

Heiress 1281

Chapter 1281

Steven's heart sank, and he immediately flew toward the living room downstairs.

Wyatt was not home today. After hearing that his daughter had secretly run off to find Justin and even jumped off the building, Wyatt was shocked and furious. He rushed to Savrow with Quentin. However, they were intercepted halfway by Asher and Drew. Drew even went as far as to smash the tires of Wyatt's multi-million-dollar Rolls-Royce to stop him from beating up Justin.

No one knew where the brothers took Wyatt or what the current situation was.

Thus, Wyatt's wives and Amelia were the only ones at home.

"Mom, your body is weak. Take it easy."

Hunter supported Chelsea, who looked haggard, to sit on the sofa.

He comforted his mother gently. "Since we know that Steven has been with Amelia all these days, you don't need to worry. Steven is almost thirty years old. It's his first time being in love, so it's understandable that he couldn't control himself, falling head over heels in love with her. You have to be mentally prepared for this when you raise a child. Among us brothers, Steven has always been the best to you and Father. Don't get angry over this matter. You should take care of your health first."

Hunter's words seemed comforting on the surface, but he was actually sarcastically fanning the flames.

As expected, Chelsea's expression darkened, and she coughed while clutching her chest. "I think your words might come true! If I don't step in now, will he still respect me as his mother or his family?"

"Mom, you're overthinking it. It's not as serious as you said!" Hunter patted Chelsea's back.

"You're right. Steven has met too few women in his life and has had little experience dating, so he was easily seduced by that girl. He has turned into another person!"

Chelsea gritted her teeth indignantly. "If I don't step in now, he wouldn't even know if he's been deceived. It would be my failure as a mother!"

"Deceived? Mrs. Lovett, I wonder who you're afraid of deceiving your son?"

A cold and regal voice suddenly sounded, startling the Lovetts.

Mila and Celeste walked over, hand in hand. Mila was noble and elegant, showing her upbringing as a prominent family's daughter.

Chelsea pursed her lips awkwardly and forced a smile. "Madam Mila, how have you been?"

Among Wyatt's three wives, Chelsea had always looked down upon Sasha and Celeste, whose backgrounds were unworthy of mention. However, Mila was the only one she did not dare to offend. "Mrs. Lovett, I know you're just anxious for your son, but Steven is your son, not your daughter. Is it suitable to watch over him excessively like a fragile flower in a greenhouse?"

Mila ignored her greetings and smiled coldly. "Steven is a good child, but if you keep monitoring him like this, you might just crush his individuality. Moreover, can you control him forever? It's better to relax and enjoy your retirement with Neil. Don't end up destroying your relationship with your son."

Chelsea immediately burned with fury, standing up from the sofa. "Madam Mila, I know my son the best. I did this to protect our relationship! Steven is still young and inexperienced. He's simple-minded, especially lacking judgment in aspects of love! He doesn't know what kind of woman suits him the most, not even realizing he has been led astray."

Celeste's eyes immediately turned red from anger, feeling breathless.

Chelsea did not mention a word about her daughter, but she was clearly insulting Amelia with each word! How could she tolerate this?!

However, Celeste was clumsy with words. Luckily, Mila had spoken up before she opened her mouth, her eyes sharp and intimidating. "Mrs. Lovett, are you talking about Amelia? You'd better think clearly before answering me."

Seeing that the situation was tense, Hunter quickly grabbed his mother, hoping to stir up trouble.

Unexpectedly, Chelsea was motivated by her love for her son. She smiled instead as Mila provoked her. "Madam Mila, don't take it the wrong way. My child knows his place. How could he deserve someone from the mighty Thompson family? Only a family like the Iversons could match the precious Ms. Amelia, who was born with a silver spoon."

Celeste's face flushed red, and even the corner of her lips twitched slightly.

Chapter 1282

Mila could hardly suppress her anger either, wishing she could grab a fistful of soil from the nearby flower pot to shove it into this woman's foul mouth. "Mom! What are you saying?!"

Steven rushed to Chelsea from the stairs in the blink of an eye. His eyes were wide with hatred, feeling like a ball of roaring flames. "What the hell are you saying? How can you say that?!"

Seeing her son with a patch over his left eye and bruises still visible on his face, Chelsea felt so distressed that her tears streamed down. "My son! What happened to you?! Who hurt you? I'll seek justice for you!"

