When Penny and her family heard that Nathan was going to meet the Warlord of Avalon, Bachok Khan, they were shocked.

Penny tried stopping Nathan by saying anxiously, "Nathan, Bachok Khan is Avalon's Warlord. He frequently leads his men to fight wars and kills people mercilessly. You're planning on meeting him even after crippling his brother? He's definitely not letting you off the hook."

Nathan smiled and said, "This isn't Avalon. He won't be dominating this place any time soon. Don't worry, Honey. I'll come back in the blink of an eye. Moreover, no matter if it is a blessing or a curse, it has to be resolved sooner or later."

As he said this, he gestured at Lenard Smith to lead the way.

The two of them, together with Colin Dunne and the Elite Eight headed to the International Hotel of Channing to meet Bachok Khan.

Seeing as she wasn't able to change



Nathan's mind, Penny wanted to risk her life to go with him.

However, she was held back by Benson as he whispered to her, "Nathan insists on going alone. You won't be of any help even if you tag along."

Penny burst into tears as she watched Nathan's car gradually fade in the distance. "Dad, I'd rather die with Nathan than to watch it happen to him."

Benson responded, "You're so foolish. Why don't you call for reinforcements to save Nathan instead?"

Penny smiled wryly. "Call for reinforcements? This is the Warlord of Avalon, Bachok Khan, that we're talking about. Where do we go to find help?"

Benson replied, "Did you forget what happened last time? The Griffins from the East tried to cause trouble by leading a mob against us Smiths. Ferlyn's boyfriend, Chris Perry, requested the military to mobilize a large army to protect us."



Penny's eyes lit up for a moment but soon dimmed down as she shook her head and said, "We asked for Chris Perry's help yesterday at the Smith's family home, but he told us he is powerless to do so."

"He probably doesn't want to help. However, at this point, we can only beg him," Benson replied.

Penny nodded vigorously. "Okay. He's staying in the Smith family home for the next couple of days. We'll take this opportunity to beg him to take action and save Nathan."

The Smiths then rushed back to the Smith family home to beg Chris Perry to save Nathan

. . .

International Hotel of Channing, Peony Hall.

Bachok and his guards were feasting and messing around, going so far as to harass the female manager and service girls who



were serving alcohol.

The women kept screaming when Bachok and his men touched them, but seeing as this group of men weren't close to being angels, they could only keep silent and hold back their tears.

Bachok pulled the manageress into his arms and groped her. When he saw her whining and weeping, he pushed her away unhappily and cursed, "I'm not only just a general in Avalon, I'm also a noble there! The women I favor should feel honored! Why the hell are you crying?"

Displeased, he raised his head and yelled out, "Where the hell is that bastard Lenard Smith? He's supposed to accompany Ali to bring Penny to me. Why haven't they returned yet?"

Right as he said this, a group of people entered the place.

The one leading the group was Lenard Smith.



When Bachok saw Lenard, he grinned and said, "Haha, you come back right when I just mentioned your name. Did you bring that beautiful woman, Penny Smith, who caused my brother trouble?"

Lenard shook his head with a strange expression on his face. "Penny Smith didn't come. But her husband Nathan Cross, who is also the one who injured your brother, is here."

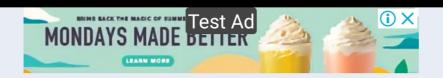
When he finished speaking, Lenard and his men quickly moved aside.

Bachok and his guards watched as Nathan Cross, Colin Dunne, and the Elite Eight walked in.

Close to a hundred of Avalon's elite Mountain Troops stood up at once and surrounded Bachok in a defensive stance.

Bachok's expression fluctuated. "So you are Nathan Cross. Where is my Captain of the National Guards, Ali?"

Nathan smiled and answered, "Your



captain is already six feet under."



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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When Bachok heard this, he was furious. He stood up abruptly and spoke angrily, "You murdered the Captain of my National Guards!"

With the smile still hanging on his face, Nathan spoke up, "I've lost track of how many generals of the Avalon's Mountain Troops I've slaughtered. Who cares about a Captain from the National Guards?"

Nathan's words startled the crowd. Most of them didn't know what he meant.

Did Nathan mean he was a soldier who had fought Avalon's Mountain Troops and even managed to kill the general?

Otherwise, why would he say this?

Bachok sneered. "Nonsense. Who do you think you are, bragging about killing countless of our generals of Avalon? Men, take them down! Let's show them what the elites of the Avalon Mountain Troops are made of!"

Bachok's men immediately sheathed their



daggers before lunging at Nathan's group.

Bachok and his men tried to be discreet when they arrived, so they didn't carry any firearms with them. They were only equipped with close combat weapons such as military daggers.

When Nathan saw Bachok taking action, he smiled and waved his hand, signaling Colin and the Elite Eight to strike back.

Colin and the Elite Eight formed a unified front and took a step forward in an orderly manner as they bellowed in unity, "Fight!"

Although there were only nine people, they gave off a formidable aura of a thousand men.

Bachok and his men were shocked. One of them noticed that there was a marking on the back of the men's hands. It was a special mark belonging to the Elite Force of the General of the North. "Oh my God! They're the General of the North's Elite Force!"



Following this exclamation, Bachok's group instantly became flustered.

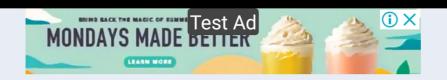
Their faces turned pale as they spoke in trembling voices, "It's true. They're the General of the North's Elites - the nightmare of us Mountain Troops of Avalon!"

"Oh my God! Why is the God of War, Ares, here?"

"Ah! This place is so scary! I want to go home..."

Bachok was also taken aback.

However, he quickly regained his composure and shouted at his elite soldiers in a fit of rage. "Calm down, you lot! What soldiers of the General of the North? What God of War Ares' Elite Forces? That's ridiculous! We're in a district in the South, not the North. This isn't even under the jurisdiction of the General of the North. Why would his forces appear in a place like this?"



As he analyzed the situation, Bachok was able to gradually calm his elite Mountain Troops down.

They thought to themselves, That's right. This is the South, not the North.

The General of the North's forces would never appear in a place like this!

It must be a fake!

The General of the North is the God of War, Ares. He must have many admirers and worshippers in a place like this. Having the mark of the General of the North's elite force on the back of their hands is quite reasonable.

As they thought of it this way, the Mountain Troops of Avalon let out a breath of relief.

They began to cuss, "What the f**k? So they're just imposters?"

"If it weren't for General Bachok's wisdom in seeing through their lies, we would've



still be intimidated by them."

Overhearing Avalon's men, Nathan, together with Colin and the Elite Eight, couldn't help but smile.

Lenard Smith, who was hiding in a corner with his men, was befuddled. He didn't know why the men from Avalon were freaking out.

Bachok himself was displeased at how his men acted. He felt humiliated.

They were only injured by the General of the North's forces a few times before. Do they need to freak out like this?

Infuriated, he urged his men, "Go on, kill these imposters! Don't make a fool out of me!"

"Kill!"

"Eliminate these fakers!"

Bachok's elites, numbering about a hundred men, charged at Colin Dunne and



the Elite Eight.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Colin exchanged glances with the Elite Eight before uttering, "Fight!"

He rushed forward as soon as he finished speaking. Like a raging rhino, he collided with one of the Avalon men leading the charge.

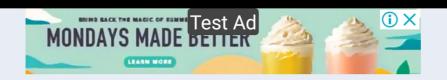
A loud thump followed by a chilling, bonecrunching sound echoed through the air.

The muffled cry of the Avalon commander was soon heard.

Everyone saw what had happened. It was as if a rhino had just rammed into a zebra. The Avalon commander flew several feet before dropping onto the floor. His body twisted at an impossible angle as he lay on the ground half-dead.

Bachok and his men were astonished by the scene unfolding in front of them.

The Avalon commander who had fallen in the face of Colin was considered one of the strongest among Bachok's subordinates.



It never crossed their minds that he would fall so easily as soon as he faced Colin Dunne.

Bachok shifted his gaze at Colin and the Elite Eight. His face had an expression of uncertainty as an ominous premonition crept into his heart.

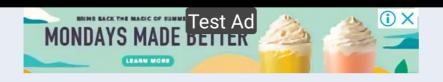
A battle was imminent between the two factions.

They collided fiercely as they launched volley after volley of attacks against each other.

Bachok's men, however, were seemingly in a state of disarray. They fought unsystematically and were nothing more than a ragtag bunch.

On the other hand, Colin and the Elite Eight adopted the classical North Army fighting style.

Their movements were simple but deadly. Each punch and kick were aimed at their opponent's vital points. It wasn't anything



fancy. They relied completely on power and speed to win.

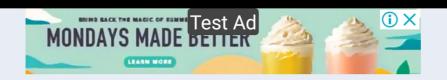
Although Bachok's men outnumbered Colin's ten to one, they were still being slaughtered by Colin's men like pigs in a butcher shop. There was constant screaming and wailing as Bachok's men fell before Colin and the Elite Eight.

One of the bolder men holding a dagger tried to lunge at Nathan, who appeared unprepared. "Die!" He shouted as he aimed the knife at Nathan's chest.

Nathan lifted his leg and executed a high kick, striking his opponent right in the chest.

The man flew like a ball being thrown and crashed straight into the wall. The wall was smashed, forming gigantic web-like cracks on the surface. The man then slowly slid down the wall, leaving an appalling streak of blood on it.

Within a couple of minutes, half of Bachok's men were already either dead or



severely injured.

The rest of them began to realize what was happening.

These people weren't imposters - they were the actual God of War, Ares' elite forces.

There was no way imposters could be this strong.

"They're not imposters!"

