

Trading My Ex for His Uncle

Chapter 411

As Melody spoke, she kept her eyes locked on Gabriel's. His eyes widened slightly, turning her suspicion into certainty.

"Why are you doing this to Nyla? Isn't she like a sister to you?" she demanded.

Initially shocked, Gabriel quickly regained his usual gentle demeanor. "Melody, what are you talking about? I don't understand."

"No one understands better than you. Did you put sleeping pills in the coffee you've been sending us?" Melody pressed.

Her tone was firm, and her eyes burned with anger as she stared at Gabriel.

He had been so considerate, claiming that working in the lab every day was exhausting, so he would send coffee to help them stay awake. He had even asked her not to tell Nyla.

Blinded by love, she had believed he genuinely wanted to build a good relationship with Nyla. Looking back now, she felt foolish!

She had handed Nyla the very coffee that led to the data leak scandal. The more she thought about it, the more distressed she became, and her eyes welled up with tears. She felt like an accomplice. Gabriel's expression remained calm and gentle, though a trace of helplessness flickered in his eyes.

"Melody, I don't understand what you're saying. I know you want to help Nyla, and I do too, but you can't just assume it was me because you're anxious," he said.

"Who else could it be? Gabriel, what exactly are you planning to do?" Melody demanded.

As she looked at his handsome face, she felt disgusted for the first time. How could she have fallen for someone so dreadful?

Gabriel moved closer to her, speaking softly so only they could hear. "I know you're recording our conversation, Melody, so don't think you'll get anything out of me." Melody's eyes widened in shock. It was him after all!

"W-Why are you doing this?!" she exclaimed.

Her voice rose in anger as she looked at Gabriel, raising her hand to slap him.

The sharp sound of the slap reverberated through the cafe, instantly drawing the attention of everyone present.

A server hurried over. "Sir, are you okay?"

Gabriel's face bore a red handprint and his cheek was slightly swollen.

He forced a smile at the ca 3:30

shook his head. "It's fine. You can go back to work."

Melody's eyes were red, barely containing her fury. She wanted to rip away his false gentle facade and reveal his true nature to everyone.

The server looked at Melody. "Miss, it's better to talk things out rather than resort to violence."

Ignoring him, Melody glared coldly at Gabriel. "I won't let this go!"

With that, she grabbed her bag and stormed out.

"Sir..." the server began.

"It's fine. Thank you for your help," Gabriel replied.

Gabriel left the cafe and watched Melody's departing figure.

A slow, satisfied smile crept across his face as he murmured, "Why? To break her wings, make her lose everything, so she'll have no choice but to rely on me. Only then will she stay by my side."

From a young age, he had known that love was about possession and control. If the person he loved did not return his feelings, he would break her wings and crush her pride, ensuring she was left with no choice but to remain with him.

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The situation needed to escalate. If Nyla wasn't pushed to her limits, she wouldn't willingly stay by his side.

Gabriel's smile deepened. He was confident that soon he would be with Nyla.

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Melody cried bitterly in the taxi on her way home. She hadn't expected that the first man she ever liked would use her to scheme against Nyla, and worse... Nyla was his sister. When she got home, she cried again.

It took several hours for her emotions to settle. Just as she was about to call Nyla to tell her what she had discovered, a news alert popped up on her phone screen.

[Prospectus Technology's experimental data leaked. The culprit is a researcher with a personal vendetta against Prospectus Technology's CEO. Was this done out of revenge or for profit?]

Melody clicked on the link and found a sensationalist article. Not only did it accuse Nyla of leaking the data, but it also exposed Nyla's past relationship with Damon.

The article implied that Nyla had leaked the data out of spite after being dumped by Damon, seeking revenge.

Fuming with anger, Melody saw that most comments were attacking Nyla. She couldn't hold back and started arguing with the commenters.

When she encountered some calmer ones, she tried to explain, but with everyone so quick to judge, no one believed her.

After all, people were more interested in the drama than the truth.

Taking a deep breath, Melody stopped replying and was about to call Nyla when she received a call from home.

"Melody, come home quickly. Your dad's had an accident!"

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Meanwhile, Gabriel received a call as well.

"Mr. Hackett, the matter has been taken care of," the caller informed.

Gabriel smirked. "Did you convey the messages I asked?"

"Yes," the man answered.

"Good," Gabriel replied.

