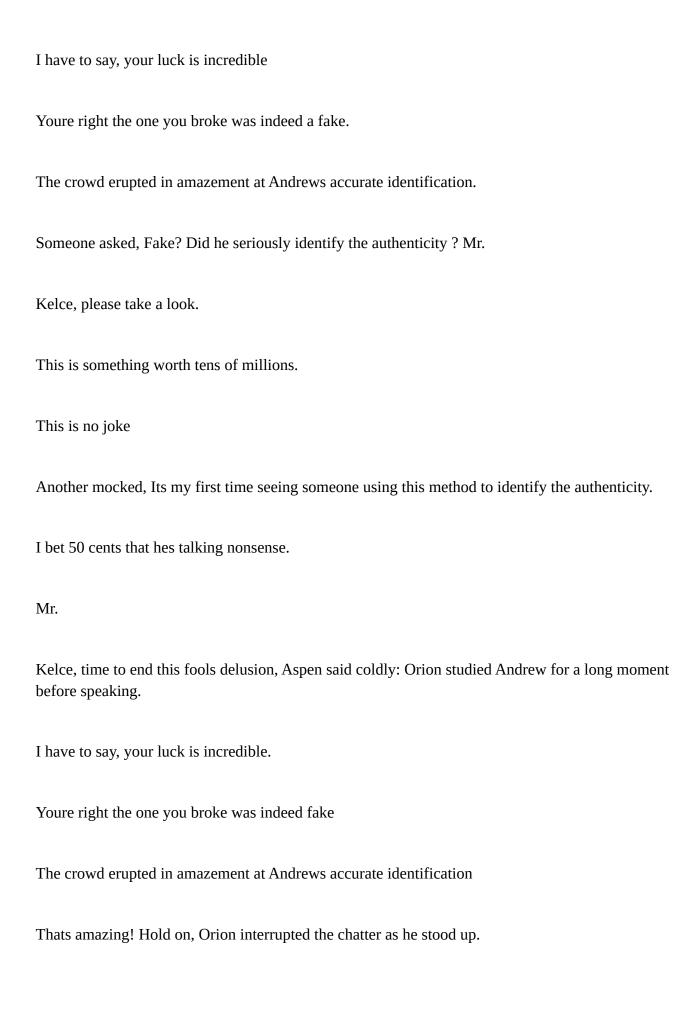
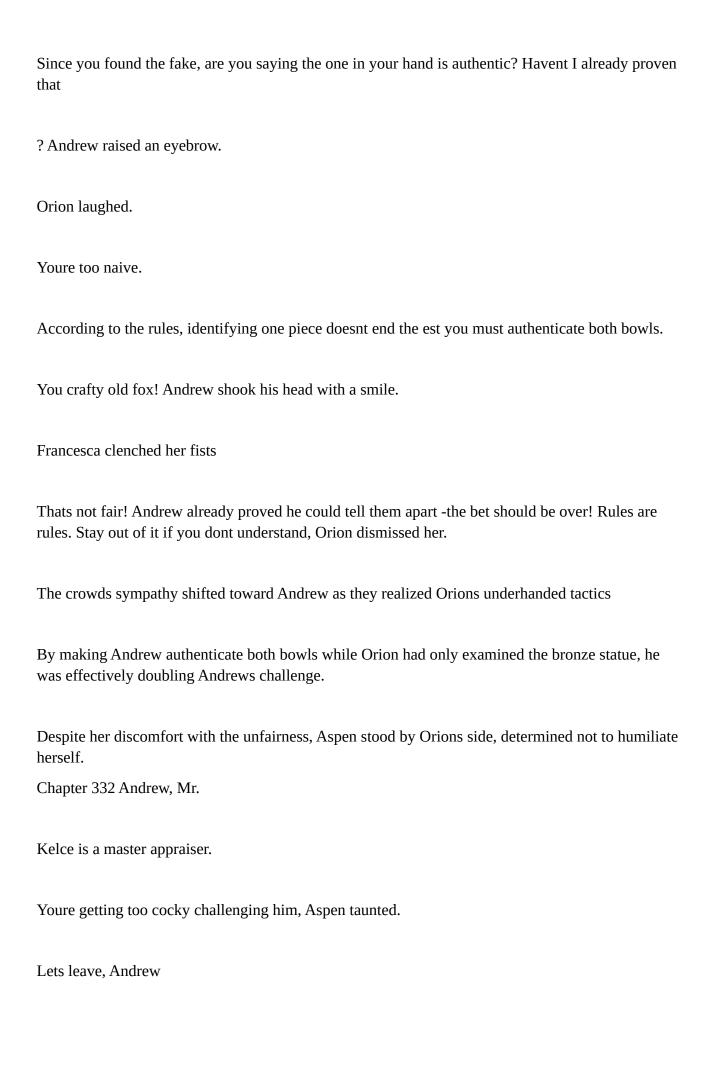
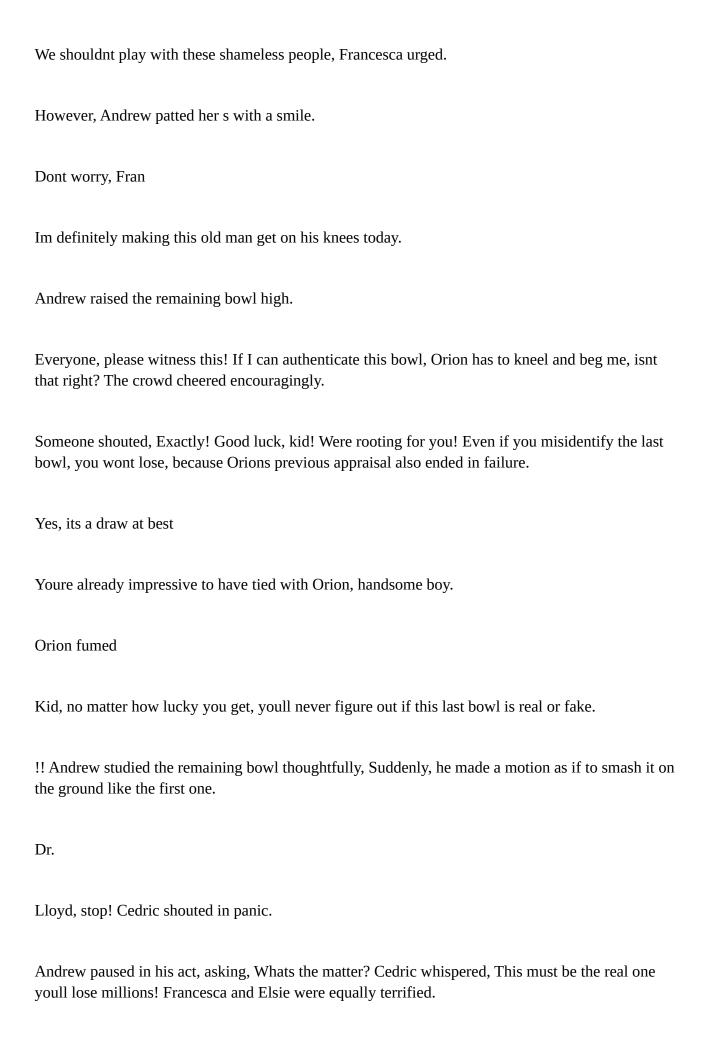
The Ashes 331

