

Under the Heiress' Facade #Chapter 231 - Read Under the Heiress' Facade Chapter 231

Chapter 231

Upon hearing that, Hera, who had been resting with her eyes closed, suddenly opened them wide.

Gideon looked utterly shocked. He didn't dare slam on the brakes but slowed down instead. Only someone intimately connected would use such an affectionate term. He began to wonder if the old man had already made a move on Hera!

Hera sensed the car slowing down. Afraid that Bernard might say something provocative again and distract Gideon from driving properly, she promptly responded, "We just have a doctor-patient relationship. There's nothing to say about it."

Bernard was somewhat speechless.

He was sure that Hera was intentionally giving him the cold shoulder.

Ever since she got the gurdyroot, she had been avoiding him. He speculated that Hera might have discovered he was Grandmaster of Astral Nova. She was angry with him because she thought he had been playing games with her by asking for the photos.

Gideon glanced at Hera. She didn't seem to be lying. She had mentioned before that she would stay at Bernard's house just for the convenience of treating him.

However, Bernard calling her "sweetie" made Gideon suspicious that this scoundrel was pretending to need treatment to pursue Hera! Fortunately, Hera was smart and wouldn't fall for such a trick easily.

With their minds occupied by different thoughts, the three arrived at the hot spring resort. James' car arrived shortly after.

That hot spring resort was a popular landmark. It was crowded with visitors to the hot spring every winter, and reservations were required in advance for entry.

It was Christmas that day, and Gideon managed to get the passes through a friend. However, upon arrival, he saw that the parking lot was almost empty. The reception area had only the staff.

"Why isn't anyone else here?" Lilith murmured.

"The other guests have yet to arrive," the receptionist explained and smiled.

"Clearly, the place has been cleared out," Gino said as he crossed his arms and raised his head with a look of disdain.

The receptionist could only smile politely in response. She hadn't expected kids these days to be so sharp.

"Cleared out?" James was surprised, but then he suddenly felt quite proud.

He had always wanted to do something like this, but even at their peak, the Everett family could only afford to book a five-star hotel for a banquet. Clearing out a high-traffic resort was out of the question, especially now that he was bankrupt. Content belongs to

Lilith, however, looked a bit worried. "Gideon, it's really not necessary-"

"Mom, this isn't his doing. His wallet isn't that deep," Gino said disdainfully as he gave Gideon a scornful glance.

He was still holding a grudge from the last time Gideon charged him 50 percent interest. Besides, he didn't believe Gideon had such capability. It must have been Bernard who` arranged it. As far as he knew, Killian Corporation owned this resort.

Content belongs

"Are you happy now? Haven't you noticed that your sister and that man are missing?" Gideon asked with a chilling tone.

It was only then that Gino and the others noticed that Hera and Bernard, who had been waiting in the seating area, were nowhere to be seen.

Meanwhile, at a gazebo in the hot

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spring resort, Hera turned around and questioned, "Why did you follow me? Her gaze was cold as she stared at Bernard. Content belongs

"Since you wouldn't come to me, I had to come to you," Bernard replied as he looked at her. "I received your gift. Thank you, sweetie."

Hera was about to say something when she saw him roll up his suit sleeve, revealing a delicate canary diamond square cufflink on his shirt cuff. It was the exact pair she had returned!

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Hera never expected that pair of cufflinks to end up in his hands.

"I didn't expect you to secretly prepare a Christmas gift for me. It made me very happy." Bernard smiled.

Yesterday afternoon, when he returned to Skyview Heights, he ran into a Jacob & Co. salesperson who had come to deliver the cufflinks.

Bernard learned from the salesperson that Hera had secretly ordered a gift a month ago. When he asked her about it back then, she had played dumb. It turned out she had prepared this little surprise for him.

However, some unpleasant events nearly ruined it.

Watching his smiling face and considering his sexual orientation, Hera felt it was ironic to give him a gift since they had no relationship. "Who said the cufflinks were for you? I prepared them for my brother. Take them off!" she said with mild anger as she stepped forward to retrieve them.

Bernard dodged her reaching hand, grabbed her, and pulled her into his firm chest. As she tried to push him away, he quickly seized her hands. "You already gave your brother a pair of sapphire cufflinks. You wouldn't give the same gift twice. This pair was custom-made for me, wasn't it?" Bernard asked as he looked down at her intently, waiting for her to admit it.

As he looked at her that way, Hera felt a surge of irritation. She thought he must find it amusing to tease her this way. She struggled to free her hands, but the disparity in their strength was too significant.

"Let go of me!" she said coldly, her expression stern.

Despite seeing Hera angry, Bernard still didn't loosen his grip. "Answer me first. Were these cufflinks custom-made especially for me?" At that moment, Bernard was a completely different person from the one who often played the victim.

Hera was momentarily stunned. She suddenly realized that she might not understand Bernard at all and even wondered if the person she thought she knew had just been playing with her all along. The thought made her angry. "Does it really matter?"

"It matters a lot! If they are, it means you have feelings for me!" Bernard gazed into her eyes. "Do you get it?" He couldn't always yield to Hera. Otherwise, she wouldn't realize her feelings for him. Content belongs

Hera stared at him without speaking, but her usually calm eyes showed traces of anger. It seemed she was really upset.

Bernard had no choice but to let go of her hands. "Don't be mad. I've prepared a gift for you too."

As soon as he finished his sentence, an attendant approached with a tray holding a gift box tied with a champagne-colored ribbon.

Hera wanted to leave, but Bernard handed her the gift. "Open it and take a look."

Hera took a glance at it and eventually opened the gift box. Inside was a set of gold-colored needle kits. When she opened the kit, she found a complete set of needles made of pure gold.

Hera was taken aback for a

moment, and her anger instantly

dissipated. Since childhood, she had

been exposed to all kinds of ad

and silver needles through her,

grandma. She immediately

recognized this set as the famous Webb's Gold Needles from the previous century.

Content belongs

Webb's Gold Needles, made entirely by hand from pure gold, were renowned for their exceptional

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craftsmanship. Despite the ne

production cost, they were

particularly popular in the alternative medicine community. Content

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Nevertheless, when the needles were inherited by the fourth generation, the inheritor retreated into seclusion due to various disputes within the community.

Since then, Webb's Gold Needles had become a legend in the alternative medicine field. Research indicated that there were now only three complete sets left in the field.

Hera recognized the kit immediately because Catherine owned one of the sets. She had always wanted to get a set for herself, but the Webb family's descendants had stopped making the gold needles.

However, this set of Webb's Gold Needles was clearly new as Hera noticed her name delicately engraved on the needles.

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It was a custom-made set of Webb's Gold Needles just for her!

"Do you like it?" Bernard asked.

Hera nodded. "How did you make this happen?" She never imagined Bernard could get the descendant of the Webb family, who had ceased making needles, to craft a personalized set of gold needles for her.

"I told him I wanted to personally craft a set of gold needles to gift to someone very important. I asked for his guidance, and he agreed right away," Bernard said.

He spoke of it casually, but in reality, Johnson expended considerable manpower and time searching tirelessly for descendant of the Webb family. It took a lot of effort to persuade him to agree to provide guidance, and only then did the crafting of the gold needles begin.

Bernard personally crafted the entire set of gold needles himself. He had never done such meticulous craftsmanship before, so it took a lot of raw materials to produce these 16 functional gold needles.

Hera was skeptical that everything had been as simple as Bernard described.

While she didn't know what Bernard had been through, she understood that these gold needles must have come at a great cost.

Compared to the canary diamond square cufflinks she had custom-made, the set of Webb's Gold Needles was far more valuable and carried profound meaning.

"Thank you!" She gently caressed the gold needles, her eyes filled with uncontainable delight.

Noticing her happiness, Bernard couldn't help but raise his hand and lightly pat her head. "A late but perfect gift to celebrate your guaranteed admission."

