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"Yes." Sonia kept her phone in her bag before she casually leaned against the seat and stretched. Then, as if she were a furry cat, she curled up in the seat and responded softly, "But Charles and Daphne were university mates who later worked together for a few years. Throughout that time, they remained purely subordinates. Daphne has never revealed her feelings for Charles, and all this while, he did not dislike her as well. It was after that incident that their relationship changed dramatically, and his attitude toward her deteriorated."

"Perhaps Charles doesn't truly dislike your secretary. He is simply refusing to face his feelings for Daphne. As a result, he subconsciously changed his attitude toward her, as if doing so would allow his feelings to remain hidden and undiscovered by others," Toby said, his gaze fixed on the road ahead of him.

Sonia was stunned by his words. "What do you mean?"

"Isn't it obvious?" He came to a complete stop in front of a red light, giving him enough time to turn around and look at her. "Charles has nothing against your secretary. In fact, the opposite was true. He has feelings for her, but he is unaware of them. He subconsciously wants to care for her without realizing that this is his love for a woman. Instead, he assumed there was something wrong with him that was caused by Daphne. That's why his attitude toward her changed."

Toby's words hit Sonia like a bomb, leaving her stunned for a few moments before she regained her senses and her voice. "W-What?! Charles has feelings for Daphne, but he is unaware of it?"

Toby gave a nod. "That's correct." He then saw the green light was on and resumed his journey.

Sonia, on the other hand, was gripping her seatbelt tightly, her mouth wide open in shock. Her dazed expression indicated that she was still reeling from what Toby said. "How could this be possible?"

Wasn't she the one Charles adored?

It wasn't that she desired his love. Instead, Charles was the one who told her that he had loved her since he was a child, and that his feelings had not changed over the years.

Furthermore, he was head over heels with her previously.

And now, Toby said that Daphne, not Sonia, was the one Charles truly loved!

Sonia almost didn't believe it.

"Why isn't it possible?" Toby looked dashing as he steered the wheel with only one hand. "How else would you explain Charles's concern for your secretary?"

That almost choked Sonia.

True. Charles seems to be overly concerned about Daphne. She could still recall Charles' overreaction to Daphne earlier in the day at the office.

"He is concerned about her; you're right on that. But does that necessarily imply he has feelings for her, no?" Sonia was skeptical.

While she spoke, Toby honked at the slow driver in front of him. "Indeed. But the thing is, he has said that he dislikes her. Would he be so concerned about her if he truly dislikes her? Will you?"

"Of course not. I don't even want to look at the person I disliked," she responded immediately.

At the next instant, she froze, as if her moment of realization had arrived. She straightened her back and locked her gaze on Toby, her eyes wide open. "I know what you mean now. Charles would not have reacted this way to Daphne if he truly disliked her. It means that his so-called dislike for her isn't true."

"Exactly. No one will ever be concerned, or even pay attention to, someone he dislikes. But Charles, despite saying that he dislikes Daphne, remains concerned about her. Obviously, his dislike isn't genuine, but his fondness of her is. It's similar to how a young boy likes to bully the girl that he likes. His bullying of her doesn't mean that he dislikes her; rather, it indicates that he likes her but does not know how to express it. As a result, he could only use such an attitude to catch her attention. Charles is probably the same way."

Sonia couldn't help but applaud after hearing Toby's analysis. The more he said, the more she believed what he said was true.

However, she frowned in the next few minutes. "But since when does he have feelings for her?" she questioned.

"How would I know if you didn't even know?" Toby took advantage of the split second when he turned to cast a sidelong glance at her.

She sighed at his response. "Forget it; it's not important. What matters is that Charles is unaware that he likes Daphne and continues to believe he loves me. Do you think I

should bring it up directly with him? Perhaps when he realizes his true love is Daphne, the two of them will reconcile, and even better, they will become a couple!" Sonia said as she stroked her chin, contemplating the possibility that what she said would occur.

Toby saw right through her. He stopped her, his brows furrowed. "You should throw that idea out."

"Why?" Sonia asked, puzzled.

He fixed his gaze in front of him, his expression solemn. "The reason Charles doesn't realize his feelings is because he subconsciously doesn't want to admit that he is no longer faithful to you. However, he also realizes that when his emotions are affected by Daphne every time; that is why he purposefully treated her badly, thinking that by doing so, his emotions would return to normal and he would no longer be affected by her. Do you think he'd accept it if you told him now that he's affected by Daphne because he loves her? Would he then think that your secretary asked you to tell him that on purpose?"

Sonia opened her mouth in response to Toby's words, but she was unable to refute anything.

Then, he went on, "He'd undoubtedly believe Daphne was the one who persuaded you to tell him that they should get together. All of his annoyance and frustration will be directed and vented toward her as a result."

"Could things really get that serious?" Sonia went pale as she heard that.

"Of course it will." Toby nodded assertively. "As I've said, his ignorance of his feelings is due to his refusal to admit that he now loves someone else. If you point it out to him, instead of being surprised, he will get angry instead, thinking that you and your secretary are conspiring to deceive him. While he may not do anything to you, I can't say for sure that he won't do anything to Daphne."

"What should I do, then?" Sonia was anxious. "Do I just pretend to be ignorant and leave them alone?"

"Yes. Just don't get involved," Toby agreed. "Directly pointing it out to him will only make matters worse. Therefore, it will be better for you to pretend to be unaware and wait for Charles to realize it himself. In this way, he would be more willing to accept his true feelings, because time may have passed before he realizes it, and they may have been through a lot of things together during that time, resulting in his attitude toward her may have changed by then. It would be easier for him to accept that he has feelings for her at that point."

Sonia did not respond to Toby's words. She lowered her head, pondering whether what he said was plausible.

After much thought, she concluded that Toby's consideration was valid and even thoughtful in all aspects.

"Perhaps you're right." She felt relieved and nodded. "Fine. I'll just pretend I don't know anything."

"Good move," Toby said, raising his chin.

Sonia, on the other hand, squinted and looked at him with suspicion. "When did you become an expert in relationships? Even I had no idea Charles had feelings for Daphne, but you did! You even considered the possible outcomes if I mentioned it to Charles. This is not at all like you! Pray tell, what causes you to act this way?"

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Toby was a smart guy, but his intelligence was always focused on business rather than emotions.

At the very least, he wasn't the type to see through someone else's fondness for another, let alone propose ideas.

But now he could see through Charles' feelings for Daphne, and he could also analyze what would happen if Sonia pointed it out to him directly.

In the past, Sonia would never believe this.

Hence, she reasoned that something must have happened to him that she was unaware of.

Toby let out a light cough as he noticed Sonia pointing at himself and asking doubtfully. "I recently finished a few books. That's why I've noticed Charles acting strangely when he's with your secretary."

"Books?" Sonia asked, her face filled with doubt. "What types of magical books are those?"

"Books about relationships," Toby muttered, returning his hand from his chin to the steering wheel.

Sonia, on the other hand, raised an eyebrow. "Why are you reading them all of a sudden?"

She couldn't understand his actions at all.

Toby's eyes twinkled. A rare desperate expression appeared on his face. "When I walked out of the conference room after a meeting a few days ago, I overheard a few female colleagues ranting about how they like romantic guys but that all of their husbands aren't romantic. As a result, they're fed up with their husbands."

Hearing this, something struck Sonia. Her lips pursed while she responded, "So you also regard yourself as someone who isn't romantic and is afraid that I'll get sick of you, just like how they got sick of their husbands? That's why you start reading those books in your attempt to become a romantic, right?"

"No," Toby responded calmly, his gaze fixed on the road in front of him. However, his flushed ears betrayed him.

His voice trembled slightly as well, revealing his guilt in lying.

That made Sonia laugh. "Don't try to hide it; you've already exposed yourself. How did I not realize you were such an insecure person before?"

"Because I lost you once, and I'm afraid of losing you again."

There were many things in this world that if they happened once, they would happen again and again indefinitely.

Losing Sonia once was sufficient to crumble Toby.

How could he endure losing her again?

Sonia kept her smile and sighed deep down as she observed his solemn yet unconfident demeanor. "Don't be concerned; that will not happen."

While saying, she put her hand on his arm in an attempt to reassure him.

In fact, she had never seen him with such a lack of confidence before today.

And he shouldn't have such insecurities, being from the Fuller Family and accomplishing at the age of 30 what most people wouldn't be able to accomplish in their lifetimes.

Such an emotion should never have entered his life.

