

The Heiress' Return: Six Brothers at Her Beck and Call

Chapter 1551 It's Time to Find Atwater

Wynter quickly turned toward the reliefs, recalling the details about the formations required for the struggle over inheritance. It was known as the Draconia Inheritance Formation.

Many believed that possessing someone was a simple matter, but it was far more complicated. Humans possessed three inner lights, making it difficult for a spirit to take control of the body without weakening those lights.

Unless the possessor was a blood relative or had a rare cultivation physique like Logan, taking over another's body was virtually impossible.

Considering the way "that person" did things, it was likely he had found a suitable body and exploited the Draconia Inheritance Formation to make the switch. The blood used in the

formation was the key element.

Wynter's expression darkened. That wasn't just any blood-the blood flowing from a living person was fundamentally different from that of the deceased.

The blood utilized in the Draconia Inheritance Formation came from the living.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to trace its source since the place had been abandoned, let alone find the murderer.

Given how the low temperature would affect the actual time of death, Wynter suspected that the possession had occurred more than three days ago. Glancing at the corpse at her feet, she closed her eyes and dialed a number. The call was answered almost immediately.

"It's me, Wynter. Do you have any news about Grandpa? I've been having nightmares the past two days dreams about my childhood. I also tried reaching out to Chad, as you asked." It was Logan Winston, whose manner of speaking remained unchanged.

Wynter instructed in a low voice, "Go to the address I gave you later. If Chad ever gets back to you, let me know right away."

"What's wrong? Did something happen?" Logan sounded anxious.

"Mr. Winston Senior had passed away. I'll explain everything when we meet," Wynter replied with her gaze downcast. There was a moment of silence on the other end before Logan's sobbing was heard.

However, Wynter didn't share his sentiment. Unlike Logan, Clyde willingly consented to the possession.

When Wynter was in the formation, she believed "that person" had randomly chosen a body to inhabit. However, she became certain of one thing after seeing the Draconia Inheritance Formation.

Whether it was Clyde or the new host, both must've yearned for something deeply. They were willing to sacrifice themselves in pursuit of eternal life and greater ideals, hoping to coexist with each other.

Humans often believed they could control the dead. But for "that person", it made no difference who he possessed. Once the host lost their value, he would relentlessly seek a new body until he found the path to immortality.

That person had to be stopped. He had never shown loyalty to his country, and now he intended to jeopardize the country's fortune by sealing the celestial force. Was he also involved in the upcoming pandemic?

A flicker of uncertainty crossed Wynter's eyes. She needed to find Atwater for assistance. It was too daunting to solve everything on her own.

"Boss, we've reached out to Lupius," Elmer reported as he came in from the east path. The faint smell of burning wood filled the air, confirming that the paintings had been incinerated.

Each member of the Special Unit had a specific area of expertise. Once their unique signal was sent, they would respond as soon as possible.

It sounded bizarre, to say the least. At that moment, an Uber driver in the middle of a job suddenly turned to the passenger with a smile.

"Sorry, young lady. I have some matters to attend to. Could you take another cab? I won't charge you through the app. Here's 50 dollars for the trouble."

The young woman blinked in surprise as she stepped out of the car, hardly believing her stroke of luck.

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Chapter 1552 Heading to Gilodam

As the young woman exited the car, she watched the cautious driver suddenly accelerate. The startling speed kicked up a cloud of dust, leaving little time for anyone to react. His remarkable driving skills even outshone those of a professional racer.

The driver was none other than Lupius, a member of the Special Unit specializing in tracking. That said, his name sounded like a piece of equipment in games and didn't quite fit his appearance.

After all, who would expect that a plain, cheerful middle-aged man with a Hossip accent could be someone feared by foreign spies?

Lupius strode in, biting down on a cigarette. When he spotted Wynter, his smile grew warmer. "So, what do you want me to look into, Boss?"

Although the Special Unit's members were at odds with each other, they held Wynter, known as 001, in high regard. Such an admiration had little to do with age, as Lupius shared the same respect.

"I'll cut to the chase. We might face a pandemic in three months. I need you to head to Gilodam and investigate whether there are other ways to enter the country," Wynter instructed.

