

The Ashes 201

Chapter 201 Among the items Andrew needed to regain his strength and break the seals were the Seventh- Heaven Quince from Mark and the Morlic Root from Cedric

The Radiant Group is holding an auction soon, and this Celestial Nymphaca is one of the featured items, Marvin explained.

.

He continued, With my connections as the wealthiest man in Jayrodale, I could have purchased the Celestial Nymphaea directly, but apparently, someone else has already shown interest in it.

The Radiant Group is in a difficult position and doesnt dare to sell it privately, which is why I came to you

Andrew nodded thoughtfully.

Got it.

Give me the time and location of the auction, and I'll handle it personally.

Marvin replied, Its the day after tomorrow at 8 pm sharp in Radiant Groups underground hall

In Jayrodale, Radiant Group was a heavyweight in the jewelry, antiques, and luxury goods industry.

For them to offer something as rare as the Celestial Nymphaea did not surprise Andrew.

After all, he had also purchased the King of Diamonds from them.

The next day, Lauren invited Andrew to accompany her to the Radiant Groups auction

Events like auctions were a playground for the wealthy, entirely out of reach for the average person.

Moreover, they often featured unexpected treasures that could not be found elsewhere.

Before the auction, Andrew made time to visit the South City Orphanage project.

Christina was truly a workaholic, and under her constant supervision, the project was already 80 % complete.

When Andrews car pulled up at the project office Leroy rushed over excitedly

Andrew, did you ... did you get a new car? he asked, running his hands over Andrews new vehicle as if it were a priceless treasure

Andrew remained indifferent, explaining that his previous Porsche Panamera had been totaled while rescuing Lauren.

On his way to South City, he had stopped by the Mercedes dealership and casually picked up a new G Wagon.

Irene and Christina walked over to join them

Christina frowned at Leroy's obvious drooling but held her tongue, though she could not resist making a comment to Andrew

She said coldly, It seems the West End development has made you quite wealthy, so now you're living a life of luxury

Andrew, you're too old for this.

Having money doesn't mean you need to waste it on such flashy things that will only lead to your downfall

It's just a car, Andrew replied dismissively.

You're making too big a deal out of it.

Mr.

Lloyd, what happened to your old Panamera ? If you're not using it, maybe you could let me have it? Sorry, but it's completely totaled, Andrew replied.

The wreck is still there if you want to collect the scrap metal.

Leroy looked thunderstruck and clutched his chest dramatically.

Andrew, how could you treat my dream car like that? I've been telling you to give it to me all this time, and now I find out you've been so careless with it! It's my car, and I'll do what I want with it, Andrew retorted with amusement.

Don't you think you're overstepping? Leroy paused, then gritted his teeth before making another attempt. Since you're so wealthy and throwing money around, how about buying me a luxury car too? Or maybe you could give me this G Wagon ? Are you begging me? Andrew asked with a laugh

Leroy hesitated for a moment but shamelessly said, If you agree, I'll beg ! From now on, I'll treat you like my big brother and follow you to hell and back, no complaints.

Christina could not take it anymore and exploded in anger

Leroy, get out of here! Do you have any idea how much shame you're bringing to the Stevens family?

Chapter 202 Leroy shrugged dismissively and said, Christie, how much is the Stevens family's reputation : really worth? You won't buy me a luxury car, and when I try to get one from someone who can afford it, you say I'm embarrassing you I don't understand what you want.

Christina's chest heaved with anger.

Her pride could not bear watching her brother behave like a bootlicker in front of Andrew.

Her voice trembled with anger and hurt as she growled, You must be really enjoying this, aren't you, Andrew? Watching Leroy degrade himself and making our family look like fools.

So you're saying it's wrong for me to drive a luxury car ? Andrew asked calmly.

Aren't you just showing off to provoke Leroy and get under my skin? Christina accused.

Andrew chuckled

Christina, you're overestimating your importance and underestimating me at the same time.

It's just a car- what's there to show off about? Irene smirked.

Who knows what tricks you're trying to pull now? But it doesn't matter because Christie is going to marry Harvey soon

Then, our family will reach new heights! Andrew raised an eyebrow.

The Weller family is in such a mess right now.

