

## Love Spell 571

### Chapter 571

Sean thought for a moment before saying, "I was thinking of creating something called Friend Net, which is based on the same model as Alumni Network. It won't have the sections for studying, but we can add a section for sharing work experiences!"

"It's a good idea," Carlisle praised him.

Sean thought Carlisle had agreed with him, so he said immediately, "I'll get the R&D team to start developing FriendNet right now!"

"I haven't finished talking."

Carlisle laughed and said, "Have you considered the fact that Alumni Network's popularity will drop rapidly if we launch FriendNet?"

Alumni Network was a social network for students in tertiary institutions to use, whereas FriendNet would be a platform for all Internet users.

It's general knowledge that there are many more Internet users in the country than university students.

If FriendNet were launched, its registered users would be sure to surpass that of Alumni Network.

Most people tended to lean toward herd mentality and seeking novelty.

Once FriendNet gained traction, Alumni Network would likely lose users.

Instead of making a separate website, it would be more reasonable to open Alumni Network up to the public.

However, the decline of SociableNet made Carlisle hesitant to make the decision.

"I-I didn't think about that."

Now that Carlisle had mentioned it, Sean became gloomy at once.

"Are we really going to give up on that demographic? There are 100 million of them!"

Alumni Network was now taking on advertisements. Thus, the profits from advertising fees would rise as the number of website users increased. If they could set up FriendNet, they could stand to make a considerable profit in advertising fees.

"Let's just do well with Alumni Network first. We shouldn't only be focused on expanding. In business, we must focus on the product and user experience."

Carlisle was also new to the business industry. He had only succeeded based on his memories from his past life, and he still hadn't decided what the future development of Alumni Network would be.

"Alright. I'm going to class now. Let's chat later, Carl!"

"Okay."

After hanging up, Carlisle launched Alumni Network on his phone and logged in to his account.

It took him 30 seconds to enter the webpage using his 2G network.

It took another ten minutes for the login page to appear.

After entering his password, he waited another seven or eight seconds before logging in.

Once smartphones were made, he would have to talk to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology about getting a 3G network.

Otherwise, his smartphones wouldn't be pleasant to use at all.

Carlisle browsed the posts on Alumni Network.

He realized that there were several users who were advertising.

There was even a post about secondhand cars.

Carlisle clicked on the personal page of the person who had posted it.

His name was Hans Warner, and he was verified as a Yorksle Polytechnic student.

The post consisted of a short promotional text and a few photos of the secondhand cars.

The text read: "Hans' secondhand cars will provide you with a driving experience that's worth it! Every car undergoes a stringent selection process to ensure quality and reliability. It includes a professional inspection and a detailed report so that you can buy a car worry-free! You can choose from all kinds of cars that will satisfy your personal requirements. The affordable prices and attentive service will make you feel it's worth it! Contact us!"

Below the text were photos of an old Santana from the 90s and a Mazda

Below that was a post that sold hairpins.

The text read: "Let your hair be part of your charisma! The classy pearl hairpin is making a comeback! Pearls exude an elegant air, and the retro vibe will induce nostalgia. The simple design can be used with all kinds of hairstyles, and they'll give you a timeless look. Contact us to order and restore your beauty!"

Below that post were a few photos of a pretty woman wearing the hairpins.

Carlisle was slightly startled when he saw the woman in the photos.

He wondered if it was the same short-haired woman from the night before. He recalled that her name was Sharon or some other.

He clicked on her profile page and saw that she was verified as a student at Caltopia College.

It indeed was her.

Carlisle continued browsing through the posts.

He saw that eight out of ten were advertisements.

One of the posts was a snarky comment about all the advertisements.

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The post read: "Damn. Is this place solely for posting advertisements?"

Carlisle immediately called Sean when he saw the post.

Sean had just reached the classroom and was about to turn off his phone.

When he received Carlisle's call, he answered and said in a low voice, "Carl, class is about to start"

Carlisle's stern voice came from the other end of the phone.

"Alumni Network's main page is filled with advertisements. It is severely affecting user experience. We must solve this problem this morning!"

Sean's eyes widened as he said, "Oh man! I haven't logged into Alumni Network yet today. I'll take care of it at once."

After hanging up, Sean immediately called the manager of the content moderation department, Jensen Moffatt. He had not had time to log on to the website.

"Mr. Woodsen?"

