

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

Chapter 1581 Went in

As Wynter approached the enforcement officers, she gave a slight smirk and politely said, " Sorry for the trouble."

She extended her hands willingly, and her carefree, confident way made the officers uneasy. They couldn't shake the feeling that she was far too composed, without any of the nervousness one would expect in such a situation.

The officers weren't sure if they should report this to their superiors, but regardless, they had to follow the procedure and take her in. The handcuffs locked into place.

Wynter's expression remained unchanged. Her features were sharp and calm, as if the cuffs were just props rather than actual restraints.

From afar, Elmer lowered his binoculars. Looking down, he typed furiously on his phone, and his eyes were filled with anger.

Who dared arrest Wynter without warning? What were they thinking? Didn't they realize they had no authority to interrogate her?

He was clearly about to lose his cool, but someone in their group had a steadier hand.

"Elmer, what are you thinking? The only reason Boss was taken is that she allowed it." Elmer paused mid-rant, reconsidering his plan to confront the city authorities.

"Exactly, Elmer. Doesn't this scene look familiar to you? Do you remember how Boss saved you at the border using this same tactic?"

Of course, Elmer remembered. They had been captured together on the border as kids. Wynter had seemed so timid back then, barely speaking a word. He even thought she had been terrified and kept asking her what she had done to get caught. Was she a physics prodigy, or maybe a math genius like him?

Back then, she had stayed quiet, acting meek and fearful. Looking back now, Elmer realized she probably just didn't want to talk to a naive kid like him.

While he had been busy strategizing about how to play dumb and wait for rescue, she had already crushed the leader's throat in the dead of night and single-handedly wiped out the entire armed group.

So much for "timid"-that had all been his imagination.

Although they were both "kids", Wynter was very different in this regard. That moment was still the most awe-inspiring thing Elmer had ever witnessed. Since then, he had learned that her key tactic during missions was always playing against expectations.

"Do you mean Boss has some other plan in place? But she didn't say anything to us."

Someone laughed. "There wasn't time. Too many people want her gone."

"But to use law enforcement like this? Whoever's behind this must have serious connections. Isn't that exactly the bait we've been waiting for?"

No one in their particular task force was faint-hearted. In fact, they thrived on risks, so their thinking sometimes diverged from that of ordinary people.

"If it really comes to it, L can hack into the city's security system."

Listening to this, Wolf raised his fierce eyes and wrote, "Even if Boss is fine, I want those who captured her to regret it for the rest of their lives!"

Chaos had an incredibly strong desire for revenge as an Ancient Beast-no one needed to mention it. If Wolf had not had other tasks and had not followed Logan on a search mission, he would have already taken action.

But he didn't think anything would happen. After all, Dalton was there.

With his big eyes, Wolf bit down on the enormous diamond in his hand.

As long as Dalton was around, no one would be able to harm Wynter. It was just that Wolf didn't understand the human world's complexities this time.

Dalton had also been taken to the relevant department for questioning. However, those interrogating him were frustrated as they couldn't get any information from him.

Instead, Dalton sat there looking less like someone being investigated and more like someone who could investigate them at any moment.

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Chapter 1582 Who Arrested Them

Although Dalton was already keeping a low profile, his presence still commanded attention. As the Top Unit's "Artist", he had never shown his face, yet he had helped solve numerous serial murder cases. Unlike Wynter, this was something he genuinely enjoyed.

The person in charge of the Top Unit had always wanted Dalton to take over their role. But ultimately, they realized that a scion from Kingbourne's elite circles wouldn't settle for a full-time job like that. After all, his natural abilities were nothing short of genius.

Back at the Top Unit's headquarters, they received the news quickly.

"Say that again? Who was arrested?"

"Dalton Yarwood."

The blood pressure of the person in charge spiked. "Who authorized this? What reason did they have? Why did they arrest someone without reporting it?"

