

Trading My Ex for His Uncle (Nyla)

Chapter 961

Upon hearing that, Damon set the file in his hand down and said, "The purpose of Starlite's project is likely to bring down the Wilkie Group."

Unfortunately, neither Jane nor Pedro had caught on. They were walking straight into the trap.

Not that Damon cared. Whether the Wilkie Group sank or swam meant nothing to him.

"I recall that Starlite is a subsidiary of Nyce Tech. Look into who's really behind Nyce Tech," Damon instructed.

A project this massive wouldn't happen without someone from Nyce Tech's higher-ups signing off. The general manager of Starlite Enterprise wouldn't dare act alone, no matter how bold they were.

"Mr. Sumner, the owner behind Nyce Tech has never shown their face publicly. Finding out who it is might take some time," Spencer replied.

Damon raised an eyebrow. "Isn't Falcon idle right now?"

After Falcon's investigation into Drake in Meristate had been exposed, the entire team had been recalled locally and were currently on leave.

If Falcon found out their break was being cut short, they'd probably curse Damon for being a relentless taskmaster.

"Understood. I'll contact them immediately," Spencer said.

Exiting the office, Spencer dialed Falcon's team lead. "Mr. Sumner wants you to investigate who's behind Nyce Tech."

Predictably, a string of curses erupted from the other end..

"I've only been on vacation for a few days! I'm lying on a beach, enjoying the sun with a gorgeous woman, and you hit me with this?" Spencer sympathized for a moment before saying firmly, "Do it quickly."

"Got it..." the other party muttered.

In the lab...

Nyla noticed Ruby zoning out again. She frowned, clearly displeased. "Ruby, if you can't focus, take the day off. If something goes wrong with the experiment, you won't be

able to handle the cons won't be...

Nyla had brought Ruby here from Capitarnia: She hadn't wanted to be so strict, but Ruby had been making constant mistakes all day-mixing the wrong reagents and miscalculating doses.

If Nyla hadn't been keeping a close watch, the repercussions could have been severe.

Meeting Nyla's frustrated gaze, Ruby quickly apologized, "I'm sorry, Nyla. I didn't mean to. I'll concentrate and make sure there are no more mistakes."

"If you're truly exhausted, take a break. Damaging the lab equipment or messing up a critical reaction would invalidate all our prior work," Nyla warned. Being reprimanded in front of the entire lab made Ruby's face pale. She bit her lip, feeling at a loss.

"I'm sorry, Nyla. I didn't sleep well last night... I promise it won't happen again," she apologized.

"Fine. But if you make another mistake, you're taking the rest of the day off. Come back when you're rested," Nyla said.

"Understood..." Ruby replied.

Nyla didn't look at her again, turning instead to discuss the latest experiment results with Leon.

Ruby lowered her eyes, wiping away the redness threatening to appear. She took a deep breath, forcing herself to focus entirely on the experiment.

For the rest of the day, she didn't make any more mistakes.

When work ended that evening, she packed up her tools quickly and clocked out without delay.

Truthfully, she had nothing urgent to do at home, but she couldn't concentrate in the lab either. Her mind kept circling back to the box Sullivan had left for her.

The night before, she had finally cracked the password to open it. Inside was a key, a property deed, and a letter addressed to her.

The letter revealed that Sullivan had

purchased an apartment in downtown Saintornia under her name. She had no idea how he'd pulled it off, but the deed listed her as the sole owner.

Chapter 962

Sullivan wrote that if Ruby chose to stay and build her career in Saintornia, the apartment could provide her with a sense of security.

If she decided to leave, she could sell it and use the money to start fresh elsewhere. Whatever choice she made, he would support her.

Ruby knew most of the money Sullivan had used to buy the apartment had been misappropriated from Prospectus Technology's pharmaceutical research fund.

Somehow, he had managed to keep his accounts clean and avoid suspicion from the authorities. On paper, the apartment had no connection to him and hadn't been seized by the police. With his salary, however, it would have been impossible for him to afford an apartment in downtown Saintornia outright.

At first, Ruby intended to sell the apartment and use the proceeds to repay the misappropriated funds. After a sleepless night, though, she began to hesitate.

An apartment in downtown Saintornia was worth millions. Selling it could provide her with the means to leave the country and cut ties with her toxic family for good.

With her skills, finding a job abroad wouldn't be too difficult. At the very least, she could support herself.

She hadn't slept all night and had been preoccupied with the decision throughout the day. Her distraction was why she had kept making mistakes in the experiment. In her mind, she felt split in two.

One part of her urged her to sell the apartment and start fresh abroad.

The other reminded her that the money came from a wrongful source, and accepting it would be morally reprehensible.

Ruby wrestled with guilt, torn between the two choices and unable to confide in anyone. The money had been stolen, and accepting it felt wrong.

Her conscience clashed with the temptation of a chance to change the course of her life completely.

When Ruby got home, she ate dinner while mulling over the dilemma.

The internal debate raged until midnight, leaving her tossing and turning in bed, unable to sleep.

Just as she resolved to stop overthinking and try to rest, a strange noise came from the living room.

Her heart lurched. Sitting up quickly, she reached under her pillow for the stun baton she kept there. Gripping it tightly, she strained to listen.

After nearly being abducted by a thug sent by her mother, she had taken to stashing self-defense tools around her home and on her person. The bedroom door creaked open slowly.

Deliberate, quiet footsteps moved toward her bed.

Ruby had not fallen asleep, so her eyes had already adjusted to the darkness. She could make out the figure of a man looming over her, holding a cloth he attempted to press over her nose.

In an instant, she shot her hand out from beneath the blanket. The stun baton crackled to life as she jabbed it into the man's body.

"Ah!" he screamed, collapsing to the floor beside the bed.

Not daring to give him a chance to recover, Ruby struck him repeatedly with the stun baton until he passed out. She grabbed her phone and bolted out of the apartment, dialing the police as she fled.

When the officers arrived and returned with her, the unconscious intruder was gone.

The police conducted a thorough search of Ruby's apartment but confirmed no one was inside. They took her statement in the living room.

"Ms. Jenner, we'll review nearby surveillance footage to identify where the suspect might have escaped. If we uncover anything, you'll be the first to know.

"In the meantime, try not to worry. We'll increase patrols in this area to ensure your safety," an officer assured her.

Still shaken, Ruby couldn't bring

herself to stay in the apartment that night. She packed some clothes and the documents she needed for work, then left with the police.

Chapter 963

The police were thorough, not leaving until they had escorted Ruby to a hotel and ensured her safety.

Once inside the room, Ruby felt a fleeting sense of security after locking the door and drawing the curtains. She sat at the edge of the bed, still visibly shaken, her face pale from the ordeal. After sitting in silence for a while, she went into the bathroom to shower.

As the warm water streamed over her, she made up her mind-she was going to sell the apartment.

She knew it was selfish but also knew that this was the only way to break free from her oppressive family.

The next morning...

Ruby contacted a realtor and listed the apartment for sale.

The property, located in the heart of the city, quickly attracted interest.

Within three days, it sold for 1,800,000 dollars.

When the money hit her account, Ruby stared at the large sum in disbelief. Her emotions were a turbulent mix of relief and unease. This was more money than she could ever hope to make in a lifetime as a pharmaceutical researcher. Without wasting time, Ruby began the process of applying to schools abroad and preparing to leave the country for a Ph.D.

As her focus shifted entirely to planning her departure, her performance at work began to suffer.

She made mistake after mistake in the lab, drawing Nyla's ire, who eventually lost her patience.

"Ruby, if you can't get your act together, don't bother coming back!" Nyla reprimanded her in front of the entire lab.

Ruby pressed her lips together and met Nyla's gaze. "You're right. I'm not fit to continue here. I've been meaning to resign but kept putting it off. I'm sorry for holding up everyone's progress. I'll resign now. Thank you for looking after me." Disbelief and anger flashed in Nyla's eyes. She demanded, "Say that again?"

Ruby had come so far, rising from her small-town beginnings to get where she was. Nyla couldn't believe she would throw it all away over a few words of criticism.

Seeing the disappointment in Nyla's eyes, Ruby hesitated for a moment, then steeled herself. "I said, I'm resigning. I don't think I need to repeat myself." "Follow me to my office!" Nyla snapped.

Without waiting for a response, she stormed off, her anger evident in every step.

Leon grabbed Ruby's arm, trying to reason with her. "Ruby, are you crazy? You're really going to quit?"

Ruby shook him off, her tone calm yet detached. "That's none of your business."

"Do you realize how good your position here is? Where else are you going to find something like this?" Leon reminded her.

"That's my concern, not yours," Ruby replied.

She brushed past him and walked to the office.

At the door, she took a deep breath before pushing it open. "Nyla."

Nyla's expression was cold as she said, "Give me a reason."

Ruby had been fine before. Recently, however, she was constantly distracted in experiments and had even considered resigning. Nyla couldn't understand what Ruby was thinking.

"I just feel like it's time for me to move on. I've decided to leave Saintornia," Ruby replied.

Nyla studied her carefully, disbelief in her eyes. "Does this have something to do with Sullivan?" Ruby's fingers clenched involuntarily.

After a long pause, she finally spoke. "No. This has nothing to do with him."

"Really? He gets arrested, and suddenly your work is riddled with mistakes, and now you're resigning? How am I supposed to believe it's unrelated?" Nyla questioned

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Ruby looked her in the eye and replied firmly, "My decision to resign is mine alone. I don't think I have to explain the reason. Whether you

believe me or not, I'm still leaving."

Chapter 964

Nyla's frown intensified as she asked, "Ruby, do you have any idea how much you've sacrificed to get to where you are? Are you really willing to throw all of that away?"

She had witnessed Ruby's journey firsthand and struggled to accept that her friend was making such a hasty decision.

Ruby's tone was sharp. "I don't need you to remind me of what I've been through. I know what I want, and I've made my decision."

She didn't want to hear another lecture.

To Ruby, Nyla was an outsider who could never truly understand the despair and struggles she had endured. Her toxic family was a suffocating swamp-the more she fought to escape, the deeper she sank. Ruby had reached her limit. She no longer wanted that life. Nyla's words couldn't pull her out, nor could anyone else's reasoning. She had made up her mind.

To her, leaving the country and vanishing beyond her family's reach was the only way forward.

Seeing that her words had no effect, Nyla paused, her voice turning cold as she spoke again. "Fine. If you're so determined to leave, call the professor yourself and tell him."

Without another word, she turned and left the office, heading for the lab.

Ruby knew Nyla was angry, but she wasn't about to apologize. An apology wouldn't fix anything. Nyla would still be disappointed, and besides, Ruby doubted they'd cross paths again. Taking a deep breath, she picked up her phone and called Edgar.

The conversation lasted over an hour.

At one point, Ruby wavered.

Edgar's arguments were compelling, but the thought of a fresh start abroad outweighed everything else. In the end, she stood firm.

Unable to change her mind, Edgar reluctantly agreed.

All that remained was for Ruby to wrap up her current projects, hand over her responsibilities, and secure her admission to a school overseas.

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That afternoon, Ruby met with Paul.

As soon as he sat down, Ruby

handed him a bank card. "Mr. Vernon, this card contains 1,400,000 dollars. The PIN is six zeros. This should be enough to repay the funds Sullivan misappropriated and cover any penalties. Transfer whatever remains to his account after his sentencing."

Paul stared at the card in disbelief. "Ms. Jenner... how do you have so much money?"

He hesitated, his suspicion evident. Handling such a large sum without knowing its origin could spell trouble.

Ruby noticed his apprehension and smiled faintly. "Don't worry. I sold a property to get this money. It's clean."

Relieved, Paul nodded and took the card. "This is more than enough. But Ms. Jenner, you and Mr. Heseltine are just colleagues. Why are you willing to help him with such a significant amount?"

"That's my business, Mr. Vernon. I don't think I need to explain myself, do I? After all, I'm not a criminal," Ruby replied coolly.

"Of course not. I'm just curious," Paul said, though he could sense the conversation had reached its limit.

Ruby stood. "Thank you for your help, Mr. Vernon. Please take care of the rest."

"Of course," Paul answered, watching her leave.

Alone with the card, Paul frowned. Something didn't sit right, so he dialed his assistant.

"Check into Ms. Jenner's recent finances. I want to know where this money came from," he instructed before ending the call.

Without wasting time, Paul headed to the detention center.

"Mr. Heseltine," he began as he faced Sullivan. "Ms. Jenner handed me this card today. She said it

tains 1,400,000 dollars to repay the funds you embezzled."

Chapter 965

Sullivan's expression, initially stoic, suddenly changed. His eyes widened in disbelief as he asked, "What did you just say?"

Ruby couldn't have that much money unless she had sold the apartment he had given her. The realization hit him hard, and his face darkened.

He had given her that apartment to help her escape her toxic family-not so she could sell it to bail him out.

"Mr. Vernon, I want to see her. Please, let her know," Sullivan requested.

Seeing Sullivan's anxiety, Paul hesitated momentarily before asking, "Mr. Heseltine, is there an issue with this money?"

Sullivan's expression stiffened.

After a long pause, he replied, "No... I just need to see her. I can't accept this money."

Paul gave him a long, scrutinizing look but refrained from pressing further. He nodded and left the detention center.

As he stepped out of the police station, his assistant called.

"The money Ruby provided does indeed come from the sale of her apartment. The property, located in the city center, was sold yesterday. There's nothing suspicious about it," the assistant reported. Paul frowned.

After a moment of thought, he said quietly, "Look into Sullivan. Based on Ruby's circumstances, there's no way she could have afforded that property on her own."

He suspected that the funds Sullivan had embezzled from Prospectus Technology's pharmaceutical research had been used to purchase that property.

If that were the case, why would he put the property in Ruby's name if they were merely coworkers? Unless... there was more to their relationship than just being colleagues. Hanging up, Paul went to meet Ruby.

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When Ruby learned that Sullivan wanted to see her, she refused outright, her tone cold and unyielding. "I've done all I can for him. Seeing him serves no purpose now." The indifference in her response only deepened Paul's suspicions.

"Ms. Jenner, the investigation into Mr. Heseltine's embezzlement is still ongoing. I hope you'll cooperate. Are you sure your relationship with him is purely professional?" he asked.

"I've looked into this, and your

finances suggest it would be impossible for you to afford a three-bedroom apartment in the city center outright. That property, which was recently transferred to your name—was it bought using the funds he embezzled?"

Paul's sharp gaze bore into Ruby as if trying to read her every subtle reaction.

Ruby turned her face away, avoiding his eyes. "Mr. Vernon, this is my private matter. I don't need to explain it to you." She bit her lip, and a flicker of guilt flashed in her eyes.

Despite that, she remembered what Sullivan had said no one would ever be able to trace the funds back to her.

That thought steadied her nerves, and she met Paul's gaze with calm defiance.

Paul frowned and warned, "Ms. Jenner, this matter could directly affect the severity of Mr. Heseltine's sentence. If the property was indeed purchased with embezzled funds, the consequences would be grave."

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Ruby looked at him with displeasure and insisted, "The property is mine and has nothing to do with embezzlement. If you need to trace the funds, you should talk to Sullivan, not me." Her dismissive response only solidified Paul's suspicions.

This property under her name had to be tied to Sullivan in some way. No one would simply spend over 1,000,000 dollars on a coworker.

Seeing Ruby's refusal to cooperate,

Paul sighed and rose to his feet.

"Ms. Jenner, regardless of your

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claims, I must emphasize that if it's proven the property is tied to embezzled funds, you can also face legal action from Prospectus Technology."

Ruby's hands tightened at her sides.

After a long pause, she said coldly, "As I've already said, my property has no connection to Sullivan. If there's nothing else, please leave. I have packing to do."

Chapter 966

Realizing further questioning was futile, Paul left.

After his departure, Ruby resumed packing her belongings. Just as she finished folding her clothes, the doorbell rang.

She opened the door to find Leon standing there. Surprise flickered in her eyes before her expression turned indifferent.

"If you've come to convince me to stay, don't bother. I'm not going back," she said.

"I'm not here to convince you," Leon replied. "I just want to know why you're resigning. Back in Capitarnia, you promised to work hard and help Nyla complete this project."

Ruby frowned. "There's no particular reason. I just think pursuing further studies is more important than this project."

"Further studies?" Leon looked at her in disbelief. "You told me before you had no money and needed to work to support yourself."

Ruby leaned against the doorframe, her hand tightening slightly. Her tone grew frosty as she retorted, "That's my business. It has nothing to do with you."

Her dismissive attitude angered Leon. Before coming, he had thought Ruby might be facing some hardship and that he could offer help.

Seeing her now, already planning to study abroad, he realized he had been naïve.

"Ruby, I came here as a concerned coworker. Since you clearly don't need my concern, I'll say no more. Good luck with your future," he said. Without waiting for her reply, Leon turned and left.

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Meanwhile, Nyla was having dinner when she received a call from Leon.

"Nyla, I just visited Ruby. She said she's resigning to pursue further studies. Honestly, I have no idea where she's getting the money from," he said.

at Leon looked down on

It wasn't that

Ruby. He knew about her financial struggles. Back when they worked in the same lab, she could barely

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afford meals, often surviving on a single slice of bread and water.

QUMS

It wasn't until she started earning money from projects that she could afford meals in the cafeteria. Even so, pursuing higher education abroad seemed financially out of reach. Nyla instinctively felt that Ruby's departure was related to Sullivan.

If Sullivan had given Ruby the

money, she could easily resign to study abroad. The question was whether the money Sullivan gave Ruby was his savings or the funds he had embezzled.

"It's her business. Let her be. She's already resigned, so there's not much chance we'll meet again. We've worked together after all the timing aligns, we'll buy her a meal as a farewell," Nyla replied.

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After the call ended, she placed the phone on the table and resumed eating.

"Is everything alright?" Damon asked, noticing her distraction after the call.

Nyla had conflicted feelings. She suspected that Sullivan might have given Ruby a portion of the embezzled funds.

Yet, after watching Ruby's growth over the years, she still hoped for her success. Thus, she hesitated to discuss it with Damon.

Damon's gaze hardened as she remained silent.

"Why are you staring at me?" he asked.

"I'm not sure if I should talk about it," Nyla replied.

"If you're unsure, you don't have to say anything right now," Damon reassured her. "Wait until you're ready. You don't want to regret saying something prematurely."

Chapter 967

After a brief hesitation, Nyla decided to share her suspicions with Damon.

Listening intently, Damon frowned and spoke in a low voice. "I understand. I'll have Spencer look into it."

"Okay." Nyla sighed, hoping that Ruby had nothing to do with the matter.

After dinner, Damon retreated to his study. As soon as he picked up a file, his phone rang.

"Mr. Sumner, we've received news from Falcon. The real owner behind Nyce Tech... You know him," Spencer reported. Damon's expression remained unchanged as he asked, "Is it Gabriel?"

"Yes..." Spencer replied.

"I see. Keep a close watch on Starlite. Gabriel's goal is likely to take over the Wilkie Group," Damon instructed.

"Understood. Should we inform Mr. Wilkie about this?" Spencer asked.

If Nyce Tech acquired the Wilkie Group, it would pose a significant threat to Prospectus Technology.

"No need for now. Let's see what his next move is. In the meantime, investigate where Sullivan funneled the embezzled funds," Damon said.

"Sullivan?" Spencer paused, then recalled the team leader who had embezzled from their pharmaceutical research funds.

Although the amount wasn't significant to Prospectus Technology, such matters were usually left to the legal team. Why was Damon personally involved this time?

"Understood," Spencer replied.

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The next morning, Nyla called Ruby to invite her to dinner that evening as a farewell gesture.

There was a long silence before Ruby responded. "I appreciate the thought, Nyla, but there's no need for dinner. I'm busy packing these days. If there's nothing else, let's leave it at that." Before Nyla could reply, Ruby hung up.

Hearing the dial tone, Nyla sighed, set her phone down, and went to wash up.

Later that morning...

As Nyla arrived at the lab, Leon approached her. "Nyla, do you have time tonight? Let's invite Ruby for dinner as a farewell."

Nyla pressed her lips together

before responding, "I already called

her this morning. She turned it

down. It seems she doesn't want to

see me. If you want to invite her, go ahead, but I won't join."

Leon's face darkened. "She wouldn't even come to her own farewell dinner? What's gotten into her? Is she even the same person anymore?"

Back when they were in Capitarnia, Nyla had helped Ruby a lot, and Ruby had always been grateful.

Now, she seemed unrecognizable. The more Leon thought about it, the more disillusioned he felt.

Nyla felt a similar disappointment.

She urged, "Let's get ready for the experiment."

As Nyla walked away, Leon decided he wouldn't bother with the farewell dinner either. A person so ungrateful wasn't worth the effort.

Ruby had finally finished packing and sat in her living room to rest. Just as she picked up her phone, her mind drifted back to Nyla's call that morning.

Her feelings were conflicted. On the one hand, she was deeply grateful for Nyla's past help. On the other, she feared that Nyla might uncover the truth about her recent actions, so she had chosen to avoid further contact.

Her thoughts were interrupted by the sudden ringing of her phone.

Seeing that it was Paul, she hesitated for a moment before answering, "Mr. Vernon, what is it?"

"My assistant discovered that the

money you gave me came from the
embezzled funds tied to Mr.

Heseltine's case. When would you be available to meet?" Paul asked.

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Chapter 968

Ruby's breath hitched, and she instinctively denied it. "I don't know what you're talking about!"

"Ms. Jenner, I'll be at the same café where we met last time, at 2:00 p.m. If you don't show up, I'll have no choice but to submit the evidence to the authorities," Paul said, then hung up without waiting for her response. Clutching her phone, Ruby froze in fear.

If she went to meet Paul, she risked losing the money and facing legal action from Prospectus Technology.

No... she couldn't let that happen. She had to leave immediately.

Steeling herself, she called Paul back. "Mr. Vernon, I'm not free at 2:00 p.m. Can we make it 4:00 p.m. instead?"

"Sure," Paul replied without hesitation.

After hanging up, Ruby quickly grabbed her suitcase and left. She gave her cat to a neighbor, not wanting anything to slow her down.

