

Surprise 211

Chapter 211 Friends Who Went Through Adversities Together

Alexander's expression was unamiable. A trace of coldness gradually seeped into the originally warm atmosphere, invading one's body and spreading throughout.

Courtney's hand that was holding her fork froze midair. Frowning, she glanced at him. "Didn't I say that it's just a friend? What's wrong with you?"

"What's their name? Was it a man or a woman?" His expression remained grim, but his tone was gentler than before. "I wish to know."

"It's not like you know them." She looked at him suspiciously. Half-joking and half-serious, she asked, "You can't be jealous just because I received a phone call from a friend, right?"

He secretly clenched his fists tightly. Her attitude at this moment made him feel absolutely ridiculous. It was clear that the truth was right in front of them, yet they were both being secretive about it. In the end, he gave in. Pulling out a chair, he sat down and said in a calmer tone, "I just want to know what other friends you have besides Cameron. Can't I?"

"I don't have many friends. When I was in America, I only had this one other friend aside from Cameron." She smiled as she naturally told him the truth. "His name is Elijah Grant. He was my senior when I was still studying at a local university. However, he is several years older than I am. When I arrived in America, he was starting up a business and lacked a certain amount of capital. I was quite wealthy at the time, so when I learned that he was an alumnus at my university, I decided to help him out."

Friends who went through adversities together... Alexander felt more and more suffocated the more he listened to her talk. It felt like it was difficult for air to circulate in his lungs, causing him to feel as if he was lacking oxygen. Courtney finished introducing Elijah to him in several simple sentences, but she left out the most important part—their marriage.

"The chicken wings are quite delicious. But, there's room for improvement." She did not hesitate to comment on his cooking as she placed a chicken wing on his plate. "Why don't you have a taste? Try and guess what it is that you need to improve on."

The chicken wing glistened in a brightly colored sauce; it looked extremely mouthwatering. Unfortunately, he wasn't paying attention to it. Under her expectant gaze, he randomly took a bite. He was filled with anger as he bit down, so he took a particularly larger mouth than usual.

"How is it?"

"Hmm." He nodded.

"Hey..." She seemed dumbfounded. "A-Are you sure your taste buds are alright?"

He glanced at her suspiciously. "What taste buds?"

"It's raw..." She pointed at the remaining half of the chicken wing on his plate. Her face was scrunched up in horror. The chicken wing was raw and bloody, from the skin down to its bones. How can he take such a huge bite out of it and even swallow it without a change in his expression?!

His face turned pale in horror. Then, he went to the restroom with a complicated expression.

A long while later, she leaned against the dining table and hooted with laughter. "Hahaha... What on earth were you thinking about just now?!"

His cooking skills were quite good. In fact, he was very talented. Although he had never cooked before, he made an entire meal for dinner. Moreover, the vegetables he cooked were tasty. Under her guidance, the fish soup also came out well. However, for some inexplicable reason, she could tell that he seemed to be preoccupied with something during dinner.

His complexion was rather pale when he finally came out from the restroom.

"Are you alright?" She dished up a bowl of fish soup and placed it in front of him. When she saw the self-doubt written on his face, she helplessly explained, "I've tasted it. This soup is fine. Drink it. It's good for your stomach."

Upon hearing her words, he let out a sigh of relief. Although it was his first try at cooking, he had his pride too—he wanted to do well. While he was drinking the soup, he glanced at her out of the corner of his eye and noticed that she was watching him with concern. Her gaze was soft; it was much gentler compared to when she was working. Comparing her current demeanor to the sharp-tongued appearance she had when he first met her, the differences made her seem like two different people.

"Why are you looking at me like that? Go on; drink your soup." Courtney winked at him and teasingly said, "Were you drinking the soup while staring at me and thinking that I look good enough to eat?"

Cough, cough. Alexander choked and started coughing. When he lifted his head again, his face was flushed from coughing. Apart from being much gentler than before, she is also more shameless now!

It was late at night in America. After Elijah finished his video conference, he returned to the place he lived at. Standing on the 60th floor, this height was enough for him to look down on the entirety of the world's economic center, Manhattan. Touching the glass of his floor-to-ceiling window, streamlined creases appeared in his handmade and well-cut suit. He observed the bustling city with a trace of loneliness reflected in his eyes. When one stands at the top of the world, they'll surely find that it's very cold and lonely at the top.