He hung up, still smiling, but his eyes were cold. He wouldn't let anyone derail his plans. He hoped Melody would understand her place. Otherwise, next time, her father's injury might be more severe than

just a broken leg.

Soon after, Melody called him. "Gabriel, you've caused my dad to break his leg. Nyla will never like someone as malicious as you!" Gabriel's smile turned icy. "Say that again?"

His voice carried a chilling coldness that pierced through the phone. Melody felt a shiver run down her spine.

She trembled involuntarily, and her voice wavered. "Did I say something wrong? You're just selfish and cruel!"

"Melody, you'll soon find out the cost of angering me." With that, Gabriel ended the call.

In the hospital, Melody regretted her words as soon as she hung up. She knew Gabriel was dangerous. So why had she called him in a fit of rage?

Holding her phone, she hesitated

over whether to tell Nyla that Gabriel

was behind the data leak. However, she remembered her mother's

earlier warning, and her hesitation grew.

Her family was ordinary, and her parents had struggled to raise her. She could disregard her safety but couldn't disregard her parents'.

As Melody hesitated, her mother emerged from the ward with a stack of bills. "Melody, here's the bill. We need to pay a deposit of 4,000 dollars..."

Her parents had just spent their

savings to buy her a small

apartment on the edge of Saintornia. They didn't even have 1,000 dollars left, let alone 4,000 dollars.

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Melody took the payment slip with a deep breath. "Mom, go back to the ward and take care of Dad. I'll figure out the money." Her mother looked apologetic and uneasy. "Melody, I'm sorry... We don't have the money, and we're causing you trouble..." She knew her daughter didn't have that much money either. Apart from borrowing, there seemed to be no other way.

Her mother suggested, "Maybe I can ask your uncle for a loan... You-"

Before she could finish, Melody interrupted, "Mom, we've already borrowed a lot from him for the apartment down payment. We haven't even started repaying it yet, and asking for more might upset my aunt. I'll find a way, so don't worry." "Alright..." her mother reluctantly agreed.

Melody took the payment slip and went to the end of the hallway to call her classmates and friends.

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In the CEO's office of Prospectus Technology, Damon looked grim as he stared at Spencer. "Didn't I tell you that this matter must not be leaked?"

Spencer felt distressed. He had indeed instructed everyone who knew about the data leak to keep it quiet, but he didn't know how so many sensationalist accounts had obtained it.

"Mr. Sumner, I'll look into it immediately," Spencer replied.

"I'm giving you one hour. I don't want to see any more news about this issue within the hour!" Damon ordered.

He then stood up and headed for the door.

Spencer hurried after him. "Mr. Sumner, where are you going? I'll arrange for a car."

"No need. Just take care of the tasks I assigned," Damon answered coldly before leaving.

Once Damon's figure disappeared from view, Spencer let out a sigh of relief and cursed under his breath, wondering who had leaked the information. Whoever it was, he would make sure they paid for it! This situation seemed deliberately aimed at Nyla. Who hated her so much to go this far?

Spencer shook his head, dismissing the thought. He quickly set about removing the trending topic and investigating which account was the first to leak the news.

When the doorbell rang, Nyla was reading the so-called sensational news online. The details of her past with Damon were known only to a few, so the person behind the leak

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must have been close to her

No matter how she thought about it, Melody seemed the most likely suspect...

Yet, emotionally, Nyla found it hard to believe that Melody would do such a thing, especially since it wouldn't benefit her. Hearing the doorbell, Nyla walked to the door and found Damon standing there. After a moment of hesitation, she opened it. "Mr. Sumner, what brings you here?" she asked.

"You saw the trending news, right?" Damon inquired.

His gaze swept over her face, and he felt relieved to see her relatively calm.

Nyla noticed the concern in his eyes and lowered her gaze. "It's nothing. You came here because of this?"

"Yes, I'm worried about you," Damon replied.

Nyla frowned slightly, her tone cold. "Mr. Sumner, we've broken up. You don't need to worry about me."

"Nyla, you may not accept me, but you can't deny me the right to care for you and pursue you," Damon said.

Seeing him still as domineering as ever and disregarding her feelings, Nyla felt increasingly irritated.

"Well, I also have the right to reject you. You're bothering me even if it's clear that I don't

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see you," she retorted. Confet

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"I'm just worried about you..." Damon replied.