Hera lifted her head to look at him. She thought Bernard didn't know about that. Little did she expect, he had known all along and quietly prepared such a gift for her. She began to wonder if Bernard hadn't reached out to her in the past few days because he had been in the mountains.

She suddenly felt that her previous deliberate avoidance of him seemed childish. Regardless of whether he liked men or women, she appreciated his gesture and thought that even being ordinary friends was quite nice.

"The way you're staring at me makes me want to do something to you," Bernard said as he gently lifted Hera's chin.

Hera hesitated for a moment, wondering what he was up to. The next moment, she saw Bernard's sharply defined handsome face getting closer. "What are you two doing here?" Gino's abrupt and stern voice interrupted Bernard just as he was about to get closer.

He released Hera and turned around,

only to see Gino standing with hands on hips, glaring fiercely at him. Behind Gino stood Gideon. His expression was tense and vigilant as if he were guarding against Bernard. Content belongs

Both Bernard and Hera were at a loss for words.

"Hera, we've got your room sorted. Here's your key card." Gideon stepped forward and squeezed between Hera and Bernard, forcefully separating them.

Bernard was somewhat speechless.

Gino caught sight of the gift box in Hera's hand. "If you want something, just tell me. Don't accept gifts from strangers. What if they're trying to deceive you?"

Hera was instantly at a loss for words, thinking that Gino really didn't get it.

"Do I look like a scammer?" Bernard asked with a smile. He needed to stay calm while dealing with his future brother-in-law.

After sizing him up intently, Gino remarked, "Not really. You seem more like a bandit!" Before they knew it, he had whisked Hera away just like a bandit!

Upon hearing that, Bernard didn't know how to respond for a moment.

Gideon sensed the chill emanating from Bernard and said to Hera, "Hera, it's cold here. Let's go back to the room to warm up before heading to the hot springs."

Feeling puzzled by the tension between them, Hera nodded and followed him.

The four of them headed to their rooms together.

Gideon had obtained VIP passes through a friend, so they checked into a mansion. It had three bedrooms, two living rooms, and a backyard with a private outdoor hot spring pool. Content belongs NôveID(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

James and Lilith had already settled into one room, leaving the other two. Originally, Gideon and Gino were to share one while Hera and Mildred would take the other.
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In his hurry to find Hera and Bernard, Gideon hadn't noticed the room numbers given by the receptionist. It wasn't until they arrived that he realized Mildred, who was supposed to share a room with Hera, hadn't come, and Bernard was here instead, which meant they would have to share a room!

Hera stood at the door, looked at the key card in her hand, then at Bernard, and finally, at Gideon. She didn't expect her brother to put her in such a predicament.

Gideon was momentarily stunned.

"What kind of arrangement is this? Why are you so stingy? Couldn't you get another room?" Gino kicked Gideon.

Bernard's lips curled into a smile as he said, "Since there aren't enough rooms, we'll just have to make do for the night."

"No way!" Gideon and Gino shouted together.

Gideon continued, "You don't look the least bit reluctant!"

Gino added, "Not enough rooms? Didn't you clear the whole place out?"

Hera was utterly speechless.

In the end, after a round of swapping key cards, Hera and Lilith ended up in one room, James and Gino in another, and the last one was for Gideon and Bernard.

Once everything was settled, Gideon smiled as he handed the key card to Bernard, saying, "Mr. Killian, you and I are sharing a room. If you mind, feel free to step outside and take any room you like."

Gino nodded in rare approval, thinking Gideon's strategy was spot on.

Meanwhile, James wanted to curry favor with Bernard to revive the company, so he hoped Bernard would stay. However, what Gideon said was practically an affront to Bernard's pride.

What a ridiculous idea! As the seventh son of the illustrious Killian family, there was no way he would condescend to share a room with a stranger, especially with so many empty rooms available.

To everyone's surprise, Bernard took the room key, swiped it, and entered the room without a change in expression.

James was astonished. "Well, you..." (C) content.

Both Gino and Gideon were rendered speechless.

They had underestimated how shameless Bernard could be. Hera watched as Bernard and Gideon walked into the room together, and her brows furrowed slightly.

Bernard had said before that not just anyone could see his body and even asked her to take photos. Tagging along to the hot springs was one thing, but he was even willing to share a room with Gideon. Content belongs

Thinking about that, Hera couldn't help but wonder if Bernard might be interested in her brother.

"Hera, what's the matter? You..." Liliith saw Hera staring at Bernard's room door and grew concerned.

She wondered if Hera wanted to share a room with Bernard.

Hera snapped out of it and replied, "It's nothing."

Once inside the room, Hera immediately placed the box with the gold needles into her bag.

As Liliith took Hera's swimsuit out of the suitcase, she noticed the item in Hera's hand and was somewhat surprised.

Hera always gave off an aloof and unapproachable vibe, making it hard for people to get close to her. She seemed indifferent to everything.

It was the first time she had seen

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Hera cherish something so much, and it seemed like it was a gift from Bernard, Suddenly, a thought occurred to her, and she hesitantly asked, "Hera, are you dating Mr. Kiftian?" Content belongs to

Hera was taken aback. She didn't understand why even Lilith thought they were dating.

"No!" Hera blurted out.

Hera's quick and unequivocal denial made Lilith question whether Hera was angry because she had been too intrusive or if Hera was upset because she wasn't sharing a room with Bernard. Content belongs

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Hera turned around and saw Lilith frowning, only then realizing that her tone was a bit harsh.

She softened her voice and said, "Really! Nothing is going on between us. Don't overthink it. We're just..." After a brief pause, she continued, "...friends."

Lilith stared at Hera in surprise as she didn't expect her to explain. The next moment, her expression brightened with joy. "Is it the friend you mentioned living at his house before?"

Hera responded with an affirmative hum.

Lilith nodded with a knowing expression. "Did you two have a fight?"

Her concern caught Hera off guard.

"Aren't you surprised?" Hera asked.

Logically speaking, Lilith should have been quite surprised. Previously, when she sent Gideon to Skyview Heights to fetch the gift and he found out Hera was staying at Bernard's place, he was visibly taken aback and even appeared resistant.

Therefore, even though Hera later agreed to return to the Everett residence, she didn't tell anyone else about it.

Lilith nodded. "I'm quite surprised. When Mr. Killian first visited our house, I didn't expect you to know him. I was equally surprised this morning when he said he had come to pick you up himself."

Hearing that, Hera was somewhat speechless.

She had the impression that Lilith's surprise was about the person, not the matter. However, considering how early Giselle and Zylar got engaged, they shouldn't be surprised about early romance anymore.

Wait, she wasn't into an early romance!

Lilith continued shyly, "Your dad and I started secretly seeing each other during high school. We were more innocent back then. However, after we became wealthy, his temperament changed..."

If possible, she wouldn't want Hera to marry into a wealthy family, especially a prominent one. She knew well the difficulties of being a daughter-in-law in such affluent households. There would always be a sense of being out of place if one's background doesn't fit.

However, if Hera truly desired it, she wouldn't intervene. Instead, she'd respect her choice.

"It's okay. If you really love him, I support you, Lilith reassured. "In relationships, there will always be disagreements. One of you will always have to make concessions for the other. You both need to give each other more room for things to last." Content belongs to

As Hera listened to her advice, she couldn't help but feel that something was amiss. After all, she wasn't even of legal age yet, and Lilith seemed to be thinking too far ahead.

"Mom, you've got it wrong. It's not what you think," she cut off Lilith.

"Is it?" Lilith sounded unsure. "But I've noticed Mr. Killian treats you differently."

Bernard exuded an inherent air of

nobility. Even when he deliberately

lowered his stance, there was

always a pressure that made people hesitant to offend or get close.

