

Runaway 581

Chapter 581

Tim Goldman shrugged innocently. I wasn't even investigating you. Someone sent this to me."

His expression looked so genuine anyone would fall for his ploy, but Peter was not stupid enough to believe him so easily.

However, he had no idea how something he kept hidden so well in the distant past could be exposed.

It was literally buried six feet under-everyone who knew about it was dead!

"H-How did you get this?!" Peter growled, finally understanding that Tim was not stopping at simple blackmailing.

However, Tim kept feigning innocence. "I honestly don't know who sent this."

Peter slammed a hand on this desk furiously. 'What do you want?! Just tell me already! I've already given you the project we competed for while you were busy sorting out your messy divorce, and paid 150 million dollars for your silence! Why do you keep doing this to me?!"

"Doing this to you? Me?" Tim blinked, and quickly waved him off. "I'm not, and don't blame me when you have no proof, or I would have to call the po- po to adjudicate this issue."

His words were a naked threat-po-po certainly gnawed at Peter's nerves.

As tension piled in his body, he clutched his chest, which was flaring in agony!

Tim was actually left wondering how fragile the man was-he was not dying right here, was he?

'Hey, die somewhere else, or you'd jinx my office," Tim said, and called for his secretary before turning back to Peter. "Should I call an ambulance for you?"

However, Peter's chest seemed to have stiffened into a block and he could not even speak!

As his face turned pale and he looked like he would soon pass out, Tim gestured for his secretary to call an ambulance, and Peter passed out right then from hypertension!

Tim pursed his lips. "Tut, tut. That's all it takes?"

He certainly held contempt for the man, but was not really apathetic either since he would have trouble explaining himself if Peter died here.

"Still not coming out? Your father-in-law passed out here."

Tim walked over to sit on the couch, while a door opened, and Zachary stepped out.

He cast a cool look at Peter, but joined Tim at the couch.

Tim's interest was actually piqued. "He's your father-in-law even after all that mess, right? And they say that you're a former doctor with an angelic soul, too... What made you this cold?"

Zachary leaned back on the couch nonchalantly. "It's simple, Mr. Goldman- I want Centric United."

Tim, however, knew better.

The woman called Lulu Adams, who was mentioned in the recording of Peter's drunken ramble, was the key.

He did not expose Zachary, however, since he was making a fortune by working with Zachary!

Why in the hell would he not do it?

Pouring Zachary a cup of coffee, Tim asked, "I'm curious. How did you find out about something he kept so well hidden?"

"Did you forget? His daughter stays in my house," Zachary said flatly.

He did not call Ember his wife, but merely referred to her as someone who stayed in his house.

Over the last few days, he had been feeding Ember certain prohibited drugs that cause hallucinations.

As a former doctor, it was all too easy to get his hands on such substances, and that in turn allowed him to find out about secrets no one else was privy to.

'Tut, tut... Honestly, I never knew that he would do anything just to succeed.' Tim shook his head in disbelief as he remembered Peter's crimes.

'It's almost inevitable for a fire to break out in that factory since he was using equipment that did not adhere to safety regulations. Even then, he could have just bought safety equipment which could reduce risk, but he didn't do it just to save money, and thanks to that, there were seven workers dead and over twenty injured... but somehow the

Officials decided that it was an 'accident'. It's a conspiracy, and once the truth is out, it won't just be him who's getting implicated."

"There's no doubt that he bribed people," Zachary replied. "Him passing out also goes to show how worried that it would be exposed.'

Tim nodded, held his gaze for a moment and asked, "What if he keeps paying US off?"

"Does he still have any money left?" Zachary asked in return.

Tim chuckled. "Oh, right-we did squeeze him dry."

"But we're going to expose him either way."

Zachary's words made his position very clear.

He was not just doing it for the perished as well, but also for Lulu.

It did not matter what Peter did in compromise-he would reveal Peter's criminal gross negligence to the world!