"They really are the God of War's elite forces!"

"My God. They're frightening!"

"Forgive me! I surrender! I'll become your prisoner. Please just have mercy on me!"

After discovering that Colin and the Elite Eight were the real deal, they couldn't help but fall to their knees and throw their weapons to the ground. They then cried out and begged for mercy.



The elite forces of the God of War Ares were no joke. They were one of the North Army's aces.

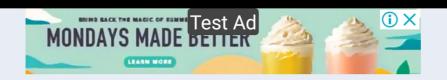
The Mountain Troops of Avalon had tried to invade the North's territory several times, and they all ended with the North causing much carnage.

After offending Colin and the Elite Eight and realizing they were part of the God of War Ares' elite forces, Bachok's men lost their will to fight and could only beg for mercy.

Bachok was dumbfounded.

Lenard and his subordinates were equally stunned.

Watching as the elites of Avalon's
Mountain Troops groveled at his feet,
Nathan spoke in an unsympathetic tone,
"When you people invaded our territory, I
did say that I would kill every single one of
you without mercy. Now you lot even have
the guts to enter this place and cause
trouble?"



The Mountain Troops of Avalon crawled on the ground, crying and begging for mercy.

Bachok also fell into a trance. He felt the world around him spin and turn.

With an ashen gray face and eyes filled with despair, he spoke in a shaking tone, "Y-Y-You, you're the General of the North, the God of War Ares."

To Lenard and his men, Bachok's words were like thunder on a clear day. Their faces warped in horror.

Lenard looked at Nathan as terror overwhelmed his thoughts. Nathan Cross is the General of the North?

Nathan stood with his arms behind his back. He turned to Bachok calmly and spoke frigidly, "Isn't it a little too late to be recognizing me now?"



Sure enough, it was the General of the North.

Bachok, Lenard, and the rest of their subordinates trembled before Nathan.

Besides feeling aghast, Bachok felt fortunate.

In addition to the hundred elites he brought here, he had also dispatched five thousand Mountain Troop warriors disguised as mercenaries to sneak into the nearby ocean territory of the South. They were prepared to back him up at any time.



If he were able to notify the secret army, they would be able to back him up fairly quickly.

The helicopter should be able to arrive in half an hour fastest to assist them.

They might even be able to kill Nathan Cross, turning the incident into one for the books.

With that in mind, Bachok wanted to use a



special communication device to secretly notify his reinforcements.

But just as he thought of this idea, his phone began to ring.

He froze dead in his tracks.

Nathan smiled and said, "Answer the phone. It should be your army that had secretly sneaked into the waters of the South trying to reach you."

What?

Bachok was astounded as he stared at Nathan. He already knew about the secret army!

After contemplating for some time, Bachok answered the phone hesitantly.

The person calling was, in fact, the commander of the secret army, Davy.

Davy's voice quivered as he spoke, "Sir, our whereabouts have been exposed and we're being attacked by both the North Army's



Dragonfury special forces and the Eighteen Riders of the North. We've sustained heavy casualties. About a thousand men and I have become their prisoners. They asked me to call you..."

Bachok's phone fell to the ground with a thud. His hand was twitching.

He raised his head to face Nathan with a look of desperation.

His entire secret army had also been annihilated. He was a sitting duck now.

Nathan flashed a half-smile. "Bachok, do you still want to kill me and my family?"

With a thump, Bachok fell heavily to the ground and banged his head repeatedly on the floor. "It's my fault. I shouldn't have come here. Please, General, spare my worthless life!"

Lenard's mouth fell as he saw this.

Nathan looked down at Bachok who was shaking like a leaf and then at Bachok's



men who were sprawled on the floor.

He spoke in a distant manner, "Raise your head when you're talking to me!"

Bachok did as he was told with much difficulty. The thought of death began to surface inside him.

If he had known that his brother had offended the General of the North, he wouldn't even come to this god-forsaken place.

Nathan asked coldly, "Do you know what you've done wrong?"

Bachok wept as he answered, "I was wrong for trying to stand up for my brother. I shouldn't have entered this place, let alone mess with you."

"Your worst mistake is scaring my wife!" Nathan exclaimed callously.

Bachok, Lenard, and everyone present exchanged glances as they heard what Nathan said.



"Now, I want you to kneel before my wife and apologize for you and your brother's behaviors. Is there a problem with that?" Nathan demanded.

Bachok answered hurriedly, "There's no problem! No problem at all."

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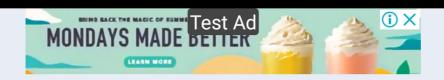
At the Smith family home.

Penny and Sean Smith's families sat together in the living room. There were about a dozen people altogether.

Besides the Smith Family being present, Ferlyn's boyfriend, Chris Perry, also sat there with a strange expression on his face.

When Penny asked Chris to mobilize the army to save Nathan, Chris felt like he was sitting on pins and needles. He rejected with an unnatural expression, stating that it was beyond his ability.

Penny begged him for a long time but to



no avail.

She could only turn to Ferlyn and plead, "Ferlyn, please help me talk to the captain. Ask him to request his leader's help to mobilize the army one more time. Save your brother-in-law, will you?"

Ferlyn rolled her eyes. "Penny, even though the higher-ups think highly of my boyfriend, we can't just ask them for help every time we run into trouble! Not to mention, this incident was caused by you and Nathan. Didn't Nathan say that he isn't afraid of the Warlord of Avalon, Bachok Khan? He even said he's going to make Bachok kneel before you and apologize, right? If he's so good, why do you need my boyfriend to save him?"



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Sean's family also spoke up in succession, saying that Penny and Nathan were the ones who caused trouble. If their own family couldn't do anything about it, they shouldn't involve the rest of the family.

Tears filled Penny's eyes as she begged profusely, "Grandpa, Uncle Jaxon, Ferlyn, Nathan did say he isn't afraid of Bachok Kahn and that he would force Bachok to apologize. But that was all just boastful words in the heat of the moment. Don't take it seriously. Please, help me coax Mr. Perry. Ask Mr. Perry to save my husband."

Benson and Leah also set aside their dignity and begged, "Dad, please talk to Mr. Perry. Save Nathan!"

Sean felt that their own family couldn't even save themselves, let alone ask Chris Perry to save Nathan.

Not to mention Sean and his family hated Nathan and wanted him to die as soon as possible anyway.

Sean sat in his chair and curled his lips



before saying indifferently, "Hehe, Nathan did say he isn't afraid of Bachok Khan. I'm sure he should be able to make Bachok Khan kneel and apologize. Our family is waiting for Bachok's apology. Why are you in such a hurry?"

Ferlyn and the rest continued gloating, "That's right. Didn't Nathan already meet Bachok? Who knows, Bachok might be on his way to apologize to you right now. Hahaha."

Tears couldn't stop flowing down Penny's cheeks as her heart suffered.

It was impossible for Nathan to force Bachok to apologize. She feared Nathan was already in danger because of meeting that man.

Seeing her grandfather's family acting cold and had no intention of saving Nathan, she wiped away her tears. "Since they're not going to help, let's leave!" She told her parents, Queenie, and Kylie.

"Dad, Mom, Kylie, you three bring Queenie



home. I'm going to the Channing International Hotel to die together with Nathan."

Kylie

's anxiety spiked as she heard what Penny had said. She rolled her eyes a couple of times before stopping the latter. "Penny, hold your horses. Your husband can definitely take on Bachok Khan. Maybe Bachok really is on his way to apologize to you."

When Kylie said this, Sean's family couldn't resist sneering.

Miles mocked, "Oh, don't tell me any of you really think that Nathan can handle the Warlord of Avalon, Bachok Khan?"

Ferlyn smirked and added, "Hehe, Nathan is blinded by arrogance. I didn't expect you to be foolish enough to believe Nathan's bragging."

Samuel grinned. "Birds of a feather flock together. Nathan loves to brag, so he gets



along really well with these brainless buffoons."

Penny's family was shocked and infuriated when they heard this. Not only did her grandfather's family not help them, but they also directed snide remarks at Penny's family.

However, Kylie held her head up high and snorted. "You people are the brainless buffoons. My brother-in-law isn't bragging. If he says he's going force Bachok to apologize to my cousin, I believe Bachok will definitely come."

Sean's family continued sneering. Ferlyn even went as far as to add, "If Nathan is able to force Bachok Khan to apologize, I'll eat s**t!"

This startled Chris Perry who was next to her.

His face changed drastically as he scrambled to say, "Ferlyn, you can't just say stuff like this."



Ferlyn spoke triumphantly, "What are you afraid of? Nathan has probably been shot by Bachok Khan and become a ghost by now. Don't tell me you guys really think he's able to force the Warlord of Southeast Asia, Bachok Khan, to come and apologize personally? What are you guys thinking!"

This left Chris feeling distressed, so much so that he wanted to cover his girlfriend's mouth up.

When she saw Ferlyn being so arrogant, Kylie was also irritated and pointed at her before saying, "Alright. Remember what you said. When Bachok comes to apologize, you'll eat s**t!"

Ferlyn retorted loudly, "Yes. That's what I said. I'd like to see Bachok come and apologize!"

As soon as Ferlyn finished her sentence, several bodyguards of the Smith family ran into the house panic-stricken. They yelled out, "Sir, we've got a problem. The Warlord of Avalon, Bachok Khan is here with his men!"



What!

Instantly, the Smith family panicked as if they had ants in their pants.

Trembling, Sean was so frightened till his voice broke. "We're finished. Bachok must have not been satisfied by only killing Nathan. Now, he is coming for the Smith Family to get his revenge!"

