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The bus arrived at their stop at 7:00 p.m.

The days were shorter in the winter and it was already dark out at this time. The snow fell over the land silently and violently. They walked in the direction of Hannah's house in the snow. From a distance away, she could make out thick snow covering the entire yard and dim yellow light coursing through the window.

"Hannah!" Janet called out from where she was. She ran over to the house with a bright smile on her face, pulled open the gate of the yard and made her way inside.

She always felt happy and excited every time she came back here, because she felt like returning to her childhood place. When she was attending school, she barely knew her way around. Hannah always stood at the front of the village with a walking stick, waiting to walk her home.

Hearing the sound of Janet's voice, Hannah opened the door with a huge smile on her face and said, "Why did you come here at this very hour? Why didn't you call me ahead of time? Have you eaten anything yet?"

Right after Hannah finished saying that, she saw Tyler next to Janet.

Hannah slammed the door shut in their faces and said, "I don't want to see that bastard. Ask him to stay away!"

"Mom, I haven't seen you for so long. You're old now. It's time I went out of my way to do something for you. At least talk to me. Please let me in, Mom!" Tyler said, tears falling from his eyes. He knelt down by the door, begging his mother to let him in. He was not very tall, and now he looked even more miserable.

Janet had no idea what to say, so she stood to the side, clearly embarrassed.

Tyler prostrated three times and begged pitifully. Finally, he had no other choice but to say to the door, "Mom, it's so cold out here. Can you let me and Janet inside first?"

At the mention of Janet, Hannah's heart softened and she opened the door.

It had been nearly ten years since Hannah last seen Tyler. Hannah hated him with all her heart for being a deadbeat gambler. But she also missed him greatly. After all, he was her son and they were related by blood.

Last time, Hannah was so enraged that she turned him away. Now Tyler had arrived at her home with a ton of gifts. Hannah wiped her tears off of her face and sat next to the stove, preparing food wordlessly.

Tyler had the feeling that his mother's attitude was way better than the last time. He immediately knelt down in front of Hannah and said sorry over and over again. He slapped himself across the face and cried bitterly.

"This was all my fault. I shouldn't have hung out with a bad crowd. Mom, I've been drifting around all these past years, but I didn't dare to come back home to see you. I was afraid that you'd be disappointed in me. This is all my fault. Mom, now that I've returned, I just want to take good care of you from now on."

Tyler knelt on the floor, crying bitter tears, and his cheeks were raw and red from all the slapping.

Hannah seemed unmoved and said angrily, "How many times have you said such things before? Not once did you keep your word."

"Mom, I swear to you that I'll never let you down again. I'll never gamble again. If I do any of that, just let me drown in the river outside." Tyler's eyes were bloodshot at this point. He raised his fingers next to his head and swore solemnly. As he said this, he slammed his forehead hard against the floor.

Even Janet was startled by what Tyler was doing, let alone Hannah, who was his mother.

"Just look at you! What are you doing?" Hannah let out a long sigh, her heart filled with complicated feelings.

She was disappointed and angry with Tyler at the same time, but when she saw his blood-covered face, it was hard for her not to relent.

After all, he happened to be her only son. Hannah's heart gradually softened. Finally, she sighed and wiped away her tears. "Get up and go wash your face now. Also, do something about the wound on your head. Let bygones be bygones."

Seeing that Hannah had forgiven him, Tyler felt immensely overjoyed. He immediately got up and clutched Hannah's arm. "I'm fine, Mom. You go and rest in the living room. I'll cook something for you. I haven't done something like this for you in a very long time."

When he made his way to the kitchen door after helping Hannah sit down, he turned around to give Janet a look. "You guys can wait outside. I'll call you when I'm done cooking."

It was not until then that Janet came back to her senses. She nodded.

After cleaning up the injury on his forehead, Tyler started to cook some food.

"The food is now ready. Come on, have a taste of the pork chop. This dish is my specialty." Forehead still wrapped in bandages, Tyler proceeded to wipe his hands on his apron. After that, he turned to look at Hannah and said, "Mom, you don't need to worry about these matters at home from this point on. I'll take care of everything at home. I want you to live a peaceful life from now on."