Chapter 582

Tim said, "I agree, and I will help you when the time comes. However, I want his office building when we split the spoils."

It was certainly a nice place-one would not blame Peter for resorting to murder for that plot of land.

"Of course." Zachary agreed to it right away, since he needed Tim's help.

Naturally, he had done his homework on Tim before seeking his partnership -the man certainly had the resources to reopen an old case and renew the investigation, first by inciting online sentiment to pressure the authorities.

"All the best to our joint venture," Tim said, raising a glass in salute. "Let's toast with coffee for now."

They had already squeezed Peter dry for money, after all.

As Zachary clinked glasses with Tim, Tim's secretary entered. "The ambulance has arrived."

"Let them do their work," Tim said.

Meanwhile, Irene had arrived at her new residence-a mansion up on the hill, near a body of water.

There was only a road up to the hill, and it was hidden within thick bamboo forests.

When they arrived, there were already three security perimeters set around the mansion, guarded by men 24/7.

Even if the guards slipped up and allowed someone in, the radar detector would pick up on the intruder and sound the alarm-nothing was getting in without permission.

Moreover, everything was prepared for their daily needs along with other necessities-Irene could live there comfortably once she moved there.

It was spacious, and everything from the environment to the air was better than Rose Garden!

Mrs. Watson's eyes widened. "This is such a good place, ma'am. When did you buy it?"

She actually thought that moving to this place was much nicer.

Irene sat on the couch with Tommy in her arms and said, "Isaac arranged for it."

Mrs. Watson's eyes lit up. "I see. So Mr. Jefferson still cares about you."

"It's just crocodile tears," Sheryl growled. "That's a man for you... Tommy is sick, and you're still recovering from labor, but what did he do...?!"

She had been holding it in for a while now, and it all burst out-she swiped at a vase on the table!

Bang!

It shattered into a million pieces, its shards shattering everywhere!

Even as Irene shielded Tommy in her arms, Sheryl screamed, "I knew it-I misjudged him! All men are rotten apples who are only skin-deep!"

Sheryl was under the impression that Isaac was dumping Irene because of her disfigurement.

"Messing with his secretary, too. How cliché!" She then turned to Irene. ' We are changing Tommy's name tomorrow. Ike

Jefferson?! More like Ike Spencer!"

Irene was about to speak, but eventually stopped himself from explaining.

Flipping out was the normal reaction here-Debbie would suspect something if Sheryl appeared calm after learning the truth.

Debbie was sharp, and her abilities were certainly not to be underestimated after she stayed by Isaac's side for so long.

Irene must not let down her guard.

"Mom, just calm down..."

"How am I supposed to calm down?! This is killing me! How could he just leave you like that? You've had two children with him, but this is how he repays you? It's outrageous!"

Sheryl's heart ached for Irene-how could she bear to see her own daughter being hurt like this?

She could stab Isaac right now if he was here!

At the same time, Mrs. Watson was quietly cleaning the floor.

She had always cared for Isaac's needs and spoken on his behalf.

However, she dared not say a word now.

Creak...

The door suddenly opened and everyone turned toward it right then!

Chapter 583

The chauffeur entered.

Everyone appeared to be disappointed, perhaps believing that Isaac had arrived.

The chauffeur did a double take in turn, and was left wondering if his timing was poor and led to their disappointment.

He stood there, suddenly unsure if he should step inside or leave. is there a problem?" Irene asked.

The chauffeur hurried to her and handed her a cellphone. "This was left in the car."

Irene took it and saw that it was her own phone.

The chauffeur then added, "If there's anything else you need, ma'am, I'll be right outside."

"Yeah," Irene replied-everyone there were people Isaac trusted.

On the other hand, Sheryl was not continuing her rant about Isaac from before after being interrupted.

In the end, she was just feeling upset over her daughter and her grandson's situation. All she could do right then was to care for them as best as she could, not to mention that Irene would be feeling the worst out of all of them.

