The Ashes 1041

Chapter 1041

Aspen said, "But you're the CEO. So, what do you think? Should we just make a casual gesture and write a check for a million? Or should we step it up a notch, maybe throw in roughly eight million to try and make a name for our company?"

Andrew shook his head and said, "Eight million? That's not enough. It lacks impact."

Aspen was stunned. "That's still not enough? Come on, this is just a regular charity event. Even those filthy rich legacy families only drop five million tops, just to show some goodwill. And you think even eight million isn't enough?

"If we go too high, we'll end up at the top of the donor list and stand out way too much. That kind of attention might actually backfire."

She clearly disagreed with Andrew's idea.

However, Andrew waved it off. "Don't overthink it. Just spend the money. I'll deal with the consequences. Screw it, let's just go with 50 million."

Aspen froze, completely in disbelief. "50 million? Are you out of your mind? If we go that high, there's no way we won't be at the top of the list.

"It's not just the money. What if a few of those big-name families or corporations notice us? They might see Supreme Capital Group as a threat and think we're out to steal their market share!"

Andrew replied calmly, "Then let them think that. If I've already joined this game, why would I fear making enemies? Go on, it's not like that 50 million is being wasted.

"Best case, it sparks something bigger. Worst case, even if it doesn't do a thing, it still goes to people who need it. That's charity, and that's good karma."

Aspen was exasperated, but somehow, he had convinced her. "Fine, it's your money. However you want to spend it, that's your call."

With that, she stood up, walked over, and signed 50 million dollars.

On the other side, Quinton chuckled and said, "Christie, you're new to the capital, and you haven't really gotten to know the business and political big shots here yet. Go ahead and put down 20 million for us-the Wrights. Might as well show your face while you're at it."

Christina looked surprised. "It's just a charity event. I saw several donors only putting in a few hundred thousand, maybe two million at most. Mr. Wright, don't you think 20 million is a bit too much?"

However, Quinton had that calculating look in his eyes and smiled lazily. "It's only 20 million, hardly over the top. The real reason? The state governor's office is planning to outsource a few of their official projects.

"Hardly anyone knows about this yet. This donation isn't just for helping the poor or feeding the hungry. It's a message, aimed directly at the governor-to make a good impression."

Christina's eyes lit up as she immediately caught on. "Smart move. In that case, the 20 million is more like laying the groundwork. If we can win the governor's favor, then you'll have a real shot at landing those projects, Mr. Wright."

Quinton laughed. "Exactly. You're sharp-that's the idea. Now, go knock their socks off and make an impression. You probably didn't notice, but several of the top dogs in the room were eyeing you earlier, and from the looks of it, they're quite taken with you."

At first, Christina was not into any of this. Nonetheless, this was the capital-the highest rung she could ever hope to reach in her life. Now, with people starting to pay attention to her, she could not help it her vanity swelled a little, and she felt just a bit more alive.

She glanced over at Andrew's seat, where he sat alone, isolated and ignored, like some nobody in the corner. She silently mocked at how, in a place dripping with wealth and power, where titans mingled freely, Andrew's glow from Jayrodale looked utterly dull.

Meanwhile, she was riding the Wrights' coattails and flying straight past him.

Chapter 1042

After all the moguls, elites, and legacy families finished flexing their generosity at the charity event, the venue transitioned into a lavish buffet-style dinner.

With her stunning looks and classy aura, Aspen turned heads everywhere she went. She held a glass of red wine and chatted gracefully with several older men, most balding and sporting sizable beer bellies.

Meanwhile, Andrew looked utterly bored. He had filled a plate with food and was sitting alone, eating away like he had not had a proper meal in days.

Aspen caught a glimpse of him across the room and nearly lost it. She was working her tail off trying to network and promote Supreme Capital Group, while this so-called CEO was sitting on the sidelines, stuffing his face and acting like none of it mattered.

She could not help but wonder what he was even thinking. Ignoring Andrew's protests, she marched over, grabbed his arm, and dragged him across the room to introduce him to a balding man named Harry Dunham.

"Mr. Dunham, let me introduce you this is Mr. Lloyd from Supreme Capital Group. Mr. Lloyd, this is Mr. Dunham, a major player in Gabo Creek's grocery and food industry. His group is currently valued at over ten billion."

Harry gave Andrew a quick glance, then looked back at Aspen with a frown. "Ms. Aspen, you brought a date tonight?"

Aspen smiled and said, "Mr. Dunham, this is our CEO, Mr. Lloyd. He's not my date."

Harry scoffed. "Mr. Lloyd, huh? Sorry, but I've never heard of that company in our business circle. Excuse me."

With that, he stormed off, clearly annoyed.

Aspen gritted her teeth. "That bald old mutt! No sense of class whatsoever. We were having a good conversation-I was even thinking of investing in his food group. I didn't expect him to flip like that."

Andrew shrugged. "Isn't it obvious? That old perv had his eyes on you. When I showed up, he realized he had no chance, got embarrassed, and left in a huff."

Aspen stomped her foot. "Then what do you suggest we do? Our company doesn't even have a single solid project yet. Events like this are perfect for business talk we can't just waste the opportunity!"

Andrew scanned the room and grabbed her by the hand. "Come with me. If you're going to talk

business, you need to pick bettenet

targets As for that old creep, didn't you notice how wasted he was from booze and other indulgences?

"The guy could barely breathe between sentences. You'd get more out of handing

him a roast chicken than pitching him business."

Aspen could not help but smirk

coldly. She was curious to see just

how much this so-called CEO could actually do. In her mind, Andrew was just a rich brute who enjoyed tormenting her-she did not think he had any real skill.

