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Odette's heartless words snatched the air from Edmund's lungs. Outraged, he clenched his jaw and roared, "What did my father ever do to you, Odette?! How could you say that about him?!"

She snorted and drawled, "I can say whatever I want about him. What are you going to do about it, Edmund? You don't honestly think you're still the high-and-mighty young master of the Albright Family, are you? As far as anyone knows, you've already been thrown out of the family like a stray mutt! How dare you talk to me this way?"

At once, everyone in the lounge burst into raucous laughter.

Julian, in particular, guffawed as he praised, "Well said, Odette, though stray mutt might be an over-glorification of this useless piece of trash!" Then, he turned to eye Edmund imperiously. "I'll give you another chance, Edmund. Get down on your knees and apologize to Odette, then I might consider letting you off this time. If not, I'll chop off both your legs and you'll never get to kneel again!"

Edmund spat, "Go ahead. Kill me if you're so great! See if I'll flinch in the face of death!"

Julian's eyes widened by a fraction as he bit out maliciously, "Well, aren't you an ambitious one? Fine. If it's death you want, then so be it!"

As he said this, he grabbed the paring knife off the table and lunged forward, aiming for Edmund's neck.

At the very last second, Edmund's gaze flickered over to Odette, who watched him with cold humor. There was not a single trace of reluctance and unease on her face. In fact, she even looked excited.

A bitter chuckle escaped him. The knife was drawing near, and so was his end. He did not flinch. Instead, he closed his eyes slowly. After all, what did he have to live for now that the only hope he had left in this world was brutally shattered?

However, he had closed his eyes for what felt like an inordinate amount of time but felt no sharp knife plunging into his neck. Surprised, he opened his eyes, only to see that Julian was sprawled on the couch and coughing up blood, looking severely wounded.

In a fit of bewilderment, Edmund turned to see that a young man had appeared next to him so soundlessly that he did not even sense his presence before this. The young man

was wearing a baseball cap that concealed his profile, but there was something familiar about him.

It was Matthew, and he had overheard and seen everything while he was outside the door. He could have come in before the tension escalated. but he chose not to, he needed Edmund to go through this agony so that he would finally let go of Odette and whatever rose-colored past they shared.

Presently, Julian spat out a mouthful of blood and glared at Matthew insidiously, demanding, "Who the hell do you think you are? I'm the successor to the Huntington Family, and you just punched me! You'll be sorry when my family hears of this! You have declared war with the Ten Greatest Families, you ignorant prick, and you... You're basically asking for death!"

Matthew scoffed, and his voice was low as he replied, "The only reason I didn't kill you, Julian, is because your life isn't mine to take, it's Edmund's! Just you wait. It won't be long now before Edmund kills you with his own bare hands!"

Julian froze when he heard this, then forced out, "You're saying this piece of trash here is gonna kill me? What are you, an idiot? You've come to the wrong place and picked on the wrong person, buddy, and for that, you won't leave here alive tonight!"

Odette helped Julian up frantically and roared at the others in the lounge, "What the hell are you all waiting for? He just hit Julian! You're supposed to kill him!"

Upon hearing this, the bystanders immediately surrounded Matthew, looking like they were ready to pummel him.

Matthew did not spare them a second glance as he casually grabbed Edmund by arm, then spun and ran out of the lounge. They had only just come up to the door when two men tried to block them, but Matthew fended them off with a swift punch before fleeing out of the Dynasty.

He brought Edmund to a remote corner and tossed him on the ground.

Staggering to his feet while holding onto the wall for support, Edmund gazed at Matthew and asked trepidatiously, "W-Who are you, sir? Why did you save me?"

Wordlessly, Matthew took off his baseball cap, revealing his full profile to Edmund. It was only then that Edmund's eyes widened as he exclaimed in shock, "M-Mr. Larson?!"

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Matthew raised a brow in amusement. "Why are you so surprised to see me?"

Edmund was silent for a moment before shaking his head to say, "Actually, no. I figured it was only a matter of time before you came to Granville. I just didn't think we'd meet like this."

A little taken aback by the statement, Matthew asked, "Why did you think I'd come to Granville?"

Chuckling bitterly, Edmund explained, "The Albright Family is part of the Ten Greatest Families, which also makes us one of the stakeholders for Neverland Pharmaceuticals. My family was involved when Cunningham Pharmaceuticals' secret formula for the Restoration Pill was stolen, and seeing as Cunningham Pharmaceuticals depended on the Restoration Pill to thrive in the industry, it's only natural that you'd show up in Granville at some point."

