

Chapter 801

“My word! Since when has the Crawford family assembly become this lax? Can literally anybody participate and sit wherever they like? Just look at how pathetic this awkward-looking person is!”

Gerald had just finished sending a message to his sister when he heard a woman’s voice mocking him. When he turned to look at the woman beside him who had heavy makeup on, she simply rolled her eyes at him.

“Humph! And here I thought that I’d only be able to meet distinguished people after getting married into the famous Crawford family! Never would I have imagined to have to sit at a table here with such a person!” complained the woman loudly, just so Gerald could hear her.

The woman looked down on Gerald so much that she seemed to be embarrassed just having to sit next to him.

“That’s quite enough! Watch your mouth. While everyone in the family is wealthy, some people are still less knowledgeable and insightful than others! Besides, some of us here may have attitudes of an upstart, so just ignore them!” explained her husband.

It was clear that the rude woman’s husband was also feeling slightly embarrassed having to share a table with Gerald. Due to the couple’s words, a few others who were sitting at the table began insinuating Gerald as well.

Bethany herself—who was also sitting beside Gerald—frowned before saying, “You’re just a lowly actress! What right do you have to criticize those from the Crawford family? Do you lack self-awareness or something?”

“Come again? Who could you possibly be referring to when you said, ‘lowly’?” replied the woman coldly when she heard what Bethany had said.

“Oh, stop with the acting. We all know who she was referring to,” said Niki as she too smiled coldly while looking at the woman.

To Gerald, it seemed like both parties held grudges against each other.

“That’s enough, there’s no need to argue with them!” dissuaded her husband.

“Humph! Just look at you! You hardly have any status among the other Crawford family members! These two are just mere girls! Remember the last time we went abroad? While both of them were received in the most distinguished manner possible, we were only seen as important guests! We were just one level below them! As if that wasn’t enough, here they are condemning me now! Yet you don’t even dare to speak up against them!” replied his wife in dissatisfaction.

Hearing that, her husband simply sighed.

“It’s not like I can help it. It’s simply true that their family is ranked higher than mine! Besides, the Crawford family has lots of rules and regulations! The family branches are separated according to our levels, which also represent our seniority! To put simply, imagine a situation where a young master meets his grandfather. Naturally, the young master has to bow when he greets him!” explained the man in resignation.

“Speaking of young masters, do you know the young master of the Crawford family? You need to contact him more since he’s the Crawford family’s heir!” asked the woman.

At that, the man could only sigh again before replying, “The young master’s only returning to the family today... In fact, this family assembly was most probably held specifically for him. How could I possibly know who he is?”

“Humph! Useless! How truly useless!” said the arrogant woman embarrassedly.

Since she had seen Gerald follow Bethany in, the woman was sure that Bethany had allowed such a person to sit at her table just to humiliate her. The more she thought about it, the angrier she became!

“Humph! Change seats with me! I don’t want to continue sitting beside a person who wears clothes that don’t even cost a thousand dollars! Such a humiliating person can only be from one of the family’s outer branches! How disgusting!” said the woman as she glared at Gerald.

Upon standing up and taking a step forward, however, the woman suddenly began screaming!

The truth was, while she was making all sorts of gestures while arguing with Bethany earlier, the hem of her long dress got closer and closer to Gerald’s foot. As a result, Gerald ended up stepping on a small part of her dress without even noticing it.

While it definitely wasn’t something to shout about, the woman seemed extremely furious.

“You b*stard! You did that on purpose!” roared the woman as she looked at Gerald.

“It wasn’t on purpose!” replied Gerald in bitter resignation.

“F*ck you! It was Bethany who told you to sit here, right? After mocking you like that, why else would you continue staying here? Just get lost already!” shouted the woman angrily as she pushed him.

As a result, the cup of tea in front of Gerald splashed all over him!

“How audacious can you be, Xandra?! How dare you be this rude to someone from the Crawford family!”

Chapter 802

The one who had immediately stood up and shouted at the madwoman was Bethany.

“So what if I’m rude? What are you going to do about it?” retorted Xandra, not wanting to be outdone.

The two seemed to have forgotten where they were as they continued arguing with each other. This was made apparent since everyone else had already gone silent for some time.

“Brother!” shouted a crisp and clear voice which silenced the two arguing women.

After all, they knew who the voice belonged to. Both of them then turned to look at Jessica who was hurriedly walking toward them.

“Sister!” replied Gerald as he tried wiping the tea stains off his body.

“...Sister?”

Everyone there was immediately stunned. He called Jessica his sister? Was he really...

“Who did this? Who dared to humiliate the young master of the Crawford family? That person must have a death wish!” scolded Jessica in a frigid tone which sent chills down the spines of the other Crawford family members.

Xandra and Bethany themselves had their jaws wide open. Both of them simply couldn't believe their ears.

'...What? He's... the young master of the Crawford family?'

"I... Young lady! I-I'm so sorry! I didn't know!" said Xandra as she began vigorously shaking her head.

"So it was you! Get out of my sight!" growled Jessica coldly.

"I-I'll leave right away!"

Knowing how much trouble she had gotten herself into, Xandra knew better than to linger around any longer.

As she turned around to leave, Jessica added, "Hold it. You're to roll all the way to the doorstep from where you stand. Don't make me repeat myself!"

Xandra completely understood Jessica's order and metaphor. She was to leave the Crawford family for good, and she would never be allowed in again.

Though she was in deep regret, she was so panicked that she immediately obeyed, rolling on the floor in front of everyone before finally leaving.

"Now come on, Gerald. Let's head up there!" said Jessica with a smile once she saw that Xandra was no longer there.

Bethany and many others still had their mouths covered. None of them even dared to say a word.

Since Gerald seemed to be quite an honest man at first glance, Bethany hadn't thought twice about bullying him. To think that she had ordered such a terrifyingly powerful person to pick up tennis balls for her!

"He's... He's Gerald Crawford! The young master of the Crawford family!"

As Gerald headed toward the elevated platform, several people were already discussing it while simultaneously clapping loudly as he walked on.

Mr. Crawford had finally returned to the family.

Upon seeing him, both Dylan and his wife stood up with smiles on their faces. Nothing made them happier than meeting their son.

“Dad! Mom!” shouted Gerald whose eyes were already watery as he ran toward them. After all, he hadn’t met them for almost an entire year.

“You’re finally back, son! Our family is finally reunited again!” said Dylan as he patted Gerald’s shoulders firmly.

“Speaking of which, Gerald, while we were educating and raising you in poverty back then, we failed to introduce you to an equally as important person!” said YuliaYaleman—Gerald’s mother—as she turned to look at the woman beside her whose face was already red.

The blushing woman in question then stood up before softly saying, “We’ve already met each other earlier, mom...”

The woman in question was Lyra!

“Mom?” replied Gerald, stunned when he heard what Lyra called his mother.

Chapter 803

“This is Lyra, Gerald! Though we’ve never mentioned her to you before, she’s the one who’s been helping you handle your financial issues all these years. We’ve raised her since she was young!” said Yulia who didn’t seem to have heard what Lyra had said earlier.

Though her mother wasn’t saying it directly, the underlying message she was implying was clear as day to Gerald. After all, not only had Gerald already heard others referring to Lyra as the young lady, it was also obvious based on the current expressions on his parents’ faces.

“Mom, we’ve already met earlier!” said Lyra a little louder this time as she looked at Gerald with a faint smile.

“Oh, you have? Well all the better then! Haha! Alright, no more beating around the bush! Lyra is your fiancée, Gerald!” said Dylan who was looking very happy.

In response, however, Yulia coughed before tugging gently on Dylan’s sleeve. After all, they were aware that their son had a girlfriend. Not only that, she was now missing! It simply felt too early to be talking about engagements.

Gerald himself was astonished beyond words. He hadn’t expected the gentle and elegant Lyra to be his fiancée. No wonder the others were addressing her as the young lady!

This turn of events was somewhat similar to a television series he had watched in the past. Just like the girl in the show, Lyra had been adopted by the family just to end up becoming his parents’ future daughter-in-law.

The entire situation was simply bizarre to him. It seemed that his family had put in a lot of effort just to raise and educate Lyra too.

“Do take a seat, Gerald!” said Lyra at that moment, still blushing as she took out more tissues to help Gerald wipe the tea stains off his body.

“You don’t have to trouble yourself, Lyra, I’ll do it myself...” said Gerald as he took the tissues from her hand. He was honestly still weirded out by the entire turn of events.

After all, he didn’t have any feelings for her. What more, she was at least four years older than him! While it was true that her beauty was near unparalleled, Gerald simply couldn’t accept something like this that easily, and the feeling persisted throughout the family assembly.

As the assembly went on, Gerald’s head was filled with thoughts. About how Lyra had been staying here for a long time now, and also about the fact that it was his mother who had arranged for her to stay here in the first place.

Just a few days ago, his sister had told him what had happened to Mila in Hong Kong. She had even told him that it was going to be difficult for them to be together in the end.

Not understanding what she meant, he had tried contacting his parents back then to no avail. Now, however, he understood everything. As it turned out, his parents had already found him a wife years ago!

As Gerald headed to his room, he was surprised to see Lyra following behind him. His shock didn't stop there, however. Upon entering, she followed him as well and she began making the bed!

"I'll... be sleeping in another room tonight, Lyra... Since you're probably already used to sleeping in this room, you can continue sleeping here! I'm sure you're tired after today's family assembly, so make sure to get a good rest!"

Gerald was sure that if he continued facing Lyra, things were only going to become more awkward.

"It's alright, Gerald... I understand how difficult it must be for you to just accept our marriage out of the blue. I'm well aware of what you're currently facing as well. I'll help you look for her!" said Lyra.

Gerald hadn't expected her to say something like that at all. However, he simply nodded before replying, "Thank you, Lyra!"

With that said, he remained in the room for a little while longer before finally leaving.

Mila's recent disappearance had caused Gerald to be filled with deep remorse. There was no way in hell that he was going to be in the mood to face another woman. He simply couldn't rest easy until Mila was found.

And what about Lyra herself? While it was true that the Crawfords had raised her, she should have the right to choose who she truly wants to marry! Why should she have to marry a man much younger than her? They didn't even have any feelings for each other!

That night, Gerald found a random guest room to sleep in.

When he woke up early the next morning, he saw three differently colored suits hanging on the head of the bed, and a pair of leather shoes on the side.

It was the first day after their family reunion and Gerald knew he didn't need to keep a low profile anymore.

Chapter 804

While he had been excited to finally be able to dress in attire suited for rich heirs, he was exhausted and in a bad mood yesterday. Because of that, he had forgotten to tell the servants to get something ready for him before he went to bed.

Unexpectedly, somebody had already done that without even receiving his orders!

Heading to the bathroom in his pajamas, Gerald saw that all the usual items for personal hygiene had already been prepared for him as well.

Thinking back, this was his home and family after all. The servants needed to be at least this attentive.

However, the thought of servants entering and leaving his room as he slept—to prepare such things for him—still made Gerald feel slightly uneasy.

After all, what would happen if any of the maids entered while he was sleeping naked? The thought of it alone sent chills running down his spine.

At that moment, Gerald heard three distinct knocks on his door.

“Who is it?” asked Gerald.

“I’m a maid, young master. I go by Helena. May I know what you wish to wear today? I’ll prepare it for you as you get ready!”

Hearing that, Gerald headed to the door and opened it. Just as Helena had said, she was a maid standing attentively right outside his door.

“Prepare? The ones hanging on the head of my bed already look fine to me. Weren’t you the one who placed those there?” asked Gerald rather doubtfully.

In response, Helena shook her head before saying, “We’re prohibited from entering your room without your permission, young master. I’m guessing that it was the young lady who prepared them for you! She’s the only one who’s allowed to enter any room you’re in. What more, when I passed through the corridor at around five today, I noticed that the light in your room was on!”

“...I see. So it was Lyra...”

Understanding what had happened now, he allowed Helena to resume her work.

Once she was gone, Gerald let out a mental sigh as he wondered whether he should find some time to explain everything clearly to Lyra. After all, both of them were simply not meant to be.

Being older than he was, Gerald was adamant that Lyra should be free to pursue her own happiness. She didn't need to get married to him just to repay the kindness that the Crawford family had bestowed upon her.

With his decision absolute, Gerald then changed into one of the suits. However, he found it quite awkward that he still didn't know how to wear a tie properly. Even after a few tries, it still appeared lopsided.

"Let me help you with that, Gerald!" said Lyra as she smiled at him. Apparently, he had been so engrossed with getting his tie right that he hadn't even noticed that she had been standing at the door for some time!

Looking at the mirror and seeing how lopsided the tie still was, Gerald simply gave it and allowed her to lend him a hand.

Receiving his approval, Lyra continued smiling as she walked over to him. With her help, it didn't take long before his collars were smooth and his tie looked much more proper compared to earlier.

"Dad's throwing a feast for you and Queta later. Since it'll be our first reunion meal together, let's head there early!"

The main residence of the Crawford family was a large villa within a scenic neighborhood. Everyone living there owned a similarly large villa.

"I'm fine with that. While we're at it, do take me to my father. I've been told he has something to inform me!" replied Gerald.

With that, Lyra led Gerald to his father. Once they got there, his mother immediately ushered Lyra to come to the side to have a chat with her. It was clear how much she adored Lyra.

Gerald himself entered the study room with his father. Once they were inside, Dylan looked at his son before getting straight to the point.

"Regarding Mila... Please don't be sad, Gerald. This entire incident... It isn't as simple as you think it is..."

"What do you mean by that?"

Taking in a deep breath, Dylan then explained, "I saw the symbol that Mila received before her disappearance, Gerald. It's the very same symbol that your uncle received that year before he disappeared as well. While both incidents are similar, more clues—aside from the fact that the victims disappear after receiving the pendant with the symbol—have been hard to come by."

"However, after investigating it for so many years, I think I've finally found a few relevant clues! Gerald, both Mila and your uncle may still be alive!" said Dylan in a hushed voice.

"Is... Is that really true, dad?" replied Gerald as his eyes lit up.

Chapter 805

"I've called you over today mainly to discuss the incident. You're already a grown man so you should be aware of the secrets that our family has gained!" said Dylan as he gently patted his son's shoulder.

"See, this symbol behaves somewhat like a curse... People call it the symbol of the Sun League. Whenever anyone personally receives the symbol, they go missing within three days! To think that Mila's currently facing what your uncle had gone through twenty years ago!" explained his father.

"According to what Fynn had said, the curse resurfaces every twenty years, and whenever it does, people go missing. He also said that nobody who's received the curse has managed to escape it!" replied Gerald.

Shaking his head, Dylan then said, "Fynn is only half correct there. While it's true that the majority who receive the symbol go missing, I've been able to locate someone who's managed to return safely!"

Hearing that, Gerald's eyes lit up.

"After interviewing him, the person stated that he had been saved by someone. Aside from that, I also gained some vital clues to help crack the code. Based on everything I currently know about the curse, it's highly likely that your uncle and Mila have been captured!"

"Captured? By who? Who on earth could be that powerful?" asked Gerald, a tinge of hope in his voice.

"I'm afraid I don't know who the mastermind is either. With so little clues to go with in the first place, it saddens me to say that we probably won't be able to investigate any further into this with the power of the Crawford family alone."

Nodding, Gerald then said, "I understand, dad. How about looking for the person who made it back alive again to see if we get any new leads?"

"While he was alive for fifteen years after safely returning, he died some six years ago. If we truly want capable helpers now, then we'll need to look for the family who saved him back then," replied Dylan as he shook his head while smiling bitterly.

"As long as they're willing to lend a hand, our strength in the case will easily have doubled! Son, let me ask you. Which of the families do you think is the most powerful now?" asked Dylan as he looked at Gerald.

"Well, while the Federsons were once very prosperous and powerful, Fynn told me that our family currently holds the most power."

"While that's true in terms of economic power, when it comes to brute strength, a few families are stronger than ours... Take, for example, the Moldell family from Yanken!"

"The Moldells from Yanken?"

Though Gerald had heard about the Longs and Quarringtons from Yanken, never had he heard about the Moldells.

While he was astonished to know that there was another powerful family living there, he quickly realized how little he actually knew. This conversation was definitely helping him expand his horizons.

"Indeed. In fact, the person I mentioned was saved by the Moldells. See, their bloodline is blessed with strength, quite literally. Those from the Moldell family are naturally physically stronger than the average human. It's no wonder that most of them are active in the military. There's also a highly mysterious group of people in Weston who call themselves the Dragon Squad. Regardless of how rich a family is, none of their guards will ever come close to comparing to those within that group!"

"That isn't an exaggeration either. Those within the Dragon Squad can kill effortlessly and in full secrecy if they wanted to. Not even our extremely tight security system could ever dream of stopping them if they were to target us! Throughout the years, our family has recruited several experts and masters to protect ourselves from that family, just in case they ever decide to assassinate any of us. However, the gap between us is simply growing larger by the year!"

Hearing all that, Gerald was left stupefied. If his father hadn't told all that to him in person, Gerald wouldn't have believed that such people even existed!

Soon enough, however, Gerald realized that it wasn't that much of a surprise. After all, he had met people like the Drake & Tyson duo and Finnley as well! The way these people operated was simply incomprehensible to the average person.

"...Well then how about Drake and Tyson? Are they comparable to those in the Moldell family?" asked Gerald.

Chapter 806

"Those two? Humph! It wouldn't be a stretch to say that twelve-year-olds from that family could single-handedly beat them to a pulp!"

Hearing that, Gerald felt himself gulp.

He then wondered how Finnley would fare against that family. However, he quickly shook the thought away. After all, his focus shouldn't be on making comparisons now.

Rather, he knew that he had to find a way to get the Moldell family's help. After all, their family would be an incredibly strong ally to have.

"The Moldells live in seclusion most of the time. Even I wouldn't contact them if it wasn't our last resort. However, your uncle held on to a very important secret relating to the Crawford family's bloodline. If the secret had gotten out from the time he went missing, our family would've already been ruined by the time your generation came to be! Now that I know that there's a chance that he's still alive, I'm left with no other option but to seek the Moldell family's help for fear that the secret may one day leak out!"

It was clear that Dylan wasn't only looking for his uncle because he was family. The other reason was to protect the secrets of the Crawford family's bloodline.

"The secret of our bloodline?" asked Gerald.

"Yes I heard about it from your grandpa sometime around then, but let's not talk about that for the time being. The priority now is to get help from the Moldells!"

"Do you want me to go there, dad?" asked Gerald.

“If going there and talking to them was all that needed to be done, I would’ve already asked for their help a long time ago. I told you, the Moldells live in seclusion. They never interfere with things that happen outside their family. However, there is a person who could potentially help us get in.”

“Who is it?”

“Your grandmother from your mother’s side.”

“Grandma?” replied Gerald, stunned.

Even from a young age, Gerald knew that his parents were sensitive when discussing topics regarding his grandparents, be it from his father’s or mother’s side.

He remembered the time when he had asked his parents about his grandparents at the age of seven. Gerald simply wanted to know why he didn’t have any while others did. As a result, his mother—who had always been gentle with him—slapped him hard before telling him not to ask any more questions about them.

That was a particularly traumatic event for him and also his sister. After that, both of them never asked about their grandparents again.

“That’s right. She’s the leader of the Yalman family from Yanken. In the past, your grandma would occasionally contact the Moldells. If she’s willing to lend a hand this time, then she’ll most likely be able to persuade the Moldell family to help us!”

“While it’s inconvenient for me and your mother to meet her, you’re different. I believe that our grudges won’t be reflected upon you, so it’s all up to you whether you’ll be able to persuade her or not!” explained Dylan as he frowned slightly.

After saying that, he called Yulia in. Upon realizing that Gerald and her husband were talking about her mother, Yulia’s expression instantly turned slightly gloomy.

Gerald himself took in a deep breath before asking his mother more about his grandparents. After all, Fynn had told Gerald that even his grandfather was still alive. What had happened to him?

What exactly took place that year?

Unlike the first time he had asked many years ago, his mother didn't slap him. Instead, she became teary-eyed as she began talking about the incidents that had happened that year.

"It's... It's all because of those god d*mned rules and regulations of the Yalaman family!" wailed her mother.

She then explained that back then, Dylan was still at the final stage of his poverty training. Similar to Gerald some time ago, his father was already rich by then, though he couldn't just casually expose his identity. It was around then when he got to know the young lady of the Yalaman family. In other words, his mother...

Chapter 807

At the time, Yulia had felt that Dylan was quite mysterious. After all, while the shabbily dressed boy—who looked quite weak back then—never fought back whenever he was bullied or scolded, he was always capable of doing things well beyond everyone's expectations.

While in the beginning, Yulia cared for him mostly out of pity, eventually, both of them fell in love with each other, not unlike how Gerald and Mila's relationship began.

However, the Yalaman family was the leader of four large families in Yanken at the time.

Even though her husband had passed on, Gerald's grandmother, Lady Yalaman, was able to make the Yalaman family even stronger than before. It was because she was the kind of person who was particularly strict when it came to managing the family.

Despite that, even she had a shortcoming, which was what Yulia hated about her mother the most.

Lady Yalaman was a person who strongly valued the opinions of men, yet considered females, in general, to be of lesser importance.

Within the Yalaman family, females would never be given important positions, no matter how hard they worked. Only the males in that family would be given the most advantageous properties to handle.

In a way, she was very traditional-minded, and it wasn't uncommon for a person with such views to value men over women.

Back then, the Yalemans had agreed with their business partner—without Yulia’s consent—that Yulia would marry their son in exchange for starting a business partnership. The decision was made simply because their business partner’s son was the richest heir around at the time.

Since Dylan was still keeping a low profile back then, nobody knew that the wealthiest person was actually from the Crawford family.

In retaliation, Yulia ran away from the wedding and eloped with Gerald’s father.

However, that incident alone wasn’t the reason why both the Yalemans and the Crawfords ended up resenting each other so much.

Rather, it was because Yulia’s escape had been facilitated by her Fifth brother who had treated her well from her childhood days. As his final brotherly act, he took the blame for the entire incident.

Not only was he severely punished by Lady Yalaman, he was also disowned!

Eventually, the Yalemans started bearing grudges against their business partner as well.

A few days after the incident happened, Dylan’s poverty training finally ended. Immediately after that, he had wanted to meet up with the Yalemans to seek justice for the Fifth brother.

However, Dylan was far too late. During the few days, the Fifth brother had been brutally assaulted. By the time Gerald’s parents found out, he had already been left bedridden in a vegetative state.

The one who caused so much pain to him was the Yalaman’s business partner. To them, he was the one who had humiliated their family.

The moment she found out, Lady Yalaman immediately blamed Yulia for all that had happened. She even publicly announced to the media that she would disown her!

Yulia herself felt that her mother was being way too cruel. After all, she was the one who had kicked Fifth brother out of the family without a second thought!

All that led to the grudges Yulia and her mother held against each other for all these years. It was the reason why Gerald's parents never paid the Yalemans a visit.

However, his parents were responsible for the disappearance of the Yalaman's business partner. It was their revenge after what they had done to Fifth brother.

It was why there were only three large families in Yanken now instead of four.

"What happened after that?" asked Gerald, realizing now that his parents had gone through so much more than he had at his age.

"Well, after that, my and your father secretly took care of your uncle. However, it was around ten years ago when your grandma took your uncle back to the Yalaman family!" replied Yulia between sobs.

"So you see, son, you're the only one who can talk to her now after all that has happened. Only your grandma will be able to persuade the Moldells, and if you succeed, your action will be seen as a great contribution to the Crawford family..." said Dylan.

"I understand!"

