

Six Brothers 1271

Chapter 1271 Acknowledging Wynter as the New Owner

Wynter calmly inquired, “In my dream, Grandpa Gordon sent me a message through Youth Daily. He urged me to come home, saying he left something for me. Did he mention anything to you before he passed away?”

Henry was visibly stunned by her question. When he met Wynter’s gaze once more, his eyes reddened as his hands slightly trembled.

“It seems the time has come. When Mr. Gordon was on his

deathbed, he had told me that someone would come and

retrieve something he left.

“No matter who becomes the Quinnell family’s head, I am bound to serve them. I initially pried Mr. Fabian about this, but he seemed unaware. I soon realized Mr. Gordon was uncertain who would come or when. It remained a mystery.”

Henry continued in a quavering voice, “But now, the time has come. Before this, I had expected to be laid to rest with Mr. Gordon’s wishes unfulfilled. Thankfully, you’ve arrived in time.”

Only at that moment did Henry feel a renewed sense of purpose. Such a feeling was different from merely learning about the Quinnell family’s new head.

Henry was a loyal and honorable man, having kept Gordon’s secret for years. Even if the Quinnell family had lost their glory in Hawford, he continued to safeguard the mansion until a new owner’s arrival.

In olden times, people shared close and meaningful employer- employee relationships. While such bonds seemed quaint in the present time, they could still lead to monumental life. changes upon finding someone truly worth following.

Henry was now ready to embrace the legacy Gordon left. behind.

Although Wynter couldn't empathize with Henry, she was deeply thankful for regaining her cognizance after her head injury.

She had dispelled the formation at the Quinnell residence and learned the truth behind the family. And now, she had followed Gordon's guidance to Hawford.

Wynter doubted she could endure the years of guarding an uninhabited mansion. She couldn't reveal a secret, nor did she

know who would arrive or when.

It was thanks to people like Henry that the Quinnell family held onto a glimmer of hope.

"Thank you for everything, Mr. Rachford. I truly appreciate it." Wynter held Henry's hands firmly as she expressed her

sincerest gratitude.

Henry hurriedly interjected, "This is nothing. In fact, I'm really happy to see you, Ms. Wynter, and I'm glad you told me the truth. It feels like those days waiting weren't for nothing."

Henry knew that Wynter wouldn't have disclosed the truth if she had harbored doubts about him. It was clear she regarded him as part of the family rather than just a caretaker.

Henry and his fellow caretakers owed a debt of gratitude to Gordon, who never scorned them for their disabilities. When Wynter extended the same compassion, Henry felt a profound sense of warmth and appreciation.

"Mr. Gordon instructed me not to reveal anything unless the chosen one has mentioned Youth Daily. Since you have, I'll tell you what I know," Henry affirmed as he looked at Wynter with sparkling eyes.

He pointed at the table and continued, “I must say you have a sharp intuition. The puzzle is on that desk. Mr. Gordon said that your destiny begins with Youth Daily, so the answer can also be found in the paper.

“He also mentioned you’ve been in Hawford before. Is that right?”

Chapter 1272 Gordon’s Legacy

Henry’s question was tinged with uncertainties. He wasn’t aware that Wynter had been to Hawford before.

Given her age, she wasn’t even born when Gordon passed

away. So, why did Gordon claim her destiny began with Youth Daily?

It was only then that Henry realized a logical flaw in his reasoning. Though he was worried about the potential

mistakes, Wynter chuckled and took his hands. “Indeed. I’ve been to this house before.”

Henry stared at her in shock, silently wondering when she had visited the old Quinnell residence. Wynter picked up the newspaper from the rack and slipped it into her black bag.

“I’ll definitely find out what Grandpa Gordon has left for me, and I won’t hand over the Chamber of Commerce he

established. So, Mr. Rachford, are you prepared for a new life?” Wynter grinned.

Feeling the vigor of his youth returning, Henry replied eagerly, Definitely. And it’s not just

me—the others are also ready for action.”