I have to admire your courage for wanting to jump into that fire.

Stop trying to scare us, Irene snapped.

Mr.

Weller Senior has already paid off all of Harvey's debts, and we got back all the money the Stevens family lost.

Christie is about to become Mrs.

Weller ! Her wrinkled face beamed with joy as she boasted.

Andrew shook his head with a knowing smile.

Talking to you is like talking to a wall

You've all seen what kind of person Harvey is

Even if he does take over the Weller family, hes still an idiot.

Marrying into the Weller family just for money and status ... well, I can only wish Ms.

Stevens good luck with that.

Christina caught the sarcasm in Andrews wish for her happiness.

She lectured, Harvey may have made some foolish mistakes, but the Weller familys resources helped turn things around

The most important thing is he learned from his mistakes.

Andrew shrugged.

Do you really believe that? A leopard cant change its spots.

How well do you know Harvey anyway? Do you actually understand the Weller family current situation?

I've always said you're being foolish about this, but its not my problem marry whoever you.

want.

Christina felt her anger rising.

I did have some doubts about Harvey's character and the Weller family.

But since you're so against it, I'm definitely going to give it a try now.

Andrew, I'll say it again leaving you was the right decision.

1/2 Charot 207 Andrew remained unfazed.

Well, let's wait and see.

Just don't come crying to me when it's too late, Irene smirked triumphantly.

Harvey said he's going to buy Christie a priceless piece of jewelry from Radiant Jewelers as her engagement gift.

Andrew, you used to act so high and mighty with that King of Diamonds.

Soon, you'll realize you're nothing.

Andrew's smile widened slightly.

Funny, I remember when Harvey dragged the Stevens family into disaster, losing every cent, and you were bawling and screaming at him.

But now you're acting like nothing happened.

Don't you worry that Harvey will remember all that and turn on you when the time comes? Irene's face darkened, and she spat.

What do you know? Harvey isn't petty like you! Andrew ignored her and turned back to Christina.

One last piece of advice: Harvey is narrow-minded, vindictive, and ruthless.

Do you really think a Stevens Weller union will bring you benefits? You're just playing with fire.

Chapter 203 Christina was clearly affected by Andrews words, but she said nothing

Over the past few days, she had felt increasingly uneasy as Harveys true nature began to emerge. After all, it was vastly different from the gentleman and promising young man she thought she knew. Even so, her pride would not allow her to admit to Andrew that she had misjudged someone so completely

1 Finally, the night of the auction arrived.

By 8 p.m.

, luxury cars filled the parking lot of the Radiant Group building as Jayrodales elite gathered for the event. Among them were Michael and Harvey, both dressed in impeccable suits and projecting an air of elegance, with stunning women in their arms, Harvey, long time no see! You look like youre living the high life definitely more comfortable than I am! Michael spoke first, casually glancing at Christina, who was standing next to Harvey

He had long admired Jayrodales Ice Queen CEO himself, and though she was truly flawless in every way , he could only admire her from afar now that she was spoken for.

Come on, Michael, theres no need for such formality between us, Harvey replied with a broad smile. Michael chuckled and said, Harvey, I mean every word

Everyone knows you and Christina are about to tie the knot.

I hear youre already halfway to taking over the Weller family leadership talk about a double blessing! Youre making us all jealous! Harvey was glowing with satisfaction, though he maintained a modest facade

Youre too kind, Michael

Compared to the heir of the Rhodes family, my life is quite humble.

Their exchange of flattery continued, causing others nearby to roll their eyes.

Everyone in Jayrodale knew the rivalry between Harvey and Michael was one of the fiercest.

If life is so hard, Harvey, why not let me take that beauty off your hands? Id be happy to help lighten

your burden, a sleazy voice cut through the conversation, shocking the onlookers.

Who would dare to openly covet Harveys woman? It seemed like someone had a death wish.

Harveys face darkened as he turned to look at the speaker.

Upon recognizing him, he suppressed his anger and sneered.

Well, if it isnt Mr.

Moore.

The man, holding a fan and flanked by two attendants, was none other than the notorious. Finley

Michael stepped forward, putting on a friendly smile.

Mr.

Moore, welcome to Jayrodale

If youre looking for some fun tonight, Ive got you covered.