"Mr. Moffatt, what is your review team doing? How did all those advertisements on Alumni Network's main page get approved?"

Sean's voice was cold and menacing. His authoritative air made his seatmate shiver beside him.

"Th-that can't be! During every morning meeting with them, I emphasize that they can't let advertisements be approved!" Jensen said nervously.

"Are you implying that I'm lying?" Sean asked.

"N-no. I'll check on it at once and solve the problem!"

Jensen broke out into a cold sweat from fear.

Only a few days ago, Sean had gone straight to the publicity department manager's office and flipped the table because the latter hadn't submitted his proposal for publicity in time. Sean had even told him, right in front of everyone in the publicity department, to either work or leave if he couldn't.

It had been brutal and humiliating.

"Who approved those advertisements? I don't want to see whoever it is at the office," Sean said before hanging up.

Carlisle always emphasized the importance of building the product properly and ensuring they considered user experience.

Something like that happening at Alumni Network just made it seem that Sean had not taken Carlisle's words to heart.

Jensen wiped his brow when he heard the busy signal on the other end of the line. He walked toward his

department's office space, looking thunderous.

There were currently only four people on the review team for Alumni Network.

At that moment, the four of them sat at their seats, laughing and talking as they ate breakfast.

"Mr. Moffatt's here," one of them muttered.

The other three immediately put their breakfast away.

Jensen laughed coldly.

"Are you really in any mood to eat breakfast right now?"

The four of them lowered their heads, not daring to say anything.

They had assumed that Jensen was rebuking them for eating breakfast at the office.

The company rules stated that eating in the office was prohibited.

Jensen usually came to work at 10:00 am, but he had arrived unexpectedly early.

Jensen coldly and accusingly asked, "Alumni Network's main page is filled with advertisements. Is that how you do your reviews?"

One of the women said in shock, "Advertisements? It can't be!"

She turned her computer on and entered the management interface as an administrator.

Her eyes widened when she saw the vast number of advertisements the server was approving automatically.

"Mr. Moffatt, there seems to be a virus in our computer..."

Jensen immediately approached to check. When he saw that the server was automatically approving posts, he frowned.

"Notify the tech department at once to take care of this."

since it wasn't an error of negligence, Jensen breathed a sigh of relief.

A virus in the computer was clearly an attack from a hacker.

Alumni Network had risen rapidly, and it wasn't surprising that it was being attacked.

Jensen called Sean back, but the call was abruptly declined.

Jensen remembered that Sean was in class, so he sent a message.

Sean looked grim when he received the message from Jensen.

It turned out to be a hacker attack.

Sean cursed inwardly.

The hacker had better hope that Sean didn't catch him.

"Tell the tech department to investigate this hacker. They'd better catch him!" Sean replied.

Isla had told him that if he wanted to be a good leader, he would have to be tough to establish his authority. Otherwise, his business rivals would trample on him sooner or later.

Now that people were already attacking Alumni Network, he could not just sit there and do nothing.

Right after Carlisle woke up and washed up, Wendell called. "Boss, I'm outside your hotel. Come to the office with me!"

"Okay, I'm coming!" Carlisle replied as he finished styling his hair, ready to leave.

Francis, who was doing single-arm push-ups in the living room, looked up and asked, "Do you want me to go with you?"

Carlisle shook his head and replied, "No thanks. You can go sightseeing in Yorksle!"

Thinking that Wendell was capable of protecting Carlisle, Francis nodded and continued with his push-ups.

When Carlisle stepped out of the door, he ran into Patrick Simpson and a short-haired teenage girl.

"Good morning!"

Patrick greeted with a smile. Despite his social anxiety and tendency not to initiate greetings, Shein had specifically reminded him to overcome this bad habit, especially as Patrick was about to enter society, where social skills were crucial.

Carlisle glanced at Patrick with a hint of disdain and then headed straight for the elevator without looking back. Patrick stood there dazed, his face flushing. Being ignored after making an effort to be friendly only reinforced his belief that initiating greetings was a bad idea.

As he looked at Carlisle's departing figure, the short-haired teenager, Sharon, gently comforted Patrick, "Patrick, did you somehow offend him?"

Patrick laughed wryly.

"I only met him last night, just like you!"

Sharon's eyes widened in disbelief.

"Seriously? Didn't you go out again last night? Maybe you ran into him then. I don't think he's the type to lack manners."



Patrick thought for a moment before nodding.

