

# The Formidable Son-In-Law: The Charismatic Lucas Gray

## - Chapter 617 – 648

### Confrontation in the Alley

#### Chapter 617: Confrontation in the Alley

Lucas squeezed Cheyenne's hand comfortingly and said softly, "Honey, I suddenly have something to handle now. Go to the parking lot and wait for me inside the car."

Cheyenne's heart tensed up. She grabbed Lucas's arm worriedly. "Is it something... troublesome? Will there be any danger?"

After getting to know Lucas during this period of time, she certainly knew that certain things would happen around Lucas from time to time, which made her feel extremely worried.

"It's okay. It's just a trivial matter that I'll resolve soon. Wait for me in the car. I'll be back in a moment."

Seeing the look of reassurance in Lucas's eyes, Cheyenne nodded, took Lucas's car key, and left.

She knew that she couldn't help Lucas in many aspects, so the only thing she could do now was to trust him and not create any trouble for him.

Lucas watched Cheyenne walk far before turning around and walking toward an ally nearby.

There were two rows of buildings along the alley, which were part of a demolition area. The residents staying here had moved away a long time ago. Basically, it was a remote place where very few came and went.

However...

Lucas walked to the entrance of the alley and shouted expressionlessly, "Get your ass out here!"

A figure suddenly appeared in the alley, which was originally empty and void of any people.

He initially had an extremely low presence, like an inconspicuous antique going unnoticed in this dilapidated alley. Even if someone walked past him, they probably wouldn't be able to notice his presence.

But Lucas's senses were so keen that he could immediately lock onto the direction from which the killing intent was spreading toward him. He then saw the seemingly inconspicuous man in gray in front of him.

This person in gray was none other than Eli, who followed Wendy.

Eli narrowed his eyes and sized up Lucas before suddenly saying, "Sharp senses like yours are really rare. You're young, but you're really something! No wonder you dared to barge into the Kingston residence on your own and deterred them from taking revenge on you."

There were a few traces of appreciation on his face.

Lucas frowned. "Are you here for the Kingstons?"

Eli shook his head and sneered. "No, the Kingstons can't order me around."

His words contained a trace of arrogance, seemingly not taking the Kingstons seriously at all.

This made Lucas raise his brows.

The Kingstons were a top family and an unreachable existence in the eyes of most people.

But the disdainful tone in the voice of the man in front of him when he talked about the Kingstons was evidence that his status was far higher than the Kingstons'.

Although the man in gray had restrained his aura to the point where most people would feel that he was just an ordinary person with such a low presence that he was almost inconspicuous, in the eyes of experts like Lucas, his concealment skills were mediocre. But his strength could be discerned from his breathing, footsteps, speech, walking posture, and other subtle aspects.

If Lucas had to describe it, the man in gray in front of him did have an overbearing aura. At the very least, he was much stronger than Scarface, the Kingstons' previous top expert.

This just meant that the man in gray was either an expert from one of the giants in DC or an expert similar to those of the Peerless Martial Association.

"Oh, so who sent you?" Lucas asked slowly.

“The Smiths from DC!” Eli didn’t hide it and simply revealed his origin. He then grinned and asked, “You should still remember what you did today, right?”

Then he released his aura, immediately turning from a mellow and harmless middle-aged man to a menacing beast.

The dust and fallen leaves in the air seem to be deterred by his aura as they suddenly rippled away. The scene was extremely shocking.

Lucas smiled faintly. But he seemed to have not sensed anything as he said calmly, “Oh, so it’s the Smiths. Roy Smith went back to complain and ask for help so soon! It seems that I was too easy on him. I decided to let him live on account of someone else, but I didn’t expect him to be so eager about dying.”

Lucas’s nonchalance immediately made Eli reveal a trace of surprise.

He initially thought that Lucas probably wasn’t aware that Roy was from one of the eight top families in DC when he beat him up. So he didn’t expect Lucas to remain composed even after revealing his identity and his overbearing aura that could shock most experts beyond resistance.

Eli had been famous for a long time, and he had never been belittled by a young man to such an extent!

He was good at hiding his strength, but this didn’t mean that he was someone who didn’t care for fame and fortune. Instead, it was because he liked seeing others being shocked and horrified when they saw him revealing his strength and turning from an insignificant nobody to a menacing monster.

Now, he had already released all his aura, thinking that he could scare Lucas out of his wits. But the other party didn’t even bother to look up. This was completely ignoring him and denying him.

Anger surged within him, and he said with a cold expression, “Kid, if you obediently make a trip with me to go and beg Mrs. Smith for mercy, maybe you can still save your life. Otherwise, death will be your only outcome!”

“Mrs. Smith? Who is that now?” Lucas asked in bewilderment.

*Which woman from the Smith family? Maybe it has something to do with that good-for-nothing Roy?* Lucas immediately thought of this.

Eli said arrogantly, “Mrs. Smith is the daughter of the head of the Smith family. Her name is Wendy Smith! Since you’ve thoroughly offended Mrs. Smith, just wait till you go to hell to regret it!”

Lucas frowned. "I offended her? Because I hit Roy Smith?"

Eli sneered. "I'll let you die with some understanding. Do you still remember Moses and Marc Kingston, who died because of you?"

"Moses is Mrs. Smith's former husband, and Marc is her biological son! Do you know why you deserve to die now?"

The news was completely beyond Lucas's expectations.

He had never expected that Moses would marry the daughter of the helmsman of the Smith family in DC and that the two of them would give birth to Marc.

If this was true, why didn't Moses and Marc use the power of the Smiths against him?

Even when Marc was begging for forgiveness and threatening him, he had always used the Kingstons' power to suppress him without mentioning his mother's family, the Smiths, at all.

Perhaps, there was something hidden in it.

But the Kingstons had nothing to do with Lucas.

Marc had taken the initiative to provoke Lucas, then had his legs crippled and jumped to his death afterward. Moses had been exposed during his plan for revenge, and after his failed attempt at revenge, he had killed himself. Lucas wouldn't feel any guilt over their deaths.

He would never go and make amends to Mrs. Smith, who had appeared out of nowhere!

Lucas remained quiet and indifferent.

Eli narrowed his eyes and threatened, "It seems that you're trying to hold out hope until you face death! In that case, I'll take you down personally, cripple your legs, and make you go and apologize to Mrs. Smith!"

Then he leaped up high and kicked Lucas's head hard!

Chapter 618: Tit For Tat

When Eli was in midair and saw that Lucas was standing still despite him stomping down hard on him, a trace of mockery appeared on his lips.

Eli was unsure if Lucas had yet to process what was happening or because he had underestimated his enemy and overestimated his own combat skills. In short, the stomp of his foot was so hard that he could even form a hole in a steel plate!

Even if Lucas used his arms to defend himself, he would stomp onto Lucas's arms and head to crush them all in a pulp!

But the moment his foot was about to land on Lucas's head, the figure beneath him vanished!

"What?!" Eli was astonished. He had been staring at Lucas, but in that instant just now, Lucas actually vanished out of sight before he could even blink.

This could only mean that Lucas's speed was far faster than he could imagine!

But the biggest question now was just where Lucas was hiding...

Before Eli could finish thinking about it, a chilling aura suddenly came from his right.

Before he could even react, he was kicked hard in the right side of his torso and knocked to the ground from midair by an unimaginably massive force.

Bang!

Eli was like a fly being slapped to the ground from the air by a fly swatter.

There was even a large pit in the solid stone ground that was completely blasted into pieces!

"Pfft!" Eli spat out a mouthful of blood as soon as he raised his head.

The spots in his waist and abdomen that Lucas had just kicked were so painful that he almost fell unconscious while his internal organs were almost all dislocated under this violent blow! The pain was simply excruciating!

This blow was so strong that it made him lose most of his combat power!

"Phew... phew..." Eli was gasping heavily, and a look of extreme shock appeared in his eyes.

It was only at this time that he truly understood what Lance really meant when he said that the Kingstons' strongest expert was killed in a second by Lucas!

The funny thing was that he hadn't thought so previously and only thought it was because the Kingstons' so-called 'expert' was weak.

Now, he had truly experienced the terrifying feeling of being knocked out in a second!

Lucas landed lightly from the air and stood in front of Eli, still as composed as ever.

He walked toward Eli one step at a time.

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A long-lost fear surged in Eli's heart, making him retreat subconsciously.

But it was so painful that almost half of his body was about to go numb. His almost broken leg hurt so badly that he couldn't move away at all.

"You just said that you want to cripple my limbs and bring me to that Mrs. Smith?" Lucas said coldly from above Eli.

Eli immediately felt an ominous hunch.

"I... Ah!!!"

He had only managed to spit out one word before Lucas stepped directly on his ankle bone and crushed it into pieces!

Snap!

Snap!

Snap!

With three crisp sounds in succession, Eli's limb bones were all crushed!

When dealing with people who took the initiative to provoke him and threaten to break his limbs, Lucas had always done to them exactly what they said they would do to him. It wasn't his fault at all.

Eli had long lost his previous appearance of an expert, and he was in so much pain that he was rolling around and wailing at the top of his lungs. The cold sweat flowing out had already drenched him.

Fortunately, it was a very inconspicuous alley, and due to the upcoming demolition, humans were scarce here. Otherwise, Eli's scream would have definitely attracted a crowd.

At this moment, Eli was full of horror and regret.

Lucas's martial arts skills were so terrifying that even he couldn't resist a single strike from Lucas. He was severely injured by one kick!

If he had known that he was such a terrifying expert, he wouldn't have been so arrogant as to provoke him...

Unfortunately, it was too late for regrets now!

He still had a pistol hidden in his waist. But Lucas had already broken his hands, depriving him of his last chance to live!

"Spare... spare my life. There... there isn't any f-feud between us. I was j-just following orders! Please... spare my life!"

At this moment, in the face of the threat of death, Eli gave up his dignity and began to beg Lucas for mercy. As he spoke, he even dragged his broken limbs with great difficulty and knelt on the ground.

Lucas sneered.

The man in gray in front of him had appeared in a dignified manner. But now, he could only miserably crawl on the ground and beg Lucas for forgiveness. He no longer had the backbone of a martial artist.

In fact, even if Lucas spared his life, he was already completely crippled.

Lucas was not a murderous and bloodthirsty person. Besides, as the man in gray said, he indeed didn't have any personal grudges against him, so Lucas didn't want to kill him.

But although Lucas didn't kill him, the fate of this man in gray would probably be far worse than death.

"I won't kill you, but you have to go back and warn Mrs. Smith that Moses and Marc Kingston died from suicide, which they brought upon themselves. If she must take revenge against me, I won't be polite to her!"

With that, Lucas stopped looking at Eli, who had become crippled, and turned around to leave. He walked to the spot where Cheyenne was waiting for him.

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San Francisco, Kingston residence...

Wendy was still sitting in the hall and enjoying the best VIP treatment.

Lance was still talking to her fawningly and trying to get close to her. But Wendy merely responded perfunctorily and half-heartedly.

Although in terms of seniority and their past relationship, Wendy should probably still see Lance as an elder. But she had a noble status. Lance had even ruined her relationship with Moses, causing her to suffer for half her lifetime. Now, she was willing to sit down and talk to him only on account of her late ex-husband and son. She obviously wouldn't show any kindness to the Kingstons.

But as time passed, Wendy began to get anxious and impatient.

According to the time, Eli should have long arrived in Orange County and defeated Lucas.

Why hasn't Eli called yet?

"Uh... Master Eli has been gone for a long time. I wonder if he's caught Lucas Gray yet," Lance asked worriedly.

Wendy sneered and mocked, "Haven't you already seen how capable Master Eli is? Don't compare him with the incompetent trash of the Kingstons! He'll definitely be able to capture that damn Lucas Gray!"

Roy said with great disdain, "Exactly. Master Eli is a top powerhouse of our family, whom the family head specially sent to protect my aunt. It's a piece of cake for him to seize Lucas. Just because the Kingstons can't do it, it doesn't mean that we can't either!"

Lance's face flushed, but he didn't dare to retort at all.

At this moment, Roy's phone suddenly rang. When he answered, he heard a terrified voice spread over. "Mr.. Smith, bad news. Master Eli's limbs have been broken, and he has sustained severe injuries!"

## **Chapter 619: Unforgivable**

"What?!" After hearing this news, Roy was so shocked that he instantly sprung up and didn't even notice that he had dropped the teacup next to him onto the floor.

The subordinate who called him was the very same bodyguard that he had left behind in Orange County to investigate Lucas.

He was in charge of investigating Lucas in Orange County, so he naturally saw the fight between Lucas and Eli, which had ended in less than a minute.

But he didn't get close to the alley, and by the time he rushed over to the vicinity, Eli had already been kicked to the ground by Lucas's leg whip.

This bodyguard was so frightened that he shivered and immediately went to hide. Only after Lucas left did he dare to go over. He then saw Eli's serious injuries and crippled limbs.

"Mr. Smith, Master Eli's limbs have been broken by Lucas Gray, and he's lying beside me! I'm not very clear about the details. Should I send Master Eli back now and let him talk to you personally?!" the bodyguard said fearfully.

"Duh? What are you waiting for? Send Master Eli back immediately! Right now!" Roy hollered at the top of his voice before hanging up.

At the side, Wendy vaguely heard something and had shock written all over her face. "Roy, you just received a call? What's the matter? Did something happen to Master Eli?"

Roy hurriedly said, "Yes, Aunt Wendy, My subordinate in Orange County called to say that Master Eli lost the fight with Lucas Gray and even had his limbs broken. We'll only know the details of the situation after Master Eli is brought back to us!"

Wendy had disbelief all over her face.

Even Lance looked horrified, and he sprung up and blurted, "How is that possible?"

If he hadn't witnessed Eli's martial arts skills personally, he might have been indifferent about it.

But the incredible power that Eli had displayed earlier was enough to suppress the Kingstons' strongest expert and beat him to the ground. Yet he ended up having his limbs broken by Lucas. *That... is too terrifying.*

*Could Lucas Gray's strength have really reached that terrifying degree?*

"No matter what, we have to ask Master Eli to rush back so we can hear what he actually says!" Wendy gritted her teeth.

Waiting was always the most arduous thing ever. In the next half hour or so, Wendy, Roy, and Lance were all very restless.

When the Kingstons' butler came to report that Roy's bodyguard had returned with the injured Eli, the few of them went all out and rushed to the villa entrance without any regard for their status.

When they saw with their own eyes Eli's crushed wrist and ankle bones, as well as his weak and wretched appearance, they couldn't help inhaling sharply.

"Master Eli, what on earth happened? Quickly tell us. How exactly did Lucas Gray beat you up to this state?" Roy asked anxiously.

While drenched in cold sweat, Eli endured the tremendous pain coming from his body and replied, "We... underestimated Lucas Gray. He is by no means an ordinary expert. He's so fast that even I... I didn't see how he actually moved. He kicked me in the waist and caused me to be so severely injured that I... I can't even get up.

"He... he isn't easy to deal with, and he strikes ruthlessly without mercy. If you can, I suggest that you don't mess with him. Otherwise, you will definitely get into huge trouble!" he said ashamedly while feeling extremely guilty and fearful of Lucas's unpredictable combat skills.

Roy inhaled sharply and immediately recalled the scene of himself getting choked by Lucas and almost suffocating to death in Orange County today.

A sudden chill instantly surged from the bottom of his feet straight to the top of his head.

"Aunt Wendy, it seems Lucas Gray is indeed very difficult to deal with! Master Eli is already a top expert of our family and the strongest one around us now. Even he got beaten up into a pulp by Lucas, so wouldn't we be... seeking death if we provoked him now? Aunt Wendy, we'd better get out of here and go back to DC! In case Lucas Gray comes over, we won't be able to deal with him at all!" Roy was now truly terrified of Lucas.

Even Eli wasn't a match for Lucas, and he only had two incompetent bodyguards remaining, who didn't even dare to breathe in front of Lucas. It made him extremely insecure, for fear that Lucas would suddenly appear in the Kingston residence to choke him to death again.

Roy belonged to one of the eight top families of DC and grew up in the lap of luxury. He had almost never even suffered a minor wound in the nearly three decades of his life. But this time, he was nearly strangled to death by a man of his age. He didn't want to ever feel the horror of a near-death experience again!

Wendy frowned and remained silent with a sullen expression on her face. The fact that she was gritting her teeth was enough to show that she was in a terrible mood at the moment.

But Roy didn't notice it and wished he could run to her and shout into her ears, "Aunt Wendy, why are you still hesitating? We'd better leave right now while we can! In case Lucas Gray comes here, we'll be dead meat!"

“Shut up!” Wendy was furious and raised her hand to slap Roy on the face.

*Smack!*

The loud slap and the numbing pain coming from Roy’s face immediately made his body freeze. But at the same time, he recovered from the fear of being on the verge of collapse.

“... Aunt Wendy, what are we going to do now? We can’t continue to just stay here, can we? We don’t have enough people around us, and the Kingstons don’t have any experts who can provide protection...” Roy asked cautiously, covering his face while glowering indignantly at Lance.

Lance felt very maligned. *Am I to blame for the fact that the Kingstons can’t find an expert who can rival Lucas Gray? Didn’t you Smiths praise Eli to no end? Yet he ended up having all his limbs broken, didn’t he?*

At the same time, Lance was also rather worried despite the criticism.

If Lucas knew that the Kingstons and Wendy were the ones who had sent Eli, maybe he would barge into the Kingstons’ again to fight.

Among the several people present, Wendy seemed to be the most composed.

She took a deep breath and said, “Since Lucas Gray only crippled Master Eli’s limbs but didn’t kill him, I think he should just want to warn us and doesn’t intend to drive us to death.”

Eli hurriedly said, “Yes, I think so. Lucas Gray also asked me... to relay a message to you. He said... he said that Moses and Marc Kingston both died from suicide, which they brought upon themselves. If you must take revenge against him, he won’t be polite to us!”

“Hmph, as expected, Lucas Gray is warning us!” Wendy gritted her teeth.

The Smiths had always been the ones to threaten others and never the other way around. Yet they were now being threatened by a young man in his twenties. It was a blatant insult!

Lucas had even dared to say that her ex-husband and son had brought their deaths upon themselves. This was simply unforgivable!

## **Chapter 620: Each Harboring Ill Intentions**

Lance, at the side, couldn’t help trembling after hearing Lucas’s warning.

He initially merely wanted to use the power of the Smiths' expert to get rid of Lucas in one fell swoop. However, not only did he fail to get what he wanted, but he ended up offending Lucas again.

Wendy and Roy had the powerful Smith family behind them, and they could return to DC and stay far, far away. Lucas wouldn't be able to exact revenge on them either. But the Kingstons' roots were in San Francisco, so if Lucas wanted to take revenge against them, they would have nowhere to run!

When Lance thought of this, a look of extreme fear appeared on his face.

After struggling for a while, he finally couldn't bear the tremendous pressure in his heart and got down on his knees in front of Wendy. "Mrs. Smith, please save the Kingstons!"

Wendy was taken aback.

Logically speaking, Lance was her ex-husband's father, so she should see him as her former father-in-law. Although she disliked him, he was on in his years, and it was a fact that she found it hard to accept it when she saw him suddenly kneeling in front of her.

"Wh-what are you doing? Quickly get up before you say what you want!" She hurriedly reached out to pull Lance up.

Lance stood up, still looking as worried as ever. With a pleading gaze, he begged, "Mrs. Smith, at this point, the Kingstons are about to face a huge crisis soon. You're the only one who can save us!"

"When Lucas Gray came to cause a stir in our home previously, he warned us not to go against him again, or he definitely wouldn't let us off. He even threatened to kill all of us! Now... now that we've provoked him, he definitely won't spare us!"

"Mrs. Smith, no matter what, Moses and Marc used to be part of the Kingstons, and we're all family members. Now, you're the only one who can save us! Please don't leave us in the lurch!"

Two lines of tears streamed down his wrinkled face, making him look incredibly miserable.

Roy was afraid that his aunt would agree, so he quickly stopped her, "Aunt Wendy, don't listen to him! The feud is between the Kingstons and Lucas Gray to begin with. What's it have to do with us? Now that Lucas Gray is so powerful that even Master Eli is no match for him, what can we do?"

"In my opinion, we shouldn't get involved in this mess! Otherwise, even we won't be able to save ourselves!"

Then he glowered at Lance again and cursed, "Old fogey, you offended Lucas Gray yourself and couldn't deal with him, so you tried to drag us all into this, huh? You're really evil. How shameless of you!"

Wendy didn't say anything, but countless thoughts rushed through her mind.

In fact, the reason she came to San Francisco this time was entirely for Moses and Marc.

She had been so in love with Moses back then that she had secretly concealed her identity and went through painstaking means to hide her family background just so she could get together with him. She had even gotten pregnant with his child.

But later on, Lance's vehement refusal forced Moses to leave her while Wendy's parents reprimanded her in disappointment and demanded that she get an abortion before marrying someone else.

In the end, she agreed to her parents' request to accept the marriage they had arranged for her on the condition that she could give birth to the child. She then secretly sent the child away so that none of the Smiths could find out his whereabouts.

In order to protect Marc and Moses, she never once returned to San Francisco over the last three decades or so. But every single day, she would secretly wonder to herself about how they were doing. When she missed them badly, she would have a trusted confidante secretly come to San Francisco to find out about Marc and Moses's situation to relieve her longing for them.

But she never dared to make it too obvious because she knew that once she revealed any hints, the Smiths would definitely take action against both Moses and Marc as soon as they found out. Besides, her current husband would definitely not tolerate the fact that she had had a child out of wedlock.

Thus, day by day, she waited and looked forward to hearing about them. But she suddenly received the news of the sudden and unexpected deaths of both Moses and Marc.

Wendy was on the verge of losing her mind after hearing the news.

Therefore, she no longer cared about anything else and simply found a random excuse to take her nephew over to San Francisco with her, where she embarked on her pursuit for the truth of the matter and carried out her plan to avenge Moses and Marc!

But she didn't expect that her most powerful bodyguard, Eli, wouldn't be a match for Lucas at all.

From a rational point of view, she should indeed give up retaliating against Lucas for the time being and rush back to DC as soon as possible so as not to arouse the suspicions of the Smiths and her husband in any way.

But if she gave up just like that, her ex-husband, Moses, and her son, Marc, would have died in vain.

The thought of the two people she loved having now turned into cold corpses while the culprit who killed them was still living freely was completely intolerable for Wendy!

“Okay, Mr. Kingston, you have my word. I promise to help your family and do everything I can to get rid of Lucas Gray!” Wendy said decisively.

Lance was immediately overjoyed at her words, and the furrows on his face eased up while he thanked her profusely.