“Well then, let’s follow Grandpa Gordon’s example and bring the Chamber of Commerce back to its former glory. It was founded in Cascadia, and we Cascadian merchants should have the final say,” Wynter asserted as she zipped up her bag.

At that moment, Henry finally realized Wynter’s intention. He

had never expected her to have such a generous spirit.

He had initially thought she merely wanted to reclaim the Quinnell family’s power in the Chamber of Commerce and establish a foothold in Hawford’s business community.

However, Henry now understood why Gordon entrusted Wynter with “that thing“. After all, she was the only one who truly understood Gordon’s principle.

To whom much was given, much was expected. A businessman should always pursue profit fairly and honestly.

The Southern Cascadia Chamber of Commerce rightfully belonged to the Cascadians, and they should wield its authority. Only then could their people live safely and happily..

“I believe you have the contact details for families oppressed by the Wrays, Mr. Rachford. I’ll cover the shortfall in their funds.

“For companies that failed in business transformations, I need you to draft some plans. Let’s take it one step at a time,” Wynter instructed calmly.

With his background in international economics, Henry quickly did some calculations and came up with a number.

“The amount required is too large. It’s not feasible to cover every shortfall. I have some funds from my stock investments. Let me withdraw them for you.”

“I can’t possibly accept your pension, Mr. Rachford,” Wynter declined with a soft chuckle.

“In that case, Marco has some connections. We could have him seek out potential investors, Henry suggested, clearly

Changer 1272 Gordon's Legacy

concerned about the funding. Many companies nowadays seemed accomplished, but their cash reserves were

constrained.

Wynter pondered for a moment and decided to spill the beans. “Don’t worry, Mr. Rachford. I’m not actually short on funds. The Wray family can’t outmatch me in terms of cash flow. Feel free to proceed with whatever plans you have.”

Henry was surprised by Wynter’s assertion. After all, the Wray family was known for having the largest cash reserves in

Hawford. No aristocratic family was a match for them, let alone the Whitman family.

Such financial strength had contributed to the Wrays’ imposing stature and formidable reputation.

The Wray family generated quick profits through businesses and established a market monopoly. With strong backing from foreign investors, they could pursue their goals without any reservations.

Despite his trust in Wynter’s words, Henry couldn’t help

worrying that she might have underestimated the Wray family.

But when he explained the potential impacts on their profits, Wynter was surprisingly calm and composed, as if she had everything under control.

Chapter 1273 A Crush

“Are you aware of this?” Henry asked in surprise, gaining a deeper understanding of Wynter,

Wynter gently nodded. "I've heard about it, but there's

something I'd like to confirm. Just what part does the Darnell family play in this situation? And why would their new head send an invitation to the Quinnell family?"

Such questions had been weighing on her mind. However she looked at it, it seemed unlikely that the Darnells would want the Quinnells at the meeting.

Upon hearing Wynter's inquiry, Henry furrowed his brows. "Are you saying that the Darnell family has sent you an invitation to the Chamber of Commerce?"

"They even sent it to the hotel. It's funny, isn't it?" Wynter

smirked.

Henry pondered and replied, "Let me check with Marco. He might know something."

Shortly after, an elderly man, whose steps barely made a sound, walked into the room.

After Henry posed the question through sign language, Marco Vaughan pulled out his phone in response. Henry gazed at the screen and fell silent for a moment before turning the phone toward Wynter.

Wynter was puzzled by the unusual exchange until she saw the

message on the screen.

"Is this credible?" she wondered aloud. However she looked at it, the message seemed to hint at some dubious gossip.

Henry chuckled. "Nothing concerning Hawford's aristocratic families escapes Marco's notice. He was Mr. Gordon's best informant."

"Does that include romance rumors?" Wynter asked pointedly

since the rumor concerned her mother.

Henry cleared his throat sheepishly. “Well, he and Ms. Marie. did attend the same school.”

Baffled by the revelation, Wynter couldn’t help grabbing her head in confusion. “That doesn’t mean everyone falls for their

classmates! Should I ask Mom about this?”

Henry responded with a serious expression, “In that case, I’m sure you’ll get an answer promptly.”

