

Love Spell 491

Chapter 491

"Well, we'll all be family soon anyway. No need for formalities," Carlisle reassured himself as he signed the contract.

Once done, he inquired curiously, "I thought all the office space in Windex Building was leased on opening day. Why is the 15th floor available now?"

The sales manager awkwardly explained, "The client kept delaying the contract and didn't pay the deposit. Our boss got tired of waiting, so we released the 15th floor to you!"

"Let's head to the finance department to settle the payment then!"

Carlisle handed a copy of the contract back to the sales manager.

He mentally noted Shania's favor and planned to return it when he ventured into the real estate business.

Shortly after the manager left, Felicia entered the office with several documents.

"Mr. Zahn, here's your salary statement... I... accidentally left you out!"

Her cheeks flushed with embarrassment, and she wished she could disappear into the floor.

All the employees' salaries had been set except for the chairman's. She had just taken over the office and had already made a mistake. She was afraid that Carlisle would be angry about her mistake.

Carlisle glanced at his salary details. As CEO of Aurora Holdings, his annual salary was 1.2 million dollars.

"That much?"

He didn't care about the amount. As the founder and legal representative of several companies, he held most of the shares. Most of the year-end dividends eventually ended up in his account.

Felicia explained, "Since we don't have a board of directors, we couldn't list you as chairman. We've made you the CEO of Aurora Holdings. This salary statement is based on the annual salaries of the CEOs of several publicly traded companies in Yorksle."

"I don't need a salary. The company's running low on funds right now, so let's save where we can," Carlisle decided, crumpling the salary sheet and tossing it into the trash.

Gareth's 200 million investment was originally meant for Dragonaire but had been transferred to Carlisle's account for his discretion. 100 million went to Xenos Factory, and the other 100 million was injected into Aurora Holdings.

Dagonaire didn't receive a single cent, but Aurora Holdings provided all the necessary funds.

Shortly after Felicia left, Anthony arrived with a work badge.

"Mr. Zahn, here's your work badge. Windex Building's management has announced that in three days, anyone without one won't be allowed entry for security reasons."

Carlisle examined his badge. It had Aurora Holdings in bold letters and his name. His employee number was 0001, and his position was as the CEO.

The badge was an identification card with his details printed on it, and it had a purple lanyard, which signified the highest company position.

Carlisle pocketed the badge and asked, "How many employees do we have now?"

"Aurora Holdings has 35 employees. Alumni Network has 86. Dragonaire Game Company has 227. Xenos Factory has 398. Govan Technology Limited has 2050. Altogether, we have 2796 employees," Anthony replied without hesitation, having a thorough grasp of the employee numbers across all of Carlisle's companies.

Nearly 3000 employees worked at Govan Technology Limited, about 1600 of whom were production line workers. The rest were technical staff and management.

"Let's quickly finalize the department structures for all companies and ensure we're fully staffed," Carlisle directed.

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It was noon, and the office building was buzzing with people leaving for the day. A crowd had gathered at the 18th-floor elevator.

"Who touched my butt? That's gross!"

"Watch where you're stepping!"

"Stop pushing! It's annoying!"

"This is ridiculous. I'm taking the stairs!"

Tower A was home to Aurora Holdings, which had just 35 employees. The rest of the crowd came from other companies in the building. Everyone wore their new work badges from either Govan Technology Limited, Dragonaire Studio, or Alumni Network.

"Pervert! Stop touching me!"

A gorgeous woman in front of Carlisle turned around and glared at the people behind her. Carlisle was right behind her, so it looked like she was staring at him.

A few people nearby also looked in his direction.

"It wasn't me," Carlisle denied.

The woman was very attractive. Almost immediately, a man stepped in to defend her.

"You were right behind her. If not you, then who? You're just a kid, yet you're openly touching women? Who raised you?"

The man wore a crisp white shirt and had slicked-back hair. He wore sunglasses indoors and looked well-mannered. His badge identified him as Lincoln Ward, an assistant team leader at Dragonaire Studio. He was on probation.