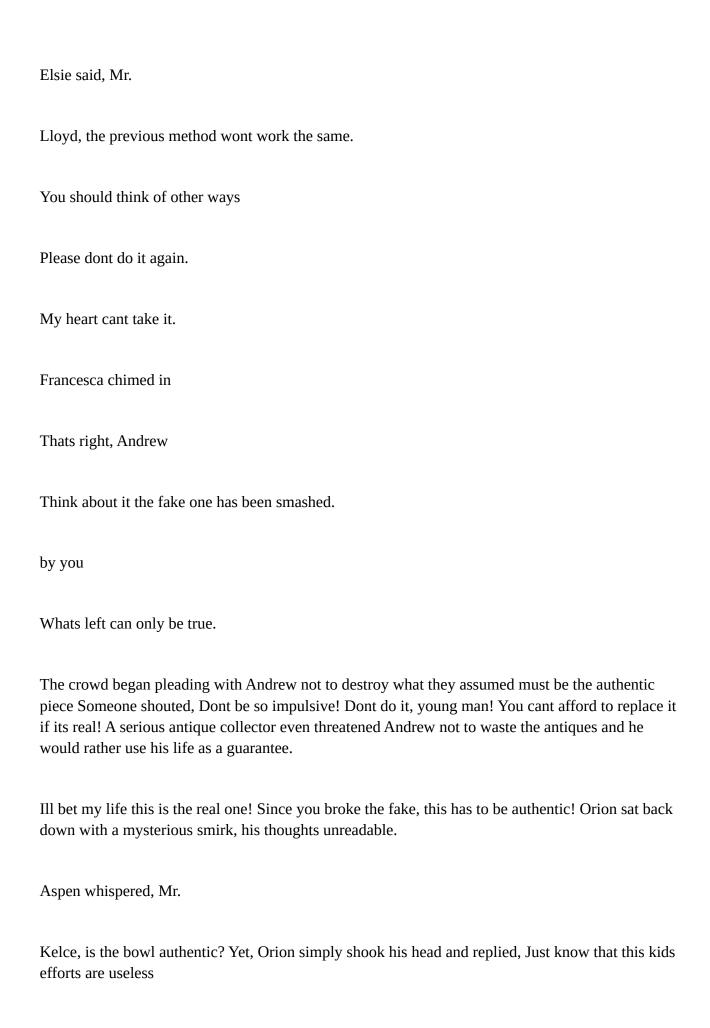
Chapter 331 The crowd exchanged bewildered glances.
They could not understand why Andrew had wasted time asking such obvious questions about the bowls value
Are you done wasting time? Can you tell which is real now? Orion asked impatiently.
Without answering, Andrew casually tossed the bowl in his left hand into the air.
Aspen shouted angrily, Andrew, what are you doing? Can you afford to replace a million-dollar piece? Before she finished speaking, the bowl crashed to the ground, shattering into pieces.
The spectators stared in disbelief, wondering if the pressure had made him lose his mind.
Elsie was overwhelmed and could only manage to stutter, Mr.
Lloyd, you- If it were real, Id have to pay for it, right? Andrew asked calmly.
Well, thats obvious, Elsie replied, distressed.
Andrew let out a relieved sigh.
Good thing I broke the fake one.
The crowd was stunned
Some whispered about Andrews unorthodox authentication method, while others bet he was just bluffing

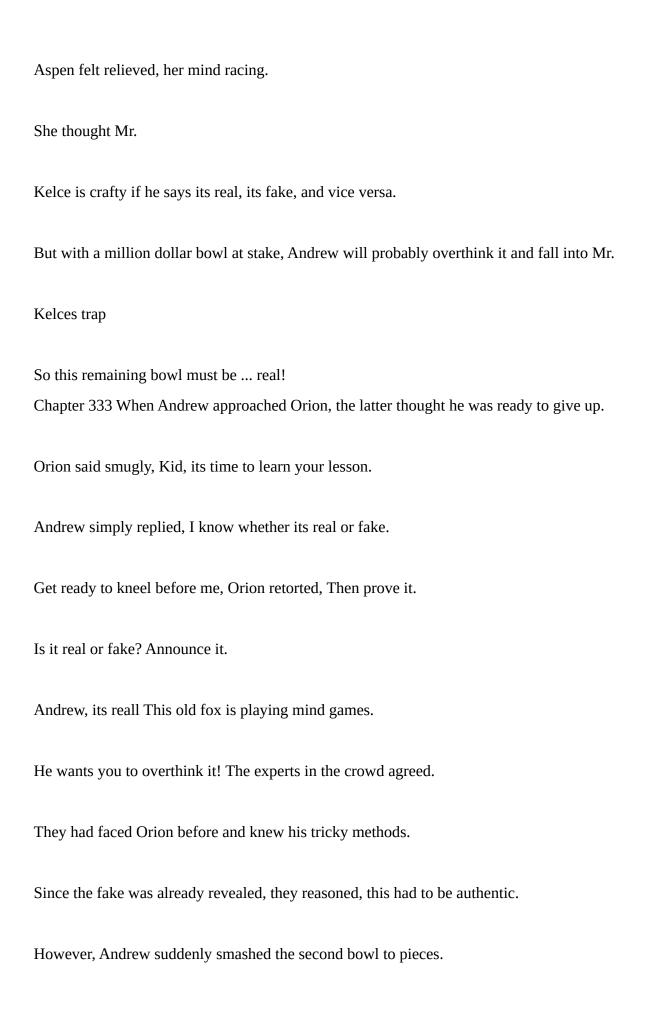
Orion studied Andrew for a long moment before speaking.

