

Read Novel Boss Your Wife's Asking For A Divorce Again

Chapter 1001

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Charles fell silent after hearing the answers from the assistants and secretaries. What was it that he didn't get it this time?

After being hidden in the lounge by Sonia, the person watching him in the lounge was actually Daphne.

It was no surprise that Sonia wanted to keep him from opening the lounge door so that he would not see Daphne.

"President Lane? President Lane?" The assistants in the office could not help but call Charles twice out of curiosity when they saw him standing at the door with his head slightly lowered.

"What's the matter?" His eyes flickered briefly before returning to normal.

"Oh, nothing at all. It's just that we noticed you suddenly lost your focus and we're concerned that something is up with you," the assistants said while shaking their heads.

"It's all right. Continue with your work. I'm not going to bother you," Charles said as he rubbed his brows.

Then, he exited the room, shut the door, and leaned against the wall of the assistant secretary's office. Deep in thought, he raised his head slightly to look at the corridor ceiling.

He finally understood why Daphne hid in Sonia's lounge and refused to come out. It was all because he had stated that he did not want to see her again. Due to his words, Daphne probably hid when she heard him approaching. Huh, she really did remember my words and stood by them.

Charles had an incomprehensible expression, indicating that he was feeling uneasy. By right, he should be happy and satisfied that Daphne had reacted in that manner. Instead of being pleased, he was rather irritated and bothered when she avoided him.

He became enraged the more he thought about it, so he abruptly opened the door to the assistant secretary's office once again.

The ajar door disturbed the secretaries and assistants inside, who were focused on their work, and several of them stared at the man.

"President Lane... Do you need something?" an assistant asked cautiously while blinking at a glum Charles.

"Does Daphne have anything going on these days?" Charles asked with a muffled voice while squeezing his palms. For instance, did she mention me? Did she ask about my whereabouts?

However, his face darkened at the thought. What the hell? Why should I care if Daphne has mentioned me? Am I crazy?

Just as he was about to dismiss his question to save them from answering, the secretaries and assistants were prompt to reply to him. "Is there anything wrong with her?"

The previous respondent touched her chin and thought for a moment before nodding. "Yes."

"Really?" Charles asked, surprised.

"Yes. Daphne has been frequently dazed recently. She is always sick and requests leave from time to time," the assistant confirmed.

"She's sick? What happened to her?" He frowned.

"Well, I'm not sure about this. We asked her, but she didn't say much," the assistant responded as she shook her head.

After not receiving the desired answer, he hummed slightly and exited the room, closing the door behind him.

The secretaries and assistants in the office exchanged glances after the door was shut; their eyes were filled with doubt and confusion. They all thought Charles was odd and no one could figure out what he was thinking.

After closing the door, he leaned against the wall with his head lowered slightly while he thought about something.

He was thinking about what the assistant had just said, that Daphne was frequently dazed and was also always absent due to an illness.

Regarding her well-being, he actually did know a thing or two.

When his mother returned from a physical examination in the hospital, she told him that she had met Daphne, who was also in the hospital.

However, it was said that Daphne had some issues with her cervical spine, but no other major illnesses.

Is it necessary to take a three to five days' leave due to a cervical spine problem? Will this divert her attention from work?

Daphne had known Charles for quite some time. Being the one most familiar with her, he knew that she was a powerful woman. She once had a nearly 104 degree fever but refused to give up her work.

As a result, a person like her could not possibly become depressed simply because of a minor cervical spine issue. There had to be other reasons that he did not know of.

Terminal illness? No way.

Charles' face tensed as he considered this possibility and his heart sank for a moment; it felt like his heart was yanked to the pit of his stomach, leaving him breathless.

Just as he was thinking about it, the door to the office next to him clicked open, derailing his train of thoughts.

Sonia emerged with her bag on her shoulders. She noticed the uneasy looking Charles, so she inquired, "What's the matter, Charles?"

"Oh, it's nothing. I just thought of something. Well, it's not important. Let's go, shall we?" he spoke hoarsely as he raised his head and forced a smile.

She nodded in agreement when she noticed he did not want to explain further. "Alright, let's go." They walked together to the elevator, then entered the car and drove to the hotpot restaurant.

However, Charles did not possess the lively and carefree character he usually had in Sonia's office as he remained silent, serious, and preoccupied throughout the car ride.

Driving, Sonia gaped a few times in an attempt to ask him what was wrong, but every time she saw his solemn expression, she eventually remained quiet. As a result, the mood in the car was rather depressed and heavy.

Toby, on the other hand, had arrived at Connor's hotel. He was not in a hurry to get out of the car; instead, he was sitting in his car, holding his phone and talking on the phone.

After hearing about the news that Sonia and Charles had left Paradigm Co., he hummed with a frown and hung up the phone.

When Tom overheard the conversation, he could not help but turn his head. "Are you upset, President Fuller, because Miss Reed is having lunch with Mr. Lane?"

Toby kept his phone and looked at Tom. "Charles is here to help Little Leaf, so it's perfectly normal for her to have a meal with him. If I'm jealous over trivial matters like this, I'll appear selfish."

"You're right, President Fuller," Tom replied with a chuckle.

However, Toby snorted before asking, "Please check the location where they're having lunch."

"For what, President Fuller? You said you aren't jealous, didn't you? So why do you care where they eat?" Tom's brow furrowed.

Is he shameless? He squinted at Toby as he thought about it with his eyes clearly mocking.

Toby pursed his thin lips and answered quietly, "I'm not jealous, but that doesn't mean I don't care where they go. I'm only concerned about Little Leaf's well-being."

When Tom heard Toby's words, he sighed and rolled his eyes.

He's unbelievable! He's obviously jealous. Why is he being so pompous?

Obviously, Tom obviously did not dare to rebuke him, so he just nodded and smiled. "Alright, President Fuller. I'll have someone look into it," he assured.

"After inquiring, please pay for their meal and then notify Charles that I have paid. Make sure he knows that I was the one who bought him lunch," Toby said with a noble hum as he raised his chin.

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Toby wanted to let Charles know that he was aware of their lunch together.

Simultaneously, he wanted Charles to dispel the secret hilarity about eating with Little Leaf that he had assumed Toby was unaware of.

Tom had known Toby for many years and could tell what he meant and what he was thinking just by looking at him.

As such, Tom's mouth twitched uncontrollably. President Fuller is so childish!

He just said that he won't be jealous of Miss Reed and Mr. Lane having lunch together, because he's broad-minded.

And now, he wants to prove his existence in front of Mr. Lane by reminding him that he comes first to Sonia??

Isn't this a bit childish?

"Why are you staring at me like that?" Toby asked coldly with his brows furrowed when he saw Tom's speechless expression in the rearview mirror.

Tom realized that he had been exposed, so he coughed and smiled quickly. "No, President Fuller. You're mistaken. I wasn't staring at you. I was thinking about something else."

"Huh. Do you think I believe it?" Toby sneered.

Tom quickly lowered his head and fell silent when he heard that.

"Just do as I say," Toby reminded as he opened the door to exit the car.

"Yes," Tom replied before scurrying down the car. All of a sudden, a thought flashed through his mind, so he raised his head and carefully examined Toby's back. "Miss Reed will definitely think we sent someone to follow her, President Fuller. Are you not concerned that she will become enraged by this misunderstanding?"

Toby paused briefly, his face slightly frozen as he tidied up his cuffs.

He clearly never considered this.

When he heard Charles was having lunch with Sonia, he simply wanted to brag in front of the other man. I should've thought of that.

When Tom noticed Toby was quiet, he seemed to understand something and fell silent.

After a few seconds, Toby turned around and looked at Tom. "It's none of your concern. I'll take care of it myself. All you have to do is follow my instructions."

"Yes," Tom answered, twitching the corner of his mouth. However, he was secretly grumbling. He said he will handle it? How will he deal with it??

He'll probably coax Miss Reed as he always does.

I'm sure Miss Reed will easily be amused with some nice, sweet words.

President Fuller must have thought so too...

Hmph! Men! Tom snubbed his nose at Toby.