The woman was also a Dragonaire Studio employee, Millie Callaghan. She was an intern concept artist and was also on probation.

Carlisle locked eyes with Lincoln.

"Are you delusional?"

Millie turned to Lincoln for confirmation.

"I saw it with both eyes. He touched her twice!" Lincoln claimed after a moment of hesitation.

The accusation caused some of the women to shuffle away from Carlisle instinctively. They gave him looks of contempt and disgust.

Carlisle might be a good-looking guy, but that didn't give him a free pass to do whatever he wanted. Not every girl was a sucker for looks. Such behavior in public was disgusting.

Millie's eyes reddened as she glared at Carlisle.

"Which company are you from? I'm reporting you to your supervisor!"

Carlisle ignored Millie's threat and continued to glare at Lincoln.

"Adults should stand by their words. Can you stand by yours?"

Lincoln looked around. He noticed the security cameras in every corner of the ceiling and immediately became nervous.

"I-I..." he stammered.

"What's the matter? Can't you back up your claim? Or are you just trying to deflect blame?" Carlisle's voice was ice cold.

The crowd sensed Lincoln's hesitation and began to shift their suspicion to him.

"He probably has plenty of admirers. He wouldn't have to do something like this," said one. "Exactly! He's being falsely accused."

"Let's not jump to conclusions. We should check the security footage," suggested another.

"Is this guy an employee? He looks too young to work here."

"Maybe he's somebody's younger brother."

Carlisle had never been to Dragonaire Studio before, and the new employees didn't recognize him.

Feeling the pressure from the crowd, Lincoln's face flushed.

"I'm not trying to deflect blame! You're just shooting in the dark!"

As an assistant team leader, he had some authority in his team. His subordinates had been eager to please him lately, which inflated his ego.

Being questioned by people from other departments felt like a blow to his pride. He'd be a laughing stock if word got back to his team.

Trying to regain his composure, Lincoln continued, "If it wasn't you, then who was it? You were right behind Millie. You were in perfect position..."

"There are cameras, right? Why not have your manager check the footage?" Carlisle looked at the security cameras again.

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The elevator doors opened. It was already packed to the brim as it descended. The people inside pushed the button to close the doors.

As the elevator left, Millie took a deep breath.

"Even though we're not from the same company, we all work for the same boss. We're

trained professionals in this office building. Let's keep our hands to ourselves and not ruin the company's reputation."

With that, she turned and waited for the next elevator. It was clear that she would not pursue the matter further.

"Wow, that's a lot of people..."

Just then, Felicia and Anthony arrived. Their lanyards were colored red, indicating director-level positions. The crowd instinctively parted to make way for them.

"Let's form a line. We'll line up, too."

Felicia turned to Anthony.

"Don't the other companies coordinate with each other? Everyone leaving at the same time just wastes more time!"

Anthony sighed.

"Most of the companies are willing to coordinate. It's just a few that don't want to adjust their schedules. I'll talk to them again over the next few days."

As the two talked, the crowd didn't dare make a sound.

"Mr. Zahn?"

Felicia finally noticed Carlisle in the crowd.

Anthony looked up and walked over to him after a pause.

"Mr. Zahn, over eight thousand people are simultaneously going in and out of Windex Building. That's why the elevator system is overwhelmed.

"I've contacted the other companies, and we're working on adjusting their schedules."

Carlisle nodded.

"If some of the companies aren't willing to reschedule, we can make the changes ourselves. We could move our start and end times back an hour or even two if necessary!"

"Two hours might be too much. Most employees prefer to take the elevator, so the congestion really only lasts about an hour."

Carlisle frowned at the revelation that it might take an hour.

"In that case, I'll take the stairs."

He turned and headed for the stairwell, with Felicia following behind.

The crowd at the elevator was stunned.

The handsome young man was Carlisle Zahn, the head of Aurora Holdings. Lincoln's face drained of color as he realized he had falsely accused his boss.