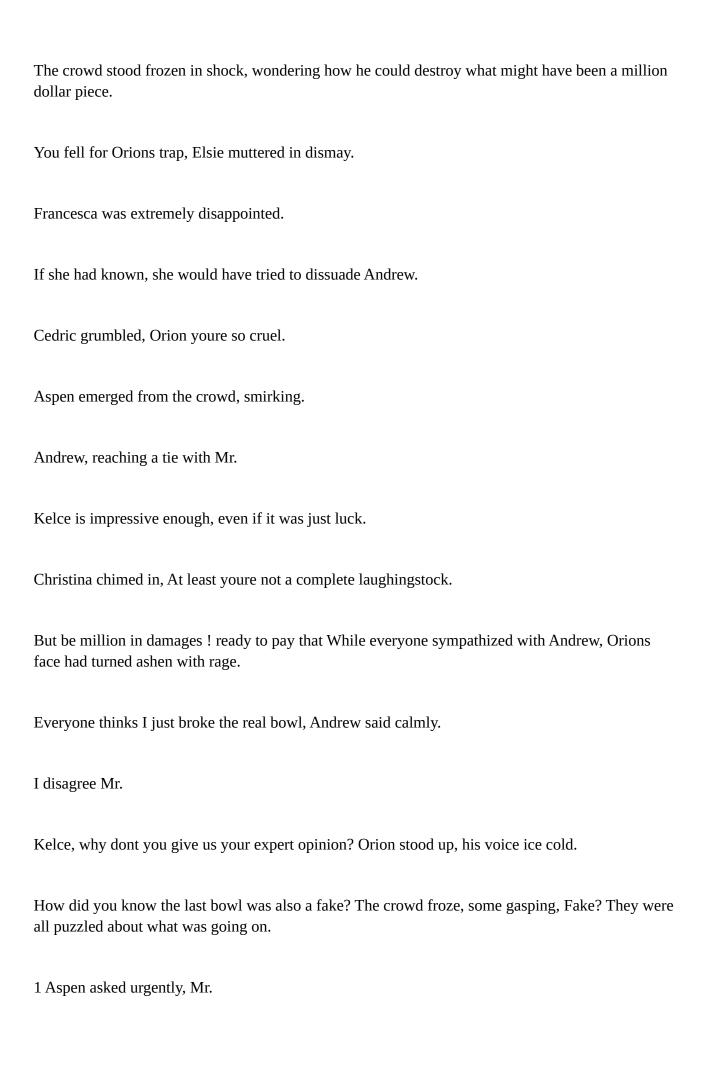






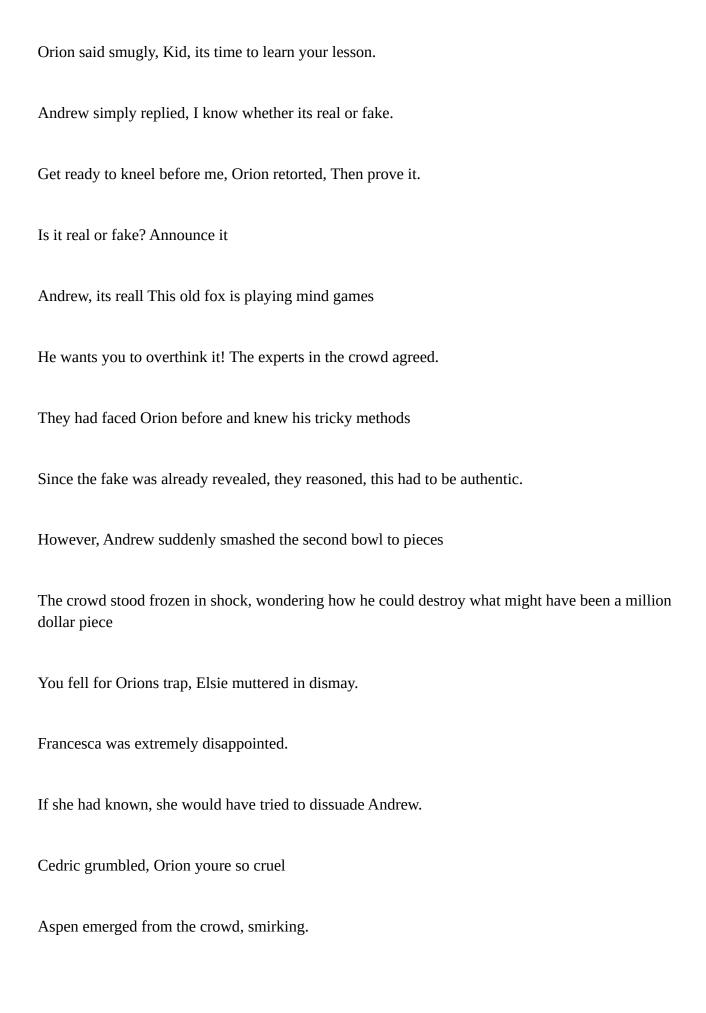




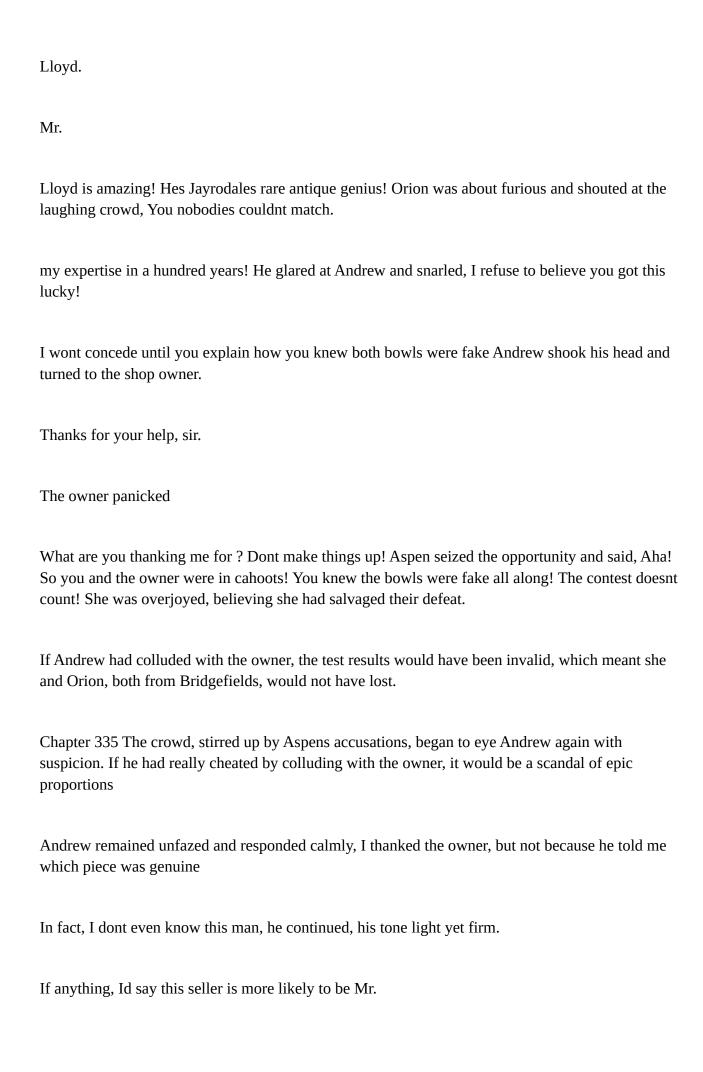


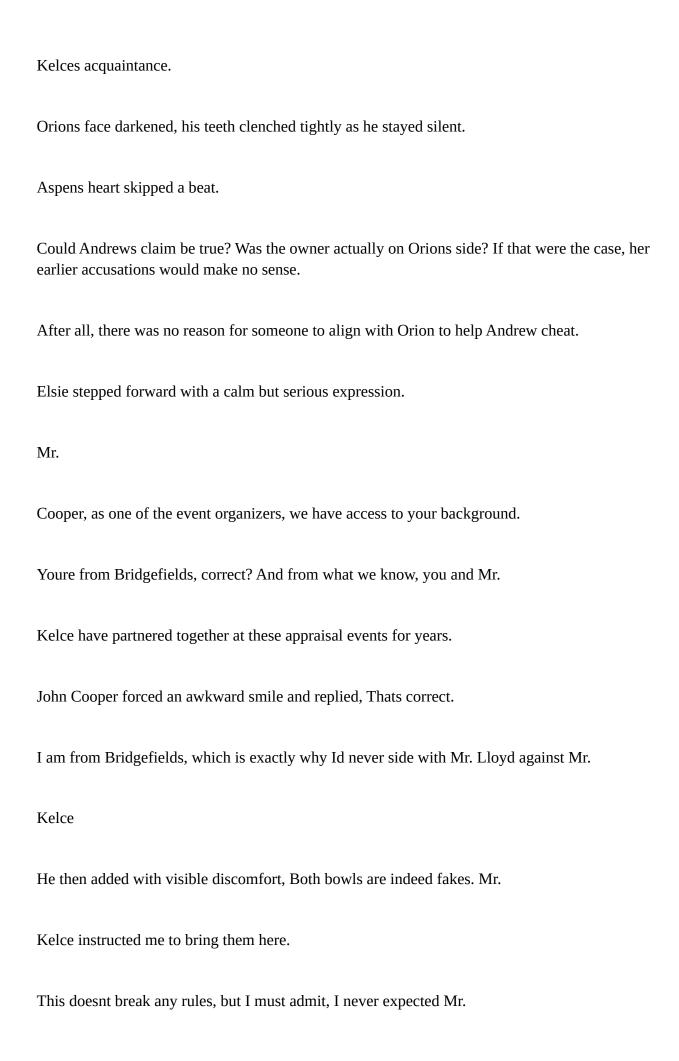






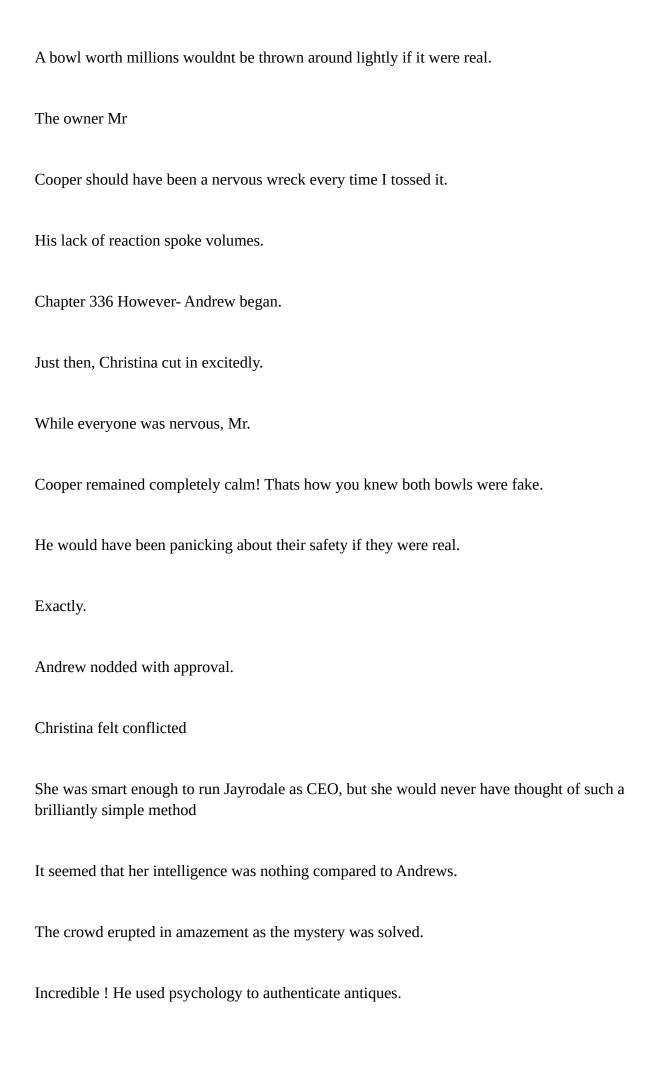
Kelce at authentication, yet this newcomer had done it effortlessly! In stark contrast, Orion, Aspen, and his followers stood there, furious yet helpless. Meanwhile, Christina stared at Andrew in disbelief.
She wondered if he really emerged victorious again.
Orion was furious and growled, How did you know they were fakes? What tricks did you use? Francesca scoffed.
What a loser he cant even accept his defeat graciously! Andrew shrugged.
Does it matter how I knew? What matters is I was right about both bowls, which means you lost. Time to kneel before me.
The crowd was shocked by Andrews unexpected victory.
