

# **No Remarriage: You Don't Deserve Me (Lenora and Zachary) Stay Away**

## **Stay Away 271**

Chapter 271 Birds Of A Feather

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Lenora gave him a look that suggested he was out of his mind. "Happy New Year

She turned around and walked ahead.

"Where are you going?" Zachary caught up with her, walking shoulder-to-shoulder toward their destination.

"I'm just taking a walk," she said somewhat irritably.

"I just saw you talking to Mallory. What were you guys talking about?"

+10 Free Coins

Lenora raised an eyebrow at him. "Can't you tell? It's unusual that Johanne and Mallory hardly spoke to each other tonight."

No. I was just too busy looking at you."

Lenora gave him a glare. "Such a smooth talker."

"Really?"

Lenora turned her head away. "It seems Johanne has another woman outside. Do you know about it?"

"I don't." Zachary was taken aback for a moment. "Could there be some sort of misunderstanding?"

He remembered it was Johanne who had pursued Mallory, and the pursuit had lasted for quite some time.

They grew up together, and based on his understanding of Johanne, he knew he deeply loved Mallory. They had been happily married for many years and even had a lovely child. He couldn't possibly cheat on

her.

Lenora said with a hint of mockery, "Mallory found a woman's perfume and hair on him, along with scratches from a woman's nails. He claimed his innocence with that woman, yet when asked about her identity, he remained silent. What, do you think Mallory misunderstood something?"

Zachary fell silent.

Lenora looked askance at him. "You two really are brothers, full of empathy."

"I wasn't defending him. I was just a little surprised..." Noticing Lenora's upset expression, Zachary immediately closed his mouth, changing the subject. "Let's forget about them. The property management office is organizing an event. Want to check it out?" "You go on your own."

Lenora turned around and went back.

Zachary watched her retreating figure, a sense of helplessness washing over him. He shook his head slightly before quickening his steps to catch up. "Then I won't go either."

Due to her advancing age, Allison couldn't keep up. After playing poker for a while with her reading glasses on and the younger generation, she retired upstairs to rest. The poker game also ended.

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+10 Free Coins

Tamara had spent a long time abroad, so her relationship with the younger generation was merely superficial. Griselda didn't interact much with her either. After exchanging a few words with Nathan, she ascended the stairs,

Before she went upstairs, she specifically instructed the housekeeper to bring Harrietta to her room as soon as she returned.

When Lenora returned to the living room, she ran into Johanne coming out from inside.

He halted in his steps, glancing at Lenora. "Where's Mallory?"

"She must have gone to the event organized by the property management office with Ryan and Harrietta."

Johanne responded with a hum and took a couple of steps forward. He exchanged a glance with Zachary who was behind, then gave a slight nod and strode out of the courtyard

Nathan had gone to answer a phone call, and Griselda had disappeared somewhere. The living room was left with only Stanley, who was lounging comfortably on the couch. He had a phone in his hand and seemed to be responding to a message. Lenora went to the kitchen, fetched a fruit platter, and placed it on the coffee table. She then settled down on the couch, spearing a piece of pitaya with a toothpick and popping it into her mouth.

At that moment, a delicate feminine voice suddenly came from Stanley's phone across the room. In a coquettish tone, she said, "Oh, I'm so bored. I miss you"

Stanley instinctively glanced at Lenora across from him. It didn't seem intentional.

Lenora chuckled. "Your girlfriend?"

"Yeah." A faint smile graced Stanley's face, yet it didn't quite reach his eyes.

"Aunt Griselda can finally rest easy. When are you planning to bring her back?"

"What I told my mom this afternoon was just to appease her. I met her at the resort a few days ago. Nothing's definite between us yet."

With a knowing expression on her face, Lenora took a bite of the sweet cantaloupe.

At that moment, Zachary strolled over and took a seat beside Lenora. He casually picked up a toothpick and ate a piece of fruit.

Stanley glanced at them and wisely choose to leave.

Lenora shot Zachary a glance of annoyance before standing up. After swallowing the piece of fruit she was eating, she announced, "I'm heading back to my room, Don't follow me." Lenora ascended to the second floor. Surprisingly, Zachary chose not to follow.

She spent some time in her room, engrossed in her phone. But eventually, she couldn't resist the pull of fatigue any longer. She freshened up and readied herself for bed.

Dressed in her pajamas, Lenora emerged from the bathroom, just about to climb into bed, when suddenly, a knock echoed from outside her door.

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62%

10 Free Coins

She assumed it was Harrietta returning and went ahead to open the door, only to find Zachary standing ar

the door.

Before she could react, he swiftly stepped inside.

"What are you doing here?" Lenora slid in front of him and stretched out her arm to stop him in his tracks.

"I'm here to sleep," Zachary said calmly.

A look of disbelief etched on Lenora's face. "You're sleeping in my room? Are you kidding me?"

This is our room," Zachary said earnestly.

Lenora was taken aback for a moment.

Before their divorce, this room was indeed the one they, as a couple, used to stay in when they visited the Fuller residence.

"We're divorced now. You should sleep in a different room."

"There's no other room."

"What?"

"Uncle Nathan and Aunt Griselda took one room, Stanley occupied another, and Aunt Tamara and Johanne each had their own. Mallory and Ryan are sharing a room and you have one to yourself. All the prepared guest rooms are taken, leaving only two rooms that haven't been cleaned or made up."

The main surprise was that the housekeeper had not anticipated that Johanne and Mallory would sleep in separate rooms.

Upon hearing this, Lenora gave it some thought, then waved her hand dismissively. "Go bunk with Johanne or Stanley for the night. Don't stick around here."

"I've asked," Zachary said earnestly. "Stanley's planning to stay up all night on a call with his girlfriend and Johanne is on a video call. I heard a woman's voice..."

He wasn't lying. Johanne was indeed on a video call with someone, and a woman's voice could be heard. However, it was simply an international conference. Johanne had offered to vacate the room for him, suggesting he could hold his meeting in the study instead. However, he declined Johanne's proposal. Under Zachary's misdirection, Lenora assumed that Johanne was video chatting with a homewrecker. She frowned in dissatisfaction.

While she was still hesitating, Zachary had already taken out his pajamas from the wardrobe. He slipped out of his suit and unbuttoned his shirt. "Hey, wait!" Lenora exclaimed.

"What's wrong?" Zachary stopped what he was doing.

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"How about... you sleep on the couch downstairs?" Lenora suggested.

Zachary lowered his hands and pursed his lips, looking at Lenora innocently. Oddly enough, Lenora felt a touch of guilt and silently averted her gaze.

"It's just one night. Even in

afraid of?"

Lenora did not respond.

I

+10 Free Coins

a situation like that in Archulea, I didn't do anything to you, so what are you

Seeing Lenora remaining silent, Zachary sighed and put his clothes back on. "I didn't realize you were so afraid of me. I remember when we were on the helicopter, you were clinging to me like a koala bear. hugging and kissing me....."

"All right, all right! You sleep inside." Lenora made a halting gesture, conceding. "Just behave yourself. No funny business."

A hint of triumph flashed in Zachary's eyes as he changed into his pajamas and went to the bathroom to freshen up.

When he emerged from the bathroom, Lenora had already settled down on the outer side of the bed, with a set of bedding laid out on the inner side.

"Should I turn off the lights?" Zachary asked.

With her eyes closed, Lenora softly hummed in acknowledgment.

Zachary turned off the light, then lifted the covers and got into bed.

It had been quite a while since Lenora had shared a bed with Zachary. At first, she found it hard to fall asleep. However, after some time, she finally drifted off to dreamland.

In the early hours, around midnight, Lenora was awakened by a continuous crackling sound. In her groggy state, she felt as if there was a furnace behind her, radiating warmth throughout her body. It was incredibly comforting in the chill of the winter night. Lenora recoiled slightly. Suddenly sensing that something was amiss, she opened her eyes wide and turned her head. "Zachary!"

## **Stay Away 272**

Chapter 272 His Actions Became Bolder.

"Hmm?"

A guttural note, brief and succinct, yet indistinct and muddled, echoed from nearby.

"What's wrong?"

#10 Free Cons

A deep and captivating voice echoed in her ears. It was like an unexpected jolt of electricity coursing through her body, leaving every crevice of her bones tingling with a numbing sensation.

The fireworks outside the window flickered, casting intermittent flashes of light into the dark room

Lenora rolled over, and what caught her eye was Zachary's seductive Adam's apple and his sharply defined jawline

She paused for a moment, then took a deep breath as she propped herself up. "How on earth did you end up under my covers?"

Zachary's eyes were barely open. He scratched his head absentmindedly. "I'm not.

Lenora pulled the covers. "You're not? Open your eyes wide and look-

She stared wide-eyed at the covers in her hands and froze on the spot.

This seems to be Zachary's

She

suddenly sat up, looking around frantically. Eventually, she spotted her covers under the bed.

At that moment, she wished the ground could swallow her whole.

Zachary lay on the bed. His gaze on her held a hint of amusement as he asked, "What are you looking at

"Nothing..

Silently, Lenora rolled out of bed, taking her covers with her back onto the bed.

Zachary let out a soft chuckle..

Lenora's embarrassment grew exponentially, and her ears burned.

She couldn't help herself and gave Zachary a light punch. "Stop laughing!"

She wore a stern expression, trying her best to appear angry. However, in Zachary's perception, it came across more like a playful scolding "As if you can stop me."

Zachary flashed a grin, revealing a set of perfectly neat and white teeth.