She booked the earliest available flight and headed straight for the airport.

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Damon and Nyla were having lunch in his office when Spencer entered hurriedly.

"Mr. Sumner, we've uncovered the trail. The embezzled funds were funneled into a separate account. Using that account, Sullivan purchased a property under Ruby's name. She sold the property a few days ago for 1,800,000 dollars," Spencer reported. At this, Nyla's cutlery slipped from her fingers, her expression filled with disbelief.

So this was why Ruby had resigned? Did she not realize that taking that money was illegal?

The more Nyla thought about it, the more disheartened she became. Now Ruby's recent behavior made sense.

Damon's voice was cold as he made a decision. "Report it to the authorities immediately."

"Yes, sir," Spencer replied, then left.

Once he was gone, Damon turned to Nyla, who was sitting on the sofa in a daze. He sat beside her. "Nyla, are you upset about me calling the police?" he asked.

Nyla had calmed down somewhat by then. She lowered her gaze and spoke softly. "Everyone has to be responsible for their actions. If she made this choice, she should be prepared to face the consequences."

"I'm just worried this will hurt you," Damon said gently.

After all, Ruby had once been her junior.

Nyla shook her head. "It won't. I was already disappointed when she resigned. This just solidifies my feelings."

Although her words were firm,

Damon could see the tension in her

tightly clenched hands resting

her lap. She was clearly still

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affected.

"Alright, let's not dwell on this anymore. You didn't eat much earlier. Have some more," he urged.

"Okay." Nyla picked up her utensils again, though the food now tasted bland.

She couldn't figure out when Ruby had changed.

Once, she had been a hardworking, sincere junior. Now, she was complicit in Sullivan's crime.

Eventually, Nyla decided to stop thinking about it.

Regardless of Ruby's reasons, she would have to face the consequences.

Just as Ruby collected her boarding pass at the airport, two police officers intercepted her.

One of them showed his badge and

said sternly, "Ms. Jenner, you are suspected of being involved in Heseltine's embezzlement. Please come with us

Ruby froze in place, the boarding pass slipping from her hands and falling to the floor.

Chapter 969

After being taken to the police station, Ruby knew she couldn't keep hiding the truth, so she confessed everything. She had already anticipated this outcome when making her choices.

It seemed her luck had never been good.

Born into a family that valued sons over daughters, she had worked hard to get into university and join a lab.

Her family, desperate to repay her brother's gambling debts, tried to force her into marrying an old widower from her village.

If it hadn't been for Sullivan saving her on several occasions, she might have already ended up living that life.

Selling the apartment Sullivan left her was supposed to be her way out—a chance to start fresh in a place where no one knew her. But life, as always, had other plans.

Ruby knew she had been selfish and greedy. Still, if her family hadn't pushed her to the brink, she might never have gone down this path. After finishing her confession, she told the officer, "I'd like to see someone."

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When Nyla was informed that Ruby had been arrested and wanted to see her, she remained silent for a long time.

In the end, she decided against it.

"There's no need for me to go," she said. "Please tell her this: I hope she never makes the same mistake again."

The officer replied, "Ms. Kinsey, she also asked us to pass along a message if you refused to meet her. She wanted to say she's sorry."

"Thank you," Nyla said softly before hanging up.

Taking a deep breath, she pushed the matter aside and focused on documenting her experiment.

If Ruby had sought her help earlier, perhaps things wouldn't have come to this. In the end, it all came down to her own lack of resolve and her decision to take a shortcut. But shortcuts, as often as not, were riddled with thorns.

That evening, Damon noticed Nyla's low spirits on the way home. He set down the document he had been reviewing and asked, "Still upset about Ruby?"

Nyla shook her head. "It's just... I feel a little emotional. Back in Capitarnia, she was the hardest-working person in the lab. Whenever I went there, she was always present. Sometimes, she'd even stay in the lab for a month straight, waiting for results. If only she hadn't made that mistake, she could have had the life she wanted."

Damon pulled her into his arms,

replying, "Everyone has different life experiences. When faced with the same situation, people make different choices. She just couldn't resist temptation. Don't dwell on it too much."

"Mm," Nyla hummed.

When they arrived home, Nyla stepped into the living room and was surprised to see Valarie on the floor, playing with Mason, while Brandon sat on the sofa, looking dotingly at them. en FindNovel

Why were they there together?

Seeing Nyla and Damon enter, Brandon rose to greet them. "Uncle Damon, Aunt Nyla."

Damon nodded. "Let's talk in the study."

"Okay," Brandon replied.

The two men disappeared down the hallway, leaving Nyla to join Valarie and Mason. She crouched beside them and asked Valarie, "You and Brandon have made up?"

"Mm, he apologized—and he was sincere about it. So, I forgave him," Valarie answered.

"Weren't you the one calling me late at night, vowing never to forgive him this time?" Nyla teased.

Valarie blushed, rolling her eyes. "Look who's talking. Don't you do the same with Damon when you two fight?"

Nyla laughed. "Fair point. I'll let it go. By the way, has Tom stopped pestering you?"

At the mention of Tom, Valarie scowled. Don't even bring him up. It's so annoying! He's been sending flowers and expensive gifts to my office every day lately. He's never been this generous before."

Chapter 970

As Valarie reflected on their relationship, she became more and more irritated, recalling how she had always been the one putting in the effort.

Not only had Tom never given her anything, but he had also shamelessly flirted with other women. How could she have been so blind five years ago to fall for someone like him? "The most important thing is not letting him interfere with your relationship with Brandon," Nyla reminded her.

Although Valarie hadn't said as much, Nyla could tell she was serious about Brandon. It was clear she was already thinking about marriage.

In Nyla's opinion, while Brandon was young and still maturing, his love for Valarie was genuine and that was enough.

"Don't worry. I've been throwing everything Tom sends straight into the trash without telling Brandon," Valarie replied.

Nyla paused, then advised, "You might want to mention it to Brandon, just to avoid misunderstandings down the line."

Valarie was about to respond when she noticed Brandon approaching. She stood up. "That was quick. Done talking already?" "Mm," Brandon replied. "Let's go."

As Nyla stood, she asked Valarie, "Want to stay for dinner?"

Valarie shook her head. "No, we have plans later."

Nyla didn't press further. She and Damon walked them to the door and watched them drive off before heading back inside.

"Nyla," Damon called suddenly.

She turned to him. "What is it?"

"There's a bidding event tomorrow evening. Will you come with me?" Damon asked.

"A bidding event? Are you sure I should go to something like that?" Nyla inquired.

"Why not? Besides, there are some pharmaceutical projects involved. You can help me evaluate whether they're a good fit for Prospectus Technology," Damon suggested. Nyla thought about it, then nodded. "Okay."

...

The next evening, Nyla accompanied Damon to the event after work.

As soon as they entered, they ran into Jane and Gabriel.

Jane greeted Damon with a smile, "Good evening, Mr. Sumner. I didn't expect you to attend this event, I thought Prospectus Technology wouldn't be interested in such small projects!"

Damon's expression remained neutral as he replied, "You sound confident, Ms. Wilkie. It seems you're determined to win these 'small projects'. I'm curious how many the Wilkie Group will manage to secure tonight."

The Wilkie Group had just recovered from a crisis and likely didn't have the funds to bid aggressively. Getting even one or two projects would already be an achievement.

Jane's smile stiffened as she said, "Don't worry, Mr. Sumner. I'll do my best for the Wilkie Group."

"I'll be watching," Damon replied with a chuckle before walking away with Nyla.

Jane glared at their retreating figures, her eyes filled with frustration.

Every time she thought about how Damon had abandoned the Wilkie Group during its darkest days, her hatred grew.

If only Prospectus Technology could face a similar crisis! Then Damon would understand the despair and fear she had felt!

Taking a deep breath to calm herself, she turned to find Gabriel distracted. Her anger boiled over.

"Gabriel! Were you blind just now? Didn't you see how Damon humiliated me? And you just stood there doing nothing! Are you even a man?!" she demanded.

Chapter 971

A flicker of annoyance crossed Gabriel's eyes, but his voice remained composed and gentle. "Jane, provoking Damon doesn't help us. Our focus should be on securing the project we need. Once the company's crisis is resolved, we can address everything else." Jane sneered. "If you were as capable as Damon with a company like Prospectus Technology, do you think I'd have to endure his disdain?"

In her mind, Gabriel's lack of success was the root of her frustrations.

Gabriel, however, seemed indifferent to her belittling remarks. His expression remained steady and unmoved. "Jane, don't get worked up. We don't want to be late for check-in or submission."

With a cold huff, Jane fell silent, though she glanced at Gabriel with veiled contempt. If it weren't for Wilhelm, she would have left him for a husband more suited to her ambitions for the Wilkie Group.

At the registration desk, she signed in and handed over the bidding documents.

As they finished, her eyes briefly lingered on Prospectus Technology's bidding folder, her gaze flickering with intent.

Without a word, she turned and left with Gabriel.

Once inside the venue, she suddenly released Gabriel's arm and said, "I need to use the restroom. Go find a seat, and don't embarrass the Wilkies."

Gabriel's reputation had taken a hit since losing his gaming company.

Gossip circulated that he was a freeloader, entirely dependent on Jane for support. If the gossips weren't so careful not to offend the Wilkies, they might have already said as much to his face. "Shall I go with you?" Gabriel asked.

"That won't be necessary," Jane replied curtly, striding off.

As she walked away, Gabriel smirked.

Moments earlier, when Jane had signed in, he had noticed her subtle reaction to Prospectus Technology's folder. Years together had made him an expert in reading her intentions, and he was certain she was planning to tamper with their bid.

If she intended to play dirty at the venue, she would only dig her own grave.

He wasn't about to stop her, though. After all, the Wilkie Group's downfall would only hasten his own plans.

Jane returned 15 minutes later,

complaining, "This venue is huge! it took me forever to find the

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restroom. Did I miss anythin

"No," Gabriel replied with a smile, "The bid opening is about to start. Let's find our seats."

They settled in just as the host stepped onto the stage.

"Good evening, esteemed guests and representatives! Welcome to the bidding session for the Mosaic Date Mall project. My name is Waylon Muir, and I'm honored to kick off this significant event..."

After a long series of opening remarks, Waylon finally transitioned to the bid opening. "We will now begin the opening of bids."

He picked up the first folder, showcasing its intact seal before moving to the next.

Jane watched intently, clutching her purse. Her knuckles whitened, but her eyes gleamed with anticipation.

When it was Prospectus Technology's turn, Waylon's expression changed the moment he picked up the folder.

Chapter 972

Prospectus Technology's folder was damaged, its seal clearly tampered with.

According to the rules, any bidding documents that were not properly sealed would be automatically voided.

Gasps rippled through the room.

"How did this happen? Did Prospectus Technology really submit an unsealed bid? That's a rookie mistake for a company like them. Surely their team knows better."

"Or maybe they were trying to cheat-peek at the lowest bids and adjust theirs. Looks like they botched

it."

"Whatever the reason, it's against the rules. Prospectus Technology is definitely out of the running now." "This is great news! With Prospectus Technology out, our chances of winning just went up."

The crowd's murmurs ranged from confusion to gloating.

Onstage, Waylon followed protocol and addressed the room. "Ladies and gentlemen, the bid submitted by Prospectus Technology has been found improperly sealed. As per the regulations, the submission is disqualified.

"If Prospectus Technology wishes to contest this decision, they may do so after the session concludes. For now, we will continue with the process."

All eyes turned to Prospectus Technology's representatives. Some were confused, some smug, and others gloating. But the happiest of all was Jane.

The inability to participate in this bidding meant that months of hard work from Prospectus Technology had been for nothing.

While it wouldn't cause significant losses for the company, Jane relished the thought of it frustrating Damon.

Damon gave no visible reaction. His sharp, glacial gaze flicked to Nyla as he spoke, "Stay here. I'll handle this."

"Let me come with you," Nyla replied, her heart aching for him.

She knew how much effort he had poured into this bid, working late nights to ensure every detail was perfect. The documents had been intact when submitted-someone had definitely tampered with them.

The prime suspect? Jane.

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Damon remained composed. "There's no need. Just wait for me."

With that, he rose and strode out.

The remaining bids were all properly sealed, and Waylon moved on to announce the details. "All bidding documents have been inspected and proven to be properly sealed.

"Next, we'll open them and continue with the bidding. After the bids are announced, there will be a second round of bidding. The second-found bids will then be assessed before the results are announced." Waylon began to read the first bid. "The bid submitted by Xcel Engineering Co. proposes a total cost of 1,213,905 dollars with a project duration of 325 calendar days, adhering to all national quality standards...

"The bid submitted by the Wilkie Group proposes a total cost of 1,131,721 dollars, with a project duration of 312 calendar days..."

As the bids were read aloud, Jane frowned. Her pricing was competitive but not the lowest. Several companies had undercut the Wilkie Group's offer.

Chapter 973

The Wilkie Group's bid price had already been slashed to the bone. Lowering it further would mean winning the project at a loss.

Jane dialed Pedro's number and quietly explained the situation.

After a brief silence, Pedro said firmly, "This is the lowest we can go. Don't drop the price any further. A project that loses money isn't worth taking on."

"Understood," she replied, though her expression darkened once she hung up.

She had spent over a month leading her team through grueling overtime to prepare for this bid. Before arriving that day, she'd promised them bonuses and a celebratory dinner if they won.

Now, the odds didn't look good.

She sighed in disappointment at the thought.

Beside her, Gabriel noticed her mood and spoke gently to comfort her. "Don't worry, Jane. Just because those companies underbid the Wilkie Group doesn't mean they'll win. The Wilkie Group's reputation is much stronger than theirs."

The lower bids came from smaller companies, desperate for the project and willing to sacrifice profit margins. But slashing costs too much would inevitably harm the quality of the work.

Jane pressed her lips together and remained silent.

The process soon moved into the second round of bidding.

The Wilkie Group held firm to their original price, while nearly every other company lowered their bids even further. Even the lowest bidder from the first round shaved an additional 30,000 dollars off their price, leaving no room for profit.

Jane's face grew grim as frustration and reluctance settled in.

Gabriel tried to soothe her again, but she cut him off sharply, "Enough. I don't want to hear any more useless talk."

"Jane, I know you're upset, but the final result hasn't been announced yet. Don't lose hope," Gabriel coaxed.

She shot him an icy glare. "It's easy for you to say. You weren't the one working overtime for over a month. You wouldn't understand how I feel."

Gabriel met her gaze calmly, his voice steady. "You think I don't understand? I built that gaming company from the ground up and ran it for years, only to have it sold off in an instant because Grandpa decided it had to go to save the Wilkie Group."

Jane scowled "What are you trying to say? That company was the Wilkie Group's to begin with. Selling it to save the Wilkie Group was the right thing to do. Don't tell me you worked there for a few years and thought it belonged to you."

Her scornful words hit like a slap. Gabriel lowered his gaze, remaining silent, though a flicker of coldness flashed in his eyes.

Ignoring him, Jane focused anxiously on waiting for the results.

Waylon soon returned to the stage. "Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your patience. After a meticulous evaluation process, we have the results. I shall now announce the winning bidder."

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The room fell silent, everyone's attention fixed on Waylon.

He continued with a smile. "I am honored to announce that the winning bidder for the Mosaic Date Mall

project is... the Wilkie Group! Let's give them a big round of applause!"

Cheers erupted, and Jane sat frozen for a moment before her face lit up with disbelief and joy.

The Wilkie Group had won!

The rush of excitement left her dizzy. Her earlier frustration and despair vanished in an instant.

Chapter 974

Jane thought this project would silence the board members who had criticized her since the Starlite Enterprise debacle and restore her standing with Pedro.

Buoyed by euphoria, she stood up, her smile radiant as she addressed the crowd. "We at the Wilkie Group are honored to be selected. As always, we are committed to quality and integrity, and we promise to deliver this project with the utmost efficiency and excellence—"

A chilling voice cut her off. "Ms. Wilkie, bribing staff to sabotage a competitor's bid in order to secure a win -do you really think your company deserves to claim integrity?"

All heads turned to see Damon stride into the room, his face unreadable, his sharp gaze fixed on Jane. His stare's intensity made her skin crawl, and she felt her face go pale.

Gritting her teeth, she retorted, "Mr. Sumner, your bid was disqualified due to an unsealed envelope. Now that the Wilkie Group has won, you're jealous and trying to smear my name? That's a bit much, don't you think?"

Damon smiled, his expression cold. "I've secured a copy of the venue's surveillance footage. Whether this is smearing or not will be clear once we play it for everyone to see."

Jane's face twitched as panic flared in her chest.

It was impossible. She had specifically chosen a blind spot in the cameras-there couldn't be any footage.

Forcing herself to remain calm, she said, "Mr. Sumner, falsely accusing someone is a crime. If you apologize to me now, I'll let this slide. Otherwise, when you fail to produce evidence, I'll involve the police to clear my name."

Damon didn't flinch. "No need. I've already called the police. Once they arrive, I'll hand over the footage to them."

Jane's face drained of color, and her composure cracked.

How could this be? Damon had called the police? Could he really have evidence?

The murmurs in the room grew louder.

"If Jane really tampered with Prospectus Technology's bid, their legal team might press charges. She could be facing jail time."

"I don't care about their feud. I just care about this bidding. If Jane did sabotage Prospectus Technology's document, does that mean the process starts over?"

"The Wilkie Group's a big company. Would they really stoop that low?"

"Heh, you never know. Didn't their finances take a hit recently? They might be banking on this project to turn things around."

The whispers felt like knives to Jane. She clenched her fists tightly, her nails digging into her palms as she stared at Damon.

"Mr. Sumner, if you have evidence,

show it now. If you prove it was me, I'll willingly give up this project to Prospectus Technology. But if you can't, I expect a public apology," she declared.

Her voice was steady, but inside, her panic only deepened. She was betting everything on the idea that

no footage existed and that Damon was bluffing.

If she lost this gamble, all her efforts

would be wasted. The Wilkie Group's board would never allow her

in her position, and Pedro would

lose

all faith in her.

She had no choice. Any sign of guilt now would be as good as a confession.

Chapter 975

Damon didn't waste words on Jane. Instead, he gave a subtle nod to the staff member trailing behind him. The staff member walked up to the stage and plugged a USB drive into the nearby laptop.

Moments later, a video began playing on the big screen.

In the blind spot of the surveillance cameras, Jane was seen handing a bank card to a staff member in uniform.

"There's 30,000 dollars on this card. Go open Prospectus Technology's bidding file. Once you're done, I'll transfer another 30,000 dollars," she said.

The staff member hesitated for a moment, then took the card.

"Fine. But if you don't keep your word, I'll expose what you've made me do," he replied, turning to walk away.

As the video played, Jane's face drained of color.

She shook her head in disbelief, muttering, "No... No way! This can't be real. That was a blind spot for the cameras how could there be footage?"

Damon's gaze was cold as he said, "The surveillance speaks for itself, Ms. Wilkie. Denying it now is pointless. The police will be here soon. Save your excuses for them."

Jane felt a sinking feeling in her stomach. If the police got involved, she would be finished.

She glanced at Damon and quickly moved toward him, stopping a few paces away, her eyes filled with desperation under his cold, unforgiving stare.

"Mr. Sumner, I know I was wrong. Please, I'm begging you let me off this time. I'll withdraw from the project and give it to Prospectus Technology. Just... please don't take this any further," she pleaded.

Damon's expression didn't change. "Withdraw? Ms. Wilkie, let me remind you that if you hadn't sabotaged Prospectus Technology's bid, your company wouldn't have a clear shot at winning the project. And projects like this aren't something you can just 'give away' on a whim."

Jane's face went ashen, and her body trembled, as if she might collapse any moment.

The murmurs of disdain from the crowd grew louder, crashing over her like a tidal wave.

"So, the Wilkie Group is resorting to such underhanded tactics now? Seems like they're in real trouble."

"Our company was considering a partnership with the Wilkie Group, but after this? Forget it. Who knows when they'll pull something shady on us?"

"Honestly, I don't know what Mr. Wilkie was thinking-grooming his granddaughter for leadership instead of his grandson."

"Women in power? This is exactly what happens-scheming and backstabbing."

At that last comment, Nyla frowned and turned her cold gaze on the speaker.

The man, uneasy under her stare, asked, "Ms. Kinsey, do you need something?"

"I don't appreciate your

generalization," Nyla replied sharply. "You're saying women are all about scheming and backstabbing? Don't men do the same? If anything, they're often worse-petty and treacherous."

Although Nyla despised Jane's actions, she wasn't about to let anyone use this incident as an excuse to demean women as a whole.

The man's expression darkened, but

he bit back his anger, knowing better than to argue in Damon's presence. "Ms. Kinsey, as a gentleman, I won't argue with a lady. People might say I'm bullying you." en FindNovel

Nyla chuckled. "Oh, please. Are you worried about that, or are you just scared of offending Damon?" The man froze, his anger palpable but restrained. He leered at Nyla but said nothing further, her words clearly striking a nerve.

Standing nearby, Gabriel watched

the exchange with raised eyebrows. He recognized the man as Bernard Trenholm, the deputy manager of Cobalt Hawk, known for holding grudges.

Chapter 976

Years ago, one of Bernard's subordinates made an offhand comment about him, and Bernard retaliated with workplace bullying that pushed the employee to the brink of suicide.

Although the matter had been quietly suppressed, it was no secret within the industry. Given Bernard's personality, it was unlikely he would let Nyla's words slide.

Gabriel began formulating a plan.

Meanwhile, Jane glared at Nyla, snapping, "Don't think I'll thank you for defending me!"

"You're mistaken," Nyla retorted coolly. "I didn't speak up for you. I spoke up because I can't stand people

using this incident to slander all women. This has nothing to do with you."

Had Bernard not been so misogynistic over Jane's actions, Nyla wouldn't have said a word.

Jane gritted her teeth and shifted her pleading gaze back to Damon. "Mr. Sumner, I know I made a

mistake. Please, give me another chance. I swear it won't happen again."

