

The Consortium's Heir by Benjamin

Chapter 196

Darius arrived at the university gates and saw almost all of his lecturers standing there.

He tensed, confused by that sight. However, he quickly snapped to his senses,

approaching a lecturer who had taught one of his classes.

"Professor Brown, because Professor Plinsky and Dean Fletcher are both dealing with

some troubles, I don't know who to ask regarding my request for a month's leave."

Professor Brown was aware of everything that had transpired. Thus, he felt pity for

Darius and was quick to nod.

"I already know about your request and am giving you my approval."

Darius did not expect things to go so smoothly.

Nevertheless, he reached out to shake hands with Professor Brown, hoping to express

his gratitude.

After the handshake, Darius left the scene with lightning speed as he could not wait to

be at Almiron City.

Erin had successfully booked flight tickets to Almiron City by the time Darius joined her in

the car.

"Let's go to the airport since we already have the tickets," said Darius, whose tone

indicated his satisfaction.

Erin's eyes rounded as she drove slower and asked, "Shouldn't we wait for those two

bodyguards of yours? The ones from your grandfather?"

"Edward and Bridget?" A frown marred Darius' face. He had almost forgotten about the

two before Erin brought them up. Curiously, he asked, "I haven't seen those two since

returning from the state. When did they tell you about wanting to go to Almiron City?"

Erin shrugged before fishing for her phone. Then, she raised it toward Darius with a

series of text messages on the screen. 'This text is from Mr. Bruce, and I think what he wrote makes sense.'

Darius accepted the phone, curiosity flashing on his face.

He read through the following text: "Miss Erin, I saw you booked a flight to Almiron City

for Mr. Reid. I don't think what you're doing is right. However, since you're Mr. Reid's

most trusted aide and secretary, I'm in no position to criticize you. Still, I believe it's

essential to take Mr. Reid's bodyguards along to Almiron City."

Darius' lips pursed with discontent upon reading that. "Bruce claims he won't interfere,

but it's clear he's done a lot."

Erin could sense his anger, but she did not feel Bruce's actions alone could cause that.

After pondering for some time, she comforted,

"Mr. Reid, although Mr. Bruce can immediately find out about anything that anyone does

in our country, I'm sure he just couldn't get the information of those people at the time."

"Your comforting words are effective," said Darius with a softened look. "I feel much better."

He then sighed and crossed one leg over his other. "So, when will those two bodyguards

arrive at the airport? I don't want to waste a second of my time because of them."

Erin could tell he was serious.

She drove with one hand, parking the car on the roadside while typing and simultaneously reading a message on her phone. "Mr. Bruce, thank you for the advice.

Your suggestion is indeed practical. However, I don't know how to get Edward and

Bridget to arrive at the airport on time. I doubt Mr. Reid would wait for them."

A notification rang out to indicate the message had gone through. Immediately after,

another chime sounded.

"Is that Bruce's reply?" Darius asked.

He felt it was unlikely that Bruce had read and replied to Erin's message in such a short

time. At the same time, he felt the message could only be from Bruce. While he was deciding between the two possibilities, Erin spoke. "It's from Mr. Bruce. He says the bodyguards are already awaiting us at the airport. They've also purchased tickets for the seats next to ours."

Darius could tell this was his grandfather's doing, so he did not dwell on the matter any longer.

"Okay, I understand." He nodded.

Darius ended up seeing the bodyguards sooner than he thought. Their car did not even make it into the parking lot. Instead, they got stalled by a crowd at the airport's gates.

Many onlookers had gathered to watch the commotion. Darius heard a middle-aged woman's voice from among them. She thundered, "You two have the words 'scumbag' printed on your foreheads! Anyone can tell there's something inappropriate going on between you guys. Why else would you show up at the airport instead of your assigned work units? My daughter has been courting you for such a long time! Instead of making it clear that you weren't interested in her, you kept in contact! Yet, you show up with another woman at the airport?"

The noise made Darius' brows pinch.

"Park along the road. We'll walk from here," he instructed, knowing the crowd would not dissipate.