“To be honest, I’m not really interested in my parents’ love story.” Wynter sighed as she mentally prepared herself.

Worried that she might feel uneasy inquiring about such

rumors, Henry attempted to offer some advice when Wynter

cut in.

“What does Lucius Darnell look like? Is he handsome or tall?” Wynter wondered aloud.

Henry was stunned by her question and turned to Marco, who gave an estimate of Lucius’ height.

“Not bad. Has he put on any weight? He’s not losing any hair

either, is he?” Wynter inquired further.

Marco shook his head and gave a thumbs-up in response to her questions.

Seeing Marco's response, Wynter let out a soft chuckle. "It's too bad we don't have his picture. No worries, we'll see him at the meeting tomorrow. But are you sure he has a crush on Mom, Mr. Vaughan?"

Marco adjusted his glasses and swiftly laid out all his records, leaving Wynter stupefied. She wondered why Marco insisted Lucius was infatuated with Marie when he seemed more like a flirtatious playboy.

So, Marco provided evidence to support his claim. He drew a circle on Lucius' eyes, hinting at the expression in his gaze.

Unfortunately, Wynter wasn't attuned to romantic cues. She kept the clues away to seek further advice at a later time.

However, Wynter was more inclined to believe that Lucius was annoyed by Marie's conservatism and brilliance rather than infatuated with her.

If that were the case, why would he send the Quinnells an invitation? It was hard to tell what was on a man's mind.

With that, Wynter decided to seek Dalton's help once she returned from the old Quinnell residence.

Meanwhile, at a prestigious hotel, Marie received an unexpected call right after her shower.

Chapter 1274 Helping Your Daughter

The call was from Lucius, who expressed his intentions. plainly. "Your daughter has compromised the others' interest by participating in the meeting. The Whitman family won't offer her their support, and I have my own plans to deal with her tomorrow."

Hearing that, Marie clenched her fists. She had long outgrown her innocence. "How do you suggest we cooperate?"

Lucius chuckled softly at her response, and it sounded like he was taking a drag off a cigarette.

At present, he stood on the top floor of Hawford's central building, surveying his surroundings. His business partners were enjoying some fine drinks and beautiful women's

company.

Snuffing out his cigarette, Lucius glanced at the crowd offering him toasts. He gently swirled his wine glass and raised a brow, prompting his bodyguards to clear the crowd around him.

In truth, the private banquet's attendees were shrewd and perceptive. Upon witnessing the scene, the crowd exchanged knowing glances and gave up on approaching Lucius.

As Lucius gazed at the dazzling night scene in silence, he uttered with a solemn gaze, "You're misunderstanding

something here—there's nothing of value you can bring to this partnership.

"The Cascadians have once said that regret for lost chances

will haunt you, in later years. Have you forgotten your disdain for me, Marie? You've turned me down more than once."

Marie frowned slightly, though her voice remained gentle. "Are you saying I loathed you? You must be drunk."

Lucius swirled his wine glass and continued, "You said the same thing back at prom night. I assure you that I'm quite sober now. If you agree to get a divorce and be at my side, I'll help your daughter take over the Chamber of Commerce."

Marie felt her heart skip a beat at Lucius' words. She hadn't expected such an outrageous offer.

"You're right. You're not drunk; you're mad," Marie retorted. For the first time, she felt her composure slipping. Despite his age, Lucius remained as indifferent as ever.

Lucius hesitantly cleared his throat before refuting in a deep voice, "Oh, I'm crazy all right. I wouldn't have made such an

offer if I were in my right mind.

“Think about the people in the Chamber of Commerce—do you seriously think your daughter can handle them?

“And do you think the Whitmans hold the same power as they once had? I’m sure you’re aware of how much your brothers have suffered since your marriage to Shane Quinnell. On top of that, Mr. Whitman Senior is growing weaker by the day.

“The Wrays had taken their chances at the perfect time and climbed to the top. They’ve been watching the Whitmans’ every move like starving hyenas. Just imagine what would become of your family.”