One of the team members explained, "It's about market manipulation. There's a video that points in his direction. It's just an investigation, nothing serious. You know how it goes. They're just following procedure."

"What procedure? Not reporting this is not according to procedure at all! Are they saying the Yarwoods' head manipulating the stock market for profit? Are the people handling this out of their minds?" The person in charge's face was flushed with anger.

The team member followed him as they walked. "Calm down. This type of case is too minor to be reported to us. It's out of our jurisdiction and just a routine investigation. I've checked it out the procedures are all in line."

"The procedures might be in line, but the logic isn't! This is a setup... Wait, a setup..."

The person's eyes gleamed as he looked at his subordinate. "What if he allowed himself to be arrested?"

The team member paused, thinking it over. It seemed very likely!

"This must be tied to a larger case." The supervisor's pace quickened. "Check who was responsible for his arrest, investigate internally, and keep this top secret. Level ten confidentiality. Bypass the local authorities."

"Understood."

Dalton was well aware of the stir his arrest would cause.

He sat there, seemingly relaxed, with only an ordinary paper cup beside him. Yet, his demeanor suggested he was attending an important meeting. His legs were slightly crossed, and his voice was calm.

He wore a meticulously tailored black suit. His deep, dark eyes contrasted with his pale skin, exuding an aloof and dignified air that filled the room with overwhelming pressure.

No one dared come in for further questioning. Anytime they tried, they felt like they were the ones being interrogated.

Meanwhile, Wynter had also been taken away. Of course, the Whitman family was distraught.

Even Cyrus rushed back in a panic. "Grandpa, where's Wynter? I heard from people outside that she's been taken in for questioning!"

Reuben nodded. His expression was grim, and his heart was aching with worry.

Cyrus stepped forward to support him, saying, "This is wrong! Grandpa, there's no way Wynter could be involved in anything illegal. Think about how much she's done to help the factory. How could she ever make money by exploiting ordinary people?"

Reuben knew that Cyrus' words were right, but he also knew that convincing others would be an entirely different story, especially with that video.

He understood that it was time to call in some favors. If he didn't act quickly, Wynter might be caught in a scandal she couldn't escape—a risk he simply couldn't take.

With his finance background, Cyrus knew exactly what stock market manipulation entailed. It was when someone used illegal means to deliberately distort stock prices or trading volumes, creating a false impression in the market.

This would mislead investors, causing them to make wrong judgments about the stock values. This would disrupt the market and profits at the expense of everyday investors.

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Chapter 1583 Downfall

However, Cyrus knew that Wynter had entered the fray to stop the Wray family from teaming up with foreign investors to siphon money from ordinary shareholders. He had never felt so wronged and frustrated for someone before.

Outsiders were already speculating that Wynter could face severe prison time. The moment she was taken away in handcuffs, it was captured on camera and spread online.

The sensational headline read, "Second-generation capitalists enter the fray, disrupt the stock market, and exploit ordinary investors."

In an instant, the comment section became a battleground.

Though Wynter's face wasn't visible in the photo, many people quickly connected her to the Quinnell and Whitman families. The flood of comments demanded an explanation from the companies involved.

"I knew this would collapse from the moment she emerged. It was only a matter of time."

"I was touched by her when she brought the heroic spirit back home, but now it seems she was just trying to launder our money!"

"She's just good at marketing. I've heard she's a high school dropout with terrible grades. You can look it up."

"I checked. Her grades were poor until later. She probably got those achievements through the Quinnell family's money. The buzz was just a coincidence."

"I don't care what she's done. Let her rot in prison as long as my brother isn't affected."

"Those scions from the Quinnell family will probably be impacted too, right?"

"What do you mean by 'impacted?' Isn't it the case that birds of a feather flock together? The Quinnell and Whitman families are all the same!"

The online discourse was intensifying. The internet was a double-edged sword. It could sometimes help someone but also be wielded as a weapon against them.

If it had been anyone else, it might not have been as severe, but given that Wynter already had a significant online presence, the fallout was much worse.