However, when he looked at Hera,

others could sense that he

unwittingly became gentle, with a tenderness that was uniquely for Hera. Content belongs to

It was obvious that he loved her.

Furthermore, Lilith also sensed that Hera's mood had clearly changed since Bernard appeared.© - All rights reserved.

"No, you're mistaken. Instead of worrying about me, you should worry about Gideon," Hera said.

Before learning about Bernard's sexual orientation, she had sensed he treated her differently. However, upon learning about it, she no longer thought that way.

Bernard's different treatment toward her might just be because they grew up together. Moreover, she knew about his undisclosed illness and had promised to treat him.

"What's wrong with Gideon? He doesn't even have a girlfriend," Lilith asked in confusion.

Hera responded, "That's all the more reason for you to be worried."

With two single men sleeping under one roof, she didn't know if Bernard would do something out of line.

Hearing that, Lilith was even more puzzled.

There was only a king-size bed measuring five feet and seven inches and a small couch in the other room. Bernard came in and sat on the couch. With his legs crossed casually, he looked intently at his phone.

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Standing behind the door, Gideon gritted his teeth in frustration as he watched Bernard lounging comfortably on the couch. He had thought he could provoke Bernard into leaving, but instead, he ended up getting himself into trouble. Content belongs to

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There was no way Gideon could sleep with Bernard in the same bed. He believed Bernard would never accept it as well. It was a battle between men to determine who would stay in this room. If he lost, the damn Bernard might push his luck.

For Hera's sake, he had to hold on and stay here. He would make Bernard leave!

Bernard had already seen through Gideon's attempt to drive him away, but Gideon underestimated his perseverance. This was originally his and Hera's room. Gideon was the one who should leave.

Bernard glanced at Gideon, who had been standing, and said, "You take the bed. I'll sleep on the couch."

Gideon was a little surprised by Bernard's generosity. He teased, "Mr. Killian, are you trying to please me?"

Even if Gideon did want to sleep on the bed, that wasn't enough to win him over. He had to make Bernard leave.

Bernard looked at him seriously and responded, "I always respect the elders."

Gideon's eyes widened as he gritted his teeth. "Elder? I'm only 25! If you think I'm old, then you're not young either! You're only one year younger than me!"

Bernard adjusted his glasses and said gently, "But you're not far from reaching 30. You're old enough to be an elder."

Gideon was pissed off. He was still young and would never admit to being old. He said firmly, "I'm young! Put away your respect!"

"Alright then. You sleep on the couch tonight." Bernard instantly got up.

Gideon froze. Damn it, he fell into the trap. Bernard provoked him on purpose!

After losing twice in a row, Gideon felt he had gotten off to a horrible start. He was facing a strong opponent. He had to find another way.

Right then, the doorbell rang. Gideon turned around and opened the door, only to find Hera standing at the doorway.

She wore her bathrobe loosely,

revealing her delicate neck and sexy

collarbones. Despite being

underage, her swimsuit couldn't

conceal her good figure, which

revealed her flawless curves.

Content belongs

Gideon hurried out and closed the door as he didn't want Bernard to see her.

"Are you alright?" Hera secretly observed him.

Gideon felt moved, believing she came here to show her concern to him. Despite losing twice against Bernard, he had a look of delight on his face and smiled at Hera. "I'm fine. What's up?" Content belongs

She thought for a while before reminding him, "Stay away from him."

Gideon's smile slightly stiffened. "Huh?" NôveID(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

He thought that what Hera said sounded strange. Could it be that she liked Bernard?

At the same time, Bernard opened

the ajar door from the inside. He et

stepped out and asked, "Sweetie, are you here to invite me to the hot springs?" Content belongs

Chapter 237

Bernard leaned against the door with a charming smile.

Hera could tell he was in a good mood. He seemed to be having a wonderful time with Gideon. She wondered if he truly had a crush on Gideon. NôveID(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

She learned from Lilith that Gideon was straight. It would be disastrous if Bernard took a fancy to him.

Gideon was nice to her, so she couldn't let Bernard lead him astray. She had to figure out how to keep them apart.

So, Hera responded, "Yes, I am."

Gideon was surprised upon hearing that. He felt she was so bold and unaware of the danger lurking beside her. He had to stop her from taking a dip in the hot springs with Bernard.

"Go first, Hera. We'll change into our swimsuits." Gideon quickly pushed Bernard back into the room.

Hera frowned as she looked at them return to the room.

She had no idea when their relationship got so good. She was much more concerned for Gideon's safety now.

The room had an independent bathroom, and the hotel attendant had prepared new swimming trunks for Bernard in advance. After he changed into them, he put on a bathrobe to conceal the scars on his body.

When he came out, Gideon had already changed into swimming trunks and a bathrobe. He was waiting for him in the living room.

Bernard could faintly hear Hera and Lilith talking in the backyard. He walked straight over. When Gideon saw that, he immediately gave chase. "Mr. Killian, let's go to the hot springs outside."

Bernard declined, saying, "I don't like to be in the same pool as outsiders." He then looked at Hera.

She was standing near the hot spring pool, helping Lilith in wrapping her hair in a towel so that she wouldn't catch a cold later.

The hem of her bathrobe went up a lot because she was raising her arms, leaving her straight legs exposed to the cold air.

Gideon followed Bernard's gaze and thought, "Hmph, you liar! Do you think I can't see through you? I bet you won't say no if Hera invites you!"

As he complained in his heart, he

thought about how to separate Bernard and Hera. He suddenly spotted Gino, who had already changed into swimming trunks

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passing by. He stretched his foot out slightly. Content belongs to

Gino noticed it and immediately dodged it. Unexpectedly, he stepped on a puddle of water. He slipped and lost his balance, falling into the hot spring pool.

"Watch out!" James, who was following after, tried to pull Gino but failed. He immediately jumped into the pool and helped Gino out. "Are you alright?"

Lilith was startled. She quickly stepped forward and squatted by the pool to check on Gino.

Gino's face flushed as he choked on the water. "Gideon! Are you trying to kill me?"

The hot spring pool wasn't deep. When he stood up, the water only reached his shoulders.

"Ah, sorry, I didn't see you," Gideon apologized, hinting at him with a wink.

Gino glanced at Bernard and instantly understood what Gideon meant. However, he suspected that his brother was teasing him in the name of resisting the enemy. He assumed Gideon intended to accomplish two goals at once. Content belongs

He hummed and lay on the edge of the pool, unwilling to leave.

Seeing that, Gideon took advantage

of the opportunity to tell Bene

"Sorry, Mr. Killian. My brother already occupying this pool. bet's go to another one." Content belongs to

Bernard and Hera were both rendered speechless. Gideon and Gino's intentions were clear to all.

Lilith and James exchanged glances. The next second, James scooped Gino up and handed him to Lilith. She then turned around and walked toward the living room.

Gideon was likewise speechless when he saw that.

"Let go of me! Where are you taking me?" Gino struggled.

Lilith hugged him tightly. "Let me check if you're hurt."

"I'm fine! Put me back in the hot spring pool!"

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Gino struggled hard and broke free from Lilith. When he landed on his feet and was about to run back to the backyard, James, who was following him, scooped him up again and carried him on his shoulders.

"This hot spring pool is too deep for you. Let's go out. There are many public pools outside."

Gino complained, "I don't wanna!"

However, his struggles proved to be in vain. James carried him directly out of the backyard.

Gideon believed that his parents had taken Gino away on purpose.

Now, there were only three of them left. He used Bernard's prior statement to tell Hera, "Mr. Killian doesn't like to be in the same pool as outsiders. Let's go out and leave him alone."

With that, he hugged her shoulders and led her out.

Hera had intended to do so before he even mentioned it. Now that he did, she found it a bit strange.

How much time had he and Bernard spent together? He appeared to have figured out Bernard's preferences!

She couldn't help but imagine Bernard flirting with Gideon in the same way he did to her previously.