Even if she appeared calm, Sheryl could tell that Irene was faking it.

Walking up to her and holding her hands out to take Irene off her hands, she said, "Let me take him to his room."

Irene shook her head. "TH do it!"

As Sheryl quietly pulled away, Irene lowered her gaze at her own son, her tears welling with tears just then.

Debbie did not want to see anything that connected the Rose Garden apartment to Irene, and so, she thoroughly refurbished every inch of the residence until it was completely unrecognizable from before.

When that was done, she called Isaac over and asked, "What do you think? You like what I've done with the place?"

Isaac's gaze was distant. "She's gone, and I agreed to give you this place..."

"I'll give you the antidote for your son-but not now."

Debbie sat beside him then, looking him in the eyes as she breathed every word heavily. "You'll get it once you hold a wedding to marry me."

She then gently laid her head on his shoulder, "Isaac, I've been by your side for years. Do you think I wouldn't know your methods after so long? How could I give it to you when I haven't gotten what I want?"

Then, her tone changed sharply. "Since you're marrying me, don't you think you should give me that set of diamond jewelry in your safe?"

She wanted to recoup the dignity she lost when James Cross caught her red-handed, while taking everything that once belonged to Irene!

Isaac rose to his feet then, holding her gaze as he growled, "Don't push your luck-like you said, you know my methods. I'll satisfy all our demands, but you're going to have to show me that you actually have an antidote."

Debbie simply smiled. "Would you let me stay if I showed you?"

She knew very well that once she revealed where she hid it-or if Isaac somehow caught on to where she got it-he would do everything he could to get his hands on it.

She would be gone with the wind once he did, and she was not that stupid!

"I won't give it to you before you marry me."

Isaac could naturally see her prudence and meticulous nature.

However, even if he agreed to play along to her whims, he never pinned his hopes on her-his people were already out, searching for the antidote while investigating Debbie.

He really doubted that she would not slip up at all.

Meanwhile, Irene had not been idling either-the researchers at Hotmesh had found the virus that the dog was carrying.

"Take a look at this."

Stephen Carr handed her the results.

Chapter 584

Irene looked up at Stephen after reading through the research results, her eyes twinkling in delight. "So it's actually curable?"

Stephen nodded.

Irene had been a researcher in Mead Clinic, and could naturally understand the complex data and find a breakthrough.

The most common infectious disease that dogs transmitted was rabies, but it would take the mixing of blood.

On the other hand, the virus that this dog carried could pass through its fur alone, but it was not particularly potent-only Tommy, a child with low immunity, would get infected after being in contact with the dog.

The rash was a symptom, and things would get worse if not treated soon.

Naturally, Tommy's brain might be affected if his fever continued.

Irene stayed silent in thought and kept studying the data that the team found. "I need a lab."

"Of course," Stephen replied. "They will see to any needs you have, and the labs are readily available.

Just use it anytime you want-they will bring you any equipment that you would ask for as well."

Such convenience was an incredible help to her. She immediately headed to the lab to try to put together an antidote.

As one would expect of Zidonia's top research center, Hotmesh Research's equipment was the most advanced, and she needed nothing aside from an assistant.

"I'll do it," Stephen volunteered-Irene would get paranoid if it was someone unfamiliar, whereas Stephen was an old partner.

"Okay," she replied, and they went to work right then.

However, she proved unfamiliar with pharmacology, and that was when she remembered Mark Wickers.

He had a team of researchers who managed to find a cure for cancer, and their research efforts would certainly be twice more effective with their help.

As such, she called Mark, who agreed to it without hesitation.

Even more confident with a team of professionals taking part, the development saw a breakthrough in three days.

They had been working day and night without much rest, and knowing that it had been hard on them, Irene went out to a good restaurant in the afternoon and ordered healthier dishes for them.

When they returned, however, the receptionist at the front desk laughed at her. "Hey, weren't you saying that you're Isaac

Jefferson's wife? Why is he marrying someone else now?"

