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Witnessing Gordon eating at a roadside stall, Isabella was convinced that this was the
extent of an affluent youth. However, she did not expect him to generously give money
to a beggar.

Corey approached the old man at the door, handed him the money, and said something that likely meant inviting him to join them for a meal.

The man was visibly moved and wiped away tears, repeatedly thanking Corey but too embarrassed to enter the stall.

Isabella overheard a group of girls whispering. They admired Corey, commenting on his good looks and kind heart.

Just as the conversation ended, some cast curious glances toward Isabella, particularly from the girls.

When Corey returned and sat across from her, he smiled and asked, "Bella, why did you stop eating?"

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"They seem like siblings..."
She curled her lips, returned a smile to Corey, and lowered her head to eat dumplings.
Isabella smiled back at him and resumed eating her dumplings.
She chose not to inquire why he carried cash. He did not bring it up either, treating it as
a normal part of his routine.
As they ate, her phone buzzed. She glanced at it to see Seth's name on the scree
indicating an incoming call.
Forcing a smile, she cast a glance at Corey before answering Seth's call with a slight tilt.
"Mr. Shaffer."
"Where are you?"
Isabella hesitated, looking around before responding, "I'm at the office."
Seth's reply was sharp. "Since when did Nemotors open in Lumber Alley?"
His retort caught her off guard.
She quickly exited the call screen and glanced at the location setting, which was
indeed brightly illuminated.
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"Well, I came out to eat something with a colleague. I didn't have lunch."

Seth snorted, but Corey interjected with surprise and excitement before he could continue, "Bella, look. There are shrimps."

This made Isabella feel even more awkward.

Seth did not bother to hide his disapproval, his voice icy. "There's trouble at the company. You haven't dealt with it, yet you're out exploring street food with a male colleague."

"Isabella, you really are something."

She was taken aback by his stern tone.

While she tried to respond, he became insistent. "You have fifteen minutes to be in

front of me. One minute late, and it's 1,500 dollars deducted from your annual salary."

Isabella stood up so quickly that she nearly knocked the table. "I'll be right there!"

As soon as she said this, the call ended.

Noticing her sudden agitation, Corey expressed his surprise. "Bella, what's wrong?"

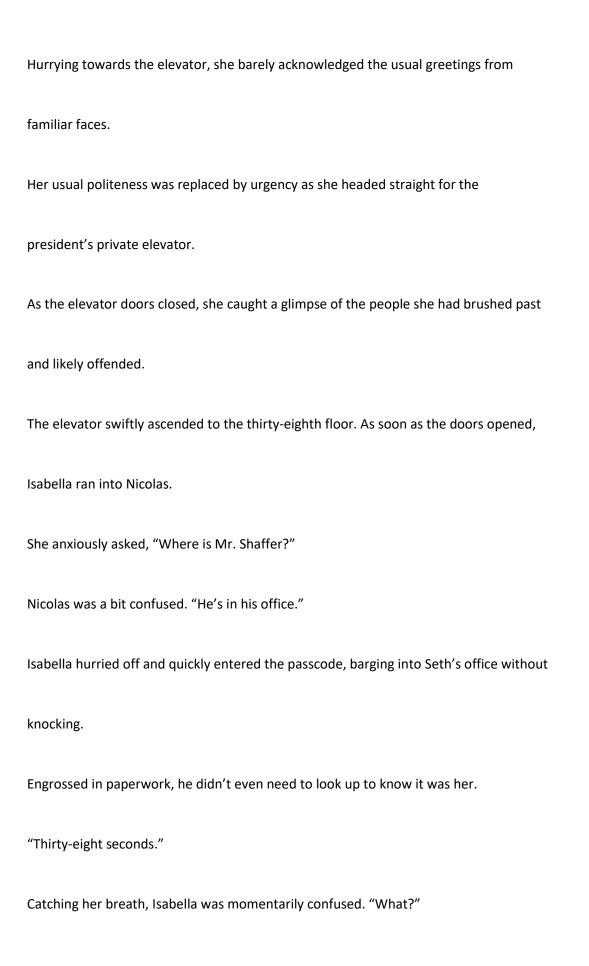


people she had encountered. it She used to see Corey as cunning and calculating, but now she understood it more as a necessity. Being born into a wealthy family often required a certain level of shrewdness, especially for someone like him who had been labeled as an "illegitimate chil childhood and subjected to countless cold stares. His sharpness was likely a su mechanism. In contrast, there was a certain person born as the sole heir to vast fortunes with their paths laid out with privilege. Yet, instead of kindness, he exuded a domineering presence. Lost in these thoughts, she kept a keen eye on the time while inwardly cursing Seth

Phoebe's car was decent, and Isabella drove at top speed, arriving at the Shaffer Group

with each passing minute.

building in just thirteen minutes.



Seth finished signing a document, closed the file, and leaned back in his chair. He then looked at her with a calm demeanor. "You were thirty-eight seconds late, but I'll round it down to thirty."

She clenched her teeth, screaming inwardly.

He continued, "750 dollars will be deducted from your annual salary."

Isabella closed her eyes and took several deep breaths, intending to argue about the

terms of her employment.

However, Seth had a response ready. "We haven't signed a formal employee agreement

yet."

This realization hit her like a lightning bolt. She remembered that her appointment as president of Nemotors was indeed without a formal contract. The most official

procedure had been the inauguration ceremony. Caught up in the excitement of the

moment, she had overlooked the necessity of a formal employment agreement.

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D*mn it! He's set up every possible trap!