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Lenora was taken aback for a moment.

Zachary is really becoming more and more childish.

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He would never show such an expression in the past.

+10 Free Cons

Lenora was beyond irritated. She reached out and tickled him around his waist. That's for laughing at

me!"

Zachary seized her hand, pulling it forcefully.

Lenora let out a gasp as she tumbled onto Zachary, her lips brushing against his cheek.

The

soft, silky strands of her long hair brushed against Zachary's face, tickling him delightfully. It felt a feather was lightly scratching, tickling him right to his core. Zachary slightly tilted his head, gazing deeply into Lenora's eyes. Unable to resist, he gently held the back of her head, passionately pressing his lips against hers. "You-Mhm-"

Lenora clenched her mouth shut, her arms braced against his chest as she strained to push herself up.

To her surprise, Zachary exerted his strength, and a wave of dizziness washed over her.

By the time she realized it, they had already switched positions.

Zachary propped himself up next to her ear with one hand, kissing her lips even more passionately.

Their breaths intertwined as their lips locked in a passionate dance. Zachary was entranced by the delicate body beneath him, and his passion ignited further. Unconsciously, he deepened the fervent, moist kiss. Lenora's breathing gradually grew erratic. Her mind was a mess.

During their entanglement, the top two buttons of her nightgown were rubbed open, revealing a patch of her fair and delicate skin.



Zachary gently rested his hand on her third button, naturally undoing it. As he caressed her two soft lumps, his lips trailed down her neck slowly.

Lenora bit her lower lip, a chill running down her spine. She belatedly realized that she had forgotten to put on her underwear after her bath. "Zachary, don't... Get up..."

Lenora struggled fiercely.

She had to admit that Zachary's kissing skills were exceptional.

She was aroused, and her words came out in a moan. Her struggles were utterly futile as she was caught between rejection and acceptance. Zachary didn't stop. His actions became bolder.

He lifted his gaze to meet her eyes, his own filled with desire and lust. Suddenly, he took a sharp breath. "Mhm..."

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Lenora couldn't help but let out a soft moan. She then bit her lip to stop herself.

De wail.

Just then, a faint sound of a child crying echoed down the corridor. It was a heart-wrenching

Gradually, the voice became more distinct. It was unmistakably Harrietta's.

Zachary and Lenora both heard it.

She quickly nudged Zachary. "Is it Hattle? Hurry up and take a look!"

10 Free Cons

Zachary immediately rolled out of bed and, with long strides, walked over to the door. He opened it and leaned out to take a look.

He saw Harrietta running toward him with tears streaming down her face. "Uncle Zachary..."

Zachary looked behind her. Tamara was standing at the entrance of a guestroom with a gloomy expression.

Zachary gave her a cool glance, then stepped forward to scoop up Harrietta and returned to the room. "Hattie, what's wrong?"

It was his first time seeing Harrietta crying like this, and it caused him immense heartache.

Lenora had already tidied up her clothes. She quickly stepped forward. "Hattie, why are you crying? Would you like to tell me about it?"

Harrietta sobbed harder as she extended her arms toward Lenora.

Lenora's heart softened. She gathered her into her arms and sat down by the bed.

Harrietta buried her head in Lenora's embrace, her hand tightly clutching a corner of her nightgown. She was choking back sobs, yet she didn't speak a word.

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Lenora suspected it might have something to do with Tamara, but she didn't press further, gently patting her back instead.

Harrietta gradually calmed down. Unhappiness was written all over her face.

Lenora instructed Zachary to bring over a wet towel. She then gently wiped Harrietta's face and asked, "Hattie, would you like to watch the fireworks?" Harrietta shook her head sullenly.

"Shall we go to sleep then? You can sleep between Uncle Zachary and me."

Harrietta gave a slight nod.

After lying down, Harrietta still leaned on Lenora, her small hand tightly clutching the corner of her clothes.

Zachary turned off the lights and lay down beside them

The night passed by and the morning came.

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Chapter 272 His Actions Became Bolder

Upon waking up, Lenora took note of Harrietta's mood, which had significantly improved.

She nudged Zachary with her elbow. "Go to Aunt Tamara's room and bring Hattie's clothes over."

+10 Free Co

After Zachary left. Lenora helped Harrietta remove her pajamas and noticed a large bruise on her chubby little arm. Lenora immediately asked, "Hattie, what happened?"

"Grandma wanted to leave tomorrow, but I didn't want to. I still want to go on a cultural excursion with you, which upset her..." The bruises on her arm were the result of Tamara's anger-induced grip.

It looks better now, but it must have been worse last night.

A surge of anger suddenly welled up in Lenora's heart.

No matter how much Tamara disliked her, she simply didn't care.

But how could Tamara possibly involve Harrietta, just a child, in the grudges of adults and vent her anger on her?

Lenora truly didn't understand why Tamara detested her so much. It was as if she had committed some unforgivable crime.

Was it simply because her family background wasn't good enough to match Zachary's?

Why was she able to adopt Harrietta then?

Zachary strongly desired to keep Harrietta by his side, but Lenora didn't share the same sentiment. She believed that Tamara had raised Harrietta, and they shouldn't take her away thoughtlessly. Even after they had spent a short month together, she was uncertain whether Harrietta would choose to stay.

But now, she hoped that Harrietta would stay.

If Tamara could bring herself to bruise her arm out of jealousy when she wanted to go on a cultural excursion with Lenora, then she would punish her again in the future for other reasons.

After Zachary brought over the clothes, Lenora helped Harrietta get dressed. She then signaled Zachary to come closer and showed him the bruise on her arm.

In a flash, Zachary understood something and his expression darkened. He gave her a look that told her to stay calm before striding out of the room.

Lenora led Harrietta downstairs.

She had prepared two gifts, one for Harrietta and the other for Ryan.

The family had only two children. With each adult giving them a gift, Harrietta quickly accumulated a handful of them. This instantly washed away her unpleasant mood, and she began to show off to Lenora.

Before long, Zachary descended the stairs. He glanced at Lenora and handed his gift to Harrietta. Seizing the opportunity, he whispered into Lenora's ear, "I will register Hattie as my daughter after the holidays."

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Chapter 273 Provide Some Peace

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## **Stay Away 273**

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Lenora softly hummed in acknowledgement.

Zachary was determined to make Harrietta stay.

She cast her gaze down at Harrietta, who was diligently unwrapping her gifts on the couch.

"What did Uncle Zachary give you?"

Harrietta replied, "He gave me a monetary gift of ten thousand. Wait, I'm still counting"

"Wow, so you're quite the little rich girl now, huh?"

Harrietta threw her head back and let out a hearty laugh.

After she finished counting, Lenora suggested, "Shall we put away the gifts and have breakfast?"

"No." Harrietta tenderly gathered the gifts in her arms.

At that moment, the sound of footsteps echoed from the staircase.

Lenora lifted her gaze, locking eyes squarely with Tamara.

She greeted with a faint smile. "Aunt TamaraTM

Tamara snorted coldly and walked down.

Harrietta looked up nervously, "Grandma."

"Hattie, come here. Tamara gently said, settling down on the couch across the room.

Harrietta hesitated for a moment.

Tamara took out a gift and gestured toward Harrietta. "I have a New Year's gift for you."

+10 Free Coins

Harrietta approached Tamara and said in a childish tone, "Thank you, Grandma. Happy New Year. I hope the new year brings you health and happiness."

"You're such a good girl." Tamara pulled Harrietta into her arms. "Hattic, I owe you an apology. I didn't

handle my emotions well last night and I hurt you. Can you forgive me? We you an apology. I didn't

Harrietta pursed her lips slightly, "Grandma, I'm not mad at you."

"What a good child." Tamara chuckled, glancing at Zachary as if she had won a battle.

She knew that Harrietta, whom she had raised since she was a child, couldn't possibly part ways with her so easily.

"I understand that you haven't had enough fun yet, but kindergarten is about to start. I'll take a leave for you, but once you're back from the cultural excursion, you have to return with me, all right?" She made a concession, agreeing to let Harrietta and Lenora go on their cultural excursion, but she was.

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reluctant to have Harrietta stay behind.

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+10 Free Cons

Harrietta glanced at Tamara, then at Zachary and Lenora, but said nothing.

Zachary quirked an eyebrow. "We'll talk about it later. Let's eat first."

Harrietta's passport was in his possession.

In the afternoon, Lenora made a trip to the police station.

She was received by a young police officer. After understanding her concerns, he assisted her by reaching out to his superiors.

The car accident back then that led to Fernando's death had drawn a lot of attention. The case was overseen by a deputy chief from a certain police station. That deputy chief, Benedict Lawson, was now a chief.

Benedict and his associates had once counseled Lenora, soothing her emotions.

After they met, Lenora brought up the past, expressing her gratitude toward Benedict and bridging the gap between them.

Subsequently, she brought up the kidnapping incident that occurred a few days before Fernando's car accident. She presented the incomplete manuscript left by Fernando and that particular photograph, along with Connor's recorded conversation. She also mentioned the relationship between Daryl and Richie.

Benedict listened to the recording with a solemn expression before turning to Lenora. "The victim of that kidnapping case years ago suffered severe and brutal torment. By the time we arrived, the kidnappers had already fled. Apart from the wanted Gaston and his accomplice, we had a few other suspects. Richie was one of them. However, he managed to escape quickly and without any solid evidence, we had to end our pursuit. The leads you provided are crucial, Ms. Wilkin. I'll have my team follow these leads immediately and do everything in our power to apprehend the kidnappers and bring them to justice. This way, we can provide some peace to the late Mr. Wilkin."