Having heard this, Matthew pointed out, "So you were kept in the loop all this while."

Edmund shrugged. "This whole thing has been planned since two months ago, but I didn't know you then. After Woodside, I made up my mind to help you, but as you know, a lot has changed in my family after we came back. Right now, I can't even help myself. I..."

He broke off as he thought about how pathetic he was, and his voice nearly cracked. He had once been the much-revered heir to the Albright Family, which seemed like a distant past now that he was disrespected and looked down on everywhere he went. He was currently devastated beyond words.

Just then, Matthew chuckled lightly. "It's not too late to help me now."

"You want me to help you? How am I supposed to do that when I have nothing to offer?" Edmund asked incredulously.

Matthew said nothing as he proceeded to fix Edmund's arm. When that was done, he answered softly, "Would you like to avenge your father, Edmund?"

Upon hearing this, Edmund clenched his fists, and an icy gleam flashed in his eyes. 'Of course,' he said through gritted teeth. "I'd like that more than anything else, but what can I do? The one who got the ball rolling was the Damron Family in Bainbridge, and the ones who did the dirty work were none other than the Ten Greatest Families in Stonedale."

Thinking about that, Edmund frowned. "I don't even know how long it will take before someone kills me off, so what can I do to avenge my father?"

Matthew smiled subtly. "All you need to do is have the drive for vengeance and I'll help you out the rest of the way. Though, I'm going to need you to do something for me. It's about the Restoration Pill."

Looking motivated for once, Edmund asked, "I'm all ears, Mr. Larson."

"In two days' time, Neverland Pharmaceuticals will have a product launch event for the Restoration Pill. I want you to sneak me into the event."

Edmund scratched the back of his head. "I don't know... I mean, it'll be quite the challenge, but I can try."

Matthew nodded. He wanted to sneak into the event and find a way to expose Neverland Pharmaceuticals' scheme. Following this, Matthew put Edmund up at a budget hotel. After the fiasco at the Dynasty tonight, it was impossible that Julian would let Edmund off the hook so easily. He would be a dead man if they were to find him.

Having made sure that Edmund was safe, Matthew returned to his temporary home to get some rest.

It wasn't until the next morning that Rat came over to see Matthew again, and this time, he actually brought the finalized Restoration Pill with him. He had climbed through the air vents and into the laboratory to get his hands on the pill, and that was no simple feat.

Matthew held the pill between his thumb and index finger, then examined it carefully. As though amused by the sight of it, he started laughing.

Rat blinked, "You okay, Mr. Matthew Larson?"

Still chuckling, Matthew answered, "I always wondered if the Restoration Pill manufactured by Neverland Pharmaceuticals would be problematic, and now that I've taken a look at the final product, my suspicions have been confirmed!"

"Really?" Rat lit up at this. "Does that mean we can expose Neverland Pharmaceuticals tomorrow at the product launch event?"

The tips of Matthew's mouth curved up into a smile. "Exposing them is one thing, but making them pay for doing this in the first place will be of our utmost priority!"

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Just as Matthew expected, Julian sent out his men to hunt for him and Edmund all over Granville. They didn't know who Matthew was or what he looked like, so they directed all their anger on the latter instead.

The Huntingtons even went up to the Albright Family's residence to demand they hand over Edmund.

With no intention to shield Edmund from the Huntingtons' wrath whatsoever, the Albright Family gave away the location of the old manor where he used to stay and even dispatched their own men to lend aid to the Huntingtons' forces.

Had Matthew not had the foresight of putting Edmund up at a budget hotel in a remote area, he would have been found ages ago.

When neither family could track him down, they stopped looking, but Julian swore he would kill Edmund personally, and he made it clear that anyone who protected Edmund would become an enemy of the Huntingtons. Furthermore, the Sinclairs and the Albright Family took their stance and chose to side with Julian.

The next evening, Matthew arrived at the budget hotel Edmund was staying at and told him everything about what had happened the day before in detail.

Edmund fell into a grim silence after hearing what Matthew said. He didn't think he could be any more disappointed after the incident at the Dynasty, but much to his surprise, the Sinclairs and the Albright Family rallied against him. It was a ruthless gesture on their part, considering Old Master Albright was Edmund's biological grandfather, and that the head of the family was his own uncle. These people were his family, but they had so brutally cut him off just so they could keep up friendly relations with the Huntingtons. They did not even hesitate to throw kinship out the window.