Toby had no idea Tom was looking down on him. After straightening his clothes, he walked toward the hotel door.

Tom was quick to follow, pulling out his phone and ordering his subordinates to carry out Toby's orders.

Soon, they were at the door of a presidential suite on the hotel's top floor.

Toby took a step back, turned his head and gave Tom a look.

The witty assistant, on the other hand, nodded knowingly and took a step forward before ringing the doorbell.

Thereafter, a voice from the loudspeaker located above Tom's head asked, "Who is it?"

He raised his head, fixed his gaze on the loudspeaker and responded, "Is this Mr. Connor's assistant, Mr. Little? Hello, my name is Tom Brown and I work as Toby Fuller's assistant."

Xander was sluggish in the room, but his expression changed dramatically when he heard Tom's words. He was wide awake now and his eyes had widened from the shock.

What? It is Toby's assistant, Tom, standing outside the door!

Xander's expression darkened as he became panicked and apprehensive.

He quickly took a deep breath to regain his composure and leaned against the door to avoid losing the battle. With lowered eyelids, he greeted, "Oh! It's Mr. Brown, President Fuller's assistant. Good day, Mr. Brown. May I know how I can help you?"

They had been in Seafield for a long time and they did not deliberately hide their location, therefore, President Fuller could not have been unaware of their arrival.

After all, Mr. Salzburg had also gone in search of Toby's woman.

Toby's woman must have informed him that Mr. Salzburg had arrived.

Hence, Toby had known Mr. Salzburg was coming to Seafield from the beginning, but he remained nonchalant for the past few days as if he was completely unaware of Mr. Salzburg's arrival.

Xander had assumed that Toby would keep up his pretense until Mr. Salzburg left Seafield and returned to Westsashire.

However, Toby's entourage arrived unexpectedly today.

This had to be what Toby meant!

When Tom heard Xander's question and turned around, he motioned to Toby for assistance.

Nevertheless, the man remained silent and only raised his chin.

Tom understood his boss' action in an instant, so he turned around and replied impatiently, "President Fuller travels all the way here to see Mr. Connor. We hope that you will be able to invite Mr. Connor to come forward and greet President Fuller. Otherwise, don't hold it against us for breaking in and humiliating Mr. Connor. We're warning you ahead of time."

Tom had no desire to befriend Connor or his subordinates as there was no need to beat around the bush.

Furthermore, Tom and Toby came here to meet Connor on their own initiative, so Connor should be grateful to them and extend a warm welcome to them.

After all, Toby could simply disregard Connor because of his inferior identity even if the latter begged to meet him one day.

As a result, Tom no longer had to be polite to Connor and his people because of their identities; he could simply get straight to the point.

Of course, Toby had given him the permission to do so.

Xander, who was standing on the other side of the door, was enraged and gritted his teeth upon hearing Tom's unkind and harsh words.

Nonetheless, Xander was rational and he knew that the man outside was one of Toby's lackeys. Therefore, he could not afford to offend Tom right now; he needed to be patient for the time being, no matter how angry he was.

Xander's face was gloomy as he took another breath, but he politely replied, "I understand that President Fuller has requested to meet with our boss. I'll report to Mr. Salzburg now. Please wait for a moment, Mr. Brown."

"Hurry up! President Fuller is right next to me, so don't make him wait too long. Or else, believe it or not, I'll kick down the door," Tom yelled in rage, crossing his arms in a fierce gesture he had learned from Zane.

Undoubtedly, Xander was fuming, though he had no choice but to grit his teeth and respond, "Mr. Brown Zhang, rest assured, Mr. Salzburg will be here shortly."

After he finished speaking, he squeezed his hands tightly together and walked into the house.

Tom assumed Xander had left when he heard silence from his end. "President Fuller, what do you think of my performance earlier?" he asked, turning his head to Toby while flashing a smile.

"Not bad," Toby complimented with his lips pursed.

Tom grinned when he heard that. "Thank you for your kind words. Mr. Coleman taught me this. Despite his lack of trustworthiness in daily circumstances, he excels during crises."

At the very least, his demeanor appeared to be highly offensive.

At first, Tom had no desire to learn; after all, he was part of the elite, so how could he learn hooliganism?

However, learning was required as Mr. Coleman's hooliganism was lethal when it came to enraging people.

Toby had a higher status than Connor in both Seafeld and Westsashire. Connor should be the one who paid a visit to him instead. Now that Toby had taken the initiative to see Connor, it implied that he wanted to retaliate.

As a result, Tom was putting on a show earlier to let Connor know that Toby had come to visit him. Since Toby was the far more superior one, Connor must not disrespect him at all costs.

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"He's only helpful in situations like this." Toby parted his thin lips and remarked on Zane.

"If Mr. Coleman knew you looked down on him so much, President Fuller, he'd probably get angry." Tom pushed his glasses.

"And I should be afraid of that?" Toby gently raised his eyelids.

When Tom heard that, he quickly waved his hand and clarified, "No, no. You've misunderstood, President Fuller. That is not what I mean."

"Then, shut up," Toby chided while frowning.

Shrugging, Tom then made a zipper motion with his mouth and stopped speaking.

Meanwhile, Xander dashed into the audio-visual room in the suite without knocking and simply pushing the door open. The room was dark and only the movie screen shone brightly.

The screen was showing a black-and-white film from the 1920s and the babble of singing came from the gramophone on the side, giving the entire AV room the appearance of a horror venue.

Connor sat on the single sofa in the center of the screen, dressed in a white suit. He closed his eyes, swayed his head and fingers to the music and listened intently to the musical.

Xander approached Connor carefully while glancing at the drama film on the big screen and taking in his surroundings. Even though he had seen similar scenes before, he could not help but shiver in fear at that moment.

Too bad, Xander was terrified of ghosts and not of anything else. Not to mention how playing black and white movies with horror special effects and soundtracks in an originally dark AV room heightened the dread.

"Hello, Mr. Salzburg," Xander greeted Connor respectfully and bravely approached him while lowering his head.

Connor, who was grooving to the music, came to a halt. The next moment, he slowly opened his eyes and looked at Xander in front of him. His pupils constricted, indicating that he was clearly bothered by the guy's interruption in the midst of his entertainment.

"What's the matter?" Connor inquired quietly after taking a sip of red wine to calm himself.

Although he was able to suppress his anger, Xander could still sense his boss' rage, so he lowered his head. "Mr. Salzburg. Big news. Toby has arrived."

When Connor heard this, he stopped swirling his red wine and raised his head to look at Xander. "What exactly did you say? Toby Fuller is here?"

"Yes." Xander nodded and added, "He's right outside. He has brought his assistant with him to see you."

Connor tightened his grip on the wine glass upon hearing this. He was silent for a moment before speaking again, "Did he tell you why he'd come to see me?"

Connor and Toby both believed that they would meet one day, but clearly, it was not now; not when it was a bad timing seeing that neither of them was prepared.

Still, he was not surprised when he realized Toby made no statement or moves after so many days, despite being aware of Connor's arrival.

Out of his expectation, Toby appeared at this precise moment.

This exceeded his expectations.

He picked up the remote control and pressed the pause button, bringing the movie on the screen to a halt.

He then stood up, accepted his dragon-head walking stick from Xander before lightly squeezing it and asked, "Did Toby mention why he wanted to see me so suddenly?"

"No... I inquired, but they both remained silent. Instead..." Xander replied with a shake of his head; his face revealed a hint of rage midway through his sentence.

Connor squinted his eyes as he noticed it. "Instead?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Salzburg," Xander quickly apologized before continuing, "Their attitude is terrible. They come to see us, but they are extremely arrogant. Tom even threatened me that if I don't bring you to meet Toby right away, they'd break in forcefully. That's truly revolting of them."

After hearing Xander's explanation, Connor's face darkened but not to the point where he was about to erupt in rage. Instead, he just grimaced and asked, "What's there to be angry about? He has a higher social standing than I do regardless in Seafield or Westsashire. I should have paid him a visit, not the other way around. Now that he has taken the initiative to come see me, he must display some arrogance in order to suppress me. Otherwise, it will imply that he is afraid of me. Therefore, there's no need to be upset. If I were in Toby's shoes, I'd do the same."

