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"What are you talking about?"

"Am I wrong? You only care about Uncle's family. You've been treating me the same way you treated Dad. I can't even give up the position and you wanted me dead. Isn't this what you truly want?"

He was driven to a corner after all.

Despite being such a gentle and forgiving person, he was now collapsed on the floor, stroking his crippled leg. His handsome face was dotted with cold sweat and his cheeks were ghastly pale.

All that was left on his face was a twisted look of hatred and menace.

Jonathan paled.

He was so furious that his veins throbbed and his eyes turned bloodshot. However, pointing at Devin, he trembled uncontrollably, unable to say a single word.

Little did he expect his obedient grandson to develop such a huge misunderstanding. Did I do something wrong this time?

Jonathan's chest heaved as he breathed heavily. Fury and sorrow surged through him. His body wavered before he lost grip of the chair in front of him.

Crash!

The chair fell onto the floor.

Devin was surprised.

Everyone outside, including Mark, had their ears perked up. When they heard that noise, they were shocked too.

What's going on?

"Listen, Devin. I've never treated your father and your uncle differently. What matters most is how capable they are! Your father always complained that I never spent any effort on him. But has he ever thought of how much responsibility your uncle has to shoulder despite enjoying all that? The military will not pay a huge price to nurture a sniper who can't even hold a gun. Instead, they'll choose an extremely talented person. Isn't that the same logic?"

After a slight pause, he continued, "Also, I have no idea where you got your information from, saying that I want you to give up your position. Listen up! Ever since I entrusted the Jadesons' future to you, I've never thought of replacing you!"

Pointing at Devin, Jonathan bellowed the last sentence out while tears welled up in his eyes.

Devin raised his head abruptly.

Really? He has never thought of replacing me?

But that man is so exceptional! He helped the Jadesons turn the tables the moment he came. Everyone in the White House and Jadeborough is intimidated by him.

Yet, he never thought of replacing me?

Devin wondered if he had misheard.

"Did you hear me clearly? This is your life and your responsibility. Don't ever think of escaping from it, you b*stard!" Jonathan yelled again. His body swayed before he collapsed onto the chair behind him, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Devin was speechless.

His heart ached terribly as if something had just hit him. He lowered his head. For the past thirty years of his life, he had never shed a single tear no matter the circumstances, yet tears were gushing out of his eyes now.

This was not something he expected.

He had always thought that everyone disliked him, just like his father.

Yet, he was actually the one always doted on.

"Since we've made everything clear, it's time for me to go."

Just when Jonathan and Devin were immersed in the joy of having all their misunderstandings resolved, Sebastian suddenly entered and spoke calmly.

What?

When Jonathan heard him, he immediately spun around.

"Go? Where are you going?"

"Yeah, Sebastian. Don't misunderstand! We didn't mean it."

Devin glanced over. When he saw Sebastian, his cheeks, still swollen, paled as he quickly denied what Jonathan told him earlier.

He still treated Sebastian as his brother and prioritized him.

However, Sebastian shot him an arrogant glance. An unhappy look flashed across his eyes as he said, "Huh? That's your responsibility, Devin. It's the smartest thing I've ever heard that old man say..."

Both Jonathan and Devin were speechless.

After a minute, Devin got up from the ground and dusted his body. "Where are you going? This is your home."

"This isn't my home. The Hayes residence is my home!" Sebastian said expressionlessly.

Jonathan had just calmed down from his previous turmoil of emotions when the veins on his forehead throbbed again.

"You—"

"All right, everyone must be tired. We're still in the military zone, so let's talk at home instead. We don't want to embarrass ourselves in front of the rest, now do we?" Devin quickly interrupted Jonathan.

After recovering from his tormenting despair, he had already resumed his calm and composed self. Diffusing the tense atmosphere between the two, he coaxed them to go home first.

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Only then did Jonathan snort coldly and stomp away, holding his walking stick.

Sebastian remained expressionless and was about to leave too when he heard Devin grunt in pain. The latter was dragging his injured leg behind him.

