

## MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL

### Chapter 2241



When they heard about Gerard's rude behavior and that Sam nearly bit him, Layla and William exclaimed in unison, "Was he bitten?"

Francesca was determined. "No. I managed to stop Sam just before Gerard was bitten."

Layla patted her chest anxiously. "Are you sure he wasn't bitten? How did Gerard react?"

Francesca frowned and replied, "He muttered something to his daughter, but I couldn't hear what he said. I'm certain Sam did not bite him. Otherwise, Gerard would have collapsed on the spot. There was no way he could have left alive."

“That's true.” Layla let out a sigh of relief.

William knitted his brows. “We can't be sure. Is it possible for L's refined poison to cause a genetic change in Sam, resulting in a slower-acting poison?”

“Hmm...” Francesca considered the possibility. Before she left, Sloan had reminded her about Sam's increased toxicity after it was soaked in poison. Thus, the period it took for the poison to react might have been prolonged.

Moreover, Sam was a tiny snake, so its fang marks weren't easy to spot. Since Gerard had been covering his neck when the attack took place, she could not be a hundred percent certain that he had not been bitten.

At that thought, Francesca immediately relayed an order to one of the maids. “Please get Sloan to come here.”

“Right away!” Just as the maid was about to go and fetch Sloan, a subordinate came rushing in, reporting, “Ms. Felch, there are many policemen outside. They are asking for you to aid their investigation.”

Bewildered, Francesca asked, “What investigation?”

“Ms. Felch!”

At that juncture, Sloan also came rushing over, exclaiming anxiously, “I've just heard the news. Gerard is dead!”

“What?” Francesca was so shocked that her eyes almost popped out of their sockets.

Layla also stood rooted to the spot, stupefied.

William, too, was stunned for a moment before his

face darkened and his expression became unfathomable.

Sloan was beside himself with anxiety as he queried, “What on earth happened today? The police said that Hazel filed a report against you, accusing you of killing Gerard. The higher-ups of the police department are directly involved in the investigation.”

“I killed Gerard?” Francesca was flabbergasted. Suddenly, an uneasy feeling rose within her heart. All this seems to be premeditated...

At that moment, William began solemnly, “Sloan, I need you to remember something. L had once mentioned that Sam is extremely poisonous. Once it sinks its fangs into someone, the poison will immediately react. There is no way the victim can survive for more than half an hour.”

“Huh? But he's never said that...” Sloan stared at him, puzzled.

Layla interrupted impatiently, “Just listen to him. It doesn't matter if Mr. Lindberg has mentioned it before or not. This is what you will tell the authorities.”

Realization dawned on Sloan, and he nodded fervently. “Okay!”

William ordered, “Just leave the rest to us and go out to stop those people from entering. Tell them no one is allowed inside the castle and that everything is to be discussed when L returns.”

“Yes!” Sloan immediately left to carry out the order.

“Everyone else, please leave,” Layla instructed.

Inclining their heads, the maids bowed and exited the

study.

Impatiently, Monica said, “Your Highness, it's as you expected. The meeting today was a trap.”

“Who's trying to harm Francesca?” Layla asked worriedly.

“If I'm not mistaken, it's the person who invited her... The first lady.” William fixed his gaze on Francesca.

Francesca shuddered upon hearing William's words. She asked in stupefaction, “Why would she do that? We have no grudge against each other.”

William frowned and explained calmly, “It probably has something to do with her daughter. We're still investigating the precise reason. She had tried to harm you many times, but you've managed to get away each time. This time, however...”

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Willam heaved a sigh. Apparently, he did not feel optimistic about how things looked.

“Is the first lady doing this to bring the three great families to power?” Layla asked, puzzled. “It's not necessary if she's doing it for the sake of her daughter's love life.”

Francesca had once told Layla about the current state of Avery, the president's daughter, as well as the fact that Avery had feelings for Danrique.

However, Layla thought that as the president's wife, the first lady didn't need to seek vengeance against Francesca for something so trivial.

Danrique's fate was currently unknown, but he would not forgive the first lady if he managed to survive and learn the truth.

William's countenance grew solemn. “Perhaps for a variety of reasons. But from how things currently look, I'm almost certain she's the mastermind. She deliberately summoned Francesca over to meet the Atkinsons and left them alone on purpose. Knowing Francesca's hot temper, she expected a conflict to arise and believed Francesca would surely retaliate. Once Francesca retaliates, Gerard will die, and Francesca will become the main suspect.”

