

Plus, I sensed a certain distance in Stella’s attitude toward her parents. It wasn’t just indifference but a kind of numbness. Every time she spoke of them, it was with an air of detachment. It left me somewhat

perplexed.

I couldn't believe she was so apathetic towards her own parents, even if she had grown out of her rebellious phase.

Moreover, from my time with her, I sensed she didn't hold a particularly significant place in Celine's heart.

I could tell that day outside the emergency room when Atlas was injured. She looked at Celine with fear, trembling at a single sharp glance from her.

I believe she did not hold the same significance in Celine's heart as Kenzie did,

Grayson responded, "Yes, Rory wasn't difficult to investigate. We've managed to confirm most of the basic information. I've got a detailed report, which I'll give to you once I'm back. I just returned from the

neighboring city and didn't have time to get it. Also, I looked into Rory's wife."

Grayson glanced at me. "His wife is quite the character. No one would have expected that Louis's assistant has a wife with such a hidden and illustrious background"

Oh Grayson's words oddly made my heart beat a little faster. I asked, bewildered "Hidden and

Mysterious

"That's right! Can you imagine that Rory's wife comes from a family even more distinguished than the Pierces?" Grayson continued to watch me as he spoke.

This was truly something I hadn't anticipated.

"So, with such a prominent background, why did she marry Rory?" I pressed on.

"Well, there's a story behind that! Love is always to blamer Grayson quipped, "I'll tell you all about it when

I get back. At the latest, in three days! Ill definitely be back!!

I could only nod in agreement, pulling up to the airport terminal. Grayson pushed open the car door, turning back to wave at me before entering the airport.

Sitting in the car, I pondered for quite some time on our conversation. Then I started to head back.

At that very moment, I received a call from Atticus. He informed me that ATL Empire was considering replacing the current head of this branch. He advised me to be prepared.

This revelation left me utterly astonished. Unconsciously, my voice rose in disbelief. "You mean they're thinking of replacing Nick?"

Chapter 333 The Trigger of the Incident

The news, to be honest, left me quite unsettled. I immediately sought out Atticus for more details.

Atticus's tone was grave. "Yes, I just got this information and called you immediately. I hope you're mentally prepared. Be extra cautious with the projects at ATL Empire. If possible, it's best to disengage from them. This way, you can cut your losses in time."

I quickly pulled the car over to the side of the road, listening intently to his call.

“Why would they want to replace Nick?” I found it hard to believe this news.

After all, Nick had been with the Torado headquarters for so long, and his reputation was excellent..

Moreover, he had been under Atlas’s father’s leadership.

That was why he had put so much effort into supporting Atlas. Even when we first met, I mistook Atlas for

his assistant.

How could Celine dare to go after Nick? My heart raced, and I couldn’t help but wonder if my actions had

affected Nick.

After all, Celine was a schemer and narrow-minded.

If Nick had secretly helped me, it would have contradicted her orders. Could this be the catalyst for

Celine’s decision to replace Nick?

The more I thought about it, the more uncertain I felt. My breath became labored. This was precisely what

Nick had feared, and it seemed he was right.

When I went to see Atlas and was discovered by Stella, the phone call I made to him afterward had hinted at Nick's displeasure.

At the time, I hadn't dwelled on it too much.

"Chloe, in the time I've known you, I can tell you're capable. You'd make a good partner. So... I have high hopes for you I don't want you to get caught up in their mess. It wouldn't be worth it!"

In the call, Atticus's tone was sincere. I felt quite touched.

Although I've also heard about your situation with Atlas. But whether it's true or not, considering you're navigating this industry, it's better to ensure your interests first! The rest...

He didn't finish the sentence, and I knew what he would say,

Thank you, Mr. Atticus! I hurriedly expressed my gratitude

I was genuinely thankful to Atticus for this. Whatever his intentions were in making this call, I felt this information was crucial.

He hung up shortly after. I sat in the car for a long time, contemplating.

I trusted Atticus, and since he was the source of this information, it had to be correct. I couldn't help but blame myself. This situation was caused by my stubbornness.

