

# **Under the Heiress' Facade #Chapter 131 - Read Under the Heiress' Facade Chapter 131**

## Chapter 131

"You're Dr. Shadow, right? Please, save my son. The doctor said there's no hope, but he's my child! I beg you, please save him," the woman pleaded, kneeling before Camille.

"Ms. Chime, I'm sorry. I just saw them downstairs, and they seemed so pitiful. I couldn't help but tell her you were here," Julie explained.

In the hallway, people passing by cast curious glances. The Chime family had ties with the hospital, and Camille had a good reputation here. It was hard to refuse.

"Take me to see him," Camille said, helping the woman up.

"Thank you. Thank you so much," the woman said tearfully, leading Camille to her son's room.

The attending physician frowned when he saw Camille with the woman.

"Ms. Chime, the patient's platelet count is too low for surgery. It's too risky," the attending physician said.

After a brief pause, he added, "Besides, they still owe the hospital for the past two days of hospitalization, let alone the surgery costs. So, I don't think it's worth the risk."

"It's alright. Let me handle it. Put the medical expenses under my name," Camille said as she took the patient's medical records.

After reviewing the case and conducting a thorough examination, Camille immediately arranged for surgery. Three hours later, the surgery was found to be successful. The patient was transferred to the ICU.

"Thank you, Dr. Shadow. We're so grateful," the woman said, kneeling before Camille once again.

Not only did the woman express her gratitude and post about it on her social media, but she also called the media to report the act of kindness.

The day after, major platforms featured headlines about Dr. Shadow's true identity as Camille and her philanthropic deeds.

Early in the morning at the Everett residence, Hera was abruptly awakened by Samantha's urgent call.

"Hera, how can you sleep so soundly? Something big has happened!"

"You better have a good reason for waking me up, or your Cartier red diamond will become Tiramisu's toy," Hera's voice, still hoarse from sleep, was filled with irritation.

"Quick, check the news! That faker Camille is impersonating you!" Samantha exclaimed indignantly.

"I already exposed her last time and revealed her true identity. How can people still think she's Dr. Shadow?"

Hera rolled over and grabbed her phone, quickly scanning the news. The news reported Camille's assistance to impoverished families at Pineview Hospital and exposed Dr. Shadow's action of snatching the Eclipse Stone from Astral Nova's grandmaster at an auction.

Interestingly, the incident with the Eclipse Stone wasn't reported the day after the auction ended. It took quite some time for it to be covered, which was intriguing.

"When did you expose her?" Hera inquired.

Samantha hesitated for a moment, realizing she had spoken too impulsively out of anger.

She reluctantly recounted the incident of unmasking Camille at Astral Nova.

After she finished speaking, she realized she had been too impulsive at the time. Not only did she fail to help, but she also inadvertently caused the situation. She immediately berated herself for it.

"Hera, I'm sorry. It's all my fault..." Samantha apologized weakly.

She then added defiantly, "But I won't let this impostor get away with it!"

"You should stay out of this," Hera replied, getting out of bed to freshen up.

"What will you do about it then?"

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"Let's not rush into it. Let's see what she's up to first," Hera mumbled as she brushed her teeth with an electric toothbrush.

The Eclipse Stone was a coveted treasure, and many were eyeing it. Camille's intervention at this time might have diverted attention away from Hera.

After chatting a bit more, they hung up. Hera finished her morning routine, headed downstairs, and went for a run.

When she returned, the whole family, including the housekeeper, Judy McCoy, was gathered around the dining table reading the newspaper.

"Ms. Chime is Dr. Shadow. Should we ask her to see Mrs. Everett Senior?" Judy asked.

Since Hera's incident at the hospital, Georgia Hemsworth's health had been fluctuating, and she had been recuperating there.

Hera remained silent.

"Gideon, why don't you try reaching out to her? Your grandmother has been in the hospital for a while now, and the medical expenses are high. Moreover, they haven't been able to diagnose her condition. Dr. Shadow could diagnose her more efficiently," James suggested to Gideon.