They stopped just outside a circle of high-level guests, and Andrew stood quietly, eavesdropping.

Aspen tensed up and whispered, "What are you doing? That group includes heads from The Five Apex Families. They're the biggest players here—there's no way we can get in!"

Andrew smiled casually and did not say a word. He simply gestured for her to stay calm and listen.

One said, "Business has been rough this year. That diamond mine I invested in abroad? Lost 100 billion when that coup broke out-damn it!"

Another chimed in, "Tell me about it. Our family shifted its whole strategy overseas. We spent five years building things up, and now we're not just making zero profit-we're also caught up in legal trouble with the local government. Screw this!"

A man whispered, "Oh, please. Was your operation even legit? You guys were tricking Holtrien citizens into shady deals, selling organs, and running scams."

"Exactly. Honestly, you're lucky it's just foreign charges. Once those guys return to the country, they're definitely gonna face trial here too!"

As Andrew listened, his expression turned oddly amused. So this was what the capital's elites were up to-not all that wealth came from clean hands, apparently.

Nonetheless, the more he thought about it, the less surprised he was.

Chapter 1043 Nowadays, among the wealthy and the ultra-rich, there were barely any whose fortune came from a spotless, clean slate.

Aspen stood frozen, utterly shocked.

The same legacy heads and well-known moguls she had always looked up to were now casually spitting out crude, foul-mouthed complaints like street punks.

Their behavior was downright disappointing definitely not what she had imagined of the elite.

Just then, Andrew cleared his throat with a light cough.

The powerful men instantly went quiet and turned toward him, their faces filled

with annoyance.

"Sorry, this is a private circle. We don't welcome outsiders," one stern-looking middle-aged man said coldly. Andrew smiled and replied, "My apologies for interrupting. I'm Andrew Lloyd from Supreme Capital Group. It's my first time bringing business to the capital, and I was hoping to have a chat with you gentlemen." The group immediately burst out laughing. "Supreme Capital Group? What kind of backwater scam company is that? Never heard of it." One of the men mocked, "Kid, you're in the wrong room. With that little pocket change, maybe open a smoothie stand or a breakfast ---- joint. The things we discuss herewell, you'll probably never even get close in your lifetime." "Why are we even wasting breath on him? Get lost. Anyone here could name their net worth and scare the hell out of you." "Do you think you're qualified to have a conversation with us? Their harsh, dismissive words made Aspen's face flush with embarrassment. She felt absolutely humiliated. However, Andrew stayed perfectly calm and kept on smiling. "Alright then, I suppose I really am interrupting. They always say the elites and moguls in the capital are known for sharp investment instincts. But from the looks of it, all I see are a bunch of narrow-minded fools." The men's faces darkened instantly.

The same middle-aged man with the commanding presence gave a sharp grunt.

"What's that supposed to mean? Do you really think you can come in here and talk trash without paying the price?" Aspen was nearly trembling from panic.

She was screaming internally, 'What the hell is Andrew doing, calling these guys fools? Is this how he planned to pitch business and find partners? This isn't negotiatingit's starting a fire!" "Let's go.

Now!" she whispered harshly, tugging at him, desperate to leave.

---- Yet, Andrew did not budge.

He stood firm and smiled as he said, "Gentlemen, I have an up-and-coming project on hand.

If I share it, and you're not interested, I'll drop it.

No hard feelings." The middle-aged man remained cold.

"Kid, walk away while you still can.

Our patience is wearing thin.

Do you think some slick words and flashy nonsense are gonna get you our money? Let's be realif we did give it to you, you probably wouldn't even have the guts to accept it. The others also sneered, clearly amused by what they saw as a total joke.

To them, Andrew was a nobody.

Everyone in that circle was either a patriarch of a top-tier family or a billionaire listed on the national ranking.

So, who did this guy think he was, trying to squeeze into their conversation? Andrew spoke calmly.

"A lot of successful people hit a wall because they become arrogant and close- minded. You've probably heard about the two miracle supplements from Jayrodale that recently made waves in the capital Vitality Pill and Titan Essence Pill?" He added, "To be frank Supreme Capital Group holds exclusive rights to manufacture and distribute both." The second he said that, the sneers and mocking smiles froze on the men's faces. A flicker of surprise flashed in their eyes. Andrew acted as if he had not noticed. He simply sighed and said, "---- Originally, I wanted to partner with some capable investors and build something big. But now it seems like the so-called elites of Gabo Creek's capital aren't quite as sharp as their reputation suggests. "There's no shortage of mediocrity and inflated egos here either. Well, if that's the case, I won't waste any more time. Sorry to bother you all." With that, Andrew let out a long, regretful sigh, turned around with Aspen in tow, and walked away without another word. Chapter 1044 Aspen's legs had already gone numb, and she could not even find the strength to move. She thought Andrew was too bold, too outrageous. Talking to those powerhouses in that tone was practically asking to get smacked down.

However, the very next second, her ears caught something completely unexpectedeager voices calling out to stop him.

Hey, young man, hold on! We may have been a bit rude just now!""" Aman said, "Supreme Capital Group, was it? No hard feelings, alright? The name's impressivel'll have my secretary reach out first thing tomorrow." "Mr.

Lloyd, since you're already here, come chat with us.

You mentioned partnering up to make money, right? That's exactly the kind of thing we love to hear!" Another chimed in, "You actually secured Jayrodale's Vitality Pill and the legendary Titan Essence Pill? Mr.

Lloyd, clearly you're full of surprises.

We're impressed!" Two of the bigwigs even rushed forward and grabbed Andrew's arm, afraid he might slip away.

Aspen stood there dumbfounded, frozen like a statue.

She could not believe what was happening.

