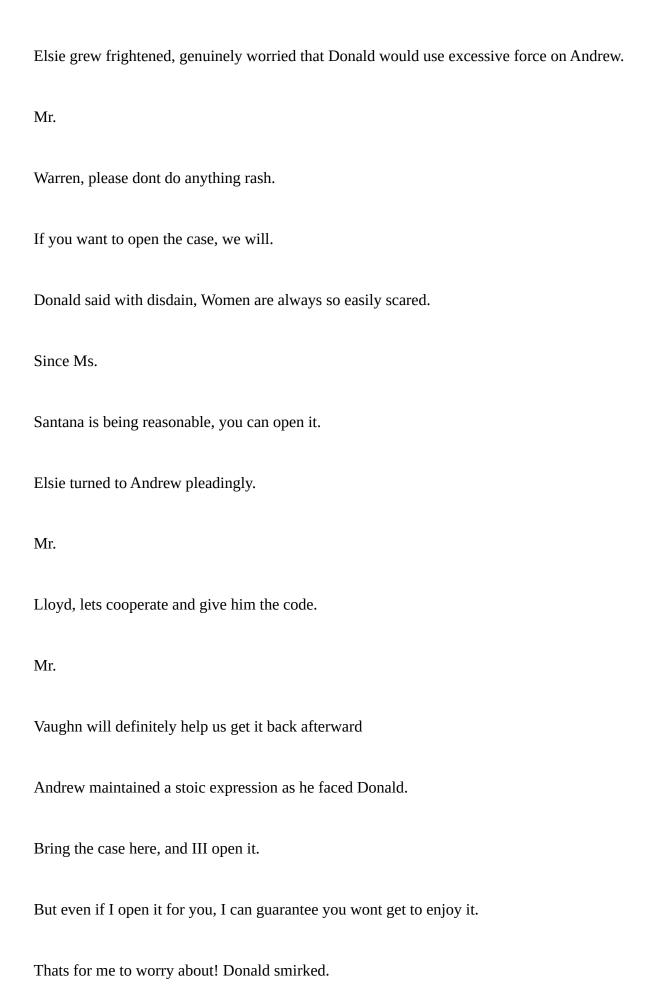
The Ashes 361

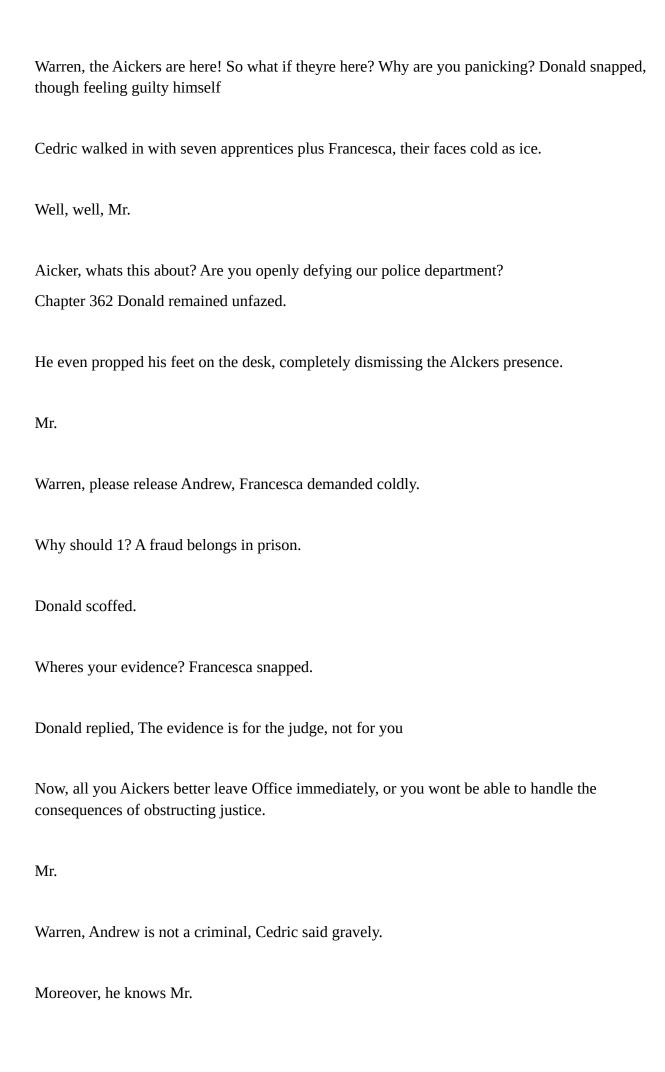
to get away with it.