"Elijah, this is the market research report for Otharia." Lilian's voice came from behind him. She was his assistant. Even though she was speaking in Otharian, she spoke with a strong American accent.

"Leave it there. Have you cleared the schedule for next week?" He returned to his senses. By the time he turned around, the loneliness in his eyes was gone.

She stood with her back straight. The contour of her face clearly revealed that she was of mixed race. However, she got the best part of an Otharian's refined beauty. Looking at the man in front of her, she did not conceal the love and concern she had for him. "I've canceled everything. The flight tickets have also been booked. Several companies in Otharia have expressed interest in cooperating with us. I have attached the feedback on the schedule in the market research report just now."

He merely nodded in response to the meticulous way his assistant handled everything. He had never expressed an opinion on her work attitude before. Ordinary people might find such meticulousness in one's work to be extremely rare, but it was the basic requirement when working on Wall Street, Manhattan, New York. "When I arrive in Otharia, I will be taking some private time off. You can contact the companies on your own."

She nodded obediently. "No problem."

Then, he gestured with his fingers to indicate for her to leave. However, she did not leave. Withdrawing the sharp aura she generally had around her while she was working, she asked a private question in a gentle tone. "Elijah, are you going to meet with Hunter?"

"Yes." As soon as Courtney was mentioned, the look in his eyes became considerably kinder. That woman was the light of his life—she illuminated the darkest years of his life. Unfortunately, she seemed to have regarded him as a friend for so long that she forgot one thing—he was an ordinary man that could fall in love with the outstanding woman by his side. Therefore, he had always acted carefully around her for so many years for fear of scaring her away.

Disappointment flashed across Lilian's eyes, and she smiled bitterly. "Alright. Rest early, Elijah."

When the door closed behind her, the room fell silent again. Elijah took off his gold-rimmed glasses and casually placed them on his desk. Massaging his temples, he noticed the family portrait sitting on his desk out of the corner of his eye. He looked startled for a moment before his gaze became gentle.

The photo showed a small family of three. Tina was still very young at the time and could only babble the words 'Mommy' and 'Daddy'. Due to her lovable looks and the fact that pure Otharian children were rare in America, she would always get her face pinched by passersby whenever they brought her out. She soon became angry after getting pinched several times. From then on, she would shamelessly ride on Elijah's shoulders whenever they went out. That was because most people could not reach her when she was in that position. Come to think of it, I haven't seen them for almost a year now. I only get to see them a handful of times each year.

Chapter 212 No, He Is My Brother

Not much time was needed to heal from a burn, and Courtney could walk without any problems one week later.

The resort development project under Sunhill Enterprise had been delayed for some time. Therefore, Alexander immediately went on non-stop business trips after confirming that Courtney was fine.

"The discussion for this project must be completed within three days. Organize a team meeting as soon as the plane lands." He issued a strict order to Josh at the airport.

"Three days?!" Josh was so shocked that his eyes almost fell out of their sockets. "President Duncan, that's not enough time! They—"

"I don't want to hear any excuses. If the discussions are not completed within three days, you can lead the team yourself and continue with the discussions. I'm heading back to Melrose City. I have something urgent to deal with."

"Huh?" Josh could barely believe what he was hearing. "That's a project worth several hundreds of millions! What could be more important than that?!"

"A private matter." Alexander frowned slightly; his expression was colored with bitter resentment. If I heard it right, that man named Elijah Grant will be coming back to Melrose City this week. I have no reason not to meet this man. Besides, I have the right to know just what the relationship between Courtney and him is.

"Right now, we're just waiting for ventilation to be installed. The ventilation here is quite good, and we have purchased the second-hand office supplies as you instructed. So, it won't take long before you can start using this place." The head of the renovation team personally reported to Courtney. After Courtney inspected their work, she paid the remaining fees for the renovation. She glanced about the newly renovated two-story building, feeling incredibly excited.

The style of the décor was based on the industrial style Cameron mentioned before. The walls were painted smoky gray; it was a color that was dirt-proof yet looked good. The first floor was the administrative office while the second floor was the designer's workshop and the clothing prototype studio. Although the place was not big, it was created by both Cameron and Courtney themselves.

At the thought of Cameron, Courtney couldn't stop herself from calling. As expected, it was Gale who answered. "How has Cameron been the past two days?"