---- Andrew shot her a subtle smile, though his face held a look of feigned annoyance.

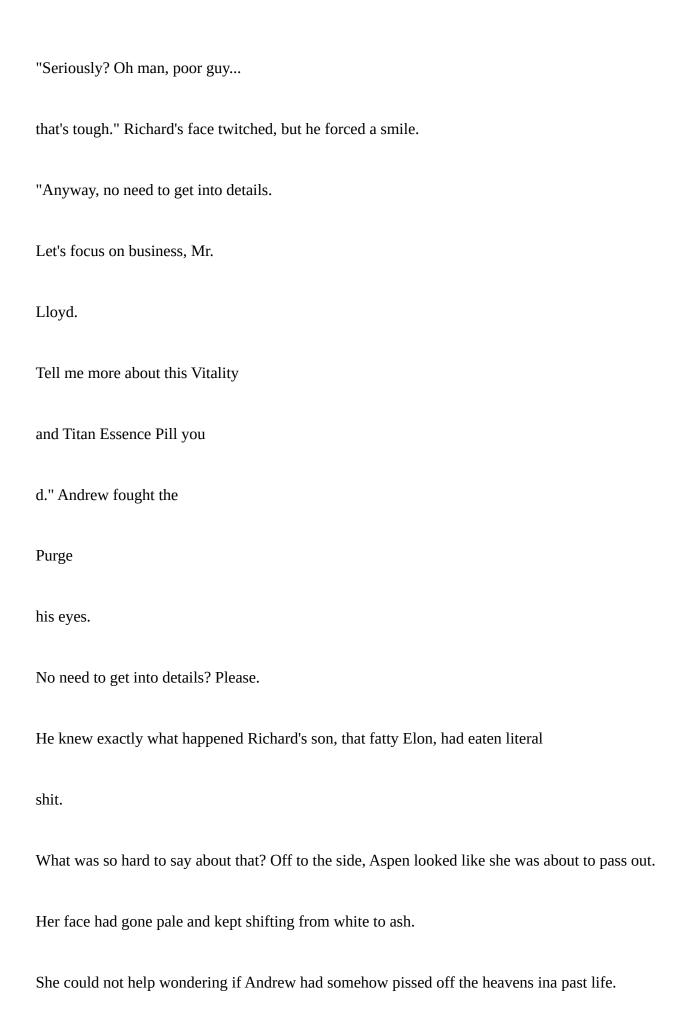
"Gentlemen, didn't you just say I wasn't qualified to be here? So why the sudden change of heart? Let go.

If you don't want to make money, I'll find someone else." He added, "Those two pills are already selling like crazy.

And the capital's market is still wide openonce we launch here, it'll be a gold mine." The group immediately began apologizing, wearing nothing but wide, enthusiastic grins on their faces.

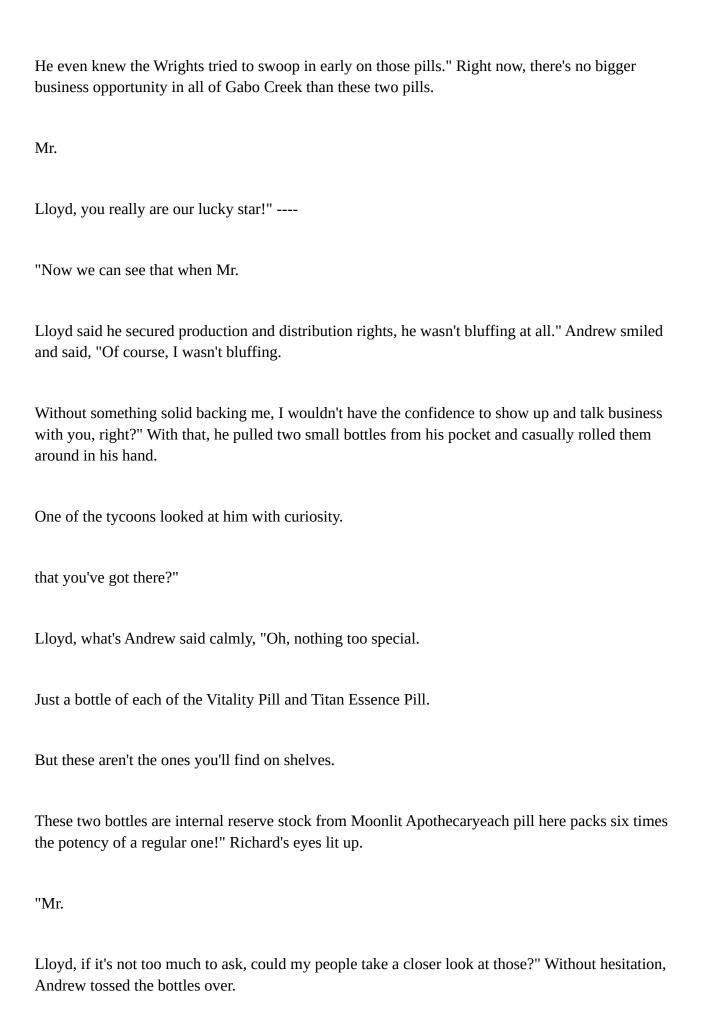
The authoritative middle-aged man even set his wine glass down and stepped forward to grip Andrew's hand, his voice firm and filled with sincerity.





