

# Trading My Ex for His Uncle

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Pedro scowled as he said coldly, "She's about to leave the country. What's the point of holding so many shares?"

"It's not that we're unwilling to give her money, but you all know the situation at the Wilkie Group. Even if we were to give her the money, it will have to wait until the company stabilizes."

Jane sneered. "You make it sound so reasonable. If I handed over all my shares to Theo, I'd be lucky to see a penny from him. That's assuming he'd even bother to get my name right!"

Pedro glared at her. "Are you really going to push me?"

"You're the one forcing me," Jane replied, her voice icy. "Even if the shares rot in my hands, I'll never give them to Theo!"

"Fine! You're a truly good granddaughter!" Pedro snapped, his voice brimming with fury.

The meeting ended on a sour note, with everyone leaving in frustration.

Back at the villa, Ruth sat beside Jane. "Now that they couldn't get the shares, they'll surely come up with other ways to take them from you. Jane, don't let your guard down."

Soft-hearted? Jane scoffed. When Pedro chose Theo and abandoned her, she had stopped feeling sorry for him.

Still, the shares weren't safe in her hands. Given Theo's nature, he might resort to something worse to get them.

Jane glanced at her mother. "Mom, I'm going out for a while."

She left the villa and went straight to Prospectus Technology.

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When Damon heard Jane was there to see him, he raised an eyebrow.

Business? That was unexpected.

"Have her come to my office."

Moments later, Jane wheeled herself in, her leg still in a cast from the serious fracture she'd suffered recently.

"Ms. Wilkie, I hear you'd like to discuss business," Damon said.

Jane nodded. "Mr. Sumner, I have 10% of the Wilkie Group's shares. Are you interested?"

Damon was momentarily taken

aback, then smiled faintly. "Ms.

Wilkie, wouldn't it be more logical to sell your shares to the Wilkies? Why offer them to me? Aren't you concerned the Wilkie Group might change its name?"

Jane's expression hardened. "If Theo ends up controlling the Wilkie Group, it might as well change its name."

"How much do you want for your shares?" Damon asked.

Jane fixed her gaze on him. "I don't want money. I want to trade 10% of the Wilkie Group's shares for 1% of Prospectus Technology's shares."

If the shares were no longer in her possession, Pedro couldn't force her to transfer them to Theo. She was determined not to let Theo win.

Damon frowned.

Trading 10% of the Wilkie Group for 1% of Prospectus Technology seemed favorable at first glance. However, with the Wilkie Group in

decline, those shares held little value

for him.

"Sorry, Ms. Wilkie. I can't accept that offer. Prospectus Technology just weathered some turbulence, and I have no plans to sell my shares," he replied.

Jane's expression tightened. She

hadn't anticipated his refusal. "Mr. Sumner, don't intend to join the board of Prospectus Technology I'm only interested in the dividends. Besides, I'll be leaving the country soon and won't be coming back."

Damon's tone remained cool. "Ms. Wilkie, I don't rely on guarantees that aren't legally binding. It seems this deal isn't feasible."

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Jane could make a promise like this to obtain shares in Prospectus Technology, but who could guarantee she wouldn't go back on her word in the future for her own benefit?

Besides, Damon would never give her an opportunity to join Prospectus Technology.

Her expression changed again, clearly unprepared for Damon's blunt refusal.

Yet, if she kept the 10% shares of the Wilkie Group, she would gain nothing. Worse, Pedro might pressure her into giving them to Theo.

Rather than let the shares go to waste, she'd rather sell them.

"Mr. Sumner, can we reconsider? Even if it's just 0.5% of your shares, I'd be willing to accept that," she negotiated.

Damon remained unmoved. "Ms. Wilkie, please leave."

Jane studied his resolute expression and finally understood-acquiring shares in Prospectus Technology was no longer an option.

Taking a deep breath, she met his gaze directly. "Mr. Sumner, since you're unwilling to exchange shares, how about I sell you the 10% I own in the Wilkie Group?"

