

MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL

Chapter 2281



Needless to say, they were eagerly waiting for it.

However, they did not receive any tasks even when a few days had passed.

It was not until yesterday did Gordon inform them to head to Koandria for a mission to deal with Jesse.

“We can finally go out! I'm so happy!”

“Yes, we can finally meet with Boss!”

“I wonder if he's still the same as all those years ago.”

“Of course he is! He won't grow old.”

“Stop fantasizing, you guys. Our boss already has a fiancée. We're going to Xendale to search for our future lady.”

“Yes!”

Meanwhile, when Danrique was awake, the first thing he asked was about his woman. “Have you found Francesca?”

“No,” replied Sean cautiously. “But we've managed to deal with Jesse and give him the data as you ordered. He released the first piece of news ten minutes ago. Everything's going smoothly.”

Not replying to him, Danrique covered his forehead with his hand.

While he had been gradually recovering in the seven days he stayed in Xendale, he needed more than ten

hours of sleep a day. After all, he suffered quite severely—the wounds repeatedly got inflamed and infected.

When he learned of Layla and Sloan's deaths, he reprimanded Gordon and Sean. On the contrary, when he heard of Francesca's uncertain fate, he was all silent.

After a long while, he finally ordered Gordon to search for Francesca, but not to draw any attention.

He was certain that Francesca would be fine, for the beasts she summoned would protect her.

Perhaps she's hiding somewhere to heal her wounds silently. Yeah, that must be it.

“Mr. Lindberg, this is the medicine Gordon had someone send over. Ms. Felch left it at home. Maybe

it will do you good. Do you want to try it?" asked Sean, feeling his heart breaking for his boss.

Danrique was blasted by a bomb, resulting in his body being covered in wounds and injuries all over, including his vital organs. If he did not have a good physique, he would not have survived until now.

Although he was treated by the best surgeon there was, it would still take a long time for him to heal completely. How I wish Francesca was here.

"Of course it would do me good. It's her meds."

As Danrique stared at the bottles and tubes in front of him, as well as the crooked Chanaean words on them, her small and beautiful face formed in his mind.

He could not help but be engulfed with guilt.

I said I'd protect her, yet she's going through all this disaster because of me...

“Mr. Lindberg, the president's people are searching for us all over the place. They even have people guarding the Lindberg Castle and corporation,” reported Sean. “Also, Harrier has led his people to barge into the house countless times wanting to take the seal. Mdm. Norah is injured because of them.”

“What audacity!” shouted a subordinate angrily, who had been listening from the side.

Norah might be merely a housekeeper, but she had watched Danrique and the other bodyguards grow up as if they were her children.

In their eyes, she was their beloved elderly.

They hurt Mdm. Norah just to get the seal! They're

employing any means necessary just to get things done, huh?

“Tell Norah not to block their path. If they want the seal, then let them have their way,” ordered Danrique. “If they could break into my study room, I have to respect their abilities!”

“Understood.” Sean then instructed someone to give Norah a call before continuing, “To stop the fuss, the president tried to bribe the Gold family, but he couldn't afford to pay them, so he could only turn to Harrier and Kevin. However, those two couldn't fork out that much money as well, so they plan to steal the seal to fish out the company's funds.”

Sean paused for a while. “To be honest, Prince William has helped us big time. He used all his wealth to buy off the Gold family and had them release the scandal to suppress the president and his wife.

Before this, he had even convinced Ms. Atkinson to retaliate against Mrs. President. That went fairly well, but..." he trailed off, not knowing how to put it into words.

"He could've stopped Ms. Layla and Sloan from impulsively saving Ms. Felch, but he didn't," Danrique finished for him calmly.

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Chapter 2282



"Yes..." Sean felt complexed. "I can't fathom why."

"He gave up all his wealth to help me, so the favor he

owed me is repaid,” responded Danrique lowly.

“Perhaps he didn't take it into account when he didn't stop Sloan and Ms. Layla, or perhaps he's trying to create obstacles between Francesca and me.”

“You rarely use the word 'perhaps.’”

As far as Sean could remember, Danrique had always been confident in everything. However, now, he did not sound as certain, especially when it came to William.

Maybe he's trying to think positively. It won't be good if we make assumptions with no solid evidence, anyway.

To the proud Danrique, he lost to his ego this time, as he had underestimated his opponent's strength and schemes.

Perhaps because of that, he started reflecting upon himself.