As she spoke, she reached out her trembling hands, trying to caress Steven's cheeks, but he slapped her hand away.

"If you still want to hear me call you Mother, please make sure you never say those ridiculous words ever again!"

Steven held himself back, his veins seemingly about to burst. His right eye was bloodshot. "Also, Amelia is my girlfriend! I will only ever marry her! Don't associate her with the Iversons. They're a filthy garbage dump of a family!"

"Steven, you... You..."

Chelsea was scolded by her son in front of Wyatt's wives, which hurt her pride. She was so shocked that her tongue was tied in knots.

"Steven! What are you doing?!"

Hunter came forward and supported Chelsea, who could not stand steadily, looking like a concerned elder brother. "Do you know how much Mom missed you and how worried she was about you?! You were sued by the Iverson family!"

Mila and Celeste were stunned!

However, Steven's face showed no panic, and he questioned coldly instead, "So? What does it have to do with you? I can handle it myself."

"Handle it yourself? How are you going to handle it? You're only going to make things worse!"

Hunter pointed at his face disappointedly. "The Iverson family is suing you for intentional injury, and we can't guard against whatever they have up their sleeves. Fighting against them is like hitting a rock with an egg. Besides, you know better than anyone how all your injuries happened!"

"Hunter! Shut up!"

Steven stepped forward and grabbed Hunter's collar, lifting him off the ground with one hand. "If you really care about Dad and Mom, you shouldn't have told them about this! Don't think I don't know what you're planning. Come at me if you have any resentment, but if you dare target Amelia and her family, I definitely won't let you off!"

Chelsea instantly understood, and a chill went down her spine.

Her son had offended one of the four great families, the Iversons. They would try to completely destroy him.

What difference did it make that they had assisted the Thompson family for many years? To the KS Group, they were only pawns to be discarded after being used. Wyatt and Lance were like brothers. How could he possibly side with her son if anything really happened?

Chelsea thought, 'Steven only got into this huge trouble because of Amelia, that mistress's daughter! What a vixen! Why did she come to ruin my son's life?!'

Immersed in horror, Chelsea suddenly felt a squeezing pain in her heart. She sweated all over her body and collapsed in Hunter's arms weakly.

"Shit! Mom is having a heart attack!"

Hunter quickly took a pill from his suit pocket and fed it to Chelsea, shouting at Steven, "Call the ambulance!"

Chapter 1283

Despite how much Steven wanted to stay to accompany Amelia, he could not turn a blind eye to his mother's condition and took her to the hospital. After the intense family drama, the spacious living room exuded a suffocating tension.

Celeste clenched the hem of her shirt tightly with her right hand and grabbed Mila's arm with her left hand, unable to utter a word after a long time.

"Celeste... Are you alright?" Mila rubbed Celeste's cold hand.

"I'm fine." Celeste's voice was dry and trembling.

"Although the Iverson family is a den of vipers, the Lovett family isn't much better!"

Mila shook her head indignantly. "Wyatt had even assisted them in their early years. I thought they would genuinely feel grateful to our family, but now it's clear that they've raised an ungrateful wolf cub. Steven is a good man, but his parents and brother... Sigh! I'm afraid Amelia would be bullied if she marries into that family!"

"Mila, don't say it anymore."

Celeste closed her eyes with tears, shaking her head in guilt. "It's not Steven's or anyone's fault... Blame me if you must. I'm useless and powerless, unable to give my daughter a happy marriage."

What they did not know was that Amelia had hidden herself upstairs in the dark, witnessing everything.

She heard Chelsea's and Hunter's harsh words and saw Steven standing up against his family without hesitation, for her sake.

Amelia felt as if she were being stabbed by a knife.

Leaning against the wall for support, Amelia slowly made her way into a dark corner like a staggering elder, curling up and hugging her knees, wanting to hide herself from the world. "Amelia? Amelia? Are you there?"

Sasha followed the sound and saw Amelia sobbing, curling into a ball like a kitten. Her maternal instincts kicked in despite never having children of her own. She pulled Amelia tightly into her arms as her eyes reddened.

"Girl, why are you crying alone here?"

Beads of tears hung on Amelia's eyelashes, her pitiful appearance causing distress to Sasha's heart. "Aunt Sasha... Is it impossible for me and Steven to be together?"

"Mrs. Lovett seems to hate me. Am I that terrible?"