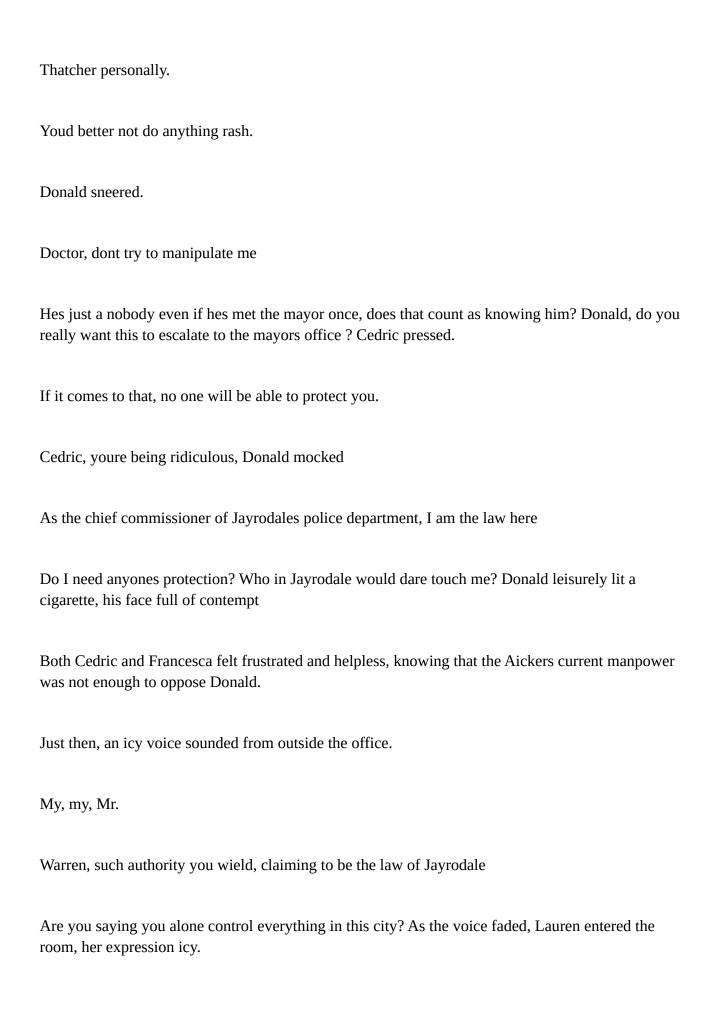
Chapter 361 Elsie sneered, Mr.
Warren, are you planning to steal it right in front of us? Donald shamelessly replied, As the chief commissioner, I need to inspect what illegal goods.
are inside
Inside is the Blood Phoenix Cicada that Mr.
Lloyd won at our antique auction through stone gambling worth over 100 million dollars.
Its absolutely not illegal goods, Elsie retorted through gritted teeth.
Donald ignored her explanation.
In his mind, there was only one number 100 million dollars! Holy crap, what a jackpot! Donald said excitedly, Well, well, Andrew.
The value of your criminal case amounts to over 100 million.
Now, as the commissioner, I order you to open that case immediately.
Andrew replied calmly, I advise you not to touch my belongings.
Otherwise, I doubt youll keep your position as commissioner for long
1 Donald laughed angrily, You little punk, do as I say, or youll suffer the consequences! This is my territory.

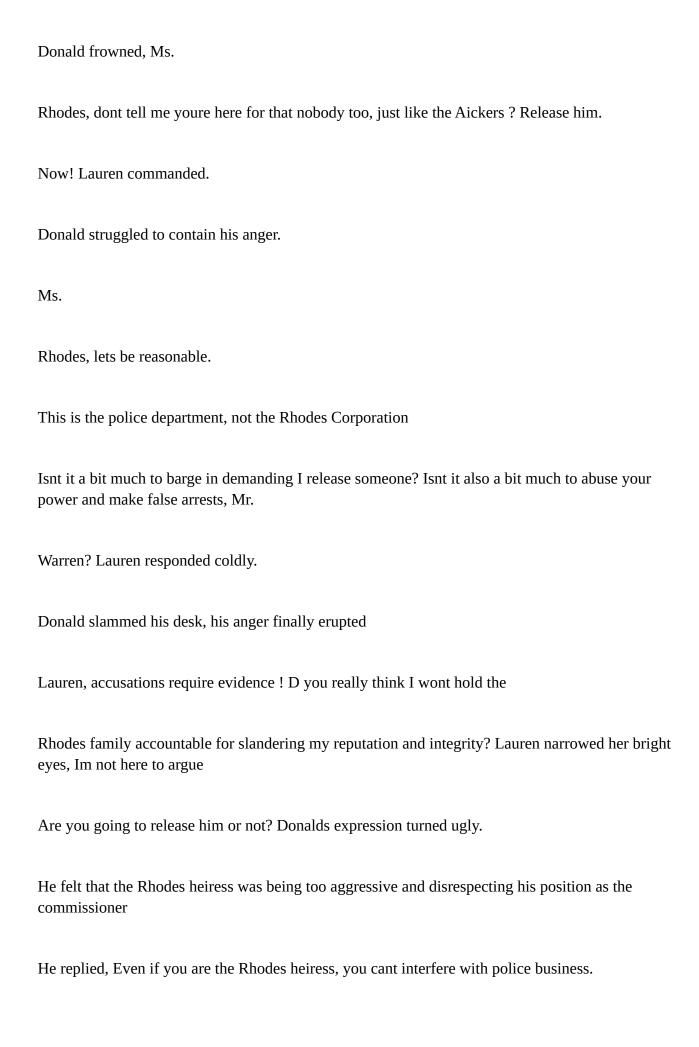
If I really wanted to kill you right here, all it would take is some paperwork and a slap on the wrist

