

# Trading My Ex for His Uncle

**C 1071**

"I know," Damon replied.

Looking at his expressionless face, Lydia hesitated for a moment before cautiously asking, "Mr. Sumner, what's your plan from here?"

"I'm not sure yet. For now, I'll handle the company's remaining affairs," Damon answered.

Filing for bankruptcy didn't mean everything was finished. There was still a mountain of follow-up work to manage.

Now that he had accepted Prospectus Technology's bankruptcy, his immediate priorities were tying up loose ends and suing Nyce Tech for stealing the company's core data.

Lydia finally breathed a sigh of relief upon noticing that, despite his exhaustion, Damon didn't look utterly defeated. As long as he hadn't lost hope, that was what mattered.

What she feared most was that Damon might crumble under the blow and let his thoughts spiral into something irreversible.

"Mr. Sumner, you didn't eat dinner last night. You must be hungry. Let me make you some breakfast. What would you like?" she asked.

Damon pondered before answering, "It's been a while since I've had your pancakes. I'd like those."

Lydia's face brightened. "Alright, I'll make them now."

She headed to the kitchen, her steps noticeably lighter.

Meanwhile, Damon grabbed a change of clothes and stepped into his bathroom to shower.

When he emerged, Lydia had just finished placing a steaming batch of fresh pancakes on the dining table.

"Mr. Sumner, the pancakes are ready. Would you like to eat now?" she asked.

"Yeah," Damon replied.

He sat at the table and had just taken a bite when Spencer arrived.

"Mr. Sumner, I brought over some paperwork and documents for the bankruptcy filing," Spencer announced.

"Alright." Damon stood, nodded, and said, "Let's talk in the study."

Spencer followed him to the study and handed over the documents. "Mr. Sumner, please review these and let me know if anything's missing."

Taking the stack of papers, Damon flipped through them for a moment before setting them down.

He looked at Spencer and said, "Everything seems fine. You've done an excellent job. You've worked hard all these years."

Hearing this, Spencer felt a lump rise in his throat. "Mr. Sumner, is there truly no other way besides filing for bankruptcy?"

He had joined Prospectus

Technology straight out of university

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as Damon's assistant. At first, he struggled to keep up with Damon's relentless pace and was often reprimanded. During his first he worked late into the night nearly every day and came close to quitting several times.

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But he stuck it out. Over time, he adapted, learned to anticipate Damon's needs, and found his footing. Work became smoother, and he developed a deep emotional connection to the company sw novel

He had always envisioned working alongside Damon for his entire career. Never had he imagined Prospectus Technology would face bankruptcy.

All night, Spencer had replayed

scenarios in his head, wondering if there was anything he could have done to prevent Henry and Gabriel from conspiring against the company and driving it into ruin.

Yet regret couldn't change the outcome.

Damon met his gaze and nodded. "I suggest you start exploring other job opportunities. If you need recommendations, I'll do what I can, but I can't promise anything."

"Mr. Sumner, aren't you planning to make a comeback?" Spencer asked.

After a pause, Damon replied, "For now, my focus is on closing Prospectus Technology's affairs. I haven't thought about anything beyond that."

Spencer hesitated before saying, "I'm not planning on looking for another job for at least three months. If you do decide to start over, I'll be honored to remain as your assistant."

Damon blinked in surprise, clearly not expecting Spencer's offer.

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"Alright. I'll keep paying your salary during these three months," Damon replied.

Spencer shook his head. "That's not necessary. I've been working nonstop for years. I'll treat this time as a break to recharge."

Besides, Spencer thought Damon would need the money if he planned to start over. Paying him would only add to Damon's burden. Damon, who had spent years navigating the business world, easily saw through Spencer's intentions but chose not to point them out. He nodded. "Alright then."

"If there's nothing else, Mr. Sumner, I'll head out. Please don't hesitate to call or message if you need anything," Spencer said.

"Mm," Damon hummed in response.

After Spencer left, Damon turned on his computer and got to work.

