

Too Far 251

Chapter 251

Francis stared at his daughter in bewilderment. "What?!"

"Remember the last time you asked me to accompany you to win the bid? With so many companies competing, did you think your company was qualified to win such a big project? Elliot was there at the time, and he was the one who told the organizers to let you win." As she watched the dumbfounded look on her father's face, Anastasia could only say that her father's shock was inevitable.

"Really? Has President Presgrave been helping me out secretly? No wonder business has been smooth-sailing recently, making it seem like all the luck finally bestowed upon me. He's the one who has been quietly supporting me from behind!" Francis' eyes were filled with gratitude right now. "Turns out the Presgrave Family have long been compensating us!" he added.

"They didn't just compensate your company; Old Madam Presgrave even approached me to offer compensation, but I refused their kindness. I don't think they should repay us, but when I found out what they've been doing all along, Elliot was already helping you out big time." Anastasia sounded helpless.

Francis let out a loud sigh, and his feelings were mixed.

Naomi, who was hiding outside the door and eavesdropping at the moment, was shocked to hear that Elliot valued the Tillman Family so much; he even supported her husband's business. Therefore, she concluded that once Anastasia gave in and accepted their compensation, she would become successful sooner or later.

How could all the good things go to Anastasia only? Since there was nothing else to eavesdrop on anymore, Naomi knocked on the door and pretended to rush in, exclaiming, "Oops! I only remembered that I left my bag here when I reached the car park!"

After saying that, she walked over to the cabinet beside the chair, grabbed her bag, and inquired in a concerned tone, "Francis, is it really okay for me to leave you here?"

"I'll be fine. You should go home!" Francis insisted.

"Rest well, alright? Call me if anything happens." After saying that, she turned to Anastasia and reminded the woman, "Take good care of your dad, okay? He has worked so hard for this family."

However, Anastasia didn't like to hear words like that coming out of Naomi's mouth, so she didn't respond. Meanwhile, Naomi sighed and lamented, "I know that I might be too straightforward and blunt at times, but I do hope that we can get along well as a family."

Since they were in front of Francis, Anastasia couldn't refute her, but she never regarded them as one family in her heart.

"I'll be leaving now." With that, Naomi left with her bag. Francis then turned to Anastasia and asked, "Do you still blame Naomi for everything?"

"I just don't understand why you would betray Mom back then. Isn't she good enough for you?" Anastasia couldn't help but question her father.

Francis seldom mentioned this matter to her, but at that moment, he looked regretful. "It's all my fault, but I never betrayed your mother on purpose. I made a mistake when I went out drinking and socializing. Naomi had just graduated from university and was working in the purchasing department back then, so we had Erica by accident."

Hearing that, Naomi furrowed her brows. "You were dead drunk, but what about Naomi? I don't think she was drunk!"

"I was forced by my clients to drink until I almost died on the table, and when I woke up, Naomi was already right beside me. I had been waiting to come clean to your mother about it, but in less than a month, your mother..."

Anastasia didn't need her father to explain all the details. After all, she understood it well as an adult. Her father was already running the construction company then; although it was of a small scale, he earned millions per month. Naturally, Naomi must have plotted a plan to seduce her father.

Even if her mother was still alive, Naomi would still try to ruin their family. Therefore, after Anastasia's mother passed away, Naomi gave birth to Erica and got married to her father immediately.

"It was because of my carelessness that caused what happened five years ago. I owe you, so I want to compensate you with this company." Francis had already written a will to distribute his assets, and Anastasia would get the biggest share.

"I don't want your company, Dad. I just want you to be healthy," Anastasia uttered with sincerity.

Just then, there was a knock at the door. A man who looked to be in his fifties entered the ward, and he was accompanied by an assistant carrying a fruit basket.

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"Francis, I heard you were so upset that you ended up in the hospital, so I've come to visit!" The man entered the ward with a fake smile on his face.

When Francis saw him, his face instantly turned scarlet as he bellowed, "What a despicable man you are, Lawrence Clavell! You think I'm an easy target, right? Leave this place at once!"

Anastasia instantly became alert. As she looked at the well-dressed middle-aged man in front of her, she could tell that this man was up to no good. When she saw how her father reacted to his visit, she assumed that he was the acquirer of her father's company.

"Tsk, Francis, why are you still struggling at this point? Leave the company to us, and you can retire in peace!" The man looked kind, but he was mocking her father in actuality.

"Get out. I'm not going to negotiate with people like you. You can't take my company away from me." Francis' chest was heaving, obviously angered by Lawrence's words.

"I don't care who you are, but please leave my father's ward."

"Whoa, there! This must be your daughter! What a beauty!" Lawrence looked at Anastasia with a hint of lewdness in his eyes. One could tell with a glance that he looked like those perverted old men on the streets.