Hannah sat down at the table. Even though she didn't smile, her eyes looked very kind. "You like to say all those beautiful things to me."

Janet could see that Hannah was really intending to forgive Tyler now.

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The trio sat down for dinner.

Tyler kept trying to fill Janet's plate. He seemed more enthusiastic than Hannah. "It must be strenuous to work for such a big company as the Larson Group. Eat more."

It was awkward, so Janet forced a smile as she ate. She said, "It's okay. It's not as bad as it seems."

"That's because you're superwoman, Janet. How many people can say they get to work for Larson Group? If I got married and had a child, my daughter might be your age." Tyler kept flattering Janet as he served her more food. "I see my mother treats you like her granddaughter, but I can't treat you like a daughter. I wouldn't dare. I'm better off treating you like I'm your uncle since we are family in a way."

Janet looked at the greasy pork chop in her plate before she looked up at Tyler's smiling eyes and said, "It's okay. Hannah is like a grandmother to me."

Hannah said with a smile, "Janet speaks better than you."

Janet smiled, but her smile disappeared when she saw the crazed look in Tyler's eyes. She had a feeling he hadn't changed, but she couldn't say anything.

When Tyler saw that Janet and Hannah had almost finished eating, he stood up, poured the rest of the food and sauce into his plate, and stirred them together before gulping the whole thing down.

"Slow down. No one will steal the food from you," Hannah scolded as she patted Tyler on the back. Her eyes were full of kindness. She was simply grateful and relieved that he came back.

Tyler finished the food and said, "I haven't had such a good meal in a while, Mom. It's so good to be at home."

Hannah smiled at Tyler. "There's no place like home. What have you been up to?"

"I'm currently between jobs, trying to decide what I should do next," Tyler said after he swallowed the food in his mouth and wiped the sauce on his lips and chin.

This worried Hannah. After thinking about it for a while, she said, "You don't have a good education background or skills, and you're not as young as you used to be, so you might not find anything except security guard work or something along that line."

Tyler sneered when he heard this. "That's embarrassing. I used to have two people working for me, so I can't stoop that low."

"Well, now that things have changed, you have to curb your bad temper. It makes you unqualified to be a security guard." Hannah sighed. Her son was ambitious but he was incapable.

When he saw that Hannah was getting riled up, he reluctantly agreed. "I'll think about it."

Janet planned to go back downtown after dinner as there was usually a night bus at that time.

When he saw that she was leaving, Tyler followed her and said, "It's not safe for you to be going to the bus station alone so late at night. Let me walk with you."

It had stopped snowing and when Janet saw how dark it was outside, she didn't refuse. As they both walked toward the bus stop, Tyler squinted and said, "I still want to run a small business. It's not

lucrative for me to work as a security guard at my age. I'm over forty, and I need to save some money to take care of my mother."

Although Janet wasn't business-savvy, she politely replied, "That's okay. It's always better to have a goal."

Tyler rubbed his hands awkwardly before he said what was on his mind, "To run such a business, I need money and my mother doesn't have much, so I can't ask her. Can you lend me fifty thousand dollars? I'll pay you back as soon as I start earning profit."

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So it turned out that Tyler came to her to borrow money. Janet frowned at the thought of it.

"I don't have much money," she replied in a low voice, avoiding eye contact with the man in front of her.

It was because Janet lied. Her salary was quite good, and she could afford to lend him fifty thousand dollars if she wanted to. But because Tyler seemed unreliable, perhaps because of his gambling habits in the past, Janet felt that she wouldn't get the money back.

It seemed like Tyler had seen through her, so he continued to persuade her, "Janet, I really want to turn over a new leaf and start afresh now. But as you probably know, I didn't finish school and I don't have skills either. It's hard for me to find a decent job. Fortunately, I have some old friends who are businessmen. They know how to make money. And they are willing to count me in. Now all I need is money. Just lend me fifty thousand dollars, please, Janet."

Tyler kept begging her, almost kneeling down on the ground.

"Don't do that. I'll think it over. When do you need the money?" Janet panicked when he was about to kneel down.

"I need the money right now." The anxiety on Tyler's face was instantly replaced with a glimmer of hope when Janet asked him when he needed the money. "My friends are all reliable. They told me that their business plan is great and without risk."