As if Sean had figured it out, Danrique stayed silent for a long while before slowly stating, “Get in contact with Emperor of Riz Corporation. Tell him I need his help.”

It was the first time Danrique had to humble himself this much, and that shocked Sean.

While Sean was aware that Danrique could handle the president and his wife with his power alone, what they lacked was time.

The more they delayed this, the more danger Francesca would be exposed to.

Hence, Danrique had to strike back with no time wasted.

Even so, Sean seemed a bit reluctant. “But we offended Riz Corporation when we helped Mr. Lincoln that time. I'm afraid Emperor will refuse to help us.”

“Just try,” persuaded Danrique. “No matter what, we're still distant relatives.”

To Danrique, saying such words was like mocking himself.

“Understood. I'll do it right away.”

With that, Sean contacted the people at Riz Corporation, asking them to convey Danrique's message to Darcel.

All they had to do now was wait for a response.

Nowadays, Darcel was the only one powerful enough

to restrain those prestigious families.

Danrique needed help, as he could not do it alone.

The Nacht family and the Lindberg family were arch-enemies. In fact, the one who made things difficult for Danrique right now was Zara Nacht, so Danrique definitely could not ask for help from the Nacht family.

Because of that, he would rather lower his ego and get help from Darcel.

Staring at the calendar on the wall, Danrique counted the days.

I have to make the president beg me to return in seven days. That way, Francesca will be safe.

Meanwhile, in the jungle, all that could be heard was the rhythm of water dropping.

When Francesca woke up from the nightmare, her mind still played the devastating moment before Layla and Sloan's deaths.

She lost count of how many days it had been since the tragedy.

After she fainted, the beasts took her to the jungle. By the time she regained consciousness, she already had coconuts and dewes by her side, as well as some chestnuts brought by the squirrel.

She ate all of them, as she needed to stay alive to avenge Layla and Sloan.

Like a child who had made mistakes, Sam accompanied her silently.

Her body gradually recovered, but it could not be said the same about her willpower.

In her whole life, this was the first time she had suffered such a devastating loss.

Layla was like a mother figure to her. The former had taught her, protected her, and even guided her when she was lost.

Sadly, the kind Layla was now gone forever. She did not even get to meet Lincoln for the last time.

Even though Layla and Lincoln had been arguing all their lives and could not stand one another, Francesca knew they cared about each other.

They had agreed that after this crisis was over, they would lie low and live a peaceful life in the hills together.

But...

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Chapter 2283



How am I going to find someone as good as her?

How am I going to face Mr. Lincoln?

What am I going to tell Lincoln and Anthony?

What about the kids at the children's home?

What about me?

Tears escaped from the corner of her eyes, and

Francesca's eyes fluttered shut. Sloan's naive yet handsome face emerged in her mind.

Back when they first met, she still did not have her memories yet. The first time she summoned a beast with the summoning spell, Sloan was starry-eyed.

From then on, he became her fan.

To help her out, he even went against Danrique's orders and let her go sneakily.

Every time he received the task to protect her, he carried it out to the best of his ability.

Every time she fought with Danrique, he would defend her.

To her, Sloan was not just a bodyguard; he was her buddy in the Lindberg family.

This time, he impulsively broke into the prison with Layla to rescue her.

He was someone who had gone through rigorous training, so how could he not know that he was running straight to his death?

He definitely knew it.

But he still came because she was the one he admired and wanted to protect most.

Zolt and Morty, too. They were Sloan's good friends, and they were often tasked to protect Francesca, so they were close to her as well.

That was why they had blindly followed Sloan there.

In the end...

The thought of those cruel scenes was like a knife through Francesca's heart.

Her twenty-one years of living had been eventful, but she never bore any grudges toward anyone.

Not even Chrono.

What she felt the most were often resignation and exasperation.

However, this time, Francesca abhorred the masterminds—the president and his wife.

Regardless of everything, they had set her up and killed Layla, Sloan, Morty, and Zolt. Francesca was never going to let them off.

With that thought in mind, a new motivation to live

burned bright in Francesca.

She had to recompose herself and make herself stronger. It was only then she would be able to protect herself and the people around her.

She could not be the lamb waiting to be slaughtered anymore.

Now, Francesca regretted not listening to Layla. She should have created more powerful weapons and poison and brought them along with her. She could have made herself more powerful in both attack and defense.

Nevertheless, she had to wait until Xendale was peaceful again before she could work on that.