Under his scrutinizing gaze, Anastasia felt goosebumps forming on her skin while she dismissed him coldly by saying, "Please leave."

"What's the rush, beautiful? I'm just here to have a little chat with your father before I go."

Lawrence then looked at Francis and gloated, "Look how the tables have turned! The company will finally be in my hands. Read the room, Francis. You should be enjoying life after working so hard all these years. Just give up on your company already! It'll be beneficial for the both of us, after all."

Once again, Francis was so furious that his chest started heaving. When she saw that her father was enraged, Anastasia recalled the doctor mentioning not to get him too emotional, or else it would trigger a full-blown heart attack. In the end, she couldn't hold back her anger and picked up the fruit knife on the table. "I told you to leave! Do you hear me?!" she threatened.

Lawrence was instantly frightened upon seeing this, so his assistant quickly held on to him.

"Whoa! You have a feisty daughter right here! It's not a bad thing to have such an overbearing stance at a young age. I like you," Lawrence remarked while tossing Anastasia a smug look.

Anastasia felt disgusted by him, but she didn't know how to handle this kind of person.

"Get out." Anastasia took another step forward. Before Lawrence left, he didn't forget to provoke her father by saying, "Francis, I've said whatever I want to say. Don't push me into a tight spot!"

After saying that, he glanced at Anastasia and continued, "I heard that you have two daughters. If both are equally beautiful, I'm sure many people will be interested in them, heh."

Anastasia went over to shut the door, but Francis was still trembling from anger as he shouted, "Even if I die, I will never leave my company to a b*stard like him!"

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Aftar saying that, ha glancad at Anastasia and continuad, "I haard that you hava two daughtars. If both ara aqually baautiful, I'm sura many paopla will ba intarastad in tham, hah."

Anastasia wanted to shut the door, but Francis was still trampling from anger as he shouted, "Even if I die, I will never leave my company to a bastard like him!"

"Calm down, Dad. You have to take care of your heart!" Anastasia quickly went over to calm her father down.

"Do you think I can hand him the company? I'd rather beg Elliot to help us than let this bastard acquire my company! Anastasia, can you promise me that you'll ask President Presgrave for help, please? We need him to save us no matter what this time." Francis was so anxious that he held both Anastasia's hands, wanting her to promise him.

Anastasia was stunned for a few seconds, unable to give her father a reply.

However, Francis looked at her with a desperate gaze and begged, "I'm aware that you know President Presgrave personally. Can you please promise me that you'll ask for his help?"

Anastasia felt bitter. How could she tell her father about her difficulties?

She knew that Elliot would help her if she asked. After all, he once promised her that he would help her father. However, she had already drawn a line between the both of them the night before yesterday.

If she were to ask for his assistance now, it wasn't about her feelings of embarrassment, but rather her pride and dignity.

"If you can't promise me this, I'll make the call myself. I know you might feel embarrassed to ask because you're still young, but to me, my pride doesn't matter anymore." After letting go of her hands, Francis realized he couldn't put his hopes on his daughter anymore. At the end of the day, she was still a young woman.

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Anastasia was conflicted. Seeing her father like this, she felt distressed and wanted to help him shoulder the burden.

How could she bear to let her old father beg a young man like Elliot?

Even if they were to ask for help, she should be the one doing it. Even if she lost her pride, it was better than letting her father lose his.

However, Anastasia was distressed. On one hand, she was adamant about rejecting Elliot's compensation, but on the other hand, she was forced to ask for his help. Therefore, she was in a dilemma.

Especially after seeing the nasty look on her father's rival, it seemed like her father wouldn't be able to swallow his last breath if Lawrence acquired the company.

"I promise you that I'll seek help from President Presgrave, so calm down, okay?" Anastasia could only reassure her father so that he would calm down and let his heart rest.

"Really? That's great! In that case, I don't have to be worried." Francis nodded his head, feeling much more at ease.

As long as they had Elliot to back them up, Francis' company would certainly be saved.

After a while, Anastasia checked her phone and was shocked by how much time had passed. "Dad, I have to pick Jared up now. It's late."

"What? Hurry up and go now! I'll ask Alex to come over instead," Francis urged.

With that, Anastasia left the ward and took a taxi to Francis' office to pick up her car. She also called the teachers at school to look after Jared while she rushed over.

While Anastasia drove in the direction of the school, she felt as if there was a heavy stone on her heart. How was she going to ask Elliot about it?

To her, that was the biggest problem on earth right now.

In the evening, Elliot was standing in front of the floor-to-ceiling window in the president's office while holding a cup of coffee in his hands. As he elegantly sipped on his coffee, he stared into the distance with darkened eyes, looking like a beast that was waiting for its prey.

Why wasn't Anastasia calling him for help yet?

