

Trading My Ex for His Uncle c 1211

Alexander glanced at Spencer, his tone serious. "Mr. Hogg, you've been with Mr. Sumner for many years. You don't want to see Prospectus Technology go bankrupt just because of his stubbornness, do you? I hope you can persuade him to accept my help."

Spencer remained silent for a moment before responding calmly, "I appreciate your kindness, Mr. Kinsey, but I don't think Mr. Sumner will accept your help. Please go back."

Upon seeing Spencer's cold demeanor, Alexander frowned slightly.

Still, he persisted. "If Mr. Sumner changes his mind, tell him to contact me anytime. I'll be staying in Saintornia for the next few days."

After Alexander left, Spencer went straight to Damon's office to report, "Mr. Sumner, Mr. Kinsey has left."

"Mm. If he comes again, don't let him in," Damon replied.

He wasn't about to give the Kinseys another opportunity to manipulate him. To

Damon, Alexander and Emerald were one and the same.

The only difference was that Emerald was blunt and forceful, while Alexander hid behind a façade of kindness.

"Yes, Mr. Sumner," Spencer answered.

Once Spencer left, Damon picked up his documents and resumed reading.

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Instead of returning to his hotel after leaving Prospectus Technology, Alexander asked his driver to take him to Mason's kindergarten.

Thanks to his arrangements, he quickly found himself face-to-face with Mason.

When Mason saw him, his face lit up with excitement. "Master! I thought you went back to Meristate! What are you doing here?"

Alexander smiled. "What, Buddy? You don't want to see your master?"

"Of course, I do!" Mason exclaimed eagerly.

"Haha, that's good," Alexander said. "I was worried you hadn't contacted me in so long because you didn't want me as your master anymore."

"No way!" Mason quickly denied it, but then his expression softened, and he lowered his head. "I just... miss my mom a lot lately..."

Seeing Mason's downcast mood, Alexander felt a pang of guilt.

He reached out and gently ruffled Mason's hair. "Buddy, didn't you say you wanted to learn hacking skills from me? I came here to see how much progress you've made."

Mason shook his head. "I haven't touched a computer lately."

"Why not?" Alexander asked, concern creeping into his voice.

"Because I started learning hacking to help my mom have a better life. But now that she's in Meristate, doesn't matter how much I

ve

it

learn-it's useless," Mason explained quietly.

Alexander's expression darkened.

He took a deep breath to control his rising anger and crouched to

Mason's level. "Buddy, you can't just give up on something you've worked so hard for because of someone else."

"But... Mommy isn't just 'someone else'," Mason said, his voice tinged with sadness.

He had learned hacking with the hope of making money and taking care of his mother. But now that she was gone, the pursuit seemed pointless.

Alexander forced a smile and

replied, "Buddy, I know your mom is important to you. But if you keep learning hacking, maybe one day you'll be able to find out where she is. Then you'll have a chance to see her again."

Mason hesitated, his gaze shifting uncertainly.

Just as Alexander was about to continue, his phone suddenly rang.

Upon seeing that it was Emerald, his expression tightened.

He looked at Mason and said, "Buddy, I have something urgent to take care of. Think about what I said and call me when you've made a decision."

With that, he turned and walked out, answering the call.

Emerald's cold, angry voice came through the phone. "Alexander, I heard you're planning to help Prospectus Technology?"

Alexander wasn't surprised by her quick discovery. He remained calm as he replied, "Yes."

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"Are you insane? Are you going against me for Prospectus Technology?" Emerald demanded.

Alexander took a deep breath and replied firmly, "Aunt Emerald, I'm helping you."

"Helping me? If you really want to help me, then get back to Meristate immediately and stop interfering with Prospectus Technology's downfall!" Emerald snapped.

"I'm afraid I can't do that," Alexander said.

There was a long silence on the other end of the line. Emerald was clearly struggling to contain her emotions.

After a pause, her voice turned frosty. "Alexander, if you insist on staying in Saintornia and helping Prospectus Technology, then you are officially opposing me. Don't blame me for not showing mercy."

Years of ruthless decisions had earned her the position of head of the Nixons. She would never allow anyone to disrupt her plans, not even her own nephew.