Damon replied coldly, "You're not sorry for what you did. You're sorry you got caught. You know this scandal will ruin the Wilkie Group's reputation and cost you your position as general manager."

Jane paled as her thoughts were laid bare. She felt utterly humiliated but didn't know what else to do to salvage the situation except beg Damon. "Mr. Sumner-

Damon cut her off, "Take responsibility for your actions. Prospectus Technology has been disqualified from this bid. Our legal team will handle the damages and your behavior."

Without waiting for a response, he turned and left, taking Nyla with him.

Jane tried to follow, but two security guards stepped in her path. "Ms. Wilkie, please stay where you are." "Get out of my way!" she shouted.

"Ms. Wilkie, if you continue harassing Mr. Sumner, it will only make things worse for you," one of the guards said calmly.

Frustrated and humiliated, Jane struggled, but there was nothing she could do as Damon and Nyla disappeared from view.

Soon after the project organizers

announced the cancellation of the Wilkie Group's winning bid. The project was awarded to the

company that had come second in the bidding process.

The representatives were already preparing to leave, their excitement barely contained as they accepted the news.

The crowd ridiculed Jane before dispersing.

The room emptied quickly, leaving only Gabriel and Jane behind.

Gabriel approached her and tried to help her up, but she slapped him hard across the face.

"You're useless! If it weren't for marrying you, I wouldn't be in this humiliating position!" Jane cried.

Gabriel's face bore a visible red mark, but he remained unflinching, his gaze calm.

"You're blaming me? If you hadn't sabotaged Prospectus Technology's bid, none of this would have happened. This is your mess, not mine. Blaming others just shows your incompetence."

"What did you just say?" Jane stared at him in shock, as though seeing him for the first time. "How dare you talk to me like this?"

Gabriel smirked. "Why wouldn't I?"

After all, you're about to lose

everything The board won't tolerate a general manager who keeps major projects, and your

grandfather's not giving you a third

chance." .

Jane's face twisted with anger as she spat, "Don't forget, you're nothing without me. If I fall, you won't have a good outcome either!"

Chapter 977

"You don't need to worry about me. You should start worrying about yourself," Gabriel countered. Initially, he had planned to keep playing along with Jane for a while longer. But since she was going to treat him like this, he didn't mind tearing off the mask right now.

Without a moment's hesitation, he turned to leave.

"Gabriel, stop right there! If you dare leave now, we're getting a divorce!" Jane threatened.

His steps faltered, and he turned back to look at her.

Jane jutted her chin out, as if thinking she had him cornered. "If you apologize to me now, I'll forgive you." "Fine. Let's get divorced," Gabriel replied.

Jane's eyes widened in disbelief. She gritted her teeth. "What did you say? Say that again!"

"I said, let's get divorced," Gabriel repeated, his tone calm.

He had been waiting for this moment for a long time.

Had Nyla not come back alive, he might have stayed in the marriage for the sake of their child.

But now? He wasn't going to waste any more of his time.

"Gabriel, are you insane? Without the Wilkies, you're nothing! What company would hire you?" Jane snapped. "And don't think you'll get custody of Wilhelm. You'll never see him or me again!"

Her anger and threats didn't faze Gabriel. While she was hysterical, he remained composed.

"Fine. You can keep custody of our son. I'll make sure you have enough money to raise him comfortably and live the rest of your life without worry," he said.

His calmness made Jane realize he wasn't bluffing. He was serious.

She rushed to stand in front of him, her teeth gritted. "You want a divorce because of Nyla, don't you?!" Before Nyla's return, everything between them had seemed fine.

After Pedro's birthday party, however, she had noticed a shift in Gabriel's behavior. He no longer shared a bed with her, nor did he embrace her at night.

She had been so preoccupied with work that she had ignored the signs.

Now, reflecting on it, Jane realized Gabriel must have decided to leave her and their son right after that banquet.

"Yes," Gabriel admitted without hesitation.

His gaze steady, he looked her in the

ine

eye. "Jane, I've never loved you. only married you because you got pregnant. But I'll make sure you're provided for-"

"Shut up!" Jane cut him off, trembling with rage. "Provided for? Hah! What kind of money can a broke man like you offer me? Three grand? Five? Ten?"

Gabriel was just an average guy-his good looks were his only standout feature. Marrying into her family had been the luckiest break of his life.

How dare he say he had never loved her? Who did he think he was?

Jane sneered, her voice rising. "You think Nyla would choose you? Why is she with Damon? Because he's rich! She didn't pick you five years ago, and she won't pick you now.

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"Who are you to say you don't love me? If it weren't for me, you'd still be a nobody!"

"Let me tell you something you don't get to decide the fate of our relationship. You want a divorce to

chase Nyla? Well, I'm not giving you one!

"Gabriel, you'll never escape me!"

Faced with her outburst, Gabriel remained impassive.

"Jane, if I want a divorce, I'll get one," he replied.

Jane opened her mouth to argue, but her phone suddenly rang.

Seeing it was Pedro, she widened her eyes and quickly picked up, momentarily forgetting their argument. "Grandpa-

"Jane Wilkie!" Pedro's thunderous

voice made her flinch. "I just heard

the news about the bid. Before I could even celebrate, someone called to tell me you bribed a staff member to destroy Prospectus Technology's bidding documents. Are you out of your mind?! Do you want to ruin the Wilkie Group?!"

Chapter 978

Pedro's furious tone left Jane trembling. Her voice quavered as she tried to explain, "Grandpa... I didn't mean to. I was only trying to secure the bid for the company."

"For the company?" Pedro spat.

"That's how you help the company? How did I raise such a failure?! Even Theo is better than you!

"Pack your things and get out of the company! From now on, you have no right to interfere in the company's affairs!" he shouted.

He hung up before Jane could respond.

The phone slipped from Jane's hand as she stood frozen, her mind blank.

The double blow of losing both her position and her marriage hit her like a freight train. Her legs buckled, and she collapsed to the floor, sobbing into her hands.

How had everything spiraled so out of control?

Not long ago, she had been the general manager of the Wilkie Group-a position that others envied.

Now? Her husband wanted a divorce, and her role at the company had been stripped away.

The more she thought about it, the more devastated she became. Tears streamed through her fingers as she cried.

"Ms. Wilkie," a voice called out.

Jane looked up, her tear-streaked face meeting the gaze of two uniformed police officers standing before her.

"You are under suspicion of maliciously damaging confidential documents belonging to a rival company, which is a criminal offense. Please come with us," one of the officers announced.

...

When Gabriel returned home, Wilhelm ran into his arms.

"Daddy, why are you just getting back? Where's Mommy?" Wilhelm asked, peering behind Gabriel but seeing no sign of Jane. His large eyes were full of confusion. Content. belongs to FindNovel

Gabriel crouched to Wilhelm's level and smiled. "Mommy's busy tonight, so she won't be home. How about Daddy keeps you company instead?"

Wilhelm looked disappointed but nodded. He was used to his mother being too preoccupied with work to come home on time.

"Okay. But tomorrow, make sure you tell Mommy not to work too hard. I miss her," he muttered.

Gabriel's eyes flickered as he picked the boy up and carried him upstairs. "Mommy told me to tell you that she misses you too."

After putting Wilhelm to bed, Gabriel walked out of the room and was met by the hurried approach of their housekeeper, Wendy Fuller.

"Mr. Hackett, Ms. Wilkie still hasn't come home. I heard from the staff at the main residence that the police took her away. Mr. Wilkie is furious. What on earth happened?" Wendy asked, worry written all over her face.

She had been with the Wilkies for decades and had watched Jane grow up, so her concern was genuine.

"Don't worry, Wendy. It's not a big deal," Gabriel replied coolly.

With the Wilkies' influence, Jane would be out of custody in a few days.

If she hadn't slapped him earlier, he might have stepped in to help. But now, whatever happened to her was no longer his concern.

"Please let me know if you hear anything, sir," Wendy urged.

"Of course. Go get some rest," Gabriel said, dismissing her.

After Wendy left, Gabriel headed to his study.

Sitting at his desk, he dialed Shane's number and ordered coldly, "It's time to reel it in."

Chapter 979

Jane had been waiting for two days at the police station before the Wilkie Group's lawyer finally arrived. "Why are you just getting here? Do you have any idea I've been locked up for two whole days?" Jane demanded, looking haggard, frustration evident on her face.

"Ms. Wilkie, your actions have caused significant damage to the company's reputation. Over the past two days, the shareholders have been scrambling to manage the PR fallout, which delayed my visit.

"Once I finish filing the bail paperwork, you'll be released. However, the shareholders have unanimously decided that you must issue a public apology to Prospectus Technology and resign as general manager of the company," the lawyer explained.

Jane's eyes widened in disbelief. She had endured two agonizing days in custody, only to hear this?

"I won't resign! I want to speak with my grandfather!" she cried.

"I'm here on your grandfather's behalf. He has agreed that you must step down," the lawyer replied. Jane froze for a moment, then shook her head violently. "No! I don't believe it! Grandpa wouldn't do this to me!"

Her agitation was palpable, and her gaze at the lawyer was filled with anger and disbelief.

"Ms. Wilkie, if you don't believe me, feel free to confirm it with your grandfather after you're released. Now, let me handle the bail paperwork," the lawyer said calmly.

...

Half an hour later, Jane walked out of the police station, following the lawyer.

Her first stop was the Wilkie residence to find Pedro.

As soon as she reached the gate, a maid stopped her. "Ms. Wilkie, Mr. Wilkie is still furious and doesn't want to see you. Perhaps you should come back in a few days."

Pedro had been at his angriest when he had previously threatened to sever all ties with Jane.

Although he hadn't brought it up again, the atmosphere at the Wilkie residence had become stifling. The service staff were wary of even speaking out of turn, afraid of provoking his wrath.

"Tell him I'll wait here until he's ready to see me," Jane said firmly.

The maid hesitated, sighing. "Ms. Wilkie, you're only making things harder on yourself—"

"Just do as I say!" Jane snapped, her tone sharp and unyielding.

Reluctantly, the maid went inside to relay the message.

Pedro slammed his hand on the table when he heard the news, his face twisted with rage. "Let her wait then! Pretend she doesn't exist!"

When the Starlite Enterprise project

ran into trouble, Pedro had fought to keep Jane in the general manager position despite growing

Swosition.

And how had she repaid him? By causing a scandal that humiliated him in front of the entire industry.

The hypocrites on the Wilkie Group's board were polite to his face, but he knew they were all laughing at him behind his back.

The more Pedro thought about it, the angrier he became.

How could he have been so blind as to think Jane was fit to inherit the company?

Theo, observing Pedro's fury,

cautiously handed him a cup of tea and coaxed, "Grandpa, don't let this upset you so much. It's not worth harming your health over this."

en FindNovel

Pedro took the cup and asked, "How are the documents I gave you coming along?"

Theo had never been particularly skilled in business, which was why Pedro had chosen to groom Jane. Despite Jane's undeniable talent, she often resorted to underhanded tactics.

Normally, smaller companies that suffered losses wouldn't dare challenge the Wilkie Group.

However, Jane had taken on Prospectus Technology this time—a company that cared little about the background or power of those they faced.

Now, seeing the disastrous outcome, Pedro had no choice but to give Theo another chance.

Chapter 980

At least stupidity was better than scheming.

Theo stammered through his thoughts on the documents, but Pedro's frown deepened with every word. "Did I say something wrong, Grandpa?" Theo asked nervously, sensing his disappointment.

If he didn't seize this opportunity, he knew he'd have no future with the Wilkie Group.

Pedro sighed heavily. "Compared to Jane, you're far behind."

The words stung, and Theo's face reddened with shame.

Growing up, he had always been overshadowed by Jane, despite being the eldest grandson. Even now, after her major mistakes, their grandfather still found him lacking.

Swallowing his pride, Theo lowered his head. "I'm sorry, Grandpa. I'll work harder."

Pedro waved him off impatiently. "Go study more. If your performance doesn't improve next time, you won't need to bother with the company."

With Theo's current capabilities, he would ruin their family's businesses within two years.

"Alright," Theo muttered before leaving the room.

Once he was gone, Pedro tried to focus on his paperwork, but his irritation lingered.

At his age, he should have been enjoying his golden years, not cleaning up after his family's messes. Why couldn't he have had a grandson like Damon?

...

Jane stood outside the Wilkie residence for over ten hours, the cold biting into her bones. Pedro refused to see her.

The service staff came out several times to persuade her to leave, but she stubbornly remained, determined to wait until he relented.

Finally, as evening fell, Pedro emerged from the house.

Jane's pale face lit up with relief, and she hurried forward-only to find her legs giving out beneath her. After hours of standing in the cold, she could barely feel them anymore and collapsed to the ground. "Grandpa..." she called weakly.

Pedro looked down at her, his expression icy. "Don't call me that. I don't have such a foolish granddaughter."

Jane froze, tears welling in her eyes. "Grandpa, I know I made a mistake, but I did it for the company..." "For the company? Or for yourself?" Pedro sneered. "Don't try to fool me."

"I really did it for the company..." Jane insisted, her gaze full of hurt.

Pedro waved her off. "I don't care to

argue. From now on, you'll receive a monthly allowance of 150,000 dollars. Stay out of the company's affairs."

"What?" Jane was stunned. She couldn't accept this outcome after waiting the entire day.

She had spent sleepless nights and endless effort building the Wilkie Group. Now, after a few mistakes, she was being cast aside?

"Grandpa, you can't do this to me! I've done so much for the company. Without me, who will take over?" she demanded.

"That's not your concern," Pedro replied coldly.

As they spoke, the driver pulled up to the gate.

Pedro didn't spare Jane another glance before stepping into the vehicle and driving off.

Jane scrambled to her feet, trying to chase

out again him, but her legs gave

after only a few steps. She could only watch helplessly as the car disappeared from view.

"Well, well, who do we have here? Isn't this the Wilkie Group's ever-so-glamorous general manager?" Theo's voice mocked. "Why are you sprawled out on the ground like this?" en FindNovel

Chapter 981

Jane turned to glare at Theo, who stood off to the side, clearly enjoying the scene. Her eyes were filled with disdain.

"Theo, don't think for a second that you've won. You know exactly how incompetent you are. There's no way the Wilkie Group will ever fall into your hands!" she hissed.

Theo's expression darkened briefly, then he chuckled. "Oh, you're capable, all right. So capable that partnering with Starlite nearly bankrupted the company, and those cheap tricks with Prospectus Technology landed you in jail. Not many people can boast that kind of talent."

Jane struggled to her feet, her face icy. "Once the Starlite project is completed, all those losses will be nothing. When that happens, the position of general manager will still be mine!"

Theo snorted. "Still dreaming, I see. The shareholders have made it crystal clear-they don't want you anywhere near the company. By the time the Starlite project wraps up, you'll have been completely sidelined.

"My advice? Take the monthly allowance Grandpa offered, stay home, and live the cushy life of a trophy wife. Leave the company out of your mess."

"Shut up! You have no right to say that!" Jane screamed.

"Fine. Let's see who ends up with no right to speak." With that, Theo brushed past her and walked off. Jane's eyes burned with anger, her heart seething with resentment.

She hated how, despite all her sleepless nights and tireless work for the Wilkie Group, she was now being cast aside like trash. She hated Pedro for turning against her and siding with the shareholders who demanded her removal.

When she finally limped back to her villa, Wendy gasped and rushed to support her. "Ms. Wilkie, what happened to your leg?"

"I'm fine. Where's Gabriel?" Jane asked.

She'd been locked up for two days, and Gabriel hadn't even shown up. So much for the man she'd chosen so carefully.

Wendy sighed. "He's been working overtime these past two days. He only comes back late at night." "Call him. Tell him to come back right now," Jane ordered.

"Of course, But first, let me help you inside. Your hands are freezing.

Take a warm bath and change.

before you catch a cold," Wendy advised.

After settling Jane into the bathroom and drawing her a hot bath, Wendy went downstairs to make the call.

When Gabriel answered, his tone was cool. "Got it. I'll head back now."

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By the time Gabriel returned, Jane had bathed, eaten, and was lounging on the sofa, watching TV. "Jane, you're home," he greeted.

Jane glanced at him, her voice sharp. "I spent two days in jail, and you didn't even hire a lawyer or come visit me. Care to explain?"

"I was working overtime," Gabriel

replied evenly. "Besides, you're the Wilkie Group's general manager. This issue involved Prospectus Technology. I couldn't interfere."

She snorted. "How convenient. Gabriel, have I been too generous with you?"

Gabriel's smile disappeared, his expression turning cold. "Are you looking for a fight the moment you're back home?"

"You've failed as a husband. Shouldn't I hold you accountable?" Jane retorted.

Facing her glare, Gabriel suddenly laughed. He sat across from her and asked, Jane, remember the night of the bidding event when I tried to comfort you, and you slapped me?"

"So what?" Jane replied.

"At that moment, I told you I wanted a divorce. That hasn't changed. I'm done tolerating your tantrums," Gabriel said.

Chapter 982

Gabriel's gaze at Jane was calm and emotionless.

Jane's heart clenched, and in a burst of anger, she hurled the remote control at him. "Gabriel, I told you, I won't agree to a divorce! Forget it!" she shouted, her voice rising.

Dodging the remote with ease, Gabriel smirked and spoke slowly, enunciating each word. "Jane, whether we get divorced or not was never up to you.

He had tolerated her behavior for the sake of their child in the past, but recently, she had become increasingly irritable and aggressive due to the company. He was no longer willing to pretend.

"You think you have the final say?" Jane sneered, her face twisted with fury. "Gabriel, you have no power

or influence. Without my approval, you're dreaming if you think you can leave."

Gabriel raised an eyebrow and replied, "Don't worry. Within a week, you'll be the one agreeing to the divorce. And if you don't want Wilhelm, I'll take him with me."

With that, he turned and walked toward the door.

"Gabriel! Stop right there!" Jane shouted, her voice shrill. "If you walk out that door, I swear I'll make you regret it!"

Her threats fell on deaf ears. Gabriel didn't even pause as he left, leaving her seething and smashing anything she could get her hands on in the living room.

Upstairs, Wilhelm had been startled awake by the noise. He left his room to find the living room in disarray.

Frightened, he huddled in a corner, unwilling to approach.

His mother was terrifying now. He had never seen her like this before.

Jane caught sight of Wilhelm from the corner of her eye and snapped, "Wilhelm! Get over here!"

Shocked by her terrifying gaze, he instinctively backed away. "No... I don't want to."

"I said, get over here! Don't make me repeat myself!" Jane growled.

She stormed toward him, her steps heavy with frustration.

Wilhelm, looking scared, tried to run for his room.

Unfortunately, Jane grabbed the back of his shirt before he could get far.

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Gabriel drove to another villa, one he had bought five years ago. He had planned to gift it to Nyla, ensuring every detail was tailored to her tastes.

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However, he never had the chance to give it to her. Shortly after purchasing the property, he received news of her fall into the

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Soon, though, she would see it. Everything he hadn't been able to give her back then, he would give her

now.

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Gabriel didn't return to the villa for the next few days.

On the third morning, his phone rang. It was Wilhelm.

"Daddy, when are you coming home? Mommy's been so scary... She hits me every day... I'm scared..." Wilhelm cried.

Gabriel frowned. He hadn't expected Jane to take her anger out on their child. "Don't worry. Daddy's coming back right now," he reassured him.

When he arrived, he found Wilhelm cowering in the corner of the living room, his eyes filled with fear, while Janesat calmly on the couch

She smirked when she saw Gabriel. "If I hadn't made Wilhelm call you, were you planning to stay gone for good?"

Gabriel's gaze was chilly. "Our divorce is between you and me. But taking it out on Wilhelm? That's low, even for you."

Upon seeing Wilhelm's state, it was clear what had been happening these past few days.

Chapter 983

Jane's eyes flickered with indifference as she said, "If he didn't constantly cause trouble and make me angry, I wouldn't need to hit him. And since you care so much about him, why haven't you come home these past few days?"

Gabriel's face clouded with displeasure.

"I stayed away because I didn't want to see you," he replied coldly. "And I've told you before-if you don't want him, I'll take him."

"I'll never let you take him!" Jane hissed.

Her face twisted with rage, her eyes burning with hatred as she leered at Gabriel.

She resented him.

If it weren't for him, she wouldn't be so isolated, with no one to rely on. She had chosen him out of love,

yet instead of gratitude, he had the audacity to demand a divorce when she needed him most.

If he wouldn't let her have peace, she wouldn't let him have it either.

Gabriel looked at Jane, now consumed by hysteria, and felt only disgust. "Jane, I will take Wilhelm. I won't leave him here to suffer your abuse."

Gabriel didn't hold much affection for Wilhelm, but he was still his son, and he had the means to care for him.

"If you stop bringing up divorce, I'll stop taking my anger out on him. Move back in today, or I'll make you regret it," Jane threatened.

Gabriel's eyes turned icy. "You think you can use Wilhelm to manipulate me?"

"Yes, and what are you going to do about it?" Jane retorted.

Gabriel nodded, his voice steely. "Alright, Jane. Since you're forcing my hand, don't blame me for being ruthless."

He had intended to offer her a settlement after the divorce, but now he decided she wouldn't get a cent. Jane's confidence faltered under his piercing gaze. Unease crept

into her chest as she stood abruptly. "Gabriel, what are you planning to do?" she demanded.

Gabriel ignored her and turned toward Wilhelm, who was cowering in a corner.

"Wil, come here. Daddy's taking you out of here," Gabriel said gently.

"Wilhelm, don't you dare go with him!" Jane shrieked. "If you do, you're no longer my son-I'll consider you dead to me!"

Wilhelm froze at her words, his small body trembling. He stood paralyzed, caught between his parents.

Tears welled in his eyes as he looked

Gabriel, his voice

"D-Dayne

please don't

Can't you come back?"t

Sobs punctuated his plea, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Not long ago, his parents had seemed happy together. Why were they suddenly talking about divorce now?

He remembered a girl in his class

whose parents had divorced.r her, and she had been

away to another school.

Would his parents abandon him too?

The thought made Wilhelm cry harder, his small body shaking with despair.

"I don't want you to divorce! If you do, neither of you will want me!" he wailed.