"Speaking of which, since you're already heading to Yanken, you might as well meet up with your cousin, Bea, your fifth uncle's daughter. Between us, I've secretly been supporting her all these years but regardless, with her help, things should go smoother for you. While your grandma is quite the stubborn woman, I believe that she won't treat you too cruelly. I need to warn you, however. No matter how terribly your grandma's treated me in the past, you're prohibited from being disrespectful to her!"

Hearing that, Gerald realized how much his mother must miss her. No matter how much they hated each other, in the end, they were still family.

"Loud and clear!"

Chapter 808

At that moment, Lyra entered the room before saying, "Queta and aunt are here..."

Having said that, Lyra then looked at Gerald before heading downstairs.

“I’ve been watching over Lyra’s growth, Gerald. She’s a very nice woman so you’ll have to treat her better... We’ll talk more about this when there’s a more suitable time in the future,” said his mother.

“I know, mom. But I’d rather focus on the mission at hand first!” replied Gerald. He knew what she was getting at, so he simply interrupted her before she could continue.

“Indeed. Such things can wait for later. The mission is definitely more important for now... Also, Gerald, be sure to behave like you own the place once you get to Yanken, Weston. After all, all of our family’s properties in Weston will be under your management and care from now on, including your sister’s! I’ve already informed Fynn about it so you don’t have to worry about the details.”

Three days later near the exit gates of Yanken Airport, two women—one middle-aged and the other much younger—could be seen leaning against the front of a black Passat. Naturally, both of them attracted quite a bit of attention.

The older woman wore a suit and her skin still seemed to be in excellent condition.

As for the younger one, she was a budding beauty who seemed like she had just graduated from university.

“What time is it now? Why hasn’t he arrived yet? The heat is annoying me! I’m already busy enough, why do we still have to wait for some pathetic relative here?” grumbled the middle-aged woman impatiently as she looked at her wristwatch.

“Have a bit of patience, mom... It’s the first time my cousin’s coming over! Besides, isn’t it normal for flights to be delayed?” replied her daughter.

The younger girl had been delighted ever since she had received a call from her aunt earlier, stating that her cousin was coming over.

After all, while she knew both her aunt and uncle did some kind of labor work abroad, she was also well aware that they had secretly been supporting her throughout her life. This included hiring the best tutor for her, giving her a chance to study in the best school, and many more.

While she had always wanted to visit them, she wasn’t allowed to due to some unknown reasons.

“Humph! You know, he could’ve just driven here! Why a plane? How bad could a drive be! Are all the Yalemans like this? Both your dad and his disappointing sister sure behave the same way!” sneered the middle-aged woman coldly.

“Mom, my aunt’s constantly supported and compensated our family even after all these years. I’m sure you’re well aware of that, so why would you even say such a thing?”

“Humph! If she hadn’t eloped with that loser back then, your dad wouldn’t have ended up in his current state in the first place! Our status within the Yalaman family wouldn’t be in tatters either if only your aunt hadn’t done that! You need to realize that you’re a young lady of the Yalaman family. You should have the same privileges as the other seductive and cheap-looking female cousins of yours! All of them have teams of cars following them wherever they go! Meanwhile, we’re stuck with only a Passat!”

“You should also know that you’re the only one who does things like this! Your grandma’s already given a clear warning that if anyone contacts that woman, the punishment that awaits them won’t be as easy as only being kicked out of the Yalaman family. Know that because of your crazy actions, I could very well lose my job! How frustrating!”

Seeing how impatient her mother already looked, the girl remained silent. Instead, she chose to eagerly look toward the exit gate.

She honestly didn’t know what he looked like. However, since her aunt was so pretty, she was certain that her cousin would be handsome.

“Could you perhaps be Bea Yalaman?” asked a young man dragging his luggage behind him as he walked toward her.

He had seen the name ‘Gerald’ written on the sign, which prompted him to walk over with a smile on his face.

Bea found herself subconsciously biting her lower lip as she nodded slightly. After all, the handsome man standing before her was dazzling.

“And... Could you be Gerald?” replied Bea with a sweet smile.

“Indeed, I am!”

“Speaking of which, Gerald, how long are you planning to stay here? Do you have anywhere to stay for the time being? There’s no need to be cordial toward us! For now, I’m simply assuming that Bea will keep you company for today and I’ll be sending you back to the airport tomorrow. Is that the plan?” asked Catherine Goff rather enthusiastically as she took a peek at Gerald who was sitting quietly in the back seat as she drove the Passat.

Seeing him drag his luggage case with him earlier had prompted her to ask the question. It was clear as day that she wanted him to leave as soon as possible.

“Oh? I’m not leaving that soon, aunt. In fact, I’ll probably be staying in Yanken for a while... I’ll be in your care till then,” replied Gerald with a slightly bitter smile.

Hearing that, Catherine’s expression immediately turned ugly though she remained silent. This was simply the reality of it. If one was rich and they lived in some obscure spot in the mountains, they would still have distant relatives. However, if one was poor, even if they lived in a bustling city, they would have no relatives to speak of.

It was no wonder why Catherine was so afraid of Gerald coming over to them. Bea, on the other hand, was extremely friendly toward Gerald.

“Haha! Rest assured, cousin! Just stay as long as you’d like! Speaking of which, it’s going to be grandma’s birthday in a few days! If you celebrate with her, I’m sure she’ll be very happy!”

Hearing that, Gerald could simply return a slightly wry smile. After all, before his trip to Yanken began, his mother had told him that though Bea always received help from her, Yulia hadn’t exposed her true identity to Bea yet for personal reasons.

Bea’s lack of information on who his mother truly was, was the reason why she could still make such a proposal to Gerald. However, in his mind, Gerald felt that it was somewhat better this way.

“Humph! It’d be nice enough if he didn’t end up infuriating her upon them meeting each other!” added Catherine coldly.

“Now why would you say such a thing, mom? While it’s true that grandma doesn’t have a good relationship with my aunt and uncle, doesn’t she enquire about them every once in a while?” replied Bea as she looked at her mother.

Catherine simply sighed at that before saying, “Gerald, I know why you’re here. From the moment I heard that you were coming over to meet Lady Yalaman, I knew that you wanted to return to our family so that you can eventually get a share of our properties! Humph! Consider this to be sound advice from me. Give up while you can. If even my family isn’t getting that much, one can only imagine how tiny the property that you’ll receive will be. If you manage to get in in the first place, that is!”

Catherine certainly saw things through different viewpoints compared to normal people. However, Gerald simply smiled bitterly as he shook his head. He didn't really need to give her an explanation of why he was truly here.

After that, he began casually chatting with Bea. After all, they were both cousins. Both of them were eventually going to get close with each other anyway.

As one of the three largest families in Yanken, the Yalemans had several family branches within it.

Since Lady Yalaman was traditional-minded to a fault, she was strict in handling any issues regarding her children. As long as any of them could gain her favor or contribute to the family, it would greatly heighten the support they received from her in terms of resources.

This system naturally worked against Bea and her mother, who both shared an equally low status within the Yalaman family. The fact that Fifth brother was still in a vegetative state didn't help with their situation. Their statuses were so low that others in the family barely took any notice of them.

After all, Catherine had only been given a very ordinary post within the family. As a result, both she and her daughter only lived in an ordinary neighborhood.

Gerald himself was beginning to see how complicated things were within the Yalaman family. He had initially not thought much about it when his mother had first told him that things were never really that simple within that family. He now understood what she meant.

A little while after arriving at their home, Bea was just about to head out to get some groceries when Catherin called out, "Hold on a minute, Bea! There's something I need to tell you!"

With that, both of them left Gerald alone for a while to speak in secret. With nothing better to do, Gerald entered the room where his uncle was in.

Yulia had always regretted the incident that had happened to Fifth brother. Even with the Crawford's current power when it came to medical expertise, none of the doctors ever came close to helping him recover.

Gerald himself knew he couldn't do anything about it, even if he wanted to. At that moment, he began wondering whether Finnley would know how to deal with the situation.

'Where even is that old man now...'

Soon after, Bea left to get the ingredients and Gerald immediately headed downstairs with the intent to leave as well. After all, with Bea gone, Gerald knew he would have to endure Catherine's ceaseless commentary alone for a while, and nothing she said was ever nice.

Just as he was thinking about what excuse he could give her, his phone began ringing as he made it to the last step.

It was an unknown number.

"Good day, young master, I go by the name of Philip Hodges. I work for the Crawford family and I'm in charge of handling things in Yanken. Is there any way I can assist you?"

The Crawfords owned several properties in areas such as Sunnydale, the Salford Province, Yanken, and many others.

In Weston itself, the family's properties were separated into many areas, and Gerald now had full control over all of them.

Chapter 810

It was no mystery why people like Philip treated Gerald like their master.

"Not at the moment. I'll contact you if I need anything," replied Gerald.

"Very well, young master!"

"Actually, there is one thing you could help me out with. I need you to get me a new car."

It was at that moment when Gerald remembered that Catherine only drove a Passat. Bea herself seemed to know how to drive, yet she had earlier ridden on her scooter when she headed out to get ingredients.

Since he was already here, he might as well get a proper car for Bea.

“Very well, master! What car model would you like? A Phantom simply won’t do! I suggest ordering the newest model from abroad!”

“There’s no need for that. Just get me a BMW 7 series!”

“I... See,” replied Philip, sounding slightly stunned.

After sharing Bea’s address and details with him, Gerald hung up without saying anything else. Gerald himself had relatively fewer demands when it came to cars.

Just as he was about to continue making his way outside, he saw Catherine running down the stairs behind him in a hurry, her cell phone in hand.

“Where are you headed to, aunt?” asked Gerald.

“Humph! I’m not sure who we owe it to, but we’re really down on our luck today! Bea accidentally scratched her scooter against another person’s car at the grocery store’s car park! Where else could I be going? Are you a bringer of bad luck or something?” grumbled Catherine as she glared at Gerald.

Hearing that, Gerald himself ran toward the neighborhood’s entrance as well.

“Everyone, please bear witness for us! This woman here scratched our car yet she’s too shameless to even want to admit to her mistake!” shouted a man who looked to be around thirty. Beside him, stood what seemed to be his wife.

Upon hearing his comment, Bea simply smiled coldly before anxiously replying, “I did no such thing! I had already stopped the scooter before you arrived! It was your wife who had driven too close to me after that!”

The truth was that Bea had simply wanted to rush home as soon as she was done buying the ingredients. After all, she wanted to cook a delicious meal for her cousin.

The couple themselves were the real culprits. The car was new and the man’s wife wanted to try driving it. Unfortunately, when another car passed by theirs, her sudden anxiety caused her to drive too closely to Bea’s scooter, resulting in the scratch.

To save face, they were now falsely accusing Bea for their own mistake!

“What’s wrong? What happened here?” asked Catherine as both she and Gerald arrived at the scene.

Seeing that they were now here, Bea then began explaining what had happened.

“Humph! All you’re riding is a scooter! Why did you have to go around so recklessly? How annoying!” scolded the man’s wife coldly as she crossed her arms.

It was clear that she thought she was superior since she was driving a BMW 5 series.

“There’s no need to argue, let’s just ask the owner of the place for the surveillance footage! I’ll call them over right now!” declared Catherine.

“Go right ahead! You go get the footage along with her, darling. In the meantime, I’ll be calling Brandon!” sneered the woman.

“...Brandon? Which Brandon?” asked Catherine, stunned when she heard that name.

Chapter 811

“Naturally, I’m talking about the Brandon who owns the place!”

Hearing that, Catherine became incredibly flustered when she saw the other woman taking her cell phone out. After all, Brandon was a famous person here who owned several nightclubs in the area.

If this woman was truly acquainted with Brandon, then Catherine knew that she was in for a lot of trouble.

While it was true that Catherine shouldn’t be this easily terrified as a member of the Yalerman family, if she simply relied on the Yalermans to deal with the situation, Lady Yalerman would definitely reprimand her for causing trouble for their family, even though the situation could easily be taken care of.

Understanding that, Catherine knew that she had no choice but to give in. She really didn’t have the courage or audacity to use the Yalerman family’s name for such a small issue anyway.

Though she knew that her daughter was most probably innocent, Catherine really didn't know what else she could do.

"Go ahead and call him over then!" said Gerald aloud.

The woman was startled when she heard this.

"...Are you doubting that I know him? Fine! I'll make the call now!" grumbled the woman as she tapped on her phone before putting it to her ear.

Catherine was so nervous that she immediately glared at Gerald before yelling, "Just shut up and stand aside! What the hell do you even know?"

Following that, she turned to look at the woman before saying, "W-we can discuss this amicably... How about compensation? We'll pay for the damage!"

"Now that's what I like to hear! Since you suggested it, a mere thousand and five hundred dollars should do!" replied the woman.

Gritting her teeth, Catherine then replied, "...Fine! A thousand and five hundred dollars it is!"

"It definitely isn't fine! We shouldn't be paying them, mom!" cried out Bea in an anxious tone.

"You aren't? I guess I'll just make the phone call then!" said the woman cockily.

Her arrogance had risen to a new high now that she knew that Catherine had been completely subdued. After all, how could a scooter rider ever compare to someone who drove a BMW?

"I already said I'm paying!" replied Catherine helplessly.

Just as she was about to transfer the money over to them using her cell phone, a few bystanders pointed toward the community gate before shouting, "Hey! Look over there! That brand new car looks absolutely stunning!"

Soon, many others began exclaiming when they saw the new BMW 7 Series driving toward the community gates.

“That model looks like it came from overseas! I’m guessing it costs at least fourteen thousand dollars! How luxurious!”

“I know right? What a truly beautiful car!”

As everyone continued talking excitedly about the car, Gerald couldn’t help but feel that Philip was an extremely efficient person. After all, he had only given the order not too long ago yet here the car was!

The car came to a halt once it arrived at the community gate’s entrance, and out stepped a suited man wearing leather boots who looked to be around forty.

Seeing the crowd of people standing there, he then asked, “Apologies, but how do I get to Unit two of Building twelve?”

“Unit two- That’s our unit!” said Catherine immediately.

“Ah, that makes things much easier. I’m here to deliver the car. Please show me the way to your unit if it isn’t too much trouble!” replied the man extremely politely.

“Could you perhaps be Mr. Fairwell?” asked the couple from before in a surprised tone.

“Indeed, I am! Have we met before?” said Mr. Fairwell with a smile.

“You may not know who we are, but we certainly know who you are! You’re Mr. Fairwell! The chairman of the BMW headquarters in Weston! Using our connections with Brandon, we bought our BMW 5 Series from one of your assistant store managers!” replied the woman as she smiled at the incredible person standing before her.

Mr. Fairwell could easily be considered to be one of the most powerful figures in all of Yanken. While it would be slightly farfetched to assume that he would know who Brandon was, the woman mentioned him anyway, just in case.

“Well then! Thank you for your support!” replied Mr. Fairwell as he nodded at her.

It was quite obvious from his reaction that he had no idea who Brandon even was. He probably didn't even know who the store manager was, let alone the assistant store manager the woman was talking about!

"Was it Philip who told you to drop the car off?" asked Gerald as he walked toward Mr. Fairwell, his right hand in his pocket.

Hearing Gerald's question, Mr. Fairwell was immediately taken aback.

After scanning him from head to toe, Mr. Fairwell then replied in a respectful tone, "Indeed, it was. He told me to deliver the car to a young lady by the name of Bea Yalaman. I've already completed all the other necessary formalities."

Mr. Fairwell then smiled at Gerald. This must be the person whom Mr. Hodges had said he wasn't even qualified to know by name. After all, there was no way that other young men his age would ever be able to get acquainted with such a mysterious figure!

"Bea- That's... That's my daughter! We live at that address as well!" said Catherine in surprise.

"Ah, then could Denzel Yalaman be part of your family as well?" asked Mr. Fairwell.

"He's my father!" replied Bea.

"I see. Then this car officially belongs to you now, Miss Yalaman. Someone told me to hand the car over to you. Here are all the completed, necessary documents and certificates. Could you please go through them to check if the information is correct?" said Mr. Fairwell as he handed Bea a car key along with a set of documents.

Reading through them, she realized that there was no mistake. The car really was hers now!

"W-what is even going on? Who could've bought us with such a luxurious car?" stammered Catherine in her excitement.

Mr. Fairwell himself didn't reply to her question. Instead, he walked over to Gerald before handing out his business card and saying, "Here's my business card, sir. Please don't hesitate to call me if you need any help!"

He could very much tell that Gerald was no ordinary person. Because of that, it was natural for him to want to get into Gerald's good books.

After handing his card over, he excused himself before leaving.

“Oh god, is that car truly ours now? This is great!” said Catherine, unable to hide her excitement.

The couple themselves had already gone pale as they exchanged glances with each other. While they had been meaning to extort both Bea and her mother, to think that they actually knew such a powerful figure!

Realizing that they couldn't go on with their plan, they immediately got into their car, preparing to leave.

“Now hold on a minute! Don't tell me both of you are planning to leave just like that!” sneered Gerald as he looked at the couple.

“What else do you want? You don't need to compensate us anymore!” snapped the woman.

“Oh, we don't need to compensate? Is that what you're still playing at? Even if you're fine with the scratches on your car, Bea's scooter still suffered a little damage! It's time to talk about the compensation you owe her!” said Gerald as he took a step forward.

“You don't need to pay much really. Only a mere... Fifteen thousand dollars!”

“F-Fifteen thousand?!” shouted the people around them in shock.

The husband and wife themselves were now staring at him with eyes wide open.

“Of course, if you choose not to pay us, I can call Mr. Fairwell to come back here any time I want! He shouldn't be too far off yet. You can call that Brandon of yours too if you want!”

“N-no! L-let's just discuss the matter over again nicely!” replied the man, terrified.

He had reason to be so scared. After all, Mr. Fairwell was an extremely powerful figure. What more, he had treated Gerald and the two other women with him so respectfully earlier! The man and his wife would definitely not be let off the hook that easily if Mr. Fairwell was called over again.

Even if they truly did call Brandon over, they would only be taught a one-time lesson.

“...C-could you lower the figure a bit? We’re-”

“Oh, would you look at that! My finger is moving on its own!” said Gerald as he began dialing the number on the card.

“W-we’ll pay! We’ll pay, I said!”

From being the extorters to becoming the extorted, what choice did the man have other than to pay for the absurd compensation?

After awkwardly transferring the money over to Catherine’s bank account, they apologized to Bea before rushing off once Gerald allowed them to leave.

“Bea, go ahead and park the scooter downstairs! I’ll be driving the car down as well!” said Catherine as she held onto the car keys happily.

Before entering the car, she snatched Mr. Fairwell’s business card from Gerald’s hand.

“Hah! Mr. Fairwell is a connection from our family! Try not to take advantage of the situation to show off!”

Chapter 813

“Do you personally know Mr. Fairwell, cousin?” asked Bea as she looked at Gerald who had remained silent throughout their journey home.

She had found it strange that Mr. Fairwell had personally come all the way here just to give her a car without any good reason. The fact that not many people actually knew about her true identity also made the situation much more suspicious.

To top it off, Gerald had just asked for her identity card number this morning! Sensing how respectful Mr. Fairwell had treated her cousin earlier, Bea felt that something was definitely up with Gerald.

“Not at all!” replied Gerald as he shook his head. It wasn’t a lie either since this was truly the first time both of them had met.

“Then why would he come all the way out here just to hand me a car? Are you sure it isn’t because of any of the connections you know?”

Naturally, Bea wasn’t looking down on Gerald. However, she knew that his family’s situation wasn’t any better compared to her own. Or that’s what she thought at least.

“I wonder...” replied Gerald with a faint smile on his face.

Smacking her lips, Bea ended up smiling as well. Somehow, the more she observed him, the more mysterious he felt.

It was around noon when Bea walked out of her room before asking, “Say cousin, the gathering is going to be held tonight. Will you be coming along?”

At the time, Gerald was still thinking of how he was going to visit his grandmother. Hearing Bea’s question, he turned to look at his cousin—who now had a different set of clothes on—before replying, “Is it the one we were talking about earlier?”

Just a while ago, Bea had told Gerald about a tradition the younger generation of the Yalemans usually did when their grandmother’s birthday was close. A yearly gathering would be held so that they could discuss what birthday gifts to buy for Lady Yalaman.

While that was what they usually agreed on, in the end, all of them just wanted an excuse to go out and have fun.

Though Gerald didn’t really have any interest in attending gatherings or parties, he knew that he still needed to get to know his other cousins a little better in order to smoothen the process of resolving the grievances between his mother and grandmother.

Finalizing his thoughts, he then nodded before saying, “Alright, I’m in!”

A little while later, a group of attractive men and women could be seen sitting inside the most luxurious bar in Yanken. All of them looked to be around the age of twenty.

“Hey, hey, have you heard that our country bumpkin of a cousin has returned to Yanken? He’s currently staying at Bea’s place!”

“What? Are you serious? My parents didn’t mention anything about this! Still, grandma’s birthday is approaching soon. Do you think he’s actually come back this time to celebrate her eightieth birthday? Hasn’t she already cut all ties with their family?”

“Hah! I think he’s only using the birthday as an excuse! He’s probably trying his best to worm himself back into our family! After all, once her birthday celebration is over, she’ll begin allocating all the family assets and resources! His return is simply too timely to be a coincidence!” replied one of the boys contemptuously.

“Regardless of his timing, if that’s what he’s really after, his chances are exceedingly slim. You should have heard grandma scolding Fifth aunt earlier once she found out that our cousin was staying at her place! It was terrible! Grandma’s anger doesn’t seem to have subsided at all!” said another girl.

“Speaking of which, his name is Gerald, if I recall correctly. From what I heard, at his poorest, he could barely even afford to eat! I remember clearly what grandma had said when she found out about that back then. She had said to let them be before stating that nobody from the family was allowed to get involved with them at all!”

“Well yes, but that was a long time ago! Think about more recent times! Don’t you remember that grandma actually asked about how Jessica and Gerald were doing during her birthday celebration last year?”

“She did! She asked how they were both doing! Though we didn’t know what his sister was doing, someone said that the country bumpkin himself was studying in university!”

As everyone continued discussing the matter among themselves, the private room’s door opened and in stepped a young man accompanied by two girls.

“Ah, you’re here, Yura!”

Chapter 814

“Yura!” greeted everyone within that group as they stood up.

Yura was the eldest grandson of the Yalaman family, and he was also Lady Yalaman’s favorite grandson. As a result, everyone in the group naturally looked up to him.

“Well you’re all early! Before anything else, though, I’d like to introduce my friends here! This young lady is my classmate in university! You can call her Marilyn! As for this beauty, her name’s Giya and she’s Marilyn’s ex-high school classmate when she was still in Mayberry City!” said Yura as he looked at Giya.

Standing next to the already beautiful Marilyn, Giya’s beauty was somehow amplified, and her excellent temperament made her all the more alluring.

When he had first met Giya, he hadn’t expected to feel so moved by her beauty since he was already so used to seeing beautiful women.

After exchanging greetings, Yura then looked at Giya before asking with a smile, “Speaking of which, you don’t mind me calling you Giya, right?”

In response, Giya simply shook her head.

To be quite honest, Giya had just arrived in Yanken today. She had initially not wanted to go anywhere but that thought didn’t last since Marilyn called her shortly after to invite her over to the gathering.

Though she still didn’t really want to go, in the end, she couldn’t outtalk Marilyn. After all, Marilyn was one of the few people she was actually acquainted with in Yanken.

“Oh, come on, Giya! Don’t be so glum! All of you are from wealthy families so you should be able to get along pretty well! Let’s party! Hahaha!” said Marilyn when she saw how uneasy Giya looked.

“Indeed! Let’s get the party started!” added Yura with a smile.

“We can’t start yet, Yura! Some people still haven’t arrived!”

“Oh? Who else isn’t here yet?” asked Yura.

“Well, there’s still Bea and her country bumpkin of a cousin!”