"Aunt Emerald, don't you understand? If you want Nyla to stay obedient, the last thing you should do is target Prospectus Technology.

"Everyone has their limits. If you push Nyla too far, who knows what she'll do? Don't wait until it's too late and regret it," Alexander reasoned.

Emerald let out a bitter laugh. "What can she possibly do? I warn you, stay out of Prospectus Technology's business. You can't save them."

With that, she hung up.

Alexander sighed, pocketed his phone, and got into his car.

Back in Emerald's office, fury consumed her. She slammed her phone onto the desk.

She had supported Alexander for so many years, and now he had the audacity to turn against her.

The more she thought about it, the angrier she became.

Grabbing the landline, she dialed her brother. "Control your son! Stop him from interfering in Saintornia! If he messes up my position in the Nixons, we'll all go down together!"

Not long after that call, Alexander received a call from his father.

His father warned, "Alexander, your aunt is

in

curious. Stop getting involved

If she really loses her

be able to save

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There was a long silence before Alexander quietly replied, "I understand. I'll go back in a few days."

After hanging up, concern crept over his face. He had a sinking feeling that if things continued this way, the situation could spiral out of

swtrol.

For the next two days, Alexander tried repeatedly to arrange a meeting with

Damon, but the latter refused to see him.

Finally, on the third morning, Alexander instructed Nigel to book him a flight back to Meristate.

Enough was enough. Damon's stance was clear, and there was no point in pushing further.

That afternoon, Alexander left Saintornia.

Not long after his departure, Damon received the news.

"Mr. Sumner, Mr. Kinsey seems to have given up," Spencer reported.

"Mm. How's Nyla?" Damon asked.

Before Nyla had left, he had sent his men to Meristate, instructing them to be ready in case she reached out for help.

"Stings has already infiltrated the Nixon estate. Now, we just have to wait for Ms. Kinsey to contact them," Spencer replied.

Damon nodded. "Yes. If Nyla needs help, she'll reach out."

"Mr. Sumner, with Stings watching

over her, she should be safe. The

most important thing now is to

stabilize Prospectus Technology so Emerald can't make another move against us," Spencer reminded him.

"Mm. If anything happens over there, let me know immediately," Damon

instructed.

"Sure," Spencer replied.

"That's all," Damon said.

After Spencer left, Damon picked up his files, but his mind couldn't focus. All he

could think about was how Nyla was faring over there.

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Damon set down the document and picked up his phone, dialing a video call to Nyla.

After several attempts, there was no answer.

His expression darkened, and a sense of unease crept over him. He quickly called Spencer into his office and instructed him to find a way to contact Stings and check if anything had happened to Nyla.

Emerald entered Nyla's bedroom with several maids, rummaging through every inch of the room, including the suitcase Nyla had brought with her.

Two maids held Nyla firmly, leaving her helpless as her clothes and belongings were tossed carelessly onto the floor. Her eyes burned red with anger.

One of the maids approached Emerald, handing her two phones. "Madam, these are the only devices we found. It doesn't seem like Ms. Kinsey has any other means of communication. Oh, and we also found this."

Emerald took the items and glanced at the paper the maid had handed her. It was a crude sketch of the estate's layout. She chuckled and casually threw both the paper and the phones out the window.

Nyla's face paled. "No!"

She struggled to break free, but the two maids gripped her arms like iron clamps, leaving her powerless. She could only watch as her phones disappeared outside. Seeing the hatred in Nyla's eyes, Emerald stepped forward, towering over her. "Since you refuse to learn obedience, I'll make sure you do. From now on, you won't hear from Damon or Saintornia. Your only focus should be becoming my daughter and the Nixons' future successor."

Emerald smirked, her voice dripping with malice. "And don't bother sketching the estate's layout. If you want to run, go ahead and try. Let's see who wins-your escape or my pursuit."

Nyla glared at her, gritting her teeth. "The Nixons won't be under your control forever."

Emerald chuckled, her expression laced with sarcasm. "That's none of your concern. Just do as I say."

With that, she turned and left.

The maids followed her out, finally releasing Nyla.

She collapsed onto the floor, staring at the mess of her belongings. Her hands clenched into fists at her sides.

She had to find a way to send a message. She couldn't just sit and wait.