"Thank you."

After stepping out of the police station, Lenora let out a long sigh of relief.

Given that the police had already harbored suspicions toward Richie, things should likely proceed more smoothly.

When driving past a certain shopping mall, Lenora noticed a large inflatable arch at the entrance, covered with a red carpet, as if a New Year event was taking place. Since she had nothing else to do at the moment, she decided to park her car and stroll around the mall. It was the New Year. The shopping mall was far from deserted.

Lenora emerged from the fitting room with the clothes in her hands. Turning to the shop assistant, she said, "Wrap these up for me, please, and also the two pieces I tried on earlier."

"All right, follow me this way, please." With a delighted smile, the shop assistant accepted the clothes and walked toward the cash register.

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As Lenora walked over, she caught sight of two individuals entering from the door.

Stanley also saw her and walked over with the person beside him.

With a smile, Lenora called out, "Stanley, what a coincidence.

"Yeah, just you alone?" Stanley glanced behind Lenora. He thought Zachary would be with her.

+10 Free Coins

"Yeah" Lenora glanced at the young woman beside him, who was also looking at her. "Stanley, aren't you going to introduce us?"

Stanley turned his gaze to the person next to him and said. "This is my girlfriend, Mindy Schmidt, Mindy, this is my sister, Lenora Wilkin."

"Ms. Wilkin, hello," Mindy said with a smile.

"Hello" Lenora looked at Mindy, feeling a sense of familiarity. "Ms. Schmidt, have we met before?"

Mindy absentmindedly ran her fingers over her purse strap. "We have, at the hot springs resort. My cousin greeted you at the restaurant. I was right there."

Lenora wore a look of understanding. "So Madison Schmidt is your cousin. How's she doing?"

Lenora felt a pang of guilt because of what Zachary had done.

Mindy tightened her grip on her purse, subtly glancing at Stanley. "She's doing quite well. It seems my uncle has secured a kidney donor. He's scheduled for surgery soon.

She's been quite cheerful lately." "Oh, that's good to hear. Which hospital is your uncle in? I'll drop by when I have some time.

Mindy gave the name of the hospital.

At that moment, the shop assistant approached. "Miss, your clothes have been wrapped up....

"All right" Lenora looked at Stanley and Mindy. "You two continue shopping. I'll take my leave now."

"Bye."

Lenora paid at the cashier and with a paper bag in hand, she headed to the supermarket located on the basement level. After purchasing some gifts, she drove toward the hospital where Madison's father was admitted. Madison was in the ward, taking care of him.

Lenora knocked and entered, which left Madison utterly surprised. However, in front of her father, she didn't show any reaction, simply stating that Lenora was her friend.

Lenora observed her facial expression. Madison indeed seemed all right, not overly distressed or worn

out

Madison's father was very polite and kind toward Lenora.

After Lenora exchanged a few pleasantries with them. Madison saw her out.

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+10 Free Coins

"Sorry to intrude," Lenora said in a low voice as she walked forward. "I ran into my brother and your cousin at the mall and learned about your father's hospital, so I thought I'd drop by."

"I know you're here because of that incident, Ms. Wilkin... I've said I won't call the police, and I mean it. You can rest assured, there's no need for you to come here again in the future, Madison stated.



She felt a pang of sympathy for Lenora. Her ex-husband had ruined her relationship, and even now, still thought Madison was the victim.

Though she had indeed been bitten by some unknown scoundrel, she had gained far more in return.

she

Apart from fulfilling his financial obligations as stated in the contract, Zachary went above and beyond. He arranged for a better hospital room for her father and even found a kidney donor. It was an unexpected blessing- She had no reason to be upset.

"Okay"

Lenora returned to the loft.

In the evening, she received a message from Zachary. He was going to bring Harrietta over.

It wasn't long before the doorbell rang from outside.

Lenora assumed it was Zachary who had arrived, so she got up to open the door, only to find that there was nobody outside.

She glanced around in confusion. Just as she was about to close the door, her eyes inadvertently caught sight of a piece of paper discarded on the ground.

She bent down to pick it up, her body drenched in a cold sweat.

A terrifying ghostly face was drawn on the paper, marked with red traces that resembled blood.

It was identical to the death threat Gordon had sent her

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## **Stay Away 274**

Chapter 274 Death Threat

+10 Free Coins

Lenora couldn't help but swallow hard. She clenched tightly onto her sleeve as she cast a wary glance around her surroundings.

They were the only ones on this floor. Just outside their door was the elevator, which was adjacent to the fire escape.

The surroundings were steeped in silence, with only the faint hum of the ascending and descending elevator subtly breaking the calm.

However, Lenora could hear the panting from behind the fire escape door. The person delivering the papers was surely hiding there, observing her reaction

Lenora took a deep breath, turned around to close the door, and locked it from the inside.

She leaned against the door, her body completely relaxed.

She regained her composure a few minutes later, then took a photo of the piece of paper and sent it to the property management office, requesting them to review the surveillance footage.

When she decided to investigate the matter and received death threats from Gordon, she had already contemplated the consequences, so she had nothing to fear.

There was no way she would just give up at this stage.

Lenora picked up her phone and dialed Zachary's number.

Once the call connected, she immediately said, "Zachary, something urgent came up. Take Hattie home. I won't be free these next few days..."

It didn't matter if she ran into trouble, but she couldn't let Harrietta get involved in it with her.

On the phone, Zachary said, "We've already arrived."

"Perhaps you should go back first?"

"Hah

Two minutes later, the doorbell rang again from outside.

After checking the video intercom, Lenora confirmed that it was Zachary and Harrietta outside before she opened the door.

As soon as Harrietta entered, she felt a wave of relief wash over her. She kicked off her shoes and started frolicking around, playing with the cat

Zachary shut the door and glanced at Lenora. "Something urgent came up? What is it?"

"I can't tell you, but it's extremely important. You should take Hattie and leave later.

Harrietta, who was playing with Cotton on the side, heard this and her face scrunched up. "Aunt Lenora, can't I sleep with you?"

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15 Free Cons

Lenora approached her and said seriously. "Hattic, I really have some matters to attend to these days Can you stay with Uncle Zachary for now? Once I'm free, you can come and play with me again." So, when will you be free? Are you still taking me on that cultural excursion?"

"About that... I don't think I can."

Harrietta wore an unhappy expression. Just as she was about to say something. Zachary interrupted with a question, "What is this?"

Lenora turned her head and discovered that Zachary was holding the paper with the ghostly face drawn. on it, waving it at her.

Taken aback, Lenora quickly lied, "It's just a prank from a friend."

"A prank?"

"Yeah

Zachary lifted his gaze to look at her.

Feeling uneasy, Lenora averted her eyes. "Hattie, what would you like for dinner?"

Harrietta responded off-topic, "I want to go on a cultural excursion with you"

Due to a disagreement over a cultural excursion, Harrietta and Tamara had a conflict. If they ended up not going, Lenora would feel rather guilty.

"We'll see. I'll figure something out."

Perhaps they won't make a move until the police uncover some results.

I could bring along a few bodyguards too,

Harrietta nodded. "I'm craving some meat."

"All right. I'll make it for you."

Lenora headed to the kitchen to prepare dinner.

Zachary recalled the suspicious man he had encountered at the entrance of the lobby. The man was garbed in a black down jacket, a baseball cap, a face mask, and sunglasses, yet he didn't seem like a celebrity. After watching her enter the kitchen, he took the piece of paper and stepped outside to make a phone call.

The call connected, and from the other end came Elijah's carefree voice. "What's up?"

"Did your people create the ghostly face I discovered over at Lenora's?"

Elijah exclaimed in surprise, "No way. I've only had the private detective named Gordon do that kind of stuff, and it scared him so much that he stopped immediately."

"Could you look into it?" Zachary glanced at his wristwatch. "Check if there was any suspicious person."

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around Lenora's house between approximately six-ten six-twenty this evening

It'd better be a prank... or else....

"Okay"

"Right, did you manage to find out who commissioned Gordon?"

"I did."

""Who is it?"

"Lenora, Elijah said in a hushed tone.

Zachary paused, glancing at the door beside him. "Are you sure?"

"I'm absolutely sure. They had before. Most likely, they were discussing matters related to the commission."

Zachary fell silent.

Lenora hired a private detective to look into the kidnapping case from years ago, but why?

+10 Free Coins

Elijah chuckled. "Hey, do you think she might still have feelings for you? Is that why she's looking into that matter? Let her do it then. You and Susanna have already broken up, haven't you? Why are you still covering for her?" On the internet, there wasn't a shred of information about the kidnapping case. This was all thanks to Zachary's efforts.

Lenora had no choice but to hire a private detective.

Zachary paused for a moment. "That's a different matter. Regardless of my relationship with her, it doesn't change the fact that she was the victim in this situation

If netizens were to dig this up, perhaps many would sympathize with Susanna, but there would also be a greater number of backbiters ready to judge, mock, and tarnish the victimized celebrity.

Back then, as Susanna's boyfriend, he had certainly fallen short in his duties.

He had promised Susanna that he would completely suppress this matter, and he was certain to fulfill it.

He had never considered using this matter to threaten Susanna either.

At this point, Susanna had only herself to blame, and he felt no sympathy for her whatsoever.

Elijah sighed. "You're right,

After ending the call, Zachary returned to Lenora's house. Hearing some noise from the kitchen, he walked toward it.