She had to apologize to Irene before when Stephen insisted that she was Isaac's wife, and because Director Turner had shown her so much respect.

Now, she naturally had to disparage Irene for lying. "Let's see how long you're gonna pretend... And you somehow still have the guts to show your face here."

Irene simply ignored her-it was completely unnecessary to take offense from someone like her.

That being said...

Debbie had gotten impatient.

Bringing the food to the lounge outside the lab, Irene called everyone in to eat while she took a seat and whipped out her phone.

As soon as she tapped on her news application, multiple headlines popped up, all of them saying that the CEO of Twinrise Enterprises was marrying his secretary.

Irene stayed impassive as she swiped it off and started to eat.

Bzzt-

Her phone suddenly began to ring and she answered it.

Then, the voice on the other end said, "Let's meet."

Chapter 585

It sounded like Debbie.

Irene's expression changed for a split second, but she soon regained her calm.

Of course she would be asking for a meeting now to brag.

"Where?" Irene asked, agreeing to it right then-she should be the audience if Debbie wanted to brag, should she not?

'Two Beaches Coffee.'

"Got it," Irene said and hung up.

Stephen looked up at her, swallowed his food and told her, "Just do what you have to. We'll hold down the fort here."

Irene nodded and cleaned up the table after finishing her lunch. "Thanks for your help, everyone."

"Oh, it's fine," everyone answered in unison.

Over the last few days, Mark's research team had heard about how Irene stole Mead Clinic's research data and hence grew to respect her. They grew to think that she was a woman who saw the big picture, and they were willing to help.

Irene was grateful. Though she said nothing, she was ready to reward them generously once the antidote was made.

Though they were being kind to her, she should not freely enjoy the results of their work and assistance.

Stepping out of the lounge and throwing away all the lunchboxes, she headed to the designated location with the chauffeur waiting in the car after she alighted and entered.

Debbie was already waiting.

Having taken a window seat, she was leisurely sipping on her coffee.

Irene composed herself, but her complexion was terrible. After all, she had been running herself ragged over the last few days, since she had to help develop the antidote while keeping an eye on Tommy's condition.

The fact that she recently went into labor only made it even more taxing—it would be weird if her complexion looked healthy.

Once Debbie saw her, she elegantly put away her coffee while mocking icily, "Oh, my goodness. It's just been a few days, but you look absolutely horrible! You're not getting depressed that Isaac is marrying me, are you?"

Irene naturally knew what Debbie wanted and would gladly play along. "You've taken everything from me. Arent you satisfied?"

Debbie shook her head. "Not yet."

Irene's hands clenched into fists under the table. "What more do you want?"

"That would be telling, and it'd kill the joy."

She was smiling smugly as if she had won, and Irene was left narrowing her eyes.

Did she have more up her sleeve?

She had to be careful—Debbie had managed to conceal her true intentions even though she served Isaac for years.

This would not be easy.

Fortunately, Irene's development of an antidote was well under way, and they did not have to pin their hopes on Debbie.

For Irene, nothing matters more than getting Tommy healthy again.

'You've called me here to brag, and I now know that you're marrying Isaac. So? Can I go now?'

Debbie shrugged nonchalantly. "Do whatever you want, but to be honest, I didn't just want to see the look on your face... have you seen your brother lately?"

Irene's gaze darkened-she knew it.

Debbie was up to something.

"You got him?"

Debbie smiled-her answer was obvious.

"He threatened me. Did you think I'd spare him?" she growled, not hiding her spite and rage at all.

Irene was certainly aware of how heinous Debbie could be-she did not hesitate to make an attempt on James Cross's life, even though they were partners at work for years.

It went without question that she would be merciless toward Ricky Spencer too.

Chapter 586

Naturally, Debbie did not bring Irene to the cafe just to brag.

She wanted Irene to give up on Isaac completely.