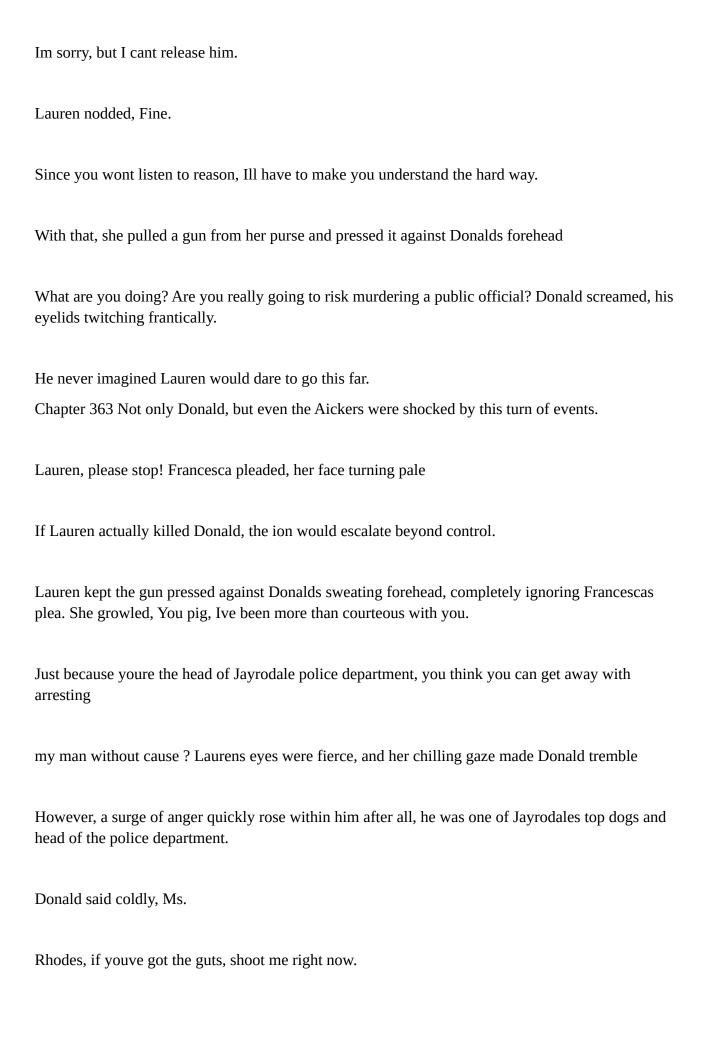


Click! Andrew entered the code and opened the security case.
Immediately, the Blood Phoenix Cicada appeared before Donalds eyes.
Donalds breathing became heavy at once
He thought, No wonder Aspen came to me for help.
So this is what she was after.
Donald knew little about antiques and precious stones, but anyone could tell at a glance that the Blood Phoenix Cicada was priceless an absolute treasure.
Clutching the open case, Donald rushed back to his office, eager to claim the Blood Phoenix Cicada for himself.
Donald then called in his trusted subordinate.
Get two expendable thugs with records to go and cripple Andrew, he ordered with a sinister smile. Remember, dont kill him just make him disabled, preferably vegetative.
Remember, dont kill him just make him disabled, preferably vegetative. He had told Andrew he would not hurt him if he opened the case, but Donald had harbored ill
Remember, dont kill him just make him disabled, preferably vegetative. He had told Andrew he would not hurt him if he opened the case, but Donald had harbored ill intentions from the start.









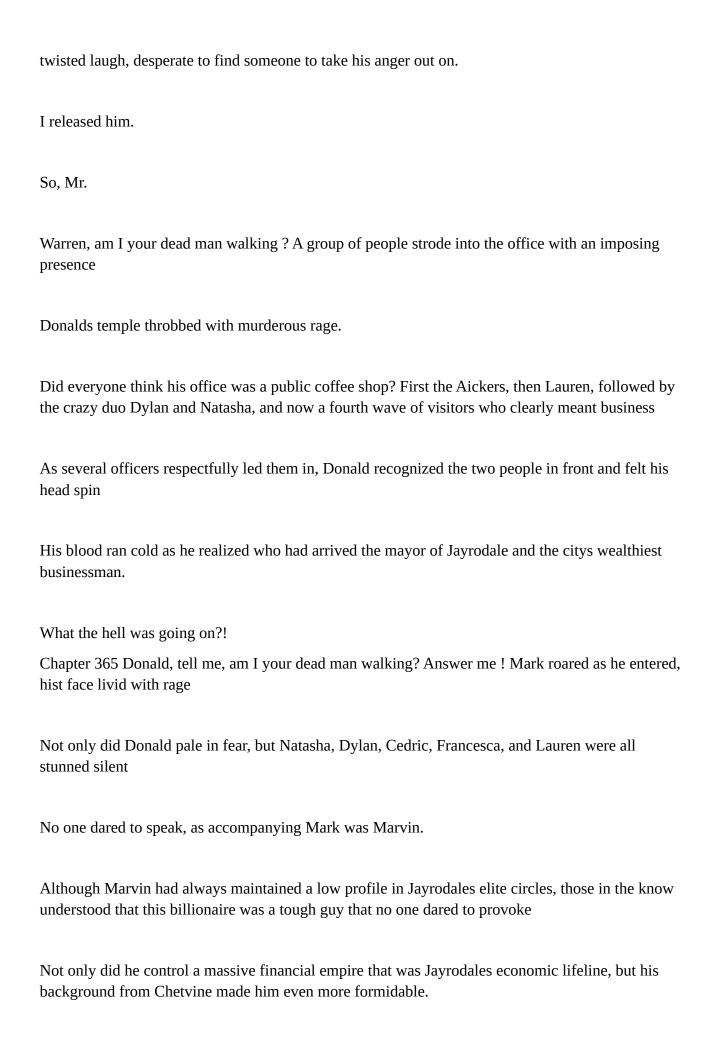
If I die in my office, not only Andrew but you and the entire Rhodes family will face severe consequences
Lauren smiled menacingly, Oh? Do you really think I wont pull the trigger? III send you straight to hell, you pig
Do it! Shoot me right now! Donald roared.
Lets see if any of you make it out of this precinct alive! Lauren suddenly lowered the gun and put it back in her purse.
Sorry, there werent any bullets in the gun.
Otherwise, I might have accidentally blown your brains out, Mr.
Warren.
She had left her ammunition behind when her mother, Tiana, had confiscated her gun earlier.
The whole thing had just been a bluff to scare Donald.
Wiping his cold sweat, Donald straightened up and taunted, Ms.
Rhodes, Dr.
Aicker, its impossible for you to save that punk from me.
Tell me your conditions for releasing him, Lauren demanded icily.
Donald snorted, regaining his arrogant demeanor.
No condition.