Finley tapped Michaels shoulder with his fan and laughed.

Mr.

Rhodes, youre man who knows how to have fun! But you know, among all the beauties in Jayrodale, only three really

Michael, curious, glanced at Christina and asked with a teasing smile, And who are these three lucky women who caught your eye? Finleys gaze locked onto Christina, his admiration far from subtle. The first two are, of course, Ms.

Rhodes and Ms.

Aickers.

As for the third, he continued, eyeing Christina like a predator, its Ms. Stevens.

Though its our first meeting, her beauty has completely captivated me.

Im in love at first sight.

The crude, almost desperate words made Harveys face turn a deep shade of red

Onlookers could not help but feel the tension in the air, eagerly watching the unfolding drama.

Clearly, Finley was a fool, but his powerful background made him untouchable.

If he stirred up trouble with both Harvey and Michael, two of Jayrodales most prominent young elite, it would certainly make for an interesting show.

Chapter 204 Michael smirked, fanning the flames.

Mr.

Moore, youre asking for trouble now.

Everyone in Jayrodale knows that Christina is Harveys true love.

Finley opened his fan with a proud look.

They arent married yet, so I still have a shot! His two attendants glanced at Christina and smirked.
Pretty lady, catching Mr.

Moore's eye is the luck of a lifetime.

Be his, and you'll live a life of luxury and power everything you desire will be within reach, one of them said

Christina remained silent, her face cold as ice.

Mr.

Moore, I respect you as a guest from Hidden Dragons, so I'm showing restraint, Harvey said through gritted teeth

But if you continue to be so disrespectful, I might have to teach.

you a lesson.

Finley sneered.

Harvey, the Weller family has fallen so low they're selling off assets.

Don't you think it's a bit ridiculous to act tough with me? Besides, why are you making such a fuss?
I'm

not interested in you it's Ms.

Stevens who's caught my eye

Finleys gaze lingered on Christina, and he smiled dreamily as he spoke, Ms.

Stevens, become my woman

My granduncle is the head of Hidden Dragons.

In Jayrodale, all I need to do is make a few calls, and youll be the most sought after woman in town

Stevens Corporation will rise to new heights! Christinas voice was cold as she responded, Thank you, Mr.

Moore, but we dont know each other, and Id prefer to keep it that way.

Finley, completely shameless, grinned

Why does it matter that we dont know each other? Its always the first meeting thats awkward, but after a few times, we can take things further -if you know what I mean! Please show some respect, Mr.

Moore ! Christina exclaimed, flushed with anger embarrassment at his crude implications.

and The auction attendees turned to Harvey with amusement.

His girlfriend was being harassed, yet his reaction seemed surprisingly mild.

Isnt Harvey supposed to be Jayrodaless top young elite? He usually acts so tough, but hes awfully quiet today, someone whispered

Another muttered, Top elite ? Please

Hes just a bully who picks on the weak and cowers before the strong.

Look at him tucking his tail between his legs in front of Finley! Stevens familys union with the Weller family has been the talk of the town.

Christina thought she was securing a powerful backing through the Weller family, but it looks like theyre not so reliable after all! Harvey gritted his teeth, his fists tightening until they cracked

The whispers from the crowd

were like a slap in the face, insulting him that he was nothing more than a weak man who could not even protect his own woman.

Christie, lets go inside

Theres no point in lowering ourselves to their level.

Harvey forced a smile as he spoke to Christina, trying to calm her down.

Christinas gaze was cold as she replied, Harvey, being insulted is one thing, but youre the heir to the Weller family, the future head of a powerful family

Can you really swallow your pride like this? She was shocked that Harvey was backing down.

As the man she had chosen, the future head of a prestigious family, his lack of spine and courage was disheartening

Harveys face turned red as he noticed the mocking glances from those around him.

It felt as if they were all laughing at him Harvey, a man of standing, who could not even stand up for a woman.

Chapter 205 Harvey felt the sting of humiliation but could only swallow his anger in silence.

He was about to take over the Weller family, and he could not afford to make any mistakes now. Although Finley was a nuisance, Harvey knew that the Hidden Dragons had too much power for the Weller family to risk angering them.

