

Becomes 127

Chapter 0127

Bill's POV *wW.W.©ðveLwðŘm.čoMl*

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I tell Sarah to call Frederick's secretary and arrange an afternoon meeting.

There's no time to waste. This could be the most important meeting of my career.

The secretary found an available slot in Frederick's schedule today. So, I jumped in my car and headed to his office in Westwood, determined to convince him not to sell his shares.

On the drive there, my grip tightens on the steering wheel. The usual thirty-minute drive feels like hours. My heart pounds with every red light and slow-moving car.

When I arrive, I check in with the receptionist and take a seat in the lobby. My leg bounces nervously as I wait, glancing repeatedly at the clock on the wall. After what feels like forever, the secretary finally calls

my name. *wW.W.(n)OðveLwðŘm.COm*

"Mr. Richardson? Mr. Hauser will see you now," she says.

The secretary leads me down a hallway to Frederick's office. She knocks gently on the door before opening it and ushering me inside.

Frederick looks up from his desk as I enter, his expression stern. He's aged since I last saw him, but his eyes still hold that sharp gleam.

"Bill," he says curtly, not bothering with pleasantries. "What do you want?"

"Nice to see you too, Fred," I say, trying to keep my tone light. "I heard you're thinking about selling your shares of RGE. I wanted to talk about it and see what's going on."

Frederick leans back in his chair, a smirk forming on his lips. "Oh, so now you care about this?"

I bristle at his comment. "I've always cared about the company, Fred. I've never neglected it, not for a second," I say.

Frederick raises an eyebrow. "Really? Because it looks like you've missed a lot of important meetings lately. And those recent scandals? It's ridiculous, Bill."

He leans back on his chair. "How do you expect us to trust you with the company's future when you can't even show up?" he asks.

Even though Frederick is harsh, I know it's coming from a place of concern.

He and my dad started Richardson Global Enterprises together. They were both my mentors, teaching me everything I needed to know about the business.

When Dad passed away, Fred stepped in as a second father. But he's always been tougher, pushing me harder whenever I get too comfortable.

"I've got it under control, Fred," I say, trying to sound confident. "I've just had a lot going on in my personal life, but I'm sorting it out."

know it'll take more than words to make Frederick believe me.

"Don't give me that excuse, Bill. We've all got personal lives," Frederick scoffs. "If you can't manage both, maybe you shouldn't be running things."

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+15 BONUS

I clench my jaw. "For seven years, I've grown this company. This is the first time something like this has happened. I think you're being a bit unfair, Fred."

Frederick's expression softens, but only slightly. "I'm just looking after your father's legacy, Bill. Right now, you aren't doing a very good job of it. Calvin has been talking to me. He's proposing to merge Richardson Global Enterprises with his own company. He thinks he can manage things better than you."

"Fred, you know this isn't the answer, right? I can fix this. Give me a chance to prove it," I plead..

Frederick shakes his head. "It's almost a done deal with Calvin, Bill. There's nothing you can do about it now. If you can excuse me, I need to return to my work."

He turns his attention back to his laptop, effectively dismissing me and making it clear the conversation

is over.

"Please, you can't do this, Fred!" I say, my voice rising with desperation. "I'm about to become a father, and I'm figuring things out. I can't lose being RGE's CEO. Just give me a bit more time to turn things around."

Fred pauses and looks up, clearly thinking about what I just said. He's probably remembering how my dad had trouble running the company while Mom was pregnant with me, and how Dad managed to bounce back. Maybe those memories will give me a chance.

"Alright, I'll think about it," Frederick replies. "I'll base my decision on what happens at the shareholders meeting next Friday."

"Thank you, Fred. I won't let you down," I say.

I leave his office with a renewed sense of purpose. I've got a week to turn things around and make the – one that leaves no doubt in Frederick's mind that I deserve to be the CEO best presentation of

my life

of Richardson Global Enterprises.

Comments