Lucius took a sip of his whiskey as he listened to Marie’s soft breathing on the other end of the line. Since she had regarded him as despicable, he had no qualms about tarnishing his image further.

“I have a copy of the financial statements for Taylor’s companies. It was a mistake he made while working with the Wray family to cover his financial shortfall.

“I’m sure you understand the consequences Taylor will face if I turn these records over,” Lucius coolly threatened.

Marie was about to end the call but abruptly paused. “You’re lying. Taylor will never engage in illegal conduct.”

Gazing at his reflection in the mirror, Lucius chuckled. “You’re finally showing some emotions. I thought you would forsake your own family for the Quinnells.

“While Taylor stays within legal boundaries, Kenton won’t. And, considering the close ties the two famili

Chapter 1275 What You Said Back Then

Upon reaching the parking lot, the driver pulled over and stepped out of the car, leaving Marie alone with Lucius.

Even with her damp hair, Marie looked far from disheveled. On the contrary, her eyes glowed with a striking clarity.

Someone once remarked that her beauty was unparalleled and defied her age, as if she was destined to be adored. Her waist was as slim as those beautiful women depicted in fiction, while her wrist appeared delicate and fragile.

While her beauty was undeniable, her view of the world was often clouded by emotional uncertainty.

Instead of being intimidated by Lucius, Marie met his gaze directly. “I don’t understand. With your status, you can have any woman you want. Why would you propose something like that? As you said, this collaboration doesn’t seem to be worth

the effort.”

“I thought I already answered that. Like you said, there aren’t many who will refuse me—you’re the first and only one to do

so.”

Lucius reclined in his seat without sparing a glance at Marie. His face was shrouded in shadows, making it hard to read his expression.

Marie tightened her grip on her coat, musing that such information had far exceeded her expectations.

At that moment, she decided to clear up her misunderstanding with Lucius. “I don’t hate you. I’m not sure if my mannerisms gave you the wrong impression back then.”

Hearing that, Lucius turned his gaze toward her while remaining still.

Seeing that he was open to an explanation, Marie quickly continued, "If that were the case, I'm willing to be honest with you. There's no need for such a ridiculous collaboration because of our past."

"The collaboration? I assumed you had agreed by coming down," Lucius replied with a chuckle, though his eyes were cold.

Marie was momentarily stunned, but she quickly regained her composure. "I have, but I need to know the reason."

Lucius shifted his gaze away from her and stared out of the window. Though he seemed calm, his throat's subtle

movement betrayed his inner thoughts.

"Your personality is fine. It seems you have really forgotten about it," he said in a hoarse voice.

When Marie appeared confused, Lucius gave her some important hints. "During the school festival, you were talking to your friends backstage after your violin performance."

Instantly, Marie was transported back to her younger days. She had just turned 18 and held strong beliefs about romantic relationships.

Her friends were asking her about Lucius and wondered how

she would respond if he were to confess. What was her answer back then?

"He's nice, but I prefer someone loyal. His relationships are a tangled mess. Besides, there's no way he'd be interested in me. If you have no other questions, I suggest we go our separate ways."

That was what Marie replied to her friends. Realization dawned upon her, and she turned to Lucius in surprise. "You were there?"

"I didn't mean to overhear, but it was hard to imagine that the decorous class president would speak critically of others behind their backs," Lucius replied nonchalantly.

“I wasn’t criticizing you. I was just speaking from an objective standpoint,” Marie argued.

“I admit my intimate relationships were disastrous compared to your beloved Shane,” Lucius retorted as his eyes were bleak.

Marie had never intended to anger him and hurriedly apologized, “I’m sorry for my immature comments back then.”

However, Lucius suddenly yanked her closer as his gaze darkened. “Do you think I made such a request just to hear your apology?”

rudent and insouciant, but he was also straightforward. He wouldn’t hesitate about seizing what he wanted by force.

Although Marie doubted that Lucius would deceive her, she needed to be sure. Putting the call on hold, she quickly

accessed the associate company’s website and found the one listed under Taylor’s name.

When she realized that Lucius was telling the truth, her face turned pale.