Elmer was surprised by the mention of his hometown, Gilodam. He had assumed the pandemic spread from the borders into the rest of the country.

"I'll go with Lupius, Boss. He might have trouble understanding our accent. It's better if I tag along," Elmer offered as he lifted his gaze. Appearing to be in his 20s, he sported a delicate face with headphones slung around his neck.

Wynter voiced her approval. As she glanced at the forensic team performing the autopsy, she handed her lucky coins to Lupius and Elmer.

"Besides investigating the source of infection, track down the Winston family as soon as possible. I have some questions for Chad-if he's still alive."

While Elmer nodded in response, Lupius appeared much more composed. Having experienced an outbreak in the past, Lupius was aware of the disaster it could wreak on normal citizens.

It was clear to Lupius that such a disease didn't emerge randomly. He knew the locations and methods to find the virus, which was precisely why Wynter had summoned him. After all, certain tasks were best left to experts for quicker and more effective results.

Wynter considered the need to leave some subordinates at the crime scene. They didn't end up completely empty-handed, but the blood needed to be collected and analyzed.

Wynter suspected that the blood didn't belong to just a single individual, but tracing its source might be challenging since it was mixed together. However, she believed there were

other clues left behind.

"Aren't you coming with us, Boss?" Elmer questioned. He was convinced that the pandemic was a critical issue that needed to be averted.

Wynter turned to him and replied, "The matters in Hawford aren't settled yet. There are things I'm curious about. I'll be investigating them alone."

Aside from the scholarship committee, she was curious about why Clyde's possessor had chosen to seize his body at the villa. She wondered if there was something within Hawford that could activate the Draconia Inheritance Formation.

On top of that, she was skeptical about Lynette's club. She wouldn't rest easy until she unraveled those mysteries.

Biting on his cigarette, Lupius coolly added, "Do you seriously think the boss has the time to deal with everything herself? Besides, this place gives me the creeps. She's definitely staying here. She's an expert when it comes to handling supernaturals, after all."

Elmer fell silent, worried that Wynter might run into trouble if she stayed behind. Noticing his concern, Wynter assured him, "Don't worry. Lucas will be here soon as the higher-ups have transferred him over. He's probably on the train by now."

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Chapter 1553 He Made a Deal

"Lucas is here to investigate the cases regarding corruption and economic crime, but there's no need to worry about the situation here. He's probably the supremo," Wynter explained. Though it was largely her conjecture, there were some predictable aspects at play.

Despite the Chamber of Commerce's importance, it was riddled with corruption. The higher-ups would never turn a blind eye to such an issue, especially with an influential figure presented. That was likely the reason for the personnel changes happening.

The Special Unit was aware of Lucas' connection to Wynter, though he might not know her identity since he was involved in politics. That said, the Keller family could provide valuable support to Wynter. And if that fell through, she could always reach out to Dalton.

Elmer had once caught a glimpse of Dalton from a distance. However, he found Dalton to be more elusive than what he heard.

Elmer recalled a time when he thought he had successfully hidden, only for Dalton to discover him. He couldn't shake the feeling that Dalton was even more mysterious than Wynter herself. With that recollection, Elmer was convinced of Wynter's safety.

Meanwhile, Wynter left the scene to meet Logan, who had arrived earlier. Upon seeing Clyde in the morgue, Logan broke into tears. But what saddened him the most was that he still couldn't understand Clyde's drastic changes.

In Logan's early memories, Clyde had always been loving. However, he couldn't recall when that had changed. As Logan stared into space, he struggled to accept the death of his grandfather, who had raised him.

Glancing at Logan, Wynter stated, "Under normal circumstances, Mr. Winston Senior should've passed away a long time ago. I'm sure you've realized that your grandpa is different from others. When one reaches 100, it feels as if their time has been borrowed."

Logan felt his fingers tense as he asked, "You mentioned he wants my help to prolong his life."

"What I meant was he planned to kill you and take over your body," Wynter corrected and glanced at the time.

Logan growled in response, "That's not something Grandpa would do!"

