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"But... that doesn't mean he has to harm uncle. They're brothers, after all. He could have voiced out about the mistreatment he had to endure. Why did he choose to do such a vicious act?"

After recollecting himself, Devin eventually pinned all the blame on his father for what happened.

Jasmine was beyond exasperated upon hearing that.

Sebastian, who had heard everything standing behind, also felt a blow to his heart.

This is where Devin's different from his parents. Even though he might lack responsibility and capability, his views are often righteous. And he always looks at the whole picture before judging.

"What did you say? How could you say that your dad was vicious? What an unfilial son you are! If he didn't do what he did, you wouldn't even have a place in the Jadesons right now!"

Jasmine burst into devastation as she accused her son loudly.

A grim look crossed Devin's face.

No longer wanting to argue with her, he continued pushing his father's corpse and moved forward.

Jasmine lost her mind upon seeing that, and she climbed onto the railing beside her.

"Jasmine, what are you doing?"

"That's right. Mrs. Jadeson, what are you doing? Please come down now!"

The Woodses behind her and the watching crowd got startled by her act.

Devin immediately turned around when he heard the commotion.

"Mom, are you out of your mind? What are you trying to pull here?"

"Out of my mind?"

Jasmine, who had gotten onto the railing, let out a smile. Staring at Devin, she let go of the railing and stood up unsteadily.

Devin was in utter shock upon seeing that.

Sebastian, who was nearby, was also bereft of speech.

By then, Sasha and Janice had arrived with the kids on the ground floor. Their hearts skipped a beat upon witnessing what was happening upstairs.

This woman is definitely crazy!

"I'm not crazy, son. I'm just thinking. Since you've abandoned your dad, let me accompany him then. After I'm gone, please take care of yourself."

Overwhelmed with fright, Devin did not know how to react.

Gaining back his senses, he immediately rushed toward his mother.

But before he could reach her, she jumped off the railing. Sebastian also failed to catch her in time.

"Mom!"

A miserable wail of agony cut through the air, echoing throughout the hospital's corridor.

In that instance, pin drop silence filled the space.

Everyone froze on the spot as they gazed down upon the woman who was now an unidentifiable mess of gore and flesh downstairs.

Sebastian could not believe what was happening.

As for Sasha, who was downstairs, she was in utter astonishment.

Did she actually jump? Why? She'd been creating a fuss in Oceanic Estate from yesterday until now. I know that she did all that to save Stephen, but even if Stephen was dead, she still got Devin, no? She didn't need to pull such a desperate act.

Sasha stared numbly at the scene, unable to comprehend why Jasmine jumped.

Right then, she sensed someone appearing beside her. Staring at the gruesome scene, she trembled incessantly as she lifted her head.

"Sab?"

"Why? Why didn't you guys stop her?"

The color drained from Sabrina's face as she look at the man upstairs.

Sasha opened her mouth and wanted to explain to her. No one was able to react in time when Jasmine lashed out.

But the words got stuck in her throat as she followed Sabrina's gaze and looked toward Devin.

She could barely recognize him.

There was no trace of life on his face as he stared down at his mother's body, unmoving.

His eyes were filled with utter coldness and a trace of hostility.

Sasha had never seen Devin like that.

In the end, Devin collapsed to the ground.

He had been up for the entire night due to his father's suicide. And now, he had to witness his mother's death in such a brutal manner. No one would be able to endure that mentally.

Sebastian immediately arranged to send Devin into a ward.

As for Jasmine...

"Sebastian, please leave it to me. Old Mr. Jadeson has woken up. You should go inform him about this."

Sasha came over and took the initiative to handle the matter.

Sebastian was in the worst mood at that moment.

He hesitated for a while and eventually agreed.

"Just give me a call if you can't handle it." He did not forget to remind Sasha before leaving.

Sasha was still nauseous as she witnessed Jasmine's suicide from a close range. Even as a doctor, it was a massive blow to her.

However, upon hearing Sebastian's words, she felt a slight sense of warmth spreading through her heart.

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"Okay, I will. By the way, Sebastian, don't burden yourself too much. This has nothing to do with you. I'm sure Devin understands it and won't blame it on you."

Sasha tried to comfort him as well.

Of course, she did not mention the expression she saw on Devin's face before the latter fainted.

Sebastian nodded lightly upon hearing her words.

With that, he went to Jonathan's ward, while Sasha and Janice went to handle Stephen and his wife's funeral.

As for Sabrina, she came to Devin's ward.

For her, it was a good thing that the Hayeses were finally able to avenge all their grudges at the White House. They had been waiting for this moment for ages, after all.

Yet, as she stared at the unconscious man in bed, her heart sank.

"What did your mom tell you before she died?"

She cast a question toward the pale-looking man.

No one could hear Jasmine's last words, for they were too far from her at that time.

Plus, Jasmine deliberately lowered her voice back then, as though she only wanted Devin to hear it.

So, what exactly did she say? Why did he show such a hostile look after she died? I've never seen him like this.

A vague uneasiness slowly crept up on Sabrina.

Just then, the door opened, and a familiar woman barged in abruptly with a group of people.

"Kira? Who let you in here?"

Sabrina stood up instantly, her face darkening as she looked at the woman.

Kira was not intimidated at all as she turned a blind eye toward Sabrina.

"Sabrina, what are you talking about? These are my parents, along with Devin's uncle and aunt. Devin's parents are both dead now. What do you think we come here for?"

To Sabrina's slight bewilderment, Kira threw her question back with a domineering gesture.

Uncle? Aunt?

Sabrina's confidence somehow faded upon hearing that.

She's right. They're Devin's relatives while I'm just an outsider to him.

"No matter what you want, Sebastian was the one who made the arrangement. You have no right to move him." She had no choice but to use her brother's name.

"Sebastian?"

Kira scoffed upon hearing that.

"Sabrina, did you forget why Aunt Jasmine and Uncle Stephen died in the first place? It was all because of Sebastian."

Sabrina was rendered speechless by that.

"By the way, there's a reason why I brought my parents here. Aunt Jasmine had instructed us before she came here. She said if anything happened to her, the Woodses must come here and take her son away!"

As Kira spoke, she took out her phone and played a voice recording.

Sabrina's face fell.

I didn't expect her to play this card.

In the end, Sabrina had no choice but to let them leave with Devin.

It was already two hours later when news of Devin being taken away reached Sebastian's ears.

Jonathan was there as well.

"Why didn't you call me right away?" Sebastian's first reaction was to blame Sabrina.

At that moment, Jonathan, who seemed to have aged a lot, made a gesture toward Sebastian, signaling to him not to blame Sabrina.

"Maybe it's better for him to stay at the Woods Residence. Red Pavilion is a mess now. If he goes back, he might just get more upset," Jonathan uttered in a composed manner.

Nevertheless, regardless of how calm he tried to act, his pale and haggard face revealed how devastated his heart was.

An old man like him should be enjoying his peaceful retiring life by now.

Yet, he just found out that his younger son was harmed by his elder son. And in such a short time, he lost both his elder son and daughter-in-law.

It was indeed a miracle that he could still talk consciously after such a blow.

"I got it. Please rest well."

Sebastian was still behaving indifferently, but he finally said something caring.

Jonathan lifted his head, his eyes dimmed with sorrow. "How's it going at the White House? I heard from Mark that Franklin had admitted that he was the mastermind. Is that right?"

"Yes, he and Alfred have been arrested. Next, they're going to be prosecuted by Congress. If everything goes smoothly, they will get locked up for the rest of their life."

"That's great!"

Finally, Jonathan's eyes lit up with slight hope.

The enemy he had been chasing after all these years was finally brought to justice.

With that, his emotion instantly improved by a lot.

But the next moment, his gaze turned stern as something crossed his mind.

"I heard from Mark that you hacked into the White House's internal surveillance system in the midst of bringing Franklin and Alfred down. How did you manage to do that? Could it be that you've recovered already?"

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Sebastian furrowed his brows as he did not expect Jonathan to ask that.

For a moment, he wanted to ignore the latter and walked right out.

Eventually, however, as he stared at Jonathan's eyes that were filled with expectation, Sebastian chose to give in.

"Is it so important whether I've recovered?"

"Of course!"

"Why?"

"Because I want to know if the price we've been paying all this while is worth it."

Sebastian found it hard to believe Jonathan's reasoning.

Is it worth it? How do we define the worth of everything that happened? If he thinks that it is worthy to sacrifice so many lives for me to recover and for him to feel less guilty, then congratulations. His wish came true. But has he ever thought that all of this happened because of him in the first place?

Nevertheless, Sebastian nodded faintly in the end. "It's just as you wished."

Upon hearing that, Jonathan got overwhelmed with utter excitement.

Tears started welling up in those pair of aged eyes.

"That's good then, that's good..." He could not suppress his emotions.

Sebastian ignored Jonathan as he took a glimpse at his watch. He planned to pay a visit to the funeral house.

"Don't worry about what happened to your uncle. Even if he didn't end his life, I would have sent him to the military court. Your dad..."

Jonathan choked on his words.

Hearing that, Sebastian paused in his tracks.

Is he finally mentioning Dad?

He froze on the spot but did not turn his head, implying that he wanted to hear more about his father's past.

Staring at Sebastian's back, Jonathan bit his lip and continued, "I admit I was too overbearing back then. After I withdrew from the border, even though I held an important position, many people in the White House looked down upon me. They thought I was nothing but A brusque man, and they used to go against my family. Because of that, I wanted to train your dad."

Jonathan's eyes trembled slightly as though he could see his talented son in front of him.

Only Jonathan knew how much expectation he put on Shin.

Ever since Shin was a kid, Jonathan had been pouring his sweat and blood to give the former the best of everything.

He hoped that Shin could revitalize the Jadesons. And he also hoped that after Shin become the head of the family, he could conquer the entire White House. Jonathan wanted to prove to the world that his family was above everyone else.

Yet, Shin, who bore great expectance, eventually fell for a woman.

"When I first heard of your mom, I was outraged. I didn't expect the heir that I've been cultivating would get destroyed by a woman. Thus, I forced your dad to leave her. But your dad was unwilling to give in. He stole the household register from the house and married your mom secretly. I was so pissed that I could not sleep for days."

Jonathan still got a little emotional as he talked about the past.

His anger was indeed reasonable. Anyone would get enraged if something they had been cultivating diligently for years got stolen by another party.

Nonetheless, blood ran thicker than water. In the end, he chose to accept Shin's decision.

It was just like what Jasmine told Devin before she ended her life. She said that Stephen took Shin's letter and was prepared to plead with Jonathan for forgiveness.

But Jonathan said that he had long forgiven Shin.

Forgiveness was meant to be a good thing.

But little did Jonathan know that the moment he forgave a son who did wrong, at the same time, he would lose a son who had been obeying him throughout his whole life.

Sebastian tried hard to listen till the end.

But still, he was unable to keep his calm as he mocked, "The biggest mistake that you've made was not your domineering harshness, but that you failed in your method of education!"

At that instance, Jonathan's pale face turned even more solemn.

No one had ever dared to say that to me.

Yet, Sebastian showed no intention to back down at all as he continued to accuse Jonathan, "Do you think you can revitalize the Jadesons by using your brutal army style? You have a habit of categorizing all your family members into levels, including your sons. You only treat those who you've deemed worthy well, while you ignore those who you've deemed useless. Do you think they are pawns in your army? Or do you see them only as weapons without souls?"

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"You..." Jonathan's face flushed red from agitation upon hearing Sebastian's words.

However, he could not refute what Sebastian said. Indeed, all these years, he had been implementing his ways of training the army on his family.

And it was obvious that Stephen belonged in the category where he was deemed to be useless.

"Jonathan, family members should be the most important people to you. If you act so biased, do you expect them to be obedient? After all, everyone has sinful natures within them. You should feel lucky that they went after my dad back then and not you!"

Sebastian's words pierced through Jonathan's heart mercilessly, leaving the latter utterly speechless.

He stared at his grandson with a bewildered look, as though he just got slapped right in his face.

At the age of eighty, it was his first time getting accused like this.

Yet, he failed to find a word to rebuke those accusations. That kind of feeling was worse than any physical torture possible.

Beep, beep, beep.

Out of the blue, the ECG monitor sounded an alarm.

Sebastian raised a brow as he cut a stare at Jonathan, who was boiling with rage.

With that, he opened the door. "Nurse, please call for Dr. Wallen."

After Grayson arrived at the ward anxiously, Sebastian walked out and left.

Grayson was rendered speechless by Sebastian's action.

D*mn! Are the two of them still in a conflict? I thought they had sorted it out.

Meanwhile, inside the funeral house, Sasha had incinerated Stephen and Jasmine's bodies.

Janice came out with a jar of ashes in her hands. "Sasha, are we taking these back to Red Pavilion? But there's no one at home right now. And Devin's still in the hospital."

"Let's take them back. It's fine. I'll be there."

Sasha made the decision after staring at the two jars of ashes.

With that, they carried them carefully in their hands, getting ready to head to Red Pavilion.

"Look. They're over there. Hurry! Go get Aunt Jasmine's ashes!"

To their astonishment, a young lady along with a group of people charged toward them just as they were about to leave the funeral house.

Sasha's face fell.

The young lady was none other than Shanae, who she had encountered a few times before.

Did she come here for the ashes?

Holding onto the jar tightly, Sasha tugged at Janice and they took a few steps back.

"Janice, I need you to take these jars inside and call for help. I'll block them from entering."

"But..."

Janice was reluctant to leave Sasha alone.

Before she could say anything, however, Sasha had given her the other jar and pushed her back inside.

At that moment, Shanae and her men had reached the door.

"Sasha, you'd better hand over the ashes right now. Or else, don't blame me for hurting you," Shanae threatened upon seeing Sasha blocking the way.

Isn't she the daughter of some prim and proper family? And hasn't she been acting innocent all this while? How could someone like her show such a ferocious look?

Sasha sneered coldly, without any intention to let them through.

"Why should I give it to you? Jasmine was one of the Jadesons. Even if she is dead, the funeral will be held at the Jadeson residence. What does it have anything to do with the Woodses?"

She showed no trace of fear, the attitude she displayed was that of the lady of the Jadeson family.

Shanae's face darkened upon hearing her words.

Do you actually think that you're the lady of the Jadesons? I should have been the one in this position!

"Bullsh*t!"

She scolded, "My aunt is dead because of you guys. How dare you say that she belongs to the Jadesons? You bunch of b*stards. You caused my uncle's death, and now my aunt's. What makes you think you have the right to keep her ashes?"

With that, she beckoned the men behind her, and they charged toward Sasha.

Sasha shouted upon seeing that. "Whoever dares to take another step forward, the Jadesons will never let you off!"

She used the Jadesons to try and intimidate them.

But to her bewilderment, those people who were used to be afraid of the Jadesons, seemed indifferent about it that day.

Not only did they not back up upon hearing Sasha's words, but their murderous aura seemed to have amped up.

Seeing this, Sasha failed to react in time.

Thump!

She felt a sudden pain at the back of her head as something hard hit her. In the blink of an eye, she failed to hold the big group of people back.

"Sasha!"

Inside the funeral house, Janice let out a desperate shriek upon seeing what happened through the window.

As Shanae's men were banging on the door, a green army-colored SUV came into view behind.

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"You must have a death wish!"

The SUV stopped not far from the group as a tall figure emerged from it swiftly.

Emitting a murderous aura, he got behind Shanae's men without making a sound.

Without any hesitation, he grabbed the neck of one of the men.

"Ahh!"

An ear-piercing scream filled the air.

One of Shanae's men was flung back before he could even recognize who grabbed him. Landing heavily on the floor, he could not get up for a long while.

That was scary! Who the hell is this?

Seeing this, the rest of Shanae's men, who were banging at the door, stopped and shifted their gazes behind them.

Right at that moment, the tall man cast a forceful kick toward them.

Crunch!

His kick connected to one of the men's back and a bone-cracking sound rang out.

The impact was so powerful that as the one who got kicked flew backward, the rest got blown away as well.

Screams could be heard as a number of them collapsed to the ground.

"Ahh!"

Sasha, who got beaten to the ground, got pulled up by the man almost simultaneously. He then hugged her tightly.

"D-Darling..."

Still holding her head with her hands, Sasha was left in astonishment as she recognized Sebastian's face.

Right then, his expression was thunderous. Especially when he noticed the wound on Sasha's forehead, his gaze turned even more murderous.

"I'm telling you right now that none of you can get out of here alive!"

He glared at them, his eyes blazing with fury, as though he was a hungry beast that just got released from its cage.

The remaining Woodses thought he was about to make a move again, and they all trembled incessantly and began withdrawing slowly.

They were aware that the man before them had gone through professional training before.

There's no way we, as ordinary people, could defeat him.

They, including Shanae, grew wary of him.

However, Sebastian made no more move against them. Nonetheless, what happened next plunged them into desperation as two other jeeps appeared in their sights.

After the jeeps rolled to a stop, a dozen bodyguards came out from it.

"Mr. Sebastian!"

"Arrest all of them and send them to the cops. Sue them for public disturbance and smuggling of human ashes."

"Yes, Mr. Sebastian!"

In the blink of an eye, the Woodses were surrounded by a dozen of bodyguards. Before they could react, they were all rounded up and sent into the jeeps.

We'll admit to causing a public disturbance. But we didn't smuggle human ashes. That's a capital offense!

All the Woodses were dumbfounded as they sat in the jeeps.

Shanae, who was still outside the jeep, stared fearfully at Sebastian.

She paled in fright as she did not expect the most powerful man of the Jadesons to show up here. At that moment, she regretted all her arrogance and recklessness.

"I... I didn't smuggle human ashes. I'm only here for my aunt's ashes.

She was stuttering, trying to explain.

Sebastian did not even bother to listen to her as he shifted his gaze toward Sasha. The next moment, he turned his attention toward the stilettos that Sasha was wearing.

"Do you want to smash with it?"

"Huh?"

Sasha was stunned momentarily.

Does he mean smashing that woman with my high heels?

She hesitated for a while and eventually opened her mouth. "Forget it... Why must we stoop to her level?"

"That's true."

To her surprise, Sebastian agreed with her right away.

"I'll just let them do it."

"What?"

Right then, she heard a woman's shriek echoing. Turning around, she noticed one of the bodyguards whipping Shanae's face with a long stick.

Slap!

Just like that, the most beautiful woman in Jadeborough was disfigured.

Oh my God!

Sasha's heart fell with a thud.

The bodyguards were not from the military but Jonathan's army in Oceanic Estate. With that, they possessed all sorts of weapons.

Moreover, they were not bound by the law as well.

Yet, just because Shanae hurt Sasha, Sebastian ordered the bodyguard to whip at Shanae's face, disfiguring her.

Sasha's heart was pounding frantically as she locked her gaze upon Sebastian's handsome face.

Isn't he treating me a little too good?

Sebastian treated Sasha so nicely that she even suspected that he had returned to his old self.

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In the end, Shanae fled in tears, covering her face with her hands. After confirming the situation was safe, Janice walked out slowly, still hugging onto those jars tightly.

"Sasha, are you all right? Please, never pull something like this again, okay?"

Her tone was filled with concern upon seeing the wound on Sasha's forehead.

Sasha shook her head, implying that she was fine.

"Darling, why did you come here? Is everything all right at the hospital?"

"Yes."

Sebastian nodded slightly as he beckoned two bodyguards to take over the jars of ashes.

Janice was an elder in the family. Seeing that Jonathan was currently in the hospital, and Devin was not at Red Pavilion, she took the initiative to ask, "Sebastian, how do you plan to carry out the funeral?"

"I'll send the ashes to Red Pavilion and wait for Devin," came Sebastian's curt reply.

In truth, he was actually quite worried about Devin. Like Sasha, he saw Devin's expression after Jasmine killed herself.

With that, Sebastian brought Sasha back to Oceanic Estate.

In the evening, he grabbed his phone and contacted Sabrina.

Sebastian: Are you in there?

After hesitating for a while, Sabrina texted back shyly: Yes...

Sebastian texted again: What do you see? How is he? Is he awake?

Sabrina replied: He's awake, but he's not talking. I can't believe his uncle and aunt. He's just got such a huge blow. Yet, they keep telling him that it was you guys who caused his parents' death.

Upon mentioning that, Sabrina sent a series of angry emoticons.

Sebastian's expression turned darker upon seeing that.

This was what had been troubling him.

"Darling, what are you doing? Are you still going to the hospital at night?"

At that moment, Sasha entered the room. Seeing Sebastian staring at his phone despondently, she could not help but worry.

Noticing Sasha approaching, Sebastian shut off his phone immediately.

"Nothing. I'm not heading to the hospital tonight. I'm planning to go to Red Pavilion."

"Huh?"

Sasha was momentarily stupefied.

He's going to the Red Pavilion? Does he want to guard the mourning hall for Devin? But Stephen's his father's killer, while the other was an accomplice. Is he willing to safeguard their ashes?

Sasha was reluctant for him to do that.

"Darling, how about I go there instead, and you go to the hospital? I'll ask Janice to look after the kids. It'll be fine."

Her heart twitched in pain as she was worried about Sebastian.

However, as soon as she finished her sentence, Sebastian reached out and cupped her face gently. "Were you afraid when those people attacked you today?"

"A little..."

Sasha was slightly startled as Sebastian suddenly changed the topic.

Sebastian leaned toward her and left a gentle kiss on her forehead, somewhere near her wound.

She was shaken by his action.

Why would he do this suddenly?

She widened her eyes as her heart almost leaped out of her mouth. At that instance, she felt overwhelmed by his masculine scent.

He seems different these few days. Or was it because we slept together yesterday?

"Please, just stay home and take care of the kids. I'll handle everything. Okay?"

After the long kiss, Sebastian let go of her and cast a gentle look at her.

Sasha's heart melted by his warm gesture.

She did not even realize that Sebastian was able to persuade her. "Okay, Darling."

Even after Sebastian left and went to the kids' room, she was still in a daze.

Upon seeing that, Vivian asked, "What happened to Mommy? Why is she in a daze?"

Matteo weighed in. "Mommy always becomes like this whenever she meets Daddy. By the way, Ian, I suspect Daddy has returned to his previous form. What do you think?"

"Agree!"

lan, who was playing his Transformers figurine, nodded casually.

Vivian's eyes widened when she heard what they said.

Oh my God! How are they so clever? How could they tell that Daddy has returned to his previous from? I have no idea at all.

That night, Sasha and the three children spent the night at the Oceanic Estate while Sebastian guarded at the Red Pavilion till morning.

If he was being honest, he did not know what he was waiting for.

Nonetheless, he knew he had to do it, or else he might lose something forever.

As the first ray of sunlight pierced through the window, Janice, who was guarding there as well, suddenly spotted someone moving outside.

"Devin? Are you finally back?"

She ran outside and was delighted to see the man who appeared at the door at that early hour.

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It was Devin.

However, he was like a completely changed person. As a soldier, he was supposed to care a great deal about his image, yet, at that moment, he looked unkempt with his scraggly stubble and unruly hair.

"Who's in there?"

"Sebastian. He's been guarding here for the whole night."

Janice's heart twitched in pain as she gazed at Devin's downcast eyes.

Devin did not respond to her words.

For a moment, he wanted to turn and leave, unwilling to enter the house.

Before he could, however, a tall figure emerged from inside the hall upon hearing his voice.

"You're here? Come in, then. We've been waiting for you to start everything."

As usual. Sebastian did not show much emotion as he cast a faint look at Devin.

Devin did not respond to him.

Eventually, he lifted his feet and stepped inside.

The moment Devin entered the Red Pavilion, he noticed the entire interior of the villa was decorated in black.

Even all the colorful pictures on the wall were removed.

Devin's pupils constricted as he fell deep in thought.

At that instance, deep agony spread through his heart, and he staggered.

"Are you all right?"

Sebastian immediately grabbed his arms.

But the moment he touched him, Devin acted as if he was electrocuted and shook Sebastian's hand off before striding into the mourning hall.

Sebastian froze on the spot for a while.

Janice's expression changed too as she witnessed what happened. "Sebastian, is he..."

"It's fine. Please go inform the guests that the mourning hall will open at ten."

Sebastian returned to his normal self, giving his instruction in a composed manner. Then, he followed Devin and went inside as though nothing had happened.

This was probably the first time someone rejected him.

It had been over ten years since Devin rescued him back in Sumanthova. Till now, Devin had always cared for him unconditionally like a brother.

Even though Sebastian might be unreasonable at times, Devin had never lost his patience with the former.

What's going to happen to us now?

Sebastian entered the mourning hall and tried to find Devin.

He saw the latter sitting despondently in front of the two jars of ashes, trembling incessantly.

"Try to hold yourself together. The guests should be here in a short while." Sebastian walked over to Devin, patting the latter's shoulder gently.

In response, Devin said, "After we settle this, are you going to the White House?"

"What?"

Sebastian was stunned momentarily by Devin's question.

"The White House? Why would I go there?"

"Didn't you know about it? After Grandpa retired, his position in the White House was left vacant. Congress will soon vote for a new leader now that Alfred has failed. You're the best representative from the Jadesons. So, you should be the most suitable nominee for this, right?"

Sebastian's face darkened instantly, for he did not expect to hear such a mocking statement from Devin in the mourning hall.

Is he out of his mind?

In an instant, all traces of warmth in Sebastian vanished as he took his hand off Devin.

"Are you out of your mind? Why would I go to the White House? Do you think everyone takes that place seriously?"

"Jonathan does!"

"Then, go and find him. Why would you tell me about it?"

"I'm congratulating you. Don't you understand?"

Devin finally lifted his head. His face looked frighteningly pale under the white light, and his eyes were reddened from sorrow. Despite so, Sebastian could still sense a hint of hostility in his gaze.

Sebastian was stunned.

At that moment, disappointment flashed through his heart. Without even thinking, he swung his fist at Devin's face, hitting him hard.

"You're completely unreasonable!" Sebastian roared.

Crash!

The next moment, a loud crashing sound echoed through the mourning hall. Devin was caught off guard and fell directly onto the altar.

All the flowers, candles and offerings were swept to the floor.

If it wasn't for the fact that he reacted fast enough, the jars of ashes would have gotten swept off as well.

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Devin's eyes went bloodshot with rage.

Janice, who had just arrived in the hall, was startled to see the two men engaged in a fierce fistfight.

What the hell do they think they're doing? They're in a mourning hall, for God's sake!

They had been the best of brothers all these years. No one had ever expected that they would turn against each other one day.

However, once the hatred and all the unsaid emotions between the two burst out, none of them was willing to show mercy for the other party.

The clean and sacred mourning hall turned into a chaotic mess in the blink of an eye.

Janice immediately ran to protect the most important things in the funeral—the two jars of ashes.

"Hurry! Send someone in! They got into a fight!"

She stumbled her way toward the door with the jars in hand.

After the fight went on for around ten minutes, Sebastian landed himself in a disadvantageous position as expected. After all, he was just an ordinary man who only went through three months of training.

There was no way he could match with Devin, who had been in the army for over ten years.

Thump!

In the end, he got beaten down to the ground. He felt excruciating pain coming from the back of his head as his consciousness began to fade.

Son of a b*tch!

The color started draining from his face.

Yet, Devin, who was overwhelmed with fury, had no intention to let him go.

Seeing how Sebastian was lying unmoving on the floor, Devin strode over and pressed his knees down on the former's chest. He then clenched Sebastian's neck forcefully with both hands

"Urk..."

Unable to even struggle, Sebastian let out a desperate grunt.

Devin was screaming like a madman. "Am I wrong? Isn't this what you want? You killed my parents to avenge yours. And now, you're finally able to take back the position that once belonged to your Dad! Is what I said wrong?"

Getting choked by Devin, Sebastian's face had turned purple.

He wanted to say something, but no sound could escape his mouth. He could only grab at Devin's wrist weakly with his hands.

"Devin, what are you doing? Are you trying to kill him?"

At that critical moment, Janice returned to the mourning hall.

Her heart fell with a thud upon seeing the scene. Without delay, she picked up a chair and smashed it against Devin's back.

Bang!

Feeling a sudden pain coming from his back, Devin instinctively loosened his grip.

As he slowly regained his senses, he looked around and realized what he had done. In the next moment, he slumped down weakly onto the floor.

"Sebastian! Sebastian, are you all right? How do you feel?"

Janice ran nervously to Sebastian's side.

However, Sebastian had long since lost his consciousness.

He lay on the floor without any reaction, and his body had turned icy cold. Janice panicked when she could not sense his breathing.

Devin paled in fright upon seeing that.