“Who else knows about this?” Marie questioned in a quavering voice.

In contrast, Lucius replied casually, “No one. I’ve intercepted the information.”

Hearing that, Marie bit her bottom lip and suggested a meeting in person. Her primary concern was to retrieve the information from Lucius and work out a solution to the problem.

Lucius was stunned for a moment before grabbing his coat from the couch. “No need to rush here. I’m just right beside your hotel. Come down when you’re ready.”

Marie ended the call. She didn’t bother to dry her hair as she quickly slipped into her coat and headed to the door.

While Wolf would normally accompany Marie, Whitley was her current protector.

Whitley was working with his laptop in the living room when he noticed Marie leaving her room. He lifted his gaze and asked, "Are you going somewhere, Ms. Whitman?"

Marie knew that Wynter and her team had been extremely busy in the past few days. In particular, Wynter hadn't had a decent rest since reuniting with the Quinnell family.

Although Marie didn't want to add to their worries, she was aware of her own fragile condition and tied the lucky token

around her wrist.

As for the issues with Lucius, she just had to deal with them on her own. She couldn't see herself as a good parent if Wynter ended up facing hardships in Hawford because of her.

"I'm meeting a friend downstairs, I'll be back soon," Marie replied. She wasn't lying, but she wasn't telling the truth, either.

As about Cocking his head to the side, Whitley was about to turn off his laptop and accompany her. However, Marie instructed him to stay and continue with his investigation.

Whitley couldn't defy the order, but Wynter had tasked him to keep Marie safe. After a moment of pondering, he insisted on accompanying Marie.

"I won't be in your way. I'll keep a close watch from three feet away," he suggested.

Marie didn't want to put Whitley in a tough spot, so she agreed to let him come along. Recalling that Lucius had only invited her into his car, she instructed Whitley to wait in another car.

Marie calmly waited at the designated spot. Based on the

background noise from their phone call, she assumed he would arrive after the party ended.

Before long, a silver Rolls–Royce Cullinan pulled over beside her. Lucius was found sitting in the backseat. He rolled down the window and turned his gaze to Marie.

Clutching her coat, Marie took a deep breath and opened the door without Lucius' order.

Upon climbing into the car, she instantly felt a cold shiver wash over her. Despite the weather that month, the air conditioner was set to the maximum.

Lucius reeked of booze and lethargy as he cast a brief glance at Marie. He appeared more charming and handsome without his gentlemanly facade, complementing a rebellious edge that belied his years. "Turn off the air conditioner," he ordered.

The driver complied with his order and drove the car to the underground parking lot.

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Chapter 1277 Their Youthful Times

Marie could feel Lucius’ warm touch on her wrist, leaving a

fiery sensation that seemed to burn her from within. She

instantly transported back to a rainy past, when she handed him her umbrella.

Back then, Lucius grasped her hand firmly and stared at her with a meaningful gaze. “Are you in love with me?”

Marie believed that many girls had fallen for his handsome looks, but they also recognized his dangerous and

unpredictable nature. Lucius had histories with numerous girls and frequently moved on to new relationships whenever his

interests waned.

Understanding Lucius’ character, Marie had long dismissed him as a potential love interest. Plus, she preferred to focus on her studies more than personal relationships.

Though her heart skipped a beat at his question, she soon realized he was merely teasing her.

“Take this umbrella. It’s better to avoid the rain when you’re sick,” she told him. As the class president, she would’ve done. the same for anyone.

While Marie had only meant to give Lucius an umbrella, she found it hard to ignore the pounding rhythm of their beating hearts that seemed to distract her from her homework.

The incident quickly slipped her mind the following day. Lucius didn't mention it either, though he did stop teasing her dull

character on their way home. When a new girl from a different school came looking for him, Marie had completely forgotten the incident.

She was too busy with her exams and her plans for her future. She had been eager to pursue a business venture but soon discovered her management skills were lacking, leading her to change her field of study.

But at that moment, Marie could clearly hear the same.

pounding rhythm. It was deep and steady, yet pulsed with a rapid pace.

