

Trading My Ex for His Uncle c 1301

"You!" Edward was so enraged that he fainted on the spot.

Mary sat down in a chair, her expression calm as she dialed a number on her phone.
"Bring Vik back."

Mary had already received word when Vik was taken by Emerald's men. She hadn't acted immediately, planning instead to use the situation to test Edward's feelings toward Emerald.

To her surprise, Edward showed no concern for her or Vik.

After hanging up, she glanced at Edward, still unconscious on the bed. As she thought about all the years she had spent with him, her gaze grew colder.

Soon, the doctor knocked and entered. "Ms. Jewell, did something happen to Mr. Nixon?"

Mary looked at the doctor, her voice cold. "From now on, I don't want his health to improve. You know what to do."

The doctor's eyes widened in shock, but he quickly nodded. "Understood, Ms. Jewell."

"Good. You can go now," she dismissed him.

An hour later, Vik was brought into the hospital room by Mary's men. He took a deep breath and pushed open the door.

He saw Mary sitting by the bed, her head lowered, lost in thought.

He walked up to her and asked, "Mom, did Dad send someone to get me?"

Mary looked up at him. "No, I did. Your father knows you caused Brian to lose a leg and wanted to take you back to make you lose one too."

Vik's face turned pale as he stared at her in disbelief. "Mom, are you lying to me?" Since he could remember, Edward had always lived with him and Mary.

Edward had always pampered him. Even when Vik made mistakes, Edward never punished him, but instead taught him lessons and helped him solve problems.

Now, Edward wanted him to lose a leg to make up for Brian?

Vik looked at Edward, unconscious on the bed, and felt a mix of sadness and disappointment.

"Vik, I'm not lying. Sit down. I need to tell you something," Mary instructed.

Soon, Mary explained how she had taken control of Edward's men over the years and planned to take the position of head of the Nixons from Emerald.

Vik was stunned and collapsed into a chair. "Mom, wasn't it Darcy who was behind all this?"

"He was just following my orders. I thought your father would protect us, which is why I acted clueless in front of everyone. But when he wanted to make you lose a leg to pay for Brian, I knew he was no longer the protector of our family," Mary declared.

If Edward had supported them, Mary might have spent her life as the fragile woman she once was. But she had to rely on herself to ensure Vik inherited the Nixons now.

Before that, though, she needed to deal with Emerald and Brian.

Vik looked at Mary. Her face was familiar, yet somehow foreign to him.

"Mom, why don't we just give up on fighting with Brian and Emerald? We could to the money Dad gave us

over the years and go somewhere no one knows us," he suggested.

Ever since Brian had lost his leg in the accident, Vik had been afraid-constantly worried about Brian and Emerald seeking revenge. He'd felt terrified when George's men had taken him at the airport, fearing they knew the truth behind the accident.

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The day Vik was locked up was the longest and most agonizing of his life. He no longer wanted to live in constant fear. If they kept fighting with Emerald, they

could end up dead.

Mary looked at him. "Vik, do you really think Emerald will let us go? Do you think you can hide the truth about Brian's accident forever?"

Vik's face went pale, and his entire body trembled. "Mom... I don't know what to do. I don't want to fight anymore. I'm scared."

Mary stepped closer, placing her hands on his shoulders. "Vik, look at me."

At her commanding tone, Vik summoned the courage to lift his head.

"The only thing we can do now is fight Emerald and Brian," she said.

"If we succeed, you'll never have to worry about Brian finding out about the accident because I won't let him live. If we fail, then the outcome will be the same as if we hadn't fought at all."

She paused. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Think carefully about whether you want to fight."

Vik swallowed hard. After a long silence, he spoke. "Okay, Mom, I'll fight for it."

Mary smiled with satisfaction. "That's my son."

Just then, Edward woke up.

Upon seeing Vik, his emotions flared, and his eyes burned with anger. "Vik, you caused Brian's accident and made him lose his leg! I won't let you get away with

Before he could say anything else, Mary slapped him across the face.

The sharp sound of the slap stunned both Edward and Vik. Neither of them had expected Mary to strike Edward.

