

Extraordinary 381

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Moreover, Berry Furnishings had been working in other cities - it had only moved to Lake City two years ago.

The Chapman family had been a powerful family for generations, and even though it had fallen a little over the past few years, they were still way ahead of the Berrys.

As such, Ashlyn was a little surprised to hear Mr. Chapman ask about her father.

“Yes, my father’s surname is Berry,” replied Ashlyn calmly.

Mr. Chapman suddenly looked excited as he asked, “I-is your mother called...”

“Dr. Berry!”

Just then, a woman’s shriek suddenly rang up behind Ashlyn.

Ashlyn turned around and saw that it was Candace, the wife of the man she once saved.

“Sorry, Mr. Chapman, I have to work. Please have a safe trip.” Ashlyn hurried over to Cadence.

Cadence’s husband has been discharged, and the surgery was a success, so what is Cadence doing here?

Mr. Chapman narrowed his eyes as he stared at Ashlyn’s back.

Berry... She looks just like Alice...

Mr. Chapman was determined to figure out just who Dr. Berry truly was.

“Alice had not contacted us in decades, dad, so it’s obvious that she no longer sees you as a father. Why bother thinking about her?” said Sisley Chapman, who didn’t want to share any portion of the inheritance with anyone.

The way Mr. Chapman reacted to Ashlyn had alerted all the bells in Sisley’s heart.

Even Sisley had to admit that Ashlyn looked a lot like Alice, but that didn’t mean the woman was a part of the family.

“Sisley is right. Alice has always been stubborn, and who knows? Maybe she’s still hiding in a hole somewhere and being mad at you. She is so immature. It’s a shame that you have always seen her as your favorite,” added Anthony quickly.

“Shut up!” growled Mr. Chapman before he coughed aloud.

Cough! Cough!

It took the elderly man sometime before he settled down and said, “Alice is still your sister, regardless of what she did. If I ever find her, I will do my best to make up for all that I owed her.”

Hera was speechless. What the hell? Is Ashlyn going to be taken in as my cousin? Oh, that is just too much! No, f*ck no! Even if we are somehow related by blood, I will make sure she is never taken back in by the family!

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Ashlyn stared strangely at Cadence. “Cadence, what brought you here? Is something up with your husband?”

Cadence shook her head and scanned her surrounding before she hesitantly asked Ashlyn, “Can I have a few private words with you?”

Ashlyn grinned. “Sure, this way, please.”

Cadence followed Ashlyn into her office.

Cadence’s husband, Landon, would’ve been a cripple if Ashlyn hadn’t operated on him. Cadence had always been thankful towards Ashlyn for that.

When the two of them were alone in that huge office, Ashlyn poured Cadence a cup of water and asked, “What is it, Cadence? You can tell me upfront.”

Cadence set on the sofa and looked a little uneasy when she turned to Ashlyn. Later, Cadence took an old photograph out of her bag.

“I saw this in an old album. When I first met you, I thought you looked familiar. It was as if I had seen you before, so I took the time to think things through at home. That’s when I recalled that you look a lot like the girl who was bought by a guy in my village.”

“What?” blurted Ashlyn as she stared at the photograph that Cadence was holding.

The photograph was too old and turning yellowish, but it was still clear enough to see everybody’s faces.

“If you don’t believe me, check this photo out,” said Cadence as she handed Ashlyn the photo.

Ashlyn accepted it and examined the person in the photo.

The photo was old, and there were at least seven or eight ladies there, but Ashlyn still saw her mother immediately. The woman in the middle was none other than Alice Chapman.

Ashlyn turned pale, and her eyes bulged as she stared at Alice in disbelief.

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The woman in the picture looked malnourished and thin.

She also looked depressed and was a huge contrast compared to the other smiling women.

However, Alice was born beautiful, so she still looked amazing in the photo, despite being sick.

Ashlyn's heart couldn't help thumping wildly.

"How did you get this photo? Where is the woman in the photo? Where is she right now? Is she still in your village?" asked Ashlyn, who could barely contain her emotions at that moment.

Mom... The woman in the photo has to be my mother!

Ashlyn was sure that she hadn't made a mistake.

"Dr. Berry, this photo was taken on the year I got married. The village organized an event, and we took a group photo. It has been over a decade since the photo was taken. The woman in the photo is no longer around." Cadence shook her head.

"She's no longer around? D-do you mean she has passed away?" asked Ashlyn.

All her excitement and happiness had faded in an instance.

"She hasn't passed. She simply left one day without a word. The guy who bought her said that he sold her to someone else. May I know who she is to you?" asked Cadence curiously.

"She might be my mother," answered Ashlyn as her eyes reddened. She later took a deep breath to regain her composure and asked, "Cadence, can you tell me the year she went missing?"