It even affected the company's shareholders' meeting and various plans. Many people expressed their disillusionment, claiming their admiration for her was shattered.

In the canned food factory's live chat, some viewers outright insulted her.

"Cut ties with that so-called young lady from the Quinnell family! I've worked so hard to build this treasure of domestic goods, so please don't let it suffer because of her!"

"Exactly! Miss, you need to tell your boss to get things under control. Otherwise, your metrics will look bad."

The backlash was overwhelming and completely unexpected. Everything related to the Quinnell family was under scrutiny.

The Whitman family wasn't spared, either. Protests erupted outside the Whitman Group's headquarters, with shareholders splashing paint on the building, demanding the downfall of those maliciously manipulating the stock market.

Reuben was well aware of what was happening. He desperately tried to find out who had targeted Wynter and how he could make them back off. His only concern was protecting her.

As for the Whitman family's reputation, he no longer cared. He refused to let her bear the brunt of everything alone.

Meanwhile, Noah and Taylor were in a promotional event with other business community members. Everyone knew about the incident, and they looked at the Whitman brothers with mixed emotions.

It was especially so for Edison, who had never felt so satisfied. His expression practically screamed that he was relishing this misfortune.

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Chapter 1584 Lapdog

"Mr. Whitman, I'm not sure if what's being said online is true," Edison said, glancing with concern at Noah. Yet, his words dripped with sarcasm.

"I heard from my secretary that Ms. Quinnell got arrested. She shouldn't have done it this way if she wanted to make money. What are we going to do now? Mr. Whitman Senior must be worse off after hearing this."

This kind of schadenfreude was precisely what such people thrived on.

The Whitman family had been riding high for some time, and Edison was more than just jealous. Now, he relished their misfortune. The Whitman family was finally tasting the bitter fruit of their actions, and it felt immensely satisfying to him.

Noah, usually not one to be trifled with, had previously kept a low profile but was now returning to his younger self's intensity. "The situation hasn't been fully investigated yet, Mr. Waldron, so why are you so eager to mock 1,501 us? Did you report on Sevie?"

The question made Edison's facial expression change. He knew all too well that it was indeed his report that triggered the investigation.

A whistleblower was necessary for the relevant authorities to investigate Wynter. Fredric and the directives from above intended to make it appear they had nothing to do with the matter.

Even the decision to issue the arrest warrant hadn't come from them, but they had undoubtedly influenced it. Edison was acutely aware of this. When the leaders directed him, he followed their orders without question.

In his mind, failing to show his allegiance now would mean losing a golden opportunity. Without hesitation, he had penned that whistleblower letter.

Noah's smile grew colder when he saw the guilt written all over Edison's face. "For so many years, the Whitman family has never made enemies.

"Since Mr. Quinnell Senior established the Southern Cascadia Chamber of Commerce, we've known that developing local businesses is the only way to compete with foreign capital.

"When conditions were tough in the past, he always thought of everyone's growth and never hid his resources, believing everyone could profit. Now that the environment has improved, you reported the Quinnell family's heir to the authorities.

"Are you still dreaming of becoming the Chamber of Commerce's president? Ha! Let me assure you, that won't happen. Regarding Sevie, until there's solid evidence, anyone who slanders her will face legal action from the Whitman family.

"I advise everyone to mind their own business and not stab others in the back now. The last people who tried that, our in-laws, are currently in jail. If you all wish to join them, feel free to try."

He spoke slowly, standing firm in the light, and no one dared to approach.

The recent incident involving the Montclair family made everyone aware of Noah's tactics. Nobody knew how many secrets he held as he was exceptionally good at hiding things.

Even moving company assets in advance was something he could manage-imagine how ruthless one must be to conceal their methods so effectively.

Edison felt bitter. He stared at Noah while clenching his fist tightly.

Someone nearby cautioned him, "Mr. Waldron, stay calm. Don't reveal anything before your plans are complete. It would be disastrous if they traced it back to you."