I steadied my anxious thoughts and mulled over the situation. If ATL Empire changed leadership, would it send shockwaves through the Torado headquarters?

If Celine took charge in this crisis and replaced Nick with her confidant, no one dared defy her wishes. Atlas was unconscious, after all. This would be her way of reclaiming the power that Atlas had worked so

hard to regain.

Even if she didn't seize significant authority, it would pose a potential threat to him once he woke up.

I raised my hand and slapped myself for being too impulsive.

Why did I have to see Atlas at this critical time? If anything were to go wrong, how would I explain it to him once he woke up?

I gripped the phone tightly, unsure of what to do. I wanted to call Nick, but what would I say?

I didn't realize how long I had been sitting in the car until Carol called me. She had been searching for me everywhere. I realized I had been gone for too long!

Carol informed me that Ryan had returned, so I restarted the car to return to the office.

Chapter 334 A Major Change

The news from ATL Empire was indeed shocking. They not only replaced Nick, but several other key positions were shuffled as well.

Just then, Celine suddenly made Atlas's condition public and even released a photo of him in a coma.

Reality

was harsher than I expected. As soon as I received the news, I called Nick. His demeanor remained calm and gentle, not avoiding the truth.

“Mr. Nick, I’m sorry. Is this my fault?” I sincerely apologize to Nick. I felt a heavy weight in my heart.

“It relates to your situation, but the outcome was inevitable. So, you need not blame yourself.” Nick didn’t sound reproachful, which made me feel even more guilty.

“Well... How is Atlas?”

“There’s still no sign of him waking up, but one day he will,” Nick stated firmly. “No one can replace his position.”

“Yes... Mr. Nick, if there’s any news about him, please let me know.”

“Of course

I sensed he didn’t have much more to say, so I reluctantly hung up. Observing the garden through the window, my heart sank. If only I could stay with him and wake him up.

Timothy Benit, Nick’s replacement, summoned me two days later.

He adopted a strictly businesslike demeanor, inquiring about the cooperation between ATL Empire and Tanum Corporation.

After our discussion, we received a notice that ongoing projects had to be completed on time with high quality, while all projects in the planning phase were put on hold.

This was within my expectations. Fortunately, I had maintained good communication with my suppliers, so there wasn't excessive inventory.

However, the pressure weighed on me, making it hard to catch my breath.

Ryan continued to comfort me. "This is a good thing. It's a wake-up call, teaching us to face unexpected events. We can't pin all our hopes on one thing. That's been our weakness. Our immediate priority is to open up our path. We can't always rely on the ATL Empire.

Deb down laww Ryan was right

However, when ATL Empire extended a helping hand to me, it saved me from a dire situation. At the time,

honestly had no other choice.

So, aside from my feelings for Atlas, I still held a lingering fondness for ATL Empire.

Grayson also returned from Solaris to Foswood. He managed to secure that contract, a glimmer of hope. in these gloomy days.

The project with Alliance Corporation went smoothly after several detailed discussions, and we successfully signed the agreement.

I still had several projects from Atticus, so Tanum Corporation's livelihood was assured. I prepared for the worst, but it would be a victory for me.

as long as I could secure the interests of those working 1

At this moment, Atlas's words of advice echoed in my ears. He urged me to always fight for my maximum

benefit

There were rumors that the ATL Empire was having a significant impact on many businesses. Timothy was making sweeping reforms. The whole team from the previous administration had been replaced.

At present, it seemed that Celine had successfully regained lost ground. She was truly ruthless.

I finally understood that Celine's public announcement of Atlas's condition was a prelude to her taking action and a reasonable excuse to reclaim lost territory.

I couldn't help but admire this woman.

It also raised my suspicion that Atlas's car accident wasn't as simple as it seemed. When the gods fight, it is always mortals who suffer.

Her bold moves meant we would pay the price. They scrutinized materials and standards, nullifying all previous approvals.

We were left in a daze. Even supplier inspection reports were rejected, requiring retesting.

While I was struggling, there were those reveling in their success. Construction for Matthew's project officially began in the nearby city.