"She can recognize people now. Her mental condition seems quite okay, but she is still very lethargic. Yesterday, she stared at the window for quite some time. I was worried about something happening, so I had some people over to install anti-theft grilles on the windows." He was living in an apartment on the 31st floor. The installation team must have thought that he was crazy to install anti-theft grilles on a window when his apartment was located so high up. After all, only Spiderman could climb through his windows to steal anything.

"It must have been hard on you," she said helplessly. "I suggest you send her to the hospital if you find it difficult to go on taking care of her. Cameron once told me before that being hospitalized helped her recover better."

"No need; I can take care of her." His voice was extremely determined. He probably decided that he would never allow Cameron to be hospitalized.

Thus, Courtney did not push the issue. Having somebody take care of her is always better than having no one there for her. Besides, I've seen the situation at a psychiatric hospital before. It's utter mayhem in there. Even an ordinary person like me would probably be driven crazy if I were forced to live there, let alone Cameron who is already in a sensitive state.

"She slept a lot less today compared to yesterday. You should come and visit her if you have the time. You're welcome at any time."

“Of course. The company renovations have been completed. At first, I wanted to share this news with her. But, it’s okay. I will go and visit here after I finish up here.”

“Okay.”

After exchanging a few more words, they hung up. Courtney could not bear to say too much to Gale. If Cameron were still rational, she would never allow Gale to see her in this condition. Unfortunately, it just had to happen when Courtney was not by Cameron’s side. Thus, Courtney always felt that her negligence was what dragged Gale into this whole mess.

On the other side, Gale put down the phone and looked in the direction of the bedroom. The curtains were drawn shut, and the lights were dim—Cameron had fallen asleep.

All of a sudden, the phone beeped. A message notification popped up, and the name of the sender was ‘Giselle’. ‘Mom asked me to bring something for you. I’m already downstairs.’ Gale’s hand shook, and he almost dropped the phone.

Tina had been playing with an LED sign in the yard of the Duncans’ ancestral home all afternoon. Shay’s concert was being held tonight at Melrose Stadium, and she had obtained two VIP tickets to his concert in advance. As one of Shay’s greatest fans, it was only natural for her to go to his concert to support him.

“Jordan, are you really not going?” She flipped the LED sign upside down, which had the words ‘Fly bravely, Shay! Tina will follow you forever!’ written on it, as she simultaneously asked Jordan, who looked to be in a bad mood. “Jordan, I have two tickets! Won’t you go with me?”

Jordan glanced at the LED sign contemptuously. Then, he shook his head resolutely. He wrote some words on his drawing board and pressed the voice button. A robotic AI voice immediately rang out in the yard. “No way. The songs he sings don’t sound good. Besides, the venue is so noisy.”

She pouted and glared at him. “You’re not allowed to talk about my brother like that! I’m going to get angry.”

He became even more upset at those words and swiftly typed out a bunch of words. “I’m your brother. Shay is not your brother; he is clearly your uncle!”

“No, no, no! He is not my uncle; he is my brother!” She was so furious that her face was flushed.

At that moment, an excited voice came from the other side of the yard. “It’s Shay’s LED sign!” Hannah flew across the yard at full speed and pointed at the LED sign on the stone table. She excitedly said, “This is Shay’s LED sign! Are you going to Shay’s concert too?!”

Although she just entered junior high school, her stature was no different from that of a primary school student due to the malnutrition she experienced before. Therefore, she looked very thin and weak.

“Are you a fan of Shay too?” Tina stared wide-eyed at the ‘grand aunt’ she rarely encountered.

“Yup.” Hannah nodded very seriously. Then, she regretfully said, “But, the tickets were gone as soon as they came out. I couldn’t get any... So, I can only listen to it from outside.”

“I have tickets!” Tina immediately lifted the two tickets into the air. “Do you want to go with me?”

“Really?!” Hannah accepted the two tickets as if she had received a great treasure. She was so emotional that she couldn’t speak properly anymore. “Oh, my God! It’s tickets to the interactive zone! You can see Shay from up close!”

“It’s not just tickets to the interactive zone; we can even go backstage with these tickets! Shay and I have a close relationship.” Tina looked proud of herself. She was completely oblivious to the fact that the expression of the person sitting behind her had turned extremely dark while the two girls were happily chatting away. That’s my ticket! Didn’t you say you were giving them to me?! Why are you giving them to somebody else now?!