He immediately stood up and pushed Janice aside. He threw himself at Sebastian and held him tightly.

Fortunately, Sebastian finally resumed breathing after a few seconds.

Suddenly, he opened his eyes, gasping for air like a dying fish that was returned to the sea.

Janice let out a sigh of relief.

After seeing that, Devin finally felt the weight off his chest. He fell backward and sat on the floor, his face devoid of expression.

He had never been so frightened in his life.

Maybe that's the feeling of escaping death, not only for Sebastian but also for myself.

With that, peace was finally restored to the mourning hall. For a long while, both men lay on the floor, dazed and unmoving.

Janice walked out silently with tears brimming in her eyes.

"Janice, did something happen in there? Is everything all right?"

The moment she came out, a subordinate of hers had arrived at the door.

Janice immediately shook her head. "It was nothing. Could you please go and buy some new flowers and fruits? And please arrange a few staff to clean up the place."

"Okay. I'll get on it."

The subordinate nodded and went to make the necessary arrangements.

Ten minutes later, Sebastian finally felt like he had regained his strength, and he sat up.

In truth, he was not that weak in battle. But an experienced fighter like Devin knew that pressing a knee on the enemy's chest would make the latter suffocate at a faster pace.

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Like last time Sasha went to find him at the military base, the female instructor pressed Sebastian down using the same method.

At the moment, Devin was staring at him.

However, Sebastian did not even spare Devin a glance.

Standing up, he dusted his clothes off and lifted his feet to leave.

After such a huge conflict, he chose to ignore Devin.

Seeing that, Devin simply remained silent.

"Huh? Sebastian, are you going back? Are you okay?" Janice ran into Sebastian just when she was bringing in two pairs of new candles.

Sebastian said faintly, "Yeah. I'm heading home for a shower."

What kind of reason is that?

With that, Devin and Janice watched as Sebastian drove off into the horizon. The mourning hall was as silent as ever.

Meanwhile, Sasha wanted to go to Red Pavilion that morning.

She had been waiting the whole night, but Sebastian did not come back yet. If it were not for the three kids, she would have gone over there last night.

Just as she was getting ready to leave, she heard Sebastian coming home.

"Darling, you're finally back."

She walked over to welcome him, delighted by his presence.

But when she tried to hug him, he avoided her with an indifferent expression.

Sasha fell silent.

"Yes. I'll go upstairs and get changed. I'll come down shortly for breakfast." Sebastian walked past her swiftly and went upstairs.

Sasha's face turned pale in an instant.

She had no idea what happened, but she could tell that Sebastian was deliberately avoiding her.

Why is he behaving like this? What happened? Wasn't everything fine when he went out last night?

Sasha was at a loss, not knowing what to think.

She walked into the kitchen and pondered for a long while.

"Have you heard about it? Something happened at Red Pavilion today."

"What?"

Right then, the housemaids in the garden outside started gossiping.

"What happened? Aren't they having a funeral there?"

"I doubt they'd be able to have it. Mr. Devin did not show up, and Mr. Sebastian had been waiting the entire night. When Mr. Devin did finally arrive this morning, the two of them got into a fight in the mourning hall."

The housemaid spoke in a perplexed tone as if she could not wrap her head around the news.

Oh my God! How could they start a fight in such a sacred place?

Olivia was doing some errands in the garden when she heard the gossips. She put down her work immediately and ran into the kitchen. "Madam, I heard that Mr. Sebastian and Mr. Devin got into a fight this morning."

"What?" Sasha, who was still deep in thought, was stunned.

"Yes. They're talking about it right now. One of the housemaids has a sister working at Red Pavilion. Madam, do you want to go there and check it out?" Olivia asked with concern as she had no idea that Sebastian had already returned.

However, as soon as she finished her sentence, Sasha ran out of the kitchen and headed upstairs.

So, he had a fight.

Sasha made a beeline to the third floor.

When she tried to open the door, she found that it was locked from the inside. She gazed through the window and spotted some worn clothes on the chair.

Those clothes looked dirty and torn.

All the color drained from Sasha's face as she immediately ran downstairs to find the key to the room. Then, she came back to the third floor.

Click.

The moment she entered the room, she could hear sounds of water-flowing coming from the bathroom.

"Darling? Are you all right? Please open the door. Did you fall?" She panicked as she kept pounding on the bathroom door.

It lasted for a whole minute before the door was finally opened from the inside.

Sebastian walked out slowly, dripping wet.

"What is it?"

Sebastian furrowed his brows and asked casually.

He showed no trace of anger for her intrusion without permission.

At that instance, Sasha did not know how to react.

She shifted her gaze toward his body that was only covered with a loosely-tied towel. Instantly, her face flushed red with embarrassment.

Oh my God. I can't handle this view.

The next moment, she regained her senses and forced herself to look the other way.

"I-It's nothing... I heard from the housemaids that you got into a fight with Devin at Red Pavilion. Is that true? Are you hurt?"

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"I didn't. Don't listen to all those nonsense." With a displeased look, Sebastian denied firmly.

Hearing that, Sasha didn't dare to ask anymore.

She knew his temper well and knew that she should stop talking whenever he was in a foul mood. Otherwise, it would only make him even angrier.

Thus, she shut her mouth and cast a glance at him instead.

To her surprise, she couldn't find any wound on his muscular body. All she could see was the water droplets trailing down his skin, making her gulp involuntarily as her breath quickened and her heartbeat raced.

"Do you want me to remove the towel for you to check it out?"

"What?"

In the next instant, the realization hit her hard. Instantly, her face reddened as she yelled, "Ah!"

In a flash, she retracted her gaze and rushed out of the room with lightning speed.

D*mn! How can he do that? How can he be so shameless and perverted?

Sasha kept running as her mind ran wild. By the time she reached downstairs, her heart was still racing uncontrollably.

How horrifying!

After that incident, she didn't dare to go upstairs or face Sebastian anymore. Just as she planned to see her children, Janice called from Red Pavilion.

"Sasha, there's suddenly a group of people here to give their condolences. Are you free now? If you are, can you come over to give me a hand?"

Since Sasha didn't want to see Sebastian at the moment, she agreed without hesitation, "Okay."

She then instructed, "Olivia, please take care of the children once they're up. Also, Sebastian had been up all night, so please prepare some food for him and tell him that he doesn't have to come over to Red Pavilion."

Upon hearing that, Olivia smiled warmly and agreed, "All right, Mrs. Jadeson."

Only then did Sasha change into plain clothes, preparing to leave.

The moment she stepped out of Oceanic Estate, she came face to face with Mark, who arrived in a car.

"Mrs. Jadeson, where are you going?"

"I'm going to Red Pavilion. Aunt Janice called me a moment ago, asking me to go over to help her," Sasha explained.

At that moment, Mark had gotten off his car. When he heard that, he nodded.

"Indeed, you should go over. Since you're the lady of the Jadesons now, you should be there to take charge of it. However, Old Mr. Jadeson wanted to go over as well. What should we do with that?"

"What?"

Sasha couldn't help but feel surprised at the tricky situation.

Nevertheless, she recollected herself soon after.

It's reasonable. After all, this funeral is for Stephen and Jasmine, his son and daughter-in-law, so naturally, he should be there.

"In that case, just let him go, then. Should I go over to pick him up?"

"It's better if you can. However, please be prepared. I'm afraid that there will be many guests today," Mark reminded, but he spoke as if he was trying to imply something else.

Apparently, the news of Stephen and Jasmine ending their lives on the same day had spread all over Jadeborough.

Therefore, the funeral that day would never end peacefully. Everyone was most probably waiting to watch them make a fool out of themselves. Moreover, those who attended the funeral wouldn't be there merely to give their condolences.

In that case, being Jonathan's daughter-in-law and a doctor, Sasha was undoubtedly the perfect candidate to accompany him to the funeral.

Sasha frowned at that.

Upon figuring out what Mark meant, she turned around and went back into the estate. A moment later, she reappeared in front of Mark with clean clothes for Jonathan in her hands. She also brought along Matteo, Vivian, and Ian this time.

Out of curiosity, Mark asked, "Mrs. Jadeson, this ...?"

"Don't worry. They have long wanted to meet their Great-grandpa. Since they are on holiday today, I'll take the chance to bring them over to visit him," she explained calmly

In actuality, there was another intention for her to bring them along.

Mark didn't probe further. Soon after, the mother and children got into the car. Before leaving, Sasha left a message for Sebastian, who was still taking his shower upstairs.

After Mark started the car, Vivian, who got carried by Sasha into the car forcefully, finally asked in a soft voice, "Mommy, are we going to visit Great-grandpa? Is he better now?"

At that moment, Sasha was struggling to braid Vivian's messy hair. When she heard Vivian's question, she nodded.

"Matt, quick. Hand me your sister's rubber band."

Silently, Matteo stretched out his hand to reveal Vivian's cute, pink rubber band.

Ian, on the other hand, rubbed his eyes sleepily. When he saw Sasha finally done with Vivian's hair, he asked, "Mommy, did Daddy not return for the night?"

lan's question made it obvious that he was indeed brought up by Sebastian, for even at such a moment, he still thought about his father.

Sasha touched his head affectionately before explaining, "Daddy is back already. He's at home right now. After we visit your Great-grandpa, we'll come home immediately."

"Okay," instantly, Ian agreed obediently and didn't ask anymore.

Half an hour later, they finally arrived at the General Hospital.

Upon seeing the three children, Jonathan's foul mood dissipated instantly. His mood got elevated even more when Vivian crawled onto his bed.

With her hands cupping her chubby face, she observed him for a while before saying adorably, "Great-grandpa, you look thinner. When you get back home, remember to eat more so that you can become a chubby old man, okay?"

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A smile quickly replaced the frown on Jonathan's face as soon as he heard Vivian's words.

"All right. Once I go back, I'll eat a lot. Then, we'll play together again!"

"Okay!"

Vivian was so happy at that. She then snuggled into Jonathan's arms and started to read the fairytale she brought with keen interest.

Sasha let out a heartfelt smile at the scene.

Then, she said to Mark, "All right. Let's find Dr. Wallen to get his permission to leave the hospital."

"Okay."

Mark took in the scene in surprise. After a while, he left to find Grayson.

Ten minutes later, in the director's office.

As expected, Grayson widened his eyes in disbelief as he exclaimed, "He still plans to attend his son's funeral in Red Pavilion? Is he out of his mind? With his condition, how can he withstand the devastation of losing his son and daughter-in-law and handle the people who come to cause trouble once he's there?"

He was so shocked that he didn't even bother to be tactful with his words like what he previously did in front of Sasha and Mark.

Mark knitted his brows.

"Dr. Wallen, since you're aware that they are there to look for trouble, if Old Mr. Jadeson isn't there, how can Mr. Devin deal with them alone? We can't let him get humiliated and become the laughing stock of Jadeborough without doing anything."

Hearing that, Grayson could no longer say anything.

A few minutes later, he handed Mark a bottle of medicine. "Remember to take good care of him. He's already eighty years old, so he can't withstand so many strong blows."

"I'll keep that in mind. Thank you, Dr. Wallen."

Mark took the bottle gratefully and left.

Indeed, Mark needed that bottle of medicine. After all, even he, as an adjutant, couldn't be sure about what was waiting for them at Red Pavilion later.

People had regarded the Jadesons as a thorn in their flesh due to the family's power and fame for years. Now that they finally got to witness such a scandal, there was no way they could let the chance go at ease.

When Mark returned to the ward, Sasha had instructed her sons to coax Jonathan into changing his clothes and finished preparing everything. Seeing Mark, she asked, "Have you gotten it?"

Mark nodded. "Yes. He even gave me a bottle of medicine."

When Jonathan was engrossed in talking with the children, Mark quickly took the chance and showed her the medicine.

Sasha looked at it and paused briefly. Moments later, she took it and put it into her bag.

Is the funeral going to be worse than what I imagined?

At the thought of that, she put up her guard.

Before long, they left the hospital and headed toward Red Pavilion.

Unbeknownst to them, at the moment, Jocelyn and the others had gathered at The Ataraxy to discuss the funeral as well.

"Dad, is it necessary for all of us to attend the funeral? After what Stephen and Jasmine did, they deserve to die. Everyone will only make fun of us there. If that's the case, why should we go?"

Being the most straightforward out of all, Jocelyn stated her unwillingness as soon as she saw the change of black clothes.

Even though Shirley remained silent, it was apparent that she was also unwilling just by looking at her expression.

Only Colton Jadeson, Jared's youngest son who lived in Cameo House, said hesitantly, "I don't think that's appropriate. After all, we are a part of the Jadesons as well. Now that our brother and his wife left the world, it's impolite for us to refuse to attend their funeral."

Yet, Jocelyn scoffed before retorting, "Who are you calling 'brother?' Your brothers are all here, and they're long gone from this world."

At that, Colton's face turned pale as he kept quiet. He didn't dare to utter his opinion anymore.

Meanwhile, Jared simply looked at the scene coldly. When he saw that everyone had finally stopped quarreling, he glanced at the woman who stood beside him and said, "If so, let's just send someone over. Colton, I'll entrust you with this task."

"What?"

Not expecting Jared to appoint him, Colton raised his head in shock and stuttered, "M-Me? But Dad, I can't. I'd never been to such a big event before. I-I-"

"You useless brat! I'm only asking you to attend a funeral. All you have to do is to show up there and leave once you sense that the situation is getting out of control," Jared scolded.

Hearing that, Colton could only purse his lips and swallow his words.

If Jonathan knew how the other Jadesons tried to steer clear of the mess and avoid them at such a time, he would surely pass out in rage.

At the same time, a silver-grey BMW had long parked outside the Ataraxy. Seeing Colton walk out with a timid look, someone in the car finally asked, "Ms. Jadeson, shouldn't you stop him?"

Stop him?

Sitting gracefully at the back, a middle-aged woman smirked. "Why should I? Isn't this the best timing to watch a show?"

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The driver asked curiously, "Ms. Jadeson, what do you mean?"

"Didn't that old man make that b*tch the lady of the Jadesons? In that case, this is the perfect chance to test her capability. Now that two people died concurrently, she would be famous if she could deal with it successfully."

Candice played with the jade bracelet on her left wrist nonchalantly. An evil smile crept onto her face that resembled Charles'.

When the driver saw Candice's expression, she couldn't help but feel chills run down her spine.

How could this be a rare opportunity? It's already embarrassing that two people died in Red Pavilion concurrently. Now that every Jadesons are worried about it, how could she make such a remark? The only explanation is that she plans to use this chance to bring Sasha down.

But I guess that makes sense. Judging from the current situation, if The Ataraxy hopes to regain its previous glory and secures its footing, becoming the one who takes charge of the Jadesons is their best choice.

With Stephen's and Jasmine's death, the bloodline of the direct descendant of the Jadesons also grows weaker.

If they can take down Sasha, then Jonathan will have no choice but to choose the heir from another two bloodlines. When that moment comes, he will undoubtedly choose from The Ataraxy.

Analyzing the situation in her head, the driver finally understood Candice's words. After pondering for a while, she said, "But, Janice would definitely help Sasha if something happens."

"Janice Durant?"

Candice scoffed coldly at that. "Why should I be concerned about her? Just because she is good at serving people and acting weak, that old b*stard called her over to Oceanic Estate. Do you think that she can handle a huge scene?"

The driver was speechless at that.

Candice then continued, "Just wait and see. I'm sure that the show today will be exciting!"

With that said, she instructed the driver to drive off.

Hmph! How dare they try to go against me? If Connor didn't drag me down the last time, I would have long ended their lives!

Just as they were about to reach Red Pavilion, Sasha's phone rang abruptly.

"Hello? Darling?"

"Why are you going to Red Pavilion? Come home now!"

Immediately after she picked up the call, an angry voice sounded from the other side of the line.

She was taken aback for a moment before quickly coming to her senses.

Immediately, she covered her phone and glanced at her children and Jonathan, who were sitting opposite her. Then, she whispered, "I can't. It's Old Mr. Jadeson's wish to go to Red Pavilion."

Her words quickly sent Sebastian into boiling rage as he gritted his teeth.

Nonetheless, in the end, he didn't chastise her. After taking in a deep breath, he calmed himself down and asked, "Where are you now? Have you reached Red Pavilion already?"

Sasha looked out the window to check their whereabouts before replying, "Not yet. We are near the furniture store right now and will arrive there after passing through the bridge."

"Wait for me there. I'll go over immediately."

With that, Sebastian hung up the phone before Sasha could utter another word.

Is he for real?

Sasha stared at her phone blankly for a long while, unable to comprehend the situation. As soon as she recollected herself, she looked to the front and said, "Um, M-Mark, Sebastian just gave me a call. He asked us to wait for him here and that he would be here soon."

"What?" As expected, Mark, who was driving, also put on a shocked look.

On the contrary, Jonathan, who also heard that, looked delighted. "Then, let's pull the car over to the roadside and wait for him."

Next, he pointed at the frontage road beside them.

Only then did Mark drive the car to the side before stopping.

In actuality, both Mark and Jonathan had given up on the hope of persuading Sebastian into attending the funeral. After all, they were well aware of the grudges between him and the deceased couple.

Thus, they never expected him to agree to come at such a time.

When Jonathan saw the familiar green SUV, his eyes lit up. Even his complexion seemed healthier at that point.

"Mommy, Daddy is here! Daddy is here!"

"Daddy!"

Instantly, all the three children cheered happily in the car.

Sasha immediately got out of the car upon seeing Sebastian's car.

"Darling, M-Mark found me just now, saying that Old Mr. Jadeson wanted to go to Red Pavilion. He was worried about Old Mr. Jadeson's health, so he asked me to accompany him."

She had trotted over to his car. Before Sebastian even managed to get off his car, she quickly explained to him through the window, not wanting him to misunderstand her.

The reason she did so was that she knew about the history between Devin's parents and him, and she was afraid that he would feel displeased with her action.

Yet, in response, Sebastian simply got off the car without saying anything. Next, he opened the rear door, scooped her into his arms, and shoved her into the car.

"Darling!" As soon as she realized what was happening, she squealed in shock.

"Stay here!" He had a terrifying look on his face as he ordered. Then, with a loud bang, he closed the door without hesitation, leaving Sasha completely petrified.

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What on earth is he doing?

How can he be so rude to just not let me go to Red Pavilion? This is too much!

Snapping back to her senses, Sasha popped her head out of the car window to explain herself to Sebastian when she realized that he had carried the kids from the car in front of them.

"Mommy, Daddy is so fierce!"

Even the kids could sense Sebastian's anger.

Vivian, who was particularly sensitive, started to hug Sasha and sob once she was put in the car.

"What are you doing, Daddy? If something's wrong you should solve it by talking it out with Mommy and not through violence!" lan protested.

Matteo, who was the last to get on the car, was equally angry. "lan's right, Daddy. You can't be so domineering all the time. Mommy will be very sad."

Sebastian's face darkened out of humiliation when his sons reprimanded him in front of everyone.

He had to suppress the urge to knock some senses into them for not stopping Sasha, who, in his opinion, was out of her mind.

To make matters worse, they even joined her as well.

Have they been living too comfortably at Oceanic Estate to the point where they find the need to get into trouble?

In the end, he let out a sigh after seeing the indignance in Sasha and the kids' eyes.

"It isn't proper for you to go to that place today."

"Why not?" Sasha asked while wrapping her arms around Vivian.

Sasha knew that the funeral might attract unwanted attention but she was shocked that Sebastian would go to such extent to intercept them and send them back to Oceanic Estate.

"People from the White House and the generals from the military base will be attending the funeral. The reporters will be there too."

Sasha did not know what to say to that.

Even the reporters are going to be there?

She did not expect that at all. Could it be that the media wanted to bring more attention to the Jadesons' recent scandal?

If she went to the funeral as Sebastian's wife, she reckoned that these reporters would have surrounded her and bombarded her with questions.

Finally realizing what could have happened, Sasha felt chills running down her spine.

"Why... Why do they have to be so ruthless?"

"Ruthless?" Still standing outside the car, Sebastian scoffed.

"The Jadesons have long been hated for their arrogance. Who wouldn't use this opportunity to destroy them?"

Feeling defeated, Sasha was rendered speechless.

She could never comprehend what lengths people will go to for power.

Sasha turned to look at Sebastian.

If she remembered correctly, this was the first time he told her important stuff instead of keeping it all to himself ever since his multiple personality disorder was triggered. Before that day, he had treated her like a child by not telling her anything.

What made him change suddenly? Sasha could also sense the patience and gentleness in his gaze.

She tightened her arms around her daughter as she felt a warm feeling surging through her.

"All right, I'll take the kids back to Oceanic Estate. We won't go anywhere else."

"Okay."

Sebastian let out a satisfied smile and reached out to close the car door.

Before he could, however, Sasha sat up straight and reached out for Sebastian's arm. "But darling... you must take care of yourself. I'll be waiting for you with the kids at home."

Sebastian paused.

He could get his arm out of Sasha's grip effortlessly, but at that very moment, she seemed to have channeled some kind of magic that made him want to get on the car and go back with her and the kids.

Not to Oceanic Estate, but to Frontier Bay at Avenport, their very own home.

In the end, he merely said, "All right. I'll call you later."

After one last look at the long slender fingers on his arm, Sebastian tugged his arm loose from the woman's grasp and walked away.

Sasha spent the next few minutes in silence and watched Sebastian get on the car in front of them.

Vivian had inched over to Ian after Sasha sat straight just now. Upon seeing her mother looking wistfully at her father, she inched closer to Ian and covered her eyes.

"Did they kiss?" Did they?" she whispered.

lan's face stiffened. After a long while, he replied with a straight face and reddened ears, "No..."

Vivian heaved a sigh of disappointment.

Matteo, on the other hand, was bellowing with laughter. "Not bad, Ian, but you could have done better!"

lan did not say anything throughout the whole journey.

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In the end, Sasha and the kids spent the whole day at Oceanic Estate.

The news of the funeral at Red Pavilion reached Sasha.

Just as Sebastian predicted, a normal funeral was widely reported because the Jadesons had too many enemies that yearned to see their downfall.

However, the head of the Jadeson family, Jonathan Jadeson, never showed up.

What was more infuriating was all of the people who came to the funeral were blocked at the entrance to the Red Pavilion.

"Apologies everyone. I would like to express on behalf of Old Mr. Jadeson that we are not proud of what our late family members had done as a military family. Please go back and understand that we will not accept guests."

Facing the cameras was Janice, who was wearing a black dress and a white flower on her chest. Her elegance and style made her look like the lady in charge of the family.

What the hell?

I can't believe they just shut us out!

The crowd outside Red Pavilion was furious because they did not get to see the Jadesons getting humiliated. They started to demand the guards to let them in when the sound of marching was heard from behind.

A troop of hundreds of soldiers suddenly appeared.

On the leader's command, the troop surrounded Red Pavilion in the blink of an eye.

Indeed, that was an incredible move on the Jadesons' part.

Not long after, the media stopped reporting live.

Back at The Ataraxy, those who were scheming to destroy Sasha's reputation were equally mad.

Just you wait, Sasha Wand!

After the crowd outside Red Pavilion dispersed, the funeral was able to proceed without disturbance.

Meanwhile, Sasha received a video message from Janice.

Sasha: There's only Colton from The Ataraxy? I thought there would be more.

Janice: I know right? This is unbelievable.

This was the first time Janice was blaming Jared.

Furious, Sasha finally knew that Jared's bloodline was just using the funeral to achieve their goals.

Sasha: It's time for me to show them who's the boss.

Janice: What are you planning to do?

Sasha didn't know what to reply after briefly thinking it through. Something in the video that Janice sent caught her eye.

When Sasha realized that was Devin in the video who was kneeling in front of the fire plate and maintaining the position for a full minute, she frowned.

Sasha: Is Devin okay? I heard he fought with Sebastian this morning.

Janice: Yeah, he should be fine. It's just that after the fight, he's been silent for the whole day. He must be shocked by his parents' sudden death.

Janice's text made Sasha less worried.

She watched the video again. Although she was still worried about Devin, she didn't ask anything more.

Sasha was curious if Devin would start to hate her and Sebastian.

Time passed very quickly, and very soon three days have passed since the funeral.

Red Pavilion was back to its usual peace.

In the meantime, Jonathan was discharged from the hospital and was back at Oceanic Estate.

"Where is Devin? What has he been doing for the past two days?" The first thing Jonathan asked Mark was Devin's whereabouts.

Mark's expression darkened.

Where is Devin?

Devin wasn't at Red Pavilion and no one had seen him for three days. Ever since the funeral, only a few housemaids were there to clean up the house.

"Devin... He's at the Woods residence."

"Woods residence?"

Jonathan scowled. "What is he doing at the Woods residence? He has a home here! Call him and ask him to come back immediately! Tell him I want to see him!"

Jonathan was very upset because Mark had disappointed him again.

"I don't have his new number, Old Mr. Jadeson. He has changed his number and he didn't tell anyone else about it."

"How dare he!"

Jonathan was fuming. "This rascal! I will break his legs the moment he comes back!"

With that said, he grabbed his walking stick, slammed the door, and left the room.

Meanwhile, Sasha and Sebastian were both upstairs. Sasha was working on a ledger while Sebastian was reading a book.

Although they had been doing the same thing for the past few days, it felt simple and blissful for them.

Upon hearing the commotion downstairs, Sasha raised her head and perked her ears. "What was that?"

Sebastian raised his eyebrows but his eyes were still fixed to the book. "Stop making excuses and continue your work. If you can't finish by three in the afternoon, you won't be sleeping in our room tonight."

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What the hell? Must he be so rude?

Sasha's face turned a bright shade of red.

"Don't worry, I'll definitely finish it on time."

She quickly lowered her head and focused on the ledger again.

It was a natural thing for a couple to sleep together, but Sasha found it awkward because they hadn't been together for more than a year.

Sebastian had really changed a lot.

Could it be that he was addicted?

Sasha stole a puzzled glance at Sebastian.

That night, the kids didn't see Sasha at the nursery.

"Matt, why isn't Mommy here to accompany us? Didn't Daddy promise us to let her come down after she finishes her work?"

Vivian was very clingy to Sasha.

When Sasha didn't turn up as usual to read bedtime stories to her, she carried her plushie and came to her brothers' room.

Matteo smiled like a cunning little fox upon seeing Vivian.

"You little idiot. That means Mommy still hasn't finished her work. She won't be able to finish it today."

Vivian pouted and almost began to cry when Ian shot Matteo a look and got down from his bed.

"Don't listen to Matt. Mommy will come down when she's done. Do you want to hear a bedtime story? Let me read it for you."

Then, Ian took Vivian's hand in his and tucked her in his bed.

lan, who was raised by Sebastian, was more mature than Matteo, who was raised by Sasha. Perhaps it was due to Sasha's parenting method that failed to suppress Matteo's mischief nature.

Sasha slept at the third floor that night.

She was too tired to know that Sebastian had turned off her phone and threw it into a drawer, ignoring a message that Sabrina sent her at midnight.

Sabrina: Sasha, do you have Jake's phone number? Devin has been missing for two days!

By right, Devin should have been at the Woods residence. After all, Jonathan and Mark were just there that morning.

It was odd enough for Sabrina to message Sasha at such late hours.

However, as Sabrina was able to go to the Woods residence whenever she liked, it meant that Devin was indeed not at the Woods residence.

It was yet another sleepless night for Sabrina, but luckily for her, she got hold of Jake's contact number in the morning.

Useless man: Here's Jake's number, but I suggest you don't look for Devin. Do you think he still wants to see you when he's already changed his phone number and completely avoided you?

Sabrina flared up upon seeing Solomon's taunt.

Sabrina: This is none of your business!

Useless man: I'm merely reminding you that your brother caused his parents' death. Do you really think he will still accept you? Do you think you stand a chance when he has never accepted you even before this incident?

Solomon pointed out the truth blatantly.

Finally, Sabrina stopped replying.

The color drained from her face as she sat numbly in the car. There was only sadness left in her eyes.

She knew that Devin would never accept her, but still, there was no way she could let him ruin his own life.

Sabrina closed her eyes and took a deep breath.

When she opened them again, her eyes were full of determination.

Sabrina: Like I said, this is none of your business.

Before Solomon could send his reply, Sabrina turned off her phone and tossed it to the side.

Sabrina was driving when her phone notification rang a few minutes later. It was a message notifying her that five million was transferred from Hayes Corporation to her account.

Meanwhile, Devin was with Jake, for he couldn't stand being alone in the house after the funeral.