Erin did as told. Just as they got out of the car, they heard two familiar voices from the crowd.

The first sounded like a man who said, "You've misunderstood, but please let us through because our chairman will arrive soon. If his safety gets compromised, I swear I'll do everything to make your life a living hell! You won't have a moment of peace!"

That further angered the middle-aged woman as she raised her voice, "If so, you should be by your chairman's side now. Yet, you're not! Not to mention, your entire outfit, down

to your watch, looks cheap. You're evidently a poor person. How could you ever serve a chairman!"

"Mr. Reid." Erin raised a brow in confusion, adding, 'That man's voice sounds familiar. I

wonder if the 'chairman' he's talking about is you."

"Your suspicion is correct. The man speaking is Edward." Darius nodded.

With a sigh, he shoved past the crowd toward a man and woman who stood alongside each other.

The two were attractive people, so standing beside each other only amplified their good

looks. That was why others easily misunderstood the two for being a couple.

Darius wanted to go over and put an end to the matter at once.

However, Erin's confused tone suddenly rang out.

'That's odd. From what I remember, all of Reid Consortium's bodyguards aren't allowed

to be in romantic relationships or marriages."

Chapter 197

Darius halted upon hearing those words. He asked, "How long before our flight's boarding time?"

Erin glanced at her watch before her features slightly softened. "We still have three

hours to get our boarding passes."

"It looks like we have plenty of time to resolve this issue," replied a sighing Darius. He no

longer tried to intervene at that point. Instead, Darius found a quiet corner at the airport

with a clear view of the commotion. There, he sat down and got himself a cup of coffee.

Erin sat beside him with a perplexed expression. "Mr. Reid, why aren't we going over to help them?"

Amused laughter bubbled from Darius just then. "I believe this is something they, as

bodyguards, should know to resolve."

Not understanding Darius' intention, Erin kept quiet. She remained beside him and

watched as he drank his coffee.

Meanwhile, the commotion downstairs intensified. The middle-aged woman grew more agitated, baring her teeth. "Edward, my daughter has never done anything behind your back! Why would you choose to be with this woman? Not only is she shorter than my daughter, but she's uglier too! She's not even half as rich as my daughter."

She paused for a breath before resuming, "Also, I hope you know my husband is a professor at a university. He's from the Brown family. I'm sure you know that family is renowned for producing many famous professors. Thus, my family isn't just wealthy—we're intelligent too! Not to mention that our wealth has been accumulated over many generations! If you date my daughter, you won't have to do your lowly job anymore. We'll provide for you on the condition that you and your child take the Brown family name. All of this is highly beneficial to you. You're young and full of pride, so you might not like my offer. But I insist that you accept it. Otherwise, I guarantee you'll regret saying no in the near future."

Edward seemed unbothered this entire time. Only when he heard those words did his blank expression shift. He scoffed while scrunching his nose. "I've never been interested in your daughter. She's the one who keeps pursuing me, invading my time and personal space. Now, you're even publicly getting in the way of my work? It's unacceptable. Consider this my final, patient warning to you—please leave. If my chairman arrives and gets upset with your behavior, I'll make you pay dearly."

Hearing that, the middle-aged woman guffawed. "Your chairman must be poor to hire a bodyguard like you. I can't wait to see him and slam some spare change in his face so he'll know his lowly place. The same goes for you."