Upstairs in the bedroom...

Nyla woke from a nightmare, gasping for breath. She looked around, taking a few moments to realize she was in the bedroom, then ran downstairs.

She pushed open the study's door to find Damon seated at the desk, working. A wave of relief washed over her.

Her face was still pale from the fright.

Damon looked up and saw her standing barefoot at the door. He frowned, standing to walk over to her.

Without a word, he scooped her up into his arms and chided, "Why aren't you wearing slippers?"

Nyla bit her lip and wrapped her arms around his neck. "I had a nightmare..."

"Dreamt something happened to me?" he asked.

"Yeah..." Nyla muttered.

Damon's voice softened as he carried her upstairs. "Don't scare yourself. I won't leave you and Buddy behind."

"Okay, but I can't help worrying..." Nyla murmured.

Damon's arms tightened around her. His voice grew more serious. "Prospectus Technology has weathered countless storms over the years. We've faced the brink of bankruptcy more than once. My resilience is stronger than that."

"Okay," Nyla relented.

Damon carried Nyla back to the bed and went to the bathroom. He returned with a warm, damp towel and knelt before her.

Realizing what Damon was about to do, Nyla quickly retracted her foot. "I can do it myself."

Before she could act, Damon gently

took her ankle in his hand. His

fingers were cool to the touch

sending a shiver up her spine.

She tried to pull her foot back but failed.

Moments later, a soothing warmth spread across her sole.

Looking down, Nyla saw Damon carefully wiping her feet with the towel, his expression serious. She bit her lip.

After cleaning her feet, Damon

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slipped her slippers on and said firmly, "Next time, make sure y wear slippers. The floor's cold."

"Okay," Nyla agreed.

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"I heard from Lydia that you stayed up all night. Get some rest now," Damon advised.

He turned to leave, but Nyla tugged on the hem of his shirt. "I can't sleep alone. Can you stay with me?"

Damon looked back and met her pleading gaze, his heart softening.

"Alright," he replied and climbed into bed next to her.

As soon as he lay down, Nyla wrapped her arms around his waist, resting her head against his chest.

"Get some sleep," he coaxed.

"Okay. You should rest too. You'll burn out at this rate," Nyla warned.

"Alright," Damon replied.

It wasn't long before Nyla's steady breathing filled the room.

Damon gently moved her arms off him, got up, and tucked her in. He quietly left the bedroom and went downstairs, where Lydia emerged from the kitchen.

"Mr. Sumner, would you like to resume breakfast?" she asked.

Damon nodded. "Sure. Oh, and don't wake Nyla. Let her sleep." "Understood," Lydia answered.

The weekend flew by, and soon, it was Monday.

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After breakfast, Nyla drove Mason to school while Damon headed directly to the office.

On the way, Mason asked, "Mommy, is Daddy upset about something these past couple of days?"

Nyla glanced at him. She and Damon hadn't told Mason about Prospectus Technology's bankruptcy, fearing it would upset him.

At five years old, he likely wouldn't fully grasp its implications. Still, they had underestimated his perceptiveness. Even at his age, Mason could easily pick up on the emotions of the adults around him.

Over the weekend, Damon had spent most of his time in the study, barely interacting with Mason. Naturally, Mason had noticed something was amiss.

Reaching out, Nyla gently tousled his hair. "Yes, Daddy has been a little upset lately, but don't worry-he'll feel better soon."

Mason nodded, though he didn't completely understand. "Okay."

Before long, the car pulled up in front of Mason's kindergarten.

After walking him inside, Nyla paused to speak with his teacher, Ms. Ferrier, at the entrance.

"Ms. Ferrier, I'll be picking Buddy up half an hour early every day for the time being. Please keep an extra eye on him during the day, and don't hesitate to contact me if anything comes up," Nyla informed.

"Of course. Rest assured, last Friday's incident won't happen again," Ms. Ferrier reassured her.