"Yes." Xander bowed before remaining silent.

"Perhaps Toby did not come for the grudge between me and him," Connor rubbed the dragon head carved on his walking stick.

"Do you mean Toby is here because of the woman, Miss Reed, Mr. Salzburg?" Xander stared at him, puzzled.

"That is most likely it. We shouldn't meet now to air our grievances. Toby, after all, has yet to discover anything. If I were him, I would only meet to declare war after conducting an extensive investigation."

"What if Toby is here because of something he discovered, not because of the woman?" Xander was unsettled.

"If he could, he would have found it a long time ago and would not have been suspicious until now. Do you get it?" Connor said somberly.

After meeting Connor's cold and piercing gaze, Xander lowered his head in fear and quickly replied, "Yes, I understand."

"I don't want to hear any discouraging words from you again," Connor warned sternly.

Xander nodded and said, "Yes, Mr. Salzburg."

Only then did Connor avert his gaze and said, "I'm still confident when it comes to how much Toby has discovered. On the other hand, he must have come to me at this point solely for Sonia's sake because the issue with her missing parts has yet to be resolved. Today is the deadline and if it is not met, she will face serious consequences. Last night, I spoke with Sonia and she stated that she has a solution. However, I haven't heard anything about it from the people we sent to keep an eye on her, so the ostensible solution could be to rely on Toby."

"That is why he showed up!" Realization hit Xander. "Now it all makes sense. If so, then Toby must genuinely care about Sonia."

"It may not be the case though." Connor stated as he gripped his cane, "Assisting Sonia in solving the problem does not imply that he cares about her. After all, Sonia is one of them and when something bad happens to Toby's people, he naturally lends a helping hand. Furthermore, such a problem is not difficult for him to resolve. All he has to do is show up. As a result, even if he doesn't love her, he can't stand by and watch her suffer. This will only embarrass himself once the words are out."

"You're right. Toby's willingness to come forward to deal with such a difficult matter demonstrates his concern for Sonia," Xander analyzed as he pushed his glasses.

"Alright. That's enough. Let's not get into that right now. I should meet Toby since he's here. We should greet him before he breaks in. If that happens, I'll be the butt of everyone's joke," Connor uttered while rubbing his temples.

"Yes," the assistant responded quickly before following his boss out of the AV room.

After exiting, Connor sat on the sofa in the living room with his legs spread apart and his cane positioned between his legs. He placed his hands on top of the dragon-head and lowered his head slightly, making it impossible to decipher what he was thinking.

Xander, on the other hand, went to open the suite's door.

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Outside the door, Tom kept staring at his watch, estimating in his mind how much time had passed since Xander left.

Leaning against the wall beside him, Toby suddenly opened his eyes, asking, "How long has it been?"

Tom lowered his wrist and replied, "Three minutes."

Toby's eyes narrowed. "Kick the door open!" How could it take that assistant three full minutes just to notify his boss? Obviously, they didn't give a damn about him. Since that was the case, he didn't have to play nice with them anymore. He would just force his way in.

Tom had been waiting for Toby to say this, so he immediately replied with a smile, "Alright, President Fuller. I'll get it done right away." As soon as he finished his sentence, he stepped back and lifted his foot to kick the door.

However, the instant he kicked out his leg, the door suddenly opened with Xander emerging behind it. As he didn't manage to pull back his leg in time, Xander was immediately sent flying by the kick before landing on the steps leading to the hallway at the back.

Consequently, Xander curled himself into a ball while letting out cries of pain.

No one expected this to happen.

At this moment, Tom still had his foot raised in midair in a kicking posture. He looked at the open door, then Xander, who was clutching his stomach in pain and rolling on the floor across from him with sweat all over his face. "Uh... Will you believe me if I say I didn't mean it?" He slowly lowered his leg as his lips twitched.

When Xander heard this, he nearly spat out a mouthful of blood. Struggling to open his eyes, he stared at Tom with bloodshot eyes as if to say something. However, thanks to the acute pain in his stomach, he could hardly even breathe, let alone speak. As a result, he could only curl up on the floor while clutching his stomach with both hands. Enduring the sharp pain, he glared hard at Tom, as if wanting to skin the latter alive.

Feeling somewhat guilty under his stare, Tom touched the tip of his nose. "Um, sorry, Mr. Little, but I really didn't mean it. I'd like to apologize to you, and I'm sorry for what happened. Please don't take it to heart. I'll be more careful to not hurt you again by mistake next time, really," he apologized with an earnest look, but he didn't sound apologetic at all.

Even his face showed no guilt or remorse for having injured Xander by mistake. Instead, all it showed was clear, unconcealed joy.

That was right: not only did Tom not feel sorry for what he had done, he even felt smug about it. He also didn't expect to end up sending Connor's lackey flying with a kick when all he wanted was to kick the door open. What does this mean? This means that even God can't stand the sight of Connor and his lackey, so He purposefully created the opportunity for me to hit the latter. Otherwise, why would he come to the door just when I was about to kick it open? That's the work of fate!

At the thought of this, he almost grinned from ear to ear.

How could Xander not know what Tom was thinking when he saw the latter like this? "Pffft!" He spat out a mouthful of blood for real. "Y-You..." He pulled his hand away from his stomach, then raised it tremblingly to point at Tom as if to accuse the latter.

However, he was in so much pain that he didn't have the strength to say a complete sentence. The hard kick he had sustained just now made him feel almost like being hit by a truck. In short, now he felt like his insides had been crushed from the impact, and he nearly passed out from the resulting pain. He felt wretched enough to begin with, but little did he realize that this b*stard would lie through his teeth. His insides twinged with anger. This *sshole says he's sorry, but he doesn't sound sorry to me at all. The most ridiculous thing is that he says he'll be careful next time. Damn it! He's thinking of doing that again next time!

Seeing how Xander spat out blood and appeared to be dying, Tom opened his mouth and was stunned. "President Fuller... Could I have hurt him badly?"

Toby had been silently watching the scene all this while. At this moment, he finally raised his eyes and said, "Who cares? Just deal with it." With that, he directly strode in through the door before walking toward Xander.

Xander was still lying on the floor when he sensed a shadow looming over him. He looked up to see the man walking toward him. Tall and expressionless, the man had a powerful and domineering presence that was impossible to ignore.

Xander stared at Toby in a daze. It wasn't like he didn't know what Toby looked like, but he had never seen this guy with his own eyes. He had only seen Toby in photos and documents. He knew that those in power usually had a commanding presence. Even so, he never expected that the presence projected by the man before him was so oppressive that he felt like being grabbed by the throat when all the man did was lower his eyes and dart a look at him. He dared not even breathe, nor did he have the courage to meet the man's eyes.

Flustered, he hastily lowered his head to avoid making eye contact with Toby. Only by doing so was he able to breathe and feel that he was still alive. It was unlike just now, when he felt his blood freeze as though he was going to die.

This guy really isn't easy to deal with! he thought to himself, his heart pounding heavily as his body trembled even more violently. He used to think that his boss was the most intimidating and formidable person on earth who struck terror into the hearts of whoever that met him. However, he was wrong. The man before him was the most intimidating and terrifying person he had met so far. He was at least able to look Connor in the eye sometimes, but he didn't even have the courage to meet the eyes of the man before him. It was laughable that he had thought that if he were to meet this man formally, he would take a good look at the latter to see if he was really as intimidating as he was rumored to be.

It was true that there were rumors circulating in the outside world about how Toby was a demon king and how scary he was, but he had never believed them. Not only that; he even scoffed at these rumors, thinking that they were false exaggerations. However, he now finally realized that these rumors were no exaggerations. They were true, and he was the one with tunnel vision.

On the other hand, Toby didn't know what Xander was thinking. He merely lowered his eyes and darted a look at the latter, whom he viewed as nothing but a piece of trash, before withdrawing his gaze and lifting his foot to step over the man.

Imitating his boss, Tom stepped over Xander as well.