If she could not claim Isaac's heart, her only option was to make Irene betray him, so that she would have an opening-a chance to win over Isaac.

In fact, once she captured him, she had already hatched the plan to use Ricky as hostage and coerce Irene.

"It's not as if I can't consider freeing him."

"What do you want?" Irene, however, knew that she would not do so easily- Debbie would demand something from her.

"I know that Isaac agreed to marry me mostly to save your son," Debbie said. "But even if he doesn't love me, his heart would definitely break if you love another man, and that gives me an opportunity. So, get yourself another man and tell Isaac that you don't love him anymore, and I'll consider letting Ricky go."

Irene was laughing inwardly. "You've really covered all the bases, haven't you?"

"I have no choice." Debbie smirked.

She certainly had to be thorough, because it was not going to be easy to win over Isaac from the very start.

After all, she had worked for him over the years, but he never once looked at her-it was obvious that she was not his type, and Debbie knew that.

She had naturally thought things through before demanding that he married her.

Since Isaac had fallen for Irene after they got married, she wanted to emulate that-Isaac would definitely see all her good points as they lived together.

While that happened, Isaac would feel moved by her loyalty while he watched as Irene threw herself into the arms of another man.

It was a perfect plan-or so she thought.

Nonetheless, Irene rose to her feet.

"Wait." Debbie stopped her. "I've done my homework-I know you are just half-siblings with Ricky Spencer, but it seems that things are at least cordial between you two. I really want to know... Are you cold enough to let him die?"

Irene remained impassive. "As you wish."

Debbie smiled at that. "And once you're gone, Isaac will completely be mine."

Irene leveled a pointed look at Debbie before turning to leave.

Returning to the car, Irene told the chauffeur, "Take me back to Hotmesh."

The chauffeur started the car... but as he drove, Irene noticed that they were not heading to Hotmesh.

"I said, take me back to Hotmesh," she said, a little louder now.

"Mr. Jefferson wants to see you," the chauffeur replied-he was instructed to do so while Irene was having a chat with Debbie at the cafe.

Irene in turn became silent, while the car drove to a bustling district and stopped.

When Irene alighted and looked around, no one was there.

She was just about to ask the chauffeur when a silhouette arrived out of nowhere and took her by the hand.

As she turned to find that pronounced face, Isaac had pulled her to a back alley.

Then, ensuring that no one was around, Irene asked, "Aren't you afraid that your secretary would see you meeting me?"

She put weight behind the term 'your secretary', almost as if she was pouting.

Still, it was understandable that she was upset when Debbie kept pushing her.

Isaac put a hand around her slender waist, his deep voice ringing beside her ear. "Are you upset?"

It was certainly the case for Irene. "What do you think? She just met me, telling me to get myself a lover or Ricky Spencer is going to die. Don't you think I should do as she says?"

Chapter 587

Isaac could tell that Irene was venting her frustrations at him.

However, he could not tell her that Ricky had been captured by Debbie so that she would not have to worry.

And yet, Debbie herself had sought out Irene to tell her just that, while also demanding that she get a lover.

How was he supposed to abide with that?

"I'll find Ricky as soon as I can."

Irene restrained her temper just then-things were hard for Isaac right now as well.

"Debbie knows your methods after working for you over the years. She won't let you find Ricky so easily-not after she's burned all bridges. Be prepared and wary, because I'm worried that she'd have other cards aside from Ricky and Tommy. Try to get her to talk the next time she's with you."

Looking up and into his eyes just then, Irene murmured, "I just hope that this will be over soon."

"Yeah," Isaac replied. "I know."

He had sent his people out to look, after all.

"I have to go now," Irene said, not wanting further trouble.

Isaac caught her wrist. "I'm sorry."

None of this would have happened if one of his closest confidants had not betrayed him.

Irene did not complain, however, since it would not change anything-all they could do was to turn things around.

Her lips twitched, but she kept her silence.