Locked inside the estate, surrounded by strangers, she had no idea who to turn to

or how to get her message to the right person.

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After a few moments of thought, with no solution coming to mind, she pressed her lips together and decided to start cleaning up the mess in her room. fo

The next morning, Nyla woke to a knock at her door.

A maid's voice called from outside, "Ms. Kinsey, Madam says we have a guest.

She wants you to change and come to the living room."

Nyla sat up and replied, "Got it."

After freshening up, she headed to the living room about twenty minutes later.

Emerald was already seated on the couch, looking slightly impatient.

Across from her sat a young man in his early 20s, with blond hair and striking blue eyes. As soon as Nyla entered, his gaze landed on her, filled with blatant curiosity

"You're

introdere," Emerald said. "Let me

the

you. This is Ricky Chilton, of a close friend of mi

to know each other."

Nyla turned to the young man and said politely, "Hello, I'm Nyla Kinsey."

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Ricky smiled. "Nice to meet you, Ms. Kinsey. I'm Ricky."

He spoke in Nyla's language so fluently and without an accent that, had she not seen him in person, she wouldn't have guessed he was a foreigner.

Emerald stood up and glanced between them. "Nyla, take Ricky for a walk around the garden. I have something to take care of. We'll have lunch together later."

Nyla nodded. "Alright."

Satisfied with her response, Emerald left the room.

As she had anticipated, Nyla needed to understand that she had no choice but to comply. This would stop her from resisting.

Emerald had invited Ricky to stay for lunch, and he had readily agreed.

Once she was gone, the spacious living room seemed to grow quieter, leaving just Nyla and Ricky.

Ricky turned to her. "Shall we go?"

"Sure," Nyla replied.

As they walked toward the garden, Ricky kept up a steady stream of conversation, making the stroll feel less tedious.

About an hour later, he asked with a smile, "Ms. Kinsey, I like you. What's your first impression of me?"

Back in the living room, Nyla had already figured out Emerald's plan-she was trying to set them up.

There was no point in confronting her about it. Even if Nyla opposed Emerald, the woman would only find another way to force her hand.

Instead of outright rejecting the plan, Nyla decided to approach it on her own terms.

She met Ricky's gaze and replied, "Mr. Chilton, you're a very nice person."

He raised an eyebrow. "So, I'm getting the 'good guy' card?"

Nyla couldn't help but laugh. "You know that phrase?"

"Of course. I don't live in a bubble. Ms. Kinsey, I assume you know why Mrs. Nixon wanted us to meet," Ricky replied.

"Yes." She paused before asking, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Go ahead," Ricky said.

"Does your father, mother, or anyone in your family work for the Nixons?" Nyla asked.

Ricky hesitated before answering, "My father works under Mrs. Nixon in the Nixons. My mother is a close friend of hers."

"Then did she tell you that I was already married back in my country? That I have a five-year-old child, and that love my husband deeply?" Nyla asked.

The moment she finished speaking, Ricky's expression darkened.

"I... suddenly remembered I have

something urgent to take care of et

he said stiffly. "I won't be staying for lunch. Please tell Mrs. Nixon apologize."

Nyla smiled. "Of course."

With that, Ricky turned and hurried off.

Watching him leave, Nyla smirked.

The real drama was about to begin.

Less than an hour later, Emerald stormed into her room, furious. "Nyla! What did you say to Ricky?!"

to Nyla, everything was falling apart.

To fully control the Nixons, Emerald needed Ricky's father's support. Now, thanks

Nyla remained calm, as if she had expected this reaction. "I simply told him the truth. After all, how was I supposed to know whether you had told him about my marriage

Damon back in the country

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"Do you think I would tell him that?!" Emerald shot back. "Think about it. What man would want to be with you if he knew you were already married?!"

Nyla remained unfazed by Emerald's harsh words. Instead, she looked up at her with a smirk. "You were married to my dad before, yet you still managed to marry your current husband and have two more kids. Why don't you introduce me to someone else? I'm sure there's always someone willing."

Emerald trembled with anger, pointing at Nyla as though she wanted to lash out, but no rebuttal came to mind.

Unbothered, Nyla poured Emerald a glass of water and said calmly, "Don't get too worked up. You're not young anymore."

"What if you have a stroke? I doubt either of your precious children would be available to take care of you."