However, they were promoting and creating a buzz over here simultaneously. They also signed another project with ATL Empire. He was how genuinely basking in the limelight, soaring to new heights.

Just as the ceremony concluded, an impeccably dressed Matthew approached me to discuss an acquisition the following day.

Chapter 335 Staging a Coup

When he entered my office, his demeanor was genuinely repulsive. It was as if he owned the place, inspecting every corner as if it were his home.

The fault was mine, When I took over, I prioritized convenience over renovations. The office remained exactly as it was, untouched.

After his inspection, he settled into the sofa, looking at me confidently.

He said, "Chloe, you're quite sentimental. It's obvious from this office. You've never had the heart to change the look. Do you feel like I'm still here?"

I let out a cold hum and silently cursed in my heart.

The villain thought he was the cream of the crop. Even the way he sat was so smug.

I looked at him indifferently, unwilling to engage with his antics.

*Alright, what brings you here?"

"Let's not beat around the bush. I've got too many projects on hand, and they keep pouring in. I can't let such a good opportunity slip away to someone else. That's why I'm here to talk to you. How about merging our companies?"

He swayed his head and boasted about his achievements. I didn't interrupt, letting him continue his act.

Seeing me remain silent, Matthew stared at me for a while before continuing, "To be honest, I'm used to working here, and I want to move back. Chloe, do you want money or projects?"

"Why don't we merge our company, and you'll be a shareholder of my company. That way, Tanum Corporation will go back to how it used to be. After all, it has over ten years of reputation. There's no need for change."

I held myself back from slapping him and stared at him calmly. I did not understand. If people were given

a little kindness, would they be kind in return?

guess I needed to surround myself with more positive people.

When Matthew noticed my silence, he felt a little proud. He believed that he had struck a chord, thinking !

was tempted.

can see you've been under a lot of pressure lately. Don't push yourself too hard. You're juggling too much and might burn out. I've said it before, Atlas isn't reliable. Now look, he's in a coma, just hanging by

I considered telling him off if he mentioned Atlas again. After reconsidering, letting him fall from his lofty heights was the best way to hurt him. I needed to let him climb higher.

"Or, I can give you some money, and you can step aside. If you're eager to work, I can let you handle a couple of projects to keep your dignity. But this place isn't suitable for you.

"In the future, if you ever come crying to me for child support, my son will eventually bear Murphy's name. So don't even think about dragging us to court later."

I clenched my fists even tighter. He was testing my limits.

Bringing Ava up in the conversation was making me lose my cool. I never even considered using him for

child support, but his tone....

He was prioritizing his son.

Before I could speak, he continued, "Chloe, nobody's always lucky. I think your luck has run out. You need to learn to face reality. Give it some thought in the next two days. If I don't hear any objections, I'll be

moving back into this office next week."

His audacity left me speechless. All I wanted was to tear him apart to find some relief.

What's he even saying? Matthew rambled on, and I stayed silent the whole time.

Finally, I asked, "Are you done?"

He looked at me, puzzled, and nodded. "Yes, I'm done. Of course, you can share your thoughts too. I'd like

to hear them!"

"Get out!" I snapped, coldly dismissing him.

Chapter 336 Go Big or Go Home

I knew Matthew didn't expect me to appear so calm while telling him to get lost. It must've been a great Insult to him since he looked so embarrassed.

"Chloe, I came to talk things out with you. You can make amends or face the consequences of defying me. You can choose if this is a friendly discussion or a warning.

Suddenly, someone opened my office door. Ryan entered, asking. "Who's speaking with such authority? Tell me, where are you planning to move to?"

Matthew's lips twitched when he saw Ryan. The former regained his arrogant composure and retaliated, "I didn't expect to see my senior from college here."

Matthew knew Ryan well, especially when Matthew pursued me in school. Ryan had taken good care of me then. Therefore, Matthew had been wary of him until I accepted Matthew as my boyfriend.

Ryan glanced at Matthew and said, "You just mentioned moving, right? Where to?"

Ryan confidently sat at the main seat and looked Matthew in the eyes, saying. "The difference between a man and a boy is something you might not understand. Do you want to move back here? Sorry, but you'll

need my opinion."