"Everything has its risk." Even an amateur like Janet was aware of this fact.

"My friends are all successful businessmen. They know what they're doing. Just please lend me the money. I will give it back to you in two weeks." Purposely ignoring what Janet said, Tyler tried harder to convince her.

In the end, she decided to lend the money to him.

It was not that she believed in Tyler. If it weren't for Hannah, Janet wouldn't lend him a single penny. But because she owed his mother for raising her, it was hard to say no to him.

"Alright. Give me your bank account details."

By ten o'clock in the evening, Janet finally arrived home. Ethan, who had been waiting for her, was finally relieved when he saw her.

"Where have you been? Why didn't you give me a call?" he asked while wiping his wet hair with a bath towel. The smell of shampoo and shower gel reached Janet's nose.

"I visited Hannah." After hesitating for a moment, she added, "By the way, I lent fifty thousand to Hannah's son."

"Hannah has a son? I didn't know about that." Ethan tilted his head and frowned.

Taking off her coat, Janet slumped down on the sofa and sighed. "He just came back recently after being away for so many years."

"Is he reliable?" Since he hadn't met Hannah's son before, Ethan was a bit curious about what kind of person he was. Anyway, Janet only lent him fifty thousand dollars, so it wasn't a big deal.

As Ethan dried his hair, he walked to the sofa and sat down beside Janet. Then he held her in his arms and kissed her. "What matters is that you're happy. Just take it as a way of repaying Hannah's kindness."

Gently playing with his moist black hair, Janet nodded. It was indeed better not to dwell on it.

She should put her mind at rest.

The days passed quickly.

Two days after she lent money to Tyler, Janet received a call from him while she was working.

Before parting ways that night, the two had exchanged phone numbers. Janet had almost forgotten about it because she thought they wouldn't talk again. She didn't expect that Tyler would call her this soon.

Was he going to return her money now? 'Well, that was fast.'

Without thinking too much, Janet answered the call.

As soon as the line connected, Tyler's worried voice came to her ear. "Janet, lend me one hundred thousand dollars. It's urgent."

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Janet wanted to hang up on Tyler right away. At first, she thought he was simply not worthy of anyone's trust, but now she realized he was a total scumbag.

"Didn't I just give you fifty thousand dollars two days ago?" she grunted.

"It's not enough. You have my bank account details. Just wire the money! I promise you, this will be the last time, Janet. Just do me a solid one last time." Tyler was clearing taking her for granted.

Janet rubbed her temples and bluntly replied, "Tyler, I don't have a hundred grand!"

Even if she did have that kind of money, she would never give it to him. Obviously, he was up to no good now that he was borrowing money from her again.

Unable to persuade her, Tyler decided to suggest a different method. "Well, can you borrow from your friends or get a loan? I'll pay you back in two weeks!"

Janet fell silent for a few seconds and became even more annoyed. 'How could he ask me to get a loan?'

Fueled by rage, she growled, "I'm not going to get a loan for you! What on earth happened anyway? Why do you need so much money?"

Not wanting to tell the truth, Tyler responded, "It's for business. You know how businesses are. Fifty grand isn't nearly enough. I need to rent an office space, hire employees, and pay tuition to learn more about running a business."

Naturally, Janet didn't believe him. Worried that she was being too loud and was disturbing everyone else at work, she decided to leave the office, and walked out of the company building. The sky was overcast. It appeared that it would rain heavily pretty soon.

Since nobody else was around, she raised her voice and said, "You're only just starting out! Just set up a God damned stall, and sell some street snacks or daily necessities. Don't dream too big when you're just starting. You don't have to make much money. I'm the one supporting Hannah anyway. Besides, you don't have to hire employees so soon. You should use your own hands to work on everything. And in the event that you fail to make money, you won't lose too much."

Tyler sighed and replied, "But that's exhausting. I have to take care of my mom, so I won't have that much time to do business all day. I really have to hire employees."

"Doing business is never easy. Don't you know that already? No job in this world is easy! If you want to make money, you'd best prepare yourself to go through hardships," Janet remarked frankly. She couldn't figure out why Tyler was unable to comprehend the way things worked in the world at his age.