Lenora glanced back at him. "Perfect timing. Could you debone the wings for me? I'm making honey-baked chicken wings for Hattie."

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Beside the sink, there was a plate of fresh, large, and plump chicken wings.

"Okay"

Zachary glanced at Lenora, noticing that she had become increasingly adept at directing him.

"The scissors are in the basket," Lenora pointed toward the basket next to the chopping board.

"Okay"

Zachary took out a pair of scissors and began to debone the chicken wings.

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Doing this didn't require much thought, so as he was deboning, he pondered. Every now and then, he would glance at Lenora,

Why is she investigating the kidnapping case from years ago?

As Elijah mentioned, is it because she cares about me that she wants to know the truth?

It doesn't quite seem so.

If Lenora knew what Zachary was thinking at the moment, she would undoubtedly say, "You're quite self-aware, aren't you?"

Just as Zachary was about to voice his question, his phone rang.

He set down the scissors and chicken wings, quickly wiped his hands, and walked into the living room to answer the phone.

A minute later, he stood at the kitchen doorway and said. "There's a situation at the office that requires my attention. I'll have to leave Hattie with you for now."

He spoke not of Fuller Group but Trident Technologies He planned for it to go public in the first half of the year.

"All right, how about you pick her up after you're done with your work?"

"We'll see."

Zachary left.

He was rather busy. For three consecutive days, Lenora didn't get to see him.

Sophia was still at the Tortell residence,

At home, it was just Lenora and Harrietta. Initially, she was somewhat worried, but as she found that life was peaceful, she gradually let her guard down.

Five days later, Benedict made a phone call to Lenora

He informed her that they had investigated based on the news of Richie being kidnapped and sold. They had traced it back to Richie's biological parents and discovered that there was an account under his father's name. A large sum of money had been deposited into this account ten years ago, which was then transferred overseas.

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Chapter 274 Death Threat

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However, this still wasn't enough to prove that Richie was the kidnapper. What was needed next was the identification of the victim of that year.

However, the victim back then was a woman who had endured brutal torment. The emotional scars she bore made her reluctant to step forward and testify.

Lenora understood the victim's feelings, but for her father's sake, she was left with no choice.

"Mr. Lawson, could you possibly arrange a meeting with her for me? I would like to talk to her personally."

"All right."

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## **Stay Away 275**

Chapter 275 Insane And Inhumane

Chapter 275 Insane And Inhumane

The next day, Sophia returned from the Tortell residence.

10 Free Cons

She shoved her suitcase to the side and collapsed onto the couch, irritably massaging her forehead. She looked utterly exhausted.

"What's wrong?" Lenora poured a cup of water and casually handed it to her.

Sophia heaved a long sigh, a depressing aura emitting from her.

She had always been full of life, facing everything with a smile. It was the first time Lenora had seen her in

this state.

"Soph, what's really going on? Are your parents not feeling well?"

Sophia lowered her gaze, her expression listless. "Nora, do you think all men are creatures who think with what's below their waist!"

A disturbing suspicion suddenly rose in Lenora's mind

Sophia laughed sarcastically. "I just found out my dad had an affair and has a son who's already in college! No wonder he's been pushing me to get married!"

Although she had anticipated it, Lenora couldn't help but reveal a shocked expression. She hadn't expected that the kind man she remembered would also cheat in his marriage.

Lenora embraced Sophia, offering her, her shoulder. "Don't be upset."

Sophia remained silent.

Lenora stared at the ceiling and said, "When I was very young, my parents divorced. After my mom left, she never returned. I can barely remember what she looked like, only a few brief images... I later heard rumors in the village that my mom had another man, which is why my dad divorced her... I've had my moments of sorrow, confusion, frustration. I remember thinking, if I ever had the chance to see her again, I would certainly ask her why... But I never got the chance to see her again. She probably has long since forgotten all about me."

Sophia lifted her head from her shoulder. "You're far more pitiful than I am..

Indeed, comparison is the thief of joy.



At the very least, her father had provided her with a comfortable life, allowing her to enjoy over twenty years as an only child.

"So you see, there's nothing we can't get through. What's done is done. Life goes on. We need to think carefully about our next move."

"Our next move?" Sophia sneered. "Don't think I'm clueless. He wants to marry me off, give me a little dowry, and leave the rest of the family fortune to his mistress' son. Dream on! If he wants to have a child outside, fine, but I won't let him touch a single penny of the Tortell family's wealth!"

"So, what do you plan on doing next?"

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Chapter 275 Insane And Inhumane

"I don't know," Sophia said hesitantly.

Dreams were plentiful, yet reality was stark.

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She had once lived a carefree life, fully engrossed in her own hobbies. Her father, David Tortell, never forced her to join the family business, which resulted in her current lack of understanding about the company's operations. She feared it would be challenging to convince him to leave the company in her hands.

"Hmm... don't appear overly resistant right now. Keep a low profile," Lenora advised earnestly.

"I know." Sophia burst into laughter. "The way you put it, it's as if I'm the unloved prince from a novel"

""More or less."

Sophia took a sip of water, casually draping her arm over Lenora's shoulder. "Enough about me. I noticed on Connor's Instagram that you two broke up. Why is that?"

"Well... it's a long story..."

"Let's cut to the chase then."

Lenora recounted to Sophia what had transpired at the hot spring resort.

Sophia looked shocked, patting her on the shoulder. "All right then, if it's over, it's over. Someone with a poor tolerance for alcohol is bound to run into trouble sooner or later. "Actually... it's not that he has a poor tolerance for alcohol: Zachary set him up..."

"Huh?" Sophia's mouth fell open. "Tyrant Fuller is truly insane. He's inhumane!"

Lenora chuckled.

She felt the same way too.

"By the way, I remember seeing the news when I arrived. Tyrant Fuller has become the chairman of Fuller Group, right?"

With a raised eyebrow, Lenora picked up her phone and went on Twitter. Without even needing to search specifically, she immediately saw the trending topic at the top of the list. Zachary had indeed returned to Fuller Group. The group's official account announced that he would be the group's chairman starting that day.

Perhaps Fuller Group had been going through a tough time recently.

Regardless, it had nothing to do with Lenora, so she promptly shut off her phone.

"Has Hattie gone home?"

"No, she's sleeping inside." Lenora pointed toward the room. "She wants to go on a cultural excursion with

me."

"Is Fiona going?"

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Chapter 275 Insane And Inhumane

"Yeah, I've already asked her."

"Then I want to go too!"

At a certain club, the elevator stopped on the first floor and the doors swung open.

Zachary stepped inside and pressed the button to close the door.

+10 Free Cons

Just as the elevator doors were about to close, an arm reached in. Sensing the obstruction, the elevator doors immediately slid open to either side.

A young man stood by the elevator, impeccably dressed in a deep blue suit, a black jacket casually draped over his arm.

When the elevator doors opened, he glanced inside. His gaze unintentionally met with Zachary for a brief moment before he lowered his eyes and stepped into the elevator, moving to the side. Zachary also withdrew his gaze and focused straight ahead.

Just as the elevator doors were about to close, a shout echoed from outside. "Wait."

The young man immediately reached out, pressing the open button.

Miles hurried in, clutching his chest as he caught his breath. Turning to the person beside him, he said. "Mr. Fuller. Ive fetched your phone"

As he spoke, he handed over the phone.

After holding it up for quite some time and seeing that Zachary still didn't take it, Miles looked up. "Mr

His voice abruptly halted.

He stood frozen with his mouth agape for a couple of seconds.

The person before his eyes was not Zachary

Zachary cleared his throat.

When Miles turned his head, he realized that Zachary was right there.

"Sorry about that." He gave the young man a sheepish smile, then handed the phone to Zachary. "Mr. Fuller, here's your phone." Zachary looked up at him, his gaze causing him to break out in a cold sweat.

"Mm:

He took the phone and slipped it into his pocket, his gaze inadvertently meeting with the young standing nearby.

Their eyes met, and the tension in the air was palpable.

Neither of them shifted their gaze.

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Chapter 275 Insane And Inhumane

The elevator was steeped in silence.

Miles felt that the atmosphere was extraordinarily heavy and somber.

He held his breath, stealing a glance at the young man

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The young man was quite tall, standing almost at the same height as Zachary, who was six feet tall. His neatly tailored suit and expressionless face made him look cold.

Upon glancing once more. Miles noticed that the young man bore a striking resemblance to Zachary in both his facial features and physique. That was why he had mistaken him earlier.

The young man gave Zachary a once-over, his gaze filled with a certain kind of contempt. "Zachary

Fuller!"

Zachary slightly raised an eyebrow. "Ezekiel Hoffman?"

With a smile, Ezekiel said. "I heard that you've become the chairman of Fuller Group today. Congratulations."

"Thank you. From what I understand, there's been some friction between Fuller Group and the Hoffman family in the business world. Mr. Hoffman, would you be interested in heading up for a couple of dricks?" Ding!

The elevator doors slid open

Ezekiel wore a calm expression and said, "I'm sorry, I have other matters to attend to. Well talk another time when the opportunity arises.

After he finished speaking, he turned around and exited the elevator.

The elevator doors closed, leaving only Zachary and Miles inside.

Miles finally breathed a sigh of relief. "I apologize, Mr. Fuller. I mistook someone else for you earlier."

"It's okay"

"But Mr. Hoffman truly bears some resemblance to you"

"Really?" Zachary raised an eyebrow. "I couldn't tell, but he seemed to hold quite a grudge against me."