Nyla showed no reaction to his words, merely watching him with a flat expression. "Mr. Sumner, you're my superior, and I'm your subordinate. I don't need your concern." Damon frowned as he spoke quietly. "Nyla, I know you're still upset about what happened before. I—"

Nyla cut him off, looking slightly resigned. "I'm not angry. It's all in the past. No matter what you do, I won't get back together with you. I need to rest now. Please leave." She then closed the door.

Damon stood at the door for a moment before finally turning and leaving.

Back on the sofa, Nyla sat down and contemplated how to uncover the truth.

Prospectus Technology was already preparing to sue Contelligence. The email sent to Contelligence had originated from her computer, so the person who had sent the email must have been in contact with Contelligence beforehand. Investigating Contelligence might be the faster route.

With this in mind, Nyla called Spencer.

After confirming the owner of the email address to which the email was sent, Nyla decided to visit that person first thing the next morning.

Spencer, aware of her plan, advised, "Ms. Jayston, you might want to wait at home for the results. The people at Contelligence are adamant that you sent them the experimental data."

Nyla lowered her gaze and said firmly, "If they're claiming it was me, there should also be evidence of prior communication between us, not just the email itself. It's unlikely that I suddenly received an email address and sent them the data without any previous contact." "They don't have that evidence. I'll contact the lawyer right away," Spencer replied.

After hanging up, Nyla felt somewhat relieved.

The fact that she had not had any prior communication with Contelligence was a breakthrough.. However, the most crucial task was to identify who had used her computer to set up the scheduled email. Otherwise, she would end up bearing the blame herself since the data had been sent from her computer.

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Early the next morning, Nyla went to Contelligence to confront the owner of the email address.

When she spotted Robert, the manager of the R&D department, she walked up to block him. "Mr. Palfrey, hello. I'm Nyla Jayston from Prospectus Technology's drug research team. I'm sure you're familiar with my name?" Although Nyla was smiling, there was no warmth in her eyes.

Robert was surprised to see Nyla in person.

He raised an eyebrow and said with a hint of a smirk, "Of course, I know you. If it weren't for you, we wouldn't be entangled in this lawsuit with Prospectus Technology."

"Mr. Palfrey, your ability to shift

blame is impressive. You acquired the data for the asthma medication I developed through improper means and eagerly made it public. It's no surprise that Prospectus Technology is suing you. But don't

understand why you're But don't

trying to drag

me into this," Nyla said.

"Ms. Jayston, talking to me won't help. The email came from your computer. It's only natural for you to get caught up in this," Robert retorted.

Nyla's smile turned cold. "I won't

admit to something I didn't do.

Prospectus Technology will

undoubtedly find out who colluded with Contelligence, and I will sue Contelligence for defamation and for accusing me of leaking trade

secrets."

Robert remained calm. "Ms. Jayston, do as you wish. I have work to attend to, so I'll take my leave now."

After Robert left, Nyla glanced back at Contelligence's building before turning and walking away.

On the way back, she received a call from Pete.

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"Ms. Jayston, I discovered that Steven has had contact with someone from the Preston Group. However, it appears you have no personal grievances with them, so there would be no reason for them to target you," Pete said.

Nyla tightened her grip on the phone. "Actually, there is some personal animosity. I understand the situation now, Mr. Monaghan, so there's no need for further investigation.

"If you have the time, could you check whether Robert Palfrey from Contelligence has had any contact with employees from Prospectus Technology?"

"Certainly. I'll look into it right away," Pete replied.

After ending the call, Nyla transferred some money to Pete. Once he confirmed receipt, Nyla closed the chat. She placed her phone in her bag, paused for a moment, and then called Damon. The call connected quickly.

Damon's voice carried a hint of tension. "Nyla... what's wrong?"

Nyla pressed her lips together, a flicker of hesitation in her eyes before she composed herself. "Mr. Sumner, I'm not sure what personal issues you have with Rebecca and Nathaniel, but I no longer wish to be involved. Please tell Nathaniel to stop sending people to follow me."

There was a brief silence on the other end before Damon's cold voice responded. "He's sending people to follow you? When did this start?"

"In the past few days. The specifics, Mr. Sumner, you'll need to ask him directly," Nyla said before ending the call.

She set her phone down, a hint of guilt in her eyes. With no direct way to confront Nathaniel, she had to rely on Damon to handle him.

Damon called Nathaniel directly from his office at Prospectus Technology, his voice barely containing his anger. "What have you done to Nyla?"