Damon set down the documents he'd been holding and raised an eyebrow, intrigued by her desperation.

He regarded her coolly. "Ms. Wilkie, I can buy your shares, but my offer is 7,000,000 dollars."

"What?!" Jane's voice rose with disbelief, her eyes widening. "Mr. Sumner, are you joking?"

Ten percent of the Wilkie Group's shares were worth tens of millions in the market. His offer was absurd.

Damon's expression didn't waver. "Ms. Wilkie, you heard me correctly-7,000,000 dollars. If that's unsatisfactory, you're welcome to leave. After all, you're the one looking to sell, not me looking to buy."

The Wilkie Group shares were of little value to him, and 7,000,000 dollars was, in his view, already a generous offer.

Jane's hands gripped the armrests of her wheelchair tightly, her knuckles white with frustration.

It was a significant loss, but if she didn't sell now, she might not even get that much. Better to take this deal than let Theo have the shares for

nothing.

"Fine," she said through gritted teeth. "I'll sell. But the money must be transferred to my account as soon as the contract is signed."

Damon arched an eyebrow, visibly

surprised by her concession. "Ms Wilkie, are you sure there's no issue with the shares you're selling?"

Jane's lips curled into a grimace. "Don't worry. There's no issue at all. And if there is, you know where to find me."

After a moment of contemplation, Damon nodded. "Very well. I'll have my secretary prepare the contract."

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Within thirty minutes, Spencer arrived with the documents.

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Jane signed the agreement, and within minutes, she received a notification on her phone confirming the transfer of 7,000,000 dollars to her account.

She glanced at Damon coldly. "Mr. Sumner, unless there's anything else, I'll be leaving. I have other matters to address."

"Of course. Goodbye, Ms. Wilkie," Damon replied indifferently.

After leaving Prospectus Technology, Jane immediately transferred the money to an overseas account before heading home.

When she reached the villa, Theo's car was parked outside. She sneered at the sight and wheeled herself inside.

Theo was on the sofa, his expression sour with impatience. He'd clearly been waiting for some time.

As soon as he saw her, he rose and approached. "Jane, what's it going to take for you to transfer the shares to me?"

Without shares, Theo had no influence. The other directors dismissed him as powerless, and he was desperate.

Jane met his gaze with an icy stare. "If you want the shares, bring the money."

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Theo's expression froze. If he had been willing to pay for the shares she held, he wouldn't have sought her out in the first place.

"Jane, don't push your luck. Don't forget, Grandpa gave you 10% of the Wilkie Group's shares because he wanted you to divorce Gabriel. You didn't lift a finger, so why should you keep those shares?!" he snapped.

Jane raised an eyebrow, smirking. "Why? You just said it yourself. The 10% shares were my compensation for divorcing Gabriel. So why should I hand them over just because you're shameless?"

"You" Theo's face darkened.

Pointing a finger at her, he spoke coldly. "Don't forget, the Wilkies will still provide you a monthly allowance once you go abroad. If you cross me now, don't expect to see a single penny from us!"

"Fine, then I won't take it! And don't think you can take advantage of me!" she shot back.

He wanted her shares without offering anything in return-his audacity was unmatched.

"Fine. Don't regret it!" Theo stormed out, slamming the door so hard the sound reverberated through the house.

After he left, Wendy cautiously approached. "Ms. Wilkie, you've angered both Mr. Pedro and Mr. Theo. What will you do now?"

Jane glanced at her, her expression unreadable. "With them like this, do you think

I can rely on them in the future?"

She had finally understood: one could only rely on oneself in this world.

Wendy hesitated but seemed ready to speak again.

Jane waved her hand impatiently. "Enough, I don't want to hear it. If you have time, go pick up Wilhelm from Gabriel's place."

She had heard about Gabriel's illegal acquisition of Prospectus Technology's core data. His actions would likely make it impossible for him to evade consequences, and Wilhelm needed to be brought back to her side.

"Alright, I'll leave shortly," Wendy replied.