His triumph brought pride to Jayrodales antique community, and they relished seeing the arrogant Orion get his comeuppance
Youre always talking about rules, Orion, Cedric beamed, finally getting his revenge.
Well, a bets a bet kneel! Exactly, Mr.
Kelce! Are you going back on your words now? Mr.
Kelce, this is Jayrodale, not Bridgefields.
I told you to be less arrogant, but you didnt listen.
Now youre being punished by Mr.



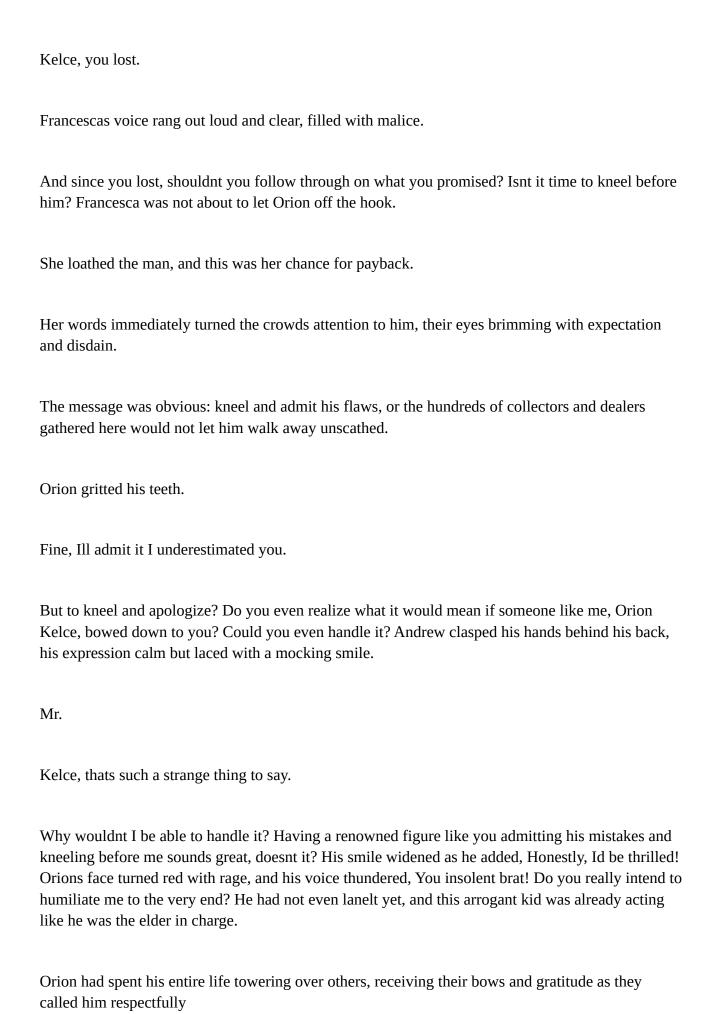


Lloyd to figure out the truth so decisively The crowd erupted in shock at his admission. Aspen was thoroughly humiliated, and she stood frozen with her mouth agape, unable to process what had just happened. The audience, including collectors and antique enthusiasts, began shouting angrily at both John and Orion. The two had clearly schemed together, setting a trap for Andrew Luckily, Andrews sharp eye and bold confidence not only exposed the ruse but also left Orion utterly defeated Enraged by the uproar, Orion shouted, Enough! Everyone, shut up! He jabbed a finger at Andrew and growled, Now tell me, how did you figure out which bowl was fake? If you cant explain it, Im not acknowledging this win! Andrew chuckled and said, Its simple. While Mr Cooper didnt say a word to me about which was real, his reactions gave it away. Aspen sneered. Reactions? Andrew, are you serious? Do you think anyone here is buying that? John was visibly panicked, and he waved his hands in protest Mr. Lloyd, youre a genius, but please, dont involve me in your story! I didnt give you any clues intentionally or otherwise If you keep this up, Ill be a pariah when I return to Bridgefields