Bernard squinted slightly. Then, he stepped forward and grabbed Hera's wrist, preventing Gideon from taking her away. "She's not an outsider," he said.

Gideon smiled and took Hera's other hand, pulling her to him. "No, she is!"

Bernard pulled Hera back to his side. "She's not!"

"She is!"

"She's not!"

Hera was expressionless as she was pulled back and forth between them. Then, a guess suddenly popped into her mind.

Could it be that they wanted to take a hot spring bath together but were too embarrassed to say it? Were they using her as an excuse? She imagined the scene of them sharing a pool. The next moment, she used some force to break free from their grip.

"I'll leave. You two stay here."

Bernard and Gideon immediately stopped arguing. Right then, Gideon's phone rang. It was a call from Lilith.

Hera didn't know what Lilith said. After picking it up and listening for a while, Gideon frowned and responded, "Okay, I'll go over now."

He then hung up the phone, turned to Hera, and reminded her, "Mom asked me to go over. You have to be careful when you stay with him." After saying that, he glared at Bernard as if warning him not to behave inappropriately toward Hera.

Hera frowned when she noticed

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that. Gideon appeared to be unaware of Bernard's sexual orientation. She patted his arm, reminding him instead, "Gideon you're the one who needs to be careful." Content belongs

Bernard and Gideon were puzzled.

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Gideon even thought, "What does Hera mean? Will Bernard kill me because I keep hindering him from pursuing her?"

Seeing his confused look, Hera felt compelled to remind him more straightforwardly. She was about to leave with Gideon but was stopped by Bernard. Content belongs

"Sweetie, don't you want to have a hot spring bath with me?"

Hera was speechless. He was the one who wanted to come here. When did she agree to share the pool with him?

But she had something to tell Bernard, so she stayed.© - All rights reserved.

He took off his bathrobe and stepped into the hot spring pool. She also did the same and entered the pool from the opposite side.

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The weather was cloudy, and it looked like it might snow. As the temperature difference was too great, the hot spring pool was filled with mist, blurring their vision. Content belongs

Hera looked at Bernard, who was surrounded by mist, and warned him, "Don't get so close to my brother!"

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Bernard was confused because he didn't think he was close to Gideon. It was Gideon who kept approaching him.

But Hera sounded unhappy, so he asked in confusion, "Why? Are you afraid that I'll bully him?"

"You know the reason well!" she remarked coldly.

Bernard was bewildered. He scowled slightly when he recalled Gideon's efforts in preventing him from approaching Hera. He looked at her, who was on the opposite side of the pool.

The mist lingered around her face. Although he couldn't see her expression clearly, he could tell she was annoyed with him.

She had been treating him like this since the morning. To be more specific, ever since she got the gurdyroot, she had been intentionally avoiding him. Could she have realized that he was Grandmaster of Astral Nova?

Based on his understanding of Hera, that might not be the case. If she had discovered his identity and realized he had been teasing her, she would've thrown a tantrum rather than be angry silently.

Or was it because she had previously stated that they would no longer have anything to do with each other after she cured his disease? But after such a long time, she should understand his affection for her.

Bernard's expression darkened slightly as he stood up and approached Hera.

"You've been deliberately staying away from me lately."

She saw him walk over amidst the thick mist in the hot spring pool. His tall and straight figure, with water droplets rolling down his muscles, appeared so enticing that she felt her breath getting swept away.

For a moment, Hera seemed to understand the perverted preferences of Grandmaster of Astral Nova. She wanted to have such a charming figure as well.

"Did I do something wrong to make you angry?"

Bernard came to a halt in front of Hera, and he could finally see her cold expression.

She tried to dodge him because he was too close to her, but he wouldn't let her. He leaned forward and placed his arms on the edge of the pool behind her, trapping her. He moved his handsome face closer.

Bernard always made ambiguous advances toward her, which caused her to misunderstand. Did he believe he could do whatever he wanted to her just because he was gay? She felt irritated at this thought Content belongs

"Think about it yourself!" Hera said harshly.

Bernard could see her getting furious. He thought for a moment before asking, "Is it because I deceived you?"

"Oh?" Hera sneered and looked up at him.

"Hmm?" He noticed that her tone was wrong.

"So, it seems you're deceiving me about something." Hera smiled meaningfully.

Bernard was at a loss for words. She didn't usually smile, but when she did, she appeared eerie.

He believed that if she realized he was Grandmaster of Astral Nova, she would be more than just angry. She would probably end all relationship with him.

He had to keep the truth from her.

"When you were looking for me, I was making gold needles in the village. But I lied to you and said was working overtime." Bernard instantly found an excuse. Content belongs

Although it sounded touching, Hera suspected it wasn't the deception he mentioned earlier.

Seeing that she was keeping silent, Bernard asked back, "Speaking of which, didn't you also deceive me? You're a good learner, but you pretend to be an idiot."

"I never pretended," Hera defended herself.

She had already proven herself in the entrance exam, but nobody

believed she was clever. So

she

stopped explaining. She even did a favor for the Luddens at that time. Content belongs

"Shouldn't you explain how you became such a good learner after spending 11 years in the village?" Bernard asked again.

He had long discovered that Hera was merely pretending to be an idiot, but he never exposed it and just waited for her to tell him.

Chapter 240

It had been a while since she got a guaranteed admission, but she never took the initiative to mention it to him.

Hera remained silent. (C) content.

Bernard noticed her avoiding his gaze and lowering her eyes. He could tell she was either avoiding answering or trying to lie again. He grabbed her chin and forced her to look at him. "By the way, please also explain where you got the money to buy me that pair of cufflinks."

Hera looked at him for a long time before harrumphing.

Bernard raised an eyebrow. "Not talking?"

This matter involved a lot of things. Hera pursed her lips instead of speaking. Suddenly, she realized something was wrong-she should be the one questioning him!

Bernard gazed at her slightly flushed cheeks. She was stubbornly pursing her lips, and the sight of her like this inexplicably increased his desire to conquer her. He wanted to kiss her and possess her as his own.

Hera also noticed that he was looking at her differently this time. He appeared enthusiastic and perhaps lustful.

She sensed something was off. Didn't he like men?

Her gaze landed on his lips as a bold idea came to her mind. She then abruptly leaned toward his lips.

Bernard was stunned. He didn't expect Hera to be so proactive all of a sudden. Despite his excitement, he immediately calmed down.

She was still underage. He was worried that he would lose control and do something inappropriate to her.

Thinking of that, he let go of her chin and grabbed her shoulders to stop her.

Hera stared at him and froze as if she had been struck by thunder. He rejected her kiss! He really was gay!

"Let go of Hera!" A shout suddenly came.

Gideon, who had left and returned, saw their movements from a distance. He believed Bernard was planning to do something to Hera.

It was a good thing that he returned on time. His guess was right. Bernard had evil intentions toward his sister!

Gideon quickly stepped forward and jumped into the hot spring pool. He then forced them apart and squeezed between them.

He glared at Bernard before turning around to see if Hera had been taken advantage of, but she appeared disoriented. "Hera, are you okay?"

Hera returned to her senses and responded, "I'm fine."

"But you don't look good." Gideon frowned.

"Perhaps I've been in the hot spring pool for too long. I'll go up first."

After she finished speaking, she turned around and got out of the hot spring pool. She even forgot to put on her bathrobe and went straight back to her room.

Content belongs to

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Only then did Bernard realize how terrible she looked. Could it be that she misunderstood him because he had stopped her earlier?

Gideon became even more worried as he watched Hera hurry away. Her face should have turned red after she soaked in the hot spring pool for a long time, but she looked pale. Content belongs

He warned Bernard through gritted teeth, "Bernard Killian, please stop being a jerk! My sister is still underage!"

Bernard felt wronged. He had stopped Hera precisely because he knew she was still underage, but she appeared to have misunderstood him.