After all, no matter how mighty she was, she could never win against those in power.

I wonder how Danrique is doing now. Is he back? Will he be able to turn the tables and defeat the evil couple?

Francesca stared at the dark cave for a while before forcing herself to sit upright. Then, she gobbled down the wild berries and chestnuts beside her.

She had to recuperate and recover as quickly as she could so that she could leave the place.

She had to look for Danrique.

Danrique woke with a start. His forehead was beaded with sweat, and terror filled his amber eyes.

He had a nightmare again, and in his nightmare, Francesca was caught in an explosion in the underground dungeon. She was torn to pieces, and

her blood coated his entire body.

He screamed her name as his heart shattered into a million pieces.

The pain he felt in his chest seemed so real.

“Mr. Lindberg, you're awake,” Sean said from behind the screen. “Do you want some water?”

“Any news of her?” asked Danrique instead, covering his eyes with his hand.

“Not yet,” Sean tentatively replied. “But Ms. Felch's childhood friend, Anthony, has gone to Xendale to look for her. Mr. Lincoln is with him. The two of them are working in secret, and they thought that no one has found them out, but the president's men have been watching them the moment they arrived.”

“Mr. Lincoln has been saved?”

“Mhm. He's been released a few days ago,” Sean answered. “Riz Corporation's men were nice enough to send him straight to S Nation. He probably saw the news and failed to contact Ms. Felch and Ms. Layla. He was worried about them, so he came to Xendale as soon as possible.”

“Send someone to protect them from the shadows,” Danrique instructed. “Don't alert anyone.”

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Chapter 2284



“Do we not persuade them to return?” Sean whispered. “They shouldn't be intervening at a time like this.”

“Do you think we will succeed?” Danrique let out a bitter chuckle. “They're as stubborn as Francesca.

“You're right.” Sean sighed.

“Just secretly protect them,” Danrique repeated. “Task Gordon on this, and have him bring a few quick-witted ones, but not too many.”

“Task Gordon on this? Is he not going to look for Ms. Felch anymore?” Sean blurted out. Then, he realized what Danrique was trying to do. “Oh, I see. You think that they have a way to contact Ms. Felch, so by having Gordon protect them, Gordon will be able to find Ms. Felch?”

Danrique inclined his head. He was running out of strength to speak.

“Understood. I'll call Gordon right away,” Sean said as he turned around.

“Wait,” Danrique called out.

“Yes?” Sean halted in his tracks and waited for Danrique's instructions.

“Have Lupine and the others work on the second task,” Danrique stared at the clock on the wall and continued, “at three in the afternoon tomorrow.”

“Um... We're putting forward the plan by this much?” Sean was baffled. “Riz Corporation has yet to respond...”

“Do as I say!” Danrique could not wait any longer. He

had to find Francesca immediately.

Before that happened, he had to have a trump card to ensure her safety too.

“Yes, sir.” Sean felt that putting forward the plan was risky, but he could understand how Danrique felt, so he dared not go against his words.

Gordon instantly conveyed Danrique's order to the others and called Gordon and Lupine.

Once the two received their orders, they immediately worked on it.

Then, the latest news came from Lupine. Per the instructions he received, Jesse uploaded a piece of evidence of the presidential palace's crimes every day. It resulted in an uproar, and public opinion was unfavorable to the president. Many citizens were

calling for the president to step down, and some even took their protests to the streets.

By then, the president and his wife panicked.

Harrier and Kevin were not of any help at all.

In fact, Harrier was panicking. He knew that the sudden turn of tables had to mean that Danrique was back.

The news that targeted the first lady and Avery could have been due to William bribing the Gold family. However, the evidence of the presidential palace's crimes was not something William would be able to get.

Only Danrique was capable of doing that, and that evidence was his trump card.

The president thought that he could take advantage of the situation when Danrique was targeted by M Nation to annihilate the latter and take over Lindberg Corporation, but as it turned out, Danrique came prepared.

Danrique was never one to care about power and status, but he would never let anyone who crossed him off the hook.

Harrier was smart. He knew that the president would not be able to do anything to him as long as Danrique could come back alive.

Therefore, he had to stop helping the president, or else he was doomed to a terrible death.

But what can I do?

Harrier was gripped with anxiousness.

Right then, William sent his men to bring a tortoise to him.

The moment Harrier saw it, he immediately understood that it was best for him to act like a tortoise hiding in its shell at a time like this.