Millie was equally shocked. She was surprised at how young Carlisle was. She feared she might lose her job.

Carlisle, however, had no intention of holding a grudge. If he had, he would have contacted their superiors by now. He had to have a broader perspective and more tolerance as a boss.

The restaurants around Windex Building were booming with business. Their prices increased accordingly.

A typical six-dollar dish had gone up to eight dollars. A nine-dollar dish was now 12 dollars, and a 12-dollar special was now 16 dollars. Freshly cooked dishes were generally over 20 dollars.

Carlisle ordered three main dishes and three side dishes. He even added a bowl of soup. The total came to one hundred dollars.

"The cost of living here is almost as high as Yorksle."

Felicia sighed.

Anthony chuckled.

"The Windex building is full of professionals with high salaries. The cost of living reflects that, of course. The vendors won't pass up the opportunity!"

Carlisle was also shocked. In his previous life, when he worked as an office worker from 2010 to 2015, fast food cost about ten dollars.

"We need our own cafeteria and dormitory for the staff. Without providing food and housing, we're paying a lot of money every month for food and housing allowances. In the long run, that cost will exceed the cost of building our own facilities," Felicia suggested.

Carlisle took a spoonful of his soup and nodded.

"Find a suitable location nearby for a cafeteria and dormitory. We only have a one-year lease in Windex Building. We must earn enough within that year to build our own industrial

park."

Felicia and Anthony exchanged glances. They didn't doubt Carlisle's ambition.

Even though the Govan phone hadn't been produced yet, and game development at Dragonaire Studio had just begun, the potential of Alumni Network was obvious. Its success seemed inevitable despite not having been launched yet.

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It was the evening at Dragonaire Studio.

Owen, shirtless, was in the middle of a card game with his colleagues. A cigarette dangled from his lips as he cocked his head at an angle. The table was littered with ten-dollar bills. The stakes had been raised to about four hundred dollars.

"Let's see them," Sunny said.

He tossed ten dollars into the pile and turned over his three cards. They were all in the same suit three kings.

"Damn. That's a hit."

Sunny immediately regretted his bold move. If only he had checked his cards first.

But knowing Owen, he probably would have gone all in blindly. With Owen's annual salary of over 200 thousand dollars, Sunny felt that now was the perfect time to rob him clean.

"Owen's done for!"

"It's good that Sunny didn't peek at his cards, or Owen would be down to his boxers!"

Everyone gave Owen pitiful looks.

Owen grinned.

"Don't count me out just yet. What if I have an ace up my sleeve?"

He gathered his cards into a pile and revealed a pair of hearts as the first card.

Slowly, he slid the first card away, revealing a red three underneath.

"Round, round, round..." he sang, hoping for a heart.

When the corner of another heart appeared, Owen beamed.

"Not so fast, Sunny. You haven't won yet."

He began to reveal the third card.

"Spiky, spiky, spiky..."

"Oh crap, it's pointy..."

And indeed, the tip of a red ace appeared. Sunny leaned in.

"Could be a four, you know?"

Owen revealed a bit more of the card, showing that the tip was slightly askew.

"Just as I thought, a four. Even a straight can't save you now!"

Sunny burst out laughing.

Owen blinked.

"But what if it's a straight flush?"

The smile disappeared from Sunny's face. A third red card-if it were a heart-would be a straight flush, trumping Sunny's three kings.

"Be round, be round," Owen continued as he revealed the third card.

The others joined in the chant. But the third card turned out to be from the diamond suit.

Owen covered his cards.

"Damn it!"

"I win! Mr. Barlow, you're a CEO now. Watch your language. We've got a reputation to uphold," Sunny teased as he collected all the money.

Owen stubbed out his cigarette in the ashtray and sighed.

"Sunny, I'm as stiff as a board back at headquarters. I come here to relax, and yet you're still on my case."

Sunny looked surprised and offered an awkward smile.

"My bad. Relax. You're home now. Let's keep going."

Just then, there was a knock at the door. A night worker opened it.