But Roy’s face suddenly turned sullen, and he advised earnestly, “Aunt Wendy, calm down! I’m not even going to take revenge on Lucas anymore, so why do you want to get yourself embroiled in this mess? Lucas Gray is a martial arts expert, and we don’t have anyone who can deal with him!”

“I’ve already made up my mind, so just do as I say! Also, you are not to breathe a word about this to our family. Otherwise, you know full well what I can do to you!” Wendy looked at Roy coldly, her eyes full of determination.

Roy was startled by the rarely-seen gaze of indifference in her eyes. But he knew that she wasn’t an ordinary person, and the things she had done in the past were simply ruthless and vicious. Thus, he never dared to offend her even though she had already moved out after getting married.

“We can’t tell the rest of the family either? Aunt Wendy, why exactly do you want to do this? Could you have some other hidden reasons?” Roy asked in bewilderment.

“Shut up. You’d better not ask about things that you shouldn’t!” Wendy chided sternly.

“Okay... I know.” Roy nodded calmly and agreed, but he was full of disbelief.

He thought that his aunt was probably out of her mind for insisting on going against Lucas. He wasn’t planning to stay behind and be buried here with her.

He decided that once he left, he would find an opportunity to leave San Francisco immediately and go back to the Smiths’ home in DC. He would, of course, tell the authoritative figures, such as his parents and the family head, about Wendy’s actions.

While thinking about this, he failed to notice that Wendy had already seen through him and the emotions he was showing on his face because he had never been able to hide his feelings well.

## Chapter 621: Beyond Expectations

Wendy frowned at Roy and suddenly asked, "Speaking of which, you said that you were going to look for your fiancée in Orange County. What happened afterward?"

At the mention of this matter, Roy immediately forgot what he was planning just now and flew into a rage. "Aunt Wendy, recalling this matter makes me furious. That shameless bitch Maddy Stone refused to acknowledge the engagement between our families, and she's even dating a pretty boy, with whom she publicly humiliated me!"

Although this seemed to be a private matter for Roy, denying the engagement with a Smith was a blatant insult to the family!

Wendy was enraged. "A shameless bitch indeed! My father only decided to let you marry that woman because of her good medical skills. She has quite a good reputation and will be useful to us in terms of forming connections. She seems to be quite pretty too. But since she dares to insult you and the Smiths like this, she really deserves to die!"

"I will definitely make the Stones give you and our family an explanation for this matter!"

There was anger written all over Wendy's face.

Roy hurriedly said, "That's right! I'm not even minding the fact that she's old, yet she has the guts to look down on our family. Aunt Wendy, you must seek justice for me!"

His status in the Smith family wasn't outstanding, and the way he was treated was far inferior to the highly valued descendants. This was why the Smiths had decided to make Roy marry Maddy, who was over 30 years old and an old woman in his opinion. He had no right to oppose even if he wanted to.

But he heard that Maddy was very beautiful despite her age and had just recently returned to the country. So he wanted to take the opportunity to go and take a good look at his future wife while he was out on a trip with Wendy. If she was pretty, he would just make do.

But he never thought that even though he had taken a liking to Maddy, she would actually dare to treat him that way and even openly hold another man's hand in front of him. She didn't even deny it when someone else said that she was that man's girlfriend, which was blatant disregard for Roy!

The matter was too embarrassing and humiliating after all. If he complained to his family about it, it likely wouldn't result in any effect and would even cause him to be ridiculed by his peers for being incompetent. Even his fiancée looked down on him.

But if Wendy was the one complaining to the rest of the family, the outcome of the matter would immediately be very different. Not only would Maddy suffer, but the Stones would have to pay the price for it.

Wendy said with a faint smile, "No matter what, you are still my nephew, and we are both from the same family, so I will naturally stand on your side."

Only then did Roy feel relieved and hurriedly thank Wendy, "Thank you, Aunt Wendy! But we just need to teach the Stones a lesson. Please let Maddy off. After all, I still want to marry her."

Although he disliked the fact that Maddy was older, her supermodel-like figure and unique elegance that was very different from other women made him feel an urge to conquer her.

Wendy smiled. "Okay, got it."

Just as Roy was feeling smug, he suddenly saw Wendy pull out a small silenced pistol from her waist and point the black muzzle at him.

"Aunt Wendy, what...?!"

Roy widened his eyes in shock. But before he could say anything, Wendy's finger on the trigger had already moved.

*Whoosh!*

With a dull gunshot that sounded strange due to the silencer, a finger-thick hole immediately appeared between Roy's eyebrows, and blood instantly gushed out of it.

Roy still had shock and disbelief all over his face as his pupils gradually dimmed. Then he slowly fell backward to the floor.

"Mrs... Mrs. Smith! Wh-what are you doing?" Lance, standing at the side, witnessed the entire process and was dumbstruck by her sudden move. He pointed at Roy's corpse with his mouth open in horror, barely able to say a complete sentence.

This scene was far beyond his imagination!

At this moment, Eli, lying on the ground with his limbs already crippled, had a change of expression because he had already guessed the intention behind Wendy's move. Moreover, he was well aware that her next target would definitely be him!

Indeed, the next moment, Wendy aimed the silenced pistol in her hand at Eli, with a look of ruthlessness.

“I... I don't know anything. I won't say anything! I swear on my life... Ah!” Eli's plea for mercy came to an abrupt end as another bullet flew out of the pistol in Wendy's hand and struck Eli's head with great accuracy.

“I never believe in oaths, and you have long become useless to me. Keeping you behind won't bring me any benefits!” Wendy watched as Eli's body convulsed violently for a short while before coming to a stop. She then blew the muzzle and slowly placed the pistol back into the sheath on her waist.

His former daughter-in-law actually killed two people in front of him with a straight face, one of whom was her bodyguard and the other her biological nephew. This was simply beyond what Lance could comprehend!

“Ahhh!” Wendy suddenly sighed slowly and said to Lance with a bitter smile, “Actually, I didn't want to do this, but I didn't have a valid reason to ask the family for help.

“Only with Roy's death would the Smiths take this matter seriously and send a stronger, elite expert to deal with Lucas Gray. Now, do you understand my approach? Roy and Eli have both been killed by Lucas Gray, right?” Wendy glanced at Lance.

Lance shuddered and hurriedly said, “Yes! That's it! Mr. Kingston found out that Lucas Gray's friend snatched his fiancée, so he felt insulted and brought Eli with him to take revenge on Lucas Gray. However, both of them were brutally killed by Lucas Gray!”

At this moment, his back was drenched in cold sweat.

For the sake of achieving her goals, Wendy was actually able to kill her biological nephew and personal bodyguard of years without even batting an eyelid. If he acted inappropriately, she would probably not show him any mercy!

Hearing what he said, Wendy said with a cruel smile, “It's good that you know. I will contact the Smiths in DC now, and soon, I will be able to take revenge for my love and son!”

## **Chapter 622: Do You Regret It Now?**

At this moment, Lucas naturally didn't know that Wendy had been so ruthless and even killed her biological nephew just to get the Smiths to send someone to deal with him.

But with Lucas's combat skills and abilities, he didn't care what kind of an expert the Smiths would send.

In this world, there were very few experts on par with him. And even experts from the eight top families of DC would probably be far from rivaling Lucas.

After settling the matter with Eli, he went straight to the parking lot outside the Lion Restaurant and took Cheyenne, who was obviously relieved, back to the villa.

Charlotte had picked up Amelia long ago, and the family enjoyed a relaxing and pleasant evening together.

Since it was Sunday tomorrow, Lucas looked at Amelia obediently lying on the bed and listening to Cheyenne's story and suddenly remembered what Karen had said when she tried to trick her. "Let's take Amelia to the amusement park tomorrow."

Amelia was stunned for a moment before exclaiming in joy and asking with glistening eyes, "Really? Really? Can we really go to the amusement park?"

Her tender face was full of anticipation as she looked at Lucas and then at Cheyenne. "Mommy said she would take me there last time, but she's been really busy and telling me that she doesn't have time..."

Cheyenne immediately seemed guilty. She had indeed made such a promise to Amelia before. But due to William's accident, she had no choice but to renege. She touched Amelia's head apologetically and said gently, "Amelia, I was just too busy before and couldn't find any time to accompany you. But Mommy and Daddy will definitely take you to play to your hearts' content tomorrow, okay?"

"Wow! Yay! I can finally go to the amusement park! Mommy, you're the best! I love you so much!" Amelia jumped up on the bed happily, wrapped her arms around Cheyenne's neck, and kissed her face.

"Haha, Daddy, I love you too!"

Before Lucas could get jealous, Amelia jumped into his arms and kissed him on the same spot on his face. She then held one of their hands in each hand and smiled gleefully. "Daddy, Mommy, I feel like the happiest person in the world! I'm the happiest person in the world! I'm so happy!"

Seeing their well-behaved and adorable daughter being so joyful because they fulfilled a small request of hers, Lucas and Cheyenne looked at each other with love and bliss in their eyes.

The next day, Lucas got up before dawn.

He took a glance at his sleeping wife and daughter and smiled faintly without disturbing them. He quietly put on his clothes and quickly drove to the airport.

Just last night, Maddy had sent him a text to inform him that she would be returning to DC at seven in the morning.

She had initially come to Orange County to help Lucas with William's treatment and also with Grace's mother's condition, treating all her post-surgical symptoms.

Maddy had done Lucas such a huge favor, and as her former comrade, he thought that he had to come personally to see her off.

After parking his car in the parking lot outside the airport and entering the terminal building, he scanned around and immediately saw Maddy and Jordan inside.

The two were standing together and whispering to each other. But given the distance between them, he understood that there was still not much progress between them.

*Come to think of it, Maddy has always been a very opinionated, smart, and independent woman, not the type to let love hinder her progress in life. Besides, she only stayed in Orange County for a few short days, and it's basically impossible for her relationship with Jordan to progress to that extent.*

At the thought of this, Lucas sighed slightly in his head and walked over.

"Lucas, you're here!"

"Lucas."

When Jordan and Maddy saw Lucas walking over, they immediately greeted him.

"It's too early, and Cheyenne is still taking care of Amelia at home. I didn't ask her to come with me, but she told me to thank you properly. If it wasn't for you, I'm afraid my father-in-law wouldn't have regained consciousness yet. But you have a tight schedule. When you come to Orange County again, we will definitely host you properly!" Lucas said with a smile.

Maddy smiled without restraint. "We're so close. You don't have to be so polite to me! Besides, when you're both free, you can bring Amelia to DC to visit me!"

"Sure, it's a deal!" Lucas smiled.

In fact, he also wanted to persuade Maddy to stay for a few days longer. But he also knew clearly that one of the major reasons why Maddy was rushing back to DC was to find out about her family's attitude.

It was her family and life, so he couldn't interfere much.

“Attention all passengers, boarding for flight CA788 from Orange County will begin soon. Please proceed to gate A1 for check-in...” At this moment, a gentle announcement voice rang out in the terminal.

Both Lucas and Jordan knew that it was time for Maddy to leave.

Lucas looked into Maddy’s eyes and said solemnly, “When you get back to DC, remember to take care of yourself. If anything happens, give us a call. Don’t ever be out of touch.

“If you don’t want to marry that kid from the Smith family, Jordan and I will rush over to support you even if your family forces you!”

Jordan nodded very seriously and assured, “Maddy, we’ll definitely rush to you, stand on your side, and help you without any hesitation as long as you need our help!”

Feeling touched, Maddy smiled and opened her arms to hug Lucas, followed by Jordan. “Okay, I will remember. If I really need your help, I’ll call you. Bye!”

With that, she waved her hand and turned away suavely without even looking back.

Jordan subconsciously started raising his fingers. But in the end, he could only slowly put them down with a sorrowful expression.

Maddy would probably marry someone else.

After all, her family was the one who wanted her to get married and have children!

But he couldn’t do anything except watch her leave. In fact, he didn’t even tell Maddy how he felt about her.

All of a sudden, Jordan felt bitter.

“Do you regret it now?” Lucas suddenly asked.

## **Chapter 623: Suitable Candidate**

Jordan abruptly raised his head and looked at Lucas. But less than a second later, he turned his head away and clenched his fist without saying anything.

Lucas sighed. “I’ve told you before that you like Maddy, but you haven’t been able to profess your feelings to her. If she really chooses to marry a man she doesn’t love, you’ll definitely regret it!

“Moreover, you’ve always felt that you’re not worthy of Maddy. But if you hadn’t chosen to leave everything behind in Calico to stay by my side, even the Stones wouldn’t dare

to look down on you, given all your previous achievements and status. In fact, I've also told you before that as long as you're willing, I'll be able to help you ask the Stones for Maddy's hand in marriage immediately. But you refused to let me. What a shame!"

Lucas had called Jordan last night and asked about things between him and Maddy, but Jordan seemed to be full of worries.

Jordan hung his head low without saying another word. After a long time, he finally said with a bitter expression, "I want to give Maddy happiness, but after spending the past few days with her, I don't think she likes me that way. She's always treated me as a brother and comrade, and she has never been romantically interested in me. So I don't want to force things, lest the relationship between us becomes awkward.

"At least, we can now still get along as comrades and friends, and that's enough for me."

Hearing this, Lucas was both angry and amused. "You're so silly! I don't know if Maddy has any romantic feelings for you, but if she doesn't like you, how could she possibly allow you to stay by her side for the past few days? She's not the type who likes to get too close to men. You should be very sure about that. But has she shown any displeasure toward you the past few days?"

Jordan pondered for a bit and realized that this really seemed to be the case. Maddy had an independent and resolute character, just like a rose with thorns. In the past few years, there had been many men who had professed their feelings to her or went out of their way to do nice things for her. But she didn't hide her displeasure and disdain toward them, much less treat any of them nicely.

But for the past few days, Maddy had been chatting with Jordan merrily until they suddenly ran into the obnoxious Roy yesterday.

"In that case, does Maddy... really like me a little?" Jordan raised his head to look at Lucas as he asked apprehensively, feeling rather worried.

At this moment, Jordan was like a young man who had just fallen in love for the first time in his life. He was no longer as suave, unfettered, and demonic as he usually appeared.

Lucas smiled lightly. "You must be too muddled and paranoid. As I've said before, if you like Maddy, take a brave step forward and pursue her. Even if things don't work out in the end, you've at least tried your best and won't keep regretting the chances you didn't take. Don't you agree?"

"Can you really accept it if you suddenly receive a wedding invitation from Maddy one day and end up seeing her holding hands with another man, exchanging rings, and

sharing a kiss with him while you can only watch from the corner of the wedding hall? Do you want to end up having to force yourself to give her your blessings?

“You know that Maddy doesn’t fancy anyone now, and if she chooses to get married when she returns to DC, it’ll only be a compromise to her family. But she will have to be bound to a man she doesn’t love at all for the rest of her life. Her talent and smarts will diminish day by day after she gets married and gives birth to children. Eventually, she will become a dull and miserable person. Can you bear to see that?”

“Moreover, the man she marries might be a playboy who has domestic violent tendencies or emotionally abuses her. Or he might also be a philanderer who loves womanizing all day. Take Roy Smith for example. Can you bear to see Maddy spending the rest of her life with an incompetent scion like him?”

Lucas’s words were like sharp daggers stabbing straight into Jordan’s heart.

The thought of the scene Lucas described and the possibility of his beloved woman being horribly mistreated made Jordan’s heart ache in misery.

“If... If her husband dares to mistreat her, I’ll definitely seek justice for her and not let anyone bully her!” Jordan clenched his fists and assured angrily in a soft voice.

“How can you assure that?” Lucas looked at his best friend expressionlessly. “Once she really gets married, she’ll be someone else’s wife, while you’ll just be an outsider. How can you guarantee that no one will bully her then? When the time comes, you’ll be in no place to show her concern at all!”

Lucas’s seemingly cold and heartless words immediately destroyed Jordan’s forced comfort.

Jordan closed his eyes in agony. *Yeah, just as Lucas says, if she really ends up marrying someone else, what right would I have to meddle with her affairs?*

If he appeared beside Maddy at that time and stood up for her, they would definitely face countless criticism and push her into an even more unfavorable position.

The thought of it made Jordan overwhelmed with a massive wave of regret, leaving him in so much pain that he started pulling his own hair.

“Lucas, what... should I do?” he murmured.

Lucas sighed. “Jordan, I hope you can understand that whether you want to give up Maddy or not, it not only concerns your own happiness and determines if you will regret later in life, but it also concerns her future happiness. You haven’t confessed your love to her or fought for the happiness you want. How can you be so sure that it’s impossible between you and Maddy then? Think about it carefully yourself.”

After saying this, Lucas decided not to persuade him any further and instead left him to figure it out quietly by himself.

But in the end, he said, "I intend to send another person to DC to help Flynn with the matters there."

Jordan was stunned for a moment before coming to a sudden realization. He asked in shock and disbelief, "Lucas, do you mean that... that I can go to DC?"

Lucas nodded. "That's right. I intend to send you to DC. The Huttons' control over the Stardust Group headquarters is even greater than I expected. Flynn is getting overwhelmed handling the matters there on his own. Stanley has already put in a lot of energy to protect Flynn, while the Huttons are constantly making things hard for him. So there's no way Stanley can continue to help him. Therefore, if I want to break the situation in DC, I have to send a competent and reliable person over.

"You're undoubtedly the most suitable candidate."

## **Chapter 624: One of the Smiths**

After hearing what Lucas said, Jordan felt extremely touched because he felt valued by him.

But since Lucas suddenly brought up this matter, it probably wasn't only because he needed Jordan to be in DC. "Lucas, if you're just trying to help me, you don't actually have to do this..."

Before he could finish speaking, Lucas immediately interrupted, "I'm not saying this just to help you either. I've already had plans for this matter beforehand. You should know how important the Stardust Corporation is to me. I'm very determined to get my hands on it!

"I've only just returned to Orange County four months ago, and the development of my power is mainly concentrated in Orange County and LA. I've only sent Flynn and Stanley to DC, so my manpower there is indeed a little weak. A careless mistake might cause both of them to die in DC.

"Besides, you're my best friend whom I value the most. You're much stronger than Stanley, and your ability to gather intelligence and analyze is superb. If you go to DC, you'll be of great help to Flynn and Stanley. To be honest, I really can't find a better candidate than you."

Lucas said to him seriously, "Of course, I do hope that you and Maddy can spend more time together and solve your issues as soon as possible. Once you go to DC, you'll be the first to know regardless of what happens to the Stones. That way, we can all be at

ease. This can be considered a selfish reason of mine. You are all my brothers and friends, and I want all of you to have happy lives too!”

Jordan was touched for a while because he knew that Lucas really treated him as his brother, which was why he would say so much to him and create such an opportunity for him.

“Lucas, I’ll go. I promise I will complete all the missions and help you get back the Stardust Corporation so that you can have peace of mind!” Jordan stood up straight and said loudly with the arrogance and confidence restored within him.

Lucas smiled, patted him on his shoulder, and laughed. “You have to hurry home to pack up and then catch a flight to DC, right?”

“Hehe, that’s right! That’s right!” Jordan laughed out loud while touching his hair.

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At about the same time, a silver-white plane crossed the sky at daybreak before landing slowly at San Francisco International Airport.

Soon, a middle-aged man wearing a pair of sunglasses slowly walked out of the exit with a cold and stern aura. Two extraordinarily tall and burly bodyguards were following behind him.

The three of them had an intimidating and unapproachable aura. Everyone in their path seemed to avoid them consciously because they knew that they were not to be trifled with. No one wanted to get into trouble.

Only Wendy, who had been waiting for a long time, immediately greeted the three of them with glistening eyes. “Vince, you’re finally here!”

She quickly walked up to the cold and solemn middle-aged man in front and complained with tears in her eyes, “Vince, it’s all my fault for failing to take care of Roy well. It’s all my fault that... something happened to him!”

The middle-aged man was none other than Wendy’s cousin, Vince, Roy’s father.

Although Wendy’s father was now the helmsman of the Smith family, Vince’s father was his biological brother. Thus, Vince commanded great power in the family, and he was even a strong contender for the next family helmsman.

Even Wendy, who could kill her biological nephew without even blinking, didn’t dare to be perfunctory with the stern Vince.

Since Wendy was already like this, Lance, who had gone to the airport with her, didn't dare to show any disrespect to him at all.

Although Vince was one generation younger than him and only about the same age as his own son, Lance nevertheless greeted Vince respectfully, "Greetings, Mr. Smith."

On the way to the airport, Wendy had already told him about the person she would be picking up today and the status he had. So Lance didn't dare to offend this powerful big shot of the Smith family.

Vince took off his sunglasses, revealing his falcon-like eyes. Without even looking at Lance, he questioned Wendy coldly, "I just want to know how my son Roy died and where his corpse is. How did Master Eli die?"

After receiving the news of his son's death from Wendy on the phone last night, he flew into a rage right on the spot.

Afterward, Wendy started telling him the general story of the matter while crying, but Vince was livid while they were speaking on the phone, so he hadn't accurately grasped every detail of her story.

Thus, he immediately asked these questions as soon as he saw Wendy.

Looking at the murderous look on his face, Wendy felt a little guilty and scared.

But she soon adjusted her emotions and hurriedly told him the story that she and Lance had fabricated together.

"Roy and I just arrived in San Francisco yesterday, and I met an old friend, the helmsman of the Kingston family. We were chatting, and Roy became bored, so he went out. We found out later that Roy's fiancée was in Orange County, so he headed there with Master Eli.

"At the time, I teased him and said that he was too childish. But I didn't expect him never to be able to return again!

"The one who killed Roy is a young man named Lucas Gray from Orange County. As far as I know, Lucas Gray isn't an ordinary person but an illegitimate son of the Huttons from DC. He was expelled from the family two decades ago and left to his own devices in Orange County.

"But there are indeed a few strange things about him. The people I sent last night informed me that he had indeed been living properly in Orange County, but life had been tough for him. Six years ago, his mother died, and he became the live-in son-in-law of a mediocre family in Orange County.

“But he suddenly left without saying goodbye and disappeared from Orange County until about four months ago, when he suddenly returned. He’s now very different from before.

“No one knows where he actually went during these six years and what he experienced, especially from where he learned his martial arts, but his skills are superb. So... so Roy and Master Eli weren’t able to escape his clutches!”

After speaking, Wendy raised her hand again and wiped her reddened and swollen eyes. “If I had known that Lucas Gray was so difficult to deal with, I would have kept an eye on Roy and not let him go look for him!”

Vince sneered, his voice as cold and harsh as the cold wind blowing in through the glass. “Hah, a Hutton? If he was a direct descendant of the Huttons, I might show him some respect. But he’s just an illegitimate son. Who gave him the guts to kill my son?!”

“Since he has the guts to kill my son, I won’t let him off regardless of how difficult he is to deal with!”

## **Chapter 625: Great Ambitions**

Vince’s cold words, coupled with the piercing and distorted killing intent on his face, immediately made both Wendy and Lance subconsciously shudder.