The acquisition process of her father's company had already started. Did Francis not mention anything about it to her?

Elliot knew that Anastasia would come and ask for his help sooner or later, so when she made such requests the night before yesterday, he agreed without hesitation.

Everything was under his control for now, Anastasia's every move included.

If there were no hiccups, she would most likely take the initiative to ask for his help. When the day came, he would do her a favor and return to her side.

Meanwhile, Anastasia finally arrived at the kindergarten to pick her son up. He was the last one to leave the school, and when she saw him sitting pitifully in the playground with the building blocks, she felt bad for him. She called out to him tenderly, "Jared, let's go home!"

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"Mommy, can't you ask Mr. Presgrave to come and pick me up if you're not free?" Jared inquired while holding her hand.

Anastasia reassured him, "We shouldn't trouble others for our own matters. I'll pick you up on time from now on, alright?"

Jared nodded at that. Although he was young, he knew how to feel sorry for his mother.

When they reached home, Anastasia made a simple meal for Jared. She watched him eat his spaghetti with gusto, but she didn't have any appetite. Her mind was currently full of thoughts about her father's request to seek help from Elliot. How was she going to start the conversation?

She wasn't able to!

However, she couldn't delay the request any longer. The acquirer was aggressive, and now that her father had a heart attack, the doctor advised him to relax and be stress-free.

While Anastasia was in a daze, Jared looked at her and asked, "What are you thinking about, Mommy? Are you thinking about Mr. Presgrave?"

Anastasia was taken aback by her son's sudden question. Since he was staring at her with his big eyes, she felt her cheeks getting warm as she lied, "No. I was thinking about work and your Grandpa. He's fallen sick and is currently at the hospital now."

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"What happened to Grandpa?"

"It's nothing serious. He's just stressed out."

"In that case, please tell Grandpa to take care. I want to see him tomorrow."

"Sure. I'll bring you over to see him tomorrow." Anastasia decided it would be a good idea for Jared to cheer her father up.

"Mommy, I think Mr. Presgrave is a good man. You should consider being his girlfriend," suggested Jared as he blinked his eyes. He looked and sounded exactly like a worried old man to Anastasia.

Meanwhile, the woman was amused to see her son acting like a grown-up, so she chuckled and ruffled his head. "I don't want a boyfriend for now. All I need is you."

"What if someone else snatches Mr. Presgrave away, though?" Jared asked anxiously.

"If he truly likes me, no one else will be able to have him. Likewise, if someone else can snatch him away, that means he doesn't like me," answered Anastasia meaningfully.

Upon hearing that, Jared seemed rather confused. He couldn't understand his mother's deep meaning behind those words, so he mumbled, "What if Mr. Presgrave really likes you and not anyone else? If you don't marry him, won't he have to wait for a long, long time? Won't he feel lonely?"

Anastasia was rendered speechless.

A child's words could sometimes hit hard, and that made Anastasia silently wonder whether Elliot really liked her.

Was he truly interested in her, or was he just doing this to repay her? There was no way for her to find out, and it felt like everything he did was out of gratitude.

"Jared, the adult world is complicated. You'll learn as you grow. Hurry up and finish your spaghetti!"

"Okay," answered Jared. He then wondered to himself, Mr. Presgrave likes me, and I like him too. Why can't Mommy understand that, though?

After Jared went to his room to play, Anastasia cleared the table and sat on the sofa, feeling conflicted. The phone was right next to her, but she didn't dare to call Elliot.

Her phone rang at that moment, and it gave her a shock. When she saw that it was her father who was calling her, she quickly answered the phone and said, "Hi, Dad."

"Anastasia, have you called Young Master Elliot? What did he say?"

"Uh... I-I haven't called him," Anastasia stammered.

"Ah! I know it must be embarrassing for you to talk to him. Let me do it instead!" Francis no longer wanted to make it difficult for his daughter.

"No, Dad. I'll ask him. You just have to sit back and rest. I know him better than you, after all." Anastasia didn't want her old father to beg him, and she thought it was more appropriate if she did it.

"My company depends on you now. Give me a call after you ask him, okay? I want to know his opinion too."

At first, Anastasia wanted to stall for some time, but now that her father had asked her to call Elliot immediately, she could only obey her father's instructions. "Okay, I'll let you know after I speak to him."

"Jarad, tha adult world is complicatad. You'll laarn as you grow. Hurry up and finish your spaghatti!"

"Okay," answarad Jarad. Ha than wondarad to himself, Mr. Prasgrava likas ma, and I lika him too. Why can't Mommy undarstand that, though?

Aftar Jarad want to his room to play, Anastasia claarad tha tabla and sat on tha sofa, faaling conflicted. Tha phona was right naxt to har, but sha didn't dara to call Elliot.