He had heard that Camille was still single, and so was Gideon. He thought that if the two could grow closer during this process, it could greatly benefit the Everett family's reputation.

"I think we should have Hera treat Grandma. My sister's medical skills are impressive!" Gino chimed in proudly.

His statement caught Lilith and Judy off guard. Both of them looked at him in surprise.

They seemed to question his sudden change in attitude toward Hera silently. Wasn't he resistant to acknowledging Hera as his sister before?

Gino remained unfazed, immediately changing the subject when he noticed someone entering the room.

"Hera, you're back. Get ready. Everyone's waiting for you to have breakfast!" Gino exclaimed.

Hera glanced at him, a slight smile playing on her lips as she replied, "Sure."

Judy found the scene surreal, wondering why Gino, who was usually aloof, was suddenly so affectionate toward Hera.

Lilith, witnessing this, felt tears welling up. Finally, Gino seemed to have softened toward Hera.

"With just a mere bracelet, you're suddenly all chummy with her," Gideon scoffed lightly.

"No!" Gino retorted emphatically.

Gideon glanced at his empty wrist adorned only with a Rolex watch.

He pondered when he would also receive a bead bracelet as a gift from Hera.

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When Hera descended in a different outfit, breakfast was already served. However, no one touched their food until she sat down and started eating.

After breakfast, Lilith tactfully asked, "Hera, would you like to accompany me to the hospital later to visit your grandmother?"

As she asked, James, Gino, and Gideon all appeared to be going about their business. However, each of them was secretly listening intently. This was the result of their discussion while Hera was changing.

Both Lilith and Gino believed in Hera's medical skills. But James, who hadn't witnessed them, expressed doubt and leaned toward finding the miracle doctor.

Gideon, however, thought it would be imprudent to directly request Hera to treat Georgia, particularly considering Georgia's past attitude toward her because of Giselle.

Taking everything into account, they decided it was acceptable to have Hera take a look at Georgia first.

"I'm busy," Hera said lightly.

Lilith's eyes dimmed at her response.

James gave a cold laugh as if to say, "See, I told you it wouldn't work. We'll have to find the miracle doctor."

"I'll go next week," Hera added.

Lilith's eyes immediately brightened.

James remained silent.

"Hera has made it to the Belle finalists and needs to prepare for the speech contest next Friday. After that, she can go," Gideon explained.

## Chapter 133

Hera glanced up at Gideon. She was about to ask him how he knew about the situation when Gino suddenly spoke up.

"Hera, my Terranish is pretty good. If you have any questions, feel free to ask me anytime," Gino offered.

Hera remained silent.

"Your Terranish proficiency is like a first-grader's. It's not even enough to teach at kindergarten," Gideon remarked.

He then turned to Hera and added, "I've already contacted a Jascilian tutor. They'll drop by this afternoon for your tutoring session."

Gino was surprised.

"Having money doesn't make you great. When I have money, I can do the same!" he thought.

Hera replied calmly, "No need. I have to go out for a while. I won't be back for lunch."

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As the new week began, the academy forum was unusually active because the results of the Belle & Hunk election were released.

Lily stayed up until midnight on Friday to see the results.

She felt relieved when she saw that Hera unsurprisingly topped the girls' rankings. It wasn't in vain that she had spent the week pretending to support Hera and canvassing for votes.

Cindy came second, and Lily herself made it to tenth place. She looked forward to personally humiliating Hera and getting revenge for the embarrassment Hera had caused her.

The contestants were practicing their language skills and speech techniques for the speech contest on Friday at the academy's theatre.

Observers on the forum refreshed it daily, monitoring who was putting in the effort and how their chances of winning the title were improving.

Only Hera's probability of winning the beauty title remained at 0% without any progress.

It was due to the fact that no one had seen her practicing, and some even claimed she didn't attend classes regularly.

Consequently, those who had voted for Hera in the preliminary round began to question their initial belief that Hera would turn over a new leaf.

Meanwhile, Hera was in the laboratory, completely focused on separating the Eclipse Stone.

The liquid in the vial containing the Eclipse Stone was highly toxic. Without careful handling, the Eclipse Stone would turn into poison.