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"What could I possibly do to her? Did

she tell you some nonsense? I always suspected she was scheming when you were with her.

Now she's trying to sabotage our friendship!" Nathaniel retorted.

Damon sneered. "Nathaniel, do you think I'm a fool? If you won't tell me, I'll investigate myself. Don't blame me if I find out something and have to take action!"

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There was a long silence on the other end before Nathaniel's cold voice came through again. "Yes, I have someone deal with her, but that's because she overstepped by trying to interfere in your relationship with Rebecca."

Damon laughed in frustration. He hadn't realized just how irrational Nathaniel became when Rebecca was involved. Nathaniel always sided with her, no matter the circumstances.

"Nathaniel, I've already broken up

with Rebecca She returned to the

country and used her illness and

past favors to threaten me into ending my relationship with Nyla and getting back with her. She's the one meddling in my relationship with Nyla," Damon said firmly

"Since we've known each other for years, you should apologize to Nyla personally, and I'll let this matter go," Damon added.

"Apologize to her? Does she even deserve that?" Nathaniel's voice was filled with anger, his indignation palpable.

He would never apologize to Nyla!

"If you refuse, then I have nothing more to say. The cooperation between Prospectus Technology and the Preston Group is over. Do as you see fit," Damon replied.

As Nathaniel heard the dial tone, he slammed his phone down, his face dark. After years of friendship with Damon, the latter was ending their cooperation over a woman?

Upon reflecting on it, his resentment toward Nyla intensified. If it weren't for her, none of this would have happened.

Wasn't Damon warning him not to touch her? Nathaniel was determined to proceed anyway!

It was just a woman. He didn't believe Damon would truly sever ties over her.

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Nathaniel called his secretary into the office and said coldly, "Contact Steven and have him prepare to attack Nyla."

The secretary, Troy Cantrill, noticed the cracked screen of his phone on the floor and replied, "Understood, Mr. Preston. I'll handle it right away."

He picked up the phone, left the office, and immediately ordered a new one to be delivered.

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When Steven received the call, he was at a prenatal check-up with his girlfriend.

Learning that he needed to attack Nyla, he hesitated. After all, Nathaniel had only instructed him to scare Nyla, not to harm her.

Noticing Steven's hesitation, Troy said coldly, "Mr. Abney, do you think that money was easy to come by?"

When Nathaniel first approached Steven, he was struggling to meet a request for 80,000 dollars from his girlfriend's parents. They had threatened to force her to have an abortion if he couldn't come up with the money.

Nathaniel had found and given him 150,000 dollars to track and harass Nyla. Nathaniel had also disclosed that Nyla was the daughter of the owner of Harris Pharmaceuticals, whose accident had killed his grandfather, making her an enemy.

In reality, Steven knew Nyla wasn't responsible for the accident. After the incident, Harris Pharmaceuticals went bankrupt but provided compensation.

For the sake of his child, however, he had reluctantly agreed to the task.

Now, being asked to attack Nyla, he deeply regretted having been so foolish.

"Mr. Cantrill, this is a crime. I'll return the money. I'm not doing this anymore," Steven said.

Troy sneered. "You think that money was easy to get? If you back out now, you'll only have yourself to blame if anything happens to your girlfriend or the baby."

Steven's face darkened. "Are you threatening me?"

"All I can say is that you have too

many weaknesses. From the moment you accepted that card, you had no choice. Choose between Nyla and your girlfriend and child," Troy said.

With that, Troy hung up. It was clear that choosing between an insignificant woman and his girlfriend and child was an easy decision, even for a fool.

Steven was furious, his calloused hands nearly crushing his phone. If he could turn back time, he would never have taken that card!

"Steven, here's the latest ultrasound. Look, these are the baby's hands and feet. So cute," Camila Swan, his girlfriend, said, presenting the check-up report. Steven glanced at the report, his eyes reddening with tears.

Noticing his distress, Camila couldn't resist teasing, "What's wrong? Why are you crying? Shouldn't you be happy?"

"In two months, our baby will be born. After the wedding, I'll give you the money we've been secretly saving. We can move into a rented place and start our life as a family of three.

By the way, where did you get all

that money my parents requested?"

Steven forced a smile. "I told you before, my grandfather died in an accident at work, and that money was from the compensation."