Granted, he expected such betrayal from the Sinclairs, but he never thought that a family, who claimed to be close-knit to his father, would turn their backs on him and rub salt in his wound in the blink of an eye.

After a long pause, Edmund said wearily, "My father used to say that a man's downfall marks the beginning of betrayal and that people will not hesitate to deal the final blow. Looks like he was right..."

Matthew gave him a commiserating look. "Our lives are shaped by experiences, and that's how we learn and thrive in the face of adversity. Your father had more foresight than you do, but the world can be unpredictable, and there are plenty of things we have to leave up to fate. You can't depend on anyone but yourself."

Edmund nodded slowly as he stared at Matthew. "You're right. My father shielded me from brutal reality all these years, and I didn't have anything to worry about other than where the next party would be. I was an airhead, and I thought whatever privilege I had

would last forever. I took things for granted until my father passed, and that was the moment I realized everything I had, my father worked hard to provide. All these years, my only achievement was to be born into the right family, to a father who was strong and capable. Now that he's gone, the only thing I can do is to avenge him, even if it costs me my life."

Clenching his fists, Edmund rose to his feet and asked, "Mr. Matthew Larson, you're the person I look up to the most now, and you've saved me a few times too. I'd lay my life down for you if it meant you could help me take revenge on those who wronged my father. I'll do anything you ask of me without question!"

Matthew chuckled and waved his hand dismissively. "I said this before, Edmund. You have to be the one to take revenge. I didn't come to Granville just to take back what belongs to Cunningham Pharmaceuticals, you know, I came because I want to help you take back your glory!"

"M-My glory?" Edmund gaped at him in shock.

Matthew nodded slowly. "That's right. Wouldn't you just love trampling on the Ten Greatest Families of Stonedale, Edmund?"

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Edmund's eyes glimmered with interest when he heard this. Of course, he wanted to trample on the Ten Greatest Families of Stonedale. After all, they were all there when his father died. In other words, if the Damron Family was the mastermind, then the Ten Greatest Families of Stonedale would be the ones who carried out the execution.

More to the point, these families had done what they could to humiliate Edmund after his father's passing. Currently, he wanted nothing more than to make them pay in blood. However, bloodlust was something he could not afford right now.

Dejected, he turned to look at Matthew and asked hesitantly, "What exactly do you mean by that, Mr. Matthew Larson?"

Matthew smiled and said, "You've been in Stonedale for long enough, and your father was head of the Albright Family for a really long time. You should know better than anyone else about the conflicts and ties that exist within the Ten Greatest Families here. Now, all we have to do is to drive a wedge between them. If you could convince some of

them to side with you, then they'll automatically go against the others. Get what I'm saying now?"

Edmund considered this for a moment, and as he finally registered what Matthew wanted him to do, his eyes widened in enlightenment. "I think I do!"

He clenched his fists and said grimly, "You want me to turn them against one another, and once they start butting heads. I can pick them off one by one and finally trample on all of them. Right?"

Matthew smiled and nodded. "Pretty much, but whether or not the plan will work depends on the current relationship between the Ten Greatest Families."

Edmund took a deep breath and said, "You know, Mr. Matthew Larson, the Ten Greatest Families may look close knit, but in reality, some of them are closer than others. This is especially true when it comes to profit-sharing in Neverland Pharmaceuticals, and if there are any disputes, it would be because of this. My father told me there are two ledgers in Neverland Pharmaceuticals. One is made for the Huntingtons, the Rathbones, and the Albright Family, which is known as the secret accounts. The other is made for the other families, which is known as the main accounts. In truth, the main accounts only show the numbers after half the profit has already been divided..."

"The Albright Family, the Huntingtons, and the Rathbones are known as the three strongest families out of the Ten Greatest Families. It's standard practice that half the profit for Neverland Pharmaceuticals will first be divided amongst the big three, and when the rest of it is reported in the main accounts, it will be divided again among the ten. At this point, the big three will always end up getting more than the other seven!"

A gleam flashed in Matthew's eyes when he heard this. He hadn't expected to get information like this!