Michael stepped forward, playing peacemaker with fake sincerity.

Gentlemen, were all respectable people here, and the auction is about to begin.

Why dont we head inside? Fine, lets attend the auction first, Finley replied haughtily.

But my love for Ms.

Stevens is as clear as day, and I wont rest until shes mine.

Mr.

Weller, youd better do the right thing and step aside! His arrogant words were another blatant insult.

The onlookers silently noted that since Finley came from the martial arts clans of Gabo Creek, no one in Jayrodale would dare challenge his authority tonight.

Just then, a Mercedes G Wagon pulled up forcefully in front of the Radiant Group building.

A tall man in an impeccable suit stepped out and shoved Finley aside, nearly causing him to fall face first

Move! Youre blocking the way! the man barked.

Finley stumbled, furious, and spun around, ready to lash out.

Who the hell pushed me ? Are you that eager for death? His two attendants were about to attack but immediately backed off when they recognized the newcomer.

They exclaimed fearfully, Its you! The crowd was stunned

Finley had always been the loudest and most arrogant person around, but this newcomer was even more aggressive.

Andrew, a few people muttered, and their reactions were mixed some shocked, some furious, some cold

Michael sneered, Andrew, youve got some nerve laying hands on Mr.

Moore.

Youd better get on your knees and pray he doesnt destroy you.

Harvey, eager to vent his frustration, joined in.

Andrew, youre in trouble now.

Do you have any idea who Mr.

Moore is ? How dare you touch him? Andrew gave him a mocking glance.

Just moments ago, you were being humiliated as if you were worth nothing.

Now youre stepping up to lick their boots? Harvey, I didnt realize you were such a groveling lapdog.

How dare you ! Harvey exploded, but he noticed many people looking at him with disgust.

Even Christina stepped away from him, shaking her head in disappointment.

Christina turned away coldly, cutting him off, Save it, Harvey.

Your dad is seriously ill and still fighting for the Weller family.

As his successor, I hope you don't completely destroy what little reputation the Weller family has left.

Finley had reached his breaking point and snarled, You pathetic pretty boy, you keep disrespecting me you must have a death wish.

After being slapped by Andrew earlier that day, Finley was already boiling with anger.

The thought that this useless man had the audacity to defy him in front of so many high- society people was something Finley could not let slide.

Chapter 206 Lauren and Francesca arrived just in time to intervene.

Lauren warned, Mr.

Moore, this is Radiant Groups territory.

Please think carefully before

starting any trouble, Who cares whose property this is? Finley roared.

My granduncle is the leader of Hidden Dragons no one dares to disrespect me! Andrew felt a headache coming on at these words.

These entitled martial arts heirs always seemed to throw around their family connections.

Even though he had only encountered Finley twice, the idiot had used the same line over and over again it was almost laughable.

The crowd backed away from Finley's outburst

Though Andrews appearance had knocked Finley down a peg and given them some satisfaction, no one could deny that Hidden Dragons was still a formidable organization.

Christie, lets go, Harvey urged, pulling at Christina arm.

Finleys lost it, and Andrew is done for.

Christina yanked her arm away coldly.

She asked, So youre scared, Harvey? Andrew might be reckless, but at least as a man, he has the courage to stand up for himself.

What about you? Can you really just swallow all those insults ? Christie, sometimes peace comes from patience, Harvey said bitterly.

Andrew is being foolishly rash.

Do you really think Finley is someone to be trifled with? I guarantee if we stay, youll watch this idiot get destroyed by Finley, and not even the Rhodes or Aickers families could help.

Christinas heart skipped a beat as worry set in.

If even Harvey feared Finleys background, how could Andrew possibly stand against him? Michael could not resist stirring the pot and sneered

Andrew, I have to say, you really are suicidal.

Mr.

Moore is the prestigious second generation member of the Hidden Dragons, a VIP wherever he goes. Yet you dare provoke him? If I were him, I wouldnt let this slight go either.

Lauren snapped, Michael, stop spewing nonsense.

How exactly did Andrew provoke Mr.

Moore? Michael laughed.

Lauren, your fondness for this pretty boy shouldnt blind you to right and wrong.

Everyone here saw your boy toy drive up arrogantly in his G Wagon, nearly hit Mr.