"Perhaps he was never truly your grandpa. I had some assumptions based on the timeline. Do you have any memories of your great-grandpa, Diego Winston?" Wynter calmly inquired.

Logan shook his head, unable to recall anything about Diego.

After a moment of contemplation, Wynter decided to be blunt for clarity. "Mr. Diego was a traitor. He assisted the Foplyans with translations and even resold many of our antiques."

That revelation left Logan reeling, and his eyes widened in shock.

Wynter steadied him and continued, "To continue surviving, the entity inside Mr. Diego needed to inhabit other bodies and chose Mr. Winston Senior as his host."

"Mr. Winston Senior willingly agreed to the deal. I suppose something must have happened to the family back then."

Wynter's explanation seemed to trigger a memory in Logan's mind. While he wasn't fully aware of the details, he had heard stories from his elders.

Back then, the whole Winston family had almost faced arrest due to their questionable backgrounds. However, Clyde managed to find a way out and saved the family from ruin. Since then, he held the family's reins.

Under Clyde's leadership, the once modest Winston family gradually rose to status. Their influence and power eventually seemed to rival that of the Quinnell family.

Logan's eyes widened in realization. He was no longer the naive, inexperienced young man he once was. Ever since Clyde's attempt on his life, Logan had been reflecting on his family's past. And now, everything seemed to fall into place.

Clyde had made a deal for something that was never meant to belong to the Winston family.

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Chapter 1554 Atoning Sins

Logan clenched his fists, his smile seeming more painful than the sight of his tears. "Wynter, this is hilarious, isn't it? I'm the type of guy who's into clubbing, racing, whatever-but I never imagined my ancestors were traitors."

Wynter understood Logan's straightforwardness and passion. He was the type who loved watching superhero movies and had figurines in his sports cars. Deep down, he loved this land more than anyone.

Wynter wasn't good at comforting people, so after pondering for a moment, she said, "Your circumstances are special, so this won't affect you. Whatever your ancestors did doesn't change the fact that you're a good person." Logan's feelings were a mess. Knowing the truth was painful, but not knowing would have left him living in a lie. He had never spoken to anyone about it, but every time he returned to the Winstons' old family estate, Astraea Villa, he would feel an eerie sense of decay.

"My progress is too slow right now," Wynter said, raising her gaze. "So, I want to use you as bait."

Logan stiffened. "Me? Bait?"

"Yes, bait. That person is currently in someone else's body, but possession isn't simple. Whoever they possess, they take on that person's karma.

"The first time they possessed your great-grandfather, he suffered a backlash, and the underworld must have sensed something. When a person dies and their soul vanishes, it's a major violation.

"From his perspective, you're the most suitable host. You're young and have a unique constitution." She paused before adding, "Besides this, there are still some lingering connections. I need you to recall-did your grandfather have close ties with any families in Hawford?"

"I'll have to think about it." Logan had received too much information today-Clyde's death, Diego being a traitor, and Chad's disappearance. He had never felt this exhausted before.

He used to fear dying mysteriously, but now, as he lowered his head and looked at Clyde's corpse, it felt like a bitter pill to swallow. "Wynter, do you think my grandfather loved me?"

"He did." Wynter's rational response left no room for argument. "But people always love themselves most. He wanted to live more than anything. And once he was possessed and had everything he ever wanted, he became obsessed.

"He was deceived. He thought that changing bodies would grant him immortality and allow him to continue ruling. "He might have resisted at first, but as his life force waned, he agreed. Over time, the person possessing him also influenced his thoughts. Logan, that's human nature."

Wynter continued in a steady tone, "Including mine. That person has their sights set on you and Tobias, but I can't risk using my brother as bait. You're also the best option because you can sense him-you can tell when he's nearby."

Wynter indeed wanted to track down that person, and using Logan as bait was the fastest way. She had initially been reluctant, but after Yvette mentioned the impending pandemic, she realized she had to race against time. After hearing Wynter's words, Logan stood up abruptly with his swollen eyes. "I'll be the bait!"

For so many years, no one had ever told him the truth. But of course, he also had another driving force behind his decision.

