

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

Chapter 1681 Having Trouble Answering

Olivian could no longer sit still after hearing Wynter's words.

"I... I really haven't done anything wrong," he stammered before taking a deep breath. "You can check all my accounts. I haven't received any bribes."

"Indeed, there were no bribes," Wynter said before turning to clap her hands.

The person who walked in was someone who had not appeared in a long time-Wolf. He was holding a scroll taller than himself, his expression fierce.

At the sight of the scroll, Olivian's tea cup toppled, spilling scalding water everywhere.

The loud noise drew the attention of everyone at the conference table. They were all seasoned in the ways of the bureaucracy and instantly understood what was happening.

Wynter leaned forward, sliding the entire scroll toward him. "Mr. Hollis, take a good look. Does this priceless painting look familiar to you?"

"I... I..." Olivian opened his mouth but couldn't form a coherent sentence. "This is just a hobby of mine."

Wynter smiled slyly. "Mr. Hollis' hobby is indeed expensive. I've seen many people fall from grace-some because of a love for expensive wine, others because of lust. And then there are people like you, who have a passion for collecting calligraphy and paintings.

"This particular one was once lost overseas. If I recall correctly, it went to Foplya, and now it's in your possession. How did it come to you? Maybe you should explain that to us."

Olivian's whole body went cold. "Did you say it was last seen in Foplya?"

The mention of Foplya made him realize he was done for.

"I always thought it was collected by some unknown person in Cascadia. I really didn't know it went to Foplya," he said quickly, his face turning pale. He was terrified, afraid that one slip would make him a traitor.

Wynter didn't think he was lying. Lowering her gaze, she asked, "So, how exactly did you come by this painting?"

She wanted to get to the bottom of it because anything discovered by Wolf was never something trivial.

The painting in question was undoubtedly a famous piece, with a long history that could even be traced back to the Atlantean. However, its implications were far from positive- especially since traces of a curse lingered on it.

Given that Olivian was part of the education system, keeping such a painting in his possession could only bring chaos and negativity.

Furthermore, whoever gifted this painting was no ordinary individual. It was definitely not

Fredric, as he lacked the knowledge to understand its significance.

Olivian hesitated, visibly uneasy.

The moment Wynter stopped smiling, her presence became almost suffocating. "If you don't explain clearly today, everyone associated with your faction will be implicated.

"Since this concerns treason, if we can't pinpoint the responsible party, we'll follow your earlier suggestion. We'll arrest everyone and conduct thorough investigations one by one." This declaration made everyone in the room uncomfortable. They were used to dealing with Lucas through bureaucratic tactics, which could occasionally achieve results.

However, Wynter's approach was brutal, direct, and utterly unforgiving. It wasn't the usual way things were handled within the system- it was downright ruthless!

"Ms. Quinnell... even if you're Mr. Munn Senior's disciple, isn't this a bit excessive?" Someone spoke up.

Wynter turned her gaze toward the speaker. "Have you played the Mafia game?"

Carlos Bach, clearly older and unfamiliar with the game, paused awkwardly. His expression clearly showed he had no idea what that was.

"This game has a very interesting aspect. Some people aren't very clever. They talk too much and end up exposing themselves," Wynter said calmly.

Her eyes darkened slightly as continued, "The way you're jumping in right now- are you trying to divert my attention from Mr. Hollis? Such a devious thought... Are you hoping I'll mark the wrong 'mafia?'"

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## Chapter 1682 Revealing Her Identity

Despite being unfamiliar with the Mafia game, Carlos could fully grasp the implications - Wynter was turning her suspicion onto him.

His anxiety was evident. After all, most of the personnel arrangements at the lowest levels were handled by him. Olivian would at most sign off on them and wouldn't bother with such minor, detailed matters.

Wynter observed him with a growing smile. "Whether I'm Mr. Munn Senior's disciple or not doesn't affect how I choose to handle things."

As she spoke, she tilted her head slightly toward Lucas. "Although Lucas might have already guessed my true identity, I believe it's time for a formal introduction. I am the Special Unit's 001."

The mere mention of the Special Unit was enough to leave everyone in the room stunned for a while.

They had heard rumors that the recent massive shakeup in the province was due to the Special Unit's intervention. Word was, it involved some kind of enemy espionage.

And now, with the code name "001" being revealed, the room was filled with disbelief. This wasn't an ordinary meeting, and those present were no small-time officials. Naturally, they knew about "001".

But all along, they thought this person didn't actually exist. They didn't believe there would be someone with no record in the archives.

The most critical point was that they had only learned about this codename during major high-level meetings, when being briefed on specific operations.

001 had saved countless lives. But none of them had ever imagined that this person was a young woman! They found it utterly unbelievable!

At this point, Olivian's legs were barely supporting his weight.

When people turned to look at Lucas, they noticed the sparkle in his eyes. It was only then they realized that even Lucas himself might not have known Wynter's true identity.

They couldn't understand why she didn't just reveal her identity on her first day in Hawford. She didn't even say a word when she was framed and taken away!

A collective chill ran down everyone's spines when they realized Wynter must have done so to capture all of them in one sweep.

From the very start, since she had arrived in Hawford, they hadn't taken her seriously.

Maybe certain business-related departments might have paid attention to her, but that was hardly the case in the field of education. Their department only listened to the higher-ups. Anyone else wouldn't have a say in their domain.

A mere businessperson, no matter how much money she made, wouldn't have been worth their time. Of course, they might have spared her a glance if she was donating funds to schools or the education sector.

