

Triumph 211

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Yulia's heart raced as these immodest thoughts consumed her. She was a mother herself, but the incident that happened five years ago was a mortifying one that she wanted no part of. Hence, when it came to relations with the opposite sex, Yulia only had limited experience. She was even more nervous since the man lying next to her was the only man to have ever moved her.

As Yulia was lying in bed unsure of what to do, Skylar stirred in his sleep, extending an arm to gently hug her from behind. Her whole body tensed up as she felt his strong, masculine arm around her waist. Skylar's breathing was soft and steady, a sign that he was still soundly asleep. As his breath caressed her earlobe, she could almost taste his familiar scent of cedar and pine on her tongue. Her mind was blank, and she felt her skin heating up as an unfamiliar feeling crept up on her.

As she panicked, Skylar's sleepy voice filled her ears.

"Don't worry, Yulia. I'll wait for you. I'll wait until you're completely ready," he mumbled. It was a deep baritone that gave her a sense of warmth and comfort. It instantly soothed her tense nerves, and she felt her body relax slightly.

She then realized she had been overthinking things. Skylar was not coming on to her. He only hugged her from behind as a reflex in his sleep, which made her feel warm and cherished.

"Skylar, are you... serious with me?" Yulia turned around to face Skylar.

"Definitely," Skylar responded with steadfast certainty, with his arm still wrapped around her waist. He moved his arm to hold her soft, dainty hands and placed it on his chest. "Yulia, I'm in love with you. I promise I'll take care of you and Lola Sue as best as I can. If I ever disappoint you..."

Before Skylar could finish his sentence, he felt Yulia's sweet, warm lips press up against his with a desperate urgency. Skylar closed his eyes, wanting to fully immerse himself in that dreamlike moment, but he felt Yulia pull back.

"I believe you, Skylor, but don't ever lie to me," Yulio said with fierce determination. Once she had said her piece, she kissed Skylor once more before he could even respond to her. This time, Skylor knew not

to hesitate any further. His body was fired up as he swiftly took control, kissing her back fervently. Yulio clasped onto his shoulder tightly as they tangled together, drowning in sweet lust.

Yulio's soft moans were like a sweet melody to Skylar's ears. Emboldened by her forwardness, his hands began to wander from the small of her back to further down south...

Yulio's body tensed up as she felt his hands exploring her body, but she knew she was in no position to stop what was about to happen. A part of her had been waiting for it for a long time. Tonight was about to be a night to remember.

Skylar's hands were tugging on her silky white nightgown, ready to take it off. All of a sudden, he heard a soft, familiar voice.

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Feeling like he had been caught in the act, Skylar quickly pulled his hands away from Yulia's body. Yulia instantly felt the warmth disappear from her skin, but Lola Sue's cries brought her back to reality. She pulled herself out of bed, her face still tender and flushed.

"Let me take a look!" Skylar offered. He hastily put on a nightgown and rushed to the nursery.

"What's wrong, darling girl?" Skylar was by Lola's bedside in an instant.

Lola peeked her tiny little head from underneath the blanket, her eyes red from crying. "Daddy, I... I had a nightmare... I... I don't want to sleep by myself..."

It was just a nightmare, thankfully. Skylar felt the tension leaving his body. He carried Lola Sue from her bed, gently stroking her back as he consoled her. "It's alright, Lola. Dreams are always the opposite of reality. If you're ever in danger, I'll always be here to protect you."

He carried her all the way back to the master bedroom. "Darling, you can sleep with Mommy and Daddy tonight."

Yulia opened her arms wide, embracing little Lola as she climbed into bed with her.

"Mommy, Daddy, have you finished your chat?" Lola asked quizzically. That was sweet little Lola, always concerned for others even though she was the one who just had a nightmare.

Yulia blushed as she recalled her 'chat' with Skylar just moments ago. "Yes... Yes, darling, we're done."