"You? Pfft!" Matthew leaned back, looking defiant. "You'll always be my defeated underling."

"Is that so? Try me again." Ryan remained composed. "We can make phase two of Avalon Hills our bet. This place doesn't suit your status and isn't substantial enough. You want to make it big, right?"

I sat upright, not entirely understanding Ryan. I didn't know what phase two of Avalon Hills was. As far as

I knew, the first phase had just ended. There was no mention of a second phase. The first phase was a significant project the government had prioritized.

Matthew also sat upright. "What do you mean?"

"It is what it is," Ryan was vague, but Matthew seemed to understand because he appeared slightly nervous.

Ryan, don't think studying overseas makes you great. Aren't you back here just for a woman? You're even

willing to be her slave, aren't you?" Matthew retorted, feeling angry and embarrassed.

That's because she's worth it, Matthew. If you want to be a real man, run your business and stop bothering Chloe. Otherwise, I'll make your life miserable," Ryan was severe. I had never seen him so confident

Matthew clicked his tongue. "Ryan, can you even bet against me on phase two?"

Ryan asserted, "I bet you'll lose out. However, if you win, I'll convince Chloe to give in and throw in a complete renovation for you."

While I didn't grasp the situation fully, Ryan's confidence was undeniable. People often said men were the most attractive when working, but I'd argue they were most attractive during negotiations.

"You shouldn't waste any more time here, Matthew. You can lose everything without realizing it," Ryan implied Matthew's recent success had made him blindly arrogant.

Matthew glanced at me, then stood up and grabbed his bag. "You're something else, Chloe. You're teaming up with outsiders to scheme against me."

Immediately after, he turned and left. I watched him in a daze, wondering if I was hallucinating. I ran toward Ryan and sat on the couch, asking, "What's all this about phase two?"

He glanced at me. "We agreed that I'd handle external matters while you handled internal ones.

I cackled, "Do you honestly have to be like this? Come on, spill the beans!"

He sat upright and said, "Phase two of Avalon Hills has already received approval. Matthew has been

trying to get it.”

“Wait, for what?” I was doubtful because I knew Matthew too well.

“It’s probably thanks to Liora’s efforts,” Ryan explained. That woman still has some influence.”

“Why are you betting with him then?” I started to feel confused about Ryan’s intentions.

Chapter 337 A Godsent Opportunity

I had been preoccupied with Atlas’s injuries these days and neglected work. Ryan noticed my skepticism and smiled, saying, “I’m confident we can succeed.”

“How are you confident about this? Are you saying...” I hesitated in making assumptions.

“Unless something unexpected happens, then yes.” Ryan grinned.

I stared at him, dumbfounded. Considering his calm demeanor, he didn’t appear to be joking. I cautiously

asked, “Are you saying we might secure phase two?”

Ryan nodded with a smile. “Why not? Who says we can’t secure a major project?”

“Are you serious?” I felt elated. “Were you working on this all along? I wondered why you were rarely around.”

“You wouldn’t have trusted me with this job if I sat around all day hoping for projects to come to me. We

can’t let Matthew win,” Ryan said smugly.

I laughed, “Haha! Tell me the details. How’d you manage to get in touch with them? If we secure this, we’ll

have a smooth road ahead.”

Ryan explained the process to me in detail. Evidently, we owed thanks to his mixed–blood junior, who had

secretly admired him.

“Her name’s Joyce Alvarez—she’s already a famous designer. The authorities were looking for internationally renowned designers for Avalon Hills, and Joyce’s mentor recommended her.”

“That’s quite a coincidence. What happened next?” I couldn’t wait to hear more.

“The company I worked for was involved during phase one. Joyce had already received notice for phase two some time ago. I had planned certain aspects of the project, allowing me to reconnect with her.”

“Why didn’t you mention this before? You didn’t reveal much when we discussed her on New Year’s Day.

You said you exchanged greetings and parted ways,” I relentlessly questioned.