"Good. I'm heading to the study. Don't disturb me unless it's urgent." With that, Jane wheeled herself to the study.

Wendy sighed, watching her leave. Without another word, she turned to the driver to discuss the logistics of retrieving Wilhelm.

Once in the study, Jane called her assistant and instructed her to arrange a meeting with Gabriel.

The assistant was efficient, and Jane was taken to meet him the next morning.

When Jane saw Gabriel again, her face was devoid of emotion.

"I'm here today to tell you that I'll be going abroad soon. If Wilhelm stays with you, he'll only suffer. I've

to take him with me she

said.

Gabriel looked haggard, his unshaven face and weary eyes making him appear ten years older.

After a long pause, he nodded. "Understood. I've saved some

money for him. It should be enough for the two of you to live

comfortably abroad." Contentov

Jane blinked in surprise but quickly scoffed. "Even if you do that, don't expect my gratitude. And Wilhelm won't be forced to remember your

so-called good deeds in the future."

If it weren't for Gabriel, she wouldn't be in this position. The Wilkies' abandonment

of her was entirely his fault.

Gabriel's voice turned cold. "I don't need your gratitude. Never mention me to Wilhelm. Act as if I don't exist."

"Don't worry. I won't. I hope this is the last time we meet," Jane said flatly.

Gabriel looked at her for a long moment before speaking softly. "Please take care of our son."

Jane gave no reply. She turned and left without another word.

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Gabriel lowered his gaze, a flash of ruthlessness crossing his eyes.

Once Jane took Wilhelm away, he would have no further concerns. He wouldn't let Damon off the hook for ruining him.

After leaving the police station, Jane immediately had her assistant handle Wilhelm's international travel paperwork and booked tickets for the next morning.

When she arrived home, Wendy had already brought Wilhelm back.

As soon as Wilhelm saw Jane, he rushed into her arms. "Mommy!"

Jane patted his head and said, "Wil, how about we have a meal with your grandparents later?"

Wilhelm looked up at her cautiously. "Mommy, now that you've brought me here, are you going to send me back to Daddy's place later? I don't want to go back there..."

"Don't worry. I won't. From now on, you'll stay with me," Jane reassured him.

Wilhelm's face brightened at first, then his expression dimmed slightly. "But what about Daddy? Won't he come with us?"

Jane's smile faded as she looked at Wilhelm. "I've already separated from your father. Now, you have to choose between me and him. Who do you want to stay with?"

If Wilhelm chose Gabriel, she wouldn't take him with her.

Upon seeing Jane's serious expression, Wilhelm's face paled.

During the divorce, he had learned to read the situation. He knew that if he said he wanted to stay with Gabriel or hoped for the family to reunite, it would upset Jane.

He clenched his small fists and carefully answered, "Mommy, I want to stay with you. Is that okay?"

Hearing that, Jane smiled and reached out to pat his head. "Of course! Let's have Wendy take you upstairs to shower, and then I'll take you to your grandparents, okay?"

"Okay," Wilhelm replied.

After Wendy led Wilhelm upstairs, Jane picked up her phone and dialed her mother.

"Mom, I'm bringing Wil over for lunch later, and I need to talk to you about something," she said.

Around noon, Jane arrived at her parents' house with Wilhelm.

When Ruth saw him, her brow furrowed. "Didn't the court already rule that he stays with Gabriel? Why did you bring him back?"

As a mother, she didn't want Jane raising Wilhelm alone. The child would only hold her back.

Wilhelm noticed his grandmother's unusual attitude and instinctively shrank behind Jane's wheelchair, looking up at her warily.

Jane turned and gently patted his head. "Why don't you go play in the garden for a while? Mommy needs to talk to Grandma."

Wilhelm didn't move, his eyes filled with fear. He was afraid his mother would send him back to the cold house, and he hadn't seen his dad in days...

Noticing his fear, Jane softened her tone.

Go ahead, and after you play for a while, I'll call you for lunch.