The man looked genuinely distressed, as though Andrews words were about to land him in serious trouble with both Aspen and Orion.
Andrew stayed calm and stated, Lets go back to what I asked earlier.
Remember when I questioned Mr.
Cooper about how much the genuine bowl would be worth? Andrew reminded them, The piece was supposedly worth millions one of a kind in the world of porcelain.
Mr.
Cooper said it was highly valuable and precious.
Francesca blinked, confused.
But what does that have to do with determining which bowl was fake? Andrew grinned. Everything
Didnt you all notice what I did during the appraisal? Each time, I threw the bowl into the air as if I were ready to let it smash to the ground
When I did that, everyone held their breath, terrified that I might destroy it.
No one wanted to be responsible for damaging something so rare and priceless not even Mr.
Cooper, the supposed owner of the piece.
Cedric nodded
Exactly! A bowl like that should never be treated so carelessly.
Andrew smiled and added, And thats the key.



Mr.
Lloyd, youre truly the best! Another expert clainted, This is pure genius! Ive been authenticating pieces for 20 years, but todays lesson has shown me Ive still got more to learn! Theres no doubt that Mr.
Kelce has lost! Aspen desperately searched for another angle to refute Andrews claims but found none. She thought bitterly, He really beat Mr.
Kelce.
As fellow Bridgefields residents, weve embarrassed ourselves.
Aspen felt like Andrew had just slapped her hard across the face.
She bit her lip, standing silently on the edge of the crowd, unable to say a word
Her gaze flickered to Orion, and the sight of him made her heart sink he was clearly furious but she did
not dare to show it, pacing anxiously like a cornered animal, completely out of options.
Mr.
Kelce, Im sorry, Aspen thought to herself with a faint sense of pity.
But even I cant help you now
Without realizing it, she edged further away from the crowd, unwilling to get involved.
Mr.



Never not once had he been forced to kmeel before someone. To him, this was not just a loss; it was the ultimate insult. And it was utterly unbearable. Chapter 337 Aspens face darkened, and she could not help but step in. Andrew, let it go. Think about it- Mr. Kelce is someone of his age and stature, and youre ... well, youre not. Forcing him to kneel is just risking your own life. Andrews tone was calm as he replied, Im not worried. Im built tough: Id gladly accept it if he kneels and begs before me. Aspen clenched her fists in anger and retorted, Andrew, do you realize what youre risking? Mr. Kelce commands the loyalty of thousands in Bridgefields Not only is he respected in the antique community there, but he also has powerful connections in martial arts circles. Are you ready for the retaliation thats bound to come your way if you force him to kneel today? Andrew let out a cold laugh. Aspen, I see what youre trying to do.

Youre just trying to get him off the hook. And youre threatening me with Bridgefields big shots and antique tycoons? Whether Im afraid or not is one thing, but do you think these Jayrodale folks here will let you run your mouth unchecked? Elsie was the first to speak up, her voice icy. Ms Stevens, as a guest from Bridgefields, youre welcome at todays antique appraisal event. But if youre not going to act like a guest and instead try to take over, then Radiant Group wont hesitate to put you in your place. The Jayrodale antique experts quickly chimed in, their tones sharp and unyielding. Ms. Stevens, this is Jayrodale, not Bridgefields. Who do you think you are, threatening Mr. Lloyd? Exactly. Is the Stevens family from Bridgefields really all that? One more disrespectful word to Mr. Lloyd, and well see if you can walk out of here. Remember, youre in Jayrodale now. If you keep talking nonsense, well have no choice but to escort you out.

Aspens face flushed with frustration and rage.

She never expected to find herself being targeted instead.

Worse still, it seemed they were serious about throwing her out.

She glared at Andrew and spat, Fine, Andrew, youve got some guts.

But this appraisal event isnt over yet.

Ill show you what real expertise looks like and prove what it means to be a true master of antiques! Aspen was not someone who took losses lying down.

As the pride of the Stevens family in Bridgefields, she had grown up surrounded by praise and adoration.

Here in Jayrodale, she was determined to make a name for herself, and she would not back down not even against Andrew.

Meanwhile, in the commotion, Orion tried to sneak away, but someone landed a sharp kick on his backside, sending him tumbling forward into the center of the crowd

Andrew smirked and asked, Whats this? Youve finally made up your mind to kneel before me? Orions face burned crimson as he roared, Who kicked me? Show yourself, or III skin alive! No one responded, but the crowd had closed in around him, leaving him no escape.

Get down on your knees! Bow your head! You made a bet, now keep your word! you The shouts and demands echoed around hint, and Orions expression turned from fury to fear.

He realized with dread that there was no way out The crowd was too large, and no one was on his side. Swallowing his pride, he finally croaked, You win ... I was wrong! His voice was shaky with suppressed rage as he bowed his head to Andrew, his fists clenched tight with humiliation.