Hence, he immediately went into hiding.

Kevin grew a brain this time, for he did the same thing as Harrier. Therefore, both of them went into hiding.

The two of them abandoned Lindberg Corporation and discreetly fled the country. Even if the president and his wife were furious, there was nothing they could do about them.

The tide had changed. The presidential palace was losing the people's trust, and the army and the

Ministry of Law were starting to waver. Even the ones who were sent to keep an eye on the Lindberg family were beginning to work half-heartedly. As a matter of fact, they were even letting many things slip by them knowingly.

Everyone was waiting for Danrique to return.

The perilous state of everything forced the president to hold a press conference, hoping to clarify certain things to salvage his reputation.

At three in the afternoon the next day, right as the president was about to head up the stage for his speech, he received a piece of shocking news.

His wife and his daughter had been kidnapped!

All colors drained from the president's face when he heard the news, but he soon calmed down and

announced the kidnapping of his family at the press conference. Then, he started to try to gain sympathy from the people.

However, in the middle of his pitiful act, he received a message. Mr. President, aren't you afraid of us killing your wife and daughter if you continue to play the pity card?

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Chapter 2285

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It was a call from an unknown number.

The initially calm president was overwhelmed by

mixed reactions. The culprit must be a powerful figure. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to kidnap my wife and daughter under the watchful eyes of the guards.

The president believed the culprit was aware of his every move. By right, no one else, besides the crewmembers and the journalists in the hall, would know what he said since the press conference was not live-streamed.

Even the recorded video would only be released half an hour later once the president's secretary had reviewed the content. Who is the culprit? What does he want from me?

The journalists began bombarding him with questions. “Mr. President, did someone really kidnap the first lady and Ms. Avery?”

“Mr. President, who do you think kidnapped them?”

“Mr. President, what's your opinion on the latest news about you? Do you think someone did that to sabotage you?”

“Mr. President...”

The president stared at the phone with anxiousness written all over his face.

The press conference was a good opportunity to dispel the rumors, but he had to be mindful of his next course of action since someone had threatened him by kidnapping the first lady and his daughter. I might put my wife and daughter in danger if I say something that will agitate the kidnapper. However, I might lose the chance to clear things up if I don't say anything. Everyone will think that I'm guilty.

“Mr. President...” the journalists continued shooting questions while the photographers kept snapping his photos.

After pulling himself together, he lifted his head, looked at the crowd with steady eyes, and answered furiously, “Yes. Someone kidnapped my wife and my daughter. I believe the mastermind is the person who has recently circulated the rumors to tarnish my reputation.”

He took out his phone and showed the journalists the text message. “I received this text message as I was walking into the hall. The person was trying to stop me from telling the truth...”

“Could you please tell us more, Mr. President?”

The journalists got even more excited as they believed this breaking news would be able to capture

viewers' attention.

“Who's the mastermind? How did he kidnap the first lady and Ms. Avery when there were bodyguards around?” One of the journalists raised his doubt.

“The mastermind is someone authoritative and influential, isn't he?”

“Yes.” The president was fuming. “Someone who could spread rumors to sabotage me and kidnap my family is definitely not an ordinary folk. I just want to be a president who serves the citizens. What have I done wrong? What did I do to deserve this?”

“I know I'm risking my wife's and daughter's lives by exposing this, but as a president, I'm more concerned about the fate of Erihal than my reputation. Even if I have to put my family in danger, I still need to tell the truth,” he added.

His voice was filled with righteous indignation.

The melancholy tone in his voice had won him some sympathy.

It was as if a righteous man was bullied to a point where he had no choice but to cry for help.

The journalists, who felt sorry for the president and sympathized with him, began to ask more questions. Some of them even deduced that Danrique orchestrated this to usurp the presidency.

Many journalists, too, agreed with the conspiracy theory.

In the blink of an eye, the tables had turned.

The president was pleased with the turn of events as

he knew things were turning around for him.

Meanwhile, in a deserted warehouse, the first lady's jaw dropped when she heard what the president said from the computer's monitor.

She was aware of how power-hungry her husband was, but never in a million years had she ever imagined that he would leave her and their daughter in the lurch.

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Chapter 2286



The first lady could not help but wonder how unimportant they were in the president's eyes. He can replace me with another woman, but how about Avery? She's his biological daughter! How can he be so heartless?