"I want to meet the person who possessed my grandfather. I need to know why he turned him into what he is now!

Revenge is often the fastest way for someone to grow. But beyond that, Logan spoke in a low voice, "I want to do something to atone for the Winston family's sins."

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Chapter 1555 Used As Wynter's Weapon

"Great." Wynter looked at Logan, her eyes filled with approval. "From now on, I will withdraw all the protection around you and leave only Leo by your side. If anything happens, I will sense it immediately."

Logan nodded, fully aware that the only reason he had been safe for so long was due to Wynter's meticulous protection. Thanks to her, his presence had been completely hidden from the rest of the Winston family.

wynter had previously used the Arcane way on him and borrowed items from Mt. Dragon to conceal the dark energy he naturally exuded, keeping unborn spirits at bay.

Before that, Logan was often haunted by spirits that latched onto him. Recently, though, nothing of the sort had happened, largely because of the protective bracelet he wore.

However, once those defenses were gone, Logan would again become vulnerable to being tracked. Though it wouldn't be immediate, with time, he would definitely be found.

The fact that his birthdate and horoscope were still in the Winston family's possession would make it even easier for that man to locate him.

If Wynter stayed by his side, it would interfere with the plan.

Logan wasn't like Tobias, whose every move was under public scrutiny. If something happened to Tobias, people would notice and raise an alarm immediately since he was an actor.

This kind of high-profile attention would have prevented that man from ever trying to possess Tobias. Otherwise, that man would have set his eyes on Tobias long ago.

In contrast, Logan was a much easier target-his low profile ensured no one would notice, just like how that man quietly moved from Diego to Clyde. The choice of the vessel mattered a great deal.

From Wynter's perspective, that man had always acted from the shadows. He had been cautious when he possessed Clyde, and he was likely the same now with his new host.

It appeared that the man had suffered a significant setback in his Arcane Way, possibly at the hands of someone with considerable power.

Wynter glanced at Clyde's corpse lying nearby, contemplating another possibility. There might be someone or something in this world that the man feared, which was why he hadn't fully revealed himself.

"Be cautious in everything you do. If something feels even slightly off, tell me immediately."

She handed Logan the purple sugilite jade along with a numbered tag. "Also, congratulations-you've officially joined the Special Unit. Let me give you a quick overview. Our unit operates under the highest authority and is not tied to any local jurisdiction.

"In special circumstances, we have immediate execution power. We can go after corruption at the highest levels or deal with unresolved grievances at the lowest.

"However, our identities must remain confidential, even from our families. Everything we do is classified at the highest level of secrecy.

"Listen carefully to what I have to say next. We're expecting an unprecedented outbreak of a pandemic in three months, centered in Cascadia's southern region.

"Based on the intel we've gathered and my own analysis, it's likely not a natural occurrence-there's a high chance it's man-made.

"For so many years, foreign influence has been infiltrating our country, and your family the Winston family- might all be involved in this, except for you."

Wynter watched Logan frozen in place, with a look of confusion or perhaps shock on his face. His eyes had a glazed, distant quality, reflecting his overwhelmed state.

"I'll give you a brief rundown of some cases we've handled," Wynter continued as she scrolled through her phone.

"There was a large-scale human trafficking case, the Hundred-Day Anti-Drug Campaign, international rescue operations, and the one you've seen before a covert espionage infiltration case. This was mentioned online, but you probably dismissed them as jokes."

At this moment, Logan felt completely numb, as if his brain no longer belonged to him.

He had always known that Wynter was special, but he never imagined she was this special. He had always thought of her as a businesswoman who just happened to be very good at fortune-telling.

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Chapter 1556 The Relief Sculptures

Whether it was in physical industries or high-stakes ventures reliant on luck, Wynter had a well-thought-out plan for everything. She was truly a genius among geniuses.

Only today did Logan realize that this genius had long since devoted herself to the country.

Among all the people present, none could have imagined she had such a background. Otherwise, no one would have dared to confront her or go up against the Whitman family.

Even back when Clyde was alive, he spoke of her with disdain. Chad even thought of Wynter as a joke. Looking back now, it was all so ironic.