How else could the universe be this cruel, putting him face to face with the very head of the Golding family? Those two in the same room? The exactman on Golding's family wide kill order was standing right before them, and now they were talking about businessreaching an agreement seemed impossible.
If someone spilled the truth, this whole place would instantly blow up into a
full-on war.
Chapter 1045 Andrew spoke with ease and confidence.
"To be honest with you all, the Vitality Pill and Titan Essence Pill are hot commodities around Jayrodale "rom what I know, both miracle supplements came from a medical institute called Moonlit Apothecary.
Ever since they hit the market, they've exploded in popularity, and it's no surprise a lot of people have been trying to get their hands on them.
"Hidden Dragons was the first to make a move, and as for the capital, those shameless Wrights were the quickest to actbut from the looks of it, they walked away empty-handed." While speaking, Andrew intentionally glanced at Richard, who was smiling politely.
Richard immediately nodded.
"Mr.
Lloyd is right.
These two miracle drugs indeed came out of a place called Moonlit Apothecary." The other tycoons chimed in quickly after.
"Mr.

Lloyd sure knows a lot of behind-the-scenes details.





control over these miracle pills, then in a few short years, they could be going toe-to-toe with even the Three Titans of Gabo Creek.

The other tycoons were now all staring at Richard, eyes wide with anticipation.

The latter subtly made a hand gesture, silently confirming that Andrew's bottles were the real deal.

The others instantly perked up, excitement flashing across their faces.

None of them could have imagined that a random charity gala would lead them straight to someone like Andrewa walking gold mine.

They had all pegged him as some cocky kid with a little cash and a lot of nerve.

However, it turned out he was directly tied to the most profitable breakthrough in the market.

Moreover, if they could go through him, getting access to the Vitality Pill and Titan Essence Pill would not be a pipe dream.

Even if they could not get the full formula, just landing production or distribution rights would be enough to make a fortune.

suddenly, every single one of those moguls swarmed Andrew like long-lost friends.

One asked, "Mr.

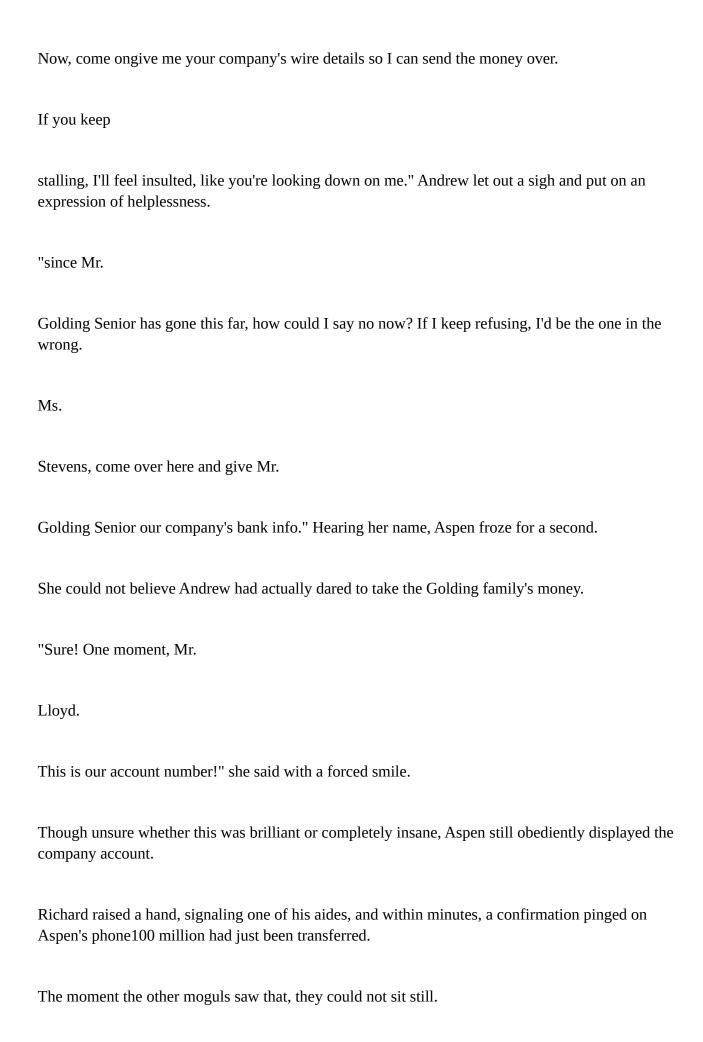
Lloyd, do you have a business card? Let's swap one right now!" "Eorget business cardshere's my personal number.

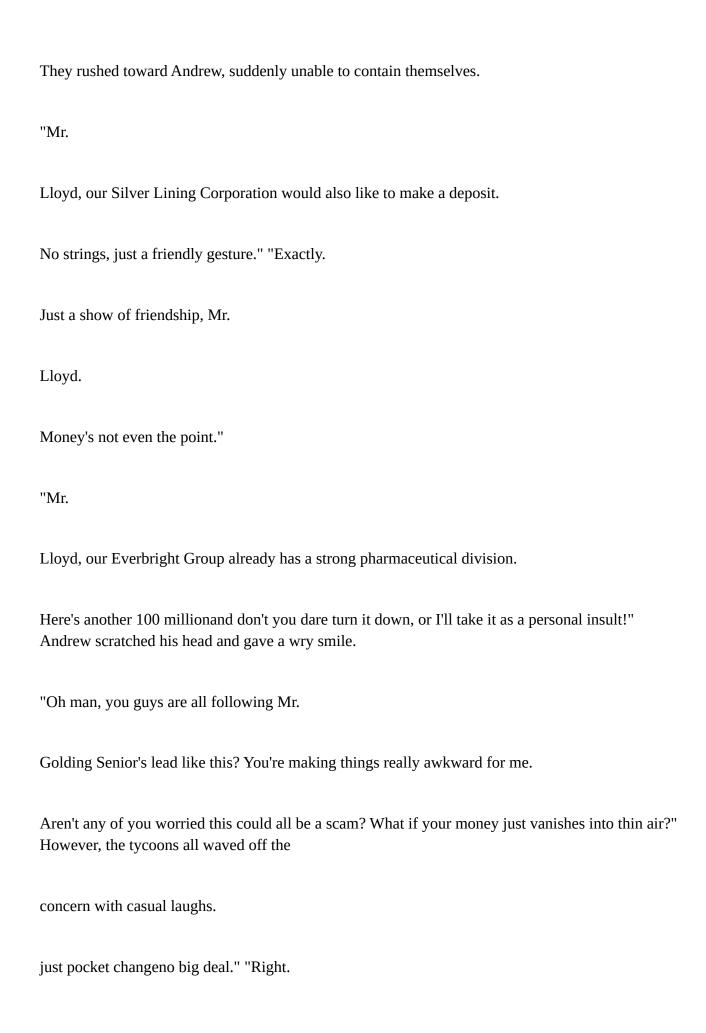
And actually, 1'd like to swing by Supreme Capital Group tonight to talk about the partnership." "Mr.