"Bullshit! Don't belittle yourself! That old hag's eyes and ass had switched places, so she can't see how much of a treasure you are! Don't get gaslighted!"

Amelia was initially sad, but her stepmother's straightforward words cheered her up again.

"Yes, that's the spirit! Our Amelia looks the best when she smiles!" Sasha reached out to wipe away her tears, but she still felt quite upset inside.

Sasha was pissed.

After sending Amelia back to her room, Sasha felt more dissatisfied the more she thought about it.

Therefore, she took out her phone and called someone she had not contacted for a long time.

It was one of her underlings when she was still in the Southern Star Syndicate, a child adopted by her father named Elias Storm. He used to be a lowly thug, but now he has become a leader in the gang.

"My young lady! I can't believe that I'm receiving a call from you! Am I dreaming?!" Elias almost cried.

"You're fucking not. I'll keep things short. Help me beat someone up." As usual, Sasha did not bother speaking nonsense.

"Who? Please give your orders!"

Sasha gritted her teeth as she spat out a name. "Hunter Lovett!"

Elias did not bother to probe further. "No problem. Same old rules?"

"Same old rules. As long as he's not dead."

Chapter 1284

The next day, in a luxurious nightclub's private lounge, smoke swirled as indulgence and debauchery filled the room.

Hunter enjoyed the beautiful women and fine liquor, feeling smug and carefree at this moment.

The man sitting opposite him was none other than James Iverson, the president and heir to the Iverson Group.

Since James had invited Hunter to the gathering tonight, it meant Hunter had obtained James' approval and officially established a connection to the Iversons.

Hunter could navigate smoothly between the Salvadors and the Iversons in the future. Did he still need to be wary of the Thompson family?

"Mr. Iverson, it's just a small favor to me. You're too polite." Hunter had a beautiful lady in his arms, appearing puffed up.

"A few glasses of wine is nothing much."

James swayed his wine glass, raising his brows with an ambiguous smile on his lips. "It can't compare to your guts, Mr. Lovett. To think you'd set up your own brother for intentional harm. One, it gives my brother an outlet to vent his frustrations. After all, someone would need to take the fall for Charles' sufferings. Secondly, it could hinder the relationship between Steven and Amelia. Your mother obsesses over her sons. Now, she'd probably rather die than let her son marry the daughter of a Thompson family mistress, right? You really killed two birds with one stone."

Since he could not touch Justin and Bella for now, he would start with the people around them.

Steven wanted the woman Charles could not get? Dream on!

"Haha... It's all thanks to your generosity, Mr. Iverson."

Under the influence of money and alcohol, Hunter shed his civilized facade, his eyes gleaming with greed. "Given that the target is my brother, the price you offered is pretty generous indeed. Of course, I must cooperate with your plan with everything I have."

"Steven is your brother, whom you've grown up with. Aren't you distressed for him?" James smiled and asked.

"Ha, he's not my brother."

Hunter gritted his teeth in resentment, his gaze vicious. "He's merely Bella's dog!"

James tutted, sipping his wine gracefully.

"Mr. James, you know my capabilities in the field of law. You can leave Mr. Charles' case to me, and I will definitely turn the tables for you. Besides, if your company has any legal problems in the future or needs legal consultation, you can come to me. I will be at your service anytime."

James raised his eyes lazily, looking at Hunter's flattering smile, and said casually, "No wonder you're so well-known, Mr. Lovett. You're versatile and adept. Based on what I know, you have close ties to Chairman Salvador and have helped the Salvador Corporation clean its ass more than once."

He continued, "But it seems you've handled Mrs. Salvador's drug case poorly this time. Mrs. Salvador still has not been released from custody, and her case will be on trial soon. As it has a terrible impact on society, this case will be publicly tried. Not even the Salvador Corporation could stop it."

His smile gradually became disdainful and contemptuous. "Your record for being undefeated has been shattered by Bella and Justin. This matter has spread in the industry, affecting your reputation. How do I trust your professional ability again?"

Hunter's smile stiffened on his face, feeling his cheeks burn in embarrassment while anger rose in his chest.

"Although Mrs. Salvador's case will be publicly tried, the courtroom is my stage. Even if I can't get Mrs. Salvador acquitted, I can still minimize her punishment."

Hunter gritted his teeth, downing a glass of wine. "Just wait and see."