“I remember you! I remember you! You are the one who took part in the travel show with Shay!” Hannah studied Tina’s face and realized that fact belatedly. “Oh, my God! Why have I never noticed?! I was only paying attention to Shay at the time.”

Tina touched her head embarrassedly. “Haha, it’s all in the past now. Mr. Harry will be coming to pick me up soon. Let’s go together.”

“Sure, sure. I brought a lot of snacks. I’ll be right back after I get them.”

“I’ll go with you.”

Their two cheerful backs were reflected in Jordan’s eyes as they left. Staring at them blankly, he couldn’t believe that his sister had been taken away by his grand aunt.

Chapter 213 Long Time No See

Shay’s commercial performance this time was a collaboration with various other celebrities under the same company. Therefore, many people attended the concert. At present, the fans of the four most popular singers were gathered in one place, which resulted in all the tickets selling out on the website almost as soon as it was released.

After Shay sent away his two chatty fans, he smiled helplessly. Meanwhile, his manager was beseechingly urging him to finish with his makeup quickly. “Come on, my lordship. Sit down and get your hair done quickly! You’re going on stage soon! How could you take the time to entertain those two little fans?!”

“Those are not just my fans; one of them is also my niece. Isn’t she cute?” Shay was pressed into the chair by his manager, and his makeup artist was busy working.

“By the way, the investors for today’s competition are all here too. You better not make any mistakes. Also, you’ll have to come along for the celebration party after the concert. This time around, you’re not allowed to leave no matter what you say.”

He looked unenthusiastic. “I don’t want to go.”

“You have to go even if you don’t want to.” His manager looked very stern. “Who among all the other celebrities under our company do not have more endorsements than you? How do you think they managed to obtain those endorsements? They had to entertain their investors too! So, you better deal

with it. You'll get several tens of millions in endorsements just by drinking and smiling. Why won't you go?!"

Shay had heard those words until his ears were about to fall off. "Keith, can't I take on less of these commercial performances and endorsements in the future? I only want to focus on producing my album."

"My lordship... didn't you hear a single word I just said?! The album market is already a sunset industry. Nobody buys them anymore. Besides, internet piracy is rampant. Even if we sell your songs online, it won't earn us any money. It's considered not bad if we can even cover the costs sustained during production. I don't object if you wish to continue with your artistic pursuits. Aren't I finding ways for you to earn money and support your dreams? But, you have to be considerate toward me too."

"Right; alright. I won't say that again." He raised his hands in defeat. As part of the entertainment industry, it was all but impossible for one to focus on being an artist without engaging in any of the dirty acts going on behind the scenes. Using the money from the endorsements and commercial performances to produce his songs could be considered his determination to maintain the last piece of innocence in his heart.

It hadn't been more than a year since he entered the entertainment industry, but he already felt as if his limbs had been shattered and reshaped again. It felt like a spinning top that was spinning continuously—it would topple over as soon as it stopped spinning. The audience only sees your brilliance on stage or your pathetic appearance as you fall from grace. Who has the time to care about your emotions and desires?

After the commercial performance, the venue manager came over to inform them about the place and time for the celebration party. Shay was being monitored by his manager all the way until they arrived at the hotel where the banquet was taking place. He couldn't escape even if he wanted to.

"I really won't escape, alright? Can you please stop staring at me, Keith? It stresses me out."

"I won't stare at you anymore after you greet the president of Warner Bros. By then, you can do whatever you like."

"Sh*t! President Pigby whose face is so greasy that it can fill a barrel with oil?! That fat pig is interested in both men and women! If I have to greet him, it will shorten my lifespan by ten years!"

"You won't die from smiling a little."

While the two were at a stalemate, a figure walked over from afar. That person was wearing a tan suit paired with a dark blue bowtie. Holding a glass of champagne in his hands, he looked extremely aristocratic.

"How strange; I heard that Shay never participates in the celebration parties." As soon as that voice entered Shay's ears, he stiffened in surprise. He had his back to Casey, but his face paled considerably.

"Oh, it's President Lewis." His manager smiled widely. "That's a misunderstanding. It's not that Shay doesn't participate in them; it's just that he was always feeling unwell. So, he would return to the hotel to rest. Look; he came this time since he was feeling fine."

“Oh?” Casey’s intonation went up at the end of his sentence, conjuring a rather meaningful tone.