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"Okay." Reluctantly, Wilhelm left.

Once he was out of sight, Jane turned to Ruth. "Mom, Wilhelm son. Now that Gabriel might be facing prison time, if I don't take care of him, who will?"



"But have you considered this at your age, if you take a child with you, what kind of man with good prospects will want you?" Ruth asked.

Moreover, Jane would soon be going abroad. Raising a child alone there would only make things harder.

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"If I don't take him with me, should I just watch him fend for himself?" Jane defended.

Ruth sighed. Wilhelm was her grandson, and she naturally wanted what was best for him. But that shouldn't come at the cost of sacrificing her daughter's happiness for the rest of her life.

"I'm not saying that, but if you want to take him abroad, I absolutely disagree. If it's unavoidable, then leave him here. Your father and I will take care of him," she said.

Jane immediately refused. "No, I've already arranged for his travel documents. We're flying out together tomorrow morning. I won't leave him here."

Once Pedro and Theo found out she had sold the shares of the Wilkie Group to Damon, they would be furious.

By the time that happened, she wouldn't be in the country, and Wilhelm would just become the target of their anger.

As for her parents, they were Pedro's son and daughter-in-law. He wouldn't mistreat them, and Theo wouldn't dare to, either.

Ruth's anger flared. "Why don't you ever listen? I'm doing this for your own good!"

"Mom, I can make my own decisions. Besides, Gabriel left a lot of money for Wilhelm. He won't be a burden to me," Jane said, her tone softening in an attempt to soothe her mother.

Mentioning Gabriel only made Ruth angrier. If it weren't for him, her daughter wouldn't have ended up in this situation. But now, it was too late to change anything.

"Since you insist on taking him with you, I can't stop you. But you'd better think this through. In the end, it'll be you who suffers," she warned.

Jane's patience began to wane. "Mom, don't worry. Even if things get tough, I won't come to you complaining."

"It's not that I'm worried you'll complain! I'm worried you'll regret this in the future!" Ruth exclaimed in exasperation.

"We'll deal with the future when it comes. I don't want to think about it right now," Jane replied firmly.

Just as they were speaking, Andrew Wilkie emerged from the study.

Seeing their grim expressions, he frowned. What's going on? Our daughter finally comes back, and now you're saying something to upset her? Why do both of you look so distressed?"

Ruth turned her head away coldly, refusing to speak.

Jane looked up at her father. "It's nothing, Dad. I just wanted to let you know that I've booked a flight for tomorrow morning. I'm going abroad."

Andrew's expression changed. "Why the rush?"

Jane opened her mouth to respond when the sound of hurried footsteps came from the door.

Everyone turned to see Pedro and Theo walking in, their faces dark with anger.

Andrew looked startled. "Dad, what brings you here?"

Pedro rarely visited unannounced. If something urgent came up, he would usually summon them to his place instead.

Theo sneered. "You should ask your dear daughter!"

He shot a sharp glare at Jane. "Jane, you actually sold the Wilkie Group's shares to Damon. You must be tired of living!"

Jane hadn't expected them to find out so quickly. Her expression darkened.

Andrew and Ruth stared at her, stunned.

"Jane, what does Theo mean? Is there some kind of misunderstanding?" Andrew asked, his voice laced with disbelief.

Jane couldn't have sold the shares to Damon!

Although the Wilkie Group was

collaborating with Prospectus Technology, they were still competitors. Damon wouldn't be content with just holding a small stake in the Wilkie Group.

"Misunderstanding?" Theo's laugh was cold. "Ask her yourselves if it's a misunderstanding!"

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Andrew and Ruth stared at Jane, their faces full of disbelief.

Andrew was the first to speak. "Jane, is what Theo said true? Did you really sell the Wilkie Group's shares to Prospectus Technology?"

Jane bit her lip, her face tense and silent.

Her silence confirmed their worst fears.

Andrew's expression darkened, anger flashing across his face as he leered at her. "Are you out of your mind? Why would you sell the shares to Prospectus Technology?!"

