

## Chapter 133 The Fire

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Sunday rolled by without any sign of Tyrone.

Sabrina was left wondering if he was avoiding her.

Late in the afternoon, a fresh piece of news sparked public interest.

A building under Blakely Group had caught fire in a different city. This incident resulted in one fatality and three injuries among the staff. The cause was still a mystery and the whole affair was under investigation.

In a bystander's video that went viral, the magnitude of the fire was startling, reducing the place to chaos as firefighters battled the flames.

The public was always harsh on such disasters and Tyrone's recent controversy further fueled the people's anger.

Many were making connections to his rumored affair with Galilea.

Baseless rumors began to circulate, pointing fingers at Blakely Group's mismanagement as the cause of the fire. People started condemning Tyrone and his corporation.

Even an official statement from Blakely Group assuring full cooperation with the police investigation did little to calm the storm of criticism.

Those urging patience and waiting for the results of the official investigation were branded as sympathizers trying to

whitewash Blakely Group's image.

When the news of the fire broke, Kylan came over to Starriver Bay, informing Sabrina about Tyrone's engagement in dealing with the situation and his inability to return home soon. He then left with Tyrone's luggage.

Gazing at the vacant room, Sabrina furrowed her brows.

She retrieved her phone and contemplated making a call, but ultimately decided against it.

She decided to go about her usual work routine on Monday.

Upon her arrival at work, her colleagues greeted her warmly.

"Hello, Ms. Chavez."

"Good morning, Ms. Chavez."

"Ms. Chavez, have you had breakfast? I brought some bread for you."

Sabrina politely declined with a gentle smile. As she turned the corner, she encountered a female employee.

Initially on edge, the female employee's demeanor softened when she recognized Sabrina. "I apologize, Ms. Chavez."

"It's okay," Sabrina replied with a smile.

Although Sabrina didn't recognize the female employee, she distinctly remembered her voice.

It was Leah, a dedicated supporter of Tyrone and Galilea's relationship.

Sabrina found herself at a loss for words.

Everything changed overnight.

By nine in the morning, a detailed police report on the fire incident was made public. The evidence pointed to the negligence of the deceased employee, who was reportedly drunk on duty.

However, this explanation was met with widespread skepticism and calls for the surveillance footage to be released

Many suspected that the incident had been fabricated to cover up the true cause of the fire.

Many had their doubts, believing there might be more to the incident than met the eye.

A few even questioned whether the deceased worker should have been on duty at that time, and whether he was compelled to work overtime.

Certain individuals harbored suspicions about the credibility of the survivors' statements, suggesting they could have been influenced by monetary incentives to shape a particular narrative.

Furthermore, some individuals questioned the adequacy of the building's fire-fighting facilities, expressing concerns about potential concealed safety risks.

The Internet was abuzz with a lot of speculations.

Only a handful of individuals placed their trust in the police's official statement.

Before long, an interview video surfaced on the Internet and quickly gained widespread attention.

The video revolved around Julius Duncan, the son of the deceased janitor. A young man in his twenties, he appeared in plain clothes, his eyes red with emotion.

Throughout the interview, he repeatedly wiped tears from the corners of his eyes while facing the camera.

"My father was always dedicated to his job, refusing to touch a single drop of alcohol when working. He funded my education through sheer toil, and even before I could compensate his efforts, he was no longer with us. I refuse to accept anyone branding him as negligent, especially in his absence. I don't seek financial recompense. I demand justice! I'll press legal charges and hope for your backing!"

Such an outcry won unanimous sympathy, with Blakely Group earning a widespread scorn.

The topic of drinking during work hours was a sensitive one.

As per the workplace insurance policy, fatalities resulting from alcohol or drug use couldn't be categorized as work-related injuries.

This meant if a worker, under the influence, met with an accident or lost his life, it wouldn't qualify as a job-related injury.

The primary responsibility would rest with the worker, the company assuming a secondary role in such situations.

Blakely Group's official stance was to abide by the police investigation's findings and act within the boundaries of the law.

Some online commentators argued that the Blakely family's substantial wealth negated the need for a fabricated tale to evade mere millions in compensation. They didn't have to.

Others expressed their opinions that if the worker indeed got drunk on duty and caused the fire, then Blakely Group could be viewed as a victim too.

This perspective drew anger from many, accusing the commentator of siding with Blakely Group.

The administrative review process would require some time.

Meanwhile, discussions about the fire continued unabated. Numerous individuals anxiously awaited the final outcome.

Meanwhile, Blakely Group's stocks plummeted, leaving the stock market in chaos, filled with murmurs of disappointment and muttered curses.

The company's fraught atmosphere was palpable to Sabrina during her working hours. The incessant phone calls in the CEO's office, mostly from media outlets seeking a scoop on the situation, kept the lines buzzing.

The secretary's response to all queries was, "The matter is under consideration."

Sabrina received a message from a secretary. "Mr. Blakely called to request your avoidance of public appearances, particularly during your commute."

Aware of some media's relentless pursuit for ratings, Sabrina understood their potential focus on her and agreed to the cautionary advice.

She couldn't resist inquiring, "When is he expected back?"

The secretary answered, "He didn't specify."

The building where the fire originated was now cordoned off, and the employees had been temporarily laid off.

Two senior executives emerged from the elevator, heading towards the provisional CEO's office.

Nobody could ascertain Tyrone's mood over the phone, but as Blakely Group's senior executives, they were expected to manage the situation.

Tyrone gazed out the French windows at the charred building with a coffee cup in hand.

As the two senior executives entered the room, Tyrone gestured for them to take a seat on the sofa. In a composed tone, he asked, "Please, tell me what happened."

One of the executives, who was in charge of the branch, seemed a little on edge as he replied, "Mr. Blakely, I bear the brunt for this incident. I should've been more vigilant. I was oblivious to the janitor's drinking habit at work and his activation of the machine in a drunken stupor. Another janitor on duty that day claimed his inability to prevent him. This was an unprecedented situation."

"That's no justification for such an incident to occur at present."

The senior manager found himself at a loss for words.

His complexion paled, and he felt a profound sense of shame.

Considering there were three janitors on duty that day, why

couldn't the other two prevent the tragedy from unfolding?

Clearly, they hadn't put in enough effort. Following the fire outbreak, they feared the repercussions and conveniently pinned the blame on the deceased worker.

An uneasy silence filled the office.

The other executive, Harrell Palmer, who was handling public relations, had hurriedly arrived at the scene of the accident and attempted to contain it, but the news had leaked nonetheless.

Harrell proposed, "Mr. Blakely, given the circumstances, our primary task should be to manage public opinion and limit the fallout. I'll meet with the deceased worker's family and negotiate with them. That's the best approach as of now."