“Ah yes, Bea! How could I forget! But what’s this about a country bumpkin? Could you perhaps be talking about Gerald? The son of that woman that grandma chased out of the family back then?”

While most of them there looked down on those who had been chased out of the family, they would usually still refer to Yulia as their aunt. When they heard Yura referring to her as ‘that woman,’ it made some of the junior members feel slightly uncomfortable. Though that was so, none of them said a word about it.

“No wonder grandma was so angry with Fifth aunt this afternoon! So Bea’s still keeping contact with Gerald!” sneered Yura.

Since Yulia and Yura’s mother weren’t on good terms when Yura was still a child, it was only natural for him to pick up his mother’s innate hatred toward Gerald and his family.

“Gerald?” asked both Giya and Marilyn in surprise when they heard his name.

Sensing their surprise, Yura was stunned as he asked, “You two know who he is? Oh right, Gerald was studying in Mayberry City!”

While Giya didn’t say anything else, she was honestly feeling a little excited now. However, she was also feeling curious. Why on earth did Marilyn know who Gerald was?

Could it actually be that this was just another person with the same name? Or could such a coincidence actually take place?

“You know Gerald as well, Giya?” asked Marilyn in a surprised tone.

Though it was just for a brief moment, a complex emotion flashed across Giya’s face as she said, “It could probably just be someone with the same name! But anyway, what’s your Gerald like, Marilyn?”

“Hah! Well, I don’t know if it’s the same person, but you know how my dad is constantly moving around because of work, right? As a result, I’ve studied in multiple schools before as I grew up. I was in high school when my father began working on a project in Serene County. It was at my new school there where I got to know Gerald the pauper!”

Chapter 815

“Serene County? Hahaha! That’s him alright!” said someone from the crowd as the rest of them laughed.

“Oh god, for real? Gerald the pauper’s actually your relative?” replied Marilyn, her shock apparent on her face.

“Sadly, legally, it’s true. However, the Yalemans have and will never acknowledge Gerald as part of our family!” said Yura with a wry smile on his face.

Giya herself didn’t really care what the others had to say about him. Instead, she was simply excited that he was possibly coming!

“Will Gerald be coming later, Yura?” asked Giya.

In response, Yura nodded before saying, “I assume Bea’s bringing him over! Speak of the devil!”

As soon as his sentence ended, the door opened and Bea entered. Seeing that Gerald wasn’t present, Giya couldn’t help but feel slightly anxious.

“Didn’t that bumpkin come along, Bea?” asked one of the girls there.

Since Bea was usually regarded as the lowest in rank within their family, nobody usually took her seriously. It was the reason why they still called Gerald a ‘bumpkin’ even though he was Bea’s guest.

“Oh, he’s gone to the gents. He’ll be here soon!” replied Bea.

In all honesty, she didn’t really enjoy participating in such gatherings. After all, the gap between her and her other cousins was simply too wide. She was barely in the same world as they were. She was only here because she didn’t have a choice.

“Hah! Hilarious! He’s probably feeling nervous since it’s the first time he’s attending a gathering at such a high-end venue!” said a few girls as they cupped their mouths while laughing.

Hearing that, everyone else started laughing as well. It was at that moment when the room’s door creaked open again.

However, instead of the country bumpkin they were expecting, they were greeted by a tall, young man who looked rather slim and was honestly quite handsome. He was dressed casually and his hands were in his pockets as he walked into the room.

Everyone was now silent and even a few of the girls were exchanging glances with each other, dumbfounded by the attractive man's extraordinary temperament.

"Over here, cousin! Have a seat!" said Bea with a smile as she held onto his arm.

"He's... He's our country bumpkin of a cousin?"

Several of the girls were now paralyzed in shock. They had expected Gerald—who, as a child, was very poor and had terrible self-esteem—to have a low and dampened image! To be a person who would look worried and behave cautiously wherever he went!

Yet the dashing young man standing before them now was anything but!

Just as Gerald was about to greet his shocked cousins, someone suddenly hit him on the back of his head!

"Well, d*mn! It really is you, Gerald! Why are you being so pretentious? Bet you didn't expect to see me here, right?" said Marilyn as she cackled. Naturally, she was the one who had hit him.

"God d*mn it!It's you?" replied Gerald, shocked when he saw the familiar face.

Truth be told, however, he couldn't really remember who she was for the life of him.

"What, have you forgotten about me already?" asked Marilyn as she crossed her arms. She seemed to find the entire situation hilarious.

"...Yes I do," lied Gerald as naturally as he breathed.

The memories were, however, slowly coming back to him. He knew that they used to be in the same class, but he couldn't remember her name at all.

“Regardless, I really hadn’t expected to see you here of all places after not meeting for such a long time! While are you still walking with your hands in your pockets? While your pretentiousness may fool others, I know your background extremely well, so drop the act already!” said Marilyn.

Hearing that, Gerald could only smile bitterly as he took his hands out of his pockets while shaking his head.

The bitterness allowed him to recall her name. She was Marilyn and they had once been classmates for about half a year.

Chapter 816

Yura and the others shook their own heads and laughed as well as the scene progressed.

Gerald was simply too much. To think that he was acting so powerful just seconds ago when everyone here clearly knew about his background!

“After transferring schools back then, we haven’t been in contact for so many years, Marilyn. I really hadn’t expected you to know my cousins!” said Gerald in response.

“Either way, there’s no need for us to talk pointlessly anymore. You almost make it sound like I even want to contact you! Just find someplace to sit down already!” replied Marilyn, a hint of disgust in her voice.

Hearing that, Gerald could only smile helplessly as he went toward a seat. Just as he was about to sit down, however, another voice suddenly called out to him.

“Gerald!”

Looking up, Gerald got the shock of his life.

“...Giya? What are you doing here too?”

D*mn it! Gerald really hadn’t expected to bump into so many familiar faces wherever he went!

Ever since that incident, Gerald hadn’t contacted Giya at all. However, what was even more embarrassing was the fact that Giya still frequently sent him messages though he never replied to any of them.

After all, he had assumed that he would never have to meet her again. Unfortunately, when it rained, it poured.

“It really is you! Why haven’t you responded to any of my messages?!” said Giya, her eyes reddened.

While she was well aware that she had promised to leave him alone after that fake wedding incident, she simply couldn’t forget about him. No matter how much she reminded herself that it was impossible for both of them to be together, whenever she closed her eyes, scene after scene would play out in her mind.

Scenes like the time when Gerald had braved the rain to carry her to the infirmary that time when she had sprained her ankle. When Gerald had constantly saved her whenever she found herself in trouble.

At this point, Giya had already come to terms that Gerald had engraved himself too deeply into her heart for her to ever be able to forget about him. It was the reason why while she was happy to see him, she was simultaneously filled with grief.

“...Sorry, Giya!” replied Gerald as he lowered his head slightly in embarrassment. After all, regardless of what happened in the past, Gerald had still let her down.

However, there was no better way to deal with the situation.

Meanwhile, everyone else was staring at the scene unfolding before them in a daze. This was especially so for both Marilyn and Yura.

After all, even a fool would be able to tell that Gerald and Giya’s relationship wasn’t all that simple. It was obvious enough from the look in Giya’s eyes.

Knowing this made Yura jealous. After all, he had been the one who had wanted to win this goddess over!

“What’s going on, Giya? Do both of you really know each other?” asked Marilyn.

Giya remained silent and simply wiped the tears away from the corner of her eyes. She then briefly glared at Gerald before angrily sitting down again. Seeing this, Gerald took a seat as well.

“Hey now, since everyone knows one another, there’s no need to be shy! Come on, Gerald! Why not have a smoke?” said Yura with a cold smile on his face as he looked at Gerald.

After proposing that, he handed a cigarette over to Gerald.

“I appreciate it, but why don’t we smoke one of my cigarettes instead?” said Gerald as he took a box of cigarettes out and placed it on the table.

While Gerald wasn’t personally a smoker, he did like to carry a box of cigarettes around whenever he attended any gatherings.

“...F*cking...! X-One?!”

Everyone was stunned when they saw the cigarette box.

“Holy f*ck! You’re smoking this brand of cigarettes?” asked one of the cousins aloud, his eyes wide in shock.

“Hey, what kind of cigarettes are those? I’ve never seen such packaging before!” asked another cousin curiously.

“It’s no wonder why you haven’t seen it before... Those are business cigarettes that only the richest of the rich living abroad can afford to smoke! These cigarettes actually nourish the lungs instead of damaging them! What more, it’s a new product that’s only been developed this year and it’s not even for sale yet! It’s only available for exclusive use as of now!” explained the boy in his shock as he held on to the cigarette box with quivering hands.

Chapter 817

“You... You smoke these kinds of cigarettes, Gerald...?”

Everyone felt like they had just received mental slaps to their faces. This was especially so for Yura.

To think that he had specifically brought along cigarettes that he had asked his friend to buy for him all the way from M country. The ones he had were really precious and expensive.

He had honestly been waiting to pass them around so that the crowd would praise and admire him.

After all, when a young man went out, the first thing people would tend to notice would be his attire. Next, they would see what kind of watch he was wearing. Last but not least, if he was a smoker, they would definitely want to identify what brand of cigarettes he smoked. All these worked together to establish a man's 'grades'.

To Yura's dismay, he was the one who ended up receiving the mental slap once Gerald took his own box of cigarettes out!

"I don't usually smoke. I just grabbed these as I was heading out today!" explained Gerald.

He hadn't really expected a simple box of cigarettes to cause such a sensation. It made him feel quite helpless.

"Hah! Then it's probably a fake! If the cigarettes truly are as great as you described, how could Gerald possibly have gotten his hands on them?" replied Marilyn who was still in disbelief.

"Probably? It's a hundred percent fake! Gerald probably doesn't even realize that he's been deceived! If you really wanted to leave home with a box of cigarettes in hand, you could've just bought a box of Marlboro cigarettes! Those cost a few measly dollars at most! Carrying fake X-One cigarettes around... What a joke!" sneered the boy from before as he tossed the box of cigarettes to the side.

Sensing the chance to show off in front of Giya, Yura then immediately said, "Gerald, Gerald, Gerald... It's not like I want to badmouth you or anything, but you should realize by now that we all know the ins-and-outs of your background like the back of our hands... There really is no need for you to try showing off in front of us... Regardless, you've already graduated, right? Have you found a job yet?"

His tone gave the illusion of him being a knowledgeable person, and once his question ended, he looked at Giya who was sitting right beside him.

"Nope!" replied Gerald as he shook his head.

"What else are you waiting for? With university over, you should be grabbing hold of any opportunity you can get to work! It's time to stop thinking about pointless things and start being more realistic! Though you may still be poor now, as long as you're diligent enough, there'll exist a possibility where you'll eventually become rich in the future! Focus more on that instead of showing-off!" said Yura aloud as he smiled wryly.

"Amazing! Did you hear what Yura said, Gerald? His words were reasonable so you should make sure that you take his advice to heart!" added Marilyn as she poked the back of Gerald's head with a finger.

If it wasn't because of his mission, Gerald would've already given Marilyn a few tight slaps across her face by now.

"While I'm at it, you should understand that the Yaleman family is more complicated than you think. Be a little more pragmatic and realize already that some things just aren't going to happen!" said Yura who simply assumed that Gerald was back because he wanted a share of the family assets.

Yura wanted Giya to see how little worth Gerald had in front of a strong person like him, which was why he was publicly preaching him now. He'd trample all over Gerald's ego if it was the last thing he did.

At that moment, a foreign girl with golden, curly hair entered the room. In her hands, was a bottle of very expensive-looking red wine.

"You've always supported me, Mr. Yaleman! So this bottle of red wine is on the house!" announced the girl in broken Weston dialect.

"How kind of you, Miss Delilah! Thank you!" replied Yura with a smile as he stood up.

"Hot d*mn! How incredible! People are giving you respect wherever you go, Yura!" said Marilyn excitedly before shaking Giya's arm.

"Did you know that this bar we're in is the most luxurious of its kind in Yanken, Giya? Miss Delilah over there is the owner of this very bar! You should know that several foreigners and powerful figures frequent this place! Yet here she is, giving Yura a bottle of red wine on the house!"

Hearing Marilyn's words, the other girls present felt equally honored and pleased.

A few of them even said, "Hah! But of course! It's because of the Yaleman family's reputation and also the fact that Yura himself is so powerful!"

The girls could tell how interested Yura was in Giya, so they were now praising him in hopes that she would eventually fall for him.

“...Hold on. X-One cigarettes? I’ve never seen anyone smoking this brand of cigarettes in Weston before!” said Delilah as her gaze fell upon the box of cigarettes that had been thrown to the side. She seemed to be deeply enticed by the cigarettes.

“Oh god, this is so embarrassing! I should’ve told that country bumpkin of a cousin to put them away! Miss Delilah’s husband is a very powerful person in M country! What impression would we leave on her once she finds out that we smoke fake cigarettes?” whispered several of the boys among themselves.

It wasn’t only the males who bore awkward expressions on their faces, but also the girls.

“Excuse me, but could I have one of your cigarettes? I’ve not tasted this brand of cigarettes in a little over half a year now after coming to Weston!” enquired Delilah as she smiled.

“Huh? Half a year? Does that mean she was among the first to try it out when it began initial production?!”

“It’s over. It’s all over! I’m going to be so embarrassed once she finds out...!”

“W-wait a moment, Miss Delilah!” shouted one of the girls as she stood among her other whispering cousins. Rather than waiting for Delilah to find out on her own, the girl felt it would be better if she simply told her the truth first.

“Yes?” asked Delilah as she turned to look at her with her usual sweet smile.

“T-those cigarettes... You can’t smoke them! We just found out not too long ago that they’re fake!”

Upon hearing her declaration, everyone turned to look at Gerald in disgust. What a good-for-nothing!

“Fake? Hahaha! Miss, I simply want to smoke a cigarette, you needn’t be this reluctant up to the point of telling me lies! Besides, since you can afford to even buy this brand, is there a need to feel so bad over a single cigarette?” replied Delilah as she took a cigarette out of the box and carefully observed it.

Next, she took a sniff at it, and soon after, a wry smile formed on her face.

“W-why would I lie to you, Miss Delilah? It really is a fake!” explained the same girl from before.

“To be frank, my ex-husband used to be the leader of the research and development department in the factory that produces this specific brand. Though I’m well aware that imitations exist in the market, I believe that I still have the ability to distinguish between a fake and the real deal! And I can say for certain that this is a genuine product!” declared Delilah with a smile.

“G-Genuine... They’re genuine?!”

Everyone was dumbfounded when they heard that. After all, from what she had said, Delilah would definitely be able to tell between a real one and a fake. What more, she didn’t have a reason to lie to them either.

But... Just how could Gerald possibly have afforded to buy genuine X-One cigarettes?

“Where did you buy these cigarettes, Gerald?” asked the boy from earlier.

“I’ll be frank and say that I didn’t buy them! They were lying around in my house so I simply grabbed them!” replied Gerald with a wry smile.

“Hah! Based on your family’s background, it’s almost as though you’re claiming that they’d actually be able to buy them!” snapped Marilyn immediately in a tone that suggested that Gerald had just personally insulted her.

“Could I smoke one of your cigarettes, sir?” asked Delilah as she turned to look at Gerald, her smile still on her face.

“Sir? Why are you referring to him as sir, Miss Delilah? We don’t even know where he got the cigarettes from! You should know that his family is so poor that they can’t even afford to eat a decent meal at times!” insulted Yura the moment he saw Delilah treating Gerald so respectfully.

“Him? Poor? You must be joking, Mr. Yalaman! Ignoring the cigarettes, you should know that no ordinary person could compare to this gentleman! After all, he’s wearing classic, French, tailor-made clothes!” said Delilah as she sat right next to Gerald.

“Did I get that right, sir?”

Chapter 819

“Classic French? What is even going on anymore?!”

Everyone was utterly stunned.

Seeing that a top socialite in Yanken was behaving so respectfully toward Gerald, Bea was extremely happy.

“Regardless, it’s truly been an honor to meet you here today, Mr. Gerald! I’ll be personally bearing all the expenses of anything you order here tonight!” said Delilah as she politely stretched her hand out toward Gerald. In her eyes, the value of befriending such a powerful figure as Gerald certainly outweighed the cost of one night’s bill.

In response, Gerald reached out as well and shook Delilah’s hand before saying, “It’s a pleasure, Miss Delilah!”

After Delilah finally left, the room was greeted by an almost pressuring silence. Yura in particular, felt like he had just received the most massive slap in his life. He had been completely embarrassed in front of all the others.

“...C-could I... Try one of your cigarettes, Gerald?” asked one of the cousins there as he looked at Gerald. After seeing Gerald’s slight nod, he took a cigarette for himself before lighting the tip.

When he saw this, Yura squinted his eyes slightly as he glared at Gerald with a frigid gaze. After that, he stepped out of the room in the pretense that he needed to answer a phone call.

Nobody had ever dared to go against Yura, even when he was only a child. To think that this countryside pauper actually dared to go against him! Gerald had even made him lose face before such a beautiful goddess!

Yanken was Yura’s territory, and he would rather be dead than lose to Gerald. Once he was outside, he lit a cigarette before making a call.

“Ah, hey Brandon, you busy?” asked Yura as he released a puff of smoke.

“Not at all, just hanging out. Still, a call out of the blue, Yura? Could it be that you have a job for me?” replied Brandon in a voice that hinted at his eagerness as he laughed.

“Nothing too big. I’m just in a bad mood since someone actually dared to trample all over me!”

“Hahaha! Who would dare do such a thing in Yanken? The audacity! Who is it, Yura? I’ll get rid of them immediately!”

“There’s no need to go that far! However, I do want you to thoroughly embarrass him!” replied Yura before sharing his location with Brandon.

“Hah! What a coincidence! I happen to be drinking with a few of my subordinates around the area! I’ll be heading over immediately!”

Yura sneered as he ended the call. He then continued standing outside as he smoked on his cigarette. This definitely wasn’t the first time he was doing something like this, and it wouldn’t be his last.

“Say Xoeey, do you or anyone else need to use the bathroom? Let’s go together!” said one of the girls back inside the room.

In response to that, Bea and a few others headed out together.

Giya, on the other hand, glared secretly at Gerald. She had been waiting for him to take the initiative to speak to her the entire time.

However, he was simply sitting there calmly while munching on fruits! It didn’t seem like he was going to make a move at all!

In the end, her anxiety got the better of her and she couldn’t help but ask, “So... are... you and Mila doing fine?”

Though everyone else didn’t know his true identity, Giya was well aware of who Gerald truly was.

“...Mila’s gone missing,” replied Gerald as he felt a surge of pain in his heart the moment he heard her name again.

He wasn’t even sure if he would be able to persuade his grandmother on the day of her birthday. No matter what, Gerald knew he had to mend the relationship between both families. If he failed, nobody else would be able to talk to the Moldell family on his behalf.

“...What? What happened?” asked Giya in surprise.

“...I’ll tell you about it when I have a chance to in the future!” replied Gerald in a casual tone.

“Hey, Giya, who’s this Mila girl? Oh god, could she be Gerald’s girlfriend? Someone like him actually has the ability to get a girlfriend?!” said Marilyn, her shock apparent in her voice.

Realizing that she had just brought up something that greatly upset Gerald, Giya didn’t reply to Marilyn’s question.

“Hello? Why aren’t any of you saying anything? Who is this Mila?”

Before Marilyn could continue pestering the duo, XoeY came rushing back into the room.

Chapter 820

“S-something terrible has happened! A few drunkards have just dragged Bea into their room after insisting that she have a drink with them!” shouted XoeY.

Upon hearing that, Gerald immediately dashed out of the room.

Right outside, he bumped into the other female cousins who had earlier gone to the ladies together. All of them looked equally terrified.

“Where’s Bea?” demanded Gerald.

“S-she’s been dragged into Room 103!” replied one of the girls as she quivered.

Getting the answer he needed, Gerald ran there as fast as he could.

As for the rest of the boys in the room, all of them simply stood in place. While they knew that they didn’t need to be afraid since they were all members of the Yalerman family, directly confronting the drunkards would definitely lead to some of them getting beaten up! With that in mind, many of them began making phone calls instead.

Giya herself followed Gerald out with a worried expression on her face.

“W-what should we do now...?” whispered the girls among themselves, meekly.

They had earlier bumped into the drunk men on their way to the ladies. Once the men realized that the girls weren't going to follow their orders, one of them immediately tried to drag Xoey away with him! However, Bea stepped in front of her just in time and pushed him away!

However, the conflict only began on their trip back from the washroom. The drunk men cornered them as soon as they exited the ladies. It was then when one of them yanked Bea by her hair and dragged her into their room!

"Gerald's the only one who's gone there to save her! I saw about eight men in there! Where even is Yura?!" shouted Xoey.

Xoey was worried to bits since she was touched by what Bea had done. After all, Bea had only gotten into this mess because she was trying to save her!

"We're already calling reinforcements now! To think that people would actually dare to provoke the Yalemans! Unthinkable!" replied one of the boys.

"Hold it. Tell the people you've called that it's a false alarm. Don't worry, Bea's going to be fine!" said Yura as he suddenly re-entered the room while gesturing for those who had phones next to their ears to do as he had said.

"W-what? But Bea's in big trouble, Yura!"

"As I said, none of you have to worry about this! Bea will be fine! However, someone else definitely isn't going to be!" sneered Yura.

Yura had a gloomy expression on his face. After all, he was feeling extremely jealous since he had seen Giya disregarding her own safety by chasing after Gerald earlier.

Everyone else in the room seemed to also have caught on to what was really happening. As a result, none of them said another word as they closed the room's door behind them.

"Release her!" roared Gerald in anger as he kicked Room 103's door open.

Hearing all the noise, the few drunkards who were all forcefully embracing her then turned to look at Gerald.

Not only did Gerald's fifth uncle have a deep relationship with his family, Bea had also treated him extremely well since he arrived. There was no way in hell that Gerald was going to allow Bea to suffer any injuries as long as he was there.

"Hah! Who do you even think you are to order us around like that! And you even brought along such a beautiful girl! Hahaha! Looks like I'll be able to have fun with two women today!" said a young man—who seemed to be the leader of the group—as he laughed.

The beautiful girl in question, was of course, Giya. She had followed him in out of worry.

"How fortunate of you, Brandon! As brothers, we'll get a go with them too once you're done, right?" said a few other drunkards as they laughed.

"But of course! Drag that woman over here too, men! It'd be irrational of me to refuse someone who sent herself directly to my doorstep!" ordered Brandon as he gestured for his men to walk forward.

"You're Brandon, right? I advise you not to continue messing around anymore. Since I've given this warning, don't blame me if something were to happen to you!" replied Gerald with a cold expression on his face.

"Hahaha! Oh? Trying to intimidate me, are you? Fine then! I'll release this young woman since you've been so daring to rush in here! But before we let her go... You'll have to crawl under our crotches first! How about it! Deal?" announced Brandon as he laughed.

Chapter 821

"Why don't you come over here?!"

It was at this moment that one of Brandon's rough and stalwart men tried to take advantage of Gerald's conversation and grab Giya over to their side.

However, someone caught hold of his wrist as soon as he reached towards her.

The crisp sound of his arm bones cracking followed.

The man's wrist was forcibly bent to an extremely jarring angle.

Argh!

The person started squealing miserably like a pig that was about to get slaughtered.

After that, Gerald grabbed the man's hair with all of his strength before his head was sent slamming towards the marble wine table in front of them.

Boom!

With a loud crashing sound, the marble wine table was smashed into pieces with the poor man's head.

Blood poured profusely from his skull as the man convulsed on the floor.

"What?!"

Suddenly, Brandon awakened from his drunken stupor.