Ruth's eyes reddened, and she turned away, avoiding Jane entirely.

Although Ruth often criticized Pedro's methods, she had always sided with Andrew when it came to major decisions, especially regarding company shares.

Pedro glared at Jane coldly. "I'll give you three days to get those shares back. If you can't, you're no longer part of this family. I'll disown you!"

Andrew was appalled. He quickly spoke up. "Dad, this matter-"

"Shut up!" Pedro interrupted sharply. "You can't manage the company, and you can't even raise your daughter properly-what good are you? If you dare to plead for her, I'll kick you out of the family too. And I mean it!"

Andrew's face tightened, and he kept quiet, unwilling to say another word.

Jane looked up at Pedro and let out a cold laugh. "The shares are already sold. I sold them to Damon for 7,000,000 dollars. Even if you offered double that now, he wouldn't sell them back."

"What?!" Pedro roared. "You sold the shares for only 7,000,000 dollars? You... ungrateful wretch!"

His anger surged as he raised his hand and slapped her hard across the face.

The force of the blow made him stagger backward. If Theo hadn't quickly steadied him, he might have fallen.

The slap knocked Jane's head to the side, and she almost fell out of her wheelchair.

She slowly raised her head, her

expression emotionless as she met Pedro's gaze. "If I hadn't sold the shares to Damon, I probably wouldn't have even gotten 7,000,000 dollars. After all, Grandpa, you and Theo were planning to take the shares from me for nothing."

"You!" Pedro gasped, furious, nearly losing consciousness.

Ten percent of the company's shares! Jane sold them to Damon for only 7,000,000 dollars!

Pointing at Jane, he roared, "From this moment on, you are no longer my granddaughter. The Wilkies have nothing to do with you!"

With that, Pedro stormed out.

Theo shot Jane a cold, malevolent glance.

"Jane, you really know how to stir up trouble. If the Wilkie Group runs into problems because of the 10% you sold, I swear I won't let you off!" He

left those icy words hanging in the air before turning to follow Pedro.

Soon, only Jane and her parents remained in the living room. Andrew turned to Ruth and snapped, "This is the good daughter you spoiled!"

Ruth frowned. "Spoiled? You didn't? Was it just me?"

"Besides, those shares were hers to begin with. When your father and Theo tried to take them from her for nothing, you didn't say a word. And now that she sold them, you're blaming me?"

"If your father and Theo had been willing to offer her 7,000,000 dollars back then, the shares wouldn't have ended up with Damon. This is all because of their greed! Serves them right!"

Andrew's face twisted with rage, and he raised his hand, slapping her hard.

The sharp sound of the slap echoed through the living room, plunging it into an oppressive silence.

Upon realizing what he had done, Andrew's expression softened with regret. "I—"

"Oh, so now you dare hit me, huh?" Ruth's voice trembled with fury.

"Ever since married you, I haven't had a single good day. And now, over something that's clearly not

father and Theo's fault, you hit me? I've had enough. I want a divorce!"

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Andrew frowned. "Are you crazy?"

"Yes, I'm crazy! I want a divorce!" Ruth yelled.

Andrew's hands clenched into fists.

"Our child is still here, and you're spouting nonsense. Aren't you ashamed? I'm not going to argue with you," he said coldly.

Without waiting for a response, he turned and strode toward the study.

Ruth stayed on the sofa, tears streaming down her face. She didn't follow him.

Watching her mother's distress, Jane felt a pang of guilt.

"Mom, I'm sorry. If it weren't for me, Dad wouldn't have lost his temper," she said, her voice soft with regret.

In Jane's memory, her parents had always been close and rarely quarreled, especially in her presence. For her father to lash out like this, he must have been pushed to his limits.

Ruth wiped her tears and looked at Jane, her expression softening. "Jane, I was furious when Theo told us you sold the shares to Damon. I couldn't understand why you'd sell them to an outsider.