If the word on Neverland Pharmaceuticals' secret and main accounts broke out, then it would be the perfect tool to drive a wedge between the Ten Greatest Families of Stonedale. The Albright Family, the Huntingtons, and the Rathbones would become enemies to the other families!

"Do you have proof of that statement?" he asked Edmund curiously.

Edmund shook his head. "You'd be overestimating me. My father said there's only one ledger for the secret accounts, and Macon, the head of the Rathbone Family, has it. Besides, he'll only take it out when the profit-sharing season comes around. On normal days, he keeps the ledger hidden somewhere not even my father knew!"

Matthew narrowed his eyes. "Does that mean we'll have to crack down on Macon if we want to find the book?"

Upon seeing the expression on Matthew's face, Edmund panicked and quickly said, "Mr. Matthew Larson, you can't do that. The Rathbones are the strongest family in Stonedale, and they have a strong background in combat. Their family is chock-full of trained martial artists. Macon, in particular, is like a legend in Stonedale. Some call him grandmaster, and not even Arnold from Woodside is a match for him! It would be too dangerous for you to confront him."

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Matthew frowned at this. He had done some research on the situation here in Stonedale before coming over, and he knew all about Macon being the most powerful martial artist in the province, but he didn't think the man could even outdo Arnold.

Nonetheless, Matthew was not too worried about it. He had become even stronger over this short period of time courtesy of the breakthrough pill. Having ingested that, he did not need the energy pill to sustain his strength in a fight.

That said, he couldn't truly grasp how strong Macon was until he took him on in a fight, but he was prepared to use the energy pill whenever necessary. The pill would be his trump card, and even if he was no match for Macon in real life, the pill would make sure he could defeat the man without fail.

The only flaw was that one could not consume the energy pill on a whim. After all, the moment the effects of the pill died off, one would lose all combative strength and become vulnerable to the enemy's attacks. If that were to happen to Matthew, his death would be imminent even if he managed to defeat Macon, unless, of course, he brought backup.

He pondered on this for a moment before saying, "Edmund, you know the Ten Greatest Families of Stonedale better than I do. Think about which of the families would be more ready to side with you while I figure out ways to get our hands on the accounts."

Upon seeing how determined Matthew was, Edmund did not try to dissuade him anymore and merely nodded.

It was 1.00 AM when a black figure snuck into Rathbone Court.

Matthew was clad entirely in black as he maneuvered his way through the Rathbones' courtyard. the topography of which he had Edmund draw out from memory.

Given that Edmund had once been close friends with the young master of the Rathbone Family, he frequented the place and knew the courtyard like it was his own home. As such, he was able to draw out a picture as vivid as his memory would allow.

On the map were two vague areas that not even Edmund knew about. One of them was the house where Macon lived alone. Apparently, not a lot of people were allowed to step foot into it. As for the other vague area, it was the Rathbone Family Depository.

With the Rathbones being a prominent martial arts family, it was not surprising that they would keep valuable books on martial arts as well as other rare collectibles. Only the core members of the family could access these things, and all outsiders were kept from entering the Depository.

Edmund guessed that if Macon wanted to keep the secret accounts somewhere hidden, the Depository would be their safest bet. Unfortunately, there didn't seem to be any way into the building. Naturally, one would be a fool to try and trespass into Macon's house, but the Depository was the most heavily-guarded place in the entire Rathbone compound. From the looks of it, the guards probably wouldn't even let a gnat get through, and breaching security was impossible regardless of how stealthy one tried to be.

As for the rest of the Rathbone Court, security was considerably lax. The residence was built on such a huge estate that the court was like a small neighborhood, and at least a thousand guards, if not more, would be needed to patrol every single area of these sprawling acres.

Surely, not even the almighty Rathbones could afford that much help!

Besides, such tight security was redundant, seeing as no one in their right mind would dare intrude into the compound and cause a scene. The lack of security for the general compound made it easier for Matthew to sneak in unnoticed.

Presently, he found the Depository after scanning the map, and he quickly hid behind a small man-made hill to observe his surroundings. Within seconds, he was certain that the Depository truly was the most heavily-guarded place in the entire court.

It was built in a separate courtyard, and in that courtyard alone stood about a dozen guards at different positions, leaving no blind spots. As things were, there was no way Matthew could approach the Depository without being seen!

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Matthew hid behind the hill and observed for a little while longer before he stealthily drew closer to the court where the Depository was.