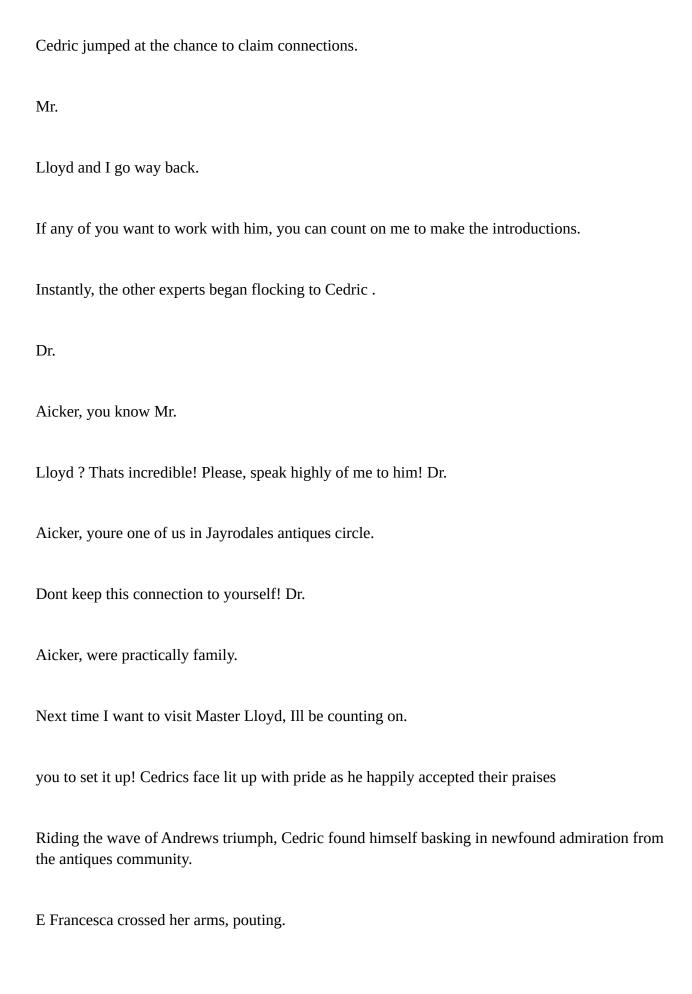
Finally, he dropped to his knees and admitted his loss.

The crowd erupted in laughter, their jeers filling the air

Orion Kelce, the once untouchable figure from Bridgefields, had been utterly humiliated.

His name, once feared and respected, was now a laughingstock.
Andrew raised his hand and said mockingly, Good, you can get up now.
But remember this next time youre out in the world, dont act so high and mighty.
Otherwise, I might have to teach you another lesson
Francesca burst into laughter, unable to hold it in Andrew, youre so bad! Oh, this is too good!
Chapter 338 Orion staggered to his feet, his bloodshot eyes glaring at Andrew as he roared, Andrew, you insolent brat! This isnt over between us! Andrew barked, How dare you use that tone with me! Do you have a death wish? Covering his face in luumiliation, Orlon, supported by his followers, scrambled toward the exit of the antiques fair
He did not want to stay even a second longer, fleeing down the bustling street with his pride in shambles
Christina hesitated and turned to Aspen.
Aspen, no matter what, Mr.
Kelce is still one of the most prominent figures from Bridgefields.
Are you really not going to check on him after such a humiliating defeat? Aspens tone was icy.
Check on him? Not a chance.
It doesnt matter.
Mr.

Kelces fury will be something Andrew absolutely cant handle.
Just wait Mr.
Kelce will definitely come back to settle the score, and Andrews the one whos in real trouble now. Christina frowned
She could not help but feel that Andrew had gone too far.
Winning was one thing, but forcing someone as esteemed as Orion to kneel and bow was excessive. Actions like that did not resolve anything.
They only bred resentment and invited retaliation.
Aspen sneered
Christina, dont be fooled by Andrews arrogance
Soon enough, hell learn what it means to pay the price for his recklessness.
Christinas eyes widened in surprise.
Aspen, dont tell me youre planning to challenge Andrew in antique appraisal again? Aspen smirked confidently.
Whats the fun in that? The real excitement is about to begin anyway.
The upcoming portion of this event is where the true masters shine, where only those with vision and courage can play.
Meanwhile, on Andrews side, the Jayrodale experts escorted him to a seat of honor with the utmost respect.





Andrew, youre truly a jack of all trades, arent you? On behalf of my grandpa, thank you for stepping in and helping him
Francesca felt a genuine sense of respect and admiration toward Andrew.
His brilliance in medicine was unmatched, and his skill in martial arts seemed bottomless.
Even in the rarefied world of antiques and collectibles, he had demonstrated expertise far beyond anyones expectations
She could not help but wonder in awe how on earth he managed to master it all.
Chapter 339 Andrew smiled.
Dont mention it.
I didnt do much for Dr.
Aicker anyway.
That relic just seemed to have a natural connection with him.
Elsie stood quietly to the side, observing Andrew with subtle interest.
Her thoughts churned as she wondered to herself, Could a man like this truly exist? Someone so
composed, charming, and effortlessly skilled in everything he does? From his demeanor and words to his charisma and even his looks, Andrew checked every box for Elsie.
She had to admit he had a magnetic pull on her, yet she felt a pang of disappointment.
No matter

she did, her charm did not catch his attention at all Just then, a staff member whispered something in Elsies ear, and she hesitated for a moment before speaking up. Mr. Lloyd, the Jayrodale Antiques Association would like to invite you to join as a member. Are you interested? Andrew instinctively wanted to decline. He was never one to care about club memberships, VIP titles, or committee positions. Those labels might impress others, but they held no appeal for him, as he preferred to keep to himself. Before he could turn it down, Francesca interjected with a cheerful laugh. Thats a great honor! Ive heard that being part of the antiques association earns you much respect. Andrew, this is perfect for you, especially at your age. Thank you so much, Ms. Santana! Elsies face lit up. Then its settled! Ill speak to the association president and let them know Mr. Lloyd is officially joining our association. With both women looking so pleased, Andrew felt it would be rude to dampen their excitement, so he held back his objections. He let out a small sigh, resigned to going along with their enthusiasm for now.

After a short break, Elsie announced, Mr.
Lloyd, were about to start the highlight of the antiques festival.
Andrew raised an eyebrow, intrigued
I thought the event was already lively enough.
Whats this highlight youre talking about? Elsie gave him a sly smile and whispered, The most thrilling part of the festival is stone gambling
Its a tradition where fortunes are made or lost on the gamble of what lies.
hidden inside raw stones
Francescas eyes sparkled with excitement.
Oh, Ive heard about that! Its all about the adrenaline rush and the thrill of the unknown, right? Even wealthy collectors and business.
tycoons are cautious about playing, though.
Elsie nodded.
Exactly.
The stakes are so high that one mistake or streak of bad luck could ruin someone completely.
I once saw a prominent antiques expert risk his entire fortune on a single uncut stone
When the stone turned out to be worthless, he lost everything and eventually ended up on the streets completely broken.