"Then Lola can sleep with you and Daddy!" Lola exclaimed happily, completely unaware of her parents' amorous adventures previously. Within minutes, the family of three was back to their usual cohabitating routine, with Lola sleeping in the middle, flanked by Skylar and Yulia on her left and right.

Skylar stole a longing glance at Yulia. The desire in him was still burning as strong as ever, but he could only be patient for now. Yulia caught sight of a tensed Skylar clenching his rugged jaw, as if he was in pain. She smiled to herself as she realized it was rather fun to tease him by getting his hopes up but not giving him what he wants.

The next morning, after dropping Yulia and Lola off, Skylar drove the new Land Rover to Garden No.1. He made his way into the house and found his parents waiting for him, all packed up and ready to depart.

"Skylar, is that your new car?" His younger sister Naomi pointed at the Land Rover parked at the gate.

"Mhmm, since we're going back to the old house, I figured the Land Rover might be more comfortable for everyone," Skylar explained amiably.

"It's not just comfortable! That's the limited-edition dynamic model, isn't it? I remember Mr. Stephenson saying it costs at least 5 to 6 million dollars!" Noomi exclaimed in awe. Did Skylar really buy a 5-million-dollar car just to ferry them back to their old home?

Skylar cocked an eyebrow as he heard the enthusiasm in Noomi's voice. "It's not that expensive. I only spent 4.8 million dollars on it."

"What? How? Tell me!" Noomi sensed that Skylar had an interesting story to tell.

"Let's get Mom and Dad into the car first. I'll tell you on the way," Skylar told Noomi as he helped to carry Nothaniel and Winono's luggage into the car.

Before long, the Fullers were on their way to their old home in Skylar's Land Rover. Upon Naomi's urging, Skylar retold the story of how he ended up purchasing the car yesterday. Naomi was fully enthralled by her big brother's story, while Nathaniel and Winona were appreciating the plush leather seats and sleek interior design of the car.

The journey of more than 2 hours was a fun one, filled with laughter and jokes along the way. Close to noon, they finally arrived at their destination – their old home in Atlas County.

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Atlas county was a county within Cloudtopia, but it was the county farthest away from the city. Atlas was home to the largest crystal industry in the country, cementing the county as one of Cloudtopia's wealthiest and making it the most advanced out of the four counties of Cloudtopia.

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The Fullers were a well-known family in Atlas, with many branches and offshoots. They were one of the four main families who exercised considerable influence on matters of the county. Apart from Nathaniel Fuller and Laurel Fuller who worked and lived in the city, most of the Fullers remained in Atlas and worked for the family's crystal business. In recent times, their business had even expanded to the neighbouring counties of Maersk and Troitz.

Many of the Fuller siblings did not do well academically back in school. They concentrated their efforts on building a crystal empire at home and eventually outshone their intellectual relatives. As the business grew, so did their bank accounts and their pride. Over time, they began to look down upon Nathaniel and Laurel.

As a result of this discord, the Fuller siblings rarely got together apart from annual family gatherings. Nathaniel figured it was better to steer clear of his siblings to avoid any unnecessary family drama. Even when Naomi got married, he did not invite his siblings from Atlas to the wedding, and neither did they bother to send their regards.

The GPS navigation system led them to the Fuller's ancestral home. It was a large colonial-style mansion, clearly dated in age but still stood out majestically for its sheer size and opulence. Nathaniel's father, Langston Fuller, had built and lived in this home for as long as he could remember.

The Fullers got to the front gate of the mansion, but before they could ring the doorbell, the family overheard an audible conversation coming from the other side of the gate.

"Oh, Nate and his family just arrived?" a voice asked. "I didn't know there were buses that came around at this time," the voice had a snarky tone.

Skylar and his family looked around, trying to trace the owner of the voice. At this moment, the main doors opened and a middle-aged woman with a fresh perm walked out. The lady was none other than Pearl Fuller, Nathaniel's fifth sister and Skylar and Naomi's aunt. She was flanked by two servants as she made her way toward the Fullers at the gate.