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Anastasia felt tensed as soon as she hung up the call. Her whole body went numb, and she still couldn't figure out how to bring it up to Elliot.

Now, begging him was even more difficult than accepting death.

After she grabbed her phone, she went into her room and shut the door. She sat beside her bed and took several deep breaths while looking down at her device. Finally, she found the courage to dial Elliot's number.

When the call went through, Anastasia's mind was still blank. Suddenly, a deep yet gentle voice sounded over the phone. “Hello.”

Elliot knew that it was her, so he deliberately sounded gentler than he usually would at the office.

Anastasia's mind was in a mess as she greeted, “Good evening, President Presgrave... Did I wake you from your sleep?”

“It's not even 9.00PM yet, and I haven't gone to bed yet.”

Anastasia couldn't help but roll her eyes, wanting to slap herself. She couldn't bring herself to talk to him about the issue.

“Well... I... I've called to ask you for a favor,” said Anastasia as she stuttered.

“Is it about the acquisition of your father's company?”

“Yes, it is. You were right; someone is targeting his company, and the acquirer came to my dad's office to have a discussion today. However, my dad's blood pressure went up and triggered an acute heart attack, so I...” Anastasia pursed her lips.

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Anastasia was interrupted by Elliot's self-blame. “It's all my fault. I should've prevented this from happening, and then your father wouldn't have suffered.”

“How is it your fault, Elliot? I just want to ask if it’s okay for you to help my father this time. If you can help my father settle the acquisition, I will do whatever you want to repay you,” blurted Anastasia.

After all, one should be humble and put themselves at the lowest when asking for a favor.

Elliot, on the other end, was silent for a few seconds, and when he spoke again, his voice was hoarse.

“Are you willing to do anything?”

Somehow, Anastasia felt a current running through her body as her face heated up. Elliot didn’t even say anything flirty, but she could feel her body going limp a little after hearing his words.

“Yes. I will do anything in my ability to repay you.” Anastasia shut her eyes and went all out this time. Anyway, she had no more pride in front of him anymore.

“Okay. I will settle your father’s company acquisition. Tell him not to worry about it.” Elliot’s voice sounded low yet powerful, reassuring even.

It was as if everything he uttered would give anyone peace of mind.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Anastasia thanked him, saying, “Thank you, President Presgrave.”

“Call me Elliot.”

His order sounded irrefutable, leaving Anastasia with no choice but to obey his demand.

“Thank you, Elliot,” Anastasia repeated, face burning hot.

Elliot chuckled at that, asking, “Does this mean we’ve made up?”

Anastasia fell silent for a moment when she recalled how she came to a resolute decision to draw lines with him last time. It was a painful slap to her face now.

“Okay, I’ll stop teasing you. Bye!” Elliot didn’t want to embarrass her anymore, so he hung up the phone.

Putting down the phone, Anastasia lay down on her bed weakly and pulled the covers over her face.

Ugh...

However, she quickly regained her senses and called her father. After passing Elliot’s message to her father, Francis sounded surprised. “That’s great news, Anastasia! My company has hope now! I feel reassured now that Young Master Elliot is willing to help us.”

Anastasia understood how her father felt. The company was like his third child—one he would never give up on.

After hanging up the phone, Anastasia felt relieved because her father was fine now, so she didn’t have to worry.

In Tillman Residence, Erica noticed that her mother was sitting on the sofa thoughtfully after dinner. When she came downstairs, her mother was still there, so she sat beside her and inquired, “Mom, are you worried about Dad’s company?”

Besides her husband's company, Naomi was also distressed because of her husband's conversation with Anastasia earlier. He said he would pass down the company to Anastasia and then to Jared but never mentioned a word about Naomi and Erica.

"Thank you, Elliot," Anastasia rapaatad, faca burning hot.

Elliot chucklad at that, asking, "Doas this maan wa'va mada up?"

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In Tillman Rasidanca, Erica noticad that har mothar was sitting on tha sofa thoughtfully aftar dinnar. Whan sha cama downstairs, har mothar was still thara, so sha sat basida har and inquirad, "Mom, ara you worriad about Dad's company?"

Basidas har husband's company, Naomi was also distrassad bacausa of har husband's conversation with Anastasia aarliar. Ha said ha would pass down tha company to Anastasia and than to Jarad but navar mantionad a word about Naomi and Erica.

It seemed that he wasn't going to let them both have the company anymore.

"Erica, I'm sure you can tell who your father's favorite child. You should work harder."

"What do you mean I don't work hard? Dad is always biased toward Anastasia, and she is also a cunning woman." Erica couldn't admit that she was useless.

Naomi was aware of her own daughter's ability, but she was too tired to criticize her, so she looked into her daughter's eyes with a serious gaze. "Guess what I overheard from your father when I went back to get my bag this afternoon?"

"What did he say?"