Though Ezekiel didn't show it explicitly, Zachary still noticed it immediately.

He even suspected that the several attempts by the Hoffman family to seize the projects of Fuller Group were orchestrated by Ezekiel from behind the scenes. Why he harbored animosity toward the Fuller family remained a mystery.

## **Stay Away 276**

Chapter 276 Not To Be Underestimated

Miles wanted to say something, but then he held back

If I remember correctly. Ezekiel was the president of the Clusian Association when Mrs. Fuller was studying abroad. He had helped her a lot and was one been close

The few men who had to her. He could be the father of the child she once gave birth to

Perhaps his hostility toward Mr. Fuller is because he knows that Mr. Fuller is Mrs. Fuller's ex-husband?

One of the reasons Zachary returned to Fuller Group this time was because the Hoffman family had poached several key figures from Fuller Group's new energy project at a high price, causing the project to stall. For every day that was delayed, a significant loss was incurred,

The project had initially been nurtured single-handedly by Zachary, and a significant amount of resources had been invested in it. The higher-ups were unwilling to let go of their previous efforts, and so was Zachary. Ezekiel was not to be underestimated.

Miles was just about to remind Zachary about the relationship between Ezekiel and Lenora when the elevator doors opened and Zachary strode out.

Miles could only quickly catch up.

This meal was primarily organized for the acquisition of a technology company.

Upon his return to Fuller Group, Zachary immediately proposed this plan, which was unanimously approved by the board of directors.

Zachary had just started to recover from a stomach ailment, and it wasn't advisable for him to consume alcohol. During the social engagements, Miles took his pole very seriously and made sure to prevent Zachary from drinking. Eventually, he drank himself into oblivion.

Once the meal was over, Zachary had his driver take him home.

Once the effects of the alcohol had worn off, Miles had already forgotten about Ezekiel's matters.

That night, Zachary received news from his secretary. Ezekiel was dining at a certain restaurant with Harry Weber, the head of the technology company, and they seemed to be having a lively conversation

He was trying to steal him again.

With a slight raise of his eyebrows, Zachary instructed the secretary. "Arrange a meeting with Mr. Weber.

for me tomorrow.

"Yes, Mr. Fuller."

The following noon, Lenora received a call from Benedict.

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Chapter 276 Not To Be Underestimated

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"The victim said she's afraid to recall those unpleasant incidents. She doesn't wish to see you," he said with

regret

"Mr. Lawson, could you please persuade her again? Her testimony is crucial. I understand that it's like reopening old wounds for her, but I'm out of options. My dad is

my only family. I have to bring the culprit to justice, Could you please help me once more?" Benedict let out a sigh. "All right, I'll try to persuade her again."

After hanging up the phone, Lenora was filled with worry.

Her worst fears had come to pass.

If the victim truly didn't wish to step forward, then the only hope rested on Jayden's ability to fulfill her assignment apprehend Gaston and bring him back to Clusia.

But lately, there hadn't been any news from Jayden, and Lenora dared not hold out too much hope.

After some thought, she sent a message to Jayden, asking him about his progress and whether he had managed to apprehend Jayden

The next morning, Lenora received a call from Benedict.

She answered the call nervously. Upon hearing the good news from Benedict, she was so thrilled that she almost jumped for joy.

The victim had agreed to meet her, setting their rendezvous for seven o'clock that evening at a certain

restaurant.

Benedict said, "The victim isn't entirely certain about this. The opportunity is one time only. If you missed it, she might change her mind."

"Mr. Lawson, I understand. I'll definitely be there on time. You've really gone out of your way these past few days. Thank you!"

"No worries, I'm just doing my job."

After hanging up the phone, Lenora finally let out a sigh of relief.

The victim agreeing to meet her was a good start.

She glanced at her phone. There was no response from Jayden.

Her fifty thousand deposit was probably down the drain

At six in the evening, before heading to the restaurant, Lenora first dropped Harrietta off at the Fuller residence.

Upon reaching the parking lot, Lenora unbuckled her seatbelt and turned off the ignition. As she got out of the car, she caught a glimpse of a familiar figure at the entrance. Susanta?

She walked into the restaurant with her bag in hand and headed straight to the second floor. She had reserved a private room.

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Chapter 276 Not To Be Underestimated

Suddenly, she saw a figure standing at the top of the second-floor staircase. It was

Susanna

+10 Free Coins

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none other than

Susanna was dressed to the nines, leaning against the stair railing. She wore an elegant smile, and her eyes were fixed on Lenora as if she were waiting for her on purpose. "So, I wasn't mistaken. That really car!"

Lenora paused momentarily before continuing up the stairs. "What's

waiting for me to catch up with me?"

is your

matter? Are you standing here

"Of course not," Susanna said with a smile, a flicker of determination flashing in her eyes. "I just wanted to give you a special gift."

No sooner had she finished speaking than she suddenly thrust out her hand, pushing with all her might.

"Ah!"

Caught off guard, Lenora missed her footing and tumbled down the stairs.

In that instant, the world seemed to spin.



By the time she regained consciousness, she had already collapsed heavily onto the ground. The pain was So intense that it made her vision go dark.

She looked up, only to find that Susanna was already gone.

She felt varying degrees of pain throughout her body.

The most painful spot was her forehead. She gently reached up to touch it, and the pain was so intense it turned her face pale. A trace of warm scarlet liquid stained her fingers.

"Miss, are you all right?" The waiter, noticing her condition, immediately helped her up. "Please, take a seat over there. I'll fetch the first-aid kit for you. Do you need me to call an ambulance?"

The moment her right foot touched the ground, a sharp jolt of pain shot through her ankle. Lenora winced, drawing in a sharp breath. She glanced at her wristwatch. It was almost seven o'clock. "No thanks. Do you have a band-aid?"

She dared not waste time. It had been quite a challenge to schedule a meeting with the victim, and she feared that if she was late, the victim might leave.

"Sure, I'll go get it for you right away,

Lenora rummaged through her bag and pulled out a tissue, gently wiping the trace of blood from her face. She asked the waiter to affix two band-aids on her forehead.

"Could you please save the surveillance footage from earlier for me? I'll come and make a copy of it once I've taken care of my own business.

After the waiter acknowledged her request, she leaned on the railing, gritting her teeth against the pain, and limped her way up to the second floor.

Susanna had already disappeared, and Lenora didn't have the time to bicker with her right now. She thought she'd wait until after meeting with the victim before calling the police.

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Chapter 276 Not To Be Underestimated

Upon reaching the entrance of the agreed-upon private room, Lenora was already in so much pain that her forehead was covered in cold sweat, her complexion pale.

She took a deep breath, composed herself, and pushed the door open to enter.

As soon as she stepped into the room, she spotted the figure seated on the couch and her body stiffened. An expression of anger immediately washed over her face.

"Susanna, what are you doing here? Get out!" Susanna leaned lazily against the back of the couch, a tall glass in her hand and a smug smile on her face. "You tell me. Don't you know who you've arranged to meet? Are you sure you want me to leave?"

Lenora gazed at her smile, a sudden thought flashing through her mind like a streak of lightning, hinting at a certain possibility.

She looked at Susanna in astonishment. "You... were the victim of the kidnapping all those years ago?"

Her mind was a whirlwind of thoughts. She didn't expect the victim to be Susanna.

However, in retrospect, Susanna was indeed the victim,

She had long known from Michael and Johanne about Susanna's past abduction and unbearable torment. Benedict had also mentioned that the victim was a woman who had suffered cruel torture at the hands of her captors, leaving her emotionally scarred. This information perfectly matched up.

Susanna took a sip of her red wine. "Yes, do you know why this case was kept under wraps? It's because Zack was involved. After the incident, he used the Fuller family's connections to suppress the news and even had all related web pages deleted." Tue, Nov

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## **Stay Away 277**

Chapter 277 A Deep Bond Indeed.

No wonder there wasn't a trace of information about that year on the internet.

No wonder Susanna had the audacity to push her earlier. Susanna knew she needed her help and wouldn't dare to call the police.

At that moment, Lenora's previously lucid thoughts suddenly turned into a tangled mess, much like a ball of entwined yarn that she simply couldn't unravel.

Before she had entered, she had already planned out her persuasive speech to the victim.

The news that Susanna was the victim caught her off guard, throwing her well-prepared plans into complete disarray.

Suddenly, she didn't know what to do.

Would Susanna step forward to testify?

Lenora felt uncertain.

She took a deep breath, limping her way to the edge of the couch to sit down. "Let's not dwell on our past grievances for now. You know why I asked to see you. I hope you can testify against Richie. He's the kidnapper who caused your misfortune. Don't you want him and the others to receive the punishment they deserve?"

Susanna let out a soft chuckle, pointing to her own face "Why wouldn't I? I recall just a few days ago, you slapped me right here!"

Lenora closed her eyes for a moment, took a deep breath, and said, "Then I apologize to you."

"What's the point of an apology?" Susanna raised an eyebrow and said, "Unless, you let me hit you back!"

Seeing Lenora's silence, Susanna started laughing. "Lenora, you can stand up for Mr. Fuller, who isn't even related to you by blood, but you can't take a slap for your own father?"

"Okay, hit me then."

Taking a deep breath, Lenora slowly rose to her feet. With a limp in her step, she made her way to Susanna

A triumphant smile tugged at the corners of Susanna's lips. Rising to her feet, she forcefully slapped Lenora's face.