Cadence thought about it for a while before answering, "That was over a decade ago. Let me think... It's... Uhm... Thirteen years ago? Yeah. I got married that year, so it's thirteen years ago."

Thirteen years ago, Ashlyn was only nine years old, but she clearly remembered that her mom died in a car accident when she was eight.

My mom didn't die then? Instead, she ended up in that village? What exactly happened all those years ago?

Ashlyn's mind was a mess.

She didn't understand what could've happened, and she didn't know if her mom was still alive at that moment.

Someone bought her... Who would buy a random woman from an unknown villager?

The more Ashlyn thought about it, the more her head hurt.

It was as if an invisible hand had tossed her brain in a small sack and was trying its best to stuff it in.

Car accident, survival, sold....

Ashlyn felt like she needed to take the time to analyze everything.

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The night was turning dark, and a white Land Rover drove into the secluded village.

The fog was thick in the village.

Cadence got out of the car at the entrance of the village. She informed Ashlyn, “Dr. Berry, the guy who bought the woman lives in the house at the end of this road.”

Cadence had to hurry home because her mother-in-law would complain if she stayed any longer.

The woman simply went to tell Ashlyn everything because Cadence thought she was a good person.

“Thank you, Cadence,” said Ashlyn. She later noticed that the roads in the village were too small for cars to travel.

As such, she could only park her car and walk the rest of the way to her destination.

It took her about ten minutes or so before she saw an old wooden hut.

The door was open, and the place was dark. She knocked on the door and asked, “Is anyone home?”

No one replied.

Ashlyn frowned and waited for a while, but she still didn’t get a response.

She fished out her phone and turned on the flashlight. With the lights on, she walked into the house.

It didn’t take her long before she found the switch. Click! The dim light bulb on the ceiling lit the house.

She could barely make out the place’s decoration, but she could tell that it was in a terrible shape.

A square table stood under the lightbulb with two stools by its side.

A bed was placed at the corner of the house, and a box was beside that bed.

Nothing else was left in the room.

Ashlyn scanned the house and thought about how her mother used to live in a place like that.

Her heart ached as if several claws were simultaneously digging into it.

This is not a living space for a human! Even a dog would have trouble living here.

She was still out of it when she suddenly heard a series of footsteps from the other side of the door.

“Who’s there? Who’s in my house?” barked a crude voice suddenly from the yard.

Ashlyn turned around instinctively and saw a reeking, dirty man walking towards the house.

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The man wore a black shirt and had a head of messy white hair. The man looked like he was in his mid-fifties.

He was wrinkled, and his eyes were ridiculously glassy.

He had a bottle of alcohol with him, and he smelled like cheap alcohol.

Ashlyn stared quietly at him for a while before she said, "I am here for you."

The man didn't think that a woman as beautiful as an angel would show up in his place.

He seemed to be in shock and couldn't help rubbing his eyes. It felt as if he was dreaming.

"A-are you an angel? Did the heaven send you over?"

"Sober up!" ordered Ashlyn cruelly. "Did you buy a woman to be your wife about thirteen years ago?"

The man walked closer to Ashlyn with his head tilted to the side. He scanned her from head to toe and stared for a long while before saying, "That wife of mine ran away ages ago. Why are you asking about her now?"

Ah, so this is not a dream, and the woman is actually standing here. Still, this gal is so beautiful.

"Where is she? Who did you sell her off to?" demanded Ashlyn.

"Pfft, she looked weak and gentle but was actually pretty stubborn. She wouldn't even sleep with me, so of course, I had to sell her off. Someone paid me to let her stay at my place for a few days, and I thought that I might be able to get more out of it, but it's such a pity..." sighed the old man as he sat on the stool.

The old man reminisced about his young past for a while.

"So, you didn't buy her?" asked Ashlyn, who immediately caught the key information in his words.

"Why should I tell you? Who do you think you are?" asked the man as he glared at her.

Ashlyn didn't bother wasting any more time. She grabbed her purse and fished out some cash, tossing it in front of the old man. "Is this enough to loosen your lips?"

The elderly man's eyes glowed, and he quickly grabbed the cash to count them.

“Yes, yes, definitely.”

“Then f*cking talk.”

“This village is indeed secluded. When I was younger, I used to go out to hunt in the forest. That was when I met a man and a woman. They were dragging a beautiful woman along the ground at the time, and they looked horrified. It was as if someone was chasing after them. They handed me some money and asked me to keep the woman hidden for a few days. I agreed to those terms and kept her identity a secret by telling everyone that I bought her. About two weeks later, a bunch of men showed up and took the beautiful lady away. They even paid me handsomely to keep their arrival a secret. Oh, that woman was truly beautiful, though,” shared the elderly man sadly.