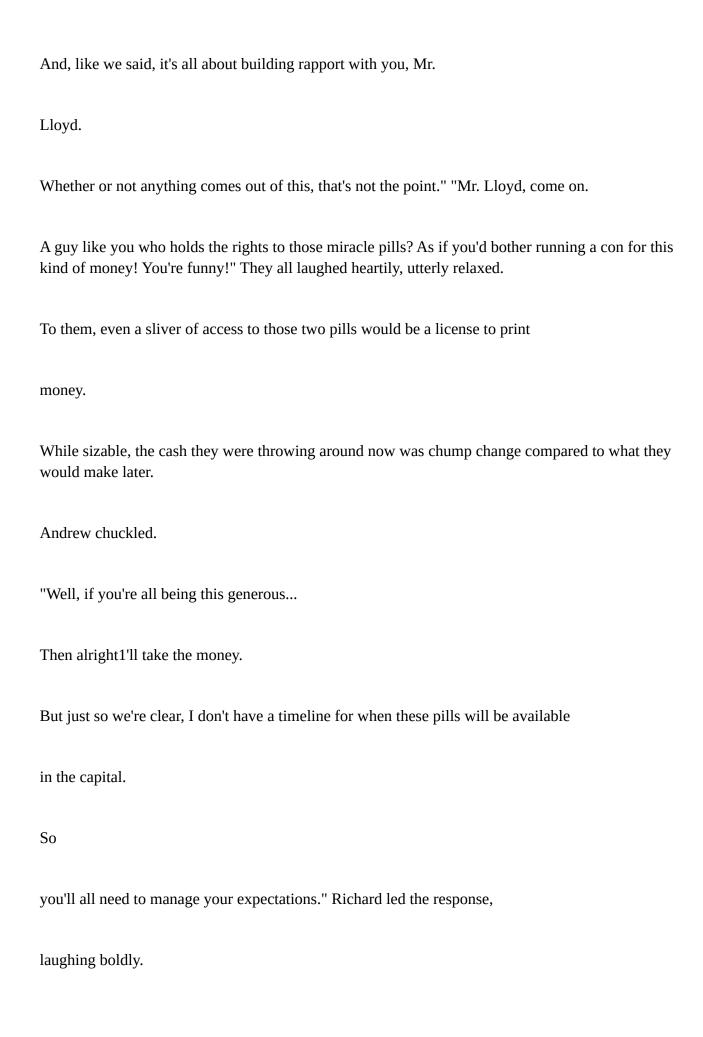
Lloyd, I move fast, alright? I'm all about action.

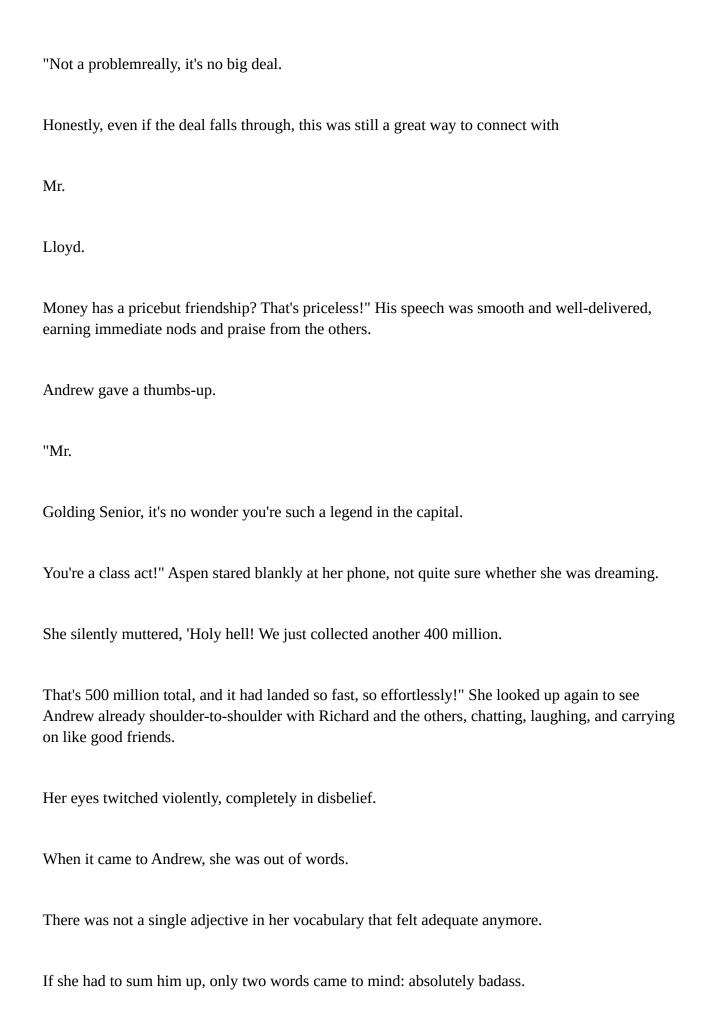
How about thisl wire you 100 million on the spot. No strings just your nod that when these pills hit the capital's market, the Golding family gets aslice." Once they realized there was serious profit involved, they all jumped into motion. However, as expected, Richard was the boldest he was already throwing cash at Andrew without blinking. Aspen watched it all unfold from the sidelines, her head spinning as her brain struggled to keep up. She mumbled, "What the hell is happening?" These top-level moguls were getting sweet-talked out of their wallets in just a few casual sentences. She was seriously starting to question everything. Had Andrew Secretly turned Supreme Capital Group, the company she had personally registered here in the capital into a scam business? Otherwise, how else could he get someone like Richard to line up and throw money at him? Meanwhile, Andrew's face remained calm and indifferent, like none of it even fazed him. Chapter 1046 fool. Chapter 1046 It was not that Richard and the others were gullible or easy to It was just that the offer Andrew had laid on the table was simply too tempting to