"Shut up!" Emerald growled.

Every word out of Nyla's mouth hit a nerve, making Emerald's chest rise and fall with fury.

How did she end up with such an ungrateful daughter?!

Nyla shrugged and continued. "You better keep introducing me to potential suitors. I don't mind a business marriage."

After all, she was certain Emerald wouldn't waste her as a pawn. If she were to arrange a marriage, it would be with someone useful.

Emerald's face darkened. "If you don't want something to happen to Damon and Buddy, you'd better behave. Otherwise, I can't guarantee what I might do to them."

A cold glint flashed in Nyla's eyes, but she didn't look the least bit threatened.

"Ms. Kinsey, you should get one thing straight. The only reason I'm even tolerating you and not making things ugly is because of Damon and Buddy.

"If anything happens to them, I promise you'll lose me as a pawn immediately," she said, her voice steady.

Emerald narrowed her eyes. "Are you sure about that?"

"Ever since the last time you went back on your word, I've stopped giving you chances to threaten me. Do whatever you want," Nyla retorted.

With that, she turned on her heel and left without sparing Emerald another glance.

Emerald watched her walk away, her face livid.

The moment Nyla was out of sight, Emerald grabbed the teacup from the table and hurled it onto the floor.

Tea splashed everywhere, and the delicate celadon porcelain shattered into pieces.

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That afternoon, Nyla took a nap, only waking when the sun began to set.

At dinner, Emerald treated her as though she were invisible.

Not that Nyla cared. She enjoyed her meal in peace, unfazed by the silent treatment. It wasn't as if Emerald ever paid much attention to her in the first place.

Sensing Emerald's displeasure, Delia glared at Nyla and said coldly, "I heard you offended Mr. Chilton today."

Nyla kept her eyes on her food, pretending she hadn't heard a thing.

Delia scowled and raised her voice. "Hey, Nyla! I'm talking to you. Are you deaf?!"

At this, Nyla finally looked up, raising

an eyebrow. "Oh, so it was you

talking thought it was a dog

barking. I was just wondering how one got into a heavily guarded estate."

"You!" Delia's face turned red with fury, and she immediately turned to Emerald for

support. "Mom! Did you hear her? She called me a dog!"

She had been spoiled her whole life. When had she ever been insulted like this?

Emerald's expression darkened. "Nyla, apologize to your younger sister!"

Nyla smirked. "Oh? So you do acknowledge that she's younger than me? Tell me, have you ever seen a younger sister screaming at her older sister like that? Calling her deaf? What poor manners.

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Emerald stiffened. "That still doesn't give you the right to insult her."

Setting her utensils down, Nyla feigned innocence. "So what you're saying is, she can insult me, but I can't insult her back?"

Emerald could tell she was being led into a trap and held her tongue.

Seeing her silence, Nyla pressed, "Since you're not saying anything, I'll take that as a yes."

"Who said I agreed?!" Emerald snapped, her face grim.

She took a deep breath and added, "I'll let it slide this time. But if it happens again, both of you will be punished."

Delia opened her mouth to protest, but under Emerald's icy stare, she had no choice but to drop her head and angrily stab her food.

Still, her eyes burned with resentment. She wouldn't let Nyla off the hook so

easily.

Meanwhile, Nyla stood up with a smile. "I'm full. You guys enjoy your meal. I hope this little incident didn't ruin your appetite!"

With that, she turned and left.

Delia ground her teeth, her face twisted with frustration.

Emerald frowned, clearly displeased, but said nothing and continued her meal.

Across the table, Brian watched Nyla's retreating figure with amusement. It seemed his half-sister wasn't the submissive pushover everyone had expected her to be.

After dinner, Emerald called Delia and Brian into the study.

"I'm planning to throw a banquet for Nyla this Saturday," she said. "It's time to officially introduce her as a member of our family."

Delia's face twisted with outrage. "Mom, I hate her! I don't want a sister! Can't you just send her back to where she came from? She doesn't respect you at all, and she treats us terribly!"

Emerald ignored her and turned to Brian. "What about you? What do you think?"

Brian's expression remained neutral.

"Mom, whatever you decide, I'll

support you. Besides, since she's

already living here, it makes sense to introduce her to everyone.