The force was so great that Lenora lost her footing. Instinctively, she tried to steady herself with her right foot, but a piercing pain shot through her ankle causing her entire body to shudder. Overwhelmed by the pain, she couldn't hold herself up and fell to the ground. The left side of her face throbbed with a burning pain, gradually swelling up to a noticeable redness. The heat spread from half of her face to the root of her car

A cold sweat drenched Lenora's back, soaking even the roots of her hair.

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## Chapter 277 A Deep Bond Indeed.

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Taking a slow, deep breath, she picked herself up from the floor and settled back onto the couch. With a raspy voice, she asked, "Can we get down to business now?"

"Okay, but," Susanna, lounging with one leg crossed over the other, watched Lenora's flustered state with great satisfaction. "What's the point of punishment now that things have already happened? After all these years, the kidnapper hasn't been brought to justice, and it hasn't affected me. Why should I stir up trouble for no reason?"

Lenora pursed her lips. "Is it that you don't want to invite trouble, or you just don't want to help me? Those kidnappers committed heinous crimes. Don't you really want them to pay for it? I think you should know why I came to you, right?"

"I know," Susanna sneered dismissively. "Chief Lawson told me. You want to capture the kidnappers and use them to track down the driver who killed your father. But what's it to me? He was your father, not mine. What if I don't want to help you? What are you going to do about it?"

Oh, how touching. I wonder what will Lenora's reaction be if she discovered that she isn't actually Fernando's daughter but instead the product of her mother's infidelity? That's going to be exciting for sure!

Susanna's dismissive demeanor gradually stirred irritation within Lenora's heart.

She held back her emotions, her voice heavy as she said. "My father caught the attention of the kidnappers because he was trying to save the hostages as quickly as possible. He managed to secretly capture their photos, and in a way, he died because of you. If he hadn't been involved, the kidnappers might have been caught by now. I don't expect you to thank him, but can't you show a shred of sympathy? Can you really bear to let a man who fought for social justice and genuinely cared for the people die indignantly?" Susanna laughed. "Why not?"

After she finished speaking, she tilted her head and looked at Lenora, raising an eyebrow in a provocative

manner

Lenora's mouth twitched slightly.

She glared at Susanna with a seething rage, her heart aflame with indignation. Her fingers clenched tightly into fists, the only thing stopping her from giving in to the impulse to slap Susanna right then and there. Lenora's heart had already cooled considerably. There was essentially no hope in asking for Susanna's help.

All she could do was place her hopes in Jayden, hoping he wasn't a fraud, hoping he could bring Gaston back to the country.

At that moment, a notification sound suddenly came from Lenora's phone.

She clicked to open it, only to find out it was a reply from Jayden: Oh, cr"p! We had Gaston in our grasp, but who would have known he'd slip away just as we were nearing the border! Worried she might not believe him, Jayden sent her several photos, all containing photographs of Gaston being held captive.

Lenora took a moment to identify the man. Indeed, his appearance was strikingly similar to the wanted pictures of Gaston. It seemed that Jayden was not a liar after all. But Gaston had fled.... 2/4

Chapter 277 A Deep Bond Indeed.

Once he took off, it would be incredibly difficult to catch him again.

In an instant, Lenora's heart plunged into an abyss, her spirits incredibly low

It seemed that they could no longer rely on Gaston.

For the sake of her father, she had to persist in her quest for vengeance

Lenora took a deep breath, lifting her gaze to Susanna "Since you agreed to meet me, it can't just be to reject me, right?! Just lay out your terms, and stop beating around the bush!"

"It appears you're quite sharp." Susanna casually sipped her red wine. "Let me put it this way. I've recently returned to work, and I'm in need of an assistant. You work for me for a month, and I'll agree to testify for you"

Lenora understood that Susanna wasn't in need of an assistant. This was just Susanna's way of tormenting her. As long as she agreed, she was bound to be toyed with by Susanna for a month.

Yet, she had no choice but to agree.

"How can I be sure you won't regret this?" Lenora asked

"If I change my mind later, you have my permission to forcibly take me to the police station," Susanna

aud, lifting her chin.

Lenora pursed her lips, her gaze lowered in deep thought for a moment before she finally spoke up. "Okay, I agree. I'll be your assistant for a month, but I need a few days to sort out my current affairs." It was just a month, endure it and it would pass

Susanna's lips curled up in a smirk, a glint of determination flashing in her eyes. "Three days! Report to my company in three days."

"Okay"

"By the way, I noticed you were limping when you came in earlier. What happened?" Susanna asked, a mischievous grin playing at the corners of her mouth, even though she already knew the answer. With a slight tug at the corner of her mouth, Lenora said softly, "I tripped and fell by accident."

"Oh, be careful when you walk in the future,"

Susanna lowered her foot, rose to her feet, and gracefully walked away in her high heels.

In the private room, only Lenora was left.

She exhaled, feeling the tension in her heart finally easing for a moment. Exhausted, she leaned back against the couch, closed her eyes, and remained perfectly still.

After taking a brief rest on the couch, Lenora beckoned for the attendant. She requested the attendant to assist her downstairs, copy the surveillance video of the staircase, and call for an ambulance. She had just stepped out of the private room when, unexpectedly, a familiar voice echoed from behind

her. "Nora?"

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Chapter 277 A Deep Bond Indeed.

Without even having to look back, Lenora knew that the person who had arrived was Zachary

What a coincidence.

10 Free Cons

"Your foot is injured?" Fu Zheng strode forward, pushing aside the nearby attendant, and personally supported Lenora.

Upon seeing Lenora's face head-on, he squinted his eyes. "What's up with your face?"

Lenora said, "I accidentally fell."

"Could a fall really leave the imprint of five fingers?" Fu Zheng asked with a cold voice. Lenora lowered her head, falling into silence.

Zachary immediately swept Lenora off her feet. "I'm taking you to the hospital right away."

## **Stay Away 278**

Chapter 278 Who Hurt Her

Chapter 278 Who Hurt Her

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+10 Free Cons

Zachary carefully lifted Lenora into the car, settling her gently into the back seat, then took a close look at

her.

Her forehead was slightly red with a couple of hastily applied bandages, her left cheek was swollen with a clear five-finger imprint, and her right foot...

He lifted her right foot, intending to take off her boot. Lenora tried to pull her leg back, but he held her calf firmly.

When the boot came off, he could see her ankle swollen significantly even through the sock.

In short, she looked entirely disheveled.

Zachary's eyes darkened as he asked in a steady tone. "What's going on? How did you get all these injuries? Who hit you?"

Lenora was silent for a few seconds. "Just don't get involved."

Faced with his pressing gaze, Lenora simply turned her head away, closing her eyes.

Zachary fell silent.

He felt both helpless and angry.

Does she really think I won't find out if she doesn't say anything? Who on earth had hurt her like this and still had her covering up for them?

Zachary had abstained from drinking at his business event tonight. His secretary, who'd been taking his place in drinking rounds, had already gone home. He drove Lenora straight to the hospital and headed to orthopedics, explaining the situation to the doctor as he set her down on a chair.

The doctor lifted Lenora's right foot, gently pressing the swollen area to assess it. "Does it hurt when I press here?"

Lenora replied. "A little."

"And here?"

"A bit, but doctor, you're pressing quite gently. It might hurt more if you pressed harder."

"Oh, in that case, I'll try pressing harder," the doctor said with a smile.

Thinking he was joking, Lenora didn't pay much attention. Then, out of the blue, he firmly fixed her ankle. and applied sudden, intense pressure on it.

"Ow!"

Unprepared, Lenora let out a cry of pain, her eyes welling up with tears.

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Chapter 278 Who Hurt Her

Zachary quickly supported her, taking her hand. "It hurts a lot!"

Tears welled up in Lenora's eyes. "Yes."

It was too painful.

+10 Free Coins

Seeing her red-rimmed eyes and the look of grievance on her face, Zachary couldn't help but smile.

Lenora pulled her hand back from his.



How can he smile at a moment like this?

The doctor released her ankle. "Try standing and walking around. See if it still hurts."

Lenora cautiously placed her right foot on the floor, holding onto a table for balance. She limped a few steps, gradually shifting her weight from her left foot to her right, making her way slowly to the door and back

A smile spread across her face. "It really doesn't hurt much anymore. Thank you, doctor!"

"You're welcome. It's good that the pain's gone."

The doctor then treated the wound on her forehead, covering it with a square bandage and prescribing some medication.

Back in the car, Zachary buckled his seatbelt and asked, "Should I take you home?"

"Actually, could you drop me at the restaurant? My car's still there..."

"Give me the keys. I'll have someone drive it back for you tomorrow."

"Sure, let's go pick up Hattie at the Fuller residence first"

Zachary changed course toward the Fuller residence. [Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

Lenora took out her phone, browsing the group chat for her photography course.

There happened to be a class tonight, so she sent a message to the teaching assistant to excuse herself.

The chat was relatively quiet, likely because everyone was still focused on the class.

When they arrived at the Fuller residence, the two of them went inside, spoke briefly with Allison, and picked up Harrietta.

As they approached Lenora's complex, she said, "You can just drop me at the east gate."

There, stopping was allowed briefly by the roadside, but no long-term parking

Zachary saw right through her intentions. She was clearly treating him as a driver and planned to send him off as soon as they arrived..

He replied, "No, that's too far from your building. It's too cold outside. We'll park in the underground. garage instead."

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"Actually, it's not far.

Without a word, Zachary drove directly into the underground parking.