Jake had booked a luxury suite in a nightclub for their friends. Seeing that their friends were having fun, he came over to Devin and asked, "What are you planning to do next, Devin?"

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For Devin, the youngest person among the four of them, Jake, was like his little fanboy.

Back then, all four of them grew up together in the same neighborhood. Since Devin was the oldest among them, he had always been the leader in the group, which included Jake and Shawn.

Unfortunately, Shawn was no longer with them.

Devin was drowned in his thoughts as he held a glass of alcohol in his hand. He thought of how many things had changed and said, "I want to resign all my positions in the military and live abroad."

"What?"

Jake stared wide eyed at him as soon as he said that.

Resign? Live abroad? Is he leaving the Jadesons for good? He doesn't want to be a member of the Jadesons anymore?

Jake was at a loss for words as a myriad of questions popped into his mind.

"Devin, i-is this really what you want? Is it because of Sebastian? Still, there's no need for you to leave the Jadesons because of that. That's your home."

Devin merely shook his head and said, "This has nothing to do with him. I'm just tired of this life."

Jake stared at the former who was sitting under the dim lights in the room. He didn't know what to say.

Ever since what happened to the Jadesons, Jake had been worried that Devin and Sebastian would have a falling-out. After Shawn's death, he just hoped that nothing else would happen between them.

Yet, when he heard that Devin did not blame Sebastian at all, he could not help but feel conflicted.

He knew that Devin had always been a righteous and forgiving person. Still, he wondered if Devin had any idea how much it hurt to hear those words coming from his mouth.

In the end, Jake decided to say nothing else.

He simply got up, wanting to order more alcohol.

However, when he got to the door, he saw a beautiful girl in a dress standing in front of him.

"Jake, where's Devin? Is he here with you?"

"Huh?"

Jake was a little stunned.

Kira? How did she find me here?

Jake's expression darkened as he looked at her. He quickly shut the door to the private room and said, "He's not here!"

Kira did not believe Jake's words at all. "I don't believe you. You guys have always been together since you were young. Now that Shawn's dead, and he's not over at Red Pavilion, where else would he be if he's not here?" she scolded and pushed him aside.

As expected, as soon as she pushed the door open, she saw a young man sitting with his legs crossed under the dim lights on the couch.

It was clear that the man was the person she had been looking for.

"Devin, you're really here. We've been searching everywhere for you."

Kira was relieved when she finally found Devin. She could not help but feel a sudden urge to cry. Immediately, she ran toward him.

Indeed, Kira's parents had been looking for him for the past two days.

He had told them that he wanted to resign from his position and go abroad when they asked him about his plans the other day after the funeral.

They could not help but wonder if Devin had somehow gone mad.

Otherwise, why would he even think of resigning and going abroad?

"Devin..." Kira stood in front of Devin.

Devin did not reply at first since he'd had a lot to drink. It took him a moment to get a good look at the girl in front of him.

"Kira? What are you doing here?"

Kira was both delighted and aggrieved when she heard him call her.

"I'm here to look for you. Devin, let's go home. My mom and dad have been waiting for you to come back," Kira said with tear-filled eyes, assuming an absolutely pitiful appearance that could elicit sympathy from anyone.

In reality, one would be happy to feel the concern from their close ones, especially following the death of their parents.

However, Devin had no urge to return with Kira at all. All he felt at that instance was resistance and a slight annoyance surging inside of him.

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"No. Just go back on your own. And tell your parents that they should stop looking for me."

"But-"

"That's all. I'll get Jake to arrange a ride for you," Devin interjected before she could finish.

He then beckoned to Jake who was behind them and asked him to send Kira back to Jadeborough.

What he did was nothing special at all, considering the circumstances.

After all, it was already very late. Kira was not only a girl, but she was also his family.

However, unbeknownst to him, Kira saw his arrangement as an act out of concern for her. Thus, instead of leaving, she remained where she was and stared at the man in front of her.

She gritted her teeth as though she had set her mind on something.

In fact, Kira was there tonight because her parents had ordered her to bring Devin back no matter what it took.

Devin's decision was indeed a huge blow to the Woodses.

The latter had hoped that Devin would go against Sebastian ever since they found out about his parents' death. Yet, Devin had no intention to do that at all.

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Instead, he decided to toss everything behind and leave, which caused them to be utterly disappointed by his decision.

That was why Kira had come prepared this time to bring Devin back.

"All right, I'll go. But can I get a drink first? I came all the way here in the middle of the night. I didn't even get to eat at all. I'm so tired and thirsty," said Kira.

In the end, she gave in to Devin and merely requested some food before she left.

Devin looked down at his watch and agreed.

It was ten minutes later when the snacks and a glass of juice Jake had ordered were served. Kira immediately sat down and dug in as soon as she saw the food.

It seemed that she was really starving.

Devin moved his gaze away from her and started scrolling through his phone.

Ring... Ring... Ring...

"Hello?"

"Hello, Sir. May I ask if this white Lexus with the car plate number 680 is yours?"

It was a call from an unknown man who went on and asked about Devin's car.

Devin paused for a bit before he replied, "It is. Why?"

"I'm sorry, Sir. I accidentally scratched your car when I was parking mine. Could you come over and take a look so that we can discuss the compensation?"

Devin had no choice but to go and take a look at his car.

"Devin, where are you going?"

"Nowhere. Just eat your food and get Jake to send you home once you're done," Devin reminded her again.

Then, he turned and left.

Jake was not around at that moment as he had gone to get Kira's ride ready.

Kira was left in the room with her food. By the time Devin and Jake got back, she had already finished eating.

"Devin, I'm done."

"Okay. Go ahead then."

Up till then, Devin did not sense that anything was wrong at all.

He even transferred her two thousand before she left since he knew she did not have any money on her.

It was moments later after her departure that Devin started to feel warm after taking another drink. It was as though something was crawling inside of him, and his temperature was rising.

"Are you drunk?" Jake asked.

Devin thought that he was drunk as well.

After all, he did have a lot of drinks that night.

"It's okay. Just take me back to the hotel. It's getting late anyway," said Devin, staggering to his feet, wanting to get back to the hotel.

Jake quickly went over and helped him up when he saw that. Thereafter, he sent him back to the hotel.

Thud!

Arriving at the hotel, he quickly removed his coat as the heat was getting to him. He headed toward the bathroom, planning to get a cold shower. Suddenly, a sweet fragrance filled the air in the room.

A woman?

Immediately, those words appeared in his mind.

His body froze. Like a deadly poison, the fragrance added fuel to the fire that was already burning inside of him.

"Who's there?"

"Devin, hurry. H-Help me..."

Devin's gaze darkened when he heard the tiny cry coming from the room.

It really is a woman.

The woman's blouse was already in a complete mess. Her porcelain skin was exposed as she walked toward Devin like a beautiful siren.

"Devin..."

She went over and wrapped her arms around his neck, her beautiful, seductive eyes staring into his.

Devin remained unmoved.

He could feel the ball of flames growing inside of him. All he could think of at that moment was to pin the woman down and swallow her alive.

However, he still had his last shred of sanity.

"W-Who are you? G-Get out!" he said with a hoarse voice as he tried to suppress his urges.

Even so, there was no way the woman was going to leave.

After all, he was the person she had always been dreaming of.

She smiled as she watched the lust build up in his eyes. And slowly, she pulled down the straps off her shoulders.

At that moment, it seemed as though she was about to succeed when suddenly, the door was smashed open from the outside.

The culprit who smashed the door narrowed her eyes when she saw what was happening. She went over and kicked the woman right on the chest.

"Shanae, you b*tch! How shameless can you be? I'm going to kill you today!"

Shanae was completely caught off guard as she was in the midst of taking off her clothes. Like a sandbag, she was sent flying some distance away and she passed out before she could even react.

Meanwhile, Devin who was under the influence froze.

As the scent of the woman disappeared, he felt worse.

The urges that were getting stronger felt as though they were about to explode in his chest. Not to mention how hard it was getting down there.

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At that moment, he felt as though there was someone else approaching him.

"Devin, are you okay? F*ck! Why are your eyes so red? Were you drugged?"

The woman was shocked to see his bloodshot eyes when she went in front of him.

That b*tch!

Just as she was about to turn around to search Shanae's body for an antidote, a pair of strong arms held onto her from behind.

She cried out in surprise, but she was silenced almost immediately.

The man who caught her felt as though he had finally found the oasis in his desert.

Smelling the scent of cocoa powder and a hint of cedar on her, he no longer resisted. He pulled her into his arms and pressed against her, his fiery lips swallowing her cry.

Damn it!

Sabrina's mind went completely blank at that instance.

Meanwhile, Sasha's phone had been ringing for a while.

When she woke up and answered her phone, Sabrina's voice could be heard from the other end of the line.

"Crap, Sasha. I slept with Devin!"

She sounded as though she had just gotten herself a beating as she could not even form a coherent sentence.

Her voice was trembling when she told Sasha the earth-shattering news.

Sasha was momentarily stunned.

She wondered for a second if she was still sleeping or if it was a dream.

She brought the phone in front of her and had a good look at it.

"Hello? Sasha, what are you doing? I'm on the phone here. Stop pretending like you're deaf!" Sabrina shouted over the phone. She sounded as though she had lost her mind.

Sasha sat up at once at the sound of that.

"Not bad. You've finally taken a huge step. Good job!" Sasha complimented, thinking that Sabrina deserved it considering how difficult it had been for her.

However, as soon as Sasha said that, Sabrina started yelling again, "Good job? What is wrong with you? I was screwed when he was drugged!"

"Huh? Drugged?"

"Yes! Shanae drugged him at the hotel last night when I found him. I knocked her out with a kick, then the man she tried to sleep with ended up sleeping with me."

The more Sabrina said, the more indignant she felt. She even sounded bitter by the end of it.

"Don't you want to sleep with him? Wasn't that your goal before?" asked Sasha.

Sabrina was rendered speechless when she heard that.

Her face flushed red as she tried to explain herself, yet she said nothing when she thought of all the things she had done in the past.

Damn this woman. I should have known better than to call her.

"So where are you now? Did his attitude change now that the two of you have slept together? What did he say to you?"

"Nothing. I can't let him know about this, so I ran," Sabrina replied as she blushed harder.

You ran!

Sasha was in disbelief when she heard her words. "So what you're saying is that after the two of you slept together, you dumped him in the hotel once you woke up and left?"

"Yeah. Why?"

"Are you a pig? How is he supposed to know then who he slept with when he's awake? Do you think he'll remember you? Perhaps he might even think it was Shanae. Listen to me, Sabrina. A man can't think straight when he's drugged. All he'll remember when he's awake is that something bad happened. He will not remember who it was if the woman is not beside him," said Sasha angrily.

Sasha was speaking from experience when it came down to it as she had experienced it first-hand.

Back then, she was pregnant with the triplets because Sebastian got drugged by Frederick on their wedding night.

If Sebastian had a semblance of sanity left then, he wouldn't have slept with her.

Sabrina paled after hearing Sasha's words as she had never thought about it.

She assumed that he would remember her even if she had left. After all, how could he forget the most intimate thing that could happen between a man and a woman?

However, she was being told over the phone now that a man who was drugged would have no memories of the entire thing.

"Sab?"

It took Sabrina a few moments before she finally said, "Forget about it then if he really doesn't remember. It's not my first anyway."

Sasha was a little taken aback.

She had wanted to say something when the line was cut off.

Is she a fool?

Frustrated, Sasha could no longer stay in bed. She lifted the covers and got out of bed.

"Darling? Darling?"

"Mrs. Jadeson, are you looking for Mr. Jadeson? Old Mr. Jadeson called for him early this morning. It seems that they have found Mr. Devin," Olivia answered her when she heard Sasha's voice.

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Could this be a coincidence?

Sasha wondered if it was truly a coincidence that Jonathan found Devin right after Sabrina told her that she had slept with him.

Somehow, something felt amiss to her. She quickly tidied up herself and left Oceanic Estate while making a call.

"Hello?"

The call went through very soon, and a familiar male voice came from the phone. Sasha could not help but blush at that voice as she recalled what happened the night before.

However, she snapped back to her senses almost immediately and asked, "Darling, where are you? I heard you've found Devin."

"Yes. We're at Coldbridge. You wanna come?"

Sebastian could read her mind as soon as he heard her tone.

"Can... Can I?" Sasha felt a little awkward. "Sab has been asking, so I wanted to go and take a look for her."

She brought up Sabrina without telling Sebastian the truth as she was afraid of how he would react. She could only imagine the man killing Sabrina if she told him about it.

As expected, Sebastian agreed. It was only a few moments later when she received the location from him.

Sasha turned on the navigation system, then sent a message to Sabrina, telling her that she was heading to Coldbridge before she drove off.

Sasha knew Sabrina like the back of her hand. The latter might seem arrogant and cocky, but she was not like that at all. Instead, she could be quite a fool sometimes.

Her foolishness stopped her from clinging onto someone she loved deeply.

The worst part was how carefree she was. She was the sort of person who would convince herself to give up once she knew that she had no hope.

The last thing she said about how it was not her first time anyway earlier before she hung up the phone was the perfect example.

Thus, Sasha was determined to go and take a look at what was going on there on her behalf. No matter what she would not allow Sabrina to be hurt.

With that thought, Sasha floored the gas pedal.

Ring... Ring...

Suddenly, her phone started buzzing.

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Sasha took a glance at it and had no choice but to pick it up. "Hello? Who's this?"

"Sasha, it's me." The caller was Janice and she sounded a little anxious.

"Oh, Aunt Janice, what's up?"

"Well, Old Mr. Woods' here at the Red Pavilion. Do you know what happened, Sasha? He came with a group of men and refused to leave."

Sasha did not expect to hear something like that from Janice over the phone.

Old Mr. Woods' at the Red Pavilion? What is he doing there? Didn't he say he's cutting off all ties with the Jadesons when they didn't manage to get any benefit at Stephen and his wife's funeral?

Puzzled, Sasha asked, "Did you ask him why? What does he want?"

Janice shook her head and said, "I did, but he ignore me. Sasha, something's wrong. Where are you now? Can you come over?"

Sasha mulled over it.

I'm almost at the highway, and she's asking me to go over there? Is she serious?

"I can't-"

"Sasha, I heard that Old Mr. Jadeson and Sebastian have gone to get Mr. Devin. Do you think Old Mr. Woods is trying to cause trouble here? I heard that Mr. Devin left Jadeborough two days ago after he went to the Woodses'. Do you think the two might be somehow related?"

"Okay, I got it. I'll head over right now."

Annoyed, Sasha turned around and headed back in the end after listening to Janice's words.

She knew that that was not the time for chaos to break out at the Red Pavilion. Devin would be pissed off if the place was messed up by those people.

Thus, Sasha gave up on going to Coldbridge.

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However, unbeknownst to her, she would miss a lot of drama over at Coldbridge because of her decision.

"Granduncle, you must stand up for me. I came yesterday night with Kira to look for him. I have no idea what happened, but somehow, Kira never came back after she went looking for him. Then, I saw him here, at the hotel, and h-he..."

The hotel room where Shanae stood was in an utter mess. She was holding her torn clothes against her with bruises all over her face. She burst out in tears in front of Jonathan as she said those words.

Jonathan's expression was grim.

He immediately turned his gaze to the bed.

He noticed that the man had his head in his hands as though he was suffering from an awful headache.

The man was Devin, and his brows furrowed as he tried to recall what happened the night before. However, all he managed to get were fragmented pieces of memories in his mind.

"Devin! You brat! What do you have to say for yourself?"

Jonathan was livid when he saw Devin in a state like that.

Devin was a little taken aback by Jonathan's voice. It took him a moment before he looked in their direction and said, "I don't remember what happened last night, but there are surveillance cameras everywhere in the hotel. We can look at the footage."

No one said anything when he said that.

"Also, there must be something wrong with the club as well. I couldn't have gotten myself into this situation."

At that moment, it became apparent how much of an experienced military officer Devin was.

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Even though the whole situation was a complete mess, and he was not sure what had happened, he still managed to notice that something was amiss.

Shanae's expression froze when she heard what he said.

"Devin, a-are you saying that I'm lying? J-Just look at the bed if you don't believe me," she said as she pointed at the bed.

Her eyes were brimmed with tears as though she was humiliated by Devin's words.

Devin was stunned.

He quickly lifted the covers, and the blood drained off his face when he saw what was under it.

"Do you see it now? You listen to me, Devin Jadeson. I'm no slut. I'm a Woods, and the Woodses live with integrity. That's our rule. I'll never joke around with my reputation!"

She sounded sincere, especially when she swore on the Woodses.

Jonathan's expression turned grim once again when he heard her words.

"Don't worry. If this brat has really done something to you, the Jadesons—"

"Ms. Woods, I had no idea that the Woodses had something like that. Then, why did I hear that you went around flirting with other men as the Jadesons' fiancée?"

Just when Jonathan was about to give his word on behalf of the Jadesons, Sebastian who had been keeping to himself stepped in.

He stood by the door with his hands in the pockets of his casual, dark-colored pants. Like a bystander, he seemed unbothered.

Yet, there was tension in the air as soon as he spoke.

It even felt as though the temperature in the room had dropped.

Shanae blanched as she argued, "Y-You're lying. Those are just a bunch of nasty rumors. Where did you even hear it from?"

Sebastian stared at her coldly, and with his overwhelming presence, he said, "My wife."

His wife? As in... Sasha Wand?

Shanae's heart did a somersault. She was bereft of speech.

Jonathan finally sensed that something was off. He quickly came over and said, "Sebastian, what's going on?"

Sebastian withdrew his gaze and answered, "Nothing. Let's just verify the whole thing first. Devin's a soldier, so someone must have done something to knock him out. Plus, there are so many women in this hotel. Yet, what a coincidence that she was the one to get caught in this."

He shot Shanae a glance as he said the last sentence.

Shanae felt a shiver down her spine, and her legs almost gave way.

What a terrifying gaze. How can I forget that the Jadesons have gotten themselves a terrifying new member?

Shanae was starting to regret getting herself involved in this.

In the end, Devin was taken away from the hotel room.

Jonathan ordered his men to look into the incident, and he had them bring Shanae back as well. All that was left was to wait for the outcome.

"Mark, what do you think Old Mr. Jadeson would do if they found out that Mr. Devin did, in fact, slept with Ms. Woods?"

"What else? Of course, he'll get the two of them to get married." Mark who was left behind to follow up on the incident answered without much thought.

In fact, that was what Jonathan had in mind as well.

After all, Shanae was the candidate he had picked out for Devin for a marriage of convenience from the very beginning.

If they had indeed slept with each other, then getting married was the only option.

"But how about Ms. Hayes? If Mr. Devin got married, what about Ms. Hayes?" the bodyguard could not help but ask as he recalled how Devin and Sabrina seemed so close to each other just a while back.

Mark furrowed his brows.

Sabrina? How did that woman come into the picture?

He seemed a little annoyed as he replied, "Don't bring up this person anymore. No matter who Mr. Devin marries, it'll never be her."

"Huh? W-Why?"

"Are you dumb? She's from the Hayes family and Mr. Devin's parents died because of Mr. Jadeson. You're asking him to marry his sister? Are you trying to make his parents crawl out from their graves?"

Surprisingly, his answer was the same as what Sabrina heard from the person who transferred the funds to her last night.

With a loud thud, Sabrina fell backward and hit the wall behind her.

She did not want to admit it, but she was slapped in the face by the harsh reality. Even though she had thought of such a possibility from the very beginning, she could still feel her heart bleed when she heard those words.

At that instance, she felt as though she was surrounded by darkness.

She had no idea how she left the hotel. By the time she snapped back to her senses, she had already gotten into her car with her phone by her ear.

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"Hello?"
"I want you to do something for me."
"What?"

"Wipe away everything that happened to me last night. I want everything gone. Leave no trace of me being there at all," she uttered each word through gritted teeth as she stared ahead with reddened eyes in the car.

The person on the other end of the phone fell silent.

He was unsure if he was supposed to feel happy or sad about it.

Finally, after one minute, he agreed in a low voice and said, "Sure. So when are you coming back then?"

"Today."

"Okay. I'll get someone to book a flight for you. You can return to work tomorrow," he said and hung up the phone afterward.

Sabrina remained unmoved for a while after the call ended. However, she finally broke down when she received the notification about her flight to return home. She threw her phone aside, plopped down on the steering wheel, and burst into tears.

It's finally over. Finally...

Over at the Red Pavilion, Sasha finally figured out the reason Richard and his men had come so early in the morning.

"Devin defiled Shanae," was what Richard said.

F*ck! That b*tch really did it! Sasha cursed in her head and sneered, "Old Mr. Woods, you can't just say anything you like. Girls nowadays will do anything to get what they want. You should be cautious of her words."

"What did you say? I dare you to say that again. Why would my granddaughter lie to me?"

Richard jumped up from his seat when he heard Sasha's words.

Then, just as Sasha was about to reveal the truth, her phone rang, and it was a message.

Sabrina: Don't tell anyone about what I told you earlier.

Sasha: What?

Sabrina: You'll never see me again if you break this promise.

Sasha was shocked by the message. She tried to send another message, but all she got was an error notification.

F*ck! What is wrong with her?

She then tried to call Sabrina but to no avail no matter how many times she tried.

She's really gone mad!

Sasha was panicking at that point when she heard someone say, "They're back! Look! Mr. Jadeson and Old Mr. Jadeson are back!"

"Yes, they're back."

Sasha looked up and saw that Jonathan was back with Devin, and Sebastian was behind them.

They're finally back. They're just in time. I'll go ask what happened.

Sasha ran toward Sebastian and said, "Darling, you're finally back. How's Devin? He—"

Sasha was eager to ask if Devin remembered who he slept with when he woke up. She wanted to know if he remembered Sabrina at all.

Yet, she had just got a hold of Sebastian's arms when she was interrupted.

Jonathan noticed Richard coming out of the villa as soon as he got out of the car. Thus, he went over with a smile and said, "Richard, I was just going to go see you. What a surprise to see you here."

"Is that so? Have you figured out the whole thing?"

Richard Woods was a devious old man. He acted all high and mighty when he noticed how Jonathan was trying to get on his good side.

Since Jonathan felt as though he was in the wrong, he had no choice but to go along with it.

"Yes, we did. I'm sorry, Richard. This brat of mine has really got himself in trouble this time. Don't worry. The Jadesons will take responsibility for this. I'll get someone to pick a good date today, and we'll get them both engaged first."

Jonathan went ahead and made a huge promise to Richard without any hesitation.

Sasha was shocked.

Finally, when the two had gone inside with Devin being dragged along by Jonathan, she tugged on Sebastian's sleeves anxiously.

"Darling, what's happening? Did you all believe Shanae's words and think she's the one who slept with Devin?"

"What are you talking about?" asked Sebastian as he narrowed his eyes.

Since he had no idea that his sister had already talked to Sasha, he was surprised by Sasha's words. At the same time, he also sensed that something was wrong.

"You know who the person is?"

"I do."

"Who?"

"Your sister."

Sasha went ahead and told him without hesitation. She did not give it much thought as she was already on the edge because of it.

What the hell? She's obviously a fraud, so why does she get to marry Devin? This is too absurd.

However, Sasha was disappointed when she saw how the person she had high hopes for, the only person who was able to help Sabrina, merely took a deep breath without saying anything.

The Love that Never Really Dies chapter 962

"Darling?"

Sasha had a bad feeling as she stared at Sebastian's handsome face.

"I didn't see her at all in the surveillance footage," he finally said in a glum tone.

Huh?

Sasha looked at him in disbelief.

"You didn't? But she told me this morning. She said that Shanae drugged Devin, so she kicked her. Then, to help Devin, they ended up sleeping together." Sasha told Sebastian everything she knew from her call with Sabrina.

However, she was disappointed again when she saw Sebastian shaking his head at her.

"No. Whether it's the club or the hotel, we've looked into everything. There were no signs of Sabrina and everything went exactly the way Shanae has mentioned. After Devin bumped into her at the hotel, she was dragged into the room, and the rest is history."

Sebastian told Sasha everything with furrowed brows while bending over to pick up the video player from the car.

The whole thing was no doubt baffling.

After all, Sebastian knew at first glance when he arrived at the hotel that someone had planned the whole thing. Not to mention how obvious everything looked.

Yet, when they sent their men to look into it, the whole thing appeared flawless. There were no signs of anyone else tampering right from the time Devin got drunk at the club to the point where he was taken to the hotel by Jake, bumped into Shanae, and dragged her into the room.

They simply could not find anything suspicious at all.

Thus, he had no choice but to watch when they brought Shanae back and had Devin dragged in like a puppet.

"How could this be? This is impossible. It's not like that when your sister called me. There's no way she would lie to me."

At this moment, Sasha had just finished watching the surveillance footage. She too, could not believe what she had just seen.

Sebastian's expression was grim.

He could not help but wonder if his sister was lying.

However, he knew it very well that with Sabrina's carefree character, she would never lie about such a thing. No matter how much she messed around outside, she would never joke about her innocence, not especially when the man she loved was involved.

Hence, the only explanation to that was that there was something wrong with the footage.

"What? What do you mean?" Sasha immediately looked up at him with the video player still in her hands.

"Someone must have edited the person and joined the whole thing back together."

It took Sasha a moment to process Sebastian's words. "Who did it?"

At that instance, all she could think of was that Shanae was the one behind it. She was on the verge of exploding with rage, and she was ready to tear her apart as soon as she got a confirmation from Sebastian.

However, Sebastian's complexion looked worse than before as he said, "Who else? That fool, of course!"

It had only been a few seconds, but his entire presence had turned so cold and distant that it could send a shiver down anyone's spine.

Sasha was stunned.

That fool?

At that moment, Sasha realized who he was talking about.

She could not believe her ears. It was only earlier that morning that she was so thrilled when Sabrina told her that she had slept with Devin.

Yet, she was being told now by the man in front of him that Sabrina was the person who had herself removed completely from the footage.

Why? Why did she do that? Does she not know that if she does that, there's no way Devin will find out that the woman who slept with him was her, Sabrina Hayes? Does she not realize that she has ruined all chances of them getting together because of that?

Sasha was infuriated.

Then again, she had no idea that there was a reason behind all of that. It was somehow understandable as so much had happened. Her mind was in such a complete mess that she did not have the time to think it through.

The real reason and truth for why Sabrina did what she did were so sad that it was suffocating.

Eventually, Sebastian went inside as well.

He went over and stood right in front of Devin when Jonathan and Richard were in the middle of discussing the date for the engagement.

"Is this what you want? Are you the one getting married or them? Don't you have anything to say at all?" he said as he looked down at Devin.

It was as though he was interrogating a criminal when he said that, and that was the first time he had used that tone on Devin.

Devin froze for a moment before looking up at Sebastian with a blank look.

At that moment, he looked lost as though his brain could not comprehend the situation he was in at all. He even had trouble understanding Sebastian's words at that point.

"Who's getting married?"

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Is he seriously asking who's getting married?

Devin's question had enraged Sebastian to the extent that it rendered him speechless.

Jonathan, on the other hand, who was discussing this matter with Richard, glared in their direction.

"Who else do you think is getting married? You b*stard, of course, it's you! Aren't you going to take responsibility for what you have done?"

Devin frowned and looked at Jonathan.

"Have you checked properly?"

"Obviously!" Jonathan shouted at Devin in public, furious at his response.

Devin's face went pale.

However, he calmed himself down and refuted, "I'm not saying that I will not take responsibility for this. It's just that there are many other ways. Why do I have to marry Shanae?"

"What? You don't want to marry her? What do you want to do then?"

"It depends on the conditions she makes. I'll definitely fulfill it if I have the capability to do so," Devin replied as he looked at Jonathan. After understanding the whole situation, he was not intimidated anymore.

Jonathan was not particularly angry with Devin's reply. Richard, who had the intention of cozying up with the Jadesons, however, exploded from anger.

"Bullshit! Shanae is an unmarried, innocent maiden. How dare you say such things after defiling her innocence? If you're not going to take her home as your wife now, are you planning to let her marry someone else in the future?"

"1—"

"I'm warning you, you rascal. You must marry Shanae and that's final or I'll spread this news and destroy the Jadesons' reputation."

Never had anyone imagined that Richard would threaten the Jadesons in such a shameless and despicable manner.

Devin blanched. He stared at Richard as anger welled up in his chest and clenched his fist so tight that his knuckles were cracking. He wanted so badly to strangle Richard to death.

All problems will be resolved after I strangle him.

"Why don't you give it a try?"