Gabriel knelt beside him, his voice soft but firm. "Wil, Daddy won't leave you. You'll live with Daddy, okay?"

Wilhelm shook his head, his sobs intensifying. "No! I want Daddy and Mommy together. I want us to be a family again!"

Gabriel's expression darkened as he tightened his arms around Wilhelm.

After a long silence, he began soothing him.

It took over half an hour before Wilhelm finally calmed down.

After asking a maid to take Wilhelm

upstairs, Gabriel turned back to

Jane, his tone sharp. "Did y

say those things?"

Chapter 984

Jane's expression changed as she angrily asked, "Do you really think I'd stoop that low?"

"You've already beaten our son to the point of bruises just to get me back here. What wouldn't you do?" Gabriel retorted.

"You!" Jane gritted her teeth and scoffed. "Fine. If that's what you think, then believe it. But I won't agree to the divorce. Get over it."

Gabriel repeated, "I told you, you'll agree soon enough."

With that, he turned and walked out.

"Stop right there!" Jane rushed forward to block him, but her phone suddenly rang.

She glanced at the screen and saw it was Pedro. Her expression changed.

After a moment of hesitation, she answered. "Grandpa, what- What?! I'll come right away!"

Hanging up, she turned pale, her hand trembling as it gripped the phone.

Jane took a deep breath to steady herself and hurried upstairs to change before rushing to the Wilkie residence.

The moment Jane entered Pedro's study, a slap landed across her face.

The impact left her stunned. She only realized how much it hurt when her cheek began to burn. She raised a hand to touch it, disbelief in her eyes.

"Grandpa..." she whispered.

"Don't call me that! I have no such foolish granddaughter!" Pedro snapped. "Our company is on the brink of collapse because of you!"

His face was dark, his glare so intense it seemed he might strangle her right then. Jane bit her lip and asked, "Grandpa, what happened? The Starlite project-"

"You still have the nerve to bring it up? Did you know Starlite declared bankruptcy this morning? All the funds our company invested are gone!" Pedro exclaimed.

Without those funds, the Wilkie Group was teetering on the brink of disaster. One wrong move could mean total ruin.

Jane gasped. "What?!"

Shock filled her eyes. During her site visit just a short time ago, Starlite Enterprises had seemed to be thriving. How could it go bankrupt so suddenly?

"How is that possible?!" she exclaimed.

From the side, Theo let out a

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mocking laugh. "That's a question for you, dear cousin. You were the one who personally vetted the project. How did you fail to see the company was on the verge of collapse, yet still decided to pour so much money into it?"

"Shut up!" Jane leered at him. "Besides making snide remarks, what else can you do?"

Theo smirked, his tone dripping with sarcasm. "You're right, I can't do much. But at least I've never nearly bankrupted the company with my stupidity."

"You!" Jane gritted her teeth, trembling with anger.

She took a deep breath and turned back to Pedro. "Grandpa, let me call Mr. Tonra and ask what's going on."

She called Shane multiple times, but the attempts all went unanswered. Her complexion slowly drained of color.

Theo snickered. "Jane, stop wasting time. Mr. Tonra fled the country last night, and you're still thinking of looking for him?"

Panic and fear flooded Jane, and her hand holding the phone went limp. "Grandpa, this is my fault, but—"

"Enough!" Pedro cut her off. "This

afternoon, the Wilkie Group will hold

a press conference. You will

apologize to Prospectus

and

resign as general manager, and never involve yourself with the Wilkie Group again

Chapter 985

Jane felt as though she had been struck by a heavy blow, standing frozen in place.

For the past few days, she had remained in the villa, hearing nothing from Pedro or anyone at the company.

She had been clinging to the faint hope that there was still a chance to salvage the situation. But now, with the fallout from the Starlite project, it was clear—she was finished.

Seeing her motionless, Pedro roared, "Why are you still standing there? Get back and prepare! Let me make one thing clear: if you screw up the press conference later, you're out of this family. You'll cease to exist in the Wilkies!"

"Grandpa..." Jane tried to speak.

Theo sneered. "Jane, I suggest you get ready for the press conference. Oh, and by the way, Damon will be attending. If he's not satisfied with your apology, you might find yourself back in a holding cell." "What did you say? Damon is coming?" Jane repeated.

The shock on her face twisted her features into something almost grotesque.

"That's right," Theo confirmed. "And don't think you can get away with just a hollow apology after what you pulled during the bidding process. You'll also need to cough up hundreds of millions in damages to Prospectus Technology."

The Wilkie Group and Pedro weren't going to help her pay a dime.

Jane had no recollection of how she made it back to the villa.

Snapping out of her thoughts, she realized it was already evening.

Wendy approached with concern. "Ms. Wilkie, you haven't eaten anything all day. Please, eat something."

"I don't feel like eating," Jane replied.

Wendy persisted, "But if you don't eat, your health—"

"I said I don't want to! Don't you understand? Get out! I don't want to see anyone right now!" Jane snapped.

Her sudden outburst and twisted expression startled Wendy, who took a few steps back.

"Yes, Ms. Wilkie. I understand," Wendy said quietly before turning and leaving the room.

Jane was left alone in the vast living room.

Taking a deep breath, she checked the time before heading upstairs to wash and apply her makeup. The situation was clear—Pedro and the Wilkie Group had decided to sacrifice her in order to save the company's reputation.

Judging by Pedro's attitude, if the press conference went poorly, he might very well announce on the spot that he was disowning her. She couldn't let that happen.

Being cast out of the company didn't matter as long as she remained part of the Wilkies. As long as she had that connection, there would still be a chance for her to rise again. She would make Gabriel and everyone who had looked down on her regret it

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The press conference began promptly at 8:00 p.m.

Dressed in a simple white blazer with light makeup, Jane still couldn't hide her exhaustion.

As soon as the conference started, reporters began firing sharp questions at her one after another.

"Ms. Wilkie, as the general manager

of the Wilkie Group, you used underhanded tactics during the bidding process to eliminate your competitor. Is this how you've secured deals in the past?" "Ms. Wilkie, we've heard that you poured hundreds of millions into the Starlite Enterprise project, only for the company to go bankruptos that money effectively lost?"

"Ms. Wilkie, there are rumors that you sabotaged Prospectus Technology's bidding documents and were detained for several days because of it. Is this true?"

The questions grew sharper, and Jane's face darkened.

What made things worse was spotting Nyla and Damon seated among the audience. She felt utterly humiliated.

At that moment, she felt like a monkey stripped bare and put on display-humiliated and mocked. Her pride had been crushed to dust.

Chapter 986

Pedro's irritated voice crackled through Jane's earpiece. "What are you waiting for? Start apologizing!" Jane drew a deep breath before speaking into the microphone. "Ladies and gentlemen, members of the press, good evening. I am here tonight to address the recent events surrounding the bidding process for the Mosaic Date Mall.

"First, I want to extend my sincerest apologies to Prospectus Technology's CEO, Mr. Damon Sumner. "For the sake of my company's interests, I sabotaged Prospectus Technology, preventing their team from competing. Their months of hard work were wasted because of my actions.

"I take full responsibility and am willing to compensate Prospectus Technology for all their losses. I sincerely hope Mr. Sumner can forgive me.

"Second, I must clarify that my actions during the bidding process were entirely my own and had no connection to the Wilkie Group.

"Finally, after this press conference, I will resign from my position as the Wilkie Group's general manager and will no longer participate in the company's affairs.'

Jane bowed deeply to the audience as murmurs rippled through the room.

The press conference dissolved into chaos, reporters shouting over one another with more questions. Jane remained silent.

The company's lawyer stepped forward and took control of the microphone. "Good evening. I'm the Wilkie Group's lawyer, Matthew Coburn, and I will address your inquiries."

Jane sat off to the side, now little more than a prop. Her hands, hidden beneath the table, were clenched so tightly that her nails dug into her palms.

When the conference concluded, she rose stiffly to leave, but Matthew intercepted her.

"Ms. Wilkie, Mr. Wilkie has asked that you stay behind after the conference," he said.

"For what?" Jane asked, her tone flat.

Matthew hesitated. "I don't know."

Jane inhaled deeply and nodded. "Understood."

A server soon escorted her to a private suite.

To her shock, Damon Sumner and Nyla were seated inside.

Pedro stood nearby, his expression uncharacteristically deferential.

The sight cut through Jane. Her proud, unyielding grandfather, was now bowing and scraping-all because of her.

"Grandpa..." she whispered, guilt flooding her.

Pedro cast her a cold glance. "Get over here and apologize to Mr. Sumner!"

Turning to Damon, Pedro forced a strained smile. "Mr. Sumner, my granddaughter has been spoiled, which led to her recklessness.

"I've brought her here to formally apologize. I hope you'll let this matter slide just this once. I promise she will no longer be involved in the Wilkie Group's affairs or appear in front of you again."

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Damon's gaze was cool, his tone cutting. "It seems Ms. Wilkie doesn't truly wish to apologize. But that's fineel don't need to hear an apology from her."

As if words could repair the damage Prospectus Technology had endured.

Pedro's face darkened.

"How could that be?" He turned sharply toward Jane. "Get over here now! Or do you want me to drag you?"

Swallowing her humiliation, Jane

stepped forward, lowered her head, and forced out the words. "Mr. Sumner, I'm sorry. I sincerely

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apologize for my actions and hope you can forgive me this once

Chapter 987

Damon glanced at Jane but remained silent.

The room fell into an oppressive silence, the air thick with tension.

Jane kept her head lowered, waiting for Damon to speak.

When he didn't, she finally lifted her gaze and said, "Mr. Sumner... I truly apologize. I was blinded by greed. For the damage I caused to Prospectus Technology, I'm willing to provide full compensation. Please, I beg you to forgive me. Please give the Wilkie Group another chance."

Pedro quickly interjected, "Mr. Sumner, Jane has made a grave mistake, and I take full responsibility for failing to guide her properly. I promise to discipline her moving forward. She won't repeat this kind of error. Could you find it in your heart to let this matter rest?"

Damon glanced at Pedro, his expression unreadable as he responded. "Since you've said as much, we'll let this go. But I warn you-if this happens again, there will be no leniency."

Pedro nodded eagerly. "Of course, Mr. Sumner! I assure you, there won't be another incident like this." Given the Wilkie Group's current instability, a single decisive move from Damon could collapse the company within a month.

The stakes were too high, and Pedro knew he had no choice but to humble himself.

Jane clenched her fists in silent resentment and humiliation but kept her head bowed, standing beside Pedro.

Damon rose from his seat, Nyla following him as he said, "We'll leave now. My secretary will deliver an assessment of the damages caused by the bidding incident to your company tomorrow morning."

Pedro hurriedly offered, "Allow me to escort you out."

Damon waved him off. "That won't be necessary."

With that, Damon and Nyla left the room, leaving behind an overwhelming silence.

As the door closed, only Jane and Pedro remained in the private room.

Jane turned to him, pale and trembling, her voice laced with guilt. "Grandpa... I'm sorry. If it weren't for me, you wouldn't have had to bow your head to Damon."

A storm of emotions swirled within Jane.

On the one hand, she resented

Pedro for siding with the company's shareholders to force her

resignation. On the other, seeing him humble himself before someone

decades younger filled her with guilt.

If only she hadn't been so reckless-so eager to secure that project-none of this would have happened. What filled the air was a deep, palpable disappointment.

"This matter is settled. I've bought you a villa overseas." Pedro's

expression

remained hard, his voice cold but lacking anger. "In a few days, pack your things and take Gabriel and Wilhelm with you. From now on, unless it's absolutely necessary, don't come back."

Jane froze, her face contorting in shock. "No, I won't go abroad."

She couldn't accept it. Staying meant she might still have a chance to return to the Wilkie Group someday. Leaving would close that door forever.

Pedro's voice grew icy. "This isn't up for discussion. If you refuse to leave, don't expect another penny from me. You're free to fend for yourself."

"Grandpa, are you really planning to hand the company over to Theo?" Jane asked, desperation creeping into her voice.

She continued. "You've seen the results of my work these past years.

What happened recently was just an accident. I can learn from this, and I swear it won't happen again

"If you don't trust me, don't give me any shares. I'll just work a salaried position. But if you give the company to Theo, it will be ruined!"

Pedro sneered. "You're no longer a Wilkie Group employee. The company's future is none of your concern.

"I'll have someone deliver your flight tickets later. If you go abroad, I'll transfer you 150,000 dollars every month. If you stay, don't expect a single cent."

Chapter 988

Pedro turned to leave, but Jane hurried to block his way. "Grandpa, are you really cutting me off like this?" Any guilt she had felt earlier evaporated, replaced by bitterness.

Pedro glanced at her impassively. "Think what you want. I have nothing more to say."

He stepped past her, his retreating figure as cold as his words.

Jane stared after him, a glint of malice in her eyes. If he wanted to force her hand, she'd have no choice but to strike back.

Taking a deep breath, she followed him out of the venue.

That night, Jane returned home but didn't see Wilhelm.

Frowning, she turned to Wendy and asked, "Where's Wilhelm?"

"He's already asleep, Ms. Wilkie," Wendy replied cautiously. "If it's not urgent, maybe it can wait until morning..."

Jane waved dismissively. "Fine. You can go."

Wendy had assumed Jane intended to wake Wilhelm, so she sighed in relief. She hesitated before

asking, "Have you eaten dinner? The kitchen kept some food warm-"

"I'm not hungry. Just leave me alone," Jane snapped impatiently, then headed upstairs.

Alone in her room, she sat at her vanity, removing her makeup while her mind raced.

She wouldn't go abroad, and Pedro wouldn't willingly hand over any shares. If she wanted them, she'd have to take drastic measures.

An idea crossed her mind. If something unexpected happened to Pedro before he could write a will, she'd be entitled to an inheritance.

She picked up her phone and called her assistant, her voice cold. "Find out if my grandfather has made a will."

"Yes, Ms. Wilkie," came the reply.

After hanging up, Jane pondered ways to orchestrate an accident for Pedro-something that would leave no suspicion on her.

Moments later, her phone buzzed again.

"Ms. Wilkie, I checked-he hasn't drafted a will," her assistant reported.

Jane smirked. "Good. I understand."

She had nothing to worry about now that Pedro didn't have a will. He was to blame for being so ruthless, planning to send her abroad and cutting off her last chance to reclaim the company.

She would never let a scoundrel like Theo take over the company.

By morning, Jane went to see Pedro at his residence.

When he saw her, he set down his toast and wiped his hands with a napkin. "Have you made up your mind?"

Tears welled up in Jane's eyes as she forced herself to appear pitiful. "Grandpa, I've decided to go abroad -but not just yet."

He shot her a cold look. "Even if you stay, I'm not handing the company to you."

She felt resentful but feigned

sentful

sorrow. "I know. I've thought it through. I don't want the company anymore. But... Gabriel is talking about a divorce. He refuses to leave the country with Wilhelm and me..."

Pedro frowned. "Why is he asking for a divorce now?"

"It's because..., his gaming company was sold to save the company, and he hasn't forgiven me. That company was his passion project his years of hard work... And later, I got so busy that I didn't arrange a angry and refuses to talk to me..." Jane explained.

new job for him. Now he's

Chapter 989

Pedro slammed the table in frustration. "Everything he has comes from the Wilkies! What right does he have to be angry? A grown man relying on his wife to live-what a disgrace if word gets out!"

Seeing Pedro's reaction was exactly what she had expected, Jane quickly added, "Grandpa, I need to discuss the divorce with him first. Once that's settled, I can leave the country."

"What's there to discuss? Call him right now and tell him to come over!" Pedro snapped.

Jane's expression faltered as she replied, "He moved out a few days ago. Even if I call, he probably won't answer..."

"Call him!" Pedro insisted.

She sighed in defeat, pulled out her phone, and dialed Gabriel's number. She tried several times, but he didn't pick up.

Setting the phone down, she looked at Pedro. "Grandpa, he's ignoring my calls."

"I'll have someone track him down and drag him here," Pedro growled.

Seeing that Pedro was about to take action, Jane quickly intervened, "Grandpa, please don't get involved. The company is already dealing with so much. Let me handle this. Whether we divorce or not, I need time to resolve it."

"Are you sure you can handle this without tarnishing the company's reputation?" Pedro asked, his sharp gaze making it clear he doubted her.

For a moment, Jane froze.

She quickly realized that his concern wasn't about her personal troubles-it was entirely about the company's image.

Her heart sank. So, he really didn't care about her at all. All he cared about was the Wilkie Group.

"Don't worry, Grandpa. I'll take care of it quietly. No one will know," she promised.

Pedro remained silent for a moment before waving her off. "Fine. I'll give you one month. Within that time, either finalize the divorce or take him with you when you leave the country."

"Yes, Grandpa, I understand," Jane replied.

"I need to get back to reviewing documents. You can go now," Pedro dismissed her.

"Alright," Jane answered.

As she turned away, her expression hardened, and her fists clenched.

It seemed her plan would have to proceed sooner than expected.

Pedro's ruthlessness made it easier for her to silence any lingering guilt about what she was planning.

In Gabriel's villa...

Gabriel's lawyer handed him the divorce papers.

"Mr. Hackett, here are the divorce

papers. Please review them to see if there's anything you'd like to adjust. If it's good to go, I'll have them sent to Ms. Wilkie," the lawyer said.

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Gabriel skimmed the document,

then handed it back. "It's fine. If she's willing to give up custody of our son, offer her an additional 5,000,000 dollars. If not, we'll see her

in court."

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"Understood, sir," the lawyer replied.

After the lawyer left, Gabriel walked over to the wine cabinet, took out a bottle of champagne, and poured himself a glass.

He swirled the glass gently, took a sip, and smirked.

Soon, he'd be free to pursue Nyla.

But first, he needed to get rid of Damon-the man standing in his way.

He picked up his phone, dialed Tom's number, and proposed, "Mr. Genge, I'm free now. Let's discuss that collaboration we talked about. How about we meet tonight?"

Tom sounded surprised on the other

end. "Mr. Hackett, if I'm not

mistaken, didn't you just sell that gaming company you've been

working on for years? How are

swne wel

in the mood to talk business now?"

Chapter 990

"Why don't you investigate who ended up with that gaming company?" Gabriel retorted. There was a brief silence before Tom chuckled.

When the Wilkie Group partnered with Starlite Enterprise, they handed over hundreds of millions to the latter. Then, to salvage their cash flow crisis, they sold Gabriel's gaming company, using the proceeds to patch up their financial hole.

In essence, Gabriel had contributed nothing yet walked away with a gaming company.

Meanwhile, the Wilkie Group lost everything-the gaming company, the money, and now even the stability of its headquarters. The company was on the brink of collapse.

"I have to say, Mr. Hackett, your maneuvering is impressive. You've played the Wilkies like a fiddle.

"I wonder, though, how Jane would feel if she realized she spent billions of the Wilkie Group's funds just

to gift you her gaming company? Do you think she'd be furious?" Tom quipped.

Gabriel's gaze turned cold. "And how does any of this relate to our partnership?"

"Of course, it doesn't. I just can't help but admire the masterful way you've manipulated the Wilkies behind the scenes," Tom replied.

Impatient, Gabriel cut straight to the point. "8:00 p.m. tonight. Violet Carriage, Room 1. Don't be late."

He hung up without waiting for a response.

...

Tom arrived punctually at 8:00 p.m.

After a few polite exchanges, he took a seat opposite Gabriel.

"So, Mr. Hackett, reaching out to me must mean you've come up with a plan. Care to share?" Tom asked. Gabriel met his gaze coolly. "I might have a plan, but how do I know you'll listen?" Tom laughed casually. "That depends. Does your plan benefit me?"

Gabriel asked, "Before we get into my plan, let's address your recent blunder. The libel case Damon filed against you for falsely accusing the Summer Group of using substandard building

materials-have you resolved that yet?"

Tom's smile froze briefly before he replied, "Of course. It was a minor legal matter. It didn't harm my company in any significant way."

Gabriel's expression remained impassive. "I expect no more mishaps like that in the future. If you cause another mess, our partnership is over."

He made it clear that his collaboration with Tom wasn't about charity. He wanted an ally, not a liability. Tom straightened his posture and said seriously, "You don't need to worry. Last time was just a small experiment to test Damon's response."

"There's no need for such experiments. If we want to deal with Damon, the target should be Prospectus Technology.

"If Prospectus Technology falls, the Sumner Group becomes nothing more than a paper tiger. But let's be honest here-your so-called 'test' wasn't about Damon or Prospectus Technology, was it? You had your own motives, didn't you?" Gabriel taunted.

Tom's expression darkened at having his intentions exposed.

He stared straight at Gabriel and said, "Mr. Hackett, we're partners. I'm not your subordinate. You're in no position to lecture me."

Gabriel nodded and stood. "In that

case, I see no need to continue our partnership. I won't work with someone who operates outside the Scope of our agreed plan."

He turned and walked toward the door.

Tom's eyes widened in disbelief. He hadn't expected such a hardline response.

"Wait!" He rushed to stop Gabriel, speaking firmly. "Mr. Hackett, I spoke too hastily earlier. I apologize. Let's not let this ruin our collaboration."

Gabriel turned back with a smile. "That's the attitude I expect. Now, let's sit down and talk properly, shall We?"

Chapter 991

Tom gritted his teeth so hard he thought they might shatter, but he still managed to force a smile. "You're right, Mr. Hackett," he said.

...

By the time their discussion had finished, it was already past 10:00 p.m.

Gabriel had other matters to attend to and left first.

Tom stayed in the private room for a while before stepping out.

As he exited Violet Carriage, he saw Valarie and Brandon walking out of a nearby restaurant. They had just finished dinner, casually holding hands and both smiling.

Valarie's gaze was almost entirely fixed on Brandon, not sparing a glance for anyone else.

Her eyes, once filled with affection when she looked at Tom, now brimmed with disdain and impatience. She didn't even want to speak to him.

A wave of emptiness washed over Tom, and he stood there, watching them walk away.

Soon enough, when Prospectus Technology fell and the Sumner Group collapsed, Brandon would no longer be a threat to him over Valarie.