At the sight of Carlisle, he stammered, "C-Carl... I mean... Mr. Zahn..."

"Just Carl is fine, I don't mind."

Carlisle waved him off with a smile.

The worker grinned.

"Carl..."

Carlisle nodded and entered the living room. Everyone stood to greet him.

Owen struggled to put on his shirt and fix his hair. Carlisle's presence was more imposing than ever. He felt like he was standing before a schoolteacher.

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Carlisle looked at the cards on the table and asked, "Why the small stakes?"

"Only Heath plays high stakes. We keep it small, just for fun!"

Owen laughed awkwardly.

Carlisle nodded in agreement. The last time Heath dragged him into a game, he lost a few

thousand dollars. He agreed that small bets were fine for entertainment, but high stakes

were harmful. The best option was not to gamble at all.

"What brings you here, Carl?" Owen inquired cautiously.

"I'm here for some pictures."

Leon's photos from then had been delivered to Owen. Carlisle decided to take them to his apartment so he could look at them whenever he wanted.

Owen pointed to the room Carlisle had used earlier.

"They're on your bed. No one dares enter your room without your permission."

Carlisle entered the room and turned on the light. A suitcase filled with cash and a thick photo album was on the bed.

After a moment, he opened the first page. It was a picture of him and Wanda looking deep into each other's eyes in front of Leon's bridal shop.

A smile crept across Carlisle's face as he turned to the next page. It was a photo of the two of them embracing.

"Wanda... Where are you?"

Carlisle traced her image as his eyes watered. Work kept his mind occupied, but the moment he stopped, Wanda filled his thoughts.

He flipped through the album as memories of Yearning Island flooded his mind.

He remembered being chased by a group of elderly people, the giant cotton candy, making wishes with a sky lantern, and sharing snacks on a stone bench under a street lamp. More importantly, he remembered the scene where he stole a kiss from Wanda, her eyes wide with surprise.

There were about 50 photographs. Each one was clear and beautifully composed, and each one was wallpaper-worthy. After looking at them three times, Carlisle reluctantly closed the album and took it with him back to Willow Grove.

Once home, he received a call from Daniel.

"Carl, we took care of Zadie!"

"Did it go smoothly?"

"Very smoothly. Thanks to Wade, they solved it without any problems."

"That's good to hear."

Three days flew by. Carlisle hadn't been to the office but was completely immersed in his studies. Gareth had dragged him out for drinks a few times, but they avoided bars, opting instead for Wonderland Steakhouse.

Carlisle had invited Gareth to a bar for a drink the night before, but Gareth had declined. Carlisle suspected that Gareth was on a tight budget and didn't want to appear cheap.

After playing basketball with his classmates, Carlisle took a break on the grass while sipping his Coke. Coincidentally, Sarah's class also had gym class. After playing badminton, she also went over to rest.

"Sarah, are you going to the Alumni Network launch event tonight? I've got three invitations - here's one for you!"

"Not interested," Sarah replied without hesitation.

She was in a terrible mood as Sienna's trial run of ScholarLoan had been reported and shut down within a week.

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Sienna suspected that a client named Zadie was behind the report. Sarah wanted revenge, but Zadie had Wade to back her up.

Wade was a former general under the now-absent Heath. Even though Heath wasn't

around, Wade and his men were not to be messed with. Even someone like Alex wouldn't provoke Wade.

The only option would be to involve Jalen, but with his recent standoff with Titan, no one wanted to stir up trouble with a third party at such a critical time.

"Bella, are you going?"

"Of course! You will receive a box of premium coffee for attending the event. It only costs two dollars to take the bus there and back. It's a total win!" Bella replied.

"I was thinking the same thing. Let's go after school!"

"Sure. Wait for me after class."

Sarah looked at her disdainfully.

"It's only one box of coffee. I'll get you two boxes if you come over and watch TV with me tonight."

"Really? Sarah, you're the best!"

Bella's eyes lit up.

The bell rang, signaling the end of classes.

Just then, Daniel came running from the field.