“I don't believe this. I don't!” The initially arrogant Avery was overwhelmed with fear. “Daddy cares about me. He'll come and rescue me. He will for sure!”

“Mr. President didn't plan to save you at all.” Lupine, who had put on a mask, sneered icily, “Your life is worth nothing to him.”

She then gestured for two subordinates to drag Avery to a large meat grinder.

At the same time, another subordinate turned on the machine.

“Ah... ah...!” Avery screeched in fear.

“No!” The agitated first lady stopped them from leaving. “Take me! You can do anything to me, but don't hurt my daughter!”

“Anything?” Lupine tapped her face with a dagger.
“You'd better think carefully.”

“I'm willing to do anything as long as you let go of my daughter!” the first lady bellowed as she panicked.

“Very well.” Lupine gestured.

Morgan turned off the meat grinder. At that time, Avery, who was hung upside down, had already fainted. if Morgan were to turn on the machine again, she would have fallen into the grinding chamber.

The first lady was aware of their intention. She knew her daughter would suffer a miserable death if she refused to cooperate. “What do you want from me?”

Her entire body was shivering, but she forced herself to remain calm. Go ahead and kill me, but spare my daughter!

“Look into the lens and confess the crimes you and the president had committed!” Lupine ordered.

A subordinate lifted a camera and aimed at the first lady.

“I know nothing. The president doesn't allow me to ask him anything,” the first lady replied in a steady tone, “I can't tell you anything, even if you kill my daughter and me.”

After a short pause, she continued, “But I can confess

the crimes I committed to clear Francesca's name!"

"He doesn't care about you and your daughter, yet you're still trying to protect him?" Lupine pointed at the computer. "Did you not hear what he said? He knew well enough we would kill you after he said that, yet he still did it without remorse. He's clearly a very selfish man!"

"You're right." The first lady responded with a sarcastic laugh. "All his life, he only cared about himself. To him, people around him, including my daughter and I, are merely pawns he could use to his advantage."

"If that's the case, why are you still defending him?" Lupine could not understand why.

"I'm not defending him. I really have no idea what he did," the first lady said seriously, "He's a paranoid

person who doesn't even trust his wife.”

“You might not know all the serious crimes he had committed, but I bet you know some of the awful things he had done,” Lupine said with a smirk. “I’ll ask the questions, and you answer.”

The first lady let out a cold snort and said, “Danrique is indeed a very tactful opponent. When he made it out alive, I knew we were doomed.”

She knew these people were Danrique's subordinates.

The first lady might not know everything about the president, but Lupine and the others could still come up with questions to solicit some insider information from her.

The president must have been pleased with how

things had turned out. He felt the kidnap had given him a chance to play the pity card in front of the citizens. Gaining the people's sympathy meant he was one step closer to making a comeback.

Yet, he did not know his wife was utterly disappointed with his action.

The first lady no longer cared about safeguarding their marriage. At that point, she just wanted to protect her daughter at all costs.

After all, forcing them to spill out the truth was Danrique's ultimate motive.

“Now, look into the lens and confess the things you've done to make Ms. Felch a scapegoat,” Lupine ordered, “start by telling us about more Avery, the illegitimate child of the family.”

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MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL

Chapter 2287



The president was still pretending to be pitiful when another breaking news was reported.

The first lady admitted that she attempted to frame Francesca, which was consistent with the speculation in the previous news—Chrono was Avery's lover, and Candice was her illegitimate child.

Because of Candice's death, Avery, who was already unhappy with her life and suffering from severe depression, became even more mentally unstable.

The first lady blamed Francesca for everything. As soon as Danrique was in trouble, she began to exact her revenge on Francesca by ensuring that the woman met with the Atkinsons. That way, she could poison Gerard and blame Francesca for it.

In the video, the first lady even arranged to buy off the Atkinsons' family doctor and the forensic examiner. The evidence presented was solid and conclusive.

Immediately, public opinion set off another uproar.

What sympathy the president had won had just then instantly evaporated as everyone shifted their attention to the first lady and wondered if there would be any more shocking news.

Meanwhile, William, who was watching the news in a wheelchair, finally relaxed his furrowed eyebrows.

“Mr. Lindberg is back. It must be Mr. Lindberg,” Hazel said excitedly.

“Yes.” William watched as the dark clouds in the sky slowly dissipated. “Finally, the storm is over...”

In a hidden villa somewhere, Danrique was watching the news on a computer screen with a deadpan expression, yet his eyes were filled with a thousand emotions.