Tom took a deep breath, turned, and headed for his car.

Jane received the divorce papers from Gabriel's lawyer, Philip Higham. Without even reading them, she tore them up.

She glared at Philip and spat, "I won't sign! Tell Gabriel to come talk to me in person, or he can forget about divorcing me!"

Philip remained calm, pulling another identical set of divorce papers from his briefcase and calmly placing them on the table. "Ms. Wilkie, my client said that if you're willing to give up custody of your son, he'll give you an additional 5,000,000 dollars as compensation. You can review the terms and decide."

Upon hearing the sum, Jane sneered. "5,000,000 dollars? He probably can't even scrape together 50,000. And you're a lawyer, yet you actually believe his lies? Do you think he can even pay your fees?" Philip didn't react to Jane's mockery. Evidently, she had no idea how much money Gabriel had. As his lawyer, however, he wasn't about to share that information.

"Ms. Wilkie, I've delivered the divorce papers. If you choose to sign, please contact me. If you don't agree within a week, my client will file for divorce in court," Philip said, standing up to leave.

Jane blocked his path. "Where is Gabriel? I need to see him!"

She had tried calling him, but he didn't answer. Even her attempts to guilt him into softening with their son weren't working.

"Ms. Wilkie, my client said he won't meet with you until you sign the divorce papers," Philip said, his tone still measured.

It was clear that Gabriel had no interest in seeing her again.

"Won't meet with me? Fine! Tell him he'll never see our son again! I won't give up custody!" Jane threatened.

Philip, looking somewhat helpless,

tried to clarify. "Ms. Wilkie, my client's position is clear. If you agree to give up custody, you'll receive 5,000,000 dollars in compensation. If not, he'll go to court and fight for custody. Either way, he wants custody."

Besides, Jane didn't have much of a chance when her financial situation was compared to Gabriel's. Jane snorted derisively. "Didn't you even do your homework on your client before taking this case? Fine, whatever amount Gabriel is paying you, I'll double it. Take me to see him."

#Chapter 992

Chapter 992

Philip shook his head. "Ms. Wilkie, I have other matters to attend to. If you need a lawyer, I can refer one to you."

"Fine. Let's see if you'll get your lawyer's fee after this," Jane shot back.

Without another word, Philip walked past her and left.

Fuming, Jane grabbed the divorce papers and prepared to tear them up again.

As her hand hovered over the papers, though, she paused.

She took a deep breath and read the contents. After that, she tossed them straight into the trash.

Gabriel had truly lost his mind—he was offering her 10,000,000 dollars as compensation for the divorce.

He had worked at a game company under the Wilkie Group for years, earning only a few thousand each month. Where could he possibly get 10,000,000 dollars?

Jane picked up her phone and called her assistant. "Find out where Gabriel is now!"

She expected a quick response, but after an entire day, the assistant still hadn't located him.

Jane lost her temper. "What kind of job do you do? You can't even find a man who doesn't have a job?"

The assistant, feeling aggrieved, tried to explain, "I checked the surveillance, but after he left the villa, his trail went cold. Ms. Wilkie, maybe you should hire a private detective?"

"Useless!" Jane snapped, hanging up.

After a moment of thought, she called her mother-in-law, Wren.

When Wren heard that Gabriel wanted a divorce, she couldn't believe it. "Divorce? You have a child together. How could he want a divo—"

She froze. Then, she recalled how Gabriel had warned her to stay away from Harrison when she tried to reconcile with him.

Could it be that he still liked Nyla? Was he out of his mind?

Jane could sense the hesitation in Wren's voice but didn't press her. Instead, she coldly said, "Mom, I can't get in touch with him. Can you call him and tell him to come back? Wil misses him. I won't agree to the divorce for his sake."

"Don't worry, Jane. I'll call him right now. I'll make sure he comes back tonight," Wren assured.

"Thanks, Mom," Jane replied.

After hanging up, Wren immediately dialed Gabriel's number. "Where are you?"

Gabriel's tone was cold. "What's the matter?"

"What do you mean, 'what's the matter'? Why are you divorcing Jane? Gabriel, don't forget, you have a family and a child now. Are you really going to ruin your life just for Nyla?" Wren demanded.

"It's been years now. Nyla and Damon already have a child, and you have a family. Can't you just leave things alone?"

Gabriel's voice was icy. "Don't forget, you have your own family, but you still want to get back together with Harrison. Why can't I divorce and pursue Nyla?"

"That's different!" Wren snapped.

"I don't see how," Gabriel replied flatly.

"If you abandon your wife now, you'll regret it when you're older. Jane and Wilhelm will hate you for the rest of your life!" Wren warned.

Gabriel let out a cold laugh. "Mom, I don't care. As long as I'm with Nyla, nothing else matters to me." "You're crazy!" Wren yelled. "Where are you? I'm coming to see you!"

Chapter 993

"No need. Tell Jane that if she refuses to sign the divorce papers, I will never see her again," Gabriel said before hanging up the phone.

When Wren called again, he didn't pick up.

She slammed her phone down, her mind boiling with rage.

If it weren't for Nyla's return, Gabriel wouldn't have wanted to divorce Jane. It was all Nyla's fault.

The more she thought about it, the angrier she became. She immediately drove to Prospectus Technology to confront Nyla.

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When the receptionist informed Nyla that someone was looking for her, Nyla was confused. If it had been someone she knew, they would have called first. No one came unannounced.

"Did she say who she is?" Nyla asked.

The receptionist shook her head. "No, but she insisted on seeing you. She seems to be someone you know."

"Alright, tell her to wait a moment," Nyla replied.

After the receptionist left, Nyla finished inputting the data for her experiment, removed her lab coat, and headed downstairs.

As she stepped out of the elevator, Nyla spotted Wren sitting near the window in the lobby.

She paused, frowning. She hadn't expected it to be Wren who was looking for her.

Approaching Wren, Nyla didn't intend to sit. Instead, she asked coldly, "Ms. Hackett, is there something you need?"

Wren glared at Nyla and demanded, "Nyla, what exactly did you do to seduce Gabriel? Now he's fighting for a divorce from Jane because of you! Are you really trying to ruin my son's life and tear apart his family?"

Wren's voice was loud enough for everyone around them to hear.

Some began to glance over at Nyla, judging her.

A gleam of satisfaction flashed in Wren's eyes when she noticed the stares.

She raised her voice even more. "What do you gain from destroying someone's family? Why are you doing this?!"

Whispers spread throughout the room, and some people even began filming with their phones.

Nyla remained unshaken, meeting Wren's gaze directly. "Ms. Hackett, do you know that spreading rumors is illegal?"

Wren faltered for a moment, noticing Nyla's unflinching stare.

"Rumors? Should I release the recording of my phone conversations with Gabriel? Maybe you'd like to hear them?" Wren shot back.

Frustrated with Wren's baseless accusations, Nyla turned to the receptionist. "This person is here to cause trouble. Please call security and have her removed. Do not let her back in again."

The receptionist, who knew Nyla well and was aware of her connection to Damon, quickly nodded. "Understood, Ms. Kinsey."

Wren's face flushed. She pointed at Nyla and yelled, "Even if you throw me out, I won't let you off! I'll make sure everyone knows what kind of woman you really are!"

Nyla smiled coolly. "Go ahead. The bigger the scene, the better. That way, when I call the police, you won't be able to claim I'm slandering you."

"Fine! Just wait!" Wren barked.

Two large security guards arrived and began escorting her out.

Wren struggled, shouting, "Let go of me! I'll leave on my own!"

The guards ignored her and quickened their pace.

Within a minute, they had dumped Wren at the entrance of Prospectus Technology.

Wren fell awkwardly to the ground, screaming in pain as she scrambled to get up.

The two guards prevented her from reentering.

She screamed at Nyla from the doorway, "Nyla, even if you throw me out, I won't let this go!"

Nyla didn't even glance at her. Instead, she turned to the receptionist and said, "Make sure she's not allowed back inside."

"Yes, Ms. Kinsey," the receptionist replied.

Nyla went back to finish her

experiment, unaware that a few people had recorded the incident, edited the video, and posted it online.

The video quickly went viral.

Not long after, Gabriel's secretary showed him the video. "Sir, this seems to be your mother..."

Gabriel watched the video and immediately recognized Wren and Nyla. His expression darkened. "What's going on with this video?"

"It appears your mother went to Prospectus Technology to confront Ms. Kinsey, accusing her of breaking up your family. Someone recorded it and posted it online," the secretary explained. en FindNovel

Gabriel scowled. "Take it down. All of it. I don't want to see any discussions about it online." "Understood, sir," the secretary replied, quickly contacting the PR team.

Before they could take action, the videos vanished. All related search terms were deleted, and nothing could be found.

"Mr. Hackett, someone must have removed the videos before we could act," the secretary informed him. Gabriel narrowed his eyes, suspecting Damon's involvement.

"Get me the details of who first uploaded the video. I'm suing them for defamation," he instructed. Seeing the frost in Gabriel's eyes, the secretary quickly nodded. "Got it."

Gabriel took a deep breath and stood. "Prepare the car. We're going to Prospectus Technology."

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Within half an hour, Gabriel arrived at Prospectus Technology.

He spotted Wren still standing at the entrance, refusing to leave, and stormed over to her with a grim expression.

Wren continued shouting at the security guards.

Gabriel grabbed her arm, his voice thick with frustration. "Enough! Are you finished throwing a tantrum like

a Karen? Aren't you embarrassed?"

Chapter 994

When Wren saw Gabriel, she was momentarily stunned, then sneered. "So, you won't come to see me, but you rush here when it's Nyla? Does she matter more than your own mother?"

Gabriel didn't waste time arguing. He dragged her toward the car and told the driver to leave immediately. If she stayed there, who knew what other mess she'd create.

In the car, Wren shoved his hand away and was about to open the door.

Gabriel's cold voice stopped her. "If you jump out at this speed, you'll either die or be paralyzed."

Wren froze, then turned to glare at him. "What do you want? You're throwing away your family for Nyla?" "This is none of your business," he replied.

Wren scoffed. "None of my business? Gabriel, do you really think Nyla will be with you just because you divorce Jane? I advise you to wake up. She didn't care about you five years ago. Do you really think she'll care now?"

Gabriel's anger flared. His cold eyes bore into hers, and the temperature in the car seemed to drop. Wren wasn't intimidated. "If you were even a little clear-headed, you wouldn't be asking for a divorce. You have a perfectly good life, but you're throwing it all away."

"And what about you?" Gabriel's voice turned sharp. "I tried to convince you not to divorce, but look at you now. You threw Harrison into a nursing home, and now you want to go back to him. Who's really out of their mind?"

Wren's face flushed.

"You..." She pointed at him, ready to explode. "Fine! I won't interfere with your affairs anymore, and you don't meddle with mine either! We're cutting ties!"

"As you wish," Gabriel replied.

His indifference only angered Wren further, and she slapped him.

The car fell into silence as the slap landed.

Gabriel scowled, his presence imposing.

Wren's hand felt numb, and she regretted hitting him. However, she couldn't bring herself to apologize, so she turned to look out the window and pretended nothing had happened.

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After a long pause, the car pulled up in front of a villa.

Wren noticed it wasn't her house and turned to ask Gabriel, "Where is this?"

"Get out," Gabriel said, opening the door on the other side and stepping out toward the villa.

Wren gritted her teeth, suppressing her frustration, and followed him.

It was clear to her that, even though she was Gabriel's mother, he was the one in charge now.

They sat in the living room, and Gabriel looked at Wren warningly. "Don't go looking for Nyla again."

"If I don't, will you even see me?" Wren countered.

"If you go after her again, I swear you'll never see me again," Gabriel threatened.

Hearing this, Wren pointed at him and snapped Gabriel, don't think you can threaten me like this. Do

you think, want to see Nyla? If you

weren't so obsessed with your divorce, I wouldn't have visited Prospectus Technology to cause a scene. You think I have no shame?"

Gabriel's patience wore thin.

"Stop pretending to be concerned about me while hurting the people I love. I've wanted a divorce for a long time, and it has nothing to do with Nyla," he retorted.

If Wren weren't his mother, he wouldn't have let her live another day after what she said to Nyla.

Chapter 995

"Do you even believe what you're saying?" Wren demanded.

If it weren't for Nyla's return to the country, Gabriel would never have asked Jane for a divorce. It was all Nyla's fault. If only Nyla had died when she fell into the sea five years ago...

Gabriel stared at Wren, his expression unreadable. "Whether you believe it or not doesn't matter to me. You should mind your own business and stop interfering with mine."

"Gabriel, are you really trying to drive me crazy?" Wren snapped.

"I'm not trying to upset you, and I haven't done anything to hurt you. It's you who keeps meddling in my affairs. I don't listen, so you get angry. You should reflect on whether it's right for you to interfere with my life," Gabriel replied flatly.

Wren felt a wave of disappointment as she met Gabriel's cold gaze. "Gabriel, I worked so hard to send you abroad for school, not for you to come back and make me miserable!"

"If you just stayed out of my business, you'd have fewer problems," Gabriel retorted.

"Fine! Since you're so stubborn, I'll pretend you're not my son. We're cutting ties!" Wren spat, storming out of the room.

She grabbed her bag and rushed out of the villa.

Once outside, she immediately called Jane. "I've tried talking to him, but it's useless. You'll have to figure it out on your own."

Hearing Wren's defeat, Jane said, "Mom, whether I divorce Gabriel or not doesn't really matter, but Wilhelm is your grandson. Do you really want him to grow up in a single-parent household?"

Of course, Wren didn't want that, but she was powerless against Gabriel.

"What can I do about it? You've been married to him for five years and can't even control your own husband. Maybe you should think about whether there's something wrong with you," Wren said bitterly. Jane huffed, her voice sharp. "Mom, who are you to criticize me? You're Gabriel's mother. He's the way he is because of you! You know I've only been with him for five years. What effect could that have compared to your 20-plus years of influence?"

Wren sighed, her patience running thin. "Anyway, I'm done with your problems. I don't want to be involved anymore. You figure it out."

With that, she ended the call.

Jane angrily threw her phone down.

Neither of them would listen, but she was determined to make them regret it.

Taking a deep breath, she decided to

ignore Gabriel for now. Once she

dealt with Pedro and secured the

inheritance, she'd handle these two.

In the CEO's office at Prospectus Technology...

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Damon's expression grew cold as he watched the footage of Wren's outburst.

Spencer, standing nearby, was too nervous to speak.

"I remember the company run by Wren's husband used to be a subsidiary of the Wilkie Group, right?" Damon asked.

"Yes," Spencer replied.

"If he can't even manage his own wife, how can he manage a company?" Damon remarked.

"Understood, Mr. Sumner," Spencer said, his voice tinged with unease.

After Spencer left, Damon reached for a file, but his phone suddenly rang.

It was Gabriel.

Damon sneered before answering. "Mr. Hackett, what's up?"

"Mr. Sumner, I apologize for what happened with my mother today at Prospectus Technology. I'm not sure if you and Nyla are free tonight, but I'd like to invite you both to dinner as an apology."

"No need for dinner. If you're truly

sorry, you should bring your mother

along to apologize to Nyla," Damon replied curtly.

Chapter 996

There was silence on the other end of the line before Gabriel's deep voice came through. "Mr. Sumner, Nyla probably doesn't want to see my mother."

"And you think she wants to see you?" Damon shot back.

"Mr. Sumner, just because she doesn't want to see me now doesn't mean she won't in the future," Gabriel retorted. "It's like how you're with her now. It doesn't mean you'll always be together, right? Don't you agree?"

Damon's gaze sharpened, his expression cold.

"Gabriel, let me warn you. Don't even think about anything inappropriate with her. If you do, don't think you're safe just because you're the CEO of Nyce Tech. Even if you're the richest person in the country, I'll make sure you have nothing," Damon warned.

"Mr. Sumner, you talk big. I'll be watching closely to see how you make me lose everything!" Gabriel replied, then hung up.

Damon set his phone down, his face darkening.

It seemed Gabriel was ready to leave Saintornia for good.

...

That evening, as Nyla got into the car, she immediately sensed something was off in the air.

She glanced at Damon and saw his grim expression.

Raising an eyebrow, she asked, "What's wrong? Did someone make you mad?"

"Why didn't you tell me about what happened with Wren today?" Damon asked.

Surprise flashed in Nyla's eyes. "How did you find out about that?"

She hadn't expected Damon to know about it. After all, Wren hadn't caused much of a scene before being escorted out by security.

Given Damon's busy schedule, he shouldn't have known about it.

Damon's lips were pressed into a tight line.

"You went through all that trouble and didn't tell me a word. Nyla, do you even consider me your boyfriend?" he asked.

"You're so busy with work. I didn't want to bother you with such small matters," Nyla explained. "To me, there's no such thing as small matters when it comes to you," Damon said.

Seeing the anger on Damon's face, Nyla leaned in and gently pinched his cheek. "I understand. This time, it's my fault. From now on, I'll make sure to tell you everything every day. Don't be mad, okay?"

"You're saying this now, but if you forget, I'll punish you," Damon warned, emphasizing the word "punish." "Alright, I got it. I won't forget," Nyla promised.

Damon's expression softened due to her sincerity. "By the way, from now on, you're not allowed to meet with Gabriel in private."

Nyla nodded. "Don't worry. I won't meet him privately."

She had no positive feelings toward

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Gabriel, Just thinking about his actions five years ago made her uncomfortable. She wished she never had to see him again.

"Good," Damon hummed.

Later that evening...

After dinner with Nyla and Mason, Damon went out for a social engagement.

The person he was meeting tonight was none other than Pedro.

Since Gabriel was trying to bring down the Wilkie Group, Damon planned to help the company rise above the crisis and then use it against Gabriel.

Pedro had already been waiting in the private room.

When he saw Damon, he quickly stood and greeted him with a smile, "Mr. Sumner, good evening."

Damon sat across from him,

skipping pleasantries and getting

straight to the point. "Mr. Wilkie, you probably don't know this, but your son-in-law is behind Nyce Tech, and the Starlite project. He intentionally set it up to trap the Wilkie Group."

His words dropped like a bombshell in a calm lake, sending shockwaves through Pedro.

"What?!" Pedro gasped, his eyes wide with disbelief.

How could Gabriel, that useless grandson-in-law of his, be behind Nyce Tech? It seemed unbelievable.

Chapter 997

"That's not all. In order to save the headquarters, the Wilkie Group sold the game company Gabriel was running. Guess who the actual controlling shareholder is now?" Damon suggested.

Pedro looked appalled. He instinctively rebutted, "Impossible... How could he be the hidden owner of Nyce Tech..."

Damon understood that this kind of news was hard to process. He gestured for Spencer to place a file in front of Pedro.

"Mr. Wilkie, you can take a look at this document first. After reading it, you'll have a clearer idea," Damon said.

Pedro took the file, and after reading it, his face turned grim.

"How could this happen? He's been hiding this for so many years... If it weren't for you telling me today, I might not have realized the truth until the Wilkie Group went bankrupt!" Pedro exclaimed.

Damon remained indifferent as he reminded him, "Mr. Wilkie, over the years, Gabriel has placed many of his people in your company. If you don't clear them out, he'll know every move the Wilkie Group makes. "At this rate, it won't take a month before the Wilkie Group changes its name to the Hackett Group." Pedro's chest heaved with anger as he slammed the file onto the table. "This is too much!"

"Now that you know the truth, what do you plan to do next?" Damon asked.

Pedro sighed, looking somewhat helpless. "It's embarrassing to admit, but the Wilkie Group is on its last legs. Without help from other companies, we might not survive much longer."

Damon raised an eyebrow and smiled. "I can help the Wilkie Group. However, I need you to help me deal with Gabriel after you get through this crisis."

Upon hearing that, Pedro's eyes lit up. He immediately said, "Of course! Gabriel has been plotting against the Wilkies for so long. After we get through this, I won't let him off the hook, even if you didn't ask!"

As the conversation neared its end, Spencer handed over a prepared contract to Pedro.
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After flipping through it, Pedro's expression grew excited. "Mr. Sumner, once the Wilkie Group overcomes this crisis, the first person I'll deal with is Gabriel!"

Damon smiled and replied, "Then it's settled. Let's work together."

After Pedro left with the contract, Spencer expressed some concerns. "Mr. Sumner, once the Wilkie Group survives, do you think Mr. Wilkie will keep his word?"

"If he doesn't, I have my ways of making him regret it," Damon replied calmly. "Now go ahead and head back. I'll drive myself."

"Understood," Spencer replied.

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On his way home, Pedro couldn't stop looking at the contract, his face filled with excitement.

With this contract from the Sumner Group, his company could resume operations and buy more time to

recover.

More importantly, having the Sumner Group as a partner would prevent other companies in the city from hesitating to work with them.

However, when he thought about how Gabriel had been manipulating the Wilkies, his expression darkened.

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Pedro arrived home and asked a maid to summon Jane.

Jane, who had already obtained the

drug, was lost in thought, planning how to secretly slip it into Pedro's tea and make it seem as though he had suffered a heart attack.

When the maid arrived to fetch her, it felt as though the universe itself had intervened.

Jane gripped the drug, a cold glint in her eyes. She wasn't to blame it was simply the universe's will that Pedro was going to die.

Chapter 998

Jane told the maid, "I understand. You can head back first. I'll check if Wilhelm is asleep, then I'll go over." The maid nodded. "Alright, Ms. Wilkie."

Jane went upstairs, placed the drug in her bag, changed her clothes, and headed for Pedro's residence. Knowing that Pedro was in the study, she didn't hurry to see him. Instead, she went to the kitchen. "Grandpa loves the tea I make, so I'll brew a pot and bring it to him," she told the maids.

She prepared the tea and then personally carried it to the study.

After knocking on the door and entering, Jane was met with Pedro's cold, piercing gaze.

She paused for a moment, then walked over and set the tea on the table with a smile. "Grandpa, who upset you?"

Pedro sneered, grabbing a document and throwing it onto the table. "Take a look for yourself!"

Jane poured him a cup of tea and handed it to him. "Grandpa, please have some tea first."