"Carl..."

Sarah froze before turning her head. She spotted Carlisle in his jersey and frowned.

"Let's go back to class. Seeing him ruins my mood."

Sarah's friends nodded and followed her into the building.

Carlisle finished his Coke and looked up at the panting Daniel.

"Carl, is the server room ready?"

"Not yet. It's still being renovated, and we're still negotiating the server prices," Carlisle replied.

Daniel handed him an invitation.

"Then how do you explain this?"

Carlisle scanned the invitation.

"Dear student, we cordially invite you to the upcoming Alumni Network launch event. We'll introduce you to our new college social platform, designed with a user-friendly interface, powerful features, and rich content. At the launch, we will demonstrate the site's features and answer any questions you may have about Alumni Network. You'll also have the opportunity to discuss and share feedback with our team."

The event was scheduled for November 7th at 8:00 pm at Riverland Convention Center. It even stated that attendees could claim a box of premium coffee after the event with their invitation. Finally, there was Alumni Network's tagline, "Real connections, remarkable experiences."

Carlisle was confused. It was November 7th, and he hadn't heard anything about it. He tried to call Sean, but his phone was off. Carlisle figured that he was probably in class.

Then, he called Felicia.

"Mr. Zahn..." Felicia began nervously.

Carlisle got right to the point.

"Is the Alumni Network server ready?"

Swallowing hard, Felicia replied, "The vendor sent over two servers for testing. They can handle the initial load of a hundred thousand users. Mr. Woodsen was so eager to have the launch that he even used his own money to buy two thousand bottles of coffee for the attendees.

"He was afraid of your reaction, so he told me to keep it a secret from you. I figured since this was his first big decision, I shouldn't discourage him. So, I kept it from you."

Carlisle's mouth twitched in annoyance. At that moment, he thought Sean was an idiot. Two thousand bottles of coffee would cost over 40 thousand, even at wholesale prices.

Besides Carlisle's million, Sean didn't have that kind of money. "Mr. Zahn, you're not mad, are you?" Felicia asked cautiously.

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After a moment of silence, Carlisle smiled and said, "I wouldn't say that I'm angry. Alumni Network is his responsibility, so he should handle it himself."

As Felicia mentioned, Sean rarely made any major decisions on his own. As such, Carlisle should not discourage his enthusiasm by offering any opinions. Sean must have thought it through carefully if he chose to make such a decision.

Nothing came without sacrifice. The press conference was the first step in promoting the product. The next step was to trudge ahead.

At 8:00 pm in Riverland Convention Center, many students from various universities gathered around booth No. 6.

Riverland had nine undergraduate universities and 12 vocational colleges. Approximately 2000 invitations were sent out via Alumni Network. On average, each school received a hundred invitations.

Another 20 invitations were sent to journalists from various media outlets. The Riverland News Observation team under Riverland TV Station came too.

Even the teachers and the principal of University of Science and Technology attended the event. They naturally came to support their students who started a business. If the company grew to be successful, it would also be a source of pride for the school.

Glory Textile Factory was located in Rainville. It was more of a workshop than a factory, with an entire work area of about 300 square feet.

That day, Rory and his wife shut down the machines early. They even treated their employees to some snacks. Had they not been employed for a long time, the employees would have thought it was Rory or his wife's birthday.

At that moment, everyone was seated as they paid attention to an old, broken black-and- white TV. Riverland TV was currently playing a commercial.

One of the employees couldn't help but ask, "Mr. Woodsen, is there a special program today?"

Rory chuckled and said, "You'll know soon enough!"

His wife, Sharyl Langley, extended her hand, which was wrinkled from excessive dye.

She grabbed a handful of peanuts and said as she ate them, "The higher the expectation, the greater the disappointment. You shouldn't get your hopes up."

Rory glared at her.

"Can't you be a little more optimistic? Kids need encouragement, not criticism," he retorted.

Displeased, she threw the peanuts onto the floor and replied angrily, "You gave him 30 thousand dollars! All our work for the past six months would be for nothing if he deceived you.