Just when Jonathan and Devin were trembling in fury at Richard's brazen threat, a cold voice that they seemed to have forgotten about sounded in front of them.

Devin immediately lifted his head and saw a man.

It was Sebastian. He was standing there with his hands in his pockets. He stared at them emotionlessly, his facial features looking all the more solemn.

Richard immediately shifted his gaze to Sebastian. "What did you just say? Do you think I won't do it?"

Sebastian smirked and replied, "You think I care? I can even grant your wish right now!"

He waved his hands, and instantly someone walked up from behind him.

"Mr. Jadeson."

"Get a few reporters here and tell them that the Jadesons have some things to announce. Oh, and inform Mark to get the owner of the nightclub and the manager of the hotel over. We'll need them during the press conference."

The instructions given by Sebastian stunned everyone.

Little did they expect him to be so direct and make a decision on behalf of Richard.

Devin was shocked.

Similarly, Jonathan widened his eyes in astonishment.

The moment Richard saw Sebastian giving instructions to his subordinate, his arrogant and impudence look turned as white as a sheet.

I can't believe Sebastian is going to have a press conference. Is he crazy? Is he aware that it's Devin who caused this scandal? Isn't he afraid that he would embarrass the Jadeson family for causing such a scene?

Richard panicked. He was terrified and furious as he knew the truth to the whole story.

After Jasmine's death, the backbone of the Woodses had collapsed.

If the Woodses wanted to stay in the upper-class society of Jadeborough, their only means was to grab onto the Jadesons. As for now, Devin was the best candidate they could place their hope in.

However, they had never thought that the Jadesons, who were fools in their eyes, would cause such a scene.

Richard glared at Sebastian and warned, "Okay. The Jadesons have won this time. All of you can afford to be embarrassed in public, but not the Woodses. I'm warning you, Jonathan, the Woodses will not let this matter slide."

Jonathan was rendered speechless as he looked at Richard, who just left angrily.

Did he just leave? Is it over?

Jonathan sat blankly for a few seconds.

Seeing that Richard had left, Devin turned around and looked at Sebastian.

"Thank you. Haha..."

Sebastian had no intention of engaging in a conversation with Devin. With a gloomy face, he turned and walked away.

Sasha, who had been witnessing everything at the door, walked up to Sebastian and hugged his arm worriedly.

"Darling, why didn't you tell Devin that Sab was the real woman he was with?"

"Why should I tell him?"

"Well, you saw it too. Devin refuses to marry Shanae. He's willing to do anything to compensate her instead and even had a falling-out with Old Mr. Woods."

"So? Was there an outcome?"

Sasha fell silent upon hearing Sebastian's question.

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Was there an outcome?

The answer was no.

That was because no one could disobey their parents, no matter how good or how bad they were. After all, the latter was the one who brought them up. Hence, obedience was a way to express one's filial toward their parents.

Sasha accompanied Sebastian to Oceanic Estate.

There was still no news from the Woodses two days later. Even since Sebastian's warning at the Red Pavilion, the Woodses had been very wary of their actions.

It was also two days later that Jonathan finally found out about Devin's resignation at the military base.

"That b*stard! Is he trying to turn against me now? Did I tell him to resign? Is he trying to get on my nerves? What good would it bring him if I died?"

Jonathan was livid as he smashed everything in his studies. Even the ground could not withstand his fury.

Mark's face turned pale upon seeing that.

Although Jonathan was disappointed with Devin's qualifications, he had never ill-treated the latter. In fact, the former had spent a lot of his time and effort on Devin.

Seeing how mad Jonathan was, Mark was afraid that something might happen to him. Hence, he quickly came over to comfort him.

"Don't worry, Old Mr. Jadeson. We've stopped the letter from reaching the higher-ups. The people of the military base have found out and quickly warned us about it. What's important now is to dismiss Mr. Devin's thought of resigning," Mark reminded Jonathan.

Jonathan stood in the middle of the mess he had created and leaned against the table to calm himself down. Still fuming, he ordered, "Go find that b*astard now!"

"Yes, Old Mr. Jadeson." Mark let out a sigh of relief. Thereafter, he left Oceanic Estate to search for Devin.

At this moment, Sasha was trimming the flowers in the garden. Just when she was about to take the flowers upstairs to arrange them in a vase, she saw the commotion that happened in the study, and her expression changed.

Devin is resigning his position in the military?

Sasha panicked too upon hearing the news. After seeing Mark leave hurriedly, she quickly threw away the scissors in her hands. With the flowers left in her grip, she rushed up the stairs.

"Oh no, Darling! Devin is in trouble!"

Sasha ran up hurriedly, shouting even before reaching the bedroom on the third floor.

Under the golden sunray, the man who was flipping through his old notebook in front of the window in the bedroom frowned upon hearing Sasha calling for him.

Why isn't Sebastian replying to me?

"Darling?"

Since there was no one answering her, Sasha called out gently with flowers in her hands as she walked toward Sebastian.

Right then, Sasha looked exactly like their daughter, Vivian.

It was obvious that the blank and sweet look Vivian had was all inherited from Sasha.

Sebastian finally turned his head over as he put down the notebook in his hands. He looked at Sasha with his pair of black and charming eyes and asked, "What happened?"

"I heard Mark saying downstairs that Devin is resigning. Darling, what do you think he is trying to do? Why did he resign all of a sudden? Does he not want to be a soldier anymore?"

Sasha went on to recount everything she overheard just now.

She could not fathom Devin's decision. She felt confused and angry because she understood the implication of the resignation to the Jadesons and to Devin himself.

However, what surprised Sasha more was that Sebastian was not taken aback by her words.

"What's so strange about it? Devin has always been like this."

"Huh?" Sasha was astonished.

Devin has always been like this? Sebastian sounds like he knows Devin very well, to the extent that he's aware that Devin will resign. However, wasn't he very tense when Devin's parents passed away a few days ago? Sebastian was constantly grumpy and was not as calm as always when he spoke and worked. Now he's telling me that Devin has always been this way?

Sasha looked at Sebastian, who looked relaxed despite the frown on his face. At that instant, she seemed to have understood what Sebastian was implying.

"Okay. Then what should we do now? Are we really letting him resign?"

"Resign? Have our efforts in raising him up all been fed to the dog?" Sebastian said through gritted teeth. Quickly, he changed into a clean set of clothes and headed out.

Sasha was shocked by how ruthless the metaphor Sebastian gave was.

Even so, Sebastian is right. Old Mr. Jadeson has nurtured Devin for so many years. How could Devin just give up in this manner? Though he may have done it for Sebastian and me, that's still not the right way to do it.

Relief washed over Sasha.

After that, she did not intervene further but took out her phone and sent Sabrina, who was in Avenport, a message.

Sasha: Sab, what are you doing now?

Sabrina: Anything?

Sabrina's reply was rather instant. It was as if she had been waiting for Sasha's message.

Sasha felt a twinge in her heart, but she quickly pulled herself together and replied to Sabrina.

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Sasha: It's nothing much. Just wanted to let you know that Shanae's scheme did not turn out well. Sebastian managed to scare Old Mr. Woods. And of course, Devin is not willing to marry Shanae as well.

The last sentence was the crucial one.

Sabrina, who was on the other end of the phone, went silent for a couple of minutes after receiving the message.

Sabrina: This has nothing to do with me anymore.

Sasha: Actually, you can tell him about that night. It doesn't matter whether the both of you will end up together or not. I think there are some things that you still need to fight for it. How will you know how he actually feels if you aren't honest with him?

Sabrina: Then why did you run away back then with your two children to a foreign country without even telling Sebastian?

Sasha fell silent as Sabrina had poked her sore spot.

However, she understood that both of them were similar in the sense that they were not willing to rub salt on their own wound when they were already in a miserable state. They would rather leave with dignity.

Hence, Sasha did not pressure Sabrina further.

Nonetheless, the former still gave the latter a word of assurance. Even though Sabrina would not be marrying Devin, there was no way Shanae would be part of the Jadesons with Sasha around.

At District 13 of the military base, Jonathan finally found Devin, who was in a heated conversation with his commanders, with Mark's help.

"Old Mr. Jadeson, you are finally here!"

"We've been waiting for you, Old Mr. Jadeson!"

The commanders looked as though they saw their lifesaver upon Jonathan's arrival as tears of relief streamed down their cheeks.

After all, the people from the military base were rather loyal to Jonathan.

Jonathan gestured the commanders to leave with a wave of his hand. After that, he stayed in the office, staring straight at Devin, who remained composed and showed no hint of repentance.

"Tell me. What are you planning to do?" Jonathan asked calmly, eventually heeding Mark's advice to suppress his anger.

Devin was shocked that Jonathan, who had always been hot-tempered, did not lose his temper and slam the table as he usually would.

Seeing that Jonathan showed no sign of anger, he replied honestly, "Nothing much. I just wanted to have a look at the world outside."

"Have a look outside?" Jonathan struggled to rein in his anger. "Where?"

"Overseas. I want to go to an architecture school in Yartran to further my studies. After all, this is my passion. I've contacted the school and will go over once I've resigned," answered Devin. He had no intention of hiding the truth.

A fresh swell of rage rose in Jonathan at once.

He did not say a word but lifted his arm instead and gave Devin a slap.

The slap was loud and crisp that even those outside the office could hear it.

"You want to go overseas? The nerve of you to make such a decision! Do you think you can do whatever you want just because your parents died? Just you wait! I'm definitely going to break your legs today!"

Following that, the office was filled with a loud smashing sound.

Mark, who was outside, was about to rush in upon hearing everything.

However, the commanders immediately stopped him. "I think it's better that you don't enter. It's no good for an outsider to get involved in someone else's family affairs. You'll only complicate things if you enter."

Mark was getting worried and anxious. "But if I don't enter now, Old. Mr. Jadesons might really beat Mr. Devin to death!"

Mark's words about Jonathan were rather terrifying.

Truth be told, with Jonathan's personality, coupled with his experience in the army, it was very likely that he would not be able to control his strength if he were to beat Devin up.

Bang!

Just when Mark finished his sentence, he heard another smashing sound from the office. Right after that, a low grunt could be heard.

"I'm warning you, Devin. I would rather beat a b*stard like you to death than let you walk out from this military base!"

Everyone shuddered upon hearing the brutal and frightening threat from the office.

Devin fell on the floor after withstanding beatings from Jonathan. He then spat out blood from his mouth and smirked. "Sure! Beat me to death then! You're a weakling if you don't!"

"You-"

This was the most rebellious remark Devin had ever made.

At that instant, Jonathan lost his rationality.

He picked up a chair and was about to smash it at Devin.

However, at that moment, Jonathan met Devin's sharp gaze, which was filled with hatred, reluctance, and rage. The former was stunned as the chair that was in his hands remained in midair.

Jonathan had never seen this side of him before.

This child has always been gentle and humble since young. He has always been obedient and mature in front of me. He's even known as the role model of the Jadesons. But why is he looking at me like this?

"Why aren't you hitting me? Well, it'll be great if you can beat me to death. I will not be able to head out again and you will be free from all your worries."

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"What are you talking about?"

"Am I wrong? You only care about Uncle's family. You've been treating me the same way you treated Dad. I can't even give up the position and you wanted me dead. Isn't this what you truly want?"

He was driven to a corner after all.

Despite being such a gentle and forgiving person, he was now collapsed on the floor, stroking his crippled leg. His handsome face was dotted with cold sweat and his cheeks were ghastly pale.

All that was left on his face was a twisted look of hatred and menace.

Jonathan paled.

He was so furious that his veins throbbed and his eyes turned bloodshot. However, pointing at Devin, he trembled uncontrollably, unable to say a single word.

Little did he expect his obedient grandson to develop such a huge misunderstanding. Did I do something wrong this time?

Jonathan's chest heaved as he breathed heavily. Fury and sorrow surged through him. His body wavered before he lost grip of the chair in front of him.

Crash!

The chair fell onto the floor.

Devin was surprised.

Everyone outside, including Mark, had their ears perked up. When they heard that noise, they were shocked too.

What's going on?

"Listen, Devin. I've never treated your father and your uncle differently. What matters most is how capable they are! Your father always complained that I never spent any effort on him. But has he ever thought of how much responsibility your uncle has to shoulder despite enjoying all that? The military will not pay a huge price to nurture a sniper who can't even hold a gun. Instead, they'll choose an extremely talented person. Isn't that the same logic?"

After a slight pause, he continued, "Also, I have no idea where you got your information from, saying that I want you to give up your position. Listen up! Ever since I entrusted the Jadesons' future to you, I've never thought of replacing you!"

Pointing at Devin, Jonathan bellowed the last sentence out while tears welled up in his eyes.

Devin raised his head abruptly.

Really? He has never thought of replacing me?

But that man is so exceptional! He helped the Jadesons turn the tables the moment he came. Everyone in the White House and Jadeborough is intimidated by him.

Yet, he never thought of replacing me?

Devin wondered if he had misheard.

"Did you hear me clearly? This is your life and your responsibility. Don't ever think of escaping from it, you b*stard!" Jonathan yelled again. His body swayed before he collapsed onto the chair behind him, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Devin was speechless.

His heart ached terribly as if something had just hit him. He lowered his head. For the past thirty years of his life, he had never shed a single tear no matter the circumstances, yet tears were gushing out of his eyes now.

This was not something he expected.

He had always thought that everyone disliked him, just like his father.

Yet, he was actually the one always doted on.

"Since we've made everything clear, it's time for me to go."

Just when Jonathan and Devin were immersed in the joy of having all their misunderstandings resolved, Sebastian suddenly entered and spoke calmly.

What?

When Jonathan heard him, he immediately spun around.

"Go? Where are you going?"

"Yeah, Sebastian. Don't misunderstand! We didn't mean it."

Devin glanced over. When he saw Sebastian, his cheeks, still swollen, paled as he quickly denied what Jonathan told him earlier.

He still treated Sebastian as his brother and prioritized him.

However, Sebastian shot him an arrogant glance. An unhappy look flashed across his eyes as he said, "Huh? That's your responsibility, Devin. It's the smartest thing I've ever heard that old man say..."

Both Jonathan and Devin were speechless.

After a minute, Devin got up from the ground and dusted his body. "Where are you going? This is your home."

"This isn't my home. The Hayes residence is my home!" Sebastian said expressionlessly.

Jonathan had just calmed down from his previous turmoil of emotions when the veins on his forehead throbbed again.

"You-"

"All right, everyone must be tired. We're still in the military zone, so let's talk at home instead. We don't want to embarrass ourselves in front of the rest, now do we?" Devin quickly interrupted Jonathan.

After recovering from his tormenting despair, he had already resumed his calm and composed self. Diffusing the tense atmosphere between the two, he coaxed them to go home first.

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Only then did Jonathan snort coldly and stomp away, holding his walking stick.

Sebastian remained expressionless and was about to leave too when he heard Devin grunt in pain. The latter was dragging his injured leg behind him.

Sebastian stopped in his tracks before turning around and holding Devin's arm.

"Don't you know how to resist?"

"What?"

"You deserve to be beaten to death. How could you just stay motionless like that?" demanded Sebastian coldly. "Do you know your actions are what caused him to develop such a twisted personality?"

Devin was at a loss for words.

He glanced at Sebastian and chuckled helplessly.

I had to endure it. It's not like I can just retaliate, right?

The two brothers helped each other out of the military zone. Jonathan and Mark were already gone as they had expected. Before getting into the car, Devin paused.

"Sebastian, are you really going to return to Avenport?"

"Yeah."

"Why?" He panicked again since neither Jonathan nor anyone from the military was present there.

"Are you still furious about what Grandpa said? Well, if you'd like to be the heir of the Jadesons, I—"

"I don't!" Sebastian cut him off.

"Listen up! I really don't want to. I was forced to come here, and I've never thought of this place as my home. My home is in Avenport, where my parents and the rest of my family are. It's the place that nurtured me. The same goes for Sasha, understand?" He emphasized every word, reiterating his stance clearly. His tone was heavy and laced with a hint of impatience as Devin kept refusing to believe him.

He's never thought of this place as his home after all this time? Devin was speechless, feeling a little upset. However, it was not the time to say anything else. Neither of them spoke on the way to the Red Pavilion.

Just when Devin was about to get out of the car, Janice walked out to welcome him.

"Oh, right. About what happened at Coldbridge, that woman from the Woods was merely putting up a show. Don't fall for their trick," reminded Sebastian in the car.

Huh?

Devin was stunned.

When he returned to his senses and wanted to clarify what was happening, Sebastian had already driven away.

An act? How did he know that it was an act?

According to the surveillance footage, wasn't he the one who dragged the person in? He was not present, so how did he know that it was an act?

Devin fell into deep thought.

"What's wrong, Devin? Are you all right?"

After a while, he looked at Janice and asked, "Aunt Janice, do you know where the surveillance footage I brought from Coldbridge is?"

"Huh?" Janice was surprised. "I think Sebastian smashed it with his foot the other day at the entrance."

She tried her best to recall what happened that morning when he brought it back.

Smashed it? If it was just some footage, why did he have to smash it? What made him so furious?

Devin's heart pounded rapidly.

In the evening, Mark came back and told Sasha that Sebastian was bringing them back to Avenport.

Oh my God! Are we finally going back?

She was so elated that she did not know what to do.

Casting her work aside, she dashed into the elevator and rushed up to the third floor.

Returning to Avenport was her dream.

For so many years, she had been struggling to hold on for the sake of her fragmented family. She did not even return to that city to visit her aged father, nor call her aunt and uncle.

No one could even fathom how much she yearned to return home.

Sasha ran to the bedroom on the third floor.

"Darling, I heard we're going back to Avenport. Is that true?" Sasha asked in excitement, panting heavily and staring at Sebastian

Sebastian was in the middle of packing his belongings. When he saw Sasha, he glanced back at the messy closet in front of him.

"You've come at the right time. I'm handing this over to you."

He always liked to avoid the question.

However, after Sasha heard that, she understood what he meant and was overjoyed.

"Okay! I'll do it. Just don't touch anything and leave it to me!" Sasha volunteered to take care of all the packing, surprised and delighted.

Sebastian was glad that he did not have to do anything.

Grabbing a random book, he started reading at the desk beside the window.

As he read, he felt that something was amiss. Someone seemed to be staring at him very intently from the side.

Sebastian shook his head in resignation.

"Are you saying that you're bringing us back to Avenport?"

Sasha tossed the clothes aside, stood beside him, and stared at him.

Sebastian froze.

After a while, he averted his gaze. Still looking as aloof as before, he flipped the pages of the book casually and replied, "Yeah. Don't you want to go back?"

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"It's not about whether I want to go back, but..." Sasha was fuming when she came to a realization. Even her fingers were trembling.

"Why do you want to return to Avenport?" she asked with a quivering voice; her eyes reddened.

Sebastian's heart skipped a bit, and he quickly raised his head.

When he was about to explain himself, he saw tears streaming down Sasha's cheeks.

"Have you regained your consciousness a long time ago? Have you been lying to me all along?"

"No..."

"Sebastian, you jerk! Have you been lying to me all along? Did you know how much I wished for you to regain your consciousness? Do you have any idea how much effort I've put in just to make you recover? How could you lie to me?"

Sasha was on the brink of a mental breakdown.

She had pulled herself through such agonizing times and worked so hard, yet Sebastian had chosen to hide it from her after regaining his consciousness, tormenting her even further.

Sasha spun around and ran away.

"Darling..."

Sebastian, who had always been pretending to be calm, finally panicked. He tossed his book aside and chased after her.

However, Sasha ran really quickly. When he rushed out of the bedroom, she took the stairs and was already on the second floor. Even from a floor apart, he could hear her sobs.

The housemaids downstairs were gossiping about it. "What happened? Did Mr. Jadeson fight with Mrs. Jadeson again?"

"No way! Mr. Jadeson has already recovered. Why would he still argue with her?"

"Why is she crying then? I've never seen her cry so sadly before. Didn't you hear her sobs? It'll be bad if she attracts Old Mr. Jadeson's attention."

Even the housemaids can tell that I've recovered. Only that woman is still completely oblivious and she's even blaming me for not telling her!

The veins on Sebastian's forehead throbbed.

But what can I do about it? She's my wife. I have to coax her no matter what. Anyway, everything she says is right. Even if it's not, it's all my fault!

Sebastian chased after her.

Sure enough, when he reached the first floor, Jonathan came out, having heard the commotion. He was standing in front of Sasha, who was crying her heart out.

"What happened? Why are you crying like that?"

Sasha continued sobbing.

It was the first time she had lost her composure in front of Jonathan.

However, she was so sad that she could not control herself at all.

"He... He lied to me."

"He lied to you? What did he lie to you about? Tell me! I'll teach him a lesson for you."

Perhaps because of what Sebastian said in the afternoon about leaving for Avenport, Jonathan was still furious. He was all prepared to deal with Sebastian.

Sebastian clenched his fists.

Without saying anything, he suddenly walked over and carried Sasha with his muscular arms.

"Ah!"

"Wow!"

Sasha screamed.

At the same time, the people watching them exclaimed in shock.

This is amazing!

Is it appropriate for them to do this? There are so many people here! How can they act so lovey-dovey in front of all of us?

Truth be told, Sebastian could not be bothered by any of them. Picking Sasha up, he said to Jonathan expressionlessly, "What happens between us is none of your business."

With that, he strode away with Sasha in his arms.

Jonathan was so furious that he stomped his feet on the ground.

"That b*stard, he... He..."

"Yes, he's too outrageous. He's crossed the line! Calm down, Old Mr. Jadeson. Let's ignore him and have a cup of coffee instead."

Mark had to drag Jonathan away forcefully.

Meanwhile, Sebastian carried Sasha upstairs and ignored her struggles. He closed the bedroom door behind him, tossed her onto the bed, and pinned his body against hers.

"Mmm... You jerk..."

"Yeah, I'm a jerk. But I didn't do it on purpose! Alfred's men came that night when I regained consciousness. I had no choice but to play along with their plan. I wanted to avenge Calvin and save the Jadesons. I had no choice, Darling."

Pinning her to the bed, he stared at her. His eyes were brimming with guilt and agony.

Sasha was stunned.

Is he talking about how he went crazy after being sabotaged at the military base? So he has already recovered back then!

"Did you know? When I saw you collapse in front of my hospital ward in the mental hospital and vomit blood, I really went crazy. All I wanted to do was barge out and bring you away. I wanted to cast everything aside and leave this hellish place. Did you know, Darling?" he started explaining himself.

For once, he could finally let out of all these emotions that had been buried deep within his heart. Hugging her head, he lowered his body and buried his face against her neck.

She could feel his warm tears rolling down her neck.

Sasha hugged him even tighter.

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This was the first time he poured his heart out to her.

He was too powerful and lonely. Not trusting anyone in this world, he was used to burying all his emotions in the depth of his heart. He refused to let anyone notice anything—not even those closest to him.

He was unwilling to portray his most vulnerable side.

Hence, by telling Sasha all that, he had made up his mind.

Sasha sighed as she held him. All the blame and resentment she felt disappeared shortly.

"I'm not blaming you... I just want you to recover so badly."

"I know... I know..."

Sebastian raised his head from her neck.

As he cupped her cheeks and stared at her, his passionate gaze landed on her lips.

Before Sasha could react, she felt the warm puff of his breath against her face. Soon, her lips were covered by his.

"Darling, I want to hear you call me Sebby..."

After a slight pause, she relented. "Sebby..."

Jonathan agreed to let Sasha and the rest return to Avenport.

However, he requested they come back more often to visit.

That was not a problem. After all, Jonathan was Sebastian's grandfather and the children's great-grandfather. It was only right for them to visit him.

"Don't worry, Grandpa. Even if he doesn't come, I'll bring the kids along to visit you," Sasha said, feeling bad when she noticed the old man's reluctant gaze.

This time, she even called him "Grandpa."

When Jonathan heard that, he paused for a while. His eyes turned redder as he gazed at the children.

"It's fine, Great-grandpa! We can video call each other every day. Have you kept the iPad I gave you?"

Matteo was a smart child. After noticing what was going on, he stopped playing and ran toward Jonathan.

Jonathan beamed brightly when he saw Matteo.

"I did. As long as it's something given by my great-grandson, I'll definitely keep it safely."

He pulled Matteo into his arms. Seeing how sweaty Matteo was, he lifted his sleeve and wiped Matteo's forehead.

He was no different from any other old man when it came to doting on his great-grandchild.

Smiling, Matteo gazed back at him. "That's good! We'll call you using the iPad, so you can see at any time."

"Really?"

"Of course! It's only for you. Also..."

A mysterious look crossed Matteo's face.

When Jonathan saw that, he tilted his head over affectionately.

"I installed an app on the iPad. As long as you click on it and connect to it, you can see what's going on in our house."

"Really?" Jonathan's eyes lit up.

Vivian ran over as well. Despite seeing Matteo talking to Jonathan, she did not care at all as she climbed up to the bench Jonathan was sitting on and poked her chubby face out.

"Yeah, Great-grandpa! You can see me too."

"I'm so happy that I can see our cute little Vivian too!"

Jonathan felt as though his heart had melted upon seeing her. Stretching his arms out, he carried the chubby Vivian to the front. A wide grin spread across his cheeks, replacing the grim look on his face earlier.

Watching from the side, Sasha smiled and turned around.

Jonathan might have a lot of flaws, but he genuinely doted on the children.

She returned to the living room.

"Mr. Steward has already arrived with Madam Janice, Mrs. Jadeson."

"Okay."

Sasha was about to head upstairs to pack her belonging. However, when she heard that, she hurried to the entrance to welcome the guests.

She saw Janice walking in anxiously with Mark. Occasionally, she would whisper something beside Mark's ear to ask him something.

"Mark, are these really Old Mr. Jadeson's instructions? I'm... I'm afraid that I'm not up for the job."

"Yeah, Old Mr. Jadeson instructed me personally to fetch you here. Don't worry, he has always thought highly of you. Now that Mrs. Jadeson is leaving, it's expected that he wants you to take care of Oceanic Estate for now," Mark reassured her.

Only then did Janice feel more relieved. However, her anxiety was still obvious from her tightly clasped hands.

Sasha stood at the entrance. When Janice approached her, she smiled and greeted, "You've come, Aunt Janice."

Janice walked forward briskly upon spotting Sasha. Unable to understand why, she grabbed Sasha's arm and asked anxiously. "Yeah! What's going on, Sasha? Why are all of you going back all of a sudden? Isn't it fine staying here?"

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Janice had enjoyed spending time with Sasha and did not treat her like an outsider. She questioned Sasha worriedly, like a family member.

Sasha led her in.

"It's Sebastian's idea. Besides, our home is in Avenport. My father, uncle and the rest are there. There are many people in the Hayes family waiting for him too."

"But..."

Although Janice was still unwilling to let Sasha go, she could not say anything more.

Half an hour ago, Sasha had taken out the Jadesons' ledger that she had compiled from her room. When she passed it to Janice, she reassured her, "Don't worry. I've already listed out the income and expenses in Oceanic Estate. You just have to follow them."

"But..." Janice looked at the new ledgers; a look of unease and fear appeared on her face. "Will... Will they listen to me?"

They? Is she talking about those in The Ataraxy?

Smiling, Sasha consoled her, "Of course! Old Mr. Jadeson appointed you personally and I've already set the framework for you. No one will dare to disobey you."

"But-"

"It's fine, Aunt Janice. I've already laid out the foundation. Now, it's up to you how you'd like to proceed from here."

A young girl, who was so much younger than Janice, was telling her that while holding the ledgers.

Janice suddenly froze, paralyzed to the spot.

A chill ran down her spine as if she had just been plunged into an icy lake. Her mind went blank and her cheeks turned ghastly pale.

I... I actually...

"Don't worry, I won't tell anyone. Gossamer Creek has been oppressed for such a long time. Days must've been tough for all of you. I understand your desire to take this step and fight on behalf of your branch family."

Still silent, Janice stared at Sasha with wide eyes, looking as timid as a cornered prey.

Sasha placed the ledger on the table, turned around, and left.

After hearing what Sasha said, Janice trembled even more.

She had never expected such a young girl to notice her intentions, which she had tried her best to conceal.

All these years, not even Jonathan could discover her motivations. He thought that she was spending so much effort taking care of him only because she wanted to secure more resources for her son, Kingston.

In reality, her son actually did receive a lot more opportunities than the others in the branch families.

"I... I'm not that ambitious. I just witnessed how life in Gossamer Creek is so drastically different from that at The Ataraxy. Furthermore, we kept being oppressed and bullied by them... That's why I decided to take this step. Sasha, I have no intention of becoming the lady of the house. All... All I want is to help out so that Old Mr. Jadeson will notice us at Gossamer Creek! Believe me, Sasha!"