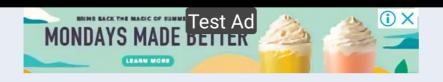
At that moment, Bachok and his men entered, while being guided by Lenard.

Every single member of the Smith family turned pale.

Bachok swaggered into the living hall with his fearsome subordinates behind him. Meanwhile, Lenard whispered into Bachok's ear as he pointed out Ms. Smith.

The next moment, something astounding happened.

With a thump, Bachok dropped on his knees in front of Penny. With a trembling voice, he pleaded, "Ms. Smith, I am Bachok



Khan of Avalon. I am here to apologize and beg for your forgiveness. Please have mercy on my brother and I!"

The next moment, all of Bachok's subordinates knelt down and bowed. "Ms. Smith, we beg you to have mercy on us..."

Penny gaped for a long while as she just stood there in shock.

Benson and Leah were stunned as well.

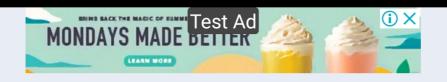
Sean and the rest of the family were so astonished that their eyes had almost popped out.

Bachok was here to beg for forgiveness instead of killing everyone.

Good heavens!

When Nathan predicted that Bachok would come to beg for forgiveness, no one believed it to be true.

Amongst them, Ferlyn was the most appalled. Her expression darkened



considerably as she mumbled to herself, "This is impossible, it can't be real..."

Penny herself could not believe it too. She questioned Bachok immediately, "My husband, what have you done to him?"

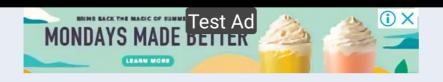
At that moment, Nathan entered with Colin and the Elite Eight. They were followed by Franklin Wilson, the Commander-in-chief of the Channing military zone, and a large group of generals.

Smiling, Nathan reassured Penny, "Honey, don't worry, I'm fine. These guys are no match for me."

When Sean saw Nathan and General Franklin enter with a large group of soldiers, he quickly welcomed them.

"Major-General Wilson, it's a surprise to see you here!"

Franklin replied indifferently, "I'm here under orders from the General of the North to punish Bachok Khan."



The General of the North!

As Sean and the others looked around, they could not help but inquire, "May I know where the General of the North is?"

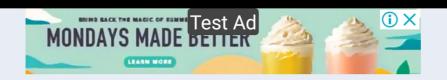
Everyone looked high and low except in Nathan's direction.

The reason was simple, no one believed that Nathan could be the General of the North.

As Penny approached Nathan to hold his hand tightly, she could not help but whisper nervously, "Nathan, where is the General of the North?"

Smiling, Nathan shocked everyone. "I am the General of the North..."

Before Nathan could even finish, Penny covered his mouth quickly. Looking at Franklin in fear, she reprimanded Nathan, "Why are you spouting such nonsense again. Do you know that it's a crime to impersonate a general?"



When Sean and the rest of the family heard what Nathan had said, they were shocked.

But, when they heard what Penny said next, they rolled their eyes instead. Here he goes again. How dare he impersonate a general in front of General Wilson. Isn't he worried about being shot by the firing squad?

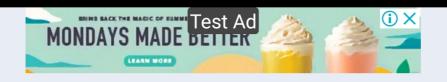
Nathan tried to protest, "I..."

Penny interrupted him sternly, "Stop making smart-ass comments!"

Smiling wryly, Nathan replied, "Fine, I won't."

Shooting a glance at Franklin nervously, Penny was put at ease when he did not seem to mind what Nathan had said.

Turning her attention back at the kneeling Bachok and his men, she asked Nathan softly, "What's going on?"



Chapter 667 Wait There Is One More Thing

At the scene, Sean's family, Benson, Leah, and Kylie were all equally curious to know.

Nathan chuckled. "Nothing much. Bachok, who is a warlord from Avalon, not only led his men to cause trouble in our nation but also secretly dispatched five thousand men into the south, disguised as mercenaries. They were biding their time to support him when he took his revenge."

When Penny and the Smith Family heard it, it sent a chill down their spines.

Meanwhile, Nathan continued, "When the General of the North knew about it, he sent men to annihilate the enemy soldiers who had slipped into the south."

"Not only did he teach Bachok a lesson, but rather, he'd also wanted Bachok and his brother to make amends for their behavior by apologizing to their victims. Which, in this case, is you, Honey."

When Penny and the Smith Family heard Nathan's explanation, they finally understood what was going on.



Chapter 667 Wait There Is One More Thing

Smiling, Franklin added, "That's right. Therefore, I am here under the General's orders to make sure that Bachok begs for forgiveness."

At that moment, Bachok pleaded pitifully, "Ms. Smith, please forgive me!"

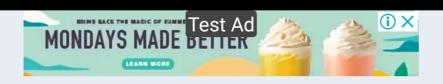
As Penny looked at Nathan, Nathan smiled and replied, "It's your decision whether you want to forgive him or not. Just say the word."

Penny bravely demanded, "Bachok, your subordinates beat up our local security team. Although my family has paid for their medical bills, I want you to compensate the security team for their losses!"

Squinting his eyes at Bachok, Nathan asked, "Do you have any problems with my wife's request?"

Bachok instantly answered, "No, none at all "

Nathan coldly declared, "There were fifteen



guards who were hurt. A million for every one of them. Therefore, reparations would be fifteen million."

Bachok readily agreed, "I'll pay. I'll compensate them."

Looking at Franklin, Nathan ordered, "Now, let Major-General Wilson bear witness to this matter. Also, I'll leave all of them to you."

Franklin concurred, "Alright!"

Very quickly, Bachok and his men were whisked away by Franklin.

As to what his fate would be, it would be up to the leadership.

After Bachok was taken away, Lenard was visibly left in an awkward situation.

Nathan had turned his attention to Lenard and sneered, "Mr. Smith, you'd promised me that you would donate five billion to all the charities within Channing. Can the funds be transferred within three days?"



Lenard replied meekly, "Yes, yes. Definitely."

Nathan nodded. "You'd better not pull any tricks this time, or I will personally hold you accountable."

With that, Lenard was frightened to his core.

He would not dare to try anything funny, as he now knew that Nathan was the General of the North.

In the event that he did, Nathan would be able to annihilate the whole Smith Family of Alberesque with just an order.

Forcing an awkward smile, he reassured Nathan, "Mr. Cross, don't worry. I won't be trying anything."

"Tomorrow, I'll gather the money and donate it to the Channing government for charity."

"Mr. Cross, may I leave now?"



Nathan nodded. "Go now. Do know that you will always be welcome to contribute to the development of Channing."

Lenard almost tripped on his way out when he heard Nathan.

He had come to Channing twice. The first time, he had paid one billion to Channing, in exchange for his life.

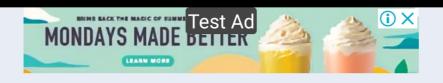
The second time, he had to pay five billion for the same reason again.

At this rate, the fortunes of the Smith Family in Alberesque were all squandered by him.

By now, he had made a solemn vow that he would never step into Channing again, even at knifepoint.

With that, Lenard left together, with his followers utterly defeated, just like beaten dogs.

Meanwhile, Sean gawked in amazement.



The Smith Family of Alberesque had always acted high and mighty.

Lenard had never respected the Smiths of Channing before. So why did he suddenly act like a coward before Nathan?

When Nathan realized that it was getting late, he suggested with a smile, "Honey, that's all for today. Time to go home."

Penny did not expect the crisis this time to be resolved so easily.

Holding Nathan's hand happily, she nodded. "Mm, Hubby, let's go home."

Meanwhile, Benson, together with Leah who was carrying her granddaughter, smiled in relief as they prepared to leave the Smith family residence and return home.

However, Kylie suddenly interrupted them, "Wait, there's still one more thing!"

Confused, everyone turned to look at Kylie as they wondered what else was still



outstanding.

Everyone except Ferlyn, whose expression turned ghastly.

Pointing at Ferlyn, Kylie announced aloud, "She's just said that if my brother-in-law could get Bachok to apologize on his knees, she would eat s***. So, how are we going to resolve that?"



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With that, Ferlyn was so angry and humiliated, that she was almost in tears.

Sean and the others were also embarrassed, especially Chris. He had tried to stop Ferlyn from making unnecessary comments but she simply refused to listen.

Defiant, Ferlyn insisted, "I was just joking. What's wrong with that?"

Nathan replied with a grin, "Of all the things to joke about, why do you need to eat s***? It's simply disgusting. So, don't do it again next time."

With that, Ferlyn started crying and ran off with her face buried in her hands.

Chris had no choice but to go after her.

When Sean and the other family members took turns to reprimand Nathan for going overboard, Nathan scoffed, "Haha, when Lenard stole one billion from your family, I taught him a lesson and got it returned to you. But yet, no one ever thanked me for



it."

"Tonight, when my wife asked your family for help, not only did you refuse to offer any, rather, you'd gloated over her misfortune instead."

"Now, just because I criticized Ferlyn, you berate me for going overboard. Your family's double standard is simply sickening!"

Nathan's words embarrassed Sean and his family, as they had no words to counter him with.

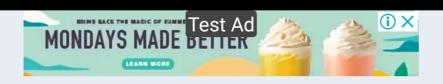


Meanwhile, Nathan held onto Penny's hand and urged, "Honey, dragons don't live with snakes while tigers don't live with dogs.

Next time, let's just avoid any contact with them."

Sean and his family were infuriated by Nathan's words but there was nothing they could do about it.

Cledondale, Northania.



In the study, Helen was chatting with Francis, the head butler.

Helen frowned slightly, "Did you say that Bachok, the warlord of Avalon not only didn't kill Nathan but was also defeated in the South?"