Sebastian stopped in his tracks before turning around and holding Devin's arm.

"Don't you know how to resist?"

"What?"

"You deserve to be beaten to death. How could you just stay motionless like that?" demanded Sebastian coldly. "Do you know your actions are what caused him to develop such a twisted personality?"

Devin was at a loss for words.

He glanced at Sebastian and chuckled helplessly.

I had to endure it. It's not like I can just retaliate, right?

The two brothers helped each other out of the military zone. Jonathan and Mark were already gone as they had expected. Before getting into the car, Devin paused.

"Sebastian, are you really going to return to Avenport?"

"Yeah."

"Why?" He panicked again since neither Jonathan nor anyone from the military was present there.

"Are you still furious about what Grandpa said? Well, if you'd like to be the heir of the Jadesons, I—"

"I don't!" Sebastian cut him off.

"Listen up! I really don't want to. I was forced to come here, and I've never thought of this place as my home. My home is in Avenport, where my parents and the rest of my family are. It's the place that nurtured me. The same goes for Sasha, understand?" He emphasized every word, reiterating his stance clearly. His tone was heavy and laced with a hint of impatience as Devin kept refusing to believe him. He's never thought of this place as his home after all this time? Devin was speechless, feeling a little upset. However, it was not the time to say anything else. Neither of them spoke on the way to the Red Pavilion.

Just when Devin was about to get out of the car, Janice walked out to welcome him.

"Oh, right. About what happened at Coldbridge, that woman from the Woods was merely putting up a show. Don't fall for their trick," reminded Sebastian in the car.

Huh?

Devin was stunned.

When he returned to his senses and wanted to clarify what was happening, Sebastian had already driven away.

An act? How did he know that it was an act?

According to the surveillance footage, wasn't he the one who dragged the person in? He was not present, so how did he know that it was an act?

Devin fell into deep thought.

"What's wrong, Devin? Are you all right?"

After a while, he looked at Janice and asked, "Aunt Janice, do you know where the surveillance footage I brought from Coldbridge is?"

"Huh?" Janice was surprised. "I think Sebastian smashed it with his foot the other day at the entrance."

She tried her best to recall what happened that morning when he brought it back.

Smashed it? If it was just some footage, why did he have to smash it? What made him so furious?

Devin's heart pounded rapidly.

In the evening, Mark came back and told Sasha that Sebastian was bringing them back to Avenport.

Oh my God! Are we finally going back?

She was so elated that she did not know what to do.

Casting her work aside, she dashed into the elevator and rushed up to the third floor.

Returning to Avenport was her dream.

For so many years, she had been struggling to hold on for the sake of her fragmented family. She did not even return to that city to visit her aged father, nor call her aunt and uncle.

No one could even fathom how much she yearned to return home.

Sasha ran to the bedroom on the third floor.

"Darling, I heard we're going back to Avenport. Is that true?" Sasha asked in excitement, panting heavily and staring at Sebastian

Sebastian was in the middle of packing his belongings. When he saw Sasha, he glanced back at the messy closet in front of him.

"You've come at the right time. I'm handing this over to you."

He always liked to avoid the question.

However, after Sasha heard that, she understood what he meant and was overjoyed.

"Okay! I'll do it. Just don't touch anything and leave it to me!" Sasha volunteered to take care of all the packing, surprised and delighted.

Sebastian was glad that he did not have to do anything.

Grabbing a random book, he started reading at the desk beside the window.

As he read, he felt that something was amiss. Someone seemed to be staring at him very intently from the side.

Sebastian shook his head in resignation.

"Are you saying that you're bringing us back to Avenport?"

Sasha tossed the clothes aside, stood beside him, and stared at him.

Sebastian froze.

After a while, he averted his gaze. Still looking as aloof as before, he flipped the pages of the book casually and replied, "Yeah. Don't you want to go back?"

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"It's not about whether I want to go back, but..." Sasha was fuming when she came to a realization. Even her fingers were trembling.

"Why do you want to return to Avenport?" she asked with a quivering voice; her eyes reddened.