Toby should be a confident and a high-spirited person. Even if he became conceited, no one would regard that as wrong as he indeed had what it took to be that way.

However, a lack of confidence that should not have appeared on him surfaced as a result of his fear of losing her again.

While Sonia felt all warm and fuzzy inside at that, she also felt her heart ache.

She was the one who transformed this confident man, who was in complete control, into someone who felt insecure.

It was as if she had dragged a high and mighty god from heaven and forced him to suffer in the human world.

Deep down her heart, she was reproaching herself for this.

She immediately lowered her gaze, attempting to conceal the guilt that was visible in her eyes from him.

Knowing Toby, he would be worried if he found out, and he might even wonder if he did something wrong.

He would apologize to her even if he had no idea if he was in the wrong.

Remembering the times how he was anxious over her, Sonia felt a little amused.

She looked at him and responded in the same solemn tone he had earlier, "Don't worry. I won't abandon you as long as you don't betray me. No matter how many women outside want me to leave, as long as you haven't done anything wrong, I will remain by your side."

Hearing that, Toby immediately indicated his double signal and came to a complete stop on the road. Then, in front of her doubtful gaze, he unfastened his seatbelt.

"What are you doing?! Why did you stop the car, Toby? We're on the road! Aren't you afraid that—"

Before Sonia could finish her sentence, Toby approached her and drew her into his embrace. His lips devoured hers as well, and he swallowed all of her unfinished words.

Sonia was stunned and her eyes were wide open as she lost the ability to react.

After all, she hadn't expected him to do this out of the blue.

Of course she didn't expect this. After all, they were on the highway, surrounded by cars.

How could he suddenly stop the car without thinking about the possibility of a collision?

Within seconds, the honking from the cars behind her brought her back to reality. After regaining her composure, she pushed him away and anxiously checked the side mirror to see if there had been any accidents.

If there were really accidents, the two of them would be in a lot of trouble.

Fortunately, she didn't see anything major happening behind her other than a long queue, and she heaved a long breath of relief at that.

"Luckily there was no accident! We'd be in big trouble if that happened, and we'd feel terrible as well!" She shut the window, patted her own chest, and said to the man in the driver's seat, who hadn't started the car but was running his thumb over his lips, looking utterly satisfied.

Toby lowered his hand and looked in the rearview mirror.

All of the cars were urging him to move. The honking continued indefinitely, not pausing for a single second.

He could only imagine how angry the drivers of the cars behind them were, and how irritated they were by Toby who blocked the path.

However, none of them got out of their cars to confront or chastise him in person.

This was because they could all see what a big shot Toby was, based on his car make and license plate number. They didn't dare to approach him—honking at him was already a brave act from them.

"I've already indicated the double signal before I stop. If they still crash into us despite that, they only have their slow reaction to blame," Toby said while restarting the car.

His car continued on its way. When the Maybach began to move, all of the cars behind it began to move as well.

Soon after, the main road resumed its normal traffic.

Sonia rolled her eyes at Toby's words. "How can you blame it on them? You turned on the signal and stopped the car abruptly. Nobody could have predicted it! Furthermore, they were all kinds of drivers back there, both experienced and inexperienced. Those with experience may be able to react in time, but who can guarantee the amateurs will do the same? We are lucky to not have caused any accident, if not for their quick reactions. Anyway, just don't do it again! If we cause a fatal accident, we'll never be able to sleep well for the rest of our lives. Besides, there's a chance they'll crash into us and injure us as well!"

Toby was so taken aback by her harsh words that he realized his actions earlier had truly terrified her.

With that, he extended his hand and stroked her hair. "I'm sorry. It's all my fault. I will never do it again," he said softly.

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Seeing that he had understood what she said and had admitted his mistake, Sonia let it go immediately.

Waving her hand, she muttered, "It's fine as long as you don't do it again. But why did you do that just now?"

"Because I'm overjoyed," Toby replied, his lips curved.

"Overjoyed?" She casted a sidelong glance at him. "What are you overjoyed about?"

"Your promise." The curve on his face widened. "You said you will not leave me as long as I do not betray you, regardless of the difficulties you face. That means you've promised not to leave me forever, as I will never do you wrong. That's what makes me so happy."

While saying this, he slightly puffed out his chest, appearing confident and even smug.

If he wasn't a human, Sonia could almost see his tail wagging behind him.

Does that really make him so happy?

She smiled and shook her head. "No matter how happy you are, you shouldn't stop the car anywhere you like."

"Don't worry. I'll hug and kiss you in a safe place next time."

That instantly made her blush. "I'm not referring to that! What I mean is that you must ensure your own safety. Safety. Not taking advantage of every opportunity to hug or kiss me!"

Toby patronizingly nodded, but he clearly didn't take it seriously.

Of course he would pay attention to his safety.

But hugging and kissing her was also a priority!

After all, he had to fight for such opportunities.

He couldn't very well expect her to take the initiative, could he?

Seeing his patronizing demeanor, Sonia knew what he was thinking and was amused by the man.

Forget it. Let him think whatever he wants, she thought.

He wouldn't take anything she said seriously anyway.

They conversed happily the rest of the way to the police station.

Meanwhile, Titus and Connor were in deep trouble.

Toby's revenge had finally been exacted, and Titus was the first to experience it.

Titus and the investigation team were leaving the conference room, and both parties stood at the door.

Titus shook his hand with Chief Dunlap, the leader of the investigation team. With his sickly face and a warm smile, Titus said, "It's been hard on you, Chief Dunlap."

"Not at all," Chief Dunlap replied smilingly. "You're the one having a hard time, President Gray. Thank you so much for bringing us around for the past few days despite your poor health. We'll feel bad as if your physical condition deteriorates."

"Don't mention it at all," Titus courteously replied. "This is my company. Of course, as the president, I have to show you around and brief you on the issues at hand. After all, I am in charge of Triforce Enterprise. The investigation will conclude tomorrow, and I will rest well after that. There's nothing to be concerned about."

"Thank you for saying so, President Gray. We're all done for the day, and we'll head back to our hotel first. Let us not disturb your rest any further." Chief Dunlap drew his hand back and continued, "You don't have to send us off. President Gray. Goodbye."

"Let me send you all downstairs," Titus said while gesturing them the way.

At that, Chief Dunlap didn't say anything further. He nodded and led the way, with Titus walking beside him.

Their subordinates followed them from behind.

The group then proceeded to the elevator.

Just as they were about to enter the waiting area for the elevator, they heard a sound resonating from it.

It was a shocked voice that said, "What? Our president once kept the collapse of a mining cave a secret?"

"Not the collapse," another voice echoed, correcting the previous person. "What was hidden was the actual death toll. The collapse of the mining cave was too major to be concealed. Hence, the only thing he could hide was the number of people who died as a result of the incident. I heard it from someone else too. According to him, one of our company's mining caves had long reached the standard for closure and should no longer be used for mining. But because our president refused to find another quarry for that, he broke the rules and continued to mine that cave. As a result, the cave was over-exploited, making it too hollow to sustain itself, and the entire mountain eventually collapsed after a heavy rain, bringing the cave with it and killing a large number of people."

"Oh my, is this true?"

"Of course! Why would I joke about such a matter?"

Titus, who was standing outside, couldn't take it any longer and was about to charge in with his fists clenched to prevent the two of them from continuing their conversation.

But just as he was about to move, someone tugged his arm.

He turned around to see Chief Dunlap's arm on his.

"President Gray, what do you plan to do?" Chief Dunlap questioned with a narrowed gaze as he looked at Titus. Though smiling, his smile did not reach his eyes. Currently, his gaze was tinged with coldness and scrutiny.

Titus broke out in cold sweat when faced with Chief Dunlap's question. He panicked, and his heart was pounding so hard that he felt pain.

Even his subordinates behind him became uneasy and lowered their heads, as if they didn't see Titus, however, didn't realize his subordinates' actions as he did not dare to look around under Chief Dunlap's stare.

With that, he forced a smile, suppressed his panic deep within his heart and put on a calm front. "Chief Dunlap, my employees are talking gibberish. I need to put a stop to their nonsense. Could you..."

He then lowered his head to look at Chief Dunlap's grip on his arm.

His intention was obvious; he wanted Chief Dunlap to let go of him.

Chief Dunlap, on the other hand, pretended not to understand what Titus meant. The smile on his face remained as he said, "What are you anxious about, President Gray? Let us continue to hear them out before deciding whether what they say is gibberish."