Not long after Sean checked his watch for a countdown, Danrique's phone, which had just been turned on, rang. He looked at the phone screen and smirked. “It's the president.”

“Don't answer it,” ordered Danrique calmly.

“Understood.” Sean knew Danrique was testing the

president's patience since the president was only open to discussion after Danrique had gotten the upper hand.

Since Danrique was no pushover, he wanted the president to plead with him in person.

The other reason for that was to prevent the president from pretending to seek peace and taking the opportunity to end Danrique once and for all.

After all, Danrique was severely injured, and the Lindberg family suffered a great loss. Should the president decide to exercise his military power and mobilize the army, Danrique would be in grave danger.

Even if Danrique had hundreds of elite bodyguards, he would not be able to withstand such a powerful force.

That was why he had to humbly seek Riz Corporation's help.

Only with the company's protection could Danrique stand a chance against the president.

The phone screen kept flashing until the call ended, and since the device did not ring again after that, Danrique assumed the president was panicking about failing to reach him.

Glancing coldly at the phone, Danrique ordered, "Have Lupine carry on with the interrogation and do her best to get more secrets."

"Understood." Sean quickly relayed the order. He then commented with a chuckle, "These women are pretty capable. Although they're new, they have no problem accomplishing their missions."

“That's true. They're much more capable than you guys,” responded Danrique, glaring at Sean.

“Yes.” Sean quickly lowered his head.

After what happened to Layla, Sloan, and the others, Danrique was more than displeased with Sean and Gordon. The only reason the two were exempted from punishment was that he needed them at the critical moment.

“Anything from Gordon?” Danrique asked.

“The news just came in, and I was about to report it,” replied Sean. “Gordon followed Mr. Lincoln and Anthony up the mountain and saw a male eagle circling the peak. He assumed that was how the two knew Ms. Felch was on the mountain. If he follows the trail, I believe he'll find her soon.”

“I hope so...” Danrique had mixed feelings about the news. He owed Francesca too much. Not only did he not know how to face her, but he also did not know if she would forgive him.

He was the reason behind everything, including Layla's death. Francesca must be heartbroken...

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Chapter 2288



Even though it was cold on the mountain, Francesca could still survive because a brown bear had been sleeping beside her to keep her warm while the other

animals searched for food for her.

Her body had recovered a lot after she had a few days to rest.

Francesca used to vomit every day in the prison, so when that did not happen in the past few days, she could not help but wonder if it was because of the fresh air on the mountain.

As soon as the rain outside stopped and the snow melted, Francesca was ready to leave the mountain. However, just when she was about to exit the cave, she noticed a ray of light in the distance.

Francesca froze like a statue. No regular people would dare climb this mountain since it's undeveloped and always snowing, so the chances of them coming here at night is even more unlikely. Does that mean they're here for me?

Since Francesca was unsure who the other party was, she decided to leave alone to prevent putting the beasts in harm's way again. After all, many of her animal friends had died trying to help her when she summoned them from the underground prison.

Suddenly, Francesca was stunned when she heard a familiar wolf howl coming from the foot of the mountain. That sound...

The first person to come into Francesca's mind was Layla, but then she remembered the woman was already dead. That means it's... "Mr. Lincoln!"

Francesca immediately rushed toward the light, but because of how slippery the path was, her thin clothes, and her weak body, she did not get far before falling.

At that moment, the big brown bear came out of the cave and lowered itself in front of her.

“Thank you.” Francesca directed the beast to Lincoln after getting on its back, and before long, she was shedding tears of joy in Anthony's arms.

“Francesca!” cried Anthony with tears welling up in his eyes as he wrapped his arms around the woman. “I thought you were already—”

“I'm fine.” Francesca's eyes, too, turned red. “How did you find this place?”

“Do you still not know me after all these years?” asked Lincoln, who also could not stop smiling. “I knew you guys would be okay.”

Francesca's heart immediately sank to her stomach when she realized that Lincoln thought Layla had

been hiding on the mountain with her. He has no idea that Ms. Layla's already...

Seeing Francesca's expression, Lincoln quickly figured something was wrong. "Francesca, w-where is Ms. Layla?"

"Yeah. Where is she?" asked Anthony too.

Francesca simply lowered her head in silence as tears began to flow uncontrollably down her cheeks.

Lincoln's legs turned weak the second he saw that, and he collapsed to the ground.