Isaac squeezed her hand in turn, his face appearing pale as he tried to speak.

Silence ensued between them.

Over at the hospital, Peter Lindt woke up and tried to sit up when he opened his eyes to see his wife and daughter.

Shirley Lindt quickly went up to help him, asking, "You were just fine in the morning. What happened?"

Peter was silent for a while before saying, "Tim Goldman is trying to screw me over."

Shirley was actually confused.

Ember Lindt sat on his bed, watching him as she asked, "Dad, what happened? You have to tell US."

Peter scowled. "Tim Goldman somehow managed to get dirt on US. He knows everything: from the equipment not up to regulation that caused the fire, to the lack of proper fire prevention measures that led to multiple deaths. I had to bribe the people reviewing the incident to alter their findings and pin the blame on the deceased's negligence, so that we didn't have to pay much damages or assume a heavy responsibility... and now, Tim Goldman is using it against me as leverage."

"We can just look for the troubleshooter before..."

Peter cut his wife short before she could finish. "He's retired."

"Then, what do we do?" Shirley became flustered.

"I can ask Zachary for help," Ember said then.

"No." Peter leveled a stern look at his daughter. "If he knows, he would use it as leverage to threaten US too."

"But he's now on our side, isn't he?" Ember pointed out. "He came home and he's been good to me. Also, didn't he apologize about what happened last time?"

Even so, Peter did not fully believe in Zachary, and was still wary toward him.

He would not ask for Zachary's help unless he was absolutely desperate.

As such, he told Ember, "Don't tell him. Understand?"

Ember nodded tamely, but her phone suddenly rang.

She took it out and saw that it was a news notification.

She did a double take when she saw the title, and tapped on it.

It was exactly what her father had just said!

How did it make the news?!

"Dad, this is bad," Ember said as she showed it to Peter, knowing that there was no hiding it now.

"Someone posted about it online, and it's now making headlines."

Chapter 588

Peter's pupils dilated as he read the news post. "What... How?!1

But that was not all—the families of the deceased had now come forward, demanding justice for the dead. The old workers who used to be employed at the factory were also testifying that the factory had no fire safety measures as well, even stating the model numbers of the factory equipment used—all of which were prohibited for violating safety regulations.

And it was only gaining further traction now.

"It seems that Tim Goldman doesn't just want money... He wants me dead too!" Peter growled, his gaze darkening as his hands clenched into fists.

There was no way he would take this lying down.

He whipped out his phone to make calls to the press, intent on paying them to take down the news posts.

What he did not know, however, was that Zachary Slate was working with Tim, and they were offering the press double-even triple-of what Peter would pay them.

As such, there was simply nothing Peter could do to enforce a press gag- no media outlet was willing to help at all.

However, he knew that as the news kept circulating, it would cause enough of a stir and lead to a reinvestigation.

And when that happened...

Overwhelmed by the monumental pressure, he collapsed again.

Seeing the direness of his situation, Ember ignored her father's instructions and went to Zachary, hoping that he would help.

As she hurried to Zachary's office building, he agreed to see her, more or less aware why she was looking for him.

"Did you see the news, Zachary?" she asked the instant she saw him.

It was only natural that Zachary knew since he was the one behind everything, but he still played dumb. "What news?"

Ember naively showed him her phone, unaware that Zachary was not the person she knew before.

The kind, compassionate man whom she had coerced and conspired against was now cold and calculative.

Zachary pretended to read the news and feigned surprise as well.

"You have to help me." Ember tugged on his sleeve.

"Calm down," Zachary assured her. "Of course I will."

Ember happily threw herself into his arms at that. "Oh! Thank you, Zachary!"

There was only cold disdain on Zachary's face, but he passed it off as if he was reading the news. "Is everything they say true?"

It was a lie to lure Ember, though she was quick-witted enough to reply, 'Of course it's a lie. My dad would never do that.'