But today, not only did they realize she was Jackson's disciple, but she also turned out to be the Special Unit's 001!

They still found it hard to come to terms that 001 actually existed. It wasn't just a codename, nor was she dead!

Carlos, who was sitting beside Olivian, gasped, his face drenched in sweat as he slumped back in his chair. He grabbed Lucas' arm in a panic.

"Mr. Keller, I was wrong-I shouldn't have bypassed proper checks to help appoint people to positions with just a word. But I swear that I didn't know this would lead to problems!

"They were all graduates from top universities! It was just a small favor, nothing out of the ordinary. Usually, nothing goes wrong!

"Look at Mr. Standford's wife-she barely knows anything but teaches at a university, and now she's a full professor! My arrangement was just a simple work placement!"

He truly felt wronged and ended up saying more than he should have.

However, some of what he said was indeed quite common. For some people, getting the job they worked hard for might just be a matter of a single recommendation from someone. Only those in the system knew how deep the corruption ran.

In Carlos' eyes, things like getting a professor's title or monopolizing students' academic research weren't a big deal. He was just arranging a job, so what could possibly go wrong? He honestly believed he was being wronged.

Wynter's gaze grew even darker after hearing this. "It seems that you are all beyond saving."

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Chapter 1683 No One Can Get Away

Using their power to arbitrarily assign jobs-this behavior had become ingrained within the educational institutions. Carlos' attitude exposed all the underlying issues in an instant.

Wynter's voice was slow but filled with a chilling tone. "From the cafeteria to the scholarship committee incident, you've never once reflected on your actions.

"You claim that students who went abroad didn't want to come back and that you have no authority to intervene. But let's focus on what you can control-personnel arrangements and the level of supervision.

"An uneducated wife can become a professor. A morally questionable student who thinks she's above everyone else can become a teacher. Isn't that what Mr. Bach was implying, Mr. Hollis?"

At that moment, everyone in the room had only one reaction. They were trembling as they wiped the sweat off their faces.

None of them dared to provoke Wynter. Her authority as 001 had gone beyond their ability to make excuses.

"I know that these accusations may seem like nothing to you. You've never once considered that a single decision made on a whim could destroy someone else's life.

"How many good teachers, who deserved to be in their positions, were pushed aside? How many young people with dreams want to study abroad?

"Some of them left, hoping to reshape their lives and one day take care of their parents. Others dreamed of returning home after their education, to repay their school and serve their country.

"They may have been chosen because of other factors, but all of you know for a fact they had good grades."

Wynter looked down at the Soul Commanding Badge hidden at her waist. "These people who worked hard and deserved the opportunities you stole from them... Since they were nothing to you, I will make all of you feel something."

Wynter was indeed different than usual, the tip of her eyes turning red due to the Soul Commanding Badge.

"Mr. Hollis, if you can't explain how that painting came into your possession, then I will treat you as Cascadia's enemy and deal with you accordingly," Wynter said coldly.

Whether it was Dominic or Carlos, both of them didn't dare utter more nonsense.

"Mr. Hollis, can't you just explain already? How did the painting come into your hands?" one of them asked urgently. Everyone was anxiously waiting for his explanation.

Olivian gritted his teeth. "I got it from a friend in Colifernia, who asked me to sign some documents regarding school qualifications. I truly didn't know that the painting had previously appeared in Foplya. If I had known, I would never have accepted it!"

"So, the qualifications for those schools were given with your endorsement." Wynter quickly got straight to the point. "Write down those schools' names. As for the teachers at Mindcrest High School, the problems may not only lie with those you arranged."

Olivian was skilled at blurring the lines and leaving things unsaid.

"Besides the ones you arranged, which other schools have had teachers suddenly resigning without explanation?"

"Get the school to release the information. If they refuse, I'm sure you know how to handle it better than I do. After all, you people are the experts in managing schools, aren't you?" Wynter said sarcastically.

Carlos and Dominic suddenly became tense. "We'll call them immediately!"

This direct approach was the most efficient way to get answers. If they waited for the resignation process to be completed, the people responsible would already be long gone by the time they acted.

Lucas watched Wynter's actions, and memories from their time in Riverburg came rushing back. It was just as Jackson had said-some of her talents were even beyond his own.

But Wynter didn't seem to be focused on that. She walked over to Olivian, her voice steady and sharp. "Tell me more about your friend from Colifernia."

Colifernia...

A sudden, terrible premonition struck Wynter. The team she had sent to investigate the plague had gone to Halsbury and Colifernia.

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## Chapter 1684 The Mystery Surrounding the Case

Olivian didn't dare utter unnecessary words any longer. However, as he tried to recall even the smallest detail about his mysterious friend, his mind was blank. He only remembered there was someone like that, but he found it impossible to recall this friend of his.

"He... I remember he had this really old, frail voice... And... And..." He found himself unable to remember any other details about him. Olivian was starting to get anxious. "Why can't I remember how he looks? We've met a few times!"

The people around him exchanged incredulous glances. Everyone was on edge, and they were all questioning how such a story could even be believable.

"Mr. Hollis, at this point, there's no need to hide anything. Please, just tell us the truth. We're begging you."

The directors were all pale. They thought that the worst possible outcome would affect only them. However, if they were to be treated as Cascadia's enemies and sentenced-it would be an irreversible ruin for their families as well. Treason wasn't just any crime!