She had been in the laboratory for ten days when she finally separated the Eclipse Stone. The next step was pharmaceutical processing.

She logged into Raven's account and asked Piglet to locate some herbal medicines for her. When she switched back to her private account, she saw Bernard's profile picture in her chat records.

It was time for his follow-up appointment, yet he hadn't contacted her. Therefore, she decided to message him first.

"Are you at Skyview Heights? I'll come over later for your follow-up."

Two hours passed, and he still didn't reply, which made Hera feel uneasy. Bernard used to respond to her messages quickly.

At that moment, a knock on the door interrupted her thoughts.

She securely stored the Eclipse Stone, removed her gloves and protective clothing, and then opened the laboratory door to find Christopher waiting outside.

"Hello, Hera. I hope I'm not interrupting. I've come to escort you to my house," Christopher said, flashing a bright smile.

Hera nodded faintly.

"Let's go," she replied, locking the laboratory door behind her.

She had promised Andrew the week before that she would visit Mary at the Ludden residence after school that day.

They walked out of the laboratory building side by side, and the Ludden family's driver was already waiting downstairs.

Lily witnessed Christopher gallantly opening the car's back door for Hera. She immediately jumped to conclusions, thinking Hera was shameless for trying to seduce Christopher.

She promptly took several photos with her phone and anonymously posted them on the academy forum.

"No more talk about Hera not putting effort into the speech contest. She just has her own unique way," the caption read.

This news was like a bombshell, causing chaos on the forum.

#### Chapter 134

"Holy crap, is this what I think it is?"

"My world collapsed!"

"Instead of using these shady methods, why not practice speaking properly instead?"

"I wasted my vote. I'm regretting it now."

"The last person who openly flirted with Christopher was Janiya. She is now sleeping on the streets."

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"I have to agree, Hera's classy face suits the academic genius vibe perfectly."

"I agree with the comment above."

"Good looks are just a facade. She can never change her country-bumpkin nature. She's definitely not on par with our top student."

"Country bumpkin, stay away from Christopher!"

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"Maybe Hera just genuinely wants Christopher to tutor her!"

"Whether it's tutoring or something else, we'll find out at Friday's speech contest."

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Upon seeing the photos on the forum, Zyler felt a surge of anger.

His suspicions were confirmed, as Hera had indeed flirted with Christopher.

The image of Christopher willingly opening the car door for her only fueled Zyler's disdain.

He harbored a deep contempt for Hera.

First, she attempted to separate Giselle from him, then she tried to seduce Douglas, and now she was attempting to ensnare his good friend. Zyler couldn't help but wonder if she was trying to make him jealous or if she was simply inherently manipulative.

He couldn't comprehend how someone as academically accomplished as Christopher could be blinded by her.

He immediately called Christopher. He was unable to stand by and watch his good friend become one of Hera's victims.

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Christopher sat reservedly in the Lincoln carriage on the way to the Ludden residence, occasionally glancing at Hera beside him.

Hera sat with her legs crossed lazily, playing games on her phone against the backseat cushion. She appeared casual but exuded an aura of aloofness that kept others at bay.

Christopher pondered that a game capable of captivating Hera to such an extent must be sophisticated, possibly even related to academic pursuits.

"Hera, what game are you playing?" he couldn't help but inquire.

He also wanted to join in and play along with Hera.

Without batting her eyelids, Hera uttered, "A basic matching game."

At that moment, his phone rang. It was Zyler.

"Hey, Zee," Christopher answered.

"Chris, as your good friend, I have a question for you. Are you and Hera together?"

Unaware of the fervor on the school forum, Christopher interpreted it as a question on their current location.

Glancing at Hera beside him, he replied, "Yes, how did you know?"

Zyler's fury spiked at his response.



"Chris, some things might be hard to hear, but as your good friend, I feel obligated to tell you," he said seriously.

"What's wrong?" Christopher's tone matched Zyler's seriousness.

"I suggest you break up with Hera as soon as possible. She's not as good as you think."

Christopher frowned.

"What do you mean?"