Francis replied with a wry smile, "That's the truth. It was a result even I didn't expect."

Helen asked in disbelief, "How can that be? When Nathan was chased out of the Cross Family. He had no one to rely on."

"Even if he had experienced some success outside, it wouldn't be enough to defeat a foreign warlord like Bachok!"

Francis replied, "To be honest, he was lucky, this incidence. When Bachok led his troops into our nation, he had a separate group of five thousand men infiltrate the South, disguised as mercenaries, ready to help him with his revenge."

"However, his actions had caught the attention of the nation's army. I heard that



the General of the North personally ordered the army to annihilate Bachok's men, who were hiding around the seas of the South. Bachok was then captured. After being punished, he was repatriated back to Avalon."

As a cold glint flashed in Helen's eyes, she lamented, "That kid is really lucky to have escaped death like that."

Francis replied softly, "Ma'am, it seems that to kill Nathan, we have to do it ourselves!"

Helen suggested calmly, "Tomorrow is Zayn's sixtieth birthday. We'll discuss it after the celebrations. For now, Nathan gets to live a few more days."

Francis nodded. "Yes!"

Channing, the South.

Nathan was having a meal at the Cloud Palace with Colin standing by his side.

Colin reported to Nathan that Bachok was



tortured, before being sent back to Avalon in chains.

Due to the humiliation, Avalon had stripped Bachok of his rank and placed him in prison. He was essentially finished.

Nathan smiled when he heard the report. "He got what he'd deserved."

"By the way, I moved my mother's grave to Tiverton Mountain. I had also instructed that the Cross Family should kneel at her grave for three days and three nights, reflecting upon their mistakes."

"Now that half a month has passed, did we hear anything from them?"

Colin replied, "The Cross family didn't visit your mother's grave. In fact, they don't even seem to be the least bit remorseful."

"Zayn has continued to live his luxurious life without a care. He doesn't appear to be aware of this matter."

Nathan's gaze turned cold as he asked,



"What about the vixen?"

Colin answered, "There's no indication that she is regretting her actions. In fact, she simply can't wait to kill you."

Hearing that, Nathan's eyes were filled with murderous intent. "It seems that it wasn't enough for Zayn and that vixen to have us kicked out of the house, causing my mom to die of depression. Instead, they now want me dead too?"

Colin lowered his head and muttered, "She is worried that Zayn would one day reconcile with you for old times' sake, despite having chased you out."

"Her worst fear is that you would inherit the Cross Family business upon your return. Therefore, she has been sending spies to watch you, over the years, hoping to dispose of you once and for all."

Nathan snorted, "Hmph, they are just testing my patience!"

Suddenly, he recalled something and



asked, "If I remember correctly, tomorrow is Zayn's birthday, isn't it?"

Zayn was Nathan's biological father.

He had abandoned his wife and son when he wanted to marry Helen, the vixen, all those years ago.

Colin replied, "Yes, it's his sixtieth birthday."

Nathan's smirked. "Send them a gift on my behalf!"

Colin looked up at Nathan in surprise before lowering his head and respectfully obeyed. "Yes, sir!"



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The next day.

In the Cross Family home in Cledondale.

There were colorful lights hanging everywhere in a carnival-like atmosphere.

It was Zayn Cross' sixtieth birthday. Many dignitaries from all over streamed into the Cross Family home to wish Zayn a happy birthday.

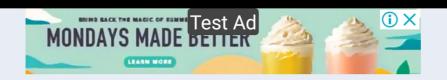
Dressed in a celebratory traditional robe, Zayn led his forty-year-old wife, Helen, and her son, Gladius together with the other members of the family to welcome the guests.

"Congratulations!"

"Congratulations to you Sir, and may you have a long and happy life ahead still!"

The ones congratulating Zayn were the leading figures of the Underground in Northania

Zayn was filled with pride and self-



satisfaction. Ever since the Cross Family had moved from the East to Northania, they had managed to establish themselves as one of the prominent families.

Zayn was proud of his achievements.

However, he had long forgotten that without his ex-wife's support, it would not have been possible for him to succeed.

Meanwhile, Francis, the head butler approached him and asked in a congratulatory tone, "Sir, Ma'am, Master, since the guests are all here and it's almost time, shall I order the kitchen to start the banquet?"

Smiling gleefully, Zayn was about to nod when a group of boisterous men barged in and insisted on presenting Zayn with a gift.

Since it was Zayn's birthday, it would be unreasonable to reject any gifts from the guests. He responded happily, "Who's sent the gifts? Let them bring the presents in."



Meanwhile, Colin strode in followed by eighteen men in suits. All of them were holding a painted scroll in their hands.

Many of the guests gasped in shock at the scene.

"Good God, what a grand entrance! I wonder who'd sent the gifts."

"Indeed! Eighteen men with painted scrolls. They must be eighteen famous paintings!"

"Tsk Tsk, these are expensive gifts. It appears that Zayn is very well respected."

When Zayn and Helen heard how impressed the guests were, they were filled with pride.

Colin did not identify himself. All he did was arrange his eighteen men in a line and ordered, "Open the presents for Mr. Cross and Helen to see."

Flick!



The eighteen men held up the scrolls and unrolled them uniformly.

The eighteen paintings were of the same style. They depicted scenes from hell, all eighteen levels of hell, in fact.

Every single painting represented one level of hell. In every one of them, there would be a demon jailer who was torturing a man and a woman in different ways.

Some used knives while others used boiling oil. Every cruel method imaginable was there to be seen.



Meanwhile, Zayn, Helen, and all the other guests present were stunned.

Who dared to send such gruesome paintings on such an auspicious day!

Before Zayn could react, someone exclaimed, "Look! In every painting of hell, the couple who is being punished by the demon looks exactly like Zayn and Helen!"

What!



With that, both of them took a closer look at the paintings.

Indeed, the paintings showed that they were the ones being punished by the demon in hell.

Both of them trembled in anger. Just when they had wanted to order their men to kick Colin and his troublemakers out, another group of raucous men approached.

Dressed in funeral garb, this new group played funeral music as they marched in, carrying a coffin.

Some of them were wailing and others lamented, "Sir Zayn and Ma'am Helen, it's tragic how the both of you had died..."

Everyone present was dumbfounded.

Meanwhile, Helen shivered violently as her face turned pale in anger.

Zayn's blood pressure had risen so much that the veins in his head were throbbing as if he could collapse anytime.



Today was the sixtieth birthday of the Cross Family Patriarch.

It was inconceivable that someone would dare to send paintings of hell on such a happy occasion, let alone organize a funeral procession.

Suddenly, the carnival-like atmosphere of the birthday banquet had changed into a funeral!

Trembling with anger, Zayn berated, "Who are you? Who has sent you to cause trouble here?"

Meanwhile, Helen called out to her men.

Suddenly, hundreds of their subordinates in black suits surrounded Colin.

However, Colin and his men remained calm, not showing any signs of fear.

Smiling, he introduced himself, "Sir, we are under the orders of Mr. Cross to send these presents to you."



Surprised, Zayn demanded to know, "Which Mr. Cross?"

Edging his chin forward, Colin replied, "My master, Nathan!"

Nathan!

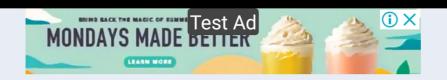
At the mention of the name, Zayn immediately recalled the rebellious son, whom he had kicked out and broken ties with.

He retorted angrily, "And yet, I thought that useless brat had died with his mother."

Colin replied in a frosty tone, "Mr. Cross has been well all these years. Other than sending me, along with these gifts, he has a message for the Cross Family."

Suppressing his anger, he asked, "What is it?"

Colin replied, "Mr. Cross wants the Cross Family to kneel at his mother's grave for three days and three nights, reflecting on their mistakes. As of now, there is still half



a month left from the one-month deadline he'd given earlier."

"Mr. Cross wants to remind you that there's not much time left and that this is your last chance. He hopes that you will not waste it."

Zayn was not only filled with shock but also overwhelmed with anger.

Widening his eyes, he scoffed, "What are you saying? Nathan actually dared to demand the Cross Family to kneel in front of his mother's grave to ask for forgiveness?"

Colin replied indifferently, "We have informed the Cross Family about this half a month ago. Why do you look so surprised now?"

Zayn was even more stunned to hear that.

Turning towards Helen and Francis, he questioned, "Why wasn't I aware of this?"

With their faces turning white as sheets,



Francis and the others stammered as they could not answer him.

Finally, it was Helen who muttered softly, "Sir, don't blame them. It was I who'd instructed them not to tell you."

Zayn scolded, "How dare you hide such an important matter from me?"

Helen replied, "Sir, I planned to tell you this after your birthday so that it wouldn't spoil your mood on such an auspicious occasion."

"But I didn't expect Nathan to hate us so much that he'd sent men to cause trouble. Sigh!"

Helen's self-deprecating words directed all of Zayn's anger back towards Nathan.

Furious, Zayn cursed, "That useless brat!"

Meanwhile, Francis took the opportunity to order their subordinates, "Men, beat all these troublemakers to pulp and throw them out!"



Upon his orders, the Cross Family men prepared to attack Colin and his group.

Colin himself was also ready to battle.

However, Zayn intervened in time, "Stop. Let them go."

Francis' eyes widened in surprise. "But Sir, how can we let them go after what they have done?"

Zayn replied coldly, "So, do you want to kill all of them and celebrate my birthday with bloodshed?"

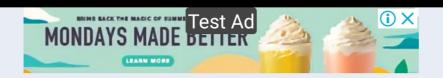


"Don't you think I have been humiliated enough?"

Francis acknowledged Zayn's orders and turned towards the Cross Family men. "You heard sir, let them go."