Sebastian's heart skipped a bit, and he quickly raised his head.

When he was about to explain himself, he saw tears streaming down Sasha's cheeks.

"Have you regained your consciousness a long time ago? Have you been lying to me all along?"

"No…"

"Sebastian, you jerk! Have you been lying to me all along? Did you know how much I wished for you to regain your consciousness? Do you have any idea how much effort I've put in just to make you recover? How could you lie to me?"

Sasha was on the brink of a mental breakdown.

She had pulled herself through such agonizing times and worked so hard, yet Sebastian had chosen to hide it from her after regaining his consciousness, tormenting her even further.

Sasha spun around and ran away.

"Darling..."

Sebastian, who had always been pretending to be calm, finally panicked. He tossed his book aside and chased after her.

However, Sasha ran really quickly. When he rushed out of the bedroom, she took the stairs and was already on the second floor. Even from a floor apart, he could hear her sobs.

The housemaids downstairs were gossiping about it. "What happened? Did Mr. Jadeson fight with Mrs. Jadeson again?"

"No way! Mr. Jadeson has already recovered. Why would he still argue with her?"

"Why is she crying then? I've never seen her cry so sadly before. Didn't you hear her sobs? It'll be bad if she attracts Old Mr. Jadeson's attention."

Even the housemaids can tell that I've recovered. Only that woman is still completely oblivious and she's even blaming me for not telling her!

The veins on Sebastian's forehead throbbed.

But what can I do about it? She's my wife. I have to coax her no matter what. Anyway, everything she says is right. Even if it's not, it's all my fault!

Sebastian chased after her.

Sure enough, when he reached the first floor, Jonathan came out, having heard the commotion. He was standing in front of Sasha, who was crying her heart out.

"What happened? Why are you crying like that?"

Sasha continued sobbing.

It was the first time she had lost her composure in front of Jonathan.

However, she was so sad that she could not control herself at all.

"He... He lied to me."

"He lied to you? What did he lie to you about? Tell me! I'll teach him a lesson for you."

Perhaps because of what Sebastian said in the afternoon about leaving for Avenport, Jonathan was still furious. He was all prepared to deal with Sebastian.

Sebastian clenched his fists.

Without saying anything, he suddenly walked over and carried Sasha with his muscular arms.

"Ah!"

"Wow!"

Sasha screamed.

At the same time, the people watching them exclaimed in shock.

This is amazing!

Is it appropriate for them to do this? There are so many people here! How can they act so lovey-dovey in front of all of us?

Truth be told, Sebastian could not be bothered by any of them. Picking Sasha up, he said to Jonathan expressionlessly, "What happens between us is none of your business."

With that, he strode away with Sasha in his arms.

Jonathan was so furious that he stomped his feet on the ground.

"That b*stard, he... He..."

"Yes, he's too outrageous. He's crossed the line! Calm down, Old Mr. Jadeson. Let's ignore him and have a cup of coffee instead."

Mark had to drag Jonathan away forcefully.

Meanwhile, Sebastian carried Sasha upstairs and ignored her struggles. He closed the bedroom door behind him, tossed her onto the bed, and pinned his body against hers.

"Mmm... You jerk..."

"Yeah, I'm a jerk. But I didn't do it on purpose! Alfred's men came that night when I regained consciousness. I had no choice but to play along with their plan. I wanted to avenge Calvin and save the Jadesons. I had no choice, Darling."

Pinning her to the bed, he stared at her. His eyes were brimming with guilt and agony.

Sasha was stunned.

Is he talking about how he went crazy after being sabotaged at the military base? So he has already recovered back then!

"Did you know? When I saw you collapse in front of my hospital ward in the mental hospital and vomit blood, I really went crazy. All I wanted to do was barge out and bring you away. I wanted to cast everything aside and leave this hellish place. Did you know, Darling?" he started explaining himself.

For once, he could finally let out of all these emotions that had been buried deep within his heart. Hugging her head, he lowered his body and buried his face against her neck.