He took out a small porcelain vial from his pocket and tipped out some of the white powder onto his palm. The powder was specially curated to knock someone out for a short period of time. He tossed the powder into the air and let the night breeze carry the particles over to the court. Sure enough, the guards there began falling unconscious one by one. However, Matthew did not immediately sneak into the Depository. Instead, he retreated to hide behind another hill that was much further away, then waited.

These guards had only passed out for a brief moment when suddenly, a loud noise came from the Depository. It was like someone had sounded the alarm, which indicated that there were more guards in the building.

Upon seeing the guards outside the Depository fall unconscious, the guards inside immediately sensed that something was off and sounded the alarm. Had Matthew snuck into the court right after he knocked out the guards, he would have been caught.

Following the sound of the alarm, everyone in Rathbone Court woke up and bolted for the Depository to see what was going on.

Seeing as the Depository was practically the heart of the family, they did not waste any time rushing out to defend it. Meanwhile, a guard clashed out from the Depository as well and hurried over to Macon's house, presumably to report the possible intrusion. Matthew followed the guard carefully and found himself standing outside Macon's private court.

Being a reclusive man, Macon enjoyed his own company and did not like crowds. His courtyard was tucked away in a quiet and remote area of the compound with hardly anyone guarding it.

While waiting for the guard to enter the courtyard, Matthew climbed over the wall and infiltrated it as well.

Macon's courtyard took up at least three or four acres of the estate. It featured a two-story house surrounded by a landscaped garden. The garden was filled with flowers, trees, grass, ponds, and even small man-made hills. It looked like a small sanctuary tailored for geriatrics to gain a peace of mind and have a cup of afternoon tea, maybe even play a round of chess.

Presently, the guard from the Depository hurried up to Macon's house, but he dared not enter, merely standing outside the door as he greeted respectfully, "Master, there's something wrong! Someone has knocked out the guards at the Depository, and whoever it is must be after the Rathbones' compendiums on martial arts!"

One of the windows of the house was pushed open to reveal the silhouette of a man standing there. It was Macon, and he sounded decidedly unfazed as he asked, "Have you located the person behind this?"

The guard shook his head and answered dutifully, "No, sir! We noticed something was off as soon as we saw the guards outside fall unconscious, and we sounded the house alarm immediately. I guess the intruder must have been startled and is now currently hiding somewhere on the compound. Should we alert all the guards and start looking around to locate the intruder?"

Macon considered this for a second and said, "Have two-thirds of our security search the grounds. As for the rest, have them guard the most vital places, especially the Depository! Also, call Gregory and ask him to drop by to check on those unconscious guards. I want to know what knocked them out in the first place."

The guard stood to attention and said, "Yes, sir!" Then, he bowed and excused himself while Macon closed the window and returned to his room.

Matthew did not leave with the guard, but stayed hidden behind the hill and waited quietly. His target for this intrusion had never been the Depository, but Macon's house!

He had asked Melvin for background information on Macon prior to coming to Rathbone Court. He learned that Macon was an extremely cautious man who would not take any chances, not to mention, elusive. He also liked to be in control of everything. A man like him would not trust anyone but himself!

With that in mind, Matthew believed that Macon would never be so reckless as to leave something as important as the secret accounts in the Depository. He would only keep it somewhere he deemed safe, and there was no safer place than his own house!

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The Rathbone Estate and the Depository saw people coming in and leaving on a frequent basis, but the most mysterious place of all on the entire estate was none other than Macon's court. The only ones who had any right to go into his house in the court were his children, Old Master Rathbone, and his wife.

On that note, even his own children had been warned not to come and go as they pleased. From what he told them, the house in the court was a sanctuary for him to recollect his thoughts and refine his martial arts. However, Matthew thought he could be

lying. He had analyzed Macon's traits and decided that there must be something very important in the house, which was why Macon did not allow anyone to go in without first alerting him of their presence.

Matthew had put his theory to the test by knocking out the guards at the Depository. Seeing as it was the most hallowed place in the entire Rathbone Estate, Matthew had achieved no small feat by causing such widespread alarm and creating the illusion that someone was trying to break into the Depository.

But Macon, who was the esteemed head of the Rathbone Family, did not even bother leaving his house to see if the security had truly been breached. Instead, he chose to stay put and dispatch most of the men to search the grounds. This could only mean that Matthew was right, there was something important Macon kept hidden in his house, something that he must stay to protect.