Initially, he had wanted to disregard the warning and continue his provocation. But the person leaned in closer and added, "This is what Mr. Monty specifically instructed."

With that, Edison took a deep breath and fell silent.

At this moment, Taylor noticed the exchange. He strode over, and his tone was laced with mockery. "Mr. Waldron, it looks like you've become someone else's lapdog. First Kenton, and now it's your turn, isn't it?"

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Chapter 1585 The Real Kingpin

Edison couldn't handle the provocation and suddenly grabbed Taylor by the collar before throwing a punch.

Taylor didn't get hit, but the incident drew attention to Edison. He should have kept a low profile as the whistleblower, but he couldn't hold back.

It wasn't just Edison who didn't understand the situation. Even his superior, Fredric, didn't grasp that neither Dalton nor Wynter could be touched.

Imagine the implications of arresting these two. One was the scion of Kingbourne and the Top Unit's mysterious "Artist". Meanwhile, the other was 001, the founder, with countless achievements and extensive experience in overseas operations, of the Special Unit known to no one.

If either of them were interrogated, it wouldn't be just a local affair-the news would reach Lucas immediately.

"Say that again? Who did they arrest?" Lucas furrowed his brow as he looked at his secretary from the car's back

seat.

"Ms. Quinnell has indeed been arrested and hasn't resisted. We're currently in the questioning phase. Mr. Keller, should we consult the higher-ups to get Ms. Quinnell released? And what about the truth behind the stock market case? Should that be revealed?"

After hearing this, Lucas rolled down the window to clear his thoughts. He was well aware of Wynter's situation, especially regarding her identity. His teacher, who had always focused on the future of Cascadia and its people, had hinted that she was someone special.

Lucas had noticed this since his time in Southdale. Her seemingly casual actions always carried a deeper meaning. He understood better than anyone that a significant part of his rapid rise was due to the major cases she had often brought to him. Furthermore, she had her insights regarding economic development.

She had mentioned the stock market case to him long ago. It was a significant economic case involving the stock market and the Chamber of Commerce, with someone continuously siphoning profits overseas.

Families like the Wrays and Montclairs were mere pawns on the surface. The real kingpin hid in the background. Though she hadn't explicitly stated it, he suspected a protective umbrella was involved. His purpose in coming here was to unearth this long-standing protection.

He had anticipated that Wynter would meet him upon his arrival. Gordon founded the Chamber of Commerce, and as the Quinnell family heir, she should be familiar with its operational model. Yet, now she had been arrested. Lucas believed she had countless ways to avoid this fate with her capabilities. But now that it was made public...

He pulled his gaze back from the window and rolled it up again, saying, "Let's hold off on revealing the truth. We need to consult the higher-ups. However, the request isn't for her release but to increase manpower and elevate the confidentiality level.

"I suspect this isn't just an economic crime there's more at play. As for Mindcrest High School, we shouldn't alert anyone. Keep an eye on the dismissed principal as people are waiting for him outside. We'll wait for further news on everything else."

"Understood." The secretary closed the file.

Lucas was steady in his actions. Although he was young for his position, he could maintain composure in front of certain people, likely due to his military background.

The school staff had received the news at the last minute that one of their higher-ups was coming. They barely had time to prepare.

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Chapter 1586 Her True Identity

At this moment, informing anyone would only expose Fredric. But upon closer thought, it was still a win.

The troublesome Wynter wouldn't be coming out anymore. Once the accusations were established, it would be nearly impossible for her to clear her name.

The public perception of the Quinnell and Whitman families had plummeted online, and no one would trust them again.

Even if Wynter knew something about the scholarship committee, it wouldn't matter. Someone who couldn't even save themselves had no way to compete with them.

Fredric adjusted his glasses with a smug expression as he listened to the broadcast updates. Wynter would finally pay the price for her actions over the past few days.