Bridget, who stood aside, could not suppress her rage any longer. She balled

her fists
and retorted explosively, "I've had enough of you!"
She then pulled up her sleeves, snarling, "I'm going to make things clear to you today!
You'll get a punch for every insult you made toward our chairman!"
On the floor above, Darius had been keenly watching the drama unfold. An approving grin curled on his face.
Although Erin did not detect any trace of anger from him all this while, she still heaved a sigh of relief when she saw his smile. "Mr. Reid, that woman seems off to me. Why does she keep bringing you up when arguing with the bodyguards?"
Darius remained in his seat without reacting too much, but when he heard Erin's words, he nodded and shot a sharp gaze at the latter. "Indeed. I thought the same. So, don't you think those two bodyguards would realize it too?"
Erin froze. "Mr. Reid, do you mean... those two aren't good people?"
"No." Darius shook his head, then looked down as he placed his phone into his pocket. "I believe my grandfather thinks I've been too discreet these days. Perhaps this incident is his way of expressing disapproval toward me. Or maybe people from Almiron City are here and want to see me flaunt my wealth, shocking everyone."
He spoke while getting up and heading downstairs, his head turning from side to side.
"Although this incident doesn't do me any good, my grandfather has always hoped for me to remember this-I'm the heir to the Reid family, someone who can afford to step all over money like it's a carpet. I suppose I've kept too low of a profile these days." A sigh escaped Darius' lips. Following that, he headed downstairs and announced, "Their poor chairman has arrived."
He spoke with an unyielding force, exerting so much effort that his body heated up and his voice amplified.
Everyone at the airport heard him. All eyes were on him now that he had

spoken.

Even so, Darius did not feel nervous.

The crowd immediately parted, clearing a path for Darius, who confidently strode toward the middle-aged woman.

The woman was short and stout like a penguin.

Darius' eyes narrowed to slits. "I heard someone thinks I'm poor and that my bodyguards

are all unworthy lowlives."

Everyone fell silent. They gawked at Darius with their mouths wide open.

"Wait. That's this Edward guy's chairman? He looks so young!"

"I can't believe it. Who would say he's poor?"

"I think I'm crushing on him. Did you see the clothes he's wearing?"

"That's part of Armani's latest collection! It's worth at least half a million!"

"If someone like him is considered poor, then I must be the dirt on the bottom of one's shoes!"

Darius listened to the crowd's discussions and eventually cleared his throat.

At that moment, everyone fell silent. They fixated on Darius, eagerly anticipating what he had to say.

"Edward, I think you should get fired. Your actions now have severely gone against the company's rules and will negatively impact the company's image," Darius stated.

Edward's face blanked when he heard that.

By the time he snapped to his senses, Darius was already approaching the middle-aged woman.

Desperate, Edward parted his lips but could not utter a word as he had never imagined this to happen.

Seeing the speechless Edward, anxiety overtook Bridget's senses as she rushed over to Darius.

Chapter 198

Bridget ran to Darius' side, urging him,

"Mr. Reid, I think you should give Edward another chance because this matter has been plaguing him for some time now. It's plausible for a girl to fall in love with

Edward at first glance and obsess over making him her boyfriend. However, Edward doesn't even remember meeting this woman's daughter. He doesn't even know when they crossed paths! As for the rest of this woman's accusations about our workplace relationship, that's false as well!"

Her gaze locked onto Darius' face, searching for any hint that the latter had changed his mind about firing Edward. Sadly, there was none. Even Erin did not know what Darius was planning. She felt his current actions were different from what she previously thought. Silence filled the space. However, the surrounding onlookers now stared at Darius with disapproval. They felt he was cruel for not protecting his employee in that situation. Little did they know their opinions would soon get proven wrong. Darius took out a check and handed it to Edward just then. "I think you should set aside some time to resolve this matter. Here's some money to do so. You can use it for anything, and you don't have to explain it to me."

Edward did not accept the check. Instead, his eyes seemed like they were about to pop out of their sockets. He muttered, "B-But, Mr. Reid, you said I'm unsuited to work at the company."

Darius nodded. "It's true, but I also despise this woman before you. Which means, I'll allow you to stay with the company if you can fix this situation." Edward still could not comprehend Darius' motivations, but he knew he had a chance to stay by the latter's side as a bodyguard. Thus, he accepted the check. He parted his lips to speak, but Darius had already approached the middle-aged woman.

"I'm the chairman that Edward mentioned," Darius proclaimed. "Tell me. What do you think now? Am I rich or poor?"

The woman could tell Darius' clothes were above average, and she had overheard the onlookers' discussions earlier. Thus, her heart raced with panic. Nevertheless, she regained her confidence upon recalling her mission. She raised her chin, placed her hands on her waist, and raised her voice. "Quit trying to fool me! You may look rich based on your outfit, but I won't believe it! I doubt you can afford an entire set of clothing in this price range."