"Your father plans to let Anastasia's son inherit the company, and he is also currently training Alex so that he will marry Anastasia in the future and help her manage the company."

“What about us? Mom, what about me? What do I get?” Erica was so anxious that she leaped up from the couch and looked at her mother.

“What else do we get if the company is going to be passed on to Anastasia and her son? We don’t get anything. Your dad never planned to leave us with anything. Hah! I finally see his true colors now. He only cares about Anastasia and his ex-wife. I guess our relationship means nothing to him!” Naomi gnashed her teeth in anger.

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“We have to find a way to grab Dad’s company, Mom! We can’t let Anastasia and her son have everything. Dad has already been so cruel to us, so we shouldn’t worry about him anymore.” Erica wanted her father’s company desperately because no other asset was comparable to a listed company worth several billion.

Instantly, there was a flash of ruthlessness in Naomi’s eyes. “You’re right, Erica! Your father is too harsh on us. He doesn’t even care about us! You must inherit the company. Will you take my advice, Erica?”

“Of course, I will! I will do whatever you ask me to.” Erica grew up under her mother’s protection, so she believed that everything her mother did was for her own good.

“Then, seduce Alex and make him stand in line with us. He will be of big help to us when we decide to take over your father’s company.”

“What?!” Erica grunted in disdain. “Alex Hunter? He’s just an insignificant finance manager under Dad’s company.”

“But he is the successor of the company chosen by your father and Anastasia will depend on him in the future. Your dad has already been so cruel to us, so he can’t blame us for being unloyal to him one day. Alex will be really useful to us in the future.” Naomi looked at her daughter calmly, already having a rough plan in her mind.

“Hmph! He’s just a sore loser. Getting him to fall head over heels for me is easy-peasy. It’s a blessing for him to have my admiration.” Though Erica was forced by her mother to seduce Alex, she despised his background from the bottom of her heart.

Having known someone like Elliot, who was high-up and elegant, there was no room for ordinary men in Erica’s eyes. Even if she couldn’t marry Elliot, she still had to marry into a wealthy family.

“Isn’t Dad’s company going to be acquired, Mom? What if Dad no longer has his company?” Erica inquired worriedly.

“What’s the hurry? The Presgrave Family is still indebted to Anastasia’s mother, so they definitely won’t sit back and do nothing. Once Anastasia asks them, the Presgraves will definitely lend a hand.” Naomi was certain that Anastasia would ask for Elliot’s help.

“Anastasia wouldn’t be so delusional to think that she can marry Elliot, right?” Erica inquired with jealousy.

A worried Naomi thought that no matter what, the Presgraves would never accept a woman with a child. "I don't think the Presgraves will take her in. They are just nice to her because they are repaying her mother's kindness. Besides, why would they want a woman with a child born out of wedlock?"

"That's true. Anastasia isn't even worthy of such a handsome and sophisticated man like Elliot." Erica also thought that the reason why Elliot was nice to Anastasia was to repay her kindness and that he would certainly marry another woman in the future.

In the early morning, Anastasia woke up, but she didn't catch a good night's sleep. After having breakfast, she brought Jared to the hospital to visit her father.

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When Francis saw his grandson, he was delighted and his mood had lightened so much that he was able to be discharged from the hospital by noon.

Anastasia came out to the corridor, not wanting to interrupt the grandfather-and-grandson moment. Just then, Alex walked over with some fruits in his hands. "Miss Tillman, I heard that you sought help from President Presgrave. President Tillman looks more relaxed now."

Anastasia nodded, but her heart was heavy since asking for help came with a lot of pressure.

Looking at her, Alex could feel a strong sense of admiration as he had fallen in love with Anastasia at first sight. No word could describe how much he liked her or loved her.

At that moment, Anastasia was wearing a ruffled blouse paired with denim jeans. She looked casual yet stylish and her long hair was let down over her shoulders as it accentuated her delicate face. All in all, she looked extremely attractive.

“Miss Tillman, let’s have lunch together. I have already booked a restaurant to celebrate President Tillman’s discharge.”

“Okay, sure!” Anastasia nodded.

Hearing that, Alex was over the moon. He could finally sit down for a meal and have a proper conversation with her. Taking out a bottle of water from his bag, he handed it to Anastasia, offering, “Here, drink some water.”

Chapter 257

Anastasia took the bottle and unscrewed the lid to drink it. Just then, footsteps were heard in the corridor, and they were coming from the corner of the elevator. Anastasia couldn’t help but glance over curiously while drinking her water.

Pfff! When she saw who it was, she instantly choked on her drink.

It was Elliot and Rey who came uninvited.

Elliot strode in with his strong and slender legs. At the same time, he exuded a powerful aura that forced anyone on his way to look at him.

Why is he here?