This kindergarten primarily accepted children from influential families in the city. Security was paramount-frequent lapses, such as children being picked up by unauthorized individuals, could severely damage the school's reputation and enrollment.

"Thank you," Nyla said before turning to leave.

Just as she reached the curb, Gabriel's car pulled up in front of her.

"Nyla, we need to talk," he said.

Her expression turned cold. "Gabriel, why do you insist on being so clingy and disgusting?"

She had made herself abundantly

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clear-she could never love or be with him. Yet, he acted as though he couldn't understand, persisting in his attempts to win her over. S

Gabriel's face stiffened, and his tone dropped to a somber note. "Nyla, I came here today because I have something to ask you about Buddy."

Over the weekend, Nyce Tech's tech department had been working overtime to repair their system. Only this morning had they managed to restore it. Upon investigation, they discovered the issue originated from within the system itself.

While Gabriel didn't believe a  
five-year-old could sabotage a  
company's technology

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infrastructure, it seemed too coincidental that the problem arose right after Mason's visit.

Nyla's gaze hardened as Mason's name was mentioned. "I'm warning you if you dare do anything to Buddy again, I won't let it slide."

She was still shaken by the memory of Gabriel taking Mason out of school without permission the previous Friday. The thought alone reignited her anger.

Gabriel pursed his lips, his tone  
growing serious. "Nyla, listen to me. I  
promise I won't force you into  
need to give me a fair chance to  
anything anymore. But in return, you  
pursue you."

"Absolutely not!" she snapped, rejecting him without hesitation as she turned to leave.

He stepped forward, blocking her path. "Fine. Let's set us aside for now. I need to ask you something-has Buddy ever been exposed to computers before?"

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Nyla frowned. "What are you trying to say?"

Gabriel hesitated before explaining, "On Friday, when I left Buddy in my office, the company's system suddenly had issues during that same timeframe. I"

She cut him off sharply, "Are you suggesting my five-year-old son somehow sabotaged your company's system? Do you even realize how ridiculous you sound?"

Gabriel stood in silence, his expression awkward. Even he knew how absurd it sounded.

"I don't have time for your nonsense," Nyla commented. "Instead of pointing fingers at Buddy, maybe you should look into whether your system was already faulty."

With that, she shoved past him and left.

Gabriel stood there for a moment, watching her car disappear down the road before finally heading back to his vehicle.

As Mason walked into his kindergarten classroom, he quickly noticed his classmates giving him odd looks.

He ignored them, found his seat, and waited quietly for the teacher to arrive.

After a while, one of the children approached him hesitantly. "Mason, I heard from my dad that your family went bankrupt. Is that true?" Before Mason could respond, the other kids burst into chatter.

"It's true! I heard my parents talking about it last night. They said I shouldn't play with Mason anymore because his family is poor now." "Same! My mom said he might have to transfer to a normal kindergarten soon because his family can't afford this one anymore!" The comments came in a flurry.

Mason frowned slightly. He understood what "bankrupt" meant.

Was this why his father had been so upset all weekend? If the company was out of money, then their family must be too.

But he quickly comforted himself

with a simple solution-he had money saved up in his piggy bank. He could give it to his father. That way, their family would have money again, right?



Lost in thought, Mason barely noticed the mocking and disdain from his classmates.

Not that it would have mattered-what they thought of him wasn't important. Even if his family's situation meant he had to transfer schools, he didn't mind.

Soon after, Wilhelm walked into the classroom and spotted Mason. A flicker of resentment crossed his face.

He still hadn't forgotten Friday, when Gabriel forced him to sit in the car with Mason, insisting they get along because they'd soon be brothers.

The thought infuriated him. He didn't want Mason as a brother and certainly didn't want Nyla as his new mom.

He had thrown a tantrum, demanding his dad kick Mason out.

Furious, Gabriel had slapped him and locked him in a room at another villa, telling him he wouldn't be released until he reflected on his behavior. The more Wilhelm thought about it, the more he despised Mason.