"She may put on a good front and prove to be the true heiress to the Everett family, but she can't hide the fact that she grew up in a rural village. She lacks education, seeks shortcuts, and has a chaotic personal life," Zyler explained.

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"She's just a gold-digger. The Ludden family is a century-old scholarly family, and Dean Ludden is a stern and upright man who would never allow you to associate with someone like her! I advise you to break up with her before she hurts you."

As Christopher listened to Zyler's words, his expression grew increasingly grim.

Christopher wondered if Hera appeared truly despicable in Zyler's eyes and how his father, who had encouraged their relationship, could suddenly disapprove of it.

By now, the car had pulled into the Ludden family's courtyard, and the driver parked the car.

"If you're just playing around with her, I advise you to quit. We have the college entrance exams next year, and you can't outsmart her in a game of manipulation," Zyler said with disdain.

"Let me be honest with you, Christopher. Hera's only with you for the Ludden family's influence. She competed with Giselle over me when she was reintroduced to the Everett family. Later, I caught her with Uncle Bernard's assistant—"

"Zyler, stop it!" Christopher interrupted sharply as Hera got out of the car.

"I won't allow you to speak of Hera like that. If you insult her again, I'll end our friendship!"

With that, he hung up the phone.

On the other end of the line, Zyler stared at the darkened screen in disbelief and indignation.

He had underestimated Hera's allure. He couldn't imagine that even Christopher, who had always prioritized academics, was deeply entangled.

He had to find a way to expose Hera's true colors and prevent his good friend from being harmed.

After Hera got out of the car at the Ludden residence, she saw a white Bentley parked in the yard. It seemed like the Luddens had other guests.

After Christopher hung up the phone, he got out of the car and led Hera inside.

The Ludden family estate was much larger than the Everett family's. Hera followed Christopher through twists and turns for more than ten minutes until they reached a reception room.

Andrew was brewing tea on the coffee table in the room.

When he saw them approaching, he nodded and smiled, "Hera, have some tea. Stay for dinner tonight."

"No, thank you. Where is Mrs. Ludden Senior?" Hera inquired.

Although it wasn't the first time Christopher had seen his father being so solicitous towards Hera, witnessing the scene again made him feel a sense of awe.

He had thought Zylar was his good friend who could appreciate Hera's uniqueness like him. Yet, to his disappointment, Zylar turned out to be just like those ignorant masses who maligned Hera without understanding her true nature.

Christopher thought he should have severed ties with Zylar directly instead of just warning him.

"Please follow me this way. Things are a bit complicated..." Andrew led the way, explaining to Hera as they walked.

Following them through twists and turns for another five minutes, they finally arrived at the place where Mary was recuperating.

Two servants were watching the door. Before Andrew could even knock, the door opened from inside.

A woman in her early 40s walked out of the room. Although she was dressed elegantly and well-preserved, she exuded an air of haste.

"Aunt Jane," Christopher greeted her politely.

Jane disregarded him and turned to Andrew, saying, "Andrew, what's going on? I've arranged for Dr. Shadow to come and treat Mary today. Why did you bring an alternative medicine practitioner here?"

As her gaze fell upon Hera, she exclaimed, "Is this who you brought?"

Dressed in a Cavendrige uniform, Hera boasted a remarkably beautiful countenance. Her complexion was flawless, and she emitted a composed aura that belied her youthful appearance.

Jane might have believed it if she were Christopher's girlfriend, but labeling her as an alternative medicine practitioner seemed implausible to Jane.

"Are you joking about Mary's health?" Jane questioned sharply.

As Andrew's sister-in-law, Jane had been instrumental in garnering support for Mary to secure Andrew's leadership position in the Ludden family.

Although not malicious, Jane was fiercely competitive, always striving to prove the superiority of the main family branch over the second, even in matters like Mary's medical care.

"Hera is wise beyond her years," Andrew retorted with a serious expression.

"Moreover, Mom has been suffering from rheumatism for decades, and despite seeing numerous doctors, none have been able to cure her. I brought Hera here to give it a try. What harm could it do?"

Jane scoffed.