"You even asked everyone in the village to watch their TVs tonight. Let's see how you'll salvage the situation if our son doesn't appear on TV!"

"Hey, what are you two arguing about?"

Gordon walked in with Hilda. As soon as they reached the door, they saw Rory and his wife in the middle of a heated argument.

Rory smiled as he welcomed them.

"Gordon, you're here. Here, have a seat and some beer..."

Sharyl reigned in her anger. Arguing in front of their employees was normal, but doing it in front of outsiders was somewhat embarrassing.

She stood up and said, "Why don't you two have a seat? I'll get you some drinks."

Helena Zander had also entered with Gordon and his wife. Rory had invited Helena over the phone.

His son had started a business and held a press conference that night. He even invited reporters from Riverland TV for live coverage. Rory felt that such an impressive moment had to be shared with everyone.

He had also invited a few old friends besides Gordon, Hilda, and Helena.

Shortly after Gordon and his wife sat, Rory's old friends arrived one after another. The small room was soon filled with over 20 people.

Sharyl added more snacks and drinks.

At 8:10 pm, Riverland Insight finally aired.

"News without boundaries. Current affairs at your fingertips. Keep up with the times.

"Welcome to Riverland Insight's live broadcast. I'm your host, Harlan Reynolds. Today, we will be discussing the current hot topics in Riverland..."

Just as the host finished his introduction, the TV screen flickered violently. "Rory, you're a boss, yet you're still so cheap. Isn't it time to get a color TV?" Gordon teased.

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Hilda chimed in as she snacked on her peanuts, "He's right. You make tens of thousands of dollars a year.

"If you're being so frugal, what are we, the poor, supposed to do?"

Rory scratched his head awkwardly.

"It must be the wind. It probably knocked the antenna out of place.

"I'll go check it out. Stay seated, you guys!"

He hurried out once he was done speaking.

The workshop was in a rented single-story house located in an urban village. Every household had a black-and-white TV with an antenna outside.

The TV's reception would be severely affected whenever there was wind or rain.

After Rory left the room, Sharyl couldn't help but say, "Hilda, how could you call yourself poor? The convenience store the both of you opened recently must have cost tens of thousands of dollars!"

Hilda rolled her eyes.

"It's not as if you are unaware of our financial circumstances. We borrowed money from you for Carl's tuition two years ago."

Sharyl asked, puzzled, "Then where did you get the money to open the convenience store? Was it from Gordon's severance pay?"

Hilda couldn't hold back her laughter.

She then looked at Gordon and said, "Severance pay... Does he look that important?"

Gordon's lips twitched. He stepped on Hilda's foot in retaliation. He wondered why she couldn't spare him the shame while they were out.

The TV buzzed as it returned to the TV program.

"Next, we will contact our on-site reporter to check out the social networking platform this young 18-year-old university student will launch..."

At Riverland Convention Center, Alumni Network's product manager was on stage warming up the audience.

He explained Facebook and analyzed why it had become so popular among universities abroad. Behind him, a projector displayed Facebook's interface and various features on a

screen.

Sean was adjusting his outfit below the stage. He wore a loose gray suit jacket with pants that were a tad too long for him that day. Half of his white shirt was tucked while the other remained untucked.

He looked somewhat comical.

Sean smiled as he looked at Lily, who was rather weak.

He then asked as he slicked back his hair, "Lily, do I look like a domineering CEO?"

Their relationship had mended after Lily had been cared for attentively over the past few days.

Lily couldn't help but chuckle, "Do you want the truth or a lie?"

Sean immediately lost interest.

"Neither sounds good, so I don't want to hear it!"

Gillian frowned and asked, "Squirt, did you pick this outfit yourself?"

"Don't call me Squirt. My name is Sean! This outfit cost me 600 dollars."

Sean scratched his head in frustration as he looked at himself in the mirror.

"Why do I feel like this jacket is a little too big?"

Gillian snickered.

"You have bad taste. Do guys never try on clothes when buying them?"