In particular, Lance wasn’t as vicious and scheming as Wendy, so his heart was pounding wildly at the moment.

If Vince knew that his son Roy hadn’t been killed by Lucas but had died in the Kingston residence, he probably wouldn’t spare the Kingstons even if they weren’t the ones who killed Roy.

He carefully looked at Wendy, who was still as calm as usual, before secretly gulping and forcing himself to calm down.

No matter what, since things had already developed to this point, he and Wendy were already on the same boat. Even if the truth came to light, he would have Wendy to take the blame. As long as he controlled his facial expressions well and avoided arousing suspicion, Roy’s incident would probably remain a secret forever.

At this moment, Wendy was secretly sizing up the two bodyguards behind Vince, whom she had previously met at the Smith residence. They were elite experts that were in no way inferior to Master Eli.

After all, Wendy was already married, while Vince was a rightful successor who held true power and authority in the Smith family. The experts he brought were naturally the elites of the elites.

“Vince, since you’ve brought your people here, should we head to Orange County immediately to capture that punk Lucas Gray to avenge Roy?” Wendy asked.

Vince didn’t answer her directly and instead confirmed again, “You said that Master Eli escorted Roy to Orange County, but they both ended up being killed by Lucas Gray, right?”

“Yes!” Wendy nodded and pretended to be angry and grief-stricken. She said slowly, “Master Eli has been with me for so many years, and he was my most skilled bodyguard. That’s why I sent him to protect Roy so that he wouldn’t be bullied by others, But I never thought that Lucas Gray would be so powerful. Even Master Eli was no match for him and instead even died in his hands…”

She raised her hand to wipe her tears, seemingly extremely miserable about this matter.

Lance also hurriedly took the opportunity to say, “Mr. Smith, Lucas Gray is indeed quite evil, and his martial arts skills are incredible. Moreover, he isn’t alone and has other experts following him. In short, he’s very difficult to deal with!

“Moreover, although he was abandoned by the Huttons, for some reason, they handed the Orange County branch of the Stardust Corporation to him to manage. So he does hold some power. Apart from a few top wealthy families in LA and Orange County, even the Coles, who are on par with us in the state, have gathered around Lucas Gray. He’s really very difficult to deal with!

“Previously, the Kingstons also suffered heavy losses and lost several top experts in order to deal with him. Even my son and grandson were both killed by Lucas Gray!”

Toward the end, Lance gnashed his teeth and did his best to show that his desire to take revenge against Lucas was as strong as Vince’s in hopes that they could become closer.

Indeed, after hearing Lance’s words, Vince looked at him, an old man of nearly seventy years old, for the first time. He asked with raised brows, “You are?”

Previously, Lance had greeted him, but Vince didn’t notice him at all.

Wendy quickly introduced, “Vince, this is Lance Kingston, the head of the Kingstons, one of the top three wealthiest families in California.”

Lance hurriedly bowed and said respectfully, “Mr. Smith, you can just address me as Lance!”

“The three top families in California…” Vince glanced at Lance and suddenly smiled. “It seems that it’s quite coincidental. I’m here in San Francisco this time to avenge my son and also to do something important.”

Hearing this, Lance immediately understood that the matter Vince wanted to do was probably related to him. Overjoyed, he frantically said, "Mr. Smith, our family has been in San Francisco for nearly three decades, and we have a significant status here. Please feel free to tell me any requests you may have! We will definitely try our best to help you fulfill them!"

"Something important?" Wendy pondered. As far as she knew, she had never heard of the Smiths having anything to do in California. Otherwise, the Smiths might have long found out about the matters between her and Moses. *It seems that this matter was likely decided by the Smiths or Vince recently.*

Vince didn't keep him in suspense. He said straightforwardly, "I want to make all of California become the Smiths' turf!"

His words were decisive and full of a domineering aura.

Wendy widened her eyes in surprise, but she soon calmed down.

Although this matter was beyond her expectation, it wasn't that shocking.

After all, the Smiths had already become one of the eight most powerful families in DC many years ago and had been expanding their power in recent years. Although their goal of taking over all of California did sound a little too ambitious, it was still possible to achieve it if they did their best.

Moreover, as long as Vince could successfully take over California, he would probably become the next successor.

But what Vince said made Lance immediately widen his eyes in shock!

The Smiths didn't only want to dominate San Francisco but all of California!

It was a terrifying goal!

Although he had always known that the Smiths were one of the eight most powerful families in DC, the Smiths' scope of influence had always only been in DC and the surrounding areas. But now, they wanted to take over all of the economically prosperous California. Their ambition was far beyond Lance's imagination!

Of course, Lance's family was only one of the three great families of San Francisco, and he hadn't been able to unify the city, let alone the state.

In this instant, he strongly felt the great difference between him and a main member of the Smith family.

At the same time, a wave of excitement and exhilaration surged in his heart.

Since Vince could reveal his plan directly in front of him, he clearly wanted to use the power of the Kingstons.

After all, in order to take control of all the forces in California, the Smiths couldn't possibly send people to take over everything everywhere. The easiest method with the least hassle was to select a few large families in California and make them the Smiths' representatives to control all of California.

And as one of the top three top families in California, getting an opportunity to work with the Smiths was simply a godsend opportunity!

As long as he could seize the opportunity and obtain the trust of the Smiths to become a representative, the Kingstons would have a powerful backer to rely on and soar to greater heights soon!

The thought of that scene made Lance look incredibly excited.

After thinking about it, he smiled fawningly at Vince. "Mr. Smith, since you want to take revenge and take over all of California, I have a good plan to help you quickly achieve both goals at the same time!"

## **Chapter 626: Lance Contributes His Idea**

Vince glanced at the smug-looking Lance and sneered before saying indifferently, "Since Wendy introduced you, you should also know the kind of speech I hate the most, right?"

Lance's heart trembled before suddenly recalling what Wendy had told him about Vince's character while they were on the way to the airport. One of the very important things that he had to take note of was never to beat around the bush. He should never try to keep him in suspense either!

The thought of it made Lance break out in cold sweat on his forehead. He had only gotten complacent because he had suddenly thought of a good idea, so he had subconsciously revealed some of the habits he had when dealing with other businessmen.

At this moment, after hearing Vince's warning, he clearly didn't dare to keep him in suspense anymore. He quickly lowered his head and said, "Mr. Smith, I'm very sorry! This is what I think. In California, the most powerful families are probably the top three in San Francisco—the Kingstons, the Coles, and the Walkers. Our families have similar strengths, so we've only been able to keep each other in balance in recent years, forming a tripartite.

"But just a short while ago, Lucas Gray suddenly barged to the Kingston residence, and only then did I discover that the Coles had joined Lucas Gray at some point in time, so

have the Hales, one of the four major families of Orange County; Little Atlantis City, the largest underground force of Orange County; and the Parkers, who have recently risen to power in LA.

“Each individual force may seem too weak, but they all have one thing in common—they are all on Lucas Gray’s side. If they unite under Lucas Gray, I can confidently say that no force in California will be able to contend with them alone!

“Therefore, in order to completely get rid of Lucas Gray and retaliate against him, we have to get rid of these forces behind him too. So, Mr. Smith, if you want to deal with Lucas Gray, you can start with the Coles in San Francisco and remove the biggest force on his side first!

“When Lucas receives the information and comes to their rescue in San Francisco, you can let these two experts around you make a move. They’ll definitely be able to kill Lucas Gray in one fell swoop! This way, all the other forces in his hands will belong to you, and half of your goal to take over all of California will be accomplished!”

Lance revealed his plan.

Worried that Vince didn’t understand the situation in California since he was a big shot from DC, Lance explained to him the distribution of the forces in Orange County, LA, and other major cities.

Since he and Vince had exactly the same goal in some aspects, such as killing Lucas and getting rid of the Coles, he explained his plan in great detail.

Now that the Kingstons had such an excellent godsend opportunity, Lance would seize it and make use of the Smiths’ power to completely get rid of all his eyesores.

After hearing what Lance said, Vince merely raised his brows without saying anything.

Seeing this, Lance couldn’t help feeling cold sweat breaking out on his back again. He kept feeling as if Vince’s sharp eyes had long seen through his agenda.

“Okay, then let’s do as you suggest and destroy the Coles in San Francisco first.”

But in the end, Lance had been too nervous. Vince finally spoke and agreed to his plan, and his tone seemed rather relaxed too.

While Lance was feeling greatly relieved, ecstasy surged in his heart.

Since Vince had accepted his suggestion, the Smiths would probably make the Kingstons their general representative in San Francisco!

“Thank you for your trust, Mr. Smith. I will definitely help you with the arrangements!” Lance bent over with an extremely respectful expression, as if he had already received a great commendation.

“Okay, I’ll leave it to you to take care,” Vince said indifferently, but a mocking smile appeared on his face.

But Wendy, standing next to him, secretly frowned, acutely sensing that something seemed amiss.

Except when he had asked her about Roy’s death with some anger at the beginning, there was no longer any irritation on his face now. It seemed as if he came here with the main purpose of developing the Smiths’ scope of influence and dominating California, as if taking revenge for Roy was incidental.

*This is indeed somewhat out of the ordinary.* Wendy thought to herself, but she didn’t say anything, though she kept her guard up.

After all, she couldn’t let Vince find out the real cause of Roy’s death. Otherwise, she would be doomed even though she was Vince’s cousin!

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Meanwhile, in Orange County...

At this moment, Lucas had returned to the Pearl Lake villa from the airport.

When he left for the airport earlier, it had only been about five in the morning. And now, it was about eight. Cheyenne and Amelia had just gotten out of bed.

Both of them were wearing cute pajamas and had just finished washing up. Cheyenne was in the closet, picking out an outfit for Amelia.

Last night, they had already discussed it and decided to take Amelia out for a day of fun in the amusement park since it was Sunday. So the five-year-old Amelia was extremely excited after waking up. She grabbed her white lace princess dress and wanted to put it on herself.

Lucas leaned against the bedroom door, looking at the heartwarming scene of the mother-daughter duo laughing in the room. His heart melted, and a gentle, heartened smile appeared at the corners of his mouth.

When Cheyenne saw his reflection in the dressing mirror, she immediately turned her head and smiled at him. “You’re back from the airport? Has Maddy already left?”

“Yes, the plane has already taken off,” Lucas said as he walked in.

“That’s such a shame. Maddy has painstakingly returned from abroad this time and helped us save Dad’s life, but it feels like I haven’t even had the chance to thank her properly!” Cheyenne said regretfully.

“It’s okay. There will be opportunities in the future. She said that we should go to DC to hang out with her when we have time in the future. I think it’s a good idea.” Lucas smiled.

He was bound to go to DC in the future, and Cheyenne and Amelia had never been there before. He would definitely take them in the future.

Lucas didn’t say much about Maddy and Jordan’s relationship.

Indeed, once Amelia heard that they could go to DC to play, her large eyes immediately lit up, and she began jumping on the carpet in her princess dress. “Great! I’ve never been to DC! I want to go there to play!”

Watching their daughter being as happy as a lark, Lucas and Cheyenne both looked at each other and smiled, tacitly expressing their feelings.

This was the rapport they shared.

## **Chapter 627: Receiving An Invitation Again**

Lucas, Cheyenne, and Amelia slowly had breakfast. By the time they packed up and got ready to leave home, it was already past ten in the morning.

But it was the weekend, where he had the rare opportunity to relax with his wife and daughter, so there was no need to rush.

Lucas drove to the amusement park with Cheyenne and Amelia in his black Jaguar. It was an amusement park for kids, to which Amelia had been longing to go. They accompanied her to countless rides and then headed to the mall together to buy some clothes, toys, and other miscellaneous items. After enjoying a feast for dinner, they returned home happily.

Today was particularly enjoyable for Amelia. Not only did she finally get to go to the place she had been longing for and had a whale of a time there, but she had also finally got to spend an entire day with her parents. For a young child like her who hadn’t been able to see her parents for several days because William had been seriously ill, there was nothing more awesome than this!

“Daddy, Mommy, can we still go out to play together tomorrow?” Amelia asked intently with her eyes wide open, still longing for more fun.

Cheyenne shook her head. "No, you're going to kindergarten tomorrow, so you can't go out to play anymore! You were also supposed to have a piano lesson today, but you skipped it, so you have to do a make-up lesson tomorrow."

"Huh~~ Why?!" Amelia pulled a long face and frowned the instant she heard this. She leaned backward and plonked her tiny body against the soft couch. She protested, "Mommy, I don't like piano lessons. Can I skip it?"

She pouted.

Since the start of the new semester, Cheyenne had enrolled Amelia in several enrichment programs such as piano, painting, dance, and French language classes because Amelia was already over five years old.

Thus, Amelia's extracurricular time and weekends had become much less relaxing than before.

Amelia was somewhat interested in painting and dancing, but she had no interest in piano at all. Whenever she had to attend piano and French lessons, she would sulk in reluctance.

"No, these enrichment classes are all for your own good. You can't skip them!" Although Cheyenne's tone was gentle, her attitude was firm.

Seeing that she couldn't convince Cheyenne, Amelia immediately looked at Lucas with her large eyes that seemed to have the ability to speak. She pleaded coquettishly, "Daddy, help me! I don't want to learn to play the piano and French!"

Lucas glanced at Cheyenne before shrugging helplessly. "Amelia, Mommy's right. It's good to learn more things. Besides, playing the piano and learning French are very interesting too!"

Although he felt that it was indeed too early to send Amelia to so many enrichment classes at the age of five, he still respected Cheyenne's decision since she was Amelia's mother.

In particular, he couldn't indulge Amelia and spoil her in front of Cheyenne. Otherwise, it would cause Cheyenne to seem a lot less authoritative.

It was definitely not a good way to teach and raise children!

This was something that Lucas had learned after reading a large amount of material about parenting in the last few months.

In fact, it had been less than four months since he returned to Orange County from Calico and learned that Amelia was his daughter.

Lucas was definitely inexperienced in teaching and nurturing children. But fortunately, he could still go through other channels to learn how to be a good father and a qualified husband.

Cheyenne was clearly pleased with Lucas's answer as she grinned at him beautifully before bending forward and saying to Amelia, who was still pouting in displeasure, "Amelia, as long as you attend your lessons, Daddy and Mommy promise to take you out to play next weekend. We'll take you to the aquarium to look at the fishies. How does that sound?"

Amelia was an obedient and sensible child to begin with. After hearing what Cheyenne said, she immediately stopped throwing a fit and instead nodded gleefully. "Alright! Mommy, you have to remember your promise. I'll attend the classes so that we can go to the aquarium together next week!"

Cheyenne hugged Amelia, gave her a kiss, and then pressed her forehead against hers. "You're so obedient, Amelia!"

The family of three were chatting happily in the living room. Soon, Charlotte returned home from work.

Although it was the weekend, there were numerous things to handle at the Stardust Corporation lately, so Charlotte, the general manager, naturally couldn't take a break and relax properly.

Now that Karen had been thrown behind bars, and William hadn't recovered enough to be discharged from the hospital, the four of them were the only ones at home.

Since Lucas, Cheyenne, and Amelia ate out tonight, they bought some of Charlotte's favorite food home for her. So after arriving home, Charlotte didn't have to cook.

"Wow, you guys actually still remembered to bring me my favorite food even though you were out for a day of fun as a family today. I'm so touched!" Charlotte returned to her childish state after getting home and was joking and laughing.

"Even food can't stop you from talking. Quickly eat the food while it's still hot!" Cheyenne smiled.

Halfway through the meal, Charlotte suddenly remembered something. She took out a large envelope from her bag and handed it to Lucas. "Lucas, your name is the addressee of this parcel, but it was delivered to the company, so I brought it home for you."

Surprised, Lucas grabbed the envelope and opened it to see that it was a large gold-embossed invitation card with a red base.

“Huh? An invitation card? Who sent it?” Charlotte asked curiously.

After skimming through the content of the invitation card, Lucas suddenly narrowed his eyes and said indifferently, “It’s the Kingstons from San Francisco. They’re holding an Elite Business Exchange in San Francisco in two days, and they’ve invited me.”

“Elite Business Exchange?” Cheyenne asked with surprise when she heard this name.

“Do you know about this exchange?” Lucas turned to ask Cheyenne.

Cheyenne nodded. “Yes, the Elite Business Exchange is an event that only first-tier families and businesses in various regions of California are invited to. Because Grandpa... Mr. Dominic Carter used to be extremely eager to receive an invitation to the Elite Business Exchange, I know a little bit about it too.

“The Elite Business Exchange isn’t an annual event, but one held on average once every three years. Furthermore, there are high requirements to qualify to be a guest, and each session is hosted by a top wealthy family in California. It is a very exclusive event, and a spot at it is very valuable.

“As far as I know, it’s actually just an exchange similar to a party. It allows the heads of various top families in California to get together and showcase their strengths while providing a platform for them to exchange pointers and cooperate with one another.

“However, it is different from ordinary parties because the exchange is meant for the current organizer to assess the comprehensive strength of each family or force to determine the hierarchy of the first-tier families and so on. Some families who perform outstandingly will also gain recognition from everyone and be promoted, while others who have declined will be demoted or even removed from the list of elite businesses.

“So, to be exact, the Elite Business Exchange should be considered a semi-official assessment of top wealthy families, and it can also be called a power reshuffle within California.”

Cheyenne told Lucas all the information she knew about the Elite Business Exchange, and she even felt a little surprised. “I’m surprised that you’d receive an invitation to the Elite Business Exchange even though you’ve only been back in Orange County for a few months.”

## **Chapter 628: The Exchange**

Cheyenne was indeed surprised, and at the same time, she felt extremely emotional as well.

She was surprised because it had only been a few months since Lucas returned to Orange County and a few days since he was revealed to be the chairman of the

Stardust Corporation's Orange County branch. The others qualified to receive invitations to the Elite Business Exchange were all established families in California.

And she was emotional because the Elite Business Exchange reminded Cheyenne of the years she had spent working hard to run the Brilliance Corporation when she was still part of the Carter family.

The invitation to the Elite Business Exchange that Dominic Carter had racked his brains and tried to obtain but to no avail was actually delivered to Lucas when he hadn't put in any effort at all. It really made Cheyenne emotional.

Cheyenne reckoned that if Dominic had known that Lucas would possess the power and attainments he did today, he probably wouldn't have treated Lucas and her family that harshly.

But the Carters had long become a part of the past, so Cheyenne merely sighed softly before pushing the unpleasant past to the back of her mind.

Lucas had already gained a rough understanding of the nature and purpose of the Elite Business Exchange. But after noticing that the organizer and inviter of this year's session were the Kingstons of San Francisco, he subconsciously felt that things were not as simple as they appeared.

After all, even if the power he held could indeed push him past the threshold of the Elite Business Exchange, the Kingstons just had a tremendous conflict with him, which caused the deaths of Moses and Marc, whom the Kingstons had valued greatly. The Kingstons should hate him to the core at the moment, and it seemed unlikely that they would be so generous as to send him an invitation.

He thought that there had to be a hidden reason or agenda unknown to him.

While Lucas was thinking about the possible motives behind the Kingstons' action, his cell phone suddenly rang. It was a call from Maddy, who had just returned to DC.

"Lucas, do you know that Roy Smith is dead?!" As soon as the call connected, Maddy broke a shocking piece of news to Lucas.

"When did he die?" Lucas frowned.

"I only learned about it from hearsay. He should have died yesterday. I only know that Roy's father, Vince, rushed to San Francisco overnight, so he must be there now. Vince Smith is not a simple person, and he's the most promising successor of the Smith family. In short, you have to be careful, Lucas!" Maddy said concernedly.

Although she didn't think that Roy's death was related to Lucas, she was afraid that Vince would confront Lucas in a moment of anger since Roy was his only son after all. And Lucas did teach Roy a lesson in Orange County yesterday in order to help her.

Lucas nodded and said calmly, "Okay, I know."

After hanging up, he frowned slightly.

He had only met Roy yesterday afternoon. Although there was a small conflict between them where Lucas even strangled him, Lucas eventually just gave him a warning.

What caused Roy's sudden death then?

With his inexplicable intuition, Lucas could sense that Roy's death would probably end up implicating him.

At this moment, his cell rang again. This time, it was a call from Bruce Hale.

Lucas answered and heard Bruce's voice. "Lucas, do you know about the Elite Business Exchange?"

"Yes, I just received the invitation letter from the Kingstons."

"Today, the Hales, the Parkers, and Joe of Little Atlantis City all received invitations to the Elite Business Exchange. However, I'm afraid that there are malicious intentions behind the invitations. It's very likely that they're out to harm us!"

Lucas asked with raised brows, "Oh? Why do you think so?"

"Because the organizer of the exchange this time was originally the Watsons of Sacramento, and the event was scheduled to take place in mid-November, which is usual for every Elite Business Exchange. But this time, there was a sudden change in the date and the organizer, from the Watsons in Sacramento to the Kingstons in San Francisco.

"This probably means that the Watsons should have reached some kind of agreement with the Kingstons, or even directly defected to them. That's why they gave their rights to host the event to the Kingstons."

"This is what makes the Elite Business Exchange this time even stranger. Logically speaking, the Kingstons just lost their most valued family members of the second and third generations a few days ago. Their corpses haven't even been buried yet, but they're already so eager to take over as organizers of the Elite Business Exchange.

"A greater reason is that they're supposed to resent us for showing up at their home together and forcing them almost to go to war with us. The deaths of their direct

descendants are also somewhat related to us. It just doesn't make sense for them to give us the invitations at this juncture!"

After all, Bruce was advanced in years and extremely experienced in various aspects. He had attended the Elite Business Exchange held only once every three years several times. Therefore, it was even more convincing now that he raised these doubts.

Of course, these were all just speculations based on the details that were obviously fishy. Bruce even had some conspiracy theories in his heart. But he didn't voice them out because they were all just his conjectures, and there was no concrete evidence to prove them.

Lucas actually also had some vague guesses about what Bruce said. But since the Kingstons dared to deliver an invitation to him, he definitely wouldn't avoid it!

"Got it. You guys get ready. We'll meet at the Elite Business Exchange in San Francisco when the time comes," Lucas said calmly.

Bruce was still somewhat worried, and he tried to dissuade Lucas, "Lucas, since you know that the Kingstons have ill intentions, you'd better give it a pass. Anyway, the Elite Business Exchange won't have much of an effect on us."

Lucas smiled faintly and said with great dominance, "The Kingstons aren't daunting enough to make me have scruples about them! If even a mere family like this scares me, how can I possibly establish my path of dominance?"

Lucas didn't hide his ambitions at all, and his tone was extremely domineering.

Bruce instantly thought of all of Lucas's past deeds and the time he had arranged for almost 200 armed military personnel to appear at the Hale residence.