With that, the men opened up a path to the exit.

Looking at Colin coldly, Zayn instructed, "Tell that stupid brat that I will overlook



what he has done on the account of his dead mother."

"I will not be as generous the next time."



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At the Cloud Palace in Channing.

Nathan was smoking by the window, expressionless.

He calmly asked, "So, Zayn said that he would forgive me on the account of my dead mom?"

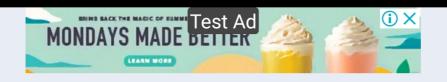
Avoiding Nathan's gaze, Colin confirmed with a deep voice, "That's exactly what he'd said."

Nathan's expression turned so frosty that even the surroundings felt cold.

Glancing at Nathan, Colin asked, "Sir, do you want to give the Cross Family some pressure?"

Nathan replied calmly, "There's no need to hurry. I'd promised to give them one month and there's still time left."

"However, the vixen has been spying on me in recent years. She sees me as a thorn by her side which she cannot wait to be rid of."



"Inform the Elite Eight, Thunderstorm, and Waves, to take turns protecting my family!"

Colin replied, "Yes, sir!"

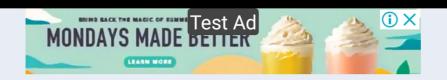
Meanwhile, outside the Cross Family study in Cledondale, Northania.

Gladius was eavesdropping on the conversation his mother, Helen was having with Francis, the head butler.

Helen's voice could be faintly heard from the study. "Is Zayn feeling sentimental? Why else would he not order Nathan to be killed, after the humiliating stunt he pulled at the birthday banquet?"

Francis replied, "Although Sir kicked Nathan out and broke ties with him, his blood still flows within Nathan's body. No matter what, Nathan is still a member of the Cross Family."

Helen expressed her concern, "What I'm worried about is, when Zayn gets older, his sentimental feelings would push him to reconcile with Nathan and invite him



home."

"When that happens, wouldn't my son lose his position as the Cross Family heir?"

"All of the Cross Family businesses would all also fall into Nathan's hands then!"

Francis concurred, "You are right to be concerned. Nathan must be removed."

Outside the study, Gladius had mixed feelings after what he heard.

He was filled with anger and hatred at the same time.

His mother, Helen, had started out as Zayn's mistress.

In the beginning, Gladius was just a child that was born out of wedlock and was treated as a b******.

It was not until Nathan and his mother were kicked out of the house that he and Helen had the opportunity to move in, becoming officially recognized as



members of the Cross Family.

Ever since his status had changed from a b***** to a son of the Cross Family, he enjoyed the luxurious life that came with the title.

However, he did not expect Nathan to reappear and become the largest threat to his position as the Cross Family heir.

He was unwilling to allow Nathan to replace him as heir. Therefore, Nathan would have to die!

Having made a decisive decision, his gaze turned colder as he left quietly.

Back in his own courtyard, his follower, Centaur, welcomed him with a smile, "Master, you're back!"

"There's a group of high-ranking officials who are organizing a nude party tonight, a lot of pretty models and actresses will be there. They want to know if you would like to join them?"



Gladius declined coldly, "I'm not interested."

"I'm heading to Channing to handle some matters. Please help me gather a group of skilled men to accompany me."

"Also, inform Minotaur that he will be coming along!"

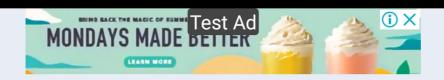
Centaur's eyes widened in surprise as he wondered why Gladius was going to Channing.

Not only was he taking a bunch of skilled men along, but he had also requested for the fearsome warrior Minotaur to accompany him on his journey.

As one of the Cross Family's Five Beasts, Minotaur was a formidable warrior and killer.

Even Zayn himself would not dispatch Minotaur, unless it was absolutely necessary.

The reason why was that Minotaur was



simply too strong and bloodthirsty. If he were unleashed at the wrong moment, it would turn into a massacre.

I wonder who'd offended Mr. Cross so badly that he wants to unleash Minotaur the killing machine?

Seeing Centaur's stunned expression, Gladius barked, "What are you still standing there for? Go!"

Centaur immediately answered, "Yes sir, I'll get Minotaur right away."





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In the evening.

Nathan returned home with Penny and Kylie from the office.

However, they realized that Benson, Queenie, and Leah were not at home.

Nathan was shocked.

Usually, Benson would leave work early to pick up Queenie from the kindergarten while Leah would be at home preparing dinner.

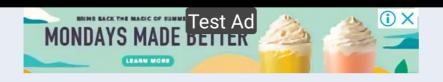
Why isn't anyone home today?

At that moment, Nathan's phone rang. It was the kindergarten that had called.

He was informed that his daughter was still at the kindergarten, as no one came to pick her up.

Where did Benson and Leah go?

While he was confused, Penny's phone rang. It was Benson who had called.



After listening to what Benson had to say, Penny replied, "Dad, don't argue or fight with them. Nathan and I will be right over to resolve the matter."

Stunned, Nathan and Kylie asked Penny about what had happened.

Penny replied anxiously, "When mom went to the market today, she was persuaded by a salesperson from a high-end hair salon to do her hair."

"They told her that her hair was infected with the HPV disease, cheating her into applying for a membership card. Amidst the confusion, she loaded her membership card with five million."

"Only when she saw the receipts of her membership card and hair treatment did she realize that she was scammed."

"Not daring to tell us, she told dad instead. Dad then went to the salon to demand a refund. However, the staff at the salon refused to do so, and instead, surrounded them in a threatening manner."



Nathan became upset. "These people have gone overboard. Kylie, go pick Queenie up at the kindergarten. Penny and I will head over to the beauty salon."

A short while later, Penny and Nathan arrived at the Noblewoman Beauty chain store in their car.

The moment he saw the Noblewoman Beauty brand, he frowned.

If he remembered correctly, the Noblewoman Beauty brand belonged to the vixen, Helen.

He had not expected its chain stores to pop up all over the country in just a few years.

This particular Noblewoman Beauty chain store had a luxurious design.

At that moment, a middle-aged, bespectacled fat man led a group of security guards, hairstylists, and beauticians to surround Benson and Leah, threatening them.



The fat man who looked like the shop owner was aggressively stabbing his finger at Benson's chest. He shouted fiercely, "Once you've loaded the cash, it will be considered as your membership balance. We do not refund membership balances."

Benson angrily retorted, "You tricked my wife into loading it. We don't need the hundred thousand she has spent. What we want is the balance of our four-point eight million. You have to return it to us."

The fat man sneered, "Who told you that the membership balance can be refunded? You can continue to use it in our salon, but it cannot be refunded."

"I have made it very clear to you. Now, leave!"

"Our shops are everywhere in this country, while our chairman, Madam Helen, is a powerful woman. If you dare to cause trouble, you may even lose your life!"

Benson and Leah were infuriated when



they heard what the man had proclaimed.

Suddenly, a frosty voice could be heard from behind them. "I don't care who your chairman is or how popular your brand is."

"You would be smart to return the money to my parents or else all the Noblewoman Beauty chain stores will be closed down in the South."

Shocked, everyone including the fat man turned around.

At the sight of Nathan and Penny, Benson and Leah's faces lit up in delight. "Nathan, Penny, you're here."

Walking up and holding Leah, Penny ushered in a concerned tone, "Dad, mom, are you alright?"

Wiping her tears, Leah replied, "We're fine..."

Benson complained angrily, "These people have gone overboard by scaring and cheating their customers. They've



frightened your mom into transferring five million from her charge card into the membership card."

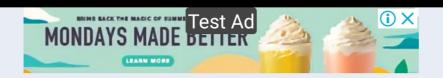
"They claimed that she had some sort of disease in her hair and that she'd needed medication for it. That alone cost more than a hundred thousand."

"The most infuriating thing was that when we asked for them to refund the balance in the membership card, they were unwilling to do so. Instead, they scolded and threatened to beat us up."

Penny reassured them, "Dad, mom, calm down. Let Nathan handle it."

The fat man and his group now understood that Nathan and Penny were the couple's son-in-law and daughter.

Squinting his peanut-shaped eyes, the fat man threatened rudely, "Young man, our shop has the backing of both the political establishment and the underground world. You'd better get out if you know what's good for you. Understood?"



While the man threatened Nathan, he reached out and stabbed his finger at Nathan's chest.



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Smiling, Nathan did not wait for the fat man's finger to touch his chest. He grabbed the man's hand in a flash and broke his wrist in one motion.

"Argh!"

The fat man's cry of agony was so loud that his voice echoed through the whole salon.

The security guards, beauticians, and hairstylists were all shocked.

Staring at Nathan with a stunned expression, they thought that Nathan's reaction was too cruel.

Despite breaking the fat man's wrist, Nathan followed up with a tight slap, as his anger had yet to subside.

Upon the slap's impact, the fat man spewed out a combination of teeth and blood, while his body flew sideways before crashing to the ground.

Nathan warned the fat man, "I'm giving you



one last chance, return the money to my parents and apologize to them."

Meanwhile, the fat man struggled to stand up with the help of his staff. His right hand was broken, while half his face was swollen like a pig.

Glaring angrily at Nathan, he exclaimed, "Wait here if you have the balls, I'll call my men!"

Nathan smirked, "Go ahead!"

The fat man yelled at his staff, "Give Prowling Leopard a call now!"

In a few minutes, five vans without plates arrived outside.

A man dressed in a floral shirt with a leopard tattooed on his chest got down. More than ten men followed behind him.

With a machete in hand, Prowling Leopard and his men entered in a menacing manner. He barked, "Who is causing trouble here?"