"Ember, you have to be honest here," Zachary told her. "I'm not going to be of help if you lie to me, and we're already married. Shouldn't we at least trust each other? Don't you trust me?"

Ember looked up into his eyes. "I..."

She thought about her options.

Her father could not make any decisions right now, so she had to pin her hopes on Zachary anyway.

Moreover, she had grown to trust Zachary because he had been coming home punctually these days and slept on the same bed as she did.

Most importantly, he apologized for losing his temper with her and her family.

He must want to get along with her now!

However, she had no idea that this was all part of Zachary's plan-the drugs he had been feeding her to confess everything would wipe her memories soon after.

"If you don't want to tell me, then forget it," he said, as if not wanting to trouble her. "I'll look into this myself and find a solution."

Seeing that he was compromising as much as he could, Ember naturally spilled the beans. "Actually, everything they say is true, but it's in the past and it's supposed to stay buried. But someone who means harm exposed it, and it won't do if this gets out of hand-you have to think of a way to silence the media."

Zachary's lips curled up lightly in disdain and his gaze turned dark. "Okay, I will."

He had recorded every word Ember just said, including her admitting that everything on the news was true!

Chapter 589

Even with his evidence, Zachary could not topple the Lindts in a single stroke.

However, that was not the case now that he had Ember's confession.

He sent her home to wait for his updates, after which he quickly uploaded the recording online.

The incident had already caused significant unrest, and in this age of networking, no individual or event gets to hide.

Soon, Peter Lindt was named, and a horde of journalists as well as outraged netizens arrived at the hospital.

They both returned home, their faces ashen, but another bombshell landed almost as soon as they sat on the couch.

"You have to listen to this..."

Shirley showed Peter the recording that was circulating online, and they both could hear that it was their daughter.

"How could she say something like that... And at a time like this?!"

As the Lindts were pushed to the brink, Peter was left seething and barking, "Call her here already!"

Shirley quickly did so, and Ember soon arrived-she had returned to the hospital after leaving Zachary's office, and she returned home since her parents had already left.

"What the hell is this?!" Peter barked as he played the recording for her, but Ember was dumbfounded too.

It was what she had just told Zachary... Why was there a recording posted online already?

However, she would never believe that it was Zachary. She said, "It must be Tim Goldman."

"You've met him?" Peter asked.

"Yes," Ember lied, and assured her father, "Calm down, Dad. Zachary is going to help US."

"What?! You told him?!" Peter gaped.

Ember Still held faith in Zachary. "Zachary would know now that it's come to this even if we didn't tell him. You know that he's not a schemer-don't think so poorly of him."

Peter was silent for a while and sighed. "Yeah. Right now, we can only trust him."

Zachary had always been soft and never did anything wrong, so it was likely he was not culpable—not when he did not even have the mind for it.

The thought that Tim wanted to screw him over put Peter's mind at ease.

Right now, he had no choice but to trust Zachary...

That was when several uniformed officers arrived at his house, demanding that he follow them back to the precinct to assist in an investigation.

The incident had already caused too much of a stir, after all.

Shirley was left sobbing-Peter had always called the shots in the family, and she had no idea what to do in his absence.

Ember tried to console her. "Don't worry, Mom. Zachary will save Dad."

Shirley said nothing as she wiped away her tears.

Zachary arrived in the evening, bringing a message from Tim.

Naturally, it was from him as well, but he described it as if only Tim said it, using Tim as a misdirection.

"We can smooth things over by paying him off," Zachary said.

"How much is he asking for?"

Ember barely finished when Shirley said, "We don't have any money left. He's already taken all the movable assets and capital our company had..."

"He must be coming after your family's fortune," Zachary said. "He also said that you could give him any businesses you have on hand if you don't have the money."

"He just wants to devour us whole, doesn't he?" Ember bristled.

"Calm down. I won't let you starve even if your family is gone," Zachary assured her.

Ember became a mush of emotions right then and threw herself in Zachary's arms. "You're the only one I can rely on now."