"Then I'll wait for your good news, Mr. Lovett."

James glanced at him mockingly. "If you could settle the Salvador family's problems and prove your worth, we will have countless chances to work together."

Drunk, Hunter stumbled toward the parking lot angrily.

His mood turned from elation at the beginning to feeling like a heavy rock had been placed on his shoulders, almost suffocating him.

At this moment, he finally realized that James had used him. He turned his back and even painted a rosy picture for him. The Iverson family was truly a den of snakes.

Chapter 1285

Hunter secretly cursed James. "Burp! Fuck... If Shannon's case didn't fall through, do you think a famous lawyer like me would be willing to join your stupid drinking party?!"

He tugged on his tie fiercely, spitting at the ground. "Just you wait. I'll win a splendid victory when Shannon's case goes to public trial. At that time, even if you kneel to beg me, I won't even give you a spare glance!"

Just as he squinted at his phone to call for a driver, four young men wearing flashy shirts and suits walked out from a dark corner, holding bats. They chuckled and surrounded him in the middle.

"You... What are you guys doing?!" Hunter sobered up, widening his eyes in shock.

"Can't you see? We're about to beat you up."

Before his voice fell, a bat swung toward Hunter's back, beating him to the ground.

"Ahem... Do you know who I am?!"

Hunter felt as if his spine was about to break, and he collapsed on the ground in fright, trembling. However, he still tried to act tough to save his pride. "I am a famous lawyer! I am the Salvador Corporation's legal advisor! The Iverson Group's president is also close to me! How dare you beat me? I will make sure you can't survive in Savrow anymore! I'll let you rot in prison!"

"Hahaha! Who are you trying to scare? We're regulars in the cell. It's like going home for us. Do you think we're scared? We heard you take on any case and that you're a lawyer without morals. Today, we'll be heroes of justice! Beat him harder!"

Hunter curled into a ball, holding his head, while the four young men punched and kicked him. He felt like a baseball being hit around by a bat.

"I'm wrong! I'm sorry! Please have mercy!"

In a few minutes, he had multiple fractures. Blood was streaming down his face, and he knelt on the ground, begging for mercy.

A car was parked in the distance.

Elias leaned against the window, trying to hold back his laughter but failing to as he took a video with his phone.

Then, he sent the results of his mission to Sasha through WhatsApp.

[Ms. Sasha, how was it? Should I go further up a notch? Like peeing in his mouth?]

Immediately after, he sent a cute sticker with a heart, contradicting his position as a leader in the Southern Star Syndicate.

After a while, Sasha replied.

[Disgusting.]

A few seconds later, she added. [Do it.]

[As you command, Ms. Sasha!]

But after waiting a long time, Sasha did not reply to his message.

Elias repeatedly read the few words Sasha replied, pouting helplessly and dotingly. "Tsk! She's not even willing to chat a bit more. Still as stingy as ever!"

Five days passed quickly in the blink of an eye.

Quite a lot has happened in the past few days. Wyatt was intercepted and brought away by Asher and Drew on his way to find Bella. No matter how sternly he questioned them, the brothers stuck to the same story, refusing to tell him where their sister was.

They merely told Wyatt there was nowhere else safer for Bella than by Justin's side.

Wyatt had lived for sixty years and suddenly realized that he thought his bunch of children could protect him in his old age. However, they were in fact guarding against him!

His mindset changed.

As for the Iverson family...

Chapter 1286

Right after Charles walked out of prison, he immediately went to fix his two front teeth, continuing to live a carefree life under the protection of the Iverson family.

Despite his bruised face, it did not stop him from throwing a wild party at the Iverson Manor's courtyard. He invited a bunch of young models over, indulging in an extravagant revelry of wine and pleasure. However, an unfortunate impotence plagued him, allowing him to see but not partake in the pleasures before him.

His frustrations led him to consume an entire pack of aphrodisiacs, which resulted in a severe case of poisoning. His eyes rolled back as he foamed at the mouth, and his body convulsed uncontrollably. The emergency medical personnel rushed him to the hospital in the middle of the night for an emergency gastric lavage.

Upon hearing of his son's distressing situation, a mixture of anger, hatred, and urgency surged within Lance. However, he could only swallow his pride. He secretly sought out every means possible to treat his son's impotence.