"You dare hit me?!" Edward growled. "Mary, you're asking for it!"

For over 20 years, Mary had always been obedient to him. She'd tolerated so much to give birth to Vik

and stay by his side. But at that moment, Edward realized he never truly understood Mary.

Her expression was icy. "What's wrong with slapping you? Edward, you caused this situation yourself."

"You!" Edward's voice trembled with

fury. "Mary, I will never let your plan succeed. I'll hand the Nixons over to em to

Emerald, and I'll never give you and Vik!"

Mary chuckled mockingly. "Since you woke up, Emerald hasn't even come to see you once. You should have guessed by now who among the Nixons is the one most eager to see you dead."

Edward's face turned ashen, but he remained silent.

"You should've figured it out-Emerald is the one who most wants you dead. Once you're gone, the Nixons will truly belong to her," Mary emphasized.

"That would be better than leaving it to you!" Edward growled.

"Whether it's left to me or not is no longer your decision," she countered.

Just then, the door to the room opened.

Daniel walked in, handing Mary a glass bottle containing white powder.

"Ms. Jewell, here's the drug you requested. Just give him one gram daily for seven days, and he will fall into a coma," Daniel explained.

Mary took the bottle, smiling as she replied, "Thank you. Go rest."

After Daniel left, Vik turned to Mary. "Mom, this drug..."

"It's for your father," Mary answered.

Vik instinctively glanced at Edward, his hands clenched at his sides. "Mom... do we really have to do this?"

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Mary looked at Vik expressionlessly. "Of course. He was ready to make you pay for Brian's leg. Do you still see him as your father?"

Vik's expression shifted. After a long pause, he finally spoke. "But... he used to treat us well..."

Although Vik had been deeply disappointed when he discovered that Edward was willing to sacrifice his leg for Brian's, he still couldn't bring himself to harm his father.

Mary let out a cold laugh. "He did treat us well in the past, but didn't we treat him well, too?"

She had been with Edward since she was 20, willingly playing the role of the woman he kept outside his marriage. She had once believed that Edward truly loved her.

But today, she had come to a painful realization: no matter what, she and Vik would never compare to Brian and Emerald in Edward's heart.

Even after Emerald and Brian drugged him and nearly killed him, Edward had chosen to stand by them. If that were the case, then Mary wouldn't hesitate to be ruthless either.

Vik couldn't argue with her words, but he couldn't bear to watch his mother poison his father.

He stood up. "Mom, do whatever you want, but I can't stand by and watch you poison Dad. I'm leaving."

As he turned to go, Mary's cold voice echoed from behind him. "Stop right there. You're not going anywhere."

Vik froze mid-step and turned back to look at her in disbelief. "Mom..."

"Vik, I'm giving you two choices. Either you give your father the poison, or you stand by his side, let his men kill me, and sacrifice your leg for Brian," Mary declared.

Vik's face went deathly pale. Neither option was something he wanted to choose.

Upon seeing his pain, Mary's voice remained icy. "I'm giving you five minutes to decide. If you don't, I'll make the choice for you."

"Mom... do you really have to force me?" Vik asked, his voice shaking.

Mary stared at him impassively. "I'm not forcing you. This is the reality-you only have two options, and you must pick one."

Everything she was doing was for Vik's sake.

However, if Vik-the one who stood to gain the most-refused to take her side, she couldn't accept it. Thus, she had to force him to choose.

The room fell silent.

After a long while, Vik finally met Mary's gaze. "Mom... I can't do it. I can't poison Dad. I'd feel guilty for the rest of my life."

"And do you think he'll feel guilty for the rest of his life after making you pay for Brian's leg? Or will he just toss you aside like trash?" Mary countered.

Vik's expression wavered, his lips trembling.

Finally, his gaze hardened with determination. "I'll do it. I'll give Dad the poison."

Mary smiled in satisfaction. "That's my boy. Soon, the Nixons will be ours."

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Edward's worsening health quickly reached Emerald's ears.

She was more than happy about it. After all, if she had planned to poison Edward herself, she would've had to be cautious. Now that his condition was already deteriorating, it saved her the trouble.