Presently, Matthew hid behind the man-made hill and waited for close to two hours before the ruckus in the rest of the estate quieted down.

Just then, a young man, who happened to be Macon's son, walked into the private court and reported that there was no sign of the person who knocked out the guards at the Depository. He also added that Gregory had dropped by to check on the guards only to find that they had been knocked out by a special dry concoction that even he could not replicate.

As such, Gregory warned the Rathbones to watch their backs, because the intruder was no simple burglar.

Upon hearing all this, Macon fell silent, and a moment later, he dismissed his son with a wave of his hand.

Matthew saw and heard everything clearly from where he was hiding behind the hill.

It wasn't long after Macon's son had left the court that Macon himself came out of the house and paced around the garden. He appeared to be deep in thought, but there were moments when there was a flicker of hesitation on his face. In the end, he went back into the house.

Matthew had taken note of his every gesture, and he noticed that Macon would slow down and stop in front one of the man-made hills, then stare at it for a few seconds before seemingly changing his mind.

Without a doubt, there was something wrong with that hill.

Having committed the exact location of the hill to memory, Matthew did not dawdle in the garden any longer than necessary. He was hiding in a spot that was not far from

Macon's house and coupled with his strength, he could easily be on par with the older man.

Throughout the whole time, Macon did not know that someone had intruded upon his private court.

By the time Matthew snuck out onto the rest of the estate, he saw that there was a large number of guards patrolling the grounds. Much to his advantage, the grounds were too big and there were too many blind spots. So, Matthew was able to effortlessly evade all these guards. He left Rathbone Court without being noticed at all.

The next morning, he stuck on a fake beard and turned himself into a middle-aged man, then arrived at the budget hotel Edmund was staying at.

Upon seeing him, Edmund immediately asked, "Mr. Larson, I heard that someone broke into the Rathbone Estate last night, and they were close to going into the Depository. Are you perhaps behind this?"

Matthew smiled and nodded.

Edmund's face brightened up at once. "You really are more than what meets the eye, Mr. Matthew Larson! You just went in and out of the Rathbone Estate like it was a common city square! So, how was it? Did you find anything?"

A chuckle escaped Matthew. "Not yet. but I'm sure I'll find what we want soon."

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Edmund was somewhat bewildered to hear this, and he couldn't quite understand what Matthew meant.

"Oh, by the way, Neverland Pharmaceuticals' press conference is today. Is there any way you can get me in?" Matthew asked.

Nodding, Edmund replied, "A cousin of mine operates a few pharmacies around Granville, and she's technically on the guest list. I gave her a call, and she told me she could get you in if you just pretend to be one of her employees, but that's all she can do for now. Helping you get into the press conference is the limit of my capabilities; I can't do much to help you for the time being..."

Matthew gave him a nod of thanks. He knew Edmund was in a tight spot right now, and he was already stretching the last of his connections just to get him into the press conference.

Suddenly, he asked, "Can this cousin of yours be trusted?"

"Yes," Edmund replied. "She's probably the only person in the world I could trust right now. She's my aunt's kid on my mom's side, and because her parents died young, my mom raised her. She grew up with me, and she's more like a sister to me."

This was all Matthew needed to know, and he nodded without asking further questions. The only thing he had his mind on was to get into the press conference. Nothing else mattered.

Following this, Edmund called his cousin, Isabella, and had her make all the necessary arrangements to sneak Matthew into the event.

The press conference was slated to start at 7.30 PM. Matthew arrived half an hour before the event started and met with Isabella for the first time.

She was a beautiful young lady in her early twenties, and there was no mistaking that she was a hard worker. He could tell that being orphaned at a young age had forced her to grow up quickly.

Presently, Isabella handed him a badge that acted as a pass for the event. However, seeing as she was only a small-time business owner of several pharmacies, she did not have as much standing here as the other pharmaceutical bigshots did. The badge she had given Matthew only allowed him to attend the press conference, but there would be no seats for him.

Matthew couldn't care less about these things, and he dismissed her apologies by taking the badge and thanking her pleasantly.

She looked hesitant for a moment, then leaned forward and said in hushed tones, "Sir, I don't know what your relationship with Edmund is, but he's in great danger right now. He pissed off Julian from the Huntington Family, and the other Ten Greatest Families are looking for him to settle the score. Could you do me a favor and persuade Edmund to leave Stonedale for his own safety?"