"That's because the previous doctors weren't competent. The one I've invited today is the renowned Dr. Shadow!"

Chapter 136

"I'm sure Dr. Shadow can cure Mary's rheumatoid arthritis, so just stay out of it," Jane said confidently.

Hera remained silent, her attention drawn to her phone buzzing in her pocket. Glancing at it, she saw it was from Bernard. Stepping aside to answer the call, Aaron's urgent voice came from the other end of the phone.

"Ms. Youngworth, Bernard is in trouble. He's badly injured, and I'm afraid he might not make it. Where are you?"

Hera's mind went blank, her breath catching in her throat.

"Ms. Youngworth? Are you there?" Aaron's voice pulled Hera back to reality.

Shaking off the shock, she replied, "Pick me up at the Ludden residence."

With that, she ended the call and turned to Andrew.

"Something's come up. I have to go."

"Are you alright, Hera?"

Andrew's concern was evident in his voice as he noticed her pale expression. But before he could inquire further, Hera had already left in a hurry.

"Christopher, please see her off," Andrew immediately instructed.

Christopher nodded and ran after Hera.

"Andrew, make sure to get a more professional doctor next time," Jane remarked with a chuckle.

"Just look at how quickly she ran when I mentioned Dr. Shadow."

"I believe something urgent must have come up. Otherwise, she wouldn't have left so abruptly," Andrew replied with a serious expression before walking away.

"That doesn't change the fact she ran away!" Jane scoffed, returning to Mary's room.

"What's the matter, Mrs. Ludden?" Camille asked, emerging from the room.

"Nothing much, Ms. Chime. My brother-in-law brought a young lady home, claiming to practice alternative medicine. But as soon as I mentioned your name, she fled in a hurry."

Jane chuckled.

Taking Camille's hands, she said sincerely, "Ms. Chime, I'm counting on you to cure my mother-in-law's illness now!"

Since Jane had boasted to Andrew about Camille's capabilities, she now had to ensure that Camille lived up to her promise.

A hint of distress crossed Camille's face. Based on her understanding of current medical advancements, she hadn't come across anyone capable of completely curing rheumatoid arthritis. It typically required ongoing management through treatment.

While manageable, the condition inevitably deteriorated over time. Rheumatoid arthritis was among the most challenging diseases to treat worldwide, and Camille doubted even the real Dr. Shadow could cure it.

"I'll do my best," Camille replied with a smile.

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Stepping out of the main entrance of the Ludden residence, Hera saw a helicopter landing nearby.

With its door open, Aaron leaped off the helicopter to escort Hera aboard.

The helicopter had already departed when Christopher reached the main entrance.

"Hera and Aaron knew each other?" Christopher murmured as he watched the familiar helicopter slowly vanish into the night sky.

Aaron noticed Hera skilfully buckling up in the helicopter, indicating that this wasn't her first helicopter ride.

"How is he doing?" Hera asked.

Aaron explained, "The bullet is pressing against the major artery in his thigh. Johnson and the doctors at the hospital refrained from removing it. They're concerned that the bullet fragments might enter the bloodstream and flow to the heart, which could be fatal.

"But if we don't remove the bullet, it will continue pressing against the artery, cutting off blood flow, and his leg will slowly die, potentially leading to amputation..."

"They suggested that the best solution would be to amputate his leg to secure his life. However, Bernard disagreed. He's lost a significant amount of blood, had a high fever, and was in a semi-comatose state. Despite his critical condition, he instructed us not to inform you because he didn't want to worry you.

"Now he's completely unconscious, and his fever isn't subsiding. We're concerned that he might—"

## Chapter 137

Upon hearing Aaron's report on Bernard's current condition, Hera felt a sob catch in her throat, leaving her at a loss for words. It was as though a surge of emotion fluttered through her heart, making her feel suffocated.

So Bernard hadn't been contacting her or even replying to her messages because he was in dire condition. She wondered why he couldn't have more faith in her medical skills.

"Actually, Bernard had retired from the frontline due to health reasons. However, our team found itself on a challenging mission, and we had no choice but to request his support.