When he saw that Anastasia was standing beside Alex and was seemingly chatting with him, he narrowed his eyes dangerously. He didn’t like the fact that men were always around Anastasia.

“President Presgrave, what brings you here?” Anastasia walked up to him politely.

“President Presgrave came because he is concerned about your father,” Rey explained with a smile.

“Thank you for your concern. My dad will be discharged by noon.” Anastasia looked at Elliot gratefully.

“Bring me over to see your dad,” uttered Elliot in a low voice.

With that, Anastasia led him into Francis’ ward. When she pushed open the door, she informed her father, who was playing with Jared. “Dad, President Presgrave is here to see you.”

Francis immediately felt overwhelmed. Beside him, Jared exclaimed, “Is Mr. Presgrave here?”

Right then, Elliot entered the ward, his gaze turning gentle upon seeing Jared. “You’re here too, Jared!”

“Hi, Mr. Presgrave.” Jared walked up to him and held his hand before they both walked hand-in-hand to Francis’ bed.

“Young Master Elliot, why did you come all the way? It must have been bothersome. Why did you buy all these gifts too?” Francis felt flattered because he was grateful that Elliot was willing to save his company, so why would he still come all the way to visit him?

“It’s no big deal. I was so worried when I heard that you were hospitalized.” Elliot looked at Francis with concern, and he was also aware that Francis was eager to know what would happen to his company. “I already settled the acquisition of your company.”

"So soon? How did you do it?!" Francis exclaimed in astonishment. "Did Lawrence agree to give up on acquiring my company?"

Rey, who was standing at the side, smiled while answering, "Old Master Tillman, you might not know about it, but President Presgrave has long been worried that your company will be acquired, so he has prepared for this beforehand. We'll acquire their company soon, so you don't have to worry about it anymore."

Hearing that, Francis was shocked yet relieved. At the same time, he also witnessed the power of wealth and power. That was the cruel reality of the business world that resembled a battlefield. Like a food chain, the strong ones would feed on the weak ones. Though his company was small, Lawrence's company eventually couldn't escape the fate of being acquired by another bigger company.

Standing on the side, Anastasia was also dumbfounded. Elliot acquired Lawrence's company?! When she thought about how the old man bragged and yelled in front of her father yesterday, she could finally breathe a sigh of relief.

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"Thank you for your concern. I'm really grateful for your efforts." Francis was so overwhelmed that his eyes turned red. He looked into Elliot's eyes as if the latter were a parent who provided for him all their life.

At the same time, Anastasia couldn't help but cast a look of gratitude at Elliot. She wasn't capable of supporting her father, but Elliot managed to boost up her father's confidence in front of his rival.

"This is what I should do, Mr. Tillman." Elliot stayed true to his words that he would do anything for the Tillman family.

Jared, who was standing beside Elliot, seemed to have sensed the atmosphere. He hugged Elliot and raised his head at him, saying, "You're a good man, Mr. Presgrave. You saved Grandpa's company and even helped my mom out a lot."

"Haha. I'm doing this willingly."

"Mommy, you said we should be grateful to anyone who helps us and repay their kindness. Now that Mr. Presgrave helped us, do you have to repay his kindness?" Jared didn't know that the Presgrave family was indebted to his grandmother, so based on his understanding, his mother had to repay Elliot's kindness.

"That's right, Jared! We must repay their kindness if they help us!" Anastasia took the opportunity to educate her son.

Chapter 258

"So, how will you repay Mr. Presgrave's kindness?" Jared inquired out of curiosity.

"Erm... I-I need some time to think about it."

"Why don't you marry Mr. Presgrave, Mommy? You can be his wife and take care of him," Jared suggested loudly.

In a hurry, Anastasia rushed over to cover Jared's mouth, but she heard Francis chuckling. Playing along with his grandson, Francis joked, "Jared is right."

Rey couldn't help but chime in, "President Presgrave actually needs someone to take care of him."

On the contrary, Alex stood aside with a stiff smile because he wasn't having any of it.

Anastasia blushed in crimson as she pulled her son over and uttered, "You shouldn't talk nonsense, Jared."

When Elliot's gaze was locked on Anastasia, his eyes were dark. He looked like a wild beast wanting to hunt her down.

Under broad daylight, Anastasia was so flustered that her face turned red. She quickly felt shy because her father was also there.

Seeing that his mom's face had turned red, Jared quickly shut up.

"Young Master Presgrave, if you're not in a hurry to head back, stay back for lunch with us!" Francis offered.

"Sure." Elliot nodded.

Alex's eyes darkened at that. He was planning to get close to Anastasia through the lunch gathering later, but Elliot came out of nowhere and disrupted all his initial plans.

Coming from an ordinary family, Alex desperately wanted to improve himself. He didn't want to live at the bottom of the hierarchy as his parents did. However, with his connections and ability, it was difficult for him to break out of the bottom level of the social hierarchy.