Despite that, her satisfaction didn't last long.

At the monthly Nixon meeting on Monday morning, Mary arrived with Vik.

Emerald's face darkened. Her voice was icy. "Mary, what are you doing here with Vik?! This is a Nixon

internal meeting. If I recall correctly, neither of you are members of the family."

Mary smirked. "Vik and I are here as Edward's representatives. This is his signed authorization."

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Mary pulled a document from her bag and handed it to Emerald. "You can check it carefully-it has Edward's signature."

Emerald's expression remained cold as she took the papers. Sure enough, Edward's signature was on the last page.

She slammed the document onto the table. "I heard Edward's health has been declining. Does he still have the energy to authorize you to attend the meeting?"

"Of course. After all, Brian lost a leg and can't inherit the Nixons anymore. But Vik is still perfectly fine. As Edward's son, he has every right to the family legacy," Mary announced.

Emerald's face twisted with anger. "Mary, if you say one more word about Brian, I'll tear your mouth apart!"

Mary chuckled. "Emerald, I'm just stating facts. Why are you so mad?"

"Shut up!" Emerald hissed.

Tension crackled between them, but the other Nixon members quickly grew impatient.

Cortez frowned. "Are we holding this meeting or not? If not, I'm leaving. I didn't come here to watch you two argue."

Suppressing her fury, Emerald snapped, "Let's start the meeting."

Mary and Vik took their seats.

Vik looked nervous, while Mary sat back leisurely, her gaze taunting Emerald.

The meeting proceeded as planned, discussing recent developments within the Nixons and deciding on future business directions.

Midway through, Mary suddenly

looked at Emerald. "Emerald, I heard you transferred all your shares in Kajer Tech to your long-lost daughter, Nyla. And yet, just days after she joined the company she disappeared without a trace. Don't you think you owe everyone here an explanation?"

At her words, everyone turned to Emerald, some already showing signs of discontent.

Emerald kept a straight face. "Why should I explain myself to anyone for transferring my own shares to my daughter?"

Mary scoffed. "Your shares? Don't forget that Edward gave you those shares- meaning they were part of the Nixons' assets."

Edward had handed over those shares to Emerald when he fell ill, giving her temporary control of the Nixons. Without that, she never would have had a stake in Kajer Tech.

"That's true," Emerald admitted.

"But when he gave them to me, I paid him for them. That means Kajer Tech has no ties to the Nixons anymore.

"Yet for the past few years, I've reinvested all my dividends from Kajer Tech back into the Nixons.

"Now that I've transferred the company to my daughter, what's the problem?" she retorted.

Mary's expression darkened. "You're

lying! You never paid Edward a cent!

Kajer Tech is one of the Nixons most valuable assets. There's no

way he would've let it become your private property."

"If you don't believe me, feel free to ask Edward. Now, we have other matters to discuss. If you have nothing useful to say, I suggest you keep quiet," Emerald snapped.

Without sparing Mary another glance, she turned to the other members. "Let's continue with our agenda."

"Hold on." Cortez leaned forward, his

tone casual but sharp. "Emerald, Kajer Tech is one of the Nixons' most profitable businesses. Now you're claiming it belongs solely to you think that's something we need to discuss further."

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Emerald frowned, her voice cold. "Cortez, we have more important matters to discuss."

"In my opinion, this is the most important matter today," Cortez replied evenly. "If Kajer becomes your private company, won't the Nixons lose a significant portion of their annual revenue?"

Emerald's expression remained unchanged. "You don't need to worry. Regardless of who owns Kajer Tech, my share of the dividends will always be reinvested into the Nixons."

Cortez gave a slight smile, though his eyes held no warmth. "Emerald, that's just your word. How can we trust it?"

"If Kajer Tech truly has no ties to the Nixons anymore, doesn't that mean you'll have the power to use its revenue as leverage against other family members?"

"If someone upsets you, you can cut off their funding. How is anyone supposed to voice a differing opinion under those conditions?"

Emerald's gaze darkened. "Cortez, I can assure you, that will never happen."