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Hera returned to her room and sobered up by washing her face in the bathroom.

She didn't know what was wrong with her. She had been aware of Bernard's sexual orientation and had given up on her feelings for him. She should've just treated him like a friend. She shouldn't have tested him. Content belongs

Sadly, she ended up embarrassing herself.

UMS

Under the Heiress' Facade #Chapter 241 - Read Under the Heiress' Facade Chapter 241

Chapter 241

During lunchtime, Bernard left after taking a phone call. Hera could finally avoid him.

After lunch, she got a call from Nathan.

"Ms. Youngworth, Queenie is out on bail."

Hera squinted slightly. "Who bailed her?"

They finally took action.

"Terence came here this morning with Frederick, Roman, and Michelle. They just released her on bail," Nathan elaborated.

Frederick was Rhett's son, Roman was Aurora's adopted son, and Michelle was Chad's daughter.

Chad and Rhett appeared to be Queenie's backers in the Killian family.

"Why did Shaun do nothing?" Hera thought of Shaun.

He was the one who helped her hold down the Gaskells. She wondered if he let Queenie go for someone.

"Have you not seen the news yet? Something happened to Mr. Thompson." Nathan was surprised.

Hera instantly browsed the news. That was when she saw the headline, which stated that Shaun had suffered terrible injuries because of a love affair. She clicked in and read the article thoroughly.

The incident happened when Shaun harassed an inte celebrity. He got into trouble because she was the beloved wife of the head of the Hubbard family.

The Hubbards wielded significant power in the South. Alex, who had his principles, beat Shaun up after knowing it. He couldn't tolerate his grandson harassing a married woman.

According to the news, Shaun was beaten so badly that he couldn't even protect himself, so he didn't have time to help Hera.

Hera was at a loss for words.

"Got it. Thank you for your efforts," Hera said.

"It's not a big deal. I didn't help much. I'll let you know if there's any progress in the case."

"Okay, thank you."

Just as Hera hung up the call, an unknown email arrived in her mailbox. The email title was "Deskmate, You Must Read It."

Deskmate? Was it Isabella? Wasn't she already dead?

Hera immediately clicked on the email.

Isabella: "I didn't mean not to contact you. Someone imprisoned me and my mother. We just escaped and are about to flee. Sorry, but I can't explain anything about my father to you. Content belongs

"If something happens to me after you receive this email, please dig out a box under the fourth oak tree in Lensvale, Southburrow. Hand it over to the police." Content belongs

After reading the email, Hera searched for Isabella's information in the class group chat, proving that the sender's email address was Isabella's.

She then forwarded Isabella's email address to Leon.

Raven: "Help me check the login address of this username from September to now."

Piglet: "Got it. But are you in a hurry? I'm on a date."

Hera was rendered speechless.

Raven: "You can go on your date first."

"Hera, do you want to go to the hot spring?" Right then, Lilith came over.

"No, I have something else to do. Enjoy your time." Hera put away her phone and headed to reception to borrow a laptop.

Through the code, she discovered

from the web version of the mailbox

that Isabella's email had been scheduled over a month earlier. The IP address was from Lensvale, Southburrow. Content belongs

Isabella and her mother, Madison Clark, had already fled there. Did she send the scheduled email because she expected something to happen to her?

Nathan contacted Hera shortly after she sent him a screenshot of the email's content.

Chapter 242

"This email's content is enough to prove that Isabella's and Madison's deaths weren't accidental! But the premise is that we must be sure this was a scheduled email set by Isabella herself," Nathan said with agitation.

"Yes, I've asked someone to investigate the username's login address. I'll go to the address mentioned in the email," Hera said.

"I'll go with you. It's too dangerous for you to go there alone. Give me your address. I'll go pick you up right now."

"Okay."

Meanwhile, Queenie returned to the Gaskell residence. She got out of the car, appearing haggard without makeup.

Standing in her yard, she took a deep breath, relieved to have finally come out.

"Hurry inside, Mom. It's cold here." Zylar came out of the house and supported Queenie obediently.

"There's no hurry." She waved and walked toward the trees in the yard, shouting, "Come out!"

Seeing that, the butler hurriedly stepped forward and dragged a paparazzo out from behind the tree. He was dressed in a black down jacket, desperately protecting his camera.

"If you want to take photos of me, please do it openly! Or I'll sue you for portrait infringement!" Queenie said sternly.

The paparazzo thought he had misheard as he couldn't believe it. Nonetheless, he timidly picked up the camera and took a few photos of her before turning around and running away.

"Mom, why did you let him take your photos?" Zylar was puzzled and wanted to chase after the paparazzo, but he had already gone.

"It's okay. I happen to need someone to spread the news," Queenie said.

On her way back, Terence had informed her of the Gaskells' situation. While outraged, she found a full sense of worth. It appeared that the Gaskells couldn't do anything well without her.

"But..." Zylar hesitated.

Queenie soon ignored this matter. She returned to the house to take a comfortable bath and put on expensive clothes. Then, she ate delicacies and applied makeup, returning to her original image as a wealthy lady.

Queenie told Terence, "Prepare the car. I'll go to Shuttle Ventures with you again."

She had to personally take action regarding the Killian family's affairs.

However, Terence remained still. He hesitated for a while before responding, "Queenie, your movements are restricted."

They could only temporarily bail her

out since Hera didn't withdraw her charges of false accusation and bribery: Before the truth of Isabella's and Madison's deaths was revealed, Queenie could only stay at home. Content belongs

"What?" Queenie's expression clouded over. "What does Aurora mean by this?"

The only difference between bail and no bail was that she was imprisoned in a different place!

"Aurora said it was all she could do," Terence explained.

Although it was temporary, releasing Queenie on bail could solve the public opinion surrounding the Gaskell family, helping the business. Queenie cursed, "Nonsense! They can't stop me!"

She didn't believe it and stormed out, only to see two uniformed policemen guarding the villa courtyard gate.

When they saw her come out, they blocked the door and said, "You can't leave, Mrs. Gaskell."

Seeing that they were equipped with pistols, Queenie didn't dare to act rashly, so she returned gloomily.

She locked herself in the study and called Aurora, but nobody answered. She made five consecutive calls before the last one was answered. "What's the matter, Aunt Queenie? Are you already out?"

Queenie felt annoyed as she listened to Aurora's leisurely voice, feeling that Aurora had deliberately kept her waiting before picking up the call. Content belongs

However, Aurora belonged to the

Killians' main branch. Even if she

politely addressed Queenie as

"Aunt", she was much nobler in terms of status. Content belongs

Thus, Queenie could only endure her anger.

Chapter 243

"Yes, I'm out. But Aury, there doesn't seem to be much difference between me being released on bail and not," Queenie remarked sarcastically. Aurora gently advised, "You can't be too greedy. At the very least, your release has weakened your family's public opinion crisis."

Queenie gritted her teeth as she thought of the two policemen guarding the villa. "They sent police to guard my house. Are you sure they're trying to weaken public opinion rather than increase it?"

"Is that so? I didn't expect them to do that."

Queenie grew outraged when she listened to Aurora's lukewarm tone. Aurora remained calm simply because she didn't get involved in the trouble. "Aury, don't forget what I did

for you back then. Do you think you'd be able to sit still if something were to happen to me?" Queenie said solemnly. "Queenie Killian, are you threatening me?"

Queenie noticed that Aurora's tone had shifted.

Aurora was no longer as polite as before. She didn't even address Queenie as "Aunt" but called her by her full name.

Queenie clenched her fists. She couldn't complain because she still needed Aurora's help. So, she had no choice but to soften her tone.

"I don't dare to, but you can't let me suffer so much humiliation, right? After all, I'm part of the Killians."

"What do you want?"

Queenie demanded unceremoniously, "I want the police to leave. I want my freedom back!"