Janice grabbed Sasha's arm agitatedly as she spoke.

Sasha did not know what to make of it.

She tugged her arm out forcefully and glanced at Janice.

"I said I understand you. I don't blame you either. Now that you've achieved your goal, I hope you'll do a good job and not disappoint Old Mr. Jadeson."

Janice felt as though she had just been slapped in the face.

Standing there and blushing, she stared at her arm, which had just been flung away. She could not utter a single word.

No matter how she tried to explain, nothing could hide the fact that it was her sole objective.

She thought that Sasha would be a gullible young lady. However, in reality, she herself was like a clown putting on a terrible act.

Hugging those ledgers, Janice left awkwardly.

Sasha continued packing her luggage.

A few minutes later, Olivia brought some dessert for her.

"Mrs. Jadeson, will she do a good job at The Ataraxy?"

As Olivia had been working for the Jadesons for a long time, she knew well what was going on with the family.

While eating the dessert, Sasha laughed. "Why? Are you worried about her, Olivia?"

Olivia pouted. "You know how challenging The Ataraxy is. Jocelyn and Shirley aren't easy to deal with. Amelia, who has been with Jared Jadeson for a long time, isn't someone to be trifled with either."

Since those from The Ataraxy were not present and Olivia was close to Sasha, she named those people directly.

Jocelyn and Shirley? And another housemaid?

Licking the sweet dessert on her lips, she smirked mockingly.

If Janice could not even deal with those people, she would not have been able to rise to her current position. Since she could endure all the humiliation for such a long time, she was definitely not someone to be trifled with as well.

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"Don't worry, Olivia. She'll find a way."

"Really?"

Olivia was still doubtful.

She did not dare to believe that Janice, who had always been so timid, was capable enough to deal with those shrewish women.

However, Janice, who brought the ledger and checks over that afternoon, accomplished everything successfully.

Despite the fact that Jocelyn, Shirley, and Jared hated her guts, she still managed to do everything.

Were it not for the person she suddenly bumped into when she left the house, it would have been the most perfect day for her.

"I've always wondered why a country bumpkin like you kept trying to enter Oceanic Estate. Turns out that this is your plan! You're quite ambitious, huh?"

The woman who stopped Janice at the entrance was wearing a blue coat. Her hair was permed fashionably and her make-up was exquisite.

With a sharp look in her eyes, she blocked Janice's way while holding a luxurious bag.

When Janice saw her, the smile on her face disappeared at once.

"C-Candice? You're out already?"

"Yeah, I'm out. Why? Aren't you happy to see me?"

Candice took a step forward and stared at Janice viciously.

Sasha did not care about that.

After packing her luggage, she headed to the hospital to fetch Sebastian.

That was her arrangement. After knowing that he had recovered yesterday, she was overjoyed. However, as she was still worried, she made an appointment with Grayson to give Sebastian a full checkup.

He should be done with it already.

"Hello? Are you done, Sebby?"

"I'm done."

A clear and masculine voice sounded from the phone. Hearing his charming voice, Sasha felt as though she was falling in love again.

"All right. I'll come over to pick you up."

Delighted, she grabbed her car keys and headed out. She was rushing out so happily that she was oblivious to her children teasing her from behind.

"Is Mommy going on a date with Daddy?"

"Of course!" Matteo affirmed Vivian's question unhesitatingly.

lan, on the other hand, remained silent.

However, given how focused he was on his game, it was clear that he agreed too. After all, he could only immerse himself in the game completely if he was not distracted by anything else.

Matteo was defeated by him badly.

After forty minutes, Sasha arrived at Grayson's office in the hospital.

"Dr. Wallen, how is he? Is he all right?" she asked anxiously the moment she arrived.

Grayson shot a glance at Sebastian, who was flipping through a thick medical textbook. He felt a shiver run down his spine.

"He's fine! What could possibly happen to him? He's fully recovered."

"That's great!" When Sasha heard that, she heaved a huge sigh of relief and felt delighted. He has completely recovered! She brought Sebastian out of Grayson's office. "Sebby, we-" "Wait! I heard that you're going back to Avenport. Someone would like to see you. Do you mind?" Grayson, who had chased after them, asked abruptly. Someone? Sasha turned around. "Who? Who wants to meet him?" Grayson replied hesitatingly, "Alfred..." As he said the name, he subconsciously hid the book Sebastian was reading earlier behind his back. He was worried that Sebastian would steal it and use it for some illicit activities. Sasha was stunned. Alfred wants to meet him? What on earth is happening? She immediately glanced at Sebastian. Surprisingly, he was extremely calm, as if he had just heard something completely irrelevant. He replied curtly, "No."

That's weird. Since when is he involved with Alfred? He's just a doctor, but why does it feel like he knows everyone here?

"Huh? You don't want to meet him?" A disappointed look crossed Grayson's face.

Sasha was quite curious.

"Do you know Alfred, Dr. Wallen? If he wants to meet Sebastian, why did he ask you to pass the message?"

"Well..."

Grayson felt a bit embarrassed.

In fact, he did not know Alfred that well.

The reason why he was the messenger was that Alfred was not allowed to meet anyone after being arrested. Furthermore, as the director of the hospital, Grayson would be appointed by the White House to check up on special patients.

That was why Alfred had asked him to pass on the message.

"Anyway, I think it's better that you meet him. He's going to be sent to the Chief Prosecutor's office soon. Once his charges have been confirmed, he will probably be stuck there forever."

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In the end, Grayson didn't explain any further and simply reminded them that he would be stuck there forever.

Stuck there forever... Does that mean he has something to tell Sebastian, the person who personally sent him to prison?

Sasha couldn't seem to understand that logic.

"Do you want to go, Sebby?"

"You want me to?" Sebastian gave in at last, but he wasn't sure if Sasha wanted him to be there.

Sasha felt a warm sensation in her heart upon hearing that.

"The fact that he wants you to see him now makes me wonder if he has something to tell you about the Jadesons. Since we'll be heading back soon, it wouldn't hurt to go hear him out," Sasha said in a serious and rational manner.

That is indeed possible. Alfred and the Jadesons have always been sworn enemies, so why else would he want to see a Jadeson after being arrested?

Sebastian frowned at the thought of that but agreed to it in the end.

The two of them then left the hospital and headed toward the White House.

Of course, Sasha wasn't allowed inside the White House and could only wait outside while Sebastian entered.

While waiting, she got a call from Olivia telling her that Janice had been attacked at The Ataraxy and that the ledgers she brought over had been ripped to shreds.

What? Ripped to shreds? Was Janice really unable to stop them?

Sasha instantly went livid with rage. A quick glance at her watch showed that it was still early, so she started up her car and drove straight to The Ataraxy.

Hmph! Let's see how crazy those guys really are!

In the White House, Sebastian avoided the members of congress with the help of an official from the Cabinet Council who escorted him directly to where Alfred was being detained.

Due to the dishonorable nature of the president's crimes, Alfred was not allowed to show himself in public.

Even if he ended up being sentenced to prison, he would still be transported there secretly.

"Alfred White, you have a visitor!" the guard shouted rudely when he saw Sebastian arrive at the door.

Alfred used to be addressed as "Sir" or "Mr. White," but now he's being addressed by his full name... Sebastian thought to himself as he stood at the door with an emotionless look on his face.

The way he looked closely resembled a certain someone that Alfred knew a long time ago.

"You look very much like your dad," he said in a hoarse voice after staring at Sebastian with his white hair all messy.

Sebastian arched an eyebrow at him in response.

"You didn't have me come here just to tell me that, did you?"

"Of course, there are two reasons I wanted you to come over. First of all, I want to see what Shin's son looks like. And secondly, I want to tell you that you didn't actually win."

Alfred, who looked like he had aged ten years, suddenly broke into a manic cackle, only to start coughing from it moments later.

Sebastian narrowed his eyes as he had already expected Alfred to say that.

Not wanting to waste any more of his time, Sebastian was about to leave when Alfred called out to him once again, "Don't believe me? No problem, just wait another two weeks and see who wins the new presidential election!"

Oh? Now this is interesting.

Sebastian stopped in his tracks, not because he was interested in what he heard, but because he wanted to tell Alfred something in response.

"Whoever wins the election has nothing to do with me, Alfred. Not everyone enjoys being in this circle like you, you know? Don't you know I'm already planning to leave?"

"What?"

Alfred had a look of shock on his face when he heard that.

"You're leaving? Aren't you going to become the heir to the Jadesons?"

"Why should I?"

"But... But..."

Alfred was in so much shock that he couldn't even speak properly. He had wanted to say that it was a perfect opportunity for Sebastian to enter the White House as the heir to the Jadesons, but the words were stuck in his throat.

After staring blankly at Sebastian for a moment, Alfred came to a sudden realization and began laughing maniacally again.

"Hahahaha... So, the Jadesons are planning to let Devin be the heir? Hahahaha... This is great!"

Alfred was so happy that he even shed tears of joy, but the look on Sebastian's face had slowly turned gloomy.

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Eventually, Sebastian lost his cool and grabbed Alfred by the collar as he shouted, "What the hell are you trying to say?"

Alfred's face turned purplish red from the pressure on his neck.

"What do you mean? I thought you weren't interested in what I have to say? You said none of this has anything to do with you, right? Hahahaha..."

He began cackling madly once again but was interrupted by a strong punch to the face.

Alfred screamed as his gold-rimmed glasses were knocked off his face, and blood was flowing out of his mouth.

"I'm warning you! You'd better not try anything funny or I'll kill you and your other son!"

The look in Sebastian's eyes was so vicious and scary that he looked like a demon straight from hell.

My other son?

Alfred shuddered. He regained his composure and instantly stopped laughing out of fear.

"H-How did you know about that?"

"Why wouldn't I? I'll have you know that I have information on all of your family members, so you'd better not have any funny ideas or he'll be the first to die!" Sebastian said with an eerie and sinister tone as he stared him down.

Alfred began trembling a lot more severely after hearing that.

Very few people in the White House knew about his other son as he had to break up with his girlfriend back then and marry his current wife.

He thought he could just forget about her and move on, but she turned out to be pregnant and gave birth to her child secretly.

Alfred's wife had also given birth to Baylor at the same time, but the doctors said he was born with a congenital deficiency and wouldn't live past thirty.

Alfred was incredibly upset by that incident, so he was caught off guard by the good news that followed.

As such, he had the mother and child secretly protected over the years. No one knew the president was actually the head of two families because he kept the other one hidden from everyone.

"Don't touch him! What do you want to know? I'll tell you everything!" Alfred admitted defeat and gave in at last.

He did this to himself by trying to pick a fight with me even when he's doomed! None of this would've happened if he didn't ask to see me today! Sebastian sneered at the thought of that as he let go of him.

"What did you mean by that? Are you saying that there's someone else instructing you?"

"Yes!"

"Who?"

"I wouldn't be in this position now if I knew!"

Alfred broke into a wry smile as he said that, and Sebastian's frown deepened in response.

How could the president himself not know who it is?

The look on Sebastian's face turned grim, and he was emanating an icy-cold aura as he asked, "Then what did you mean by that? Why were you so happy when you heard about Devin being the heir to the Jadesons?"

"Because Devin is easy meat. Can't you tell? I was sent to keep you Jadesons in check to begin with, so we're both practically being used as pawns. Because of Jonathan's huge contribution over his many years of military service, I had to step up and keep him on a tight leash. Do you really think the White House is just going to let you Jadesons hog everything to yourself now that I'm going down?"

Sebastian stood frozen in place for about ten seconds, staring silently at the cunning middle-aged man before him.

It was the first time he had heard of a power struggle like this, especially one that was started by the two core forces within the circle.

Sebastian didn't really know much about politics, but he found those who engaged in a political power play to be ten times more disgusting than the cunning businessmen he usually dealt with.

Money was the only thing at stake for corporate power struggles, but political power struggles were a threat to both national security and the interests of its people.

Enraged, Sebastian grabbed the nearest chair and smashed it to pieces in front of Alfred.

"Listen up, Alfred! You'd better tell that person that he's playing with fire here. Jonathan could remain in his position of power for so many years because he ensured the country's safety for decades! If he goes down, you're all going down with him!" he shouted furiously before leaving the room and slamming the door shut behind him.

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Although Jonathan's family is a total mess, his contribution to the country's safety is undeniably the greatest of all. All of his soldiers have fought and bled for the country's sake for decades! Practically everyone in the country looks up to him! There's no way he'd fall victim to such a conspiracy unless he chose to!

Alfred stared blankly at Sebastian's back as he stormed off and let out a wry chuckle when he finally disappeared from his sight.

"You've raised one hell of a son, Shin. It's a shame he hates this career path like you did. With his capability and smarts, those guys wouldn't stand a chance at all!"

Sebastian thought Sasha would be waiting for him outside, only to realize she was gone.

"Mr. Jadeson is out, Old Mr. Jadeson!"

Mark had been waiting in front of an old-fashioned black car for quite a long time, and he began yelling excitedly while waving his arms the moment he saw Sebastian.

The look on Sebastian's face grew increasingly gloomy as he made his way toward the car.

An old man then stepped out of the car with a walking stick in hand.

"I heard you went to see Alfred. What did he tell you? Why did you come alone without telling me? Do you know what this place is?" Jonathan shouted the moment he saw Sebastian, much to Mark's horror.

What the... Didn't Old Mr. Jadeson agree to keep his cool and question Sebastian calmly when we came over? Jeez...

"Calm down, Old Mr. Jadeson. Mr. Jadeson is-"

"What are you so afraid of? I'm standing here just fine, aren't I?" Sebastian's cold voice cut him off before he could finish his sentence.

Both Mark and Jonathan froze upon hearing that, as that was the first time they had gotten such a response from him.

The three of them then got into the old-fashioned car. Sebastian seemed obviously displeased as he had gotten used to his more luxurious cars.

"Sorry, Mr. Jadeson... This is the kind of ride Old Mr. Jadeson usually takes."

After a few seconds of silence, Sebastian asked, "Who told you I was here? Where's Sasha?"

He was a lot more concerned about her, but Mark knew nothing about Sasha's whereabouts.

Grayson had given them a call out of concern for his safety after the two of them left the hospital.

Sebastian then grabbed his phone and called her immediately after hearing that.

"Hello, Sebby!" Sasha's gentle and clear voice was heard on the other line, and it seemed to have eased the tension in the car significantly.

The frown on Sebastian's face relaxed slightly as he asked, "Where did you go? Why didn't you wait for me outside?"

"Huh? Oh, I'm sorry, Sebby! I got a call from Olivia earlier. She said Janice ran into some problems here at The Ataraxy."

"The Ataraxy?"

Sebastian's expression went back to its gloomy state when Sasha mentioned that place.

That place is nothing but trouble...

"Yeah! It's fine, Sebby. Janice was just having some difficulty figuring out a couple of things, so I came over to give her a hand! Don't worry, okay?"

She really didn't want Sebastian to worry as she was actually standing in the yard of The Ataraxy with one foot on a vase that had been kicked over while grabbing Janice's braided ponytail with her free hand.

In the end, Sebastian believed her and hung up after a brief exchange.

The smile on Sasha's face vanished after she put her phone away, and her expression returned to being icy-cold again.

"Candice, you can forget about getting a single cent out of Oceanic Estate if you dare whip me!"

"Oh? Is that so?" Candice asked with a sneer.

The next thing Sasha knew, she felt a stinging sensation on her palm as Candice snatched the whip from her and lashed Janice hard with it.

Crack!

"Ah!"

Being a weak and frail woman, Janice let out a loud cry and collapsed with her hands covering her cheeks.

Moments later, blood began flowing out of the gaps between her fingers.

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What a vile woman!

Instead of helping Janice to her feet, Sasha got so mad that she just shouted at Candice, "You've gone too far, Candice! You like to play rough, eh? Fine, I'll give you rough!"

With a gesture from her eyes, a couple of heavily armed security guards came running into The Ataraxy.

"What are your orders, Madam?"

"Take her back to Oceanic Estate!" Sasha barked the order while pointing at Candice.

Everyone at The Ataraxy was shocked, including Jared who jumped from his chair.

This b*tch brought those men with her?

"She's my daughter! How dare you take her to Oceanic Estate?"

Sasha simply sneered as she replied coldly, "I'm the lady of the house, and I'm currently in charge of the Jadeson family. Is that good enough of a reason for you?"

Everyone instantly went pale in disbelief.

Janice had come over while Sasha was still the lady of the Jadeson family and was currently being held captive by Sasha.

They were boldly roughing her up so she would hand the rights over to them, but she turned out to not have the actual rights at all.

Candice went pale as well and tightened her grip on the whip instinctively when she saw the guards approach her.

She was prepared to make a desperate final struggle, but the Oceanic Estate's guards were highly trained professionals.

Candice had merely raised the whip when one of the guards lunged at her and snatched it out of her hands.

The guard then ripped it in two with a violent tug.

Snap!

Candice was dumbfounded. "You... You..."

Not wanting to give her a chance to speak, Sasha quickly ordered, "Stop wasting your time with her and just take her back to Old Mr. Jadeson! Let's see how he feels about her running around causing havoc like this!"

The guards then took her away while everyone else in the yard watched on in silence.

Sasha cast a cold glance at the messy yard behind her before grabbing the checkbook with her bloody hand.

She didn't leave them with a single check as she found them unworthy of it.

Sebastian and the others had arrived at Oceanic Estate before Sasha did, and he was having a conversation in Jonathan's study at the time.

"Oh my goodness! You're injured! Come, let me bandage that wound!"

Olivia felt her heart ache when she saw Sasha's injury and rushed over anxiously with a first aid kit.

Sasha eyed her wound which wasn't really deep and reassured her, "I'm fine, it's just a little cut. By the way, what is Mr. Jadeson doing in Old Mr. Jadeson's study? Did something happen?"

She was really worried about the two hot-tempered men being together.

"They came back together. Did you not know that?" Olivia looked surprised.

"Huh?"

It was Sasha's turn to be surprised.

They came back together? Does that mean Jonathan went to the White House too? If that's the case, what are they talking about in the study? Could it be about Sebastian going to see Alfred?

Sasha felt so uneasy that she couldn't even be bothered to tend to the two women she brought back with her.

She was treating her wound in her bedroom on the third floor when she heard footsteps coming from outside, and she saw Sebastian when she opened the door.

"Sebby, you're back?"

As if all of her worries were gone in that instant, she threw herself at him and hugged him tightly around the waist.

Sebastian was about to reach out to hug her back when he caught a whiff of antiseptic on her and scanned the room behind her.

"You're injured? What happened? Let me see."

The look in his eyes grew cold when he noticed the bloodied bandages, and he quickly pried her off him, only to notice her hand all wrapped up.

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"What happened to you?"

"N-Nothing... I hurt myself by accident on the way back, that's all!" Sasha stammered in response to his sudden glare.

What kind of accident would result in a nasty wound like this? Sebastian thought to himself with a frown.

Since she refused to tell him the truth, he chose not to press her for answers and led her into the bedroom after taking a quick glance at her hand.

"You messed up the bandages. I'll re-do it for you."

"Okay," Sasha agreed immediately when she saw that he had stopped pressuring her for an explanation.

"What did Alfred tell you when you saw him at the White House earlier, Sebby? I heard Old Mr. Jadeson went over too. Did something happen?" she asked while holding out her hand.

"No, don't worry about it," Sebastian calmly reassured her and kept his head low as he focused on wrapping her hand up.

Sasha felt relieved when she heard that.

"What did he tell you, then?"

"He asked me about his son. He wanted to know if I was the one causing trouble behind the scenes," Sebastian lied as naturally as he breathed while bandaging her hand up like a gentleman.

Due to his intelligence, Sasha had no choice but to believe him whenever he lied to her.

She asked him about returning to Avenport when he was done patching her up, and Sebastian gave her a decisive reply this time. "We leave tomorrow. I've had Karl prepare a private jet for us, so we'll fly straight to Avenport."

"Okay!"

Sasha was overjoyed. She threw herself into his embrace, nuzzling against his chest and kissing him happily on the lips.

As his wife had taken the initiative, it was only natural for Sebastian to respond passionately in kind.

The housemaids at Oceanic Estate realized the two of them spending most of the afternoon upstairs that day.

Meanwhile, Jonathan was furious as he confronted Candice for her actions at The Ataraxy.

"You never fail to surprise me, Candice! I can't believe you've changed so much over a year! You went from being a mature and obedient person to some bloodthirsty lunatic fighting on the frontlines! What, was your behavior in the past just a pretense?" he yelled angrily at Candice who was kneeling before him.

Had Jared not rushed over from The Ataraxy to beg him for mercy, Jonathan might have had his men break her legs on the spot.

"N-No, Uncle Jonathan... Please, listen to me... I'm not that kind of person!"

Candice went pale from his questioning, but her cunning nature pushed her to deny it even though all evidence had been presented to her.

"What I did before was wrong, and I've already been locked up for half a year because of it, but... I'm not at fault this time! My sisters-in-law told me Oceanic Estate has reduced their monthly allowance to 500 thousand. That's why I came rushing over!"

"500 thousand?"

Jonathan was shocked by the number she mentioned.

500 thousand? Didn't every family receive about five million in the past? Why did Sasha cut it to a mere tenth of the original amount after taking over?

Fortunately, Mark happened to be standing beside them. He explained, "Madam only adjusted the amount after conducting a check on The Ataraxy's expenses over the years, Old Mr. Jadeson."

"But isn't that too big of an adjustment? I remember it being about four to five million in the past!"

"That is true, but Madam found out that they only needed 500 thousand for their living expenses. The rest of the money was used for their businesses. Now that they are no longer doing any business, Madam said 500 thousand was all they should be given."

Jonathan went livid with rage upon hearing that.

Business? What business? One of them was selling drugs, and the other nearly f*cked the entire Jadeson family over with the drama at the military base!

"Even 500 thousand is excessive for you failures! You only deserve to get 100 thousand!" Jonathan shouted with his eyes wide.

"Uncle Jonathan..."

"Jonathan!"

Jared and Candice both called out to him at the same time.

100 thousand? We'd starve to death with that amount of allowance!

Jared was panicking so much that he couldn't even be bothered to help Candice beg for mercy. "Jonathan, we can't possibly survive with just 100 thousand! We need to spend at least tens of thousands each day!"

Jonathan was so mad that he yelled at the top of his lungs, "Why can't you if the folks over at Gossamer Creek can? What the hell are you guys even spending the money on anyway? Even us here at Oceanic Estate don't spend that much! What kind of extravagant life are you all living?"

He had long since been trained in frugality after decades of military service, which was made obvious by the looks of his car.

Jared fell silent and could only stare helplessly at his daughter.

After a brief pause, he clenched his teeth and knelt down before Jonathan as the last resort.

"What are you-"

"Okay, we'll go with 100 thousand, but could you at least spare Candice? I've lost both of my sons and three of my grandchildren! I can't go on if I lose my daughter too!"

He had a bright idea and pleaded for his daughter's safety in exchange for the huge cut in allowance.

Jonathan's attitude softened as the tragedies that befell his brother had indeed pained his heart.

He was about to agree to Jared's request when his phone vibrated from an incoming text message.

Little B*stard: If she walks out of this house today, I'll have her chopped up and fed to the dogs tomorrow!

The Love that Never Really Dies chapter 977

In the end, Jonathan did not let Candice go.

Aside from revoking her rights to claiming her allowance from Oceanic Estate as a member of The Ataraxy, he also ordered Mark to send her to The Substratum.

The Substratum was an impoverished and remote place. Whoever sent there would have a hard life.

"No, no, Uncle Jonathan. I'm sorry... I'm sorry. Please give me another chance, Uncle Jonathan..." On all fours, Candice implored Jonathan pitifully.

However, Jonathan shoved her aside with a kick.

"I've given you a chance. You made a huge mistake last time, and you were locked up for half a year. Yet, you didn't learn from your mistake, and you expect me to give you another chance? Take her away!" Jonathan cried.

"Yes, Old Mr. Jadeson," someone answered.

"One more thing. Keep a close eye on her. Once she has been sent away, she's forbidden to return to Jadeborough without my permission. Or else, all of you will be subjected to punishment by military law!" Jonathan even threatened his men with military law.

He was very loud, and everyone in the building could hear him.

As such, the wailing woman was dragged away.

That night, Sasha was packing her children's clothes. Suddenly, Vivian came over with her Barbie doll in her arms. "Are we going back soon, Mommy?"

"Yes, tomorrow." Sasha caressed her daughter's little head. The latter's hair was damp after a bath.

Panic flashed in Vivian's large, watery eyes. "What should I do now? My teacher said that she will organize a farewell party for me with my classmates, as I'll be going back soon."

"Huh?" It was Sasha's turn to be surprised. What a thoughtful school to organize a farewell party for their student!

Sasha was at a loss.

At once, she turned to her two sons who were playing video games. "Matt, Little Ian, is it true? Did you have a farewell party in your class?"

"Yeah, but we declined it." Matteo, who was enjoying himself immensely, answered the question with a nonchalant grin.

Sasha was speechless.

Vivian, who had her doll in her arms, looked like she was about to weep. Sasha immediately put down the clothes and hugged her.

"Okay, okay. Mommy will ask your teacher about it. If she organized the party especially for you, Mommy will discuss with Daddy about going back a day later. Is that all right?" Sasha asked.

"All right." Finally, the little girl laughed.

This was the difference between girls and boys.

Boys usually did not care much about this sort of thing, especially Matteo and Ian. They were extremely intelligent and already knew that the school teachers organized the farewell party to appears the Jadesons.

Thus, they rejected the offer on the spot.

However, Vivian was different. She was innocent and naive. Moreover, she was a meticulous person. Therefore, she appreciated that her teacher decided to host this event for her.

After tucking the children in bed, Sasha told Sebastian about this matter.

"A party? Do schools still do these things?" Sebastian was puzzled.

"Yes, I spoke to the teacher just now, and she did make this arrangement. She said that she had no other intentions. Vivian's leaving soon, and her classmates miss her. So, she decided to organize this farewell party," Sasha explained.

"Do they have to do that? It's not like Vivian has spent much time at that school." As expected, Sebastian seemed dismissive about the idea. He displayed an indifferent expression like his two sons.

Eventually, he agreed to the idea.

Vivian was the apple of his eye. He would give his daughter the world to make her happy.

"We shall leave a day later, then. Coincidentally, I need to look for Devin. Take the kids to school tomorrow. I'll pick you up once I've settled the matters at hand," Sebastian said.

"Devin?" Sasha was stunned by his worried expression. "Where are you going to look for him? Isn't he at home?"

"No. He went out yesterday and didn't return today. It's all right. He might be at the military base. I'll pay him a visit and come back after I've clarified everything with him," he explained briefly.

In fact, that was what Sebastian believed. They have already discussed the matter, and Devin had no reason to disappear out of the blue again. If he was not in Red Pavilion, he should be held up by his work at the military base.

However, little did Sebastian know that he was wrong this time.

"Devin, you've been sitting here for a whole day. Are you all right? What on earth did you see in the video?" At dawn, Jake drove back to West Bank Hotel in Coldbridge. When he arrived, Devin was still sitting in his hotel and did not move a muscle.

Naturally, Jake felt a bit anxious.

To be precise, Jake was stricken with anxiety ever since they got the videotape last night, and Devin locked himself in the room after watching the footage.

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Jake had started to panic by then.

Nevertheless, he got the room key from the hotel and opened the door.

When the door opened, however, he realized that Devin had not moved, as if he had been fused to the chair.

Jake, who had been watching over Devin yesterday, was even more worried. What on earth did he see in the surveillance footage? What would make a calm and collected man react in this manner?

He wondered whether he should tell Sebastian about this.

"Devin, you..." Jake said.

"What's the time now?" He was rather surprised to hear the other man's voice.

Devin had been sitting in the chair for more than ten hours. When he finally muttered huskily with bloodshot eyes, it seemed like he had retrieved his voice from the void.

Jake was stunned.

A few seconds later, he regained his senses and checked his watch. "It's almost seven in the morning. There are a number of phone calls at Red Pavilion, saying that Sebastian's looking for you. Do you want to head back, Devin?"

"Okay." Devin nodded.

Then, Jake watched as he got up from the chair. He squeezed the tape in his hands. Without warning, he tossed it out of the window.

The tape fell out of the tall building.

"What... What are you doing, Devin? Why did you throw it away? That's the last original footage, and we spent a long time finding it. There's nothing left after you throw it away." Jake felt exasperated.