They had all lived in arrogance, so used to their privileged upbringing that they instinctively categorized people into different ranks. Logan thought he understood Wynter completely, but in truth, he probably hadn't even grasped a third of who she really was.

As a young man, like many others, Logan harbored a dream of being a hero hoping to become, like a movie's protagonist, someone truly special who could dedicate his life to the land beneath his feet.

Logan's pain was gradually washed away by a surge of excitement. He looked up at Wynter. "Rest assured, Wynter. I will definitely complete the task you've entrusted to me!"

"Alright." Wynter didn't doubt Logan's character. Otherwise, she wouldn't have given him the badge belonging to the Special Unit.

There were people in this world who carried a legacy, and then there were those who walked through life guided only by their passion. From the moment she met Logan, Wynter knew he was unhappy within the Winston family.

She had heard all the rumors from Kingbourne about her. So, she knew it wasn't easy not to conform in such an environment.

Yet, Logan had managed to stay true to himself he was the only one in his family not influenced by those around

hirn.

After giving her instructions, Wynter didn't linger. Initially, she had planned to personally visit Lynette's club to see what exactly was captivating all those socialites.

However, after seeing the earlier relief sculpture, she was left with an unsettling feeling. Compared to investigating the clubhouse, the scholarship committee seemed far more dangerous.

From its name alone, it was clear that the program involved students. Laboratory schools, being one of the top schools, shouldn't have many issues. After all, they weren't found in rural areas with neglected children whose parents were away for extended periods.

The records for each round of educational aid for top schools like this should be well-documented, and the students receiving scholarships should have their information on file.

Yet, according to Yvette, the Wray family had somehow used this school as a stepping stone to gain power within the Chamber of Commerce.

Mounting her motorcycle, Wynter's long legs gracefully swung into place. As she snapped her helmet on, the curve of her lips held a chilling edge.

Some people truly behaved worse than animals, all while thinking they could seize power under the guise of doing good.

Since the Wray family had fallen, if something sinister really was happening at this laboratory school, now was the best time to investigate. Whoever was benefiting from the school wouldn't sever this link easily.

Someone new was bound to step in. When they did, she'd be ready to swiftly pull the rug from under them and send them all to prison!

At this moment, the Waldron family was entertaining guests, eagerly anticipating Wynter's downfall. They were completely unaware of her true intentions and what she was about to do next.

In Edison's eyes, once Fredric made his move, Wynter was as good as finished. It was merely a matter of time. He only needed to sit back comfortably and watch the spectacle unfold.

At the right moment, he could even play the hero over at the Whitman family. But for now, he would allow them to remain happy. After all, he believed they would be in a living nightmare soon.

Edison's thoughts were colored by a prior agreement that if the Wray family fell, he would be chosen as a decision-maker for the Chamber of Commerce.

Today, however, not many had shown up. He knew that most of the attendees had gone to the Whitman family instead.

"Alvin really is shortsighted, betting everything on the Whitman family," someone whispered in Edison's ear. Edison chuckled in response and said in a quiet voice, "Let him. Those who go there now will end up crying even harder later."

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Chapter 1557 Still Trapped in Delusions

The person next to Edison widened his eyes in surprise. "Mr. Waldron, are you hiding something from us?"

"Not at all," Edison replied, his words tightly guarded. "But as businesspeople, we must know what to get involved in and what to avoid. The Montclair family's downfall is a clear example. Now, let's see if Wynter is as lucky when she faces the same situation."

Everyone knew that the Montclair family had been entirely ruined. Tamia, punished for numerous offenses, had no hope of ever getting out.

Tamia had tried to reach out for help, banking on her past connections with that man. After all, many elements at play had helped him reach where he was today. If both the Wray and Montclair families collapsed, his position could also be at risk.

But that man didn't respond to her pleas. Tamia finally understood what it meant to be in eternal torment.

She had to listen to Landon hurling insults at her every day, saying that her actions were worse than those of animals. Within just two days, her former elegance had vanished.