With the Thompsons withdrawing their lawsuit, he felt incredibly fortunate. At such a critical moment, even if he harbored thoughts of retaliation, he knew he must keep a low profile and avoid drawing attention. However, the situation was far grimmer for Hunter.

That night, Hunter got beaten to a pulp. Elias also made sure he carried out his threats, having his henchmen stuff hot feces into Hunter's mouth.

This vile act left Hunter unable to stomach any food for days, as everything tasted like excrement to him. He could not stop dry-heaving and nearly vomited bile. He even developed a high fever due to extreme distress.

To Hunter, this humiliating ordeal was worse than death.

Baffled and tormented, Hunter struggled to comprehend who would stoop so low to force him into such a humiliating situation.

Then, one night, as he lay feverish and on the brink of death, a sudden memory struck him.

During the beating, he had faintly noticed a lapel pin on one of the thug's suits. It was like a red bird.

Could it be a Vermilion Bird-the emblem of Savrow's most formidable gang, the Southern Star Syndicate?!

Hunter screamed in horror, instinctively clutching his head as if reacting to a shock, his teeth chattering as his body broke into a cold sweat.

Today, the delegation leaders and top officials from the five major cities gathered in Savrow to discuss important matters with the mayor and several influential council members.

It was an important gathering.

As the wife of a councilman, Astrid started preparing her outfit a week early, choosing a dress with intricate dragon and phoenix embroidery. For someone who was just a councilman's wife, she was preparing as though she wished she could wear a royal robe.

Ever since Astrid married Theodore, she has meticulously supported and managed his career like one might raise a child. She strategized his moves in both political and business circles, built his public image, and helped gather votes. Her hair thinned as she poured her family's money into covering Theodore's debts, helping him rise to his current esteemed status.

Now, with most of their connections solidified, only the upcoming mayoral election stood in their way. If her husband won, he would become the new mayor of Savrow.

This would move her a step closer to her aspiration of being the country's First Lady!

Astrid adjusted her husband's tie and continuously reminded him about what to say and how to behave at the meeting to make a good impression. Theodore, visibly irritated, could not hide his impatience further.

"Enough already. I've heard these things so many times!"

Theodore pushed her hands away, frowning as he tied his own tie and muttering, "You used to be concise. Why do you nag like an old hag now...?"

"You ungrateful man! Now that your career is taking off, you're starting to despise your devoted wife?!"

Astrid snapped back angrily, poking his forehead with her sharp fingernails. "Without my efforts, where would you even be now? Let me be clear, Theodore. Without me, you're nothing!" Theodore shot her a resentful glance and then turned to leave for the bathroom.

Just as he left, his phone on the nightstand suddenly vibrated.

Having secretly learned her husband's phone password, Astrid quickly grabbed the phone and unlocked it.

Upon discovering her husband's intensely flirtatious chats with not just one but multiple lovers, rage surged within her. Her eyes were shooting flames of fury!

Seething, Astrid charged into the bathroom and threw the phone directly at his face, shouting, "Theodore Savoy! How dare you cheat on me?! You've gone too far!"

Startled by her reaction, Theodore looked at her in disbelief. "You snooped through my phone? How could you do that?!"

Chapter 1287

"I'm your wife! Why can't I have a look?!"

Astrid, forgetting all pretense of decorum befitting a councilman's wife, grabbed his collar and shook him violently. She shouted hysterically. "I've been so good to you, and this is how you repay me? You heartless jerk!"

As she raised her hand to slap Theodore, he quickly grabbed her wrist and shoved her back forcefully.

"Argh!"

Astrid lost her balance and crashed into the door. The pain made her gasp, and her eyes widened in shock.

"How dare you hit me? I'm the heiress of the Iverson Group! How dare you lay your hands on me? Aren't you scared of me going home and telling my Dad and big brother that you've been hitting me?!"
"Go ahead. Tell anyone as you please! I've had enough of you!"

Pushed to his limits, Theodore pointed accusingly at Astrid's stunned face. "The election is just around the corner. If you want to cause trouble and destroy everything we've built for years in one moment, just go ahead! Let me make this clear. Right now, our fates are intertwined. If I go down, so do all your aspirations!"

Astrid's face turned ghostly pale. She was speechless.

She had never imagined that her man could turn her dedicated efforts to build him up into a weapon against her!