He rushed to the windowsill. Unfortunately, the tape had landed on the ground below, and it was smashed to smithereens.

Devin has gone mad! Yesterday, he was the one who was hell-bent on finding this thing. Today, he's also the one who throws it away. What the hell is he trying to do?

"Devin, can you tell me something? What the hell did you see in the footage? Is it exactly as Ms. Shanae said? Never mind, then. Don't marry her if you don't want to. We'll help you!" Jake said.

He thought what the woman said was true, which was the reason for Devin's fury.

After that, Jake began to console Devin.

He even brought up Sebastian and said that they would help him.

Yet, Devin ignored him. As soon as he discarded the tape, it seemed like a burden had been lifted off his shoulders. He heaved a sigh and walked away.

Jake was at a loss for words.

Then, he followed Devin.

He still did not understand him, even though he knew him for many years. It was Jake's first time seeing Devin behave in this manner, and it perplexed him.

Finally, the two of them left Coldbridge by car.

They reached Jadeborough a little after ten in the morning, and they headed straight for the Red Pavilion.

"You're finally back, Mr. Jadeson. Mr. Sebastian is looking for you and has phoned up numerous times. He has gone to the military base," the housemaid said.

"Huh?" Jake was astonished when he heard the housemaid's words.

"Why is Sebastian looking for you? He even went to the military base. Is something going on? He has never done this before," he addressed Devin.

It was strange, indeed, for Sebastian seldom looked for someone in such a hurry. Furthermore, it was rare for him to be proactive in paying others a visit.

So, is something up?

Devin was taken aback, too.

Soon, he returned to his car silently. He started it up and drove to the military base.

Does Sebastian know about the tape? I bet he does!

The other day, Mark told him that the videotape brought back by Sebastian contained footage of Devin and Shanae. Strangely, when he viewed it yesterday, he found out that the content was completely different.

Who doctored the footage?

He did not have the answer yet. However, he believed that with Sebastian's intelligence and sharp observation, the latter could tell that the footage was definitely doctored.

Devin drove to the military base quietly.

As expected, he saw an olive green SUV parked outside the base's compound. Judging by the vehicle's temperature, it had been there for quite some time.

"Major!" A sentry saluted him.

"Did you see my brother heading in?" Devin pointed at the SUV. He still addressed Sebastian as his brother.

The sentry nodded at once. "Yes, he's inside. He said he's looking for Major. I consulted my superiors, and they let him in."

"All right." Devin got out of the car and told Jake to wait for him outside. Then, he entered the military base.

What does Sebastian want to tell me?

He had no idea. Nonetheless, as soon as he passed through the gates, an idea appeared in his mind. If he wants to talk to me about that matter, I'll refuse!

Devin would even deny it. It was just like the destroyed videotape. Not a shred of evidence was left.

"So, you've finally returned." While Devin was pondering over the matter, an impatient Sebastian had stepped out of the former's office. He frowned when he saw Devin and stopped in his tracks.

The Love that Never Really Dies chapter 978

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"lan is right—we need to make sure everything's fine since Vivi wants us to join her! Once we reach the farmhouse, I'm sure I can handle them just fine! I'll make sure we have a great day!"

"Hooray!" Her sons started jumping for joy and wrapped their arms around their mother.

She figured out things were the exact opposite of the ones she had in mind once they reached the farmhouse.

Despite being very near to Jadeborough, the farmhouse was located in a secluded valley. Honestly, given how run-down the place looked, it would be a stretch to say that this was a farmhouse.

It reminded Sasha of the Floral Village in Avenport, which their family had spent some time in a while back.

No. Even Floral Village had better facilities than this! There isn't even a well-built road over here!

The moment the teacher saw them, she rushed over and introduced the place to them, "This is Alex's family-owned farmhouse! The entire place hasn't gone through any modern modification! In other words, we get to experience a primitive lifestyle!"

Glancing at the surroundings, Sasha rolled her eyes and felt a strong urge to curse.

It turned out that most people of the upper echelon had been blessed with easy lives and sought to experience "labor and hardship", which was why the farmhouse was preserved in this primitive manner.

They thought it was a great idea to live a different life every once in a while.

It was then Vivian rushed to her mother and brothers' sides, asking in a mellifluous tone, "Mommy, isn't this similar to the village we used to stay? Are we there again?"

The rest expressed their disbelief when they heard the little girl's questions. They couldn't believe the almighty household members of the Jadesons once spent a long time on the outskirts.

If that's the case, does it mean those aren't merely baseless accusations? Is she really a country bumpkin instead of the heiress of an equally influential family?

The rest of the party thought it wasn't worthy of their time anymore since they were initially there to flatter the household member of the Jadesons through the aid of the teacher.

On top of that, they couldn't wait to figure out the identity of the household member of the Jadesons since the family was the most influential amongst the members of the upper echelon in Jadeborough.

Throughout the years, countless women tried joining the family as household members, but their efforts were to no avail. Out of nowhere, a young woman was introduced as the wife of the successor of the Jadesons.

They couldn't keep their curiosity and jealousy to themselves anymore, especially when they heard something along the line of Sasha spending time on the outskirts.

Unaware of the things going on in the minds of those around them, she leaned over and explained in a gentle tone, "This isn't the village we once spent some time together."

Vivian responded with a nod and rushed in the direction of her friends with the plushy she brought along with her.

She mentioned, "Caroline, my mother has just confirmed this isn't the village we used to live in!"

The adorable little girl next to Vivian asked in return, "Really?"

The innocent little girl seemed to be smarter than Vivian. She asked in return, "If that's the case, where's the village you used to live with your mother? Is it as rural as this one?"

"No! It was a village with picturesque scenes! Although it was a relatively simple house, Mom did a great job keeping the environment clean!"

Vivian tried recalling the time she spent on the outskirts and thought things were fine since they spent quite a long time there as a family of five.

Vivian sincerely wished to share the great time she had with her family with her friend, but Caroline's parents had something else in mind when they heard Vivian.

"Has she just mentioned they once spent a long time on the outskirts as a family? If that's the case, is it true she's just a country bumpkin?"

"I think that's probably the case!"

"If that's the case, we'll get the teacher to assign her the toughest chores! We can share the news with the rest once we verify she's just another country bumpkin!"

Out of nowhere, the parents engaged themselves in a heated discussion and came out with something vicious.

They thought it wouldn't be necessary to waste their time with Sasha if they could prove her just another woman from the streets.

Once they tarnished her image, others would stop thinking highly of her. They thought it was a great opportunity to get her to owe them a favor in return.

As soon as they had everything sorted out, one of them returned to the teacher's side and shared their plan with her.

Once Sasha got herself ready for work, the teacher approached her and asked, "Are you familiar with handling a seedbed? Can you help out with the seedbed? You can take that miniature watermill over there home with you if you're the team with the most contribution."

The teacher showed Sasha the miniature watermill next to the river. Coincidentally, the children, including her sons and daughter, had gathered around to inspect the never-seen-before watermill.

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Sasha thought it was too much of a hassle, but she made up her mind to handle the seedlings as she was afraid of letting the children down.

After much consideration, she made up her mind and got herself ready for the upcoming session, marching to the plot of land in the middle of nowhere with her children.

The confused Ian tagged along with his mother and blurted out the questions he had in mind, "Mommy, is it just me, or is this plot of land relatively small as compared to the ones in Floral Village?"

Sasha turned around and found out she was the only one working hard when the rest of the parents had a great time doing nothing with their children.

In the end, she explained with a smirk, "Well, it's because they're merely here for a short getaway with their family. On the contrary, we had to ensure there was sufficient food for everyone when we were at Floral Village."

Vivian continued collecting flowers and added, "Mommy's right, Ian! Have you forgotten the cows and dogs at Floral Village? There's nothing similar here!"

Ian was initially against the idea of joining the trio. However, he couldn't bear to leave his careless sister alone and went to her to keep her safe in the end.

As Sasha started working hard, the pretentious parents couldn't suppress their urge to execute their vicious plan anymore.

Along with a nasty caption, the photos of Sasha made it to the internet within a few minutes.

The mysterious Mrs. Jadeson!

When they thought it was time to make fun of the almighty Mrs. Jadeson once the news made it to the headline, an SUV with camouflage print pulled over at the entrance.

"Mommy, Daddy's here!"

The observant Vivian was the first to notice her father's presence. She started waving at him with the flowers she had collected.

Similarly, Sasha turned around and looked in the direction of her husband the moment she heard her daughter.

The man, who had promised to drop by and pick them up, finally made his way there to honor his promises.

"Mommy! I wanna go find Daddy!"

"Alright, get Ian to go along with you!"

Sasha instructed Ian to keep an eye on his sister and continued cultivating the seedbed again. She thought of leaving the moment she acquired the miniature watermill for her children.

As soon as Sebastian joined his daughter and son, he brought them to her side and asked, "What are you doing? Why are you plowing the land when you're here for some sort of party?"

Sasha turned around and found out the man had finished his sentence with his brows arched in confusion.

Meanwhile, the rest of the parents couldn't suppress their excitement any longer when they found out the successor of the Jadesons had made it there.

They started capturing photos of the man who had been stirring things up at Jadeborough throughout the year since it was the first time they met him in person.

When the photos of the man leading a primitive lifestyle along with the woman on the outskirts made it to the internet, it took the netizens by storm.

User A: Is this the successor of the Jadesons, the son of the late almighty commander?

User B: I think it's him!

User A: Oh, God! He's such a handsome man!

User C: You're right! I think I've just found my new crush! It turns out the so-called maniac is such a handsome man!

Within a few minutes, countless topics revolving around Sebastian's look made it to the headline as well.

Some of them couldn't help but wonder the reason the successor of the Jadesons was familiar with chores of families on the outskirts.

On the other hand, the vicious group of parents was thrilled by the comments.

Out of nowhere, a comment took the rest by surprise.

User F: Hold on a second! Why does the successor of the Jadesons resemble the successor of the Hayeses so much? If my memory serves me right, I've seen him on a show!

User G: Are you sure you're not seeing things?

Once again, the comment took the internet by storm and garnered the attention of the onlookers.

The photo the said user showed the rest took them by surprise again since it was a photo of the family of five taking part in similar activities conducted by a preschool in Floral Village.

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Coincidentally, the family of five was in the middle of a similar session on the outskirts.

It wasn't even necessary for the vicious parents to stir things up anymore since the photos had topped the headlines of major media.

As a matter of fact, the moment the news made it to the headline, it had rendered the server incapable of handling the requests from the concurrent users.

They finally figured out the reason the successor of the Hayeses disappeared into thin air about a year ago.

It turned out he was the rightful successor of the most influential family. Due to the absurdity of the incident, the netizens couldn't help but express their envy over him.

Similarly, the comments took the parents by surprise when they found out the man was the fearsome corporate player.

In fact, his previous identity was on par with his current identity since no corporate player was a match for him.

Hold on a minute! If that's the case, she's not just another woman from the streets; she might be an equally capable woman!

On the other hand, Sebastian had joined Sasha in the field and was ready to get his hands dirty. He had learned from his previous lessons.

Therefore, he was aware of the tips and tricks to get things done as soon as possible. He leaned over and started planting the seedlings all over the plot of land.

She was thrilled he was there to share the workload with her, but she didn't want him to stain himself. Thus, she urged, "Just leave everything to me! I'm afraid you're going to stain yourself again!"

After all, he never had to get himself involved in something similar since he was born with a silver spoon.

On top of that, he had better things to do with his time, including improving the world economy. Hence, she thought it wouldn't be wise to acquire his aid.

However, the man dismissed her suggestion and asked in return, "What do we get in return?"

When the three little ones next to them heard them, one of them turned around and answered his query, "We get to bring the miniature watermill home with us, Daddy!"

Sebastian turned around and asked Sasha, "What exactly are we talking about?"

Sasha giggled and explained, "They seemed to have grown fond of the primitive tool next to the river and asked me to do them a favor."

"Well, we just hurry up and finish everything! It's almost time to leave!" Sebastian sped up since he couldn't wait to go home.

Out of the blue, one of his children shrieked, "I-It's here! Hurry up and catch it!"

"What are they doing?"

Sebastian and Sasha turned around the moment they heard their children's conversation.

lan, who was crouching next to his brother, immediately leaped into action upon hearing Matteo's cry.

Vivian thought Ian would get it, but he was no match for Matteo in terms of agility. After all, he spent most of his time home instead of going out and about.

Vivian remarked in an aggrieved manner with her lips pursed, "lan, the ladybug has fled!"

A ladybug?

Their parents finally figured out the things they were up to. Once they exchanged glances, they put everything aside and made their way to their children.

"Where's the ladybug?"

"It's gone, Mommy! Matt and I saw one a few seconds ago! It was a colorful one!"

Vivian started sharing the things she saw with her mother once their parents made their way to them.

Matteo couldn't keep his excitement to himself as well. He started pointing in the direction of the ladybug and mentioned, "Mommy, it was right here, but lan couldn't catch it!"

lan was rendered speechless and started flushing in embarrassment as if he had been humiliated.

Sasha returned to the side of her eldest son and assured him, "It's fine! Since it's nearby, I'm sure we can still find it! We'll just go around and search for it!"

She brought her son around the farm with her in an attempt to get their hands on the ladybug. Sebastian joined them and started searching high and low.

It wasn't much of a surprise for them to run into one or two ladybugs since they were far away from the heavily-polluted city.

Coincidentally, the owner of the farmhouse figured out the things the family of five were up to when he dropped by to ensure everything was fine.

Therefore, he thought of sharing the tips and tricks to capture a ladybug with them. "Mr. Hayes, try searching for them at vacant lots full of weeds instead of the ones I have plowed."

"Thanks for the advice!" Sasha was thrilled when she figured out they could easily find ladybugs everywhere.

The owner responded with a smile and wrapped up the conversation with the family of five.

Sebastian started trying out his luck with vacant lots full of weeds that were nearby when he wouldn't even do the dishes or the laundry whenever they were home.

Sasha couldn't believe the germaphobe had gone to great lengths just to fulfill their children's wish.

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Most importantly, he was able to carry himself in an elegant manner as if he was in the middle of something serious instead of trying to catch the bugs for their children.

The moment he found the first ladybug, the little ones started jumping for joy and rushed in his direction to get their hands on the never-seen-before creature.

"Daddy, hand it over to me!"

"She's right, Daddy! Hand it over to us! Otherwise, it's going to fly away again!"

lan joined his siblings and stopped feeling guilty at once. He nodded since he was of the same idea.

Sasha, who was next to them, felt as if blissful moments as such were the only ones she needed in life. She truly wished they would get to live a simple and happy life as a family of five in the future.

The family of five was thrilled to find something enjoyable in the middle of nowhere. They spent quite a few hours catching ladybugs and putting them aside in a jug until it was almost sunset.

"Wow, Daddy, Mommy! You guys are awesome! We have caught so many ladybugs!"

"Those are quite interesting catch you have over there! We should've brought our children to join all of you! I'm sure they would've enjoyed it as much as your children did!"

The rest of the parents joined them and thought it was a great opportunity to get themselves acquainted with the members of the most influential family in Jadeborough.

Sasha remained indifferent throughout the conversation. She brought her children to the river to get their feet cleaned.

A few minutes later, a man returned to them with a jug full of ladybugs and a miniature watermill.

"Is that it?"

"Mmm! Shall we go home since it's getting late? Let's not forget we need to return to Avenport early in the morning."

"You're right. It's time to leave," Sasha agreed without a second thought since she couldn't wait to leave.

The family of five wasn't aware of the things going on in the virtual space when there was another uproar as soon as the photos of them indulging themselves in a primitive form of entertainment made it to the internet.

The netizens were envious of the family's blissful lifestyle and thought it was time for them to learn to appreciate the presence of their family.

Similarly, someone in Sumanthova came across the photos and clenched her fingers when she found out the family of five had a great time together.

The little ones and Sasha tucked themselves in shortly after their meal after having such a long day.

"Sebby, have you informed Wendy we're moving over to Frontier Bay once we're back?"

Sebastian, who had just made his way out of his shower, answered the query of the barely conscious woman, "Yes."

Sasha fell into a deep slumber once she wrapped up the conversation with Sebastian.

She was against the idea of getting herself involved in irritating situations. Thus, staying elsewhere was the sole alternative she could think of.

Sebastian started running his fingers through the hair of the sleeping woman. Out of nowhere, her phone on the nightstand started buzzing.

Who could it be when it's so late?

The moment Sebastian accessed her phone, he was confused by the message she received.

Solomon: What time are you reaching tomorrow?

He thought of casting the phone elsewhere but changed his mind at the last minute. After much hesitation, he replied on Sasha's behalf.

Sasha: ?

Solomon: I'm just trying to reserve a private dining room for your family since it's going to take Wendy some time to get everything ready.

It merely took the man on the other end a few seconds to reply. With that being said, he did a great job justifying himself.

Once Sebastian figured out the things Solomon was up to, he stopped furrowing his brows.

Sasha: Thank you so much, but just do me a favor and stop poking your nose into my business!

It was then Solomon, who was in his apartment in Avenport, figured out he was in the middle of a conversation with Sebastian.

Slouching against the couch, his eyes widened in disbelief when he found out the truth. A few seconds later, he cast his phone aside while flushing as if he had been humiliated in the face.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Irked by the interaction with Sebastian, Solomon instructed the one knocking on the door with his volume raised, "Come in!"

Luke entered the room to a frustrated man on the couch with his face scrunched up. Subsequently, he stammered, "M-Mr. George, I have already reserved a private dining room with Palace Hotel—"

The infuriated man stopped Luke from finishing the sentence and instructed, "That won't be necessary! Cancel it!"

H-Huh? Isn't he the one bringing up the same thing over and over again ever since the afternoon? Why has he changed his mind when I have gone to great lengths just to get him a freaking private dining room?

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As confused as he might be, he knew it was time for him to cancel the reservation since Solomon had made himself clear.

"Speaking of which, has Sabrina returned?"

Luke brought himself to a halt and answered, "She's has made her way to Cranur to strike a deal with the owner of the company in charge of renewable energy sources. I don't think she's going to be back soon."

He told Solomon the things Sabrina was up to over the past few days. It turned out she had gotten herself engaged with all sorts of things after joining the company as a staff.

Solomon wasn't the only one who hadn't encountered her since her subordinates weren't aware of her whereabouts as well when they needed her to guide them.

He got increasingly frustrated and instructed, "Send a few people to keep her safe. Speaking of which, who's the candidate Matilda has in mind for her blind date again?"

Once again, Solomon's question took his secretary by surprise.

Matilda? Is he referring to his aunt and Mr. Brandon's mother?

Luke started perspiring in fear of offending the already irked Solomon. He stammered, "I-I'm not sure since you turned her down when she brought up the suggestion."

When I shared Matilda's proposal with him the moment she called, he expressed his disagreement and reprimanded her.

He said he would never allow others, especially the Emmanuels, to take advantage of the Hayeses even though Frederick had long passed on. If that's the case, why has he changed his mind out of the blue?

"Well, just get going and ask if you're not sure! If it's possible, set them up for a session in person!"

What the heck? Has he seriously agreed to set Ms. Sabrina up for a blind date with someone else?

As confused as Luke might be, he took note of Solomon's instructions and excused himself.

He couldn't figure out the reason he had changed his mind out of the blue since he didn't bother to poke his nose into the business of his half-sister throughout the past year, let alone her marriage.

To be precise, he turned them down with the same excuses when Matilda called to share her proposal with him.

In short, his secretary couldn't fathom the reason he had changed his mind and agreed to set them up for a blind date in person.

When Luke was on his way home, he lost himself in a train of thought while staring at the bright moon. He thought he wouldn't have the chance to indulge himself in such carefree moments anymore.

"Mr. Hayes, Mrs. Hayes, you guys are finally back!" he muttered to himself and reached for his phone in an attempt to figure out the precise time of arrival of Sebastian and his family.

To his surprise, he found out he had received a text message from Sabrina.

Sabrina: Luke, is my brother coming home with his family tomorrow?

Luke: Yes, Ms. Hayes. Speaking of which, where are you? I've just returned from Mr. George's office. He wants me to set you up for a blind date with the successor of the Sheerwood family from Summerbank.

Sabrina: Come again? Who's this successor of the Sheerwood family we're talking about?

As the woman on the other end wasn't aware of the things going on, Luke had to share the content of his conversation with Solomon with Sabrina.

Luke: Have you forgotten the time your aunt tried to set you up for a blind date with someone else? Mr. George said it's worth a try.

Sabrina: Hello? Who does he think he is to poke his nose into my business?

She started reprimanding Solomon for being a busybody and cast her phone aside, ignoring the incoming text messages.

See? I knew she would throw a tantrum! No one can possibly talk some senses into her!

Luke shrugged his shoulders, indicating there wasn't much he could do as well.

Little did he know the moment he wrapped up his conversation with Sabrina, the infuriated woman called Solomon and confronted him.

"Hello?"

She yelled the moment the man picked up the phone, "Solomon! How dare you try to set me up for a blind date with someone else? Who are you to poke your nose into my business?"

Solomon had to inch away from the phone since the woman on the other end was at the top of her lungs.

He explained, "I'm afraid you're yelling at the wrong person since it wasn't even my idea."

"What do you mean it's not your idea?"

"Hello? Who am I to poke my nose into your business? I'm just playing along with your Aunt Matilda since she mentioned it was her duty to take care of you after your father's passing. Go scream at her instead."

The man remained calm throughout the conversation and made it sound as if it had nothing to do with him.

Soon enough, Sabrina was at a loss for words as she wasn't supposed to pick on her aunt. After all, Matilda was her sole relative.

Nonetheless, she repeated herself, "I don't care because there's no way I'm showing up!"

On the other hand, Solomon remarked with a smile, "It's totally up to you, but allow me to give you another heads-up. Devin had returned to Coldbridge with the tape. I'm sure he has figured out you're the one. However, he hasn't done anything as we speak. Isn't it time for you to stop getting your hopes high?"

The woman on the other end went dead silent.

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A few seconds of silence later, Sabrina hung up the call and brought the conversation to an abrupt halt.

No one was aware of the things going on in her mind, but Solomon dropped Luke another text message prior to calling it a day.

Soloman: Tell Matilda to get the man ready to meet Sabrina in person!

Sasha and the rest of her family roused from their sleep early in the morning and savored their last breakfast in Oceanic Estate prior to their trip home.

"Madam, when are you guys coming back?"

"Madam, we're going to miss you as much as Old Mr. Jadeson does when all of you aren't around!"

The housemaids' emotions were written all over their faces since they were against the idea of the family of five leaving.

They were different from the pretentious housemaids at the Hayeses' place as they had grown fond of Sasha ever since she joined the family.

Therefore, Sasha was slightly upset and against the idea of leaving them. She assured them, "We'll be back in the future! Once we're free, we'll drop by every once in a while!"

She announced at the top of her lungs since she wished to share those words with Jonathan as well. The man had long roused from his sleep and made his way to the living room. He was equally upset since they would be leaving soon.

It was then Sebastian marched down the stairs with Vivian in his arms. He asked, "Are you done?"

"Yes," Sasha answered with a nod and looked in the direction of Karl and their sons at the entrance.

lan and Matteo were equally thrilled to return to Avenport since they spent most of their time there as a family of five after being apart from one another when they were young.

Jonathan's face puckered the moment the boys started jumping for joy at the entrance.

To make things worse, once Sebastian ensured they had everything they needed for the trip, he walked out of the mansion with Vivian.

H-He's such a-

Sasha, who couldn't move her eyes away from Jonathan, stepped forward and stopped Sebastian from leaving.

"Shouldn't you bid farewell to your grandfather before leaving?"

Glancing at the man in the living room, Sebastian finally brought himself to a halt.

He returned to his grandfather's side once he brought his daughter to her siblings' sides.

"I've already made myself clear more than once. As long as you listen to me, the Jadesons will be fine. In short, you don't have to worry."

Jonathan couldn't believe his so-called grandson wasn't there to bid farewell to him. Instead, the young man made it sound as if he was the one calling the shots around the family.

Unable to stand the man in front of him getting full of himself, Jonathan started burning with rage and asked, "What do you mean? Are you talking about the upcoming election? Am I supposed to listen to you and stop getting Devin involved? Who the hell do you think you are?"

Jonathan couldn't stop himself from going berserk anymore. Sebastian couldn't care less and marched his way in the direction of the entrance, leaving his irked grandfather alone in the living room.

As infuriated as he might be, he refused to initiate another conversation with the young man. Grasping his walking stick with all his might, he turned around with his eyes brimming.

In spite of the things he had in mind, he refused to give in again.

To his surprise, the leaving man brought himself to a halt and asked, "What exactly do you want from me?"

Jonathan turned around to find his grandson facing him with a scrunched-up face, and joy immediately took over the anger within him.

He repeated himself, "At the end of the day, you're still my grandson!"

"Uh-huh. what about it?"

"It's fine for you to return to Avenport, but I want you to return to Jadeborough at least once a month! Also, you're the person in charge of the subsidiaries of the family! I need to know if things are fine! You're supposed to ensure the maintenance of Oceanic Estate as well!"

Jonathan brought up his requests as if those were instructions his grandson had to adhere to as a member of the Jadesons.

He thought his grandson would pick on him again once he finished his sentence. However, Sebastian stopped making a fuss and asked in a sarcastic manner, "Are you sure it's necessary for me to return home once every month for something as trivial as such?"

"B-But-"

"If you wish to figure out the things going on, why don't you drop by Avenport and pay us a visit instead? I'll reimburse your trip once you're there!"

Once he wrapped up his conversation with his grandfather, he marched out of the mansion.

Jonathan couldn't even grasp the situation, but he found out Sebastian mentioned nothing else apart from expressing his disagreement to return once every month.

In other words, he's not trying to deny his responsibility as a member of the Jadesons? Is he going to fulfill his responsibility at Avenport?

Jonathan finally returned to his usual self and thought it wasn't such a bad idea to make a trip to Avenport every once in a while.

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Sasha finally returned home with her family after being away from Avenport for more than a year.

They had gone through countless ups and downs as a family throughout the past year. Thus, Sasha was overwhelmed by tidal waves of emotions when she set foot in her hometown again.

"Sha! We're over here!"

Shortly after they walked out of the arrival hall, they saw a young man waving at them with all his might. An elderly man was right next to the young man.

They were none other than her cousin, Lance Wand, and her father, Rufus Wand.

When Sasha saw Lance and Rufus, she cast everything aside and rushed in the direction of the ones she held dear in mind with her eyes welling up.

"Dad, I'm finally home!"

She wrapped her arms around her father after being apart from him for more than a year. As a result, she couldn't stop herself from weeping.

Similarly, her father couldn't keep his emotions to himself anymore. He started trembling with tears of joy streaming down his cheeks when he thought he had lost his daughter for good a year ago.

"I'm glad you're finally home!"

Even Sebastian couldn't help but tear up as he heard the conversation of the father and daughter duo.

After all, it took them a lot of effort for their family to reunite and return to the place they considered their home.

It took them some time to regain their composure and snap out of the overwhelming session.

The little ones greeted their grandfather, "Grandpa, did you miss us?"

"Of course! I miss all of you so much I have a hard time sleeping!"

Rufus leaned over and wrapped his arms around his grandchildren.

The boys were relatively obedient. On the contrary, the little girl ran her chubby fingers through her grandfather's hair and urged, "Grandpa, have you not taken good care of yourself when we were away?"

"Huh?"

Rufus couldn't believe the seven-year-old little girl was such an observant sweetheart. Subsequently, he felt another prickling sensation behind his eyes.

He had aged over the night when he heard that his son-in-law had gone missing and was heartbroken to know that his daughter had fallen off a cliff, dead.

On top of that, his grandchildren were nowhere to be found. He thought he had lost all the ones he held dear over the night.

He was just glad he hadn't resorted to anything extreme such as joining them in the afterlife when he was at the worst in life.

"Well, since you're back, why don't you drop by every once in a while to ensure I'm taking good care of myself?"

"Okay! If that's the case, I'll make sure to visit you every once in a while in the future!" The innocent little girl promised her grandfather to keep him company without a second thought.

As the little girl tapped on the middle-aged man's shoulder and assured him, those around them burst out laughing.

It was still autumn in Avenport while the people of Jadeborough had gotten themselves ready for winter. Things were still lively for those in Avenport, especially the family who had been apart from one another for so long.

Once they returned to Frontier Bay, Wendy wasn't the only one around to welcome the family of five—Sharon, Sasha's aunt, was there as well.