He'd been trying to persuade Janet for a long time, but it didn't seem like she'd agree to loan him some money. He burst into tears and cried, "Janet, I really need your help. Please! Okay, I'm going to tell you the truth. Before I came home, I amassed some debt due to gambling. I don't have enough money to pay my creditors back. I don't have any other choice but to ask you for help. If I don't pay them back, they're gonna kill me!"

Janet was surprised that Tyler was in debt again.

"Didn't you promise us that you've changed? Why do you have debts again?" Janet gritted her teeth, infuriated by the fact that she was fooled.

Even though she was mentally prepared that Tyler might never pay her the fifty grand that he owed her, she still felt furious when she found out that he had been lying to her.

Tyler sniffled. He realized that this was the end of the rope for him. "I don't have any other choice. I need to pay them back. Janet, will you promise not to tell my mom about this? I really have decided to change, but I need to solve these problems first before I can start over. I'll pay you back everything I owe you, I promise!"

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Hearing that, Janet frowned. Her intuition was right. Tyler wasn't a good person. He had been lying to her and Hannah. Perhaps his promise of starting over was a lie too.

"I don't have one hundred grand; I swear. Why don't you borrow money from others? I won't tell Hannah about it. She is too old to withstand such a blow." With that, Janet decided to hang up the phone.

"I don't have any friends. They all run away from me as if I were a plague. How would they lend me money? I have no one to turn to. You are my last hope, Janet," Tyler cried in despair. "Janet, please lend me one hundred grand. At least for my mom's sake! If you don't help me, I'm afraid those guys will go to my mom!"

Janet's heart leaped to her throat.

If that were the case, she had no choice but to help him out. Janet knew that if she didn't help him, Tyler would turn to Hannah, which would only make matters worse. After all, Hannah was old, and Janet didn't want her to worry about more problems.

"Tyler, you must have investigated what I'm doing now before coming to me. That fifty grand I gave you was the best I could do. Anyway, which casino do you owe money to? I'll find a way to deal with it."

Tyler cried with joy. He knew Janet would help him. "Gainrich Casino. You have to help me fast, or in a few days, the compound interest would pile up, and I'd have to pay more than one hundred and fifty grand."

"What? The casino is located in the northern part of the country. How did you get there?" Janet's frown deepened as she checked the information about the Gainrich Casino on her phone.

The Casino was located in a city far away from Seacisco.

At first, Janet inquired about the casino because she knew Ethan had a lot of connections and believed he could help. However, the casino was miles and miles away from Seacisco, so she didn't think Ethan would have friends there.

"No matter what, you should pay them back as soon as possible!" Tyler said anxiously as if he hadn't heard what Janet said.

Janet didn't know what to say. Tyler was taking her for granted. She didn't owe anyone money and agreed to help him only for Hannah's sake.

"Gainrich Casino is too far away from Seacisco, Tyler. I will try my best to help you but don't build hopes. Keep asking people for money. In the meantime, I'll think of a way," Janet advised. It was crucial to solve the problem now, so she wanted him also to try his best.

"Okay," said Tyler. "But I have no one now. You are my only hope."

Before Janet could speak, he hung up the phone.

Janet told everything to Ethan as soon as she returned home.

She wanted to see if Ethan knew anyone who could help Tyler.

Ethan sat cross-legged, flipping through the pages of the book in his hand. Hearing Janet's words, he looked up and asked, "Gainrich Casino is hundreds of miles away from here. Why did he go there?"

"Maybe he was afraid that Hannah would find out if he gambled in Seacisco," Janet replied with a weary sigh.

The problem would have been easier to solve if the casino were in Seacisco.

"Of course, I will help you." Ethan shrugged. "I need to make a few calls first."

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Right now, there was nothing else Janet could do but wait for Ethan to come up with something.

As the days went by, the snow in Seacisco became stronger.

At sunset, Ethan returned from his long journey. Snow had piled up on his black wool coat.

"Are you okay? It's too cold outside. Have dinner first so you could warm up. Let's go to the shopping mall once I get my salary so we can buy some clothes for you." Ethan always wore this black coat. Janet understood that he didn't need a lot of winter clothes, but she didn't want him to live so poorly.