It’s true that we didn’t have much contact then. Joyce contacted me independently this time, which is

just a fortunate coincidence. She introduced me to the project's key figures. We had many productive meetings, which led to a potential partnership.

"Bull, I couldn't tell you until I was almost certain," Ryan explained.

"So, since you're discussing it now, does that mean you're almost certain?" I was getting excited as

"Yes, unless something unexpected happens," Ryan beamed, reassuring me even more.

I palmed my cheeks, then clasped my hands together. "Thank goodness! We finally have hope!"

Ryan marveled, "Liora has been fighting for this, and her network already extends to the highest levels in the province. I'm amazed at how connected she is in these domestic relationships, but she won't have the upper hand."

e to meet Joyce. I'm curious about this woman who became my fateful benefactor."

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*Sure, after we sign the contract," Ryan replied. "Matthew won't be too calm once he hears the news. He's

staked everything on phase two in partnership with the Thompson family. He plans to use it to expand the company and establish a strong foothold."

"But you

revealed the details to him earlier. Is that okay?" I was slightly nervous. I feared Ryan might not

fully understand the dynamics, and things might get out of hand.

Ryan said, "I want to use this information to create internal strife between them. Do you know who else is

competing for this project?"

Confused, I shook my head. "Is it Celine and her team?"

"You're spot on," Ryan confirmed.

"Are you trying to stir the pot?" I boldly guessed.

Ryan smiled with ease. "Smart! By making them undermine each other and expose their weaknesses, we can quietly wait for our opportunity."

"So we'll just sit back and reap the benefits?" I mischievously smiled.

Ryan also smiled contentedly. "This time, Liora is leveraging Atticus's connections. I believe he may have some grudges against Liora for doing this."

I suddenly realized this might be my opportunity. "So, that means the information you just disclosed will likely drive them to push even harder, maybe resorting to extreme measures.

Chapter 338 Who to Ask for Help?

It was survival of the fittest in the business world, and I was determined to make Liora relent. If I didn't, it

would be over for me

Conveniently, Matthew's groundbreaking ceremony had just concluded. I thought it was the night time to

put my plan into action

Ryan assured me, "You can get a good night's sleep this time I'll consider us established in Foswood

once we have the capital to be independent

I wholeheartedly agreed with his sentiment.

However, ATL Empire added to my pressure when the retested inspection reports returned. Surprisingly, they showed elevated levels of harmful substances, rendering the project non-compliant.

Immediately after, ATL Empire ordered all remaining construction to halt. If we couldn't resolve it, the project would never continue. Since we sold all the units, I would be in serious trouble if the homeowners.

complained.

ATL Empire didn't give me a chance to address the issue. The work stoppage was just the first step. Then, they sent an outrageous claim notice. I knew they intended to crush me

Ryan, Grayson, and I tried dealing with this situation. We collaborated with our suppliers to provide convincing evidence to persuade the relevant authorities, but it was in vain. I knew Celine would leave me

with no room to recover.

I finally understood how unwise it was to challenge Celine. She was a ruthless witch, I also realized the significance of Atlas's and Atticus's repeated advice for me to protect my interests.

I felt powerless under the ATL Empire's pressure. Even Ryan seemed at a loss. Still, this wasn't what I feared most. Instead, this might even affect Ryan's chances of securing phase two of Avalon Hills.

Meanwhile, I received no news of Atlas and regretted not leaving a way to contact the doctor. Even if I

knew Atlas was okay, it would provide some solace to my troubled heart.

I felt burnt out these past few days, Lauren heard the news and was genuinely concerned about me. She

rushed to my office and suggested, "Chlo, you must seek help. You can't handle it alone—Tanum

Corporation is too small to persuade anyone."

I helplessly looked at Lauren, knowing she was right. Still, I didn't know who to turn to. I dejectedly said,

"You're right, but who would stand up for a small company like mine? Most would probably want to avoid getting involved

Lauren fell silent momentarily and then suggested, "Well, that's not necessarily true. You'll never know if you don't try. I think you can seek help from Atticus."

"Atticus?" I looked at Lauren in surprise, repeating his name and pondering. "I'm not that familiar with him.

Can I even ask for his help?"