He had been in Seafeld for quite some time, but he hadn't found anything useful in Triforce Enterprise. The only thing he got were some minor blunders that the country could live with.

Though he was a government official, he was still a commoner.

Wealth was idolized by commoners, and he was no exception. Chief Dunlap had always wanted to look into more problematic companies for his own benefit, as well as to improve his work performance.

But Triforce Enterprise was so clean that he couldn't find anything. As a result, he couldn't claim any credit. This had already made him unhappy.

Hence, now that he had finally learned something negative about the company, he would not let anyone ruin it.

He would not let anyone prevent him from achieving his expected performance.

Titus had no idea what Chief Dunlap was contemplating. However, from the coldness emanating from Chief Dunlap's eyes, Titus could roughly guess what was on the man's mind.

He was determined to prevent Titus from interfering with the employees who were speaking.

At this moment, anxiety and hatred filled Titus' heart.

He was anxious as to why the elevator wasn't here yet. Once the elevator was here, the two employees would stop talking.

And he hated them for bringing that matter up, among all other things.

Most importantly, they did so right when Chief Dunlap was nearby.

Aren't they obviously putting me in trouble?

Now that Chief Dunlap had heard about this, Titus would be in big trouble, as what the employees said was true. If Chief Dunlap decided to look into the incident, Titus would never be able to escape this unscathed.

The more Titus thought about it, the paler his face became. He appeared as if he was about to pass out at any moment.

In fact, he wished he could just pass out on the spot.

Perhaps doing so would alert the two employees inside and cause them to stop talking.

And he could probably get away with it.

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Titus' mind was hoping for him to pass out, but his body was doing the opposite by keeping him sober, and he was forced to listen.

On usual days, he would faint on trivial matters and be sent to the hospital immediately, but it looked like it wasn't happening anytime soon when he was desperate at this time.

He had never hated himself this much for his body condition, which was ruining things at bad times from time to time. It's a nuisance.

Chief Dunlap was studying Titus with a meaningful look, as Titus' face turned pale and beads of sweat fell from his forehead.

Titus' reaction was a confirmation of his guess. The employees are speaking the truth, or else Titus won't react with such nervousness and anxiety but get angry. After all, a person normally won't bear others spreading rumors of him and slandering his name.

However, Titus' expression was mixed with guilt and nervousness, other than anger. Therefore, Chief Dunlap couldn't help but notice that and wondered, There must be something going on. He won't have that look if he's innocent.

Meanwhile, the conversation between the two employees went on.

"Simon, you mentioned many miners were killed in the mine collapse. How many were they exactly?"

"I don't remember the numbers, but I'm sure more than ten died in the accident."

"More than ten deaths?"

"Yes. There's a law in our country prohibiting the company from continuing mining once there are more than ten deaths during the process. Besides, the company must report the cases to the authorities. Our president indeed made the report, but the company didn't stop the mining back then. Obviously, not only did the president hide the truth that overexploitation was the cause of the mine collapse in the first place, he also lied about

the number of deaths. He wanted to avoid the miners being prohibited to enter the cave, and continued to exploit the resources until he made the most value out of them.”

“Tsk! The president is crueler than I thought.”

“That’s a common trait of entrepreneurs, though. Enough of the topic. The elevator has arrived. Let’s go.”

Ending the conversation, the two men stepped into the elevator. The moment the elevator doors closed, the men turned to each other and exchanged a meaningful smile.

The group turned around the corner and entered the lobby once the elevator began to descend.

Chief Dunlap watched the number on the elevator floor display decreasing before turning to Titus, who was clenching his fists tightly and deep in thought. Squinting his eyes, Chief Dunlap began coldly, “President Gray, I guess you heard everything, aren’t you? Do you have anything to tell me?”

Titus’ eyes widened at that as he answered in panic, “Chief Dunlap, it’s not true. You shouldn’t listen to them. They’re merely trying to ruin my reputation. Please believe me. I’m telling the truth.”

He reached out his hand to grab the other man’s arm.

Chief Dunlap was aware of Titus’ attempt as he lifted his arm to avoid Titus. Feigning a smile at Titus, he answered dismissively, “President Gray, I’ll find out whether the two were speaking the truth or not by myself, so stop wasting your energy in the attempt to earn my trust. Anything can wait until the investigation results are out. That’s all for today. I have to go.”

Once he finished his words, he stepped into another elevator, followed by his men.

Titus didn’t try to follow and didn’t dare to do so at all. He could only stand there while watching the group leave. His body was stiff as he had goosebumps.

As soon as the elevator door shut before him, the strength that had been supporting him left his body as his legs buckled and he fell backward.

His subordinate shrieked before rushing over to help him stand.

“President Gray! What happened? Are you okay?”

“President Gray, I’ll help you up.”

At last, Titus rose to his feet with his assistant's help. As his limbs were still feeble and he was unable to stand firmly in such a condition, he leaned onto his assistant for balance. The blood had drained from his face and he stared at the void, mumbling, "We're doomed... We're really doomed..."

Hearing Titus' mumbling on the side, the assistant could feel his stomach churning as his expression sank. He knew all of Titus' dirty secrets being the man's special assistant, including the mine collapse in the two men's discussion a moment ago.

He was stuck in the same boat as Titus. If Titus was exposed and brought down by the authorities, the assistant's outcome would be the same, as he was Titus' right-hand man. Therefore, he was panicking and anticipating his future, just as his superior did at the moment.

However, the assistant's priority for the moment was to calm Titus down. After all, Titus had to stay strong as the backbone of Triforce Enterprise. If Titus fell, the whole company would fall too.

Taking a deep breath, the assistant suppressed his emotions as he consoled, "President Gray, you don't need to worry yourself even if Chief Dunlap intends to initiate an investigation. A long time has passed since the accident. We've made sure not to leave any traces back then, so Chief Dunlap wouldn't find much evidence even if he tried. They can't put us behind bars."

Fortunately, the mine collapse was an accident that happened a long time ago instead of a recent case. Or else, they wouldn't have the time to clean up the scene. The authorities would find solid evidence of their crimes and send them to prison. At worst, they would be facing a death sentence.

After all, it wasn't about "more than ten deaths" as one of the men said. Fifteen people were killed in the mine collapse.

It was counted as a serious crime. Along with the overexploitation and continuation of mining, they no doubt would be sentenced to death once arrested.

Once again, the burden was slightly lifted from the assistant's mind as he was glad that the accident was an old case. Besides, they had made sure to clear everything at the scene.

Even if Chief Dunlap could find something to confirm his suspicions, he would never find conclusive evidence.

In other words, they wouldn't be arrested or face a death sentence, but they would need to spend a lot of money to pay the authorities to avoid the consequences. However, it was nothing compared to being put in prison or death.

Those words managed to ease Titus' mind as he thought, He's right. We've taken care of the scene. No need to panic.

Titus was feeling calmer thinking about it as he regained his strength. Even though he was still pale, he was better than a while ago, but his expression was cold when he ordered, "Find out the name of the two men who dared to mess with me. I don't care about their motives, but I want them dead by today."

As he finished his words, a shocked and frightened look flashed across all of his subordinates' faces, except the assistant. They lowered their heads immediately to avoid Titus taking his anger out on them.

Oh, God. If I heard right and understood him correctly, is the president threatening to kill the two gossipers?

Titus and his assistant couldn't care less about the others' thoughts.

The assistant wasn't surprised to receive such an order from his superior. After all, he wouldn't spare the person who almost got him killed if he was in Titus' shoes.

"Right away, President Gray." The assistant nodded at Titus with a gloomy expression.

As their businesses were all entwined, the assistant dared say the two employees had also endangered him. Therefore, he wouldn't pity the two, but rather hoped they would die.

"Hold on. Help me back to the office first." Titus extended his hand to hold the man's arm with a tired look.

The assistant did as told and sent Titus back to the office before leaving to investigate the identity of the two employees who had a conversation in the elevator lobby.

About half an hour later, the assistant returned to the office just as Titus was about to fall asleep.

Seeing the assistant pulling a long face, Titus could feel his stomach drop as the bad feeling dawned on him. "How is it? Do you find anything?"

Sitting upright, he quickly shot a question at the assistant in anticipation without hiding the resentment he was holding toward the targets.

The man stopped before Titus' work desk and shook his head gloomily. "I'm afraid that I've let you down, sir. I can't find anything about them because they aren't even employees at Triforce Enterprise or any of our subsidiaries.