If it weren't for Mason and Nyla, his parents wouldn't have divorced, and he wouldn't have been torn away from his mother.

After being locked up for two days, Wilhelm pretended to apologize and agree to befriend Mason. But inside, he had already decided-he would never let Mason take his father's attention or affection away from him.

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When he overheard the other kids gossiping about Mason's family going bankrupt, Wilhelm finally understood why his father had said they would soon be one family.

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It turned out Mason's father had gone bankrupt, which was why Mason's mother was considering marrying Wilhelm's father.

Wilhelm stormed up to Mason and shoved him. "Mason, I won't let your mom marry my dad! Your family goes broke, and now your mom wants to marry my dad to become my stepmom? No way! I won't let you get what you want!"

Mason nearly lost his balance but quickly steadied himself, his cold gaze locking onto Wilhelm.

Despite being only five years old, there was already a trace of Damon's commanding aura in Mason's expression-a look that demanded respect and fear.

It startled Wilhelm, making him instinctively take two steps back.

Realizing their classmates were watching, Wilhelm forced himself to stand tall and glare back. "What are you staring at me for? I'm just telling the truth! Your mom's doing something shameless, and I'm not allowed to say anything about it?"

He had made up his mind-there was no way Nyla would marry Gabriel!

"My mom would never marry your dad. She can't stand him," Mason shot back sharply.

Whenever Nyla saw Gabriel, her face filled with disgust. She avoided speaking to him whenever possible. How could she ever marry someone she couldn't stand?

"You're lying! I hate your mom, and I hate you too! I'll never let your mom be with my dad!" Wilhelm shouted.

The argument quickly escalated.

When Wilhelm ran out of words, he resorted to his fists, and soon the two were locked in a full-on fight.

Mason had learned from their previous brawl and now knew Wilhelm's weaknesses. Wilhelm was no match for him this time.

In no time, Wilhelm was pinned to the ground, crying out as Mason landed blow after blow.

The commotion frightened some timid kids, who rushed to get the teacher.

The teacher arrived quickly, pulling the boys apart and summoning their parents.

Nyla had just reached the villa when she got the call and had to rush back to the school.

As she parked, she spotted Gabriel arriving at the same time.

Without sparing him a glance, she turned and walked briskly toward the kindergarten, her expression icy.

They entered the office one after the other.

Laura greeted them with relief. "Ms. Kinsey, Mr. Hackett, I'm so glad you're here."

Mason immediately ran to Nyla,

clutching her tightly. "Mommy,  
Wilhelm said you were going to  
marry his dad. That's why we fought."

For a moment, the office fell silent.

Nyla knelt to check Mason for injuries. Seeing he was unharmed, she finally exhaled in relief.

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Wilhelm, however, was covered in bruises, his face swollen and pitiful. He hesitated, wanting to run into Gabriel's arms for comfort, but froze when he met his father's cold gaze.

"Daddy..." he murmured, his voice filled with guilt and fear.

Gabriel ignored him, turning instead to Laura. "Ms. Ferrier, I'm sorry for the trouble Wilhelm has caused."

Laura blinked, caught off guard by his response. Something about it felt off.

Wilhelm had been beaten black and blue, yet Gabriel hadn't even asked about his son's injuries or tried to understand what had happened. He went straight to apologizing on Wilhelm's behalf.

Even if Wilhelm was at fault, shouldn't a parent at least seek an explanation before assigning blame?

"Mr. Hackett, I called you here to help us understand what happened. This isn't the first time Wilhelm and Mason have fought.

"I think it's time for the parents to discuss how to handle this moving forward," Laura said, her tone firm.

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Gabriel nodded. "I understand. But I know both children's personalities well. Buddy isn't the type to start trouble. Wilhelm, on the other hand, has been difficult at home lately. I'd guess this was his doing again, wasn't it?"

Laura's expression changed before she nodded. "Based on what I've gathered, it seems that Wilhelm insulted Mason first, which led to the fight. "However, Mason threw the first punch, so he's not entirely blameless."