"You can pretend to seek Atticus's advice. He's experienced in the business world, so he should have a way to handle it. Don't overthink it," Lauren encouraged me.

I looked helplessly at Lauren and asked, "Do you think it'll work?"

Lauren got up, pulled me to my feet, and said, "Come on, I'll take you there. Who cares if it's a long shot? Sometimes, you need to take a chance. Even just talking to him might ease your mind."

Her encouragement worked. In any case, I didn't dislike Atticus as a person.

In the car, I told Lauren that Atticus had tipped me about ATL Empire switching personnel.

She said, "See? Sometimes, a few words from someone can save us from trouble. If it's useful to us, we have to try it. Don't just stay stuck in a rut."

Lauren continued to encourage me as she drove. "Hurry, call Atticus and ask if he's at the company."

I quickly found Atticus's number, took a deep breath, and called him.

Chapter 339 Meeting Him at Vanderberg Palace

Atticus quickly answered the call. He said hoarsely, "Hmm, Ms. Chloe? What's the matter?"

I glanced at Lauren, and she nodded reassuringly, urging me to speak.

"Um... are you at the company? I'd lik

I

to discuss something with you," I said, still lacking confidence.

"Sure, go to Vanderberg Palace. I'll be there in a while," he responded promptly.

I felt dazed because I did not know what Vanderberg Palace was. Lauren saw my confusion and patted

my hand, signaling me to end the call.

"All right, see you later," I replied awkwardly before hanging up. Then I turned to Lauren and said, "I don't

know where Vanderberg Palace is."

Lauren laughed at me mockingly. I felt embarrassed and asked, "Hey! Why are you laughing?!"

"Because I know where it is. Hahaha," Lauren continued to tease me. "I should've driven you around more

when we had nothing to do. You should have some fun driving around. Geez, you embarrass me

sometimes."

Soon after, we arrived in front of a tranquil courtyard. Lauren looked at me and said, "We're at Vanderberg

Palace."

I looked outside and saw a charming little courtyard. It had an antique signboard at the entrance that read Vanderberg Palace.

“Is this the place Atticus referred to?” I questioned with a hint of skepticism.

“Yeah, let’s go in. Vanderberg Palace is a clubhouse. I’m surprised you don’t know this place.” Laurent

rolled her eyes at me. “I should give you a crash course. If Liora finds out you don’t know this place, she’ll

roll on the floor with laughter.”

I followed Lauren inside and realized how spacious the place was. It had Victorian–style aesthetics that

exuded elegance. Lauren whispered, “The owner is Ms. Vanderberg. Her background is pretty impressive.

I’ll introduce you to her someday. Today, we shall focus on the business at hand.”

Once inside, Lauren approached the elegant–looking front desk. She asked hushedly, “Hi there, is Mr.

Atticus here?”

Yes, he’s in the Autumn Hall,” the young woman replied, pointing to the second floor.

Lauren glanced at me and said, “You go ahead while I wait elsewhere. Just call me when you’re done.

“Okay.” I nodded, and the young woman gestured toward the stairs. I couldn’t help but sigh as I climbed the stairs to the Autumn Hall. It appeared I was out of touch and had no idea Vanderberg Palace was a

clubhouse

The location, the decor, and the spaciousness surprised me. I never expected to see such a tranquil place in Foswood's city center. It seemed the owner of this establishment was not an ordinary person.

I found the Autumn Hall, knocked on the door, and received a response from inside. When I entered. I

saw the same Victorian-style decor, I couldn't help but appreciate this place's elegance. It was far more intriguing than the elaborate decors I had seen before

As I passed the entrance, I saw Atticus sitting and brewing tea

"Mr. Atticus."

"Please, have a seat," he gestured to the seat opposite him, and I approached to sit down. I felt awkward because I had seldom asked for help, especially not from someone like Atticus

He calmly made his tea, giving me the impression that he could keep his composure in any situation

"Mr. Atticus....I...I struggled to find the right words but knew I had to speak

"Here, try this tea first. The tea at Vanderberg Palace is impressive," he said, placing a freshly brewed cup

before me.