"It's all my fault. I knew he wasn't fit for the mission, yet I still requested him. He was shot because I failed to cover him," Aaron blamed himself, his fist landing heavily on the cushion.

Not skilled at offering comfort, Hera replied awkwardly, "Don't blame yourself. It was his decision."

Aaron nodded in understanding. They had been comrades-in-arms for over nine years. If Bernard were to ask for his assistance, he would agree without hesitation, even in the face of great danger.

"Have Johnson and the other doctors prepare the operating room. I'll need a set of silver needles as well. We'll begin the surgery as soon as we land," Hera instructed.

"Huh?"

Aaron was stunned.

He had come to fetch Hera so she could see Bernard one last time in case Bernard didn't make it. He hadn't expected her to perform surgery on him.

From Johnson, Aaron learned that Hera practiced medicine and was treating Bernard with alternative medicine.

However, removing a bullet required modern medical skills, and Bernard's condition was so critical that even Johnson and the doctors in the hospital doubted they could succeed. He pondered how Hera could possibly complete such a challenging surgery.

"What are you waiting for?"

Hera glared at him, prompting him to act on her instructions.

"Got it!"

Sensing her urgency, Aaron quickly contacted Johnson.

Meanwhile, Hera also sent a message to Lilith, informing her that she wouldn't be home for the next two days.

After texting, she looked out the window, silently praying, "Hang in there, Bernard. I'm on my way now."

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20 minutes later, the helicopter landed at the secret military hospital. Aaron led Hera straight to the meeting room next to the operating room, where Johnson and several doctors were in the midst of discussing surgical plans.

Upon seeing Hera, who appeared to be barely of age, the doctors couldn't help but wonder if she was capable of performing surgery on Bernard.

Despite their doubts, Johnson showed Hera their plans and Bernard's current condition. He had prepared the surgical antiseptics and the silver needles she had requested. They were already set aside for her to begin the surgery at any moment.

"Ms. Hera, how many assistants do you need?" Johnson asked.

Having witnessed Hera's ability to pull Bernard out of illness before, Johnson was confident she could bring him back from the brink of death.

"You alone will be sufficient," Hera replied, having confirmed the bullet's position through the CT scans they had taken.

Without hesitation, she swiftly tied up her long hair and disinfected herself. Donned in surgical sterile clothing, she entered the operating room with the silver needles.

"Okay."

Johnson quickly followed behind.

The doctors, who had been listening to their conversation, were shocked. They couldn't believe the internationally renowned genius, Dr. Johnson Chime, would become Hera's assistant.

Moreover, given the complexity of the surgery, Hera should require at least two assistants, yet she only requested Johnson's.

They couldn't understand how the two of them could execute such a challenging surgery, especially when even they had found it difficult.

The doctors found Hera's plan rather implausible.

## Chapter 138

The doctors kept their doubts to themselves since Johnson, Bernard's personal doctor, had decided.

Meanwhile, Hera finally saw Bernard in the operating room. As he lay on the table with his eyes closed, Bernard's lips stood out as unusually crimson against his pale expression. His hand, where the IV drip was attached, bore bruises and needle marks.

Typically exuding an air of authority, Bernard now appeared fragile and weak. His brows remained furrowed despite being unconscious, hinting at a subtle restlessness beneath his closed eyelids, as if he were trapped in a nightmare.

Hera observed his heart rate and blood pressure readings on the monitor. It appeared that his condition was more critical than she had anticipated.

As she touched his forehead, Hera felt the heat. It was feverish enough to sear her heart.

"The fever is a result of a wound infection. We've administered antibiotics and antipyretics, but their effect is minimal," Johnson explained, his tone tinged with concern.

He feared the prolonged fever might affect Bernard's brain before his leg.

Hera gently smoothed Bernard's furrowed brows, then swiftly opened the packet of silver needles. With precision and expertise, she inserted the needles into specific acupuncture points.

Shortly after, Bernard's agonized expression gradually eased.

"Attach the oxygen tube and be careful around the needles. We'll begin the surgery right away," Hera instructed, removing the IV drip from Bernard's hand to check his pulse at the wrist.