"But now, I've thought it through. If you hadn't sold them, your grandfather and Theo would have taken them from you. At least this way, you have some money in hand."

Even if Jane had handed the shares over to Theo, Ruth knew he wouldn't have been grateful. He would have seen it as his due.

Jane blinked, surprised by her mother's understanding.

At that moment, she finally grasped the depth of her mother's love. Tears welled up in her eyes.

"Thank you, Mom," she whispered.

Ruth knelt in front of her and took her hand, her voice trembling. "Take Wilhelm and leave the country tomorrow. You've sold the shares, and your father isn't strong-willed or capable enough to protect him. If Wilhelm stays here, he'll suffer. It's better if you take him with you."

Initially, Ruth had wanted Wilhelm to remain in the country so Jane could rebuild her life abroad and eventually remarry. But with Theo harboring resentment, protecting Wilhelm had become impossible.

She and Andrew only held 1% of the Wilkie Group's shares-far too little to shield Wilhelm from Theo's schemes. The safest option was for Jane to leave the country with her son.

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"Mom, why don't you and Dad come with us?" Jane suggested, her tone earnest. "With the money I have and what Gabriel left for Wilhelm, we can all live comfortably abroad."

Ruth hesitated before shaking her head. "No, your father and I are too old. Living abroad, not knowing the language-we wouldn't adjust. Besides, all our friends are here."

Deep down, Ruth feared they would become a burden to Jane.

Raising a child alone was already difficult enough. Adding two aging parents would only make things harder.

"Mom, don't decide so quickly," Jane urged. "I'll take Wilhelm abroad first and get him settled in school. If you and

Dad ever want to come, just let me know, and I'll arrange everything."

Ruth nodded reluctantly.

"Alright," she murmured.

After the emotional conversation, Jane found she had no appetite for dinner. She left with Wilhelm shortly afterward.

On the drive home, Wilhelm looked up at her curiously. "Why didn't we eat at Grandma and Grandpa's?"

Jane glanced at him, her voice gentle. "Grandma and Grandpa had something come up. We'll eat with them another time."

"Oh," Wilhelm said quietly, lowering his head. His small hand clenched at his side.

He couldn't help but wonder if his grandparents didn't like him. Maybe that's why they hadn't invited them to stay.

When they got home, Jane immediately asked Wendy to start packing their things.

The next morning, she and Wilhelm boarded a plane and left the country.

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With the lawyer's efforts, Gabriel was temporarily released on bail.

On the drive back, he turned to his secretary in the passenger seat. "How's the company doing while I was away?"

The secretary's expression grew grim. "Mr. Hackett, since news broke about your arrest, the company's stock has been plummeting. Several shareholders have already started selling off their shares to cash out."

Gabriel's face darkened as he growled, "Those old fools! They act high and mighty when things are going well, but the moment there's trouble, they rush to jump ship. A bunch of spineless idiots!"

"Some shareholders have even sold their shares at a loss..." the secretary added cautiously.

"Head to the company first!" Gabriel snapped.

He couldn't let this continue. At this rate, Nyce Tech would collapse within a month.

"Understood..." the secretary replied.

Philip, seated beside him, interjected with a frown, "Mr. Hackett, the priority right now is resolving the lawsuit Prospectus Technology has filed against you. If this isn't handled properly, you will face..."

He trailed off, but Gabriel caught his meaning.

"I don't pay you handsomely to spout nonsense!" Gabriel barked. "Your job is to win this case, not lecture me."

Philip hesitated. The evidence Prospectus Technology had submitted was damning and thorough. Unless they could prove it was falsified, there was little hope of victory.

Getting Gabriel out on bail had already been a challenge, and if he were taken back into custody, securing another release would be nearly impossible.

"Mr. Hackett, if the evidence Prospectus Technology submitted is legitimate, I recommend you start planning for the aftermath," Philip said carefully.

Gabriel's expression turned icy as he stared at Philip in silence.

The atmosphere in the car grew suffocating, and both Philip and the secretary held their breaths, afraid of provoking him further.