Much to his surprise, this young brat was actually stronger than he anticipated. After all, that goon of his was one of his strongest men.

However, it seemed as though he posed little to no threat to Gerald at all.

This young brat was way too ruthless!

"Ahhh! Gerald!"

He wasn't the only one that was shocked. Giya screamed when she saw all the blood spurting out of the man's face. His nose was crooked in a weird angle, no doubt broken by the impact just now. She was scared to death!

When and how did Gerald become so merciless?!

Giya's heart was beating frantically.

"Your name is Brandon Zouch, right? You are Jeremy Lauder's subordinate?" Gerald asked coldly.

"You...who are you?"

Brandon's heart trembled when he heard this.

After all, Jeremy was someone with a powerful background. He used to be the driver for Philip, the boss of Trustdeck Group in Yanken.

Because of this, after Jeremy's debut, his endeavors had been very successful and prosperous in every aspect.

Jeremy had also been looking out for Brandon all this while and this was a large part of the reason why Brandon could make a living for himself.

It was no surprise why no one dared to call Jeremy by his full name in front of him.

However, it seemed as though this young man knew all the details there were to know about Jeremy!

Speaking of which, no one knew how Philip found out that Bea nearly got extorted last night. Such a situation should not have arisen!

So, he made a phone call and found out that the other party's backer was none other than a subordinate of the subordinate of his previous driver. In other words, it was Brandon who was behind this!

After that, Philip asked Gerald if he should deal with Brandon and that couple on his behalf so that he could avenge Gerald's cousin.

However, Gerald simply told him to let it go.

“You do not deserve to know who I am! You should ask Jeremy about it when you have the opportunity to do so!”

After he was done speaking, Gerald walked forward before pushing Brandon aside.

After that, he grabbed hold of Bea’s hand and he glared at Brandon, a final warning before he left the place wordlessly.

Even though Brandon was usually a very ruthless man, being in the contempt of Gerald made him so timid that he dared not even breathe too loudly around him.

For one, he was shocked by how brutal Gerald was when he beat up his men.

Also, Gerald seemed to have completely disregarded Jeremy as they spoke.

This made Brandon feel as though Gerald was not a mere simpleton.

After all, how did these gangsters make their living? Was their income based on their territory? Obviously not! To put it bluntly, gangsters must’ve been relying on their connections to make a living!

The strong ones would dominate the weaker ones, and the cycle repeats itself.

They usually dealt with people who had no backers at all just to show off their might during ordinary times. However, if they really encountered anyone with a strong background or backer, they’d all freeze up out of fear.

“Brandon, he beat our brother up like this. Are you really going to let him leave just like that?”

One of Brandon’s men asked.

Brandon stared at his subordinate before he said, “Hmph! I was frightened for a moment there because that brat mentioned Jeremy’s name. It’s okay. Yura already told me that this brat is nothing more than a pauper from Mayberry City. However, to be on the safe side, it would be better for me to clarify the situation with Jeremy first. If that brat lied to me, then I’ll make sure that he won’t live to see the light of day!”

That's right. This was all just a setup and Yura's phone call just now was part of it.

They were prepared to humiliate Gerald, the country bumpkin.

Chapter 822

Paranoid, Brandon thought that it was better safe than sorry as he called up Jeremy.

Upon hearing him answer his call, Brandon explained his little incident with Gerald to Jeremy in a brief manner.

After that, Brandon's men saw their boss' face turning paler and paler!

"You are not worthy enough to know who he is! However, if you are concerned about survival, I'd advise you to chop off the hands of anyone who touched Miss Bea just now! Perhaps you will be given an opportunity to live then!"

After Jeremy said his last sentence in a sympathetic tone, he hung up the phone immediately.

"Brandon, what's going on? What did Jeremy say?"

Brandon's subordinates couldn't resist the urge to ask when they saw the horrified expression on his face.

"Damn it! That scumbag Yura really got me into big trouble this time!"

After that, Brandon smashed his cell phone on the ground out of anger.

On the other end of this whole incident, Gerald held Bea's hand as he led her out swiftly. Bea went back to their original room to inform her cousins that everything was fine.

Frightened by what had just happened, she had completely lost the mood to enjoy herself. That was also the moment that she decided that she was going to leave together with Gerald.

The same went for Giya, who was never interested in partying in the first place.

Furthermore, Gerald was already leaving. There was no reason for her to continue lingering around here anymore.

So, she chose to leave together with Gerald too.

Yura was burning with jealousy at this point but even more than this was the feeling of shock.

“What is going on?”

As they had agreed upon, Gerald should have been humiliated and embarrassed at this point. Wasn't Yura supposed to bring everyone else with him to watch and ridicule Gerald as he was being humiliated?

What was Brandon up to? What the hell is he doing?

Yura approached Brandon's room, filled with anger and rage.

“What are you doing?”

Yura asked Brandon coldly.

Yura was stunned when he saw one of Brandon's men lying down on the ground with his face covered in dark-red, gooey blood.

“What happened?” Yura asked.

Boom!

The answer to Yura's question was Brandon's red wine bottle smashing into the side of his head.

“Yura! I will settle this score with you in the future! Let's go! A few of you will have to go to the entrance of the hall tonight! I won't let you go without some punishment!”

After Brandon was done speaking, he left with beads of cold sweat all over his face.

All this was simply because of a sentence Jeremy had said over the phone, which made Brandon feel nervous and on edge. He felt as though his spiritual and carnal side as a human being was in a great conflict with one another at this point!

“The both of us are not worthy enough to find out about his true identity. All that you need to know is that even Mr. Hodges has to bend over backward and bow down in front of him to speak to him every time they meet!”

After leaving with Bea, Gerald walked Giya downstairs as Giya was still following him.

There was an awkward silence between the two of them. They simply walked forward wordlessly.

“Gerald, you have changed!” Giya suddenly said.

“Me? Changed? No, I did not!” Gerald replied with a smile.

Gerald felt that although he had already returned to his family, nothing about him changed that much. He was not as extravagant as his elder sister and he was still the same old Gerald from before. He still very much enjoyed living a plain and simple life.

Nothing about him had changed!

“You really have changed! Perhaps you cannot feel it, but I can see it in your eyes! Seriously! You’re like a completely different person now!”

“When Tammy and the others were mocking you back then, you would simply lower your head. However, things are different now! You even hit someone else in retaliation just now. I mean I was scared but, no doubt, you made me feel as though you were a complete stranger and not the Gerald I used to know!”

Giya struggled to articulate her feelings concisely.

If she really had to point out which part of Gerald had changed, then it would be how he created a sense of security whenever he’s around her, something that at one point in the past was lacking.

“I really did not change at all. I bet it’s because of how little time we spent together in the past!”

Giya did not refute his statement. Instead, she carefully raised her gaze and glanced at Gerald meekly before she stopped and asked softly, “Gerald, what exactly happened to Mila?”

Although Giya knew that Gerald would feel upset if she reminded him of that girl, the reason why she tagged along with him was that she wanted to find out what happened to Mila...

Chapter 823

“The Northbay territorial waters is a very large area to cover. It has already been so long. Mila, perhaps she...”

After listening to Gerald’s account of everything that had happened, Giya was both visibly shocked and also worried.

When Giya saw the dark expression on Gerald’s face, she refrained from saying anything unnecessary.

There was no explanation for the emotions Giya was feeling right now.

Although she had been Mila’s rival before this, Giya had to admit that she really was a good girl and she really loved Gerald very much.

Surprisingly, Giya felt upset to hear that something horrible had happened to Mila.

But aside from these sad emotions, Giya also felt a hint of excitement.

She knew that it was not right of her to have any other ideas at a time like this. However, it was impossible for her to resist such an urge.

Gerald did not stay with Giya for a long time.

Gerald appeared to be rather dejected after they started speaking about Mila.

He returned to his room after a brief exchange.

Gerald would be going back to the Yuleman family mansion to visit his grandmother at noon tomorrow.

The next day, in the meeting room of the Yuleman family mansion in Yanken.

Every member of the Yuleman family was gathered here.

The Yuleman Group was a family business and subsequently, the executive members of said group were all members of the Yuleman family.

Such business meetings were the norm.

“The Yuleman family is becoming more and more desolated in recent years. We used to be the top family amongst the big four families. What about now? Why don't all of you take a good look at the Yuleman family's annual revenue? Even though we are considered by many as a member of the top three families, do you really think we can be labeled as such?”

An old woman in her eighties spoke with a sonorous and powerful voice.

She glanced coldly at her descendants and grandchildren.

She slammed her walking cane loudly against the floor.

“I am already getting older and older and I do not know when I will leave this world. How can I possibly feel okay with leaving our assets in your hands? Answer me! How?!” The old lady said.

She was Lady Yuleman, the head of the Yuleman family and also the chairwoman of the Yuleman Group.

Lady Yuleman used to be a well-known career woman in Yanken. However, as the years finally caught up to her, she began to retreat from the limelight and was only working in the background for the past couple of years. Aside from making the major decisions for the company, she was no longer involved in running the business.

It was precisely because of this that there was a serious internal struggle and a never-ending conflict between the younger generation of descendants who were also senior executives of the company. The kids have divided themselves into various factions and the Yaleman family rules and discipline had been on a steady decline ever since.

Lady Yaleman's descendants and grandchildren all bowed their heads upon hearing her words.

"Answer me!"

Lady Yaleman slammed her hand on the table angrily and her face had already turned purple in anger.

"Mom, don't get angry!" The eldest son, Yuma spoke up at this time, "As for our family matters, we are also trying to catch up with the Long and Quarrington families. However, when it comes to comprehensive personal connections, the Yaleman family still pales in comparison to those folks!"

"We were not even able to make a bid in the real estate business for the three big families. This is the biggest reason why both the Long family and the Quarrington family are rapidly overtaking the Yaleman family!" Yuma replied.

"Bidding! Bidding! Since you already know what our weakness is, why didn't you devote your time and energy to strengthening our family and expanding your network and connections instead? In the past ten years, the Long family and the Quarrington family have been able to gain so many projects precisely because of their ties to the Trustdeck Group. Why can't we do the same? Did you send anyone to do that?"

Lady Yaleman asked as she poked Yuma's head.

The rest of her sons and daughters covered their mouths as they giggled secretly to themselves.

"What are you laughing at?! Why don't all of you take a good look at yourselves? The older and younger generation are all equally unpromising!"

At this time, Lady Yaleman turned around and glared at Yura who had a bandage over his head.

Lady Yaleman said angrily, "Just take a look at all of you! I doubt that I'll even be able to make it to my own birthday banquet tomorrow!"

At this time.

The door of the meeting room was pushed open.

A middle-aged servant walked in respectfully.

“Ma’am, the luncheon is ready!”

Lady Yaleman took a deep breath before she lowered her tone and said, “If there are no other ways, then try to come up with a solution! It is useless for us to only complain about it. Alright then, let’s go and eat our reunion lunch now!”

According to their tradition, they would always eat a reunion meal together after every family meeting.

Everyone exchanged some words with one another before they entered the living room.

When they arrived, they saw a young man and a young woman sitting on the sofa.

“Hmph! Isn’t that Bea? It’s already noon and she did not even bother with attending the family meeting! To think that she’d been sitting here the entire time! Oh? It looks like she brought a young man here with her too! Has she gotten herself a boyfriend?”

Chapter 824

Bea’s aunts started ridiculing her and sneering at her.

Bea’s mother, on the other hand, stood at the side of the room, not daring to speak up for her own daughter.

She simply wore an ugly expression on her face.

She had already told Bea many times not to come here with Gerald. However, it was clear that Bea was defying her order as Gerald was standing right there!

“Third aunt, sixth aunt, he is not my boyfriend. He’s actually my cousin, Gerald!” Bea replied.

“What? Ger...Gerald?!”

“It’s him!”

Silence descended upon the room as soon as those words came out from her mouth.

Everyone’s eyes were fixed on Gerald.

Although they knew that Yulia had given birth to a pair of children, Jessica and Gerald, after she left, this was the first time that they had seen either one of them in two whole decades!

“How blessed and fortunate that woman is to have such a handsome son!”

One of the women sneered slightly.

“Cousin, let me introduce them to you. This is...”

Bea started introducing her relatives to Gerald.

Gerald greeted them politely one by one.

However, aside from his fourth uncle who responded with a smile and a nod, pretty much every one of them were ignoring him.

“Why are all of you standing up? Sit down!”

An old lady yelled as she entered the living room with the assistance of a helper.

“Mom, come and take a look! Your beloved granddaughter, Bea, has brought you a gift right before your birthday! That woman’s son has come to see you!”

Rose marched over to give the old lady a hand while wearing a nasty sneer on her face.

“Hmm?”

The old lady immediately turned to look at Gerald.

This was the first time that Gerald had seen his grandmother ever since he was a child.

Naturally, he felt a bit excited to see his beloved granny.

“Grandma!” Gerald called out.

The old lady’s hands trembled slightly when she heard him calling her grandma. She did not say anything but she did respond with a nod.

“Your name is Gerald, right? Where is your elder sister?”

The old lady took a deep breath before she sat down.

“My sister’s abroad now. She is not back yet.” Gerald replied.

“Hmph. Why are you here then? It’s been so many years. Do you even remember that you have a grandmother?”

The old lady asked with a frown.

Although she sounded very cold and indifferent, the reality was the same as what Gerald’s mother had told him beforehand. The old lady would not be too harsh on Gerald.

When she saw how Gerald bowed his head wordlessly, she started fearing that being overly-blunt would scare the child away.

So, she eased up a little and said, "However, I guess you're still a filial child since you've at least made the decision to come and see me!"

Both Yuna and Rose were surprised to discover that the old lady was far from being angry at Gerald.

Yura was especially shocked. The humiliation and embarrassment he suffered yesterday was a result of Gerald's actions after all.

Since he held a grudge against Gerald, he tugged at his mother's arm under the table.

Rose immediately started sneering. "Hahaha! Mom, you think too well of him, don't you? Haven't you realized? They haven't seen you at all in the last twenty years but why are they suddenly here now? To think that they even have the guts to appear before you one day before your birthday! How outrageous! I'm gonna be blunt here, they're just here to get their hands on a share of the Yalaman family's inheritance! Why else would they even think of you at all?"

After Rose's attempt to sow discord, it was clear that the old lady started acting with caution around Gerald.

"Gerald, are you really here to get your hands on a share of the Yalaman family inheritance?"

The old lady asked with an unhappy expression.

Chapter 825

"You have misunderstood me, grandma. I have no intentions of taking any of the Yalaman family's assets at all!"

Gerald replied with a subtle frown.

"Hmph! Ever since your mother, that ungrateful daughter of mine left the Yalaman family, all of you no longer have anything to do with the Yalaman family! I have already made it official that I have severed all ties with that girl! Before you proceed, understand what has already happened."

The old lady sneered.

Gerald did not say anything at all.

Seeing how tense the situation had become, the fourth uncle cleared his throat before speaking up.

“Ahem, mom, look. No matter what happened between you and her, Gerald is still your grandson. I for one, think it’s a good thing for the kid to still have some sense of filial piety. This is the first time that he has come back home so I’d advise you to stop scaring him away! Gerald, come here! Since all of the elders of the family are all gathered here, why don’t you come and serve them some tea.”

It was this moment that Gerald recalled what his mother told him, that both his fourth and fifth uncle were the ones who treated her the best.

So, Gerald simply nodded in agreement.

He took the teapot from the servant’s hand.

After that, he started pouring a cup of tea for the old lady.

“Grandma!”

Perhaps the old lady was reminded of how sad her past had been. Or perhaps it was the anger within her upon hearing what Rose said, that Gerald was just here for his share of the pie. Or maybe it was both.

She simply closed her eyes.

Gerald poured another cup of tea for Yuma.

Yuma refused to drink the tea Gerald poured for him.

He proceeded to serve his second and third uncle.

After that, he poured a cup of tea for Rose.

To his surprise, Rose smiled coldly at him and said, "Hmph! When someone is giving a free lunch without any reason or cause, he must have something evil or obscene in mind!"

She emptied the content of her cup onto the floor after saying that.

The boys and girls of the Yalaman family were all looking at Gerald when Rose did that.

It was fine for her to refuse his tea, but to think that she had the audacity to pour the tea onto the floor.

Rose was obviously trying to embarrass Gerald by trampling all over him.

Yura on the other hand was celebrating inside. He couldn't help but think how perfect it would be if Giya was here to see this as well.

Of all the people Gerald served, his fourth uncle was the only one who drank the cup of tea.

"I wish I could make this clear to a certain someone. Stop having weird fantasies or foolish intentions. You sure know how to find the right timing to visit Lady Yalaman don't you? Why didn't you come sooner or later? Why today?" The second aunt sneered.

"Exactly! He obviously knows that something's good around here. What's the matter? You've grown sick of living in poverty and you're looking for a taste of the high life?"

Rose sneered.

"Hmph! That woman abandoned the whole family, exposing us to such great risks back then! I can remember clearly how furious mom was when she did that! Why don't you go back and tell that woman that it's too late for regrets?"

Third aunt also chimed in.

As soon as this topic came bubbling up, it became endless.

Everyone started accusing and pointing their finger at Gerald's mother, one after the other.

"Enough! Enough! Stop talking about it!"

The old lady's blood pressure spiked immediately. She shouted as she slammed her hands down on the table in order to stop the noise.

Everyone shut up instantly.

"Sheldon, help me back to my room! I'd like to have a rest now!"

"Yes, ma'am!"

Moments later, the old lady left the living room.

"This is all your fault! You hapless guy! Why did you come back? Was it necessary for you to make your grandmother so angry?"

Rose scolded Gerald again.

"Can all of you stop reprimanding my cousin? He is simply back here because he wants to visit grandma! Why are all of you acting like this?"

Bea felt so anxious that she was about to burst into tears.

"Hmph! Bea, why are you butting in when the adults are speaking? Is not being scolded not good enough for you? If it weren't for your damn good-for-nothing father's help, his mother would not have been able to escape her marriage back then!"

Rose said as she sneered.

“Sister-in-law, just what do you mean by that? Is that the way that you should be talking to a junior?”

Bea’s mother was also very unhappy.

“What’s wrong? Can’t I lecture my junior if she does not understand the rules around here? Hahaha! Why don’t you take a look at your status in the Yaleman family now? Bea, you just started working for the Yaleman Group, right? That’s right! You happen to be in the project department too, right? During the meeting just now, Lady Yaleman already said that the most urgent and pressing matter at hand is for us to get some projects. You’ll be in charge of that this year!”

Chapter 826

“Aren’t you really good at talking? Why don’t you show me how capable you are then? If you can’t even contribute to the family, then both you and your mother will only be able to get a small share of the family fortune!”

Rose’s mouth was destructive, just like a cannon.

Her fourth and fifth brother’s families used to have a pretty close relationship with Yulia back then.

Yulia’s relationship with Rose, on the other hand, had always been strained.

Back when Rose was working for the company, Yulia discovered that she had been misappropriating the company’s funds.

This led to Yulia personally reporting her findings of Rose to Lady Yaleman, who then proceeded to slap the culprit right in front of everybody during one of their family meetings.

Rose and Yulia had been at odds with one another since that very day.

She hated Yulia and she eventually began to hate her fourth and fifth brother’s families too.

Yuma and Rose were the ones who were in control of most of the company’s resources at the moment.

She was equivalent to the vice-chairman of the company, so she naturally had the right to speak up.

It was also precisely because of this that Bea and her family could not refute her words at all.

“Okay, that’s enough. Everyone, it’s time to stop saying anything unnecessary. Mom already emphasized earlier that family unity is the most important thing!” Yuma said.

“Elder brother is right. Gerald, you don’t need to stand there anymore. Come, sit down and eat with us!” urged the fourth uncle.

“What? Why are you asking him to sit down with us? What rights do you have?”

Several aunts responded unhappily.

It was at this moment that Gerald realized that if he continued staying around here, he’d only further exacerbate his fourth uncle’s already deteriorating relationship with the rest of the family.

He smiled bitterly, “No need, fourth uncle. I think that it’s better for me to leave first! Enjoy your meal!”

After he was done speaking, Gerald patted Bea’s shoulder lightly, a gesture for her to not bother with him anymore before he left the house.

“Hmph! This is my final ultimatum. He is not related to the Yaleman family in any way. If I find out that any of you are still keeping in touch with him, I will sack you from the company immediately!”

Rose warned the juniors of the family.

She was trying to convey the message to Bea specifically.

Everyone nodded in agreement.

Gerald really did not expect that the grievances between the Crawford family and the Yaleman family would turn out to be so serious.

However, Gerald had no fear as all he wanted to do was to help ease the relationship between his grandmother and mother.

Gerald believed that as long as he willed it to be, things would not be too big of a problem.

What he was afraid of, was that an outcome directly the opposite of what he intended, would arise. In other words, he feared that he would be forced to have a final showdown with these folks.

So, everything would depend on his grandmother's birthday banquet tomorrow.

Realizing this fact, Gerald called up Philip immediately.

He asked Philip to prepare some gifts for him.

It was already noon.

When Bea came home, she had a very sullen expression on her face. She had obviously been given an earful from Rose.

Gerald did not know how much Bea had suffered because of him. Although Catherine remained silent, she was already looking at Gerald with a cold and unkind expression.

"Bea, come. I will buy you some clothes!"

Gerald looked over at Bea.

Bea was a good girl but she had not been living well for the past two years because of being on the receiving end of Rose's constant bullying.

Therefore, compared to the rest of her cousins, the clothes that Bea wore were much more tattered and had much less "bling" to them.

Aside from the car, Gerald had not done anything else to show his gratitude to the girl yet.

“Ahhh? There is no need for that, Gerald!” Bea hastily rejected his offer.

“Let’s go. You can keep me company while I shop anyway!”

With that, Bea hopped into her brand-new BMW 7 Series and headed straight for the shopping district where they sold fancy branded clothing.

Beep! Beep!

Bea locked the car door.

“Giya, why the long face! Hey, hey, looks like they’ve just dropped a whole new line of clothes. C’mon, let’s enjoy shopping together, haha!”

Two girls stepped out of the car.

They were none other than Marilyn and Giya, who was forced to tag along with her...

Chapter 827

Marilyn led Giya up to the third floor.

“The clothes on the third floor are all very expensive. Are you sure you want to shop here?”

Giya asked with a half-hearted smile.

All the clothes in this shop were branded, but the clothes on the third floor were considered the crème de la crème of branded items.

This also happened to be the place where many young girls loved to shop around.

Even if they could not afford to buy it, they would at least have to be familiar with the items up on sale, just for the sake of keeping up with the crowd.

“We can just shop around on the third floor first. If there is something that really suits me, then I will buy it no matter what the price is!”

Marilyn replied with a beaming smile.

After that, both of them started working their way through the third floor.

At one point, they walked into a very popular branded boutique.

“Wow! Giya, look! Look how pretty this dress is! I’m gonna try it on! Hehehe!”

Marilyn had taken a liking to a long one-piece dress.

She took the dress with her to the fitting room hastily.

Giya’s attention was on a men’s clothing store next door.

The design of the clothes were all very cool and tasteful.

She was suddenly reminded of Gerald’s dressing style, which would always be very plain and casual.

So, she thought of choosing some nice clothes for Gerald, something that would make the rest of the girls squeal.

While Marilyn was busy trying on her dress, Giya went out to take a look at the men’s clothes on sale.

Upon putting on the dress, Marilyn hopped out giddily from the fitting room and struck multiple poses in front of the mirror. It was simply too beautiful, she thought to herself.

“Miss, this suits you real nice. You should buy it. This is the latest design of the year and it just hit the racks the day before yesterday. We have a new product promotion going on right now in fact!”

The salesgirl said as she approached Marilyn.