Meanwhile, in the interrogation room, Dalton didn't seem like someone being interrogated, but Wynter felt more like the one interrogating others.

"I don't acknowledge these accusations as I've never done any of these things." She leaned forward. "The whistleblower needs to provide evidence, too. They can't just slander me. Since I'm here, shouldn't they be brought in to cooperate with the investigation?"

The interrogators were taken aback by her counter-question.

One of them, visibly irritated, snapped, "That's not your concern. Just answer the questions."

"Me? I'm just an ordinary business investor," Wynter replied, looking at the interrogator. "I'm surprised to have been arrested and suspect someone is framing me. I have my suspicions about who reported me."

"This is a case of malicious competition in business. I demand that the company's legal counsel be involved."

The interrogators seemed to ignore her plea as one of them stood up abruptly. "Ms. Quinnell, we've encountered many criminals like you. You'd better think carefully about what you've done. Confessing will benefit your sentencing."

She smiled slyly. "I've already thought it over."

The interrogator, feeling smug, thought she was scared and sat back down to record her statement.

But she wouldn't give him that chance. She quickly grabbed his wrist and looked up at him. "You aren't even recording this interrogation?"

The interrogator's face turned pale instantly. He stared at Wynter in disbelief, as if he were seeing a ghost. "You... How?"

How did she unlock the handcuffs? She had been cuffed to the chair!

As the Special Unit's leader, Wynter found it easy to handle such matters. She chuckled softly, and with a click, she locked the interrogator to the chair using the same handcuffs.

The interrogator tried to press the alarm button on his shoulder, but Wynter swiftly tapped a pressure point on his

arm.

The interrogator's eyes glazed over, unaware that such techniques still exist.

Not wasting any time, she pulled out her phone and dialed a number. "Have our people take over here completely, but keep it low-key."

Members of the Special Unit had long been itching for action.

"Yes, Boss!"

They arrived quickly, and the people inside initially thought they were just ordinary citizens. But when the Special

Unit revealed their identities, everyone froze in shock.

The Special Unit? How could they be here in Hawford? Why were they here? It was unbelievable!

Someone took the opportunity to tip others off but was immediately pinned to the table by Elmer. "You'd better behave. We're all colleagues and don't want to use force if we can avoid it."

That did not seem like they were trying to avoid using force!

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Chapter 1587 Unable to Bear the Responsibility

"Boss!" Elmer, having finished his task, ran over to Wynter.

Wynter casually rotated her wrist and raised an eyebrow. "Is he the mole?"

"Yes." Elmer nodded.

The Securities Regulatory Bureau was an institution dispatched by the Securities Regulatory Commission. It was responsible for on-site supervision of listed companies, with a

particular focus on insider trading and market manipulation.

It was unlikely that everyone in the bureau was corrupt-it usually only took one or two rotten apples to spoil the bunch.

The person interrogating Wynter had been from a lower position, but the one Elmer had uncovered held more authority.

Wynter's dark eyes lowered slightly as her gaze fell on the man in question, Zachary Hiddlestone. He was now trembling, his legs having gone completely weak, and he collapsed on the floor. His phone lay discarded beside him.

He had encountered Wynter before. He was someone of some authority, after all. He had been invited to events like those hosted by the Chamber of Commerce.

From Zachary's perspective, Wynter had always been just a sharp-witted scion-someone who, even if she made money in stocks, did so largely thanks to Dalton's involvement.

Everyone assumed that her success was due to luck, not her own abilities. No one thought she could ever take down the Wray family on her own.

But now, to his utter disbelief, the Special Unit had completely taken over their division - for her! Zachary wondered if he heard them wrongly when they called her "Boss".

Zachary's hands trembled, and his breathing came in ragged gasps. He was terrified to the core. Did the higher-ups or Fedric know that Wynter was actually part of the Special Unit?

Wynter didn't give him any more time to stammer. She walked over, picked up his phone, and placed it back in his hand. "Send a message to your superior. Tell them that all the charges against me are valid and that I'm so scared that I'm losing my mind."