When the car finally stopped in front of Nyce Tech's building, Gabriel broke the silence. "Don't you have connections in the courts? Evidence, even if it's real, can be made to look se. Am I wrong?"

Philip was taken aback. "Mr. Hackett, that would be illegal!"

He was just a lawyer handling a case. He had no intention of ending up in prison alongside Gabriel.

Gabriel let out a cold chuckle.

"Illegal? That depends on who's

doing it if you pull this off, I'll pay you 1,500,000 dollar as

compensation, plus additional funds

to smooth things over."

He glanced at the secretary, who immediately understood and pulled a bank card from his briefcase, handing it over.

Gabriel frowned. "Why are you giving it to me? Hand it to Mr. Higham!"

The secretary quickly passed the card to Philip.



Philip didn't take it, visibly distressed. "Mr. Hackett, I really can't do this. You should find someone else for this kind of task."

"There's 3,000,000 dollars on this card," Gabriel said coldly. "If you don't take it, that money might be used to hire someone to take care of you instead. Your choice."

Without another word, he stepped out of the car and slammed the door.

The secretary sighed and looked at Philip. "Mr. Higham, you've already boarded this ship. There's no getting off now. Either you help Mr. Hackett out of this mess, or we all go down together. It's too late to back out."

After a long silence, Philip reluctantly took the card with trembling hands and exited the car.

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By the time Philip left the vehicle, Gabriel had already arrived at the top floor of Nyce Tech.

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The once-bustling top floor of Nyce Tech was eerily quiet. Only a few secretaries remained at their desks.

Gabriel approached one of them with a scowl. "Where is everyone?"

The secretaries froze at the sound of Gabriel's voice.

After a brief moment, one of them looked up, confirming it was him, and quickly stood. "Good afternoon, Mr. Hackett."

"I asked you a question," Gabriel repeated, his tone sharp. "Where is everyone else? Why is it so empty here?"

The secretary stammered, "T-They've all resigned..."

She didn't dare mention that she and the others still present were planning to quit as soon as their work was handed off.

Gabriel's expression darkened. "Notify all shareholders to meet me in the conference room in 30 minutes."

"Y-Yes, sir..." The secretary hurried off.

Back in his office, Gabriel stared at the pile of untouched documents on his desk, his frustration mounting.

A bunch of useless slackers! They hadn't even tried to delegate tasks to other shareholders in his absence.

Half an hour later, the conference room was only half-full, a stark contrast to the usual crowded meetings.

Sitting at the head of the table, Gabriel scanned the room with a glower. "Where is everyone else? Are they all dead?"

One shareholder hesitantly replied, "Mr. Hackett, some haven't come to the office, and others have already sold their shares and are no longer part of Nyce Tech. The ones still here are present."

Gabriel sneered and slammed a file onto the table. "So, the moment I'm gone, they all scramble to leave? Afraid they'll get dragged down if they stay?"

The shareholder lowered his head, not daring to respond.

"Fine," Gabriel said coldly. "If no one else is coming, let's get started. Give me a full report on Nyce Tech's current situation."

The shareholders exchanged uneasy glances, none willing to speak first.

The truth was too grim to voice.

Nyce Tech was on the brink of collapse. Stock prices had plummeted, and if the trend continued, bankruptcy would be inevitable.

The remaining shareholders weren't even there voluntarily. They hadn't been able to leave earlier, and now, no one wanted their shares. Even if sold, the price would be absurdly low.

Gabriel knocked the table impatiently. "I asked a question. Have you all gone mute? Don't you usually have a lot to say?"

Finally, one shareholder gathered the courage to speak. "Mr. Hackett, the company's situation has deteriorated significantly. Many of our partners have terminated their contracts..."

Gabriel snorted. "If they want to terminate contracts, make them pay the penalty fees as stipulated. Simple."

"But they're refusing to pay," the shareholder said nervously. "They've said we can sue them if we want, but they can afford to drag it out in court

On the other hand, Nyce Tech can't." .