"We're not children, Emerald. Promises mean nothing. My stance is clear—we use the Nixons' funds to buy back Kajer Tech's shares. It must belong to the family, not to any one individual," Cortez insisted.

As he finished speaking, murmurs of agreement spread through the room.

"That's right, we need to buy those shares back! No one should own Kajer Tech outright!"

"If we let this slide, the Nixons will fall apart in no time!"

"If Emerald refuses to return Kajer Tech to the family, we should elect a new leader. The Nixons won't collapse just because she's gone!"

As their voices filled the room, Emerald's grip on the document tightened, her expression as cold as ice.

How dare they?!

Across the room, Mary smirked, satisfaction gleaming in her eyes. She wouldn't let Emerald hold onto this position for long.

"Enough!" Emerald slammed her hand against the table, her voice sharp with fury. "We will deal with this later. Right now, my eldest daughter is missing. Even if we discuss repurchasing Kajer Tech, it will take time. For now, we need to focus on more urgent matters."

Mary rolled her eyes. "How

convenient. Who's to say you didn't hide your daughter yourself? If she never turns up, does that mean Kajer Tech will remain under your Control forever?"

"She's right! We need answers today. We won't just let this go!" the others chimed in.

Cortez's voice cut through the

tension like a blade. "Emerald, you already gave away the Nixons'

southern land to the Bumards to net

save Brian. Now you've handed Kajer Tech over to your daughter. Are you trying to turn the Nixons into an empty shell?"

At first, the southern land incident had only made him wary of Emerald. But with Kajer Tech, this was the moment he realized she needed to be removed.

If she stayed in power, the family would become completely unmanageable.

What the Nixons needed was a leader who could elevate them to new heights, not someone who kept diminishing their assets.

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Emerald's expression darkened. "Cortez, that's a serious accusation. I have never tried to hollow out the Nixons. Since taking over, I've worked tirelessly for the family's success. If you choose not to believe me, so be it."

She added, "If you insist on resolving the Kajer Tech issue first, then this meeting is over. We'll discuss it again once I find my daughter."

Without another word, Emerald stood and left.

The moment she was gone, murmurs erupted throughout the room-voices filled with frustration and resentment.

"We can't let Emerald keep leading the family like this! Who knows how much more damage she'll cause?"

Several people turned sharp glares toward Cortez.

"Cortez, you've always backed Emerald. Did you really not know she's turned Kajer into her own company?"

"I bet he turned a blind eye because she gave him something in return!"

"Hold on. If Cortez was really benefiting from Emerald's deals, he wouldn't have called her out just now. I trust him."

Cortez let out a cold laugh, sweeping his gaze over the group. "Believe whatever you want it makes no difference to me. I only look out for my own interests."

Without sparing them another glance, he turned and walked out.

Mary watched him go, a smile on her face, before quickly following after him.

"Mr. Rex," she called. "Would you be free for a meal later?"

Cortez turned to her, his gaze frosty. "Ms. Jewell, I have work to do. I'm not interested."

Mary's smile froze for a moment, but she recovered quickly. "I'd like to talk about Edward and Emerald. If you ever have time, just let me know."

Cortez's voice was as cold as ever. "I doubt I'll have the time. Emerald may have mismanaged things, but that doesn't mean I'd ever let Vik run the Nixons."

As he spoke, his gaze flicked toward Vik, who stood behind Mary, laced with contempt.

Vik? Running the Nixons? He might as well let Emerald keep running it.

Vik and Brian were nothing more than pampered, useless children.

Under the weight of Cortez's gaze, Vik's face paled, and he instinctively looked away.

Cortez scoffed, then turned and walked off, his presence radiating ice-cold indifference.

It was only after he disappeared from view that Vik scowled. "He looks down on us!"

Mary remained calm. "Of course he

does. To him, I'm just Edward's

mistress, and you're just an

illegitimate son. But it doesn't

matter. Soon enough, I'll make sure he knows who truly runs the Nixons."

Back at the estate, Emerald arrived home with a storm cloud hanging over her.