“Go ahead and talk. I’ll be going there to greet some other people.” Shay’s manager tactfully fled the scene. Before he left, he patted Shay on the shoulder for an inexplicable reason. The look in his eyes indicated that Shay should seize the opportunity. He probably was not aware of Casey’s malicious intentions up to this day.

Shay’s expression was extremely frustrating. How did I get this kind of manager? All he does is push me into the fire!

“Long time no see.” Casey’s quiet voice came from behind him.

The corners of his mouth twitched as he forced a smile onto his face. “It hasn’t been that long, right? Didn’t we have a ‘chance encounter’ three days ago in Tokyo?”

Calling it a chance encounter is putting it nicely. Who would believe that two people can meet each other all over the world once every three days on average? There’s nothing he cannot do, only what you cannot imagine. I seriously suspect that my manager is selling my itinerary to Casey.

“What a pity.” Casey held his glass in his hand. The golden champagne swayed gently along the wall of the glass. “If it were March or April, we could have seen some rather beautiful cherry blossoms.”

“President Duncan, you truly are leisurely and elegant.” Shay glanced at Casey indifferently. “I went there for work. How could I choose when I wanted to go? I’m not as free as you are.”

Casey did not deny or confirm anything. He simply smilingly said, “I heard that you had some trouble with President Pigby of Warner Bros?”

When Shay heard that question, he looked absolutely disgusted and irritably asked, “What does that have to do with you?”

President Pigby of Warner Bros, who practically everybody in the entertainment industry dreaded, had molested Shay’s butt in front of everybody at the backstage area of the Kyoto Film Festival half a month ago. That incident had made him sick for half a month. Even now, he felt his stomach churning whenever he recalled the incident. If it wasn’t for his manager’s swift actions to stop him, he would have beat President Pigby up on the spot.

“It’s none of my business. But, Lewis Enterprise joined hands with Warner Bros recently. I handed some items to Old Master Pigby of the Pigby Family, and now, Warner Bros is no longer under that pig’s control.”

Shay looked startled. Then, he glanced at Casey suspiciously. “What did you give him?”

It’s nothing more than some pictures of that pig hugging several men at a male brothel. It was truly an elegant sight. Old Master Pigby nearly had a heart attack on the spot and immediately made a phone call to remove that pig from his position.”

President Pigby was born with a sense of debauchery that was not restrained by the common sense of the world. Therefore, it was not surprising for him to do something like that. Shay tried to hold his laughter in for a while. In the end, he couldn’t control himself and burst out laughing.

“What do you think? Don’t you plan to treat me to a meal as thanks?”

“I didn’t ask you to help me.” He raised his eyebrows at Casey and put aside his wine glass. “If that’s the case, I don’t have to hang around here anymore. I was waiting for that pig to appear so that I could apologize to him. Can you please let my manager know that I left early, President Lewis? I’m leaving.”

Shay walked away arrogantly. Meanwhile, Casey stood still for a while. Then, he lowered his head with a smile and followed.

“What’s the matter with you? Why are you chasing after me and forcing me to treat you to a meal?” After walking along the street for a while, Shay finally noticed that Casey had been following behind him. This is maddening!

“I am a businessman.” Casey’s expression was lazy. “A businessman always puts profit first. You have to provide me with an equivalent exchange.”

“Will you stop following me if I treat you to something to eat?”

“Of course.”

Upon hearing those two words, the pair of eyes under the sunglasses slanted sideways. Shay glanced at the oden stall by the side of the road that had just opened for business and quietly said, “You said that yourself.”

Chapter 214 The Dead Can’t Come Back to Life

“Eat whatever you want. I’ll treat you to it.” Shay waved his hand grandly and reserved the entire oden stall.

The lady selling oden was so happy that she couldn’t stop smiling. “Come; come. Have one cup each. Help yourselves to whatever you want to eat. It’s all made of fresh ingredients.”

He filled the cup to the brim and asked the lady to drizzle some sauce on it. Then, he handed it over to Casey with great sincerity. “Here; my treat.”

Get lost after finishing this. He was secretly delighted inside. Casey is a rich young master who was spoiled and coddled all his life. How can he possibly bring himself to eat at this random roadside stall where you can’t even tell what ingredients the food was originally made out of?

Casey looked at the large cup of skewers in front of him. He finally accepted it after examining it for several seconds. “What is this? What is it called?”