"I'm here. You have nothing to worry about." Zachary patted her on the shoulder, staying silent for a while before continuing,

"Money is just a possession. Right now, the most important thing is to save your father. Moreover, it's just business-it won't bankrupt the company, and your father has the strength to straighten things out once he's released. That's the easy part, but bailing him out right now is the priority."

"That's right, Mom," Ember echoed.

Chapter 590

While Shirley hesitated, Ember kept persuading her. "Mom, we don't even know if Dad would be abused while he's being arrested. We need to get him out soon-you're the only one who can make the decision and sign the papers."

Shirley was soon convinced-bailing out her husband was the priority anyway.

Turning toward Zachary, she asked, "So? What am I supposed to do?"

A dark look appeared over Zachary's face just then, but he kept solemn as he said, "There's some papers you need to sign.'

"Okay," Shirley said, agreeing to it right away without thinking.

Zachary took out the papers he prepared beforehand and handed it to Ember. "There's no helping it. Some of the company's businesses must be sacrificed to save your father."

Ember took his words at face value and did not even check the papers before passing it to her mother. "You have to sign it while Dad's away, Mom."

Shirley's fingers clenched, but she braced herself and signed the papers, doing it so quickly that she did not read the contents.

The first reason she did it was because she was convinced that Zachary would not lie to her, and these papers would not have anything sinister behind that.

Secondly, she would rather that this would be over soon. Even if it hurt to give off the company's businesses to someone else, she had to do it to save her husband.

With the papers signed, Zachary took them and put them in his briefcase." I'll go to Tim right now."

"We will wait for you," Ember told him.

Zachary merely held her gaze for a while, but said nothing as he turned to leave.

Neither Ember nor Shirley slept well as they waited.

However, while they were convinced that it was all over after Shirley signed those papers, it did not- instead, there was now a formal criminal case against them.

To their bewilderment, they were notified that the police seemed to have gathered sufficient evidence to investigate the factory fire.

Ember quickly went to Zachary's office to ask what happened, but he was not there.

Forced to return home, she just reached the front gates when she heard her mother yelling.

Knowing that something bad had happened, she rushed inside to see Tim Goldman sitting nonchalantly on the couch with one leg over the other, as if he was at home.

Ember became as furious as Shirley right then, and rushed at him, intent on hurting him. "You monster! They took away my father because of you!"

Tim scowled, but simply caught her hand and firmly knocked her away.

Ember stumbled and fell, and Shirley rushed to help her up.

They then huddled together, watching Tim fearfully-he was certainly hostile and bore no mercy toward them.

However, Tim was impatient too. "Stop making me waste my breath. Get out of here right now."

"You have no right! This is our home!" Ember shot him a furious glare.

That was when Shirley tugged at her and whispered into her ear, "No, we fell for a trap. The papers Zachary had US sign? It was not just concessions of some of our businesses-it was a transfer of controlling interest and all fixed assets."

Ember's pupils dilated and she shook uncontrollably. "H-How?!"

She was still convinced-even lying to herself-that Zachary would never trick her.

Tim smirked. "Did you think I did this all by myself? Would everything really have gone so smoothly for me without someone pulling strings from the inside?"

"I don't believe you!" Ember screamed in rage.

Tim merely smirked in disdain and gestured for his henchmen to throw them out of the mansion-it no longer belonged to the Lindts now!

Ember and Shirley were both hence dragged out of the mansion and dumped carelessly by the road.

They never suffered such abuse, but more than that, Ember could not accept that Zachary was in league with Tim!

Abandoning her mother right then, she ran straight to Zachary, intent on questioning him.

He still was not at his office, so she went to his home instead.

There, she found Zachary speaking with his mother, and she stormed in furiously. "Zachary! Tim Goldman said that you were in

league with him and that my father was arrested because of you! Is that true?!"

Zachary slowly turned toward her with aloofness in his eyes.