Matthew eyed her steadily, and he could see how worried she was for Edmund.

"Sure, I'll talk to him. Don't worry about it," he promised as he smiled and nodded.

She heaved a sigh of relief when she heard this, then added quietly, "Oh, I should tell you that the Ten Greatest Families will be attending the press conference tonight as well, and there'll be other moguls of the pharmaceutical industry present. Once you're

in, make sure to avoid getting into trouble with anyone. Edmund's in no position to help you out if you were to accidentally offend anyone important, and everything will just blow up into a big old mess. If you're looking to buy the medicine in bulk, I could place the orders for you, or I could even give you a part of my share too. Just... Don't go and fight the others for it."

Evidently, Isabella thought Matthew was just a small business owner who was here to place orders of the star product today. Occurrences like these were common in Granville, and this was especially true after Neverland Pharmaceuticals announced their plans to launch a new medication that could cure cancer. Anyone who could get their hands on the pills would start rolling in money in no time!

As such, plenty of distributors and sales representatives clamored to gain entry to this press conference in hopes of placing orders for the Restoration Pill. As for the moguls, they could always pull some strings to get their hands on the first batch of the medication.

Isabella presumed that Matthew did not have any connections, which was why he had turned to Edmund for help despite the latter's unfortunate circumstances. As such, she was worried that he might stir up trouble at a prestigious event like this one.

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Matthew saw the worry in Isabella's eyes, but he did not try to explain himself either. Instead, he merely nodded and smiled, "I understand."

Isabella went on to tell him what to look out for while he was at the press conference, then walked away to attend a pre-conference briefing.

Neverland Pharmaceuticals was a manufacturer and an organic business in Stonedale, which meant local pharmacies had the privilege of being invited to events like these. If that were not the case, then Isabella and her small-time business would never be able to attend a large-scale and heavily publicized press conference such as this one.

That said, the privilege to attend precluded the privilege to place huge orders. After all, there were plenty of other pharmacies in Stonedale who would probably fight tooth and nail for Neverland Pharmaceuticals' products, and Isabella was hopelessly invisible among them all. Even so, she still offered Matthew some of her orders if she managed to get any. It was through this act of generosity alone that Matthew was sure she was a kind person.

With the Ten Great Families hot on his tail, Edmund was essentially public enemy number one to the upper echelons of society. Anyone else would have cut him off or turned against him, but for Isabella to go to such lengths to help him out was proof of her fortitude.

At the moment, Matthew walked into the press conference hall, and upon seeing that it was practically devoid of people, he decided to take a look around.

While this was happening, a few cars were speeding down one of the main roads leading to the heart of Granville's metropolis. The car right in the middle of the fleet was an S-Class Mercedes Benz, which looked understated on the outside, but opulent within. There was nothing about the interior of this vehicle that did not evoke luxury and indulgence.

In fact, it looked like it had been specially modified to outshine the luxurious ambiance that a Rolls-Royce could provide its passengers.

There was a couple in the backseat. On the left was a stunning woman with waist-length hair who was meticulously painting her nails. Next to her was a young man dressed in a white suit. The man had his hair combed back neatly, revealing his finely-chiseled features and his porcelain skin. He was far prettier than any man had the right to be, like a walking piece of art.

If Matthew were there, he would recognize the man in the white suit as none other than the scion of the Cosby Family, the very same one whom he had gotten into a dispute with previously.

The Cosbys were one of the Ten Greatest Families of Cathay, and they were one of the most influential forces in the Six Southern States. Master Levi was the King of the South, but even he was on par with the Cosby Family, which only went to show how powerful the latter was.

After she was done painting her nails, the girl with the waist-length hair stretched out her arm and spread her fingers wide so that she could admire how the color of the varnish looked against her delicate hand.

Tristan, the heir to the Cosby Family name, grimaced at the girl in disgust and snorted contemptuously. The woman heard this, but instead of getting angry, she sputtered. She leaned back lazily against the seat and nonchalantly crossed one leg over the other, not at all worried about how much skin she was showing as she started painting her toenails red. Her leg dangled just ever so slightly and sensually. However, Tristan only wanted to scoff at her, and the disgust he had for her intensified.

"That's enough! You're a young lady of nobility too. You should at least try to keep up your appearance! You can't seriously think you'd command respect by behaving this way!" Tristan snapped irritably.