"You're finally home!"

She was all smiles when she rushed out of the entrance with an apron around her. The moment she saw them, she couldn't stop herself from weeping anymore.

Sasha felt equally overwhelmed. She brought her children along with her and greeted Sharon, "Aunt Sharon, just leave the rest to the housemaids and take a break!"

Sharon wiped her tears dry and started reprimanding her niece, "What are you talking about? It's nothing when it's such a joyous occasion!"

After a few seconds, Sharon brought the little ones into the mansion and thought it was time to gather around as a family.

Sebastian spent the time after their meal with his father-in-law and Jackson, Sasha's uncle, whereas Sasha joined Sharon in cleaning up the things she brought home with her.

"How's everything going on with the Jadesons? Has that man given his consent and allowed all of you to return?"

As the most level-headed amongst the rest, Sharon brought up a serious question.

Sasha nodded in return and assured her aunt, "Aunt Sharon, you don't have to worry because there's no way he's going to harm Sebastian. At the end of the day, Sebastian is still the sole successor of his late son."

Sharon let out a long sigh of relief when she heard her niece's words of assurance.

She had been holding a grudge against Sasha due to the demise of Xenia. Sasha's demise was the turning point of their relationship.

It was the first time in forever Sharon showed her niece her affectionate side and thought it was time to let bygones be bygones.

"Speaking of which, where's Sabrina? She's not in the company, is she?"

Sharon finally returned to her usual indifferent self when Sasha brought up Sabrina. "How am I supposed to know her whereabouts when we're not related to one another?"

Sasha knew it was time to ask someone else. Thus, she reached for her phone and drafted a text message.

Sasha: Sab, where are you? We've returned home. Currently, we're at Frontier Bay.

Standing on the balcony, she thought it was great to be home after being away for almost a year. She was glad the housemaids did a great job maintaining the garden as well.

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It merely took Sabrina a few seconds to reply to Sasha.

Sabrina: I'm currently at Summerbank.

Sasha: Huh? What are you doing there? Haven't you promised to pick us up from the airport? I have been waiting for you!

Sasha was startled when she found out Sabrina was away since Sabrina promised to drop by the airport and called to confirm their estimated time of arrival the day before.

It wasn't much of a big deal if she wasn't at the airport, but why the hell is she out of town? Most importantly, she's at Summerbank!

Sasha: What are you doing at Summerbank?

Sabrina: It's nothing special. I mean, do you really need me when there are so many people to keep the family company?

Sasha: What do you there are a lot of people to keep the family company? Apart from Sebastian and Karl, there's no one there to help us with our luggage!

Since Sasha was in a hurry to explain herself, she couldn't include everyone who had made it to the airport.

Soon, her sister-in-law stopped engaging herself in a conversation with her as if she had disappeared into thin air again.

Well, I guess I'll just forget about it until I meet her in person again. After all, she's free to do anything she wishes since she doesn't really have much of a commitment.

Sasha thought it was nothing and put her phone aside, returning to join the rest of her family.

Unbeknownst to her, Sabrina was currently in a café located in the courtyard of Summerbank

She was in the middle of a blind date, but the color had long drained from Sabrina's face.

The man opposite him asked when he saw her face turning pale and haggard, "Ms. Hayes, is everything fine? Why do you seem so pale?"

The man wasn't half bad in terms of look. In fact, he was considered to be above the average of his peers. He resembled Solomon in terms of look with his gold-rimmed glasses.

However, there was something odd about the way he carried himself. She felt as if he had gone through countless lessons to groom himself and thought that might have something to do with his identity as the heir of a political figure.

A few seconds of silence later, she replied, "I'm fine."

The man asked with a smile, "Shall we go catch a movie at the cinema? I've just found out there's a new movie screening today!"

"Okay..." Sabrina answered as if she couldn't care less of their upcoming agenda.

A few minutes later, the duo made their way out of the café and hopped in the Maserati at the entrance, heading towards the cinema.

She thought it was about time to stop dwelling in the past and to move on since things didn't work out for her.

Actually, she was against the idea of going on a movie date at the cinema when she was already thirty years old.

After all, she was never a huge fan of sweets, including popcorn and carbonated drinks.

The only thing she had in mind was a wine that was aged for at least a decade.

"Ms. Hayes, I've just gotten our popcorn! Shall we go in?"

"Okay." Sabrina played along with the man and entered the hall with a bucket of popcorn instead of sharing her thoughts with him.

Once they found their seats, it was time for them to enjoy the thrilling movie.

F*ck! A horror film of all things?

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The man stammered when the movie was about to begin, "M-Ms. Hayes, I'll always be here just in case you're afraid!"

Sabrina remained silent and continued savoring the popcorn she wasn't interested in at all.

Ten minutes later, it was finally time for the first climax of the movie. The most intense scene took a majority of the customers by surprise.

As a result, the man next to Sabrina shrieked and leaned over in an attempt to seek shelter.

Meanwhile, Sabrina continued savoring the popcorn with her eyes glued to the screen since she wasn't startled at all.

Halfway through the movie, the man on her shoulder sat upright and looked at her in the eyes, muttering her name, "Sabrina..."

"What?"

Sabrina was about to have another mouthful of popcorn, but she paused when she heard the man.

She turned around with her eyes widened since no one, apart from her parents, had ever addressed her in such an intimate manner.

Most of those affiliated with her would address her as Ms. Hayes. Otherwise, her close acquaintance, such as Sasha, would address her with her alias or nicknames.

It has been such a long time ever since someone last addressed me in such an intimate manner.

"I just want to let you know you're an attractive woman. I've never encountered someone as charming as you throughout the years."

Sabrina's mind went completely blank since no one had ever complimented her as well. After all, she had quite a unique fashion sense and preferred putting on gothic makeup.

In short, she would show up in front of others as if something was wrong with her mind when she was the heiress of the Hayes.

To her surprise, the man, whom she had merely encountered a few hours ago, praised her in a sincere manner.

As she lost herself in a train of thought, the man in the dark leaned over and kissed her on the lips after gasping out her name for one last time.

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She ended up casting the bucket of popcorn she had with her in his face and yelled, "What the hell is wrong with you?"

As she was at the top of her lungs, those around them heard their conversation and turned around.

Similarly, her response took the man by surprise. He felt humiliated since he had a relatively disheveled appearance with popcorn all over him.

He felt a strong urge to run out of the hall and stuttered, "I-I'm so sorry, Ms. Hayes! I-I'm just—"

"F*ck off!"

There was all she said. She couldn't be bothered to waste the energy to utter another word to the man.

Similarly, the woman sprang up from the seat and brought herself out of the hall, leaving the man alone.

As others started picking on him, he felt his limbs turning stiff and thought it was time for him to leave as well.

Shortly after she made her way out of the hall, Sabrina hailed a cab.

It was then the man caught up with her and said, "Ms. Hayes, hold on a second! I'm so sorry for trying something rash! Can you please forgive me?"

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How dare he get in my way?

Irked by the disgusting man's response, Sabrina was about to reprimand him in front of others again.

In the nick of time, the man grasped her hand and repeated himself with his voice quivering, "I didn't mean it, but I couldn't stop myself since you seemed extremely alluring in the dark! I-If it makes you feel better, just slap me in the face! Can you please not leave me?"

Sabrina was shocked as the man's voice was barely audible towards the end of his sentence as if he was truly apologetic.

What one earth is going on? Has he always been such an awesome sweet talker? Isn't it too much of an exaggeration when we're merely acquainted for a little more than a few hours?

Despite the doubts she had, she wasn't as infuriated as before. She confessed in return, "I'm so sorry, Mr. Sheerwood, but I'm afraid things won't work out for us since I don't really have a thing for men like you."

The man's disappointment was written all over his face. In a final attempt to salvage his relationship with the woman in front of him, he asked, "Why?"

She asked in return, "What do you mean why when you can't really justify the sort of affection you have for me as well?"

The man was rendered speechless. In the end, he suggested, "Well, shall we go get something to eat? I mean, you haven't had anything after making your way here from afar, have you?"

He looked at her in the eyes with an aggrieved look as if she hadn't made herself clear it was over for them.

As a result, she frowned and thought she wouldn't need others to keep her company for a meal.

She thought of turning him down, but when she recalled her aunt was the one introducing the man to her, she knew that wasn't the wise thing to do.

In the end, she promised to join him for one last meal, "Alright, we'll return home once we finish our meal."

"Alright, stay right here and wait for me! I'll be back in a short while!" he assured with his eyes gleaming and dashed in the direction of the parking lot, leaving Sabrina alone at the entrance of the cinema.

In spite of the protruding set of outfits she had put on, she was just another woman in the middle of a bustling street.

However, the driver of a passing-by SUV noticed the presence of the woman and brought the car to a halt at the street opposite the cinema.

The passenger in the car craned over and asked the driver, "Major, why have you stopped here when we're still on our way to our destination?"

To his surprise, the one driving his car seemed to have something else in mind. He caught a glimpse of a certain someone he was familiar with when she was supposed to be elsewhere.

Within a few seconds, he started emanating a menacing presence, intimidating those around him.

The man next to the one driving finally turned around and found out there was another similar car parked at the entrance of the cinema.

However, it wasn't just another ordinary SUV; it was a full-spec Hummer that had undergone a series of modifications.

Sabrina couldn't keep her questions to herself anymore. She asked with her eyes gleaming, "Holy moly! How the hell have you gotten your hands on such an amazing ride? I have purchased countless vehicles, but none of the ones I own is a match for this!"

The woman with a miniature bag and skintight dress started running her hands across the modified car as if she had found treasure.

Sabrina was different from an ordinary woman since she was no fan of accessories and cosmetic items. Cars were the only things she was fond of. To be precise, she was a huge fan of street races.

Similarly, the man inside the car couldn't believe his ride was the thing it would take to charm the initially indifferent woman.

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"I have gathered the parts from all around the globe from fellow fanatics!"

"Are you serious?"

He knew it was time for him to shine. "Yes! If you're interested, why don't you drop by my place and see if there's anything you want? I have plenty of those at my place!"

Sabrina couldn't pull herself together anymore. She removed her pairs of high heels and handed her bag to the man, climbing her way into the car without a second thought.

No ordinary man could withstand the woman with a busty figure crawling into the car under broad daylight.

She seemed to be a fallen angel due to the gothic makeup she had put on. With just one glance, the man secretly gulped to get a grip on himself.

Meanwhile, the man inside the SUV opposite the street grasped the steering wheel with all his might when he saw her climbing into the car.

Crack!

When the passenger next to him heard the sound of him cracking his finger, he stammered, "M-Major—"

Gritting his teeth, Devin repeated his instructions, "Get out of the car!"

His comrade couldn't figure out the things going on since Devin wasn't even that intimidating of a figure when they were involved in a war.

As soon as the sole passenger in the car alighted, Devin accelerated the car without a second thought in an attempt to pursue the modified Hummer.

What's he up to? Is that the suspect of the firearm smuggling case?

Half an hour later, Sabrina finally made it to the residential area of those affiliated with the army of the nation.

Sabrina drove all the way to Isaac Sheerwood's place according to his instructions. Once they reached, he asked, "We're finally here, Ms. Hayes! Care to join me for a cup of coffee?"

Isaac was thrilled since he had gotten Sabrina to drop by his place. Needless to say, he was certain his parents were home in anticipation of their arrival.

However, Sabrina had no intention to join the man after taking a peek at the mansion. She asked, "Where's the garage? Why don't you hurry up and show me the way to the garage?"

"O-Okay, it's that building over there."

Isaac was slightly upset, but he showed her the way to his garage as instructed. Shortly after she figured out their upcoming destination, she accelerated the car in the direction of the garage.

The man next to her was really afraid things wouldn't turn out the way he had in mind.

As a member of the renowned Sheerwood family, he had quite an impressive garage since a bungalow was modified to accommodate his needs.

It might've cost a leg and an arm, but it was merely a piece of cake for him since his father was the one calling the shots around there. Similarly, his mother was a highly regarded professor giving lectures at a nearby university.

Sabrina remarked with her eyes gleaming when as she drove into the garage with all sorts of parts of cars everywhere, "That's quite an impressive garage you have!"

She wasn't really shocked since those were nothing as compared to the ones the Hayeses owned. However, Isaac thought those were words of reassurance coming from her.

"I have purchased these from everywhere! I'm pretty sure no one is a match for me in terms of varieties and collections!"

"Are you serious?"

She jumped out of the car without her shoes as she couldn't suppress the urge to look around anymore. A few seconds later, she had gone rounds searching for the parts she needed.

Isaac seemed as if he was her subordinate, carrying her pair of heels along with him while trying to catch up with her.

"Of course! That's precisely the reason I tell you it's just a piece of cake to modify the car of your choice!"

"Actually, I'm trying to modify a Jeep Wrangler!"

"A Jeep Wrangler?"

"Yes, I've always wanted to visit the desert! I mean, I need a car that can bring me everywhere!"

She wrapped her arms around the parts of cars in the garage as she continued sharing her vision with Isaac.

Well, maybe I'll be fine as long as I stay away from others for a few years! I need to spend some time in isolation somewhere no one can find me!

"Consider it done since! I'm sure I have all the parts you need here! I'll show you around once you put on your pair of shoes!"

Isaac flushed as he fell to his knee in an attempt to put on her shoes on her behalf.

Sabrina couldn't get used to it and felt her limbs turning stiff the moment she recalled she had been running around barefoot.

"I'll put in on!"

"No, Ms. Hayes! Just allow me to do you a favor since it's not really safe in the garage! I don't have anywhere for you to take a seat as well!"

In the end, the man with gold-rimmed glasses put on the pair of heels on her behalf.

Sabrina's mind was all over the place.

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She snapped out of bewilderment once she felt the man's gigantic palm around her foot, holding it in a gentle manner as if it was something precious to him.

Brakel

The moment she thought of moving her foot away from him, they heard another car closing in from afar at top speed.

Who is it?

Subconsciously, she raised her head and looked in the direction of the entrance.

As a thunderous crack filled the desolate space, the roller shutter was banged open from the outside by a black SUV a few seconds later.

What the hell?

Isaac, who had yet to put on her shoes on her behalf, felt a chill running down his spines and turned around to figure out the things going on.

He found out it was an SUV on par with the one he owned. On top of that, it was owned by someone from the military.

What's a militant SUV doing in my garage?

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The color started draining from Isaac's face as he tried to figure out the reason the mysterious figure alighting from the car was there.

The man alighting from the car had put on his camouflage-print uniform along with a pair of heavy-duty boots.

Isaac stammered his questions with his eyes widened in disbelief, "W-Who the hell are you?"

The man in uniform dismissed his question and had his eyes glued to the woman next to her with his face puckered in irritation the moment he caught a glimpse of Isaac's hand on Sabrina's foot.

He tried his best to suppress his wrath and asked with his teeth gritting in angst, "What are you doing?"

Sabrina's mind went completely blank as she thought she had been seeing things again when the man showed up out of nowhere.

What's he doing here? Am I hallucinating again? Is my mind messing with me again?

Staring at the man in his uniform in the eyes, she felt the man's intimidating presence as if he was there to take out his foe.

It was the first time she encountered the serious side of the man. She couldn't even form a complete sentence since she was still in a state of bewilderment.

Devin couldn't stand the woman going dead silent anymore. He let loose of his emotions and asked at the top of his lungs, "Have you not heard me?"

As a result, Sabrina shuddered and inched away from Isaac once she returned to her senses.

It was then Isaac brought himself up and stood in front of Sabrina to defend her, asking the man in front of them, "Who the hell are you? What do you think you're doing at the residency of the Sheerwood family? Have you lost your mind or something? How dare you barge into our place?"

Has he mistaken Devin as just another infantry or something? Why isn't he stepping aside when his life might be at stake as well? Is he—

Another glance at Isaac from Sabrina was all it took to get on the nerves of the already enraged Devin.

She couldn't even explain themselves as the enraged man asked in return, "Are you trying to challenge me? Well, I'll show you the things I'm capable of!"

Devin dashed in the direction of Isaac and rendered him incapable of motion by strangling him with all his might.

"Urgh!"

"Argh!"

Sabrina started shrieking in fear at the same moment the man in front of her started growling in pain.

She finally snapped out of bewilderment once she heard Isaac coughing in an attempt to catch his breath after being sent flying away brutally.

Immediately, she got in front of Devin to stop him and said, "Stop picking on him when he's just a friend of mine!"

"A friend of yours?"

Devin's expression darkened the moment she asked him to show Isaac some mercy and considered him her friend.

I'm pretty sure this friend of hers is up to no good! Otherwise, he wouldn't have brought her here with him! Also, there was no way he'd fall on his knee just to put on her shoes on her behalf!

Devin couldn't figure out the reason he was on the verge of letting loose of his wrath. With that being said, he felt a strong urge to strangle the duo to take out the pent-up frustration.

He launched another powerful kick in Isaac's direction and asked while clenching his fists, "Why have you befriended this smuggler over here?"

Huh? Who's the smuggler he's talking about?

Sabrina gaped at the things Devin brought up and repeated after him once she linked the missing pieces of puzzles together, "W-What sort of smuggler are we talking about? I'm not even aware he's a smuggler! We were merely out for a blind date!"

"Come again?"

The man let loose of his emotions and yelled at her, "You were on a freaking blind date with him?"

"Y-Yes! M-My aunt introduced him to me and told me he's quite the man around here! Are you sure you haven't mistaken him for someone else—"

Crack!

Sabrina couldn't even finish her sentence as the infuriated Devin crushed Isaac's leg with all his might, producing a loud crack in the garage.

She grasped the hem of her shirt and went dead silent in fear of offending the horrifying man.

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Doesn't he have a good temper? He has always been so mild-mannered in front of me. Why does he seem like a completely different person now? He's almost worse than Sebastian!

Sabrina dared not make another sound.

A few minutes later, the Sheerwood couple, who had heard the commotion and cry of agony of their son, rushed to the garage.

"Oh my god, Isaac! Isaac, what happened to you? Isaac!"

When the couple saw the terrible sight in the garage, they paled drastically. The mother even lunged toward Devin.

"Who are you? What have you done to my son?"

"Yes! Who are you?" Reuben Sheerwood bellowed, frightened and furious.

It was then Devin shifted his foot before taking out his military ID.

The couple instantly fell silent.

Once the two saw the name and military rank on the card, the colors drained out of their faces as fear crept onto it.

"Y-You're one of the Jadesons from Jadeborough! Why... Why are you here? Has my son done something wrong?"

"Yes, he has. He's involved in smuggling," Devin said without showing any emotions on his face.

When Isaac, who was still sprawled on the ground, heard it, anger filled his chest to the point it numbed him from the pain. "What did I smuggle? I'm warning you not to accuse me of anything!"

"Am I accusing you? Dare you say that these parts in this garage are obtained through legal means?"

"|—"

"Also, car modification is illegal. You have a whole set of parts here, and you've been working with this for a long time. Therefore, I have the right to suspect that you've been dealing with the black market all these while."

No one thought that the Jadeborough's special forces' major would intervene in a trivial matter like this.

Dealing with car parts in the black market?

Sabrina was dumbfounded by Devin's words, but she dared not interrupt them.

After all, as far as she knew, a civilian like her should not intervene in the matters of a military officer.

Unsurprisingly, the moment the Sheerwood couple heard his words, they began begging for mercy.

They wailed, and they sobbed, pleading for Devin to have mercy on them. Of course, they also promised to destroy everything that was in the garage and stop Isaac from dabbling in car modification in the future.

Destroy everything?

When Sabrina heard that, she glanced around the top-tier accessories around her before scrunching up her face.

"All right. I'll give him another chance then. If I hear his name on the black market again..."

"No, no, of course you won't. Don't worry, Major Devin. We'll send him overseas for further study right away. We won't let him dabble in this anymore," the Sheerwood couple swore.

Only then did Devin drop the case.

"Why are you still standing here? Leave now!" he yelled at the woman who was still standing at the side in a daze.

Sabrina blinked, finally snapping back to her senses.

"Okay, okay. I'm going."

She then ran back and picked up the high heels from the ground.

Minutes later, when the two rode in Devin's black SUV away from the house, Sabrina asked as she put on her heels, "Are you really here to arrest him today?"

Devin still had a scowl on his face, so his tone was a terrible one, "What's the matter? Do you not believe me?"

Sabrina looked down. "It isn't that ... "

It was not that she did not believe in his words, but that she hoped he had come for her when she saw him at the garage.

However, that could only be her fantasy.

Sabrina quietly put back on her heels.

"Send me railway station. I'm going to go back to Avenport," she gloomily said, her eyes still looking downward.

Devin frowned

He had thought of sending her back to Avenport, but when he heard her voice it his thoughts out loud, annoyance grew in his heart. It seemed like she was eager to leave right away.

"What's wrong? Are you upset that I've messed up your relationship with your potential husband?"

"What?" Sabrina looked up to cast him a look of confusion.

"His family background matches the Hayes family, and it seems like your interests and hobbies are quite similar. Won't you blame me for messing it up?" Devin repeated.

Perhaps he was angry, for he even mentioned that she shared similar interests and hobbies with the other young man.

Honestly, the delighted expression she had previously was as if she had found her soulmate. Not even he had seen that look on her face before.

Meanwhile, Sabrina finally understood what he meant.

Instantly, disappointment crashed onto her heart like tidal waves, crushing the last trace of hope she had. All that was left in her was frigid self-deprecation.

"You're right. It's quite disappointing. I thought I'd be married by the end of this year."

Devin did not respond to that.

"But that's fine. My aunt knows a lot of people. There are more in line even if this one doesn't work out. I'll spare some time to look through them before meeting a few more."

At that, she beamed at him as though nothing had happened earlier.

The look in Devin's eyes turned colder.

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In the end, Devin did not send Sabrina to the railway station.

Instead, he drove her back to Avenport.

"How could I trouble you when you're already so busy? You're here because you have a lot of things to do, don't you? Hurry up and put me down. I can ask for a friend to lend me a car; I'll drive back myself."

Unable to take it any longer, Devin roared, "Shut up!"

Then, he slammed his foot on the accelerator, and they sped toward Avenport.

It was the first time he had completely lost control of his temper. The thrumming anger in his veins kept taking over his mind.

At Frontier Bay in Avenport.

Although it had been two days since they returned, things were still lively in the Royal Court One.

Rufus, Jackson, and Jackson's wife came over every day. Moreover, when the members of the Hayes family heard about their return, they visited them.

After a few distant relatives came to visit, Sebastian's cousin, Saul, came to suggest to Sasha, "Sasha, why don't you and your family head to the Hayes residence for a meal? You have so many guests every day; I'm sure it's quite troublesome for you too."

When Sasha heard that, she nearly flinched.

Although she wanted to go there, she had been observing the situation at the Hayes residence. A certain someone had not been showing up, and she did not know if he was trying to avoid her.

He had been absent even though he had asked her when she was going to come over. He even asked her if he should make arrangements for her to have a meal at a restaurant.

After brief contemplation, Sasha answered, "I'll discuss it with Sebastian first."

Saul nodded instantly. "All right. The two of you should discuss it first. You don't need to worry about cooking because your sister-in-law will be helping. Preparing food for four to five tables won't be a problem."

Like the others, Saul was joyous that they had returned safe and sound.

Naturally, he was enthusiastic about helping them out.

Once he was gone, Sasha went to the garden to look for Sebastian.

However, when she went downstairs, she realized the man was drinking tea with those few older men again. Moreover, she could see the three fishing poles stabbed in the pond.

What is he doing?

Does he have no other way to appease these few old men other than drinking tea with them?

Sasha stormed over.

"Dad, Uncle Jackson, what are the two of you doing?"

"Can't you see? We're fishing. Come, take a look, Sasha. Take a look at how big a fish I've caught."

The moment Jackson saw her, he excitedly motioned at her to go over to his side to look at the fish.

Sasha was speechless, but still, she went to him.

When she saw the flopping golden fish in the bucket, her eyes slowly drift toward the man at the side.

However, the man remained expressionless as he drank his tea. If Sasha's memory served her right, the fish in the bucket was worth hundreds and thousands.

Yet, he was not batting a lash at it at all.

"It's fantastic, Uncle Jackson. Enjoy your fishing. I need to have a talk with Sebastian for a bit."

"Go ahead."

Jackson, who was certainly enjoying his time, waved happily.

It was then Sasha dragged Sebastian back to the third floor of the villa.

The moment they were upstairs, Sasha blurted out, "Are you insane? Why are you letting them fish at the pond? You've been raising those fishes for years! If you want to entertain them, you can always bring them to a lake outside or something!"

Nevertheless, Sebastian shrugged nonchalantly. "They're just fishes. I can always raise more. Why were you looking for me?"

At that, Sasha sighed before entering the main topic.

"Saul was suggesting for us to go to the Hayes residence instead of having guests come over to our place every day. Then, we'll invite them to the Hayes residence instead. Do you think it's a sound plan?"

She then tentatively looked at him.

Truthfully, Sasha had actually sensed something amiss about him.

First of all, the Hayes residence was the place he grew up at. Even if Frederick was no longer around, as the child Frederick had raised, Sebastian should still take a trip back to the Hayes residence.

However, he did not. In the past two days, he never mentioned it at all.

Why was that the case?

It was mostly because Solomon had already moved into the Hayes residence.

"Why should I go there? It's troublesome and small. We can always book a space at a restaurant if we're going to host a meal."

As Sasha expected, Sebastian rejected the suggestion right away. Even impatience and irritation had crept upon his face.

Thus, Sasha did not dare to insist on it.

She looked away from him and nodded. "All right, I'll tell Saul about it."

With that said, she turned around to head back downstairs.

All of a sudden, Sebastian grabbed her arm. "You look unhappy."

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"Do I?"

"Do you not?"

With a quick tug, he pulled the woman into his arms. He then held her tight before his warm kiss touched her lips.

Her heart raced, and a blush appeared on her cheeks.

"0-Of course not. What are you thinking about?" she stammered out.

She could feel his warm body pressing against hers, and her womanly instincts told her to flee.

Yet, it was daytime, and they had guests. She was almost sure he would not do anything.

She was not exactly right; she was now in his hands, and he was not going to let her go easily.

Sebastian tightened his grip, and like a helpless bunny, she was pulled toward the dresser.

Oh my god! What is this b*stard trying to do?

Sasha was fixed to the spot by fear.

"I have nothing else in my mind other than the need to tell you who your man is!"

With that, the man began showering her kisses.

At the same time, his hands crawled toward her collar.

By the time Sebastian and Sasha went back to Frontier Bay, the two men in the garden were still fishing.

The group of women was still downstairs as well. Sabrina did not know what they were doing, but they were crowding together, seemingly merry.

My, what happened to the owner of this house?

In the past, other than the ones who lived in this house, no one was allowed in, not even a bug. Yet, the sight in front of her was akin to a supermarket.

Sabrina widened her eyes.

"Ms. Sabrina, you're back?"

Wendy, who was in the villa, spotted Sabrina standing by the doorway in a daze. Immediately, she excitedly rushed over to greet her.

It was then Sabrina came back to her senses and walked inward while Devin followed her at the back.

"Ms. Sabrina's here!"

"Quick, Sabrina's back. Let's say hello to her."

The people who were in the first floor's living room were all Hayeses. When they saw Sabrina, they all promptly stood up.

It was the same reaction as the one they had when they saw Sebastian.

After all, Sabrina was like the devil of the family as well.

The moment Sabrina saw them, she scrunched up her pretty face. "Why are all of you here? Where's Sebastian and the others?" she barked out.

In an instant, the rest froze.

Then, Wendy chuckled awkwardly. "Ms. Sabrina, they're all here to visit Mr. Hayes and Madam. It seems like the two of them are upstairs. Ms. Sabrina, may I know who's the one behind you?"

Wendy was a smart woman. She knew that Sabrina was going to kick up a fuss, so she hastily changed her focus to the man behind her, Devin.

Finally, Sabrina dropped the scowl.

"He's Devin, Sebastian's cousin. Get him to come downstairs to greet him. I have other things to do, so I'll get going first."

After that brief introduction, Sabrina turned to leave.

Wendy stiffened.

Even Devin was stunned by Sabrina's abrupt words.

When Sabrina was about to leave the house, he recomposed himself and grabbed her wrist. "Where are you going? This is your house, and your brother isn't downstairs yet. Are you going to leave me alone here?"

"What else do you want? I've already brought you to this place."

His pull had been too sudden, so Sabrina lost her balance and nearly fell into Devin's arms.

What is he trying to do?