resist.
These two miracle supplements were not just on the radar of the Five Apex Familieseven the Three Titans of the capital were probably drooling over them.
Meanwhile, Andrew was not just a middlemanhe was the one holding the cards. If his words did not stir the room, then nobody else's would even matter.
"Mr.
Golding Senior, transferring funds this early? Isn't that a little too soon?" Andrew said, looking hesitant.
Richard waved it off with a generous tone.
"What's the problem? Mr.
Lloyd, don't worry.
This 100 million isn't about the dealit's simply my way of building friendships.
Even if you end up not working with the Golding family, just consider this a goodwill gift between friends." As head of one of the Five Apex Families, Richard's words and actions naturally carried extra weight Andrew gave a warm smile.
"We'll definitely be getting the rights to produce or sell the pills.
It's just a matter of timing." Richard immediately said, "That's all I needed to hear.
I'll just wait for your good news, Mr.
Lloyd.











Truth be told, none of them had been willing to hand Andrew money so casually at first.

However, because Richard made the first move, they followed.

As the saying: "Follow the leader, and you're guaranteed a piece of the pie." Meanwhile, Andrew led Aspen toward the hallway that led to the restrooms. Halfway there, he suddenly changed direction, barely holding back his grin.

"We're leaving." Aspen was stupefied.

"Leaving? What about the money you just took? "You're not even going to explain anything to Mr.

Golding Senior and the others?" Andrew smirked.

"Explain what? Do I owe them a fruit basket or something? The Golding family and I already have bad blood.

If they don't flip the table afterward, I'll count my blessings." Aspen was stunned.

"Waityou knew you were enemies with the Golding family? Then why the hell would you still take their money?" Andrew chuckled casually.

"Did you not see who came running to hand it to me? I didn't beg, and I sure didn't force anyone.

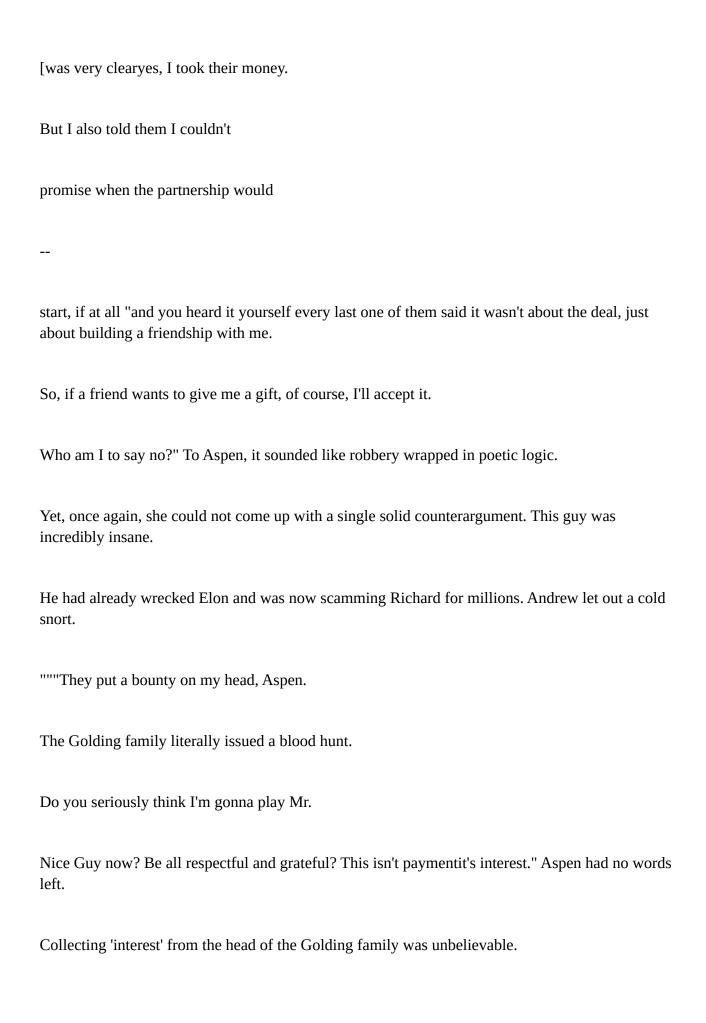
They gave it willingly." That smug, totally justified attitude left Aspen completely speechless, and

mind was buzzing.

Eventually, she asked, "So whatyou're just walking off with Mr.

Golding Senior's money and everyone else's too?" Andrew shook his head, smiling calmly.