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"What? They aren't our employees?" Titus was shocked, and he wasn't ready to accept the bombshell from his assistant as thoughts ran through his mind. He had been going on long-term medication, which was the reason why his jowly face was now quivering unsightly.

The assistant nodded. "Yes, I've got hold of their faces from the surveillance cameras in the elevator lobby and searched for them in the company's employee database, but I found nothing. Thinking they might be temporary workers whose IDs aren't entered in the system, I also asked around every department. The heads helped me to ask their subordinates, but none of them had ever seen those two around before. Therefore, the two must be spies."

Titus' face scrunched up in anger as he spoke through gritted teeth. "In other words, the two were sent into the company by someone on purpose, which was to expose me in front of Chief Dunlap, so he would direct his focus on me."

The assistant lowered his head. "I think so too. Other than that, I can't think of why the non-employees would show up at the time and talk about the mine collapse with Chief Dunlap around. Someone was probably setting us up. President, do you think it's our opponents that did it? We've succeeded in taking over a lot of business dealings recently. The others are not satisfied and might want to take revenge on us."

Shaking his head at the assistant's guess, Titus answered with a somber look, "It's not them."

"No?" A surprised look flashed across the assistant's gloomy face. "President, what do you mean?"

"We didn't make the fuss over the mine collapse back then as I suppressed the news before it could get to many people. Not even the high-levels in Triforce know, let alone the other companies. Besides, the accident occurred a long time ago. I've been getting rid of the insiders over the years. Therefore, we're the only ones who know it besides Cadman of the Planning Department. Despite disobeying me, he knows the seriousness of the matter and won't tell others. After all, it isn't only about me, but the whole company. Even if he wants to bring me down, he won't want anything to happen to the company. There's no use for him to take over an endangered company, or else he would've spread the news long ago."

Rubbing his chin, the assistant commented, "You're right. The other companies don't have the connections to know this."

Titus narrowed his slitted eyes and spoke in a low tone. "If I'm right, Toby Fuller is the man behind all of these."

"President Fuller?" The assistant's surprised expression turned to a shocked one. "He knows it?"

"At first, Toby didn't know anything. I asked extra men from him when I was understaffed to get rid of some evidence. That time, he was close to Tina. She was considered an important person to him even in a vegetative state, so he had been watching over the Gray Family and Triforce. He didn't think twice when I sought help even if I didn't tell him the use at that time. After that, he inquired about the story, so he's another person who knows."

"I see." The assistant nodded in understanding.

Titus was clenching his fists on his sides. "He wants to get back at me, which is why he was exposing me to Chief Dunlap."

The assistant stared at him. "Just because you paid the trolls to heckle and slander Sonia?"

"Hmph! What else?" Titus harrumphed.

The assistant pushed his glasses with a finger. "Maybe it's about Miss Tina? You and the Fuller Family or President Fuller himself aren't holding grudges against each other. The worst matter by far was Miss Tina asked to hypnotize him and pretended to be his lover in the past. As President Fuller's main target of retaliation, Miss Tina, has passed away, he could only unleash his fury on you since you're her adoptive father."

"That's impossible." Titus shook his head. "Toby might be a vengeful man. He indeed will see us as another target to take his anger out according to what happened between him and Tina. However, if he wants revenge, he would have done it a long time ago because he's not the kind of person to wait without taking any action. On usual days, he treats me like I don't exist at most, and has no interest in taking revenge on me. I can't exactly understand his behavior. Therefore, I'm certain it has nothing to do with Tina. He's doing it for Sonia this time."

The assistant then spoke his opinion. "No matter his motives, as long as the both of you are related to Miss Tina, there will always be a grudge between you. Even if he's not bothering to take revenge on us right now, he would do it any time. I think he's preparing for something."

Titus sighed worriedly. "You're right. Even if we have no idea what he is waiting for when he's capable, we need to be prepared, or else we can't react in time when he strikes. However, our top priority is to solve the immediate problems. We can't do anything to stop Chief Dunlap from investigating the accident for the time being. Even

though his findings won't put the sentence on us, they will affect us nonetheless. We will need a huge amount of money to resolve it. Go see Cadman and discuss the funds with him. He won't reject it for the sake of our company."

"Alright, sir." Zaiden nodded and turned to work on his task, leaving Titus alone in the office.

As he looked around the empty office, it was the first time Titus felt lonely in the place which boosted his ego on usual days and he was used to giving orders.

From the conversation a moment ago, Titus finally realized that Toby not confronting them any sooner wasn't out of his past relationship with Tina. It was because Toby had other ideas for them, so he was waiting for the time being.

It was obvious that not one man could ever get over the fact his emotions and memories were intervened and manipulated by someone else.

Especially for a prideful man like Toby, being set up by others easily was a lifelong shame to him.

There was no way Toby would let Tina and the Gray Family off.

I wonder whether Tina's dead or alive. Titus found out later that the body didn't belong to Tina. Maybe she's alive, but she might not come back.

As long as Tina wasn't returning, the Gray Family would always be the one to bear Toby's anger without knowing the time he would finally strike. Toby had no reason to let the Gray Family off easily if he was doing it for Sonia. He would even aid her in suppressing the Gray Family.

Titus was confident that he wouldn't be afraid if his opponent was only Sonia herself. After all, he was on the more experienced side while she was an inexperienced young woman, who did not hold much power.

However, Titus would be helpless if Sonia had Toby to back her up. Aside from the two joining forces, Titus stood no chance even if he was only fighting against Toby.

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Therefore, his future, the Gray Family, and Triforce Enterprise were already foreseeable.

In reality, he wasn't afraid of death. After all, it was too unlikely for him to find a replacement kidney as he suffered from such an illness. The only fate awaiting him was death, as he only had less than two years left to live.

However, he was worried about Julia and Rina. What would happen to them after he died? At the moment, he could still stand his ground against Toby and Sonia with some difficulty, but no one would be able to protect Julia and Rina when he died.

Though he felt that he was indebted to his wife, he owed too much to his daughter. The moment Rina came into being in Julia's womb more than 20 years ago, he had vowed to do his best to protect the child regardless of whether it was a son or a daughter. Alas, he failed to keep his word after Rina was born, causing her to be abducted and thrown into the river by Henry. Although he didn't know how she had survived in the end, he was still unable to forgive Henry's actions, nor could he excuse his failure to protect his own daughter back then.

Now that Rina had finally returned, he wanted to make it up to her initially, but he didn't manage to do so in the end. Instead, he dragged Rina into the feud between the Gray Family and the Reeds, causing her to live in fear. All of this made him feel even more of a failure as a father.

Titus pounded his chest in remorse. Regardless, a hint of determination flickered in his wrinkled eyes. No matter what would happen to the Gray Family in the end, he had to arrange for his wife and daughter's escape before the day arrived. At the very least, he couldn't let them fall into Sonia and Toby's hands. Whatever it was, he'd take it on alone!

Meanwhile, Connor, someone whom Toby was also dealing with, was also in trouble.

Connor liked to listen to opera. Since he mostly stayed in the hotel, his only entertainment was to watch videos of past opera performances in the video room. Just when he was watching the opera in fascination, Xander came in hurriedly, saying, "Mr. Salzburg!"

He opened his eyes with a gloomy expression. Then, he turned to look at Xander with a sinister and ferocious look in his eyes, and he said, "I told you last time not to barge in all of a sudden when I'm listening to opera. This is already your second time committing the same mistake."

Xander knew that his abrupt actions had angered his boss, so he quickly lowered his head in fear while apologizing, "Sorry, Mr. Salzburg, but something serious has happened this time."

"What's the big deal?" Connor asked unhurriedly while grabbing the walking stick next to him. Obviously, he didn't think much of what Xander had said.

When Xander saw this, he felt even more anxious. He promptly replied, "Mr. Salzburg, our goods in Westsashire have been intercepted at customs."

Connor immediately stopped rubbing his walking stick when he heard Xander's words. The next instant, his face turned ghastly pale. Then, he stared at Xander intensely as he asked, "What did you say? You mean someone intercepted our goods?"

"Yes, Mr. Salzburg." Xander nodded repeatedly. "Just half an hour ago, I got a phone call from our men stationed at the customs checkpoint. They said that a bunch of people had suddenly popped up and seized our goods."