Monica exclaimed, “How devious! Will they send Ms.



Felch to prison? I don't think they would dare to, as the Lindberg family holds power here even in Mr. Lindberg's absence. They wouldn't dare act so boldly, right?"

Layla agreed with Monica, which was a rare occurrence. "She's right. What's more, Danrique is still alive. He might even be back in a few days."

"Perhaps they don't want him to come back," William suggested suddenly. The atmosphere in the room grew tense at once.

The three women gaped at him.

"If L does not return, the president can instate an obedient puppet who will take over Lindberg Corporation."

William's lips curled into a sneer as if he had already

gotten used to such devious methods.

“If L is dead, then getting rid of Francesca becomes a matter of urgency. If L is still alive, however, making a move against Francesca now would force him to show himself. And once he does, countless crises await him.”

Francesca gasped involuntarily. “So that is their plan. I was wondering why would the first lady attack me with such vicious measures. Turns out it isn't because of a personal vendetta, after all. There are huge benefits in it for her.”

“Doesn't the president care that his wife is doing these things?” Monica asked.

Layla had seen through everything. “What a redundant question. All he has to do is sit back and do nothing, and his wife will grant him the power he

desires. If anything happens, the first lady would be his scapegoat, shouldering everything for him. For all we know, he doesn't know anything. If their plan succeeds in the end, he would be the greatest beneficiary.”

Monica shuddered. “It's frightening how evil people can be.”

William laughed derisively. “Everything had been planned ahead of time. Preparations had already been made back when the president first invited L and the three great families to the banquet. If Danrique had not brought Francesca along that night and instead accepted Avery as his wife, they would have become a family. A family shares common interests, after all. However, they never expected Danrique to bring Francesca along and publicly reveal her identity, rejecting the president's 'kindness' in the process...”

Francesca said irritably, “How is this different from Frank? They're all like 'death to all who oppose me!'”

“Well, that's how it is in a dog-eat-dog world. Even blood-related siblings would lash out and kill each other, so what's to stop them from doing the same to L, who is nobody to them?” William sighed with a bitter smile.

“The problem in M Nation has long since existed, right? Why did it only blow up at this juncture? Could it be related to the president, too?” Layla asked.

William, on the other hand, was objective. “They must have been in wait for the right opportunity. Perhaps they had begun making preparations in advance when they noticed that a problem would arise around this time. Then, they would seize this opportunity to uproot Lindberg Corporation and claim it for themselves.”

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Francesca suddenly remembered something. “If you put it that way, does that mean Hazel was only a pawn of theirs?”

William nodded solemnly. “She must have been innocent. If it was only for love, she didn't need to sacrifice her father's life. If I'm not mistaken, she had always been a pawn, and the previous scandals might not have been her intention at all. The first lady instigated Gerard to help further her cause. Her purpose was to use Hazel as a diversion and have

everybody think that Hazel created all the chaos just to marry into the Lindberg family, to mask the fact that the actual mastermind had been the first lady. In any case, judging by how things turned out, it's obvious that the one who was behind all this benefited the most.”

So that's what happened.

Francesca suddenly recalled something Hazel had once said to her.

“Actually, it's good to be a doctor who's free and easy. There's really no need to get involved in such a complicated political battle...” Those were her exact words.

Perhaps Hazel had known from the start how deep the waters were. She had warned me often to distance myself, yet I didn't heed her advice.

“Hazel is clever. Danrique wouldn't have valued her highly otherwise.” William seemed to have seen through Francesca's thoughts. “However, even if she had seen through many things beforehand, there's no avoiding the fact that she's hostile toward you. Her father is dead, after all. Her hatred for you will only deepen. Even if she finds out that someone else was behind it, she still wouldn't forgive you.”

Francesca fell silent at those words.

Layla frowned. “It looks like we're caught between a rock and a hard place. Our only hope is that Danrique returns unharmed before they capture Francesca.”

William was pessimistic. “I don't think things are that simple. As the first lady is behind this, it wouldn't be long before somebody comes after Francesca. They would have nothing to fear since the Lindberg family

doesn't have anyone at the helm right now.”