She suspected his suit could easily fit her 180-pound father.

Lily chimed in, "Just take off the jacket. The white shirt looks fine on its own."

Since Lily said so, Sean reluctantly took off the jacket and tucked his shirt fully into his pants. However, the white shirt was still quite loose. Lily still thought it looked rather awkward no matter how she looked at it.

She sighed and said, "Take me with you the next time you go clothes shopping. I might not know much about suits, but I do have an eye for style."

Sean blushed at Lily's comment.

To ease the awkwardness, he smiled and explained himself, "Darling, you may say that I suck at buying clothes, but you can't say I lack an eye for aesthetics. Otherwise, how could I

be so smitten with you?"

Gillian's lips twitched.

"How shameless... The two of you aren't married, yet you both flirt like husband and wife."

Lily shot Sean a glare as she blushed furiously. However, she felt warm inside. She finally understood the feeling Wanda described when dating Carlisle.

Lily's eyes dimmed slightly upon thinking of Wanda.

She couldn't help but wonder about Wanda's whereabouts.

"Mr. Woodsen..."

Alumni Network's publicity director walked over. Sean immediately tensed up.

"Is it my turn to go on stage?"

The publicity director smiled and shook his head.

"Mr. Zahn is here..."

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"You know that's Mr. Zahn. So why didn't you bring him over?"

Sean instantly couldn't bear the sight of the publicity director.

Carlisle had arrived, yet the publicity director approached Sean to report to him instead of greeting him. Sean wondered if the publicity director understood his priorities. He

questioned if his years of working experience had taught him anything.

The publicity director quickly explained himself.

"Mr. Zahn and the others arrived without notifying anyone beforehand. They were standing at the end of the convention center.

"It seemed they wanted to join this press conference as an audience member. I saw them, so I came over to inform you."

Sean looked less irritated upon hearing that.

"How many people are standing in the audience?"

"About a hundred or two."

"Go borrow some chairs from the booths."

"Alright, Mr. Woodsen!" replied the publicity director. He then turned and left.

Sean turned to look at the audience. The final row was too dark, so he couldn't see Carlisle and the others.

Meanwhile, the product manager on stage was about to wrap up.

"Other countries have social media platforms for their universities. Our country should have the same.

"Now put your hands together for the CEO of Alumni Network, Mr. Sean Woodsen. He'll be introducing our soon-to-be-launched university SNS platform-Alumni Network."

When the product manager finished his closing remarks, a fierce round of applause erupted. After all, the audience was still waiting to receive their box of premium coffee.

If they weren't proactive, they would miss out on grabbing themselves some, which would be a huge loss.

Sean steadied his nerves and walked toward the stage.

The product manager handed Sean the microphone. The moment the thousands of students saw Sean, chatter erupted.

"Holy shit. He's so young."

"Wow, isn't that Sean from our class?"

Someone in the audience chuckled and replied, "That guy is from our dorm. Impressive, right? So, will you agree to be my girlfriend now?"

"You're nuts..."

"Do you see him? That's my student. I knew he was extraordinary the moment he stepped into my classroom!" exclaimed a teacher in the audience.

"Yeah, I see him."

Someone else chimed, "He's younger than me. Why is he better than me?"

"If you had an awesome dad, you could be a president at his age, too!"

"Mr. Woodsen's taste in clothing is rather indescribable," commented another.

Felicia crossed her arms. She could barely suppress her smile.

Perhaps she was used to being in a large company. Thus, she naturally compared Sean with the CEOs of other large companies.

Anthony smiled and said, "I'll have someone order some workwear from Islo Clothing tomorrow."

Felicia chimed in softly, "Islo Clothing isn't cheap. I think it's fine if you order the clothes from a smaller clothing brand."

The company had just started out and required a lot of capital in multiple areas, especially Xenos and Govan. Those companies were a money pit.

Said companies didn't usually require a lot of capital. But when the need arose, it would start in the eight-figure range.