Moore, then push him we all witnessed it! Well, Andrew, mark this day because itll be your death anniversary next year! Finley grinned.

Perfect timing too my sword hasnt tasted blood since I left Hidden Dragons headquarters.

Time to show you Jayrodale losers what true martial arts mastery looks like.

Taking a sword from his assistant, Finley prepared to demonstrate the power of Hidden Dragons to all of Jayrodale

He intended not just to kill, but to establish Hidden Dragons power through the act.

Andrews eyes narrowed, cold and sharp.

If Finley was determined to court death, Andrew was more than willing to oblige.

Stop! a voice commanded at the last moment.

The crowd parted as a middle aged man in a suit approached with his security.

Michael and the others immediately dropped their attitudes and respectfully greeted him.

Mr.

Vaughn ! Silas Vaughn, the CEO of Radiant Group, was a mysterious figure with vast wealth in Jayrodale

His presence finally brought the situation under control.

Chapter 207 Out of respect for me, Silas said calmly, how about we let this one go? Finley scoffed, resting his sword over his shoulder with an arrogant smirk.

Let this one go? Sorry, Mr.

Vaughn, even if youre personally here to plead, this little punk will bleed out on the spot tonight. The onlookers tensed, shocked that Finley would not even show respect to the auction host.

Then again, the Hidden Dragons reputation was formidable enough to back Finleys audacity. Most spectators silently fretted

If even Silas could not control Finley, Andrew might be in grave danger.

However, Silas looked at Finley as if he were an idiot.

He barked, You fool, when I said to let this slide, did you think I was begging you? The crowd was stunned by Silas words.

Finley froze and darkly replied, Silas, I dont owe you any respect just because youre Radiant Groups CEO.

Youd better back off.

Silas raised a finger, nearly poking Finley in the face.

You little brat, youre nothing more.

than some minor relative of the sect leader, riding on the Hidden Dragons coattails to throw your weight around

He continued, Others might tolerate you, but I wont.

And let me make one thing clear- Radiant Group answers to the Onyx Serpents.

Do you really think youre untouchable? Well, we dont fear you.

Finleys face instantly paled.

Among Gabo Creeks three martial arts clans, the Onyx Serpents and Hidden Dragons were sworn enemies

Acting up on Onyx Serpents territory was practically suicide, and even Hidden Dragons could not protect him if something happened

To everyones amazement, Silas hurried over to Andrew with a respectful smile.

Mr.

Lloyd, welcome to our establishment

Please be merciful and overlook this incident.

Andrew raised an eyebrow.

Mr.

Vaughn, are you trying to protect this idiot? The Onyx Serpents and Hidden Dragons are mortal enemies

Why would I protect him? Silas explained with a wry smile

Its just that if you handle him here at our doorstep, Hidden Dragons might come asking questions later, causing unnecessary trouble.

Andrew nodded thoughtfully.

Fine

III let it slide for you.

Silas face lit up with joy.

Thank you for your generosity, Mr.

Lloyd

Please, come with me.

Weve prepared The Vault just for you.

Without hesitation, Andrew strode into the auction hall, flanked by Lauren and Francesca.

For a moment, the crowd was stunned.

Then, an uproar erupted

Who the hell is this guy? Why is Mr.

Vaughn treating him with such respect ? Did you see that? Silas completely dismissed Finley like he was

a nobody, but he practically groveled before Andrew like he was someone untouchable! Its unbelievable

! Michael, Harvey, and even Finley all got put in their place by this newcomer tonight.

Finley's face darkened as he listened to the discussions

He had expected Silas to bow to him, but instead, Silas had shown him no respect and kowtowed to Andrew

The contrast made it clear to everyone that Finley was nothing compared to Andrew.

Chapter 208 Christina turned to Harvey with a cold smile.

Didn't you just say Finley would kill Andrew? Things turned out quite differently from what you predicted! Harvey opened his mouth but could not find the words to explain.

He, too, was shocked by Silas' respect for Andrew.

That pretty boy must be riding on Mr.

Yates' connections to get such treatment from Mr. Vaughn, Michael mocked dismissively

Harvey quickly seized the opportunity.

That's right! Mr.

Vaughn and Mr.