“Seriously?” Layla's eyes widened with terror. She was about to say something when Sloan hurried in to report, “Ms. Felch, news about Gerard being poisoned to death is all over the headlines now. Everyone all around the world knows about this. The police have issued an ultimatum: If you don't turn yourself in, they'll barge in here.”

“This is unbelievable! They only dare to do this because someone has their backs!” Layla yelled, incensed.

Francesca, on the contrary, was unusually calm. “It's on the news? What news?”

Sloan handed Francesca the tablet. “Every major media outlet around the world has been spreading the word. Your name is censored, but they identified the



offender as Mr. Lindberg's fiancée.”

Francesca took a look. Sure enough, the news did not mention her alter-ego, Francesco. They only reported Danrique's complete disappearance and that his fiancée, someone given the alias Ms. F, had poisoned Gerald Atkinson, a member of one of the three great families.

Danrique rarely appeared in public, much less in the press. Despite that, due to the prestige of his identity, news pertaining to him tended to spread like wildfire.

This time, especially, it spread across the globe in the blink of an eye.

Danrique's legendary fiancée, Ms. F, had become known as a mysterious and vicious woman whose true identity the media all over the globe was trying to deduce.

Some inferred that she had poisoned Hazel's father because she was engaged in a fight of jealousy with Hazel. Others believed that her motive was linked to Danrique's disappearance.

In any event, public opinion on the matter was influential.

Many emphasized that nobody was above the law and that murder was the most heinous crime of all. They called for the truth to be unearthed at all costs so the murderer could be severely punished.

Some had even created polls online. Hundreds of millions of netizens voted in favor of punishing Francesca severely.

Layla was livid. "Everything has clearly been premeditated. It had only been six hours since the

meeting. His death couldn't have made the news that quickly, nor would it have caused a large public outrage in such a short time!”

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Comprehension dawned on Francesca. “Everything has been planned in advance. But why would they want to conceal my identity?”

“They probably did that because they considered the fact that you have saved many lives, including some big shots who would probably take action if they found out that you are detained in Erihal. Thus, they

censored your identity to avoid attracting trouble for themselves.”

“It is indeed premeditated, given that everything is so carefully arranged,” William surmised.

“What do we do now? Will they storm in to arrest her?” Monica asked anxiously.

As soon as she spoke, a subordinate came in to report, “The military is here, Ms. Felch, Sloan.”

Sloan panicked. “What? Even the military has gotten involved? Things are looking serious.”

“Pack your things, Francesca. Let's get out of here,” Layla urged Francesca.

“You're right. I'll go pack as well.” Monica stood up at once.

Francesca remained calm. “That won't work. The military is already here to arrest me. How are we going to escape? Even if we managed to make it out of this castle, we wouldn't be able to leave Xendale.”

William nodded. “That's right. She's innocent, but if she escapes now, they would think she's absconding because she's guilty. That way, Erihal could issue an arrest warrant for her.”

“Then what should we do? Let them take her away?” Layla asked in a panic.

William did not reply to that. Instead, he gazed at Francesca with a complicated expression.

The woman announced placidly, “Since the military and higher-ups of the police department are involved, I'm not in a position to say no. Besides, I

don't think they would dare harm me. The most they could do is lock me up for a couple of days.”

William nodded. “She would be even safer in their hands.”

Layla was beside herself with anxiety. “Have you ever thought about why they're making such a big fuss? They're trying to lure Danrique out. For all we know, he might be hurt right now and is currently hiding. He could've laid low and reappear to turn the situation around after he gets better, but do you think he can stay calm and do nothing if he finds out you're arrested?”

Francesca was conflicted. “But if I'm arrested, my sentence is as good as confirmed. What if they announce to the public that Danrique was the one who instructed me to poison Gerard? Won't that cause him more trouble?”

Layla's frown grew deeper. "That's possible. Perhaps this is a trap. The moment you escape, they will convict Danrique of various offenses, preventing him from even returning to Erihal."

Monica panicked. "We can't escape, nor can we stay. What should we do, then?"

Francesca quickly made up her mind. "I can't run. I would have to go through a trial and an investigation since they're doing things according to the procedure. At least they wouldn't do anything to me during that phase, but..."

She peered out the window, feeling uneasy. "Would those scoundrels come to steal the seal in my absence? I will need a few bodyguards."