She could feel his warm tears rolling down her neck.

Sasha hugged him even tighter.

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This was the first time he poured his heart out to her.

He was too powerful and lonely. Not trusting anyone in this world, he was used to burying all his emotions in the depth of his heart. He refused to let anyone notice anything—not even those closest to him.

He was unwilling to portray his most vulnerable side.

Hence, by telling Sasha all that, he had made up his mind.

Sasha sighed as she held him. All the blame and resentment she felt disappeared shortly.

"I'm not blaming you... I just want you to recover so badly."

"I know... I know..."

Sebastian raised his head from her neck.

As he cupped her cheeks and stared at her, his passionate gaze landed on her lips.

Before Sasha could react, she felt the warm puff of his breath against her face. Soon, her lips were covered by his.

"Darling, I want to hear you call me Sebby..."

After a slight pause, she relented. "Sebby..."

Jonathan agreed to let Sasha and the rest return to Avenport.

However, he requested they come back more often to visit.

That was not a problem. After all, Jonathan was Sebastian's grandfather and the children's great-grandfather. It was only right for them to visit him.

"Don't worry, Grandpa. Even if he doesn't come, I'll bring the kids along to visit you," Sasha said, feeling bad when she noticed the old man's reluctant gaze.

This time, she even called him "Grandpa."

When Jonathan heard that, he paused for a while. His eyes turned redder as he gazed at the children.

"It's fine, Great-grandpa! We can video call each other every day. Have you kept the iPad I gave you?"

Matteo was a smart child. After noticing what was going on, he stopped playing and ran toward Jonathan.

Jonathan beamed brightly when he saw Matteo.

"I did. As long as it's something given by my great-grandson, I'll definitely keep it safely."

He pulled Matteo into his arms. Seeing how sweaty Matteo was, he lifted his sleeve and wiped Matteo's forehead.

He was no different from any other old man when it came to doting on his great-grandchild.

Smiling, Matteo gazed back at him. "That's good! We'll call you using the iPad, so you can see at any time."

"Really?"

"Of course! It's only for you. Also..."

A mysterious look crossed Matteo's face.

When Jonathan saw that, he tilted his head over affectionately.

"I installed an app on the iPad. As long as you click on it and connect to it, you can see what's going on in our house."

"Really?" Jonathan's eyes lit up.

Vivian ran over as well. Despite seeing Matteo talking to Jonathan, she did not care at all as she climbed up to the bench Jonathan was sitting on and poked her chubby face out.

"Yeah, Great-grandpa! You can see me too."

"I'm so happy that I can see our cute little Vivian too!"

Jonathan felt as though his heart had melted upon seeing her. Stretching his arms out, he carried the chubby Vivian to the front. A wide grin spread across his cheeks, replacing the grim look on his face earlier.

Watching from the side, Sasha smiled and turned around.

Jonathan might have a lot of flaws, but he genuinely doted on the children.

She returned to the living room.

"Mr. Steward has already arrived with Madam Janice, Mrs. Jadeson."

"Okay."

Sasha was about to head upstairs to pack her belonging. However, when she heard that, she hurried to the entrance to welcome the guests.

She saw Janice walking in anxiously with Mark. Occasionally, she would whisper something beside Mark's ear to ask him something.

"Mark, are these really Old Mr. Jadeson's instructions? I'm... I'm afraid that I'm not up for the job."

"Yeah, Old Mr. Jadeson instructed me personally to fetch you here. Don't worry, he has always thought highly of you. Now that Mrs. Jadeson is leaving, it's expected that he wants you to take care of Oceanic Estate for now," Mark reassured her.

Only then did Janice feel more relieved. However, her anxiety was still obvious from her tightly clasped hands.

Sasha stood at the entrance. When Janice approached her, she smiled and greeted, "You've come, Aunt Janice."

Janice walked forward briskly upon spotting Sasha. Unable to understand why, she grabbed Sasha's arm and asked anxiously. "Yeah! What's going on, Sasha? Why are all of you going back all of a sudden? Isn't it fine staying here?"