The man then scanned Ashlyn once more before commenting, “Actually, the two of you look really similar.”

“What did those people look like? What did the man and the woman who dragged her over look like?” asked Ashlyn, whose heart was hurting profusely when she heard what the man had said so far. It was as if a hammer was smashing mercilessly at her chest.

Only one thought kept echoing in her mind. Mom might still be alive! She might be living in some random corner on earth. Mom survived! Mommy, where are you?

“The man looked handsome, but the woman looked ordinary. I remember the woman’s voice being very sharp, though. Still, I’ve only met them once, so I don’t really remember much,” answered the elderly man as he recalled his past.

“Think,” ordered Ashlyn through gritted teeth.

“I’ve already accepted your money, so why would I lie or keep things a secret? I honestly can’t recall anything,” barked the elderly man loudly.

Ashlyn thought that she couldn’t get more information about those two, so she stopped pushing. Instead, she asked, “Did you see a little girl? She should be with that woman.”

“There was never a girl, or at least I never saw her,” replied the elderly man.

If mom survived, then where could my baby sister be? Ashlyn frowned in confusion.

She later tossed some more cash at the man and instructed, “Watch your mouth, and don’t tell anyone that I came looking for you.”

“No problem,” replied the elderly man as he counted the cash happily.

*

It was already past midnight when Ashlyn drove the car back into the city.

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Ashlyn looked terrible and was a little pale, but she was strangely energetic.

It was already past midnight, but she couldn't seem to sleep.

Mom is still alive. She didn't get in a car crash and was sold instead. Horace lied to me! What about my baby sister, though? Was she sold too?

Ashlyn thought about how her mother and sister might be suffering at that moment.

They might be hidden and are being tortured right now! Ashlyn felt like she might lose control of her emotions when she thought about all that.

She was tempted to destroy everything in sight.

She took a deep breath and suppressed all the negative feelings inside her.

N-no, that can't be it. Mom and sis are happy right now. They must be leading a good life... Stop overthinking this. Just stop overthinking it!

Ashlyn laid on the bed and kept comforting and lying to herself.

Before she knew it, she had closed her eyes, and it was almost noon when she woke up.

She picked up her phone to check the time. That was when she noticed the number of missed calls.

Some were from the hospital, while the others were from Lucas.

Ashlyn sent a reply to the hospital but ignored Lucas' texts.

She freshened up before driving to the hospital.

She parked her car, when suddenly...

"Wow, that guy is so handsome and cool!"

Ashlyn hadn't even gotten out of the car before an exaggerated shriek surprised her.

She blinked and traced the gaze of the shrieking stranger.

That was when she saw several black Bentleys parked by the hospital's entrance. That sight exuded power and could stun anyone.

Over ten security guards got out of the car and marched uniformly to form two lines. It looked like they were trained.

The door to the Bentley in the middle was opened, and a few men in tuxedos walked out of it.

Ashlyn's gaze fell onto the man that led everyone.

He wore a handmade black coat and a pair of ironed-out black trousers. He had one hand in his pocket and stood straight, which highlighted his tall figure.

He had short, dark hair, and his unearthly handsome face looked like it was specially crafted by heaven itself. He looked physically fit and was surprisingly perfect.

All he had to do was stand there, and everyone else would pale in comparison. They looked at nothing but his background.

The man exuded the powerful aura of a natural leader, and that prompted others to instinctively bow down to him.

Just then, another equally fit and tall man got out of the car as well. The man looked ridiculously handsome and polite, and his lips wore a caring grin.

Lucas and Joseph showing up together like that instantly captured everyone's attention.

Ashlyn got out of the car and walked towards the hospital.

Lucas stood there with his dark eyes quietly tracing her.

"Why didn't you pick up your phone?"

Ashlyn wasn't sure if she had made a mistake, but... Did the surrounding air suddenly turn cold?

Ashlyn raised her brows and walked past the man as she replied, "I just woke up."

In other words, she refused to pick up her phone while she slept.

Joseph was standing beside Lucas, and the former wanted to laugh aloud when he saw Lucas being tossed aside like that. Joseph managed to keep his laughter in, though.

Aw, what is up with Lucas? Ms. Berry is still treating him like he's nothing.

“Mr. Joseph,” greeted Ashlyn reluctantly. She only greeted Mrs. Field out of courtesy.

“Ms. Berry, my boss has been in a bad mood ever since he woke up. I suspect that he might be sick. Should I get him some medicine or something?” joked Joseph while wearing a bright smile.

“He needs a good punch. Just beat him up, and he will recover in no time,” answered Ashlyn calmly.