“Hehehe. Okay then. I have already seen this dress on the official website a long time ago. By the way, isn’t there a purple color option for this dress? Can I try that on as well? I really like the purple design!”

“Sorry, baby girl. Someone else is trying on that purple design dress now. It is already sold out and that is our last piece!”

“Ahhh?” Marilyn gasped.

Considering how pretty this girl is, if she were to put on that purple dress, the number of heads turning would exceed two hundred percent!

Suddenly, the door of the other fitting room popped open, and out walked a girl with said purple dress in her hand. She walked straight towards the designated customer waiting area.

When Marilyn saw that it was the dress that she was looking for, she hurriedly followed after that girl.

“That dress suits you very well! Let’s buy it!”

There was a boy sitting in there, waiting for her.

“No, how could I? It’s too...too expensive. Why would I need to wear something so expensive? Just take a look at the price! This dress costs more than thirteen thousand dollars! We should just go somewhere else to buy something else instead!” The girl replied.

The boy with a wry smile shook his head.

“Gerald? So, it’s you?”

Suddenly, a voice sounded in Gerald's ear.

Gerald lifted his head and took a look. He did not know when Marilyn had appeared behind Bea.

Her sudden appearance surprised Gerald.

"Hahaha! What a coincidence! I happen to be very interested in this purple dress so you should hand it over since you can't afford it anyway! Salesgirl, I am not going to try it on. Wrap it up for me, will you? They cannot afford to buy it anyway!"

Marilyn was relieved when she saw that her counterpart was just Gerald.

Despite how Gerald shocked everyone yesterday, Marilyn merely thought of it as him trying to show off by acting pretentious. She thought that it was just him trying to save himself some face. Maybe even the outfit he wore yesterday was just a rental piece.

Anyway, no matter what it was, Marilyn refused to believe that Gerald could afford to pay for this dress.

"Okay, no problem!"

When the salesgirl looked at both of them, she felt the same way as well. Marilyn was dressed head-to-toe in branded apparel after all.

Bea on the other hand wore clothes that were from mediocre brands.

As for the boy, to be frank, she didn't even know what sort of clothes he was wearing.

On a subconscious level, she had already concluded that Marilyn would be the one that could afford the dress.

"Hold on. Who said that we cannot afford to buy it?" Gerald replied with a sneer.

“You?” Marilyn replied contemptuously.

After that, she flipped over the price tag of the dress and it was that moment that her jaw almost hit the ground.

“Fuck! It actually costs \$ 13,999.00?”

Marilyn was shocked.

It was far more expensive than she had anticipated.

Chapter 828

She only had about seven to nine thousand dollars with her.

“What’s the matter? Is \$13,999 too expensive for you?”

Gerald asked Marilyn while chuckling to himself.

After all, Marilyn was the one who poked his head and mocked him yesterday.

Gerald felt the urge to settle his grudge with her today.

So, Gerald responded jokingly.

“Hey, watch it. How can I possibly not be able to afford this dress?”

Marilyn thought how outrageous it would be for a pauper like Gerald to be actually looking down on her.

“Alright then, we’ll buy another dress! So, please pack this dress up for us!” Gerald replied with a mischievous smile.

The salesgirl was surprised and delighted at the same time when she heard this.

“You must be bragging! It would already be great if you could afford even one of these pieces here! Hmph! If he is going to buy two pieces, I’ll buy three! In any case, I’ll buy a piece more than him!”

Marilyn was hellbent on winning the little competition with Gerald.

“Mom, come here and take a look!”

Five other customers filed into the boutique.

It was five women.

Two of them were young and three of them were middle-aged.

Based on how they dressed, it was quite clear that they could afford the clothing on sale here. Of course, the salesgirl dropped what she was doing here and went over to serve them.

“Madam Gosling, Miss Yalaman, you’ve come! Welcome! Welcome! There are many new designs in our shop now. I can help you to pick out a few of our new items!”

“No need for that. We’ll take a look around by ourselves!”

Madam Gosling replied immediately.

All of a sudden, her daughter started tugging on her clothes.

“Mom, all of you, look! Isn’t that, that person?!”

The girl pointed in Gerald and Bea’s direction.

“Hmm? It’s Gerald! Bea is actually here with him too? Hahaha!”

Madam Gosling snickered.

That's right. Madam Gosling was none other than Gerald's first aunt, Rose.

The other two middle-aged women were none other than Gerald's second and third aunt.

As for the two younger girls, they were both Gerald's cousins.

The boutique they were in offered the most expensive merchandise throughout the entire shopping center. Naturally, the patrons of the shop were all powerful and reputable.

Rose felt embarrassed to see that both Gerald and Bea were shopping for clothes here.

"Gerald, stop playing around with me! If you cannot afford it, you should just admit defeat! There's no shame in that, right?"

Fumes started appearing from Marilyn's ears.

This was in response to Gerald saying that he'd buy Bea ten pieces of clothing.

Even the salesgirl felt like reprimanding Gerald for fooling around and wasting her time.

"Miss, have you just started working here? Why would you even waste your time with such a customer?"

A voice that was filled with insult and ridicule suddenly sounded at this time.

Gerald and Bea turned their heads around to take a look.

It was none other than Rose and the others.

“Hmph! I doubt that they’d even be able to buy a sleeve here! I really have to talk to your manager and ask him not to allow such dubious and shady people into the establishment. This lowers the standard of your boutique, don’t you think?!”

Rose said unceremoniously whilst looking at Gerald and Bea.

“Aunt, why are you saying things like that?” Bea asked angrily.

“Why am I saying things like this? You still dare to question me? Bea, let me ask you something. How much do you earn in a single month? How dare you shop at such a shop? Even if you have the money, you should use that money to serve your father well instead. You hate doing that, don’t you? Have you forgotten what I said at the luncheon today?” Rose replied in an insulting manner.

“That’s right, Bea. We understand what it means to be a girl, but you can’t just forget what sort of situation your family is in right now. To think that you even dare to try out the clothes here! What are you going to do if you damage their clothes!? Will you even be able to pay for these items!?”

“That’s right! That’s right!”

Their cousins chimed in as well.

Bea burst into tears as soon as she heard their words.

The salesgirl glared at Gerald and Bea contemptuously and said, “Hmph! You’re just pretending to be rich, aren’t you? See? I got scolded by a customer because of you two!”

“So are the both of you going to buy the clothes or not? If the answer is no, please leave the shop. The rest of the customers would like to try these clothes on!”

The tone of the salesgirl was neither polite nor courteous when speaking to Gerald and Bea.

Bea was about to hand the clothes over while sobbing.

“I already told you that I am going to buy ten pieces of clothing. Are you deaf?”

Gerald spoke up as he glared coldly at the snobbish salesgirl...

Chapter 829

The salesgirl was taken aback by Gerald's tone.

Even Rose and the others were surprised by his sudden change in attitude.

His voice was by no means deafening, but the hostile expression Gerald wore made everyone shudder in fear.

"Hmph! You're still adamant about buying ten of 'em huh? The cheapest of these clothes cost at least six grand! It'll cost you tens of thousands of dollars judging by the number you specified. Are you serious about your purchase?"

Rose and the others despised the feeling of being intimidated by Gerald.

Was he really planning to buy ten of these dresses?

Hahaha!

They started sneering as they ridiculed him.

Bea also tugged on Gerald's arm as she said, "Forget it. Eldest aunt is right. We will never be able to afford the clothes here. I think it's best if we leave now!"

"It's okay. I've already said that I'll buy you these clothes! Look, the ones you tried on just now looked A-okay, so why not? Miss, if you will, please help me check how much they cost. I'll be paying with my card by the way!"

Gerald whipped out his debit card.

The salesgirl nodded repeatedly upon seeing how serious he was about the purchase.

“Hold on. I was not talking to you. I am talking to you, miss. Please help me to pack these clothes up!”

Gerald said as he pointed at another salesgirl who stood at the side throughout their entire exchange.

“Okay, sir!”

The salesgirl started packing up the clothes as ordered. There were ten pieces of clothing in total.

The total price was \$120,000.00.

“Hahaha! This fool. \$120,000.00. Isn't he walking into his own tomb?”

“That's right. Even if he wants to show off, this is not the way to do it. \$120,000.00 just to buy some clothes? This is going to be an amazing show!”

Marilyn was overjoyed when she saw the total bill.

Gerald's cousins started whispering among themselves.

“Hmph! I want to see how Gerald is going to get out of this mess!”

Rose exchanged glances with one another and they sneered at Gerald with their arms crossed over their chests.

The salesgirl quickly brought out the POS machine.

Gerald typed in the password as if he had done this countless times before.

As Gerald was about to key in the last final digit of his password, the salesgirl suddenly exclaimed.

“Wait! Hold on, sir! I made a mistake!”

The salesgirl was overly nervous. After all, with a sale of \$120,000.00, she would be able to gain a commission of at least five to six thousand dollars. How could she not be nervous?

She got such a great deal without saying a single word nor moving a single muscle after all!

Her anxiety and excitement were further fuelled by all the attention she got from her colleague as well as the customers.

As a result, she accidentally keyed in an extra zero on the POS machine.

However, before she could stop him, Gerald had already keyed in his password on the POS machine. It was too late, as she could see on the display that the machine was already transferring the transaction data....

“Sir, I am so sorry but I accidentally keyed in the total amount as \$1,200,000.00 instead of \$120,000.00. I am really sorry!”

The salesgirl apologized profusely while bowing at Gerald.

“It’s okay. You don’t need to apologize. Even if you keyed in one less zero, he’d never be able to cough up that amount!”

Third aunt said.

Beep!

The POS machine’s beep was loud and clear.

It stated that the transaction was successful.

It then proceeded to churn out the receipt with no hiccups whatsoever!

“What?!”

Rose, Gerald's cousins, and Marilyn were all shocked.

The transaction was actually successful?

Gerald's debit card? He actually...he actually has \$1200,000.00 in his bank card?

F*ck! Am I dreaming?

Marilyn's mouth was wide open out of disbelief.

Astonished, Rose stared at one another with the same look of disbelief. The expression on their mugs could never get any uglier than this.

Gerald, the boy born as a pauper has a million bucks in his bank account!?

The salesgirl was even more frightened when she saw the look on their faces. With trembling hands, she said, "Sorry, sir. I will refund the rest of the money to you immediately! I am really, really sorry!"

"Forget it. You don't need to refund the money to me. Don't you guys have a membership scheme? I'll just sign up for a membership card for my sister, and you just need to transfer the balance into that card."

Gerald tucked his card back into his wallet with a wry smile on his face.

Chapter 830

If Rose was simply taunting him and ridiculing him alone just now, he would not have said anything at all. Gerald was still the same old tolerant Gerald.

However, he could not allow her to insult Bea like this.

The kindness his fifth uncle had shown his own mother back then was not something that could be made up for with cold hard cash.

What Gerald wanted was justice for Bea.

To his surprise, in the process of doing so, \$1,200,000.00 had been swiped directly from his bank card.

But it did not really matter to him. After all, \$1,200,000.00 or \$120,000.00 made no difference to Gerald now. Aside from a difference in the number of digits, nothing about that sum was significant enough to frustrate him.

“But cousin, this...this is too expensive! Hurry up and get a refund!”

Bea said as she jumped around anxiously.

“What? Why would you ask him to do that? If he wants to insert that amount into a membership card for you, you should just let him do it! Hahaha! This fool! Putting so much money into a stupid card. I wanna see what he’ll do with the balance!”

As stunned and as surprised as Rose was, she still wanted to lash out against Gerald.

This was because if Gerald were to put all of that money into the membership card, then he’d never be able to do anything else aside from buying clothes.

That’s what you get from tooting your own horn!

However, she was still very irritated and frustrated. That, and surprise. When did Gerald become so rich?

She suddenly lost her mood to continue shopping.

The same went for Marilyn. She had to debate with herself over and over again in her mind before buying a single dress that cost \$12,000.00 only for Gerald whom she had always looked down on, to put \$1,200,000.00 into a membership card without a hint of hesitation!!

Marilyn went out of the shop with a dejected expression.

At the same moment, Giya walked out from the shop next door.

When she saw Marilyn's gloomy appearance, she couldn't help but smile and ask, "Hey, what's wrong with our little Marilyn? Has your mood turned sour from all the shopping?"

Marilyn took a deep breath before she said, "Giya, do you believe in fate?"

"Ahhh? What kind of fate are you talking about?"

"Where a very poor person strikes gold overnight, and he becomes exceptionally rich!" Marilyn replied anxiously.

"What exactly happened?"

"I...I just ran into Gerald!"

"You saw Gerald?"

Giya suddenly felt very nervous.

"Yes! Gerald! Giya, you might not know this but Gerald...he seems a little different compared to how he was before. Back then, he used to be the poorest student in our class. Back then, he was everybody's punching bag. I used to bully him too but do you know how wealthy he is right now? Did you know about this? He's no longer the pauper that he was when he was still in high school!"

Giya looked around and checked out her surroundings but saw no signs of Gerald.

So, she subconsciously nodded as she replied, "The amount of money that Gerald has is not something that you can even comprehend!"

"Ahhh? Giya, what did you say?"

Marilyn did not hear Giya's words clearly.

“Ahhh? I...I did not say anything!”

Giya came to her senses and she hurriedly denied what she had accidentally blurted out.

“Don’t think too much about it. You should just treat Gerald better from now onwards then. After all, the both of you used to be classmates!” Giya advised.

“Yeah, I guess so! I think I caught a glimpse of another side of Gerald just now, y’know, when he was swiping his card down the machine. He looked so cool and manly! Looks like I’ll have to change my attitude for the better from now on!”

When Giya saw the smile on Marilyn’s face, she could not help but feel a little uncomfortable...

“I am so angry! I am so, so angry!”

Rose slammed her hands on the steering wheel angrily on the way back home.

“Why did that woman’s son suddenly become so rich? Where did he get his million dollars from? Did he win the lottery?”

Rose kept on muttering the same thing on their entire journey home.

Just like most people, Rose also did not want her own opponent to become stronger and better than herself.

“That’s right! A million dollars ain’t small change, even to us! Sister-in-law, did you see how Gerald didn’t even blink or hesitate at all when he swiped his card?” Second aunt also said.

“You know, we thought that Gerald was simply renting his clothes to look extravagant and that he was just acting pretentious just to show off when we first met him. But it looks like everything that happened at the bar last night might actually be real!”

Gerald’s younger cousin spoke up.

“What do you mean by that? What happened at the bar last night?”

Chapter 831

“Are you saying that the clothes that Gerald wore cost just as much?” Rose asked in disbelief.

“Impossible! It is absolutely impossible! We already know about his father, Dylan Crawford’s status from back then. Like hell, their family’s that affluent! The most probable explanation is that Gerald won the lottery! He must’ve blown all that cash impulsively just now!” Rose said.

It seemed as though the million dollars Gerald spent really left a huge impact on them.

“Now that eldest aunt and the others are all gone, let’s go back to the shop and ask for a refund for this membership card. It’s way too expensive! So much money’s in there! Don’t you think it’s a waste to leave it all in there?”

“There is no need for that, Bea...”

“It’s a million bucks! How could you just brush it off like it’s nothing? Also, why...why do you have so much money?”

Bea seemed a little terrified.

Gerald laughed as he shot a glance at Bea who was behind the wheel. After that, he said, “I will tell you something, something that you can’t tell anyone else yet. This includes fifth aunt too!”

“What is it?” Bea asked.

“I am actually a rich heir and I am the kind of rich heir who has an unlimited amount of money to spend!” Gerald replied with an eager smile on his face.

“Hahaha!”

Unexpectedly, Bea suddenly laughed out loud, “Okay then, rich heir, if you’ve that much money, then please allow your humble cousin to help you to spend some of that cash!”

Bea obviously thought that Gerald was just pulling her leg.

“Cough. Cough. You can choose to believe me or not!” Gerald replied after clearing his throat.

“By the way, what gift are you planning to give to grandma for her birthday tomorrow?” Bea asked.

“I do not know what to give her either! I’ll think about it tomorrow!”

The atmosphere at the Yaleman family mansion was extremely lively.

It was Lady Yaleman’s eightieth birthday today.

Compared to the previous years, her eightieth birthday banquet was much grander and multitudes livelier.

Not only were all the members of the Yaleman family present, there were multiple distinguished guests who were also invited here to celebrate Lady Yaleman’s birthday.

“Each and every gift from the distinguished guests should be recorded down on paper clearly and re-checked. You absolutely mustn’t be careless about this! There should be a lot of distinguished guests present this year and the ranking arrangements should be treated with utmost seriousness!”

Lady Yaleman was wearing a red festive robe early in the morning as she instructed the butler.

Lady Yaleman took her seat after that.

Upon receiving a signal from their parents, the younger generation of the family started coming forward to offer their gifts to Lady Yaleman.

“Grandma, this is the jade bracelet that I bought for you. Take a look at it and see if you like it?”

A girl came up with a sweet smile on her face.

“I like it. I like it a lot! Ooh, a piece of nephrite jade! What a good child you are!”

Lady Yaleman smiled happily.

She held the girl’s hands throughout their brief exchange.

“Oh! Bea! The both of you just arrived, I presume?”

Bea had arrived with Gerald.

They happened to run into Yura and a few others.

“Bea, what kind of a gift did you buy for grandma this year? Don’t tell me that you’re giving her another embroidery that you made yourself again, just like you did last year! Hahaha!”

Yura and the others started cackling away.

Yura’s laughter was the clearest and the loudest. After he was satisfied with mocking Bea, he shot a cold, hostile glare at Gerald.

“I didn’t expect that you’d attend grandma’s birthday banquet too! Hahaha! To think that you came empty-handed!” Yura said as he laughed.

After that, he whispered into Gerald’s ear, “I am warning you. You should stop thinking about laying your hands on the Yaleman family’s assets! Don’t let me catch you trying to put any weird thoughts into that old woman’s head!”

Gerald quietly listened to Yura’s provocative words.

He did not even bother to look at him but instead, he flashed a kind smile at Bea. “Come, let’s go in now!” he said to her.

They proceeded to make their way towards grandma.

Yura was so angry that his fists were tightly-clenched out of anger.

“Country bumpkin! I will never let you off so easily!”

Yura thought indignantly to himself.

Due to the previous grievances, Yura had never liked Gerald. Despite how honest and decent that hillbilly seemed, that bastard kept stealing the limelight from Yura when they were in the bar last night.

Yura did not know what Gerald said to Brandon in the end that ended up with his head getting smashed in by Brandon in front of all his cousins.

Chapter 832

Yura placed the blame entirely on Gerald.

The thing that pissed him off most was when he finally found a goddess that he was interested in, Gerald had to butt in and screw-up his chance to shine.

“Look, grandma! This is my birthday gift to you!”

The younger generation of the family was still presenting their gifts at the main table of the birthday banquet.

Lady Yaleman was grinning from ear-to-ear; she could not conceal the happiness that she was feeling right now.

“Oh! Isn’t that Bea? What took you so long? Have you already forgotten that it is your grandmother’s birthday today?”

In walked Bea and Gerald.

Rose wore a cunning smirk as she spoke.

“How can I possibly forget about grandma’s birthday? Eldest aunt, you are too much!” Bea retorted immediately.

“Hahaha! Let’s see what kind of birthday gift Bea prepared for grandma this year-round!”

Several girls simultaneously.

Bea’s mother was visibly irritated when she heard what those girls said about her daughter. She then directed a reassuring smile at Bea whilst glancing down at the gift she was holding.

She knew that her mother would be overjoyed if she received this gift.

“Bea, hurry up and show your grandmother the gift that you’ve gotten for her!” Catherine said.

“Okay! Grandma, this is the birthday gift that I have prepared for you this year! It’s a dragon jade bracelet!”

Bea said as she opened the box carefully.

“Dragon jade bracelet?”

Lady Yalman was stunned for a moment.

She looked down at the gift and realized, it was just as she had said, a dragon jade bracelet!

In fact, Gerald had already bought a dragon jade bracelet for Giya before this and it cost about fifteen thousand dollars.

Of course, it wasn’t like Lady Yalman couldn’t afford such a small gift.

But she knew very well that Bea’s family was not doing as well for the past few years. It was part of the reason why they could not afford to give her any decent gifts back then.

However, the fact that Bea was willing to give her a dragon jade bracelet that was worth more than fifteen thousand dollars naturally proved Bea's filial piety towards her.

"Okay! It's pretty good!" Lady Yalaman said with a smile.

The dragon jade bracelet had already completely won over Lady Yalaman's heart, and her reaction was completely different from when she was presented with the nephrite jade bracelet from earlier on.

The expression on Gerald's second aunt and cousin turned sour immediately.

"Bea, I heard that you're working as an intern in the group's project department for a couple of months now. Sigh, you're all grown up in a blink of an eye. If you perform well, granny will teach you the way of the trade, and maybe then, you'll be able to lead a bigger department on your own!" said Lady Yalaman.

"Thank you, grandma!"

Bea was very happy when she heard her grandmother's words. Catherine was elated to hear those words as well.

"Grandma, how can you be so sure that this is an authentic dragon jade bracelet? After all, there are countless knock-offs in the market!" sneered Yura as he approached them.

The expression on Bea's face changed slightly.

The same went for Catherine, who finally decided to stand up for her daughter, "Yura, what are you talking about? Let me tell you. This bracelet is something my mother gave me, and now it's passed on to Bea. It's impossible that it's a knock-off!"

Catherine was telling the truth. She had really gone all in at this time.

"Grandma, I learned some basic identification techniques when I was studying abroad. Why don't you let me take a look at it?" Yura said.

Yura's words cast doubt in Lady Yalaman's heart, which quickly became apparent on her face.

After all, she knew her daughter-in-law, Catherine very well. If this really was such a precious item, why would Catherine be willing to give it to her as a birthday gift?

Lady Yalaman handed the dragon jade bracelet over to Yura.

“Oh, man. There’s no doubt about it. It’s a fake!”

Yura shook his head with a mere glance at the bracelet.

“You don’t know what you’re talking about Yura! What do you know?” Catherine replied anxiously.

“Hahaha! Fifth aunt, why do you sound so anxious? Okay then. I’ll keep my mouth shut. If you say it is authentic, we’ll just treat it as such!”

He proceeded to hand the jade bracelet over to Catherine.

However, before poor Catherine could grab it, he released his grip deliberately.

Clink!

With a crisp sound, the jade bracelet shattered into a million pieces on the cold hard ground...

Chapter 833

“My jade bracelet!”

The jade bracelet had shattered into a million pieces.

Catherine’s eyes widened from the shock.

Bea was also taken aback by what Yura had just done.

This jade bracelet was the most precious treasure in their family.

Her grandmother had given this jade bracelet to her mother before it was passed down to Bea.

The reason why Catherine was willing to let go of the bracelet as a gift for Lady Yaleman was quite simple.

Her husband was currently lying in bed in a vegetative state and there was no more hope for her.

She hoped that her daughter would be able to prove herself and gain recognition from the Yaleman family, someday in the future.

As long as Lady Yaleman was pleased and satisfied, then Bea would be able to move forward.

Otherwise, if Rose was allowed to gain full control of the company in the future, then all hope would truly be lost for Bea and her family.

But now, this final bastion of hope had been smashed into the cold hard ground!

Yura had obviously done this on purpose!

“Give me back my jade bracelet! I want you to compensate me for my jade bracelet!”

Catherine’s eyes were red and blinded by rage as she rushed forward and grabbed Yura forcefully by the collar.

Everyone at the birthday banquet stopped what they were doing and stared at the source of the commotion.

“Stop it! Do you still know how to behave yourself?!”

Lady Yaleman yelled angrily at them both. She was a woman who cared about her public appearance after all.

“Mom! Yura did it on purpose! He deliberately broke my dragon jade bracelet!” Catherine complained in a distressed tone.