When Penny and her parents saw the fearsome gangsters, their faces turned pale.

At the sight of Prowling Leopard, the fat man explained with a servile smile, "Leopard, sir, thanks for coming. This is the young man that's causing trouble and even hurt me. You have to teach him a lesson on my behalf."

Prowling Leopard replied fiercely, "Let me see who this blind... Ah! Mr. Cross!"

Prowling Leopard wanted to say that the young man was blind to be causing trouble here.

However, the moment he saw Nathan, he was so shocked that his shout turned into a shriek instead.

Nathan coldly muttered, "Do you know me?"

With a thump to the ground, Prowling Leopard dropped to his knees. Sobbing, he explained, "Yes I do, I used to be Thomas



Dunn's subordinate. Hence, I would definitely know you."

It appeared that Thomas Dunn had stopped running illegal businesses on Nathan's advice.

Therefore, all his subordinates were let go, so that they too, could make an honest living.

Prowling Leopard was one of those who were let go by Thomas Dunn.

After being a gangster for half his life, he was unable to bring himself to suffer through an honest job.

Therefore, he discreetly gathered ten or more men to run a protection racket. The Noblewoman Beauty salon was his biggest client.

When Prowling Leopard's men heard that Nathan was Thomas Dunn's master, they realized that he was extremely powerful.

Hence, all of them knelt down together



with Prowling Leopard.

The fat owner and his staff were dumbfounded.

Cringing, Prowling Leopard meekly uttered, "Mr. Cross, I wouldn't dare to involve myself in your matters. Since this has nothing to do with me, can I leave now?"

Nathan sneered, "Don't. Since you're here, you shouldn't leave hastily."

"My parents have been cheated by this dishonest beauty salon. Since you are men of the underworld, the underworld's creed demands you to right any injustice you see."

"Little Leopard, I want you to take down this shop!"

Prowling Leopard's eyes widened in shock. With an awkward expression, he stammered, "Mr. Cross, this... this..."

Nathan scoffed, "If you find it difficult, I'll call Thomas and let Thomas help you with



it."

Prowling Leopard felt a jolt through this body. When Thomas let them go, he warned them not to be gangsters anymore.

Hence, if he found out that they remained gangsters, he would likely teach them a brutal lesson.

Prowling Leopard replied in panic, "It's not a problem at all. There's no need to trouble Thomas."

With that, he instructed his subordinates, "Men, destroy this dishonest establishment!"

At his command, the ten or more men laid waste to the beauty salon. In a blink of an eye, the luxurious beauty salon was turned into a scene of devastation.

When the fat owner saw his shop being destroyed, he cried out in anguish, "Stop! Please stop!"



The fat owner watched on as the tens of millions worth of beauty salon decorations were destroyed.

His heart bled at the sight of the devastation.

He had invested millions just to become the owner.

Now that the shop was destroyed, he did not know how to explain it to headquarters.

Glowering at Nathan, he said angrily, "You're finished. The famous tycoon Mr. Jared Ocean is the main franchise holder of Noblewoman Beauty in the South, while the chairman of Noblewoman Beauty is Helen Brown of the Cross Family from Northania."

"By destroying our shop, you have signed your own death warrant!"

Jared was one of the top ten richest men in the South.



Therefore, he was an influential man, both in terms of the political establishment and the underworld. Only a handful of people dared to go against him.

Even Penny began to worry when she heard that Jared was the main franchise holder for Noblewoman Beauty in the South.

Nevertheless, Nathan was unbothered. "Haha, so what if I'd destroyed your shop?"

"As I said earlier, I want all of your chain stores in the south to be closed down."

The fat man and his staff widened their eyes in dismay.

Suddenly, the fat man could not help but sneer. "Those are brave words. By asking us to close down all of our shops here, are you telling me that you are the Governor of the South?"

Nathan smiled smugly, as even the Governor of the South had to grovel before him.



Picking up his phone, he called Colin. "I want all the Noblewoman Beauty chain stores within the south to be closed in ten minutes."

In ten minutes, he wants all Noblewoman Beauty chain stores within the south closed?

Isn't it too ridiculous even for a boast?

Does he really think that he is the Governor?

The fat man broke into a hearty laugh and mocked, "I'm utterly impressed at your ability to boast. You're so good at it that you even make us feel embarrassed on your behalf."

Meanwhile, Penny and her parents came over to dissuade Nathan.

Penny said, "Hubby, let's not argue with them anymore. We should just make a police report instead."

"They cheated our money while we



destroyed their shop. Based on the law, they should refund us the money, while we should compensate them for the damage."

When the fat man heard it, he thought that Penny and her family were afraid.

He became more arrogant and exclaimed, "Compensation?"

"You hurt me and destroyed my shop!"

"And also threatened to have all our shops in the South closed. Do you think that our main franchise holder for the South, Mr. Ocean would let you off the hook so easily?"

"He will make sure you go bankrupt, compensating us!"

Meanwhile, Nathan reassured Penny, "Honey, don't worry. If I declare that all their shops in the south will be closed, they will be."

"As for compensation, only they will compensate us and never the other way



around."

The fat man laughed, despite how angry he was. "Huh, this is simply ridiculous. I want to see for myself how you can close down all our shops in ten minutes."

"Also, when Mr. Ocean comes to deal with this matter, I hope that you can still maintain the same bravado that you have now, in front of him."

The moment he finished, his phone rang like crazy.

It was Jared, the main franchise holder of Noblewoman Beauty in the South, who had called.

Waving the phone in his hands, the fat man looked at Nathan in glee. He then sneered, "Speak of the devil, Mr. Ocean is calling me now. You're finished!"

With that, he answered the call with a servile tone, "Mr. Ocean!"

On the other side of the line, an angry



voice could be heard, "Dexter Hicks!"

The fat man was startled as he replied, "Yes, Mr. Ocean. I'm listening!"

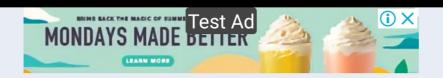
Jared's roar could be heard from the phone. "You idiot! Which big shot have you offended?"

"All thirty-seven Noblewoman Beauty chain stores in the South have been sealed by the enforcement personnel."

"When I checked with their leaders, I found out that you were the cause for it. Who did you offend?"

"Every year, I spend two billion to maintain my position as the main franchise holder for Noblewoman Beauty in the South. Now that you've caused all of my shops to be closed, I'm going to f***** kill you, if that's the last thing that I do!"

When Dexter heard Jared berating him over the phone, he felt as though he was struck by lightning.



He stood there dumbfounded.



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A moment later, he regained his senses. In a broken voice, he replied, "Mr. Ocean, I don't know what'd happened either. There's this guy who said that he would close down all our shops in ten minutes. I didn't expect him to be so powerful…"

Clenching his teeth, Jared demanded, "Clean up your own mess. If you can't get whoever it is to forgive you and I am unable to reopen my shops, I swear to God that I will personally kill you!"

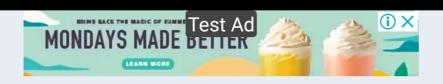
Dexter's face turned white as a ghost. What else could he say?

Before anything came to mind, Jared had slammed the phone down and ended the call.

Depressed, Dexter raised his head and looked at Nathan in despair.

Other than shock, his eyes were also filled with fear.

This man can close down all the Noblewoman Beauty salons in the South



within ten minutes with just a phone call. He must really be very powerful!

Everyone looked at Nathan in astonishment.

They thought that Nathan was only boasting but did not expect him to actually deliver.

The beauty salon's staff started to panic, one by one, especially the few who had scammed Nathan's parents earlier.

Ignoring his injuries, Dexter dropped onto his knees in front of Nathan and cried out, "Mr. Cross, I'm sorry! I shouldn't have taken your parent-in-law's money. It was also wrong of me to have threatened all of you. Please have mercy on me!"

Nathan scoffed, "What happened earlier? Why are you only admitting your mistake now?"

"Anyway, can you return my mom's money now?"



Dexter replied immediately, "Yes, right away. I'll refund everything."

In a moment, the whole five million that was half cheated from Leah was returned to her card.

The card was given to her by Nathan. Although it was only used for grocery shopping, there was no limit imposed on it.

She had thought that there were only tens of thousands in it, which was what she had wanted to transfer into the membership card. But after being tricked, she ended up transferring all five million instead.

Now, with the money returned, she was finally put at ease from her guilt.

Returning the card to Nathan, she nervously explained, "Nathan, Penny, I didn't know that there was so much money loaded in the card. It's dangerous for a woman like me to be using it, so it's better if you keep it."



Nathan replied with a smile, "Mom, the money is your allowance. Why are you giving it back to me?"

"Buy whatever you want, as long as you're not being cheated into it. It doesn't matter how much you spend."

Penny added, "Mom since Nathan gave it to you, you should keep it. Or just think of it as him giving it to you for safekeeping."

After hearing Penny's words, Leah reluctantly agreed and kept the card.

Still sobbing, Dexter asked, "Mr. Cross, now that I have refunded the money, do you think that you can allow the Noblewoman Beauty salons in the South to be..."

Nathan cut him off with a frosty tone, "As scammers, returning the money is just the first step. It doesn't mean that you will go scot-free!"

"Besides, I don't think this is the first time you'd committed such an unethical act!"



"Whether your salons will get to reopen or not, will depend on the investigations by the relevant authorities."

Just when Nathan had finished, a group of enforcement personnel arrived.

Their leader happened to be Zed Walker, the captain of Channing's Investigation Unit.

After politely greeting Nathan, Zed declared to Dexter and his staff, "As we have received complaints from the public and directives from the leadership, we suspect that your beauty salon is running a scam."