After patting off the snow from his coat, Ethan hung it on the coat rack. The grey sweater he wore under the coat was revealed. It wasn't from a luxury brand; in fact, Janet only bought it on sale. But because Ethan was in good shape, the sweater looked expensive when he wore it.

"The clothes in the shopping mall are very expensive. Didn't you just lend someone fifty thousand dollars? Let's postpone that for now." Standing in the doorway, Ethan stared at Janet. The dim light accentuated his handsome face.

Guilt was evident on Janet's face. She was silent for a while before finally saying, "I know I shouldn't have indulged Tyler, but I have to help him for Hannah's sake..."

Her soft voice gradually trailed.

Noticing that Janet was feeling down, Ethan walked over and stared at her with eyes brimming with affection. Then he raised her chin and kissed her passionately.

He sucked on her bottom lip, biting into it. Just as Ethan was about to lose control, he let go of her lips and said in a gentle tone, "I'm not blaming you. Don't worry. I have asked my friend for help. He has talked to someone who works at the casino. They have agreed for Tyler to pay them back in installments."

Surprised by the news, Janet raised her head and asked, "You really know a lot of people, don't you? Did it cost you a lot to ask your friend for help?"

Ethan gently pinched her chin and answered, "It's not a big deal. He happened to owe me a lot of favors. Just tell Tyler to get a job. He has to have an income to afford to pay his debt every month. In that way, he could also support himself and start anew."

"I'll tell Tyler the good news later. Finally, there'll be a solution to his problem." Now, Janet's face looked livelier. She snaked her arms around Ethan's waist and praised him with a smile, "You're so smart."

What she did made Ethan chuckle, but he arched his eyebrows. "Is that all I'd get?"

The smile on Janet's lips grew wider as she understood what he meant. She stood on tiptoe and kissed Ethan on the cheek.

It wasn't enough for the latter, so he held the back of her neck and pressed his lips on hers. With one hand on her waist, he lifted Janet up and pressed her against the sofa.

They sucked in their breaths as Ethan pressed himself against Janet, letting his hand wander on her body under her clothes.

It couldn't be denied that Janet was greatly affected by his touch. She felt wet between her legs, wanting him. Her flushed face also gave her away. However, she closed her legs and said, "Not now. I have to call Tyler to tell him the news first."

Hearing this, Ethan's face darkened. "Are you kidding?"

"You're the best!" Janet giggled like a spoiled child and gave him a peck on the lips.

While Ethan was in a daze, she took the opportunity to flee. She shouted as she ran away, "I will thank you next time!"

In the end, Ethan could only heave a sigh. He watched Janet run away and shook his head in amusement.

As soon as Janet entered the bedroom, she took out her phone and called Tyler.

The latter's excited voice rang in her ear. "Have you paid them already?"

"No. But I have tried my best to help you. They have agreed to let you pay your debts in installments with low interest. You just need to pay them a part of the debts every month. There's no need for you to hurry. Just find a job and slowly pay them back. Those men won't bother you again." A bright smile was plastered on Janet's face as she spoke, thinking that Hannah wouldn't have to worry about Tyler anymore.

There was a brief silence before Tyler spoke again. This time, he didn't sound excited anymore. "Oh, I see."

Judging from his tone, Janet could tell that he wasn't happy with the news. Instead, he sounded disappointed and dissatisfied.

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When Tyler received the call from Janet, he was happy, thinking she had repaid all his debts.

In his early years, Tyler was lured into a casino and became a gambling addict when he worked with the hooligans in the village several years ago. Later, he moved to another place to gamble, and his debts piled up over the years. The debt collectors were after him like predators waiting to catch their prey.

Just as Tyler wondered what to do, he heard some people from his village tell him that his mother, whom he had abandoned years ago, had a promising granddaughter. They told him that she was

working in the famous Larson Group and was the mistress of the company's CEO. His mother seemed to live a comfortable life because of her.

Tyler grew jealous; he felt life was unfair. How could his mother live a good life when he was suffering? No wonder his mother hadn't bothered to look for him. It turned out that she lived a spectacular life and didn't need him anymore.