“Oh! It’s just a lousy bracelet anyway! Chances are, it might even be a fake! So what if it was an authentic dragon jade bracelet?”

“Aren’t you a bit too old to be quarreling with your own junior? Have you no shame?”

Second aunt chimed in.

“It’s mom’s birthday today here you are, trying to start a fight. How unruly can you be!? Can’t you behave yourself!?”

“Okay, that’s enough! ‘Tis nothing but a jade bracelet! There’s nothing we can do now, since it has already been broken. I’m too old to be wearing such a thing anyway! What Rose said is not exactly wrong. Do you really need to take your anger out on Yura like this?” Lady Yalaman said casually.

Catherine’s vision blurred up from the tears that were welling up in her eyes.

Gerald noticed how biased his grandmother was, even when Yura was clearly in the wrong here. He had purchased a similar dragon jade bracelet before as well, so he knew that Catherine’s bracelet was indeed not a mere knock-off.

The reason why Yura did what he did was out of fear that Bea would gain his grandmother’s love and affection.

It wasn’t long before everyone shifted their attention towards Gerald.

“Gerald, I see that you’ve got nothing with you. Did you really come empty-handed to the banquet?”

Rose asked with a cold expression on her face.

That’s right. In the entire Yalaman family, Rose hated her fifth brother-in-law’s family the most, followed by her fourth brother-in-law’s.

However, a new person has popped up at the top of her “most-hated” list, and that person was none other than Gerald.

This was in light of everything that happened yesterday.

“Hmph! Sister-in-law, maybe you were right! I guess he’s too broke to even afford a gift for Lady Yalaman at this point! Haha!”
Second aunt also said.

It was then that Lady Yalaman noticed Gerald’s hands were indeed empty.

So, she felt a little upset in her heart.

“Forget it! I don’t need his gift anyway!” Lady Yalaman replied indifferently.

Gerald remained silent and he did not say anything at all.

“Mom, I think that you have to reprimand Bea and correct her ways. She keeps drifting off during work. My guess is that she’s simply here to squander away all the inheritance money! We should not allow this to go on any longer!” Rose continued saying.

Catherine shot back at Rose hastily, “Just what do you mean by that? When has Bea not worked hard for our group?”

“All of you should just stop arguing right now! I do not know which one of you is telling the truth but only those who are worthy shall receive any sort of reward! Bea, I will keep my eye on you from now on. If you fail to meet my expectations, don’t blame grandma for being heartless when the day comes!” warned Lady Yalaman.

“Hahaha. Grandma, you do not need to worry about me. If my eldest aunt said she is telling the truth, then so be it! I don’t feel so well, so I’ll be heading back first. Do enjoy the banquet though!”

Bea replied with red, misty eyes.

Bea stood up and left immediately after saying that.

“Bea! Bea!”

Catherine chased after her daughter.

Gerald frowned. It seemed as though this was not the first time that Rose and her son, Yura had targeted Bea and her mother.

Worried about Bea’s condition, Gerald too tagged along behind Catherine.

“See, mom? If Bea can act like this in front of you, it’s not that hard to imagine how she usually acts in front of me at our workplace!”

Chapter 834

Rose said.

“Hmph! She can leave if she wants to! Out of sight, out of mind!” Lady Yalaman responded coldly.

She then turned around to take a look at the scene of the banquet.

“What’s going on? There were so many distinguished guests at my birthday banquet last year around this time. Where have they all gone this year?”

Lady Yalaman suddenly realized that something was wrong.

Yuma replied, “Yeah, it does feel rather odd. Why are there so few guests here today? I mean, didn’t I personally invite them here to the banquet?”

On Lady Yalaman’s face was a sour expression.

She signaled for her butler, Sheldon to step forward.

She asked him about the low turnout rate for the guests they had specially invited to the event.

Sheldon replied, “Lady Yalaman, I’m sorry but I too have no idea why this is happening. Many of the distinguished guests and partners that we invited suddenly called to say that something has happened and they cannot make it here anymore. They simply asked me to congratulate you on their behalf! As of now, there have been more than thirty chairmen of various companies that rang us up to inform us about their non-attendance!”

“What?”

Lady Yalaman exploded angrily, “Hmph! I understand now. They must have planned this together! Looks like our family’s really on the decline now! If it were a few decades ago, this place would’ve been packed to the brim whenever the Yalaman family hosted an event. But now, people aren’t even bothering to attend the event, even after we have personally sent them an invitation!”

Yuma and the rest remained silent.

“Yuma, have you already gotten the project that I asked you to bid for? Or did we come back empty-handed?” Lady Yalaman asked.

“Our capital turnover is a major problem right now. Mom, I am already working on it as fast as I possibly can. I’ll come up with a solution for the supply chain issue before tomorrow ends. After that, I’ll try to get our hands on a lucrative project!” replied Yuma.

“Dear God, our home no longer has the feel of a proper home, and the same’s happening to our bloody business!? Are we really going to fall behind the Long and Quarrington families just like this?” Lady Yalaman said dejectedly.

Suddenly.

The butler suddenly rushed into the mansion from the main entrance.

“Ma’am! Ma’am!”

“What is going on, Sheldon?” Lady Yalaman asked.

“You...you should hurry up and come out to take a look. There’s a convoy outside with gifts for you!”

Sheldon said and he looked very nervous.

“Huh?”

Lady Yaleman was surprised.

Sheldon would never react in such an exaggerated way if they were ordinary gifts from ordinary guests.

So, who could it possibly be?

Lady Yaleman was momentarily taken aback.

So, she got up from her seat and followed Sheldon out of the house.

Yuma, Rose, and the rest also followed behind them out of curiosity.

When they finally got out of the mansion, they saw more than a dozen Rolls-Royce Phantoms outside the door. These vehicles cost at least three million dollars a pop.

A team of bodyguards dressed in black were standing in line.

Each of them held a gift box in their hands.

“Mr. Crawford from the Crawford family sends these gifts to you, Lady Yaleman! The Crawford family wishes you a very happy birthday!”

The leader of the bodyguards finally spoke up.

Lady Yaleman and the others were all dumbfounded and at a loss for words.

A presentation of gifts could not get any fancier than this!

Seconds later, the first bodyguard opened the gift box in his hands.

“A thousand-year-old ginseng!”

“What? Thousand-year-old ginseng?”

Everyone was surprised.

“An ancient white marble pot!”

“What?”

Lady Yaleman was visibly moved by the gifts she saw.

Yuma and Rose on the other hand could only swallow nervously.

“An authentic Henri Matisse’s painting!”

The third gift box was the next to be opened.

“An authentic Henri Matisse’s painting?!”

Everyone clustered around the butlers.

“Mr. Crawford from the Crawford family? Who is he? How could he possibly be so generous and extravagant?”

Chapter 835

There were still a lot more unopened gift boxes.

This made everyone in the Yalaman family, including Lady Yalaman herself, feel very bedazzled.

It would not have been an exaggeration to describe each and every one of these gifts as a rare treasure.

Every single gift had its own story to tell and all had incredibly rich histories. They were all simply invaluable!

Lady Yalaman was filled with excitement.

At the ripe old age of 80, she had obviously been around for quite a while, but never in her life had she ever witnessed such a grand scene before!

“Lady Yalaman, this is the list of gifts presented today. Please take a look at it!”

The young man leading the troupe of butlers handed a list over to Lady Yalaman in a respectful manner.

“No, no need for that! I don’t need to look at it anymore! Please thank Mr. Crawford for all these gifts. However, you must tell him that these gifts are really too expensive! By the way, I don’t think that I’ve ever met this Mr. Crawford that you’re talking about before. Can you tell me who your master is?” Lady Yalaman asked with a smile.

The cold atmosphere that enveloped the scene melted away in an instant.

“Lady Yalaman, if there is nothing else, then we’ll be leaving now! Now if you’ll excuse us.”

It was obvious that these people were told to keep their mouths sealed.

“Why don’t you stay back for a drink?” Lady Yalaman asked.

“I appreciate your generous offer, but I really can’t! I’m sorry.”

As soon as the young man bid them farewell, the rest of his colleagues climbed aboard the cars and left immediately.

“God, can it be anymore lavish than that!?”

The bodyguards and entourage were all so calm and disciplined! Just who are the Crawfords and what sort of family were they?”

The members of the Yaleman family were all taken aback.

“Mom? Mr. Crawford from the Crawford family? I don’t think we’ve ever met him before. Why are they giving us such expensive gifts? A rough estimate places these gifts at close to a hundred and fifty million dollars!”

Yuma was so excited that his hands were trembling uncontrollably.

“Yeah, they sure as hell look like they cost that much! Mr. Crawford from the Crawford family, a real generous fella ain’t he!? But isn’t it odd that we’ve never met them before? I’ve been around for so long and yet I have never heard of such a family before. Maybe they’re one of the juniors’ classmates?”

Lady Yaleman said in disbelief.

Astonished, all of the juniors exchanged glances with one another.

Even the best of classmates would never be willing to present birthday gifts worth more than one hundred and fifty million dollars! What Lady Yaleman said sounded simply a little too far-fetched.

“Mom, you don’t need to worry that much about this. If they’re willing to provide such extravagant gifts, they’re yours no matter what! If you sell any one of these items, you’ll undoubtedly be able to resolve the financial crisis our family’s facing right now!”

Rose said with a sparkle in her eyes.

“Shut up! Stop blabbering such nonsense! These are gifts the Crawford family has generously decided to present to me. Who gave you the courage to even make such an outrageous suggestion? No one is allowed to touch them before I ascertain the true identity of this Mr. Crawford. If anyone dares to lay their hands on any one of these gifts, I will kick him or her out of the family, no questions asked!” Lady Yaleman replied.

At the same time, Lady Yaleman was staring intensely at the convoy that was driving into the horizon.

“Mom, what are you looking at?”

Yuma came forward and asked when he realized that he would not be able to get his hands on any of his mother’s birthday gifts, for now at least.

“I am looking at those people who got out of the cars just now. Yuma, did you see how well-trained and disciplined those men were? They’re not the subordinates of your run-of-the-mill rich family, that’s for sure! Maybe they’re working for one of the top families around here!”

“In other words, we have to figure out the identity of this Mr. Crawford as soon as possible so that we can get in touch with him and ask him to help us to get through this ordeal!”

Lady Yaleman said in foresight.

“Understood, mom!”

“Hmm. There is actually another possibility!”

The second aunt suddenly chimed in.

“Hmm? What could it be?”

“Perhaps Mr. Crawford fancies and is interested in one of the young ladies in the Yaleman family? Maybe he’s giving us all these gifts now as a lead-up to his marriage proposal in the future?”

The second aunt said with a cunning smile.

Among all of them, Ysabel, the second aunt’s daughter was the most beautiful girl with the most outstanding temperament.

She was simply trying to tell everyone else that the wealthy Mr. Crawford might very likely be interested in her own daughter.

“Hahaha! You are really thinking too much!”

Rose became unhappy as soon as she heard this.

After all, her son, Yura was supposed to be the future heir of the family.

Why, if she isn't spewing all this bullcrap just to try and get in good graces with Lady Yalaman!

They might work together as a team when the situation called for it, in the end, it was personal interests that reigned above all. Thus, it was inevitable for their goals to diverge.

Chapter 836

“Hmm? But what she said made sense too. A young master from a top-tier family would never be cumbersome in doing things and they would never make their intentions direct and clear either. There was a real possibility that Mr. Crawford had indeed fallen for one of the young ladies from the Yalaman family!”

“Ysabel, you've just started working with the company recently after studying abroad for years. I believe you have met a lot of people and participated in many different events and occasions, yes? Do you remember encountering any such powerful and formidable young masters?”

Lady Yalaman asked. After all, she was perfectly aware of how eye-catching Ysabel was. Yeah, Bea was on par with her beauty but she was rarely exposed to grander events and the outside world compared to Ysabel.

Ysabel took a moment to think about her experience before she replied, “I think so, grandma!”

“Well, if that's the case, then we'll count it as a blessing for the Yalaman family! Ysabel, if there is anything that you want or need in the future, do not hesitate to ask grandma for it!” Lady Yalaman said.

“Thank you, grandma!” Ysabel replied excitedly.

These words foreshadowed the possibility that Ysabel would be able to secure a high position for herself in the company.

Grandma held Ysabel's hand as they returned to the mansion.

It was around this time that Yuma suddenly received a phone call.

"What did you just say? Can you repeat yourself one more time?"

The expression on Yuma's face changed immediately.

After hanging up, it seemed as though all color had been drained from Yuma's face instantly.

"Mom!"

Yuma was a little perplexed and he was in a state of utter stupefaction as he approached Lady Yalaman.

"What's wrong?"

"Something happened to the company!"

"What happened?"

The expression on Lady Yalaman's face changed immediately.

Yuma gulped nervously and said, "For the past couple of days, the company's supply chain had been under strain, so I followed my usual procedure of applying for a loan with the bank. My subordinate just called to say that something's gone wrong with the loan! The bank has just rejected our loan application!"

"What?"

Lady Yalaman really did not expect things to turn south so fast.

“What did you use as collateral?” Lady Yalaman asked.

“I put up the existing land that the Yalaman family was going to use for our project. I have always done the same thing and it would always end up with success. But the bank just informed us that they won’t be releasing the land back to us anymore! We’ve tried to negotiate but nothing’s moving forward!”

“It must be the Long family! It has to be the Long family!”

Yuma said with a pale look on his face.

Turns out, the guarantor Yuma had relied on was the Long family. To be exact, it was one of the more senior members of the family who had personally approached him to talk about the loan.

He was completely oblivious to the fact that he had walked right into a trap they’d set up just for him.

They were also interested in that piece of land after all.

Yuma’s realization came about a tad bit too late.

Lady Yalaman was so infuriated that she slapped Yuma viciously across his face.

The Long family had always been a long-standing rival of the Yalaman family. However, Yuma had been blinded by his lust for money, that he was willing to court the risk of collaborating with his enemies.

Considering how powerful and influential the Long family was, they were able to manipulate the bank’s choice with just a snap of their finger.

“You, you...are you trying to piss me off as much as you can?!”

Lady Yalaman said as she waved the walking stick in her hand.

“Mom, what are we going to do now? We are already halfway through our project now. Is the Long family trying to take advantage of all our preparations?”

Yuma asked with a dejected expression.

Slap!

“You useless little thing! Don’t ask me that!”

Lady Yaleman was so angry that she didn’t hesitate to slap Yuma the second time. She was so angry that she had lost all steam to proceed with her birthday celebration. Fuming from the ears, she stormed off into the building!

...

“Bea, are you okay?”

Bea cried as she ran all the way home.

Gerald followed her back.

Bea ran straight into the fifth uncle’s room. She held his hand as she sobbed away...

Chapter 837

“Dad, I am useless. I couldn't even speak up and defend mom when everybody’s attacking her! I am a disappointment! I’m so sorry that I failed to live up to your expectations!” Bea said as she cried.

“Mom gave me her favorite and most precious bracelet with the intention of giving it to grandma as a birthday gift, to please her and make her happy. She did this hoping that I’ll strive forward in the company! But Yura broke the bracelet! He did it on purpose, I know he did! Everyone saw with their own two eyes what he did!”

“But dad, grandma turned the other cheek and accused mom of overreacting. She said that it was nothing more than just a jade bracelet. Dad, could it be that in grandma’s eyes, nothing can ever be comparable to Yura at all?”

Bea felt seriously aggrieved today.

Usually, she would just endure it when everyone else ridiculed her or her mother.

However, this time, there was a blatant display of unfairness.

No longer able to put up with it anymore, she ran all the way back home.

“Don’t you know how much Rose hates you, or me and mom? Every day, she’ll try to find all sorts of reasons to send us into exile from the family! Fine! I’ll never go back to the Yalman family from now on!”

Bea said. She buried her head into her father’s bed and continued sobbing away.

Gerald could only pat her shoulder gently as he tried his best to comfort her.

Although Bea was a kind and tolerant girl, she had her own self-esteem too. No one on Earth will ever be able to endure a never-ending cycle of discrimination and bullying.

No one else understood what Bea was feeling right now, aside from Gerald himself.

Speaking of which, if Bea’s family did not help his mother back then, they would not have ended up in such a terrible state.

Since his mother had already entrusted him with dealing with this issue, Gerald would have to come up with a solution to end his fifth uncle’s peril!

“Cousin, I am sorry that I made you worry. I’m so sorry that you didn’t even get to enjoy the banquet today!”

Bea started to apologize before she had even truly stopped sobbing. She wiped the tears away from her face while sniffing incessantly.

“It’s okay! Listen, Bea, you’ve got to stop having such bleak thoughts. Everything will be better in the future. It certainly will, and you have my word on that!”

Gerald said as he held Bea's hand.

"Yes, I do hope so!"

Bea nodded.

Bea's cell phone suddenly rang.

Looking at the caller ID revealed that it was a phone call from Sheldon, Lady Yaleman's butler.

"The Yaleman family is holding an emergency family meeting. Everyone has to be here as soon as possible!"

After saying that, Sheldon hung up the phone immediately.

"Go and wash your face and we'll head over, pronto!" Gerald said.

"Like hell, I'm going there! I'm not even going to step foot in that dreaded place! Finally, I understand why my aunt refused to stay there, despite being such an outstanding and capable individual! Seriously, sooner or later, I'm going to die from all the torment they've put me through!" Bea replied angrily.

"How could you say that? You have to think about your mother as well. I'm sure your eldest aunt will keep on making all sorts of ludicrous remarks about her. You should at least go for now!" Gerald replied with a smile.

Bea thought about it for a moment before she nodded slightly.

Finally, she agreed with Gerald's words.

The meeting ended at two o'clock in the afternoon.

Gerald did not go along with Bea to the emergency family meeting. Instead, he stayed at home to help his fifth uncle work his limbs to keep them functioning.

Bea finally came home with Catherine from the meeting.

Gerald could hear Catherine cursing loudly as soon as they came back.

“Rose I swear to God, this will be a fight to the death! There will be no end to this until blood is spilled! How dare you bully someone like this! I’m coming for you!”

Catherine cursed.

“Fifth aunt, what’s wrong?”

Gerald asked.

Catherine did not reply to his question. Her eyes were red and tears were welling up in them as she walked straight into the house.

Bea was also in a visibly bad mood.

However, instead of ignoring him, she replied to Gerald.

“Cousin, something terrible has happened to the Yalerman family. Everything is a complete mess now!”

Chapter 838

“Something happened?”

Bea proceeded to explain to Gerald what had happened to the Yalerman family.

To put it briefly, the Yalerman family, which was already down in the dumps had just been stabbed in the back by the Long family, again.

The Long family had set their crosshairs on the Yalaman family's main source of income, which was also the largest remaining development project they had on hand.

This was in spite of the fact that the Yalaman family's finances were well-structured enough for them to retaliate.

However, both of them had control over massive industries which further fuelled their never-ending demand for more capital.

This was especially so for the kind of business their family was directly involved in. It was the Yalaman family's immediate lifeline, without which they would cease to exist.

Such a massive project had been yanked out of their hands.

It was natural for them to feel the pain at first instance.

When Lady Yalaman was lecturing Rose for her mistakes, she shoved the blame to someone else.

To be more exact, she pressured Bea into getting a new project for the company.

Lady Yalaman was so frustrated that she told anyone who was inactive and wasn't willing to chip in to get lost from the family.

She pointed her finger directly at Bea and Gerald's fifth aunt.

This naturally pissed the both of them off.

"Hahaha. Is that all? Then it should be a pretty easy job!"

Gerald said with a wry smile on his face after listening to Bea.

“Cousin, the Yalerman family is in a complete mess right now, so don’t joke around with me anymore! God! My mother and I are both really frustrated right now. This is obviously all my eldest uncle’s fault. He was the one who got us into this mess so why are they shoving the blame to us instead?!”

Bea started complaining.

“Why would I be joking with you? Y’know, grandma’s not feeling this way because you guys have just lost this project. After all, the Yalerman family is not desperately in need of money. However, she is feeling anxious because the Yalerman family has no new projects anymore. The Yalerman family specializes in engineering development. Having a project on hand is like constantly having an advertising campaign. It all pays to have our name circulating among our potential clients. Without a project, the only outcome will be a downward spiral, and it’s this thing that grandma’s really worried about!” Gerald replied.

“I guess you’re right. But even though I’m in the project department, I can’t just handle the entire project on my own. Rose is supposed to be in charge of all of this. I knew she was just trying to get rid of me and my mother! She won’t stop until we’re out of the family!”

“Then, you should just gain a few large-scale projects for the Yalerman Group and show her that you’re a capable person. I’ll help you with that!” Gerald replied with a smile.

“There you go, pulling my leg again!”

“I am not joking with you! I am dead serious!”

Gerald shook his head before he whipped out his cell phone.

After uttering a few words into the phone.

Gerald looked at Bea and, “It’s done. You can go to the headquarters of the Trustdeck Group later in the afternoon and the person-in-charge there will hand over the project to you, okay?”

“Cousin brother, you know people in the Trustdeck Group?”

Bea always felt something mysterious about Gerald.

“Yep! Sure do! One of my classmates works there!”

Gerald replied as he feigned ignorance.

After all, it was not the time for him to reveal his identity yet. Although there was no need for him to keep any secrets from Bea, there were still some things that he thought were very troublesome to explain.

“Don’t worry about it. When have I ever lied to you? After going there, you’ll be meeting someone named Mr. Kayden Zelly. He’s the guy in charge of the project!” Gerald replied seriously.

Bea nodded when she realized Gerald wasn’t fooling her.

Nothing posed much of a difficulty for Gerald who had already gained full control over all the family businesses in Weston.

Of course, Bea wasn’t going to waste her time talking to Gerald.

After freshening up, Bea headed straight for the headquarters of the Trustdeck Group. She did so having complete faith in her cousin, that he wasn’t bamboozling her.

Trustdeck Group was a massive corporation in Yanken. It was no family business, but it was commonly regarded as the God of Wealth for many family businesses.

Therefore, their strength and influence were absolutely unimaginable.

“Miss, there are a lot of clients here today so please wait in the VIP waiting area!”

When Bea arrived at their building, a customer service representative led Bea to the VIP waiting area in a very respectful manner.

After entering the waiting area.

Bea saw several of her acquaintances waiting inside.

Simultaneously, all of those acquaintances saw Bea too.

“Oh my! Why if it isn’t Bea? You came here too?”

Chapter 839

“It’s you guys?”

Bea frowned as soon as she saw them.

Sitting there was none other than her eldest uncle’s family of three and also her second uncle’s family of three.

What happened today fostered the hatred Bea had for Rose and the rest of the Yalman family.

“How disrespectful of you, Bea. Aren’t you supposed to greet your elders when you see them? Have you no manners, or even a basic sense of courtesy!?”

Rose’s response was cold as ever.

Yuma glared at her with an angry expression.

“What are you doing here?” he questioned.

“I am here to discuss a project of ours!”

Bea had a bag she was holding. Everyone in the VIP waiting area was all either bosses or some local tycoon. Either that or they were second-rate owners of their respective enterprises, just like her eldest uncle.

She was the only person here who was dressed like an ordinary employee.

“Hmph! What did you say? You’re here to talk about a project?” Rose asked while laughing in Bea’s face.

She stared at Bea as if she was looking at a fool.

“Do you know that this is the Trustdeck Group we’re talking about? Why don’t you take a look around you again and see what sort of people are waiting here right now? You really think that you will have the honor of working with these folks based on your abilities?”

The second aunt said as she smiled wryly.

“Hey, maybe Bea’s starting to panic because of what you said earlier today. Maybe she finally realized that she’s nothing but a liability to the family! Maybe she’s so terrified of being kicked out of the family that she’s got no choice but to try her luck here!”