She had even considered ending it all by ramming into a wall, but she failed every time. Now, all she could do was wait in agony for her sentencing.

Tamia glared at the prison camera with resentment, thinking that Wynter was on the other side, laughing at her. "Just you wait. One day, you'll regret ever coming to Hawford. Someone will show you the meaning of stopping before it backfires."

She had completely lost her mind. Deep down, she understood that the Montclair family's current situation meant that anyone who still had ties with them would expose their political and business collusions.

No one wanted to be dragged down with them, so everyone kept their distance from the Montclair family.

Wynter's strategy had been ruthless and clear. She had cut off every escape route for the Wray family.

Even Ophelia, who had been released on bail, was treated like an outcast in Hawford. She might be free, but no one dared to contact her. The higher-ups worried that she was bait released by the authorities anyone reaching out risked being tracked by them.

As for the social circle of affluent ladies, they had made their stance clear. They weren't in the same social class anymore, so why pretend otherwise?

Ophelia still held onto hope, thinking that she could somehow convince Rosalyn to help her plead for mercy.

"Noah and I just had a misunderstanding. I never really wanted to divorce him. It was all because of my mother's manipulation." Ophelia tried explaining herself.

Rosalyn, not wanting to get involved in Ophelia's messy situation with the Whitman family, found it difficult to fend off her persistent attempts to block her path.

Ophelia would have rather stayed in jail than face the reality awaiting her outside—a mountain of debt, no home to return to, and the stain of economic crimes on her family's name. Now, she was just a middle-aged woman who had lost everything.

This was the harshest blow for Ophelia. This felt worse than being locked up. It made her feel like she was living in a nightmare, especially when she saw the judgmental looks from her former friends.

"What kind of misunderstanding could make someone accuse their own husband of cheating?"

"Exactly. We would never stoop to something like that."

The ladies were skilled in cold, biting remarks, and Ophelia knew this all too well. She had once been part of their circle, after all. But now, being on the receiving end of their mockery made her wish she could disappear!

The thought of having nothing left in the future filled her with panic. She couldn't accept that at all. She had to reclaim her status as Mrs. Whitman!

Seeing that Rosalyn remained silent, Ophelia assumed there was still a chance. Desperately, she grabbed Rosalyn's arm.

"Rosy, we've been friends for so many years. You'll help me, won't you? I don't even need to see Noah. Just please, tell my son that I'm here waiting for him. Can you do that for me?"

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Chapter 1558 A Mere Stepping Stone

As long as she could see Cyrus, Ophelia believed he would soften upon seeing her in this state. After all, blood was thicker than water. No child would truly abandon their mother, and especially not Cyrus!

As his mother, Ophelia understood Cyrus well.

However, Rosalyn shook her head after hearing her plea. "Ophelia, I might try to help you if you ask me to arrange a meeting with Noah. But if you want me to bring Cyrus out, the Whitman family might hold me accountable.

"I'm not going to do something so foolish, and I advise you not to use your child like that. You'll only make the Whitman family feel that keeping you in Hawford is trouble."

Rosalyn was a smart woman, even if her words were blunt. She had no intention of continuing her association with Ophelia.

Rosalyn couldn't even manage her own husband. She was not in the mood to take care of someone else's problem.

There was no chance that one would be invited back in once they were chased out of a circle. Ophelia was exposed to a malice she had never experienced before.

She had lost everything-except for mountains of debt and the occasional whisper, "She's probably sick in her head. Why would she divorce someone like Noah?"

"You have no idea how she was all about 'empowerment' just a few days ago. She was saying that divorce was the best choice. We all believed her and thought Noah had really wronged her, but she played us all for fools."

"She should've divorced him long ago. She had never been good enough for Noah."

"She used drugs to climb her way up but still had the audacity to be on the same table as us. Who gave her that confidence?"

Ophelia wanted to block out the voices, but they seemed to come from all directions. Her phone rang again—it was another debt reminder. She hadn't even had breakfast, and now she didn't know where she would sleep tonight.

But despite everything, Ophelia's mind remained fixated on contacting Cyrus. To her, Cyrus was merely her stepping stone to escape her miserable situation.