"Half an hour ago, huh..." Connor's face contorted as he could no longer keep his gentle and indifferent expression; perhaps this was his true colors. "Who did it?" he asked in a chilly voice while clutching the dragon's head on his walking stick with all his might. Finally, he continued, "I'm going to throw that person into the ocean to feed them to the sharks. How dare they mess with my goods? I bet they're tired of living!"

Xander shook his head as he continued his report. "Nobody knows who did it, but according to our men at the customs checkpoint, a bunch of people arrived before the men we'd sent to receive the goods. Not only that, but instead of seizing the goods through illegal means, they openly took the goods away from the customs checkpoint with documents issued by the related departments in their hands. Also, according to our men, those documents were genuine, as they bore the official stamps of the related departments. So, I think the person who intercepted our goods was definitely not an ordinary person."

"Of course, they're not." Connor looked ferocious. "If that person were so easy to deal with, how could they manage to seize the goods openly with documents that bore the official stamps of those departments? I don't believe that the customs have no idea that the batch of goods is ours. Yet, despite knowing this, the customs and the related departments dared to issue documents for that person to seize our goods. This only proves that the person has a powerful background and is on excellent terms with the higher-ups."

"Who would it be, then? I don't remember us having offended such a person before." Xander frowned in puzzlement. They were indeed audacious, but they had brains. Usually, they wouldn't mess with such bigwigs on their own initiative, which was why he was confused about why such a figure would want to deal with them.

Connor narrowed his eyes as he sneered. "Did you forget that we'd offended such a person before? Isn't Toby such a person?"

Xander gaped in shock. "Sorry, Mr. Salzburg. I forgot about him."

"It's not your fault. After all, none of us would've expected Toby to do such a thing." Connor's expression was still gloomy. "What a surprise. I've always been the one who

snatches things from others; no one has dared to snatch things from me. This is the first time my stuff has been taken away, but I can't go to that person or even sort him out immediately. So this is how awful it feels to be unable to vent my anger or pour out my grievances, huh?" he said in self-deprecation, but his face gave no indication of that. It was apparent that he was only poking fun at himself.

When Xander closely regarded Connor's bloodshot eyes, he asked gingerly, "Mr. Salzburg, if this is really Toby's doing, then what should we do about—"

Connor raised his hand to interrupt Xander. "Don't overthink this matter. We can never get the batch of goods back. Toby can easily get back what he wants from us, but it's almost impossible for us to get back our stuff once it falls into his hands. We're not as powerful as he is, so we can't go to him directly and warn him to return our stuff."

Xander looked worried, though. "But that batch of goods is essential. We ordered it from a foreign supplier at a huge cost before the turn of this year. So now that goods are finally delivered only for such a thing to happen, we'll have trouble with the factory."

Connor looked up and shot an impassive glance at him. "What's the use of saying these things right now? What's happened has already happened, and we can never get back our stock. So what else can we do other than to solve this with money, as Paradigm Co. did? That being said, I'm much wealthier than Paradigm Co. So it's not that I can't afford to lose money for such things."

Xander became less perturbed once he heard that Connor already had a solution for the problems. So, he pushed his glasses up his nose as he looked at Connor, saying, "Say, Mr. Salzburg, do you think Toby is doing so to get back at us for intercepting Sonia's goods last time? After all, Toby intercepted our goods using the same trick this time."

Connor rubbed the dragon's head on his walking stick slightly before shaking his head slightly. "No, I don't think so. He's gotten his revenge after we got hospitalized during the previous incident, so he wouldn't go so far as to get back at us twice for the same reason. It's obvious that he's not taking revenge for what happened previously, but what he's doing this time is also for Sonia's sake. Don't forget what happened to her today."

Xander realized what he meant. "Are you referring to how we hired trolls to spread rumors about her?"

Connor didn't give a definite answer. Instead, he added, "There's nothing else other than this incident. However, this is a good thing since it can make us understand further how much Sonia matters to him. Of course, I can't snatch the goods back, but it doesn't mean that I'm willing to swallow this in silence to avoid further trouble. Call Toby's men later and ask them if he has decided whether he still wants the item his mother left behind. I'll give him one more day to think about it. If he doesn't want it, then don't blame me for what I'm going to do." He smiled maliciously.

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Indeed, he didn't have the capability to ask Toby to return the goods to him after the latter had seized them. However, he was never the kind of person who would keep his grievances to himself. He couldn't fight against Toby openly as the latter was rich and powerful. Still, he could secretly put a spoke in Toby's wheel to disgust him.

A hint of excitement flashed across Xander's face when he realized what Connor meant. He immediately replied with a nod, "Yes, Mr. Salzburg. I'll get it done right away."

"Just go." Connor waved his hand.

Xander left quickly to make the necessary arrangements.

Connor picked up the remote control and replayed the paused video of the opera, upon which the video started playing again. Unfortunately, this time he was no longer in the pleasant mood he had been in as he rewatched the video.

Toby was still unaware that Connor was already setting a trap for him. At this moment, he and Sonia arrived at the police station. He had just parked the car, unbuckled his seat belt, and was about to get out of the car when his phone rang. It was a phone call from Tom.

Sonia released her grip on the car door handle when she saw that. "Answer it. We'll get out of the car after you finish talking."

"Give me a minute." Toby nodded slightly before swiping his thumb across the phone's screen. Then, he held the phone to his ear as he spoke. "Hello?"

Tom's apparently excited voice sounded through the phone. "President Fuller, what we did to Triforce Enterprise was a success. Chief Dunlap has heard the information disclosed by our men. After he left the company, he went to the Mining Resources Bureau right away to check the files on the mine collapse back then."

"Uh-huh," Toby mumbled. "Got it."

"It's too bad that Titus did a clean job of destroying the evidence back then. Regrettably, the conclusive evidence is gone, or he'd absolutely be shot to death. How ironic that we can only make him pay an astronomical compensation in retribution at the moment," Tom said with a sigh of regret.

Toby pursed his lips before turning to look at Sonia. "I'm also to blame for this. Titus went out of his way to borrow some of my men while getting rid of some of the evidence back then, which was why I knew about this. If I had been able to stop him from destroying the evidence, or if I had been able to get my hands on the evidence before he did, he wouldn't have been so lucky right now."

When Sonia noticed how the man blamed himself for how things had turned out this way, she patted his hand and reassured him with a smile, "What are you feeling sorry about? You were hypnotized into thinking you loved Tina back then. Titus is her father, so it was normal for you to help him. It's just that I never thought you'd help him with this kind of thing."

Toby replied with a frown, "I didn't know Titus had borrowed my men to get rid of such evidence. I wouldn't have lent my men to him if I had known about this. I shielded him at the time for Tina's sake, but I wouldn't be so unscrupulous. We're talking about the lives of 15 people here." He thought nothing of people's lives, nor did he care about the lives of others, but he wouldn't act with no regard for human life as Titus did. Not only did the latter not stop after people were killed, but he even made a special effort to hide it and destroy the evidence.

Sonia let out a disbelieving gasp when she heard the figure. "What? 15 lives, you say?"

Toby nodded. "That's right; there were 15 of them. I was also shocked upon learning about this. When Titus asked me to lend him my men back then, I didn't know what he was trying to do, so I simply lent my men to him without asking him about it. It wasn't until when my men came back later that I realized Titus had actually done such a thing. It was my mistake." As he had said, had he known earlier that Titus would do such a thing, he wouldn't have lent him his men.

"You're not to blame for this." Sonia looked at him with a smile. "After all, who would've known that Titus would do such a thing? Even if you asked him about it, I don't think he'd tell you the truth either."

Toby's eyes were full of regret as he massaged his temples. "I just regret it. I could've helped you obtain the conclusive proof that could crush Titus, but I let it slip through my fingers just like that."

Sonia tucked her hair behind her ears. "You don't have to blame yourself for this. This is fate; no one knows what will happen in the future, and neither do you. You didn't know at the time that the situation would turn out the way it does today, so you don't have to think that this is your fault. Perhaps God doesn't want us to crush him so easily. Well, there's no way we could destroy him now, but we can at least weaken his influence. Then, when he goes to prison in the future, he'll realize that not only has he ended up going to prison anyway, but he's even spent a lot more money. Isn't such an outcome even better?" she said while covering her mouth with a chuckle.

Toby stared at her for a while before ruffling her hair. "You're right."

Sonia raised her chin to signal Toby to look at his phone. "Alright, hurry and answer Tom's phone call, or he'd still be waiting."