"There's a bus from the city to Atlas every 10 minutes, Pearl," Nathaniel indirectly informed Pearl that his family had overheard her conversation, his displeasure with his sister clearly written on his face.

Hearing this, Pearl automatically assumed her brother's family had indeed taken the bus over. She cast a cold glance at them before speaking. "Brother, your shrewdness is humiliating! I know you can't afford a luxury car, but surely you'd be able to purchase a cheap sedan? We could always help you buy a secondhand car," Pearl offered.

There was a snide sense of elitism in Pearl's speech. An outsider observing Pearl's behaviour might have assumed that Pearl was the matriarch of the family. In truth, Pearl did not wield much more influence within the family than Nathaniel or Laurel did. Nathaniel's second and third brothers were the ones who called the shots. However, Pearl enjoyed picking petty fights with her brother and sister simply because she could.

Upon hearing his sister's offer to buy them a second-hand car, Nathaniel's expression switched to one of pride and excitement. "Thank you for your concern, Pearl, but we don't need it. My son here bought us a new car just to bring us back to Atlas."

Nathaniel was usually an easy-going man by nature, but everyone had their breaking point. He did not

deserve such disrespect from his own family. After all, he was the oldest of the Fuller siblings and he had done so much for this family once upon a time. Now, this bunch of ingrates turned their backs on him and mocked him and his family behind his back. The familial bond had been broken and destroyed a long time ago.

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She took another disdainful look at Skylar. "Is this the son you speak of?" Pearl asked her brother on purpose, even though she knew the answer. "Didn't he go missing for a few years? Why is he back now? Not that I care in particular, but since you brought it up, then we should check out the car!"

"Fine by me!" Nathaniel huffed, irritated by his sister's rude attitude. He could not wait to see the look of astonishment when she saw the Land Rover.

Winona gently tugged at her husband's elbow, trying to diffuse the situation. "Pearl," Winona began. "Why don't we all just call it a day and get into the house? It's just a normal everyday car, it's not worth looking at," she persuaded her sister-in-law.

Winona had hoped that Pearl would drop the notion of taking a look at the car. However, Pearl thought Winona was trying to protect Nathaniel who was lying about the car. She was ready to call his bluff. "It's no trouble at all, the car park is just a short stroll away! Winona, are you ashamed to show me your car?" Pearl taunted.

Winona was rendered speechless. She only meant well, but Pearl refused to let the matter slip. "My son just bought his father and myself a new car last month. It's a beautiful car, but it costs close to 300,000

dollars! He really shouldn't have spent that money..." Pearl bragged as she gestured to the young man trailing behind her.

As his mother motioned for him, Pearl's young son did a light jog over to his mother's side. He kept his arms folded as he smiled politely at Skylar and his family. Skylar had probably met him a few times as a child, but he could barely remember him now.

"Aunt Pearl, these days a 300,000-dollar car is only the norm. There's nothing special about that," Naomi scoffed. "It'll look like a toy car next to Skylar's car."

"What did you say? A toy car?!" Pearl was affronted, her face red as a tomato. "Naomi, how dare you speak to me like that? Fine, let's see the car then!"

Pearl did not intend to drag the children into her argument with her brother. However, Naomi Fuller started the war by talking back to her. Pearl decided there and then that she would not rest until she had the last laugh. What kind of expensive car could a poor army man like Skylar Stone afford anyway? A second-hand pickup dumpster truck?

"Fine, let's go!" Naomi spouted as she started making her way toward the car park. Pearl and her son and daughter-in-law trailed along. Winona, Nathaniel, and Skylar had no choice but to follow the crowd as well.

They arrived at the car park several minutes later. The matte black Land Rover was hard to miss, since it was the only car in the guest car park. Naomi pointed at the car as she spoke. "See that Land Rover? Skylar drove us to Atlas in that ride today!" she announced proudly.