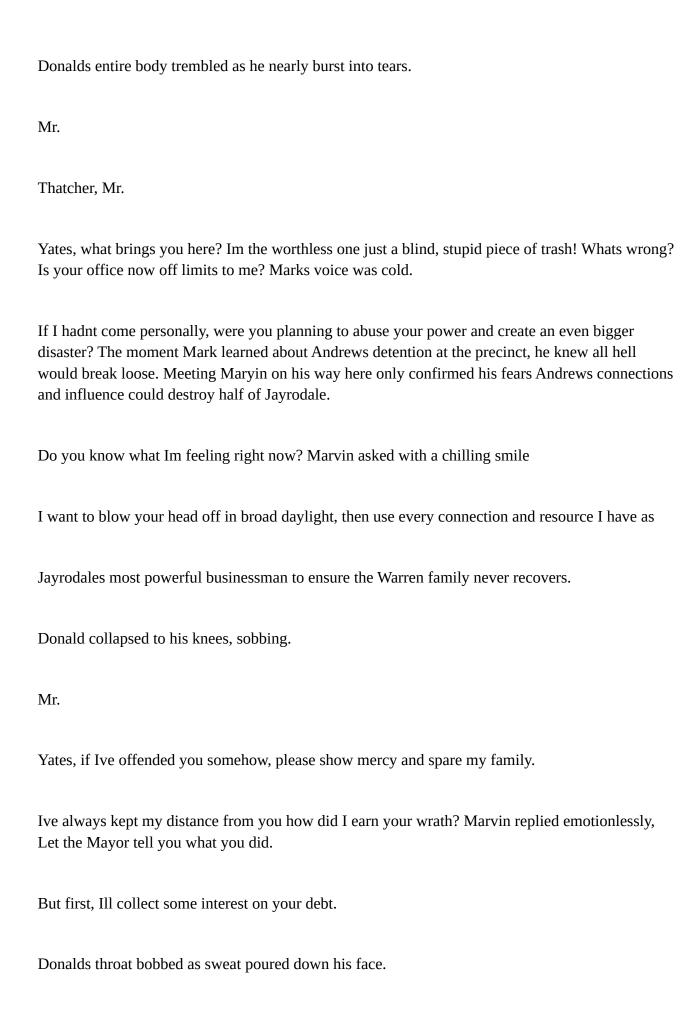
Even God himself couldnt get that kid out of here today.
Just as he finished speaking, two people walked into his office.
Thats quite a statement, Mr.
Warren
If God cant do it, would you at least show respect to us? The newcomers approached Donalds desk, ignoring the armed officers outside
some Donald looked up, his heart pounding.
Mr.
Garner, Madam Vostokoff, what are you doing here? 1/2 The pair who had entered were Dylan and Natasha, Jayrodales two underground crime lords.
Mr.
Warren, release him, Dylan said calmly.
Natashas face remained expressionless as she spoke, Andrews under West Ends protection.
Anyone who touches him deals with me personally.
Donalds anger surged.
His day was turning into a nightmare.
Every big shot in Jayrodale seemed to be coming after him, and for what? I dont recall having any beef with you two, Donald growled, though his tone was notably more restrained than with the Aickers and Lauren

After all, these underground leaders were not to be trifled with.
They were hardened criminals who had fought their way to the top.
Mr.
Warren, are you deaf? Natasha snapped impatiently.
I just said Andrews under West Ends protection.
Chapter 364 Dylan threatened, Youd better release him, or fundreds of my South City boys might pay Warrens house a visit.
Donald exploded with rage, Mr.
Garner, are you threatening me? Dylans face suddenly darkened, twisting with menace.
He snarled, Thats exactly what Im doing.
What are you going to do about it? You fat pig, others might fear you, but I dont give at damn about your position.
He added, If anything happens to Mr.
Lloyd, Ill take you down even if it costs me my life.
Am I clear? The ferocity in Dylans voice made Donalds face pale as he struggled to maintain his composure
Donald could not wrap his head around it who the hell was Andrew? Why were even the underground crime lords getting involved? Moreover, Dylans stance seemed to show that he was ready to go to war over this

Donald said through gritted teeth, Think carefully about what youre doing
Even if I release him now under pressure, what about later? Not everyone can get away with disrespecting me like this
Besides, Andrew is a criminal.
Im justified both legally and personally.
Natasha cut in coldly, I dont care if hes a criminal or not.
I just need you to release him.
And Mr.
Warren, I have evidence of your visits to prostitutes.
Dont make me upload that to the internet.
Donald finally cracked, his voice ice cold.
Fine, you win by force of numbers.
But remember, the tide always turns.
Ill get my payback eventually.
Francesca pointed at the security case on the desk.
That case belongs to Andrew too, Mr.
Warren

Please return it to its rightful owner.
Donalds face turned several shades of purple.
He had never had to give up something once he had claimed it.
However, under the death glares from Dylan, Natasha, Lauren, and the Aickers, he had no choice.
Fine
I wont forget this day, Donald spat venomously
Francesca grabbed the case as Donald called for his subordinate.
Go release him.
The subordinate wore an awkward expression.
M Mr.
Warren, hes already been released! Donald froze, then exploded, Released? Who the hell
authorized that? This was beyond humiliating.
Not only was he forced to release Andrew, but someone had already done
it without his order.
Im going to find out which dead man walking dared to override my authority! Donald snarled with a