“Oh my! Mister, how can you not know what oden is?” The lady sounded helpless.

He nodded and commented, “It’s a simplified version of hotpot.”

“You eat hotpot?” Shay looked at Casey a little suspiciously. For some reason, he always assumed that Casey was born eating western food. He thought Casey only ate stuff like expensive foie gras and caviar—food that wouldn’t even fill up the stomach of a cat.

“Compared to western food, I prefer Otharian food which has greater variety and is richer in taste.” Casey glanced at Shay before eating the ‘simplified hotpot’ skewers in his hands. He ate slowly and elegantly. The skewers of meatballs gradually disappeared one by one, followed by the skewers of the fish cakes. The dried tofu strips, lotus root slices, mushrooms, seaweed, and quail eggs also disappeared one by one—

Casey Lewis, are you a pig?! Shay was so shocked that his eyes were about to fall out of their sockets. “You finished everything?!”

“It’s delicious. Can I get another portion?” Casey looked at him and handed him the empty cup with an expectant look.

At this point, he believed that Casey truly liked eating oden. Therefore, he began to regret his decision—he regretted overestimating himself and bringing this ‘oden blackhole’ here. “Can you stop eating?”

“Are you not eating?” Casey reached out to Shay with a fish cake in his hand. The special sauce covered the fish cake and made it glisten. “Try it; this is very tasty.”

“Of course, I know it’s delicious.” Shay nearly went mad with frustration. “If I can eat it, why would I need to wait for you to feed it to me?! If I eat any of these, I’ll have to run on the treadmill for two hours tonight! I’m tired; I don’t have the strength to do that.” A male boss will never understand the life of a male celebrity!

Casey nodded. “You don’t need to be so demanding of yourself. I think it doesn’t matter whether you are fat or not. Besides, you might feel even better to the touch if you gain a little more weight.”

Upon hearing those words, Shay’s face immediately burned in embarrassment. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw that the expression of the lady selling oden had also changed at those words. Thus, he said through gritted teeth, “Suck your grandfather’s d*ck!”

“I’m afraid my grandfather passed away a long time ago. But, you can feel free to curse at my sister. She deserves it.”

“You’re insane.” He rolled his eyes at Casey before lowering his head to pay for the meal. All of a sudden, he noticed that he had several missed calls on his phone. They were from Mrs. Bell, the old housekeeper at the Hunter Residence. He hurriedly returned her calls. “Hello? What’s the matter, Mrs. Bell?”

Casey was enjoying the last of his oden. Then, he watched as Shay’s complexion turned deathly pale after making the phone call. “Have you informed Courtney about this? Tell me the hospital’s address; I’ll be there immediately.” After saying those words, he turned and ran toward the side of the road.

Casey was about to chase after him, but the lady grabbed him. “Hey, you haven’t paid!”

Hence, he threw a stack of cash on the table before running like the wind after the figure in the distance.

It was late at night. Weeping sounds mixed with the apologetic voices of all the doctors that had participated in the operation rang out from inside the hospital. “I’m sorry, but the dead can’t come back to life.”

The doctors did not know how many times they had said these words, and they had long since become numb to them.

It was a mess outside the operating room. When Shay arrived, Courtney was standing alone in the corner. Her eyes were red-rimmed as she looked in the direction of the door to the operating room. She had no intention of stopping Susan from harassing the attending doctor.

“Look; you can’t do this. The patient passed away from sudden liver failure. We did our best to save him; we’ve tried our best.”

“Nonsense! Luke was perfectly fine while he was at the hospital! You said that it was okay to discharge him from the hospital! It hasn’t been long since his discharge. And now, something like this occurred! How can you say that you are not responsible for this?!” Susan grabbed at the attending doctor’s white lab coat like a madwoman. She pulled so hard that the pockets of the lab coat were torn at the seams. To be honest, she did not look sorrowful. Rather, she seemed to be full of resentment. Unfortunately, nobody knew why she held so much hatred for a doctor.

Anna and Courtney were separated by the body of their father, which was covered with a piece of white cloth, and Anna’s mother, who was raising hell in the hospital. Anna never expected to be put in such a difficult position one day. Her mother was arbitrarily kicking up a fuss and trying to pin all the blame on the doctor. Looking at her mother’s crazy behavior, she felt extremely humiliated. Never in her life had she ever experienced this emotion before—at this moment, it felt as if her hands were covered in blood.