Guilt softened Camila's gaze. She

took his hand and said softly, "I'm sorry. After we get married, I'll work hard too. We'll earn that money back sooner or later."

"Yeah, let's go," Steven replied.

As he supported Camila out of the hospital, she excitedly talked about their future.

Normally, Steven would join in the conversation about their plans, but today he was unusually silent.

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Camila asked him several times, but Steven just said he was too tired from work.

After dropping Camila off at home, Steven watched her walk away and made up his mind. He was determined to protect her and the baby, even if it meant committing a crime. He called Troy, gritting his teeth. "I'll do what you asked, but I need to wait until my girlfriend gives birth."

"No way. That's too late," Troy replied.

Steven sneered. "Mr. Cantrill, I can always tell Nyla what you're planning. You're just looking for a scapegoat. Am I not even allowed to decide on the timing?"

"If you tell Nyla, there's no telling if your child will even have a chance to be born," Troy warned.

"Mr. Cantrill, if anything happens to my family, I'll post our phone conversation online. You wouldn't want this to blow up, would you? I just need two months," Steven negotiated. Troy was silent for a moment before saying coldly, "I'll consult with Mr. Preston and get back to you."

Upon hearing this, Nathaniel sneered. "Two months? No, the maximum I'll give him is one week!"

"Mr. Preston, if we push too hard, it might backfire," Troy advised.

"Then make it half a month. I can't wait any longer. If he continues to haggle, just get rid of him," Nathaniel instructed.

A nobody like Steven didn't get to make demands!

"Understood," Troy replied.

After reporting this, he hesitantly added, "Mr. Preston, Mr. Hogg just came over with the termination contract... Those contracts..."

Nathaniel's eyes flashed with anger. So, Damon was really serious!

Alright, he'd see who would back down first!

"Bring me the contracts. I'll sign them now!" Nathaniel snapped.

Spencer left after receiving the signed termination contracts from Nathaniel.

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Back at Prospectus Technology, Damon reviewed the contracts and said coldly, "Everything seems fine. Put them away."

"Mr. Sumner, is it really worth ending our cooperation with the Preston Group over this? What if it gets out..."

Damon looked up, his eyes icy. "Do you think sending someone to follow and harm Nyla is a trivial matter?"

Noticing Damon's displeasure,

Spencer quickly lowered his head just thought, since Mr. Prestone

hasn't actually harmed Ms. Jayston, maybe we're overreacting

"When did it become your place to instruct me on how to handle things?" Damon questioned.

"I don't dare..." Spencer replied.

"Then just follow my instructions," Damon said.

Spencer sighed silently and was

about to leave when Damon suddenly added, "Gather the board members for a meeting in half an hour to discuss how to handle the data leak."

"Understood," Spencer answered.

Half an hour later...

As soon as Damon entered the meeting room, a board member sarcastically said, "Mr. Sumner, I don't see why there's anything left to discuss. We should just follow the company rules. Just because the person at fault is your girlfriend, you're shielding her. Does that mean if any of our subordinates mess up, we can also protect them?"

Damon remained silent. He walked to the main seat and coldly stared at the board member who had spoken.

"Mr. Warner, if you don't want to attend this meeting, you can leave now," Damon said.

Hector Warner stiffened but did not speak or leave.

"This meeting is primarily to discuss the issue of compensation," Damon began.

Hearing this, Hector couldn't resist making another sarcastic remark. "Mr. Sumner, Nyla probably can't afford hundreds of millions, can she?"

"If she can't afford it, I'll cover it for her," Damon answered.

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Hector sneered. "You certainly have the means to cover her compensation, Mr. Sumner."

Damon looked at him and said slowly, "I'd cover her compensation-if she's actually responsible for this." "Who else could it be? The email was sent from her computer. That's a fact, isn't it?" Hector asked.

If he weren't afraid of future retaliation from Damon, he'd almost accuse him of deliberately shielding Nyla.

"It was indeed sent from her computer, but there's no evidence of her communication with Contelligence," Damon replied.

"That email is evidence enough. What more do you need? Mr. Sumner, are you hesitating to pay?" Hector pressed.

If the board were to be the fall guy, he would be the first to refuse!

"Mr. Warner, today's meeting is to determine the exact compensation amount, not to discuss whether I'm willing to pay," Damon stated.

Hector snorted and fell silent.

After an hour of discussion, the agreed-upon compensation amount was 200,000,000 dollars.