"All these years, you've used your heiress status to oppress and humiliate me, and I've endured it. You wanted a publicly affectionate and caring relationship, and I've given you that! From now on, mind your

own business. Just do what a councilman's wife is supposed to do, and we can all have great days for ourselves. Otherwise, we might as well go our separate ways!"

His words translated into one clear message. He had grown confident under Astrid's care and was ready to take off on his own!

Theodore straightened the collar she grabbed. Without sparing his wife another glance, he stormed out, slamming the door behind him.

Astrid sat dazed on the floor, pitiful tears streaming down her face.

After a while, she got up, wiping her tears off fiercely, and forced a smile in the mirror, so stiff it looked eerie.

"R-Right! What are a few mistresses? I'm going to be the future mayor's wife! I need to be magnanimous and see the bigger picture in this situation. Once everything settles down, I'll deal with them one by one. Just wait!"

At exactly 5:00 p.m., the reception for the inspection team took place at the Savrow Central Hall.

Mayor Solloway, Councilman Savoy, their wives, and other high-ranking officials and business elites from Savrow made a grand entrance into the hall, surrounded by media and staff.

As the chairman and president of the Iverson group, Lance and James also attended the event as representatives of the business community.

Thus, except for Charles, who was still recovering from his injuries, and the always-enigmatic Christopher, all members of the Iverson family were present at the event.

Amidst the grandeur of the event, unnoticed by all, a black luxury minivan silently parked across from the hall.

Behind the privacy glass, Justin hooked his arm around Bella's slender waist and lifted her onto his lap. He pressed his lips against hers, exploring the smooth territory of her mouth with his tongue. His eyes glowed with desire as he savored her.

"Mmm... Enough already. You're insatiable."

Bella panted as she pushed him away, her lips swollen from his kisses. "We're here on business!"

"We're indeed handling business right now," Justin replied with a slight curl of his thin lips. His handsome smile exuded a captivating charm.

"You... I meant the actual business, not this!" Bella's cheeks flushed as she punched him lightly on the chest.

"Once you get the taste of it, you'll want more of it, Bella."

His large hand then caressed her silky black hair, his gaze fixed on her irresistibly. He could not help but nibble on her reddened earlobe, murmuring, "I will always crave you. I'll never get enough of you."

Chapter 1288

Those sweet nothings that Bella once dreamed of hearing were now a constant reality.

Now, Justin wrapped himself around her day and night, chattering in her ear like a mosquito. To the point where she almost grew tired of it.

Yet, every time he drew close, touched her, and kissed her, her mind lit up like fireworks. Her emotions stirred beyond control as she allowed him to tease and tempt her.

As for her love for him, she did not need to express them in words.

It was all there in her reactions. Her face flushed, her heart raced, or her body yielded to his touch. That said everything.

Bella tried to regain her composure from his overwhelming kisses, playfully grabbed his tie, and teased. "Justin, you used to be so serious. Why do you always look like you're a dog in heat now?" She paused, realizing that might be too harsh to say out loud.

Even if it was true, it was not nice to say it out loud. It was better to spare him some dignity.

However, Justin's breathing grew heavier, a thick desire simmering in his eyes as he caressed the nape of her neck, his forehead resting against her smooth brow.

"Bella, I'm a dog in heat for you."

Bella's heart raced, and her cheeks flushed with a rosy glow as she playfully poked his firm chest. "Stop saying that. Criticizing yourself is like criticizing me, too."

The man swallowed hard and bit gently at her tender, reddened lips. "Today is a rare occasion. The minivan is spacious enough for us to have fun."

"I'm here for revenge, not to make out with you in the car!"

Bella's face turned a deeper shade of red as she flicked him on the forehead, quickly changing the subject. "By the way, why aren't the Hoffmans here today? Ryan is the company's acting president. Shouldn't he be stepping into events like this? Can he really afford to let the Iversons steal the spotlight?"

"They're still dealing with the aftermath of Zoe's scandal. They've been in the spotlight for all the wrong reasons lately, and showing up now might spark controversy."

"Well, at least they're aware of that themselves."

Justin moved in closer, his nose lightly grazing her cheek, the sensation tickling slightly. "Ryan previously mentioned that he despises these events. He'd rather be at home cuddling his lovely wife than watching these doddering old men here. I quite agree with that."

"You've been hugging me so tightly these past few days that I wake up feeling sticky and gross."

Bella swiftly twisted off his lap like a rabbit escaping from its burrow, declaring. "We're sleeping in separate beds tonight!"