Lenora pouted but let it go, deciding to let him come upstairs for once since he'd been so helpful tonight.

After parking, Zachary got out and followed Lenora and Harrietta into the elevator.

In her loft, Lenora kicked off her boots, picked up her phone, hung her down jacket on a hook, and headed straight for the kitchen.

She pulled out some frozen ravioli from the freezer, intending to make some for herself.

Zachary, standing at the kitchen door, watched her movements. "I didn't eat much at the event tonight. Make a few extra ravioli for me too." Lenora turned and shot him a glare.

He grinned, turned, and walked back to the living room.

Suddenly, her phone on the table buzzed.

Zachary glanced at the screen. It was a message from someone named Zeke

The message preview only showed the contact name due to the locked screen.

Harrietta had mentioned Zeke was Lenora's photography instructor, and she'd planned to go on a cultural excursion with him.

Since Fiona and Harrietta would also join them. Zachary hadn't thought much of it and assumed Lenora was genuinely interested in learning photography.

"Come get the bowls!"

Lenora's voice called from the kitchen.

Zachary walked over, carrying two bowls out to the table.

Lenora followed with forks and some gravy.

Sitting on the couch, the two ate their ravioli. Harrietta, watching them, seemed increasingly tempted. Finally, Zachary fetched a clean bowl, setting a few dumplings in it for her as well.

After dinner, Zachary lingered, though he had no reason to stay, and finally left reluctantly.

Before going, he reminded her, "Remember to apply the medication on your forehead."

Lenora didn't reply, simply shutting the door behind him.

With a soft "click," the door closed in Zachary's face. He rubbed his nose and called the elevator down to the parking garage. Once inside his car, he didn't start it immediately but instead sent a message to Miles, asking him to investigate what had happened at the restaurant earlier that evening.

After cleaning up the dishes, Lenora curled up comfortably on the sofa and unlocked her phone, seeing

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message from Zeke: Why didn't you come to class tonight?

She replied: Sorry, I had some things to handle tonight, but I'll catch up with the recordings.

Zeke: Sure, the courseware is in the group chat. Feel free to ask if you need help.

Lenora: Thank you.

After a moment's thought, she added: Almighty Zeke, have you set a date for that cultural excursion you mentioned?

Zeke replied: Didn't I tell you to call me Ezekiel?

Lenora: Ezekiel

Zeke: We haven't set a date yet. Why, are you busy?

Lenora: Yeah, I have commitments for the next month, so I'm only free the next few days.

Lenora glanced at Harrietta beside her, hoping that Zeke could fit the trip into these three days. Otherwise, they'd have to wait a whole month, and the little girl wasn't that patient.

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Harrietta had a conflict with Tamara and decided to stay for so many days here just for the cultural excursion. She didn't want to disappoint Harrie

Zeke: Okay, I've got some things to handle tomorrow morning. How about we head out after lunch and stay in Newcove for two days?

Lenora: Sounds perfect! Thanks, Ezekiel!

Lenora turned to Harrietta excitedly. "Hattie, we're going on our cultural excursion tomorrow!"

Harrietta looked up from her cartoon and pumped a fist in the air. "Yay!"

Lenora then informed Sophia and Fiona about the plan.

On the morning of the eighth, she packed a small bag for the trip.

Fiona arrived with her own bags. After lunch, the threeadults, plus Harrietta, set off, heading toward the highway entrance.

There was already a black car waiting by the roadside. A young man stood next to it, clad in a dark plaid overcoat and a scarf around his neck.

Seeing him from afar, Sophia exclaimed, "Whoa, is that Zeke? He's so handsome!"

Lenora glanced at him, confirming the license plate. "That's the car. Pull up there."

Sophia parked behind the black car.

Lenora got out, shut the door, and greeted him. "Ze... Ezekiel?"

She remembered thinking, after seeing photos of Ezekiel in the group chat, that he bore some resemblance to Zachary. No, actually, Ezekiel was older, so it was Zachary who looked like him.

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As she met him in person, the likeness struck her even more. Their eyes, especially, were nearly identical.

Ezekiel walked over, smiling warmly at Lenora's familiar face. "Nora."

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Chapter 279 An Old Acquaintance

Chapter 279 An Old Acquaintance

"Sorry to keep you waiting."

"No worries, we just got here." Ezekiel looked Lenora up and down. "What happened to your forehead? Is it serious?"

"It's nothing. I just slipped. After all these years, you're still as gorgeous as you were back in university

"Not really," Lenora laughed shyly. "Ezekiel, let me introduce you to my friends. This is Sophia, and this is Fiona She's a photographer too. My niece stayed back in the car.

Sophia grinned. "Hi, Handsome. I'm Sophia Tortell."

Sophia would never let

linger. She was always able to process her emotions quickly, bouncing back

to her usual cheerful self in no time.

Fiona nodded at Ezekiel. "Hello, I'm Fiona Rouge."

Ezekiel's gaze lingered on Sophia momentarily before turning to Fiona. He nodded courteously, smiling. "Hello. I'm Ezekiel Hoffman, Lenora's teacher. Once we get to Newcove, maybe we can exchange some ideas." The last part was directed at Fiona, who responded with a smile. "I'd be delighted."

Another man had just stepped out of Ezekiel's car. He introduced himself to the women, "Hello, ladies! I'm Mr. Hoffman's assistant. You can call me Jerry"

Lenora raised an eyebrow. "You're the teaching assistant"

"That's me."

"It's getting late. Let's get on the road," Ezekiel suggested.

"Sounds good,"

They all returned to their vehicles and headed toward Newcove.

Newcove, located south of Jacaster in the neighboring state, enjoys a warm climate, offering beautiful, spring-like weather year-round. It was a perfect spot for creative exploration and scenic photography. During the drive, Harrietta glanced over from the passenger seat, looking at Lenora in the back. "Lenora, did you notice their car?"

"What about it? Lenora asked, puzzled.

"I thought I saw another person in their car who didn't get out."

"Really?" At the wheel, Sophia kept her eyes on the road. "I didn't notice."

"That's because you were too busy checking out the handsome guy!" Fiona teased.

Lenora shook her head. "I didn't notice anyone either."

## **Stay Away 279**

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Sophia said with mock seriousness, "What's wrong with admiring a good-looking guy? Who wouldn't want to sneak a few glances? By the way, Lenora, is he married?" "I don't know."

Fiona speculated, "I bet he isn't. No ring on his hand. If he was married, would his wife let him take other women on cultural excursions?"

"Good point. That means I still have a chance," Sophia said with a straight face.

"What?" Lenora looked stunned.

"SugarSoph, have you already decided to pursue him?" Fiona asked, surprised.

Glancing at Fiona, Sophia explained, "I did a bit of research before coming here. Guess what I found out?"

"What did you find?"

"Ezekiel Hoffman isn't just a renowned photographer-he's also the eldest son of the Hoffman family in Jeahron. He's been living abroad for years, but last year, he came back to take over the family business because his father's health started to decline. So, now, he's the head of the Hoffman family"

Fiona exchanged a surprised look with Lenora. "And?"

Sophia grinned. "My dad keeps pressuring me to marry, planning to leave everything to my half-brother. There's no way I'll agree to that! But I'm not cut out to manage a business, so I need to find someone who can handle the job and keep my dad in line. This way, I can take back the company without having to actually run it. Plus, with Ezekiel's wealth, he wouldn't be interested in the little scraps of our family's fortune. It's a perfect arrangement! Don't you think Ezekiel is the ideal candidate? Sure, there's a bit of gap in status, but it's worth a shot! Who knows, maybe he'll be a total romantic and fall for me!"

Fiona burst out laughing

Lenora fell silent for a few seconds. "Makes sense. Go for it!"

"Ms. Tortell," Hattie called in an adorable voice.

"Hmm!"

"You're a real dreamer!"

"Hahahaha..."

Around five in the evening, they arrived in Newcove and drove into the underground parking lot of the

hotel.

After getting out, Lenora lifted Harrietta out of the car and grabbed her luggage. They walked toward the elevator with Fiona and Sophia.

Sophia glanced around as she dragged her suitcase. "Where did they go?"

Their car's over there. Let's check in first," Lenora replied.

Sophia muttered, "Why park so far away when there's space here?"

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## Chapter 279 An Old Acquaintance

"Who knows."

The three of them, with Harrietta in tow, took the elevator to the first floor and checked in.

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Once the receptionist had entered their IDs, she handed them the key cards. "Your room is 1605. Take the elevator to the sixteenth floor, and it's the fourth room on the left." They'd booked a three-bedroom suite, each getting a separate bedroom, with Harrietta sharing with

Lenora.

"Okay."

Lenora took the key card and headed toward the elevator.

Just as they entered, another elevator nearby opened, and Ezekiel and his group stepped out.

Seeing no one in the lobby, Jerry glanced around and said to the young man beside Ezekiel, "They probably went up already."

"Mm." The young man's expression remained indifferent.

Once in the suite, they rested for a bit. Soon, hunger struck, and Lenora suggested, "How about we head to The restaurant for dinner?" Sophia, who had been lounging on the sofa, jumped up "Sure! Let's invite Ezekiel and his group."

Lenora raised her brows. "Sure, I'll message him."

"Hey, share his contact with me!"

"Okay"

Lenora sent Ezekiel a message about dinner and forwarded his contact to Sophia.

"He replied and said to meet at the restaurant. Let's go

"Wait, he replied to you?" Sophia looked at Lenora's phone with disbelief, then sighed. "Why won't he accept my friend request, though?"