Yet, Wynter would never give her that chance, and Cyrus was no longer the same person he used to be.

When he learned that Ophelia was trying to reach out to him, he transferred her a sum of money, followed by a short message. "I know I'm nothing more than an ATM to you now. This is the first and last time."

Ophelia didn't care about the message. She was happy as long as there was money in her account! Cyrus was still her son after all. Once she spent this money, she was sure she could get more next time.

But her real goal wasn't just the money. She needed to use Cyrus to reconnect with Noah.

As for Wynter, she could sell her some information, perhaps about the shared interests between the Montclair and Wray families, or why that man had once needed the Wray family so much. There was also the role Yvette had played in all this.

Not to mention the fact that it wasn't just the aristocratic families in Hawford - there was also a deeper connection to Kingbourne. If not for that man in Kingbourne, these families would never have been so united.

This was the kind of information that only insiders knew, and no matter how skilled Wynter was, she might never uncover it on her own!

Meanwhile, at the laboratory school, Eliana had finally made up her mind and returned to the principal's office.

"Mr. Valencia, you can contact them now. I'm willing to go."

Gideon's face lit up with a smile. "You should've agreed earlier. You have no idea how much your life will change after this! Alright, you don't need to attend any more classes now. I'll take you there right away."

"Right now? Isn't that a bit rushed?" Eliana frowned, her sense of unease deepening.

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Chapter 1559 Who Said It Was Useless to Study

"Rushed? How is this rushed? The name list came out long ago, and you're already late. There are procedures to follow. You've informed your family, right? If you don't hurry, you might miss out altogether." Gideon spoke of the opportunity as though it were a golden ticket.

He continued, "You were selected because of your excellent grades and outstanding qualifications. However, once you're there, whether you perform well enough to actually earn the scholarship will depend entirely on you."

Upon hearing this, Eliana's skepticism began to wane. She indeed had excellent grades, consistently ranking in the top 100 of her year nationally. Given the school's high reputation and its ties to international institutions, it wasn't surprising that she had been chosen.

What she didn't know was that Gideon had carefully crafted his words to erase her doubts and ensure she followed along without resistance. Once she was calm, she'd be more willing to go with him.

After all, the school was full of surveillance cameras, and if something went wrong, it would come back to him.

Moreover, the higher-ups had only seen Eliana's photo and deemed her suitable for their purpose. Nobody knew for sure whether her destination was truly abroad or if she had another fate awaiting her.

Gideon, however, was eager for Eliana to be chosen. The closer his connections were to the higher-ups, the more chances he had to get a promotion.

He didn't think it was a big deal. After all, these students were benefiting from the opportunities his network provided.

Many students, like Eliana, came from families without local residency, yet clung to the dream of settling in Hawford. They couldn't afford social security or the exorbitant costs of buying property in the school district.

Eliana relied on her elderly grandparents, thinking she could find a place in the city. Did she really think good grades alone could change her fate? Gideon found that idea laughable and foolish.

Gideon's smirk made Eliana feel uneasy. "I'd like to call my grandfather."

"Sure." Gideon took the lead and walked ahead. "You should let him know you're safe. Make the call while we walk-it'll save time."

Eliana nodded, dialing her phone to inform her family that she had been selected for an overseas study opportunity.

Her grandparents, like many elderly people, were unaware of the complexities behind such offers. This was the same reason so many elderly fell victim to scams. To anyone in their

position, it was simply a source of pride that their granddaughter was excelling.

Anson Linden and Agnes Mendes adored their granddaughter greatly. Despite their frailty and labored breath when speaking, their pride and joy were unmistakable in their voices.

"Our Eliana is really going places! Listen to your teachers while you're out there, and just tell us if you need money for anything. Your grandma and I have saved a little."

Eliana knew all too well how they had managed to save that money-by waking up early and staying out late, collecting bottles and recyclables to scrape together extra funds. They'd even stationed themselves near trash bins just so she could have a bit more pocket money. Her fingers tightened around her old, second-hand phone that had cost only a few hundred dollars. Compared to some of her classmates, who could spend thousands on a single meal, it indeed made her seem like she was lagging behind the times.