The car looked majestic under the bright sunlight. Its sleek body kit and tinted windows gave it an even more expensive appearance. Pearl and her son stared at the car with their expressions frozen. A typical Land Rover would have already cost more than 300,000 dollars. The one they were looking at right now looked like the latest imported limited-edition model. How did Skylar Stone afford a car like that?

Pearl pretended not to notice the car model. "Well, it is a nice car, but the paintwork and body kit looks a little shoddy, don't you think?" She tried to discredit the car. "It's definitely a local car from the looks of it. How much would it cost, honestly? The car my son got me is an Audi from Germany, prized for its safety and quality. With the amount he paid, we could buy a few of your cars!" she mocked disparagingly.

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Truth be told, Pearl Fuller knew nothing about cars. Everything she had said, she had picked up bits and pieces from the conversations between her son and daughter-in-law. Before she could finish speaking, her daughter-in-law quickly tugged at her elbow and whispered into her ear. "Mom, stop talking. Uncle Nathaniel's car is a well-known luxury brand from England. The cheapest model retails for close to 6 million dollars." How could a 300,000-dollar entry-level Audi compete with a car like that? Pearl Fuller was thoroughly humiliated.

"6... million dollars?" Pearl's jaw was slightly agape. "Did I hear you right? Are you sure you've seen the car properly?" She could not believe it. Skylar Stone left to join the army for 6 years and came back as a millionaire who could afford a car like that? Winona even said this was only his weekend car. She was well and truly shocked into silence.

"Aunt Pearl, now do you believe me?" Naomi provoked her aunt.

"You..." Pearl was trying very hard to maintain her composure, breathing heavily. She could not find the words to refute Naomi. "It's just a car, a metal object on four wheels that get stuck in traffic and breaks down after a while. The truly wealthy wouldn't have to prove themselves by getting a car like that," she managed to spit out. She scolded Naomi as if she did not just brag about her 300,000-dollar Audi just minutes ago.

Upon hearing her Aunt, Naomi had a smug expression on her face as she nodded vehemently. "I agree with you, Aunt Pearl. I don't know how some people have the nerve to brag about a 300,000-dollar toy car. Or perhaps it's just plain stupidity!" Naomi remarked.

"You... Are you calling me stupid, you little brat?!" Pearl was fuming as she turned to Nathaniel and Winona. "Look at the kind of rude children you've brought up! I'm her aunt after all. Is that any way to speak to an older relative? What a classless act!" she questioned her brother and sister-in-law.

Skylar had remained silent up until this point. However, Pearl Fuller crossed a line when she insinuated that his adoptive parents did not raise their children well. "Would you like me to shed some light on what true proper upbringing is like?" Skylar did not yell, yet his voice boomed with authority.

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Pearl was about to continue berating the family as she made eye contact with Skylar. His angry, piercing stare sent shivers down her spine, making her swallow her words before she could speak.

Winona gently placed her hand on her son's arm. "Skylar, let's get back to the house," she coaxed. Skylar knew his mother was trying to avoid an ugly confrontation, so he decided to let Pearl Fuller off the hook and followed his family toward the house.

It was only after they were some walking distance apart from Pearl that she remarked loud enough for Skylar's family to overhear. "I've never heard of his achievements in the army even after 6 years! Who knows what sort of shady business he got himself into to be able to afford a 6-million-dollar car?"

Pearl's son, Hans, recalled something as his mother continued mocking Nathaniel and his family. "Mom, isn't today's family gathering to celebrate Cousin Norman's return from the army? I heard he just got promoted again!"

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Pearl Fuller brought her finger to her lips as soon as her son mentioned Norman. "Shhh. I heard it's more than an average promotion. Your uncle just told me Norman caught the attention of the General, so he might be promoted to Adjutant General soon. He'll be the General's personal aide and the pride of the Fuller family!"