"Actually, I did run into him last night, and we both nodded to each other. But it wasn't as awkward as it was just now!"

Sharon pressed her lips together and remarked, "That's odd. But it's okay. He's not from our school, so we probably won't interact much with each other in the future, anyway."

"Yeah, you're right. Let's hurry down. Everyone's waiting for us," Patrick said, regaining his composure and walking toward the elevator.

As Sharon trailed behind, Patrick suddenly asked, "How's your hair clip business going? I saw your ad on Alumni Network earlier. The wording was pretty good."

"Not a single call so far."

Sharon sighed in frustration. Her parents taught during the day and worked as private tutors in the evening, often traveling several miles to reach their students. She started selling hair clips at school to ease their burden and earned over 300 dollars in the first month.

Although it was a drop in the bucket compared to her family's debt, she was very satisfied with it. After all, her monthly allowance was only 120 dollars in high school.

Patrick responded, smilingly, "Honestly, I think you should consider wholesale instead of retail."

Slightly taken aback, Sharon asked, "How would I do wholesale?"

When they reached the elevator, Carlisle was still waiting there. Sharon glanced at Carlisle silently. Since he had been rude to Patrick, she didn't feel the need to be polite to him. After all, Patrick was not only her senior at school but also a business management major who had advised her on selling hair clips.

"So, Patrick, how should I go about wholesale?" Sharon continued asking.

Patrick inquired, "What's the cost, retail price, and profit per hair clip?"

Sharon replied, "The cost is 5.20 dollars. The retail price is seven dollars, so the profit for each hair clip is 1.80 dollars."

Patrick pondered before replying, "If you become a manufacturer's agent, the cost should be around four dollars. Then, you can recruit partners on campus and offer them a wholesale price of 5.20 dollars, with a minimum order of 30 units. This way, you can earn over 30 dollars with every partner. If their sales are good, they might return for more orders twice or thrice a month!"

Sharon's eyes lit up but quickly dimmed again.

"But the manufacturers might not grant me the agency rights."

Patrick smiled and said, "So you need to market yourself, demonstrating your resources and advantages to the manufacturers!"

Sharon lowered her head and muttered, "I have neither of those."

Suddenly, the elevator chimed, and the doors opened.

Carlisle walked straight in while Patrick courteously said to Sharon, "After you."

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"No, after you!" Sharon said, her cheeks slightly flushed.

Patrick had always been quite aloof, and his sudden consideration caught her by surprise.

Patrick chuckled lightly and insisted, "Ladies first!"

Sharon replied politely, "No, you're my senior, so you should enter first!"

Tired of their back-and-forth, Carlisle pressed the button to shut the elevator doors.

Patrick quickly stopped the doors from closing, his brows furrowed.

"That wasn't very gentlemanly of you. Can't you tell we haven't gotten in yet?"

Carlisle glanced at him indifferently and replied, "Time is money. I don't have time for your chatter!"

Patrick was deeply annoyed as he met Carlisle's nonchalant gaze. His family and friends were always polite to him, perhaps due to his father. Even at school, he was the center of attention among his peers, owing to his identity as the top student in the business management department.

He inwardly questioned what right this Riverland University student had to be so dismissive. He wondered if he had somehow offended Carlisle.

Patrick decided not to dwell on that thought. Since he would soon be working at Thompson Group, he was confident that, with his talent, he would undoubtedly become a senior executive there.

Since Thompson Group was based in Riverland and Carlisle was from Riverland University, Patrick thought it would be unwise to offend him now. He worried that Carlisle might defame him in school when he became successful.

With that in mind, Patrick said to Sharon, "Sharon, let's skip the formalities and get in before this guy loses his patience again."

Slightly furrowing her brows, Sharon nodded and entered the elevator first. Patrick followed her in and pressed the button to close the doors.

Suddenly, Carlisle looked at Sharon and inquired, "Are you a Lawson?"

He had just realized that Sharon matched Howard's sister's description short-haired and a freshman at Caltopia College.

Taken aback, Sharon looked at him and asked, "How do you know?"

Carlisle smiled, feeling glad that his speculation was correct.

"You have a lunch appointment today, don't you?"

Sharon nodded, her expression turning tense.

"H-How do you know?"

She had received a call from her parents not long ago, mentioning that someone intended to impersonate her brother. She had initially vehemently opposed the idea, but her parents said they were paid a lot of money—a full 200 thousand dollars.