The more Tyler thought about it, the angrier he became. He had been hiding to escape from the debts, sleeping under the bridge along with beggars. His life was no better than that of a stray dog.

Therefore, he decided to go back to his mother. Hannah was softhearted. If he fell on his feet and pretended to turn over a new leaf, she would forgive him in a heartbeat.

Moreover, Janet was wealthy now. She was the CEO's mistress and certainly wouldn't be short of money. His debt was just a drop in the bucket for Janet.

As expected, Janet had agreed to lend him fifty thousand dollars without much hesitation.

Fifty thousand dollars was just the tip of the iceberg among his gambling debts. He only wanted to use it to test the water and see what Janet would do.

Fifty thousand dollars was far from enough to pay off his gambling debts that had accumulated over the years.

However, as Tyler continued to borrow money, to his surprise, Janet refused to lend him money and said she would find a way to help him.

In fact, Tyler was surprised to find Janet could help him in the first place. The casino consisted of all kinds of people, and only a few would have a say on things. He couldn't fathom how Janet could be so capable.

Later, after a lot of thinking, Tyler concluded that she would probably ask the CEO of the Larson Group for help. That was how she would manage to rescue him from such a serious problem.

The Larson Group was one of the most reputed companies in the entire country. Tyler felt it would be better if Janet could somehow make the casino write off his gambling debts.

Keeping all this in mind, Tyler decided to let Janet step in.

However, to his utter dismay, Janet had called and informed him that he had to repay the debts in installments. Tyler's heart sank with dejection.

He had been idling around all his life. He was too lazy to work hard to pay off the debt with his meager salary.

"This gambling debt is too much," Tyler sighed. "It will take me several years to pay it off in small installments. Since you have the ability to persuade the casino people to allow me to pay off the debt in installments, why don't you ask them to write off the entire debt?"

Tyler's recklessness disgusted Janet. "That's impossible!" she snapped coldly. "A casino never allows anyone to pay in installments. I tried everything I could to pull a few strings to help you and they finally

agreed to make an exception. How could you expect them to write off the debts completely?”

Janet wanted to hang up the phone right away. Sensing Tyler was a notorious man, she warned, “Look, Tyler, I have done the best I can to help you. This is it. Don’t come to me for money again. Find a serious job and repay all the debts without bothering Hannah.”

With that, she hung up the phone.

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Upon hearing the busy tone, Tyler muttered “bitch” under his breath. He was referring to Janet.

‘Just because she’s sleeping with some CEO, she now thinks that she can tell me what to do and what not? Fuck that!’ he thought.

As he held his phone, he put on his coat and slammed the door.

‘How am I supposed to pay such a big gambling debt on my own? I’ll never be able to pay that money back!’

Tyler kept mumbling swear words under his breath all the way to a bar.

He didn’t have enough money to go to regular bars, so the bar he went to was an illegal one. People like him who lived in the bottom of society knew some illegal bars. These types of bars usually sold cheap alcohol, and they employed teenaged girls to sell beers table-to-table.

The bar wasn’t well-ventilated, and smoking wasn’t prohibited. Upon entering the bar, all kinds of smells wafted into his nose and there were people from all walks of life.

He spat on the ground, walked to a seat with a cigarette in his mouth, and asked a barmaid for two dozen beers.

The barmaid didn’t want to talk to him when she saw that he looked like a bum. She just put the beers on the table and went to talk to the other guests.

Tyler gulped down the first bottle of beer, thinking of the embarrassment he faced when he tried to persuade Janet to give him more money.

‘How could she ask me to find a job to pay off my debts?’ he complained inwardly.

The taverns at night were brighter and livelier than the streets outside.

While Tyler was drinking, he heard someone whisper to another man, “I heard that the cripple in the neighboring village got a wife. Did you help him? How much did you sell her for?”

“How much do you think a guy from a poor village can afford? A few thousand dollars. But there are a lot of men in Barnes, hoping to buy young, beautiful women. They offer really high prices, mind you,” the man replied, raising his fingers.

“One hundred thousand dollars?”

“Nope. One million!”