The man felt a sudden emptiness in his arms. Upon hearing the mention of sleeping in separate beds, he almost teared up. He pleaded, "Please don't be so harsh to me, Bella."

Just then, a knock on the door interrupted them.

Bella rolled down the car window to see Ian's face.

"Mr. Salvador, Young Madam, the arrangements inside the hall are all set."

"Thanks for your hard work, Mr. Harris."

Bella nodded with a smile, her expression turning serious as she continued, "But please be careful. Today's event is extremely important, so security and patrols will be strict. If people from the Salvador Corporation aren't present today and you show up now, the Iversons might catch on and suspect something. That would complicate our next moves." "Don't worry, Bella."

Justin wrapped his long arms around her waist and murmured, "I have my men inside the hall, too."

Bella's beautiful eyes sparkled, and her anxious heart relaxed.

She then turned on her laptop, and her fingers danced nimbly across the keyboard, with green code cascading down the black screen like raindrops.

Justin had long grown accustomed to his woman's remarkable skills. But no matter how many times he witnessed it, he still felt a mix of awe and humility in his heart. "Okay. Everything is set."

Bella hit the enter key and stretched her fingers to relieve the stiffness. "Now, we just wait for the show to begin."

Justin tenderly took her small hand and gently massaged her fingertips.

He would let this woman turn the world upside down if she wanted to.

He would catch her if the ground sank, and he would hold up the sky for her if it fell.

Chapter 1289

In the largest conference hall of the Central Hall, the atmosphere was quite solemn, filled with high-ranking officials and industry leaders from Savrow and across the nation.

Mayor Solloway was giving a speech at the conference.

Important figures like council members and business representatives sat at the front, while family members like Astrid could only find seats at the back.

Being the sole heiress of the Iverson family, Astrid had a significant standing in the circles of elite socialites. However, in the male-dominated world of politics, it was a different realm entirely. She was merely Theodore's spouse, without much right to speak.

Naturally, someone with her prominent and assertive personality was not happy about this.

She was the one who had meticulously crafted her husband's ascent to his current prestigious position. Without the backing of the Iverson family, the support from her father, and her careful grooming, Theodore's rise would have been impossible.

The more Astrid thought about it, the prouder she felt. Her previous sour mood, caused by rival mistresses, dissipated like smoke.

She vowed to one day sit at the front, just like the mayor's wife, Mrs. Solloway.

With this in mind, Astrid sat up straight, almost haughtily, as if she were looking down at others.

People nearby glanced at her and whispered among themselves.

"Look at her snobby demeanor. If you didn't know better, you'd think her head was in the clouds!"

"Exactly! The election hasn't even started yet, and she's already acting as if her husband is guaranteed to win. That's a bit too presumptuous!"

"Astrid still thinks she's the precious heiress of the Iverson family. Doesn't she know that a married daughter is technically nothing to their birth family? It's widely known in our circle that she's been siphoning of huge sums of money from her family like a mouse burrowing back into the hole to support her husband's campaign. Her family has grown to despise her, yet she still thinks highly of herself!"

"I really don't have high hopes for Councilman Savoy. Just looking at him, you can tell he's going to be corrupt! If those two ever come to power, the people of Savrow are in for a tough time!" The harsh gossip pierced through Astrid's ears, but she disregarded it.

In her opinion, those people were merely jealous, envious of her high-class background, and resentful of her husband's success.

Just then, Mayor Solloway concluded his speech.

The room erupted into thunderous applause.

The host then stepped up to the stage and announced with a clear voice. "Please welcome Councilman Savoy to introduce his business plans for Savrow for the upcoming three years!" Theodore walked onto the stage with all eyes on him and applause filling the air.

Astrid almost stood up to clap for him, eager for everyone to recognize their connection.

Theodore approached the microphone with a broad smile, "Now, let me share with you the upcoming plans for Savrow..."

He turned to face the big screen behind him, but in the next moment, he froze.

His smile vanished, replaced by a look of stormy dread, as if lightning had struck him.

Instead of the expected project PowerPoint slides, a handwritten bill appeared on the screen.

The bill clearly displayed the bribes Theodore had accepted over the years, with dates, locations, and amounts ranging from hundreds to millions of dollars, all meticulously listed. Theodore's body wobbled, and he looked utterly dumbfounded.