Xander felt humiliated when Toby stepped over him, but the difference between them was so huge that he was still able to tell himself to calm down and pretend to know nothing. However, when Tom stepped over him, he gnashed his teeth in hatred and wished he could tear Tom to pieces right away.

Naturally, Tom sensed the murderous gaze behind him, so he looked back and happened to see Xander's eyes bulging with anger. Instead of being frightened, he raised his chin with a provoking smile and gave the latter a taunting thumbs down.

At the sight of this, Xander could no longer restrain himself. Everything went black before his eyes, and he fainted.

Tom raised his eyebrows in surprise upon seeing this. The next instant, he quickly curled his lips and turned his head back indifferently, with no intention of calling a doctor for the unconscious Xander. To him, Xander was just a lackey of Connor, so it didn't matter to him that he fainted. Moreover, he passed out from anger just like that, so he definitely wasn't capable of anything. He can't even endure this little bit of hardship? What an unpresentable good-for-nothing! To think that he'd pass out just like that.

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Tom wasn't at all worried about what would happen to Xander afterward. As President Fuller said, we'll just deal with it, anyway, he thought. Putting Xander out of his mind, he quickly caught up to Toby ahead of him, paying no more attention to the unconscious man.

Toby entered the suite's living room. At a glance, he saw Connor sitting across from him with his eyes slightly closed as if he was napping. At that very moment, he stopped in his tracks with a violent storm brewing in his eyes. So this old man is Connor Salzburg, the man who failed my mother and caused her to kill herself. He might also be my dad's murderer! At the thought of this, he clenched his hands at his sides into fists so tightly that his knuckles cracked audibly.

Looking down at the veins standing out on the back of Toby's hands and his pale knuckles, Tom quickly whispered, "Calm down, President Fuller. Your left arm hasn't recovered yet. If anything happens to you, Miss Reed will get worried."

As he had expected, the instant he mentioned Sonia, Toby instantly calmed down a lot, and his fists unclenched a little.

At the sight of this, he breathed a sigh of relief. Miss Reed is useful after all. Seems like if President Fuller loses his temper again in the future, I can mention her to quell his anger, he thought to himself as his eyes flickered. The more he thought about it, the more he thought it was feasible. In the end, he couldn't help but nod twice to himself.

On the other hand, Toby had no time to care about what Tom was thinking behind him. All he knew was that he had finally met Connor, the person behind the death of his parents. He had always thought that he could remain composed enough even if he met Connor, but now, he finally realized that he was wrong, and that he had yet to reach that level of composure. Upon meeting his enemy, he was inwardly consumed with impulsiveness and violent rage, so much so that he even wanted to kill this guy right away. Turns out that I'm not as good as I thought. Clenching his fists again, he took a deep breath. It took him a lot of effort to barely suppress the murderous intent inside him and continue to walk on.

Sitting on the sofa nearby, Connor rubbed the dragon's head on his walking stick when he heard the footsteps. "Xander, go make some tea if you've brought them here."

There was no answer.

Toby stopped right in front of the sofa opposite Connor's. Then, he sat down and stared at the latter.

Naturally, Tom stepped behind him and stood still while also staring at Connor. Seeing how Connor closed his eyes with a calm and mysterious expression, he couldn't help but roll his eyes while sneering inwardly. This old guy is quite good at pretending. Now that we're here, he's still closing his eyes in an enigmatic fashion. Those who don't know what's going on would think that he's playing the role of some reclusive master. Just look at how pretentious he is; no ordinary people could reach that level. "You'd better stop calling for your assistant, Mr. Salzburg. I'm afraid that he can't get up and make tea at the moment," he said while pushing his glasses.

Finally, Connor opened his eyes across from them. At first glance, he saw an expressionless Toby sitting on the sofa across from him while exuding frostiness through every pore.

The instant Connor saw Toby, his pupils shrank, and a hint of an inscrutable emotion flashed across his eyes. The next instant, though, he resumed his former expression as if nothing had happened. He even smiled gently at Toby, saying, "We finally get to meet in person, son. You're even taller and more handsome than I imagined. As expected of Val's child."

Toby knitted his brows; his eyes looked even more murderous. "You have no right to call me 'son,' nor are you worthy of calling my mother by her pet name."

"Hehe." Connor chuckled. Instead of getting angry, he laughed. "In terms of family background and social status, I'm indeed not your equal, and I have to call you President Fuller. However, considering our age and my past relationship with your mother, you're indeed supposed to call me Uncle Connor, whereas I'm supposed to call you 'son.' As for me calling your mother by her pet name..." He narrowed his eyes with a meaningful smile. "I think I'm the only person on earth whom your mother would want to call her by her pet name."

As soon as he said that, Toby's face immediately darkened, but he couldn't make a retort. Indeed, given her feelings for him, his mother would naturally want Connor to call her like that.

Connor's smile deepened when he saw how Toby compressed his lips without saying a word. "By the way, son, your assistant behind you just said that my assistant couldn't get up. What does that mean?"

Tom stepped forward, but just when he was about to speak, Toby raised a hand to signal him to back off. Upon seeing this, he immediately gave a knowing nod and stepped back to his original position.

Toby put down his hand while looking at Connor. Then, as his thin lips parted, he said in a cold and stony voice, "I'm not that interested to mention so much about an unimportant person. Let's get straight to the point. Where are the spare parts of my lover's company?"

Connor's face showed no surprise when he heard Toby say this. After all, he had figured out Toby's purpose in coming here when he learned of the latter's arrival. And now, what Toby had said merely confirmed his guess. "So you're here for what happened to Miss Reed. Seems like you're deeply in love with her." He looked at Toby with a shrewd gleam in his eyes.

Toby kept his countenance so that no one could tell his emotions. "That isn't something you should care about. You just have to tell me whether you're gonna return the spare parts or not!"

Seeing how cold and unyielding his manner was, Connor let out a sigh of regret. This lad is pretty good at maintaining his composure; there's no way to tell anything from his face. Ah, young people nowadays... Rubbing the dragon's head on his walking stick, he sighed to himself while feeling jealous at the same time. He had been heaped with praise since childhood, but he wasn't able to be as imperturbable as Toby was when he was younger. It was evident from this alone that he was inferior to Homer. He had been compared with Homer when he was younger. They said that however outstanding he was, he was slightly inferior to Homer. And now, even Homer's son did better than he had been in his younger days. Ha! How ironic.

He lowered his eyes to conceal the emotions in them before putting on a gentle smile again. He replied, "Now that you've come here in person, wouldn't it make you look bad if I were to refuse to return the spare parts? We've never met in person before, but we've heard about what kind of a person each other is, so we naturally won't offend each other easily. Moreover, it's still hard for us to shed all pretenses of cordiality now, isn't it?"

Toby narrowed his eyes. "Your words seem to reveal a lot of information."

Connor let out a chuckle. "Some things aren't that easy to point out, don't you think?" he said while pouring a cup of tea for Toby. Then, he pushed the cup of tea toward the latter with an inviting gesture.

Toby glanced down at the cup of tea, but he had no intention of picking it up and drinking it. Instead, he stood up from the sofa. "By saying those things, don't you worry that I'll kill you right away to save myself a lot of trouble and get everything over and done with?"

Connor picked up his cup of tea and drank it slowly. "You won't. If you do that, all the contributions your grandfather made to the country back then will be wiped out overnight. Do you wanna make him turn in his grave?"

Toby's eyes were blood red. "No wonder you dare to admit it. Turns out you were waiting for me to say that."

Connor looked at him smilingly without saying a word.

Toby closed his eyes hard for a long time before suppressing his anger. His face sullen, he said, "I didn't come here for nothing today. I'll remember what you said, and I'll end your life myself!"

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As Connor had said, he was indeed eager for revenge, but he wouldn't really kill the latter right away to save trouble. If he were to do that, he would ruin the accomplishments Norman had made with his own life.