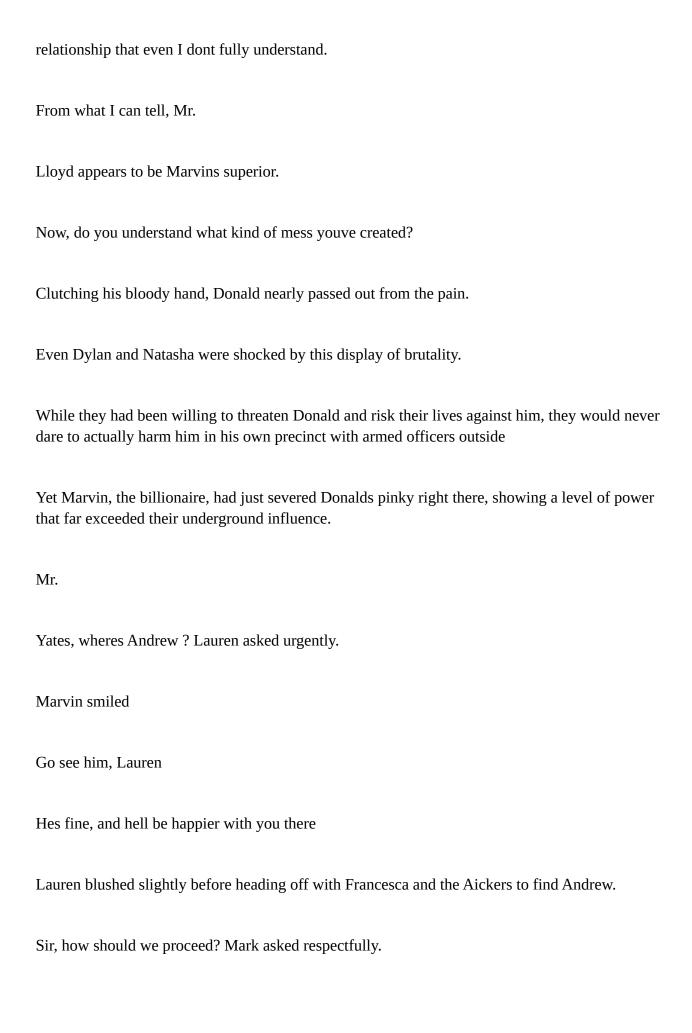


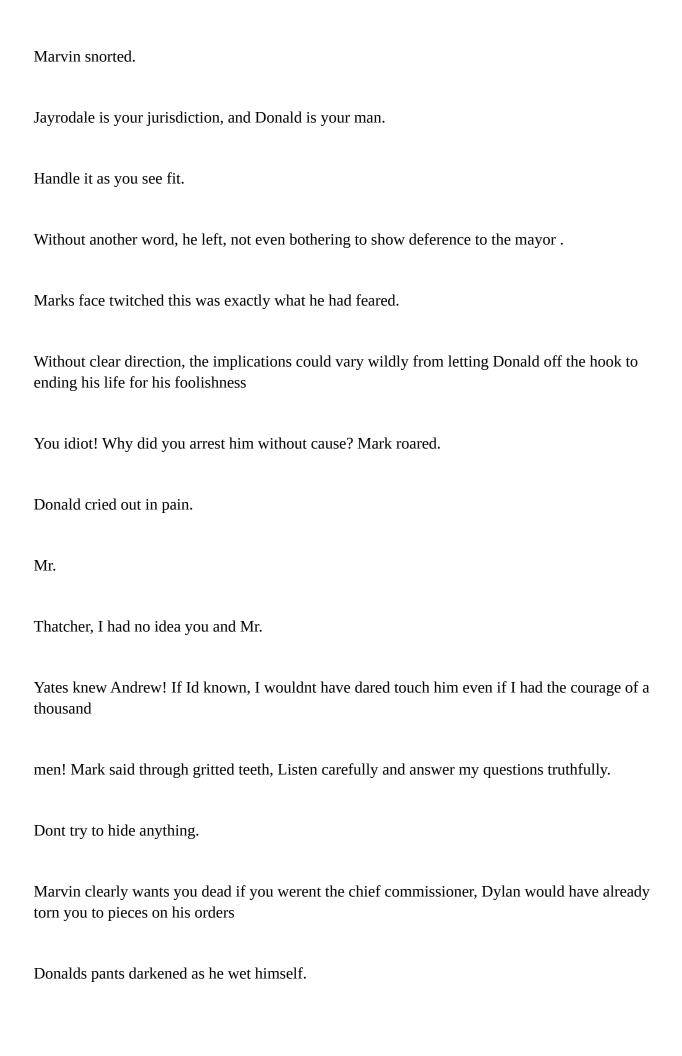


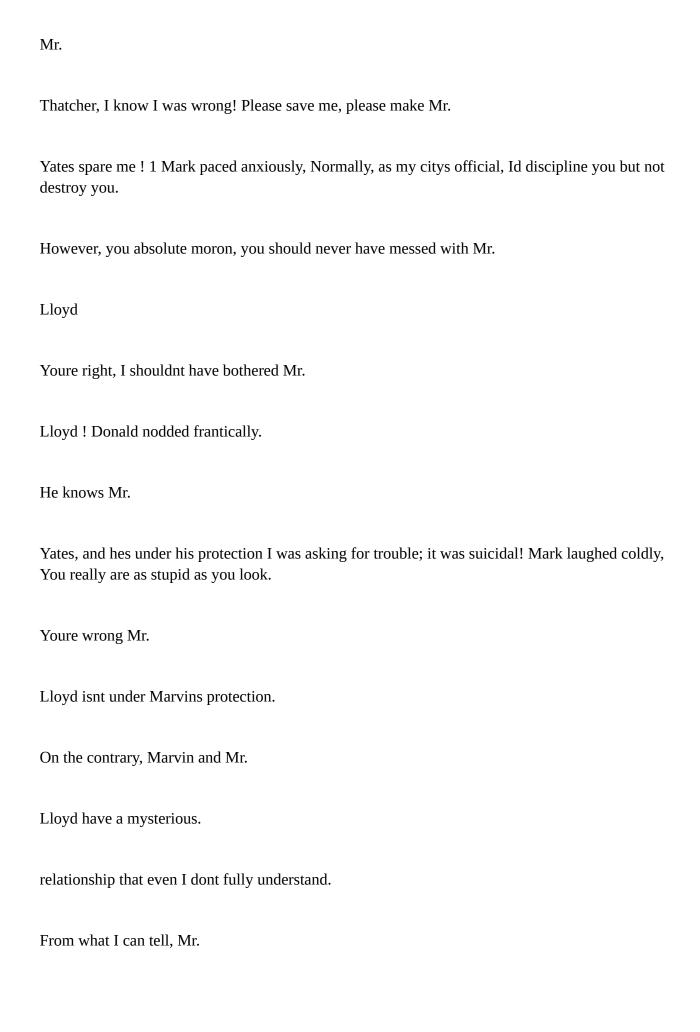
Interest, Mr.
Yates? What interest? Marvin usually seemed like a harmless, elderly man.
Yet now, his expression was merciless.
With a wave of his hand, two of his men stepped forward one held Donald down while the others blade glinted under the light.
A bloody pinky flew through the air and landed on the floor as Donalds agonized screamts filled the office
Chapter 366 Clutching his bloody hand, Donald nearly passed out from the pain.
Even Dylan and Natasha were shocked by this display of brutality
While they had been willing to threaten Donald and risk their lives against him, they would never dare to actually harm him in his own precinct with armed officers outside.
Yet Marvin, the billionaire, had just severed Donalds pinky right there, showing a level of power that far exceeded their underground influence.
Mr.
Yates, wheres Andrew? Lauren asked urgently.
Marvin smiled.
Go see him, Lauren.
Hes fine, and hell be happier with you there.

Lauren blushed slightly before heading off with Francesca and the Aickers to find Andrew.
Sir, how should we proceed? Mark asked respectfully.
tas Marvin snorted.
Jayrodale is your jurisdiction, and Donald is your man.
Handle it as you see fit.
Without another word, he left, not even bothering to show deference to the mayor.
Marks face twitched this was exactly what he had feared
Without clear direction, the implications could vary wildly from letting Donald off the hook to ending his life for his foolishness
You idiot! Why did you arrest him without cause? Mark roared.
Donald cried out in pain.
Mr.
Thatcher, I had no idea you and Mr.
Yates knew Andrew! If Id known, I wouldnt have dared touch him even if I had the courage of a thousand
men! Mark said through gritted teeth, Listen carefully and answer my questions truthfully.
Dont try to hide anything.









Lloyd appears to be Marvins superior.
Now, do you understand what kind of mess youve created? Donalds mind was blown by the revelation, and putrid.
What? Andrew is Mr.
Yatess superior? Th Mr.