Stunned, Marie felt her breathing quickened. She attempted to speak when Lucius cut her off.

"We're both adults, so I'm sure you know what I'm after here. Taylor's financial statements are just to your right. You can either take them and accept my offer, or you can watch your family fall into ruin.

"As for your daughter, I'll make sure she never gets a chance to rise in Hawford. I give you my word," Lucius threatened calmly. His gaze lingered on Marie's lips as his fingers glided through

her hair.

Marie was completely shaken up. It was the first time in her life she had experienced such discomfort.

During her marriage with Shane, they were regarded as the perfect couple. In truth, Marie had only entered the relationship with him because of the care he showed her.

Back then, she was young and hadn't given too much thought to romantic relationships. But after giving her heart to Shane,

she had chosen not to pursue another relationship following

her divorce.

Marie raised her head and confronted Lucius' gaze directly. As long as she could be of help, she would do everything in her

power to support her family and da

Lucius was right about one thing—the Wray family had been menacingly watching over the Whitmans. Marie couldn't even imagine the chaos within the Chamber of Commerce.

However, she knew that Wynter stood no chance against the Wrays if the Darnells sided with them.

As she was previously ill, Marie wasn't aware of Shane's stunts in Hawford—not that she cared much. Yet, she knew Albert was active in stock markets, and Lucius happened to be proficient in such investments.

She couldn't risk jeopardizing the interests of both her family and Wynter, let alone Taylor's future.

Taking a deep breath, Marie finally declared, trying her best to suppress the quaver in her voice, "Alright, I agree to be your lover, but on one condition."

"Do you think you're in a place for negotiation?" Lucius frowned

His question fell on deaf ears as Marie met his gaze unwaveringly. "I'm not interested in being a homewrecker.

Once you decide to start a family, we'll go our separate ways."

Chapter 1278 A Deeper Truth

Lucius looked at Marie with a meaningful gaze. "I promise. I have no intention of starting a family soon or at any point in

the future.”

After all, the woman he dreamed of marrying more than anyone else didn’t feel the same way.

“Let’s get back to you—when are you going to divorce Shane?” Lucius asked. Staying with Shane would only lead to her downfall, yet Marie remained blinded to the looming danger.

Marie frowned at his words. “There’s something I’ve been wanting to ask. Are you not aware of my divorce?”

Lucius appeared stunned, and the look in his eyes changed noticeably. Despite his calm appearance, he stumbled over his

words. “Y–You’re divorced?”

“Indeed. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have agreed to your ridiculous proposal. So, tell me, are you seriously intending to use Taylor against me?” Marie inquired, staring at Lucius with a clear

gaze.

For the first time, Lucius felt like a cat on a hot tin roof—a saying he learned from his great-grandfather. Fidgeting with his fingers, he nervously affirmed Marie’s question.

“You always enjoyed coming up with such absurdities. When you first visited us, you insisted I be your playmate. When I refused, you broke my toy.” Marie sighed, her soft tone matching her calm demeanor.

Upon hearing that, Lucius felt a surge of panic inside. “You still remember that?”

With downcast eyes, Marie replied, “I’ve forgotten a lot of things since I got sick. When I came to Hawford, I tried to recover my lost memories; not the ones others shared with me.

“Since you’ve made a request, I’ll do the same. You claim our grandfathers were close friends, but why didn’t the Whitmans. hear about this?”

Lucius looked at her sorrowfully. “It’s because of the conflicts within the Darnell family. Grandpa Jared kept a distance from the Whitmans for my sake.

“I was feeling down that day, and he thought a visit to his old friend might lift my spirits. He mentioned his friend had a grandchild around my age.

“Grandpa Jared wouldn’t have taken that risk if it weren’t for me. To the Darnell family, I was considered impure. My Cascadian blood made me unfit to take over the family, so I was essentially cast aside.”

He wore a wistful smile and continued, “Unlike my mother, Grandpa Jared was a scholar who provided me with a good education. Unfortunately, I wasn’t exactly a disciplined child due to the blood running through me.”