Aurora remained silent for a moment before responding, "That's a bit difficult. It's possible to pay bail for false accusations and bribes, but it's difficult to do so in murder cases.

"Although the Killians have power as the head of the four influential families, we still have to abide by the laws."

Moreover, there was news from Southburrow that Cavenridge was pursuing Isabella's case. The police concluded the case too hastily, so they requested a re-investigation. If she intervened at this time, she would be in serious trouble. Content belongs

Queenie thought angrily, "You're spouting rubbish! You just don't want to help me! You know that Isabella's and Madison's deaths have nothing to do with me!"

Aurora said softly, "Yes, I know that, but the police want evidence. The only way is for them to find a new suspect. Then, your name will be cleared." Queenie squinted slightly, realizing what Aurora meant. She needed to find a scapegoat to confess as Isabella's and Madison's murderer so that she could get out of trouble completely.

More significantly, she couldn't find

the scapegoat casually. It had to be someone who had a certain relationship with the case. Besides, that person had to be trustworthy and controllable. It had to be someone who wouldn't betray her. Content belongs

She thought of several people before choosing a familiar face.

It was already dark when Hera and Nathan arrived at Southburrow Airport. After getting off the plane, she felt dizzy as if she had a cold or a fever.

She believed she had caught a cold after taking a hot spring bath. In addition, she flew from north to south, and the temperature difference was significant.

Hera informed Nathan before going

et

to the restroom, where she jabbed herself with the gold needles Bernard had given her. Soon, she managed to suppress her fever. She still had a headache, but it wouldn't affect her condition. Content belongs

"Ms. Youngworth, are you feeling unwell? We can stay at the hotel tonight and start tomorrow morning."

Nathan saw Hera coming out of the restroom. Although she appeared better, she still looked uncomfortable.

"I'm fine. Just stick to the original plan. By the way, Captain Olson, you can just call me Hera." NôvelD(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

She didn't want to delay everyone's time because of her condition. She wanted to get the box Isabella had mentioned as soon as possible to avoid accidents.

Nathan was a little surprised. As the daughter of a wealthy family, Hera had always appeared cold and unapproachable. However, after getting along with her, he found that she wasn't aloof and could endure hardships.

Chapter 244

"Okay, Hera." Nathan smiled. "You can also just call me Nate."

Although he was ten years older than Hera, it didn't matter if he was addressed by his nickname. NôvelD(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

"Okay, Nate," Hera responded.

Lensvale oak trees could be found in the countryside. There was still a long distance to go there from the airport. It was predicted that they would have to drive for around five hours.

With such a long journey, Hera couldn't imagine how Isabella and Madison escaped without using planes, high-speed rails, or trains all of which could capture their information.

They soon left the airport and took a cab to a restaurant. After getting out of the cab, Nathan was still worried about Hera and asked, "Are you really alright?"

"I'm fine. I just have a headache. I'll rest in the car afterward." Hera shook her head.

Nathan nodded. "Okay, let's have a meal first and wait for my friend to come over."

"Okay."

Hera had no appetite and didn't eat much. During their meal, Nathan answered a phone call. Soon, a black SUV appeared outside.

After paying the bill, Nathan told Hera, "Let's go. My friend is here."

His friend was Stephen Hall, who worked at the local police station.

When Stephen saw Hera, his eyes brightened up. He whistled and playfully asked, "Nate, is this your girlfriend? You have a good eye." Hera was rendered speechless.

"Don't talk nonsense!" Nathan smacked Stephen's shoulder and whispered, "Be serious. She's related to Mr. Killian!"

Stephen immediately put away his playful smile and greeted Hera seriously, "Hello, I'm Stephen Hall."

"I'm Hera Youngworth," Hera responded calmly as she got into the back seat.

"She's so aloof," Stephen whispered to Nathan.

Nathan smiled. "She's not easy to get along with. Don't try to take advantage of her."

Stephen pouted as he got into the passenger seat. He asked Nathan to drive first. They would switch places at the midway point.

Just as they closed the car doors, Hera's voice sounded from behind. "Nate, please turn on the lights."

Nathan found it odd upon hearing her request, but he turned on the lights anyway.

Hera leaned against the back seat and soon fell asleep. Five hours later, Nathan woke her up.

"Wake up, Hera. We're here."

She opened her eyes. The car's lights stayed on, but it was pitch-black outside. The only lights outside were the car's two high-beam headlights. They were near a forest. Content belongs

e

It was cloudy tonight without the moon. When Hera got out of the car, she glanced at the darkness around

ft

her and started to become nervous.

WY

Content belongs

Stephen took out three flashlights and two shovels from the trunk. He joked, "We look like tomb raiders!"

Nathan noticed something was

wrong with Hera and warned

Stephen, "Don't scare Hera." He then

asked her, "Hera, are you alright?"

You can wait in the car. We'll go find the box." Content belongs to

Through some details, he discovered that Hera seemed to be afraid of the dark.

The brightness of the three flashlights made her feel better, so she responded, "I'm fine. Besides, how are you two going to find the box?"

Chapter 245

Hera looked around with a flashlight. Their car was parked in the middle of the dirt road, which had no cement paving. No streetlights or surveillance cameras were around.

The forest was on both sides of the road. As there were many oak trees planted, it was dubbed an oak forest.

The oak forest covered a large area. They weren't sure if the fourth tree Isabella mentioned was from the left or right. If they didn't have a plan and looked for it aimlessly, they might not be able to find the box until dawn.

"Let's start from the right and check them one by one. Our current direction is the main road toward the village. Logically speaking, the fourth tree is probably on the right side."

Stephen used his flashlight to scan the forest on the right. As a local, he was familiar with this area.

Nathan spread out a map and showed it to Hera. He had asked Stephen to circle the location of the oak forest and mark several major roads on the map before boarding the plane.

Hera glanced at the markings. Even so, they were in the countryside, and this was just a map. The actual location and number of trees weren't specified.

"Is there another road at the end of the forest on both sides?" she asked.

"Yes, but they're all small roads. Most people won't take them unless they're villagers."

Stephen took the pen, held the flashlight with his mouth, and marked the locations of the small roads on the map.

Based on all the marked roads, Nathan calculated the spots they would have to search and discovered roughly 20 of them.

There were only three of them. Even if they searched separately, they would need to cover around six or seven positions each, which would exhaust them.

"We have no other way. Let's just do it!" Stephen took the flashlight and pointed at the map. "You two go together and search the area to the left. I'm familiar with the area, so I'll go to the right side alone."

As he spoke, he pulled out two walkie-talkies from the car and handed them to Nathan. "You two can take the car. Let's stay in contact at all times." Hera, who was pondering, suddenly stated, "I have an idea, but I don't know if it's feasible."

"What's it?" the two men asked simultaneously.

Seeing her point to the sky, Nathan and Stephen both looked up. On such a cloudy day, they couldn't see the moon and only spotted a few stars. "What are we looking at?" Stephen turned back and looked at Hera in confusion.

Hera explained, "I was referring to satellite monitoring."

"Wow, pretty girl! Your idea is quite bold!" Stephen gave her a thumbs-up.

Nathan felt amused. "It'll be too slow if we go through the approval

process with the correspondial

departments. We might even finish digging this forest while we wait." Content belongs

Moreover, even if satellite

monitoring was available, it was difficult© - All rights reserved.

o find the video record

from more than a month ago. It could only capture real-ti

footage.

Content belongs

Hera felt embarrassed to tell them her actual idea. She actually didn't need to go through the official process and could try to hack into the system right away.

Nathan and Stephen were both upright police, so it never occurred to her that she would use illegal ways. They assumed she was joking and didn't take it seriously.

"You stay in the car first. We'll go check out the nearby spots," Nathan said.