The girl smiled and asked, "So what if I'm a young lady of nobility? Just because I am, it doesn't mean I have to blow hot-and-cold like you do all the time. Should I perhaps glare at everybody like you do? Why don't you teach me how I can become more proper than, Young Master Tristan, seeing as you take appearances oh-so-seriously."

Tristan's blood was boiling with rage, but he could do nothing about her nonsensical comebacks and decidedly turned to look out the window, ignoring the girl entirely. Unfortunately, the girl thought this was too much fun to stop teasing him.

She kicked him gently in the calf, and he turned to snap at her angrily, "What the hell do you want?"

She then flashed him a smile and asked, "What do you think? I just want to talk to you, that's all."

"I have nothing to say to you."

She was still smiling as she drawled, "Really? Let's talk about the time when Matthew roughed you up then, shall we? I, for one, would love to dive into the juicy bit where someone held you down from behind and wouldn't let you go no matter how hard you struggled."

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Tristan's face was pale after listening to what the young woman said.

He stared at her angrily. "Who told you that? Tell me! Who said that?"

She pretended to be terrified as she gasped, "Please, could you not speak so fiercely? I'm just a weak woman, but look how frightened you've made me..."

She even patted her pounding chest to soothe herself. In reality, her actions did not make her seem terrified but instead added a certain kind of seductive air to her.

He was livid. "Don't put on these coquettish airs in front of me! Answer me! Who the hell told you that?"

The young woman giggled. "I definitely can't tell you who said it, but not many people know about it. Don't worry, Young Master Cosby. I'll help you keep it a secret!"

Tristan's anger had not dissipated one bit, but there was nothing he could do to her that would change anything, so he could only glare out the window, fuming.

She seemed rather smug as if everything was going to plan for her. She inched her way closer to him and said with a smile, "By the way, Tristan, let me ask you something. Previously, when grandpa consumed blood ginseng and ended up in that life-threatening situation, how did you know that everything would be fine if he ate a bit of ice?"

Tristan glared at her irately. "What does that have to do with you?"

She giggled yet again. "It has something to do with me, of course! Think about it. Grandpa nearly died that time, and every one of us was thunderstruck! If something happened to Grandpa, it won't be just the Cosby Family, but everyone in the Six Southern States would be shaken by the news! However, you managed to save Grandpa's life with just a piece of ice. Tristan, don't tell me you simply got lucky! Could it be that someone told you about it?"

Tristan continued to furiously glare out the window. He did not want to talk to her, but deep down inside, he was also immensely relieved.

When Wilfred ate blood ginseng, something had indeed gone wrong and he nearly died on the spot. All of the Cosbys were wringing their hands in agitation and no one knew what to do. They had brought in several of the most renowned doctors to check on Wilfred, but every single one of them nearly fainted out of fear. None of them could find a way to save the old master.

In the end, as Tristan watched Wilfred, who was on the verge of taking his last breath, he suddenly recalled what Matthew said. He decided to give it one last shot by taking a piece of ice and feeding it to Wilfred.

At the time, Tristan's father and all the other elders of the family rebuked him harshly. They thought his actions would only worsen Wilfred's condition.

No one would have ever thought that Wilfred would recover miraculously after eating a piece of ice.

Once again, the Cosbys were completely stunned. Every single one of them was in shock. As for Tristan, his incredible feat of saving Wilfred elevated his status among the family.

Tristan himself was also floored. He never would have dreamed that an off-handed comment from Matthew would end up saving the old master's life. In fact, when that happened, Tristan thought about inviting Matthew over to check on Wilfred, but before he could bring this up, his second uncle suggested inviting Gregory Huntington from Stonedale to treat Wilfred.

Gregory was a renowned doctor in Stonedale, and his fame as a medical genius had also spread all over the Six Southern States. Not to mention the fact that he created the Restoration Pill, which catapulted him further into fame. The Cosbys were naturally keen to bring in this long-famed miracle doctor.

This time, the Cosbys sent a representative to join Neverland Pharmaceuticals' product launch event. It counted as them showing respect to Gregory.

Naturally, their intention was also to request that he treat Wilfred. The Cosby Family was sincere in showing their respect for him.

Tristan's second uncle attended the product launch event along with Tristan and this female cousin of his. It had to be said that apart from Master Levi, no one in the Six Southern States had ever had the honor of having this many core members of the Cosby Family attend one of their events!

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