Nyla, who had remained silent until now, spoke up. "Ms. Ferrier, what exactly did Wilhelm say to Buddy?"

Laura looked troubled. She hesitated, clearly reluctant to share. The things Wilhelm had said were inappropriate, and she felt awkward repeating them in front of the parents.

"H-He said something about you wanting to marry Mr. Hackett and become his stepmother," she finally managed to say.

The room went quiet again.

Nyla let out a cold laugh and turned to Gabriel. "Did you teach him to say that?"

Gabriel's expression changed slightly. "Nyla, do you really think I'd say such things to him?"

"If not you, then who? Me? Buddy? Do you think I'd ever want to marry you?" Nyla retorted.

Seeing the disgust in her eyes, Gabriel took a deep breath and said slowly, "Nyla, I have no idea why he said such things, but I promise you, it wasn't me. If you don't believe me, there's nothing I can do about it."

"Fine, let's assume it wasn't you. But your son saying such things to mine-don't you think you should reflect on why a child his age would even think like that?" Nyla replied.

She didn't believe for a second that Wilhelm had come up with those words on his own.

Gabriel nodded. "You're right. This is my fault. I apologize, and I'll make sure to educate him better moving forward. He won't say anything like this again."

His tone was sincere, but Nyla couldn't care less whether he was genuine.

"Since you say so, I have nothing more to add. As for Wilhelm's medical bills, I'll cover them," she replied.

After all, Mason had injured him, and refusing to pay would be unreasonable.

"There's no need. This started because of Wilhelm. I wouldn't feel right accepting any money from you. Nyla, I'll apologize again on Wilhelm's behalf. I'm sorry," Gabriel said.

Nyla pressed her lips together. "Take

him to the hospital for a checkup just in case. If there's any cost, let me know, and I'll cover it. I don't want any unnecessary trouble later."

She also planned to take Mason for a checkup, just to be safe.

Seeing her insistence, Gabriel relented. "Alright. How about you and Buddy ride with me to the hospital? That way, you can get him checked, too." "There's no need. I have my car, and the hospital is nearby. I'll meet you there," Nyla refused.

With that, she took Mason and left.

Once in the car, Nyla turned to Mason. "Buddy, are you sure you're okay? I'll have the doctor give you a thorough checkup later."

Mason shook his head. "Mommy, he didn't hurt me."

"Really? You're not feeling any pain anywhere?" Nyla asked once more.

"No," Mason answered.

Seeing that he wasn't lying, Nyla finally relaxed a little. "You can't be so impulsive next time, do you hear me? When I got the call saying you were fighting at school, I was scared to death."

"I'm sorry, Mommy," Mason apologized.

She reached out and ruffled his hair gently. "I know you were angry because of what Wilhelm said, but next time, tell your teacher first. If the teacher doesn't handle it come to me. I'll take care of it, okay?"

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"You're Mommy's most precious treasure. If you ever got hurt from fighting, it would break my heart," Nyla said.

Mason hung his head, staying quiet for a while before finally nodding. "Okay, I understand."

"Good. We'll go to the hospital now. After the checkup, I'll take you home if everything's fine, and you can skip school for today," Nyla explained. Mason nodded. "Okay."

When they arrived at the hospital, Gabriel and Wilhelm were already waiting at the entrance.

Nyla held Mason's hand as they approached them, her expression cold. "Let's go."

Noticing her frosty demeanor, Gabriel stepped closer and lowered his voice. "Nyla, this was really just an accident."

Nyla replied coolly, "You don't need to explain. I don't care."

With that, she quickened her pace, making it clear she didn't want to continue the conversation.

Gabriel watched her slender figure as she walked away, his gaze darkening.

"Daddy, you're hurting my hand!" Wilhelm's complaint broke through Gabriel's thoughts. He quickly let go.

Inside the hospital, doctors and nurses efficiently examined Mason and Wilhelm.

As he had said, Mason was unharmed.