Before she could finish speaking, Pedro suddenly knocked the cup from her hand.

The hot tea splashed onto Jane's hand, and a sharp pain shot through her. She quickly pulled her hand away from the cup.

As she checked her now-red hand, Pedro's cold voice echoed above her head. "Jane, take a good look at this document and see who you really married!"

Jane froze. Enduring the pain in her hand, she picked up the document and flipped it open. Her expression shifted from confusion to shock.

"This... How is this possible?!" she gasped.

How could Gabriel be the hidden owner of Nyce Tech?

She had been married to him for five years, and in her eyes, he was just a man who relied on the Wilkies. How could he be the owner of a publicly listed company?!

"Grandpa... are you sure about this? If he's really the owner of Nyce Tech, why would he spend five years as a son-in-law in the Wilkies?" she asked, her voice trembling with doubt.

Pedro sneered. "I wish I were mistaken, but this document came from Damon. Do you think it'd be fake?" "Why would Gabriel do this?" Jane asked.

"Why?" Pedro fixed her with an angry

gaze. "For the Wilkie Group, of course! The game company that was sold is now under his name. We used the Wilkie Group's money to buy that company, and without paying a single cent, he took that profitable company away from us!"

The more he spoke, the angrier he became.

Pedro had originally hoped to groom Jane as the future successor of the Wilkie Group. Now, he was utterly disappointed in her.

"You married him, lived with him for five years, and never saw any signs. That shows just how foolish you are!" he scolded.

Jane shook her head. "Grandpa, he always acted normally. He went to work at the game company, and on weekends, he'd stay home with Wilhelm. There was no unusual behavior. And not just me—you didn't notice anything either, right?"

"You spent the most time with him. If you didn't notice, how could anyone else have?" Pedro shot back. Facing Pedro's furious gaze, Jane felt a mix of frustration and confusion. Why was she being blamed when it was Gabriel's fault?

"Enough. Go back now. From now

on, be careful around him. As for your divorce, I'll send a lawyer from the company to help. Since he's harmed the company so badly if

no

Want a divorce, make sure he

pays the price!" Pedro declared.

Jane didn't respond, her head lowered as she turned and left.

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Back at the villa, Jane sat on the sofa in a daze.

Chapter 999

Gabriel was the owner of Nyce Tech?

If anyone else had told Jane this, she would have dismissed it as nonsense. But since Pedro mentioned that the document came from Damon, she knew it was the truth.

However, now that Gabriel owned Nyce Tech, there was no longer any need for her to pursue Pedro. The market value of Nyce Tech far exceeded that of the Wilkie Group.

Thinking of this, Jane felt a brief flicker of joy, but her expression quickly darkened.

She had added the drug she brought with her into the tea she made for Pedro. If he had drunk it... Panicking, she rushed to the Wilkie residence.

As she entered the living room, she saw a maid carrying the teapot she had sent to the study earlier, heading toward the kitchen.

Jane quickly stopped the maid, breathless. "Has Grandpa drunk the tea yet?"

The maid, looking confused, shook her head. "No, Mr. Wilkie said he was going to bed and that the tea might cause insomnia. He had someone bring him a glass of warm milk instead."

"Oh... that's good..." Jane sighed in relief, though she noticed the maid eyeing her with suspicion.

"I just remembered that I read somewhere that old people shouldn't drink tea at night because it's bad for

their health..." she quickly added. "Give me the tea. It's my favorite. I'll take it back and drink it."

Though the maid still seemed uncertain, she handed the tea over. "Alright, Ms. Wilkie."

"Thanks, you should get some rest," Jane said, her voice hurried.

After sending the maid away, Jane took the tea and left, walking briskly back home.

Back at the Wilkie residence, Pedro stopped the maid and coldly asked, "What did Jane say to you earlier?"

The maid froze at his sudden

question, her face turning pale. "Mr. Wilkie, Ms. Wilkie told me that old people shouldn't drink tea at night because it's bad for their health. She also said that the tea was her favorite, so she didn't want to it and decided to take it back."

Pedro's gaze darkened. "I see. You may go now." "Y-Yes..." the maid stammered, clearly relieved to leave.

waste

After she departed, Pedro turned to his butler and said coldly, "When Jane brought the tea to my study earlier, I knocked over a cup and spilled some on the floor. Have someone collect a sample of the fortesting to see if there's anything in it."

The butler's expression changed. "Mr. Wilkie, are you suspecting that Ms. Wilkie put something in the tea?"

"Just do as I say," Pedro ordered.

"Of course..." the butler complied.

Two hours later...

The butler handed Pedro a report. "Mr. Wilkie, here are the results of the tea's analysis."

Pedro took the report and, after a long pause, opened it. He stared at the test results for several moments before slowly closing the document.

He couldn't believe it. His own granddaughter, whom he had raised with so much care, had planned to harm him.

The tea contained a neurotoxin that

would cause the heart to rapidly contract, triggering a heart attack. would be quickly metabolized, so even an autopsy would only reveal heart failure as the cause of death.

If he had drunk that tea, he might already be dead.

As for Jane, simply discarding the teapot would have been enough to cover her tracks.

Pedro couldn't understand why Jane would do this. Was it really just because he had refused to let her return to the company?

Chapter 1000

The more Pedro thought about it, the more disappointed he became.

Seeing the disappointment on his face, the butler deduced that the tea had indeed been tampered with. "Mr. Wilkie... what do we do about this?" he asked.

Pedro took a deep breath and said solemnly, "Pretend you know nothing. Don't tell anyone."

"Understood," the butler replied.

Jane thought no one knew about the drug she had slipped into Pedro's tea. After getting home, she poured the tea out and smashed the teapot into the trash.

Once everything was handled, she let out a sigh of relief, sat back down on the sofa, and began to reflect on her situation with Gabriel.

She hadn't considered divorce before. Now that she knew he was Nyce Tech's owner, divorce was out of the question.

As long as she remained Gabriel's wife, she would still have a claim to half of Nyce Tech. If they divorced, she would have nothing.

She had been married to Gabriel for five years and even had a child with him. For him to try to pay her off with a few million and take their son away was simply unacceptable.

The next morning...

Jane went straight to Nyce Tech to find Gabriel.

As soon as she entered the lobby, the receptionist stopped her. "Hello, Miss. May I ask who you're here to see? Do you have an appointment?"

Jane's demeanor was arrogant as she coldly replied, "I'm here to see Gabriel Hackett."

The receptionist paused, then checked and found no one by that name. "Miss, we don't have an

employee named Gabriel Hackett. I think you've come to the wrong place."

"You don't even know your own boss' name? How are you working as a receptionist?" Jane snapped.

The receptionist frowned. "Our boss is Eddie Morrison... You must have made a mistake."

"Then call him down. Tell him I'm Gabriel's wife," Jane demanded.

The receptionist remained silent.

Jane's expression grew icy as she ordered, "Call him. I'll speak to him."

The receptionist hesitated, then glanced over at the security guard. "This person is causing a disturbance. Please escort her out."

Jane's eyes widened in disbelief. "You're going to call security on me? Do you even know who I am? I'm your boss' wife!"

The receptionist stared at her

blankly. "Our boss is Mr. Eddie Morrison. He's nearly 70, and his granddaughter is about your age. As I already said, there's no one named Gabriel Hackett here. If you don't leave, I'll have to call the police."

With that, she instructed security to forcibly remove Jane.

Furious, Jane pulled out her phone to have her assistant check the number for Eddie's office.

Just then, a black Rolls-Royce pulled up behind her.

A well-dressed man stepped out of the passenger seat, walked to the back, and opened the door for a portly man in his 70s.

Seeing Jane standing by the door, Eddie asked with a frown, "What's going on?"

One of the security guards spoke up. "Mr. Morrison, this woman is causing a disturbance. She insists on seeing you.

Eddie glanced at Jane. Recognizing her as Gabriel's wife, he said in a low voice, "Ms. Wilkie, it seems Nyce Tech has never wronged you."

Jane stepped forward and said in a

low voice

"Mr. Morrison, I don't I want

to waste time with you. I know

Gabriel is the real boss behind Nyce

Tech. I need to see him.

"If I don't,

expose everything to the

public-including how your

company, Starlite Enterprise, purposely swindled the Wilkie Group

out of billions before filing for bankruptcy.

"I can't find Mr. Tonra, but I can sue Nyce Tech."

Chapter 1001

Eddie was silent for a moment before dialing Gabriel's number. "Mr. Hackett, Ms. Wilkie is downstairs at Nyce Tech and wants to see you."

Soon after, Eddie hung up and told Jane, "Mr. Hackett is at Villa No. 1 in Fantas Paradise."

Jane smirked. "Thank you, Mr. Morrison."

She then got into the car and left.

...

Jane pulled up to Villa No. 1 in Fantas Paradise and couldn't help but feel conflicted as she gazed at the luxurious villa.

A few years ago, when Fantas Paradise was first put on the market, many tried to purchase Villa No. 1, with offers reaching up to 100,000,000 dollars.

Despite the lucrative offers, the owner refused to sell it.

At the time, rumors circulated that the villa's real owner was the boss of Nyce Tech, though no one knew who that was.

Eddie, the general manager of Nyce Tech, attended numerous social events. Countless people tried to inquire about the company's owner, but he never revealed a thing.

Jane never imagined that the owner of this villa would turn out to be Gabriel.

She took a deep breath, pushed open the car door, and stepped out.

Because she had been expected, the security guard immediately let her in.

Entering the villa's living room, she was further disturbed by its extravagant decor.

Gabriel had so much money, yet he had pretended to be poor in front of her. It was all a ploy to lower the Wilkies' guard, allowing him to infiltrate the Wilkie Group and gradually dismantle it.

She had worked so hard for years to become the company's general manager, only to lose it all because of his schemes.

A wave of resentment and anger surged within her as this thought crossed her mind.

Gabriel sat calmly on the sofa, looking at her with indifference. "So, you've come to see me. Have you made up your mind?"

Jane sneered and sat across from him. "Gabriel, I wasn't planning to divorce you even before I knew you were Nyce Tech's owner. Do you really think I'll do so now?"

"Nyce Tech was my property before we got married. If you're thinking of taking it from me, stop dreaming," Gabriel replied.

"Nyce Tech may have been your pre-marital property, but it's made quite a bit of money since we

married, hasn't it? If I apply to the et

court for a financial investigation, do you really think they won't find

anything?" Jane taunted.

Gabriel narrowed his eyes, his gaze growing colder. "What do you want?"

"I won't agree to a divorce. You're moving back in with me, and I want to join Nyce Tech," Jane stated, laying down her terms.

Gabriel chuckled. "Jane, have you not woken up yet? You think I'd let you into Nyce Tech?"

"I already know about the scam you

ret

and Starlite pulled on the Wilkie Group for billions. My grandfather knows too, and he's going to deal with you. Once Nyce Tech is sued, it'll be over for you," Jane threatened.

QUMS

"Jane, you need evidence to back your words. The contract was signed between you and Starlite, and Shane has already gone abroad.

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"What proof do you have that I was behind Shane's actions? Even if the Wilkie Group sues, it should be Starlite, not Nyce Tech," Gabriel countered.

Jane gnashed her teeth. "Starlite is a subsidiary of Nyce Tech. Now that Starlite is in trouble, Nyce Tech should take responsibility!"

"You probably don't know, but at the

beginning of this year, Starlite became an independent company. It's no longer affiliated with Nyce Tech, though that hasn't been made public," Gabriel explained.

"What?!" Jane gasped, her eyes widening.

Chapter 1002

Jane's anger flared as she stared into Gabriel's calm eyes. "You've been plotting this all along, haven't you?"

Gabriel smiled. "Jane, you're a little smarter than Theo, but you're still not cut out for business."

After all, he had only set a trap, and she had foolishly walked right into it.

Jane clenched her hands tightly, leering at Gabriel as she said through gritted teeth, "Gabriel, you're cruel!"

"Same to you," Gabriel quipped.

After a brief silence, Jane gradually calmed down.

"Gabriel, everything you've done is to swallow up the Wilkie Group. But now my grandfather has teamed up with Prospectus Technology. You'll never get your hands on it!" she hissed.

"If I can't have it, so be it. I never really wanted it anyway," Gabriel replied.

His current target was Prospectus Technology. His goal was to bankrupt the company and take Nyla from Damon.

As for the Wilkie Group, without Prospectus Technology, it was just another paper tiger, like the Sumner Group.

Jane asked again, "So now you're set on divorcing me and chasing after Nyla, is that it?"

Gabriel stopped pretending and nodded. "Yes, Jane. I've never loved you. I married you not because you're special, but because I thought it didn't matter who I married."

Upon hearing his cruel words, Jane's chest ached.

She had truly loved Gabriel during their years together, but everything—the affection, the tenderness he had shown her had been an act. How could she accept that?

"I will never agree to a divorce. You can forget about it," she spat.

Gabriel stood up and looked down at her. "Then there's nothing to discuss. You can leave now."

Without another word, he turned and walked away.

Jane quickly stepped forward and blocked his way. "Can't you just live a good life with me and our son? Nyla doesn't even love you!"

Gabriel shoved her hand aside and

looked at her with a mocking expression. "She doesn't love me, but you love me now? If I weren't Nyce Tech's owner, would you be treating me this well?"

"As long as you're willing to give up custody of our son, I'll give you 5,000,000 dollars as compensation." "5,000,000 dollars? Five years of my life and the son I bore for you are worth that much?" Jane questioned.

Gabriel asked, "How much do you want, then?"

"I want half of all the money Nyce Tech has made since we got married," Jane demanded.

Gabriel smiled. "Jane, do you really think you're worth that much?"

Jane's face turned pale.

It took several seconds before she

coldly replied, "If you don't give it to me, I'll drag out the divorce. If you dare pursue Nyla, I'll expose her as the mistress who destroyed our marriage online."

"Don't you dare!" Gabriel hissed.

The chill in his gaze wrapped around Jane, leaving her struggling to breathe.

Jane met his gaze, unafraid. "You think I won't? If Nyla gets bashed by netizens because of you, she'll probably hate you even more."

Jane had thoroughly investigated Gabriel's pursuit of Nyla five years ago. She knew Nyla didn't like him at all—it was Gabriel who had relentlessly stalked her like a madman.

Her resentment deepened as she thought of his possessiveness over Nyla and his fake affection toward her over the past five years.

Jane hated both Nyla and Gabriel.

If she couldn't have peace, neither should they!

Suddenly, Gabriel gripped her throat,

growling, Jane, I hate being

threatened, especially with her Do you really think that because Damon

is helping the Wilkie Group, I won't dare touch you?"

Chapter 1003

The suffocating sensation gripped Jane like a vice. Her face flushed as she reached up, struggling to pry Gabriel's hand off her. Her efforts, however, were futile.

Gabriel's smile deepened as he watched the pain twist her expression. "The Wilkies have already abandoned you. If you know what's good for you, sign the divorce papers, take the compensation I'm offering, and leave. Otherwise, you'll walk away with nothing."

He released her, tossing her aside carelessly like discarded trash. Without sparing her another glance, he turned and walked away.

Just as Gabriel was about to return to his work in the study, his phone rang. It was Wren.

"Gabriel, your stepfather's company is in trouble... He's threatening to divorce me now... What should I do?!" Wren's voice was frantic, panic clear in her tone.

"What does his company's trouble have to do with his wanting a divorce?" Gabriel asked, his voice cool and uninterested.

Wren gritted her teeth, clearly reluctant. "I caused a scene at Prospectus Technology, and now Damon knows about it. Prospectus has pulled all collaborations with his company...'

Gabriel didn't even look up, his tone indifferent. "What you should be doing right now is apologizing to Nyla, not calling me for advice."

The silence on the other end was telling.

If Wren had been willing to apologize, she wouldn't have called him in the first place.

"You want me to apologize to Nyla?" Her voice dripped with disbelief.

"You went to Prospectus Technology and caused trouble. Doesn't that warrant an apology to Nyla?" Gabriel replied flatly.

"Don't you have a big company? Just a word from you, and Raymond's company will survive this crisis-" Before she could finish, Gabriel interrupted sharply, "I can help his company, but why should I?"

If Wren hadn't stirred things up with Nyla, Raymond Wilkie's company wouldn't be in trouble, and they wouldn't be facing divorce. Everything that was happening now was her doing.

"Please, Gabriel, just help me this time. I'm begging you," Wren pleaded, her desperation evident.

Gabriel's expression remained unchanged. "Didn't you always want a divorce? Now that he's agreed to it, isn't this exactly what you wanted?"

Wren's face flushed with anger. "Harrison is impossible! I groveled and begged him, but he still won't forgive me. I can't just let everything go!"

"I'm not getting involved in your problems anymore. Go apologize to Nyla, or lose your life as a rich wife. The choice is yours," Gabriel concluded and hung up.

Furious, Wren nearly hurled her phone against the wall. She took several deep breaths to calm herself before turning toward the study.

"Darling, Gabriel... is not in a position to help..." she lied.

Raymond snorted. "Not in a position, or simply unwilling to help?"

"It's really not a good time. Prospectus Technology is also targeting his company, and he's struggling to deal with it... If he" Wren began explaining, but Raymond cut her off. "Enough!" Raymond waved his hand

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dism. You don't need to say

more. Since he won't help, we'll just prepare the gift and go to Nyla ourselves to apologize."

Wren nodded reluctantly. "Alright. I'll have the service staff prepare the gift."

That evening...

Raymond and Wren arrived at Damon's villa with the gift, only to be stopped by a maid at the door. They didn't even get to see Damon or Nyla.

Chapter 1004

"Mr. and Mrs. Wilkie, Mr. Sumner said he's not seeing anyone today. Please go back," the servant informed them.

Raymond's expression darkened.

This wasn't simply a refusal to see guests-it was clear they didn't want to see them at all.

He had just witnessed Theo being escorted inside moments earlier.

Forcing a smile, he said, "It's fine. We'll wait here. If Mr. Sumner changes his mind, please let us know." The servant's expression remained indifferent as he replied, "Suit yourselves."

With that, the door was shut in their faces.

Wren frowned. "He refuses to see us. Why are we still waiting here? It's freezing cold..."

"Shut up!" Raymond snapped, his voice frigid. "If it weren't for your foolish actions, I wouldn't be begging

Damon to forgive us. From now on, stay out of matters involving Jane and Gabriel. Don't show up in front of Nyla again,

I'll divorce you!"

Wren stiffened, unable to respond. She could only glare at Raymond, her emotions tangled between anger and helplessness.

It was her fault for acting impulsively and dragging Raymond's company into the mess.

"Fine," she muttered, her gaze dropping as she turned away from him.

...

The two of them stood outside the villa for over two hours before the door finally opened again. Theo stepped out, surprised to see Raymond. "Uncle Raymond, you're here to see Mr. Sumner?" Although they shared the same surname, their relationship was distant, limited to occasional meetings during holidays or special occasions.

"Yeah... I heard about the partnership between the Wilkie Group and Prospectus Technology. Did you come to discuss business with Mr. Sumner?" Raymond asked.

Theo didn't want to reveal too much and simply nodded. "Yes, I have some work to do. I'll be leaving now."

Raymond quickly stepped forward, his expression troubled. "Theo, I've never asked you for a favor before, but could you help me with something?"

"What is it, Uncle Raymond?" Theo asked.

Raymond explained, "It's... well, Wren

misunderstood that Mr. Sumner's

girlfriend, Nyla, was involved in

Jane's marriage to Gabriel. She caused trouble at Prospectus Technology, and now she regrets it.

"She insisted we come here to apologize in person to Mr. Sumner and Ms. Kinsey, but Mr. Sumner is still angry and refuses to meet with us. Could you speak to him and ask him to see us—"

Before he could finish, Theo immediately refused, "Uncle Raymond, that's not fair. You're putting me in a difficult position. Do you really think I have the influence to get Mr. Sumner to meet with us?"

Seeing Theo's displeasure, Raymond quickly added, "All you need to do is speak to Mr. Sumner and ask him to meet with us. You don't have to ask for any special favors-just let him know we're here. I'll owe you one, alright?"

Theo rolled his eyes. Did they really think he had the power to get Damon to see them?

"Uncle Raymond, I don't have that kind of influence. I'm not about to beg for you. You're on your own with this one," Theo said.

He then brushed past him and got into his car, driving off without a second glance.

Raymond's expression soured as he watched Theo's car disappear. He realized that Theo was only being polite by calling him "Uncle Raymond." There was no way he truly respected him.

Wren huffed angrily. "Theo has no manners! He didn't even greet me properly. No upbringing!"

Raymond shot her a cold look. "Greet you? Do you think you deserve that?"

Wren paled.

Staring at him with disbelief, she asked, "What do you mean by that, Raymond? Why don't I deserve it? No matter what, I'm still your wife!"

Chapter 1005

Raymond scoffed. "Wife? Not for much longer."

"Are you really going to divorce me?!" Wren stared at Raymond, her eyes wide.

Though in her 50s, Wren had taken excellent care of herself and appeared to be in her early 30s.

When they first married, Raymond hadn't been drawn to her looks. Instead, he had married her because a fortune teller had told him that Wren would bring him good fortune.

The first two years of their marriage had been prosperous for Raymond's career. His business had expanded rapidly, growing several times in size.

Now, however, because of Wren's foolishness, his company was on the verge of bankruptcy.

On top of that, Raymond had been seeing a mistress, planning to make her his official partner. Wren had to step aside.

"We've been married for years, but if it weren't for the mess you caused this time, I would never have considered divorce. This is all on you," Raymond blamed her.

Seeing Raymond's cold, heartless attitude, Wren fell silent for a long time. Finally, she asked, her voice low, "Have you really thought this through?"

"Of course. Your actions almost ruined the company. If I keep you around, I'll probably offend even more people.

"I've treated you well these past years. Let's part on good terms. I'll give you 150,000 dollars as compensation," Raymond replied with a serious expression, showing no sign of joking.

Wren's heart began to race.

With Gabriel ignoring her and Harrison refusing to take her back, she'd have nothing left if she lost Raymond too.