Emerald nodded in approval. "Good. Many important people will be attending, so make sure you behave properly. We can't afford to embarrass the family."

Brian nodded. "I understand, Mom."

"That's all. You can go now," Emerald dismissed them.

As soon as they left the study, Delia grabbed Brian's arm, her face still twisted in anger.

"Brian, why did you agree with Mom? Do you really want another person competing with us for the inheritance?" she questioned.

More than anything, she just despised Nyla and didn't want her around.

Brian gave a small smile. "Why not? She's Mom's daughter too. You should try being nicer to her instead of picking fights all the time."

Delia scoffed. "Why should I? I hate her! Even if you and Mom throw a banquet for her, I will never acknowledge her as my sister!"

With that, she stormed off in a huff.

Watching her go, Brian chuckled and shook his head.

Their mother had coddled Delia too much. She still foolishly believed that Nyla's presence meant she'd have to compete for the Nixons' inheritance.

How naïve.

Maybe that was a good thing, though. If Delia ever found out that Nyla was nothing more than a pawn in Emerald's grand scheme, her big mouth might end up ruining everything.

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At that thought, Brian decided it was best to let Delia remain naïve.

Back in her room, Delia grew more frustrated. She opened her messaging app and started venting to her best friend about the situation.

After hearing her out, her friend suggested they find a way to embarrass Nyla at the Saturday banquet.

Delia hesitated. She hadn't agreed yet.

After all, the banquet was something both her mother and Brian had approved. If she caused trouble and ruined the event, Emerald would never let her off the hook.

Despite that, the thought of simply accepting Nyla as a member of the family didn't sit well with her either.

Thinking it over, she asked her friend if there was a way to humiliate Nyla without it being traced back to her.

Her friend offered a few ideas—perhaps triggering an allergic reaction or making Nyla sick, something subtle that would embarrass her at the banquet but wouldn't lead back to Delia.

After considering the suggestion, Delia immediately formulated a plan. She sent an [OK] before exiting the chat.

For the next few days, Emerald stopped trying to introduce Nyla to new men and instead hired an etiquette coach to teach her proper manners.

Nyla had no idea what Emerald was planning, nor did she care. She barely put any effort into the lessons, making a complete mess of them.

At the end of each day, the etiquette coach would march off to complain to Emerald.

At first, Emerald would get furious and summon Nyla to the study to scold her.

But after two days, she realized something-Nyla didn't care at all. She just argued back, nearly giving Emerald a stroke in the process.

Eventually, Emerald gave up. She told the etiquette coach, "As long as she looks presentable, that's enough."

Left with no other choice, the etiquette coach stopped trying so hard.

Before long, Friday arrived.

At dinner that evening, Emerald finally informed Nyla about the banquet planned for Saturday—an event to publicly introduce her as Emerald's daughter and an official member of the Nixons.

Nyla's response was indifferent. "Oh. Got it."

Emerald frowned, clearly displeased with her reaction. "That's all you have to say?"

Nyla looked at her mockingly. "And what exactly do you expect me to say? Am I supposed to cry tears gratitude? I don't recall ever asking you to throw a banquet and

announce me as your da

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Emerald's expression darkened. "Do you have any idea how many people would

kill to be my daughter? To be part of the Nixons?"

The Nixons had businesses across

the globe. In Meristate, they were among the wealthiest and most powerful families. Not only that, but their family had produced many politicians over the years, ensuring their influence remained strong.

Becoming a member of the Nixons meant gaining immense privilege.

Yet Nyla seemed completely unimpressed.

Emerald could hardly believe it—what was going on in this girl's head?!

Still smiling, Nyla replied, "If they were in my shoes, I doubt they'd be proud to have you as a mother. You sure have a high opinion of yourself, Ms. Kinsey." "You're absolutely ungrateful!" Emerald scolded.

Nyla nodded in agreement. "That's right. I don't appreciate it. So why don't you just cancel tomorrow's banquet?"

Emerald's face turned stormy, but she remained silent.

Cancel the banquet? That was out of the question. It was a crucial part of her plan.

Seeing the fury on Emerald's face, Nyla found it amusing.

Emerald wanted to use her but also expected gratitude in return. How greedy.