Hera didn't refuse. While they were

gone, she returned to the back seat, took out the laptop from her bag, and turned it on. Then, she connected to the mobile hotspot, plugged in the USB flash drive, and started typing quickly. Codes soon flashed across the screen. Content belongs

Due to the time difference, it was daytime in Miridian. The staff on duty at a military air base spotted one of the satellites sending out a data anomaly alert.

He immediately activated the alarm. "Attention, someone has invaded UTA-224. Enter a defensive state!"

All staff in the office immediately went on guard.

Chapter 246

All the staff members spent more than half an hour typing on their keyboards.

"The loopholes they invaded haven't been repaired yet. Their approach and method are like the hacker, S! S is here again!" "No, it's not S! Look, this is a raven icon. It's Raven!"

"I don't care who the hell this person is! Intercept them! They're trying to change the orbit of 224! Stop them now!"

"I can't stop them!"

"I can't do it either. The other party is a world-class hacker."

"The orbit of 224 has shifted. Record what this person wants to do!"

"Track their position. We have to find out who Raven is!"

"W-Wait a minute. Why did they transfer 224 to this place?"

A bearded man retrieved the video footage captured after UTA-224 changed its orbit.

The place was pitch-black, but they could see it was a forest. Several beams of light shone through the trees as if someone was doing something. They then used the location coordinates to find the specific location. It was a rural village in Lensvale, Southburrow, Jadonia.

When they attempted to zoom in on the image to see who it was, Hera abruptly deleted the video footage. Then, she redirected UTA-224 back to its original orbit and exited the system.

She left a message in Terranish on the screen: "Thanks for the satellite. I've fixed your loopholes in return."

Someone promptly examined the existing loopholes and exclaimed, "The loopholes have been fixed!"

The staff members exchanged

glances. Finally, someone

concluded, "It seems that they just

borrowed UTA-224 and recorded a surveillance video. Isn't that overkill?" Content belongs

When everyone realized that it was probably the case, they fell silent.

They wondered if Raven was an organization. Otherwise, how could one person invade and adjust the satellite's orbit while also repairing the loopholes?

This organization was so terrifying that their hackers managed to hack their military UTA-224. If it belonged to Jadonia's army, there would be a war between the two countries!

Content belongs

A burly man with blue eyes slammed the table fiercely and cursed, "Raven doesn't take Miridian seriously at all! No matter what, we have to find Raven!"

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The leaves rustled in the oak forest as the night breeze blew.

Hera felt a chill, and her headache worsened. She took out the gold needles, pricked herself several more times, and continued typing.

She enlarged the images retrieved from the satellite one by one. With the fine-resolution images, she could see many details on the ground.

Although the nighttime images weren't very clear, she could distinguish the position of the trees by slightly adjusting the brightness of the images.

She used Nathan's marked spots to

correspond to the trees in the

el

satellite images. Then, she compared the traces on the grassland and finally found a trace of someone turning over the land. Content belongs

That location wasn't on the main road but rather on a small road at the end of the forest on the left side.

Hera looked out and vaguely saw Nathan's and Stephen's flashlights. They had walked some distance into the forest.

She picked up the walkie-talkie left by Nathan and said, "Nate, I found the location. I'll go over and take a look."

Chapter 247

Hera got into the driver's seat and started the car. Nathan's voice came through the walkie-talkie. "Wait, where is the location? How are you going to get there? I'll go back and take you there now!"

She told him the location and added, "I'll drive there. You guys rest first. I'll be back soon."NôveID(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

As she had finally gotten a clue, she couldn't wait anymore.

"Okay. Be careful, then." Nathan then realized something and asked, "By the way, do you have a driver's license?"

Hera skillfully turned the car around and drove toward her destination. She held the steering wheel with one hand and the walkie-talkie in the other. "I'll take the exam next year."

"Holy shit! Are you driving without a license? Stop right now! I'll take you there!" Nathan couldn't help but curse.

Hera listened to the rustling footsteps coming from the walkie-talkie and said, "I've driven a tractor in the village before. It's simple."

Tractor?

Nathan subconsciously imagined Hera driving a tractor. The scene was so weird that he couldn't continue imagining it.

"Is a tractor anything like a car? Stop messing around! If my colleagues find out, they'll scold me to death!"

Hera thought he was stubborn.

She stepped on the accelerator and turned a corner. "It's okay. We're in the countryside. There's no one on the road. Just treat it like I'm practicing driving in advance. Nobody will know if we keep it a secret!"

"Ahem, pretty girl, have you forgotten about me? I've heard your secret." Right then, Stephen's voice came from the walkie-talkie.

Hera instantly went silent.

As they spoke, she had already reached the destination. "I just arrived. I'll go take a look."

Nathan felt helpless. Hera was truly beyond his control, so he could only remind her, "Please be careful. I'll go over later with Stephen."

She responded, "I know, Nate. You're a bigger nag than my brother."

He was rendered speechless when he heard that.

Hera pointed the car's headlights at a specific location. Then, she brought a flashlight and a shovel over.

To avoid being afraid, she mustered her courage and went straight to her destination. She had a clear conscience, so she didn't need to be afraid.

As she approached the fourth tree,

she noticed that the grass had been trampled. The area that had been trampled appeared to have been

done by more than one person.

Logically speaking, there shouldn't be such obvious traces after a month. Content belongs

Hera sensed something was wrong. When she reached the fourth tree, the soil around its roots had been turned over.

She chose a larger stone, placed her flashlight on it, and then used the shovel to dig along the area that had been turned over.

The night breeze carried gusts of leaves, accompanied by the sound of soil being shoveled. After digging for ten minutes, Hera didn't see the box Isabella mentioned.

Her bad premonition grew stronger. She wondered if someone arrived before her.

But wasn't Isabella's email sent to her alone? Or had the email been discovered long ago?

Suddenly, she heard the sound of branches being trodden from behind. It appeared that someone was approaching her.

Hera abruptly turned back, but the high beam of the car lights hindered her from opening her eyes for a while.

She squinted slightly. Shielding the light with her hand, she vaguely noticed two flashlight-like beams approaching.

She assumed it was Nathan and Stephen and thought they had arrived quickly. She then waved at them. "Nat—"

She suddenly felt pain in the back of her head. Someone seemed to have smacked her head severely. Despite her dizziness, she held on and turned around, only to see someone behind her. Content belongs

That person was holding a stick. He didn't seem to expect that Hera would turn around, so he raised the stick again. When he was going to strike her a second time, she collapsed to the ground. Content belongs

Chapter 248

On the other hand, Nathan and Stephen had just met at the designated location and were walking through the forest in Hera's direction.

The forest was so large that it would take them more than 20 minutes to reach their destination.

"Let's race. The loser buys beer!" Nathan suggested.

Stephen could tell Nathan was worried about Hera. But he was exhausted and didn't want to run, so he responded nonchalantly, "Don't worry, this area is safe. Nothing will happen."

"I think she's afraid of the dark. We should get there soon," Nathan stated.

Despite her fear, Hera persisted and pretended to be fine. It was most likely because she didn't want others to know about her weakness.

"Hey, you seem to pay extra close attention to her. Are you interested in her? Didn't you warn me not to take advantage of her because she's related to Mr. Killian?" Stephen joked.

Nathan said seriously, "Stop spouting rubbish! Since I brought her here, I have to be responsible for her safety. If something happens to her, I won't be able to explain it to Mr. Killian."

"You don't need to worry-" Stephen was about to soothe Nathan when he noticed three faint lights sweeping through the forest ahead. He abruptly stopped speaking and became serious.

Nathan and he exchanged glances, confirming that they had seen the lights.

Stephen cursed, "Damn, you jinxed it!"

They immediately dashed over.

When they arrived, Hera was no longer there, and the flashlights they had seen earlier were gone.

"Shit!" Nathan panted and clenched his fists. Out of professional instinct, he first protected the scene before observing the traces.