Although Aurora Holdings had a billion dollars in the company account, the amount definitely wouldn't last long. As Director of Accounting, it was her responsibility to control costs.

Anthony nodded and said, "I'm planning to have uniforms custom-made for the CEO and Mr. Zahn at Islo Clothing. After all, they represent the company. They need to maintain a good personal image when attending business events in the future."

Just then, a group of staff members arrived with chairs. Anthony dragged a chair over for Carlisle to sit on.

Chapter 500

At Glory Textile Factory, laughter was heard.

"Do you see that? That's my son."

Rory stood up from the excitement upon seeing Sean on stage.

Sharyl covered her mouth in surprise. She was teary-eyed.

Sean really was on TV. Her boy was all grown up now.

"Rory, your son has just started his studies, yet he has started a business. He shouldn't neglect his education!" one of Rory's long-time business associates said worriedly.

The others nodded in agreement.

"That's right, Rory. Sean should prioritize his studies at this age. He wasn't parented properly..."

"Call him quickly. Tell him to stop and focus on his studies. It isn't too late to start his business after he has graduated!" exclaimed another.

Several suppliers who had a good relationship with them chimed in. They felt rather envious.

Their sons not only had poor grades, but they also refused to learn the trade. Instead, their sons spent all day either at internet cafes or arcades.

They wondered how such a big difference could be between their sons and Rory's son. They thought that perhaps Rory's family had some incredible luck.

Sharyl was swayed by their words. She took out her phone, ready to call her son.

Rory grabbed Sharyl's hand and asked coldly, "What are you doing?"

She replied, "They're right. Sean should be focusing on his studies at this age. We're not so old that we can't work anymore.

"We can still earn a living. Do we need to rely on him financially?"

Rory furrowed his brows. He was torn.

He wanted his son to be successful and independent, but he also didn't want him to neglect his studies.

However, running a business meant being constantly busy. He wondered how Sean could possibly focus on his studies.

"Gordon, isn't your son also carrying out a business? Aren't you worried he'll neglect his studies?" asked Sharyl upon being stopped by her husband.

She turned to Gordon, hoping he could help persuade Rory.

Gordon smiled and said, "Sharyl, I think we're worrying too much. Studying requires

brains, and so does running a business. The kids have their own ideas and must have thought them through.

"Remember how Sean and Carlisle used to spend all their time online, and we thought they were academically hopeless?"

Sharyl hesitated for a moment. She then looked at Hilda.

She and Rory hadn't received much education, but Gordon and Hilda had both attended high school. In the 80s, high school graduates were considered intellectuals.

Gordon would naturally side with Rory, so she wanted Hilda's opinion.

Hilda hesitated for a moment.

She then smiled and said, "Gordon and I used to share your sentiment. However, we eventually understood that kids can only get into college if they work hard. It was not due to our strict management of them.

"Let's look at it from another angle. If he didn't get into university, wouldn't he be learning the trade from you or spending money on a vocational school and then finding a high- paying job?

"Kids

path."

grow up eventually. I think we should support them as long as they are on the right

Hilda had recently come to realize those thoughts. A weight had been lifted off her chest when her son entered university.

Her son could choose his own path in the future as long as it was the right one.

As she munched on her peanuts, Helena remarked enviously, "You should be content. My boy didn't even get into high school. He dropped out halfway through vocational school and ran away!"

Sharyl felt much better when she heard that.

She glared at Rory and said, "Move. Don't block my view of our son."

"Alright," Rory grumbled as he stepped aside.

Sean was speaking confidently on TV. Behind him, the screen displayed animated visuals of Alumni Network in sync with his speech.

"Today, I'm introducing a product our company has meticulously crafted for college

students a social platform called Alumni Network!

"Alumni Network provides a safe, convenient, and fun space for you to share your life, studies, and entertainment.

"On Alumni Network, you can create your personal homepage to showcase your talents. You can upload photos, post updates, and share videos. This will help more students to get to know you.

"At the same time, you can follow people you're interested in and stay updated on their latest activities."