Marie stared at Lucius. Ever since she received his call, she had been weighing her options. Finally, she came to a decision.

“I know the Darnells hold significant influence over the Chamber of Commerce. My request is simple—support my

daughter and cast a favorable vote when she decides to move against the Wray family,” Marie stated firmly.

Lucius arched a brow and retorted, “Well, we’ll have to see if she can make an impression.”

“She definitely can. In addition to these requests, the Darnell family must voluntarily withdraw from the Chamber of

Commerce,” Marie continued. She was fully aware of Wynter’s purpose in Hawford.

Upon hearing that, Lucius turned his gaze away and let out a threatening chuckle. “Wouldn’t it be easier if you just ruined me instead?”

“I didn’t tell anyone about our meeting, not even my daughter. Now that I’m in a relationship with you, I hope to secure her best interests instead of creating more problems for her to handle,” Marie replied, her stare unwavering.

Lucius scoffed. “Well, aren’t you an admirable mother?”

“I’m not. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have come to see you. I have my own selfish reasons,” Marie refuted as she shifted her gaze away.

Stunned, Lucius attempted to speak when Marie cut him off with a low voice. “Now that I’ve agreed to your request, will you agree to mine?”

Chapter 1279 Regret

“I promise you,” Lucius said, “the Darnell family will voluntarily

withdraw.”

He had lost.

His grandfather, Derrick Darnell, had taught him never to reveal his trump card in business and to keep people guessing. Derrick

despised Lucius’ half–Cascadia heritage, but with only one grandson, he imparted what he knew.

Lucius had indeed never revealed his trump card over the years.

Even Adrian, his own father, had hoped for his demise. But Lucius wondered why it mattered even if he did meet a bad end. He had gotten what he truly wanted anyway.

Moreover, he only considered his maternal grandfather, Jared Neil, his family member. In a family that scorned him as a half–breed, it was Jared who took him to Hawford. He taught Lucius to write

Cascadian and kept him close.

Jared had said that Lucius’ green eyes didn’t matter. As long as he lived righteously, he would be his beloved grandson.

Lucius didn't care how anyone saw him. Jared was long gone, after all. But there were still some things he would do.

He looked over at Marie and said, "The Darnell family isn't the only foreign member in the Southern Cascadia Chamber of Commerce."

Upon hearing this, Marje's fingers twitched slightly. "I know, but you're the hardest to deal with. Wynter will avoid confronting you unless absolutely necessary because when giants clash, it's the smaller Cascadian businesses that suffer. She'll consider that and try to avoid you.*

"So, that's what you're thinking." Lucius laughed. "No wonder you agreed to my terms."

Marie realized they were sitting too close. She looked away briefly before returning his gaze. "I told you, I have my own reasons."

Marie remembered a long time ago, when they were both children, Lucius lay down on Marie's grandfather, Johnny Whitman's, bed. Once, he had a high fever and tossed his toys at Marie, asking her if

she could save him when he was about to die.

Marie was scared back then. Whenever Lucius had a fit, both Jared and Johnny would be anxious. Johnny had told her that Lucius was

different from other kids.

Marie's hands trembled, but she still held down Lucius' hand to stop him from pulling out his IV and told him to wait for the doctor.

Those memories had become blurry.

After the discussion, Marie picked up the file folder beside her and examined its contents. Lucius hadn't lied to her. These internal accounts were indeed difficult to uncover.

The Wrays had planted these traps for so long, and they weren't for nothing. If the Wray family were investigated, it would inevitably implicate Taylor. He would be the first person held accountable.

By then, whoever initiated the investigation into the Wray family would essentially be destroying the Whitman family.

Thinking about Wynter's recent actions sent chills down Marie's spine. The situation was too intricate, and a single misstep could easily ensnare them.

Marie held the report in her hand. "I'll come find you after the conference with the Chamber of Commerce."

Lucius watched Marie's slender figure leave. He was filled with regret.

Why hadn't those he sent to investigate told him she was divorced?

Leaning back, he stared at the car's ceiling, wishing to turn back time an hour. He wanted to return to the time when he hadn't downed that glass of whiskey or made any demands. He rubbed his brow in frustration.