Lucas still had one hand in his pocket, but his gaze turned icy as he glared at Ashlyn. That woman... Lucas had just regained his internal composure and thought about the trap she had set to get him married. He finally understood everything and rushed over to tell her the good news, but she repaid him by being that cold and cruel.

Such an ungrateful little thing. You weren't that distant when you needed me to be your cure on the bed.

As far as Lucas was concerned, the vilest thing was that Ashlyn had verbally dissed him.

Beat me up? Hell, I think I'd heal faster if I beat you up! In bed, of course.

Ashlyn walked towards the elevator then.

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Lucas and Joseph headed towards the elevator as well.

The men got into the elevator first, and Lucas' dark eyes glared intently at Ashlyn when he instructed, “Get in.”

Ashlyn shook her head and replied, “No thanks. I'll get the next one.”

When Lucas heard that, his handsome face darkened, and he readjusted his emotions to suppress his annoyance. After that, he said, “Honey, stop making a scene and hurry up.”

Ashlyn's lips twitched.

Why is this man suddenly speaking so softly and sweetly? I have goosebumps all over me now.

The elevator's doors were about to close, so Lucas extended his long arm, grabbed her, and dragged her in.

When Ashlyn stood beside Lucas, she felt like his burning gaze was stuck on her.

She felt a little uncomfortable, so she retaliated by glaring back, but she was ambushed by a pair of beautiful, dark eyes.

Her heart skipped a beat before she demanded, "Why did you come to the hospital?"

Those mesmerizing dark eyes seemed to have the ability to break through all of Ashlyn's defenses and shoot an arrow straight into her heart.

Her long eyelashes tilted downwards, and she was no longer looking at the man.

Lucas, however, suddenly got close to her. His familiar, masculine scent instantly surrounding Ashlyn.

His deep, sexy voice then rang up beside her ear, "Guess."

The man's familiar icy breath swirled around her nose, and it felt like it was corroding her defenses.

Ashlyn's long eyelashes fluttered, and she turned away.

"Why should I?"

She lifted her arm to push Lucas aside, and when the elevator door opened, she immediately rushed out.

Arthur's surgery was scheduled for the next afternoon.

Ashlyn sat in her office and read Arthur's medical report with a frown on her face.

The bones on his knees were crushed, so were the ones on his arm. He also had a series of other injuries, including more broken bones in other regions.

Almost every injury was on the surface while his internal organs remained intact.

That proved that Arthur used to be healthy, and given the extent of his injuries, it was likely not an accident. It looked more like someone had physically abused Arthur.

Ashlyn frowned as she analyzed the situation.

She was still lost in thought when she heard a series of knocks on her door.

"Come in."

She had just finished speaking when her office door opened. A nurse popped her head in. "Dr. Mccoy wants to talk to you about Arthur's surgery, Dr. Berry."

"Alright." Ashlyn grabbed the medical report and headed towards Dr. Mccoy's office.

She had just left her office when she bumped into Penelope, who was holding another man's arm. The

man wore a white coat and looked pretty easy on the eyes.

Ashlyn hadn't been in the hospital in a while, so she didn't recognize the man.

Penelope barred Ashlyn's path proudly and said, "Ashlyn, let me introduce you to my new boyfriend, Jerry Sherman."

Jerry had just got back from studying overseas, and his father was John Sherman, the second-in-command of the hospital. He had just started working when Penelope heard about his family background and immediately went after him. She did everything to present her best self to him.

Jerry was a player even before he headed back to the country. When a woman went after him, he would happily accept her.

As such, the two of them had started a relationship quickly.

Penelope turned proud the second she was the girlfriend of the son of the second-in-command of the hospital.

Bumping into Ashlyn only made it impossible for Penelope to not boast.

Ashlyn remained unmoved. Her beautiful eyes glowed with calmness and disinterest as she said, "I am not interested in knowing who you're dating."

Jerry's eyes shone with surprise and bewilderment when he saw Ashlyn's extraordinary beauty. Why didn't I know that the hospital has a doctor this stunning?

Penelope's beauty was above average, but compared to an angel-like Ashlyn, Penelope was nothing more than mere dust on the floor.

The difference in beauty made Jerry upset.

"Dr. Berry, right? Hello, I am Jerry Sherman, the doctor from the orthopedics department."

Ashlyn extended her hand out of respect and politely shook Jerry's hand, but she never expected Jerry to stare with lust burning in his eyes. He gripped her hand and even extended his other hand to caress the back of Ashlyn's hand.

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That made Ashlyn so disgusted that goosebumps appeared on her whole body.

That asshole! How dare he try and take advantage of me?