Olivian's hands trembled as he removed his glasses. He clenched his fists and put them on his head as he exclaimed in distress, "I'm not hiding anything... I really don't remember! Do you think I don't want to get out of this situation? It's so strange..."

He suddenly stood up. "My secretary! My secretary has seen him, too! Mitchel! Mitchel, come in!"

"M-Mr. Hollis, I'm here." Mitchel Ruiz rushed in.

Olivian grabbed onto this small shred of hope, his voice urgent. "Mitchel, do you remember the man who invited us for dinner? The crab feast! What did he look like?"

"I remember. He's..." Mitchel suddenly froze, and his tone became unsure. "He's a guy... and he's quite old. I remember his voice, but..."

There was no follow-up to the testimony. Logically, such a scenario was impossible to believe. Whether it was Olivian or Mitchel, it was impossible for them to not remember the person's appearance at all.

The person could try to hide, like wearing glasses or a hat every time they met, which might influence their visual judgment. But if that were the case, they would have naturally mentioned how the person appeared each time they met, explaining why they couldn't fully see their face.

Since they didn't mention this situation, and given that they both came from the education system, they should know exactly how to describe someone they interacted with regularly. Their behavior was just too strange.

While ordinary people would have difficulty understanding this, Wynter, however, had picked up on something. Her gaze deepened as she murmured, "It seems we've encountered

a professional."

"Huh?" No one present quite understood what she meant.

Wynter didn't linger on the issue. Instead, she glanced over her shoulder and said, "Lucas, may I have a word with you?"

Lucas nodded. Compared to the others in the meeting, Lucas was actually more shocked by Wynter's identity as 001.

From the information he had heard, most of the cases that 001 handled were unconventional and not disclosed to the public.

It might sound mystical, but recent events had shown a shift in how things were being handled given that every country had its own unique fortune.

At the recent international conference, where fortune tellers from Mt. Dragon participated, they had discussed the Arcane Way.

It was rumored that ten years ago, due to various special cases, the Arcane Division was established.

Some of these individuals had mental abilities on par with software for calculations, while others had sensory abilities that could detect things that ordinary people couldn't.

Of course, there was also a group of individuals in Mt. Dragon itself, undergoing training in secret. This matter was confidential.

But whether Wynter was aware of all this was a question that lingered in Lucas' mind.

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Chapter 1685 Absolute Fairness

After all, the records did indicate that 001 had indeed disappeared for some time, with no reports of her appearances.

"Lucas, the person Mr. Hollis interacted with is suspicious," Wynter said.

From the information she had gathered, Clyde was supposedly in Hawford but had hidden himself exceptionally well, leaving not a single trace behind. Someone was undoubtedly helping him erase his tracks.

Yet, after seeing the Crimson Abyss, Wynter had also realized that the soul residing in Clyde's body had now found a new host.

Listening to Olivian's account, Wynter couldn't shake the feeling that the person in question was, more likely than not, Clyde when he was still alive. After all, the employment arrangements mentioned had been set in motion a long time ago.

"When someone can't recall another person, it's usually one of two possibilities. Either they've been subjected to hypnosis, or the person they met is a cultivator," Wynter explained.

She paused, then looked up at Lucas, not withholding anything. "With your level, you should be aware of some of the things happening in Mt. Dragon. They are all real, including the dragon lock chain."

At the mention of the dragon lock chain, Lucas recalled the time when a Sothoth was about to emerge, causing the chain to break.

He did know about some of these matters, which only made his heart feel heavier. "Can cultivators obscure their facial features?"

"Certain Sigils of the Arcane Way can achieve that," Wynter replied.

She then proceeded to summarize the key findings from her investigation to him. "I've already sent people to dig into the Winston family. It's unlikely anyone survived, but there should still be traces left behind."

Her gaze darkened slightly. "This is a complicated situation. I'll likely have to hand over all matters in Hawford to you. In addition, I hope you can submit a request for some of

the people from Mt. Dragon to head to Colifernia. That person wouldn't appear without reason."

After all, that person's arrival in Hawford had even brought out a wraithlord.

"It might be difficult," Lucas said, speaking with deliberate care. "They're all tied up with their Arcane Way discourse now."

Wynter thought about it, then smiled faintly. "You're right. It wouldn't be suitable for you to handle this. But don't worry, I have my own ways to get them to come."

If the heavens were on the verge of collapsing, what was there to debate about the Arcane Way?

Lucas couldn't help but feel that Wynter's approach wasn't so much a request for help as it was a command. Still, he would support whatever she decided to do.

"I'll write a report, too," Lucas said. He didn't want Wynter offending Mt. Dragon unnecessarily. If someone had to cross that line, it was better for him to do so.

"I'll say that I need it." He continued, a hint of a smile in his tone, "You always have such a shocking way of handling things."

"This time, after you got caught, Mr. Munn Senior was genuinely furious. He didn't call you, but he did call me. He said if anything happened to you, he'd personally come and make this group of people pay for it."

"He was so mad that he lost rationality. You know how he is normally, he wouldn't even use public funds for a meal. For him to say something like that, well, it shows how worked up he was over you."

Wynter had never paid much attention to her methods' nuances before. Her focus had always been on efficiency, catching the culprits as quickly as possible.

But this time, she had indeed worried many people. It wasn't just Jackson, who had always treated her as a true disciple. There were also her grandparents, uncles, brothers, and especially her mother. They must have been restless, unable to sleep in peace.