Sloan felt distressed for Francesca. "Don't worry

about us right now, Ms. Felch. Take care of yourself instead. I'd already had somebody contact Gordon, and he'll think of something when he gets back."

"He's out there searching for Danrique. Don't bother him," replied Francesca before leaving in a hurry.

"Where are you going, Ms. Felch? Ms. Felch!" Sloan immediately followed her while Layla did the same.

Monica asked in a low voice, "Your Highness, should we leave? This doesn't concern us, and I think the military and the police wouldn't give us a hard time..."

William scowled at her. "It would be indecent if we were to leave at this crucial moment! Francesca had rescued me so many times. How could I stay out of this when she needs me the most?"

Monica was distressed. "There's nothing you can do



now, and we'll be implicated if we stay. What would become of Robin and everybody in the castle if something happened to you?"

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William's expression turned grim. "Shut up. I don't want to hear you say such nonsense a second time."

"Yes, Your Highness." Monica inclined her head at once, not daring to speak further.

"Give me my phone."

Monica handed William's phone to him, and he called Robin. "Find me a legal team that is familiar with Erihal's laws. Also, come as soon as you can."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Robin had seen the news and learned that something had happened to Francesca. Knowing that his master would contact him, he had already made preparations.

After hanging up, William ordered Monica, "Arrange a meeting with Hazel for me."

"Yes, Your Highness." Though Monica disagreed about William getting involved, she gave him her full support since he had already made up his mind.

"One more thing."

William was about relay another order when eagle cries suddenly sounded outside.

Instinctively, he turned to look and saw several eagles gliding past the window. Following that, a herd of wild beasts raced toward the front hall.

Monica was dumbfounded for she had never seen such a spectacle before. “Did the animals escape because they were frightened?” she asked, panicking.

“Wheel me out.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

Monica wheeled William out of the palace, and the pair soon became stunned upon witnessing the scene before them.

Francesca was standing at the entrance of the hall

with her arms spread open as she summoned every animal inhabiting the animal-training facility.

The eagles gliding in the sky and the beasts galloping across the place heeded her command.

In the near distance, the convoy of vehicles that had just arrived skidded to jerky halts.

Among them were police cars containing the force's highest-ranking officers, military jeeps of the army, and private vehicles belonging to the three great families.

The high-ranking police officers and military officials in their cars were awestruck by the scene before them.

Seated in one of the MPVs, Hazel, Harrier, and Kevin were similarly stunned.

“W-What is going on here? Don't tell me that brat had been in the circus before!”

Kevin was so worked up he was babbling incoherently.

“Though I'd heard of her ability to summon beasts, I thought it far-fetched. I can't believe it's true.” Harrier narrowed his eyes and peered out the window with a complicated expression.

“I don't care how good she is. She is going to pay for killing my father.”

Hazel glared at Francesca with hatred as her hands clenched into fists.

She was merely hostile toward Francesca before that, but at present, she also felt immense hatred toward her.

Kevin was thoroughly rattled. “Beast summoning? I've only seen it in movies. I can't believe it exists in the real world as well!”

Harrier appeared calm. “The world is never short on curiosities. Why would Danrique be so deeply in love with her if she isn't remarkable?”

Kevin became disconcerted. “This girl seems formidable. Will we be able to defeat her?”

“She won't be able to run with the military and the police here. She owes a blood debt, so it's only natural that she pay it with her own life,” Hazel snarled. She then exited the vehicle and proceeded to beckon the cars behind them to move forward.

At that moment, Francesca waved her arms and ordered the beasts, “In my absence, defend the castle

and prevent any breaches!”

The beasts nodded as if they were a unique task force.

Francesca waved her hands again, and the animals retreated to the side at once to make way for the convoy's arrival.

The occupants exited their vehicles tentatively. Armed with guns, members of the military and police force regarded Francesca with wariness and fear.

Francesca stood at the entrance. A convocation of eagles circled above her head, and a pack consisting of tigers, lions, and leopards flanked her. Every one of those beasts glowered at the people before them with murderous intent, as if saying, “I will tear apart whoever dares lay a finger on my goddess.”

The entourage of predators terrified all of them. Some police officers were so frightened that they were trembling. Kevin, on the other hand, didn't even dare to emerge from the vehicle.