Delia, sitting nearby, was filled with frustration and resentment. She just didn't understand. Why would her mother still insist on introducing Nyla to the world after the way Nyla had just spoken to her?

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The dining room was thick with tension when Brian finally spoke. "Nyla, even though we have different fathers, now that you live here, we're family. Mom is throwing this banquet so everyone knows you're officially part of the Nixons."

Nyla turned to him with a smile. "If this banquet is for me, why am I the last one to know about it?"

Brian's gaze darkened slightly, but he remained silent.

Emerald let out a cold laugh. "Does it really matter when you found out?"

"It doesn't," Nyla replied. "But I'd prefer if you didn't pretend this is for my benefit when it's obviously for your own gain. That just makes you look desperate."

"Nyla! Who do you think you're calling desperate?!" Emerald snapped.

If Nyla weren't her biological daughter, Emerald would have kicked her out immediately.

This girl was nothing like the child she remembered. When she was little, she had been sweet and adorable. What had happened to her?

Nyla showed no fear. "I mean you. Do you really need me to spell it out?"

Emerald's fury was palpable. She slammed her utensils down on the table. "Get out!"

Without hesitation, Nyla stood. "Sure. Just have someone open the gate for me. I'd love to leave, but I have a feeling certain people won't actually let me go."

Emerald sneered. "Fine! I'll have the service staff open the gate for you. Let's see how far you get without money or a phone."

"That's none of your concern." With that, Nyla turned and walked toward the estate's entrance.

Brian's expression changed. He leaned toward Emerald and whispered, "Mom, the invitations have already been sent. If she doesn't show up tomorrow, the banquet won't happen."

Besides, people both inside and outside the Nixons already knew about Nyla.

They couldn't just replace her with someone else.

Emerald shot him a cold look. "Let her go! Let's see how long she lasts before she comes crawling back."

It was freezing outside, and Nyla had no money. Danger lurked everywhere. Once she ran into trouble, she'd have no choice but to beg to return.

Seeing that Emerald was too angry to listen to reason, Brian didn't argue further.

After all, Nyla was nothing more than a shield to him—someone to take the hits meant for him. Whether she lived or died was of no concern to him.

Still, letting her die wouldn't be ideal.

He turned to the butler. "Have some people follow her. Make sure nothing happens to her."

Before the butler could respond, Emerald snapped, "No one is to follow her! Let her learn her lesson."

Many people were keeping watch

outside the estate. The moment Nyla stepped out, they'd be on her. If she got caught and suffered a little, so be it.

Once she had a taste of hardship,

Emerald would personally go to net

"rescue" her. After that, she'd be obedient—no more talking back, no more attitude.

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Brian's expression changed slightly as he turned to Emerald. "Mom, we should have someone follow her. If something happens to her, it could affect our future plans."

Emerald's face darkened. "Don't worry. She'll be taken away, but they won't let her die. Our plans won't be affected."

"Mom..." Brian began, as though about to say more.

"Enough, Brian! Are you questioning my orders now?" Emerald barked.

Seeing that Emerald was truly angry, Brian didn't dare push further. He simply nodded and said, "Alright, we'll do as you say."

After the commotion, Emerald lost her appetite. She stood up and left the dining room.

As she was about to return to her study, her phone rang.

It was Edward's assistant, who informed her that Edward had just coughed up blood and collapsed. He'd been rushed to the hospital and was now in the ICU.

Emerald lowered her gaze and nodded. "Understood. I'll be there soon."

After hanging up, she immediately summoned Brian and Delia. The three of them quickly got into a car and headed to the hospital.

The ride was silent. None of them felt much concern for Edward.

Ever since he had planned to hand the Nixons over to his mistress and their illegitimate son, he had become their enemy.

Fortunately, Emerald still held control over the family, so things wouldn't spiral out of control even if Edward died.

In fact, the best outcome would be if he lingered a little longer-giving them more time to solidify Emerald's position.

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By the time they arrived at the hospital, an hour had passed.

As soon as they reached the ICU, two security guards in black suits blocked their path. Their faces were emotionless as they informed them that Edward had specifically ordered no visitors before losing consciousness.

Emerald remained composed. She had long since given up hope in Edward. However, Brian and Delia's expressions darkened, their anger almost palpable. They had rushed over to check on Edward, only to be stopped at the door.