Tyler was almost drooling when he heard the price. He rolled his eyes, tempted at the thought that Janet met the standards that those were talking about.

He approached the men with a smile. "I know a beautiful girl. I can give her for you for half the earnings. What do you think, boys?"

Not only could he pay off his gambling debts through these possible earnings, but he could also make a fortune. He could even continue gambling using the rest of the money!

One of the human traffickers had a freckled face, and the other had thick eyebrows and big eyes. They both eyed Tyler up and down.

The freckled-face man spoke first. "Which neighborhood do you live in? And why have I not seen you before?" he asked vigilantly.

Tyler pondered for a moment and said, "I'm just another guy who's down on his luck. I used to hang out with people from the Gainrich Casino. Everybody there calls me Tiger."

The freckled-face man knew Gainrich Casino. He was also aware that all sorts of rogues owed money to the casino there. He and his companion exchanged glances before looking back at Tyler. "Do you have any photos of the girl? We need to see what she looks like first. Call it a pre-check."

Tyler gulped down another bottle of beer and wiped his lips. "Alright. She works for the Larson Group. I'll show you tomorrow."

The next morning, he took them to the road that Janet always took to go to work.

The human traffickers' eyes widened when they saw her. She was indeed gorgeous, and she was maddeningly sexy. They could easily sell her for a hefty sum.

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Janet was indeed beautiful.

The human traffickers had never sold someone so beautiful. Janet was a white-collar worker in the city. Clearly, she had some social experience, so she wasn't as gullible as those female college students they usually dealt with.

"I don't think we can do anything to her. Besides, we don't know who she is. It'll be suspicious if we just walk up to her to strike up a conversation." The human traffickers were caught in a dilemma.

Seeing that they were about to give up, Tyler replied, "Take it easy. She's my niece. She's not wary of me. If I'm around, it'll be easier to deceive her."

Thanks to his assurance, the human traffickers became hopeful. They exchanged glances with each other, and then one of them said, "In that case, we should do this as soon as possible. When do you think we can take action?"

Tyler walked on ahead of them, wearing a wicked smile. He had already formulated a plan. "Let's talk about the money first, shall we? Since she's my niece, I want seventy percent of the profits you sell her for."

“Considering how you’re more than willing to sell her off, I don’t think you’re that close to your niece. You don’t even flinch when you say such horrible remarks. It will take us a lot of effort and time to sell her to a willing buyer. Why should we give you that much money?” the freckled man countered with a grin.

‘This man is fucking horrible! He’s even willing to sell out his relatives just to make money. That girl is so unlucky to have an uncle like him,’ the freckled man thought.

Once they were done negotiating, they decided to give Tyler sixty percent of the earnings they’d get for selling Janet. Afterwards, they discussed the plan of action, and worked on their part of the plan separately.

On Saturday morning, Tyler called Janet.

“I’m sorry about the other day, Janet. I shouldn’t have put you in that position. Now that I’ve had time to ponder on your words, I realize that it makes a lot of sense. People shouldn’t rely on anyone but themselves.”

Glad that he figured it out himself, Janet replied, “It’s nice to hear you say that. Find a stable job, so that you can pay off your debts one day. As long as you avoid gambling and correct your bad habits, all will be fine.”

As Tyler held the phone, he nodded repeatedly and continued, “A few days ago, I scored an interview to become a hotel security guard, but I’ve never taken part in an interview before. You work at a big company, right? Do you mind accompanying me to the interview? It’ll give me a sense of security and boost my confidence.”

“Sure. No problem. I’m free this weekend, anyway.” Janet was always willing to help anyone in need as long as it was something she could help with. Aside from that, she also wanted to see what kind of job Tyler had found. If Hannah were to ask her about it, she could tell her about his job.

That very weekend, she followed the address that Tyler sent her and went to a run-down area in the city. It was close to the suburbs, and it wasn’t completely developed yet. Some of the houses had dilapidated tile roofs, and the alleys were narrow and worn down.

At the end of the alley, Janet saw Tyler smoking. She clutched her bag and asked, “Tyler, can you check the address again? Did we go to the wrong place? I don’t see any hotels around here.”

Tyler threw the cigarette butt on the ground and crushed it underfoot. He glanced at Janet before walking to a more remote place. “It’s right ahead of us. Come and have a look.”