Wilhelm had only minor injuries-some redness, swelling, and a small scrape that would heal quickly with a little medication.

Relieved that Mason was fine, Nyla felt the tension leave her shoulders.

She held the medical report and told Gabriel, "I'll cover the cost of Wilhelm's examinations and medication."

Gabriel sighed. "Nyla, there's no need to be so formal with me."

Nyla frowned, about to respond, when her phone suddenly rang.

Seeing Damon's name on the screen, she bit her lip and pulled Mason aside to answer.

"Hello? What's up?" she asked.

Damon's deep voice came through the line. "Nyla, where are you right now?"

Nyla hesitated momentarily, instinctively glancing around as if he might somehow see her.

Did he already know she was at the hospital? Why else would he ask?

"Is something wrong? Do you need me for something?" she asked instead.

"No, I just heard from Lydia that you haven't come home yet, so I wanted to check on you," Damon explained.

Nyla glanced at the time. It was nearly 10:00 a.m. She had dropped Mason off at school at 7:30 a.m. and should have been home long ago.

After a brief pause, she decided

against telling him about Mason's

fight. It would only add to his worries, and he was already busy with the company's bankruptcy proceedings.

"After dropping Buddy off, I decided to go out for a bit. I thought it'd be better than just sitting at home. Do you need me to bring you lunch later?" she replied.

"No need. There's a lot to handle with the bankruptcy process, so I'll just grab something quick," Damon answered.

"Alright then. Take care," she said gently before ending the call.

Putting her phone away, Nyla turned to Gabriel. "Give me the bills for the exams and prescriptions. I'll go pay." "Nyla, really-" Gabriel tried to decline.

"Gabriel," Nyla interrupted firmly. "I

don't

don't want to repeat myself. If you

transfer

the money directly to your account."

Count."

"Fine..." Gabriel relented, handing over the papers.

Without another word, Nyla turned and walked off to settle the bills.

After paying, she turned to Gabriel, who was holding Wilhelm's hand and standing behind her.

"The expenses have been taken care of. This matter is over. Make sure your son doesn't say such things to Buddy again." Her tone was icy.

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"Nyla, I promise this won't happen again," Gabriel assured.

Nyla didn't respond. She simply took Mason's hand and walked away.

Gabriel and Wilhelm stood there for a moment before finally leaving, neither of them noticing the figure watching from the corner of the hospital lobby. Brandon dialed Damon's number again. "Uncle Damon, you don't need to come. Aunt Nyla already left with Buddy.

"I asked around and found out that Buddy and Wilhelm fought at school this morning. Aunt Nyla and Gabriel were here to get them checked out, but they've already gone their separate ways."

There was a pause before Damon's cold voice came through the line. "Got it."

Then he hung up.



When Nyla brought Mason home, Lydia looked surprised to see him. "Ms. Kinsey, why isn't Mr. Mason at school?"

"He'll stay home with me today. Buddy, go wash your hands and change your clothes," Nyla said.

Mason nodded and ran upstairs.

Lydia didn't press further but mentioned, "Mr. Sumner called earlier to check if you'd gotten home. I told him you hadn't returned yet. Maybe you should call him back?"

Nyla paused. Damon rarely called just to ask about something so mundane.

Frowning, she said, "Okay, got it. Thank you. You can go back to your work."

After changing her shoes and sitting on the couch, she debated for a while before finally dialing Damon's number.

Damon picked up the call. "Yes?"

"Did you know I took Buddy to the hospital today?" Nyla asked directly.

There was a silence on the other end before he replied, "Yes."

"Who told you?" she asked.

"Brandon happened to be at the hospital and saw you with Buddy and Gabriel. He called to ask me about it." His tone was calm as if this were just an ordinary conversation.

"Then why didn't you ask me when you called earlier?" Nyla pressed.

"I did. You said you were out. I figured you didn't want to tell me, so I let it go," he answered.

"I didn't want to worry you. You're

already dealing with enough

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"But if you knew, why not just ask me directly instead of beating around the bush?" Nyla questioned.