Wynter stopped to reflect on her actions. "I'll be more mindful about my methods in the future. Mr. Munn Senior's cardiac health isn't the best. And those shell casings are still inside..."

"Lucas, please try to convince him to eat on time. Make sure he remembers not to sneak off for a game of chess during his breaks,"

"Do you think I have the courage to tell him that? Only you would dare to boss him around." His laughter held the warmth of a brother's indulgence.

But as his eyes lifted, his expression grew serious again, settling back into the gravity of their work. "Now that they've uncovered your identity, I'm deeply concerned."

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### Chapter 1686 Unwavering Determination

"They should pay the price for occupying the resources." Wynter didn't hide her intentions from Lucas. She was always honest when talking to him. "If they didn't see me, it meant that their current charges might not have gone deep enough.

"Even if they were arrested and sentenced, they'd probably only serve five or six years. Meanwhile, their descendants would still enjoy privileged positions and benefits. Yet, the resources stolen from others can never truly be recovered."

Lucas had suspected as much. Wynter wasn't someone who would reveal her identity lightly. Her decision to expose herself was deliberate-meant to leave no room for these people to harbor illusions of escaping justice.

"Mr. Monty said he did nothing wrong." Wynter's sharp gaze cut through any pretense. "But he's a frequent guest at the Wray family's club. Of course, he plays a more sophisticated game-preferring a touch of poetic elegance in his indulgences.

"Much of the documents regarding Club Solstice were destroyed. We tried recovering them but only managed to retrieve fragments. There's no direct footage implicating him.

"But, Lucas, none of the people here today are innocent," Wynter said gravely, her tone heavy with conviction. "I'm here to seek justice for those who can no longer speak for themselves."

No one could see the swirling black mist behind Wynter, where one soul after another emerged.

They were young women who had perished in the prime of their lives. They were those who couldn't speak for themselves, who didn't even know their rightful positions had been stolen, and those who were still struggling to make ends meet before their deaths.

Atwater had often emphasized the importance of harmony with nature, aligning oneself with the flow of heaven and earth, when teaching her the Arcane Way. But Wynter, born with a defiant spirit, refused to simply go with the flow.

If she ever truly became a cultivator, ascension and the so-called Sacred Path wouldn't interest her. Her path was clear-she wanted to protect the living and give a voice to the dead.

Lucas looked into Wynter's determined eyes and sighed with a mix of exasperation and fondness. "I understand now. Mr. Munn Senior wasn't wrong when he scolded me. Compared to you, I don't have even half the courage."

"Don't belittle yourself, Lucas." Wynter's smile softened, a rare expression reserved only for family. "From the moment I met you, I knew you were someone who truly spoke for the people. You have your own ideals and strength."

Despite his rank and position, Lucas couldn't remember the last time someone had praised him so sincerely.

He adjusted his glasses, trying to suppress the smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. "Leave this to me. Do what you need to do, and rest assured-just like you said, this time, those who cannot speak for themselves will have their justice."

The education sector had always been the most difficult to address. The breadth and depth of those implicated in this case had surpassed all expectations.

For someone newly appointed like Lucas, most would have hesitated before making such bold moves. Offending so many people-up and down the hierarchy-right after arriving at a new position could easily provoke dissatisfaction from higher-ups.

Conventional wisdom would suggest handling things with a more measured approach, but Lucas didn't waver. Those in the meeting earlier were all immediately detained, and the schools listed in the investigation, no matter how prestigious their reputations, were promptly subjected to inquiries,

Initially, the "teachers" who had received the signal to retreat from the area didn't believe they would be caught. The plan devised by Edward was flawless. While everyone else was still in disarray-scrambling to detain

responsible parties and reacting to the uproar these individuals intended to preserve their strength and quietly withdraw from the schools.

They could either relocate to another city and begin anew or wait until the situation calmed before returning under the guise of a natural rotation.

They were confident that no one would detect anything unusual about their movements. Hence, they didn't think this uproar would implicate them.

They had already subtly planted insidious ideas into their students' minds and, as if it were just another routine day, went to their offices to hand in their resignations.

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## Chapter 1687 Incoming Plague

The reasons the "teachers" provided for their sudden resignations were seemingly reasonable. They claimed the pressure had become too much, and they needed to take time off to pursue further studies.

In their minds, it wouldn't matter even if their leave was not immediately approved. They could still leave Hawford without any problems. Everything would continue as normal, and it would be easier for them to slip in and out unnoticed.

However, on the very day they submitted their resignation, they were called in for a conversation. At first, they didn't sense the severity of the situation. They thought it was just a routine discussion a common formality from the school to keep them on board.

But they did not expect that those who came to meet them were wearing police uniforms. Panic set in despite their calm composure on the surface.

Edward had assured them that no matter what happened, there would always be someone to back them up, and they should just behave as usual. But the more questions they were asked, the more their nerves started to unravel. Then, a new person entered the room. His voice was very formal, but the words left at least two of them frozen on the spot. "The items at your home were searched. These teaching materials are not right."

In the face of the evidence, all their explanations fell apart.

Edward didn't even receive the news when the "teachers" were taken away, but it was clear his plan to preserve their strength had failed.

Based on his understanding, he had always believed that the education system would be too complex to investigate fully. It was too deeply rooted, and there was no way to dig up everything without triggering alarms.

What he didn't anticipate was Wynter's precision in pinpointing their infiltrators so accurately. He also never thought Lucas would be so fearless, willing to step on so many toes to dig deep into the corruption.