Zachary's lips quivered. "I-I..."

"Send it." Wynter's voice struck like lightning, devoid of any warmth. "Or would you like to take the fall yourself and face a death sentence?"

"I'll send it now!" Zachary hastily unlocked his phone.

There were no contacts in his phone and even his call history was blank, but it didn't matter as he had memorized the number. After typing it in, he began composing the message, word for word, exactly as Wynter instructed.

Wynter raised an eyebrow. "Whose number is that?"

Zachary's gaze wavered, as if he was too afraid to say.

Wynter stood up. "Take him away. No need for further questioning - he will take the fall." "I'll talk, I'll talk! It's Mr. Monty!" Zachary shouted in a panic. "Mr. Monty didn't directly say it, but he mentioned that the recent stock market fluctuations had caused several leading companies in the city to crash, which led to criticism from the provincial authorities.

"He implied that if we didn't step up our regulatory efforts, I'd be held accountable. He wanted me to handle any complaints carefully and pay attention to public voices. If the leading companies fall, it'll set the city's development back.

"Though Mr. Monty didn't spell it out, I knew he was referring to the Wray family." Zachary grew bolder. "You've caused major corporations in the city to collapse, and Mr. Monty isn't happy about that.

"After he hinted at it, Mr. Waldron submitted a formal complaint, accusing you of manipulating the stock market."

Hearing this, Wynter turned off the recording device, her tone calm. "Aside from Fredric Monty, did anyone else from the provincial level imply the same?"

"No one else," Zachary confirmed after a moment of thought. "It's only Mr. Monty. Your case wasn't enough to reach the provincial level..."

Then, Zachary muttered absentmindedly, "Now that it has, even the provincial authorities might not be able to bear the responsibility..."

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Chapter 1588 Backfire

Wynter knew there was no point in asking further. The mastermind would never expose any vulnerabilities, not even to their subordinates.

Those in power often communicated through implication. Those who understood would serve them, and those who couldn't would stay stagnant, never receiving promotions.

A mental storm brewed in Wynter's mind. She would need solid evidence to expose the person behind Fredric. Empty accusations would only alert her enemies.

The reason she allowed herself to be taken in was to lower their guard. After all, she had been too high-profile in Hawford lately. Her every move was watched closely, making it difficult for her to act freely.

The matter with Mindcrest High School couldn't be left unresolved. Her instincts told her that was the key to everything.

Wynter knew she had to rescue the recently selected girls before Logan tracked down the Winston family. The best way to do that was to adopt a new identity.

At that moment, Zachary's phone beeped. He handed it to Wynter, and after reading the message, a knowing smile crossed her face.

"Do as usual." The three words summarized everything. The implication was clear-get rid of Wynter as soon as possible.

"As expected, he's an old fox. To bring down the true mastermind, we'll need to deal with Fredric first," Wynter said to Elmer.

She immediately gave him orders. "Gather every detail about Fredric's early days as a lower rank official. Keep it discreet. Look into how he climbed to his current position. This includes every minor detail."

"Understood." Elmer nodded.

By now, everyone in the department realized what had transpired. They were ready to fully cooperate with the Special Unit. In a show of dedication to the mission's secrecy, they voluntarily switched off their phones and handed them over to Elmer.

This was the integrity of the civil servants, who genuinely served the people-showing their values through their actions.

Meanwhile, Fredric couldn't contain the smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. Finally, the major problem-Wynter-was dealt with.

Soon, both the Quinnell and Whitman families would have a hard time protecting

themselves. The coveted position of the Chamber of Commerce's chairman would never fall into their hands.

Furthermore, no one would pay attention to the scholarship committee anymore. Wynter, that insolent young upstart, was bound to pay for her actions. Even the Yarwood family couldn't do much with the damning evidence they'd gathered against her.

If he'd known she feared being interrogated, he would have captured her sooner.