Yates are close friends

Andrew is just hiding behind Mr.

Yates' influence to save his skin.

Finley growled, Marvin may be Jayrodales richest man and quite the figure.

But if I want to deal with Andrew, he wont dare interfere.

This isnt over ! Michael and Harvey exchanged a glance, their eyes brimming with malice and cold calculation.

With the brute Finley joining their side, they felt confident Andrew would eventually fall.

The underground auction hall at Radiant Group was not particularly large, but its decor was nothing short of extravagant.

The Vault was the most prestigious suite there, usually reserved for family patriarchs and Jayrodales wealthiest elite.

Under hundreds of envious stares, Andrew and his companions walked in leisurely.

The view of the auction from here is amazing! Francesca exclaimed with genuine excitement.

Lauren glanced around with her discerning eye, finally nodding in approval.

Not bad

Truly worthy of its reputation.

However, Andrew was not interested in the surroundings.

He simply sat down on the plush couch and waited for the Celestial Nymphaea to appear.

Lauren turned to him with a curious smile.

Dr.

Lloyd, are you and Mr.

Vaughn close? Not particularly, Andrew replied, shaking his head.

I just bought a jewel from him once.

You mean that 7.5 million dollar King of Diamonds ? Francesca asked in surprise, to which Andrew simply nodded

Francesca was amazed.

The price tag aside, most people couldnt even buy it from Mr.

Vaughn if they wanted to it was practically priceless.

How did you convince him to sell it to you? I gave him an offer he couldnt refuse, Andrew said casually.

Both women were intrigued.

What kind of offer? With an indifferent tone, Andrew replied, The leader of the Onyx Serpents is Silas boss.

Lets just say Silas got an earful and handed me the King of Diamonds without hesitation.

The two women nodded in understanding, knowing Andrews unfathomable medical skills.

Even someone as powerful as the Onyx Serpents leader might need his help.

Nonetheless, they did not know that Andrews connection with the Onyx Serpents ran much deeper.

That so called heir did not just visit Andrew for medical advice he practically groveled in Andrews presence, addressing him with endless deference like a devoted lackey.

As Jayrodales elite arrived for the auction, a stunning woman in an elegant dress took the stage as auctioneer and announced the start.

The first few items were unremarkable just antiques, ornaments, and artwork that did not interest Andrew much

Lauren and Francesca were there mainly for social networking

They bid on items they liked but mostly sat beside Andrew, watching the proceedings.

Dr.

Lloyd, Lauren asked, didnt you have something specific you wanted to bid on today?

Chapter 209 As Lauren turned to look at Andrew, she quickly caught the eye of several onlookers. Yes, theres a small item Im interested in, Andrew replied with a smile

Is it a medicinal herb, Andrew? Francesca asked, and Andrew nodded..

Yes, a Celestial Nymphaea.

Francesca thoughtfully explained, The Celestial Nymphaea is a premium medicinal herb, highly valued by medical experts and serious collectors.

Though in Jayrodale, unlike metropolises like Chetvine, there probably wont be many interested bidders you should get it easily.

Just as she finished speaking, the host, Elsie Santana, pulled back a red cloth downstairs, revealing a perfectly preserved Celestial Nymphaea.

She announced, Distinguished guests, tonights item is quite special.

Its not a priceless jewel or a masters artwork, but rather a professionally authenticated medicinal herb

thats at least 500 years old truly a rare find that interested parties shouldnt miss.

Despite Elsies enthusiastic presentation and perfect smile, the response was lukewarm.

Clearly, the wealthy audience either did not understand or needed such herbs.

Stop wasting time! Whatsso special about some dried plant? Its just worthless grass, someone shouted from the crowd

Yeah, show us the good stuff! Who needs medicinal herbs these days? Were not practicing martial arts here ! Ms.

Santana, instead of going on about this useless herb, why dont you hike up that gorgeous dress of yours

? Give us all something worthwhile to admire ! More crude comments followed, causing widespread laughter as the crowd hoped to catch a glimpse of more of Elsies beauty.

Disgusting pigs! Francesca muttered angrily, her face twisted in disgust.

Lauren, however, found amusement in the situation.

With a mischievous glint in her eye, she leaned closer to Andrew, her voice teasing.