Given Norman's past contributions, the country wouldn't hold him accountable for killing Connor, but it would use Norman's meritorious exploits to cancel out the impact and trouble caused by him killing Connor like that. Norman had performed meritorious deeds at the cost of his own life, so it really wasn't worth it to use them to cancel out the problems caused by Connor's death. He wouldn't do that either, so he would use the most righteous means of revenge: he would find the evidence of Connor's crimes before requesting the top guns to let him execute Connor in person. He believed that they wouldn't turn down such a request. As long as he didn't do anything reckless and cause hundreds of thousands of people to lose their jobs or their families, the authorities would definitely satisfy him for Norman's sake.

Connor's grip on the dragon's head on his walking stick tightened when he heard Toby's words. However, he loosened his grip with a dismissive smile soon afterward, saying, "Is that so? In that case, let's see what you're capable of."

Toby raised his chin slightly while looking down at Connor with the aid of his height. "You won't be disappointed. I just hope that you won't beg me for mercy when the day comes."

Naturally, Connor didn't like it when Toby looked at him with contempt like this. However, he couldn't do anything about it because of the latter's height, so he had no choice but to put up with it while barely managing to keep smiling. "Of course I won't."

"Good to hear that," Toby replied coldly with his hands in his trouser pockets. Then, he threatened airily, "I hope you'll have the spare parts delivered to Paradigm Co. within an hour. Otherwise, even if I can't take your life at the moment, I can make you suffer. Try me if you don't believe it."

Connor replied with a chuckle, "Rest assured, son. Since I've promised to return the spare parts, I won't put it off, of course. So there are some things that you can't do even if you want to."

Toby's eyes flickered slightly. "Is that so? That's too bad. I was hoping that you could be a bit late." If this old man does so, I'll have a reason to give him trouble.

Connor let out another chuckle. "Now that you've fulfilled your purpose in coming here, I wonder if you can talk about my purpose."

"What do you want?" Toby squinted.

Connor stood up as well. "As you know, I've never set foot in Seafeld over the past 30 years. Now I'm here for my only daughter."

"So Anya really is your illegitimate daughter?" Toby cut him short.

Connor lowered his eyes to conceal the look in them. "Of course. What's wrong? Are you suspecting that she isn't my daughter?"

"The police have told me about the way you interacted with Anya. It's hard for me to believe that you two are father and daughter," Toby replied, admitting straightforwardly that he didn't believe it.

Connor smiled calmly. "I see. No wonder you're suspicious. It's normal for you to be suspicious, though. It's true that I'm not nice to my daughter. After all, she is a disgrace to a man. I believe that you'd also be like that if you were me."

"That'd be impossible." Toby's thin lips curled into a cold sneer. "Firstly, I'm not like you. I wouldn't keep on saying that I love someone while getting involved with another woman out there at the same time, nor would I produce a love child. Not only do you treat your illegitimate child badly, but you even regard her as a disgrace. Didn't you bring disgrace upon yourself by giving way to your lust?"

One could say that these words unceremoniously blew Connor's cover and exposed the most hypocritical side of him to the sun. An illegitimate child was indeed a disgrace to a man. However, the disgrace wasn't brought by the illegitimate child; it was brought by the man upon himself for failing to restrain his urges. Connor was such a man. Despite being the one in the wrong, he put all the blame on his illegitimate daughter, thinking that it was the latter's presence that had brought disgrace upon him. Thinking that he had done nothing wrong, he put his actions out of his mind. Such a man was a typical example of selfishness, and such a selfish person usually loved themselves the most. They would never fall in love with anyone else.

So, my mother... Toby sneered inwardly in mockery. Did you see that, Mom? Such is the man you love.

Little did Connor think Toby would say such things without sparing his feelings. Perhaps because he knew that Toby was right and that he was such a person, he found the latter's words unacceptable at this very moment. For a moment, he got so exasperated that he stared at Toby with bloodshot eyes. He uttered sinisterly between clenched teeth, "Don't you worry that I'll get angry when you say these things?"

Toby laughed as if he had heard a cosmic joke. "Do you think I should be worried?" He took a step forward to close in on Connor. With his height and his commanding presence, he was more outstanding than Connor in every aspect. Moreover, he was a fierce tiger in its prime, whereas Connor was already an old wolf in the twilight of its life. It was a no-brainer which of them would win if they were to come head-to-head. In terms of presence alone, Connor was several notches below him, for he totally suppressed Connor.

"I'm not at all worried about whether you'll be unhappy. Even if I kill you right now, no one would dare to say anything, so you should be glad that my grandfather's meritorious service is saving your life for the time being. Don't get ahead of yourself and forget whose territory this is and who you're facing. Are you even qualified to threaten me?" He looked down at Connor with a mercilessly cold look in his eyes, as if he was looking at a dead person.

Connor had always thought he was the one who brought the fear of death upon others in his life. However, he never dreamed that he would feel the fear of death brought upon him by somebody else one day. Furthermore, that somebody was a young man 30 years his junior. Such a blow was indeed a humiliation to him. At the same time, it made him realize that he was indeed getting ahead of himself. He had forgotten that he was in Seafeld, not Westsashire. Also, he had forgotten that the person he was facing wasn't any of those who had feared him in the past, but the demon king who harbored grudges against him but was of a much higher status than he was. This was his mistake.

Seeing how Connor fell silent with a darkened expression, Toby withdrew his gaze. "I have a rough idea what your purpose is. You want me to let Anya off, so you first went to my woman. But you failed, which was why you intercepted her company's spare parts to threaten her."

Connor's ringed thumb moved slightly to rub against the dragon's head on his walking stick. "You're right. I thought she was a persuadable and soft-hearted woman, so I went to her after arriving in Seafeld. I thought it'd be easy for me to achieve my goal. As long as she was willing to forgive Anya, I could offer double compensation. However, she turned me down, so I had no choice but to resort to this. Still, I didn't think that my plan would fail. She's even more stubborn than I imagined. She refuses to relent even under such circumstances."

"She's my woman. If she were to give in so easily, I wouldn't have fallen in love with her," Toby said through his thin lips without concealing the pride in his voice.

"Is that so?" Connor's eyes flickered.

Toby then said, "On the other hand, you intercepted the goods to coerce my woman when you failed to reach your objective. Don't you worry that I'll get angry when you do so?"

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He repeated the question Connor had thrown at him.

Connor chuckled. "If I were worried, I wouldn't have done that. After all, all I did was intercept some goods, so you wouldn't go so far as to fight me to the bitter end. Furthermore, I've decided since the beginning that if you personally ask me to return the spare parts, I'll immediately give them back without delay. Wouldn't that give you no reason to lay a hand on me?" It was exactly because he was absolutely certain about this that he dared to do so. Otherwise, he wouldn't have taken the risk.

"You know me better than I imagined," Toby taunted.

Connor rubbed the dragon's head with a half-smile. "And so do you."

"In that case, if I didn't come to you to ask for the batch of spare parts, would you continue to feign ignorance by not returning the spare parts? Would you let my lover's company get into trouble so that you could laugh at me?" Toby said while unleashing his murderous intent.

Connor, the old fox, still had a smile on his face. "How is that possible? I knew that you'd definitely come back. After all, you and I know very well what Miss Reed is capable of. She has no means to solve this issue. If she wants to prevent Paradigm Co. from going bankrupt, all she has to do is agree to let Anya off, and I'll naturally return the spare parts to her. However, she refuses to do so, so I have no choice but to keep on stalling her. You know Paradigm Co.'s situation without me telling you about it. The problem with the spare parts can't be held off, but she can't produce a large sum of money to weather the crisis caused by the lack of spare parts, so you're the only one she can turn to. She's your woman, so it's only natural that you can't sit by and do nothing about it. Well, my guess proved to be right, no?"

In reality, it wasn't for Anya's sake that he intercepted the spare parts in the beginning. His real purpose was to sound out how much the man before him cared about Sonia. Anya was just an extra. What if Sonia was softhearted enough to agree to let Anya off? Even if the couple didn't agree to let Anya off, he could sound out how much Toby cared about Sonia. In short, whatever the outcome was, he wouldn't be at a disadvantage. He

would get what he wanted, and he proved to have succeeded. Sonia was very dependent on Toby. On the other hand, Toby might not love her so much as to be unable to live without her, but he was absolutely deeply in love with her. Otherwise, why would he come in person instead of sending his assistant here? Of course, this wasn't enough. What he wanted to see the most was for Toby to love Sonia so much that he could sacrifice his life in exchange for hers. Only then could Sonia be of great use in the future.