"Got it," Johnson affirmed.

Despite his extensive surgical experience and the years since he last acted as an assistant in the operating theatre, Johnson felt no discomfort at following Hera's lead.

On the contrary, he was quite impressed by her performance. It was the first time he had witnessed someone seamlessly integrate acupuncture with modern medicine, let alone apply it in a challenging surgery.

As Hera, clad in a green surgical gown, stood at the operating table with her head bowed in concentration, her movements were precise and steady.



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Aaron paced anxiously in the hallway outside the operating room, his gaze frequently darting toward the closed door. His brows were knitted tight with worry. Several doctors stood nearby, waiting with him.

"Captain Ludden, should we inform the Killians about Mr. Killian's condition?" inquired one of the doctors.

He was Liam Jach, a man in his 40s with thick glasses and a bald head.

Given Bernard's former role as the captain of the special forces unit "Azure Wolf" and his status as the younger brother of the head of the Killian family, the doctors were concerned about the potential repercussions if anything were to happen to him during the surgery at their hospital.

"That won't be necessary," Aaron dismissed the suggestion firmly.

"Bernard's condition must remain confidential. No one should be informed."

Aaron had some insight into Bernard's situation within the Killian family. He knew the Killians were all coveting the shares Albert had left for Bernard. If news got out that Bernard was in critical

condition, they would surely make a move to secure his shares, preventing them from falling into charitable hands.

Moreover, external forces were keeping a keen eye on Astral Nova and internal conflicts within the organization. Any disclosure of Bernard's condition would undoubtedly trigger a chain reaction. Therefore, keeping Bernard's status strictly confidential was paramount.

"Yes, sir!" the doctors replied solemnly.

"But should we at least have a close relative of Mr. Killian sign this surgical consent form?" Liam asked hesitantly, holding up the unsigned document.

While the consent form wasn't mandatory, given Bernard's unique status and critical condition, Liam felt it prudent to have it signed to shield him from potential liabilities.

Aaron glanced at the form, then back at the doctors. He understood their concerns from their expressions. It was clear they still harbored doubts about Hera's medical abilities.

Aaron retorted, somewhat irritated by their lack of trust, "That won't be necessary. Mrs. Killian is currently inside the operating room!"

"M-Mrs. Killian?" Liam stuttered, visibly taken aback, as were the other doctors.

## Chapter 139

Liam and the doctors were puzzled at the mention of Mrs. Killian. They wondered when Bernard had gotten married. The young lady looked barely of age.

Although their curiosity peaked, the doctors silently stared at Aaron, keeping their thoughts to themselves.

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Outside the window, darkness gradually gave way to the breaking dawn, marking the end of the heart-wrenching wait.

In the operating room, Hera's forehead glistened with sweat as she deftly removed the bullet with the forceps in her left hand.

The sound of the bullet hitting the metal tray echoed through the otherwise quiet operating room, drowned out only by the hum of machinery.

Johnson's eyes lit up with overwhelming joy.

They had succeeded! Judging by the vital signs monitor readings, Bernard's condition had been resolved without any complications.

While he and other seasoned doctors had spent hours deliberating over a viable surgical plan, Hera had effortlessly completed the surgery after a quick examination of the CT scans and Bernard's pulse.

He found her to be truly remarkable.

Johnson suddenly recalled Bernard's search for Dr. Shadow. It seemed they no longer needed Dr. Shadow now that they had Hera.

"Stitch him up," Hera instructed Johnson.

As Johnson closed the wound with sutures, she applied a few more acupuncture needles to Bernard.

With the surgery now concluded, Johnson moved to open the operating room door while Hera removed her gloves and gently brushed her fingers against Bernard's cheeks. She let out a sigh of relief.

Although Bernard's body temperature remained slightly elevated, his fever had subsided, and his lips had regained their natural color.

Despite his pale expression, he slept soundly, like a sleeping prince awaiting to be wakened up with a kiss.

As soon as the operating room door opened, Aaron hurried over and asked anxiously, "How did it go?"

Stepping out of the operating room, Johnson finally released his tension, his expression worn out from exhaustion.