"I wouldn't call it 'walking off...



She did not even want to imagine Richard's face when he found out the truth.
The longer they stayed, the more risk they faced.
So, the two of them picked up the
pane
prize t
hell
all, when you've taken
smart move is to geree
out.
However, just as they rounded the corner, someone stepped into their path, smiling.
"Mr.
Lloydand Ms.
Aspen, right?"
Chapter 1048 "Mr.
McCormick would like to see you both.
Please come with me," the man said politely.

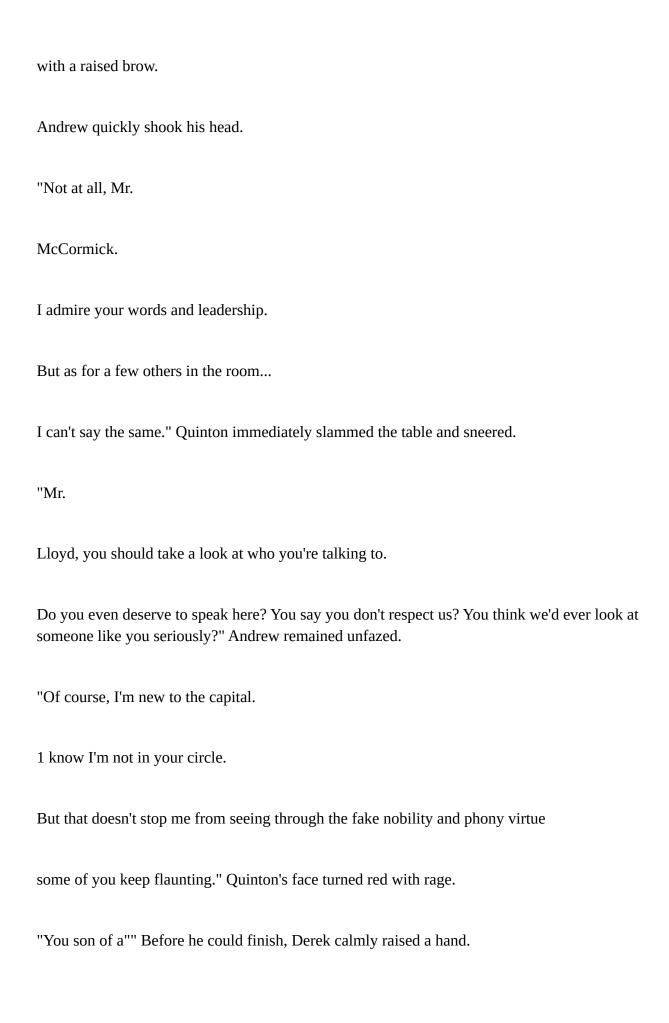
Andrew's smile froze for a second, and he silently cursed, 'Damn it." Aspen quickly covered her mouth, nearly bursting into laughter. This guy thought he could just pocket the cash and sneak out? Not a chance. Just when one wave had passed, another one hit. Derek himself had extended the invitation, and there was no way Andrew could slip away now. "Well then, if Mr. McCormick is asking, of course we'll go. Please, lead the way," Andrew said with a suave smile, his composure quickly returning. Aspen shot him a sideways glare, part irritated, part amused. She thought, 'Keep pretending, Mr. Calm-and-Collected." Inside a spacious and stately conference room, Derek sat at the head of the long table, observing everyone entering. Andrew and Aspen were the last to walk in. Once seated, Derek smiled and said, "There's nothing urgent. I just wanted to speak to you all briefly. The government currently has a few open infrastructure and development projects that we're looking to ---- hand off to private partners.

I figured I'd invite a few of our top business leaders to see who might be

interested." At once, the energy in the room changed, and eyes began to gleam with ambition.	
It was no secret government contracts were goldmines, which was why half the people showed u at this charity event in the first place.	p
"Mr.	
McCormick, say the word.	
No matter how difficult the task or challenging the circumstances, the Wrights will always be the first to contribute to the great state of Gabo Creek!" Quinton declared, puffing his chest like a patriotic soldier.	•
His tone dripped with loyalty and pride, as if he were here for the good of the people.	
The other moguls quickly followed suit, all sporting fake smiles and speaking with the same over the-top sincerity.	r-
"Mr.	
McCormick, you just tell us what needs doing.	
We'll handle the rest." That's rightprojects or no projects, we just want to give back	
to the state!" "Please don't hesitate.	
Just assign them.	
We're honored to serve Gabo Creek	
s we can." Andrew!	
shead slightly, fighted to	