When he met Francis and heard that he had two daughters, he found a shortcut to success. He thought he could marry into the Tillman family and become the successor to Francis. That would help him leap out of his predestined fate.

There were two daughters in the Tillman household. Alex had met Erica before, but he knew that Francis didn't value her. Instead, the eldest daughter in the family, who had been mysterious all this while, caught his breath when he first saw her at the banquet.

Alex was aware that Francis wanted to train him into being his successor and intended to introduce his eldest daughter to him. When he heard that, he was overjoyed. He would be achieving the peak of his life when he had both Francis' company and his daughter.

Despite that, he never expected that Elliot would be the most powerful obstacle to his success.

Elliot, who stood at the top of the food chain, also admired Anastasia! Alex heard that Anastasia's mother sacrificed herself to save him, so he had always been doing his best to repay the Tillman family.

It was also a coincidence that Elliot was attracted to Anastasia.

"Alex, come here. Let's switch to a classier restaurant. President Presgrave and his assistant will be joining us for lunch." Francis looked at Alex while instructing him.

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At that moment, Alex had mixed feelings, but he still had a conscientious expression on his face. Smiling, he replied, "Sure, I'll book another restaurant right now."

Alex then proceeded to leave the ward with his phone. Standing outside the glass window, he glared at Elliot with resentment in his eyes.

"Dad, why don't I book the restaurant and bring President Presgrave over? I'll ask Mr. Hunter to bring you over once the documents for discharge are ready," suggested Anastasia.

Francis nodded and agreed, saying, "Sure. You should leave first. Ask Alex to come in."

Anastasia pushed the door open and said to Alex, "Mr. Hunter, I'll book the restaurant. You can help my dad with the discharge process, and I'll text you the address later."

"Sure, Miss Tillman." Alex nodded. When Anastasia turned around, he couldn't hide the affectionate gaze he had for her.

After Anastasia brought her son, Elliot, and Rey out of the ward, they headed toward the car park. Elliot instructed Rey to drive Anastasia's car, while Anastasia and Jared took his car.

Anastasia hadn't bought a child safety seat yet, but Elliot had it in his car, so she agreed to Elliot's arrangement after considering her son's safety.

By 12.00PM, they arrived at the fancy restaurant.

Francis later brought Alex along, and once they were done with their orders, they started chatting.

Chapter 259

Francis mentioned his feud with Lawrence in passing, and the revelation shocked Anastasia. It turned out that Lawrence used to be her father's business partner when the company was first established. Later, Lawrence used the company's public funds to gamble, which Francis found out about. Then, sometime after serving a one-year sentence in jail, Lawrence earned a load of black money and used it to enter the commercial industry to exclusively steal Francis's businesses and clients. In the end, it was thanks to Elliot that Francis managed to bag a lot of orders and projects while Lawrence lay low for a few years before resurfacing as an acquirer.

Anastasia knew she had Elliot to thank for saving her father from a horrible fate once again.

"Here's to you, Young Master Elliot." Francis raised his wine glass toward Elliot.

With that, Elliot got up and clinked his glass against Francis's humbly. As Anastasia watched Elliot drink, she couldn't help worrying about his stomach. It was why she was particular about the spiciness level when she ordered the food.

"Don't worry, Mr. Tillman. As long as I'm around, your company will be fine," Elliot promised.

"I feel absolutely relaxed, knowing I have your help. It's just that I feel bad to keep asking for your help." At that, Francis turned to Anastasia. "Anastasia, you should toast Young Master Elliot too!"

To men, toasting someone meant that they respected that person.

However, Anastasia thought otherwise and smiled. "Dad, don't drink so much. Here, have some food."

"C'mon, toast Young Master Elliot. He has done us a great favor." Francis urged his daughter.

Left with no choice, Anastasia poured a glass of wine and toasted Elliot. "Here's to you, President Presgrave."

Elliot brought the glass to her and clinked it against hers elegantly. Anastasia didn't realize it, but she got visibly worried when she saw him down the entire glass of wine. However, Elliot noticed it, and he couldn't help smiling in response, clearly pleased with her reaction.

Anastasia leaned toward Elliot, and so did he when he noticed she seemed to have something to tell him. From Anastasia's angle, his long lashes covered his eyelids, blurring his sharp, cold features.

Anastasia couldn't help gawking a little, for his tenderness right then carried a hint of alluring charm.

"Watch your stomach," Anastasia whispered.

Elliot said nothing but latched his fathomless gaze at her and blinked, indicating he got it.

"Here, Young Master Elliot, have some food."

Meanwhile, Rey and Alex chatted away, and it was then they realized they had studied at the same university one year apart. Alex envied Rey's job, for Rey surely would have a bright future when he could work for someone like Elliot.