“Mom, that’s enough,” she suddenly said as she grabbed her mother, who was lying on the ground. “Dad is dead. Can you please be quiet?”

There were tears at the corners of Susan’s eyes. At the same time, her expression was filled with shock and dissatisfaction as she shook off Anna’s hand. With the help of the surrounding people, she moved to the side. Only then were the doctors allowed to push the body trolley to the morgue.

Among the chaotic crowd, Courtney was the only one to quietly follow the body trolley into the morgue. Shay, who arrived late, moved to follow her too.

“Shay,” Anna stepped forward and called out to Shay.

“What is it?” Shay turned back to look at Anna.

“I-It’s nothing.” The words were on the tip of her tongue, but she could not say them. “I’ll deal with things here. Go and comfort her. After all, the dead can’t come back to life.”

He frowned. “I know.”

After saying those words, Shay chased after Courtney without looking back. Anna watched his back for a long time, watching as his back got further and further away from her. A touch of self-deprecating laughter flitted across her eyes. From the past to the present and even the future, his back will forever be the only thing I see. He has never taken the initiative to look at me before. I wonder why I still hope for something different.

“Why don’t you look sad even though Mr. Hunter just passed away, Miss Hunter? Do you have a terrible relationship with your father?”

A cold voice entered her ears, bringing her back to her senses. She looked up and saw Casey, who had appeared next to her at some point without her noticing. Stunned, she said, "What do you mean by that, President Lewis?"

"It's nothing. I just found it funny. Your father just passed away; your mother made a huge fuss in the hospital, trying to blame his death on the hospital. Does the Hunter Family lack that amount of compensation? Or, do they lack a reason to comfort themselves?"

Anna's expression tensed. "President Lewis, please watch your words."

"It just slipped out by accident." Casey smiled. The chilly look in his eyes landed on Anna, making her shudder in response. He had seen many disputes among the wealthy families in his time. Lucian Hunter died of organ failure even though he was only in his fifties. Moreover, even the hospital could not determine what the cause of death was. That was simply inconceivable. Besides, the reactions of this widowed mother and daughter pair of the Hunter Family were quite suspicious too.

Chapter 215 Who I Am Is Not Important

Lucian's funeral was scheduled for Saturday. When the morning ceremony ended, family members brought his ashes to bury at the cemetery. His final wish was to be buried next to Cecilia. When Susan found out, she had cried so hard and fainted once during the funeral, but she still agreed in the end.

Her agreement was pointless, though, because Courtney did not agree. Moreover, Alicia had also rejected the idea. The Hunter Family had no choice but to find another grave; one that was on the other side of the road from where Cecilia was buried.

"Don't worry, Luke. I'll take good care of your daughter when you're not around anymore. I'll manage the company. My brother's children are all grown up now. They are more than capable. According to your will, they all have the right to inherit the company."

Susan turned the peaceful funeral into a meeting for the allotment of shares.

Courtney was sick of listening to her. After standing in a daze for a while, she snuck away from the rest of the group.

In fact, Lucian had built his career from scratch. He had endured hardships all his life but ended up falling into Susan's schemes. Courtney did not believe that he had left all his inheritance to Susan and her maternal family in his will. Even if they went in order, it was only right that the inheritance went to Courtney first.

But his death also brought an end to everything. She no longer wanted anything to do with the current Hunter Family.

Before she left, she went to visit her mother's grave.

Bending down to pull out some weeds, she then looked at the picture on the gravestone and lamented, "Mom, you can probably see dad on the other side now. I've taken the liberty to forgive him, but I'm guessing you don't need me to hate him. Grandpa told me that when you gave birth to me, you named me Courtney with the hope that I would live a dignified life without being plagued by worldly troubles..."

After murmuring to herself for a bit, her legs started to get tired. She turned around to leave when she saw a black silhouette; the white flower on the chest of the black blouse was an especially harsh sight.

Susan glared at Courtney and chided, "I've been looking for you everywhere, but you were all the way on this side. Do you think I have nothing better to do?"

In the past, she always acted as a dutiful stepmother in front of Courtney's father. But now that he was gone, there wasn't a need for her to keep acting that way anymore.

Courtney let out a scoff in her mind, but she maintained the same tone of voice on the outside. "The funeral is over. What reason do you still have to look for me?"

Susan sneered at her and sized her up with a scornful look. That gesture was so smooth as though she had gone over it in her mind countless times.