I calmed down and sipped the tea, finding its flavor refreshing and delightful. I chuckled, saying, "I don't

know much about tea. Is it Darjeeling tea?"

Atticus smiled. "You claim not to know much about tea, but you could identify it as Darjeeling tea? They just harvested the tea leaves today."

"It's perfect! Mr. Atticus, you have exquisite taste." I took another sip, savoring the sweetness

"When I want some peace to think, I come here," Atticus said, leaning comfortably into his chair. His eyes

were deep as he looked at me.

I felt awkward but not as uncomfortable as when I first entered. I lowered my gaze momentarily, then looked up at Atticus. "Well, there's a reason I came to you, Mr. Atticus."

Chapter 340 The Cunning Man

Atticus showed no surprise and nodded. "Go ahead."

I explained my purpose and then looked at him, asking. "Can you give me some advice?"

Atticus didn't respond directly. Instead, he contemplated momentarily before saying, "I can't help you

this."

with

My mind went blank, and my heart dropped. I realized I might've been too hopeful since I wasn't close to Atticus. It was unrealistic for him to help me for no reason. As I was about to provide a way out for

myself, Atticus continued, "However, I can offer a suggestion."

I looked at him in surprise and waited for him to continue.

“Do you know Pinnacle Group?” he asked.

I nodded. Pinnacle Group was the country’s leading company and the most renowned real estate brand. They had properties worldwide and were well-known for their quality.

“Go to them. Their building materials undergo rigorous selection and meet national standards. I noticed the items you used identified as non-compliant are the same ones they use. Wouldn’t that be quite

persuasive?”

Atticus’s tone was calm and collected, but his advice was astounding. His words made everything more

evident.

If the direct proof didn’t work, there would be no reason to continue clashing with ATL Empire. Instead, I could find an indirect solution. I cursed myself for not thinking about it myself.

“I can give you an address. Go to Solaris and meet this person. Convince him, and you’ll get the information you need. However, this person is a little... difficult to handle. He’s stubborn, but everything should fall into place once you convince him.”

Atticus removed a small paper from his bag and pushed it toward me. “I hope everything goes smoothly.

for you.”

I looked at him gratefully. I knew he had prepared and knew about the non-compliant issue. Nonetheless, I appreciated his help immensely. I took the paper and saw a name, Dominic Welch, and an address,

written on it.

Is there no contact information?" I asked. Soon after, I realized I had made a mistake because Atticus mentioned that this person was 'difficult to handle.'

Atticus smiled, "He doesn't leave his phone number with

"I understand." I nodded, then carefully folded the paper and put it away. Afterward, I stood up to bid him

farewell.

"Why are you in such a hurry?" Atticus looked at me calmly and said, "Stay, I have more to say."

I sat back down and sipped some more tea. I was in a rush because ATL Empire's deadline was only three days away. Therefore, I needed to go to Solaris as soon as possible.

However, Atticus's following words surprised me. It wasn't just a suggestion—instead, he gave me a well-thought-out plan. I couldn't help but admire him. After all, he was the reason for Echelon Group's success.

He had taught me to handle such situations. Atticus was not just a mentor but also a wide friend who had enlightened me. My worries subsided after our conversation. I found it amazing that anyone could unexpectedly become my savior.

"Thank you, Mr. Atticus," I said sincerely.

I

“Let’s not be so formal. I hope we can be friends, not just business partners or a bridge for mutual benefit,

he replied, smiling meaningfully.

I blushed and responded, “Oh, n–no, I’ve never seen you as a bridge for mutual benefit. I should thank Matthew and Keegan for allowing me to meet you.”

Atticus smiled, “I should be thanking Preston West.”

I understood he used Preston to make a point. He was indeed a cunning and wise man. Atticus then gave me a few more instructions before saying, “All right, you should go now. Time’s running out, and your task is vital. Good luck.”

I got up and looked at him severely. “Thank you, Mr. Atticus. I’ll take my leave now.”

I couldn’t help but feel like a different person than when I first entered. I initially felt anxious and uncertain, but I was full of confidence now.