The phone conversation with Tom was still ongoing. Toby pressed the phone against his ear again as he instructed, "Pay more attention to Titus' side and help Chief Dunlap in secret as much as you can. If he pursues the case the wrong way, have someone correct him. I want Titus to lose a fortune this time." As he spoke, a cold glint flickered in his eyes.

Tom replied with a nod, "Alright, President Fuller. By the way, things are going smoothly on Connor's side. The goods have been intercepted; they're all custom-made high-quality goods from abroad. Connor's quite willing to spend the money."

"He intended to use that batch of goods to open up the Lacralian market, so he had to get a batch of high-quality ones, of course. Nonetheless, this batch of goods is now ours," Toby replied as his thin lips curved into a smirk.

Tom scratched his head. "But, President Fuller, that batch of goods isn't useful to us. Our company doesn't do the processing of goods."

Toby decided the goods' destination at once. "Have them delivered to Paradigm Co."

Sonia didn't expect to be involved in this. Rather, she looked up in surprise, asking, "Why are you delivering the goods to Paradigm Co.?"

Toby turned to look at him. "Isn't Paradigm Co. specialized in the processing of goods?"

Sonia laughed. "Yes, it is, but we don't do the routine processing of goods. We only do the processing of heavy industry spare parts. I've looked into the Salzburg Group before. The company mainly deals with processing electrical engines, so I can roughly guess that the goods you intercepted are chips or engine bearings. Even if I have these, I can't process them."

"You can use the batch of processing machines you ordered from Kosovo to process and assemble engines with a little modification. So, you can give it a try using this batch of goods first. If the processing of the engines ends up being a success, Paradigm Co. will be able to develop a new line of business, which is good for the company's growth," Toby explained.

Sonia was startled. "Is that possible?"

Tom quickly chimed in over the phone, "Miss Reed, what President Fuller said is indeed true. The batch of large processing machines you ordered can indeed be modified to process sophisticated things like engines."

Now that Tom had said the same thing, Sonia's heartbeat quickened in anticipation. She was somewhat tempted, but she couldn't come to a decisive decision after pondering the matter. After all, reforming a company was no trifling matter, so she couldn't rush into a decision.

Still, when Toby saw how tempted and hesitant she was, he took her hand in his, brought it to his lips, and kissed it. "There's no need to feel torn about it. All you have to do is give it a try. And besides, these goods are snatched from Connor; they're a token of apology for how he snatched your goods last time. They don't cost money, so you won't lose money by giving them a try. Moreover, such an opportunity is hard to come by, so there's no harm in trying. If you miss out on it, it's hard for such an opportunity to arise the second time."

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Now that Toby had persuaded her the second time, Sonia thought that she would let him down if she were to keep on hesitating. Besides, he did have a point. Some opportunities were hard to come across for the second time once she missed out on them; perhaps she'd never come across these opportunities again. Naturally, she had to seize this golden opportunity. Moreover, these batches of goods were snatched from Connor by Toby. Even if her experiment with them turned out to be a failure, even if Paradigm Co. couldn't modify parts of engines, it wouldn't cause any losses to the company. After all, she didn't spend a single penny on the raw materials. She believed that the company's senior executives wouldn't raise any objections upon learning about this.

At the thought of this, she finally made up her mind and nodded in agreement. "Okay, I'll give it a try, then. Thank you."

"It's nothing. I know that you've always wanted to become successful as soon as possible, and I'm looking forward to it so that you won't be stressed. Now that there's an opportunity, I hope you can go after it fearlessly. I always have your back, you know," Toby encouraged while looking into her eyes.

Sonia blushed a little. "Tom is still on the other end of the line. Don't you worry that he'll laugh at us after you say these things?"

Tom instantly shuddered on the other end of the line. Therefore, he promptly replied, "Miss Reed. this isn't something to be joked about. Why would I laugh at you two? Plus, I don't have the guts to do so."

"Did you hear that? He says he doesn't dare to do so." Toby pointed at his phone. "So, why worry about him? Just say whatever we want to say."

"Yeah, that's right." Tom nodded repeatedly.

Sonia covered her mouth as she chuckled. "Alright, cut it out. Just have the goods delivered to Paradigm Co. I'll have Daphne arrange for somebody to wait downstairs and store the goods in the parking lot's storeroom. Then, I'll discuss what we'll do about

them at tomorrow's meeting with the company's shareholders."

Toby lowered his eyes to look at the phone's screen. "Did you hear that?" Obviously, the question was directed at Tom.

Tom pushed his glasses up his nose and said with a straight face. "Don't worry, President Fuller. I'm not hard of hearing." So you don't have to go out of your way to ask me this.

"Since you've heard that, just do as she says," Toby said impassively as his thin lips parted. You may get lost now, he thought.

Tom was only too eager to hang up the call. The instant Toby said that, he quickly bid his goodbyes, saying, "Goodbye, President Fuller." Then, he wasted no time in ending the call.

This was Toby's first time having his subordinate hang up on him, so he was involuntarily stunned for a moment. Then his handsome face darkened as he realized what had just happened. "How dare he hang up on me without my permission!" He clutched his phone as he looked at Sonia with a visible hint of disbelief in his eyes.

His shocked appearance amused Sonia, so she merely patted him on the shoulder.

"Alright, don't be angry. Didn't you tell Tom to get it done in the first place? So, there's nothing wrong with him doing so. You should feel lucky to have such a nice and obedient subordinate who does what you tell him to do right away."

Toby replied with a snort, "Don't think that I don't know you're making excuses for him because you don't want me to take his behavior to heart."

Sonia stuck out her tongue without saying anything to refute his words.

Toby loosened his grip on his cell phone. "Never mind, I'll forgive Tom's transgression this time for your sake. I'll have him thank you in person some other day."

"Okay, I'll be waiting for it, then," Sonia replied with a smile, but she didn't take the man's words to heart. She had only said those words casually, so she didn't need Tom to thank her personally for it. Instead, she fished out her cell phone, saying, "Let me call Daphne to have her arrange for someone to receive the goods."

Toby nodded slightly. "Just go ahead."

Sonia gave him a smile before dialing Daphne's number.

While she was talking over the phone, Toby turned sideways and kept staring at her intently. Even if she wanted to, she couldn't ignore it. It couldn't be helped; the man was staring at her like a wolf staring at its prey. That was right—she was the prey, so how could she ignore such a look in his eyes?

Sonia gave Daphne the instructions over the phone while suppressing the urge to beat Toby up and the sudden need to glare daggers at him. After she finished giving her orders, she kept the phone away and took a deep breath. Then, she turned and glared at him with big, round eyes. She wanted to use her most ferocious expression to teach him a lesson, letting him know that she'd feel uncomfortable when he kept staring at her like that.

She thought she looked very ferocious at this moment, but her demeanor didn't deter Toby at all. Instead, he felt that she looked very adorable. Finally, unable to restrain himself, he grabbed her wrist and forcibly pulled her into his arms before kissing her. Sonia was stunned, which resulted in her widening her eyes further, but the ferocious look in them was replaced with a look of stupefaction. It seems like I've been pulled over and kissed by force again. But, no, that's exactly what's happening! The delicate touch

on her lips snapped her out of her trance. Peeved, she kept slapping his back in an attempt to make him let go of her.

But why would Toby release her? He hadn't had enough of kissing her on the way here before. Now that he had finally caught an opportunity to benefit himself, he wouldn't let go of her until he had enough. At the thought of this, he tightened his arm around her waist.

At first, Sonia still had room to struggle and slap his back. Yet, now that he had tightened his arm around her, her body was pressed even closer against his, making her unable to struggle even if she wanted to. This dirty dog! She rolled her eyes angrily. Finally, she gave up as she slowly stopped struggling and responded to his kiss.

A hint of smugness flashed across Toby's eyes when he sensed that she had submitted to him. As he gradually let down his guard, his arm slowly relaxed around her waist. Naturally, Sonia noticed this subtle change, and her eyes gleamed shrewdly. Now's the time! She narrowed her eyes as she held his shoulders and used the chance to push him away.

The moment Toby was pushed away, he was totally stunned. He blinked at her, staring at Sonia in a daze as she checked her appearance. I have actually been pushed away! He was filled with disbelief. Nonetheless, even if he couldn't believe it, it was useless. What had happened had already happened, and Sonia had indeed pushed him away. Thus, he lowered his eyes to conceal his astonishment as he regained his composure and returned to his usual demeanor while regarding her with downcast eyes.