"The funeral is over, but don't you want to know what's in your father's will?"

Courtney frowned. "Does his will have anything to do with me?"

"What a pity." Susan laughed. "It really doesn't have anything to do with you. Your name wasn't even mentioned once. Isn't that so funny? You were a daughter he cherished all these years, but he didn't leave a single thing to you in his will."

The unabashed look she had on her face made Courtney feel nauseous just by looking at it.

"Cecilia, you can see for yourself. You thought of your daughter even as you took your last breath, but to Lucian, she was nothing. He didn't leave anything for her. Did you know that?"

Susan stared at the picture on the gravestone, her eyes almost popping out. The deep hatred in them seemed to have been buried for many years that Courtney felt like she could smell the rotting stench it gave off.

Standing in front of the gravestone to block her view, Courtney warned, "Please show some respect to the dead. My mother does not deserve to be humiliated by you."

"Humiliated?" Susan smirked. "Do you think she humiliated me any less? She always set herself above everyone else and was full of herself. Didn't she still die in the end? Good fortune doesn't stay with you forever, Cecilia. Did you think you could beat me by leaving this wretched thing?"

Courtney was shaking with anger. "Get out..."

"What right do you have to chase me out of here? There is something I've wanted to do all along."

Susan raised her hand in an instant.

It was starting to drizzle. When Courtney looked up, a drop of rain fell on her eyelashes, forcing her to blink. She did not have time to avoid the slap, and by the time she realized what was happening, it was too late.

Before the pain she had anticipated reached her face, she heard Susan yell, "Who are you?"

Then, her ears caught the sound of a familiar voice.

“Who I am isn’t important.” The man’s voice was gentle and steady, but it did not allow room for interruption. “You just have to know that if this slap ends up on Courtney’s face, I will make you and all the property you think you’re entitled to go up in smoke overnight. I am a man of my word.”

“Elijah.” Courtney stared at the man before her in bewilderment. “Why are you here?”

“I decided to return early. I came as soon as I heard that something had happened to your father,” he explained briefly. His eyes were still glaring at the woman in front of him.

Susan observed the both of them for a moment, then burst into laughter. “Courtney, you’re amazing. As if seducing Alexander wasn’t enough; you have another one here too. Are you only depending on men?”

Before she could finish, two hefty black men jumped out from beside Courtney and grabbed a hold of Susan at each arm.

Lilian walked out and ordered, “Shut her up.”

The black bodyguards did as they were told. Like magic, they presented a rolled-up handkerchief and stuffed it in Susan’s mouth, silencing her nasty cursing.

Lilian waved her hand and had the two take Susan away.

“Hey!” Courtney waved her hand hurriedly.

“Don’t worry; nothing is going to happen. They’re just going to send her away after giving her a little warning,” Elijah reassured while patting her shoulder.

She let out a sigh of relief.

After Lilian dealt with Susan, she turned around with an umbrella in her hand and walked toward Courtney. She hugged Courtney and said sincerely, “I just heard about your father. I’m really sorry, Hunter.”

“It’s okay.” Courtney hugged her in return with a slightly bitter smile on her face. “It’s great to see you again, Lilian.”

Lilian was taller than Courtney by a head. Every time Lilian hugged her, it seemed like she was hugging a child. It was clear that Courtney was not short either, but she always looked fragile in Lilian’s embrace.

Oh, it must be nice to be mixed. She has good genes.

“It’s starting to rain. Is there anything left to do here, Hunter?” Lilian let go of her. A major portion of the umbrella was over Courtney’s head.

Courtney shook her head. “No.”

The only thing left was deciding who in Susan’s maternal family would gain ownership of the shares. Since I have nothing to do with the will, then this place has nothing to do with me anymore.

The rain was getting heavier. Standing under one umbrella, Courtney and Elijah slowly walked off in the rain together. She did not notice the black figure that was standing on the other side of the cemetery that had taken the earliest flight out to make it back in time only to watch her leave in Elijah’s arms.

“President Duncan. Aren’t you going to stop Miss Hunter?”

Josh was feeling rather conflicted as he stood next to Alexander with an opened umbrella.

During the meeting for the Shanghai resort project, Alexander heard the news about the Hunter Family and had rushed out in the middle of the negotiation.

“Get the car now and go after them.” Alexander’s voice sounded from under the umbrella.