Francescas expression turned sympathetic To gamble away everything for something so uncertain... Why would anyone do that? The risk seems far too great its like betting your entire life on one spin of a roulette wheel. Andrew shrugged and said calmly, Thats exactly the allure of stone gambling. People enjoy the process of turning nothing into something, of taking a risk and hoping for a reward. Youd be surprised how many are drawn to the thrill. Francesca looked at Elsie in surprise. Ms. Santana, is Andrew right? Are that many people really into this? Elsie smiled knowingly. Hes absolutely right. The magic of stone gambling lies in its unpredictability and the hope it offers. Even knowing the risks, people still cant resist diving in, chasing that one chance to strike it big. Francesca shook her head in disbelief. I honestly cant understand how anyone could take a risk like that. Chapter 340 Elsie chuckled and said, Its not as exaggerated as it sounds, Ms. Aicker. True experts at stone

All it takes is uncovering one rare gemstone worth millions, and theyre set for life.

gambling know how to play smart theyre looking for a jackpot.

Why wouldnt they take the risk? She leaned in slightly, adding, The most famous case in modern history
is the King of Emerald discovery from an overseas quarry.
That guy, as if blessed by luck itself, unearthed a gemstone worth over a billion dollars from an
unassuming stone.
The news caused a worldwide sensation, even catching the attention of royalty from across the world. Francescas eyes sparkled with excitement, completely captivated by the story.
A billion-dollar gemstone? Thats incredible! Andrew, we should definitely try our luck with a few stones later, dont you think? Andrew smirked and teased, Didnt you just say that the risks were too high, and we shouldnt play? Blushing, Francesca laughed awkwardly.
Well, we could just play with smaller stones
You know, for fun and to get a feel for it.
Andrew shrugged and smiled
Sure, if it seems interesting, why not? Elsie quickly chimed in with a word of caution.
Mr.
Lloyd, Ms.
Aicker, if you do play, make sure to avoid spending too much
If you come across stones priced in the hundreds of thousands or millions, just walk away.

Andrew grinned mischievously.

What if we happen to strike gold or rather, something even better? Wouldnt that be worth it? Elsie smiled politely but did not reply

While she acknowledged Andrews earlier success in appraising antiques, she knew stone gambling required a completely different level of skill and expertise

It was not something that luck alone could carry you through, and she doubted Andrew would fare well in this arena

She hoped they had played conservatively and avoided unnecessary losses.

At that moment, the antique vendors began clearing the central plaza where the event was taking place.

In their place, trucks begar unloading large, uncut stones of various shapes and sizes.

Each stone was marked with its place of origin, giving the event an air of professionalism.

Elsie gestured to the stones and explained, These have been sourced from reputable quarries around

the world, all arranged by Mr.

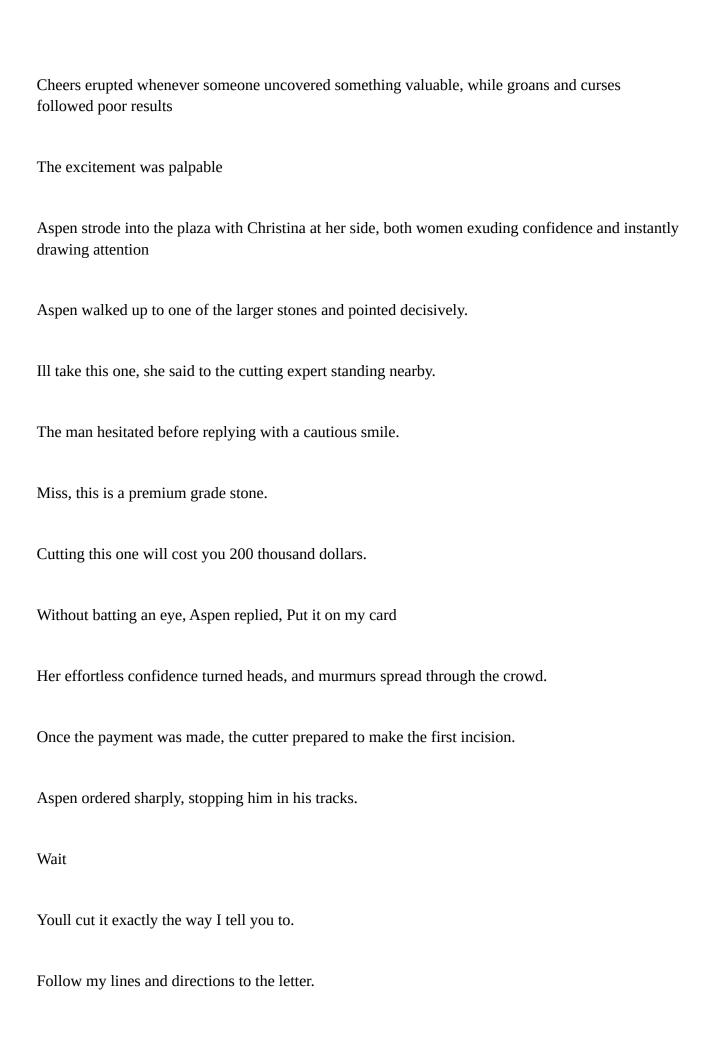
Vaughn, Among them, the stones from Auqanias mines.

are considered the most promising

Thats where most players will likely focus their bets.

Crowds surged in from the surrounding streets, eager to watch the spectacle.

The plaza buzzed with anticipation as players rushed to examine the stones and place their bets



If you make even the slightest mistake, expect a full refund, plus compensation in the form of another stone of equal quality

Her assertiveness sent ripples through the crowd, especially among the more experienced attendees. They could tell this was not her first time Aspen clearly knew what she was doing.

This princess of Bridgefields Stevens family was not just a bold spender she was a pro at stone gambling