But at least her grandparents knew she hadn't been distracted by material things. She had always kept her head down and focused on her studies.

To them, her being selected for this study abroad program was a direct result of her academic excellence. How could they think otherwise?

Eliana's resolve solidified. She understood that her only real escape from her circumstances was through education. If she accepted this scholarship, it would relieve her family of some of the burden, and her grandparents could finally rest.

Looking down, she spoke softly into the phone, "The expenses are covered by the school and philanthropists, so you won't need to worry. But I might not be able to call you and Grandma as often. I'm just worried about leaving, with no one to take care of you two."

The Heiress' Return: Six Brothers at Her Beck and Call

Chapter 1560 A Trap

"You silly child. Your Grandma and I can take care of each other just fine." Despite coming from a rural background, Anson had never favored boys over girls.

Eliana didn't have parents but had received nothing but love from her grandparents.

"Once you go abroad, your Grandma and I will move back to our hometown. We'll farm a little and find some stuff to do while waiting for you to return triumphantly!"

Anson's laughter eased a lot of worry weighing on Eliana's heart.

Gideon, walking ahead, overheard the conversation and felt a disdainful sneer tug at his lips. He figured that the apple didn't fall far from the tree.

If there were really such good opportunities to study abroad, the school would obviously give them to wealthy business investors' children. Who would waste a chance like that on poor kids?

Gideon came to the conclusion that they didn't understand their place in society, and that was beyond pathetic.

Eliana, who was trailing behind him, couldn't see his current expression.

As they reached the school gate, the security guard didn't even bother asking any questions. He just opened the gate with an ingratiating smile. "Are you heading out, Mr. Valencia?"

Gideon chuckled lightly. "Oh, no. I'm just taking a look around."

This whole setup was perfect. Eliana was going willingly, so if anyone ever questioned what happened later, he would be in the clear.

"Off you go, Eliana. The person picking you up is right across the street," Gideon said.

Eliana looked up and saw a minivan parked across the road. The driver, Colby Leblanc, was a young man who looked fresh out of college with an approachable face. He rolled down the window and waved, motioning for her to come over.

Eliana glanced back at the school building behind her as she saw Colby's gesture.

Gideon didn't rush her. In fact, it wasn't the school's policy to escort students like this. If anyone wanted to study abroad, they usually handled it on their own.

But this time was different—the orders from above had been urgent. They'd specifically requested Eliana. So, he had no choice but to be directly involved.

Since the Wray family's fall, his own situation had become precarious. Fortunately, no one knew about his connections to them. If they did, he'd be under investigation, too.

Gideon's mind was heavy with thoughts as he glanced at the car waiting. As soon as Eliana stepped through that gate, the school would be free of responsibility—at least on the surface. Even if someone tried to investigate later, those higher-ups would cover for him.

After all, a girl from Eliana's background... Her grandparents wouldn't know any better. In a mere two years, it would be nearly impossible to find her.

Some people went abroad and simply stayed there, cutting ties with their families. He'd seen it happen before.

And for him, escaping overseas had always been part of his plan. After the Wray family's collapse, he accelerated his own emigration process.

As far as Gideon was concerned, these girls going abroad and never returning was "normal". Gideon was confident in his plans.

Eliana was still just a student, with little life experience and no real understanding of what might be lurking beneath the surface. Furthermore, Colby's friendly appearance reassured her. She no longer hesitated and stepped out of the school gates.

At first, everything seemed normal. But as Eliana approached the minivan, she realized that Colby wasn't the only one in the vehicle. There were three large men inside, and one of them reached over to pull the door open.

A wave of unease surged through her, and her fingers instinctively tightened around the hem of her shirt. She felt the urge to back away.

But Colby, now standing on the other side, blocked her path back to the school. He remained polite as he spoke, "Ms. Linden, don't worry. These are just employees from our company. It's getting late, so please get in. It's better not to keep the bosses waiting."

The scene, even if captured on camera, wouldn't look like Eliana was being threatened. And besides, this area happened to be a blind spot for the surveillance system.