Yura shook his head as he directed a bitter smile at Bea.

“That sounds about right! Never have I ever heard of ordinary employees coming to the headquarters of the Trustdeck Group just to talk to the person-in-charge about a pathetic little project. Bea, I’m warning you, don’t you even think about telling them that you’re a part of our family! You bring nothing but shame and embarrassment to our name!”

Ysabel said contemptuously.

Bea was furious but she paid them no heed. She sat down at the corner of the VIP waiting area.

“You know what, forget it. Let’s just ignore that silly girl. Yura, didn’t you say that your classmate from M Country is working here as well? Your classmate’s father knows Mr. Huddell, who is the manager here, right? Why isn’t he here yet?” Yuma asked.

They were here to ask for his help.

If Yura could get his hands on a project this time, his position as the future heir of the Yaleman family would be set in stone.

This was the reason why they’ve decided to come here.

The second eldest, however, was a shameless bunch, so they too decided to follow Yura and his family all the way here.

However, Yuma was not afraid that they would steal the spotlight from Yura.

“I have already made a phone call just now. Mr. Huddell’s still in a meeting. My classmate’s father has already told him about this just now. Since he knows that we’re from the Yuleman family and have personally come here to see him, I have faith that he won’t ignore our pleas.”

Yura replied confidently.

“Alright then!”

It was around this moment that a beautiful receptionist approached them.

“Are you Mr. Yuma Yuleman?”

“Yes!”

“Hello, Mr. Yuleman. Mr. Huddell has just finished his meeting. Please enjoy a cup of tea while you wait here. I will bring you over to Mr. Huddell’s office to proceed with your discussion later!”

“Okay! Thank you very much!”

Yuma and Rose were overjoyed when they realized their plans were going smoothly.

At the same time, however, they sighed under their breaths upon realizing that they would have to lower themselves in front of another person in order to get what they want.

To tell you the truth, Mr. Huddell was merely an assistant manager. He was just one of the many managers in the secretarial department.

It wasn’t like they had better options though.

What Yuma desperately needed now were projects which would secure his position in the Yaleman family.

After all, there were also the Long and Quarrington families in the equation, meaning the Trustdeck Group had many options to choose from.

“Are you Miss Yaleman? I just checked and I didn’t see any appointments made under your name?”

The receptionist shifted her attention over to Bea.

“Ah? Do I need to make an appointment? My cousin told me to come and there’d be someone waiting for me here!”

Chapter 840

Bea said a little nervously.

“Your cousin? May I know who he is? Who did he ask you to look for here?”

The receptionist working the front desk had a very good temperament and it was clear that she had received special training for serving their clients. She treated everyone in the room with respect, even the plainly-dressed Bea.

“His name is Gerald Crawford. He told me to come here and look for a man named Mr. Kayden Zelly!”

The receptionist at the front desk shook her head and with a painful smile, she told Bea, “I am sorry but there is no one named Kayden Zelly here. We have never heard of anyone called Gerald Crawford either. Are you sure you didn’t make a mistake?”

“What?”

Bea’s nervousness spiked upon hearing the receptionist’s response. This was especially so because everyone had their eyes on her. She started blushing out of embarrassment.

“Oh my god! What did I say just now? God, how embarrassing! What a fool she was to come all the way here!”

Speechless, Ysabel covered her face to shield herself from the awkward atmosphere.

“Whose connection did she say she was relying on? Gerald Crawford? Has this girl gone mad? Gerald is the one who made her come here? Hahaha! Even the receptionist has never heard of that name she said!” Rose sneered.

Bea was so nervous that she clenched her fists tightly, clueless as to what to do next.

“Yura! Uncle Yaleman! Everything’s already settled. Mr. Huddell will come over here in a short while. You guys should drink up first!”

A young man showed up with a bright smile on his face.

He was obviously none other than Yura’s classmate.

“Miss Lacroix, what’s wrong?”

Yura’s classmate glanced at the front desk, this time with a much more half-hearted smile.

The receptionist at the front desk replied, “Miss Yaleman said that she’s here on her cousin’s recommendation. She said she’s looking for someone called Mr. Kayden Zelly. Tobias, you have not heard of anyone called Kayden Zelly working here, have you?”

“No, I don’t think I’ve ever heard of that name before as well!” Tobias replied while shaking his head.

Taking up a more dominant posture, he told Bea, “Listen, would you like to re-check with that cousin of yours to ask if you’re in the right company?”

Everyone in the room started laughing as soon as they heard him say that.

“Embarrassing! God this is humiliating!” Yuma said angrily.

“You fool! You buffoon! Gerald is just lying to you. You sure are thick-skinned, aren’t you? Should Mr. Huddell hear about this matter, he’ll undoubtedly treat our family as a bunch of clowns! I’m telling Lady Yaleman about your acts when we get home later!”

Rose said while poking her finger against Bea’s skull.

“Why don’t you look at that fool’s character and personality? Do you seriously believe everything that he says?”

“No, my cousin would never lie to me! He’s not that kind of a person!” Bea refuted their words immediately.

“Hmph! You’re literally the only person who treats him as your actual cousin! He is nothing but a fool, and so are you!” Ysabel replied.

“Oh! Mr. Huddell is here!”

Someone called out.

A middle-aged man dressed in a tailored suit and polished leather shoes walked out of the elevator into the VIP waiting area with a group of female assistants.

The assistants parted into two neat rows.

There were about forty people.

It was Mr. Huddell’s personal way of welcoming his guests.

Some of the leaders of their respective departments were present as well.

Mr. Huddell was focused on arranging their positions, from the front, all the way to the back.

“Wow! Miss Lacroix, is a VIP coming today? Maybe it’s some big executive from the senior management of some MNC?”

Tobias was stunned. “They’re actually preparing a welcoming ceremony!”

“I’ve no idea. We’re not qualified enough to get in touch with any of the senior management executives. Only people like Mr. Huddell is authorized to do that!”

The receptionist at the front desk replied.

Trustdeck Group was a massive corporation and it was divided into three different classes, low-level, mid-level, and high-level management.

The front desk only had contact with people from the low and mid-levels, never anyone from the high-level management.

Such a scene more likely than not was a sign that someone from the high-level management was coming...

Chapter 841

“Who could it be?”

As the others looked at each other in dismay, Manager Huddell—who was making use of his free time—entered the VIP reception room.

As soon as Yuma saw him, he gave a subtle smile before saying, “Manager Huddell!”

“Sincerest apologies for being so inattentive toward you today, Chairman Yalaman. There’s just been so much to do! I do hope that you’ll bear with me for the moment,” replied Manager Huddell.

Hearing that, Yuma then said, “You’re being way too cordial. I’m well aware that the Trustdeck Group is extremely busy every day! While that is so, you still took the time to attend, and I appreciate that!”

In response, Manager Huddell sighed before saying, “Speaking of which, Chairman Yalaman, I’ve asked around regarding the incident you mentioned back then. However, if it’s related to bidding and proposal affairs, Chairman Zelly—my superior—currently has no time to look into it! You may have to wait for a while before he can attend to that incident!”

“It’s all good, Manager Huddell! I trust in your ability to make arrangements!” replied Yuma in a somewhat servile manner.

Upon hearing that, Manager Huddell then looked at his watch before saying, in a doubtful tone, “How odd, though. Chairman Zelly said that the person should have arrived long ago. I wonder why they haven't arrived yet...”

‘Could she already be here...?’ Manager Huddell thought to himself.

As his gaze fell upon the door, Leah—a female receptionist—asked, “Could I know who you’re waiting for, Manager Huddell?”

“Ah, speak of the devil. I was just about to go look for you! Could you check with reception on whether Miss Bea Yaleman has arrived?”

“Miss Bea Yaleman?” repeated Leah, clearly stunned as she turned to look at Bea who was still standing at the side.

Yuma and Rose themselves were stupefied.

‘What the hell? Why is Manager Huddell looking for Bea?’

“M-manager Huddell... This girl here is Bea Yaleman!” replied Leah as she pointed at Bea.

The moment he heard that, Manager Huddell’s expression immediately changed and he rushed toward her before asking, “You’re Miss Yaleman? Could you be here today to meet Chairman...?”

“That’s right. I came to meet Chairman Kayden Zelly,” replied Bea with a nod, finally able to breathe a sigh of relief.

‘That’s right, why would Gerald ever prank me on such a thing? He told me that he had a way, and I believe that he’ll keep to his word.’

Getting the confirmation he needed, Manager Huddell then slapped his thighs before saying, “Alas! I hadn’t anticipated that you’d be here so early! Chairman Zelly had even ordered me to personally welcome you!”

Hearing him say that, everyone became even more stunned than before! This was especially so for Rose whose mouth was now gaping so wide that it looked almost comical.

“M-Manager Huddell, are you certain you aren’t mistaken...? There really is a person called Kayden Zelly in the group?” asked Rose in disbelief as Ysabel and Yura glared at Bea with burning jealousy.

“He’s one of the superiors here who’s always kept a low profile. Speaking of which, Madam Gosling, it’s rather imprudent of you to address my superior by name, don’t you think?” replied Manager Huddell in an astonished tone.

Being one of the superiors in the group who preferred working behind the scenes, there was no need for casual small fries to even know Kayden’s name.

“I-I apologize! I just wanted to confirm whether there’s been a mistake! After all, Bea’s a mere employee in my company. Why would she even have the privilege of personally being welcomed by you?” said Rose.

“The only person who knows why is Chairman Zelly. Regardless, you’re here to negotiate the project, right, Miss Yalerman?” replied Manager Huddell respectfully as he turned to look at Bea with a smile.

After seeing Bea’s firm nod, Manager Huddell then continued, “Very well. Chairman Zelly’s already prepared a signing ceremony for you upstairs. If there isn’t anything else, let’s proceed with that now, shall we?”

“Huh? We’re signing it already?” replied Bea, astonished.

Bea had initially thought that she would still need to negotiate carefully upon arriving. After all, though Gerald had proper connections—just like Yura did—that would only grant her access into the battlefield.

To her surprise, things were running incredibly smoothly. Even more surprising was the fact that her cousin was actually acquainted with one of the superiors from the Trustdeck Group.

Moments later, a female usher came by and held on to Bea’s bag for her as she followed Manager Huddell upstairs.

“Could they have made some kind of mistake, mom?”

Yura had asked that question in his sheer disbelief.

“That’s right! To think that she had even claimed that it was because of Gerald’s connections... How does he even know such high ranked people? How is any of this possible?” grumbled Ysabel enviously.

After being humiliated like that, they were sure that everyone was now looking at the two families with mocking gazes.

Rose herself was now thinking of how Gerald had withdrawn a million dollars just the day before. She also recalled what Yura had told her about Gerald’s clothes.

Adding that to the fact that she had now seen, with her very own eyes, that Gerald had the capability to pull strings from within the Trustdeck group, she was extremely certain that he was no ordinary person.

“Hold on a minute!” interrupted Rose while Ysabel and her mother were still exchanging envious words in their annoyance.

“Could it be that we’ve not investigated Gerald’s background thoroughly enough? Is he actually not a pauper at all? How else could he have such extravagance? That would explain why he has so many powerful connections as well!” said Rose in a serious tone.

Upon hearing that, everyone fell silent. After all, nobody wanted to believe it. However, reluctant as they were, the truth was evident.

“...I... I refuse to believe that! It simply isn’t possible!” declared Second aunt as she shook her head wildly.

“Indeed! We don’t believe that either!” added Yura and Ysabel simultaneously.

After that, Rose went silent for a while. Since she was so used to being slick, her ability to conceal her emotions was so great that nobody could guess what she was thinking during her momentary pause.

Eventually, however, Rose cupped her hands over her mouth in shock as she realized something horrifying.

Seeing her reaction, even Yuma and Yura felt terrified.

“M-mom? What’s wrong?” asked Yura immediately.

“There’s no need to be so flustered, sister-in-law! Perhaps Gerald simply helped Chairman Zelly in the past! If that truly happened, then the chairman could very well just be repaying the favor to Gerald! That possibility isn’t out of the question, right?” suggested Second aunt.

Hearing that, Rose’s eyelids twitched as she shook her head before saying, “Have you forgotten about the present Lady Yalaman received today? The one that cost a hundred and fifty million dollars?”

“You mean the present given by the mysterious Mr. Crawford...?”

The moment that name was mentioned, silence temporarily engulfed the room again.

“...That’s right... Mr. Crawford is definitely from the Crawford family and Gerald has that surname too... Could... Could it be that Gerald’s actually Mr. Crawford? If he is, then everything makes a lot more sense now!”

The conjecture alone was sending chills down Rose’s spine.

While there wasn’t an immediate reply from anyone, everyone had unpleasant expressions on their faces.

“That’s... That’s simply impossible!” shouted Second aunt.

“For now, let’s refrain from making any more wild guesses, aunt. Instead, let’s just wait for Bea. She, for one, definitely knows more about him than any of us here. Besides, if she fails to get the projects, everything will become clear. Until then, we have no way of proving that Gerald is actually powerful,” added Ysabel.

“That’s true. Fine, we’ll just wait for Bea to return!”

It was about forty minutes later when Bea finally returned. This time, however, she had five document files in hand.

Her aunt and the others had been waiting for her at the door this entire time and once they saw the contracts, they were so shocked that they immediately called out, "Bea!"

"You... You've signed all those?" asked Rose incredulously.

"I have! I now have five major projects from the Trustdeck group that spans from this year to the next!" replied Bea excitedly.

'Let's see you try bullying me and my mother again from now on!' Bea thought to herself.

After saying that, she immediately began walking away without even bothering to look at the astonished crowd.

"Stop right there!" shouted Rose.

"What do you want?"

"Humph! Don't think you can act all smug just because you've gained a few projects! Regardless, I'd like to ask about Gerald. How does he have so many strong connections? And how on earth did he even manage to get acquainted with Chairman Zelly in the first place?"

Chapter 843

"I don't know. Why don't you ask him yourself?" said Bea before promptly leaving.

"It's... It's all over now. Bea's definitely made the biggest contribution this time around!" shouted Yura.

"Why are you being so anxious? Bea probably can't make anything big out of it! Still, she isn't the biggest issue now. The main thing we have to worry about, is that b*tch's son, Gerald! We need to find out how much power he truly holds!" declared Rose.

The second she said that, everyone relevant received a message in the family's group chat. The family's butler had just issued a family meeting, and they were to gather at the Yalman family's conference room within an hour.

"See that? Bea's asked for credit so quickly! The meeting's definitely related to the projects this time around!" said Second aunt aloud.

Rose then crossed her arms and smiled coldly before saying, "Let's return home for now... I want to see what sort of mess that girl ends up making!"

By the time the hour was up, everyone in the family was already in the Yaleman family's conference room. After all, meetings organized by Lady Yaleman were mandatory to attend.

Lady Yaleman herself was already at the main seat, and she seemed to be beaming with joy.

"I'm sure most of you already know why I'm hosting this family meeting. That's right, you're all here to watch me praise Bea! To think that she was able to get everything done by noon when I just talked about it this morning! She's definitely put in a lot of effort! Not only did she fulfill the task, she even brought our family five new projects! With the Trustdeck Group agreeing to have a deep cooperative relationship with Bea from today onward, I can safely say that she's truly made a great contribution to the Yaleman family!" announced Lady Yaleman with a smile so broad that even her wrinkles seemed to be beaming.

Hearing that, everyone could only look at Bea incredulously.

"Moving on, I also have an arrangement to announce. Not only will Bea be in charge of the five projects, but she'll also be given the roles of general manager of the project department as well as the vice president of the Yaleman Construction Group!" declared Lady Yaleman.

"What?!"

Upon hearing that, a deafening uproar surrounded the room. Yura himself felt like he had just received a massive kick to the gut.

After all, before her birthday, Lady Yaleman definitely had something else planned. She had stated that he would become the Yaleman Construction Group's vice president, and that she would officially announce it after her birthday party.

Yet here she was! Granting the post to Bea instead!

Rose, on the other hand, could feel her lips twitching slightly at the thought of Bea being able to enjoy similar privileges with them from now on.

“Just continue maintaining a good rapport with the Trustdeck Group, Bea! I believe in you!” said Lady Yalaman.

With the major announcement done, the meeting continued as per usual. Quite a few other things were discussed before the meeting finally ended.

As she watched Bea leave, Rose—who had stayed behind—turned to look at Lady Yalaman before saying in a hushed tone, “Mom...! While it’s true that Bea has proved her capabilities and she should, indeed, be given praise and encouragement, I’d like to confirm whether you’re serious about placing her in charge...”

“Of course I am. Bea’s the one who was able to get those projects. It’s only natural for her to get that role,” replied Lady Yalaman.

“That’s true, but consider the fact that no matter what, Bea’s still a woman. Putting aside her ability to properly hold the role of vice president for the moment, she’s not exactly young anymore, mom. She’ll definitely get married within the next two years or so, and when that happens, she’ll belong to another family...”

Upon hearing that, Lady Yalaman found herself slowly calming down from her earlier excitement.

“What more, Bea’s never had any experience being a superior! She’s only ever worked as a subordinate for as long as she lived! I’m simply worried that she won’t be able to handle this kind of responsibility, at least not yet! Another reason I’m worried is because of her kindness! It makes her susceptible to being tricked! Just look at our smart Yuma! Even he ended up being tricked by the Longs! Bea wouldn’t stand a chance against such people!” added Rose with a sigh.

After thinking for a brief moment, Lady Yalaman then ordered, “Sheldon, tell Bea to return to the conference room!”

“Right away, chairman!”

Hearing that, Rose and Yura exchanged gazes with each other, smug grins on their faces.

As soon as Bea arrived home sometime later, she angrily shouted, “Ahh, this is so annoying!”

At the time, Gerald was pruning the flowers on the balcony. Hearing how annoyed she was, he then asked, “What’s wrong, Bea?”

“It’s Rose! What a truly vicious woman she is... You know, grandma had already announced that I was going to be placed in charge of the projects! I was ready to finally have a chance to train myself! I don’t know what Rose said to her, but grandma ended up changing her mind at the very last second! Now both Yura and I have been placed in charge! After treating me and my mother like that, what right does he have to be part of any of this!”

Chapter 844

Her tone was rightfully angry as she said all that.

“Regardless of whether he’s part of it or not, don’t forget that you’re the one in power here. The Trustdeck Group cooperates with you. Not Yura,” reminded Gerald.

“...That’s true. I don’t have to be afraid anymore! Speaking of which, cousin, I see you’ve prepared a gift box there. Who’s it for?” asked Bea as she sat on a sofa while looking at him.

Hearing her question, Gerald wiped his hands clean and picked the gift box up before saying, “I was planning to pay grandma a visit once your meeting was over.”

Gerald had initially wanted to meet up with her earlier but once he found out that the Yalemans were having a family meeting, he postponed his plan. After all, he really didn’t want to have to deal with First aunt and the others.

“Still, aren’t you the curious one. Did you think that it was a birthday gift for you?” added Gerald with a cheeky smile on his face. He remembered, at that moment, that Bea’s birthday was in two days.

In response, Bea stuck her tongue out before saying, “No, I didn’t!”

“Regardless, since the meeting is over, I’ll go visit grandma now. I heard that she’s been turning in quite early nowadays!”

While his tone was casual, Gerald was honestly feeling extremely anxious since he was, after all, about to discuss reconciliation with his fearsome grandmother.

Upon arriving at her home, however, he first bumped into both Yura and Rose who were taking a stroll. The mother and child were quite wary of Gerald at this point after all that had happened.

“What are you doing here at this late hour, Gerald?” asked Yura.

"I've come to meet grandma!" replied Gerald.

"Humph! Lady Yalaman's already turned in! If there's anything, you can just discuss it with me!" said Rose as she crossed her arms.

"Thank you, but I kindly refuse!" said Gerald rather coldly before turning around to walk away from the duo.

"Hold it right there! What kind of tone was that?" growled Rose furiously when she saw how disrespectful Gerald was being to her in front of her other subordinates.

"Is there a problem?" replied Gerald as he turned around to look at her again.

The moment she saw his icy glare, Rose momentarily became tongue-tied, and simply ended up saying, "...It's... nothing..."

With that, she watched as Gerald made his way into the house.

"Mom, that bumpkin is getting more and more imprudent by the day! Were you honestly afraid of him just now?" asked Yura in dissatisfaction.

"...What? Afraid? Me?" replied Rose in disbelief.

At that, Yura simply nodded.

After processing her feelings for a second, Rose realized that her son was right. The emotion had been fleeting, but Rose faintly recalled her heart momentarily skipping a beat when Gerald had glared at her.

Emotions could be weird at times. After all, when she had first met Gerald a few days ago, he wasn't any less cold and aloof toward her.

However, she had merely disliked him back then. She hadn't thought much about him at all, and she had simply mocked as she pleased.

To think that that was only a few days ago.

Now, he was still very much the same person with the same personality, yet Rose hardly had any confidence to insult him anymore.

Even if she didn't want to believe it, she simply had to. She had come to terms that she had indeed, been terrified of him when he had glared at her moments ago.

Still, why was she so afraid of him now?

"Chairman, Mr. Gerald is here!" said Sheldon just as Lady Yalaman was about to turn in for the night.

Stunned, she then thought for a brief moment before replying, "Let him in."

Chapter 845

"Since your body's condition hasn't been too well recently, I've bought some health supplements for you, grandma!" said Gerald as he placed his gift aside once he entered.

"Humph! How rare it is to see you being this thoughtful!" replied Lady Yalaman in a solemn tone. After all, Gerald had come empty-handed on her actual birthday that day.

Regardless, though it was true that she had disowned Yulia, she had to admit that it was near impossible to perfectly slice the bond between mother and daughter. What more, Gerald and Jessica were both her biological grandchildren.

As a grandmother, she had honestly always wanted to at least have some form of contact with him.

However, when she first saw how pathetic Gerald looked, she was instantly reminded of Dylan. Both father and son were so alike... Their characteristics were similar as well.

They were simply the kinds of people who never retorted or fought back against others, even if they were scolded or beaten up.

After a slightly agonizing silence, Lady Yalaman asked, "...Has your mother been leading a good life all these years, Gerald?"

“She has. To tell you the truth, my mom frequently misses you!” said Gerald as he sat up straight.

“Humph! She’s having a good life even when she’s together with a person like your dad? I know why you’re here, Gerald, and I’m obligated to tell you that it isn’t customary for the Yaleman family to hand out properties to those from outside the family. You can give up on that. After all, it’s been over twenty years now and I’ve not heard a single word from that woman. I’m afraid she must’ve assumed I died long ago!” replied Lady Yaleman angrily.

At that, Gerald smiled before saying, “Please don’t say that, grandma. I’m honestly not here for any of the Yaleman family’s properties. My reason for being here is to moderate the resentment between you and mom.”

“Moderate? I won’t even be alive for much longer, so what’s the point in that? Besides, all of this began when she ran away from that wedding that year! Not only did it cause the Leans family to stand against the Yalemans like rabid dogs, it’s also the reason why our family’s position has consistently been deteriorating throughout the years. While we were the head of the four large families here back then, we’re now that last! We’ve truly suffered a lot because of her!” retorted Lady Yaleman as she got increasingly furious.

“While that’s true, the Leans family was ruined by someone else shortly after, no?” replied Gerald as he slowly raised his head.

Hearing that, Lady Yaleman was stunned. From his gaze and the way he had said it, she was able to catch on to what he was trying to imply.

“I’d just like to say something since I’m already here today. It wasn’t entirely my mom’s fault regarding what had happened back then. With all due respect, you were partly responsible for all that as well. Besides, things change. You may have thought that my father was but a pauper back then, but who’s to say that he’s remained the same after twenty years? Regardless, I hope you rest well, grandma. I’ll come meet you again in a few days,” said Gerald as he got up to leave.