"Unfortunately, your guess is partly wrong," Toby mocked sharply while looking at Connor. It was true that Sonia couldn't produce the money, but she had never intended to ask him for help. She'd rather consult Charles about how to solve the problem than ask him for help. Connor was wrong about this from the beginning.

Connor's confident smile froze all of a sudden when he heard Toby say that his guess was wrong. "My guess is wrong? That's impossible. How am I wrong?"

Toby had no intention of answering his questions, though. His thin lips parted slightly as he replied coldly, "That isn't what you're supposed to know. It's true that I won't fight you to the bitter end just because you intercepted the spare parts, but I'll remember this and settle all the scores with you in the future." His eyes gleamed with frostiness as he spoke.

Connor stopped rubbing the dragon's head with his thumb for a moment. Soon after that, he started rubbing the dragon's head again, but Toby's words seemed to make him feel somewhat restless. His thumb rubbed against the dragon's head much faster than just now, which revealed his turbulent emotions. "Is that so? Well, I'll be looking forward to that." He lowered his eyes. "Having said so much, I have yet to tell you my purpose. Your guess just now is right. I'm indeed here for that disappointing daughter of mine. I don't like her either, but no matter what, she's my daughter. I can't bear to see her like this, so I'd like to ask you to show her mercy and let her off. Of course, I'll pay Miss Reed the full compensation she's supposed to receive. I'll even pay her double compensation. How about that?"

The instant he said so, Tom nearly threw up in disgust, not to mention Toby. The question of whether Connor had caused the death of Homer aside, it was an indisputable fact that Connor had caused the death of Toby's mother. Secondly, it was also an indisputable fact that Anya, Connor's illegitimate daughter, had repeatedly bullied Sonia. One might as well say that Toby and Sonia had a lot of scores to settle with Connor and Anya, so what gave Connor the cheek to ask Toby to have Anya released? In short, this was his first time seeing someone asking their enemy to release one of their people. Don't tell me Connor thinks that President Fuller will definitely say yes once he makes a request. What a joke!

As he had expected, Toby replied in a grim voice, "You want me to let Anya off? Do you think that's possible?"

Connor wasn't surprised by Toby's reply. Instead, he laughed. "I know that with the history between us, it's indeed quite impossible for you to let my daughter off like that. But what if I trade something for that?"

"I'm not interested," Toby replied without the slightest hesitation.

Connor looked at him, his eyes flickering. "We're talking about the stuff your mother left behind back then. Are you sure that you're not interested?"

Toby's face changed color instantly at these words. Staring at Connor with bloodshot eyes, he asked, "What did you say? You mean the stuff my mother left behind?"

Connor smiled smugly. "That's right. I won't go so far as to lie to you about this kind of thing."

Toby fell silent, whereas Tom had a complicated expression on his face. They never expected things to turn out this way. To think that Connor still has the stuff left behind by the late Madam in his hands! Not only that, but he's now using it to threaten President Fuller, thought Tom.

Toby stared at Connor with a terrifyingly grim expression. "What did my mother leave behind?"

Connor picked up his cup of tea and took a sip from it. "I won't tell you what it is for now. All I can tell you is that it was very, very important to your mother. She gave it to me when she and I were together, saying that it was as important as her own life. She gave it to me in hopes that I'd think of her whenever I saw it, so I've kept it well until now."

"How lamentable," Toby suddenly commented.

Connor was startled for a moment. "What do you mean?"

Toby replied, "Something as important as her own life, huh? My mother gave such an important thing to you because she trusted you. To think that you'd betray her trust by offering the stuff she gave you in exchange for your illegitimate daughter. Isn't that lamentable?" He raised his head and suddenly stretched out his hand. Then, before Connor could realize what was going on, he immediately grabbed Connor's throat and lifted him up with all his might.

Connor was only about 170 centimeters tall. Moreover, he was thin, so Toby lifted him up effortlessly with one hand. Before Connor realized it, he was already at least six centimeters above the ground.

The walking stick in Connor's hand dropped to the floor with a thud and rolled on the carpet before coming to a stop. On the other hand, Connor was suspended in midair. At this moment, his face was flushed, and his eyes were bulging and tinged with blood. He

was opening his mouth in an attempt to ask Toby to let go of him, but Toby grabbed his neck so tightly that he couldn't make a sound at all. Consequently, he could only keep trying to prise Toby's fingers, wanting to prise the latter's fingers from his neck.

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At this moment, however, Toby had let rage overcome his reason. All he knew was that not only had the old man in his hand caused the death of his mother, but he was now offering to trade the stuff she had left behind for the life of his illegitimate daughter. There was no way he could keep calm, so he grasped Connor's throat in a vice-like grip that he gradually tightened.

Soon after that, Connor felt that he couldn't breathe; his face turned from crimson to purple and was streaming with tears and snot. His eyes rolled up uncontrollably, and all the veins in his temples protruded as if they would burst simultaneously in the next second. In short, he felt terrible at this very moment. He couldn't breathe, and his strength was gradually melting away. At first, he had been struggling desperately to prise Toby's hand in a panic, but he slowed down as his strength melted.

He knew that Toby was in the mood to kill and wanted to take his life. He could even feel his death approaching at this very moment. No, no way! I can't die! I mustn't die now that my wishes haven't been fulfilled! At the thought of this, he suddenly had a will to survive. At this moment, some strength returned to his originally powerless hands. Struggling vigorously, he began slapping Toby's hand while flailing his legs continuously.

However, these were merely hopeless efforts for Toby. To him, Connor's struggles were just the last-ditch struggle of a nobody, which would only enrage him even further without doing him any harm. Consequently, he tightened his grasp on Connor's throat once again.

Connor looked even more ghastly and pained. His vision began to blur, and he felt like Toby was about to break his neck; he could even hear the sound of his bones breaking. Am I really gonna die here? No, I can't accept this! Still, however unwilling he was to die at this moment, he no longer had the strength to struggle or fight back. What he had done just now was already his last struggle.

As such, instead of struggling to prise Toby's hand, he suddenly let go of it and let his hands fall to his sides.

Still, Toby had no intention of letting Connor off. With a cruel expression, he continued to tighten his grip. At this moment, there was only a voice in his mind telling him to

choke the latter to death. As long as he did so, the deaths of his parents would be avenged, and his grandmother's longtime wish would come true. The more he thought about this, the more bloodshot his eyes became, and his grip tightened more and more.

As he continued to tighten his grip, Connor's eyelids began to droop, and his head began to tilt to the side as if he was about to die.

Upon seeing this, Tom knew that the situation had to stop. Hurriedly, he put his hand on Toby's wrist and said loudly, "Stop it, President Fuller! Connor is dying! I know how you feel, but we can't kill him like this right now. Don't forget about the late Old Master Fuller's meritorious exploits! It's not worth it to use them to cancel out the consequences of killing this guy."

When Toby heard this, his pupils shrank slightly for an instant. At this moment, his originally stony face showed a hint of warmth, which only appeared when he heard Tom mention his grandfather. Thanks to the bit of warmth, he gradually returned to his senses. Seeing how he had almost choked Connor to death, he closed his eyes hard, suppressing all the murderous desires within him. Then, he uncurled his fingers and released his grip on Connor's throat.

Connor fell to the ground with a loud thud. His eyes wide open, he stared fixedly at the ceiling, clutching his terribly painful throat with both hands while greedily gasping for air with his mouth agape. This was his first time being so close to death. So is death such a horrifying thing? Recalling how Toby had nearly choked him to death just now, he instantly turned as white as a sheet with irrepressible terror showing in his eyes.

Seeing how Toby had listened to him and let go of Connor, Tom immediately heaved a sigh of relief. "Phew..." He took a handkerchief out of his pocket and handed it to Toby. "Please wipe your hands, President Fuller."

Toby darted a look at Tom before taking the handkerchief from him. Then, as he wiped his hands clean, he lifted one foot and stepped on Connor's chest with all his might. "Connor, I seriously wonder if you ever loved my mother."