Bang! The loud ring was quickly followed by the man's howl, "Ah!"

Ashlyn tossed Jerry over her shoulder - she did so beautifully. That made Jerry fall onto the floor and scream in pain.

Penelope was in shock, and she quickly rushed over to help Jerry up. "Ashlyn, what the hell are you doing? Have you gone insane? How could you hurt him like that?"

Ashlyn saw the shadow under the man's eyes and caught the way he curved his back. She couldn't help but grin as she said, "Dr. Sherman's kidneys seem weak. Are you sure he can satisfy you, Penelope?"

Jerry was a player; he was good at seducing and lying to women. As such, he had slept with dozens of women. His family had money too, so he had never held back and had messed around endlessly.

He was young, but he 'played' so much that he had already destroyed his body.

He took a lot of supplements regularly, but Ashlyn still managed to notice the problems and shared her findings aloud.

Jerry's back was hurting as he thought, All I did was caress your hand. What's so bad about that? You should be honored that I took advantage of you!

Jerry was ashamed and angry at Ashlyn's truthful diss. He glared at her before saying, "I was just being polite and trying to get to know you, Dr. Berry, but you tossed me to the floor like that! You even insulted me!"

Penelope was both angry and embarrassed as well. She knew that Jerry only looked good, but he couldn't actually last for more than a few minutes if he hadn't taken any pills beforehand. Unfortunately, Penelope was in love with his family background, so she endured it.

When Penelope heard what Ashlyn said, her face grew dark, and her eyes glowed with hatred towards Ashlyn. "How could you say something like that? Have you no shame?"

Ashlyn narrowed her eyes at them. "I'm just telling the truth. Besides, I'm only saying this for the sake of your sexual future, so why are you so mad?" Ashlyn asked ever so innocently.

"My dad is the second-in-command of this hospital! I-I'm going to get you fired, woman!" shouted Jerry. He was interested in Ashlyn a moment ago and wanted to court her. She won't be nice to me? Fine, don't blame me for being cruel then.

Jerry rubbed his injured back and shouted, "Security, security! Toss this woman out of here this instant! Don't let her set foot in here ever again!"

"What is going on? Why are you guys yelling in the corridor like that? You're making us look bad!"

The director of the hospital and the hospital's second-in-command walked over soon after.

"Dad, director. That woman insulted Penelope and I, and she even injured me. How can our hospital hire someone so dishonorable and disrespectful? She brings shame to the entire industry," shouted Jerry as he pointed his finger at Ashlyn.

The director frowned and turned to Ashlyn before shifting his gaze to Jerry and Penelope.

Ashlyn looked calm - a huge contrast compared to how agitated Jerry and Penelope were.

Penelope had her eyes on Ashlyn, and the former was secretly gleeful because she thought Ashlyn would be kicked out of the hospital soon after. Jerry does love me after all.

The director of the hospital felt a headache coming when he saw Jerry. The director and the second-in-command were good friends. It was rumored that they were bunkmates when they were in medical school.

When Jerry graduated, he was given a full-time job at the hospital and didn't even need to go through an internship.

The director was usually towards the second-in-command, but Jerry was simply too big of a problem.

A powerful investor was taking over the hospital, and soon, even the director of the hospital would have to listen to what the investor said.

Hence, the director was a little annoyed as he said, "Dr. Sherman, do you even know who Dr. Berry is?"

The second-in-command had always thought that the director was too kind towards Ashlyn and gave her too many special treatments. That prompted the second-in-command to believe in his son's words immediately.

"Jerry has always been a good kid, Director. Dr. Berry must've insulted him and threw the first punch!"

"It's true! We must chase her out of the hospital," insisted Jerry when he heard his father siding with him.

The director looked a little troubled when he turned to Ashlyn. It was plain to see that Ashlyn was a skilled surgeon, but the director was close to the second-in-command... I must find a way to solve this issue peacefully.

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At that moment, the door to the elevator suddenly opened.

A few men in black walked out with a handsome man in a tuxedo leading them. The leader had a

powerful aura, and his face shone with cruelty.

Lucas' frown exuded a murderous ambiance, and his gaze was sharp and cruel. It was plain to see that he was someone to be reckoned with.

He had one hand in his pocket, while his other hand held his phone as he walked towards the crowd.

Ashlyn turned to him, and their eyes met in the middle of the room.

Lucas' dark eyes stared at her face for half a second; everything seemed calm. A few seconds later, he retracted his gaze and stood in front of the hospital's director.

"Mr. Nolan, what brings you here?" asked the director, who looked a little surprised when he saw Lucas there.

Spencer calmly told the director, "Our master has an important announcement to make, so please gather all the heads of the departments."