He knew that Lucas definitely wasn't bragging because he did possess great power. The power that Lucas had shown thus far was only the tip of the iceberg, and he reckoned that Lucas hadn't shown his true power yet!

At this moment, Bruce was full of pride. Following Lucas had broadened his horizons in ways he could never have imagined!

## **Chapter 629: Birthday Invitation**

The moment he thought of that scene, Bruce had zeal and ardor coursing through him, feeling as if he was ten years younger all of a sudden.

He had already handed over the position of the helmsman of the Hale family to his grandson Connor. And this time, he actually planned to let Connor attend the Elite Business Exchange on behalf of the family so that he could rest.

But after hearing Lucas's ambitions, he felt a desire not to resign to his fate of being old and guffawed heartily. "Okay! Lucas, since you're going to meet them, I'll go with you too! No matter what kind of schemes and tricks the Kingstons have up their sleeves, there's nothing we fear as long as we're by your side!"

Soon after Bruce hung up, Damon and Joe also called and talked to Lucas about the Elite Business Exchange.

Likewise, after hearing Lucas's plans, they decided to go forth and stand by his side too, just as Bruce had done. They decided to go to the Elite Business Exchange together and see what the Kingstons were planning to do!

Cheyenne and Charlotte, who overheard Lucas's conversations over the phone, were shocked.

Lucas had absolutely no intention of avoiding them while on the phone, so they had heard everything.

Although Damon, Bruce, and Joe had already publicly stated that all the businesses they owned actually belonged to Lucas when Karen and Moses' plot was exposed, Cheyenne and Charlotte's main focus had been on Karen and Moses at the time. So even though they had been surprised to hear what they had said, they didn't take their words to heart.

Once again hearing many big bosses of Orange County and LA speaking to Lucas so respectfully, Cheyenne and Charlotte finally realized just how powerful Lucas was.

"Lucas, you... you are really amazing!" Charlotte gave Lucas a thumbs-up.

A few months ago, if someone had told her that Lucas could subdue the Hales, one of the four major families of Orange County, and make them subordinate to him, she might have thought that this person was exaggerating.

But the power Lucas now possessed had far exceeded Charlotte's imagination, and she even felt that he might have more trump cards than she imagined, given how composed he was.

"Lucas, just how many more surprising things and bottom cards do you have that we don't know about, huh?" Charlotte asked with a sigh.

Lucas smiled faintly. "Well... there should still be some. You just need to know that I can easily defeat the eight great giants of DC if I want to."

He made it sound extremely casual and relaxing. If someone else had said it, she would definitely think that they were joking or bragging.

But Lucas was the one who said it. So while Cheyenne and Charlotte were incredibly shocked, they strongly believed that he was definitely not blowing his trumpet but was really that powerful!

“Wow!” Charlotte gasped in amazement and then inhaled sharply again. “Lucas, you... you’re really powerful.”

Even Cheyenne was astounded. “Hubby, you...”

Although she had long known about Lucas’s extraordinariness and the fact that he was once the leader of the Falcon Regiment in Calico, as well as the feud between him and the Huttons, she never thought that his true power could be so terrifying.

The eight giants of DC were top families out of reach to many people in the country. For example, although the top families in Orange County and San Francisco were also wealthy, they weren’t on the same level as the eight giants of DC at all.

The families in San Francisco and Orange County, such as the Kingstons of San Francisco and the Taylors of Orange County, would be overjoyed if they could become acquainted with the eight giants.

But Lucas said that he could easily defeat the eight giants and subdue them. It was simply beyond imagination.

Lucas smiled slightly. “It’s no big deal. Anyway, Charlotte, just continue to work hard. Perhaps one day, you might be able to develop further.”

Charlotte felt slightly touched, and she wondered if Lucas meant that it was possible for her to go to DC for development in the future and take on greater rights and responsibilities from him.

Although Charlotte was still young, she had already undergone superb training and improvements during the time she served as the general manager of the Stardust Corporation’s Orange County branch. She was entirely capable of handling the position of general manager.

Therefore, Lucas really had high hopes for her because he knew that he would definitely go to DC one day and go against the Huttons, one of the eight giants of DC, to which his father belonged. When the time came, people such as Charlotte, who was capable and trusted by Lucas, would definitely be arranged to take on important positions.

The reason Lucas deliberately mentioned this matter in front of Charlotte and Cheyenne today was to give them some mental preparation.

He naturally wouldn't hide these things from Cheyenne since he was his wife and the woman he loved the most.

Another person Lucas trusted was William. Once he recovered and was discharged from the hospital, Lucas would slowly tell him about these things.

DC was a place that Lucas was bound to go. He hoped that his family members like Charlotte and William would be able to join him and work with him to develop in DC!

"Got it. Lucas, I will definitely work harder and help you when the time comes!" Charlotte assured confidently.

Cheyenne smiled tenderly, "Hubby, I will definitely support you in whatever you decide to do!"

Even Amelia, who was looking at picture books because she didn't understand what the adults were talking about, suddenly raised her little head and said, "Me too! Daddy, no matter what you want to do, Mommy, Aunt Charlotte, and I will definitely support you!"

Amelia's childish yet serious words broke the somber and emotional atmosphere, making the few of them burst into laughter.

After spending some heartwarming time together, Lucas was about to go to bed at about 10 p.m., but he received a phone call again.

"Lucas, I've thought about it for a while, and I've decided that I still want to tell you that it's my birthday in two days, and I'd like to invite you to my birthday party. Are you free to come?"

The voice on the other end was very sweet and young.

This time, the call was from Alexis Cole in San Francisco.

## **Chapter 630: Indecisiveness**

Lucas was honestly pretty surprised by the call.

After all, he and Alexis had only met a few times and barely spoke to each other. But Lucas had a good impression of her.

However, he had other plans tomorrow, including some matters in the Stardust Corporation and a trip to the hospital to visit William together with Cheyenne. He also had to send Amelia to her piano lessons in the evening and so on.

At the thought of this, Lucas glanced at Cheyenne lying next to him. He didn't accept Alexis's invitation immediately.

Seemingly sensing Lucas's hesitation, Alexis instantly lowered her gleeful voice and said with some disappointment, "Uh, it's fine if you can't make it!"

Lucas thought about it and said, "Since it's your birthday, and the birthday girl has even called me personally, how can I possibly turn you down? What time is your birthday party, and where will it be held?"

No matter what, Alexis was the granddaughter of Edmund, of whom Lucas had a good impression. When Lucas and his people were at the Kingston manor and confronting the Kingstons, Edmund had resolutely decided to go to war with the Kingstons in order to protect Lucas without any regard for the possible losses that his family might suffer. This made Lucas feel extremely touched.

The Elite Business Exchange would be happening in three days, so Lucas might also need the Coles' help during the function. Therefore, he should attend Alexis's birthday party in both logic and emotion.

When Alexis heard Lucas's question, her disappointment instantly turned into joy as she exclaimed happily, "That's great! The party will be held at my home in the evening the day after tomorrow. Lucas, you can arrive before seven!"

Lucas calculated the time. It took six hours to drive from Orange County to San Francisco. If he left tomorrow evening, he would still have time to stay overnight in a hotel and freshen up. Before leaving, he would also be able to send Amelia to her enrichment classes. His plans wouldn't be disrupted, so it was good.

"Okay, I know. I will definitely arrive on time," Lucas said softly.

After hanging up, Lucas turned around, only to meet Cheyenne's sparkling eyes staring at him closely.

For some reason, Lucas suddenly felt nervous and quickly explained, "Uh, the person who called just now is Alexis, the granddaughter of Edmund, the helmsman of the Coles, whom you've met before. She's celebrating her birthday in two days, so she specially called to invite me to her birthday party. I also happen to have to meet Mr. Cole for something, so I've decided to go over and take a look."

"Is that so?" Cheyenne said leisurely, keeping her large beautiful eyes fixed on Lucas.

Lucas immediately felt his heart tensing up, feeling that something was a little amiss. He quickly raised his hands to show that he was innocent. "It's true! Her birthday party is in the evening the day after tomorrow. I'll accompany you to the hospital to visit William during the day tomorrow, and then... How about we let Amelia skip her piano lessons, and we can all head to the Coles' together?"

Amazingly, Lucas could somehow immediately sense that there was something wrong with her emotions. But she didn't quite seem to be jealous either, so he quickly tried to make things better.

Cheyenne stared at him for a long time before turning around and saying indifferently, "Let's go to bed. We have a busy day ahead of us tomorrow."

Lucas wasn't an insensitive man who didn't know to observe the situation. Seeing that Cheyenne seemed to be upset, he immediately panicked and put his hand on her shoulder before cupping her face to make her face him. He said gently, "Honey, don't be upset. If you have anything to say, you can talk to me directly."

"If you don't want me to attend the birthday party in two days, I'll stay home and accompany you and Amelia, okay?"

He had just thought about it, but he still couldn't come up with any reason.

But since Cheyenne was upset after hearing that Alexis had called him, he decided not to go at all, thinking that perhaps Cheyenne would stop being upset if he chose not to go.

It was important to maintain a relationship with the Coles, but Cheyenne was the woman Lucas loved the most. If he could make her happy again, turning down the invitation wouldn't be a big deal.

As soon as he said this, Cheyenne immediately said, "No, I'm not asking you not to attend Miss Cole's birthday party!"

She looked Lucas in the eye. "I know that Mr. Cole has always said that you're his life savior, so he has been helping you all the time. Logically speaking, it is only right for you to go to Miss Cole's birthday party and visit her family. I won't stop you because of that."

"You..." Lucas started speaking in bewilderment.

But before he could finish, Cheyenne suddenly reached out, hugged him, and buried her head in his chest. She said gently, "Hubby, I want you to hug me..."

With her soft hair resting on his chest, he immediately felt a tingling feeling.

Lucas was instantly full of zeal, and he took a deep breath before lowering his head to kiss his dainty wife, unable to hold back any longer.

...

More than half an hour later, the two of them were nestled in each other's embrace, completely drenched in sweat and enjoying the post coital warmth.

Cheyenne was still blushing coyly as she panted with her eyes closed.

Lucas lovingly tucked the sweaty strands of hair on her face behind her ear and asked, "Honey, why... why were you angry just now?"

Cheyenne struggled to open her eyes before glaring at him feebly. "I'm not upset anymore. Don't ask."

Then she quickly sat up and put on her pajamas, afraid that Lucas would continue asking questions. "I... I'm going to take a shower now."

She immediately got out of bed and walked into the bathroom before Lucas could say anything.

Lucas lay on the bed, smiling helplessly.

They all said that a woman's heart was difficult to understand. He was indeed confused now, completely unable to understand Cheyenne's thoughts.

But since Cheyenne didn't want him to continue asking, he decided that it was better not to ask. He believed that one day, she would really bare her heart to him, and they would eventually be able to talk about everything under the sun.

Meanwhile, Cheyenne, who was hiding in the bathroom, was biting her lower lip while standing under the gushing water in the shower.

For some reason, she suddenly felt a strong uneasiness in her heart after Lucas answered Alexis's call.

As her husband got more and more powerful, his social network was also expanding, and there were more and more outstanding figures of high status around him.

Cheyenne somehow felt a strong sense of crisis and dejection. She even began to feel insecure and paranoid.

Only when Lucas was holding her gently and passionately could she feel that the person embracing her was her husband, the man she loved the most.

*No, I can't go on like this. Since he's surrounded by so many outstanding people, I have to become better too!*

## **Chapter 631: Selecting Gifts**

The next day, Lucas went to the Stardust Corporation office building in the morning and handled some reports and documents before heading to the hospital with Cheyenne. Since William regained consciousness, his physical condition had improved greatly, and he was gradually recovering from the injuries he suffered because of the car accident.

In the afternoon, Lucas personally went to the kindergarten to pick Amelia up before sending her to her piano class. Lucas looked at Amelia and the group of children about the same age, watching them pressing their soft and tender fingers against the piano keys in the classroom.

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Late afternoon the next day, just as Lucas was about to leave for the Coles', he suddenly smacked his head as he recalled that he seemed to have forgotten something very important.

Since he came to attend Alexis's birthday party, he had to prepare a birthday gift for her no matter what. Unfortunately, he had been in a rush, so it completely slipped his mind.

Moreover, he also planned to visit Edmund. Since it was his first time visiting the Coles, it wouldn't be appropriate to show up empty-handed.

*Looks like I have to go and prepare some decent gifts!* Lucas decided to drive to the famous Union Street in San Francisco.

It was a famous place for luxury items in San Francisco.

Although Lucas hadn't been here before, he had at least heard about it, and there were indeed plenty of fine antique pieces or luxury goods for sale here, though there might sometimes be counterfeits.

Cole Antiques was the most famous boutique antique store in San Francisco. But since Lucas wanted to pick out some gifts for the Coles, he couldn't possibly buy them from Cole Antiques and then give them to Edmund and Alexis.

He parked his black Jaguar in the parking lot along the street and started window shopping. When he came across an antique store named the Heavenly Pavilion, it immediately captured his attention.

First of all, the Heavenly Pavilion had a large floor area, with the first floor being more than three times the size of other ordinary stores. It was extremely grand, and there was a plaque with the words 'Heavenly Pavilion' engraved on it above the entrance. The calligraphy was beautiful and probably done by a master calligrapher.

Furthermore, the entire Heavenly Pavilion itself was a luxurious, antique-style building that had a total of five floors, with carved eaves and arches. It was magnificent and full of splendor.

The fact that it could occupy such a large space on Union Street, where every inch of land cost a hefty amount, proved that the owner of the store was wealthy enough and that the items sold here were definitely genuine treasures.

With this in mind, Lucas confidently strode toward the Heavenly Pavilion.

After entering, Lucas discovered that it was indeed worthy of being the largest and grandest antique store on the street. It might be an understatement to call it just an antique store. To Lucas, it was almost like an antique gallery.

In the middle of the hall, there were dozens of antique-style shelves arranged in a staggered manner. There were various antiques such as ceramics, sculptures, jade, and other ornaments displayed aptly on them.

There were also several famous paintings and calligraphy pieces hung on the walls all around him.

Lucas took a quick and casual glance at the items. He had seen lots of high-quality antiques before, and there were even plenty of antiques in his villa. He could tell at a glance that the many items in the hall on the first floor weren't just ordinary flashy ornaments worth only a few thousand dollars.

After he entered, a few uniformed staff standing near him in the hall, who were prepared to entertain customers, planned to serve him out of habit. But they unanimously stopped in their tracks when they saw him.

As salespeople, they had long developed sharp vision and experienced judgment. They were very knowledgeable in luxury goods and designer apparel.

Lucas was dressed in extremely plain, simple, and casual clothing, none of which were designer. They assumed that he was just a passerby who came in to browse antiques casually without any intention of purchasing. Therefore, it would be a waste of their efforts to entertain him. Based on the way Lucas dressed, they were certain that he wouldn't be able to afford anything from the Heavenly Pavilion.

They had encountered many such people before and knew that as long as they ignored them, they would naturally be conscious enough to leave out of their own accord.

Lucas planned to make some inquiries to a salesperson, but he noticed their indifferent faces. Some even secretly rolled their eyes.

At this moment, a young saleswoman walked up to Lucas with a polite smile and asked personably, "Hello, Sir, is there anything I can help you with? We have a large variety of items in the Heavenly Pavilion. What kind of items would you like to inquire about?"

Seeing her behavior, the few salespeople standing still nearby pursed their lips in disdain.

*This young man is obviously penniless. The Heavenly Pavilion is an upscale store, and even the cheapest thing here costs over five grand. Each piece probably costs several times his monthly salary.*

*Only that fool who can't receive proper customers would entertain such a lowly and useless passerby.*

Lucas remained composed as he observed their expressions. He then said to the saleswoman in front of him, "I'd like to get two gifts. One is a birthday gift for a young woman in her twenties, and the other is for an elderly man in his seventies. However, I don't know what gifts to get. Please recommend some items to me!"

He glanced at the nameplate of the saleswoman and saw the name 'Jane'.

Jane smiled and nodded, then continued to ask, "Alright, Sir, may I ask what your price range is? Do the recipients have any special preferences?"

Her attitude was serious, and the questions she asked were professional, causing Lucas to have a good impression of her.

"I don't know what special preferences they have. Just recommend some items to me. I'm expecting the value of each gift to be about a million dollars. Of course, you can recommend more expensive things if they're more suitable. It doesn't matter if the price is higher," Lucas answered.

The price of both gifts would probably add up to two million dollars, which was definitely not a large sum of money to Lucas. But his relationship with Edmund and Alexis was worth more than that. Since they were a birthday gift and a gift for his first visit, he didn't want to come across as miserly or overly flashy.

After hearing what Lucas said, the few salespeople standing near them began to sneer.

Chapter 632: College Classmates

Who would believe that this shabbily dressed young man would really spend millions on two gifts?

They had received people who stepped into the store and pretended to be generous spenders, only to hem and haw for a long time while refusing to pay for the items the salespeople had painstakingly picked out for them. They would also escape under the

pretext of going to the restroom. So they were certain that Lucas was one of those people.

Suddenly, a woman's voice full of surprise rang in Lucas's ears. "You... Are you Lucas Gray?"

Lucas turned his head and looked in the direction of the voice to see that the woman who called out to him was also wearing the standard uniform of the Heavenly Pavilion. Her face seemed slightly familiar to him, but he couldn't recall who she was.

But when he saw the nameplate pinned on her chest read 'Supervisor Kylie Reed', he remembered who she was—a classmate from college.

However, Lucas didn't have a deep impression of her.

When he was in college, he had to juggle work and studying all the time. Apart from attending class, he spent most of his extracurricular time working and was rarely in school.

On the other hand, Kylie seemed to be a popular figure in his major and was rather well-known in school. Even Lucas, who hadn't cared much about campus gossip, had heard some unsavory rumors about her.

There were rumors of her being a sugar baby, getting an abortion, and so on. In short, she didn't have a good reputation.

Apart from this, Lucas barely had any impression of her. Of course, even when they were classmates in college, they had almost never spoken to each other before, so it could be said that the two had nothing to do with each other at all.

He was actually rather surprised that Kylie could actually recognize him to be her former classmate.

"Haha, Lucas, it's really you! Speaking of which, we seemed to be classmates in college, right? In the blink of an eye, it's been six years since we graduated, and we haven't seen each other for a long time! Where are you working now? You can actually afford to shop here at the Heavenly Pavilion. You must be doing pretty well, huh?"

Although Kylie was smiling, her tone made Lucas feel particularly uncomfortable, especially when she added, "I remember that your family was struggling to make ends meet, right? When we were in college, you were the only one working alongside studying, and you'd head straight to your part-time jobs of distributing flyers and so on after class and during vacations. So, what happened? Did you strike it rich?"

Before Lucas could even speak, she continued to speak like she was bragging, "I'm nothing compared to you! It's been six years since we graduated, and I've only managed to become a lowly supervisor. I must be worlds apart from you, aren't I?"

While speaking, Kylie deliberately puffed up her chest, for fear that Lucas wouldn't notice her title printed on the nameplate on her chest.

Lucas was still a little surprised to run into his former classmate a moment ago. But now, he was full of disdain toward her and didn't have any intention of catching up with her at all.

Of course, anyone who wasn't blind would be able to tell from Kylie's attitude that she was just deliberately trying to provoke Lucas and showing off in front of him.

Lucas was amused by her behavior.

They had almost never interacted with each other in college, so he was curious as to why Kylie was showing him this inexplicable hostility out of nowhere.

"I'm just running a small business to maintain a livelihood. I can't be compared to you at all," Lucas said indifferently and detachedly.

As he expected, a blatant look of smugness appeared on Kylie's face as soon as she heard what he said.

"Lucas, don't get too conceited and have your nose up in the air now that you have some money! You probably still don't know that we sell only the finest products here in the Heavenly Pavilion, and even the most ordinary items in the hall on the first floor cost at least five thousand or so. As for the high-end items upstairs, they can easily reach hundreds of thousands and even millions!

"I suggest you... stop puffing yourself up at your own cost. Even if you want to get some gifts, you should visit other stores that offer cheaper things on Union Street!

"I'm not trying to be mean, but look at what you're wearing. I think you'd better save your money and spend it on some decent clothing instead! It's been several years since we graduated, and you're still dressed like this. Even we, your former classmates, feel embarrassed for you!"

Kylie's hostility began to get more and more obvious. And now, she was just short of pointing her finger at Lucas and ridiculing him for being a penniless loser and telling him to get lost from the Heavenly Pavilion.

Lucas was somewhat amused and bewildered.

He had barely even spoken a word to her in his four years of college. Why would she do this?

He couldn't be bothered with someone like Kylie and was about to casually say a few perfunctory words to her to get her to leave. But at this moment, two more people came into the store.

It was a man and a woman in their mid-twenties who seemed to be a couple. They were both decked out in luxury designer wear. The man was clad in a sharp Versace suit with an expensive Vacheron Constantin watch on his hand, and the woman was wearing the latest Chanel dress and holding a Givenchy lambskin clutch in her hand while strutting in on one of the latest pairs of shoes from Prada. They seemed affluent.

As soon as the salespeople saw the couple, their eyes immediately lit up, and they were eager to receive them. But when they saw Kylie, they were instantly smart enough to stop in their tracks.

Although these two distinguished customers were indeed wealthy, and the salespeople would be able to get quite a considerable commission by selling some items to them, Kylie was their supervisor, so it was impossible that they'd get such a good opportunity.

If they dared to snatch Kylie's potential clients insensitively, not only would they not get any commission, but she might even find a random excuse to dock their salary. Something like this had happened before, and the salespeople were long familiar with her overbearing tyranny.

With a bizarre triumphant smile on her face, Kylie mocked with contempt, "Lucas, if you want to continue to shop in the Heavenly Pavilion, then feel free to do so. But the items in this store don't come cheap. You must be careful not to touch them! Otherwise, I'm afraid you won't be able to afford to pay for one even if you exhaust all your money."

Then she took two steps toward the door. Seemingly recalling something, she ordered Jane, the salesperson who was serving Lucas, "Jane, keep a close eye on the items in the store. If anything gets dropped, damaged, or stolen, I'll hold you accountable!"

After saying this aggressively, Kylie turned around and walked toward the couple dressed in designer clothing from head to toe. With a fawning and deferential smile on her face, she greeted the two of them affectionately.

Upon seeing this scene, the other salespeople in the Heavenly Pavilion all looked at Lucas and Jane gloatingly.

## **Chapter 633: Two Precious Items**

In today's society, where materialistic desires thrived, many people had long become mercenary and gotten used to judging and measuring others by their wealth.

If Lucas couldn't afford to buy the things in Heavenly Pavilion and ended up being deliberately humiliated, no one would take pity on him, and they would only think that he deserved it for bringing it upon himself.