He couldn't understand where Lucas got his courage from. How dare he embarrass the education sector like this? But despite Edward's disbelief, it still happened.

Meanwhile, on the same day, the family members of the directors who had attended the earlier meeting were all found, including Dominic's wife, the one who had been promoted to professor.

The moment they were confronted, there was no need for further questioning.

As soon as the authorities revealed the case, Dominic's wife, Estelle Corin, sneered. "You small-town cops! Do you even know where this is? How dare you come here asking questions? What are you even trying to question?"

"How can you believe rumors just because someone reported us? I'm going to have a word with your superior!" Estelle was still trying to rely on Dominic's influence to exert her dominance against the authorities. However, the Special Unit didn't engage in any further conversation. They merely carried out their operation forcefully. Meanwhile, those directors' children were still loudly protesting, fearing they were about to lose their jobs. They were demanding to find someone to appeal their crimes, all dissatisfied with their current situations.

After all, none of them knew that their fathers had already fallen from grace.

At the same time, Wynter handed the scene over to Lucas. She knew that with his skills, securing the suspects was all but guaranteed. As for who would end up behind bars, she wasn't particularly interested.

She took out her phone and walked outside, dialing a number. It didn't take long before the call connected. "Check the situation in Colifernia. Find out if there will be any large-scale events happening soon. Make sure to investigate thoroughly."

Wynter hung up right after instructing the person on the call.

She wasn't fully convinced by what Yvette had said, but there was a significant possibility that the outbreak of the plague could be imminent. If it happened suddenly and without warning, it could bring the entire nation's

economy to a standstill.

Furthermore, as the Special Unit's leader, 001, she felt an unwavering duty to handle these potential threats.

The Special Unit member, who had received Wynter's directives, immediately began their investigation. Before long, the member returned a call to Wynter.

"Boss, we've just found something. There's going to be an international military exercise in the coming days, open to soldiers from all countries. It shouldn't be a major issue, right?"

Wynter narrowed her eyes at the information. "Stay put as you wait for further instructions. I'll have the others meet you soon. This exercise may not be as simple as it sounds. I'll explain in-depth once I arrive."

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

### Chapter 1688 Boundless Merit

Wynter was ready to leave, but trouble always seemed to follow, particularly from those who refused to

acknowledge the harm they'd caused by taking resources that rightfully belonged to others.

A commotion had already started outside. "Who's the person in charge here? Who gave you the authority to arrest people? Let me go! I said, let me go!"

Before getting on her motorcycle, Wynter swept a glance at the scene.

Among the protestors was Estelle, who exuded an air of entitlement. "I'm not going in. I'll say it one last time- you have no right to detain me! Do you know who I am?"

Wynter's long legs casually supported her sleek black motorcycle. She glanced at Estelle, tucking away her phone before ordering her subordinates, "Record her words. Ask her husband who she thinks she is."

As Wynter's words traveled to Estelle's ears, she sized her up. "I don't know who you are, young lady, nor do I care how you're handling this case. But I'll tell you one thing-do not offend those you cannot afford to provoke."

Estelle didn't think someone with a motorcycle could have any real power.

Wynter slipped her helmet on with one hand. Without wasting a single word more on Estelle, she simply instructed, "Document every word she has said. Submit everything to the higher-ups."

"Understood."

Estelle wasn't fazed in the slightest. After all, she hadn't broken any laws. She also believed that if Dominic found out about what happened today, none of the people here would escape unscathed.

If they wanted to interrogate her, so be it. She was curious to see how they would dare to accuse her.

What she didn't expect, however, was that there wouldn't be an interrogation at all. Instead, they took her directly to see Dominic. She wasn't foolish-one look at Dominic's state, and she instantly understood what had happened. Her face turned pale as disbelief washed over her. She was in shock that Dominic had actually fallen from grace when he was already so close to retirement. Worse still, the reason they'd brought her here was that they had substantial evidence in hand.

The position she'd been awarded as a professor was a result of Dominic's abuse of power. Right before her were documents outlining his confessed crimes, complete with his signature.

"How could this be? Impossible!" Estelle exclaimed in shock.

In an instant, the once-high-and-mighty government official's wife plummeted from her lofty perch to rock bottom. Thinking back on the things she'd said earlier, her expression was filled with shame and regret. Initially, they'd only intended for her and Dominic to relinquish positions and privileges they never deserved. If she hadn't behaved so arrogantly earlier, perhaps the matter could have been resolved differently.

The submission of the video left those advocating for a cautious approach, not wanting Lucas to conduct a full- scale investigation, with no excuses to object anymore.

The implicated officials' family members those who had bypassed processes to enter departments, secured positions through undue influence, or obtained unearned honors all came under scrutiny.

Some of the scholarship committee's missing members were rescued. Others remained unaccounted for, and tragically, some were confirmed to have lost their lives.

It was only after seeing this scene that the unborn souls let go of their resentments. Once the results were made public, the honors and positions were restored to their rightful owners.

Estelle's position as a professor, which had originally belonged to another teacher, was one of the many examples. That teacher, resigned to their fate for years, trembled with emotion upon receiving the notification.

Those who wielded their power for personal gain likely never considered the gravity of their actions. To them,

taking someone else's spot was inconsequential.

But the truth was undeniable they had stolen others' fortune. Some people's academic achievements had been falsified. Others had their honors or futures ripped away from them. Today, all those stolen fortunes were restored. It sounded simple when summarized, but in practice, achieving such an outcome had been fraught with obstacles at every turn.