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Hazel might hate Francesca, but she was terrified by how the situation had escalated. She couldn't even utter a word.

Harrier stood behind the crowd and watched silently.

The team stood dozens of meters away as they dared



not come any closer. Each of them pointed a gun at the beasts warily, not daring to let their guards down.

Despite that, they were still extremely uneasy, afraid that the beasts would rush over to rip them into shreds.

In the end, someone from the military spoke. “Ms. Felch, you are under suspicion of being involved in a murder case. Please come with us to assist in the investigation.”

“Be clear. What murder case do you suspect I'm involved in?” Francesca demanded haughtily.

“Gerard Atkinson died from poison after seeing you. According to our investigation, you used a venomous snake to attack him, so—”

“Please mind your words,” Francesca interjected icily.

“The venomous snake had indeed flown from my hands to his neck, but I summoned it back before it could bite him. Gerard's death has nothing to do with me.”

“How can we know if you're telling the truth?” Hazel roared angrily. “My father kept holding his neck back then. He also said his neck felt cold and numb. It must be your venomous snake that bit him! Nothing happened on our way back, and the poison acted up when we got home, killing him in the process. Who else could it be? It must be you!”

“Even though we've met up, that doesn't mean I killed him. If you die later, is it my fault, too?” Francesca retorted.

“Hey!” Hazel's face paled in fury.

Right then, William gave Monica a silent gesture. The

woman immediately shoved Sloan, hinting at him to speak up.

Regaining his senses, Sloan promptly explained, “Ms. Atkinson, I think you've gotten it wrong. The green snake belongs to Mr. Lindberg. It has been bathed in poison since its birth, so its venom is extremely fatal. If it had bitten Mr. Atkinson, he would've died on the spot. There was no way he'd die at home.”

“Hear that?” Hazel grew increasingly emotional.

“Francesca knew that snake was venomous but allowed it to bite my father! She wanted to kill my father!”

“No, I mean—”

“Francesca, I must avenge my father! How could you do that to him?”

Hazel grabbed a gun and aimed it at Francesca.

Suddenly, one of the tigers let out a guttural roar at her. Frightened, Hazel nearly collapsed to the ground.

“Let me repeat myself. I didn't kill your father.”

Francesca shot her a frosty look before turning to the police. “You must've examined the body, right? What did the forensic pathologist say?”

“According to the forensic pathologist, Mr. Atkinson died from snake venom. Ms. Felch, all evidence points to you, so please follow us back to assist in the investigation,” the highest-ranking police officer replied.

“Snake venom, huh?” Francesca sneered. “So it's indeed a pre-arranged trap.”

“What do you mean?” Hazel demanded instinctively.

“You're only needed to assist in the investigation. Please cooperate.” The police officer gestured for Francesca to leave with them.

“Before Mr. Lindberg returns, no one is allowed to take Ms. Felch away,” Sloan declared as he led his men to stand before Francesca.

“No one dares to harm Ms. Felch, but if you stop us from carrying out our job, we have no choice but to arrest her with force,” one military officer said sternly. “After all, we've received Mr. President's orders to carry out this mission.”

Sloan and the rest were stunned to hear that. The president gave them the orders? No wonder they are this insistent.

Francesca's lips curled. It looks like Layla and

William's prediction was right.

She said calmly, “Assist in the investigation, right? No problem. But my subordinates won't allow anyone to barge into the Lindberg residence when I'm not around.”


With that said, she waved her hands, and the beasts roared out loud in unison.

The beasts' roars were so deafening that the rest took a step back as their faces turned pale in horror.

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Francesca walked toward them, but none of them had the to arrest her. Instead, they kept retreating in fear.

They backed up until they found themselves pressed up against their cars and had no other way out. Left with no choice, they were forced to face Francesca.

The beasts followed Francesca closely, so the police officers didn't even dare to lay a hand on her.

Finally, Francesca gave a wave to dismiss the beasts.

Only then did the highest-ranking police officer take a deep breath as he opened the car door carefully.

“This way, please,” he said.

“Ms. Felch...” Sloan took a step forward to stop her.

Francesca made a gesture and ordered, “Stay at

home and protect Ms. Layla.”

“Got it, Ms. Felch,” Sloan answered with a sad nod.