"Mr. Lincoln!" exclaimed Anthony, hurrying over to help the man.

"I'm sorry... I'm sorry..." Francesca cried so hard that she started to shiver. "It was my fault. I got Ms. Layla

killed. It was all because she wanted to save me...”

Filled with guilt, Francesca could not even bear to look Lincoln in the eye. If I could turn back time, I'd gladly trade my life for Ms. Layla's and Sloan's.

“Who was it? Who exactly was it who killed Ms. Layla?” Anthony clenched his fists as if he was ready to avenge Layla.

“You don't have to do anything.” After wiping her tears away, Francesca took a deep breath. “I will avenge Ms. Layla, so just go back to S Nation and stay out of this.”

“We're already here. How do you expect us to stand idly by?” Lincoln's voice was already deep and hoarse. “I promised Ms. Layla that we'd die together. Now that she's gone, I have to avenge her.”

“Mr. Lincoln... I'm sorry,” apologized Francesca while crying.

“It's not your fault. The blood is on those murderers' hands.” Lincoln patted Francesca on the shoulder after getting up. “Ms. Layla wished for you to keep on living. You can't let her down.”

When Francesca heard that, she felt even more terrible.

“Let's get out of here first. It's freezing and dangerous here.”

“Okay.”

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MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL

Chapter 2289



The three supported each other as they made their way down the mountain. Francesca briefly explained the situation to Anthony when he asked her about it.

On the other hand, Lincoln kept his head lowered and remained quiet.

The man did not scold Francesca for what had happened, inquire about the specifics of the situation, or even show grief.

Aside from how he had collapsed to the ground before, Lincoln showed no other reaction.

He simply kept his head down in silence as if he was thinking about something.

“I can't believe how despicable the president and the first lady are! They have a problem with Danrique, so why do they have to involve you? They even got Ms. Layla caught in the storm,” complained Anthony furiously.

“It was my fault.” Francesca remembered what Layla had said to her.

“What happened between you and Danrique was supposed to be just a relationship problem, but things got complicated after it got political. Have you thought about the consequences? If you stay, you'll have to face problems like this all the time. You'll be looking over your shoulder every day. Are you okay with that?”

Layla had been able to tell what would happen to Francesca, so she had tried her best to warn the

latter. Unfortunately, Francesca did not listen to her.

Even though Layla had known what she did would be dangerous, she still stuck by Francesca's side to help clean up her mess without hesitation.

In the end, she even sacrificed herself to protect her.

“All you have to do is to be the innocent child you are. I'll protect you!”

Francesca remembered Layla saying that to her. She was right. I was so innocent... Countless people tried to warn me, but I didn't listen to them. I have no one but myself to blame for what happened.

“What do you plan to do next, Francesca?” asked Lincoln, finally breaking his silence.

Francesca was at a loss for words, as she was

unsure how to answer the question.

Back then, Francesca had been angry with Danrique for secretly taking Hazel to M Nation. However, after Layla's explanation, Francesca realized the man only did that for her sake, so she decided to trust him.

From an emotional point of view, Francesca loved Danrique and hoped to spend the rest of her life with him. On top of that, she was pregnant with their child.

From the rational point of view, though, she never wanted to go back because no matter how much they loved each other, the reality remained cruel. Even though Danrique had returned safely, his war with the president had just begun.

Francesca knew she would have to endure many trials and tribulations if she were to stay with him. He's like a time bomb, ready to explode at any moment.

She did not fear death, but she was worried about the well-being of those around her. I've already lost Ms. Layla; I can't lose Mr. Lincoln, Anthony, the children at the orphanage, or my unborn baby too! That's why...

"I'll return to S Nation after I've avenged Ms. Layla." Francesca quickly made up her mind.

"Good," responded Anthony, bobbing his head. "You should've gone back to S Nation long ago. Don't come to this place ever again."

"Are you sure? If you return to S Nation, that means you'll be giving up on your relationship with Danrique," said Lincoln in all seriousness.

"I'm sure," answered Francesca with a confident nod. "I prefer living my life without a care in the world and not to be entangled in this nest of intrigue."

“Okay.” Lincoln nodded in relief. “You're right to think like that. You're young; you still have a long way to go. Danrique may be good to you, but it's dangerous to stay by his side.”

“That's right,” Anthony chimed in. “We'll go back to S Nation after avenging Ms. Layla and never come to this damn place again. Right, Mr. Lincoln?”