Dr.

Lloyd, are you curious about what lies beneath Ms.

Santanans dress? Andrew cleared his throat awkwardly.

Well, I hadn't thought about it.

Lauren leaned closer, her warm breath brushing against his ear as she giggled.

Don't be shy, Dr.

Lloyd

If you're interested, I could wear something similar for you someday.

I promise it would be even more impressive than Ms.

Santana's ! Her seductive gaze and the faint, intoxicating scent of her perfume nearly made Andrew lose his composure.

This woman was becoming bolder by the day.

When she caught Andrew's eye, she quickly turned away with a pout.

Look, Dr.

Lloyd, Fran seems jealous! Lauren chuckled.

Should we invite her to join our fun? Before Andrew could respond, Francesca yelped as though Lauren's suggestion had burned.

her

She scooted farther away and huffed, I would never! You two are shameless! Meanwhile, Elsie's

blushing response to the crowd's teasing had the young heirs and aging executives alike worked into a frenzy

Andrew had to admit she knew her craft she had skillfully turned the lukewarm reception of the Celestial Nymphaea into an energetic atmosphere.

A womans beauty, when wielded properly, could indeed be a powerful tool.

Chapter 210 Since our distinguished guests dont seem too interested in this Celestial Nymphaea, lets start the bidding at 750 thousand dollars, Elsie announced with feigned disappointment.

Her alluring glance across the VIP suites stirred even the initially uninterested buyers into participating. 780 thousand dollars consider it a favor for you, Ms.

Santana ! someone called out.

825 thousand dollars we must support Ms.

Santana, after all! The bidding quickly heated up, reaching 900 thousand dollars. Lauren frowned

Ms.

Santana may have fooled these hormone driven idiots, but these rising prices arent doing Dr.

Lloyd any favors... Then, she announced loudly, 1.05 million let me cool things down a bit.

Elsies eyes lit up

Ms.

Rhodes bids 1.05 million! Any other offers ? If not, this premium medicinal herb goes to Ms. Rhodes

The sudden jump in price silenced many bidders.

It was not that they could not match Laurens bid, but rather that they were not interested enough in the Celestial Nymphaea to throw away their money just to please Elsie.

Francescas face lit up.

Andrew, the Celestial Nymphaea is about to be yours! Suddenly, a raspy voice cut through the air.

1.2 million I must have this Celestial Nymphaea ! Lauren and Francesca instantly scowled, their gazes snapping toward the source.

Laurens voice turned icy as she said, Michael, couldnt you see I wanted this herb ? From his VIP suite, Michaels laughter echoed

Lauren, what you want has nothing to do with me.

And for the record, Im not the one bidding.

Lauren sneered

Not you? Then why is the bid coming from your suite ? Michael shrugged.

So what? Its not my bid.

Besides, youre only after this herb to gift it to that little freeloader of yours.

If even a gold digger can have it, why cant my friend try their luck? Laurens eyes narrowed, and her voice dripped with disdain.

Fine

Lets see who tires out first.

With that, she countered boldly, 1.5 million.

From Michaels suite, Bane grimly responded, 1.8 million !

He recognized the unparalleled value of the Celestial Nymphaea, Lauren, undeterred, raised the stakes

2.25 million

Bane gritted his teeth and barked back.

3 million ! Laurens temper flared.

4.5 million ! The escalating bids were so outrageous that they sparked a wave of murmurs and gasps among the attendees.

Bane snarled and threw out his final bid.

7.5 million! That was his absolute limit.

Beyond this, no matter how valuable the herb was, he refused to bleed himself dry over it.

Lauren seethed, ready to retaliate once more.

I wont lose! Not when this is for Dr.

Lloyd- But before she could speak, Andrew gently caught her hand.

Ms.

Rhodes

Lauren shot him a defiant look.

Dr.

Lloyd, dont stop me! I refuse to let Michael win today! Andrew sighed, his voice calm but firm. Im not stopping you.

I just think its time for me to handle this.

Lauren froze, her anger melting into confusion, while Francesca looked equally bewildered

Andrew leaned back in his seat and calmly announced, 12 million! The hall fell into complete silence, and even Elsie found herself stunned.