Some of the lingering unborn souls behind Wynter exchanged glances. Before departing to the afterlife, they wove threads of merit from their spiritual essence as a gift to her.

Wynter could see the injustice they endured, even if others couldn't understand why she pursued the investigation so relentlessly.

"Why dig all this up again after so many years?" people questioned. "It wasn't even them who were corrupt-it was their fathers."

But what people seemed to forget was that these individuals were also beneficiaries of their fathers' misdeeds. They not only enjoyed the ill-gotten gains from that power but also trampled on the ordinary citizens' most basic rights their human rights.

Public resentment was the most pressing grievance to address. The common people's desires were straightforward -they wanted food to eat and clothes to wear. If they were not provoked, they would not have been the first to strike.

Yet, why did these individuals feel entitled to trample on others just because of their positions?

Wynter didn't believe in sweeping injustices under the rug for the sake of maintaining a false peace or because it had happened long ago. She didn't think that anyone had the right to declare that these past transgressions should go unpunished on the victims' behalf.

Lucas shared her convictions. He no longer hesitated over whether his actions would upset the balance or inadvertently cause more waves,

The case's every detail was made public. Even the long-standing, unspoken rule that one's children would be placed in another's department, and vice versa, was now exposed for all to see.

Lucas was bold and courageous, breaking away from the usual system of concealment that many within the bureaucracy adhered to.

Wynter looked at the merit descending upon her. While she didn't reject it, she didn't take it all. She absorbed a portion of the spiritual essence into her Soul Commanding Badge but left most of the merit untouched.

She lifted her gaze. "Can I give the rest to Lucas?"

The girls exchanged a glance and nodded firmly in agreement.

"He will face a calamity in the future. With the merit you've given him, it should be enough to dissolve the calamity." Wynter chuckled lightly before continuing, "Without him, things wouldn't have gone

He's a good leader."

smoothly.

The girls' eyes brightened.

With a flick of Wynter's right wrist, the dark clouds parted. A beam of light shone down from above, unerringly landing on Lucas' figure.

Lucas, however, didn't notice it. His thoughts were still occupied with anger toward those who abused their power to oppress the people.

Beside him, Juan looked on in disbelief, wiping his glasses. "Am I imagining things, or do I see a golden light surrounding you, Mr. Keller?"

Lucas paused. He did indeed feel a sudden sense of lightness in his body. He had been sick before coming to Hawford and was coughing intermittently. But now he felt better than ever, as if a weight had lifted off his shoulders.

He wasn't sure if he had heard right, but it almost seemed like someone was whispering their thanks in his ear. In the world of politics, if one possessed merit protection, it shielded them from evil spirits, and could even turn a great calamity into a boon. It was a powerful blessing for those in positions of authority.

The crow could see the scene unfold clearly. He flapped his wings a few times, his voice low and cautious.

"Wynter actually passed on something as valuable as merits. She really hasn't changed much from before. I thought that people would be different after reincarnation."

Of course, Dalton heard this remark. He lifted his eyelids slightly, his expression neutral. "Tell Whitley to follow her closely during this period."

The crow hesitated for a moment before looking up carefully. "Are you asking Whitley to supply Ms. Quinnell with fortune? Or is it because of the Soul Commanding Badge..."

The rest of the words remained unsaid, for Dalton's gaze was filled with warning.

If a place were to be graced with merit, it would soothe the resentment accumulated there over the past year.

It was on the same day that in a small underground room next to Eliana's home, Jeremiah numbly prepared to

open his stall.

He dragged behind him the day's meager earnings when he heard a familiar voice.

"Dad!" A clear, crisp voice came from behind.

It was Penelope. She was injured, looking much thinner than when she left, with bruises on her arms, but she was back. Behind her were public officials who had brought her home.

Jeremiah's tears instantly welled up. He reached out to touch Penelope's hair. "They all said you went out and thought the outside world was better, that I was a burden, and no longer wanted to come back. But I know you, my child. How could you possibly despise me?

"It's my fault. I couldn't find anyone to bring you back and am useless. That scholarship committee... we won't go

there again."

Penelope nodded, and for the first time, she truly felt like she was saved and was finally home. She was afraid even when the public officials appeared.

But now, trembling, she turned on the phone that someone had given her. "This person... This person saved me. I heard from Eliana that the people who deceived and harmed us won't come back again. Dad, I'm really home."

Penelope let out a loud sob. She had been holding back her tears the entire way, her head lowered, while others tried to talk to her. But she was terrified. She had been conditioned to react with fear and panic.

It was a public official, a young woman, who found a way to calm her down. She showed Penelope her phone, displaying messages from Eliana.

Only then did she begin to respond, but it wasn't relief she felt initially-she repeatedly read the messages over and over again, as if trying to confirm something.

She was confirming that the people who had hurt her were truly caught. Only once she was sure of that was she able to let herself break down in tears.

At that moment, the officials who had escorted her home understood why it was important to check everything- even the children and relatives of those involved. The seemingly stubborn insistence on digging deeper now made

perfect sense.

Most people would never know that all of this was orchestrated by Wynter. The codename "001" only existed in

files.

As for those who had seen 001, they remained silent. They would definitely have to spend at least three or four years locked up, and with their own crimes, everything came to an end swiftly.

Even when some of them saw the videos and testimonies submitted, they chose to stay quiet. They dared not to

speak up, let alone suggest that the investigation had gone too far.