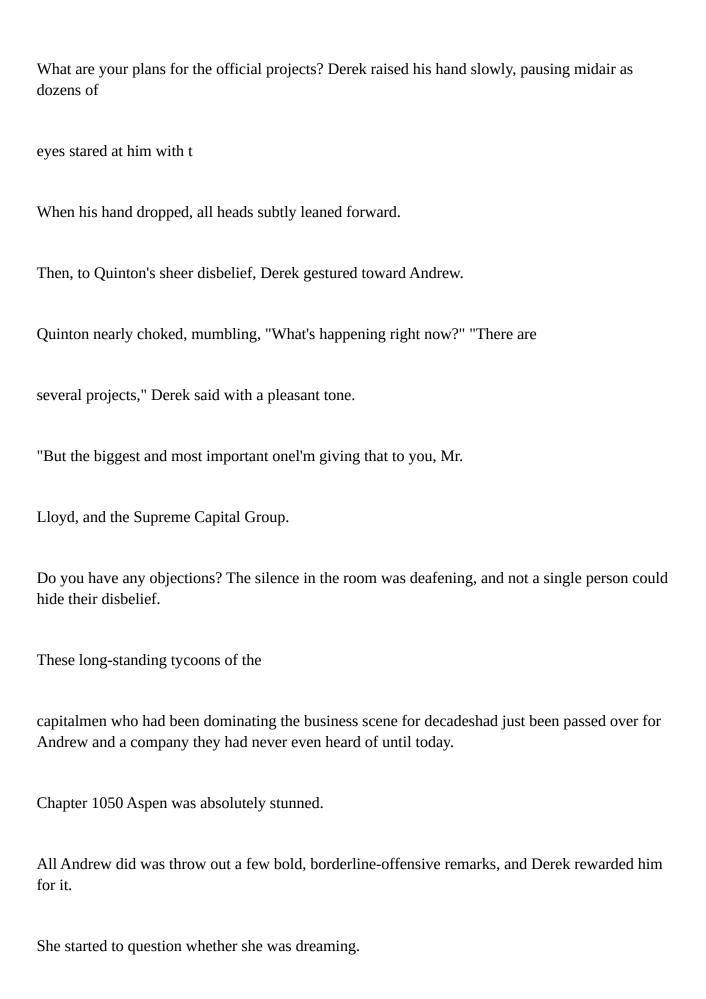
it all and could not help but shake his head slightly, fighting back a grin. They were all fighting for government contracts, yet they were acting so righteous and noble. It was laughable. What Andrew did not realize was that Derek noticed his amused smirk. The latter looked over at Andrew and casually asked, "Mr. Lloyd from Supreme Capital Group... may I ask what you're smiling at? Is something amusing?" Andrew blinked, caught off guard. He had not expected Derek to be so sharp, let alone spot him in that moment. Aspen, on the other hand, nearly had a heart attack. In her mind, she was already praying to every God she knew to save them. Messing with Richard had been wild enough. But now Andrew was casually grinning in front of the governoret Was he actively trying to get himself killed? All eyes in the room now turned toward Andrew. Quinton looked visibly annoyed, wondering how a nobody like Andrew even got a seat at this table. Nonetheless, he was not concerned.





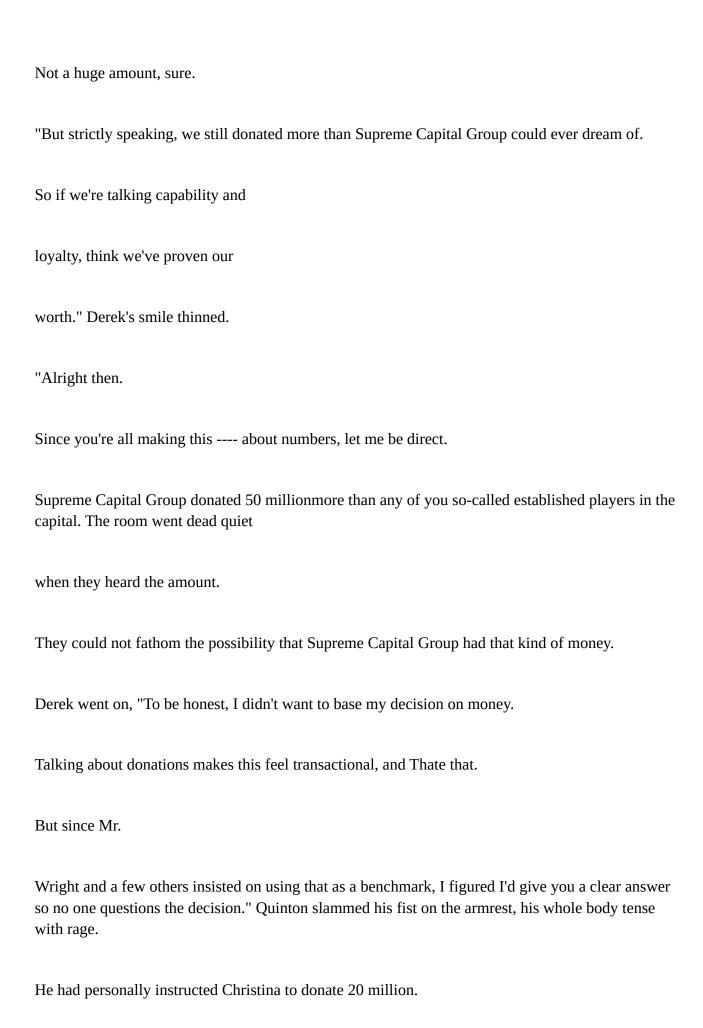






since when did the world start handing out favors for calling people fake?
Christina's face turned a shade darker as she exchanged a look with Quinton.
He gritted his teeth and muttered, "Don't rush.
Let's just wait and see.
Mr.
McCormick's decision isn't something we can challenge outright.
Damn it
this kid really stumbled into the jackpot." Andrew straightened his suit jacket at the center of it all and stood up with a bright, unbothered grin.
"Well then, thank you, Mr.
McCormick, for the trust.
In that case, Supreme Capital Group is honored to accept the offer!" He added, "Don't worrywe'll make sure the job gets done right." Before Derek could respond, one of the old family heads shot up from his seat, clearly displeased.
"Mr.
McCormick, with all due respect, I really don't understand why you'd assign such an important project to an entirely new company.
"As far as I know, Supreme Capital Group has no real history in the capital.
We've never even heard of them before today.





At the time, he thought it was a bold movea clear advantage.
He never imagined Supreme Capital Group would outbid him, and win Derek's
favor.
He had miscalculated big time.
The others were left speechless too.
Supreme Capital Group had just pulled off the unthinkable.
They showed up out of nowhere, made one move, and instantly became the focus
of the entire capital.
With Derek's backing, their future looked unstoppable.