Thatcher, please save me! Donald sobbed
forgiveness, whatever he wants! Just please don! Donalds mind was blown
by the revelation, and the puddle beneath him grew larger and more putrid.
What? Andrew is Mr.
Yatess superior? Thats thats impossible! Mr.
Thatcher, please save me! Donald sobbed.
Ill do anything be his slave, beg for forgiveness, whatever he wants! Just please dont let me die
Chapter 367 If Jayrodales wealthiest man could destroy him so easily, Donald shuddered to think about the power level of someone who commanded that kind of authority.
The sense of impending doom was overwhelming
Mark said coldly, Your tears are useless now Its too late.
Tell me, what possessed you to arrest Mr.

Lloyd in the first place? Donalds face crumpled as he explained, It was Aspen Stevens. She told me Mr. Lloyd committed fraud at the antique appraisal convention, causing her to lose tens of millions, so I Mark cut him off with a sneer. So, you just blindly acted on this womans word? You didnt follow proper procedure or gather evidence? You just took her baseless accusations at face value? Donald shrank back, stammering, I I didnt think it through Aspens my old classmate, and I thought Id do her a favor. Mark stated indifferently, What else? You better tell me everything. Otherwise, I wont be able to protect you if Marvin comes back. Donald swallowed hard and spilled everything without reservation I actually wanted to sleep with Aspen, so when she called for help, I agreed without thinking I figured shed owe me a favor, and I could legitimately ask her to meet me at a hotel afterward. He continued, I also heard Mr. Lloyd had discovered a priceless treasure worth millions at the event. I got greedy and thought Id bring it back to the precinct to see what was so special about it. Mark mocked, You werent just looking you were blinded by greed and had a death wish. Coveting Mr. Lloyds possessions? Donald, its a miracle youre still alive! Donald asked cautiously, Mr. Thatcher, who exactly is Mr. Lloyd? Not only did the Aickers, the Rhodes family, and the two underground crime lords Dylan

and Natasha come running, but even you and Mr.