Filipe noticed immediately. "Madam, did something happen?"

"Nothing," she replied curtly. "Bring tea to my study."

"Yes, Madam," Filipe obeyed.

Emerald strode into her study, tossing her bag onto the couch, fury burning in her eyes.

How dare Cortez treat her like that?

They were supposed to be on the

same yet he had sided Mary in front of everyone.

belongs to ont

She had clearly misjudged him.

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

her phone and dialed Cortez's el

number.

The phone rang twice before he picked up. "Emerald, what do you need?"

"Get to the estate. Now," Emerald demanded.

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Cortez's light chuckle came from the other end of the phone. "If this is about Kajer Tech, I don't see the need for a private meeting. We can discuss it publicly once you've found your eldest daughter."

Emerald suppressed her anger. "I want to know why you publicly went against me!"

He could have spoken to her privately, but instead, he chose to humiliate her in front of everyone.

"I'm not going against you. You're just too greedy," Cortez sneered. "You deliberately transferred Kajer Tech's shares to your daughter so you could use the company's annual dividends as leverage over us. That way, we'd have no choice but to let you continue leading the Nixons. Am I wrong?"

His mocking tone felt like a slap to Emerald's face, making her even angrier. "Cortez, don't forget-you're supposed to be on my side!"

Cortez chuckled. "I've always said I only act in my own best interest. I supported you in the past because our interests aligned.

"But now? You're hurting my position. We're no longer partners—we're opponents."

"You!" Emerald snapped.

Cortez interrupted, "If I were you, I'd focus on finding your missing daughter before things spiral further out of control."

Emerald took a deep breath. "So you're saying you won't support me anymore?"

"That's right. You're on your own," Cortez confirmed before hanging up.

Emerald furiously threw her phone onto the desk, her expression as dark as a storm. She was completely surrounded by enemies now.

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An hour later, George entered Emerald's study.

She had calmed down somewhat, though her eyes still carried a sharp chill. "George, I told you to find Nyla and Damon. Why haven't you found them yet?"

ét

"Ms. Kinsey, our people are doing their best, but there's a powerful force blocking our investigation...". George hesitated before adding, think would be best to ask M Alexander for help. His intelligence network is—"

"Enough," Emerald interrupted coldly. "Keep looking."

"Understood..." George replied, sensing her foul mood. He didn't dare say more and quickly left.

Emerald set down her documents, picked up her phone, and found Alexander's number. Her finger hovered over the dial button, hesitating.

She thought about what he had said to her before, and how she had told him, in

no uncertain terms, that their relationship was over.

In the end, she put the phone down without calling.

She would find Nyla on her own. It was just a matter of time.

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Alexander was already making preparations to send Nyla, Damon, and Harrison back to Saintornia.

Although Emerald had taken control

of Harrison, she had ensured he received the best medical care and had top-tier nurses looking after him. His condition was stable enough to handle a long flight home.

"My aunt won't last much longer," Alexander told them. "Just hold on for another two weeks, and you'll be able to return to Saintornia. I'll arrange for my private jet to take you there."

Nyla nodded. "Alright. Thank you."

"No need to thank me," Alexander said with a small smile. "After all, I'm Buddy's mentor-and your cousin."

Nyla lowered her gaze. "I really do appreciate it. If it weren't for you, I probably would've been caught by her already."

Sensing her lingering distrust, Alexander smiled and stood up. "Alright, I have things to do. Call me if you need anything."

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"Sure," Nyla replied.

After Alexander left, she turned to Damon. "We really will make it back together, right?"

Seeing the worry in her eyes, Damon pulled her into his arms. "Yes. I promise. Trust me."

She didn't say anything more, simply resting against his chest. Deep down, however, unease still lingered.

Three more days passed, and George still hadn't found Nyla.

Meanwhile, unrest within the Nixons was worsening. More and more people began openly opposing Emerald, demanding a new leader.

Emerald was exhausted and overwhelmed.

The stress took a toll on her body-she collapsed and was rushed to the hospital again.

When she woke up, the doctor warned her that she couldn't keep pushing herself like this, or her health would suffer serious consequences.