Damon fell silent again.

When he didn't respond, Nyla sighed and hung up.

Damon didn't return home until late that night. He found Nyla still awake, sitting on the couch with a book.

"You're still up?" he asked, surprised.

"I was waiting for you," she said, closing the book.

Damon changed into slippers and sat beside her. "It's late. Let's talk tomorrow."

"No, we're talking now," she said, her gaze unwavering.

"Alright. What do you want to talk about?" he asked.

"You know why I'm here waiting for you," she stated.

Damon avoided her eyes.

The room fell into a heavy silence.

Finally, he said, "Nyla, I'm sorry. I didn't ask because I was afraid..."

"Afraid of what? That I'd leave you with Buddy? That I'd end up with Gabriel?" she asked.

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"Both," he admitted. "I've always been confident. If Prospectus Technology were still thriving, I wouldn't even think twice about it But now... with the bankruptcy, feel so uncertain about us. I'm scared of losing you."

Damon believed he'd recover and rebuild, but he worried about

dragging Nyla and Mason down with him or that one day, she might regret staying.

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Nyla reached out and hugged Damon. "I'm not going to leave you. Whether you're the CEO of Prospectus Technology or just an ordinary person, you're still the one I love. I love you-not the company behind you."

"Nyla, I'm sorry. I've been too sensitive lately," Damon said, his voice heavy with remorse.

"It's not your fault. It's normal to have moments of self-doubt when facing such a major setback. You just need to remember one thing: I'm never going to leave you. That's all that matters," she replied softly.

Damon didn't say anything more. Instead, he tightened his embrace around Nyla.

Suddenly, the sound of small footsteps echoed through the quiet room.

They both turned toward the staircase and saw Mason coming downstairs in his pajamas.

Damon released Nyla and faced the boy. "Buddy, why aren't you asleep yet?"

Without answering, Mason ran up to them, clutching a card in his small hands. He held it out to Damon. "Daddy, I heard your company is in trouble because there's no money. This is the money I've saved over the years."

Seeing the card in Mason's hand, Damon felt a lump rise in his throat.

"Buddy, you should keep this for yourself. Don't worry about the company. Daddy will figure it out," he said gently.

Mason, determined, placed the card firmly in Damon's hand. "Daddy, you can use this first. You can pay me back after you make the money back." Damon's eyes grew misty as he looked at Mason's earnest expression. He knew the amount in Mason's account likely wasn't much-nowhere near enough to pay his employees' wages-but it was everything his son had.

Damon accepted the card with a solemn nod. "Thank you, Buddy. I'll make sure to use this money wisely."

"Okay," Mason said with a bright smile.

Satisfied that his father had accepted the card, Mason wished them goodnight and headed back upstairs.

Once Mason's small figure disappeared at the top of the staircase, Damon turned to Nyla. "You set up this card for him, right? It's where his gift money and allowances go?"

Nyla nodded. "Yes. It's probably accumulated a few thousand over the years."

For a child Mason's age, it was a small fortune.

Damon handed the card back to her. "You should hold onto it for him."

Nyla shook her head. "It's a gesture

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of love from our son. Even though it's a small amount, it means something. You should keep it. The

PIN is his birthday." swnovel

Damon considered this for a moment before nodding. "You're right. I'll keep it for now."

"It's late. Let's go to bed," Nyla suggested.

"Okay," Damon agreed.

The next morning, Damon arrived at the office early. There was still much to handle following the bankruptcy filing.

As soon as he stepped into his office, Spencer knocked and entered. "Mr. Sumner, Prospectus Technology's lawsuit against Nyce Tech for illegally stealing trade secrets has entered the filing stage. The trial date should be set soon."

Damon nodded. "Good. Keep a close eye on it."

"Sure. I'll head out now," Spencer said before leaving.

Left alone, Damon opened his laptop and began working on post-bankruptcy matters.

However, a commotion outside soon interrupted him.

Frowning, he stood and stepped out of his office, only to find Gabriel standing there.