After her brother went abroad for treatment, her family was heavily in debt. The 200 thousand only managed to cover two-thirds of it, excluding the money her aunt offered.

Her parents had reminded her to keep the impersonation matter a secret. Otherwise, the impersonator would take back the money with interest.

The impersonator had also given her a letter about the lunch appointment and instructed her to burn it after reading it so that no third party would find out about it.

She pondered how the Riverland University student before her knew about it.

Sharon panicked, her rosy cheeks turning pale.

With his hands in his pockets, Carlisle replied casually, "I'm your lunch appointment." Sharon's eyes widened.

"So, you are—"

She abruptly shut her mouth, sensing Carlisle's warning glance.

Patrick frowned upon listening in on their conversation.

"Sharon... what's going on? Are you two having lunch together today?"

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Patrick was utterly bewildered. He wondered how Sharon and Carlisle would suddenly have a lunch appointment together when it was evident that they didn't know each other. Moreover, it seemed like the lunch was

prearranged.

Sharon stammered, unsure how to explain, "I-It's a bit complicated, Patrick. You'd better let it go."

Patrick assumed they might have met on Alumni Network but had not seen each other in person. He figured that would explain why they had arranged a lunch without recognizing each other.

Feeling slightly annoyed, Patrick said in a brotherly, earnest tone, "Sharon, you need to be cautious when dating, especially with online dating. You're too trusting sometimes. You could easily be deceived."

"It's not what you think, Patrick," Sharon quickly explained, blushing at the mention of online dating.

She couldn't fathom his thoughts.

Carlisle could tell that Patrick was interested in Sharon. Although he didn't know much about Patrick, he inexplicably found him annoying.

Feeling mischievous, Carlisle said with feigned heartbreak, "Sharon, that's not what you told me on the phone!" "W-What are you talking about?"

Sharon's eyes grew wide. She had never talked to him over the phone.

Patrick's expression darkened. His eyes were filled with murderous intent as he glared at Carlisle.

Suddenly, the elevator chimed, announcing their arrival on the first floor, and the doors opened automatically.

The sight of Patrick's dark expression made Sharon so anxious that tears welled up in her eyes.

"Don't listen to him, Patrick. He and I are "

"I think I'll cancel the lunch today and recover what I've given..." Carlisle remarked, his voice choked as he pretended to wipe away his tears.

He then walked out of the elevator without looking back

Sharon stood in the elevator, stunned. She wondered if he had just mentioned reclaiming his money. However, the 200 thousand had already been used to pay off debts. She didn't know how her parents could possibly come up with that amount now.

Sharon regained her composure before hurrying after him.

"Hey, wait! Don't go..."

She didn't even know his name yet.

Patrick watched Sharon chase after Carlisle, his hands clenched into fists at his sides.

When Sharon performed "Super Star" on stage at Caltopia College's bonfire party, her sweet voice and stunning beauty had everyone in the audience singing along, creating an electrifying atmosphere.

Her name quickly spread throughout the school, making her the most beautiful freshman at Caltopia College.

Later, when Alumni Network launched, Sharon even encouraged 1500 students to register as users, leveraging her popularity. She was hardworking.

Patrick admired her, but he wouldn't call it love yet. Although he had initiated a conversation with her during a friend's birthday the previous night, their conversation was limited to academic issues and future plans.

He had noticed Sharon's gaze was full of admiration when she looked at him, and she clearly enjoyed it when he started the conversation. Just when he thought they were getting closer, this situation regarding online dating came out of nowhere.

As the doors were about to close, Patrick took a deep breath, pressed the open button, and walked out with his head down.

As soon as he stepped out of the elevator, his phone rang. He took out his phone-a silver Nokia 7610. It was considered a luxury item, having been launched that March and priced at 750 dollars. Even though Patrick dressed modestly, his phone told a different story.

"Dad," said Patrick into the phone.

"Patrick, come home tonight."

Clifford Simpson's authoritative voice came from the other end of the line.

Clifford's voice immediately dissipated Patrick's desire to go home.

"I have plans tonight."

Clifford said sternly, "Do you remember Wanda, the young lady I mentioned to you?"

Patrick thought for a moment before replying, "She's not good-looking."

Two years ago, Clifford showed him a photo of Shein's daughter, Wanda. He didn't think she was as nearly as pretty as Sharon.