Enduring the severe pain in his throat and on his chest, Connor slowly moved his eyes to meet Toby's frosty and condescending gaze. He replied in a weak and unpleasantly hoarse voice, "Of course I love her."

"Do you think I'll believe it?" Toby let out a sneer. "If you had loved her, you wouldn't have hidden your relationship with her from everyone else without openly acknowledging her identity. If you had loved her, you wouldn't have watched her get married without trying to stop it or even fighting for her. You wouldn't have kept in touch with her, strung her along, and made that laughable promise without honoring it after she got married, nor would you have had an illegitimate daughter, for whom you offered to trade her possessions. So, Connor, given your actions, what gives you the right to say that you love her? Which part of your behavior represents your love for her? You

were merely teasing her, manipulating her, and humiliating her!” he said. Then, overwhelmed with rage once again, he lifted his foot and stepped hard on Connor.

Crack! A sharp, loud sound of bones breaking sounded, accompanied by Connor’s shrill cries of pain.

“Hiss...” Upon hearing this, Tom let out a gasp of horror. President Fuller has definitely broken at least two of Connor’s ribs with his foot! Seeing Connor’s pained expression and bulging eyes, he clicked his tongue twice. However, he had no sympathy for Connor. He totally deserves this, he thought.

Toby moved his foot away and let go of Connor before taking a step back to distance himself from the latter. Seeing how Connor writhed on the floor in agony, he said through his thin lips in a mercilessly cold voice, “Bear in mind that this isn’t gonna cancel out everything you did—only your life will do.” Then, he said to Tom, “Let’s go.” With that, he turned around and headed toward the suite’s door, ignoring Connor, who was lying on the floor like a dead dog.

Tom gave Connor a scornful look before catching up with Toby. However, as soon as he took a step forward, Connor grabbed his ankle.

As a result, he was forced to stop. Looking down at Connor, who was in so much pain that he wished he were dead, he said with a frown, “Mr. Salzburg, don’t tell me you’re grabbing me because you want me to call an ambulance for you?”

Trembling all over, Connor gasped violently in pain as beads of cold sweat dripped from his forehead. He said in a feeble voice, “I-I want you to tell him to think about whether to agree to the exchange... If he decides not to, I’ll dispose of the stuff his mother left behind myself. You two had better not regret it.”

“You...” Tom’s face darkened. “How dare you threaten President Fuller even now?”

Instead of answering him, Connor smiled a creepy smile, revealing his bloodied teeth.

At the sight of the scene, Tom instantly got goosebumps. After staring at Connor for a while, he yanked his ankle out of Connor’s grasp. Then, he turned around and quickly trotted after Toby.

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When Tom caught up to Toby, the latter was already in front of the elevator. Seeing how the man gave off an oppressive aura through every pore, he knew that he was in a bad

mood at the moment. After a moment's thought, he fished his cigarette pack from his pocket, shook a cigarette out of it, and handed the cigarette to the man. "Wanna smoke a cigarette, President Fuller?"

Toby darted a look at it before straightening up. "No, I don't need it. I've quit smoking."

"Huh?" Tom was startled. "You've quit smoking?" When was that? Why don't I know about that? Well, President Fuller wasn't a heavy smoker, but he'd occasionally smoke a cigarette or two. I've not heard of him quitting smoking, though.

Raising his chin slightly, Toby replied with a note of unconcealed pride in his voice, "I quit smoking just a few days ago. Little Leaf forbade me to smoke, saying that it was bad for my health. Since she cares so much about me, how could I disappoint her?"

"Uh..." Tom's lips twitched. "I see. Alright then, I'll smoke the cigarette myself," he said while putting away the cigarette.

Toby frowned. "You're not allowed to smoke as well."

Tom was just about to put the cigarette between his lips when he heard this. "Why?" he couldn't help but ask curiously. "Could it be that you're also concerned about my health, President Fuller?" Aww, I'm so touched! I've been working for this mean boss for over ten years. Not only has he never cared about me, but he also leaves all kinds of dirty and heavy work to me. It's no exaggeration to say that he's a bully who exploits his employees. I thought I'd keep on living under his exploitation, but to think that he has finally become more like a human now! Really, I'm so touched. This is all thanks to Miss Reed's taming of him!

Just when he was inwardly walking on air, Toby's response dampened his spirits like a bucket of cold water pouring down on him, making him feel touched for nothing. "What are you dreaming about? Why would I care about a guy like you?" Toby looked at him with a frown of disgust. "I forbid you to smoke because I don't want to betray Little Leaf's concern for me by breathing in secondhand smoke from you. What does that have to do with you?"

Ha ha. Speechless, Tom put his cigarette back into his cigarette pack with an expressionless face. I should've thought of this long ago. How could the wicked boss for whom I've worked for over ten years become so humane all of a sudden? If he were humane, he would've done so long ago, no? How could he possibly become humane over ten years later? Seriously, it's too naive of me to believe that my bully of a boss will care about me. Ha ha. Really, I was touched for nothing. What a lack of awareness.

"Remember not to smoke in front of me from now on, or I'll make you feel sorry for it," Toby warned in a cold voice.

Tom's lips twitched again before he replied sulkily, "Yes, President Fuller."

Only then did Toby withdraw his gaze in satisfaction and stop looking at him.

Just then, the elevator arrived. Toby stepped into it, and Tom immediately followed suit.

After the elevator door closed, Tom turned to look at the man next to him, asking, "By the way, President Fuller, does your previous conversation with Connor mean that he admitted he was the one behind Mr. Homer's death?"

Toby balled his hands at his sides into fists while starting to give off chilly vibes once again. He replied with a monotonous "yes," but one could recognize the murderous note in it if they were to listen carefully.

Tom took a deep breath. "So it really was him. I never thought he'd really dare to admit it."

Toby's eyes were bloodshot with fury. "Didn't you hear it? With Grandpa's meritorious service, is there anything he wouldn't dare to do?"

Tom fell silent. After a while, he said with a sigh, "I suddenly feel that it's not a good thing for the late Old Master Fuller to have made so many contributions. Who knows if these contributions were used to shield the Fullers or our enemies?"

Toby lowered his eyes. "There are things that are good and bad at the same time, to begin with. With advantages come disadvantages. The Fuller Family is able to become so successful mostly thanks to the contributions Grandpa made to the country. Now that we're enjoying the benefits brought by his contributions, we have to abide by the law and not do anything reckless."

"It's exactly because of this that Connor is able to catch this flaw and act cocky." Tom sighed. "As expected, there are some things that come with their own advantages and disadvantages."

Toby didn't respond to his words.

Looking at the man, Tom continued, "Say, President Fuller, if the late Old Master Fuller were to know how Connor had killed his son and used his meritorious service as a protective cover, would he still care about his legacy? Perhaps he'd agree to let you kill Connor right away to avenge the deaths of Mr. Homer and the late Madam before using his contributions to smooth over the consequences of killing Connor."

"Grandpa wouldn't agree to it." Toby wearily pinched the space between his eyebrows. He said, "I know what kind of a person he is. Grandpa lived through the war years and was one of the founders of our country. Not only did he have an abhorrence of evil, but he also knew how and when to repay grievances with grievances. Connor killed my dad, so he would approve of me taking revenge on Connor, but he wouldn't approve of me doing so by giving Connor a taste of his own medicine. He'd only let me search for

evidence and have Connor arrested according to law. Otherwise, do you think I'd really wait until now without asking Connor whether he was my dad's murderer? No, I'd have asked him about it and killed him right away as soon as I began to suspect him in the beginning. But if I were to do so, I'd act against Grandpa's beliefs and what he had taught me." If it weren't for this, he wouldn't have really waited for 12 years while still searching for clues and evidence about Homer's death. He'd have gotten his revenge long ago.

Tom threw up his hands in resignation. "Well, an old revolutionary like him did have strict morals. He's too upright and incorruptible, though."

"That's why I wouldn't disappoint him by bringing shame upon him," Toby replied impassively while watching the floor numbers flash on the elevator board.