As the meeting ended, Hector turned to Damon and said, "Mr. Sumner, I advise you to get rid of the woman who leaked company data. Otherwise, she'll only bring you bigger trouble next time."

"No matter how big the trouble, I can handle it. You'd do better to focus on your problems rather than meddle in mine, Mr. Warner," Damon warned.

Hector's face hardened as he left, gritting his teeth.

Everyone at Prospectus Technology knew he had kept a mistress, and his wife had responded by taking a younger man home, which humiliated Hector. Ironically, his current status was due to his in-laws, and he didn't dare to divorce.

Back in his office, Damon was about to review some documents when he received a call from Rebecca.

"Damon, I heard from Nathaniel that you ended the cooperation with the Preston Group because of Nyla?" she asked.

Damon's eyes flashed with irritation. "What does that have to do with you?"

There was a pause on the other end, and then Rebecca's voice, filled with hurt, came through. "I'm just concerned about you. Nathaniel and you have been friends for years. I don't want you two falling out over a misunderstanding."

"If you knew the full story, you'd realize there's no misunderstanding," Damon replied.

"Nathaniel only wanted to scare Ms. Jayston. He never meant to hurt her. And this whole situation started because of me. If you're looking for someone to blame, blame me. Don't make things difficult for Nathaniel," Rebecca explained.

Damon frowned, and his tone grew colder. "Rebecca, I appreciate that you helped me back then, but that doesn't give you the right to interfere with my company's affairs or my decisions. Until you figure out what you want, don't contact me again."

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Rebecca put her phone down with a dark expression, her eyes filled with jealousy and frustration.

Nathaniel, who was across from her, also looked grim. He hadn't expected Damon to be so determined to end their cooperation.

Moreover, it seemed that Rebecca still had feelings for Damon.

"Rebecca, if you're insisting that I get rid of Nyla to be with you, are you planning to let me take the blame after she's gone so you can get back with Damon?" Nathaniel asked.

He stared intently at Rebecca, fearing he might miss any change in her expression.

If she truly intended to be with him, why wait until he dealt with Nyla? Unless she wanted to remove obstacles between herself and Damon to get back with him.

Rebecca looked up at him, her gaze full of shock and sadness. "Nathaniel, I can't believe you think that of me. Do you know why I called Damon? I wanted to help you because I felt you were wronged."

Seeing her emotional response, Nathaniel quickly moved to sit beside her. "Rebecca, I'm sorry. I was just angry and lost my temper. Please forgive me."

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Rebecca felt a slight relief seeing the panic on Nathaniel's face. Turning her head away, she said coldly, "I already told you that what happened that night should be considered as if it never occurred. If you're having second thoughts, we can still be friends." "No!" Nathaniel took her hand and said gently, "I don't want to be just friends. I want to be your boyfriend."

As she looked into his deep, affectionate eyes, Rebecca felt no emotional stir but decided to play along with a shy demeanor. "Okay."

Moved by her act, Nathaniel instinctively cupped her chin and leaned in to kiss her.

Rebecca, startled, quickly pushed him away. "No... There are too many people in the restaurant. Someone might see us."

Noticing her pale face, Nathaniel frowned. "Do I look that unpresentable?"

"It's not that... It's just that my breakup with Damon hasn't been made public yet. If someone who knows us sees us, it might reflect poorly on you," Rebecca explained.

"I don't care," Nathaniel insisted.

"Even so... I'm shy... If you want to, let's wait until we get back," Rebecca said.

With Rebecca's promise, Nathaniel finally smiled. "Alright, when we get back."

Neither of them realized that their kiss had been captured by Pete, who had been lurking outside the window.

That evening, Nyla received a message from Pete after finishing dinner.

Upon seeing the photo of Nathaniel and Rebecca kissing, she raised an eyebrow. She hadn't expected that sending Pete to follow Nathaniel would yield such results.

Since Nathaniel had the time to have someone follow her, it was the perfect opportunity to post this photo online and cause him some trouble.

After sending the photo to a gossip account specializing in celebrity and wealthy family scandals, Nyla set her phone aside.

She was about to read a book when she received a call from Melody.

"Nyla, could you... lend me some money?" Melody asked, her voice hoarse and her mood visibly down.

"What's wrong? How much do you need?" Nyla inquired.

"30,000 dollars. Is that okay?" Melody replied.