Clifford slammed a fist on the table and retorted angrily, "Does beauty put food on the table? We should look for someone whose family background is worthy of us."

"Besides, don't you know that women could look completely different as they age? It took me a lot of effort, but I managed to obtain Wanda's latest photos. You'll be amazed when you see them!"

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Patrick pressed his lips together and slowly said to Clifford over the phone, "Alright. I'll check them out when I'm home tonight."

Carlisle stepped out of the hotel, shivering as the cold breeze hit his face. Pulling his coat tighter around him, he glanced at Wendell, who was standing a short distance away with his face covered.

"Hey!" Sharon shouted as she hurried over, panting.

Her eyes were reddened.

"Please don't take back the money!"

Carlisle raised an eyebrow.

"Okay. See you at lunch then!"

With that, he walked straight toward Wendell

Sharon stood in the wind, bewildered. She wondered what all that was about and questioned if he was toying with her on purpose.

When Carlisle neared Wendell, he saw Wendell staring at a photo in his hand, comparing it with Sharon, who was standing at the hotel entrance. Wendell was startled by Sharon's uncanny resemblance to the young lady in the photo.

"What are you looking at?"

Carlisle peeked at the photo. It showed an image of Sharon with a well-mannered couple and a beaming,

handsome young man. The Lawsons, indeed, had good genes. Gideon and his wife were a perfect match, and their children were both very attractive.



Wendell whispered to Carlisle, "The young lady at the entrance looks a lot like Howard's sister, Sharon!"

"She is Sharon!" Carlisle confirmed.

"No way! What are the odds? You just arrived in Yorkle yesterday and already bumped into Sharon?"

Wendell's eyes widened in disbelief.

"Alright. Take me to the company now," Carlisle instructed.

"Yes, boss!"

Wendell nodded, leading Carlisle to the company where he worked-10KFresh.

10KFresh had branches in multiple regions across the country, each supplying groceries to many fresh food supermarkets. It was more of a large warehouse than an ordinary company.

As they entered the company's premises, Carlisle saw trucks lined up, waiting to be loaded.

Wendell whispered to Carlisle, "10KFresh is a subsidiary of Golden Happiness Group. They focused on modern agriculture, animal husbandry, deep processing of agricultural products, and the frozen and warm delivery of fresh food.

"They aimed to expand to ten thousand supermarkets and achieved this in just two and a half years. They're indeed a formidable company!"

Carlisle was quite familiar with 10KFresh as he had studied the company out of boredom in his past life.

He remembered that they would also launch an app that would allow customers to have their groceries delivered to their doorsteps. The company's rapid growth was largely due to the support of Golden Happiness Group.

Golden Happiness Group was a well-funded venture capital firm, investing in many large domestic enterprises.

Even internet giants Penguin Group and GoSearch had their backing. These two companies had already reached annual revenue of three billion in this era.

Golden Happiness Group's legal representative was Ruth Sweeney, a renowned venture capital queen.

Since 10KFresh was wholly owned by Golden Happiness Group but managed by the Murrays, it appeared that the Murrays were the true bosses behind Golden Happiness Group.

"Wendell!"

Two of Wendell's comrades, who had come to Yorksle with him, approached Wendell and Carlisle with croissants, donuts, and coffees in their hands.

Kevin handed Carlise one set of breakfast and said, "Boss, you haven't had your breakfast yet, right? This is for you."

"Thank you."

With a polite smile, Carlisle accepted the breakfast.

Kevin smiled sheepishly, then sat by the roadside and started eating.

The other comrade handed Wendell a set and said, "Here's yours, Wendell."

Wendell took the breakfast and started eating before it turned cold. Carlisle joined them, sitting by the roadside and munching on his croissant.

Just as they were enjoying their meal, Carlisle received a call from Gareth.

"Alumni Network is in trouble," Gareth said in a heavy, solemn tone.

Carlisle swallowed the piece of croissant in his mouth and took another bite, replying indistinctly, "Is it about the ads? I'm aware of it."

Gareth replied gravely, "Alumni Network has been found hosting explicit photos and information regarding solicitation. The cyber monitoring department has ordered Alumni Network to cease operation for rectification!"

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Carlisle was stunned by the news about explicit photos and solicitation ads on Alumni Network. He was puzzled about how university students could possibly post such things and questioned what the review team at Alumni Network was doing.

Gareth continued, "Alumni Network was hacked. The backend review system bypassed all sensitive keywords and approved everything.