“I'll wait for you here,” Layla said, her eyes reddening.

“Okay.” Francesca bobbed her head and turned to William. “William, your condition is stable, so you can leave anytime. This has nothing to do with you, and they won't make things difficult for you.”

She whipped her head around to look at the military and police officers. “Am I right, guys?”

The leaders of both teams nodded. “Of course. Prince William has nothing to do with the matter. No one will find fault with him.”

“I'm glad to hear that.”



William spoke suddenly. "The castle is huge. I don't feel like living. Francesca, I'll wait for your and L's return here!"

"All right." Francesca didn't think too much about his words as she assumed he had nowhere to go. After all, people in Danontand were watching him like a hawk and might attempt to hurt him if he were to leave.

It would be safer for him to stay under the Lindberg family's protection.

"Ms. Felch, come on," the police officer urged.

Francesca got into the car. The beasts wanted to follow her, but she chided, "Leave."

The beasts hurriedly retreated, heeding her order.

The police officers quickly got into the car and drove away.

A few eagles soared in the sky above the car to escort Francesca.

When the driver sped up, the eagles increased their speed, too. They were impossible to shake off.

Seeing that, the police officers in the car broke out into a cold sweat.

Francesca told them calmly, "Don't worry. They won't hurt anyone if I'm not in danger."

"Ms. Felch, please don't say that. We wouldn't dare to hurt you!" The police officer hurriedly explained, "You only have to assist in the investigation. We're doing this under orders."

“Under whose orders?” Francesca asked with her brow arched.

“Well...” The police officer seemed hesitant to answer her question.

She said nothing else for she had gotten the answer she wanted from his silence.

Clearly, Layla and William were right. It was the president's doing. Without his orders, no one will have the guts to harm someone who's part of the Lindberg family!

Nevertheless, the police officers weren't lying when they said they dared not touch Francesca for now. They still had to use her to force Danrique to show himself.

The car drove out of the castle. Layla watched the

convoy for a while before looking away.

She had expected this day to come ever since Francesca ended up with Danrique. Alas, their efforts to protect her were in vain.

I thought I was able to help Francesca, but now I realize that I am helpless in the face of absolute power. Perhaps someone else can be of help at a time like this...

Layla went over to William. “Prince William, do you have a plan in mind?”

That was the first time Layla took the initiative to talk to William politely.

“I've asked Robin to come to the castle with a professional legal team,” William revealed with a smile. “Don't worry. I'll help Francesca.”

“Oh, that's good to know. Thank you.” Layla sighed in relief.

He's my only hope for now.

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## Chapter 2248



After Francesca was taken away, a somber atmosphere took over the Lindberg residence.

Norah would sob quietly and wipe her tears from time to time.

Sloan was anxious and kept trying to contact Gordon.

Previously, Gordon would call every day to get an update about the situation in the castle, but after what happened recently, he suddenly cut off contact.

Despite feeling something was amiss, Sloan didn't know what else to do. He could only text Gordon to inform the latter about Francesca's situation.

Robin arrived the next day. Sloan sent someone to pick him up and bring him over to the castle.

William talked to Robin behind closed doors for the entire afternoon before Robin got to work.

No one knew what he was busy with.

After learning they found a legal team, Sloan told William that Danrique had a legal team of his own that

was trustable.

However, William said they couldn't use their own legal team without explaining the reason.

Sloan felt unsettled, but Layla told him to trust William.

Seven days went by in the blink of an eye.

There was no activity on William's side, but the news about Francesca poisoning Gerard had blown up everywhere.

An anonymous netizen provided evidence that an attendant in the hotel saw Francesca releasing her venomous snake to bite Gerard. There was also a blurry video showing their backs.

The video didn't show Francesca's face, but it was a

scene showing Francesca releasing her snake to bite Gerard. It wasn't edited or faked; it was real.

Clearly, there was a camera in the private room that had recorded the entire scene. The person who posted this must've cut out one part of the video to post this online.

Seeing that, Sloan and the rest were furious. It was pretty obvious by now that the first lady was behind this. After all, she was the one who picked the place and would've examined the place thoroughly before entering it. There was no way an attendant could've recorded that secretly.

Hence, she must've deliberately ordered her men to set up the camera so that Francesca would get blamed.

As Sloan rambled about how despicable the first lady



was, he got increasingly furious. However, William chuckled.