Lady Yaleman could only stare at his back in surprise as he left the room.

It was her first time having a formal chat with her grandson, and it was also the moment when she realized that Gerald wasn’t a weak yes-man like how he presented himself to be.

Gerald had also seemed to indicate something rather preposterous to her during their brief conversation.

After seeing Gerald off, the butler began unwrapping the gift that Gerald had left in the other room. Usually, the butler would record everything—from the identity of the person who had given the gift, to the contents of the gift itself—upon Lady Yaleman receiving a gift.

However, he was so stupefied the moment he saw the contents of the gift box that he momentarily forgot to do so.

Instead, he began knocking on Lady Yaleman's door before anxiously saying, "C-chairman! Have a look at the gift Mr. Gerald Crawford gave you!"

Upon allowing him to enter, Lady Yaleman's eyes immediately widened in shock as she looked at the gift in her butler's hands.

"That's..."

"If I'm not mistaken, this seems to be the *Saussurea involucre* which had been bid by Chairman Thomson from Yanken. It's said that this thousand-year-old ginseng has the ability to counter all illnesses and also promise longevity!"

Chapter 846

"Sau... *Saussurea involucre*?" replied Lady Yaleman, her voice quivering as she continued staring at the gift in bewilderment.

"How could Gerald possibly have gotten his hands on such an expensive and valuable thing...?"

The butler himself simply lowered his head. After thinking for a brief moment, he then said, "... There's something on my mind, though I'm not sure whether I should say it, Chairman."

"Go on!"

"From what I've been able to observe, Mr. Crawford doesn't seem to be an ordinary person. Rather, he seems to exude the disposition of someone with nobility! There's just something about the way he talks... This may seem far-fetched, but have you considered that maybe, just maybe... Mr. Crawford could be the mysterious..."

"...Are you suggesting that Gerald is the Crawford family's Mr. Crawford?" replied Lady Yaleman, greatly surprised to even hear Sheldon suggest that.

In response, Sheldon simply pointed at the *Saussurea involucre* again. That alone, made Lady Yaleman's heart skip a beat.

“...How... How could that be possible? You saw how Dylan looked that year as well, right? There’s simply no way!” said Lady Yaleman incredulously.

“Chairman, with all due respect, the Yaleman family hasn’t been having it easy in the past few years... The problem isn’t limited to our slowly declining business either. The internal fights within the family have worsened over time as well, since quite a few parties in the family are after greater power distributions once you’re no longer in the picture. May I remind you that Mr. Yuma Yaleman has also caused a lot of trouble for the family throughout the years.”

“Even with all that happening, isn’t it strange that the Yaleman family’s business hasn’t collapsed? It was a few years ago when I first realized that someone must be helping the family in secret. After all, any dangers we faced were quickly dealt with and if we had to deal with any, they were usually minor incidents.”

“What more, remember what happened to the Leans? They were our greatest enemy and they were also immensely powerful back then. However, in just a single night, their entire family fell into bankruptcy. Not only that, the Leans family was wiped off the map entirely! What exactly happened that night? It still remains a mystery to this very day!”

Sheldon had so much to say since he had previously kept all this to himself. After all, he was afraid that Lady Yaleman would be angry if he said all this.

Thankfully, Lady Yaleman was only frowning slightly now.

As she thought about the gift that Mr. Crawford had brought, she eventually sighed heavily as her expression turned gloomy. Regardless of what the truth was, the present itself still cost at least a hundred and fifty million dollars.

It was the next day when Gerald looked at Bea before asking, “It’s your birthday tomorrow, right? How are you planning to celebrate it?”

“I’ve never really celebrated my birthday all these years,” replied Bea.

“Well that’s going to change this year. After all, I’m here to celebrate it with you!” said Gerald with a smile.

Touched by his words, Bea simply nodded. From the way she was fidgeting, however, it was clear that she had something else to add. Despite that, before the question could leave her mouth, she stopped herself. The question could surely wait.

Gerald, however, had already caught on.

“What? Do you want to know how I know the people from the Trustdeck Group?” said Gerald with a smile.

Hearing that, Bea shook her head before saying, “It’s not that... Rather, I’ve been meaning to ask something else. Since you’ve already graduated for some time, I was wondering if I have... You know, a future sister-in-law...? You’re already so excellent, yet never have I seen you calling anyone that could be your girlfriend... While we’re at it, I think that Giya’s a beautiful girl who’s also very well-mannered!”

Bea definitely seemed much more attentive than she looked.

Gerald’s lips slowly turned into a bitter smile as he replied, “I’m not even sure where to start, but Bea, let me ask you something. Would you hate someone who failed to keep their promises? Hypothetically, if your boyfriend were to fail to turn up at a place where both of you had promised to meet, how would you feel?”

“Well, I’d surely be both disappointed and also saddened! No matter how cold and aloof a woman may be, they definitely value dates a lot! After all, a long time is needed just for them to get ready for dates! Breaking such a promise would no doubt be a major disappointment! Though, why are you asking that? Have you broken a promise, cousin?”

Chapter 847

After thinking about it for some time, Gerald ended up gently patting Bea’s head before saying, “I’ll tell you about it sometime in the future. Regardless, it’s your birthday tomorrow! I’ll be preparing a little something for you, so expect to be pleasantly surprised when you receive your gift!”

“Huh? What’s the gift?” asked Bea as she stuck her tongue out playfully.

“It wouldn’t be a surprise if I told you the answer now, would it? Just wait for tomorrow,” replied Gerald with a faint smile before returning to his room.

Though he was smiling as he left, Bea could sense how truly forlorn Gerald was. This wasn’t the first time she had noticed it either.

While her cousin had always behaved like an attentive elder brother would, she was able to tell that he constantly had something weighing on his mind. He just never seemed to be truly happy.

Bea suspected it had something to do with what had happened between him and her possible sister-in-law. However, since he refused to talk about her, Bea didn't continue prying out of respect.

Being his cousin, Bea naturally felt the urge to help him, and she knew that the easiest—and quite possibly the only—way for her to assist in such a situation was to distract him out of his gloominess.

The problem was that Gerald didn't really have many people he could have fun with in Yanken, or at least that was what she assumed.

As the gears in Bea's head began grinding, time passed on and the day of her birthday eventually came.

While she had initially planned to make a reservation at a restaurant early that morning, she received a notification from her family before she could even make the call.

Apparently her family was organizing a party to celebrate the implementation of the projects. All the family's superiors had been invited to attend. After all, it had been so long since such a celebratory party—regarding the signing of contracts—had been held.

From what Bea could remember, the last time a similar party was held was around twelve years ago. This could only signify that the party this time was going to be extraordinarily grand. So grand, in fact, that Lady Yalaman's eightieth birthday party could probably not even come close to rivaling it.

Since the Yalemans had invited everyone they could possibly think of, Bea didn't even dare to think about excusing herself. Thus, both she and Catherine quickly left for the venue once they were ready.

As one of the two main people in charge of the projects, Bea had to stand at the door with Yura to greet the guests.

"Congratulations for getting all those projects, Mr. Yalaman!"

"He's so young but he's already so capable! How remarkable! The future of the Yalaman family truly lies in you now, Mr. Yalaman!"

"Hey, hey, Mr. Yalaman? We should be addressing him as Chairman Yalaman now! Either way, congratulations!"

At the time, several distinguished guests were busy praising Yura. After all, they had heard that the Yalaman family had signed contracts for five major projects. That was an instant sign that their family had undergone an extreme upgrade. Things were definitely going to be different now.

As Yura continued getting praise after praise, Bea simply remained silent as she stood at the side. Even though she was the biggest contributor to this success, she had been completely ignored by most of the guests.

“Humph! While you did manage to gain all those projects, don’t think you’ll get an upper hand just because of that! I’ll say it now, with me here, you’ll eternally be inferior to me!” said Yura as he smiled coldly at Bea.

Though she was furious at his comment, she said nothing.

“Speaking of which, Bea, it’s your birthday today, isn’t it? Hah! Looks like you won’t be able to celebrate it!” added Yura with a smirk on his face as Bea glared at him.

It was a short moment later when Lady Yalaman made her appearance, leading a few people from their family.

When she saw Bea’s expression, however, she immediately said, “Bea, I do hope you realize what sort of occasion we’re celebrating today... Take a look at yourself! So cold and aloof... We have so many distinguished guests here today yet the way you present yourself would make anyone feel unwelcome!”

Lady Yalaman couldn’t refrain from scolding her. After all, she was a person who cared a lot about both her reputation and dignity.

“You may have forgotten, grandma, but it’s Bea’s birthday today! Of course she’d be unhappy since she’s here welcoming guests instead of celebrating it!” explained Yura.

“Oh? It’s your birthday today? What a truly sorry case! You’re feeling burdened to have to deal with family affairs even though it’s your special day, aren’t you?” said Rose out of the blue as she joined in on the conversation.

“I’m not!” denied Bea immediately.

Hearing what Rose had said, Lady Yalaman frowned.

“Regardless, you and Yura are standing out here since you’re both in charge of the projects. However, look at how he presents himself, then compare yourself to him! Mind your manners before the guests! It seems what your aunt had said was right after all. She had claimed that you lacked experience being a superior, and though I thought that you’d be able to adapt quickly, I was wrong. It seems that you’re truly incapable of handling such occasions.”

“You don’t have to welcome the guests anymore! Just head inside and see if there’s anything else that requires help with!” said Lady Yalaman solemnly.

Chapter 848

As she led the other family members away, Yura laughed before smiling coldly at Bea.

“Watch your tongue or you’ll pay a heavy price for it, Yura! Wipe that smirk off your face!” growled Bea as she turned to leave.

The moment she turned around, however, she saw Gerald there. In his hands was a small cake about six inches tall. Only after seeing him did she regain her composure.

“You’re late, cousin!” said Bea rather happily.

“Well I did have to order this cake for your birthday!” replied Gerald as he lifted the cake in his hands for her to see.

“Humph! You truly are from a village! Who still eats cake during their birthday? Lame!” said Yura with a scornful smile.

“Well I love eating cakes, do you have a problem with that?” replied Bea.

“Humph! I’m not even going to continue bothering with you anymore!” sneered Yura.

“Hey, it’s Bea!”

At that moment, a voice came from a car that had just stopped at the Yalaman family house’s entrance.

Slowly, five women—who all looked to be around the same age as Bea—stepped out of the car. All of them were equally beautiful and tall.

“Mae! Yesenia! You’re all here!” said Bea as she waved at them.

The girls were somewhat close friends of Bea’s when she was still in university. Since Lady Yalaman had said that the more the merrier when it came to large celebrations like this, even the younger generations in the family had been allowed to invite their friends over.

Yura himself had invited a few ex-classmates of his own, and they were now standing around him, keeping him company.

“How lively, Bea!” said one of the five girls who had arrived with a smile on her face.

“Indeed! Anyway, since I’m free now, do come in! While we’re at it, I’ll introduce you to my cousin!” said Bea.

She had specifically mentioned Gerald since this was part of her plan. Bea hadn’t invited them simply out of the kindness of her heart. They had also been invited so that her cousin would be able to get to know more people here.

That way, he wouldn’t be lonely anymore!

Though she still didn’t know what happened between her cousin and his girlfriend, she did wonder what would happen if one of her beautiful ex-classmates ended up falling for him.

After all, it was always hard to say when it came to things relating to love and relationships.

“Oh? Is that your cousin? How attentive of him to have remembered your birthday! I mean he even brought that tiny cake along!” said another one of the girls. While her tone had suggested that it was a praise, none of the five girls were able to properly hide the slight contempt in their eyes.

They were, after all, girls who came from quite influential families in Yanken as well.

If they were any closer to Bea, they would’ve definitely given her birthday gifts that cost at least eight hundred dollars. To think that her cousin had only bought her a six-inch cake!

The fact that Bea had sung praises about him before only served to disappoint them greater when they realized that he was probably just a plain, country bumpkin.

While they couldn't help but sneer as they continued looking at Gerald, their expressions immediately changed when they saw four tall and handsome guys walking up to them from behind him, all of them dressed fashionably.

"Well, hello, hello, beautiful ladies! It's our first time here at the Yalaman family house, and that seems to be the case for you as well... Why don't we take a stroll together and get to know each other a little better?" said one of the guys from the group.

Hearing that, they all immediately beamed with joy as they replied, "Sure, why not?"

Yura himself smiled when he saw that they couldn't be bothered by Gerald anymore.

"A stroll? Fancy you suggest that! Alright, how about this? I'll arrange a servant to lead the way for you! In exchange, you better keep these beauties company properly!"

"Excellent idea!" exclaimed the beauties excitedly in their glee.

Chapter 849

Bea, on the other hand, was unhappy to hear that. After all, from what she could tell, he had probably guessed that she had specifically invited her ex-classmates over to introduce them to her cousin. Yura was definitely doing this on purpose.

"You'll have much more fun with me! There's no need to take a stroll with them!" said Bea angrily.

Seeing how mad she was, her classmates simply looked at each other before pouting as they entered the house with Bea.

As they walked through the backyard, Gerald couldn't help but sigh.

He knew what Bea was up to. While he understood that she only wanted to get him a girlfriend out of kindness, he wasn't really in the mood to get to know any more female friends at the moment.

After all, he was no stranger to getting into trouble from getting too attached to his female friends. Alice was a textbook example of that.

Because of that, Gerald only treated the beauties from the perspective of an elder brother. However, the girls themselves weren't even interested in talking with him. After all, none of them looked up to Gerald.

Due to that, the atmosphere was rather dull.

Sometime later, Yura's gang walked over to them again before saying, "Well hello there, beauties! We meet again!"

"Indeed! What a pleasant coincidence!" replied the girls with smiles on their faces.

"It seems that us getting to know each other is inevitable. Since even fate itself is pushing us together, why not use the opportunity to exchange our Line contact information? We promise to bring you to other fun places in the future!" said one of Yura's ex-classmates with a charming smile on his face.

As he said that, Yura's other friends looked at Gerald with scornful eyes.

"So you're the cousin we've been hearing about? Just look at that tiny cake! The beauties won't even be able to share it among themselves! Why didn't you get a bigger one?" mocked yet another guy.

After saying that, they proceeded to exchange contact information with one another.

Noticing that Bea was now glaring at them with hostility, they decided not to stay there any longer. They took turns winking at the beauties before finally leaving.

"Well, I didn't know you were coming! Otherwise, I would've definitely gotten a bigger one! Haha!" said Gerald as he laughed bitterly.

Hearing that, the beauties simply rolled their eyes. They weren't even going to bother replying to that.

"Say Mae, I'm not sure if you've noticed, but wasn't one of those handsome guys from earlier Klaus Waine from the Waine Group?"

“Yeah, that’s definitely him! And the one wearing glasses was Lionel Zinke, right? The one from Dynamics Information Technology Corporation? I heard that his family’s company is going to be listed soon!”

“D*mn! As expected, no ordinary people could be within that group of friends! After all, they’re all from influential families!”

“Well aren’t you excited? Do you have a crush on one of them or something?”

As Mae and the other girls continued discussing among themselves excitedly, Bea could only sigh before looking at Gerald.

“I really appreciate you buying me this cake, cousin... This is honestly the first time I’ve celebrated my birthday with a person other than my mother... Well, let’s go find someplace to share the cake between us!” said Bea as she held onto Gerald’s hands, deeply moved by his thoughtfulness.

“Sounds like a plan!”

As the two of them went off to enjoy the cake, Sheldon—the butler—himself was extremely busy.

Since word had spread that the Yalemans were making a comeback, hordes of people kept on coming throughout the morning. The grandiose scene could barely be compared to Lady Yaleman’s eightieth birthday celebration which was awkwardly silent most of the time.

However, since Lady Yaleman had allowed for visitors to be invited over, many of the guests there weren’t even people that the family personally knew.

It was soon half-past ten and most of the distinguished guests had already arrived by then. Knowing that, Yura then entered the living room to serve them there next.

Since someone still had to stand at the door, Sheldon took Yura’s place. It was quite a while later—and not many more guests were expected to arrive—when Sheldon turned to re-enter the house. However, before he could do so, the corner of his eye caught a glimpse of a team of cars heading toward the Yaleman family’s house.

Squinting his eyes, he was shocked when he saw that all the cars within that group were luxury cars! How dazzling!

While it was true that there were already at least a hundred luxury cars present—since many of the guests were, after all, wealthy and distinguished people—it seemed that the total price tag of the swiftly approaching team of cars could easily outprice the total cost of all the cars parked there!

Chapter 850

The fact that such distinguished guests were coming over sent shivers down Sheldon's spine.

When the cars finally stopped before Sheldon, a family of four stepped out of one of the luxurious vehicles. They consisted of a middle-aged couple, their son, and their daughter.

"Thank you for attending the Yaleman family party. It's a pleasure to have you with us. Could you perhaps be... Chairman Jagger?" said Sheldon, astonished that such a distinguished person had come.

"A pleasure to meet you as well! And yes, I'm Brody Jagger!"

"What an honor! Not only do you have an astounding reputation, but you're also the richest among the four richest people in Jacksonville!"

Sheldon was extremely anxious now. How couldn't he be? The richest man from Jacksonville was now standing before him! He couldn't even stop his hands from quivering.

Since the Yalemans weren't able to curry favor Chairman Jagger and his people before this, his arrival today was definitely a pleasant surprise.

Before Sheldon could even recover from his shock, another team of cars could be seen making their way toward the Yaleman family's house.

Upon arriving, yet another middle-aged man stepped out of the car together with his family. Dumbstruck as he stared at the man who looked to be around fifty, he gulped as he said, "...Chairman Yarbury?"

"Good god! Chairman Yarbury from Yanken is here as well! I can't believe this!"

It wasn't long before more and more influential people arrived. In addition to a few famous people from other provinces in the Northwest, there were even those who came from the Takoma Province as well!

In the end, a total of twenty extremely distinguished people made their appearance and all of them brought their families along.

If Sheldon hadn't pinched his thigh hard, he wouldn't have believed that any of this was truly happening. He was honestly feeling quite light-headed now being in the presence of so many great people.

Snapping out of it, he immediately bowed down low before saying, "This way, please!"

"You don't have to worry about us. We aren't here to participate in the Yalaman family's party," said Brody as he pacified his youngest daughter.

"...Huh? Then... Why exactly are all of you here?" asked Sheldon in a doubtful tone.

"We're here to celebrate Miss Bea Yalaman's birthday, of course! Could you please take us to her?"

"M-Miss Bea's birthday?" replied Sheldon, astonished.

'Since when did she get to know so many influential big shots...?'

Sheldon didn't dare to enquire them about it so he simply bowed again before saying, "Miss Bea should currently be in the backyard. Allow me to lead you to her!"

When the group of big shots graced Bea with their presence, she became equally as stupefied as the rest of her ex-classmates.

“Happy birthday, Miss Bea Yaleman! It’s a pleasure to meet you!” said several of the distinguished guests with smiles on their faces.

“...Huh?”

It was all Bea could say in her stunned state.

While Mae and the other girls were stunned as well, they soon snapped out of it.

“D*mn it, Bea! What the hell is going on? Isn’t that Jagger from Jacksonville? And aren’t those people over there Chairman Yarbury and his family?”

They were so shocked by the sudden turn of events that they completely forgot all about the guys from earlier.

“Haha! We’ve come all the way here to celebrate your birthday with you, Miss Yaleman! Aren’t you going to welcome us? Why not start by getting us some seats?” said Brody as he laughed heartily.

“...O-oh! Yes! I’ll make arrangements for seats immediately, Chairman Jagger! Chairman Yarbury!”

Bea was now extremely flustered and beads of cold sweat were running down her forehead. She had still been eating her cake there when they arrived so she didn’t even know where to start making arrangements.

“I-if I may, you’re our most distinguished guests here today! How could we possibly allow you to enjoy yourselves in the backyard? Please, allow me to lead you to the living room!” said Sheldon, his voice shaky.

“Haha! It’s quite alright. After all, it’s rather nice out here in the backyard. Just get us a table and a few seats! Oh, and some wine and dishes too, of course! And a few drinks for the kids, that’ll do!”

After saying that, Brody handed out an extremely expensive-looking jade bracelet to Bea before saying, “Here’s my birthday gift to you, Miss Yaleman. I hope that you’ll provide me with the support and guidance that I need when it comes to business from now on.”

The moment Sheldon saw the bracelet, he was extremely excited. However, he managed to maintain a calm façade.

Seeing that they were reluctant to head to the living room, he immediately ordered the servants present to move a large table and several seats over. If they wanted a banquet here, he would give it to them.

Bea herself was so nervous that she didn't know what to do. When he saw that, Sheldon calmed himself, realizing that she desperately needed his assistance. By her side, he then quickly and carefully began helping her serve the guests.

The Yaleman family couldn't afford to offend anyone from within that group.

Chapter 851

"T-thank you for the gift, Mr. Shelver!" said Bea as she received yet another gift from another big shot.

Mae and the other girls were simultaneously feeling stunned and jealous of Bea as they looked at all the gifts she was receiving.

"Could these be your best friends, Miss Yaleman? All of them are such beauties! It's a shame that we don't have enough presents to go around! Do wait for a moment as I order someone to send more gifts over! Consider them to be acquaintance gifts!" said Mrs. Jagger as she smiled.

"...Huh? We get gifts too?" replied the girls, surprised.

"But of course! Haha!"

"Alright! Thank you, Chairman Jagger! Mrs. Jagger!" shouted Mae and her friends, unable to contain their excitement and gratitude. After all, since all these people were extremely influential, any gifts they gave would most definitely be extraordinary!

"Hurry up and serve the presidents their drinks, Bea!" squealed Mae and the others excitedly.

"Will do!"

"There's no need for that, we can help ourselves!" said Chairman Jagger and a few others.

Meanwhile, Gerald was playing with a little girl who seemed to be only a few years old.

“Come on, call me uncle and I’ll let you have some cake,” said Gerald with a smile on his face.

“Hello, uncle!” said the little girl as she blinked her large eyes.

“What a good girl!” replied Gerald as he fed her a spoonful of cake.

“We want some too, uncle!” shouted a few other children who instantly ran toward him when they saw the other girl getting cake.

“Of course you can!” said Gerald, beaming.

“What a loser!”

“I know right? The rich young ladies and masters have been pampered from birth! How could he just decide to feed them something like that?”

“How humiliating!”

Mae and the others murmured anxiously among themselves as they glared sternly at Gerald before pulling Bea to the side.

“Bea, tell your cousin to leave already! We’re enough to keep these big shots company!” said Mae who was so anxious that she was stomping her foot on the ground.

“Why should I? Why should he leave?” replied Bea, her expression turning sour.

“What do you mean why? Aren’t you embarrassed to have him here?”

“That’s right! If he stays here any longer we’ll eventually be laughed at!”

The other beauties were now chiming in to get Gerald out of the picture as well.

“I refuse! He can’t leave! Speaking of him, there’s something I need to ask him about...”

After saying that, Bea walked toward Gerald before whispering, “...Cousin? Why exactly did these big shots come over to celebrate my birthday today?”

She was well aware that the only person capable of doing all this was Gerald. After all, Gerald knew an astonishing amount of people. That made him extremely mysterious to her.

“I told you that you were in for a surprise, didn’t I? Happy birthday! Do you like your gift?” replied Gerald with a soft smile.

Hearing that, Bea’s eyes widened. So it was his doing!

“How... How did you even get so many big shots to come over to celebrate with me?” asked Bea excitedly. Forget asking if she liked the gift, she couldn’t even put a value to it since the gift was so outrageously good!

“Get them to come? Bea, they came on their own initiatives. Weren’t you listening? They wanted to cooperate more with you in the business field in future!” replied Gerald with a smile.

“In the business field? But I-”