Sonia felt somewhat guilty under his stare, so she stopped fixing her hair. Her eyes flickered as she asked, "Why are you looking at me like this?"

Toby pursed his lips and uttered, "You played dirty."

Sonia's lips twitched. "How did I play dirty?"

"You purposely responded to my advances just now to let my guard down. But, then, you took the opportunity to push me away," Toby said while looking at her with an even more bitter look. "I didn't know there would be such a calculative side to you." That's right—she struggled whenever I kissed her all of a sudden in the past. Only when we slept together at night would she put up a token resistance before responding to my advances. At other times—especially outside, she'd only struggle without responding to me. I actually overlooked this and let her have her way just now. "I never thought there'd be such a cunning side to you!" He looked at her aggrievedly.

Sonia looked at him smugly before saying slyly, "Even an idiot would've learned to be smarter after being attacked by surprise so many times, so you can't blame me for that. It's your fault for kissing me again all of a sudden."

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"You're too cute, so I couldn't help myself," said Toby while rubbing his lips with his thumb.

Sonia rolled her eyes at him when she heard his shameless reasoning. "So, that's why you have quite a few moments where you can't help yourself in a day?"

"Why? It's not against the law," said Toby. Then, he tilted his head slightly and smiled at her—a smile that seemed more like a sinister grin than a sweet one.

Sonia couldn't help but feel her cheeks flushing crimson as she stared at his devilish smile. If it's an ordinary man who puts up such a smile on his face, then the smile probably looks greasy and disgusting. But when Toby makes the same smile, not only does he not give off the vibe of a greasy man at all, but it also has the capability to make one's heart beat faster and one blush. Enchanter! I wonder who it is that says only women can tempt men with their alluring smile?! Please! Men can seduce women with their charming smiles too!

Sonia instantly covered her face while saying to him, "Stop smiling like that, will you? Hurry up and control your expression!"

When Toby saw her reaction, he raised his eyebrows and asked, "Why can't I smile?"

"Forget about the reason. Just do as I say. Hurry!" Sonia urged.

Since Sonia was the woman he loved dearly, Toby naturally couldn't bear to see her not getting her way. Therefore, he swiftly followed suit as soon as she pleaded with him.

"Alright. Alright. I won't smile like that. So, can you please stop covering your face? Don't you feel it's hard to breathe with you covering your face like that?" While he stopped smiling, he reached out to grab Sonia's wrist and removed her hands from her face.

However, Toby was startled when he took her hands off her face. "Why are you blushing?"

"It's none of your business!" Sonia snorted. Then, she opened the door and made her way toward the police station. As she walked, the embarrassed Sonia let out a silent scream and thought, I can't believe a man's charm will actually crimson my face. How embarrassing! And if that dirty dog knows I blushed because he enchanted me, he's probably going to be tremendously pleased with himself. So, I must never tell him why I was blushing just now.

Meanwhile, Toby couldn't help but be surprised for a moment when he saw that Sonia had already left the vehicle and was walking hurriedly to the police station like someone was chasing after her.

It didn't take him very long as he soon figured out why she was behaving this way. She suddenly covered her face when I smiled at her just now. Later, when I held her hands covering her face, I saw her blushing deeply. It's strange because I clearly remember

that she was acting pretty normal before I smiled at her—not to mention that I saw no sign of flushing or embarrassment at all. In other words, was it because of my smile that she suddenly blushed and left in embarrassment? It should be, shouldn't it? Otherwise, why didn't she answer me when I asked her why she was blushing? But then again, I never saw her have such a reaction whenever I smiled at her on usual days. So, why does this smile alone make her react like this?

Toby also got out of the car as he desperately wanted to learn what had made Sonia blush so terribly after seeing his smile. Then, he stood on the side of the car and bent down slightly to look at himself in the left rearview mirror. He smiled the same smile from before and observed his reflection in the mirror.

Even so, no matter how much he stared at himself, smiling in the mirror, there was still a little confusion in Toby's eyes. I still don't understand what's wrong with my smile that it actually has the effect of making Sonia blush sheepishly just now. Well, of course, it can also possibly be since I'm a man and feel differently about this smile from her. After all, men and women often view things differently. So perhaps the same smile that can make women's hearts skip a beat may not have the same effect on men.

As he thought of this, he stopped looking in the mirror. Finally, he stood up straight, put his hands in his trouser pockets, and sauntered to the police station. Regardless of why Sonia had such a reaction to his smile just now, Toby realized that he might be able to smile at her like that more often in the future just to see her so shy. Since she'll feel shy from my smile, does this mean that she actually enjoys seeing me smile like this? If so, then surely I need to satisfy her. After all, isn't it a man's responsibility to satisfy his own woman?

Afterward, he strolled into the hall of the police station with his head held high like a man who was proud of having mastered some kind of a secret code to wealth.

Meanwhile, Sonia, who was already in the police station, could see the unconcealed complacent look on Toby's face from afar. Although she didn't know what had gotten into him, she actually felt rather both amused and exasperated when she saw him acting like that.

Toby came to Sonia and stood beside her. Sonia asked him curiously, "Look at you feeling so happy. Did something good happen?" In fact, he looks like he's in seventh heaven.

He smirked when he heard that, "It's a secret, and I'm not telling you." If I tell her that I'm happy because I had discovered something that would make her show her shy side, she'll definitely warn me not to smile at her like that in the future. So, there's no way I'm going to tell her.

“Secret?” Sonia was stunned for a moment when she heard Toby’s answer. Then, she looked at him with a great sense of disbelief and asked, “So, you’ve actually learned how to keep me guessing now, huh? Are you really not going to tell me?”

“Yes, I can’t tell you,” said Toby as he raised his chin slightly, showing his resolute demeanor.

Sonia harrumphed derisively, “Fine! Forget it! Like I want to know.”

Afterward, she feigned displeasure, waiting for Toby to coax her and tell her the secret.

After all, it was almost infallible whenever she did this. But, alas, this time, Sonia’s plan failed. Toby had no intention of coaxing her and told her the secret. In fact, he didn’t make any moves even after she looked away for a long while.

When Sonia saw this, she realized that Toby was obviously determined not to tell her the secret. I know I shouldn’t get angry even after knowing he doesn’t want to tell me. After all, he has the right to decide if he wants to tell me or not. But still, I feel a little upset when I see he really doesn’t plan to tell me. Perhaps I’m spoiled by him. He would hardly hide anything from me and would tell me what I wanted to know in the past. Now that he doesn’t tell me even just one thing, I actually can’t bear it instead. If this doesn’t count as spoiled or contentious, then what is?

When her train of thought arrived at that conclusion, she inhaled deeply to calm herself, rubbed her face, and immediately regained her composure. I cannot behave this way anymore. Otherwise, I’ll become an irritating woman.

Sonia couldn’t help feeling shivers run over her body whenever she thought about the possibility of her becoming a vexatious woman. No, that’s too terrifying. I must not let myself end up like a vexatious woman. Such a woman is always crazy and unreasonable and quickly goes ballistic if she doesn’t get the desired outcome. I think I better be a woman who’s constantly rational and calm. Such a woman won’t lose her cool and make a fool out of herself even if she can’t get what she wants. Hence, from now on, I have to make changes to my temper. I can’t lose myself and change my personality just because Toby usually pampers and tolerates me.

At this thought, Sonia had completely adjusted her state of mind. When she looked at Toby again, the dissatisfaction she had felt earlier was gone. Instead, she looked at him and simply snorted, “Forget it if you don’t want to tell. You can always tell me later whenever you want to.”

“Okay.” At that moment, Toby didn’t know what Sonia was thinking, but he could feel that her demeanor had changed a bit. A while ago, she was still agitated, yet right now, she has become placid. This shows that she can control her emotions very well now.

Just as he was thinking about it, a police officer came over with a notebook. "Miss Reed. Mr. Fuller."

Sonia smiled back, and Toby didn't respond since he didn't want to talk to other men.

Yet, Toby's rudeness didn't anger the police officer.

Since he was highly influential, and the case this time wasn't a big deal, the police officer didn't care about Toby's rude attitude. Rather, it would genuinely make the police officer flattered if Toby greeted him politely.

"Miss Reed, Mr. Fuller, please come with me. Our chief is already waiting for you both in the office," the police officer said as he made a gesture, implying that they could head to the chief's office.

Sonia smiled politely and nodded. "Sure. Please lead the way."

"You're too kind, Miss Reed," the police officer replied. After that, he walked in front and led the way.