However, the delay had interfered with his timetable for sending Eliana to her "destination ". He would need to devise another plan to ensure her transfer was carried out smoothly.

But the most pressing matter for Fredric now was handling Lucas' arrival.

Seeing Lucas' car pulling in, Fredric quickly ran over to open the door, maintaining his practiced subservience. "Mr. Keller, shall we allow the children to continue their lessons as usual? We can just take a look around."

Of course, disrupting the students' studies was out of the question.

Lucas nodded and chuckled. "Let's start by visiting the cafeteria. It's almost lunchtime, and we don't want everyone making too much fuss. I'd like to see what the children are eating." Everyone knew that a school's cafeteria was a reflection of how much the administration valued its students. There wouldn't be enough time to whip up a fancy meal just for show- whatever was on the menu now was what the students ate every day.

Fredric immediately knew Lucas wouldn't be easy to deal with. He thought to himself that Gideon had received plenty of benefits over the years, so surely, he wouldn't let the food quality slip, right?

However, when they finally arrived at the cafeteria, Fredric's expression changed drastically.

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Chapter 1589 Feeling Awful

With Gideon, the master in half-hearted cover-ups, no longer around, the sudden inspections brought light to the long-standing issue that had been conveniently ignored.

The problems that had festered within the school became evident the moment the group stepped into the cafeteria.

No one said a word at first. They watched as the cafeteria staff poured something from a pot. Upon closer inspection, it turned out to be leftover tomato soup.

But that wasn't the most shocking part-what was truly disturbing was the sour smell emanating from the soup. It had clearly gone bad, yet the staff were reheating it to serve it again.

A glance further into the kitchen revealed even worse. The hygiene standards were appalling. Forget masks-one of the cooks was smoking while adding oil to a large pan to stir-fry vegetables.

Fredric's expression dimmed before Lucas could even react.

The kitchen staff eventually noticed the group watching. One of them dropped the ladle with a loud clang before yelling, "What are you all doing here? Don't you know that outsiders aren't allowed in here?"

While other high schools had undergone regular inspections, Mindcrest High School had somehow always managed to dodge them. Whenever they needed to present something, it was staged for photoshoots. Hence, no one in the kitchen ever expected a real inspection to happen.

This was especially true for the man, Aiden Valencia, running the cafeteria. Aiden was part of the Valencia family and a direct relative of Gideon. This made him believe that he was untouchable.

But unlike the clueless kitchen staff, Aiden recognized the gravity of the situation and rushed over as fast as he could.

Even faster was the school's administrator, David Harris. He was sweating profusely as he ran to greet the group. "Mr. Paley, this isn't how things usually are in the kitchen. I swear, today's just an exception. Maybe it's just that..."

David only recognized Samuel Paley and hadn't seen any of the other officials before. But noticing that Samuel could only stand in the back, David instantly realized the severity of the situation-their school was in deep trouble this time!

"Maybe? Maybe what?" Samuel pointed at the pot of the tomato soup, his hands shaking in anger. "Why are you reheating something that has already gone bad? You guys are allowing children to eat this? Tell me, would you allow your own kids to eat this?"

Samuel was beyond furious. As someone responsible for overseeing education, he had always believed that his work was for the betterment of students.

But now, something like this had been happening under his very nose. "All of you! Don't think you can brush this under the rug with a few words!"

As he spoke, he lifted his head to look at Lucas. "This is my mistake. Mindcrest High School clearly needs a thorough investigation!"

Everything they'd been presented with before had painted a rosy picture. Samuel's mouth felt dry as he continued, "The last time I was here with Mr. Monty, the cafeteria served ten dishes and a soup.

"Everything was fresh, and they even made accommodations for students who don't eat meat by offering a separate vegetarian menu. I personally tasted every dish. I never would have imagined they were capable of such deception!"

Parents paid for their children to eat at this cafeteria, and no parent would tolerate their child eating this kind of "food". Even the meat in the kitchen was questionable no one could say for sure what kind of meat it even was.