But Lucas didn't take to heart these gloating gazes of mockery, though he now had a bad impression of the Heavenly Pavilion.

With such snobbish salespeople, the company culture of the Heavenly Pavilion was obviously extremely mercenary too.

Just as Lucas was about to turn around and leave, the saleswoman named Jane was still standing in front of him with a smile as though she hadn't heard Kylie's warning just now. Still as sincere as before, she asked, "Sir, you just said you wanted to buy two high-end gifts at an estimated price of a million dollars each, right?"

Lucas was a little surprised, but he nodded. "That's right. That's roughly my budget, but I don't mind paying a little more if the items are really superb."

Jane smiled. "Okay, understood. The items displayed on the first floor are relatively common, and the items within your estimated budget are on the fourth floor. I'll take you up there to take a look now, alright?"

Her attitude was extremely easygoing and professional. Even though Lucas didn't like the entire Heavenly Pavilion and even had the intention to leave, he couldn't help being impressed by her sincerity that made him stay and take a look.

"Okay, lead the way," Lucas said.

Watching Jane usher Lucas to the elevator for VIPs, which led directly to the high-end goods displayed upstairs, the few salespeople on the first floor all cast disdainful glances at them.

*They thought, He's obviously a penniless bumpkin. He probably can't even afford the cheapest and most ordinary item in the store. Only that underperforming dimwit Jane would believe his nonsense and even take him to view the high-end items upstairs.*

*In the end, it'll all just be a waste of effort. All she'll end up doing is giving that loser a feast for his eyes without being able to sell anything.*

They wouldn't do such a troublesome but unrewarding thing!

Jane led Lucas up to the fourth floor, where the items of the highest value and best quality were.

Lucas took a casual glance at the items and found that they were indeed much better than the ordinary ones downstairs.

Jane walked to a display case full of high-grade emerald jewelry and pointed to a set of exquisitely crafted jewelry. “You mentioned that one of the gifts is for a girl in her twenties. This set of emerald jewelry is perfect. They are cut and carved exquisitely and are highly transparent. The color is bright, vibrant, and beautiful. It’s especially suitable for girls in their twenties.

“This set of jewelry was crafted exquisitely by a leading jeweler in the industry. The lines are perfect and smooth, making them seem ethereal. But this set is going to exceed your budget. It costs about 1.4 million dollars. What do you think?”

Jane looked at Lucas with some apprehension.

Its price had indeed exceeded the budget of one million that Lucas mentioned, so she was very nervous, for fear that he wouldn’t be able to accept it.

Although she was a trainee salesperson who had been working in the Heavenly Pavilion for more than two months, she would, for some reason, often get interrupted when she was trying to receive customers. So thus far, she hadn’t closed a single deal yet, let alone receive any commission or bonuses.

This time, the other salespeople snobbishly looked down on Lucas and weren’t willing to waste their time to entertain him just because they felt that he was dressed shabbily. This gave Jane the opportunity to serve him and introduce him to high-grade treasures.

In her opinion, although Lucas wasn’t clad in luxury designer clothing like most of their wealthy customers, whose affluence was apparent at a glance, she could vaguely sense from his calm temperament and dignified attitude that he was not as shabby as he seemed on the surface.

Even if Lucas couldn’t afford the items she recommended, she had fulfilled her duty as a salesperson and recommended what she thought was appropriate to the customer, so her conscience was clear.

Lucas took a look at the set of emerald jewelry, which he thought was indeed beautiful and should be suitable for a young lady of Alexis’s age.

But he didn’t make up his mind immediately and instead said to Jane noncommittally, “Show me something suitable for an elderly man around seventy.”

Seeing that she wasn’t getting any feedback for her recommendation, Jane felt a little lost. But she soon readjusted her expression. She didn’t try to hard-sell the item to Lucas and instead continued smiling as she led him to the other end of the hall near a row of display cases for high-grade items, in accordance with his request.

“Most of the items here are more suitable for elders, such as this whole ivory carved statuette, this emerald pendant, this two-hundred-year-old Breguet clock, and antique vases from the Yuan Dynasty, etc. Sir, which one would your elder prefer?”

Jane introduced the items enthusiastically while observing Lucas’s expression to see which one he was interested in.

All of a sudden, Lucas pointed to a rather inconspicuous-looking string of Buddha beads in a separate display case. “What’s the background of this?”

Surprised to hear his question, Jane answered, “This is... a string of Bodhi ancient wood beads carved from the essence of an ancient Bodhi tree bark, which has a history of thousands of years.

“Since the Bodhi tree was extremely old and grown in a field of valuable herbs, it has a refreshing medicinal scent mixed with notes of sandalwood. It is extremely rare, so the value of this string of Bodhi beads is also far from what ordinary Bodhi wood can compare to. Its price is 2.5 million dollars, so it’s a lot higher than your expected price range...”

“The price doesn’t matter. Please take it out and let me have a look at it,” Lucas interrupted.

When he saw the Bodhi beads just now, he could already sense an extremely antique and peaceful aura from it.

The faint scent of herbs and sandalwood Jane mentioned wafted up to his nose even though the beads were enclosed in the glass display case.

If he guessed correctly, this string of Bodhi beads was indeed very rare and had a significant effect on clearing the mind and prolonging life.

If it landed in the hands of someone who needed it or knew their stuff, its value would definitely be far beyond 2.5 million dollars.

“Sir... Sir, are you really planning to buy this string of Bodhi beads? We have strict rules in our store that disallows us from taking items out of display cases unless the customers are certain about buying them...” Jane looked at Lucas with some difficulty and said embarrassedly.

## **Chapter 634: Showing Prowess**

There was nothing Jane could do about this rule.

In the past, there was a customer who had accidentally damaged a valuable treasure in the store but was unable to afford to compensate for it. Later on, the Heavenly Pavilion

established a rule that stipulated that any violation of the rule by salespeople who took expensive items out of display cases without permission would lead to severe punishment.

Of course, it didn't mean that customers wouldn't be given the opportunity to take a closer look at the items. If the customers were really interested, the salespeople were allowed to invite them to the VIP reception room on the fifth floor to take a look after obtaining permission from a supervisor and making sure that the customers had the means to buy the items.

In another situation where the customers really wanted to buy the items directly, the salespeople were naturally allowed to take the items straight out of the display cases for the customers to take a look. But the customers would have to make payment immediately.

Jane quickly explained both scenarios to Lucas, who said without hesitation, "Let's settle the bill now then. I'll take the set of emerald jewelry you just showed me too."

He was in a hurry to go to the Cole residence for Alexis's birthday party, so naturally, he couldn't be bothered to spend all this time waiting for the application process.

"What?!" Jane was utterly shocked, and her mouth was slightly open. "Sir, did... did you just say that you want both the Bodhi beads and the emerald jewelry set? They cost four million in total!"

She remembered that his previous budget was around two million, which everyone already felt that he couldn't afford. So she wondered if he could afford these items that cost about four million dollars.

She wasn't worried that he was a liar who was just bragging. But rather, she just found it incredible and was afraid that he didn't hear the prices clearly.

Lucas nodded with a calm expression. "Yes, I'll take both of them and make the payment now."

Jane immediately became excited. "Okay, okay, I'll help you go through the procedures now!"

Even in the Heavenly Pavilion, which generated a high sales revenue every single day, a \$4 million transaction was considered shocking.

In particular, this was the first sale that Jane, a new trainee, had closed in the Heavenly Pavilion after working for such a long time. This order alone could bring Jane at least \$40,000 in commission, which was quite amazing.

Even the experienced salespeople, who were good at reading people, would take about six months to earn \$40,000 in commission.

Jane was so exhilarated that she grabbed the string of Bodhi beads Lucas wanted out of the display case and was about to hand it over to him when someone suddenly shouted from the side.

“Jane! What the hell are you doing? Hurry up and put it back!”

Jane was taken aback when she saw that Kylie had somehow come up to the fourth floor display area and was glowering at her in exasperation.

“Jane, you’ve been working here for more than two months. Don’t you even understand this rule? Who gave you permission to take out the items and show them to someone else? Even if I sell you away, we can’t afford to pay for any damage!” Kylie rebuked angrily.

Jane hurriedly explained, “Miss Reed, this gentleman here has decided to buy these two items, so I took them out to show him. It’s not a violation of the store rules!”

“Shut up! Stop arguing with me. How can a poor loser like him afford to buy the items in the Heavenly Pavilion’s Treasures Pavilion? Are you a stupid pig? You don’t even have the ability to make good judgment!” Kylie reprimanded.

Behind Kylie, a few salespeople who had followed her up to watch the fun began to sneer.

“Miss Reed, you’re right. This man obviously can’t afford to buy the things on the fourth floor. Yet Jane actually believed his words and showed him things worth more than a million. How daring!”

“That’s right! Besides, she didn’t even ask for permission from Miss Reed beforehand and just acted presumptuously. How unruly!”

“Hah, that’s why we say that she’s a dimwit. She’s been here for almost three months, right? Why is she still so silly, and why is her EQ so low? It’s no wonder that she hasn’t been able to close a single sale after working here for so long!”

“She’s just stupid! She keeps going against Miss Reed too. It seems that she will definitely be thrown out this time!”

...

Being humiliated and mocked by her colleagues, Jane felt disappointed and aggrieved.

Indeed, she had started working in the Heavenly Pavilion right after graduation and hadn't closed a single sale since then, but it wasn't her fault!

On her first day at work, she had been full of enthusiasm and was lucky enough to receive a low-profile whale who decided to buy an item worth \$500,000 without thinking about it at all.

At the time, Jane was overjoyed to clinch her first sale on the first day of work. But before she could process the order for the customer, Kylie used her identity as a supervisor to snatch the customer from her. Thus, Kylie naturally got the commission instead.

Jane didn't say anything. But when her second and third customers were also snatched by Kylie in the same way, she couldn't hold back any longer and said to her, "Miss Reed, this is my customer. I believe I can serve him well on my own."

From then on, Jane became a thorn in Kylie's side, and the latter would alienate and suppress her at every turn while secretly instructing the other salespeople to bully Jane.

She was just a trainee who had only started working in the Heavenly Pavilion for a few days, but Kylie was a supervisor. So the salespeople were naturally smart enough to be on Kylie's side, and it became their habit to bully Jane.

Thus, she had been unable to clinch any sales even when her training period was almost over. Lucas was her first customer, but Kylie was targeting him harshly.

Jane was indignant, and she felt a sense of empathy with Lucas, so she clenched her fingers and argued, "Miss Reed, I just said that this gentleman is indeed planning to buy these two items, and I was about to settle the payment for him. There is no violation of any rules of the store!"

Hearing Jane, who had always been bullied and oppressed by her, actually dared to 'talk back', Kylie immediately became even angrier.

"Are you deaf? Didn't you hear what I just said? I already said that Lucas Gray is my former college classmate, and I know better than you what kind of person he is. The string of Bodhi beads you're holding is priced at 2.5 million. Do you think he can afford to pay for it?"

"If you don't follow the rules yourself and have bad judgment, you will be breaking the rules of Heavenly Pavilion! If everyone acts like you and casually shows valuable items worth millions of dollars to customers and ends up losing or breaking them, I'll see how you can compensate!"

"You are dismissed! Go pack up your things immediately, settle the resignation procedures with HR, and get out of the Heavenly Pavilion!" Kylie commanded,

exercising her rights as a supervisor and looking at Jane condescendingly as if she was a queen.

She then looked at Lucas, sneered, and mocked, "Lucas, don't blame me for being unceremonious. You're not fit to come to the Heavenly Pavilion with your current status at all. If you're smart enough, leave now. Don't make a fool of yourself here!"

## Chapter 635: All Out

After being mocked and criticized by Kylie repeatedly, Lucas couldn't help becoming furious.

He initially only felt that her mockery was rather bizarre, and he was confused as to why she was finding trouble with him for no reason. But since they used to be college classmates, he decided not to hold it against her. However, she seemed to treat him as a pushover and wouldn't stop until she trampled him to death.

Besides, Jane had merely handed the Bodhi beads to him upon his request as a customer. Yet Kylie dismissed her for 'violating the store rules', which was truly overboard and arrogant of her.

"Kylie, what do you know about me? Have we even spoken to each other before? On what grounds are you concluding that I can't afford the items in the Heavenly Pavilion?" Lucas said coldly with a dark expression. He was giving off a naturally domineering and inviolable aura, making Kylie's face stiffen. And she couldn't help feeling a sense of diffidence and weakness.

But she soon snapped back to her senses and was even more infuriated by the fact that she had actually been intimidated by Lucas for a moment. "You're just a penniless man who became Cheyenne Carter's live-in husband, which is why you can freeload off of her. You think I don't know about those distasteful matters of yours? You're just a freeloading piece of garbage who's dirtying the Heavenly Pavilion by stepping into this place!"

Kylie's words were extremely hostile. Especially when she said Cheyenne's name, her tone was full of hatred and envy.

Lucas instantly understood that her inexplicable hatred toward him probably stemmed from him being Cheyenne's husband.

But after giving it a casual thought, he immediately recalled that although Kylie had a bad reputation in school, she often boasted about being the campus belle, thinking that she could subdue countless boys because of her beauty.

But at the time, the person everyone in the school recognized to be the school belle was Cheyenne, not Kylie. Later on, Cheyenne was even lauded as the 'most beautiful

woman in Orange County'. In the eyes of Kylie, Cheyenne was an existence who made her crazy with envy.

Seeing the twisted look of resentment and envy on Kylie's face, Lucas only felt that she was incredibly ridiculous.

When Lucas and Cheyenne were in college, they had never had any contact with Kylie. Moreover, after graduating for more than six years, they bumped into each other in San Francisco by chance, yet she came to him and barked at him like a mad dog, making him feel utterly repulsed.

"Miss Reed, how can you say that? Even if Mr. Gray is your former college classmate, he is now here as a customer of the Heavenly Pavilion. No matter what, you shouldn't speak so maliciously when speaking to customers."

As an outsider and a junior employee of the Heavenly Pavilion, Jane couldn't stand hearing Kylie's words at all. She said seriously, "Every single day, many customers come to the Heavenly Pavilion. Some people genuinely want to purchase something, but most people are here to browse without any intention of buying. But we can't chase customers out of the store just because we assume that they can't afford anything here.

"Besides, Mr. Gray has already said that he wants to buy these two items. How can you assume that he can't afford to pay for them? Won't it be clear whether or not he can afford them when it's time to make the payment? Why do you have to be so overbearing and insult Mr. Gray so aggressively?"

"Furthermore, I haven't violated any of the store rules, and you have no right to fire me without a valid reason!"

Jane went all out and blurted all the things she had wanted to say but had been suppressing all this while.

She knew that her actions today might completely anger Kylie and cause her to lose her job, but she had already been suppressed by Kylie enough. After nearly three months, she didn't manage to close a single deal at all. She even had to suffer bullying constantly. Instead of being branded as an incompetent employee and getting kicked out at the end of her probation period, she would rather just reveal all the things she wanted to say.

She would at most just quit. She was a university graduate, so how could she possibly starve to death just because of the loss of this job?

Jane's unusual behavior immediately made Kylie, who had always been arrogant and used to bossing others around, enraged.

She had always been the one to reprimand her subordinates, yet she was now being rebuked for her behavior by a salesperson in front of everyone, making Kylie feel embarrassed.

Anger surged from her heart, and she blew her top. She raised her hand to slap Jane and snapped, "Outrageous! Who do you think you are? How dare you try to teach me?"

Jane was completely caught off guard as she watched Kylie slap her. She was just an ordinary girl who led an ordinary life. Since she was a child, let alone being in any fights, she had never even watched others fight. Facing such a brutal and tyrannical woman like Kylie, who got physical at every turn, she was immediately stunned. She froze in shock and even forgot to dodge!

Kylie's fingernails were long, and her slap was very hard. If this slap landed on Jane's face, it would be scratched!

*Smack!*

Just as Kylie was about to scratch Jane's face, Lucas suddenly raised his hand and grabbed Kylie's wrist, preventing her from continuing.

"You want to slap her just because you can't outargue her? Aren't you going overboard?" Lucas stared at Kylie's eyes coldly.

Only then did Jane return to her senses and see the sharp fingernails right in front of her and about to poke her face. She cried out in shock and hurriedly took two steps back away from Kylie. Only then did she feel relieved.

But she was also surprised. She didn't expect that Lucas, who seemed to be extraordinarily good-tempered, would help her stop Kylie from slapping her.

A trace of shock appeared on Kylie's ruthless face.

She remembered Lucas to be taciturn in college. Although he was good-looking, he was often ostracized and bullied because of his humble background. At the time, he would just suck it up and remain silent.

But Lucas, whom she thought was a wimpy good-for-nothing, actually dared to grab her hand and stop her!

"Lucas Gray, are you tired of living? You actually dared to grab my hand? If my husband finds out, he definitely won't spare you!" Kylie hollered menacingly while trying her best to retract her hand.

Lucas sneered. "Do you think all men want to take advantage of you just because you're a woman? You're being too narcissistic!"

With that, he let go of her wrist as if he was throwing away something dirty.

“Ah!” Because Kylie had been struggling hard, she was thrown off balance. Moreover, she was wearing a pair of 12-centimeter tall stilettos, so she lost her balance and fell onto the floor on her butt.

## Chapter 636: Husband or Father?

“Miss Reed!”

“Miss Reed, are you alright?”

Seeing this, the salespeople watching from the side immediately gathered around Kylie and showed her concern.

It wasn't that they were actually concerned about her or were trying to be affectionate on purpose. But rather, Kylie was the type who would think that anyone who didn't come up to show her concern had something against her. She would then torment those people.

They understood Kylie's temper and character like the back of their hand. Moreover, there was a person behind Kylie whom they couldn't afford to mess with...

After the crowd helped Kylie up, she didn't even care about the attentiveness and concern the people around her were showing. Instead, she glowered at Lucas viciously and said with a menacing expression, “Lucas Gray, how dare you lay a hand on me? In that case, I won't be polite to you either!”

Then she took out her phone and called someone. In a disgustingly coquettish voice, she complained, “Hubby, it's me! I'm on the fourth floor of the Heavenly Pavilion, and I got bullied! Hurry up and come here to seek justice for me~”

Seeing Kylie calling her husband, Jane immediately panicked because she knew who her husband was.

Although she and Lucas had met each other for the first time today, she no longer treated him as merely an insignificant customer, perhaps because both of them were yelled at and bullied by the same person. Besides, Lucas had even stopped Kylie from slapping her just now.

“Mr. Gray, you'd better hurry up and leave while you can! Kylie's husband is the general manager of Heavenly Pavilion. He's hot-tempered and extremely protective of his wife. He also has the power to command all the security guards in the Heavenly Pavilion. If he comes here to stand up for Kylie, you'll be in hot soup. Even if you don't die, you'll definitely suffer! Hurry up and leave before he arrives, or else you won't be able to leave later!” Jane urged softly and anxiously beside Lucas.

Seeing the genuinely worried look on her face, Lucas had a good impression of her, the only salesperson who had decided to serve him.

Generally, the other salespeople of the Heavenly Pavilion, as well as Kylie, a supervisor, had made him rather displeased. But he felt that Jane's character wasn't too bad.

However, Lucas was destined to let Jane's kind reminder go to waste.

He didn't even care about the Kingstons in San Francisco or the eight giants of DC. What could the mere general manager of an antique store do to him?

Leave? That definitely wasn't something Lucas would do.

Seeing Lucas not moving, Jane thought that he still didn't realize how serious things were at this moment. She persuaded anxiously, "I'm telling the truth. Hurry up and leave, or else you will really suffer!"

Kylie, who had just hung up the phone, happened to hear this.

With a smug smile, she threw her head back and laughed. "Haha, you want to leave? Impossible!"

She turned around and instructed two salesmen beside her, "Go to the elevator and wait. Don't let him leave! Otherwise, I'll teach you a lesson!"

When the two young salesmen obediently went to the elevator door and stood there, Kylie turned to stare at Lucas triumphantly and sneered. "Let's see how you can leave! You just grabbed my arm and caused me to fall. I will never let you off easily!"

Jane retorted furiously, "Kylie, you know clearly what really happened just now. Why are you accusing him now? He didn't do anything to you at all. If you just want to vent your anger, take it out on me. Why do you have to act like this?"

Kylie snorted coldly. "Hmph, don't think I've forgotten about you. I still remember what you said to rebut me just now! You're just a small trainee who I can kick out at any time. What right do you have to be so proud in front of me?"

"Moreover, isn't this the first time you're meeting Lucas Gray today? Why are you speaking up for him? Do you think he can really afford to spend four million on the items of the Heavenly Pavilion? Is that why you're eagerly sucking up to him? Haha, what a joke!"

"I'm telling you, this man is just a good-for-nothing live-in husband mooching off his wife! Ah~ Could it be that you've also taken a liking to his face, so you want to make him your

boy toy? I'm afraid you're a step too late. He already has a wife. Unless you can replace his wife, you'll forever be his mistress!"

Kylie's words were getting more and more unbearable, making Jane, a fresh college graduate who had never even been in love, blush in humiliation.

"You... How can you say that? Mr. Gray and I just met for the first time today, and he is my customer. We're innocent, and there's nothing between us, unlike the nasty things you said! You... you are the..."

Jane didn't know how to curse, and the few sentences Kylie said had already made her blush. Even though it was true that Kylie was once the mistress of a married man, Jane couldn't bring herself to say it out loud.

Lucas narrowed his eyes.

Kylie was indeed going overboard by smearing a fresh college graduate who was only in her early twenties with such vicious words.

At this moment, the elevator door suddenly opened, and a balding middle-aged man in his forties or fifties with a beer belly walked over. He questioned boorishly, "You said someone bullied you. Who is it? Is he still here?"

Kylie immediately leaped into the arms of this middle-aged man with a beer belly aggrievedly and feebly and complained sobbingly, "Honey, it's him. He just grabbed my arm and pushed me to the floor. I'm in so much pain!"

While pouting, she pointed the long fingernail of her index finger at Lucas.

The few salespeople at the side seemed to be used to the scene before them as they remained silent. Only one of them had twitching lips and was vaguely expressing some emotion.

Lucas looked at the scene in front of him and found it unsightly. He snorted and burst into laughter.

"Kylie Reed, is this your husband or your father? Are you sure you didn't address him with the wrong term?" Lucas asked, pretending to be puzzled.

As soon as he said this, the surroundings fell silent. Kylie, who was complaining coquettishly, froze right on the spot.

## **Chapter 637: Come With Me**

After a long time, Kylie finally understood what Lucas was driving at with his ridiculing remark. Her face, covered with thick foundation, was about to explode because of how exasperated she was!

“Lucas Gray, you bastard, how dare you mock him?!” She glared at Lucas as if she had the most unpleasant and distasteful side of her exposed. Even her voice became extremely sharp and shrill.