The hospital director had a bad feeling. The mysterious investor that's supposed to take over the hospital... Could it be...

The director didn't even dare go down that rabbit hole. He quickly ordered the second-in-command, "Go set everything up right away!"

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At the office of the second-in-command.

Penelope was examining Jerry's back and saw that there was a huge bruise on it. "That Ashlyn Berry is too much! How could she be so mean?"

"The director watched me grow up. I'm sure he will chase Ashlyn away," scowled Jerry angrily before he added, "You have to help me seek revenge, dad!"

"Don't worry. Given my close relationship with the director, Ashlyn will definitely be fired," comforted the second-in-command.

Penelope was helping Jerry apply some medicine when Jerry reached out to hold her hand. "Thank you for being so kind to me, Penelope."

Penelope was a little shy because the second-in-command was in the room. So, she retracted her hand and said, "Don't do that. You'll just make me blush."

The second-in-command grinned happily. He knew that the Berrys had some money and were

somewhat rich, so he was glad to see his son being with Penelope.

Penelope later followed the second-in-command and Jerry into the conference room.

The conference room was already packed with the top management of the hospital.

The second-in-command couldn't help but frown when he saw that Ashlyn was sitting with the head surgeon.

"Ashlyn isn't the head of her department, and this meeting is only for the top management. She has no right to be here."

The director was reading the document he had with him. He turned his gaze to Penelope, who was standing behind the second-in-command. "Sister Berry isn't even a doctor, but she's here too, isn't she?" the hospital director stated.

That was when the second-in-command realized that Penelope was there too. His face froze over, and he stopped complaining.

After that, the director instructed his assistant, "Tell every doctor and nurse to come in for the meeting. Only one doctor from each department should keep working."

The second-in-command sat down. It wasn't right for him to say anything anymore.

A few minutes later, every doctor and nurse in the hospital showed up.

The best seat in the room - the one that used to be the director's - was now being occupied by a tall and unearthly handsome man. The man had a black tuxedo on; he looked striking. It was virtually impossible for anyone to look away from him.

The director then stood up and introduced, "This is the First Hospital's major shareholder, Mr. Lucas Nolan. Please welcome him."

Everyone gasped in astonishment.

Lucas Nolan? As in the president of the Nolan Group?

Lucas scanned everyone sitting in the room, and his cruel voice sounded, "Starting today, Nolan Group will take over the hospital's management, and we have decided to fire Dr. John and Jerry Sherman."

Lucas' words made everyone gasp once more.

Jerry couldn't believe it. He sprang up while slamming his hand against the desk. He protested, "I am a doctor who has studied overseas, and my skills are better than most doctors here! How dare you fire

me?”

Jerry had graduated from a renowned university, so his salary and other benefits were better than most other doctors. He had a good shot at being a manager after working for two more years, but Lucas was firing him then and there?

Jerry's heart gripped. No, that's not possible!

A man in black entered the room at that moment and handed a folder to Spencer. The latter quickly opened the folder and put it in front of Lucas.

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Lucas tilted his head down and flipped through a few pages before he scoffed aloud, “Do you really want to talk about your education? Your so-called graduation from a renowned university was nothing more than a recognition of how you were a guest student there instead of an actual student. Your certificate and achievements are also exaggerated.”

After saying his piece, Lucas handed the folder to the hospital's director, who was sitting right next to him.

When the director saw the folder, his expression changed tremendously.

He threw the folder at Jerry and growled, “See for yourself!”

Jerry grabbed the folder and read it. That got him to sway, and he looked like he was being mercilessly attacked as he fell back onto his seat. His eyes burned with fury as he insisted, “You're framing me. I have never done anything like that! W-who the hell do you think you are, Lucas Nolan? All you have is money! Who knows where you even got it from? Maybe you're a sex slave to some rich old women, and that's why you needed to show your wealth off in the hospital to feel better about yourself.”

Everyone gasped when they heard that. Jerry insulted Lucas Nolan right to his face? Has that Jerry gone crazy?

The hospital's director wanted to call security to chase Jerry out when he saw that the man had lost all composure and was acting crazy. However, Spencer beat the director to it. Spencer gestured to the men in black, who then pinned Jerry down and beat him up mercilessly.

The folder that Jerry had with him fell onto the floor, making it was plain for everyone to see.

A series of photos fell out of that folder, and every single one of them featured Jerry being a playboy. There were some photos where he went to strip clubs, and there were some photos where he was naked with a few women...

One of the papers on the floor also highlighted Jerry's credentials and studies...

Lucas Nolan truly was as efficient as his reputation claimed. He actually learned that much about Jerry Sherman within that short time span.