"Oh, right, President Fuller, Connor wanted me to pass on a message to you when we left just now," Tom said as he suddenly recalled this. Then, he quoted what Connor had asked him to tell Toby.

Toby's face darkened when he finished listening to Tom's words. "He's really unwilling to give up, isn't he? How dare he threaten me!" Seems like I was too lenient with him just now.

"President Fuller, Connor knew that by offering the late Madam's stuff in exchange for his illegitimate daughter, he'd probably make you so angry as to kill him on the spot for real, but he did it anyway. Perhaps Anya really is his daughter, and they only interacted in such a strange manner because he doesn't like her. But Anya is his only offspring, after all, so he has no choice but to save her." Tom made his analysis while rubbing his chin. Then, looking at Toby, he asked, "I can tell that the stuff belonging to the late Madam that Connor talked about was really important to her. Should we get it back?"

Toby lowered his head in thought without saying a word.

Upon seeing this, Tom shut up and stopped bothering him.

Meanwhile, Sonia and Charles had finished eating, so they called the waiter over. They were about to pay the bill and leave for the bank to meet up with the bank's person in charge.

Sonia opened her handbag and took out her cell phone, asking, "How much is it?"

The waiter opened his notebook to take a look. Then, he replied with a smile, "Miss Reed, both your meal and this gentleman's have been paid for."

Sonia paused for a moment just as she was about to tap the 'Pay' button on her phone's screen. Then, she looked up at the waiter, asking, "What did you say? You mean the bill has been paid?"

"Yes, it has." The waiter nodded with a smile.

Sonia immediately turned to look at Charles. "Did you pay the bill?"

Charles threw up his hands. "No, it wasn't me. I didn't pay the bill. I never left the room even once, so how could I have paid the bill?"

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That's true. With her suspicion toward Charles dispelled, she shifted her gaze back to the waiter. "Excuse me, but since we didn't pay the bill, could you tell us who paid it? Or did your system go wrong and show that we had paid the bill when we didn't?"

The waiter replied with a smile, "Don't worry, Miss Reed. Our system didn't go wrong, and it's true that your bill has been paid. It was paid by Mr. Fuller, your boyfriend."

"Toby?" Sonia and Charles responded in chorus.

Charles even stood up in surprise.

The waiter nodded. "That's right. It was Mr. Fuller who paid the bill. Also, he has a message for you, Mr. Lane."

"For me?" Charles pointed at his own nose.

Puzzled about what Toby wanted to say to Charles, Sonia turned to look at the latter.

"Yes, Mr. Lane. For you." The waiter nodded with a smile.

Charles' lips twitched. "Okay. What kind of message does Toby have for me, then?"

The waiter adjusted his bow tie before replying with a straight face, "Mr. Fuller said the meal you had with Miss Reed today was his treat, so he hoped you wouldn't get too full of yourself and think that you had defeated him by eating out with her alone. He also hoped that you wouldn't show off in front of him later about how he didn't know you had had dinner with Miss Reed. He said he knew everything, and he warned you not to ask for trouble. That's all." With that, he raised his eyes to look at Charles.

Looking as black as thunder, Charles clutched his fork and spoon tightly while uttering between clenched teeth, "Damn you, Toby Fuller!" Can he read my mind or something? To think that he's even able to figure this out! Alright, I admit that I do feel a little smug about eating out with Sonny alone, and I do think that I'm several notches above Toby.

After all, he doesn't know that Sonny and I were eating out together. Moreover, I can even call Toby and brag about this later to anger him on purpose. Alas, before I could do that, Toby saw through my plans and even warned me. This is so... Peeved, he screwed up his face. Is Toby a dog or something? He's so sensitive!

Sonia also didn't expect Toby to be the person who paid for her and Charles' meal. Not only that, but he even left such a message for Charles. She wasn't dumb, so it was impossible for her not to figure out that Toby had left such a message for Charles for the purpose of asserting his claim. After all, since Charles had such feelings for her, there was no way Toby wouldn't mind it. This was why Toby made a special effort to warn Charles to know his place and not fool around after knowing that she had gone out with the latter for dinner.

On one hand, she understood Toby's feelings. On the other hand, though, she felt that he had gone a bit too far. After all, Charles had said that he would let go, so he naturally wouldn't do anything to her. Therefore, it was somewhat disrespectful to Charles for him to warn the former like this.

Sonia massaged the space between her eyebrows as if she had a headache. Well, it can't be helped. Toby is my boyfriend. Now that he's done something wrong, I've got to help cover his *ss, of course. At the thought of this, she put down her hand and smiled at the waiter. "We got it; thanks for telling us about this. If there's nothing else, please go ahead with your work. We'll be leaving in a minute."

"Sure, Miss Reed." The waiter bowed politely. Then, he turned around and left, leaving Sonia and an angry Charles in the private room.

Sonia poured a glass of fruit juice and handed it to Charles. "Sorry, Charles. Let me apologize to you on Toby's behalf. Don't get angry, okay? That's the kind of person he is. He only did that because he became jealous upon knowing that you and I were eating out together. I'm sorry about that, so please don't take it to heart."

Charles was really angry at first. Upon hearing her words, he looked up at her and took the fruit juice. His dark expression cleared, and he was visibly a lot less angry. "Why apologize to me? This isn't your fault at all."

Sonia smiled. "Well, that's true, but Toby and I are a couple. If he does something wrong, I ought to deal with the aftermath, right?"

Charles let out a snort and took a drink from his fruit juice before his anger dissipated completely. "Never mind, I won't fuss about Toby's actions for your sake. But, Sonny, I remember that you didn't tell him about us eating out together, right?"

Sonia shook her head. "No, I didn't. It's not a big deal, so I don't have to report it to him."

"Precisely," Charles replied. Then, he said with a snort, "You didn't tell him about us eating out together, but he knew everything about it, including where we were having dinner. What does this mean? This means that this guy is petty and possessive and is watching you all the time. Who knows how many people around you have been bought off by him to work as his spies and report to him everything about you from morning till night? Hiss..." As he spoke of this, he folded his arms and shuddered. "Sonny, it makes me feel suffocated just to imagine such perverted behavior. Aren't you tired of being with him?" Hmph! Didn't Toby care so much about Sonny and I eating out together as to assert his claim and warn me directly? I can speak ill of him in front of her in return! That's what they call an eye for an eye! Since he gives me a hard time, I'll give him a hard time as well.

Sonia noticed the mischievous joy in Charles' eyes as he spoke. Naturally, she knew that he was purposely saying so to get back at Toby, so she couldn't help feeling amused. What a pair of childish men! "Alright, that's enough. Toby didn't buy off my company's employees to work as his spies, nor does he have somebody keep an eye on me at all times and report to him everything about me. I guess he learned of this after asking my company's employees," she said while picking up her handbag and slinging it over her shoulder. She was confident that Toby didn't buy off her employees. After all, all the subordinates around her knew about the problem with the spare parts. If Toby had bought them off, he would've learned about it long ago instead of being unaware of it even now.

Propping his head in his hand, Charles looked at her while interrupting her thoughts, saying, "That's really strange, then."

Sonia blinked her eyes. "What is strange?"

"Toby, of course," Charles replied with a yawn. "Why would he call your employees instead of calling you directly?"

Sonia was startled for a moment. Yeah, that seems to be right. However, she soon found an excuse for Toby. "Perhaps he did call me, but he couldn't get through because there was no signal. We were stuck in the parking lot for quite a while, remember?"

Charles rolled his eyes. "Alright, alright." Speechless, he waved his hand. "What a devoted girlfriend. Just speak for him however you want."

Sonia was amused. "What are you talking about? Alright, let's go. It's about time for our appointment with the bank's manager."

As they had business to discuss, Charles finally stopped picking on Toby. "Uh-huh," he responded. After putting down his glass of fruit juice, he stood up and left the private room and the restaurant after Sonia.

He stared straight ahead while driving the car with rapt attention, whereas Sonia, sitting in the passenger seat, was typing on her cell phone with her head down. She was texting Toby about what had happened in the restaurant just now. Not only that, but she also advised him not to do that to Charles again since that was very rude.