During this period, the Chamber of Commerce had been facing significant setbacks, its momentum quickly deteriorating. This, however, was not something anyone had hoped for.

The small businesses that had long relied on the Chamber of Commerce were now in a state of panic. Just as they had once agreed to kick the Whitman family out, they were now downstairs, pleading for them to return. Taylor looked at Noah and asked, "What should we do now? Should we go back?"

Noah didn't hesitate for a moment, his voice firm. "We need to go back. The Chamber of Commerce was created by

the former Mr. Quinnell Senior.

"It has been passed down for generations, and neither the Whitmans' nor the Quinnells' ancestors would want to see the Chamber of Commerce in its current state.

"I believe Wynter wouldn't just stand by and watch it collapse, so we should do this for her. It will at least show that we are not useless uncles,"

Taylor's eyes narrowed slightly as he pondered for a moment. "You're right. This was founded by the former Mr.

Quinnell Senior, and now Wynter is working so hard to steer the Chamber of Commerce in a better direction. Let's do it, then. I'll go meet them downstairs."

Noah knew that if the Southern Cascadia Chamber of Commerce couldn't unite and stand together, it would quickly collapse or fall into the hands of someone with ill intentions.

Although there were other Chambers of Commerce in cities like Colifernia and Halsbury, they were no longer under their control. Most of the decision-making power had shifted overseas.

When Gordon was alive, the overseas Cascadians had still been connected to the homeland, but the current

generation of overseas Cascadians were not the same. Hence, while the Chamber of Commerce appeared to be controlled by Cascadians, the real power behind it was unclear.

Meanwhile, Cleo was leisurely rocking in his chair, enjoying the sun's warmth. With his eyes closed, he appeared

completely relaxed.

Before long, Alaric walked over from inside the house. "Mr. Sinclair, we've just received news. Ms. Quinnell has eradicated all the parasites within the Southern Cascadia Chamber of Commerce.

"Additionally, several high-ranking provincial officials have been arrested, and now the entire Department of Education has mobilized to reboot the atmosphere within schools."

Cleo slowly opened his eyes. "Ms. Quinnell is quite impressive. She has achieved notable results since arriving in Hawford. Perhaps it's time to put aside my prejudices and meet her."

Since Gordon's passing, Cleo had placed his hopes on Shane. However, he turned out be a fool who relied too

much on his connections.

Shane's actions caused Cleo to lose all faith in the Quinnell family's descendants. He no longer believed that

anyone from the Quinnell family could carry on Gordon's legacy.

Alaric knew the true source of Cleo's prejudice—it wasn't toward Wynter herself, but rather his disappointment in

Shane.

He spoke carefully, "Mr. Sinclair, I believe the time has come. Ms. Quinnell is nearly matching the former Mr. Quinnell Senior's power and influence. But she is still young, and I fear her achievements may lead to arrogance. It seems it's time for someone like you to step in and offer guidance."

Cleo was quietly considering this. He didn't voice his thoughts aloud but closed his eyes again. However, an idea

had already formed in his mind he would definitely offer Wynter his full support if she actually found the item left behind and hidden by Gordon.

In the Whitman family's meeting room, Noah and Taylor sat at the head of the table, while the other members of

the Chamber of Commerce filled the seats.

Noah spoke first, his voice firm. "The Whitman family will lead everyone out of the current predicament, but I

must make one thing clear-this is not the time to indulge in extravagant lifestyles with people like Kenton and

Edison.

"What this Chamber of Commerce needs is businesses that focus on real work, and we must stick to supporting our domestic brands."

He took a sip of water before continuing, "When the former Mr. Quinnell Senior was still around, the businesses in Colifernia and Halsbury also established chambers, intending to develop together.

"However, those people are no longer in charge, and the situation has changed. I'm sure you all understand

without me explaining much.

"What we need now is unity. We must make the Southern Cascadia Chamber of Commerce and also expel the hidden forces controlling Colifernia."

Hawford the best,

The other members exchanged looks, and one of them spoke up. "Mr. Whitman, it's good that you guys have returned. After all, the Whitman family's stock price has soared, and we'll surely benefit from that. But... I fear that

the Chamber of Commerce in Colifernia won't even take us seriously."

Noah had considered this as well. However, before he could reply, a familiar calm and measured voice echoed across the room. "You don't need to worry about that. I'll go to Colifernia myself."

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

Chapter 1689 Chamber of Commerce

The voice belonged to none other than Wynter. With her reappearance now, no one doubted her abilities as they once did. In their eyes were nothing but amazement and admiration.

Previously, they had no idea of the wits and influence she wielded. But now, they all knew-it was her who had coordinated with the Special Operations Team to crack the major case.

So, the Chamber of Commerce members' gazes were filled with a tangible shift in attitude.

"Ms. Quinnell!"

"You're finally here!"

"We've all heard about your accomplishments. Why didn't you tell us earlier that you are acquaintances with Mr. Keller?"

People swarmed her, including those who had previously been indifferent or skeptical about her capabilities and questioned her qualifications for joining the Chamber of Commerce.

Now, everything was different. After everything that had transpired, not only were they eager to accept her as a member, but they would even willingly make her the chamber's acting chairman if she desired it.

It wasn't just the land she acquired, which promised lucrative profits after development, that made them so willing. It was also the fact that she had a direct connection to Lucas. That was more than enough to secure endless opportunities for the future!