Spencer looked evil as he said, "How dare you insult Mr. Nolan? He doesn't need any women to buy him anything. He can afford hundreds of hospitals all on his own. I suggest Dr. Sherman, who has just returned to the country, looks into who Mr. Nolan is before barking nonsense. Man, you're not just an idiot on paper, you're an idiot in the street too!"

Jerry's mind was in a mess, and his body was in pain, but that was nothing compared to the turmoil in his heart.

Lucas Nolan... Lucas Nolan... Who the f*ck is he? Is he well-known?

Jerry had been staying abroad for a long while and had paid little attention to the matters in the country. He was also too arrogant to understand how powerless he truly was.

His father was the second-in-command of the hospital, so Jerry had always thought that he was pretty amazing.

"I don't believe it. How can Lucas Nolan possibly be that rich?"

Spencer stared at Jerry as if the latter were mentally retarded. After that, Spencer said, "How did the First Hospital end up hiring a lunatic like that as a doctor?"

"Hahaha!" Ashlyn laughed, not able to hold it in anymore.

The second she laughed aloud, the other doctors and nurses in the room snickered as well.

They had always been annoyed by the Shermans in the hospital and were especially happy to see the father-son duo being in a state that terrible.

A nurse couldn't help but say, "You should look up Mr. Nolan's name as soon as possible. You'll see how much of an idiot you are then."

Jerry's face had turned pale, bleeding red, and had dark bruises on it. He looked so terribly 'colorful' that it was verbally impossible to describe his state.

The second-in-command was furious too.

He decided to guilt the hospital director by turning to the director and saying, "I have dedicated my entire life to the hospital and have been working here for decades! Are you really going to fire me just

like that?"

"Sherman, I no longer have any authority in that matter. You and Jerry offended Mr. Nolan. Even my hands are tied," replied the director, who looked troubled.

Still, rather than saying that they shouldn't have offended Lucas, it was actually more appropriate to say that they should've been nicer to Ashlyn.

Seriously, why did you have to mess with Ashlyn for no reason? Lucas Nolan bought and donated ambulances to the hospital just to get a glimpse at Ashlyn. It's obvious that he cares deeply for her.

The hospital director couldn't help but sigh internally.

Sherman's old age really got to him. How did he raise such a useless son?

"I've decided to promote Ashlyn as the second-in-command to replace Dr. Sherman."

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Lucas suddenly said in a solemn tone.

Ashlyn was rendered speechless.

Frowning, she looked at Lucas in displeasure with a face that was filled with annoyance. "Are you out of your mind? Two operations per month are more than enough for me. I'm very busy. I have no time for those miscellaneous chores in the hospital. So cut it out, Lucas, or I'll resign from the hospital."

Everyone was shocked that Dr. Berry had actually turned down a promotion and even glared at Mr. Nolan with a look of impatience.

Everyone saw how Jerry had ended up after offending Lucas earlier.

At that moment, Jerry was still lying on the ground wailing in pain. After being beaten black and blue, he looked like a total mess.

Meanwhile, Penelope was staring at Ashlyn with jealousy. How dare this ungrateful and rude woman reject a promotion? Let's see how Mr. Nolan's going to deal with her!

Just when she, like everyone else, thought that Ashlyn would be punished severely by Lucas, who was sitting at the head of the table, Penelope saw a look of adoration and resignation wash over the man's face as he heaved a sigh. "Alright. Do as you please, okay?"

The "okay" at the end of the question sounded as if he was discussing with her with a hint of doting resignation.

Everyone was shocked to the core.

I-Is this the same man who had earlier decisively beaten up Jerry with a grim look on his face?

If the man earlier was like the king of hell who broke out of the battlefield, then the man right now was like a sweet yet manly and domineering president.

The change in his attitude made him a completely different person.

Penelope looked at Ashlyn in devastation, her hands clenched into fists. "You're going overboard, Ashlyn. You really think you're very capable, don't you? You all probably don't know that she accepted Mr. Haddock's bribes a few days ago. That's why she agreed to treat Arthur."

What happened in the hotel the other day was simply a humiliation for Penelope. She was certain that Ashlyn had made a shady deal with Dixon, which was why she had blurted that out.

With a cold expression, Ashlyn looked at Penelope, whose face was now distorted. "Sister Berry, do you want me to play the footage of how you seduced Mr. Haddock but ended up getting a slap in the face?"

What?

Penelope seduced Mr. Haddock?

Everyone was struck dumb, including Jerry. He looked at Penelope in disbelief, who was glaring at Ashlyn in anger, her eyes reddened. "Don't make false accusations. Y-Y-You're the one who wants to seduce Mr. Haddock! You might have even slept with him!"