The implication was clear-Nyce Tech didn't have the resources to survive a lengthy legal battle. The partners wouldn't have to pay the penalty fees once Nyce Tech collapsed.

"In that case, deliver the products as per the contracts. If they send them back, wait a few days and deliver them again. Keep it up and see who lasts longer," Gabriel ordered.

The shareholders winced.

Under normal circumstances, they might have supported the strategy. But Nyce Tech's current scandal allegedly stealing Prospectus Technology's core technology-had left them with

neither the time nor the resources to

play such games.

Another shareholder ventured cautiously, "Mr. Hackett, the stock price keeps dropping. If this continues, the company won't last much longer. Resolving the allegations against you is critical. Only then can we focus on dealing with the partners."

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Gabriel's face was grim, and he didn't speak.

The conference room fell silent, the only sound the faint, heavy breathing of those present.

"Enough. I understand. For now, take care of the backlog of files on my desk. I'll handle the PR situation. I won't let Nyce Tech collapse!" he announced.

His words did little to inspire confidence. The shareholders still looked deeply uncertain.

From Gabriel's expression, it was clear the allegations of stealing Prospectus Technology's core technology were true.

No wonder. That was how they had managed to release the Galaxy chip so quickly.

If Prospectus Technology had solid evidence, just the charge of stealing data related to their chip's development would be enough to bankrupt Nyce Tech entirely. Even selling the company wouldn't cover the damages.

"Understood..." the shareholders chorused.

Upon seeing their grimaces, Gabriel's expression darkened further. He waved them off impatiently. "Alright, that's it. You can all leave."

The shareholders filed out one by one, leaving the conference room empty except for Gabriel.

He sat alone for a long time before finally rising and heading back to his office.

His time out on bail was short-he had to make the most of every second.

Back in his office, he immediately called for his secretary. "Find out how much liquid capital Nyce Tech currently has."

Less than ten minutes later, the secretary returned with the numbers. "Mr. Hackett, Nyce Tech currently has 79,300,000 dollars in liquid assets."

Gabriel took a deep breath, his voice cold. "Transfer all of it to this account."

He handed the secretary a slip of paper with a string of numbers that looked like a bank account.

The secretary took the paper, his fingers trembling slightly. "Mr. Hackett, if we move all the liquid funds, the company won't be able to function within a week. Are you certain about this?"

"Do as I say. I'll handle the company," Gabriel replied.

After a moment's hesitation, the secretary nodded. "Understood, Mr. Hackett. I'll take care of it right away."

Once the secretary left, Gabriel contacted a friend overseas, asking them to prepare a helicopter for him.

Given the current state of Nyce Tech, it was clear that Prospectus Technology wouldn't let him off the hook.

He knew all too well that the evidence Damon had submitted was enough to keep him behind bars for life.

At best, Philip could buy him another day or two. He had to leave before the police came to arrest him again.

There was just one more thing he had to do before he fled.

Gabriel's expression darkened further, his eyes cold and calculating.

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Spencer entered Damon's office, holding a document. "Mr. Sumner, I've just received word that Gabriel was released on bail this morning."

Damon paused mid-signature and looked up. "Where did he go after being released?"

"Straight from the police station to Nyce Tech," Spencer informed.

Damon nodded. "Understood. He'll be back in custody soon enough."

"Should we have someone keep an eye on his movements?" Spencer asked.

"Yes," Damon answered.

After Spencer left, Damon finished signing the document and turned to review another file.

By 3:00 p.m., Damon called Nyla to let her know he'd be working late "Nyla, you and Buddy don't need to wait for me for dinner tonight I'll be home a little late."

Nyla's gentle voice came through the phone. "In that case, I'll have Lydia pack up some food, and

Buddy and I will bring dinnerel

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office for you."

"No need. It's too much trouble for you two to come all the way here. I'll be back by 8:00 p.m. at the latest, and I'm swamped right now. Even if you came, I wouldn't have time to sit with you," Damon explained.