Layla frowned. “Why are you laughing?”

“Hazel will be contacting me soon,” William replied confidently.

“Why?” Monica was curious. “For the past few days, I tried all means to ask her out but got rejected every time. She even threatened me. Why would she change her mind suddenly?”

“She should've read the news,” came William's calm answer. “It's pretty easy to understand what happened. Even Sloan realized what happened, let alone her.”

Monica and Sloan were stunned, but Layla promptly understood what he meant. “Are you saying that

Hazel has realized it was a trap set by Mrs. President?”

“Yes.” William nodded. “She's a smart woman.”

Layla was still worried. “But Francesca is her love rival. Will she help Francesca? Or will she take the chance to get rid of Francesca?”

“She won't help us.” William was pretty sure of that. “However, she wants to know the truth. We can use that to our advantage. Besides, she won't want L to be in trouble.”

“All right. We'll rely on you, then. This is giving me a headache.”

Right after Layla finished her sentence, Monica's phone rang. She took a look at the screen and grew excited. “It's from Hazel.”

William gave her a look, and she went aside to answer it. A while later, she returned and reported, “Your Highness, Ms. Atkinson wants to meet you tonight.”

“Okay.” William nodded. “Sloan, please make the arrangements.”

“Sure.”

Sloan made the arrangements according to William's wishes and drove him to the meeting spot.

As William had difficulty moving around, Hazel got into his car after he arrived at the meeting spot. She went straight to the topic and asked, “Your Highness, do you have something to tell me?”

“I think you have a question for me, Ms. Atkinson.”

William gave her a pleasant smile.

“You're indeed smart, Your Highness.” Hazel gave him an intense look. “I'd like to know your opinion about the video that appeared in the news today.”

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[MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL](#)

Chapter 2249

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“I have the same opinion as you, Ms. Atkinson,” William answered. “Mrs. President is a careful person. Why would she allow an attendant to record a video in secret?”

“Ha! I knew it!” Hazel sneered. “She manipulated my

father, created a scandal between me and Mr. Lindberg, and blamed her daughter's illness on me. I endured how she made me a scapegoat for her deeds over the years. I knew she had been using me, but I didn't want to offend her and invite trouble. Nevertheless, my endurance only caused her to push her limits.”

“That's how the world works.” William could understand her feelings. “The weaker you are, the more they will take advantage of you.”

“I endured her actions in the past, but my father lost his life this time.” Hazel grew emotional. “Despite his evil deeds, he was still my father. Besides, he loved me. He was the only family I had...”

Her voice choked.

William handed her a tissue and comforted her, “My

condolences.”

After a pause, he got down to business. “Now that we know Mrs. President is behind this, then—”

Hazel interrupted him by saying hatefully, “You don't have to persuade me to change my mind. Even if it was Mrs. President's plan, the real murderer was still Francesca. She knew the snake was venomous but told it to bite my father! That was murder!”

William asked, “Are you sure the snake bit your father? Could it be someone else who poisoned him?”

“After leaving the hotel, we got into the car. Nothing happened after that. Less than two hours after my father got home, he started feeling unwell. When the doctor arrived, he was already...”

She trailed off as her eyes turned red. “The forensic

pathologist examined him and said he died from snake venom. Who else could it be? It must be Francesca's doing!"

"We can only be sure after examining him personally."  
William wound down the window and called out,  
"Sloan!"

"Yes."

Sloan gestured for his subordinate to drive a truck over to them.

He then opened the door to reveal a pig inside.

"Huh? This is..." Hazel was baffled as she didn't know what they were getting at.

When Sloan released Sam into the truck, Hazel finally understood what was going on. She immediately got

out of the car and went nearer for a better look.

Initially, Sam didn't want to attack the pig. The subordinates started hitting the truck to create noise. Growing irritated by the noise, Sam flew in the pig's direction and sank its fangs into the pig's neck.

The pig immediately let out a horrible shriek and collapsed. It began frothing at the mouth and twitching uncontrollably as blood trickled out of its mouth and ears.

Less than ten minutes later, the pig stopped moving. Its blood was black, and its skin slowly turned green.

It was a horrible sight.

Hazel gaped in disbelief when she saw the pig's death.