Even the chubby bald man with large ears turned over to glare at Lucas hostilely.

“Punk, who do you think you are? How dare you poke fun at me?” He squinted sinisterly, making his eyes look even smaller than the rest of his chubby face.

Lucas looked at the two of them embracing each other in an unsightly manner and gibed, “You two are a perfect match. The items sold in the Heavenly Pavilion aren’t bad. It’s just a pity that you two are here. It’s no wonder that you barely have any customers.”

Then Lucas looked at Jane beside him and said to her, “Your talent will only go to waste if you stay here. There’s no harm in quitting this job. Leave with me later, and I’ll give you a job way better than this. Your talent and competency won’t be trampled on by these tacky, vulgar, and repulsive people.”

Lucas didn’t decide this on a whim.

Through his brief contact with Jane just now, he could tell that, despite being a fresh graduate without much work experience, she was a woman of principle and wouldn’t let societal norms sway her. Even her horrid work environment in the Heavenly Pavilion, due to Kylie abusing her authority as a supervisor, didn’t dull her talent and nature.

Lucas now owned many companies. And seeing Jane, he felt a strong urge to nurture her because he felt that a capable and principled person like her would definitely have a better time working in any company he owned than staying here.

Lucas’s words made Jane extremely surprised and touched.

Although she wasn’t familiar with him and didn’t even know if he was telling the truth or not, his words resonated with her thoughts.

She had also decided deep down that if she continued staying in the Heavenly Pavilion under the control of Kylie and the general manager, she would never be able to develop further and get ahead in life. In fact, even her values and views would be ruined here.

“Alright, thank you in advance, Mr. Gray!” Jane beamed with joy while facing Lucas.

After hearing their conversation, Kylie was about to hit the roof. The chubby middle-aged man next to her also seemed extremely displeased, and he hollered, “Dream on!

Jane, don't forget that you're still an employee of the Heavenly Pavilion! Besides, did I say I would let you two leave?"

The elevator door opened, and more than ten strong and burly men clad in security uniforms walked straight to the middle-aged man. The leader of the guards stood in front and said respectfully, "Mr. Frey, I heard that someone is causing trouble here. Please give us your instructions!"

The chubby manager immediately pointed at Lucas smugly. "This is the troublemaker! Catch him, teach him a hard lesson, and throw him out! In the future, the Heavenly Pavilion definitely won't allow this man to appear here again. Beat him up every single time he appears!"

When Frey said this, his expression was extraordinarily domineering, and it was as if he was the owner of the Heavenly Pavilion, or rather, the leader of the entire world.

"Yes, Mr. Frey!" The security guard leader immediately agreed and pointed at the ten or so bodyguards. "Did you hear what Mr. Frey said? Seize this punk immediately!"

"Stop it! I'll see which one of you dares to touch him!"

Just as one of the security guards was about to take action, a furious voice came from behind, and a figure hurriedly rushed over from the elevator.

The voice immediately drew the attention of all the people present.

A young wealthy scion around 27 or 28 years old and clad in an immaculate, high-end suit was storming toward them. He had two elite bodyguards who seemed intimidating and unapproachable following him from behind.

Frey shuddered, and a look of astonishment appeared on his face when he heard the voice. He pushed Kylie away from his arms and scurried toward the young man. With a fawning smile, he asked, "Mr. Parker, why are you suddenly here? Had I known earlier you'd be here, I would have gone downstairs to receive you..."

"Get lost!" the young man roared angrily and pushed Frey away before striding straight toward Lucas.

Then amid everyone's shocked gaze, the scion lowered his head, bent forward, and said to Lucas respectfully, "I'm sorry, Mr. Gray. I failed to take my subordinate in hand, and he ended up offending you. Please forgive me!"

This scene made everyone's jaw drop!

Not only were Jane and the other salespeople of the Heavenly Pavilion shocked, but even Kylie's eyes were wide open. Frey was full of disbelief, as if he was hallucinating.

A... noble scion actually behaved so respectfully and politely toward this shabbily dressed young man. He even sounded so sorry and deferential!

What a fantastical world!

Lucas was the only one who kept a straight face in the Heavenly Pavilion. He merely raised his eyebrows with a slight hint of surprise.

Reason being, the young man currently standing in front of him and apologizing to him with utmost respect was none other than Kenneth, the scion of the Parker family.

Recalling how Kenneth had coveted his wife, Cheyenne, when he was in LA and even went against him several times, Lucas felt amazed that Kenneth was now standing in front of him in fear, as if Lucas was going to punish him.

But it was a matter of course. After all, the Parkers had already pledged allegiance to Lucas, and the helmsman, Damon, had also become one of his most powerful subordinates. What more a junior like Kenneth?

What surprised Lucas was that Kenneth owned the Heavenly Pavilion.

Suddenly, a sharp and shrill voice that was getting uncontrollably louder because of extreme astonishment rang out beside them.

“Mr... Mr. Parker, are you... mistaken? Lucas Gray isn’t a big shot at all. He’s just a good-for-nothing freeloading off of his wife! I’m his former college classmate, and I can’t be clearer about what kind of a person he is. You must have mistaken him for someone else!

“Otherwise, Lucas Gray has deceived you by telling you that he’s some big shot. You mustn’t be fooled by him!” Kylie yelled hysterically, unable to control her expression and emotions. *Lu-Lucas Gray is clearly just a good-for-nothing and a bottom feeder of society. Why would the chairman of the Heavenly Pavilion, the scion of the Parker family, be so respectful and polite toward a loser?*

“Shut up!” Kenneth, whose face was terrified and panicked, immediately shouted in anger.

He turned his head to glare daggers at Kylie. “Who do you think you are to speak to me? How dare you slander and insult Mr. Gray? You deserve to die! Security, drag her out immediately! No matter what her previous position was, she’s now dismissed from the Heavenly Pavilion!”

## **Chapter 638: Expelled**

Kenneth was incensed. He had happened to be in the vicinity to inspect the operations of his family businesses. But he suddenly received a report that the staff of the Heavenly Pavilion, one of his businesses, had gotten into a conflict with a customer.

Kenneth didn't take it seriously at first because it was just a trivial matter that didn't require his attention. But when he heard that the customer involved in the conflict was Lucas, he was frightened out of his wits!

He immediately dropped everything and hurried over, just a second before the Heavenly Pavilion's security guards were about to get physical with Lucas. He managed to stop them from stupidly offending Lucas just in the nick of time.

He, the esteemed scion of the Parker family, had no choice but to bow down and apologize to Lucas. Yet this silly woman actually had the audacity to jump out and insult Lucas in front of him. *Isn't she afraid of further incurring his wrath?*

Kylie's eyes widened in shock, and she spluttered in disbelief, "Mr... Mr. Parker, what did you say? You actually want to dismiss me? For a... wastrel like Lucas Gray? I've been a veteran employee of the Heavenly Pavilion for years!"

Seeing this, Frey hurriedly tried to speak up for Kylie. "Yeah, Mr. Parker. Kylie is a supervisor of the Heavenly Pavilion, and she has made a lot of contributions to the company over the years. She's been the top sales achiever every single year. If you dismiss her just like that, it... it will really be inappropriate!

"Furthermore, we have a lot of regular customers. Kylie has top-notch managerial abilities and strong communication skills. If she's dismissed rashly, not only will the other employees of the Heavenly Pavilion find it unjust, but I'm afraid that our regular customers will be affected and thus result in a great impact on our overall sales volume. Mr. Parker, please reconsider your decision carefully!"

As soon as Frey said this, many of the staff of the Heavenly Pavilion, including Jane, had indescribable expressions.

They had never seen any of Kylie's so-called superb work competency, managerial abilities, and communication skills, but they were certain that she was the top sales achiever. Reason being, she would abuse her authority as a supervisor and leverage on the power of her backer, Frey, to snatch away all the big spenders, claiming credit for their hard work and snatching their sales. She would often let them handle the sales with low transaction amounts of about a few thousand to tens of thousands. So it, of course, made her seem very competent.

Moreover, Frey's words made Kylie seem extremely important, as if the Heavenly Pavilion would collapse and slip into a major crisis without her, a mere supervisor. It was absolutely ridiculous.

But the staff didn't dare to reveal their emotions in front of Kylie and Frey.

Even Lucas didn't say much and merely stood calmly on the spot with raised brows, waiting to see how Kenneth would handle this matter.

However, Kenneth was extremely annoyed after hearing what Frey said.

"Hah, so, this supervisor named Kylie is an indispensable pillar in the Heavenly Pavilion, huh? Without her, the Heavenly Pavilion will fold and go bankrupt immediately because you're just an incompetent general manager. Is that what you mean?" Kenneth questioned furiously with a gloomy expression on her face.

Frey immediately broke out in a cold sweat and hurriedly defended himself, "No, no, Mr. Parker, that's not what I mean..."

"Shut up!" Kenneth hollered, immediately interrupting him. "Don't think I don't know what exactly you have in mind. When I came in, this woman was nestled in your arms and calling you 'Honey'. I know very well that you're already almost fifty years old and a married man with children!

"I'm afraid this woman is about the same age as your daughter, isn't she? Trust you to be able to embrace each other and address each other with such endearing terms. How revolting!

"I don't care how you fool around and how many mistresses you have out there, but since you've brought your filthy affairs to the Heavenly Pavilion and dirtied this place, I can't spare you!

"I just took over the Heavenly Pavilion not long ago, and I've yet to find time to deal with you scoundrels, but you've already offended Mr. Gray. In that case, you two get out now! There's no room for people like you in the Heavenly Pavilion!"

With a look of disgust on his face, Kenneth ordered that both Frey and Kylie be expelled from the Heavenly Pavilion together.

Hearing this, Kylie and Frey felt as if they had suddenly been slapped twice. Their faces were stinging and burning, and they were full of disbelief.

Neither of them had expected that Kenneth, who had never personally managed the family's affairs, to be so ruthless and unmerciful to them for the sake of Lucas!

Kylie had only worked in the Heavenly Pavilion for a few years, while Mr. Frey had already been an employee for more than ten years. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call him a senior employee. Yet Kenneth actually dismissed him too for Lucas's sake.

When Kylie saw Kenneth's cold and solemn face, a sudden chill and wave of horror surged in her heart.

For the past year or two, she had been acting tyrannically at work by relying on her relationship with her backer, Frey. Not only did she get the position of a supervisor, which came with a high annual salary, but she also managed to get tens of thousands of dollars in commission from the sales she snatched from others.

Besides, she also had a high status, and everyone, including her superiors, would be extremely respectful toward her, afraid of offending her. It was as if they were facing Frey in person.

Kylie had always been an overly ambitious person who felt that she was beautiful. In addition, she was treated like a queen in the Heavenly Pavilion, causing her to become unbridled and capricious with her words and actions.

Kenneth's words were like a bucket of water pouring over her, snapping her back to reality. Without Frey and the Heavenly Pavilion, she was nothing!

She had long gotten used to living an extremely privileged life with her annual salary of hundreds of thousands. And she barely had to do anything in exchange for this. All she had to do was serve Frey, an old man about the same age as her father, and bully the people she disliked every single day. Life was really carefree and pleasant for her!

Once she really got fired, she wouldn't be able to earn even \$20,000 a year!

The expression on Frey's fat face was also changing incessantly.

All of a sudden, Frey got on his knees in front of Kenneth, completely disregarding his pride. He cried loudly, "Mr. Parker, I was wrong! But this is all Kylie Reed's fault. I-I was just deceived by her!"

"She told me that someone was deliberately causing trouble here. That's why I brought security over to handle the issue! I... I had no intentions of targeting Mr. Gray! Please give me another chance to make up for my mistakes! I will definitely take care of this matter properly!"

Frey knelt on the ground with horror written all over his face.

## **Chapter 639: A Thorough Investigation**

Frey was now truly terrified.

He had been with the Heavenly Pavilion for more than ten years and now had the position of general manager. He enjoyed glory, and his ambitions were all fulfilled.

The Heavenly Pavilion was the largest antique store on this street. With the excellent work conditions provided by the Parkers, the annual salary, including the overriding commissions drawn from his sales team easily, amounted to more than \$200,000. Coupled with the little tricks that he had resorted to in secret, he had managed to accumulate a considerable fortune for himself within just a few years.

If he got sacked, how could he possibly get a good job now that he was almost 50 years old?

Moreover, he would definitely get a bad rep for being dismissed and kicked out of the company. In particular, he had been working here for more than ten years, and the people in the industry basically all knew him. Once the news of him being fired by the Parkers spread, no business in the antique industry would dare to hire him.

In short, if Frey was fired from the Heavenly Pavilion, it would be over for him.

So even though he was old, he could only go all out and get on his knees to beg Kenneth while putting all the blame on Kylie.

Filled with disbelief, Kylie looked at the old man who had always treated her as a gem with great disappointment.

At this moment, Frey was obviously going to make her take the blame and completely abandon her!

“Hah, why should I keep an incompetent man like you whom women can manipulate at will in the Heavenly Pavilion?” Kenneth said coldly, not moved by Frey at all.

Frey’s face stiffened, feeling that he had shot himself in the foot by saying those words just now. He hurriedly changed his statement and begged, “Mr. Parker, I admit that I was muddled for a moment. But please forgive me this time for the sake that I have been working diligently in the Heavenly Pavilion for more than ten years. I ought to deserve credit for my hard work! Please don’t kick me out of the Heavenly Pavilion! I am already so old, and I’m just a couple of years away from retirement. Mr. Parker, please...”

Before he finished speaking, Kenneth was already annoyed with his incessant rattling and the fact that he kept throwing his weight around as a veteran employee. He directly interrupted, “Hmph, you still want to stay in the Heavenly Pavilion to retire? Okay, you don’t want to leave, huh? I’ve given you a chance, but since you don’t cherish it, don’t blame me for being nasty!”

He glared at Frey and took out his phone to call his assistant. “Go and investigate the general manager of the Heavenly Pavilion in San Francisco. I don’t know his name, but he has a fat face and large ears. Screen through all the company accounts that he has handled, as well as the economic activities he has participated in. If you find any

irregularities or negligence in his duties or abuse of authority for personal gains, report to me immediately! If anyone dares to conceal any information, you know what to do!”

“Mr... Mr. Parker...” Frey immediately felt as if he had plunged into the ice cellar as he shuddered uncontrollably.

Although the Parkers were the owner of the Heavenly Pavilion, they didn’t send their descendants to manage it directly. It could be said that all the financial activities of the Heavenly Pavilion had been handled by Frey in recent years. As long as the profit figures of his quarterly and annual reports tallied, the Parkers wouldn’t intervene in the actual operation of the store.

In this situation where he was given great power without supervision, Frey’s boldness and appetite got bigger and bigger. He even secretly did lots of terrible things.

Now, Kenneth was really going to send people to investigate him. Since it happened too suddenly, Frey simply didn’t have time to deal with the aftermath.

As soon as he thought that things he had done might be exposed, Frey was drenched in sweat. He hurriedly said, “Mr. Parker, I-I know my mistakes now! I’ll leave the Heavenly Pavilion immediately!”

Then he wanted to turn around and leave.

Now, he only wanted to get away and prayed that he would be lucky enough for the Parkers not to discover him. He obviously couldn’t be bothered about the person who wanted to continue staying in the Heavenly Pavilion to make money.

“Hold it!” Kenneth yelled coldly to stop him. “You chose not to leave when I allowed you to do so earlier, and now you want to escape because you’re afraid that you’ll be implicated once the investigation results are out. When the investigation results are out, I’ll let you leave if you’re innocent!”

Kenneth initially didn’t plan to pursue the matter against Frey.

He was the scion of the Parkers and in charge of many of the Parkers’ companies, so he understood that being overly strict might not allow people to reap enough benefits. He knew that many senior executives would make use of their jobs to reap some monetary gains for themselves, but he also knew that it was commonplace.

So at the beginning, he simply chose to dismiss Frey without looking into his behavior at work on account that Frey had indeed worked for the Heavenly Pavilion for more than ten years.

However, not only had Frey not been grateful for his graciousness, but he had even thrown his weight around using his experience and credit. Kenneth didn't want to indulge him any longer.

In particular, Frey and this silly woman had both offended Lucas! Even Kenneth didn't dare to be rude to Lucas. How could they have the audacity to offend Lucas?

Seeing how resolute Kenneth was and realizing that there was no room for discussion, Frey appeared desperate and full of regret.

When he saw Kylie sitting next to him, his remorse immediately turned into immense fury, spurring him to raise his hand to slap Kylie on the face.

*Smack!*

A bright red slap mark appeared on Kylie's face.

Frey grabbed Kylie's hair and whispered into her ear sinisterly, "You stupid woman, this is all your fault! If you hadn't made trouble with someone here and called me to help you by misleading me into thinking that someone was causing trouble here, things wouldn't have turned out like this. Idiot! I'm telling you, if something happens to me, you won't have it easy either! Whatever it is, anything that happens to me will happen to you too. Don't you forget!"

He was venting his anger and also giving her a warning.

Frey was telling Kylie that if Kenneth discovered his misdeeds, Kylie would also be implicated because she was his accomplice!

At this moment, Kylie was shivering incessantly.

After getting fired from the Heavenly Pavilion, she had indeed lost a great money-making job. But if the Parkers found out what she and Frey had done, she would probably have to go to jail for the rest of her life!

The thought of the consequences made Kylie so terrified that she was about to wet in her pants.

She immediately turned to face Lucas, knelt by his feet, and pleaded, "Lucas, no matter what, we're former college classmates. Quickly help me beg for mercy from Mr. Parker! Otherwise, I'll be in huge trouble. Hurry up and ask him to spare me!"

Seeing the drastic difference in Kylie's attitude now and that of her arrogant self minutes ago, Lucas only found it ridiculous.

## **Chapter 640: Misappropriation of Large Funds**

Lucas looked down at the panicked Kylie with a look of contempt and mockery on his face.

“Have you suddenly remembered that we’re former college classmates now that things have come to this? You shouldn’t have forgotten how you deliberately picked a fight with me previously and insulted me, your ‘former classmate’, huh? If you hadn’t looked for trouble with me, this incident wouldn’t have happened at all. Who are you to ask me to beg for mercy on your behalf?”

“Moreover, even now, you’re still acting arrogant. Is this the attitude you should have when asking for help? You and I have nothing to do with each other in the first place, and there’s no reason for me to help someone hostile toward me for no reason. Get lost!”

Lucas immediately stopped Kylie from reaching over to grab his calf.

Only at this moment did Kylie realize that Lucas was no longer the taciturn person who would allow anyone to bully him whom she remembered.

*But... but why?!*

*This bastard Lucas is obviously just a good-for-nothing!*

*Even if he married Cheyenne Carter as a live-in husband, he’ll forever be a good-for-nothing!*

“Mr. Parker, do you know that Lucas Gray is really just a loser who has nothing to his name? Why do you have to protect him so much and even go so far as to kick veteran employees like me and Mr. Frey out of the Heavenly Pavilion? I’m really indignant!”

The more Kylie thought about it, the angrier she got. She was overwhelmed by envy and anger, so much so that she actually began questioning Kenneth.

Kenneth narrowed his eyes slightly as a trace of killing intent flashed in his eyes.

He was the only scion of the great Parker family, and most people were respectful toward him. Since when had he ever been questioned by such a lowly woman?

In particular, her comments targeting Lucas were ridiculous, absurd, and silly.

If Lucas was really a useless and penniless man, would he have to be so cautious and on tenterhooks in front of him? Kenneth wasn’t a fool.

*This woman is an idiot. She doesn’t even know to observe!*

Kenneth naturally wouldn't reveal Lucas's true identity in front of Kylie and just sneered. "If you still want your tongue, you'd better shut up. If you dare to disrespect Mr. Gray and make me angry again, I can't guarantee what I will do!"

Kenneth had always been the most arrogant one among his circle. If not for Lucas's presence today, he would have long gotten rid of this stupid woman who dared to question him and lose her temper at him. But he didn't want Lucas to think that he was ruthless, and he wanted to cut her some slack because she was Lucas's former college classmate.

After hearing the cruel warning from Kenneth, Kylie shuddered and suddenly snapped back to her senses. *I-I must have been muddled to have dared to question the scion of the Parker family loudly. I let my anger get the better of me!*

After receiving Kenneth's warning, Kylie started to behave herself, not daring to say anything else.

Suddenly, Kenneth's phone rang. It was a call from his assistant.

"Mr. Parker, regarding the investigation about the general manager of the Heavenly Pavilion, we haven't done a thorough one yet, but we've discovered something extremely important that I need to report to you!" his assistant said solemnly over the phone.

"Speak!" Kenneth commanded tersely and pressed the speaker button to transmit the assistant's voice clearly to the ears of everyone present.

"We found out that just half a month ago, a sum of ten million dollars was suddenly transferred from the Heavenly Pavilion's account to a personal bank account belonging to Sean Frey. But the usage of this sum was not reflected in the financial statements!"

"Therefore, we have reasonable grounds to suspect that Sean Frey embezzled this large sum!"

As soon as the assistant said this, Frey's fat face turned pale. He collapsed helplessly on the floor, and large sweat droplets emerged from his forehead.

The other people around them were just as astonished.

Ten million dollars was by no means a small sum. In fact, it was a massive amount!

Most people struggled to save even a hundred thousand dollars after working hard all their lives, let alone ten million dollars. It was absolutely outrageous!

Even Kenneth was shocked, and his face immediately turned as dark as ink.

He had indeed guessed that Frey wouldn't abide by the rules, and he also knew that people in high positions would inevitably be greedy for some benefits. But Kenneth had never expected Frey to be so greedy as to have the guts to do a one-time transfer of 10 million dollars from the company account to his personal account!

The net annual profit reported by the Heavenly Pavilion in recent years was only about 15 million dollars at most, and this was on the basis that the store's top antiques were sold with the Parkers' prestige.

Frey had pocketed most of the Heavenly Pavilion's revenue in one bite. It was simply intolerable in Kenneth's opinion!

"Bastard, what else do you have to say now? How do you plan to explain to me about the ten million dollars?" Kenneth roared furiously.

Frey was trembling incessantly as he stammered an explanation, "Mr... Mr. Parker, the money, I-I just borrowed it for an... an emergency. I never planned to em-bezzle it!"

After hearing his argument, Kenneth laughed in anger. "You pocketed so much money without the permission of the company's senior management. Yet you're telling me that you borrowed it temporarily? Regardless of your reason or what you used it for, you were clearly misappropriating company funds!"

"If I hadn't sent my people to check it out, would you have hidden it from me and made up a reason on the report when the time came so that you could just pocket the money without anyone finding out? You bastard, you really came up with a great plan, huh?"

"Tell me, where is the ten million dollars now?"

Kenneth was really livid.