Ashlyn waved her phone at her. "I have your video here. Do you really want everyone to see it? I don't mind sharing it then."

Widening her eyes, Penelope could not react for a while.

No, it can't be! How does Ashlyn have the footage?

She had been lost in the pleasure of playing with the toy that day. Thus, she didn't even know that Dixon had filmed it and forwarded it to Ashlyn.

"Share it. You must share it! I must see how dirty she is!" Jerry yelled with a twisted face while lying on the ground and wiping the blood off the corner of his mouth.

During the time Penelope was with him, she had made him buy her some branded bags, clothes, shoes,

and jewelry.

It seems like she's been taking advantage of me all this while!

Jerry could not stomach the humiliation of being fooled by Penelope after being beaten by Lucas.

The ashen-faced Penelope kept shaking her head. Looking at the colleagues around her who were shooting her a strange look, she yelled, "No, don't. I didn't do it. Ashlyn doesn't have the footage, and I didn't seduce Mr. Haddock either."

"Penelope, do you think I don't know the fact that you tried to drug me with your parents?" Ashlyn sneered. "It's a pity that you drank the spiked drinks yourself."

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Spencer walked up to Ashlyn at this time and respectfully took the phone from her before he projected it on the projector screen in the conference room.

Everyone immediately saw the disturbing scene, whereby a disheveled-looking woman was playing with a toy in the corner of the hotel's private room.

Her moaning and slutty posture were extremely hard on the eyes.

Everyone in the meeting room was watching Penelope play with the toy.

Meanwhile, Penelope slumped down on the ground in tears. "No, no... that's not me. It really isn't me! It's all Ashlyn's fault. It's all because of you, Ashlyn!"

Jerry struggled to get up from the ground and gave Penelope a hard slap on the face. "You're a whore and a slut!"

With her hand over her cheek that had just been slapped by Jerry, Penelope bawled, "I was framed by Ashlyn! How could you beat me when you don't even avenge me?"

All of a sudden, she took out a scalpel and wielded it towards Ashlyn.

She moved so fast, shocking everyone.

Just when the scalpel was about two centimeters away from Ashlyn, who was about to jump up from her seat to dodge it, a dagger suddenly pierced Penelope's wrist. The scalpel she was wielding dropped to the ground.

Penelope fell to the ground holding her wrist, screaming in pain.

Ashlyn looked up and saw Lucas, who had a gloomy expression on his face.

He was taking the handkerchief Spencer had handed over and wiping his fingers gracefully.

Even if Lucas hadn't helped her just now, she could have dodged it.

She hadn't expected him to actually help her.

Not only am I shocked that Lucas saved me, but I also feel warm deep down. What's wrong with me?

Ashlyn shook her head to shake those thoughts out of her mind.

The most important thing now was that she had to find a way to figure out who was the man and woman who sold her mother to the village.

Mom obviously didn't meet a car accident; she was being trafficked instead.

Since there was no car accident, where did my sister go? Was she trafficked too? She was still so young then...

The thought of her mother and sister suffering somewhere made Ashlyn anxious and uneasy.

However, how should I begin after so many years have passed?

It was not easy to find someone in this big world.

It was different from now, whereby she could find out where one was as long as she could track the other party's activity with her hacking skills.

The incident had happened so many years ago. Any traces would have long disappeared with time. There was simply no way to even start the search.

Ashlyn sighed.

All the doctors and nurses walked out of the meeting room after it was confirmed that Penelope and both the Shermans were sacked.

Peace was restored at the hospital.

As soon as Ashlyn went into her office, Lucas came.

Before she could close the door, he lifted his leg and wedged it between the door frame and door,

refusing to let her close it.

“What do you want, Mr. Nolan?”

As soon as she finished speaking, Ashlyn got hit on the door panel in the shoulder. Overwhelmed by the pain, she couldn't help but groan, “Ahh—”

Lucas held Ashlyn's shoulder with one hand while wrapping the other around her waist.

He could feel her soft and tiny waist through the thin fabric of her white coat.

He couldn't help but hold his breath. Even though he was familiar with her body, he still couldn't help but feel impressed again.

Is she made of water? She's amazingly soft.

With her back firmly pressed against the door panel, and her waist grasped by the man, Ashlyn twisted her body. She said, feeling a little annoyed, “Lucas Nolan, don't ever think you can do whatever you want just because you've become the major shareholder of the hospital.”

A faint smile appeared on Lucas' handsome face, and his chest began vibrating slightly with laughter, causing the muscles under his black shirt to tighten, revealing the sexy outline.

Parting his lips, he said nonchalantly, “I did nothing, Honey. Why are you so nervous?”

Nervous? Me? Ashlyn was speechless. I just feel pain after being pinned against the door!