Yates showed up at my humble office I nearly passed out of fright! Mark clasped his hands behind his back and replied flatly, Dont ask questions you shouldnt.
However, Im curious about his background, too.
If Im not mistaken, hes probably from one of the powerful old money families or even centuries old royalties of Chetvine
Donald shivered at the revelation.
In Holtrien, centuries old royalties were even more.
powerful than those old money families.
One more question, Mark continued.
Did anything happen between you and Aspen ? Donald hesitated, Is this relevant to the situation with Mr.
Lloyd? Just answer the question unless you dont value your life anymore, Mark snapped impatiently
Ill tell you, Ill tell you! Dont be angry, Dona Aspen yet.
Shes too clever I made suggestions Mark frowned, Youre married with kids, and y still trying to do such sleazy things? impatiently.
Ill tell you, Ill tell you! Dont be angry, Donald quickly replied.
Nothing happened with Aspen yet.
Shes too clever I made suggestions, but she said shed wait for results first.

Mark frowned, Youre married with kids, and youre the chief commissioner. Why are you still trying to do such sleazy things?

Chapter 368 Donald forced a laugh, Sir, Im not as noble as you.

You know what they say the grass is say the always greener on the other side.

Donald continued, Aspen is a brilliant and beautiful woman from the Bridgefields Stevens family. Wanting her is only natural.

And... When Donald hesitated, Mark pressed, And what? Tell me everything so I can try to help you find a way out of this mess.

Donald shifted uncomfortably before admitting, And sleeping with someone like Aspen isnt just about the pleasure and the thrill of conquest.

I was planning to secretly record it, so I could enjoy it again later.

With that kind of video, I could even make her come back for more ... Mark took a deep breath, staring at Donald intently.

Donald, you should have been a porn director elsewhere instead of a chief commissioner in Jayrodale. Donalds eyes lit up excitedly, Mr.

Thatcher, so youre into that too! No wonder you asked so many detailed questions! Shut up! Mark snapped, his face reddening.

That was for the investigation not everyone is a perverted pig like you! Heres what well do: come with me to apologize to Mr.

Lloyd in person.

With my mediation and the fact that you didnt hurt him or damage the gem, we might be able to resolve this.

Donald was overjoyed and exclaimed, Thank you, Mr.

Thatcher! I can never repay your kindness in saving my life! III definitely take this lesson to heart! Mark warned, Remember, everything we discussed today stays between us.

Donald replied eagerly, Of course! Later, Mark escorted Donald to meet Andrew, who was being treated as an honored guest in the precincts VIP room.

Elsie was present, watching in shock as Donald transformed from his previous arrogance into a groveling, apologetic figure before Andrew.

She was stunned into numbness, realizing how narrow her perspective had been when she had thought Andrew was being overconfident earlier.

Andrew set down his teacup and said calmly, Mr.

Warren, you dont blame me for your missing pinky, do you? Donalds face paled as he quickly assured, Not at all, Mr.

Lloyd! I deserved it Im actually grateful for the lesson.

Your attitude is so proper now, its almost uncomfortable, Andrew remarked blandly.

I almost miss the arrogant chief commissioner from before.

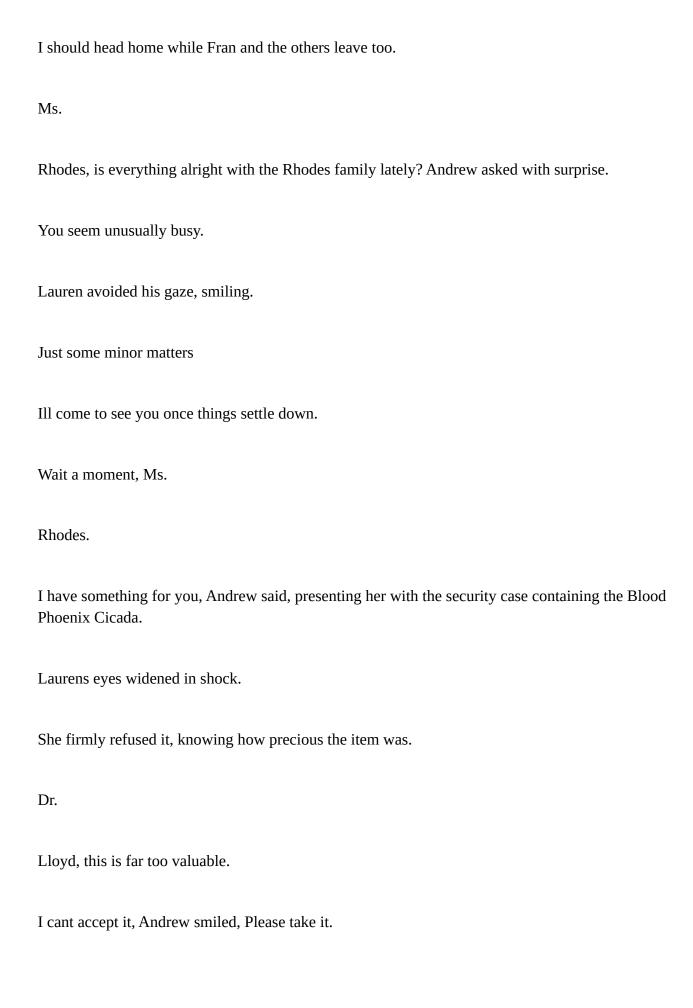
Lloyd, I was blind not to recognize your status, Donald replied with a pained smile.

If Id known who you were, I would never have dared.