However, his demeanor shocked the other doctors, who assumed the worst. A chill crept down their spines as they contemplated the potential consequences if Bernard had indeed perished during the surgery.

"Captain Ludden, I'm truly sorry. If I had tried to stop them or perhaps joined their surgery, Mr. Killian might still be alive now," Liam exclaimed, dropping to his knees, his expression filled with remorse.

Liam's reaction startled the other doctors, leaving them uncertain if they should follow suit.

"What nonsense are you blabbering about!" Johnson interjected.

"The surgery was a great success! The patient is stable without needing to amputate his leg!"

"Really?" Liam exclaimed in disbelief.

Ignoring him, Johnson returned to the operating room to assist Hera in wheeling Bernard out.

The doctors were left dumbfounded, unable to grasp how a young lady had succeeded in a surgery they deemed challenging.

Without hesitation, they dropped to their knees, offering their sincere respect to Hera.

"You're a genius, Mrs. Killian! You have our deepest respect and gratitude, Mrs. Killian!"

Hera stared at them in puzzlement.

Chapter 140

Staring at those shiny bald heads kneeling before her, Hera turned to Aaron and asked calmly, "What's going on?"

She wondered why they suddenly started addressing her as Mrs. Killian after the surgery.

Aaron hadn't expected the usually serious doctors to turn so sycophantic suddenly. He couldn't help but wonder where those doctors who had doubted Hera had disappeared to.

The doctors lifted their heads and glanced at Aaron, seemingly questioning whether Hera was indeed Mrs. Killian.

Ignoring their curious stares, Aaron reassured himself that Hera would eventually become Mrs. Killian anyway, so he wasn't exactly lying.

"They're simply in awe of your extraordinary medical skills. They wondered if you could cure their balding issues," Aaron replied to Hera's question with a fabricated reason.

The doctors were taken aback by Aaron's statement. While not offensive, it was undeniably humiliating.

After a long night of surgery, Hera's face showed signs of exhaustion as she finally relaxed. Nevertheless, she instructed Johnson to take Bernard to the ward while she fetched her acupuncture kit.

"We certainly can't have doctors roaming around with shiny bald heads. It can be hurtful to the eyes," Hera remarked as she spread her kit on a chair in the hallway.

Aaron was dumbfounded. He didn't expect her actually to know how to cure baldness.

Meanwhile, the doctors were left speechless. They began to debate internally whether they were at fault for neglecting their appearance.

As doctors, they felt that they should prioritize medical studies over their looks. Thus, they figured that they shouldn't be overly concerned about their baldness.

However, if their medical knowledge was sufficient, they might have resolved their baldness issue long ago.

...

Bernard found himself trapped in a small, dark room. Inside, he was transported back to his childhood, where his mother lay in a pool of blood, surrounded by mocking voices accusing him of being illegitimate.

Faces with vicious smiles advanced toward him. They were the faces of the house helper who desecrated his mother's ashes, the maid who held him underwater, and the cook who poisoned his food.

With reddened eyes, he clutched a dagger tightly, thrusting it at them relentlessly until they retreated in fear. Discarding the dagger, he fled.

However, no matter how fast he ran and where he went, he found only endless darkness, as if he were trapped alone in this world.

As fear, isolation, helplessness, and despair crept into his heart, pushing him to the verge of collapse, he suddenly heard a familiar yet cold female voice.

He dashed toward the voice until he glimpsed a glimmer of light ahead.

"Bernard..."

When Bernard opened his eyes, his gaze found the face he had longed for.

Upon seeing him awake, Hera's eyelashes fluttered as she gazed at him with lowered eyes, a hint of joy flashing across them.

"I might have resorted to using my needles to wake you if you hadn't woken up," Hera teased.

Bernard slowly closed his eyes again, feeling the intense pain in his left leg after the anesthesia had worn off.

The pain reminded him that the scene before him wasn't a dream. Hera was here with him, and so was his leg.

With a twitch of his discolored lips, he said, "Perhaps your kiss could fully awaken me."

Hera was left speechless by his request.