Beside her, Sloan explained, “Sam is Mr. Lindberg's snake. Besides Mr. Lindberg, it only listens to Ms. Felch's orders. If Ms. Felch ordered it to stop, it would definitely stop. I wasn't sure what would happen when Sam was to bite someone, but Gordon reminded me before he left that Sam's venom was lethal. Anyone it bites would die immediately. After seeing the experiment, I'm sure you know Mr. Atkinson wouldn't wait until two hours later to die if Sam had bitten him. Just like the pig, he would've...”

When he realized the inappropriateness of his words, he quickly apologized, “I'm sorry. I mean, he'll die from the venom on the spot.”

He didn't need to explain anything, for it was pretty obvious what the experiment meant. Hazel had been with Danrique long enough to know what his snakes were like.

Back when she left the hotel with Gerard, he seemed fine. Hence, she assumed Sam didn't bite him and that he was merely imagining things when he claimed his neck felt cold and numb.

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### MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL

#### Chapter 2250



After her father died, the forensic pathologist insisted his cause of death was snake venom. During her moment of shock and grief, she promptly lost all reason and focused on seeking revenge for her loved one.

It's obvious that I've been used. Someone else must

be behind my dad's death!

“Someone must've arranged for the forensic pathologist to say that,” William reminded her. “If you don't trust him, you can hire a trusted forensic pathologist to examine your father's body again, but...”

“But what?” Hazel demanded anxiously after regaining her composure.

“I'm afraid it's too late,” William revealed with a frown.

Hazel turned pale in shock. She pulled her phone out to call her assistant hastily. “Go to the police station and get my father's body back now! Hurry!”

“Yes!” Her assistant got to work immediately.

“Your Highness, please excuse me.”

Hazel took one last look at William before leaving in a hurry.

William watched her back as she left. He knew his plan had succeeded.

Sloan came over to him. “Your Highness, are you saying that they would deal with Mr. Atkinson's body earlier than expected to avoid Ms. Atkinson examining his body again?”

“Yes.” William nodded. “I'm afraid it's too late even if she rushes back now.”

“What should we do?” Sloan panicked. “Will she still trust us?”

“Of course.” William's lips curled into a smirk. “The more they try to cover things up, the more it proves

that something is wrong.”

“Oh, I see.” Realization dawned upon Sloan.

“All right, then. Let's go.”

William knew the first part of his plan had succeeded. As long as Hazel trusts me, Francesca will be safe.

Sloan drove him back to the castle.

In the car, while Monica put a blanket over William's lap, he sighed. “I wonder how Francesca is doing inside. Did they torture her?”

“I don't think they dare to do that,” Monica assured him. “Mr. Lindberg hasn't shown up, after all. What if he shows up and settles the scores with them? Besides, Ms. Felch isn't someone who will suffer silently.”

“You're right.” William broke into a smile.

Right then, William's phone rang. Monica handed his phone to him hastily. He answered the call and put it on speaker mode. “Ms. Atkinson.”

“I just received a call. They had already cremated my father's body,” Hazel told him in a low voice.

“I'm sorry. I should've reminded you earlier,” William apologized softly.

“It looks like the culprit behind my father's death was Mrs. President.” Hazel finally realized the truth. “She used my father's death to convict Francesca. She also wants to use Francesca to draw Mr. Lindberg out so she can kill him!”

William sounded pleased. “You finally realized what is

going on. Don't be someone else's pawn anymore.”

“Yes, I finally realized the truth.” There was a hint of sadness and fury in Hazel's voice. “She used me so many times, and I endured her actions patiently. I can't believe this is what I get in the end.”

William advised, “That's why you have to fight back. Helping Francesca is akin to helping L now.”

Hazel chuckled bitterly. “I know. Your Highness, Francesca is blessed to have a good friend like you!”

William said meaningfully, “L is also blessed to have a great assistant like you. I think he selected you to follow him to M Nation not only because he trusted you; he also wanted to protect you.”

Hazel was stunned to hear that.

Yes, Danrique should've brought Harrier to M Nation, but he brought me there instead. Harrier was sent to H City. I assumed it was because Danrique didn't trust Harrier enough, but he must've known that someone wanted to go against him. The person who followed him to M Nation will get to escape danger. If my father hadn't fallen into a trap and gotten used by someone else, my family could've escaped unscathed.

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