Lucas remained composed, his steady gaze falling on Fredric. "Mr. Monty, what's your take on this?"

Fredric was not expecting to be singled out at this moment. He had hoped to avoid any attention from Lucas. But he had never anticipated that this would be the very moment he'd stumbled.

"Yes, an investigation must be carried out. The safety of the school's food is paramount-it concerns the health of every child here." Fredric feigned outrage as he continued, "People who make money through such unscrupulous means must be punished severely!"

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Chapter 1590 Eliana Trusts Wynter

Lucas glanced sideways. "Then, let's follow Mr. Monty's suggestion and punish everyone involved, including all school personnel. Spread the word to the public.

"Starting today, we'll use Mindcrest High School as an example and conduct surprise inspections across all primary and high schools in the city.

"Mr. Paley mentioned how things were different the last time you visited. That's easy to explain."

Lucas turned his gaze to Samuel. "Last time, someone tipped them off. This time, if any school gets advance notice of an inspection, you can bet all of you will be under suspicion."

Lucas' words were delivered with a smile, but no one there was able to reciprocate. All seven of them, including three officials from the department, could tell his remarks were a direct warning. That smile was far more unsettling than outright anger, and it chilled them to the bone.

No one felt this more keenly than Fredric. He had intended to accompany Lucas to divert attention away from Mindcrest High School. But now, not only would he have to deal with internal affairs, but the media would also catch wind of this.

Soon, every citizen would be focused on the school's failings. That meant any further interference from him would be nearly impossible.

Fredric figured it would be best to take advantage of the chaos and discreetly take Eliana. After all, with so many pressing matters on Lucas' plate, it was unlikely anyone would notice a single student being taken away.

And it was certainly true. The things Lucas had to handle now were not minor issues.

Fredric took a step forward and took a glance at his driver.

When Eliana was called out again, it was her homeroom teacher, Kurt Abrams, acting as the intermediary.

"Eliana, I don't understand why you would refuse such a great opportunity. The person who brought you here last time has already been taken away by the authorities. People like that might give you wrong ideas or lead you to make poor decisions."

Kurt, who was relatively young, seemed to have an almost wistful tone when talking about going abroad.

"I hope you seize this chance to study overseas. Once you get there, you'll realize that the backward ideas you encounter here simply don't exist over there. The air itself is sweet, unlike the hazy smog that surrounds us here."

As Eliana listened to Kurt's accent, something started to feel off. She had always paid attention to her studies and had never noticed his accent.

In the quiet of the conversation, Eliana suddenly remembered something she'd once heard. Some foreign spies could infiltrate communities and brainwash people subtly through their ideology.

She had previously dismissed it as gossip, just idle chatter to pass the time. But now, her instincts were on high alert.

She was well aware of what had been happening online - Wynter, who had saved her, had been arrested, accused of stock market manipulation and creating a fake persona. Eliana had only met Wynter once, but she refused to believe the rumors circulating about her.

Eliana knew exactly who had saved her, and she was certain that the place Kurt wanted to send her was anything but safe.

Gripping her hands tightly, Eliana recalled the advice Wynter had given her when she was dropped off. She had told her to agree with them first no matter what they say. Then, stall time and contact her.

Swallowing her fear, Eliana put on her usual quiet demeanor. "I need to go home and discuss this with my grandparents."

"Yes, you should discuss it. After all, becoming an exchange student is a big deal, and your family won't need to pay for it at all. You've been a bit stubborn in the past," Kurt said with a warm smile.

He continued, "Alright then, you can skip the evening classes today. Go home and discuss it with your grandparents. Someone will pick you up tomorrow morning."

No matter what Eliana said, it was clear Kurt had already decided for her.

As Eliana walked out, trembling slightly, she caught a glimpse of Kurt's face darkening through the crack in the office door.

Kurt muttered, "Such a hassle. In the end, I still have to get my hands dirty."