The car headlights were facing the direction of the fourth tree, and he saw that the roots had been turned over. He wondered if the box had been found. Hera's shovel and flashlight were on the grass. The grass showed traces of being trodden by many people.

"I'll go to the car and take a look," Stephen said.

The car had a dashcam, and its front was facing the crime scene. He hoped it captured the culprits.

However, when Stephen got into the car, he discovered that the memory card of the dashcam had been taken away. Even Hera's bag was missing from the back seat.

He looked around again. It was so dark that he couldn't see anything. He didn't know which direction the culprits had fled. However, the fact that he didn't see the lights indicated that the culprits were still nearby. Content belongs to holds text © rights.

"How's it going?" Nathan ran over and asked. He was unable to locate any useful clues due to the limited lights.

Stephen lit a cigarette and said frustratedly, "They took the dashcam's memory card! I believe they came prepared. Sorry, I shouldn't have been so careless."

"Find someone to check the surveillance footage of nearby road sections, especially in the village. We must locate Hera before they go far!"

Nathan made a call after he finished speaking.

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Shaun was in the VIP ward at Jedburgh's Reinland Hospital. His legs were in a cast, and he was lying dejectedly on the hospital bed. He was now looking at Bernard pitifully. Content belongs

"Bernard, do you still have Hera's life-saving pills? Ask her to give me two more."

Previously, he didn't believe that the pills Hera had given him were life-saving. He was even unwilling to take them. Bernard was the one who forced him to take them. Half an hour later, he found that they

worked. Content belongs to

"I don't have any!" Bernard refused indifferently and looked at his watch. "Since you're fine, I'll leave."

Shaun shouted, "I'm not fine at all!"

Right then, Bernard's phone rang. He glanced at the caller ID and saw that it was Nathan. He immediately picked up the call.

"Mr. Killian, Ms. Youngworth is missing."

Chapter 249

When Hera awoke, she felt like her head was about to explode and was uncomfortable.

She tried to get up, only to find that her hands and feet were tied. There was straw beneath her, and the walls were made of the same mud bricks used to build buildings a century ago.

It was already dawn, and the sunlight shone in through the grid windows. The wooden door was tightly closed, with evidence of being pried open.

There was a pyre covered with cobwebs on her left and a straw bed on her right. The straw surface of the bed had been flattened, and a blackened quilt was piled in a corner. There were also two dirty plates next to the quilt.

It appeared that someone had been living here for a while.

Hera concluded that she was in a woodshed in the countryside. She struggled to sit up and found her head spinning. Her body temperature was so high that she suspected she had a fever.

Recalling what happened last night, she wondered what happened to Nathan and Stephen. The person she saw before fainting was a stranger.

She had a severe headache and couldn't figure out whether she had fallen into a trap from the moment she received the email or whether the culprit had arrived at the location before her.

She had to get out of here first.

Hera's hands were tightly bound behind her back. She felt lucky to have watched a kidnapping drama before. She thought the techniques to tie the ropes were quite cool, so she learned a few.

At that time, Catherine looked at her strangely and asked her if she was going to do something bad.

The techniques she learned proved useful at this critical moment.

It was just that she wasn't in good condition, so it took her a while to untie the rope that bound her hands. When she was about to untie the rope around her feet, she heard movement outside.

Someone was talking, and more than one person was approaching the woodshed.

Hera immediately stopped moving.

"Miss, she's inside." It was a rough male voice.

"Open the door." It was a female voice.

Hera recognized this voice as one she had heard before. Then, she heard the door being unlocked. NôvelD(ram)a.ôrg owns this content.

She instantly lay down, holding the untied rope and hiding her hands behind her back.

Because she had a fever and was uncomfortable, she wasn't suitable for a head-on conflict with them. So, she pretended to be still unconscious.

Someone shoved the wooden door roughly. It hit the wall, sending up a layer of dust.

Amelia covered her nose in disgust and used her other hand to fan away the dust. After a while, she walked in.

She glanced at Hera lying on the ground and asked the man, Eric Scott, "Why isn't she moving? Is she dead?"

There was a ferocious scar that went from his nose to the left side of his face, which looked a little frightening.

"She's still alive. I confirmed it this

morning. After Eric finished

Mool.ne

speaking, he instructed the men behind him, "Go get water and wake her up." Content belongs

Hera, who was pretending to be dead, was rendered speechless.

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She already had a fever. It would only make her condition worse if they splashed cold water on her, especially since it was winter. She had no choice but to pretend she had just awoken and opened her eyes. Content belongs

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Hera pretended to sit up with difficulty. She appeared frightened, and her voice was a little hoarse. "Why did you kidnap me?"

"You woke up in time," Amelia sneered.

She held the rope tightly behind her while carefully observing the situation outside the door.

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Aside from Amelia and Eric, there were three men outside. Judging from their appearances and outfits, they were most likely gangsters who always engaged in illegal activities. Content belongs

Her current condition didn't allow her to force her way out, so she could only act according to circumstances.

Chapter 250

"Are you scared? Weren't you arrogant when you caused trouble at my house? Why are you so timid now?"

Amelia looked at Hera condescendingly.

Hera had straws stuck in her messy hair, and her face and body were filthy. With a panicked expression, she appeared to have an egg on her face. Amelia thought, "I wonder how she can attract Shaun and win over the Everetts with such a look. I won't lose to her again!"

She was jealous of Hera. Both of them were daughters of wealthy families, but Amelia had been nobler since birth and had a better education. She was even gentler, better behaved, and more obedient than Hera.

Nevertheless, Amelia wondered why Hera was prettier than her, could attract Shaun, and had higher grades than her. More than a dozen prestigious international universities were vying for Hera.

Even though the Everetts only found Hera in a village after she had grown up, she still won her family's favor.

On the other hand, as the daughter of the Gaskells, Amelia was a target for Queenie to lash out at, Zylar's sparring partner, and Terence's dispensable daughter.

"Shouldn't I pretend to be afraid? Otherwise, you won't get a sense of accomplishment in this kidnapping," Hera said lightly, subsiding her fake panic. Amelia felt that her provocation had no effect.

"I know you're pretending to be calm! Let's see how long you can keep at it! We're at a barren mountain. Even if Mr. Thompson wants to find you, he'll take at least a year!"

Hera captured the keyword "mountain".

She remembered the map she had seen before. To the east of Lensvale's reservoir was a wilderness of mountains and forests.

She had a rough idea of where she was.

She responded calmly, "So, is this where you imprisoned Isabella and her mother?"

Amelia frowned slightly, thinking Hera was truly here for Isabella and Madison.

She didn't admit it.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Let me guess."

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Hera continued, "You guys sent them overseas on the pretext of helping Madison treat her illness. You concealed their whereabouts and cut off their contact with the outside world. Then, you brought them here secretly and locked them up for a while. Content belongs

"You thought they would stay obediently and didn't expect them to escape. But they failed to run away and were still caught by your people.

"You weren't sure whether they

called the police, so you drowned them in the reservoir. Even if the

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police found you, you could say that they escaped on their own and drowned by accident. Is my guess correct?" Content belongs

Hera maintained a calm appearance as she looked at Amelia. In fact, she was already sweating profusely. Her mouth was dry, and the pain in her head had begun to blur her vision. Still, she held on. Content belongs

Amelia looked shocked because she didn't know about Isabella and Madison's deaths.

Queenie only told her that they had escaped and that Eric caught the person who had helped them. Her mother then called her over to take a look.

Amelia glanced at Eric, wanting to ask him what was going on. However, she noticed him staring at Hera gloomily with a murderous intent.

He appeared to wish to kill Hera to silence her after she revealed the truth.

Amelia clenched her fists.

Hera sneered at Amelia's silence.

"No wonder Queenie Killian fears nothing. It turns out that you're the murderer."