"I understand," Emerald said flatly. "I'd like to be alone now."

Sighing, the doctor left the room.

Emerald stared out the window, her gaze distant.

For years, she had fought relentlessly to become the head of the Nixons.

But after everything-her son had lost a leg, one daughter hated her, and the other refused to obey her-now, the family she had fought so hard to control was slipping from her grasp.

Had she made the wrong choices from the very beginning?

When Filipe arrived, he found Emerald still gazing out the window, lost in thought.

Sighing, he walked over and quietly shut the window.

"Madam, you need to take care of yourself," he advised.

Emerald remained silent, her expression unreadable.

Knowing better than to push her, Filipe set the meal he had brought onto the table. "At least eat something first."

Emerald got out of bed, picked up the utensils, and began eating without a word.

When she finished, she suddenly looked at Filipe. "Contact Alexander. Tell him to come see me."

Filipe's eyes flickered with delight. "Yes, Madam."

Ever since Emerald's falling-out with Alexander, Filipe had wanted to persuade her to make amends But

with how busy she had been he never got the chance.

Now, she was finally reaching out on her own-this was the best outcome he could have hoped for.

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Less than an hour later, Alexander walked into the hospital room.

He sat down in a chair beside the bed, his expression cold. "Why did you call me?"

Emerald chuckled. "You won't even call me 'Aunt Emerald' anymore?"

Alexander lowered his gaze. "Didn't we cut ties?"

"You know why I called you," Emerald said.

Alexander nodded. "I already told let Nyla go, I'll help you.

you-if

There's no reason for her to suffer in

MeriState anymore. Why keep

forcing her to stay?"

Emerald was silent for a long moment before finally speaking. "You've been helping her and Damon hide all this time, haven't you?"

"Yes," Alexander confirmed.

Emerald sneered. "And Harrison? You had him taken away, didn't you?"

"Mm," Alexander hummed.

The room fell into silence.

After what felt like an eternity,

Emerald finally spoke again. "Fine. I accept our terms. I'll let her go and stay out of her life. But in return, you're going to help me eliminate the people standing in my way"

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Alexander was silent for a moment before meeting Emerald's gaze. "Fine, I'll help you secure your position as head of the Nixons, but I won't help you eliminate your opponents."

As long as there were threats to her power, she wouldn't have time to target Nyla and Damon. Keeping a balance of power was the best way to keep Nyla safe.

Emerald's expression darkened. "You don't trust me?"

Alexander nodded. "Aunt Emerald, I'd like to, but you need to give me a reason to. Back in Saintornia, you promised Nyla you'd support Prospectus Technology, but the moment she arrived in Meristate, you tried to bankrupt it.

"Now, you're making promises without proof. How can I trust you?"

"Alexander, don't forget-I'm your aunt. We're family!" Emerald hissed.

"To me, Nyla is my cousin, so she's my family too. Think about my offer, Aunt Emerald," Alexander said calmly.

He remained unbothered by the situation. He knew Emerald was already backed into a corner-without his help, she had no chance of holding onto power in the Nixons.

Emerald clenched the blanket in frustration, her face burning with anger. No matter how furious she was, she knew the truth-Alexander was her only option.

After a long silence, she gritted her teeth. "Fine. I'll agree to your terms. But before Nyla returns to Chyland, she needs to give back her shares in Kajer Tech."

Alexander smirked. "She can give them back, but you'll have to buy them from her at market price."

Emerald's face twisted with rage. "Alexander, don't push your luck! I gave her those shares in the first place. Why should I have to pay to get them back?!"

"Like you said, you gave them to her. That means they belong to her now. And considering you weren't there for her all these years, paying her back a little seems fair. Besides, it's the Nixons' money, not yours," Alexander countered.

"What difference does that make?!" Emerald snapped.

She controlled the Nixons-whether the money came from them or from her, it was the same thing.

"You might not be in charge for much longer," Alexander retorted.

Emerald snarled. "Are you threatening me?"

Alexander gave her an innocent look. "Aunt Emerald, I'm just stating a fact."