A hand quickly slapped on the woman's face. This sudden action caused the woman to stumble to the ground. She held her cheek, glared at Erin with utter shock, and screamed, "I don't know who you are, how could you hit me"

Opposite her, Darius stood with his arms crossed, his expression frosty. "I didn't do anything. Yet, you seem very afraid. The middle-aged woman sat on the ground with her eyes rounded at Erin. She could feel a burning sensation on her cheek, which obstructed her ability to think logically. She clambered onto her feet and glowered at Erin, her tone becoming higher with each word.

"Do you know what you've just done? Do you know who I am? How dare you hit me? Let me tell you this-you'll have hell to pay for your reckless actions!"

"I'd like to see how much I'll have to compensate you. I wonder if it's as costly as this coat I'm wearing."

Darius noticed his surroundings, a smile graced his face. He found it amusing that people were focusing on the unfolding drama. None left to catch their flight, not even the man that stood near him. The man held a boarding pass, but according to the time written on it, the flight had long departed the airport. Despite seeing that, Darius did not bother to inform the man about the missed flight.

Instead, his focus returned to the woman . 'You've caused quite the fuss for a while now. Tell me, what exactly do you hope to get out of this?

Wealth? A contract? Or something else?"

The middle-aged woman did not expect Darius to say that. Her eyes widened as she

exclaimed, "Why would I want to sign a contract with you?"

I don't wish to collaborate. I merely want your company to disappear from this world!"

Something clicked in Darius' mind. "It seems your daughter was once deeply hurt by me."

"T-That's a lie! You're making that up!" The woman panicked.

Again, Darius became devoid of emotion." I've decided not to give you a chance anymore."

He straightened his back and approached the woman once more "I thought I was being

nice enough to you, but it's evident you don't respect nor value my patience."

The woman's eyes grew wide as fear trickled into her mind. She began shaking her head

with desperation, begging, "N-No! Please!"

Erin made a phone call, wanting to investigate the relationship between Darius, the

woman, and the daughter.

Unfortunately, all she discovered was that the woman downstairs was merely a pitiful

cancer patient. The rest of the woman's information was missing.

That seemed abnormal, she took her outside the airport.

Confusion filled Darius's eyes

Chapter 199

By the time Darius located Erin, the woman had vanished. All that remained was the faint

smell of blood in the air

Erin did not feel he had to hide anything from Darius.

"I broke her wrist and got her to admit why she did all that." While saying that, She

looked at Darius, waiting for his response.

Darius signed.

Erin reached out to look at his watch. "If we had found out about this 30 minutes later

than we did now, we'd already be on the plane, facing a grave threat."

Darius and the two bodyguards shared confused looks before they asked,"

What exactly happened?"

Neither of the three could imagine the severity of what was happening.

After pondering for a while, she decided to reveal the truth. "At first, I didn't think things

were that serious, so I planned to give anyone involved with the earlier incident a

warning. You know-give them a taste of pain.

However, along the way, I caught a whiff of a peculiar odor that only belonged to aircraft

paint. Those guys were here as flight passengers, which meant they shouldn't have

touched the plane. So, I got suspicious."

The three's jaws hung wide open upon hearing that.

They never imagined Erin could detect something was wrong from such a slight detail.

Utter respect and admiration oozed from the way they looked at Erin.

Yet, Erin did not think anything of it as he stoically continued, 'That's why I interrogated

that middle-aged woman in the shortest time possible. Her answer proved that my

suspensions were correct. That's what happened." Darius then looked at

Edward. "Isn't

there something you should tell me?"

Edward remained rooted to the ground, his muscles stiffening while his brain went blank.

In truth, he had no clue what he needed to tell the former.

Meanwhile, Darius felt that Edward was dense as a brick. He sat down on a nearby chair

before speaking frostily to the latter.