He said he wants to come and look for Sebastian, so I've brought him here. What else does he want?

Annoyed, Sabrina struggled to pry his hand away.

Unfortunately, although she knew some self-defense moves, she was no match for a special forces officer.

Devin did not care for niceties at all as he began berating her, "Is this the way you treat guests? How did I treat you when you were at the Jadesons? Since your brother is missing, and I'm unfamiliar with this place, are you going to toss me here all by myself? Isn't it rude?"

Sabrina took in a deep breath.

Has he lost his marbles? This is such a trivial thing, but he's actually putting on such a grave look and reprimanding me about it? When did he become a petty man like this?

Once again, Sabrina was stunned.

Nevertheless, she fell silent after hearing his words.

After that, she quietly waited for Sebastian to come downstairs with Devin while the Hayeses quickly made themselves scarce.

After three to four hours—Devin even went to the garden to play chess with Rufus—Sebastian finally appeared after his shower.

"Sebastian, what have you been doing? Why were you upstairs for so long?" Sabrina began grumbling when she saw her brother. She had been put through an uncomfortable wait, after all.

At that, Sebastian raised a brow.

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"What could I possibly be doing with my wife upstairs?"

Sabrina pressed her lips into a thin line.

Thousands of thoughts flashed past Sabrina's mind, but in the end, she could only articulate a word in her mind. E*ck.

"Fine. I've led the guy here, so I'm going to leave now." With that, she turned to leave again.

The guy?

Sebastian slowly turned to look outside. When he saw a tall figure clad in olive green in the garden, a sneer grew on his lips.

"Did he tell you that he's here for me?"

"That's right."

Despite her swift answer, a trace of despair danced across her eyes.

Sebastian turned to look at her. As the look in his eyes darkened, he waved dismissively. "Go ahead. You don't need to come over tonight."

At that, Sabrina narrowed her eyes.

Although that was the result she wanted, she still could not help but feel worse after hearing his words.

In fact, a scowl even emerged on her face.

In the end, Sabrina left.

Devin did not realize it. He was still playing chess with Rufus while listening to the latter tell stories of when he was in the army.

"I still remember that Commander Shin had been as young as you when I was in the army."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. Back then, he had been a major in the special forces as well. In the past, he used to train me and Sebastian's father. I mean, his foster father."

Even now, Rufus was still delighted and proud of that moment.

Back then, Shin had been a legend in the army. It was as if he was born to serve the country. At a young age, he had gained great achievements, and even the United Nations had given him a badge for it.

Yes, Rufus thought, it had been a great honor to have trained under him.

Devin quietly listened to his stories.

He had heard too many things about that uncle of his, and that uncle was someone he dared not start comparing himself with.

Nevertheless, he was jubilant to hear that some thought he was like his uncle—that there was a hint of Shin in him.

In the middle of his conversation, a soft voice traveled into his ear. "Devin."

Sebastian put down the chess piece and turned around. "Sebastian? You're finally here."

Sebastian nodded before shoving his hands into his pocket and walking over. Without any emotions on his face, he swept his eyes across the chessboard and asked, "Why are you here? Didn't you say that you're going to investigate the firearms smuggling case?"

Sebastian knew about it because Devin had told him about his recent activity.

Devin tensed up.

"Yes, well, I was nearby, so I decided to pay you a visit." Devin was lying. Of course, he did not want Sebastian to find out that he had been acting out of character, for that was too embarrassing.

Sebastian fell silent after that.

However, his expression darkened further as he stared at Devin.

Soon, the two exited the garden and returned to the villa. Sebastian poured two glasses of red wine for them. Only after a sip of the red wine, then did he continue.

"Did you take on this smuggling case yourself, or did the higher-ups assign you to this?"

"I took it on myself. Didn't you ask me to get closer to the White House? I don't think this case is going to be resolved any time soon. I've looked into it, and I've found out that it's an international case involving several countries. If I leave, I'd have to stay overseas for months. Maybe even half a year."

Devin told him all the details of his plan.

It was a good plan. In half a year's time, congress would pick a new leader.

At the same time, there would be a new council as well.

By then, it would be none of his business even if he came back.

Finally, a look of satisfaction crossed Sebastian's face.

"Okay. Nonetheless, from now on, you should prioritize the army and be less involved with the White House, especially that old man. Tell him not to interfere in things that aren't his business," Sebastian reminded.

Devin agreed to it.

However, neither of them knew that even the powerful ones could be powerless at times, especially for the Jadesons.

By the time Devin left, the sky was starting to get dark.

"I'll be leaving now."

"Okay."

Sebastian stood up and sent him to the door.

Right as Devin was about to step out of the house, Sebastian asked, "By the way, how did you encounter my sister today? Was she at the provincial capital?"

"Oh. Right." Devin halted in his tracks as an odd expression crept onto his face.

"When I went by the provincial capital here, a local cop told me that there's someone who's involved with smuggling luxury car parts and that he might be involved in the firearms smuggling case, so I went to look for the guy," Devin told him the tale he had long prepared in his mind.

Sebastian continued staring at him without blinking.

"That's where you encountered her?"

"Yes, she was... there."

"Right. That guy was her date of the day."

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Sebastian had heard the awkward tone and seen his stiff body, but still, he said those words without care.

Devin was rendered speechless.

What did that moment looked like?

That moment was just like when a culprit is trying to come up with excuses until someone slapped him with solid evidence of his wrongdoings.

Devin's face turned from red to pale before turning dark. Devin, who had never been anything else but calm and collected even in the face of the worst terrorists, was panicking.

The changes of the expressions on his face even amused Sebastian.

"Sebastian..."

"It's fine, really. I know you don't want to marry her because of what happened between me and your parents. Still, Devin, would you listen to my plea? If you're really determined, for the sake of our friendship, please don't give her hope anymore."

Both fell silent after that, but Sebastian continued staring at him.

Sebastian was not wearing many layers. The weather in the south was much warmer than the weather in Jadeborough, which was a city up north. Yet, as he stood there—as the setting sun made his shadow longer—he looked like a demon. That sent chills down Devin's spine, and it made him pale as well.

For a moment, he wanted to explain everything to him.

However, when he thought about how his parents had died a tragic death and what his mother's last words had been, he closed his eyes.

"Okay. I got it," he squeezed out in a quiet mumble.

Then, he turned and left.

Sebastian watched him leave as his heart sunk, his fingers curling to clench his fists.

"Sebby, why are you standing there? I heard that Devin was here. Where is he? Has he left?"

Right then, Sasha came down the stairs and spotted the scene from the inside of the villa. Almost immediately, she jogged over.

Sebastian finally looked away.

"Yes, he was busy."

He turned around to look at her. When he saw that she had come out with just a thin scarf, he reached out to pull her into his arms and covered her with the jacket he was wearing.

"Why are you down here? You didn't even put on your coat."

"I was in a rush to come out here when I heard that he's here. Sebby, was he here to look for Sab? Oh, yes. I even heard that Sab came back with him. Are the two of them..."

Sasha popped her head out of his jacket to look up at him.

However, the man did not answer her question.

Instead, he lowered his head to press a hard kiss on her plump lips.

Sasha was taken aback by his action.

"All right. Let's not try to matchmake them anymore. There's no good ending for them. If you really have the time, you should be explaining to me why you've abruptly gone to the hospital to work again."

"Huh?"

Sasha was dumbfounded by the completely unrelated question.

"I... I'm there to earn a living."

"Earn a living?"

"That's right. Look, we've just moved here. You... You're not going to go back to the Hayes residence, right? We're a big family, and we certainly need to spend money. Even though you still have some savings, it'll deplete eventually. So, I contacted my old coworkers at the hospital to ask them to introduce me to the job."

Sasha was terrified, and she could barely manage to stammer out her explanation while he fixed his piercing gaze on her.

What she told him was her plan.

Sasha did not know how much Sebastian had left.

However, if he did not return to the Hayes family, then it was likely that they would go bankrupt soon without an income. The three children were in school, and other than their living expenses, the gigantic house they were living in was also...

Sasha was in quite a rush to get a job.

However, to her surprise, right as those words left her mouth, the man who had his arms wrapped around her shot her a weird look.

"Do you mean to ask me to hand over all my assets?"

"What?" Sasha was caught off guard by his question. "No. That's not it. That isn't what I'm talking about..."

"All right. You can have them."

"Huh?"

That statement was nothing but a bolt from the blue.

Half an hour later, in their bedroom on the third floor, Sasha found herself staring at the various certificates of property ownership and credit cards that were lying all over the ground.

Once again, she was baffled.

"Look, Darling, these are all my assets, and now, they're yours."

Sasha did not speak.

"I heard from Peter and the others that married men are like this. They'll hand their pay over to their wives, and they're earning the money for their wives. Everything's the wife's, and that's how their families are always happy. Therefore, Darling, that'll be how our family is too."

At the end of his speech, Sebastian even handed her the small bag that was closest to him.

What the heck did Peter tell him?

Sasha was stupefied, and her eyes were wide to the point they seemed like they were going to pop out of their sockets.

With trembling hands, she took the bag from him and opened it.

Holy moly!

She could not withstand the shock and fell down to the ground.

What the heck? They're all diamonds!

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In the end, Sasha did not go to work.

It was not because she was knocked out by the shock of his wealth, but because after the three children returned, so she would have to enroll them into a new school. Thus, she had to tell the others about her search for a new school.

"Sasha, I think Avenport Central Elementary is a good choice. The three of them should enroll in that school."

"How could you let them go there? The school they should be in should be none other than Empire Elementary. It's the best elementary school here, and it's also under Hayes Corporation. Our children study there too."

The few sisters-in-law of the Hayes family had once again come together to offer suggestions to Sasha.

Sasha was stumped after she heard them.

In terms of facilities and enrolment package, Empire Elementary was indeed the best. However, she knew nothing about its quality of education.

After what happened at Opal Garden Academy in Jadeborough, Sasha was traumatized by private schools like these. Even if it was under Hayes Corporation's, she was still worried.

In the end, she decided to take a look at the school herself.

"Wendy, I'll be taking a trip to the school. Please take care of the children at home."

"All right, Madam," Wendy swiftly answered as she watched Sasha leave.

In the last two days, Sebastian was often away from home. No one knew what he was doing, and he only returned in the evening.

Sasha drove and left Frontier Bay.

"Hello? Luke, it's me, Sasha. I'd like to ask if you still have Empire Elementary's headmaster's number?"

"Huh, Mrs. Hayes?"

Luke was stupefied to have received the call from her, and he leaped to his feet in response.

"Of course, of course. Mrs. Hayes, are you planning to send the children to that school?" he asked, his excitement clear in his voice.

It seemed like he had completely forgotten that he was still at work.

Sasha hummed an agreement before saying, "That's right, since school is about to start soon, and since we're back, I'd like to make the arrangements as soon as possible. So do you have the headmaster's number? If you do, please send the details to me."

"Of course I do! I'll send it to you right away," Luke hastily replied.

After ending the call, and just as he was about to send the headmaster's contact details to her, he raised his head.

It was then he realized there was a young man in a suit, with his sleeves rolled up, holding a stack of documents standing in front of him.

"M-Mr. George?"

"This is the contract that we've just signed with LG. Organize it."

Solomon barely had any expressions on his face.

The eyes behind his gold-rimmed glasses glanced at Luke before handing him the contract he had just signed. Then, he turned and went back to his office.

Luke was silent the entire time.

As he stared at his retreating figure, cold sweat beaded on his forehead.

To Luke, the new president was much more even-tempered than Sebastian Hayes, who constantly had mood swings.

Most times, the new president would speak to his subordinates in a calm and collected tone.

He rarely lost his temper.

Therefore, Luke had a relatively easy time returning to his job.

However, alarm bells were ringing in his head as he watched Solomon enter his office, and chills ran down his back.

It had been such a long time since the people at Frontier Bay had contacted them.

Instead of heading to the school first, Sasha went to the mall after receiving the headmaster's number.

She was planning to get some gifts. Although Empire Elementary was under Hayes Corporation, she still needed to show some gratitude toward those who were going to teach her children.

"Miss, may I know what you'd like to buy? Are these gifts?"

"Yes, I'd like to know how much this is," Sasha asked as she pointed at one of the gift baskets.

The shop attendant instantly walked over to assist her.

Right then, someone else entered the shop.

"Nancy? What a coincidence!"

"Huh?"

Sasha, who was looking around the gift baskets, immediately turned around to look at her.

Without turning around, she knew who it was just by hearing the name Nancy. Only one person would call her by that name.

"Solomon, what a coincidence indeed. Are you here to shop too?" Sasha abruptly felt awkward when she saw him.

Thinking about it, I think I've been avoiding him for a week.

"Not really. I passed by this place and thought I saw you, so I came in."

In contrast, Solomon was calm.

The young man was in a black suit, standing by the doorway. After a year, he had returned to his original state of tranquility. When he stepped into the shop, his eyes landed on Sasha for a brief second.

Soon, he let his eyes drift toward the gift basket she was looking at.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm thinking of getting one of these to the school. We're back now, so I'll have to enroll the children in a school. I was just thinking of taking a trip to Empire Elementary."

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While Sasha felt awkward to see him, she was not unhappy. In fact, she felt relieved.

Empire Elementary?

Solomon studied the gift basket for a moment before saying, "Are you planning to send them there? If you're going to, there's no need for you to send them this. I'll just inform them about you."

"No, no. That's not what I mean," Sasha hurriedly explained. "I know it's easy to enroll in that school, but I'd like to extend my gratitude to the teachers. Don't you know that some of the teachers have it tough nowadays?"

At that, she furrowed her brows.

Solomon fell silent as he turned to study the woman's pretty side profile. All of a sudden, something emerged in his mind, and a myriad of emotions danced across his eyes behind the glasses.

"In that case, I'd suggest for the children to study in a public school."

"Really?"

"Yes. Have you forgotten about how we used to be in public schools? Although public schools might not have facilities as good as private schools, the teachers are fair to all students. As long as the kid's grades are good, they won't be neglected. On the other hand, the environment at the private schools is a competitive one," Solomon pointed out.

The moment his words traveled into her ears, Sasha gasped.

He's right! Why didn't I think about this?

After making up her mind, Sasha decided to forgo purchasing the gift basket.

Noticing that her problem had been solved, Solomon pointed to a cafe in the mall and suggested, "Why don't we sit over there? It's been a long time since we've had a chat."

It would seem rude for her to reject his suggestion right after he had helped her out, so Sasha went to the cafe with him.

Once they found a place to sit in the cafe, Sasha began explaining the reason for her not to have contacted him after their return.

After a moment of silent contemplation, she muttered out, "I'm sorry, Solomon. I didn't visit you after coming back. We've been busy as we've had tons of guests over our place every day. I did think of calling you once I'm free, however."

Nevertheless, Solomon did not mind.

"It's fine. By the way, what plans do you have?"

"Plans?" Sasha wondered out loud as she stirred her coffee. Then, she shook her head.

"Nothing for now. I'm only thinking of making arrangements for the children's enrolment. My father is in poor health, so I'm thinking of spending some time to help him recover as well."

"I see. What about him?" Solomon suddenly asked.

Sasha froze.

He's asking about Sebastian?

Taken aback, she spent a while staring at him before mumbling, "I... I don't think he's doing anything right now. I'm not very sure."

"Then, when you go home, ask him if he wants to come back to Hayes Corporation."

"What?"

Sasha's eyes widened in shock.

"Back to Hayes Corporation? Do you mean that..."

"I'm planning to return to Jetroina. After all, I'm only temporarily managing the company when the two of you were caught up in the incident. Now that he's back, he should be taking back this role too. That way, I'll be able to leave earlier," Solomon said, finally revealing the main topic of the chat.

Both his voice and face were calm as if he was not involved in the matter at all.

Sasha was speechless as she continued looking at him, gobsmacked.

Is there something wrong with my ears? Did he just say what I think he did?

"Are you insane? He can't go back to Hayes Corporation!"

"Why not?"

Once Sasha snapped back to her senses, fury burned bright in her chest, and she began muttering, "Isn't it obvious? He's not a genuine Hayes. Will the shareholders be willing to accept him if he goes back to Hayes Corporation? The company has already been handed to you. How could he possibly take it back from you?"

Sasha did not think that Sebastian would return to Hayes Corporation, for she knew that Sebastian was not a man who would do that.

Furthermore, she could sense that things had not been completely resolved with the Jadesons despite their return.

Therefore, what reason did Sebastian have to go back to Hayes Corporation?

Yet, what was surprising to her was that the man in front of her seemed to be dismissing everything she said.

"It still isn't mine. Three days, then. Tell him about it. In three days, I'll hold a press conference about it. Whether or not he comes will be up to him."

Once he was done with his piece, he stood up.

Sasha was silent.

It was only until when he was about to leave the cafe then did she come back to her senses and ran after him.

"Solomon George, stand right there! Solomon!"

It was the first time in her life she had been shouting his name so furiously.

Nevertheless, he did not even pause in his tracks. Soon, he was back in his car, and in seconds, he was gone from Sasha's line of sight.

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"How could he do this?"

Sasha fumed as she stomped her foot, the vein on her temples throbbing.

She had not expected things to have turned out that way.

However, she knew nothing of what happened in the grey car that sped off. Before the car had even turned around the corner, blood had trickled out of his nose when he lowered his head.

"Mr. George!"

The young woman, who was driving, was frightened out of her wits, and she slammed her foot on the brakes.

Immediately, the car came to a rough stop in the middle of the road.

She hastily grabbed a handful of tissues as she turned around and sobbed out, "Mr. George, what's the matter? Are you okay?"

However, after the man took the tissues and stopped his nosebleed, a look of calmness crawled onto his pale face. It was as if the nosebleed was not his at all.

"Why are you in such a panic? I'm not dying yet."

"Mr. George..."

The woman's lips trembled as her eyes reddened even more.

Regardless, she dared not say anything else. Once he stopped bleeding, she averted her sorrowful eyes and forced herself to look at the road again. In minutes, the car started up again and drove off.

Forty minutes later, at Hayes Corporation.

"Jamie? Why are you back alone? Where's Mr. George?"

Luke was surprised to see the president's secretary coming back alone.

Indeed, the woman in front of Luke was Solomon's secretary, Jamie Marley, also known as Jetroina's Akiko Sato.

After Solomon came to Hayes Corporation, she had been spending lonely days at the Jetroinian bar. Hence, he brought her over to work for him as his secretary while Luke became his assistant.

Jamie nodded, her face still pale.

"He went to meet a client and asked me to come back to the office to grab something. Mr. Scott, please postpone all afternoon appointments for today. He said he isn't free and is unsure if his schedule will open up the next day," Jamie promptly told him.

Luke then watched her enter the president's office. Soon, she emerged out of the room with some of Solomon's stuff before leaving the office.

A last-minute meeting with a client?

Why don't I know about it? Even if it's a sudden meeting, shouldn't he be informing me, his assistant?

Moreover, he has postponed all appointments for the afternoon.

Why is he doing things like these so often recently? He wasn't like this before.

Luke's mind was buzzing noisily with the number of questions in it.

However, there was nothing he could do to find the answers, for Solomon was not around. In the end, he could only postpone all of Solomon's afternoon appointments.

At Royal Court One, Frontier Bay.

Sasha, who was already home, told Sebastian, who just came back, what happened in the afternoon.

"Sebby, I didn't mean to look for him. I encountered him at the mall, and he told me he's going back to Jetroina soon. He's only giving you three days. What are we going to do?" she worriedly asked.

Of course, she made sure to emphasize to him that she was not the one who was looking for Solomon in the first place.

Nevertheless, the moment Sebastian heard the threat, a scowl appeared on his handsome face.

"Does he have a death wish?"

Sasha kept her silence as the hairs on the back of her neck rose.

At that, his scowl grew. "Very well. Tell him that I want to see him gone after three days. If he's still around, I'm going to fly him back to Jetroina on a helicopter myself!"

Once those words were squeezed out through his teeth, he stormed upstairs.

Sasha remained downstairs, her heart still in her throat in fear.

That was terrifying!

He's clearly not saying the truth! Look at his demeanor. If Solomon actually leaves in three days, he's going to skin him alive!

How did the two of them end up this way?

Sasha groaned.

Left without a choice, she went to Sabrina.

Sasha: Sab, where are you?

Sabrina: What?

It had been two days since Sasha had talked to Sabrina, but Sabrina's response was still as crude as always.

It's okay. I'm the better woman.

Sasha: Something has happened at home. I encountered Solomon when I was out shopping today, and he has told me he's going to quit and go back to Jetroina. He wants your brother to go back to the company, but your brother doesn't want to. What now? Sasha could not help but shudder at the thought of a leaderless company.

When the woman in the bar saw the message, she threw the glass of wine in her hand onto the ground.

"F*ck! None of them have any brains!" she shrieked.

The surrounding people chanced a glance at her before quickly looking away.

They all knew who she was—she was Sabrina of the Hayes family.

Only a young man in glasses dared to approach her. He carefully walked to her side and asked, "Ms. Hayes, are you all right?"

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"Who are you?" slurred Sabrina while gazing at the person in front of her.

"It's me, Isaac. Do you remember me, Ms. Hayes?"

Isaac?

Who the f*ck is that?

Drunk as a skunk, Ms. Sabrina Hayes had no recollection of a person named Isaac.

Isaac assisted her out of the bar and uttered, "Ms. Hayes, you've had a bit too much to drink. I'll drive you home."

"I'm... I'm not going home. I need to find that son of a b*tch! Does he think he can just waltz into the Hayes Residence whenever he wants? I'll make him pay!"

Having said that, Sabrina plunged into the car.

Isaac had no choice but to drive her to her destination. Following the directions given by Sabrina, they arrived at a fancy apartment building.

"Ms. Hayes, is this the right place?"

"Yes. His apartment number is 2503. I'll go and find him."

Perturbed about her safety, Isaac went with Sabrina.

After I heard that the military officer had gone to Zarain, I came back here in secret.

Upon returning to this city, I ran into her...

Sabrina knocked on Solomon's front door.

The sound of her knocks echoed through the empty hallways.

As soon as Solomon opened the door, Sabrina shouted, "You little piece of sh*t! I heard that you've decided to leave my family business alone. The guilt has finally gotten to you huh? So, what now? You gonna run back to Jetroina with your tail between your legs?"

Sabrina, who was still intoxicated, pointed her finger at Solomon's nose.

Livid, Solomon glared at her with a minatory look on his face. "Scram! You crazy b*tch!"

Before he could shut the door, Sabrina quickly forced her way inside.

Bang!

Sabrina kicked the door open and ended up hurting Solomon's forehead.

"Ah! Are you okay? You're bleeding!"

Isaac was stupefied.

Seeing the blood on Solomon's forehead, Sabrina was stunned in place.

Solomon, on the other hand, was rather nonchalant about all of this. He gave Sabrina a frigid glance and went back inside his apartment.

Ten minutes later, Sabrina took a seat on the sofa beside Solomon. After Solomon was done tending to the wound on his forehead, Sabrina stared at him and queried, "What are you up to? Sasha told me that you're going to Jetroina in three days. Is that true?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Do I need to have a reason? I just feel like going back there. Besides, like you said, I've just been intervening in your family business here. Shouldn't you be enraptured now that I'm leaving?"

Solomon sneered at Sabrina.

You've always been cold toward me, Sabrina. Even though I'm your biological brother, you've never really acknowledged my existence.

If it wasn't for me, the Hayes family wouldn't have gotten as far as it did. But that doesn't mean anything to you, does it?

With that said, why are you not delighted now that I'm leaving?

"Enough about that! You should focus on your own matters!" Sabrina responded with gravitas.

Solomon gazed vacuously at her.

Focus on my own matters?

What matters is she referring to?

Does she want me to run her family's business? I thought she wanted me to go back to Jetroina. The contempt look that she gave me just now was definitely screaming, "Go back to Jetroina!"

Solomon was reticent to say anything.

Isaac walked up to the man with a band-aid on his forehead before uttering, "Pay her no mind, Mr. George. She's just a bit drunk and sullen. You guys really shouldn't argue with each other. It's not good when siblings fight with each other. Don't you agree?"

It wasn't until this point that Solomon noticed another person in his apartment.

Isaac?

Isn't he the guy from the Sheerwood family in Summerbank?

Solomon let out a chuckle before querying, "Do you know why she's been drinking?"

"No..."

Isaac shook his head honestly.

After ten seconds of complete silence, Solomon added on, "Do you like her?"

"Yes... I do." Isaac stuttered.

Solomon put on a smile. "How deep is your affection for her? Are you willing to accept her as a whole, including her flaws?"

"Yes!" Isaac replied steadfastly.

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When Sabrina woke up, it was already the next day.

Upon opening her eyes, she was met with the vintage aroma of the wooden bed frame. On top of her was a green gauze curtain billowing in the wind. Since her head was still aching, she couldn't figure out where she was.

"Ms. Hayes, you're finally awake. Are you feeling a bit better now?"

Seeing as she had woken up, a young man in glasses rushed over to her bedside.

Sabrina was baffled.

Isaac?

Why is he here?

Sabrina let out a frown as she rubbed her head.

Isaac hurriedly explained, "You were drinking at a bar yesterday. Subsequently, you went to your brother's apartment and caused a ruckus. I brought you back here after you passed out."

"My brother? Was he in Frontier Bay?"

Sabrina's face turned ashen.

Hearing Isaac's words, Sabrina thought she had gone to disturb Sebastian when she was drunk to argue about matters regarding "that man".

Isaac shook his head.

"No, he was at his apartment. Did you forget? You were the one who guided me there."

The image of her gonzo behavior yesterday was evoked to Isaac's mind as he said that.

However, that didn't have any effect on his impression of her.

Sabrina breathed a sigh of relief.

Caressing the back of her head, Sabrina got up from her bed. Wait, I know this place. It's the Hayes Residence!

I can't believe this wimp brought me here.

Sabrina trudged up to the table in front of her and drank the cold cup of water on top of it.

"Ms. Hayes, you shouldn't drink cold water first thing in the morning. Not to mention, the weather is getting quite chilly recently. I've prepared hangover soup for you. You should drink that instead. Go wash your face. I'll bring the soup to you."

He knows how to make hangover soup? Really?

Sabrina turned her head to glance incredulously at Isaac.

"What... What's wrong?"

"Nothing. I'd just like to ask, where did you learn to make hangover soup? Did you make it yourself?" Sabrina had an awkward look on her face.

I didn't know men are capable of making a soup like this.

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All the men I know are either as bossy as Sebastian or as patriotic as Devin.

Who knew that there are actually men who could cook?

Overjoyed, Isaac responded, "Yes, I made it myself. Since you've had quite a lot to drink yesterday, I figured that you might have a headache when you wake up. Hence, I went to gather the ingredients needed to make a hangover soup last night and made the soup for you."

"Oh, by the way, I've also made some desserts. I'll bring them to you once you've finished the hangover soup. They will help to warm your stomach."

Isaac continued to blabber to Sabrina about the various desserts that he'd prepared.

In this world, a man like Isaac is a rare sight. He doesn't possess any great ambitions. A life of serene with his family is the only thing that he desires.

To put it simply, he's a family man.

Sadly, I'm not really fond of this kind of man.

In the end, Sabrina didn't drink the hangover soup. She ignored Isaac and started heading toward the front door.

Without a second thought, Isaac dashed after her.

"Ms. Hayes, wait for me! Ms. Hayes--"

"What do you want? Stop being a nudnik to me. I don't need you anymore. Just go home, will you?" Sabrina was peeved.

Upon hearing her words, Isaac's face turned melancholy.

"Ms. Hayes, I can't go home."

"Whv?"

"I came here in secret. After your friend frightened my Mom and dad, they sent me away to another country. I didn't tell them that I was coming back here."

Isaac had an innocent look on his face as he lowered his head. Feeling anxious, he was constantly rubbing his fingers.

Sabrina was taciturn.

I am itching to kick him in the face right now.

He dares to call himself a man? How pathetic can he be?

Sabrina was starting to form an aversion toward Isaac. Miffed, she left without saying a word.

Seeing as such, Isaac quickly went after her and got into her car with her.

However, once he was in the safety of the backseat of the car, Isaac let out a sinister smile...

Sabrina decided to drive to the Bartel Apartments.

Even though she was drunk yesterday, she still more or less remembered Sasha's message to her.

That piece of sh*t! Who gave him permission to do this?

Meanwhile, at the villa in Frontier Bay, the sweet fragrance of flowers was flowing in the air. Under the morning sky, the dewdrops on the flowers were shining like jewels.