She gritted her teeth and said, "You know the true power behind Nyce Tech is my son, Gabriel. If you divorce me now, you'll regret it."

Raymond mocked her, "If Gabriel really cared about you that much, why didn't he help when you called him for assistance?"

He had been standing nearby, overhearing their conversation.

Gabriel had made it clear that he wouldn't help Raymond's company, especially knowing the mess was partly due to Wren's actions.

Gabriel was refusing to help now-what made Wren think he ever would?

Seeing Wren fall silent, Raymond sneered. "Got nothing to say?"

"It's because I had a fight with him a few days ago. Once he's cooled down, he'll listen to me," she retorted.

"He's been hiding his company from you for years. Do you really think he'll listen to you now? If he did, his company might have already collapsed," Raymond ridiculed.

"You!" Wren trembled with rage, pointing at Raymond. "Don't go too far!"

Raymond didn't want to argue further and coldly replied, "I've got a meeting to attend. You can stay here and wait. When Mr. Sumner is willing to meet with you, the you can return."

With that, he turned and left.

Not long after Raymond left, Wren followed him.

She went straight to Gabriel, hoping he would help save Raymond's company. However, Gabriel's attitude remained unchanged he wasn't going to get involved.

Wren was filled with

disappointment. "Gabriel, I raised you with so much effort. If it weren't for me, Would you have what you have today? I'm just asking for your help once, and you're being so heartless. How could I have raised such an ungrateful son?"

Gabriel looked at her expressionlessly and retorted, "Mom, you caused trouble with Nyla and still won't admit your mistake. Why should I help you?"

Upon seeing that he was only defending Nyla, Wren's chest ached with anger. "Is that it? If I apologize to Nyla, then you'll help your Uncle Raymond's company?"

Chapter 1006

Gabriel looked at Wren calmly and said, "If you're willing to publicly apologize to her, I'll agree to your request."

"A public apology? Are you trying to ruin me?!" Wren shot back.

She already believed she was not in the wrong. A public apology would turn her into a laughingstock. "You can choose to refuse," Gabriel replied indifferently.

Wren was furious but felt powerless. She knew that the Gabriel standing before her was no longer the son she could control.

Taking a deep breath, she suppressed her anger and said, "Fine, I'll do it."

Gabriel nodded. "Alright. I'll have someone come over to record your apology video. It needs to be posted online today."

Wren hadn't expected him to act so quickly, but she was already trapped. There was no turning back. Besides, she needed Gabriel's help to save Raymond's company.

True to his word, Gabriel acted swiftly. Within half an hour, a videographer arrived, and Wren was seated on the sofa, ready to record her apology.

It took three or four takes before Gabriel was finally satisfied.

Once the videographer left, Wren turned to Gabriel and asked, "Are you happy now? Can you help Raymond's company like you promised?"

Gabriel's expression remained cold as he replied, "Go home for now. Have him come see me first thing tomorrow morning.

At those words, Wren let out a sigh of relief.

She nodded. "Alright."

With this, Raymond should stop pushing for a divorce.

Not long after Wren left, Gabriel instructed his team to post the apology video online.

The video quickly caused a massive stir.

The Wilkie Group was well-known in Saintornia, and recent controversies had already made them a hot topic among internet gossip bloggers.

Several bloggers uncovered that Wren was Jane's mother-in-law.

When Wren's apology video went live, the Wilkies instantly became a trending topic.

to discuss how

At the time, Jane was meeting with her lawyer of Gabriel's assets she could

the event of a divorce. Contin

When she answered the call, Pedro's furious voice came through. "Jane, get rid of those trending topics online right now!"

He didn't even give her a chance to respond before hanging up abruptly.

Confused, Jane checked her phone and quickly found the trending posts Pedro had mentioned.

She took one look, and her expression darkened.

In an attempt to appease Nyla, Gabriel had made Wren record an apology video.

As a result, the Wilkies were now being mocked online, along with Jane herself.

People ridiculed her for marrying a cheap man and commented on how his mother was dragging him down.

Only a handful of people knew that

Gabriel was actually the man behind Nyce Tech, so most assumed he was just an ordinary overseas returnee. Many saw Jane's marriage to him as "marrying ben her."

Noticing Jane's sour expression, the lawyer hesitated before speaking. "Ms. Wilkie, if you have other matters to attend to, we can reschedule our discussion. In the meantime, I'll dig deeper into Nyce Tech's financial situation so we can have a more detailed conversation later."

Jane snapped out of her thoughts and nodded. "Alright, I appreciate your help."

"It's my duty. I'll take my leave now, and we'll set up another meeting soon," the lawyer replied. "Okay, I'll walk you out," Jane offered.

After seeing the lawyer off, she returned to her living room.

Her expression grew darker as she stared at the news on her phone.

She took a deep breath, went upstairs to change, and then left the house.

Chapter 1007

At Prospectus Technology, small private chat groups among employees buzzed with activity as everyone discussed Wren's apology video.

The entire company was aware of the scene Wren had caused earlier, and clips of her outburst had circulated in various employee group chats.

When Damon found out, he issued a strict notice forbidding employees from sharing the video further. Anyone caught distributing it would have their bonuses docked.

To incentivize compliance, he offered a 400-dollar reward for the anonymous reporting of violators.

No one dared share the video openly anymore, but discussions about it continued in private.

"Wren looked so arrogant in that video. How did she apologize so quickly? Did Mr. Sumner threaten her?" "Considering how much Mr. Sumner cares about Nyla, that's definitely possible."

In the lab...

Leon noticed the trending video and immediately handed his phone to Nyla. "Take a look at this, Nyla." Nyla glanced at the video on the screen.

Upon seeing Wren apologize so earnestly, a flicker of surprise crossed her face.

Given Wren's personality, she wouldn't normally apologize. Could someone have forced her?

She handed the phone back to Leon and passed him her experiment log. "Record this for me. I'll be back in a bit."

Stepping out of the lab, Nyla pulled out her phone and sent a message to Damon, asking if he was behind Wren's apology.

Damon responded quickly.

Damon: [No, I had Spencer look into it. It was most likely Gabriel's doing.]

Nyla frowned slightly but didn't reply. She put her phone away and returned to the lab.

Whether or not it was Gabriel's doing, it didn't change her feelings. She wouldn't forgive Wren.

At Raymond's villa...

Jane sat across from Wren, her face cold.

"Mom, Gabriel went too far this time. Forcing you to publicly apologize like that-he's humiliating you and dragging the Wilkie name through the mud!" Jane exclaimed.

Wren's expression darkened. "What else could I have done? If not for you and Wilhelm, I wouldn't have caused a scene with Nyla.

"But it almost cost your uncle's company! Gabriel used your uncle's company to threaten me. What choice did I have but to agree?"

Seeing Wren so agitated, Jane took a deep breath and said, "Mom, I'm sorry. You've had to suffer because of me."

Before realizing Gabriel was Nyce

Tech's owner, Jane had always been indifferent to the mother-in-law she didn't like. She avoided interacting with her whenever possible.

The situation was different now. She couldn't let go of Gabriel just yet. Perhaps this mother-in-law could still be of use.

Wren huffed indignantly. "At least you know!"

Jane moved to sit beside her, gently

patting her back to soothe her. "Mom, now that Gabriel is so focused on Nyla, he's ignoring both me and Wilhelm-and even you his own mother. We need to think of a way to stop him."

"This is your fault!" Wren snapped. "You've been with him for five years and couldn't win his heart. Now that Nylais back, he's already asking for a divorce. You're useless!"

Jane's hand froze mid-pat, her expression darkening briefly.

She'd done so much for Gabriel over the years. She'd gotten him into the Wilkie Group's gaming company

and borne him a child-what more could she have done?

"Mom, that's not fair. I've done everything a wife should do. Who could've predicted Nyla would return?" she retorted.

Chapter 1008

Besides, Nyla didn't even like Gabriel. It had always been him chasing her.

What was Jane supposed to do-crack open his head and make him stop liking Nyla? Wren frowned, clearly irritated.

"Alright, I'm not in the mood to talk about this. Go home," she said, waving Jane off.

Jane protested, "Mom, we haven't even discussed how to bring Gabriel back to me and Wilhelm. I need your help."

"What do you want me to do?" Wren asked.

"Later, call Gabriel and tell him Wilhelm has a fever and wants to see him. Get him to come home," Jane requested.

Wren hesitated. Gabriel's attitude toward her had grown increasingly cold. If he found out she was conspiring with Jane to deceive him, it could further damage their relationship.

Seeing her reluctance, Jane sighed. "Mom, do you really want to watch him chase after Nyla? With the way things are between you two now, do you think Nyla will treat you kindly if they end up together?" "That's impossible! Nyla doesn't like him. They won't end up together," Wren stated.

"She didn't before, but now that people know he's the owner of Nyce Tech-which isn't far off from Prospectus Technology in standing that might change." Jane stopped there, letting Wren think it over. "I... I still don't think it's possible. Go home. I need to think about this," Wren said finally.

Suppressing her frustration, Jane stood up. "Alright. Take your time. I'll head back."

As Jane left the villa, her expression turned icy. It looked like she would have to handle this on her own.

...

That evening, Jane personally picked Wilhelm up from school.

When Wilhelm saw her, his face lit up briefly before he pressed his lips together.

Since Gabriel had left, Jane had changed a lot. She hit him often, and he was scared of her.

Jane pretended not to notice his

wary expression. Smiling warm/et

she approached him. "Wil, what's wrong? Aren't you happy Mommy came to pick you up?"

Wilhelm stared at his shoes, saying nothing.

He was happy but also afraid-afraid his mother would turn into the scary version of herself who hit him for no reason.

When he didn't respond, Jane crouched down to his eye level and gently touched his head.

She coaxed, "Wil, Mommy wasn't in a good place before and did a lot of wrong things. I know I was wrong, and I promise I'll never hit you again. Can you forgive me?"

Wilhelm hesitated for a long while, enough that Jane's patience was wearing thin. Finally, he nodded. "I forgive you."

Jane's smile widened as she replied, "Good. To make it up to you, let's go out for a special dinner tonight, okay?"

Wilhelm's dull eyes brightened

instantly, though he held back his excitement and cautiously glanced at her. "Really, Mommy? We can go?"

"Of course! I came to pick you up just so I could take you out for a nice meal," Jane said.

"Okay!" Wilhelm cheered.

"Let's go then," Jane urged, extending her hand.

After a moment's hesitation, Wilhelm placed his small hand in hers.

The two of them headed to the car, and soon, Jane was driving him to an upscale steakhouse.

...

Once Jane had ordered food for Wilhelm, she looked at him seriously and asked, "Wil, do you want your dad to come home?"

Wilhelm thought for a moment before nodding. "Yes, I want Daddy to come home."

Chapter 1009

Wilhelm thought that when Gabriel was home, Jane never hit him without a reason.

But ever since his father left, his mother had become unpredictable. Sometimes, even the sound of him making noise while eating would lead to punishment, forcing him to stand in the corner.

He missed the mother who would kiss him and speak to him gently. He didn't want the mother who hit him for no reason.

"But Daddy's out there with another woman now and won't come home," he said.

Although he was young, he understood a lot of adult issues.

Lately, Gabriel hadn't been around. With Jane's constant hints, Wilhelm had started to believe that Gabriel had left because of a bad woman, choosing her over their family.

"Mommy, when I grow up, I'll protect you. I won't let any bad woman bully you!" Wilhelm vowed.

Tears welled in Jane's eyes at his words, her heart filled with a mix of emotions. Yet, her moment of hesitation lasted only a second before her resolve hardened.

The only way to give Wilhelm a complete family-and for her to get what she wanted-was to make Gabriel come back home.

She smiled at Wilhelm, her voice soft. "Wil, the most important thing right now is finding a way to bring Daddy back. Mommy has a plan, but I need your help. Will you help me?"

"Mommy, I'll do anything if it means Daddy will come home!" Wilhelm promised.

Jane stroked his head, praising him, "You're such a good boy."

"What do I need to do, Mommy?" Wilhelm asked.

"For now, you don't need to do anything. Just enjoy this meal. By tomorrow, Daddy will be back home," Jane coaxed.

Wilhelm's eyes widened in disbelief. "Really?"

Would his father come back after he finished the meal?

Jane nodded. "Really."

"Okay!" Wilhelm chirped.

Soon, the server brought their steak to the table and offered to cut it for them.

Jane smiled and refused. "No need. I'll do it myself. Could you check on the desserts, though?"

"Of course, ma'am," the server replied before stepping away.

Jane carefully cut Wilhelm's steak

into bite-sized pieces and p them

Tront of him. She placed et

"Go

d and eat."

Wilhelm, who loved steak, eagerly picked up his knife and fork to take a bite.

Just then, he paused, hesitating for a moment before offering the piece "Mommy, you've worked

hard.

You eat first." Can get

Jane smiled as she accepted the bite. "Thank you, Wil. Now eat up, I've got plenty here." Wilhelm nodded. "Okay!"

After finishing his steak, the desserts arrived.

Jane slid the hazelnut cake toward him. "Here, Wil, try this. After dessert, we'll head home."

Wilhelm's eyes sparkled with curiosity as he looked at the cake. "Mom, what are these on top?" "They're hazelnuts. They're really tasty-try them," Jane offered.

"Okay!" Wilhelm agreed, picking up a spoon and, as was his habit, offering the first bite to Jane. She gently waved it off. "Mommy doesn't like cake. This one's all for you."

"Alright," Wilhelm replied.

Upon taking his first bite, his face lit up with delight. "It's so good! I've never had a cake this tasty before." He quickly took another big bite.

Watching his happiness, Jane couldn't help but smile. "Slow down. Don't eat too fast, or you'll choke."

When Wilhelm had eaten nearly half the cake, Jane stopped him. "That's enough for tonight. Eating too much before bed isn't good. If you like it, I'll bring you back another time

QUMS

Chapter 1010

Although Wilhelm wanted more, he hesitated briefly before obediently putting down his spoon. "Okay, Mommy," he said.

His compliance sparked a brief flicker of guilt in Jane's eyes. But the feeling vanished as quickly as it had come, replaced by a calm determination.

After settling the bill, she led Wilhelm back to the car.

As soon as they were on the road, Wilhelm began squirming in his seat, scratching himself furiously. His small face scrunched in discomfort as he complained, "Mommy... I don't feel good. I'm itchy all over..." Jane glanced at him and saw red spots breaking out across his skin.

"Hold on, Mommy's taking you to the hospital right now," she said.

She sped toward the nearest hospital, reaching it in less than ten minutes.

By the time Jane pulled into the ER, Wilhelm's face was covered in hives. He was clawing at himself, leaving red marks all over his pale skin.

Jane rushed to unbuckle him and carried him inside, moving quickly toward the emergency desk.

A doctor approached immediately and asked, "What happened?"

"Food allergy," Jane said anxiously.

"Lay him on that bed over there," the doctor instructed.

As the medical team got to work, Jane stepped aside and called Wren, her voice shaky with panic. She explained what had happened and begged her to come to the hospital.

Wren was startled and immediately called Gabriel.

"I understand. Which hospital are you at? I'll be there right away," Gabriel said.

...

When Gabriel arrived, an hour had passed.

Wilhelm had been moved to a private VIP ward, where he was resting with an IV in his arm.

Gabriel's expression turned icy as he looked at Wilhelm's fragile state, his face still covered in scratches. He turned to Jane, his voice cold. "Step outside. I need to talk to you

Jane didn't move, her face as cold as his. "Anything you have to say, you can say here."

Gabriel let out a mirthless laugh before grabbing her wrist and pulling her out of the room.

Once they reached the end of the corridor, he released her, his voice sharp and accusatory. "Why did Wilhelm suddenly have an allergic reaction?"

Jane rubbed her reddened wrist, her

irritation rising. "You're asking me? What right do you have to question me? You haven't been home in ages. Would you have ever come back if Wilhelm hadn't had an allergic reaction?"

"You know he's allergic to hazelnuts. Ever since we found out, I've made sure there aren't any in the house. Do I need to investigate this myself?" Gabriel questioned.

For a moment, Jane's eyes flickered with guilt, and she avoided his gaze.

"I just took him out for steak tonight. The hazelnut cake was mine. How was I supposed to know he'd sneak a few bites while I was in the restroom?" she said.

Gabriel's expression turned to one of cold contempt as he pushed, "I'll have the restaurant's surveillance footage pulled. We'll see if that's the truth."

Jane scowled. "You don't trust me?"

"Should I?" he asked, his tone cutting.

"You!" Jane ground her teeth, nodding sharply. "Fine! Think whatever you want. Don't bother checking the footage-assume I did it!"

"I only believe in surveillance footage," Gabriel insisted.

Seeing his determination, Jane clenched her fists. She was on the verge of erupting.

Taking a deep breath, she glared at Gabriel. "Yes, I did it on purpose! I knew it was the only way to make you show up! Gabriel, this is all your

fault! you weren't so selfish your

Wilhelm wouldn't have had

suffer!"

Chapter 1011

Looking at Jane's self-righteous demeanor, Gabriel remained expressionless. His gaze was indifferent, as if she were a stranger of no consequence.

His lack of reaction agitated Jane even more.

"Gabriel, why aren't you saying anything? Why?!" she shouted.

Gabriel's voice was calm. "Because I think you're pitiful."

"Pitiful?!" Jane repeated, then burst into laughter. "Do you think you're any less pitiful than I am? You abandoned your wife to be with Nyla, but has she even spared you a second glance? In the end, you and

I are no different-we're both pathetic losers."

Gabriel showed no visible reaction but said, "Jane, I'm not like you."

"What's so different about you?" Jane demanded.

"I can make my own choices. You can't. Take this situation, for example I can ensure you'll never see Wilhelm again, but there's nothing you can do to stop me," Gabriel stated.

Jane froze, her laughter faltering. An overwhelming sense of unease gripped her. "What are you going to do?"

Gabriel waved his hand, and two bodyguards stepped forward, grabbing Jane by the arms.

"For the sake of your own goals, you were willing to harm your child. Someone like you doesn't deserve to

be a mother. I'll be taking Wilhelm with me. From now on, don't even think about seeing him again," Gabriel announced.

"What?!" Jane's eyes widened in shock. "Gabriel, what gives you the right to do this?! I won't let you take Wilhelm! Over my dead body!"

Gabriel indifferently remarked, "Too noisy."

One of the bodyguards covered Jane's mouth and dragged her away.

She struggled desperately, letting out muffled cries, but it was no use. She was soon forced into an elevator.

...

At the hospital's main entrance, the bodyguards unceremoniously dumped her onto the ground.

The impact made Jane see stars, but she ignored the pain and got up, prepared to run back to the hospital.

She had carried Wilhelm to full term and given birth to him. What right did Gabriel have to take him away?

Jane braced herself, expecting the

bodyguards to stop her, but they didn't even glance her way. Instead, they got into a car and drove off.

Her anxiety intensified as she raced toward the elevator.

By the time she reached the ward, Wilhelm's bed was empty. The boy was nowhere to be found.

Jane rushed to the nurse's station.

"Where's my son? Where's Wilhelm?" she demanded breathlessly.

The nurse looked confused. "His father took him just now. The discharge procedure has already been taken care of."

Jane went pale. She bit her lip, panic rising.

A sudden thought struck her, and she bolted downstairs.

Too impatient to wait for the elevator, she took the stairs-but in her panic, she misstepped and tumbled down.

When Wilhelm woke up, he realized he wasn't in the hospital anymore.

The unfamiliar room made him uneasy, and he quickly climbed out of bed.

As his feet touched the floor, the door opened, and Gabriel walked in carrying a bowl of soup.

"Daddy!" Wilhelm's face lit up with

surprise and joy. He ran to Gabriel who caught him with one arm while balancing the bowl in the other.

"Careful," Gabriel said with a smile.

"Daddy, where is this? Why am I here? And where's Mommy?" Wilhelm asked.

Gabriel's smile didn't waver. "This is our home now. Are you hungry?"

Have some soup. The helper'sel.ne

making your favorite barbecue ribs for lunch."

Chapter 1012

"Okay," Wilhelm answered.

He accepted the bowl and took a couple of sips, then looked up at Gabriel and asked, "Daddy, where's Mommy?"

Upon seeing the cautious look in Wilhelm's eyes, a complex expression crossed Gabriel's face.

He crouched down to the boy's level and said gently, "Wil, from now on, you'll live with Daddy. Is that okay?"

Wilhelm froze, tears welling up in his eyes. "Daddy, does that mean you don't want Mommy anymore?" Jane's words echoed in his mind-that Gabriel had a bad woman outside and didn't want them anymore. Now that his father didn't want his mother, it wouldn't be long before he didn't want him either, especially if he had a child with that bad woman.

Gabriel sighed and spoke softly. "Wil, this is an adult matter that you won't understand. Daddy isn't abandoning Mommy. We're just going to live separately. But no matter what, both of us love you very much."

"You're lying!" Wilhelm cried, throwing the bowl to the floor, where it shattered into pieces.

He burst into tears and ran toward the door. "You're a bad daddy! You've found a bad woman outside, and once you have a child with her, you won't want me anymore! I want to see Mommy-I don't want you!"

The floor was littered with ceramic shards, and Gabriel worried that Wilhelm might hurt himself. He quickly scooped the boy up in his arms and carried him out of the room.

"Wil, listen to Daddy. I will never stop loving you," he reassured him.

Wilhelm refused to stop crying and struggling, demanding to see Jane.

After a long, fruitless attempt to comfort him, Gabriel reluctantly decided to have someone contact Jane. Before long, one of his assistants approached hesitantly. "Mr. Hackett, Ms. Wilkie fell down the stairs at the hospital and broke her leg. She's being treated now and can't come."

Gabriel pressed his lips into a tight line. "Understood."

He turned to look at Wilhelm, still sniffing on the sofa, and called over a maid.

"Keep an eye on Wilhelm. If he's hungry, prepare him something to eat, but don't let him sneak out," he instructed.

Gabriel suspected that, given Wilhelm's current state, the boy might try to run away to find Jane. He couldn't allow Wilhelm to return to her, only to be used as leverage again.