Frey's actions had not only damaged the Parkers' interests but also revealed their management issues.

Moreover, this matter was exposed in front of Lucas!

Now that the Parkers had already become Lucas's subordinates and were helping him manage the Solar Corporation in LA, as well as other businesses, the revelation of management flaws in a company under his management might arouse Lucas's displeasure. If his grandfather heard about his mismanagement, Kenneth might be abandoned for being incompetent!

The thought of this possibility made Kenneth feel a strong urge to kill this audacious dimwit, Sean Frey!

## **Chapter 641: Refusing To Admit**

Seeing that he couldn't deny it at all, Frey was frightened, especially after noticing the murderous gaze in Kenneth's eyes.

He hurriedly pulled Kylie over from the side and pointed at her. "Mr. Parker, this bitch is to blame for everything! She told me that the stock market is booming now and that the stocks are all following a bullish trend. She told me that I'd be able to make a big profit immediately as long as I invested my money in some stocks. She also fooled me into secretly transferring money from the company's account to my own account to invest in the stock market. Once I made some money, I'd transfer the ten million back into the company's account, and there wouldn't be any problems anymore!

"But I was unlucky, and all my stocks plunged. On the first day I invested, I lost about a million! I... I wanted to recoup my losses and get my capital back so that I could return the money to the company. But I didn't expect to keep losing money for the next few days. I-I-I really had no choice!"

When Kenneth heard that this bastard had actually used the company's money to buy stocks, his face became even gloomier.

Everyone knew that investing in stocks was risky.

But this fool in front of him actually had the guts to buy stocks with the Heavenly Pavilion's funds and even ended up suffering a huge loss. He really felt a strong urge to skin Frey alive!

"Don't tell me that you've lost all ten million dollars on the stock market!" Kenneth gnashed his teeth.

Frey hurriedly said, "No, I didn't lose it all in stocks. After a few days of losing, my losses totaled more than four million dollars. I didn't dare to continue speculating anymore, so I withdrew all the money. But only about five million is left..."

Toward the end, his voice gradually became softer, and he seemed really ashamed of this result.

Kenneth was so enraged that he was about to explode.

Within just a few days, he had lost more than four million dollars. Frey was an absolute dimwit!

Even the most idiotic people invested blindly, they wouldn't suffer such huge losses.

Moreover, the money Frey lost was all funds belonging to the Heavenly Pavilion!

"... What about the rest of the money?" Kenneth desperately tried to control his urge to rip the man in front of him to pieces.

Frey immediately pointed at Kylie beside him. "This woman has the rest of the money! She told me that she has good channels and could help me recoup the five million dollars in the shortest possible time, so I transferred all the money to her!"

Everyone was staring at Frey's finger and watching him shift it to Kylie's body.

Seeing that things were going awry, Kylie hurriedly shirked all responsibility, "What nonsense are you saying? I didn't know about this at all, and I never took five million dollars from you. Why are you putting the blame on me when you're the one who made the mistakes? Let me tell you. I'm not a vulnerable woman that will put up with taking the rap!"

Frey flew into a rage. "How dare you deny it now that things have come to this? You're the one who instigated me to embezzle the company's money and told me that you had a way to make quick money. That's why I transferred the remaining five million dollars to your account. Yet you're trying to shirk responsibility now?!"

Kylie craned her neck, raised her head, and exclaimed, "I said, I don't know about these things at all. Don't try putting the blame on me!"

She took off the nameplate on her chest, threw it onto the floor, and said resentfully, "None of you try to accuse me! I'm quitting this job! None of you have the right to stop me!"

With that, she got up from the floor and wanted to walk toward the elevator.

"Hold it!"

With the loud shout, one of the bodyguards following Kenneth immediately stepped forward to stop Kylie.

Kenneth suppressed the anger within him and threatened through gritted teeth, "No one is going to leave until this matter has been clarified! If you dare to continue acting like a shrew or feign ignorance, I'll have someone amputate both of your legs right here! If you don't believe me, you can try it!"

If Lucas wasn't still watching, he wouldn't have only threatened Kylie.

As the scion of the Parker family, whom Damon had taken under his wing and nurtured for years, Kenneth wasn't a fool.

If it was only a one-sided account by Frey, Kenneth would have wondered if he was deliberately framing a woman in order to draw attention away from himself and confuse the public.

But Kylie's anxiousness to leave clearly showed that she had a guilty conscience and revealed what she intended to hide.

Frey's embezzlement of \$10 million of the company's funds was definitely related to her!

When Kylie heard Kenneth's warning, her heart trembled, and she didn't dare to act rashly anymore.

Kylie, who had been a supervisor of the Heavenly Pavilion for a few years, was naturally well aware of Kenneth's identity.

Even in the early years, Kylie had once thought of seducing Kenneth and marrying him in order to climb her way up to fulfill her dreams of becoming rich.

But after hearing about some of the things he had done, she immediately swept away this delusion and felt genuine fear toward a powerful scion like Kenneth.

She was now very certain that if she didn't do what Kenneth wanted her to, she would definitely suffer a miserable fate worse than death!

But if she admitted to the things Frey accused her of, her outcome wouldn't be any better. Now, her only option was to deny it outrightly, as she was sure that Frey would never be able to produce any evidence!

"M-Mr. Parker, I've really been wronged! Sean Frey embezzled the funds out of his own accord. And now that he's been exposed, he wants to drag me down with him and take the blame for him. This is a false accusation! Mr. Parker, you must believe me. I really had no idea what he did, and these things have nothing to do with me at all! I... If I had the five million dollars, I'd have absconded a long time ago. Why would I continue working in the Heavenly Pavilion?" Kylie denied firmly.

Staring at Kylie's familiar yet unfamiliar face, Frey said sneeringly, "Kylie Reed, do you actually think that you can deny it because I don't have any evidence? Haha, fortunately, I've always kept my guard against you, and I have never trusted you completely. Otherwise, I would have been stabbed in the back by you today!"

Frey suddenly took out his phone from his pocket and tapped on an audio file to play it.

When Kylie heard the recording of the familiar conversation, her face turned deathly pale!

## **Chapter 642: Three Recordings**

An audio recording of a man and a woman transmitted smoothly from Frey's phone.

Anyone could tell that the voices belonged to Kylie and Frey.

“Honey, I’ve told you several times that the stock market is booming lately. I invested a hundred and fifty grand and made over a dozen grand within just half a month. But my capital is too small. If we have millions of dollars as capital, I guarantee that we will be able to earn at least a million within half a month! This is much more than what our jobs pay!

“Besides, the company’s money is lying around in the company’s account anyway, and it’d be a waste just to leave it there. We might as well withdraw it for us to make a good deal of money! Anyway, the company’s finances and accounts are now under your control, and you have no superior to supervise you. What are you afraid of?”

“But... in case the Parkers suddenly check the accounts...”

“Ugh, what are you afraid of!? I told you. We’re just going to transfer the money away temporarily. We’re not going to withdraw all of it anyway. We’ll just take about ten million. When we make a profit of about three million in the stock market, we will naturally return the money and tally the accounts. No one will find out!

“Besides, once we get the three million or so, it’ll be much faster for us to continue investing in stocks or do other investments. Don’t you agree?”

“Honey, what are you hesitating for? Nowadays, those who starve to death are the timid ones, and those who are courageous are living large. Just listen to me. I guarantee there won’t be any problems, so just wait to get rich!”

“Okay, I’ll listen to you and take a gamble!”

...

After the recording played, Frey glared at Kylie. “Now, what else do you have to say? You instigated me into embezzling company funds to speculate in the stock market. What other excuses do you have now that there’s concrete evidence?!”

“You... you actually recorded our conversation?!” Kylie blurted in astonishment.

She had thought that she had Frey, this chubby old man, all wrapped around her finger and within her control. But she hadn’t expected him to keep his guard up against her and even secretly recorded their conversation!

Now, the fact that she had instigated and encouraged Frey to use the company’s funds to speculate in the stock market was a nail in the coffin!

After a short period of panic, Kylie said, “Fine, I admit that I indeed told you about this before. But at the time, I was just thinking about it! The financial power of the Heavenly Pavilion lies in your hands, and you’re the one who put the massive sum of ten million into your private account. I didn’t force you to do it!

“Also, this money has been in your hands since the beginning, and I haven’t seen a single cent of it. Don’t say that you gave me the money! If you don’t believe me, show us the transfer records, and we’ll see who you transferred the five million to!”

Kylie was full of confidence and gusto when she said her last sentence.

Reason being, she indeed wasn’t the recipient of the funds transferred from Frey’s account. No matter what the foolish Frey said, she would never hand over this sum of money!

Frey looked at the smug expression on Kylie’s face and suddenly smiled. “Kylie Reed, are you trying to hold out hope until the very end before you face death? Fine. I’ll make you completely convinced, you vicious woman!”

Then Frey clicked on another voice recording on his phone.

Kylie’s and Frey’s familiar voices were in it too.

“Honey, you’re just unlucky this time. That’s just how the stock market is. There’s nothing we can do about it! But fortunately, we still have more than five million, so it’s not a complete loss. Don’t be too vexed about it!”

“How can I not be vexed? I took ten million out of the company’s account! Now that we only have five million left, there’s no way I can make up for the deficit even if I use all the money I’ve saved over the years! If the Parkers investigate this, I’ll be doomed!”

“Honey, don’t worry. Hear me out. I have a friend who specializes in running some secretive dealings, such as money-lending and other stuff. If you give me the remaining five million, I can definitely help you earn ten million or even more within a month or two! Just trust me!”

The audio recording confirmed the authenticity of Frey’s previous statement about Kylie instigating him to transfer the remaining five million dollars to her account.

Immediately afterward, Frey sneered and clicked on another audio recording without waiting for Kylie to say anything.

“Kylie, why doesn’t this account number you gave me belong to your personal account?”

“Rest assured, Honey. This is my friend’s account. You can just transfer the money straight to his account. Even if you transfer the five million to me, I’ll still have to transfer it to him. Don’t you think this extra step is redundant?”

“Okay then. I’ll transfer the money to the account number you gave me!”

“Okay, Honey, just wait for a while. My friend is really impressive, and we’ll definitely be able to earn double of the capital you invested!”

...

By the time the recording ended, Kylie’s calm face had already shattered into countless pieces, and she was now as pale as a sheet.

She hadn’t expected Frey to record all three of these conversations!

*Just how wary was he against me?!*

*Does he have any more incriminating voice recordings?*

But she couldn’t be bothered to think of anything else now because the three voice recordings that Frey had played were enough to condemn her for her misdeeds and leave her with no means of rebuttal.

At this moment, the others present were appalled by their behavior.

On the one hand, they were shocked by their audacity to conspire and embezzle a massive sum of \$10 million from the company’s accounts to speculate on stocks while keeping their guards up against each other.

Moreover, while Kylie was addressing Frey with mushy and endearing terms, she had also come up with the idea of making Frey transfer the money to someone else’s account to shirk the responsibility. On the other hand, Frey was just as amazing. While being bewitched by Kylie and colluding with her, he had secretly left a backup plan for himself by recording their conversations.

The two of them were really compatible because they were equally dishonest!

Seeing how miserable Kylie was and how she was at a loss for words, Frey looked rather thrilled and resentful at the same time. “Bitch, you’re the cause of these matters. You want to push all the blame on me and escape just because you think I don’t have any evidence? Dream on!

“Now that there is concrete proof, can you continue to defend yourself? Let’s see what you have to say! I told you. Even if I go to hell, I will definitely drag you down with me too, you vicious wench! Haha!”

Frey laughed hysterically.

## **Chapter 643: Kenneth Shows His Goodwill**

At this point, there was nothing Frey could say to defend himself. Besides, only five million of the massive sum of ten million dollars that he had embezzled was left, which was now in Kylie's hands. Even if he added all his assets together, he wouldn't be able to pay it back. Moreover, he knew that the Parkers would never let him off the hook.

In that case, he had to drag Kylie, this shameless woman who caused him to be reduced to such a state, down with him no matter what!

Kenneth was furious too.

But he looked at Lucas respectfully and asked, "Mr. Gray, what do you think is the best way to deal with this matter?"

It wasn't that he was indecisive. But rather, he was thinking about what Kylie said previously about her and Lucas being former college classmates. So he wondered if Lucas would show her some mercy on account that they used to be classmates.

Lucas was standing silently at the side and watching everything. But after hearing Kenneth's question, he said without even looking at him, "Do what needs to be done."

He was never friends with Kylie in the first place, and she was the one who had provoked him first. Now that it was revealed that she had done such a thing, Lucas was already kind enough not to kick her when she was down.

Hearing Lucas's answer, Kenneth immediately knew what to do.

He yelled at the group of security guards of the Heavenly Pavilion, who were cowering in a corner and pretending to be invisible. "Why are you cowering there? Are you waiting to be paid without doing any work? Immediately come here and send these two people to the police station. Tell the police what they did and make sure you file a report so that the police will investigate!"

Then Kenneth glanced at the staff in the store, who had peculiar expressions, and lectured them, "I don't want to see such a terrible thing happen again. Do you all understand what I mean?"

"Yes!"

"We got it, Mr. Parker!"

...

The security guards and salespeople immediately nodded profusely.

Soon, Frey and Kylie were sent to the police station. Since there was concrete evidence, the results of the investigation would probably be released soon, and it would be time for them to be sent to the place they should be.

But before Kylie was taken away, she turned around and stared at Lucas with an extremely complicated expression.

Even until now, she still didn't know why she ended up landing herself in prison when she had clearly only wanted to mock Lucas because she disliked him.

*Lucas Gray is clearly a bottom feeder of society who makes less money in a year than I do in a month. He should feel ashamed in front of me forever, but why have things turned out like this?*

*On what grounds does he manage to make the scion of the Parkers treat him with so much respect and defend him? If not, I wouldn't have ended up in such a state!*

But no matter how resentful she was, it was already too late.

After settling everything, Kenneth cautiously looked at Lucas and asked, "Mr. Gray, are you fine with the way I handled things?"

He hadn't forgotten the reason he had rushed to the Heavenly Pavilion was that he was afraid his subordinates would end up offending Lucas and upsetting him.

Lucas assented noncommittally before raising his wrist to look at the time.

It was almost half past six in the evening.

He had planned to pick up two decent gifts from the Heavenly Pavilion before going to Alexis's birthday party. But he had ended up running into Kylie out of nowhere, causing him to waste a ton of time.

Since he had already picked the gifts, he stopped delaying any further and said to Jane next to him, "Please wrap up the two gifts I've chosen. I'm in a hurry."

Jane seemed to wake up from a dream as she hurriedly answered, "Yes! I'll help you go through the procedures immediately!"

The scene just now had left the young Jane shell-shocked, not only because of how audacious and shameless Frey and Kylie were but also because of Lucas's identity.

Even the scion of the family who owned the Heavenly Pavilion, Kenneth, was extremely polite and deferential toward Lucas, so much so that he even had to seek his opinion when handling the matter.

She wondered, *Who... exactly is this man...*

While thinking about this matter, Jane didn't slow in her actions. She immediately proceeded to place the string of high-quality wooden Bodhi beads and the set of emerald jewelry inside exquisitely designed gift boxes.

At this moment, Kenneth finally understood why Lucas suddenly showed up in the Heavenly Pavilion. It turned out that he was here to pick out some gifts.

After realizing this, Kenneth immediately said, "Mr. Gray, so you came here to get some gifts. We have plenty of treasures in the Heavenly Pavilion. If there's anything you like, just tell me! If you want, I'll take you to go look at them now."

Lucas said indifferently, "It's alright. I've already picked two just now."

The gifts were for Edmund and Alexis. In fact, the Coles ran an antique business, so even if Lucas gave them other antiques, they would probably find them similar. Besides, he was already friends with the Coles. So as long as the gifts were appropriate, he didn't need to care about anything else.

While they were talking, Jane had already returned with two beautifully wrapped gift boxes. She handed them to Lucas and asked politely, "Mr. Gray, these two items cost a total of 3.8 million. Do you wish to pay by credit card or check?"

Before Lucas could say anything, Kenneth immediately got anxious and chided Jane, "What credit card? It's just two items. We naturally can't let Mr. Gray pay a single penny for them! Mr. Gray can take away any item he likes in the Heavenly Pavilion for free, let alone just two antiques! Bear this in mind!"

Hearing this, a look of astonishment once again appeared on Jane's face.

The value of the gifts Lucas had selected were close to four million dollars. Yet Kenneth not only gave them to him for free, but he even said that Lucas could take anything he wanted from the Heavenly Pavilion for free in the future. The total value of the antiques in the store was at least a billion dollars!

*Who exactly is this Mr. Gray, who's dressed in plain and simple clothes...*

Lucas wasn't surprised by Kenneth's act of giving him these expensive gifts.

Even though Lucas had intended to pay for the gifts with his own money if Kenneth hadn't come, his relationship with the Parkers was now very different. If he had to spend his own money at a store belonging to the Parkers, it wouldn't be him being polite, but rather, it would be putting the Parkers to shame.

Thus, Lucas didn't stand on ceremony with Kenneth and gladly accepted his kind gesture.

"Alright, thank you very much then, Mr. Parker." Lucas took the two gift boxes and smiled at Kenneth.

This immediately made Kenneth let out a huge sigh of relief.

This was enough to show that Lucas wasn't upset with him and the Parkers because of what had happened today, which was good!

"However, your general manager is no longer here, so shouldn't you consider appointing someone to replace him?"

Just before Lucas was about to turn around and leave, he suddenly gave this suggestion while looking at Jane in front of him.

## **Chapter 644: Smash The Car**

Kenneth froze for a moment, but he soon understood what Lucas meant.

Although he came late and wasn't quite sure if there was any relationship between Lucas and Jane, he naturally wouldn't ignore Lucas's recommendation since he had already expressed his intention so clearly.

"Mr. Gray, you're right! I think... Miss Jane is quite a suitable candidate for the general manager of the Heavenly Pavilion. What do you think?" Kenneth asked, which was rather smart of him.

Lucas smiled lightly. "I believe you won't regret your decision today."

Hearing this, Kenneth instantly felt relieved.

Regardless of why Lucas was impressed with Jane, a salesperson of the Heavenly Pavilion, to the extent that he directly recommended her to be the general manager of the Heavenly Pavilion, Kenneth was very confident in Lucas's judgment.

Kenneth immediately announced loudly, "From today onward, Jane is officially the general manager of the Heavenly Pavilion. She will be responsible for managing all the affairs within the Heavenly Pavilion. Remember, I've personally appointed her. If any of you have any objections or defy me behind my back, don't blame me for being impolite!"

None of the salespeople who were feeling sour about it dared to express their displeasure.

Kenneth was clearly supporting Jane, so who would dare to make things difficult for her? They still wanted to make a living in the Heavenly Pavilion!

Besides, Jane was young and had a good temper. Despite having been mocked by them over the last two months, she had never lost her temper. So they were positive that she'd make a better general manager than the lecherous Frey and overbearing Kylie.

The salespeople had no objection to his decision, except for two who became anxious because they used to bully Jane badly.

Meanwhile, Jane, the person in question, was dumbfounded.

She never imagined that she would turn from a new employee about to be sacked just a few minutes ago for offending her supervisor and underperforming in sales to the general manager of the Heavenly Pavilion in the blink of an eye.

It made her feel overwhelmed with surprise.

Confused and nervous, she looked at Lucas. "Mr. Gray, I..."

Lucas smiled lightly. "You're competent enough to take on this role. If you're still feeling uneasy about it, convince everyone with your abilities!"

"Yes, I will! Thank you very much, Mr. Gray! And thanks a lot, Mr. Parker! Thank you for the trust you've given me!" Jane turned to face Lucas and Kenneth with a confident smile on her face.

The matter here finally came to an end.

Lucas was in a rush to go to the Cole residence, so he didn't stay any longer and left with the gifts after saying goodbye.

Kenneth personally saw Lucas all the way to the entrance of the Heavenly Pavilion and let out a long sigh of relief when he saw Lucas leaving.

Ever since he saw Lucas's formidable behavior in LA, Kenneth had a deeper understanding of this man who, despite being around his own age, possessed power so terrifying and unfathomable that even his grandfather Damon was extremely cautious when facing him, let alone Kenneth himself.

When facing Lucas, Kenneth felt as if he was facing an extremely tall and lofty mountain range, so he subconsciously felt very nervous.

A breeze blew past, and a sudden chill passed through Kenneth's body. Only then did he notice that he had unknowingly broken out into cold sweat, coating a thin layer on his back and forehead.

"Mr. Parker, who was that... young man just now?" someone standing behind Kenneth asked.

Kenneth raised his hand to wipe a bead of sweat from his face and said with a complicated expression, "He is Lucas Gray, but no one knows exactly how terrifying his power is. You just need to remember one thing—don't ever provoke this man. Otherwise, you won't be able to afford the consequences!"

Seemingly having remembered something terrifying, Kenneth shuddered.

Seeing Kenneth's actions, the person who asked the question was astonished.

Since he could induce fear within Kenneth, the usually fearless scion of the Parkers, he definitely wasn't an existence that could be provoked!

---

At this moment, Lucas had already driven to the Coles' manor in his black Jaguar.

Due to the delay in the Heavenly Pavilion, Alexis's birthday party was about to begin by the time Lucas arrived.

At this juncture, most of the guests had already arrived, so Lucas could see that the extremely spacious parking lot outside the Coles' manor was basically full of all kinds of luxury cars. It seemed that most of the guests attending Alexis's birthday party were from prestigious families.

Lucas found an empty parking space and casually parked his Jaguar. He got out of his car carrying the two gift boxes in his hand and walked toward the entrance of the Coles' manor.

"Hey, kid, hold it right there!"

At this moment, someone yelled curtly behind Lucas. When he turned around, he saw a young man dressed in luxury goods and designer clothing from head to toe with red highlights in his bangs in front of his forehead. He was poking his head out of a Maserati sports car and glaring daggers at Lucas.

Lucas glanced at him and said indifferently, "Is there something wrong?"

"Punk, immediately move your car away! No parking here! This is my parking spot! With your lousy car worth only a hundred thousand, how can you be qualified to park here?"

The red-haired young man spoke in a bossy, overbearing, and arrogant tone, as if Lucas was just a servant of his family.

Lucas simply didn't bother paying attention to this scion who self-righteously thought that he was invincible and instead turned around to leave.

"Hey! Punk, I told you to stop! Didn't you hear me?!"

The red-haired young man shouted angrily several times. But Lucas turned a deaf ear to him and quickly went straight into the gate of the Coles' manor, vanishing out of sight.

The red-haired young man was about to explode with anger and immediately yelled at the two bodyguards in the car, "You two, go smash that punk's car! It's just a Jaguar. How dare he ignore me? No matter what, I'll teach that punk a lesson!"