Fiona patted her shoulder, consoling her. "Maybe he didn't see it."

Sophia fell silent.

She didn't buy that.

At the restaurant, Ezekiel and Jerry were already seated. Seeing only the two of them, Fiona assumed she must have been mistaken earlier and put the matter out of her mind.

They shared a table. With Soplita and Jerry keeping the conversation lively, any initial awkwardness quickly faded.

Ezekiel and Lenora's connection was brought up, and he smiled, sharing a few memories. He recounted instances where he'd helped Lenora-like securing housing, assisting with shopping, and extending her

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There was another incident when Lenora lost her phone in a supermarket at a shopping mall. She went the manager to review the surveillance footage, but he was dismissive, seeing her as a young girl and an outsider. It was only when Ezekiel negotiated with them that they took her seriously, reviewed the footage, and found the thief who had stolen the phone.

Coincidentally, Ezekiel graduated from the same university and the same major as Lenora. He was familiar with the personalities of several of Lenora's professors and had given her numerous academic guidance.

Besides this, during the New Year's holiday celebration organized by the Clusian community back then. Lenora was pursued by a wealthy scion who had studied abroad. It was only when Ezekiel stepped in that the rich heir dared not bother Lenora any longer. However, the more Lenora listened to what Ezekiel was saying, the more unfamiliar it all seemed to her. She tried hard to recall, but she still couldn't remember anything.

"Wow, you two were close!" Sophia said, glancing suggestively between Ezekiel and Lenora

It seemed Ezekiel had a lot going for him, and was, in Sophia's eyes, just as good as Zachary

As for her earlier comment in the car, although she had seriously considered it, her tone had been mostly joking.

Ignoring Sophia's look, Lenora continued serving Harrietta food.

The little girl had already noticed the photographer's attention toward Lenora. Hmph, I'm going to tell Uncle Zachary!

After dinner, Sophia headed to the restroom

The shared sink area was between the men's and women's facilities. Just as she was washing her hands, a man stepped out of the men's side. Sophia glanced up and froze in place.

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## **Stay Away 280**

Chapter 280 Does He Stay Here Too

Chapter 280 Does He Stay Here Too

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"Sophia, we meet again. Happy New Year." With a gentle smile, Zephyr greeted Sophia, stepping up beside her at the sink to wash his hands.. "What are you doing here?" Sophia asked bluntly.

"Just handling a few things around here. And you?" Zephyr took two paper towels from the dispenser and dried his hands with an easy grace. -Vacation," Sophia gave him a curt one-word reply, shook off the water from her hands, and walked out.

Zephyr caught her arm. "Any chance I could take you to dinner?"

"No chance," she said, shaking off his hand and striding out of the restroom. Back at the table, Lenora noticed Sophia's expression. What happened?" Sophia gave a cold snort. "Ran into some trash. Talk about a buzzkill." Lengra immediately understood who she meant. "He's staying here, too?"

"Yeah." Sophia took a few more halfhearted bites, then set down her fork. "I'm done. Going back to the room first. Are we going out tonight?" Lenora glanced at Ezekiel, who

checked his watch thoughtfully. "Let's head out around eight. I can show you a few night photography techniques" "Sounds good. I'll go rest up a bit," Sophia said, grabbing her phone and leaving

"Aunt Lenora, I'm full too. Can we head back?" Harrietta asked, looking up at her.

Lenora turned to Ezekiel. "Guess we'll head back first. Let's meet in the lobby at eight."

Ezekiel nodded.

Once they left, only he and Jerry remained at the table

Jerry hesitated before saying. "Mr. Hoffman, the child just called Ms. Wilkin her aunt."

"I heard," Ezekiel replied, his voice low. "Look into who Lenora's husband is."

"Understood."

Just then, Zephyr approached with his tray and took a seat across from Ezekiel. He adjusted his glasses with long, graceful fingers. "They left already?" "Yeah."

Jerry added with a smirk, "Ms. Tortell came back from the restroom and said she wanted to go back to her room, claiming she'd encountered some 'trash. You might still have some work to do. Mr. Yankovich." Zephyr chuckled. "If she's got feelings, that's better than seeing me as a stranger."

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Chapter 280 Does He Stay Here Too

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+10 Free Cons

Back in the hotel room, Harrietta was about to call Zachary when, surprisingly, he called her first.

She quickly ducked into the bathroom and answered softly, "Uncle Zachary."

"Hattie, where are you?" Zachary asked.

Yesterday, he'd taken Lenora's car keys, saying he'd have someone bring her car back from the restaurant. He planned to use the excuse of returning the keys to visit Lenora at home, only to find out that there was no one at Lenora's place! "We're in Newcove now. Aunt Lenora's here for a photography trip. Uncle Zachary, come quickly! That photographer's trying to steal your girl!"

"I got it. Hattie. I'll be there soon."

After hanging up the phone, Zachary immediately pinpointed Harrietta's location. He asked Miles to book a hotel in advance and to look into a photographer named Zeke Easton.

Miles hesitated, looking mildly puzzled. "Are you sure the photographer with Ms. Wilkin is named Zeke Easton?"

"Yes. Why?" Zachary raised a brow.

Miles glanced up carefully, then quickly lowered his head. "Zeke Easton is actually Ezekiel Hoffman."

Zachary's brow furrowed. "Oh? The Hoffman family's eldest son? And he's a photographer?"

Miles added, "There's more. He was the president of the Clusian Association when Ms. Wilkin was studying abroad... Zachary froze and looked up. "Say that again?"

Miles' voice wavered as he stammered, "Mr. Hoffman is the president of the Clusian Association..."

"The one who approached Lenora and is most probably... Zachary trailed off.

He gritted his teeth, struggling to maintain a calm facade.

So Ezekiel Hoffman had targeted the Fuller family all for Lenora?

"Yes..." Miles replied, hardly daring to breathe.

Zachary abruptly stood up and snapped, "Contact me if anything urgent comes up." He then strode out of

the office.

Miles sighed in relief and quickly fished out his phone to book the hotel for Zachary

At eight, Lenora and her group headed out, wandering the city streets and taking photos along the way. Occasionally, Sophia would serve as their model.

Whenever Ezekiel saw room for improvement in Lenor's photos, he would demonstrate himself.

After they had been walking for a while, Harrietta was panting from exhaustion and couldn't go any further. So, Jerry carried her the rest of the way.

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They returned to the hotel after ten. Lenora freshened up and settled into bed. She browsed through photos taken earlier that night, feeling as though she had gained a wealth of knowledge Harrietta was already fast asleep. Lenora put down her phone, turned off the light, and went to bed.

That night, she couldn't sleep well.

She felt like she was dreaming but couldn't wake up

In the dream, she was surrounded by friends, playing games in a lively atmosphere.

A stylishly dressed man walked over, holding a glass of wine to strike up a conversation.

Lenora brushed him off, feeling annoyed, and went to the restroom to escape. As she glanced at herself in the mirror, a jolt of terror snapped her awake.

Lenora opened her eyes wide, heart racing.

The room was pitch black.

She closed her eyes again, but the image of her reflection in the dream-a pregnant belly-flashed, through her mind.

Il hat was that absurd dream about? Does it mean I want a child?

She sighed. Feeling Harrietta cuddled beside her, she couldn't resist pinching her cheek gently.

Oddly, the dream matched some of what Ezekiel had said.

The other things he'd mentioned didn't seem like lies, but she truly couldn't recall a thing.

She concentrated, trying to remember, only to be struck by a sharp, splitting pain.

"Ah..."

Lenora grimaced, clutching her head, as fleeting images raced through her mind too quickly to grasp.

Never mind.

She closed her eyes and went back to sleep.

The following morning, Jerry received a report and was in shock.

"Mr. Hoffman, I found out who Ms. Wilkin's husband is

Ezekiel adjusted his cuff in front of the mirror. "Let's hear it."

"It's Zachary Fuller."

Ezekiel's hand stilled, and he looked over.

Jerry quickly explained, "Ms. Wilkin is the adopted daughter of the Fuller family. Three years ago, Old Mr. Fuller arranged her marriage to Zachary, and they only recently divorced. It was all over the news" 15:35 Tue, Nov 12 B

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Ezekiel didn't follow entertainment news, so he'd missed it entirely.

"Zachary Fuller... Ezekiel murmured, his gaze turning dark as he repeated the name.

+10 Free Coins

After breakfast, Ezekiel stepped out of the elevator, heading toward the lounge area, when he stopped

short.

At the door, Zachary, keys in hand, stepped inside. Upon seeing Ezekiel, he narrowed his eyes, stopping in his tracks.

The thought of Ezekiel being a possible father figure to Lenora's child made Zachary clench his fist, his knuckles cracking as anger surged within him.

The atmosphere thickened. An uncomfortable silence settled over them as they locked eyes in a wordless standoff, neither willing to break first.

Neither of them made the first move to speak, as if the one who spoke first would be admitting defeat.

After a tense moment, they both spoke at the same time.

"Fancy seeing you here, Mr. Hoffman Heading out?"

Quite the coincidence. Here for business, Mr. Fuller?"

"I'm here to look for someone." Zachary said, his gaze turning darker.

"Well, best of luck," Ezekiel replied evenly.

Just then, the elevator beside them chimed, and the doors slid open.

Lenora stepped out, holding Harrietta's hand.

When she saw the two of them standing face-to-face, she froze, utterly baffled.