Meanwhile, his mistress and illegitimate son were inside, by his side. The thought alone was infuriating.

Emerald's voice was cold and threatening. "You have two choices-step aside now, or you won't live to see tomorrow's sunrise."

The two guards remained

motionless, neither answering nor

moving aside. They had been

personally trained by Edward and

would only follow his orders

Emerald scoffed. If they refused to take the easy way, then she wouldn't hold back.

She pulled out her phone and made a call.

Within minutes, a dozen men in black suits arrived, their presence imposing.

The tension was palpable, the air thickening, like the calm before an inevitable storm.

Both sides stood off, as though a tightly wound string were about to snap. Just as a fight seemed imminent, the hospital room door swung open. A woman stepped out.

She wore a strapless dress, her fiery red hair cascading in elegant waves. She had clearly taken good care of herself-her appearance suggested she was in her early 30s.

She smirked, her gaze dripping with mockery as she looked at Emerald and her children. "Emerald, Edward isn't dead yet. Why are you here with Brian and Delia? And bringing a dozen men along... Were you planning to force your way in?"

Emerald's expression remained ice-cold. "I want to see him."

She had to confirm with her own eyes that Edward was still alive.

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"But he doesn't want to see you." The woman sneered. "Before he collapsed, he specifically said that if the three of you showed up, you weren't to be let in. Isn't that hilarious?"

Emerald scowled. "I don't care. I'm seeing him tonight."

"You think you can do whatever you want just because you're in charge of the Nixons now?" Mary Jewell challenged.

Emerald had no patience for her nonsense. Her voice was sharp. "Break in."

At her command, the men behind her surged forward.

Mary's face paled slightly, and she instinctively stepped back. The two guards in front of the door immediately moved to intercept them.

Fifteen minutes later, the hospital hallway was littered with bodies-Emerald's men had all been taken down.

Yet, the two original guards remained firmly in place, unmoved.

Mary reappeared, lifting her chin with an air of arrogance. "Looks like you won't be getting in tonight after all. If I were you, I wouldn't bother humiliating myself like this."

Emerald let out a cold laugh. "Mary, your luck won't last forever."

Once Edward was dead, Mary and her son would lose their protection. At that point, she would deal with them however she pleased.

Mary's expression flickered for a moment before she regained her composure. "You said the same thing when we first met. But strangely enough, I've been doing just fine all these years."

"Alright," Emerald said, her voice steely. "We'll see how long you last."

With that, she turned and walked away.

Brian and Delia hurried after her. It wasn't until they got into the car that Brian finally spoke. "Mom, if Mary keeps blocking us from seeing Dad, what should we do next?"

It had been almost half a year since they last saw Edward. Every time they tried, they were turned away.

When Brian was born, Edward and Emerald's relationship had still been decent, so Brian still had some attachment to his father.

Delia, however, had been born after Edward moved out to live with Mary and their son. He rarely returned home, so Delia felt little connection to him.

For her, not seeing him didn't make much of a difference.

Emerald's expression was grim. "Ignore her for now. She's just a clown. Once your father dies, let's see if she's still so smug."

"Understood," Brian replied.

By the time they returned to the estate, it was nearly midnight.

Brian and Delia headed straight to bed, while Emerald went to her study.

She called for the butler. "Edward's health is deteriorating. Keep a close eye on the situation. The moment anything happens, I want to be informed immediately."

If his condition weren't serious, those two guards wouldn't have fought so hard to keep them from seeing him. Once they saw Edward, they'd be able to tell how he was doing.

"Yes, Madam," the butler replied.

Emerald continued, her voice sharp. "Also, find out where Nyla is. Bring her back before tomorrow night's banquet."

She dismissed the butler with a wave of her hand.

Less than half an hour later, the

butler rushed back, his face anxious. "Madam, we've lost track of Ms. Kinsey. Shortly after she left the estate, she just disappeared

Emerald's expression darkened. "Keep searching. Check those watching the estate. See if they've acted unusually tonight."

"Understood," the butler answered.

By the next morning, there was still no sign of Nyla.

For the first time, Emerald began to panic. She immediately ordered more men to search the entire city for her whereabouts.