"Yes, Mr. Nick!"

The two burly bodyguards in the car immediately took out tools like wrenches and crowbars from the toolbox, went forward, and smashed Lucas's Jaguar.

*Bang!*

The windshield and rearview mirrors were all smashed into pieces.

The initially smooth front hood had also been smashed uneven.

Almost in an instant, Lucas's black Jaguar was smashed to pieces beyond recognition!

## **Chapter 645: The Coles' Banquet**

At this moment, Lucas had already entered the Coles' manor and was still unaware that his car had been smashed in the parking lot outside.

Even though Lucas didn't have an invitation card with him, when the person in charge of receiving guests at the entrance saw him, he politely brought him to the main hall where Alexis's birthday party was being held.

Lucas followed the usher all the way and scanned his surroundings in the Coles' manor.

The Coles really lived up to their reputation as one of the top three wealthiest families in San Francisco. The entire manor covered a large area, and the interior was different from the usual European luxe decor preferred by many wealthy families. Instead, it had a simple but elegant decor style, with some decorative water features and pavilions interspersed between.

However, the main hall, where Alexis's 20th birthday party was being held, was a detached modern European-style villa. After all, most of the guests Alexis invited to her party were young, so the Coles deliberately chose to hold the party here.

"The party is being held here this evening, Mr. Gray. Please come in!" the usher said as he opened the glass doors of the banquet hall respectfully.

Lucas nodded and entered.

At this moment, it was almost the start of the banquet, and most of the guests had already arrived, dressed in fancy clothes and holding various drinks while chatting with each other.

It was a typical scene of a gathering among the rich. Most people present were the heirs and heiresses of various top families, so they were all wealthy and noble.

But it did make sense since Alexis was the pampered heiress of the Coles, who had a high status and a large network of connections. Those who were qualified to attend were naturally also of comparable statuses.

Therefore, Lucas, who suddenly appeared at the birthday banquet hall, became an anomaly.

As soon as he entered, he immediately saw many pairs of eyes full of ambiguous gazes.

After all, among the wealthy scions and ladies present, Lucas was the only one wearing an extremely casual outfit, making him stick out like a sore thumb. He was just like a wild hen among a flock of eye-catching peacocks, unique and different from the rest.

But Lucas had always ignored these peculiar gazes that he would get for the way he dressed. He simply acted as though he didn't see them and sat down in the nearest corner.

He didn't come here with the intention of communicating with the children of wealthy families today. He was merely here to deliver the gifts because Alexis invited him to her birthday party.

Lucas wasn't interested in participating in anything else.

"Lucas Gray? You're here too?" a woman exclaimed in surprise near Lucas.

Lucas turned around and saw Lena, who was wearing a black halter bustier dress made of chiffon. She walked toward him smilingly.

"Lena, you're here too." Lucas was slightly surprised and greeted her.

“Haha, of course. Today is the birthday of Alexis, the princess of the Cole family. Although my family isn’t very close to the Coles, we should still come and show our support no matter what! Even many prestigious families in other cities in California are proud to receive an invitation to the party!”

Lena seemed to be in high spirits, as she was extremely chatty with Lucas.

“However, I’m still a bit surprised to meet you here. Given your character, I thought that you might not enjoy attending such banquets!”

Lena grabbed two cocktail glasses from the tray in the hands of a passing waiter and handed one to Lucas.

Lucas took it politely, but he merely held it in his hand without taking a sip. He said casually, “I happen to be friends with Mr. Edmund Cole and Alexis, so I’m just here to take a look.”

“That’s true. When we were in LA last time, I heard that you saved Mr. Cole. I was shocked!”

Lena suddenly blinked at Lucas and asked, “Do you think I’m pretty today?”

She was here to attend the birthday party today, and on such occasions, every woman attending wouldn’t be willing to let others outshine them. So Lena was dressed today in an elegant black dress that not only accentuated her voluptuous and alluring figure but also made her skin look incredibly fair. Moreover, she was a gorgeous beauty to begin with, and her exquisite outfit, as well as accessories, made her look even prettier.

Lena’s beauty stood out from most of the other women present and was extremely eye-catching.

Lucas praised sincerely, “You’re indeed very pretty today!”

“Haha, thanks!” Lena answered with a shy smile.

At this moment, the glass doors of the banquet hall opened again, and a tall and handsome young nobleman walked in from outside.

His appearance immediately caused a commotion because extraordinarily handsome men like him were rare even at such occasions, where heirs of noble families gathered.

“Wow, who’s this handsome guy who just came in?”

“I know him! He’s Connor Hale from Orange County. Although he’s only thirty, he has officially become the head of the Hale family just a few days ago!”

“Really? He’s already become the head of the Hale family at such a young age? He should be the youngest among the helmsman of first-tier families, right? I heard that the Hales are one of the four top families in Orange County and are extremely powerful! Has Connor Hale really become the head of his family?”

“Of course. Although he’s young, he definitely isn’t an ordinary person. Otherwise, Bruce Hale wouldn’t have favored him and passed him the position of family head!”

“That’s incredible. He became the helmsman of his family at such a young age, and the thing is, he’s so handsome. He’s just like the prince charming of my dreams! I’m starting to like him!”

“Hey, you’d better wake up. He’s already married, and his son was born not long ago. He even threw a full moon party for his son!”

These words made many nearby sigh, finding it a huge pity.

...

Connor attracted the attention of many women as soon as he entered due to his outstanding appearance.

But at the same time, many wealthy scions were staring at Connor, who was now officially the helmsman of a top-tier family. This point alone had already set him apart from others his age.

While countless people were staring at Connor, his eyes suddenly lit up, and he quickly strode toward Lucas.

Connor stood in front of Lucas, bent forward slightly, and said respectfully, “Mr. Gray, I didn’t expect you to be here too. If I had known earlier that you were coming, I would have gone to pick you up personally!”

This scene immediately caused many people to widen their eyes in bewilderment.

## **Chapter 646: Young Helmsman**

Connor was very respectful toward Lucas. In fact, he was even somewhat in awe of him.

Even though he had now become the actual helmsman of the Hale family, he didn’t dare to be rude to Lucas at all.

During his son’s full moon shower back then, Lucas had practically wiped out the Hales overnight with a single command. Later on, the dozens of Hales were spared also because of Lucas’s power.

It could be said that Lucas had full control over the life and death of the Hales, so Connor was naturally afraid of a terrifying figure like him. In fact, he had even once broken out in cold sweat from being in the same car as Lucas.

But the Hales had now become subordinate to Lucas. In fact, everything the Hales had actually belonged to Lucas, which caused the drastic change in Connor's attitude. He no longer feared Lucas and instead genuinely submitted to him out of subservience to a superior.

Lucas looked at Connor and smiled lightly. "Yes, Alexis invited me, so I came to take a look."

Connor raised his head, and only then did he notice the beautiful woman beside Lucas. He smiled and said, "Miss Sawyer, you're here too."

Lena laughed and teased, "Now, I have to see you as the helmsman of the Hale family. You didn't see how much attention you got from all the beautiful women as soon as you entered! You're the youngest person to become the head of a first-tier family in the last decade or so. I'm also about the same age as you, but now, I'm still just a vulnerable woman!"

She and Connor were both from families among the top four in Orange County, so they had interacted with each other rather often. They were also more familiar with each other than others.

Connor looked at Lucas, standing beside Lena, and said ambiguously, "How is that possible? Miss Sawyer, you and Mr. Gray are so close to each other. You will definitely be a successful person in the future, so who would dare to despise you?"

Lucas immediately realized that Connor had probably misunderstood the relationship between him and Lena. But when he saw Lena blushing with shame and embarrassment and then saw many people nearby secretly paying attention to them, he merely coughed gently without saying anything to explain.

Anyway, he knew that there was nothing between him and Lena, and this was enough. If he explained anything, it would make it seem like he was getting defensive from trying to cover it up.

Since Lucas didn't explain, all the more Lena wouldn't take the initiative to explain anything. In fact, she felt a sweet and fuzzy feeling after hearing that Connor had gotten the wrong idea about them.

*How wonderful would it be if... Lucas and I were really in that kind of relationship?!*

But after fantasizing, Lena acutely sensed something that shocked her.

Connor's attitude toward Lucas was really too good to be true. In fact, he was extremely respectful toward him.

Even when Connor was still just the esteemed scion of the Hale family, he wouldn't necessarily need to be so respectful and polite to Lucas, let alone now that he was the helmsman of the family.

*Does this mean that Lucas has a higher status than Connor, the helmsman of the Hale family?*

The three of them were just having a simple conversation here. But many other people in the hall could barely suppress their surprise.

Initially, when Lucas just entered, he had attracted many disdainful gazes from the other guests because his plain outfit made him stick out like a sore thumb.

Later on, the ravishing beauty Lena, who attracted the attention of most of the men in the room, took the initiative to walk up to Lucas to greet him. After her, Connor, who attracted most of the women in the room, did the same and even seemed to be extremely respectful toward him, leaving many puzzled.

Who exactly was this young man dressed shabbily?

Lucas casually glanced around the hall and saw a few people he knew, such as the two young people of the Wallace family, as well as Gisele and other Taylors. However, most here were rich children from San Francisco and other cities, so he didn't know them.

The moment Gisele saw Lucas, she subconsciously shrank, for fear that he would come over and create trouble for her.

The last time Lucas had confronted the Taylors and made Preston hand over Karen, he was really powerful and overbearing. Not only had he beaten all the bodyguards of the Taylors to the ground, but he had also killed the powerful expert of the Peerless Martial Association.

This made Gisele no longer dare to seek revenge against Lucas. Instead, she was now like a mouse seeing a cat, absolutely petrified.

But Gisele was overthinking things, as Lucas would never take a nobody like her seriously or be in the mood to find trouble with her. Well, unless she took the initiative to provoke him.

At this moment, a few men and women standing in the middle of the hall and chatting suddenly walked toward the corner where Lucas was.

"Lena, why did you come over here?"

The leader of these people was a wealthy heir of about twenty-seven years old, who was dressed fashionably in an expensive and decent suit. The red segment of hair hanging in front of his head was particularly eye-catching.

He then looked at Lucas and drawled in a light tone, "Hey, who's this? I don't think I've seen him before. Lena, won't you introduce him to us?"

Despite asking for an introduction, he had his head raised high and his nose facing Lucas, clearly full of contempt toward him, whom he belittled.

Lena seemed to have a bad impression of this wealthy heir as she glanced at him and said indifferently, "This is my friend, and we're here to talk. Mr. Walker, do you have an issue with this?"

The wealthy heir with red hair hanging in front of his forehead laughed. "Lena, I'm just asking. Why do you have to be so hostile to me?"

Looking at him, Lucas couldn't help sighing.

The person who had called out to him and ordered him to give up his parking spot like a subordinate outside the Coles' manor just now was exactly this man.

But Lucas didn't know his identity just now. After hearing Lena say his last name, he reckoned that he should be one of the Walkers, who were on par with the Coles and the Kingstons.

Connor also frowned slightly.

He had never had any close ties with Nate Walker and merely knew of his existence. Nate seemed to be hostile to Lucas, or rather, despised Lucas.

The condescending expression he had on his face when he looked at Lucas made Connor's impression of him worsen, and he didn't want to pay attention to him at all.

"Hey, Connor Hale, can't you see that Mr. Walker is standing in front of you and speaking to you? How dare you not greet him. What do you mean by this?!" a square-faced young man following behind Nate shouted in displeasure.

## **Chapter 647: Who is He?**

Connor glanced at the young man with the square face who had just spoken rudely. After giving it some thought, he finally recalled that the young man should be Dallas Watson.

The Watsons were initially only a small family in California who had somehow managed to get close to the Walkers of San Francisco. They then developed and rose to become a first-tier family.

This was why the Watsons had almost become subordinate to the Walkers while Dallas, the scion of the Watsons, often followed Nate Walker around like a lackey.

Connor couldn't be bothered to pay attention to a lackey of Nate, who was extremely hostile to Lucas, and sneered. "Who are you?"

Dallas froze for a moment before shouting in anger, "What did you say? You actually asked me who I am? You don't know who I am? I am Dallas Watson from San Jose!"

"Oh, I thought you were some incredible big shot. You're making it sound as if everyone should know who you are. It turns out you're just a Watson from San Jose," Connor said indifferently, but his words completely angered Dallas.

Before Dallas could lose his temper again, Connor continued, "Besides, you only belong to the younger generation of the Watsons, while I am the helmsman of the Hale family. You'd better watch your tone when you talk to me. Otherwise, don't blame me when I question your elders about the upbringing of their descendants."

As soon as Connor said this, the people around him were utterly shocked.

None of them expected Connor to be so hostile and relentless toward Dallas as to reprimand him for lacking manners right in front of everyone.

Even if the Watsons's strength was slightly inferior to that of the Hales, Dallas was following Nate!

As the saying went, to humiliate the protected was to humiliate the protector. Yet Connor reprimanded Dallas right in front of everyone, which was a blatant insult to Nate.

"Although Dallas was indeed a little hostile to Connor, they're actually about the same age, so it's really not necessary to be so particular about rules and status, is it?"

"Exactly. Dallas is Nate's follower no matter what. Connor Hale is being too harsh with him. He's clearly out to embarrass him by saying that!"

"I reckon Connor Hale has probably become way too arrogant because he became the helmsman of his family at such a young age. He doesn't even show any respect to the scion of the Walkers. He's really gone overboard!"

...

Many of Nate's friends, who were standing around them, as well as those eager to suck up to the Walkers, started rebuking Connor.

After hearing this, Dallas, who was already angered by Connor, became even more infuriated, as if he had been provoked.

"Connor Hale, you only got to become the helmsman of the Hale family merely because your grandfather is old. Do you really think you're that capable and impressive?"

"How dare you reprimand me here? Fine. I'm indeed just a junior of the Watsons now, and I don't have as high a status as you, but this man standing here is Nate Walker, the scion of the Walkers. How dare you be so rude to him? You won't even greet him. Aren't you being too arrogant and cocky?"

Dallas immediately mentioned his backer, Nate Walker.

Connor then looked at Nate and pretended to be surprised. "Oh, I'm sorry. So, you're Mr. Walker. I really didn't recognize you just now. I've been too impolite. I'm sorry! But seriously, Dallas, since you're so close to Mr. Walker, why didn't you introduce us just now?"

Connor's words were rather perfunctory, and anyone could tell that he did it on purpose. However, his expression was so serious that it made many riled up, but they couldn't find any fault with him at all.

This made Nate, who had always thought highly of himself and was proud and arrogant, extremely gloomy.

"Connor, although you and I are about the same age, you probably no longer take us seriously since you've now become the helmsman of the Hale family at such a young age, huh?" Nate wanted to make Connor seem arrogant and conceited so that all the scions here would develop animosity against him.

Of course, Connor wouldn't take the bait. He smiled and said, "Nah, Mr. Walker, there are many outstanding people among people our age, such as young talents like you. In fact, there are some whom I look up to and are far superior to me."

He glanced in Lucas's direction, took a half step back, and stood behind him.

Nate immediately frowned.

The young man in front of him, who was dressed extremely shabbily and looked incredibly out of place in this upscale party, seemed to have the ability to make Connor bow down to him despite already being the helmsman of his family.

*Who exactly is this person?*

Apart from a small number of good-for-nothings who really loafed around all day, most of them were good at reading people from their body language. Connor's actions were not particularly secretive, so they all noticed what he just did.

All of a sudden, many became interested in Lucas's identity.

Another voice suddenly sounded near them. "Mr. Gray, so you're here to attend Miss Cole's birthday party too. Had I known earlier, I should have accompanied you."

The person who spoke was none other than Kenneth Parker from LA.

He and Lucas had just met in the Heavenly Pavilion 20 minutes ago. Lucas had been there to buy some gifts, but Kenneth didn't expect that these gifts were for Alexis.

The people around them showed a trace of surprise again. "Isn't that Kenneth, the scion of the Parkers from LA? He's actually here too, and he seems to know that young man as well."

The Parkers had officially become the supreme hegemon of LA now, whose status and strength were even comparable to that of the Coles in San Francisco. With the rise of his family, Kenneth's status was also much higher than that of many other scions here.

This time, more eyes were cast on Lucas.

Lucas raised his eyebrows and looked at Kenneth, not expecting him to be here too.

Seeing how bewildered Lucas was, Kenneth took the initiative to explain, "Initially, my grandfather wanted to come personally. But when he heard that most of the guests were young people, he asked me to come instead, leaving the task to me."

Lucas nodded without saying anything.

Indeed, most of the people in the hall were in their twenties, which was about the same age as him. There were very few elderly because Edmund clearly stated that he wouldn't be attending the party, and he hoped that the young people could have fun on their own.

This was also why many elderly chose not to come at all and simply sent their younger descendants.

After Kenneth came over, he consciously stood behind Lucas with an expression almost as respectful as Connor's.

This scene immediately made the numerous young people present even more curious about Lucas's identity.

Nate, standing opposite Lucas and the others, began frowning.

## Chapter 648: Triggered By A Touch

Nate initially thought that Lucas was just a nobody from a poor family who was trying to mingle with them and join the party through connections because he was dressed in extremely plain and ordinary clothes. He reckoned that his outfit probably cost less than a hundred dollars in total. Compared to the large fleet of luxury cars in the parking lot, Lucas's Jaguar, which cost only about 80 grand, seemed extremely shabby too.

Yet such a shabby small fry had actually snatched Nate's parking space, making him extremely displeased. So he had immediately stopped Lucas from leaving and told him to move his lousy car away.

He didn't expect the man, whom he thought was penniless, would be so ignorant as to ignore him and disregard his presence. Nate lost his temper and instructed his bodyguards to smash Lucas's car to teach him a lesson.

But it was now revealed that Connor, the current helmsman of the Hale family, and Kenneth, the scion of the Parker, both actually knew Lucas and were extremely respectful toward him. This made Nate's heart skip a beat.

*Could this young man actually be the scion of a wealthy family who usually keeps a low profile?*

If it was someone from a wealthy family in California, he would still be inferior to him because no one in the state was on par with the top three families of San Francisco.

In that case, the only possibility was that Lucas was from another state. He thought that perhaps Lucas was the scion of a wealthy family in DC!

As soon as Nate thought of this possibility, an ominous feeling surged in his heart while a layer of cold sweat broke out on his back.

After all, he had just ordered his bodyguards to smash Lucas's car to pieces!

Nate began to panic and get a little flustered, but he nevertheless forced himself to seem calm as he asked, "It seems to be the first time I've seen you, buddy. Which family are you from?"

He thought he was hiding it well, as if he was just casually getting to know someone new, but the nervousness and worries deep in his eyes couldn't escape Lucas's eyes.

Although Lucas didn't know that Nate had smashed his car, he knew that Nate had quite a bit of scruples toward him and was thus pretentiously trying to find out his identity.

Lucas said composedly, "I'm not the son of some wealthy family. I'm just someone who doesn't have parents or a family to protect me. I can't be compared to you, Mr. Walker."

Lucas's mother had passed away because of an illness six years ago, and he had never acknowledged the man from the Hutton family, his so-called father, as his parent at all.

As long as the Huttons didn't create trouble for him every other day and tried to suppress him in every possible way so that he couldn't make a comeback, he would be thankful enough.

He would never get any protection or help from this family.

Of course, Lucas didn't consider himself a Hutton either. The Huttons were nothing but his enemies, and one day, he would return to the Huttons to take back everything that should rightfully belong to him and his mother. There was no other relationship between him and them beyond this.

Nate didn't believe Lucas's words.

If Lucas was really an orphan who didn't have a family to back him up, how could the prideful Connor and Kenneth possibly stand behind him and willingly show him so much respect?

Nate wasn't a fool. He felt that Lucas was definitely the scion of some top wealthy family and that he deliberately said those words in order to conceal his identity.

He naturally didn't believe it and wanted to ask a few more questions, but someone suddenly sneered beside him.

"Hah, you brat, given your status and background, how dare you attend Miss Cole's birthday party? Who gave you the guts? Also, what's up with your attitude when Mr. Walker is speaking to you?! How dare you speak to him so casually? It seems that you're indeed a bottom-feeder of society who needs to be taught a lesson!" Dallas rebuked while pointing at Lucas with a contemptuous expression.

The faces of the four people present immediately turned dark.

Connor, Kenneth, and Lena were all piqued.

"Dallas Watson, how dare you insult Mr. Gray? Apologize to Mr. Gray immediately!" Connor's face turned sullen as he exuded the aura of a superior helmsman of a notable family, and a massive sense of oppression weighed down on Dallas.

"Yes. Do you think someone like you can humiliate Mr. Gray? Apologize to him immediately, or else the Parkers won't let you and your family off!" Kenneth stared at Dallas with a gloomy expression.

Lucas was now the actual controller of the Hale family and the Parker family. Even they didn't dare to offend him, and yet Dallas had the audacity to speak to him so rudely!

Besides, both of them knew that Lucas was definitely not a pushover. If he was angered, he would definitely put anyone to shame regardless of the occasion.

If Alexis's party was ruined because of them, the Coles would likely be displeased too.

None of them wanted to see that scene.

Lena said indignantly, "I don't think Lucas was being rude at all. Dallas, you're just picking on him! Moreover, who are you to lecture Lucas? Lucas is a guest invited by the Coles, and since the Coles haven't even said anything, who are you to disparage a guest?"

The three of them were all on Lucas's side, and since they had a common enemy, they were all very united, making Dallas overwhelmed with fury.

Nate looked disgruntled too.

He had wanted to find out Lucas's identity by asking, but the dimwit Dallas suddenly interjected and made everything even worse than before.

He frowned and tried to make Dallas shut up, but Dallas was angered by what Connor, Kenneth, and Lena said. So he leveraged on his identity as Nate's friend and mocked them without hesitation.

"Connor Hale, Kenneth Parker, and Lena Sawyer, you don't actually have to lick Lucas Gray's boots. He's just a penniless punk who has nothing to his name and no family to support him. You people are the only ones who treat him as a gem. There must be something wrong with you!

"Look at his shabby clothes. It probably adds up to less than a hundred bucks. What kind of garbage is that? If not for the fact that today is the birthday party of Alexis, the Coles' little princess, I would have already taught him a lesson!

"And, Mr. Walker, look at them. None of them take you seriously at all. I really feel so aggrieved for you! This is absurd!"

After criticizing them, Dallas even deferentially complained about them to Nate like a dog, deliberately fanning the flames.

Nate's face was about to turn pale, but the foolish Dallas actually thought that he was mad at Lucas and Connor because of his instigation. He even smiled smugly.

The rest of the guests looked over and thought to themselves that they were in for a good show!

At this moment, the piano music in the banquet hall suddenly changed, and a commotion broke out among the crowd.

Someone exclaimed, "Look, our birthday girl is coming out!"