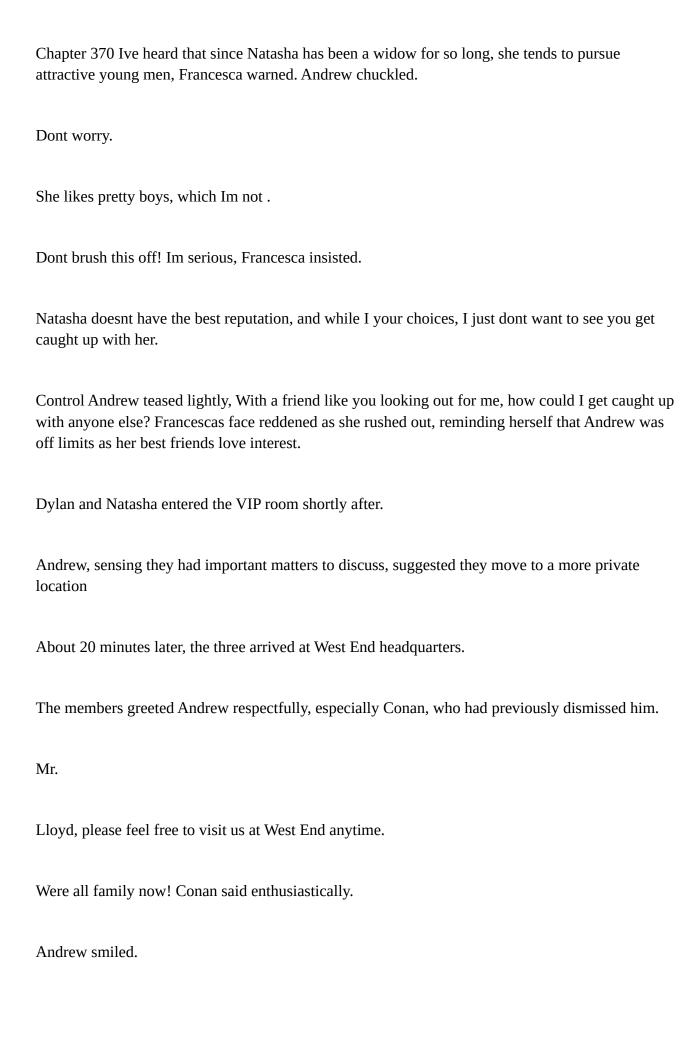
Andrew asked, So, was it Aspen who put you up to this?

Chapter 369 Donald nodded vigorously, Yes, it was Aspen.

If she hadnt slandered you, Mr.
Lloyd, I would never have made that move.
Andrew waved his hand dismissively.
Very well I believe you know how to handle the situation moving forward.
Donalds face turned sinister.
Rest assured, Mr.
Lloyd
That bitch nearly got me killed.
She wont get away with this.
Andrew remarked with a knowing smile, Yet I heard from Mr.
Thatcher that you wanted to sleep with her, That was just my hormones talking, Mr.
Lloyd! Donald quickly exclaimed.
Ive come to my senses now I just want to cut all ties with that woman and teach her a lesson. After Donalds submissive departure, Lauren smiled.
Dr.
Lloyd, Im relieved youre okay.



I already gave Fran a Royal Violet Crystal, and when I first acquired this Blood Phoenix Cicada at the auction, you were the first person I thought of Laurens beautiful face flushed red, her heart racing, Dr. Lloyd, y you really thought of me first? Andrew suddenly realized his words had sounded quite intimate and laughed awkwardly, I just thought its beauty would complement your elegance. If you dont want it, I could always give it to someone else. Lauren quickly grabbed the case, pouting. In that case, III accept! I wouldnt want you giving it to anyone else! Do you like it? Andrew asked softly. Lauren glanced up at him before quickly looking down again, I I love it! Id cherish anything you gave me, even if it were just a blank piece of paper. She hurried out with the case, fleeing from the intensity she had seen in Andrews eyes Andrew felt a twinge of regret at missing out on the lovely sight of her bashful expression. Andrew, since everyones okay, should we head back? Francesca entered, wondering what had transpired between Andrew and Lauren to make her best friends face so flushed. You, Mr. Aicker, and Ms. Santana go ahead, Andrew replied thoughtfully. I need to discuss some things with Dylan and Natasha. Alright then, Francesca said with slight disappointment. But Andrew, you should keep your distance from Natasha.



I remember you werent so welcoming before, Conan
I thought you might set the dogs on me if I came around too often.
Conan laughed heartily, Mr.
Lloyd, youre truly exceptional.
I was wrong to underestimate you before we street folks arent known for our judgment.
Natasha gave Andrew a meaningful look before turning to Conan.
Bring us some tea
We have business to discuss.
After they were settled, Dylan got straight to the point.
Mr.
Lloyd, weve found an opportunity to move against Atlas.
1 What kind of opportunity? Andrew asked calmly.
Natasha explained, After Atlass falling out with Finley, the Northern District has been in chaos.
We managed to get inside information about his movements.
Andrew nodded approvingly.
Well done

So, youve identified when hell be vulnerable? Natasha covered her mouth and laughed softly, As expected of my brilliant darling, youve figured it out.
We discovered Atlas will be spending the night alone at his villa in the suburbs, which is why we decided to make our move.
Could it be a trap? Andrew asked cautiously.
Dylan smiled.
What you dont know, Mr.
Lloyd, is that after ending things with Yvonne, Atlas couldnt stand being alone.
Hes got himself a new girlfriend
He continued, But this time, Atlas seems to have changed his taste instead of movie stars, hes now going for influencers
Hes meeting her at the villa tonight for a romantic rendezvous, Dylan added with a knowing look. Which is why were confident its not a trap
Andrew smiled wryly, He certainly knows how to enjoy himself.
After a moments contemplation, he took out a small white bottle and placed it on the table.
The instant Dylan and Natasha saw it, they could not take their eyes off it.