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However, Alex was a little greedier, for he didn't just want a high salary but also a broader future. What was more, he was good at concealing his ambitions. Hence, he was a hard-working, aspirant young man in Francis's eyes.

"Young Master Elliot, Anastasia is working in your company. I hope you can look after her." Francis tried to put in a good word for his daughter.

"I will." Elliot nodded. Oh, how he wanted to take good care of her, but what could he do when she kept rejecting his kindness?

Just then, a thought popped into Francis's mind, but he suppressed it in two shakes. As outstanding as Anastasia was, she still wasn't enough for someone like Elliot. Besides, she had a son. No way would rich families like the Presgraves accept a woman who had given birth before marriage. Hence, he didn't dare hope Anastasia would develop any romance with this rich young man.

Jared sat next to Elliot, and Elliot would check up on the little guy from time to time, adding whatever Jared liked to his plate.

Alex's worry grew when he saw Elliot's behavior toward Jared. Is Elliot trying to win Anastasia's heart? If that was the case, he had no chance against Elliot at all! What was more, he hadn't even confessed his love for her. She has no clue I like her!

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Chapter 260

Alex could tell Anastasia might stand on ceremony with Elliot, but she cared deeply about Elliot.

After dinner, Alex went to pay the bill, only to learn that Rey had already done so. With that, he went back to the table to tell Francis. "President Tillman, President Presgrave had already paid the bill."

"What?! Young Master Presgrave, I should be the one paying the bill!" Francis felt horrible. How could he continue to let Elliot spend the money?

"Don't worry about it, Mr. Tillman; we're all family here." A hint of a smile laced Elliot's eyes as he looked knowingly at the young woman next to Francis.

Anastasia reflexively lowered her head and retorted inwardly, Who's family with you?!

On the other hand, Francis couldn't thank Elliot enough. But just then, Francis got a call from his office, saying there was something he needed to see to urgently. It was only when Anastasia watched how her father kept shaking Elliot's hand and thanking him again and again that she realized how rude she was to Elliot.

Look at what she had done when even her father behaved differently around Elliot, fearing that Elliot experienced any remiss.

She had no respect for him from the moment they met, and she even found him repulsive. Even at this point, she still saw him as an equal, in no way any more superior than her.

But now, looking at how her father behaved toward Elliot, she realized how horrible she had been acting toward Elliot.

It was time for Anastasia to go home as well. With that, she went up to Elliot. "Thank you for today, President Presgrave. I should take Jared home now."

However, he had other plans. "Why don't we go shopping instead? I'd like to get Jared some toys." With that, he picked the little guy next to him up and headed toward the mall.

"Hey..." Anastasia called out anxiously and chased after them with resignation.

Later, they arrived at the Lego store. Whatever Lego set Jared looked at and expressed his liking for, Rey would take one box for him, and in the blink of an eye, the cart Rey was pushing behind Jared already had a good few sets of Legos.

"President Presgrave, you're going to spoil Jared. This is already plenty enough." Anastasia had to stop Elliot from splurging further.

Elliot, who was still carrying the little guy in his arms, still wanted to pick out a few more sets. But Anastasia's bright, insistent gaze told him she was serious. With that, he turned to Rey and said, "This will be all."

"Mr. Presgrave, can I play over there?" Jared pointed at the play station aside, hoping he could play with the other children there.

As soon as Elliot put Jared down, the little guy dashed toward the play station. A gentle smile laced Anastasia's eyes as she watched her boy playing happily.

When she looked up, she was surprised by the pair of dazzling eyes staring right at her, melting her away.

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Anastasia's heart skipped a few beats, and her lashes instantly fluttered in discomfort, unsure of where to look.

Even if Elliot didn't look at a woman with a tender gaze, he could already have her falling head over heels for him, so which woman could say no to him if he softened up?

After paying for the Lego sets, Anastasia thought it was time for Jared and her to go home. With that, Elliot told her to drive safely before leaving with Rey.

After returning home, Jared played with his new Lego sets on the carpet, minding his own business, and Anastasia took this opportunity to work on her sketches. Now, all she had to design was Elliot's necklace.

But she wasn't happy with any of the designs she came up with that night. Worse, her mind was everywhere, and she couldn't focus.

Back in the Tillman Residence, Naomi called Francis to ask about Tillman Construction's fate. He naturally didn't hide anything from her, telling her Elliot had stepped in and the company wouldn't be acquired.

Naomi heaved a sigh of relief after hearing the news. Francis's company had been saved, so now she had to come up with a plan to seize the company for herself. She couldn't just sit idly by and get nothing in the end.

Meanwhile, Hayley was waiting for Elliot's phone call in the lavish mansion. It had been two days since she told Anastasia to give him the necklace, but Elliot had never given her a call at all.