Nyla was taken aback, her brows furrowing. "What's going on? Why do you need so much money?"

"My dad is sick and needs surgery, which costs 30,000 dollars... Nyla, if you're worried I might run away,

can leave my ID with you. I promise I'll pay you back slowly..." Melody explained.

Hearing the sob in Melody's voice and sensing her emotional distress, Nyla quickly said, "Okay, I'll transfer the money right away. Don't worry. He'll get better."

"Nyla... thank you!" Melody cried.

"Don't worry about the money. If you need more, just let me know. I'll

transfer the money now. When

hospital is your father in? I'll visit him tomorrow," Nyla offered.

While visiting Melody's father was secondary, Nyla was more concerned about Melody's distress and wanted to offer some comfort. Melody nearly broke down in tears. "No... that's not necessary. Just helping me is more than enough. I'm so sorry for troubling you..." "It's okay. Friends are supposed to help each other," Nyla reassured her.

After comforting Melody a bit longer, Nyla hung up and transferred the money.

The moment the transaction was complete, Melody's phone dinged with a notification showing that 30,000 dollars had been received.

Tears welled up in Melody's eyes again as she looked at the man standing before her, her gaze filled with hatred.

She gritted her teeth and said, "Nyla has transferred the money. Can you release my mom now?"

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Gabriel smirked. "Don't worry. If you do as I say, your mother will be safe."

Melody glared at him, her eyes filled with deep-seated hatred. "Gabriel, you're so untrustworthy! I was blind to have ever fallen for someone like you!"

As she thought about how he had coerced her into borrowing 30,000 dollars from Nyla and wondered what other schemes he might have, Melody felt a wave of despair. Was there truly no way to expose his true nature?

Gabriel looked down at her, showing no sympathy for the tear stains on her face. Instead, he found her tears annoying.

He pinched her chin and said coldly, "Tomorrow morning, go to Prospectus Technology and report her. The 30,000 dollars she transferred to you tonight is your hush money." Melody's eyes widened in shock, and she shook her head. "No! I won't help you frame Nyla!"

She finally understood the real purpose behind Gabriel's demand for the 30,000 dollars from Nyla. Trembling, she realized how dangerous this man was he truly intended to ruin Nyla! "You're already helping me by calling her, aren't you? Even if you don't cooperate, she won't forgive you once she learns the truth," Gabriel taunted.

"I don't want to help you either!" Melody cried.

"Fine. Just wait for news of your mother's death," Gabriel said, turning on his heel.

As she watched his cold back, Melody was overwhelmed with fear. She believed Gabriel was capable of carrying out his threats because he was completely unhinged.

She rushed forward to stop him. "Okay, I'll do it!"

"Better not try any tricks, or I'll make sure you suffer," Gabriel warned.

His eyes were dark and impenetrable, like a net trapping her with no chance of escape.

"I-I won't," Melody stuttered.

She trembled as she spoke. The mere sight of Gabriel filled her with fear, leaving no trace of her previous attraction.

Gabriel smiled with satisfaction and turned to leave.

It wasn't until his figure disappeared around the corner that Melody collapsed to the ground, drenched in cold sweat.

...

The next morning, Nyla had just woken up when she received a call from Spencer, asking her to come to the company.

Upon arriving at the company, the receptionist escorted her to the conference room. Seeing Damon there, looking grim, she had a sinking feeling.

After she sat down, Spencer said,

"Nyla, Melody claims she saw you sending emails to Contelligence. She says you gave her 30,000 dollars as hush money. Do you have any explanation for this?"

Nyla looked at Melody in disbelief.

"Didn't you say the 30,000 dollars was for your father's surgery and that you borrowed it from me?" she asked.

Melody lowered her gaze, unable to

meet Nyla's eyes. Her voice was barely audible. "That was supposed to be hush money... Nyla, I'm really sorry, but I can't ignore my

conscience... Sharing the company's experimental data is illegal"

Nyla felt a whirlwind of emotions she couldn't quite grasp.

After transferring the money to Melody without hesitation the night before, she hadn't expected it to be used as a bribe against her.

"Why are you doing this to me? Have I wronged you in any way?" Nyla asked, her eyes filled with disappointment as she looked at Melody.

Melody bit her lip, mustering the

courage to face Nyla. "Nyla, you've been very kind to me, but I can't ignore the fact that you've caused the company to lose hundreds of millions. I can't protect you just because we're friends."