"You have now been classified under case 315. Please follow us, for further investigation."

Dexter and his staff were flabbergasted.

With that, Zed ordered, "Cuff them and take them all back!"



Upon arriving home, Nathan noticed that Queenie was watching the television, while Kylie was cooking.

Queenie lunged towards Nathan excitedly when she saw that he had returned home. "Papa, you're back!"

Nathan bent down and picked Queenie up before smiling and saying, "Yeah. Queenie, have you finished your homework yet?"

Queenie affirmed proudly, "Yeah!"

He then praised her affectionately, "Good girl!"

While Nathan was praising his daughter, he suddenly realized that Penny, Benson, and Leah were eyeing him suspiciously, so he asked in amusement, "Why are you looking at me like that?"

Penny scoffed. "Nathan, are you hiding something from us?"

Nathan chuckled. "No, what makes you think so?"



Benson joined in on their conversation. "What happened to the Noblewoman Beauty franchise? How did you even manage to make them shut down their outlets in the South with just a single call?"

Leah added, "Yeah. Nathan, how did you do it? Are you hiding something from us?"

Nathan replied, "Actually, the Noblewoman Beauty brand's reputation is already terrible, to begin with, and a lot of people have lodged complaints against them. The 315 Consumer Rights Banquet was postponed to tonight for some special reasons. Everyone knows that consumers have been defending their rights fiercely lately, so most shady businesses are forced to do things the right way. Despite that, Noblewoman Beauty still continued their malpractices! That was why I'd asked my men to report them to the authorities, and that was why they'd gotten investigated and shut down."

As Nathan spoke, he picked up the television's remote control and turned to the news channel. Sure enough, the news



was all talking about consumer rights!

In the South's news channel, a reporter stood outside Noblewoman Beauty's entrance and announced seriously, "We received police reports that the Noblewoman Beauty franchise has allegedly scammed their customers' money by asking them to top up their very expensive membership cards. Our law enforcement department received similar reports today, so we've decided to take initiative, shutting down all outlets of the Noblewoman Beauty franchise in the South as soon as possible..."

Penny finally believed what Nathan had told her when she saw the news.

On the other hand, Benson chuckled. "Nathan, you really were winging it back then. Who would've thought you'd be lucky, managing to shut that franchise down within ten minutes?"

Leah rebutted, "He wasn't just lucky. Nathan was confident in his actions because he knew that the Consumer



Rights Banquet was today."

Penny had the same thought as Leah, but she somehow had an uneasy feeling, even though she could not explain why she had it.

For now, she could only believe that Nathan was using the opportunity of the occurrence of the Consumer Rights Banquet to punish the immoral business.

At that moment, Kylie came out of the kitchen to ask everyone to eat because dinner was ready, "Alright, it's time to eat."

The family sat down and had an enjoyable meal together.

Meanwhile, Gladius Cross, who was wearing a black tuxedo, exited from the Channing International Airport with his followers, which included Minotaur and Centaur. He looked somewhat attractive, but he exuded a menacing aura.

A wealthy businessman from the South, Jared Ocean, awaited his arrival with a



horde of his men.

Jared immediately approached Gladius when he saw him and smiled ostentatiously, "Nice to meet you, Mr. Cross!"

Gladius replied coldly, "Are you the general manager of my mother's company in the South, Jared Ocean?"

Jared grinned. "Yeah. I'm quite well connected in the South, so please feel free to let me know if my assistance is needed."

He then opened the Bentley's door personally for Jared.

Jared stepped into the Bentley haughtily before sitting down in the backseat.

Jared wanted to sit beside Gladius, but Centaur stopped him before he could do so. "Who are you to sit beside our Master? You'll sit in the passenger's seat and be prepared to answer our Master's questions at all times!"



Jared's expression darkened because even a subordinate dared to speak to him this way, but then he thought about Gladius' background and Northania's Cross family's prowess and came to realize that it was not a wise idea to offend him. With that in mind, he kept his temper in check.

Centaur, along with the expressionless Minotaur, sat beside Gladius, while Jared sat at the passenger's seat, asking the chauffeur to start driving.

Jared's and Gladius' men followed them in a huge fleet of black cars, and the huge ensemble attracted the attention of the passersby.

Gladius asked coldly, "I'd asked you to investigate where Nathan Cross is located. Have you done it already?"

Jared nodded and replied, "Yes. They live in the Riverside area."

He then immediately lowered his voice and announced, "Mr. Cross, since you're here, I have something that I need to report to



you."

Gladius squinted. "Go ahead!"

Jared then told Gladius about how Nathan had made a few dozen outlets of Noblewoman Beauty in the South shut down.

Noblewoman Beauty was the company built by Helen, and it had been doing relatively well lately.

However, in the eyes of the powerful Cross Family, it was not anything of significance, not receiving an inch of their care.

Despite that, Gladius was concerned about how Nathan could manage to mobilize the relevant authorities, shutting down a few dozen outlets in just ten minutes. This could only mean that Nathan was a very formidable person.

A hint of concern flashed before Gladius' eyes for the first time as he asked slowly, "How did Nathan Cross do that? How much power does he actually have?"



Jared pouted and uttered dismissively, "I'll be damned if Nathan Cross actually has any power. He's just a very cunning person. He reported us to the authorities because the 315 Consumer Rights Banquet was happening tonight, and that'd caused our shops to be shut down."

Jared then continued rather awkwardly, "He's not a very capable person, but on the other hand, his wife, Penny Smith, is a force to be reckoned with. She's the president of the Cross Group, and the Cross Group is a favored company in the South. A lot of political leaders give them preferential treatment as well."

Gladius felt relieved instead when he heard that, and he smirked and scoffed, "It seems like Nathan Cross is nothing to worry about. My mother had really overestimated him. If I'd known this earlier, I wouldn't have come here personally and I would've just sent some of my men over here. What a waste of my time! I could've been sleeping with more women!"

Jared immediately realized that Gladius



was a vain man who enjoyed the company of women, so he immediately exclaimed, "Haha. Mr. Cross, you like pretty ladies, right? Then, you've come to the right place."

Gladius was stunned. "Why is that so?"

Jared grinned. "Nathan's wife is famous for her beauty in the business world, and she's prettier than most celebrities. On the other hand, Penny's cousin, Kylie Tonkins, is also a beautiful lady. The sisters are enough to make your trip worthwhile."

Jared then took out his phone, opened the Cross Group's official website, and showed Gladius Penny's and Kylie's pictures.

Originally, Gladius did not have any expectations, but his jaw dropped when he saw Penny's and Kylie's pictures.

He muttered in surprise. "Tsk tsk. They say the South is famous for their beautiful ladies, and now I know that that's really the case. The sisters really are beautiful! The older one has a mature vibe to her while



the younger one seems more innocent. Haha, I have my eyes on them now."

Centaur immediately sucked up to him, "Haha. Mr. Cross, you're about to enjoy the pleasures of killing your enemy and toying with your enemy's wife!"

Upon hearing that, Gladius' lips curled slightly upwards in an ambiguous smile.

On the other hand, Jared scoffed. He deliberately catered to Gladius' liking by promoting Penny and Kylie to him just to sabotage Nathan. That's for ruining my business, Nathan Cross!



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The cars quickly arrived at the Prince hotel.

The Prince hotel was one of the most luxurious hotels in Channing, and it was an infamous brothel as well.

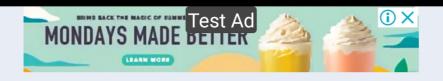
As the Bentley stopped before the hotel's entrance, Jared hurriedly stepped out and opened Gladius' door personally.

Gladius stepped out of the car with Minotaur and Centaur, casting a glance at the hotel.

Jared smiled ostentatiously and explained, "Mr. Cross, this is the most luxurious hotel in Channing, and it is well equipped in every aspect from business to pleasure. I've already booked a whole floor for you and your men."

Gladius waved his hands, "Jared, come here. I want to say something to you."

Jared approached him and asked, "What's the matter, Mr. Cross?"



Gladius patted Jared's shoulders and panned out flatly, "You've done everything well, from picking us up, investigating Nathan Cross, to arranging accommodation for us."

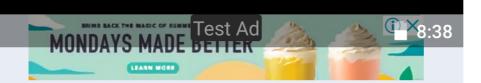
Jared was about to break into a smile when he received the compliment, but Gladius continued, "But there's something you need to take note of. Don't play any tricks on me, and don't ever think that you're smart enough to use me as your personal hitman."

Jared defended himself instinctively as an expression of horror crossed his face, "Mr. Cross, I didn't…"

Gladius smiled coldly. "But I think you did, and that's all that matters."

Cold beads of sweat started to roll down Jared's ashen face as Gladius gave Centaur a look!

Centaur understood what Gladius meant, as he moved in lightning speed, grabbing Jared's right arm. He then broke Jared's



arm in one clean snap!

"Ah!" Jared shrieked in pain.

His bodyguards immediately rushed towards Centaur, both shocked and enraged.

Meanwhile, Centaur, Minotaur, and a few dozen of Gladius' men stood behind Gladius stoically, even as they emanated a murderous aura.

Jared tried to bear with the pain as he raised his left arm to stop his bodyguards. He grimaced and commanded, "Don't move. Do you all have a death wish? He is Mr. Gladius from the Cross Family in Northania!"

Jared's arm was broken, but he still did not dare to lose his temper. He apologized meekly, "Mr. Cross, I was wrong. I won't play tricks on you ever again."

Gladius smirked and headed towards the hotel as he instructed, "Make up some legitimate excuse to arrange a meeting









between me and Ms. Smith. Do not force her here. Not only do I want her body, but I also want to win her heart over as well because it's pointless otherwise."