"Yes, sir," the maid replied.

After giving these instructions, Gabriel went to his study to work.

Not long after, Raymond arrived with Wren.

As they stepped into the house, they saw Wilhelm sitting on the sofa, his eyes red and puffy from crying. Wren rushed to his side. "Wil, what's wrong? Why are you crying so much? Where's your dad?" Upon seeing Wren, Wilhelm's tears began to flow again.

He threw his arms around her and sobbed. "Grandma, Daddy doesn't want Mommy anymore! I want to see Mommy! Daddy won't let me!"

Seeing Wilhelm in such a state broke

Wren's heart. She fumbled to wipe away his tears, comforting him "There, there, don't cry. I'll talk

your daddy, okay?"

"Really?" Wilhelm looked up at her with hopeful eyes.

Wren's heart melted due to the tear tracks on his cheeks. She quickly nodded. "Of course, sweetheart." As she spoke, Gabriel entered the living room.

He glanced briefly at Wren soothing Wilhelm, then turned his attention to Raymond. "Let's discuss this in the study."

"Ah, yes, of course," Raymond replied nervously, rubbing his hands together.

He had never thought highly of Gabriel, dismissing him as someone who lived off his wife. But now, Gabriel had risen to become a

successful entrepreneur, while

Raymond's own company wasel

the verge of bankruptcy, forcing him to seek help. His feelings were complicated, to say the least.

Chapter 1013

Raymond and Gabriel stayed in the study for over an hour before emerging.

By then, Raymond's expression had shifted from initial unease to radiant joy, his face brimming with smiles.

It seemed the fortune teller had been right-Wren was indeed his lucky star.

Despite his company's brush with bankruptcy, Gabriel not only promised to inject 70,000,000 dollars into it but also agreed to partner with them on future projects.

The potential profits were enough to make it impossible for Raymond to hide his grin.

Seeing his cheerful demeanor, Wren let out a breath of relief.

Setting Wilhelm down from her lap, she turned to Raymond and asked, "So, you reached an agreement?" "Yeap. I need to get back to the office, though. I'll have the driver pick you up later," Raymond replied. "Alright. Will you be home for dinner?" Wren asked.

"Of course! Tonight, we'll celebrate properly," Raymond promised.

After Raymond left, Wilhelm tugged on Wren's sleeve. "Grandma, when are you going to talk to Daddy about letting me see Mommy?"

"I'll go right now," Wren answered.

"I'll go with you," Wilhelm said.

The two headed to the study and knocked on the door.

"Come in," came Gabriel's voice.

Wren pushed the door open and stepped inside. "Gabriel, I heard from Wil that you're not letting him see his mother?"

Gabriel set down the document he

had been reading and cast a cold glance at her. "Mom, you can't even manage your own family matters, so maybe stay out of mine."

"I don't intend to meddle in the issues between you and Jane, but Wil is my grandson. He's just a child. "How could you deny him the chance to see his mother? You left him crying in the living room-what if something happened to him?" Wren explained.

Gabriel set the document aside and told Wilhelm, "Wil, step out for a moment."

Wilhelm shook his head. "No! Daddy, I want to see Mommy! I want to be with her!"

"Are you sure? Have you already forgotten how she used to hit you?" Gabriel reminded him.

At these words, Wilhelm shrank back, fear flashing across his face. Clearly, he remembered the terrifying experience.

After a moment's hesitation, he

nodded. "Mommy didn't mean to hit

me. She told me she was going through a hard time and promised it wouldn't happen again. She even took me out for something delicious yesterday..."

Looking at Wilhelm's innocent face, Gabriel frowned. He didn't want to tell Wilhelm that Jane had taken him out yesterday to deliberately trigger an allergy in order to force a meeting with him.

However, if Wilhelm didn't fully see her true nature, he would keep begging to see her. Over time, he might even come to resent Gabriel, his own father.

After a pause, Gabriel asked seriously, "If you had to choose between Daddy and Mommy, who would you pick?"

"Daddy, I don't want to choose. I want both of you. I want us to be a happy family again," Wilhelm replied. "You have to choose. Either me or your mother," Gabriel insisted.

Tears welled up in Wilhelm's eyes, and he began to sob. "I don't want to choose! I want both of you! I don't want you to get divorced!"

Wren's heart ached as she watched Wilhelm cry.

She scowled at Gabriel. "What kind of father are you? If he misses his mother so much, let him see her. Why force him to make such a cruel choice?"

Ignoring her, Gabriel turned to Wilhelm and said, "Since you won't choose, I'll decide for you. I'll send you back to your mother's place."

Chapter 1014

Wilhelm froze at Gabriel's stern expression, shrinking behind Wren and peeking at his father with frightened eyes.

Without looking at him, Gabriel called for a maid. "Take him to the Wilkies with the driver later." The maid nodded. "Understood."

Just as the maid was about to lead Wilhelm away, Wren pulled the boy behind her and snapped, "Gabriel, can't you see how scared he is?"

Gabriel finally lifted his gaze to her, his tone icy. "Weren't you the one who brought him to me and insisted I let him see Jane? Now that I've agreed, what more do you want?"

Wren stiffened but quickly composed herself. "I only brought him because he was crying so pitifully. That doesn't mean I want him to live with Jane again."

She wasn't stupid. It was clear that Wilhelm was better off with Gabriel than with Jane.

If the divorce went through, Jane would eventually remarry, and who knew how much Wilhelm would

suffer in her new household?

At least with Gabriel, Wren could visit Wilhelm often, and he would have a stable life.

"I've already told you, this is my business. Stay out of it," Gabriel warned.

Wren was angry. "I have no choice but to interfere. Just look at Wil-what have you and Jane done to him

with your constant fighting? You're his father. Can't you stop being so selfish?"

With a sharp crack, Gabriel slammed his file onto the desk, silencing the room.

Wren, who was quite afraid of Gabriel, turned pale and didn't dare speak again.

In the silence, Wilhelm's sobs echoed through the study. "Waaah! Bad Daddy! I don't want you! I want Mommy!"

At Gabriel's signal, the maid quickly stepped forward and carried Wilhelm out of the room.

Once the study was quiet again, the oppressive atmosphere made Wren feel suffocated.

She hesitated, then cautiously said "Gabriel, just remembered something I need to take care of

T'll

come back another day to visit Wil."

"Wait." Gabriel's cold voice stopped her in her tracks.

"Do you know why I brought him here?" he asked.

"W-Why?" Wren managed to ask.

"Last night, Jane deliberately fed him something he's allergic to, hoping to force me to meet with her," Gabriel explained.

Wren's eyes widened in shock. "What?! She did that to her son?!"

She recalled Jane's phone call the previous night and felt a chill run down her spine.

Jane had called her because she couldn't get through to Gabriel, manipulating her into arranging the meeting.

The more Wren thought about it, the more alarmed she became.

For Jane to go so far as to harm Wilhelm, her child-who knew what else she was capable of?

"No. Wil can't go back to her. If she can use his allergies to get her way once, who knows what she'll do next? They can't meet anymore!" Wren exclaimed.

Gabriel's expression remained cold. "I didn't tell Wil about what she did. I didn't want to hurt him."

"How can you not tell him? And you still planned to send him back
him.

her? That's like throwing
wolves!" Wren exclaimed

Gabriel gave her a pointed look. "Didn't you bring him here, insisting he see Jane?"

Chapter 1015

Embarrassment flickered across Wren's face as she muttered, "I didn't... I just didn't know the situation before, okay?"

"If you don't know the situation, then don't meddle," Gabriel rebuked.

After a moment of silence, Wren stole a glance at Gabriel and softly said, "Gabriel, this time it's my fault. I'm sorry. But Wil absolutely cannot be sent back to Jane. Who knows how she'll treat him? She's already proven she's capable of terrible things."

Just thinking about Jane intentionally causing Wilhelm's allergic reaction made Wren's skin crawl. What kind of mother could be so cruel?

"I know what I'm doing. From now on, if Jane contacts you, don't respond," Gabriel instructed.

Wren quickly nodded. "Okay... I understand..."

"If there's nothing else, you can go. I have work to do," Gabriel dismissed.

"Alright... I'll leave now..." Wren answered.

As Wren walked out of the villa, she finally let out a sigh of relief.

Just as she was about to call her driver, her phone rang.

Seeing that it was Jane, she let out a cold laugh before answering.

"Jane, you've got some nerve calling me," she said.

"Mom, what's that supposed to mean?" Jane asked.

"You know perfectly well what it means! You deliberately caused Wil's allergic reaction just to force Gabriel

to meet you. A person like you doesn't deserve to be a mother. I won't help you anymore, so stop calling me," Wren scolded before hanging up.

She then blocked Jane's number.

...

Jane hurled her phone at the ward's wall with a loud crash, startling Wendy.

"Ms. Wilkie, what's wrong?" Wendy asked nervously.

Jane's face was cold and sinister. She didn't answer, and Wendy dared not ask

further. She silently picked

up the shattered phone and set it on the table, sighing deeply.

After lunch, Gabriel instructed a maid to bring Wilhelm back to Jane.

When Jane saw Wilhelm, she didn't appear particularly happy. Instead, she fixed her gaze on the maid who had brought him over and asked, "Where's Gabriel? Why didn't he bring Wil himself?"

"Ms. Wilkie, Mr. Hackett is busy with work, so he asked me to bring Mr. Wilhelm. If there's nothing else, I'll take my leave," the maid answered.

"Stop right there!" Jane snapped, her eyes blazing with anger. "What does Gabriel mean by this? Is he done taking responsibility for his son?!"

"Ms. Wilkie, I was only asked to send Mr. Wilhelm. I'm not aware of anything else," the maid replied.

"Get out!" Jane shouted. Her fury made her look terrifying.

Wilhelm was frightened by her appearance and instinctively took a step back. When Jane had hit him before, she had looked exactly the same as she did now.

The maid nodded slightly before promptly leaving.

Once the room quieted, Jane turned to Wilhelm, her voice icy. "Come here."

Wilhelm shook his head. "Mommy, I told Daddy I want us to live together as a family, but he wouldn't agree. Mommy, I did what you

asked-please don't hit me, okay?"

His voice wavered as tears welled up in his eyes.

Jane's gaze turned cold, but she softened her tone. "Don't worry. Mommy won't hit you. I just want to know was your dad treating you well?"

Wilhelm hesitated for a moment, then shook his head. "No... Daddy wasn't good to me. I had to cry and beg before he finally agreed to send me back to you."

Chapter 1016

Jane smiled and praised, "You're such a good boy, Wil. Come here-Mommy wants to tell you something."

Hesitant but trusting, Wilhelm slowly moved closer to her.

The moment he was within reach, Jane grabbed his collar, her expression dark and menacing. "When I called you earlier, why didn't you come immediately?"

Terrified, Wilhelm turned pale, tears brimming in his eyes. "Mommy... I was scared..."

"Scared of what?" Jane demanded.

"Scared you'd hit me... Waaaah..." Wilhelm cried.

When Wilhelm had been staying with Gabriel, he'd worried he'd never see his mother again.

But now, seeing her up close, she seemed frightening-nothing like the gentle mother he used to know. Jane's patience snapped at the sound of his crying. "Shut up! If you keep crying, I'll throw you out!" Wilhelm immediately clammed up, though he couldn't stop the little hiccups that followed. His face was streaked with tears, making him look pitiful.

Just then, the door to the room opened, and Wendy walked in carrying some medicine.

Seeing Jane gripping Wilhelm with such fury, Wendy quickly stepped in and pulled the boy away. Her frown deepened as she noticed Wilhelm's pale face and hesitant, silent tears.

"Ms. Wilkie, what's the point of this? No matter how things go with Mr. Hackett, Wilhelm is still your son. If you and Mr. Hackett divorce, he'll be your only hope. If you don't treat him well now, don't expect him to be filial later," Wendy reminded her.

Jane let out a derisive laugh. "Hope? I can't even rely on Gabriel. You think I'm going to rely on a kid?" "Ms. Wilkie, no matter how you feel, Wilhelm is still your flesh and blood. If you don't care for him, who will?" Wendy pressed.

Jane's face twisted with bitterness. "Care for him? And who's going to care for me?"

Seeing that her words weren't getting through, Wendy sighed wearily and dropped the subject. She tidied up the room and was about to take Wilhelm back to the villa when he refused to leave. "I want to stay with Mommy," he said firmly.

Wendy's heart ached as she looked

at

arly frightened but

still unwilling to leave his mother. A child's love for their parents truly was unconditional.

"Alright, then I'll stay with you both," Wendy replied.

Wilhelm nodded vigorously. "Okay!"

That evening, Pedro was reviewing some documents in his study when the butler entered to announce a visit from Gabriel.

Pedro froze for a moment, then his face darkened. "He's got the nerve to show up?"

Remembering how Gabriel had spent five years ingratiating himself with the Wilkies, only to betray them and nearly destroy the Wilkie Group, Pedro felt his anger rise.

"He says he has a business proposal for you. Should I let him in?" the butler asked. A business proposal?

Pedro sneered. "Bring him to the study."

He wanted to see just what Gabriel had to say.

Soon, Gabriel was led into the room.

"Grandpa," he greeted.

"Don't call me that. I'm not your grandfather," Pedro said coldly.

Gabriel remained unfazed. With a faint smile, he walked over and sat opposite Pedro.

"Grandpa, there's no need to be

angry. I'm here today to discuss

very lucrative business oportet

Gabriel remarked.

Pedro shot back, "I wouldn't dare do business with you. Who knows when you might stab me in the back again?"

Chapter 1017

Gabriel smiled. "Grandpa, rest assured-I'm not here to scheme against you. I've come to return the gaming company to the Wilkie Group free of charge."

Pedro's sharp eyes narrowed coldly. "You're being this generous? I don't buy it."

"Of course, I have conditions," Gabriel replied evenly.

"And what are they?" Pedro asked.

"I want a divorce from Jane, full custody of Wilhelm, and for the Wilkies to send Jane abroad permanently. She's not to return," Gabriel stated firmly.

Pedro raised an eyebrow, surprised.

Returning such a lucrative gaming company just for a divorce? As for sending Jane abroad-that was already part of his plan.

Pedro remained silent, but Gabriel showed no impatience. He sat quietly, waiting for a response.

After a long pause, Pedro finally spoke, his tone icy. "How do I know you're not bluffing? You could strip the company of its core assets and leave me with an empty shell."

Gabriel chuckled. "Of course not, Grandpa. That gaming company may generate hundreds of millions annually, but it's nothing to me. Returning it doesn't hurt my bottom line. All I want is the divorce." "This requires careful consideration. You may leave for now," Pedro said curtly.

Gabriel stood, adjusted his sleeves, and smiled. "Very well, but I suggest you act quickly. My patience is limited. Even if you refuse, I have other ways to ensure the divorce happens it just might get messy." Pedro's expression darkened. "Is that a threat?"

"Not at all, just a friendly reminder," Gabriel replied before leaving.

Watching his retreating figure, Pedro struggled to reconcile this confident, composed man with the seemingly meek grandson-in-law of years past.

How could Gabriel have founded Nyce Tech? And yet, the impossible had happened.

As soon as Gabriel left, Pedro instructed the butler to summon Jane to the house.

The

Waid hesitantly, "Mr.

Wilkie fell down the

of Paid hesitantly, "Mr.

last

elairs

and fractured her leg

She's still in the hospital."

W4

"Even in the hospital, she can still come home. I need to speak with her," Pedro insisted.

"Yes, sir. Right away," the butler replied.

...

About an hour later, Wendy wheeled Jane, her leg in a cast, into the Wilkie residence.

"Ms. Wilkie, Mr. Wilkie is waiting for you in the study," the butler announced.

"Why is Grandpa in such a hurry? Did something happen?" Jane asked.

The butler shook his head. "I'm not sure, but Mr. Hackett visited earlier." Jane's face darkened. "What did he want?!"

"I don't know. He spoke privately

with Mr Wilkie and left soon after et

You'll have to ask him yourself the butler answered.

After guiding Jane to the study, the butler and Wendy stepped out, leaving her alone with Pedro.

As soon as the door closed, Jane demanded, "Grandpa, why was Gabriel here? What did he want?"

"He's willing to return the gaming company to the Wilkie Group-on one condition: you must divorce him," Pedro said.

Jane's initial joy at hearing about the

gaming company quickly turned to rage. "No way! I won't agree to it. He can forget about divorcing me!"

Chapter 1018

Jane's words were met with Pedro's cold stare, causing her to stiffen. "Grandpa, don't tell me you're actually considering this!"

"That gaming company generates hundreds of millions in profit every year," Pedro said pointedly. "So what? You're willing to force me into a divorce for the sake of a company?" Jane questioned. "Jane, recovering that company would stabilize the Wilkie Group's finances. And let's face it, there's no love left between you two. Dragging this out serves no purpose," Pedro replied.

Jane laughed bitterly. "Grandpa, you've said it all, haven't you? What more can I say? But don't forget- Gabriel has Nyce Tech. If I divorce him, we lose half of Nyce Tech."

Pedro shook his head at her naivety. "Nyce Tech was established before your marriage. Even if some of its profits were earned after, he's had plenty of time to hide assets. You won't get a dime."

The fact that Gabriel had been able to remain so low-profile within the Wilkies for years proved how difficult it would be to trace any hidden assets. He might be wealthy, but Jane had no claim to any of it. "But we're married. If I can prove he's transferred assets, I can claim those profits. Five years of Nyce Tech's earnings-do you really think a gaming company compares?" Jane insisted.

"He won't give you the chance to find that proof," Pedro said bluntly. "All I care about is retrieving the gaming company. If you agree to the divorce, I'll transfer 10% of the Wilkie Group's shares to you." Jane had once seen 10% of the Wilkie Group as a tempting offer, but now it seemed insignificant. "Grandpa, 10% of the Wilkie Group versus half of

Nyce Tech? I'll take the latter," she stated. Pedro studied her for a long moment before speaking slowly. "What you can hold onto is what truly matters. Go home and think it over. I expect your answer in a few days."

"I don't need a few days. I can answer now. I refuse to divorce him," Jane said firmly.

Pedro's face grew colder due to her stubbornness. "You don't have a choice. Take the 10% and divorce him, or get nothing-and still divorce him. The decision is yours."

Jane clenched the armrests of her wheelchair, her face contorted with rage. "Grandpa, you're forcing me! You're not giving me a real choice!"

"Choices are for those with leverage. You have none. Do you really think you're in a position to

negotiate?" Pedro challenged.

His words hit her like a bucket of ice water, dousing any remaining resistance.

He was right. She had no leverage. Whether it was Gabriel or Pedro, both had the power to force her hand.

If Pedro were on her side, she would have a chance to fight it out with Gabriel. But now that both men were aligned against her, she had no way to resist.

"If you push me into this divorce, you'll regret it someday," Jane said bitterly.

Pedro's voice was indifferent. "If that day comes, I'll deal with it. Right now, I'm focused on saving the company. Your foolishness brought us to this point. You have only yourself to blame."

Taking a deep breath, Jane extended her hand. "Fine. I want the shares first." Pedro wasted no time, summoning a lawyer to draft the share transfer agreement. Within hours, the documents were signed and sealed.

Chapter 1019

After receiving the shares, Jane said coldly, "Tell Gabriel to send the divorce papers to the villa. Once the one-month cooling-off period is over, we'll finalize the divorce."

Pedro nodded, a rare smile crossing his face. "There's no need to wait a month. You can get divorced today."

Time was of the essence. Neither he nor Gabriel had the patience to wait.

Jane scoffed, her expression mocking. She had expected this seemingly smooth process to come with strings attached.

"Fine. Have Gabriel come over," she said.

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Gabriel arrived quickly.

After transferring ownership of the gaming company back to Pedro, he and Jane headed to the courthouse to finalize the divorce.

As Jane held the divorce certificate in her hand, she couldn't help but laugh bitterly. Her life had truly become a joke.

Outside the courthouse, Gabriel glanced at Jane, who sat in her wheelchair, and handed her a document. "Jane, consider this my compensation for five years of marriage. From now on, we'll go our separate ways," he said.

Jane opened the document and saw that he was offering her 100,000,000 dollars as compensation. She sneered. "How generous of you."

"I'll head back with you now to pick up Wilhelm," Gabriel replied.

Jane fell silent for a few seconds before looking at him coldly. "Are you planning to stop me from seeing my son in the future?"

"It's best if you don't see him unless necessary," Gabriel answered.

Seeing the indifference in his eyes, Jane said nothing further.

The drive back to the villa was silent. Neither of them spoke a word.

When they arrived, Wilhelm saw them return together and ran over excitedly. "Daddy! You're back?"

Gabriel looked down at his son, his expression softening. "Yes, Wil. Go upstairs and pack your things. You'll be moving to a new home with me."

"Is Mommy coming too?" Wilhelm asked cautiously, his eyes full of hope.

Gabriel reached out to pat his head and replied gently, "Mommy's not coming. It'll just be you and me. From now on, you'll live with Daddy. Okay?"

"No!" Wilhelm screamed, shoving

Gabriel's hand away as he backed up. "I don't want to go with you! want to stay with Mommy! I don't want to be with you. You'll let the bad woman hurt me!"

Gabriel frowned and turned to Jane, his voice cold. "Is this what you've been telling him?"

"I only said you didn't want us anymore, and I wasn't lying, was I?" Jane retorted.

"Explain it to him properly," Gabriel ordered.

"What's there to explain? You left us and forced me into a divorce. It's all for Nyla, isn't it? Did I misunderstand something? Or are you planning to chase after Nyla now?" Jane shot back.

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Gabriel's icy gaze bore down on her, anger radiating from him.

"Jane, do you have a death wish?" he hissed.

She met his glare with defiance. "Oh? Are you planning to kill me now? Go ahead. We're divorced now, and I'm of no use to you anymore, am I?"

Fury burned in Gabriel's eyes. If Wilhelm hadn't been there, he might have lost control.

Jane raised an eyebrow with a smirk. "What's the matter? Angry? Frustrated? This feeling you have right now? It's what I've been living with every single day since you abandoned me and our son and forced me into this divorce.