"While the tech department addressed the problem, the hackers escalated their attack. They remotely logged into some student accounts and posted illegal information.

"The tech department couldn't respond in time, so someone snapped a photo and reported it to the cyber monitoring department."

Carlisle took a hard bite of his croissant and narrowed his eyes.

"Yuriel must and his son must be behind this!"

Gareth replied with self-reproach, "I should have handled the situation more delicately. I called Yuriel, thinking he might overlook it for my sake. Yet, not only did he refuse to cooperate, but he also struck against Alumni Network so quickly."

Carlisle instructed, "Let's have Hank deal with this. You'll need to get in touch with the cyber monitoring department and explain the situation to them."

"Got it. I'll head to the cyber monitoring department personally," Gareth replied calmly, though his tone revealed a hint of suppressed anger.

Sensing Gareth's frustration, Carlisle offered some reassurance, "Don't get too worked up. It's normal to be targeted in business. We'll encounter more issues and troubles along the way. Getting upset over every problem won't help us."

From the moment he turned down Austin's offer to acquire Alumni Network, Carlisle knew the company would face difficulties sooner or later. A mature business must weather various trials to grow stronger.

Gareth sighed deeply.

"We can't just let ourselves be bullied without retaliating, can we?"

Carlisle took a bite of his donut and replied calmly, "I did say I'd seek revenge for any grievances, didn't I?" After ending the call, Carlisle received another call from Owen, who was also concerned about Alumni Network's current issue. Carlisle told him to focus on managing Dragonaire Studio and not to worry about other matters.

After breakfast, Carlisle followed Wendell and his men to the office of Storehouse 8, where Wendell introduced Carlisle to the storehouse team leader, Janice Holland.

Janice, in her mid-20s, was a pregnant lady with short hair and fair skin. She had a competent demeanor and appeared capable of handling hard work.

After introducing Janice, Wendell began to introduce Carlisle, "Ms. Holland, this is C-"

"Howard Lawson, I presume? I know."

Janice interrupted Wendell and then called a morning meeting with everyone in the storehouse.

There were 20 staff members in this storehouse-six warehouse managers and 14 handlers. The warehouse managers were relatively young, while the handlers were mostly men aged between 35 and 50.

There were no surveillance cameras in the storehouse or office, so Janice asked directly, "Does everyone remember what we discussed in last night's meeting?"

Everyone nodded in unison.

"Yes, ma'am."

Each had received a thousand dollars, and they had only one task-to acknowledge that a warehouse manager named Howard Lawson was in the storehouse.

Janice pointed to Carlisle and said, "This is Howard Lawson. Don't treat him like a stranger. Think of him as an old colleague you've known for a long time, okay?"

Everyone nodded again.

Janice then waved them off.

"Alright. Back to work."

The handlers left the office.

Janice turned to Carlisle and said, "Most of the staff here were hired based on my recommendation, so they're quite reliable."

As soon as Janice finished speaking, a woman in a pink down coat with big, permed hair walked into the office. The woman, in her late 20s, wore a thick black scarf and had her hands in her coat pockets. Her light makeup gave her an innocent yet alluring appearance.

"Ms. Miller."

Janice quickly rose from her seat to greet her, and the warehouse managers did the same.

Carlisle glanced at the name tag hanging around the woman's neck: Zoey Miller, Deputy Director of the Human Resources Department.

Zoey nodded slightly, then pulled out a worn company badge and several pay slips from her pocket, handing them to Carlisle.

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Carlisle took the pay slips and company badge, which read: Howard Lawson, Employee ID "01725", Storehouse Clerk in the storehouse department.

Zoey said, "There's a shipment going to Golden Happiness Group tomorrow morning. They'll send someone to confirm the goods and delivery personnel this afternoon. You're on your own for that."

Wendell looked tense.

"This afternoon?"

He felt that it was too soon as he had planned for Carlisle to be familiar with things that day.

Zoey nodded.

"Golden Happiness Group scheduled it. They'll arrive around four this afternoon."

She then turned to Carlisle and added, "As long as you remember the information I gave you, you should be fine." Carlisle asked, "Did Wendell and the others use fake documents too?"

Zoey nodded.

"They were lucky. The representative from Golden Happiness Group was preoccupied with personal matters last time and barely looked at their personal information before signing off."

"I'll see what I can do then," Carlisle said, taking a deep breath as he started to feel anxious.