A buzzing sound rang in Astrid's head as if something drained all the blood from her body. Shocked, her face turned pale, and the world seemed to spin around her.

Below the stage, murmurs erupted among the audience.

"What's this? It doesn't look like project presentation slides."

"Hey, that looks like a ledger! A ledger of bribery!"

"There's Councilman Savoy's name on it. Isn't this evidence of him taking bribes?!"

In the next moment, the content on the screen changed again.

Now, a series of secretly taken photos played in a loop.

They showed Theodore entering private clubs, personally accepting expensive jewelry, and even images of him with his arms around two women heading into a club room. The crowd was in an uproar, and the media was stunned.

Chapter 1290

"Gosh! Who did this?! This is incredible!"

"They've accumulated so much evidence and chose such a critical moment to release it. They're really out to destroy Theodore!"

"Could it be Mayor Solloway? After all, they are major rivals in this election."

"It's possible, but do the Solloways really have such capability? Whoever is behind this must be even more formidable!"

The relentless flashes of the cameras captured Theodore on stage, paralyzed and shaking, documenting his embarrassing predicament. Some reporters were not satisfied with just photographs. They surged toward the stage and pointed their cameras at him.

"Councilman Savoy! Is everything displayed on the screen factual?!"

"Did you take bribes? Have you engaged in any unauthorized dealings for personal gain?!"

Theodore's teeth clattered uncontrollably as he staggered backward. "That wasn't me! Someone photoshopped me into it. Someone is trying to frame me!"

"What about the ledger? How do you explain that?!"

"It's fake! It's all fake! I didn't take that money! I never did!"

Sweat soaked Theodore's face. He cried out in panic. "Where's the security?! Come maintain order!"

As the scene descended into chaos with the media besieging his son-in-law and one scandal after another exploding like landmines, Lance became infuriated. His face darkened rapidly. "Go and find out what's going on immediately!"

Lance's eyes reddened, and his breathing was uneven with fury. "This is clearly an attack on my son-in-law, but they're actually aiming at the Iversons! Who on earth has such audacity to go after us?!"

"Alright, Dad. I'll look into it right away!"

Realizing that the situation was out of control, James urgently suggested, "Let's take advantage of the situation and get you out of here now. After all, Theodore is your son-in-law. If he's in trouble, it'll probably affect you too."

"No way!"

Lance firmly refused. "If we leave now, wouldn't it seem like we're admitting to these scandals? Besides, people will think the Iversons can't handle pressure and can't play the long game. Wouldn't that just make us a laughingstock to them?"

Just then, James' phone vibrated.

He answered it with a stern expression, only to hear Astrid's voice come through in a frantic tone. "James! Come outside now! I'm waiting for you in the hallway!"

When James arrived, he found Astrid panicking, pacing back and forth with her face deathly pale.

"What on earth is happening, Astrid?!"

"James! You need to help Theodore!"

Astrid pleaded tearfully, gripping James' arm with a sheer look of panic. "If word of what happened at today's event spreads, Theodore's political career will be over!"

James gritted his teeth angrily. "With such an important event and numerous high officials and media here, do you think we can keep this under wraps?! The rumors have already taken over the city!" Astrid staggered backward in fright, her heart racing.

"Are the ledger and those photos real?" James exhaled sharply, his voice harsh.

Astrid shut her eyes and nodded.

"Useless! You're supposed to be the heiress of the Iverson family, and yet you can't even control a man who's financially dependent on you?! You've continually taken money from our family to support him, only to foster a man greedy for more?!" James' anger was uncontainable as he looked at his sister, whose actions always seemed to backfire.

"What's the use of talking about this now?! Every time something goes wrong, everyone blames it on me. But none of you mentioned how much you benefited from Theodore before! Do you think I supported him for myself? His supposed ascent to the mayor would have benefited the Iversons, too!" Astrid screamed hysterically, on the verge of breaking down.

"Enough! Keep your voice down! Do you want everyone to hear you?!" James glared at her intensely, his gaze oppressive.

Astrid immediately stopped crying and asked tremulously, "James... You have to help Theodore! For the sake of the Iverson family's reputation... Please help him!"

"I know!"

James inhaled sharply, his expression grim. "Once the news gets out, it won't be long before authorities start investigating Theodore. I'll have people lock down the area and try to find a way for you both to leave quietly!"