“Yes.” Lincoln nodded before looking into the distance. “We're almost there. The car is just parked beside the road ahead.”

Since there was no road suitable for cars to go up the mountain, Lincoln and Anthony had to climb on foot.

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MYSTERIOUS MALE ESCORT IS A MOGUL

Chapter 2290



The three continued to walk for a while until they finally saw the car.

After Anthony helped Francesca into the vehicle, Lincoln drove them all down the mountain.

By then, dawn was about to break as the morning sun slowly rose on the horizon and shone upon their path.

Leaning back in her seat, Francesca stared blankly out the car window and at the beautiful scenery outside, thinking about nothing but the death of Layla and Sloan.

Francesca had never done anything she turned out to regret before then. But at that moment, she realized she had to live the rest of her life with guilt and regret.

After all, there was nothing she could do to change the fact that her actions had cost the lives of four people.

Anthony took off his jacket and put it on Francesca before wrapping his arms around her. That was his way of comforting the woman.

Perhaps she was too tired because she fell asleep in Anthony's embrace.

Lincoln stepped on the accelerator to speed up the car, and soon they were down the mountain and zooming on a wide road.

“Where are we heading to, Mr. Lincoln?” asked Anthony, sensing that something was off. “This seems to be the direction to—”

“To the airport,” interrupted Lincoln in a deep voice. “You take Francesca back to S Nation.”

“What about you?” Anthony asked hastily.

“I'm staying to avenge Ms. Layla,” replied Lincoln very calmly.

Anthony panicked. “Huh? How can you do that by yourself? I—”

Woken up by the man's somewhat loud reaction, Francesca slowly opened her eyes.

However, just when Francesca was about to speak, Lincoln swiftly struck her neck with the back of his

hand and caused her to fall unconsciously back into Anthony's arms.

Anthony was dumbfounded after witnessing what Lincoln had done. “What are you doing, Mr. Lincoln? Why did you knock Francesca out?”

“How else would you leave on a plane with her?” asked Lincoln rhetorically before throwing Anthony a black duffel bag. “Get her changed.”

“Oh, right.” Anthony quickly did as told after returning to his senses.

Even though Anthony was simple-minded, he knew he should leave with Francesca then.

Lincoln drove so fast that they arrived at the airport in a short time.

After dressing up Francesca to look like a patient, Anthony placed her in a wheelchair and wheeled her to a counter to get their tickets.

Lincoln had already prepared air tickets for them, so he simply watched as Anthony went through all the necessary processes before wheeling Francesca through a security checkpoint.

Usually, the security personnel would have to check on an unconscious passenger, but since Lincoln had already bought off the officer on shift then, Anthony went through the checkpoint with Francesca with no problem.

As Anthony continued to wheel Francesca forward, he turned to look at Lincoln, who waved at them before leaving with sheer determination in his eyes.

After getting back into his car, Lincoln made a phone

call. "Did you find anything?"

"Yes. The president will be holding a press conference at the International Conference Center at nine o'clock tonight!"

"Good. Thank you!"

Lincoln then hung up and drove directly to the International Conference Center.

Glancing at the rearview mirror, Lincoln saw that the cars tailing him had gone. He knew they belonged to the Lindbergs. I guess Danrique has a conscience after all since he didn't stop Francesca from leaving. He probably knows it's best that she leaves Erihal too.

At the Lindberg residence, Danrique received a phone call from Gordon.

“Mr. Lindberg, Anthony has successfully passed the security checkpoint with Ms. Felch. Our people are secretly keeping an eye on them,” reported Gordon.

“Good. Have them follow the two to S Nation,” ordered Danrique.

“Understood. It'll be done,” Gordon promised. “By the way, Mr. Lincoln drove to the International Conference Center. He's probably planning to assassinate the president.”

“T-The president only decided to go out into the public because he wants to set up a trap. Mr. Lincoln will be throwing away his life for nothing if he does anything reckless now,” stated Sean nervously.

“Stop him,” Danrique commanded, to which Gordon immediately responded, “Yes, Sir.”

“Ms. Layla's death has already caused Ms. Felch enough heartache. I can't imagine how broken she'd be if something were to happen to Mr. Lincoln too,” said Sean worriedly. “I heard from Riz Corporation that Mr. Lincoln is well-trained in combat and reconnaissance, so I'm not sure if Gordon can stop him.”

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