The representative from Golden Happiness Group was likely someone from the Murray family. If things went wrong, both he and the people who had been bribed could face trouble.

After Zoey left, Carlisle mingled with the staff in the storehouse. The order department occasionally dropped by with delivery orders. The warehouse managers selected the goods according to the orders, and the handlers packed and loaded the goods onto the trucks.

Carlisle spent the entire morning working alongside the warehouse managers. Although he didn't do much himself, moving around and observing left him feeling a bit disoriented.

Carlisle and Wendell took a cab to Yorksle Diner during lunch break, which they had reserved in advance.

Wendell said excitedly, "The specialty dishes at Yorksle Diner are exceptional. Last week, our supervisor took us there, and we cleaned the plates completely, leaving no trace of food!"

"Seriously?" Carlisle asked, skeptical.

"Just wait until you try them," Wendell replied.

Yorksle Diner was located outside an old alley on Fourth Avenue. The place was small, with only nine eight-seater tables inside and four eight-seaters with long benches under a sunshade outside. The business was booming, with no empty seats to spare.

Having finished school early, Sharon arrived half an hour ahead of time. She smelt the aroma from the diner causing her to lick her lips and swallow.

She hadn't had breakfast that morning. The previous night, she had restrained herself from eating much due to the presence of many wealthy ladies at her friend's birthday party. Additionally, she had a physical education class in the morning, and the intense physical activity had left her starving.

She couldn't help but swallow again at the smell of Yorksle's specialty dishes.

"Hi there. I see you've been standing here for quite a while. Are you waiting for someone, miss?" Jack, a waiter wearing an apron, came out and asked.

Sharon nodded.

"Yes, my friend asked me to meet him here."

Jack asked, "Is your friend a Webb?"

"I don't know..."

Sharon shook her head awkwardly. She didn't know Wendell's name.

Jack thought for a moment before asking, "What time was your appointment?"

"12 o'clock."

"Then that must be it. Come with me," Jack said.

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Sharon followed Jack into the diner. Jack took a folding eight-seater table from the storage room, set it up, and then brought out four long benches.

"Zac, this is the place. I guarantee you'll want to come back for more after this!" said one of the scruffy young men who surrounded Zachary as they approached the diner.

These men were the high-level players in Zachary's guild in the game "The Legendary Tale". Despite their illustrious status in the game, they struggled in reality.

Zachary gave a faint smile.

"My dad has mentioned this place before. I haven't had the chance to visit during my previous trips to Yorksle. Today, I finally have time to try their specialty dishes."



He then took out five hundred-dollar bills from his pocket and handed them to a young man in a dirty white down jacket, saying, "WarSpirit, go buy me a pack of Marlboro cigarettes."

WarSpirit was the man's in-game username. Most players were accustomed to calling each other by their usernames, not bothering with real names.

"Ain't our guild leader a generous one!"

The man that goes by WarSpirit, whose real name was Josiah Finch, smiled, revealing his yellow teeth as he took the money.

Zachary walked straight to the freshly set up table.

Jack quickly approached him with a friendly smile and asked, "Do you have a reservation?"

"You need a reservation to dine at this dump?"

Zachary scoffed, glancing disdainfully at the shabby diner.

Jack nodded.

"Yes. Reservations are required to dine here. If you don't have one, you'll have to wait until after two o'clock for a table."

Zachary pointed at the empty table in front of him.

"Isn't this table available?"

"This table had been reserved," Jack explained, smiling.

Orville, a blonde man standing behind Zachary, frowned and said dramatically, "Do you know who you're talking to?"

"No, and I'm not interested," Jack replied, noting Zachary was dressed in high-end luxury brands, indicating he was probably from a wealthy family.

However, Yorksle was full of wealthy scions, and Yorksle Diner had even hosted the wealthiest person in Yorksle. Hence, Jack wasn't afraid of offending a rich scion like Zachary,

"How dare you!" Orville shouted angrily, drawing the attention of other customers.

"Do you know the game 'The Legendary Tale'? The man standing before you is the guild leader of Makers of Chaos -Chaos\_Hero!"

Makers of Chaos was currently ranked third in The Legendary Tale, with over ten thousand guild members. Their members were spread across all the servers.

Jack looked at Orville as if he were an idiot and retorted, "I don't play games. What does he being a guild leader have to do with me?"

"You motherfu"

Orville raised his hand, attempting to strike, feeling Zachary had been insulted.