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/ Returning from the Dead: His Secret Lover Janice had enjoyed spending time with Sasha and did not treat her like an outsider. She questioned Sasha worriedly, like a family member.

Sasha led her in.

"It's Sebastian's idea. Besides, our home is in Avenport. My father, uncle and the rest are there. There are many people in the Hayes family waiting for him too."

"But..."

Although Janice was still unwilling to let Sasha go, she could not say anything more.

Half an hour ago, Sasha had taken out the Jadesons' ledger that she had compiled from her room. When she passed it to Janice, she reassured her, "Don't worry. I've already listed out the income and expenses in Oceanic Estate. You just have to follow them."

"But..." Janice looked at the new ledgers; a look of unease and fear appeared on her face. "Will... Will they listen to me?"

They? Is she talking about those in The Ataraxy?

Smiling, Sasha consoled her, "Of course! Old Mr. Jadeson appointed you personally and I've already set the framework for you. No one will dare to disobey you."

"But—"

"It's fine, Aunt Janice. I've already laid out the foundation. Now, it's up to you how you'd like to proceed from here."

A young girl, who was so much younger than Janice, was telling her that while holding the ledgers.

Janice suddenly froze, paralyzed to the spot.

A chill ran down her spine as if she had just been plunged into an icy lake. Her mind went blank and her cheeks turned ghastly pale.

I... I actually...

"Don't worry, I won't tell anyone. Gossamer Creek has been oppressed for such a long time. Days must've been tough for all of you. I understand your desire to take this step and fight on behalf of your branch family."

Still silent, Janice stared at Sasha with wide eyes, looking as timid as a cornered prey.

Sasha placed the ledger on the table, turned around, and left.

After hearing what Sasha said, Janice trembled even more.

She had never expected such a young girl to notice her intentions, which she had tried her best to conceal.

All these years, not even Jonathan could discover her motivations. He thought that she was spending so much effort taking care of him only because she wanted to secure more resources for her son, Kingston.

In reality, her son actually did receive a lot more opportunities than the others in the branch families.

"I... I'm not that ambitious. I just witnessed how life in Gossamer Creek is so drastically different from that at The Ataraxy. Furthermore, we kept being oppressed and bullied by them... That's why I decided to take this step. Sasha, I have no intention of becoming the lady of the house. All... All I want is to help out so that Old Mr. Jadeson will notice us at Gossamer Creek! Believe me, Sasha!"

Janice grabbed Sasha's arm agitatedly as she spoke.

Sasha did not know what to make of it.

She tugged her arm out forcefully and glanced at Janice.

"I said I understand you. I don't blame you either. Now that you've achieved your goal, I hope you'll do a good job and not disappoint Old Mr. Jadeson."

Janice felt as though she had just been slapped in the face.

Standing there and blushing, she stared at her arm, which had just been flung away. She could not utter a single word.

No matter how she tried to explain, nothing could hide the fact that it was her sole objective.

She thought that Sasha would be a gullible young lady. However, in reality, she herself was like a clown putting on a terrible act.

Hugging those ledgers, Janice left awkwardly.

Sasha continued packing her luggage.

A few minutes later, Olivia brought some dessert for her.

"Mrs. Jadeson, will she do a good job at The Ataraxy?"

As Olivia had been working for the Jadesons for a long time, she knew well what was going on with the family.

While eating the dessert, Sasha laughed. "Why? Are you worried about her, Olivia?"

Olivia pouted. "You know how challenging The Ataraxy is. Jocelyn and Shirley aren't easy to deal with. Amelia, who has been with Jared Jadeson for a long time, isn't someone to be trifled with either."

Since those from The Ataraxy were not present and Olivia was close to Sasha, she named those people directly.

Jocelyn and Shirley? And another housemaid?

Licking the sweet dessert on her lips, she smirked mockingly.

If Janice could not even deal with those people, she would not have been able to rise to her current position. Since she could endure all the humiliation for such a long time, she was definitely not someone to be trifled with as well.