Emerald took a deep breath. "Fine. I'll buy the shares at market price."

"Good. Once you're discharged from the hospital, call me anytime," Alexander replied.

Not wanting to delay things, Emerald

immediately added, "This afternoon

at

I'll come to your villa. Have the transfer agreement ready."

Alexander was a little surprised by her urgency but nodded. "Alright."

Before he left, Emerald asked, "Why are you helping Nyla so much?"

He met her gaze. "Aunt Emerald, may have forgotten she's your daughter. But I haven't forgotten-she's my cousin, my family."

After Alexander left, Emerald lowered her head, lost in thought.

When she had first arrived in

Meristate, she used to cry herself to sleep thinking about Nyla. But after having Delia and Brian, she gradually stopped thinking about her,

eventually forgetting her altogether. If not for wanting to use Nyla, she might never have thought of her again.

Did she feel guilty? No.

Her goal was the Nixons, and she had worked for years to achieve it. To reach

that goal, she was willing to sacrifice anything.

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Even Brian and Delia, whom Emerald had spoiled, were expendable in her eyes if they ever posed a threat to her position, she wouldn't hesitate to give them

up.

To her, family had always come second to the Nixons.

At exactly 3:00 p.m., Emerald's car pulled up outside Alexander's villa.

She stepped out and walked into the living room, where Alexander and Nyla were already waiting.

Without a word, she sat down, picked up the documents on the table, and flipped through them.

After confirming there were no issues, she signed the last page, then pulled a bank card from her bag and placed it on the table.

She slid it toward Nyla. "The password is six zeroes."

Alexander picked up the card and handed it to his assistant. "Go check it."

Emerald's expression stiffened. "Alexander, what the hell does that mean?!"

Was he trying to humiliate her by having his assistant verify the card right in front of her?

"Aunt Emerald, it's for both our peace of mind. This way, there won't be any issues later," Alexander explained calmly.

Emerald let out a cold laugh. "Fine!"

Too angry to say anything more, she turned away, refusing to look at them.

Alexander, unfazed, waited patiently for his assistant to return.

Ten minutes later, the assistant walked back in and handed the card to Alexander. "Mr. Kinsey, everything checks out."

Alexander nodded and passed the card to Nyla. "Nyla, take this. Think of it as compensation for everything my aunt put you through."

Nyla shook her head. "No. I don't want anything to do with her anymore. From this moment on, I have no connection to her. As far as I'm concerned, my mother died when I was in elementary school."

The words had barely left her mouth when Emerald snapped, "Nyla! What nonsense are you spouting?! Are you cursing me?!"

"Ms. Kinsey, in my heart, you are not my mother. So I meant no offense. If you feel insulted, I apologize," Nyla said calmly.

Although her words were polite, her expression showed no hint of regret.

Emerald's chest tightened in anger.

"Fine. If you're cutting ties, then take the money. From now on, I'll act like I never had a daughter!" Emerald snapped.

"I don't need your money," Nyla replied.

What she needed was a mother's love—and no amount of money could ever make up for the 20-plus years she had spent without it.

She grabbed her bag and walked out without looking back.

Emerald turned to Alexander. "Do you see how she acts? Even if I wanted to make amends, she's making it impossible!"

"Aunt Emerald, you owe her too much. But at this point, it doesn't matter anymore. Just don't disturb her life again. Maybe this is the best outcome for both of you," Alexander replied.

For some reason, Emerald felt a sharp pain in her chest when she heard those words.

She closed her eyes briefly, then stood up. "Make sure she takes the money. After this, we have nothing to do with each other."

With that, she strode out of the villa.

Watching her leave, Alexander sighed and went to find Nyla.

No matter how much he tried to convince her, she refused to accept the money.

Left with no choice, he went to Damon and explained the situation.

After hearing everything, Damon

simply said, "I agree with her

decision. If she's cutting ties, it

should be complete. Taking that

money would only complicate things."

Alexander shook his head in frustration: "You and Nyla are both so stubborn. If it were me, I'd take the money in a heartbeat and leave. Consider it payment for emotional distress."