Zachary quickly grabbed Orville's wrist and frowned.

"What are you doing?"

Puzzled, Orville looked at Zachary and said, "Boss, he disrespected you!"

Zachary retorted expressionlessly, "Has all that gaming damaged your brain?"

Zachary couldn't understand why Orville would think a game identity could intimidate others in reality. His face flushed with embarrassment.

Mistaking Zachary's blush as anger, Orville fiercely glared at Jack.

"Apologize to our guild leader now! Otherwise, all ten thousand members of Makers of Chaos would trash this place-"

"Shut

up,

Ollie!"

Josiah just returned from buying cigarettes. He hurried over to cover Orville's mouth after hearing his rant.

It was Zachary's first time meeting these guild members in person. Considering Orville's dramatic behavior in the game as well, he couldn't help but suspect Orville of suffering from some sort of mental issue.

"WarSpirit, is this guy out of his mind from playing games?" Zachary asked.

The young man sighed and explained, "It's not the game's fault. Six months ago, his girlfriend cheated on him, and he hasn't been in his right mind since. He often immerses himself in game characters and sometimes even claims to be the reincarnation of a God!"

Zachary was slightly taken aback, finding it a classic behavior of someone with a mental disorder.

Looking at Orville's youthful face, Zachary thought of his sister, Wanda, whom he had come to meet along with his parents.

Chapter 580

Orville had often stayed up all night with Zachary playing The Legendary Tale. While his behavior in the game was over the top, Zachary found it acceptable, as he sometimes saw himself as the lofty guild leader, too.

However, now, in reality, Orville remained as dramatic as he was in the game. Clearly, he had some mental issues.

Zachary decided to get to the bottom of Orville's situation.

"Where are his family?"

"He's an orphan."

"Does he have a job?"

"No."

"Then how did he get the money to go online?"

Zachary was confused. Orville had been online almost every night and occasionally spent money on in-game items. Josiah glanced at the other guild members, who silently lowered their heads.

Growing impatient, Zachary demanded, "Spit it out."

Josiah stammered, "O-Orville's girlfriend, the one who cheated on him, gave him 30 thousand dollars. We've been living off that money for the past six months."

Zachary looked at them, feeling speechless.

"And

I you lied to me about having jobs?"

Josiah explained uneasily, "We didn't want you to think we were all unemployed bums."

The truth was revealed. Zachary planned to sit down and discuss it further. He noticed Sharon, who looked about the same age as Wanda, standing by the empty table.

"Did you reserve this table?"

Sharon nodded.

"My friend reserved it."

Zachary smiled gently.

"Could you ask your friend to give it up? I'll pay two thousand dollars for the table."

"T-Two thousand?"

Sharon stared at Zachary in disbelief.

"My goodness! Is this how the rich behave? They're willing to spend two thousand just for a table at a diner. I only managed to earn three hundred a month selling hair clips. The world of the wealthy is simply beyond me," she thought.

"I'm sorry, but I can't make that decision. And I don't know how to contact-"

Sharon suddenly stopped talking when she noticed someone at the door.

"He's here. Why don't you ask him yourself?"

Zachary turned his gaze outside and locked eyes with Carlisle.

"Carlisle?"

"Zachary?"

Both of them were momentarily stunned.

Zachary sneered, "What a day! I didn't expect to run into you here."

Carlisle shot back, "Guess I won't have much of an appetite for lunch later."

Sharon nervously glanced between them. Although they clearly knew each other, it was evident they weren't on friendly terms.

"Aren't there any more seats?" Carlisle asked, noticing the lone empty table left in the diner.

Wendell turned to Jack and said, "Hi, I'm Webb."

Jack pointed to the empty table.

"Welcome. This is your reserved table."

Carlisle walked directly to the table and taunted, "Oh my, it seems Mr. Thompson won't have a seat."

Zachary's expression darkened. He knew Carlisle wasn't going to sell him the table. He figured Carlisle was wealthier than him now since he had Gareth's financial support. Carlisle was no longer the pushover he once was.

Fixing his gaze on Carlisle, Zachary raised his voice and said, "I'll buy a table for five thousand dollars."

Immediately, patrons at three other tables stood up.

"I'll sell."

"We're almost done anyway."

"Hey, handsome! You can have our table!"

Zachary's disdainful look turned into a smirk as he said, "I'll take all three tables."