After a moment of hesitation, she decided to follow him. The further they walked, the more she began to suspect that there was no hotel in this remote area. And even if there were, she wondered why they would need to recruit security guards and have such formal interviews.

Soon, they walked out of the alley. On both sides of the alley were dilapidated residential buildings. A crow flew over Janet’s head and perched on a branch.

While staring at the crow, Tyler cursed, “What a fucking bitch.”

Janet was taken aback, wary of any danger and shuddering all over. She wanted to say something, but a black van came barreling towards her.

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Sensing the danger, Janet turned around and attempted to run away.

But then, the door of the minivan behind her was opened. The people inside quickly grabbed ahold of her. At the same time, Tyler pushed her into the minivan. Then, he got into vehicle as well. The door of the minivan closed, and it soon drove away.

The human traffickers were already skilled at this kind of method, so they managed to perform the whole kidnapping within just a few seconds. Janet didn't even have the chance to react when they threw her into the minivan.

Tyler and the freckled human trafficker sat on both sides of Janet. They sealed her mouth with duct tape, and tied her wrists together using a hemp rope.

She didn't even have a chance to resist. She kept shaking her head and kicking her legs, glaring at Tyler.

"Bitch, don't you dare glare at me!" Tyler raised his hand, intending to slap Janet. However, the freckled man stopped him.

"Hey! Don't damage her pretty face. It's going to lower her value, man. Control yourself!"

Thus, Tyler dropped his hand and just glared at Janet. He then averted his gaze from her and asked the freckled man, "Are you going to hand her over to a buyer now?"

Meanwhile, the freckled man was texting someone using his smartphone. "That's right. We're going straight to the expressway to deliver the goods. We'll arrive at Southernton tomorrow morning."

"When are you going to pay me my share?" Tyler couldn't wait to get paid.

"The money will be given when we've delivered the goods. Take it easy, bub. You're gonna get paid." The freckled man locked his eyes on his phone and didn't bother to glance at Tyler the whole time.

Based on their conversation, Janet figured out what was going on. She understood that she had fallen into the hands of human traffickers.

She never expected that Tyler would be in cahoots with human traffickers and was planning to sell her for money.

At this moment, desperation and fear overwhelmed Janet. Tyler had lost his humanity and had become a villain.

The three men in the minivan were thinking of how to have fun after earning from the sale.

Just then, the minivan seemed to have run over something. A harsh sound was heard from outside, and one of the vehicle's tires had deflated. The minivan began to swerve along the road until it gradually stopped.

The human traffickers were quick to react.

“What happened?”

“We have a flat tire!”

The freckled man glanced at his companion, the driver, and figured that something bad had happened.

By now, the minivan was unable to move. Janet was inside their vehicle. Considering the fact that they were on a highway, and there were cars and people constantly passing by on both sides, they could get caught for kidnapping and human trafficking if anyone were to pay attention to them.

“What the hell are you waiting for? Do you want to go to prison? Run, you fools!” The freckled man opened the door and jumped out of the minivan decisively. The driver also ran out from the driver’s seat and brushed past the bushes on the side of the highway.

Giving up on this deal was much better than going to prison.

A few seconds later, only Tyler and Janet remained in the car.

“Hey! Why are you guys running away?” Tyler shouted out of the window angrily. “Damn it! She’s still here! Don’t you want her anymore?”

Unfortunately for him, nobody replied. It turned out that the human traffickers had already fled.

Frightened by what happened, Tyler pondered for a few seconds until he decided to open the door and leave as well. Considering the fact that the human traffickers had already escaped, and he had no idea what the buyer’s phone number was, he realized that he wouldn’t be able to do anything even though Janet was in his hands.

With that in mind, he figured it was best to escape. But the second he got out of the minivan, he noticed a tall, strong man nearby. Just as he looked up, he was knocked out. He didn’t even get the chance to see the man’s face clearly.

Janet’s hands were tied and her mouth was sealed with a duct tape. Her only way to attract passersby’s attention and let them know she was in the vehicle was to kick the door as hard as she could.

After kicking the door twice, it was opened from outside.