Damon's expression darkened instantly. "What are you doing here?"

Gabriel smiled. "Mr. Sumner, I'm here to discuss business with you."

Glancing at the bodyguards behind Gabriel, Damon let out a cold laugh. "This doesn't look like a business discussion. It looks more like you're here to make trouble." S

Gabriel maintained his smile. "I can't help it. Before I came, I figured you wouldn't agree to meet me easily."

"If you want to talk, get the men behind you out of here immediately," Damon demanded.

Gabriel turned to his bodyguards. "Didn't you hear? Mr. Sumner wants you to leave. Are you all deaf?"

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The bodyguards hesitated before quickly leaving.

Gabriel turned back to Damon with a grin. "Now can we talk?"

Damon walked into his office without a word, and Gabriel followed.

Sitting behind his desk, Damon glared at him coldly. "What do you want to discuss?"

Gabriel smiled. "Mr. Sumner, with Prospectus Technology on the brink of bankruptcy, it's pointless to keep spending money fighting Nyce Tech in court. How about I give you some money, and you drop the lawsuit? What do you think?"

Damon's expression hardened. "I doubt you can afford the price I have in mind."

"I'm offering 10 billion dollars. You can take the money and start fresh. How about it?" Gabriel proposed.

He had considered the amount for a long time, clearly confident that Damon wouldn't refuse.

Silence filled the office.

After a long pause, Damon snickered. "Gabriel, you colluded with Henry to steal Prospectus Technology's core trade secrets. Now you want me to let you off the hook for 10 billion dollars? Dream on."

Gabriel raised an eyebrow. "Mr. Sumner, you're a smart man, so let's not waste time. Henry has already committed suicide to escape justice. Are you sure the evidence you have will hold up?"

Even if it did, Gabriel had ways to make it disappear.

Damon's gaze turned icy. "Is that a threat?"

Gabriel's smile widened. "Not at all. Just a friendly reminder. I'm offering you a way out. Take the 10 billion and walk away. It's your best option. "Drag this out, and you might end up with nothing. There won't be any second chances to fix it then."

"Thanks for the advice, but I don't need it. Now get out," Damon dismissed.

Gabriel stood and straightened his suit. He looked down at Damon. "Think it over. When you're ready to make the right choice, give me a call." With that, he left.

Once Gabriel was gone, Damon called Spencer into the office. "How much liquid cash does the company have left?"

"Less than 300,000 dollars," Spencer answered.

Damon handed him Mason's card. "Check the balance on this card."

He couldn't rely on the company's dwindling funds.

"Yes, Mr. Sumner," Spencer replied.

The office fell silent again as Spencer left with the card.

Damon lowered his gaze, contemplating how to retaliate against Gabriel.

Suddenly, the door swung open. Spencer returned, visibly shaken.

"Mr. Sumner... t-this... c-card..." he stammered.

Damon frowned. "What about it?"

"It has 1 trillion dollars in it!" Spencer exclaimed.

With this money, there was hope for the company!

The company needed 400 billion dollars immediately, so not only would the amount on the card save the company, but the excess could be used for the lawsuit against Nyce Tech.

"What did you say?" Damon asked. "Did you see it wrong?"

The card belonged to Mason.

According to Nyla, it was used to et

hold his gift money and allowance. There shouldn't be much in it, Tet alone 1 trillion dollars!

Even at Prospectus Technology's peak market value, it was only worth 2 trillion dollars.

This meant the money on the card could buy half of Prospectus Technology at its peak.

"It's true... Mr. Sumner, don't you know approximately how much is on this card?" Spencer asked.

Damon stood and took the card from him. "I'll look into it personally."

He couldn't believe there was 1 trillion dollars on the card.

How could a five-year-old like Mason have accumulated that much money?!

Spencer trailed behind Damon,

thrilled that there was hope for the company. Then, he lamented that they shouldn't have dismissed the employees so hastily, as it would now take a large sum to recruit them back.