'That woman was here to cause trouble for you. Regardless of her motivations, you

seemed to be the weak point she kept targeting."

Edward's features contorted, revealing a complicated expression.

"I understand what you mean now, Mr. Reid. You're right. I should've come clean about

the matter with you. This is where Bridget and I differ—I didn't grow up under Reid

Consortium's care. I joined when I was 21 years old. Thus, my memories of my parents

and childhood environment run deep. That woman exists in my memory

because she
and her daughter are from my past. According to my parent's wishes when
they were
alive, I was supposed to marry and have kids with that woman's daughter. But
that's not
what I wanted. Plus, her daughter was reluctant when I tried to fulfill my
promise to marry
her. That's why I decided to go with Bruce after meeting him. I even told the
woman and
her daughter that I'd have nothing to do with them once I left with Bruce. Her
daughter
was quite pleased back then, so I have no idea why the woman would show
up here
now."

Darius nodded, feeling somewhat accepting of this answer. He reached out
and waved
his hand.

Edward could have left at that point. However, he did not move, despite the
former's
dismissive wave.

"Mr. Reid, I know you want to fire me, but I'm sorry. That will only happen after
we return
from Almiron City."

Darius silently narrowed his eyes at Edward, determining if the latter was
trustworthy. He
also found the situation odd due to his grandfather and Bruce's recent
behavior. After all,
he knew the two were highly cautious and would only pick the best
bodyguards to be by
his side.

"But it's obvious that Edward isn't such a person. He can't even guarantee my
safety,"

Darius thought.

Edward felt uncomfortable being in the center of Darius' scrutinous gaze.

Regardless, he

dared not say a word because of the latter's identity. He stood stiffly with his
hands

behind his back, his muscles tensing from anxiety.

That went on for a long time.

Edward eventually felt an ache throughout his muscles. He could not help
raising his

chin but kept his gaze downcast as he was unable, nor did he dare, to meet Darius' gaze.

"Mr. Reid, you can ask me anything. The current situation makes me nervous, and I'll

lose the most basic ability of a bodyguard-making sound judgments."

He did not think Darius would respond.

"As you wish," Darius said while nodding, much to Edward's surprise. Then, he voiced

the question in his mind.

A blank look flashed on Edward's face but soon went away as he answered, "It's

because I'm good at combat. Only I can take on three people at once among all of Reid

Consortium's bodyguards. My opponents can't escape defeat."

Darius quirked a brow, not expecting that. He parted his lips to speak but immediately

noticed two tall and burly men approaching from afar.

The men fixated on Darius with murderous intent.

Darius chuckled at that, thinking, "What perfect timing."

He then raised his chin, motioning at the two men before holding Edward's gaze. "Now's

the time for you to prove it then."

Edward paused, uncertain of what that meant. Immediately after, he snapped to his

senses, turned around, and looked in the direction Darius hinted at earlier.

He glimpsed at the incoming men before turning and lowering his head at Darius. "I

understand, Mr. Reid. I'll prove my capabilities to you, however..."

A conflicted emotion marred his face.

Darius knitted his brows, stating, "You can speak your mind. I dislike hearing incomplete

utterances or needing to guess the meaning behind complicated expressions."

Hearing that, Edward candidly voiced his thoughts.

"It's just that those fighting those two won't properly demonstrate my capabilities. They're

too weak."

Chapter 200

Darius chuckled, feeling taken aback by Edward's words. 'That doesn't matter because

you can prove your capabilities by speedily defeating them.”

Edward nodded.

As their conversation ended, two men appeared beside Edward.

One of them swung their arm around Edward’s shoulders and said,” Edward Elliott,

we’ve had a hard time tracking you down these years. We didn’t think we’d see you here.”

Edward, Bridget, Erin, and Darius were surprised that the other party did not immediately take action.

However, Edward would tell the man had exerted a lot of force on his shoulder, which made his brows furrow.

He remained unmoving but spoke with an irritated tone. “Shouldn’t you be happy to have found me?”

The man’s face warped with rage. “We’ve always treated you well in the past, Edward.