In truth, their imagination still fell short. Wynter's connection with Lucas wasn't just a simple acquaintance. If they knew she was actually his junior apprentice, they would be even more awestruck, much less if they learned that she held the position of 001.

As her family member, Noah could more or less guess that things weren't as simple as they seemed.

Wynter was truly extraordinary her real capabilities, if revealed, might cause an even bigger sensation. The Whitman family, being business people themselves, understood this all too well.

Yet, no matter which member of the family it was, none of them would ever disclose Wynter's true identity to outsiders.

This was the true meaning of being a family. Her reputation could bring them endless wealth. However, to protect her, they were willing to ensure her brilliance remained concealed. Even Reuben, who had endured so much silently, held an unspoken pride in her.

True heroes never stood under the spotlight, basking in applause. They remained hidden behind the curtains. While others were marveling at their achievements, they were already moving on to tackle the next challenge.

What made Reuben proud was that Wynter was exactly this kind of hero. Although Reuben wasn't present on this particular occasion, both Noah and Taylor felt an overwhelming sense of pride and heartache.

As families, they couldn't help but feel protective of Wynter. She had endured imprisonment and online slander, all to lure the evildoers into dropping their guard so they could be fully exposed. These feats sounded simple in words but were unimaginably difficult to execute.

In their eyes, Wynter was still a child. Who wouldn't wish for their child to live carefree, like a princess in a fairy tale? Perhaps it was precisely because she was so capable that people forgot she was only just 18.

Even if she hadn't been born into the Quinnell and Whitman families, with her intelligence, she could have been living a happy, carefree life in school, without needing to carry the burdens she now shouldered.

Just like Reuben had said, "Wynter does more than she says."

At her most glorious moments, her family would willingly step back to let her shine.

For instance, both Noah and Taylor weren't standing right beside Wynter. Instead, it was the other members of the Chamber of Commerce who eagerly crowded around her, each hoping to exchange a few words with her.

After nodding politely to the others, Wynter lifted her gaze and called out, "Uncle Noah and Uncle Taylor."

Only then did Noah and Taylor step forward.

Taylor looked at her carefully, scrutinizing every detail, before finally speaking, "There seem to be no injuries, and you seem to be in good spirits."

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

## Chapter 1690 Old Habits Die Hard

Both Noah and Taylor were deeply worried that Wynter might have been wronged. After all, she had been taken in for questioning, and the details of her involvement in the case weren't public knowledge.

Even without diving into specifics, just hearing the words "exploiting under the guise of scholarship", "auctioning young girls", and "organ harvesting" was enough for Noah to picture the harrowing environment. "It's good enough that you're back safe and sound. Your grandfather and mother are waiting for you at home."

Noah chuckled lightly before continuing, "Your cousin, on the other hand, is fretting about his latest project. He's terrified he'll mess it up and wants you to give it a final check."

"I trust Cyrus with the project. Besides, I know you'll be there to guide him." Wynter hesitated slightly as she continued, "But Uncle Noah, I'll need you to help me explain things to Grandpa and Mom. I know I worried them this time it was my mistake not to consider their feelings."

Wynter fully understood how much her family had agonized over her safety. Seeing how Reuben had faced criticisms on her behalf in the past few days had only made her more aware of their love and concern.

No matter how capable she was, her family would always fear for her safety.

Noah paused briefly before responding with quiet resolve, "All of us understand. No matter what happens outside, the Whitman family will always stand behind you. Even if our strength is limited, Taylor and I will never allow anyone to harm you."

The other members of the Chamber of Commerce, upon hearing this, couldn't help but wonder who would dare harm Wynter with the immense achievements resting on her shoulders.

If it were them, they wouldn't overthink this much. Breaking a massive anti-corruption case meant that no one would dare to treat both Wynter and the entire Whitman family as they had before-stepping on them whenever convenient.

The balance of power in Hawford's business circle was about to change profoundly. Word had already spread that those who had previously given Reuben a hard time had all been summoned for questioning.

This wasn't just about a shift in the business circle-even Lucas had undertaken a full-scale restructuring. Unlike previous transitions where incoming leaders had to adapt to "unspoken rules" developed over time, Lucas made it clear that he wasn't playing by the old manual.

In any city, the direction of development largely reflected its leadership. With Lucas at the helm, it was evident that the focus would be on tangible, meaningful progress.

Specifically, there were whispers that future support would prioritize industries related to technology, domestic brands, and cultural initiatives representing local identity and heritage. This vision aligned perfectly with Wynter's efforts and initiatives.

Some of the members in the room, who had been wavering between the Wray and the Whitman families, couldn't help but feel uneasy. Unlike those who had already secured opportunities for growth, such as the applesauce factory, none of them could compare now.

"Ms. Quinnell, would you mind sharing what specific instructions Mr. Keller has given?"

"Yes, you must know his personal interests too, right?"

"We don't need to worry about the situation in Colifernia for now. Let's focus on developing our side first."

Some were clearly eager to leverage the connection. They couldn't understand why, at such a good opportunity, they were still talking about family matters and what was happening in Colifernia. They were more interested in using their connection with Lucas to seize the chance and make a fortune.

Wynter's gaze swept over them, lightly toying with her purple sugilite pendant. "I thought seeing the consequences of some people's actions would make you settle down."

Her words silenced the room.

"Just in case some of you are still unaware, it was me who took down Edison. Anyone who shared his style in the business world is likely writing their repentance letters in prison by now," Wynter said coldly.