Meanwhile, Sonia and Toby followed behind while holding hands.

While on their way to the chief's office, Sonia asked the police officer some questions regarding Anya's current situation, and he answered them one by one. When she heard that Anya had been detained in the detention center for so many days, and her mental state had become pretty bad, Sonia not only didn't become soft-hearted about her situation, but she actually felt this was the best ending for someone as ill-hearted as Anya. In her opinion, Anya deserved such a punishment for her crimes.

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Anya wouldn't have thought how terrible my mental state would be when she stole and ruined my dress in the first place. Similarly, I won't be kind-hearted and feel sympathy for her worsening mental state now. It's just tit for tat.

Just as she was deep in her thoughts, the voice of the police officer sounded. "The chief is waiting for you two inside." It turned out that he had taken her and Toby to the office door. As soon as he escorted them to the destination, he turned and left.

Once the police officer left, both Sonia and Toby didn't enter right away. Instead, they stood outside the door and looked at each other. Eventually, it was Toby who raised his hand and knocked on the door.

It didn't take very long before a muffled voice rang from behind the door. "Please come in."

They entered the office with the man's permission.

In the meantime, the person inside the office was sitting behind his desk and preoccupied with work. He paused in his work and raised his head when he heard the sound of footsteps walking into his office.

The moment he saw Sonia and Toby, he quickly placed the file in his hand away and stood up with a smile. Then, he walked around his desk toward them and extended a hand in greeting. "President Fuller. Miss Reed. You're finally here."

Toby reached out and shook the police chief's hand in greeting.

Shortly after, the police chief extended his hand toward Sonia, wanting to greet Sonia as well.

Unfortunately, as a possessive lover, Toby would never allow other men to touch Sonia, even if it was just a greeting out of courtesy.

Hence, Toby once again shook hands with the police chief with a frown—a hint of utter disgust was seen in his eyes like he was stepping on a deep pool of slush.

Meanwhile, the police chief was stupefied when he saw Toby shake hands with him again, and this led him to instinctively think that Toby was reluctant to let go of his hand so much that he actually wanted to shake hands with him twice. So it looks like I have won the heart of this wealthiest man in Seafield. In that case, will he agree if I request his sponsorship?

Just when the police chief was thinking about whether to draft a sponsorship list in the hope of helping the police station obtain sponsors, he suddenly heard bell-like laughter of amusement.

The police officer instantly returned to his senses and found that it was Sonia who was laughing while covering her lips. Not only that, Sonia even looked at her hand that was held tightly by Toby's when she chuckled in amusement.

At once, a realization hit him, and the police chief finally understood the situation. Therefore, he looked up at Toby, only to see the latter staring at him with a stern, gloomy-looking face. Moreover, the police chief even saw the hint of disdain and a trace of warning in Toby's eyes.

At that moment, the police chief instantly understood that Toby didn't admire him, nor did he win his heart. Otherwise, this wealthiest man in front of me won't look at me with disgust. As for the warning hint in his eyes, I know what it means. After all, I used to be

a criminal police officer working in the Criminal Investigation Department, so I know how to read people like a book. He intercepted halfway when I reached out to shake hands with Miss Reed, and the warning look in his eyes also only appeared right after that. In short, he's very displeased with me wanting to shake hands with Miss Reed. As for his reason for displeasure, it relates to the possessiveness and desires a man has for his woman. When a man loves a woman so dearly, he won't allow any other men to touch her—not even a polite handshake. That's why he interfered halfway through my handshake with Miss Reed. He did so to warn me not to touch his woman.

After the police chief figured things out, his cheeks flushed in embarrassment, instantly becoming awkward and abashed.

He felt uncomfortable because he had no other intention besides just intending to just shake Sonia's hands out of courtesy. Yet, Toby mistook him for having indecent thoughts about Sonia, which made him feel deeply embarrassed.

At the same time, he was abashed from thinking Toby favored him. There I was, having the audacity to still believe that this wealthiest man shook hands with me for the second time just now because he acknowledged and was touched by the greatness of us civil servants. What's more embarrassing, I even thought of taking the opportunity to ask for his sponsorships. Fortunately, I didn't immediately ask him anything about support at that time. Otherwise, I'll be humiliated when I eventually receive a rejection.

As Sonia stood by the sidelines, she naturally saw the strained expression on the police chief's face. So, she had a general idea of what was wrong with him. Thus, she immediately hid her amusement and nodded shyly. "I'm sorry, Officer Chase. My lover values me quite a lot, so sometimes, he can get a little overboard with his protectiveness. Please forgive him."

As she spoke, Sonia hugged Toby's arm and pulled it slightly, motioning him to quickly let go of Freddie's hand.

Toby obeyed Sonia's silent cue and finally let go of Freddie's hand after giving him a hard look.

Meanwhile, Freddie stared at his hand, which had reddened in pain due to Toby's forceful grip. Although he gave a wry smile in his heart, outwardly, he still had to act as if nothing had happened. He maintained his calm composure as he withdrew his hand and placed it into his pants pockets. Then, he forced a smile and replied politely, "I'm fine, Miss Reed. On the contrary, I actually thought President Fuller was a very good man when I saw he cared so much about you. Miss Reed, I'm happy that you have found yourself such a good man."

I don't need you to tell Sonia that I'm a good man. Toby glanced up at Freddie contemptuously, and the gaze in his eyes seemed to be relaying the thought he had in mind.

Freddie noticed this, and he could feel the corners of his mouth twitch in uneasiness. I really didn't expect that the legendary cold-faced tyrant in the business world, as rumored by the outside world, actually has such a character.

Of course, Sonia, too, saw the derisive look Toby had shot at Freddie. She immediately felt a migraine building as she regarded the scene before her.

"That's enough. What are you doing?!" Sonia glared at Toby angrily. Then, she grabbed his man and pulled him to stand behind her, allowing herself the chance to face Freddie in a much more civilized conversation. Otherwise, I don't know what other rude actions he will do to Officer Chase later if I let him face the poor chief.

Honestly speaking, Freddie actually felt relieved after he saw Sonia pull Toby to stand behind her. Finally! I don't have to face an unpredictable person like President Fuller.

As he thought of this, Freddie breathed a sigh of relief. Finally, he resumed his serious demeanor as the chief of the police station. He turned his attention to Sonia as he asked, "Miss Reed, since you two are here, let's not waste any more time and get straight into the matter, shall we?"

"Sure." Sonia nodded lightly.

Afterward, Freddie motioned for them to follow him as he brought them to take a seat on the couch on the side.

Once Sonia and Toby were seated, Freddie poured them each a cup of tea before continuing. "Miss Reed, it's been several days since the incident regarding the ruining of your dress. How's your discussion with the suspect's family coming along? What is your course of action?"

Before Sonia could speak, Toby, who was sitting next to her, spoke first. His tone of voice was chilly with a hint of mockery as he refuted, "Do you think we will choose to forgive her?"

Sure enough, Freddie understood what Toby meant. He took off his police cap and set it aside with a smile. "I'm also undoubtedly aware that the two of you won't choose to forgive the suspect, but please understand that I need to ask you these questions due to procedure. Although I am a police chief, I still need to abide by protocol while making a real-time recording of your statements."

As soon as he said that, he pointed at the recorder pinned on the left side chest area's pocket of his police uniform.

Just like what he said, Freddie figured that these two wouldn't choose to forgive Anya. First, if they wanted to pardon her, they wouldn't have waited until now and would've done so as early as the first day when the suspect's family came here. Secondly, they

are both highly influential. Their influences and wealth are far beyond the suspect's family, so they don't need an apology in the form of compensation. Besides, there's also no reason for them to fear that the suspect's family will seek revenge on them. So naturally, they don't need to pardon the suspect.

"We understand." Sonia gave an understanding smile as she looked at the recorder pinned in Freddie's pocket. "Still, for the sake of clarification, my thoughts are the same as my lover's. We are in agreement on not forgiving her actions."

Freddie flipped his notebook open as he pulled out a pen and started jotting down every valuable detail for the entire duration of their conversation. This was also a protocol for taking down the victims' statements. So not only did he need to record the conversation with a police-issued recorder, but he also had to make notes of the conversation in case anything relevant popped up further down the line of investigation.

As he wrote, he added, "I understand what the two of you mean, but I still have to ask on behalf of the suspect. Is there no room for negotiation?"

Sonia and Toby remained silent in the face of that question, and their silence was their abject refusal to show any pity toward Anya.