Jared replied softly, "Alright, Mr. Cross!"

The next day, at the Cross Group's guest room.

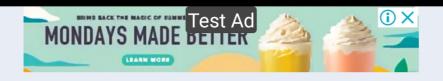
Penny and a few of her subordinates greeted the visiting Jared personally.

Penny was stunned when she saw that Jared's arm was in a cast. "Mr. Ocean, what'd happened?"

Jared smiled awkwardly. "Nothing much. I just fell down and broke my arm because I was drunk."

Penny expressed her sympathy before asking Jared why he was here.

Jared replied apologetically, "President Smith, I'd heard that your mother was scammed by one of our stores, and it is our mistake, so I'm here just to offer an



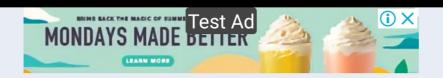
apology to you."

Actually, Noblewoman Beauty was just one of many companies under Jared's tenure, because after all, he was one of the top ten wealthiest people in the South.

Penny thought that he was a very sincere and kindhearted businessman because he came all the way from Alberesque just to apologize to her for something pretty inconsequential.

Therefore, she immediately proclaimed, "Mr. Ocean, you don't need to apologize, because after all, you didn't mean it as well. Besides that, everything has been settled now. I really am honored for a senior in the industry like you to offer an apology to an amateur like me!"

Jared grinned. "Even though you're young, you're famed for your beauty in the business world in the South. Not only that, but you're also amazing at managing your business. Under your tenure, the Cross Group had expanded and grown to over a hundred billion in value, and it has become



one of the most powerful companies in the South."

Penny grinned. "We were just lucky!"

Jared chuckled. "President Smith, you're being too humble! However, the Cross Group is focused on the production of vaccines, and its main market is in the South. President Smith, don't you want to expand your business to Northania?"



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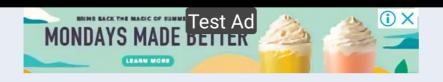




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Penny smiled awkwardly, "Of course I want to. But there are a lot of prominent figures exerting their influence in Northania, so it's really hard for us to establish ourselves when we don't have solid footing there."

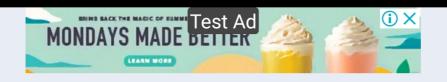
Jared latched onto that opportunity and suggested, "I know a wealthy and powerful man from Northania, and if you're willing to be his business partner, I guarantee that the Cross Group's product can make their entrance into Northania without any hassle."

Penny exclaimed, "Really?"

Jared nodded. "Really. To express my sincerity, I'm willing to introduce you to him. Are you willing to meet up with him?"

Penny nodded. "Of course I am. When should we meet?"

Jared grinned. "Today, because incidentally, he arrived at Channing recently. Is it alright if I arranged your meeting to be at three p.m. in the Prince hotel?"



Penny hesitated for a little while before agreeing.

A smug look flashed across Jared's face once Penny agreed. Soon, he stood up and bid his farewell.

Not long after Jared left, Nathan brought some of Penny's favorite desserts to her.

He smiled. "I'd passed by Blissful Promises Confectionery just now, so I'd bought some tarts for you."

Penny stared at him quizzically before saying, "We don't usually pass by Blissful Promises Confectionery when we go to work. You probably went there just to buy this for me, right?"

Nathan smiled in response.

Penny felt a warmth surging in her heart. Nathan has always shown me his love in subtle ways. He's never clamored for credit or bragged about it as well.

She finished her snacks joyfully and told



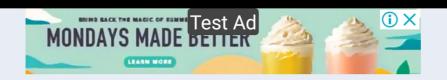
Nathan about Jared.

Nathan grinned. "We'd caused a few dozens of Jared's shops to shut down, and now he's apologizing to us and introducing a powerful business partner just for us to expand our business to Northania? Do you think he's that kind?"

Penny gaped in surprise as her eyes wavered uncertainly. "Do you think he's trying to scam us somehow? If so, I'll just cancel tomorrow's meeting!"

Nathan grinned and explained, "Since you've already agreed to meet him, it wouldn't be appropriate if you'd just canceled the meeting abruptly. Maybe I'm wrong and Jared really is sincere in his apology and he really wants us to introduce a business partner to us! How about I go with you to the meeting later? That way we can be sure that they're not trying to trick us."

Penny smiled sweetly. "Alright. I'll feel much safer if you're with me."



In the afternoon, Nathan brought only one subordinate, Colin, with him as he arrived at the Prince hotel with Penny.

The entire restaurant in the Prince hotel was booked by Gladius.

He wore a black tuxedo and was dressed very elegantly. Centaur and Minotaur stood right behind him, and a few dozen expressionless men stood further back.

Penny was shocked when she saw Gladius because he looked somewhat similar to Nathan.



Gladius looked more cold and menacing, while Nathan looked more grounded and reserved.

Penny asked in puzzlement, "Are you the one from Northania, Gladius Cross, that Mr. Ocean had mentioned?"

A hint of admiration flashed before Gladius' face when he saw Penny, and he stretched out his hands towards her for a handshake. "That's right. I'm Gladius



Cross. Nice to meet you, Ms. Smith!"

Penny did not shake his hand. Instead, she explained, "Please excuse me. My husband doesn't like it when I shake other men's hands..."

At that moment, Gladius' smile contorted to a cold smirk when he stared at Nathan. He chided mockingly, "Haha. Long time no see, Nathan!"

Penny gaped in surprise. "You two know each other?"

Gladius announced smugly, "Of course.

Nathan and I are brothers from the same father! He was the adored son of the Cross Family, while I was the b******, so my status back then was nowhere near his. However, it turned out that he got kicked out of the Cross Family like a dog being chased out by its master!"

Gladius then mocked Nathan haughtily, "Now, the tables have turned. I'm the favored son of the Cross Family while you're just a nobody!"



Nathan exchanged a glance with Colin, who stood beside him when they saw how superior Gladius was and they smiled.

Nathan chuckled. "I'm afraid that you'll be disappointed. I'm still the one you need to look up to!"



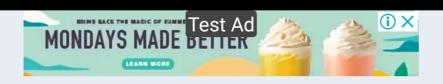
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Someone I need to look up to!

Gladius was taken aback when he heard that, but he immediately broke out into a cold smirk. "Haha. You're even better at boasting now! I'm the favored son of the Cross Family, and I am set to inherit trillions in assets! What about you? You're just a loser who's gotten out of the army, so why should I look up to you?"

An expression of anger showed on Penny's face when she heard that, yet she still looked at Nathan anxiously because she was scared that his pride might be hurt.

However, Nathan seemed unfazed as he smiled in amusement when he looked at Gladius as if he were watching a circus show.

Gladius suddenly burst in rage as he accused coldly, "Nathan Cross, you probably think that you're hot s***, now that you've married the president of the hugely successful Cross Group, right?"

Nathan grinned and replied, "Haha.



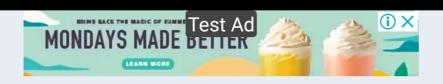
Perhaps."

It was obvious that Gladius did not think much about Nathan. He looked at Penny and smiled. "President Smith, you're the goddess of the South's business world, so why are you wasting your life on someone like him?"

Penny was already wary of Gladius because she had uncovered that he was Nathan's half-brother and he had some bad blood with Nathan.

Now that Gladius kept mocking Nathan, she could not help herself anymore as she blurted out coldly, "Excuse me. I don't have to explain our marriage to an outsider! I thought that Jared was genuinely introducing a business partner to the Cross Group, but it turns out that it was all just a ruse. There's no need for a meeting anymore. Hubby, let's go!"

Penny could not stand Gladius humiliating her husband, so she tugged Nathan's hands furiously in an attempt to leave.



However, Gladius took a sip of red wine and grinned. "Please hold on, Ms. Smith!"

Penny stopped in her tracks, turned around, and asked coldly, "What else do you want?"

Gladius chuckled. "According to my knowledge, the Cross Group is mainly based in the South's market, and you want to venture into Northania, but you don't have the means to do that. If you're willing to have a meal with me, we can talk things out while we eat, and I promise you that I can help you solve this problem. I guarantee that your products can enter the Northania market smoothly without any obstacles."

As Gladius made his suggestion, he deliberately pointed at Nathan and mused, "But I have one condition. He needs to wait outside the hotel as we discuss things."

If she were willing to have a meal with him, the Cross Group could earn the support of the powerful Cross Family and be able to easily establish themselves in Northania.



If that happened, the Cross Group's profits would grow exponentially!

It was a simple meal, but it had the power to earn her a few billion!

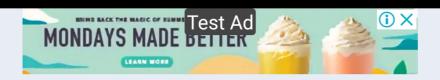
Gladius held onto his wine glass as he stared at Penny confidently. He thought that she was no fool, so she would definitely agree to his proposal.

The reason why he did this was to embarrass Nathan and to drive a wedge between Penny and Nathan's relationship.

After all, any man would be displeased if their wives had a meal together with their enemies to earn a huge profit while they were forced to wait outside.

Over time, they would grow increasingly distant from each other.

Once Nathan and Penny's relationship was compromised, Gladius could take advantage of her vulnerabilities and slowly win her heart over.



He had cast a very tempting bait, and if Penny fell into his trap, she would never escape from it again!

He squinted at Penny just like a hunter silently observing its prey as he waited for her to fall into his trap.

However, to his utmost surprise, Penny replied coldly, "I'm not interested!"

Gladius gaped in surprise. "Huh? Don't you know how much your company can earn if you have this meal with me?"

Penny raised her chin up and replied icily, "I know, but my husband is more important than all the money in the world! He is irreplaceable!"



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