Why would you do this to us now? Besides, I need to know where our mom has gone.

She said she saw you and came over but never returned to us, not even until now.”

Edward’s gaze shifted to Darius. He was unsure if he should tell the truth about what had

happened to the two men, who were brothers. If he did so, it would complicate and delay

Darius’ departure from here.

Little did he expect Darius to speak up. “Your mother made a grave mistake, So I’ve

already sent her down to the gates of hell. I can do the same for you two if you wish to join her that badly.”

The men gawked with sheer disbelief.

“What did you say?” one of them exclaimed. The man then took Darius in from head to toe.

‘Who’s this? Is what he said true?’

Edward was well accustomed to Darius’ attitude at that point. Thus, he shot the men an icy look.

‘Yeah, your mother crossed the line. I’m unsure whether you two were aware of her decision to act that way, but you’ve already made a massive mistake by showing up here.’

All emotions vanished from the men by then. Instead, a fiery hatred sparked in their eyes and soon spread throughout their faces.

One of them glared at Edward while the other scowled at Darius. Despite that, they

shared the same thought, which the one standing before Darius voiced, “We would consider letting you guys off the hook if you had answered us nicely. What a

shame, though. Since you couldn’t give us a satisfactory response, there’s only one way

to handle this—you’ll have to join our mother down there and keep her company.”

Only a brief chuckle came from Darius.

He parted his lips to speak, but it was then that an announcement rang out in the airport.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we have begun boarding for the flight heading to Almiron City.

Thus, we invite all passengers to approach the boarding gates for ticket inspection.

Thank you.”

Darius finally raised his gaze off the ground. He looked at a boarding gate nearby before

instructing with a much colder tone,

“Edward, finish them off soon. Let’s not delay the flight.”

The brothers’ gazes met, hatred and mockery gleaming in their eyes.

One of them then put his hands on his waist while guffawing. “I’ve never been ignored

like this before. It seems we’ve been too nice to you guys, and it’s giving off the wrong

impression. Anyway, I hope you lot will hold your tongues during what we’re about to do

because you’ll pay dearly for crossing us.”

Before Edward could respond, a snicker rang out.

Although the environment was noisy, the brothers could still hear it. Their attention

instantly shot toward Darius while pure hatred radiated off them.

“Do you have a problem with what I said?” One of the brothers approached Darius, glaring daggers at the latter. He wanted to say more, but Darius beat him to it. “Edward, you have five minutes left. If you can’t settle this within five minutes, there’s no need for you to join me on this trip. ” Upon hearing that, Edward’s eyes widened. He then replied with quivering lips, “Rest assured, Mr. Reid. All I need are two minutes to get rid of them.” Then, he speedily knocked the brothers to the ground with one punch, not giving them a chance to speak. Darius’ mouth opened slightly in shock as he mused, “Edward’s capabilities in combat grew significantly since our last encounter. Incredible.” Contrarily, Bridget, who stood nearby, did not seem shocked by the outcome. The brothers that got knocked over felt a ringing in their heads but still got back onto their feet. That was when Darius glanced at Edward while tutting. “And here I thought a single punch from you would render these guys immobile. I have to admit that I’m a little disappointed.” Edward glimpsed at Darius before quickly looking away with shame. “I’ll do exactly that now, Mr. Reid.” He then turned toward the brothers, whose bodies swayed as they struggled to balance on their feet. The two had just stood when a blow got dealt to their faces, causing them to stumble once more. This time, they could not bring themselves to stand. Two control room personnel suddenly rushed over just then. They frowned while stating, “Fighting in such a public space will cost you guys greatly.” Darius silently glanced at Edward. However, no words were necessary, as Edward understood what was happening. He knelt, grabbed both brothers’ collars, and growled, “We grew up together!

Was it
necessary to call the authorities because of our little brawl?"
Although Edward was smiling, he gripped the two with force.
The brothers glared at him.
One of them then turned to the control room personnel and loudly spoke while
tearing
up, "Don't trust a word he says! We did grow up together-but he abandoned
our sister!"