Jared had never taught him how indirect Cascadians could be. This lack of understanding of the cultural nuance was his downfall.

"Damn it!"

Lucius' looks didn't match his tone at all. He appeared mature,

composed, and intellectual, with a perfectly tailored suit. By this age, he should have been more collected, but he had truly acted foolishly this time.

The chauffeur returned to see Lucius in this state and couldn't

fathom why the normally inscrutable man was so upset. The meeting had gone well, hadn't it?

At the same time, Wynter was still in the car while studying something. She furrowed her brows slightly. “This won’t be easy to handle.”

Chapter 1280 Wynter’s Ideas

Wolf looked up at Wynter and gestured, asking what was hard to handle.

“The business world is intricately complex. When a company fails, countless people lose their jobs,” Wynter replied.

Wynter could compete with the Wrays using cash flow, but this strategy could only be employed once. If this strategy was used for a prolonged time, it would affect the market. It was uncertain whether those small and medium-sized enterprises could survive.

Wynter was contemplating how to avoid such a scenario. It would be easy to win against the Wrays if she had decision-makers in the Chamber of Commerce who could support her when she filled the funding gap.

However, Gordon’s original purpose in establishing the Chamber of Commerce was not simply to win without regard for the other enterprises’ survival.

Wynter propped her face on her hand. She could enter the market as the angel investor and fight the cash flow battle, then convince the Whitmans and Lucius to remove the Wray family from the Chamber of Commerce. That way, she could stabilize the situation and save the market with funds.

She was confident about the Whitmans. As for Lucius... Perhaps a thorough discussion at the Chamber of Commerce would help.

Based on her research, Lucius didn’t have much fondness for his own family.

It was common to overlook the smallest details when people were handling many things at once, and even Wynter was no exception. Hence, when she returned to the hotel and saw the report Marie

handed her, she flipped through the pages quickly.

“Take these to the old Quinnell residence and have Mr. Rachford find a way to balance these accounts first. Get the team investigating the Wray family’s company to come back,” Wynter ordered.

“Come back?” The person following Wynter was puzzled. “But the recent progress...”

Wynter’s eyes darkened. “It was my mistake to underestimate him. Kenton is so confident in letting you investigate and letting my brother maneuver in the stock market because he’s prepared a trap.

Everything went too smoothly.

“He anticipated this day and had laid the blame on the Whitmans beforehand. As long as there was business interaction, it couldn’t be prevented.”

Wynter smiled, a cold glint in her eyes. “The Wray family had calculated against the Whitmans even since back then by trailing behind them and setting them up.”

It started long ago. Wynter hadn’t realized, and it went unnoticed by even Noah and Taylor.

The Whitmans had taken action and cut off many ties with the Wrays. But this had begun a long, long time ago. Maybe it was even forgotten.

It was a simple truth. The more upright a person was, the less they suspected good friends.

Wynter had also tried looking for clues but found none.

“Mom, how did you get that report?” Wynter’s question hit the core of the matter.

Marie didn't hide it from her. She hung up her robe as she explained, "I met Lucius. We were acquaintances when we were younger."

Wynter paused. In reality, Marie hadn't tried hiding her meeting with

Lucius from her.

Wynter knew that Marie was simply trying to prevent her from being distracted. Otherwise, she wouldn't have had Whitley follow in a separate car. It was only now that she learned who exactly Marie had

met.

Lucius... Combining this with some of the things she heard in the old Quinnell residence earlier today, Wynter leaned in and seriously examined Marie's face.

Marie was puzzled by Wynter's actions. "What's wrong?"

"Logically speaking," Wynter smiled, "with someone as attractive as you, the other party would certainly bring up some cooperation proposals."

Marie's finger froze. She didn't want to lie to Wynter.

Unexpectedly, Wynter suddenly changed her tone. "Mom, you can go wherever you want. You don't need to have Whitley follow you as long as it's safe."

Marie looked up.

Wynter held her hand. "You can meet whoever you want and do whatever you want."