Hans' eyes sparkled with delight. "That means Uncle Spencer is about to expand the Fuller's influence and power once more. Luckily for us, we're a part of the family."

"Of course! Your cousin Norman is the most capable young man in the family. We're counting on him to bring the family to greater heights!" Pearl was in full adoration of Norman Fuller.

However, her expression turned glum as she thought about her other nephew. "How dare that bastard child Skylar flaunt his dirty money in front of us! We must get Norman to investigate the source of his money," her desire for revenge was obvious. "I heard the army has zero tolerance for bribery and misconduct. Well, he can await his punishment when he gets caught!"

Skylar Stone did not catch Pearl's conversation with her son, but even if he did, it would not have mattered to him. There was only one person at the top who had the authority to investigate him, and he was not afraid of an investigation because he had done nothing wrong. Every dollar in his bank account was legally earned through his own hard work and effort.

As Skylar entered the mansion, he spotted several figures seated in the family living room. Upon a closer look, the figure seated on the largest couch was his grandfather and the patriarch of the Fuller family, Langston Fuller. Langston Fuller was 84 this year, well into his golden years but he was still active and kept a healthy daily routine.

On his right sat a few others, including her Aunt Laurel and her daughter Ash. Their faces looked glum as they spotted Skylar and Naomi entering the house as if the siblings had wronged them. Clearly, they were not over how Skylar and Naomi had kicked them out of Garden No.1. The tension in the air was perceptible to Nathaniel and Winona, but they chose to ignore it.

“Father! I’m home,” Nathaniel greeted his elderly father jovially.

Naomi joined her father in greeting her grandfather. “Grandpa, it’s me, Naomi!”

Skylar Stone merely smiled as he observed the family dynamics. He did not mean to be impolite, but Langston Fuller had never treated him as a part of the Fuller family since he was young. Naturally, he had no reason to call the man his grandfather.

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“Father, we came home in a rush, so we did not have the time to get you a special gift. I got you a traditional health tonic, fermented and bottled in the mountains,” he presented a box wrapped in gift paper to Langston. “Please try some when you have the time.”

Laurel Fuller interrupted the conversation before Langston could even speak.

“Nate, you and your family live in such a grand villa. How come you’re still so stingy with your gifts?” she chided her older brother. “Your daughter’s necklace itself cost 4 million dollars, and you turn up here to give father a health tonic?”

Ash continued to fan the fire her mother started. “I heard that you can buy that tonic online for 200 dollars. Uncle Nate, isn’t that just a little disrespectful?”

Nathaniel's expression was dark and tentative as if he was about to curse this wretched family of his. Winona stepped in to mediate the situation. “Father, we bought this tonic on a trip to the mountains not long ago. It’s not like what Ash said,” she explained. “As for the villa and the necklace, those were Skylar’s gifts to us...”

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Even though Nathaniel and Winona had moved into a grand villa courtesy of their son, Skylar, they refused to take any money from him. Their lives since moving in were not much different from their lives before. Prices of goods were steadily rising while wages remained stagnant. After accounting for their usual expenditure, the husband and wife only had savings of about 40,000 dollars. Spending a fifth of their savings to purchase the health tonic for Langston was a huge gesture on their part. How could their own relatives accuse them of being insincere?

Winona felt hurt by their accusations, but she was a non-confrontational person by nature. She only hoped her explanation would suffice.

Naomi, who had just witnessed her parents being bullied, confronted her relatives in return. "Well, since you think our gift was not a sincere one, what did you get for Grandfather then?"

Laurel Fuller averted her gaze, but nothing slipped past the sharp-eyed Naomi. She noticed the two blue gift boxes by Langston's side.

"Hey, isn't this the drugstore brand that was running a Buy One Free One promotion?" Naomi asked out loud.

Laurel's initial embarrassment turned to anger. "Father knows about our financial situation, it's no secret. We can't afford to gift something beyond our ability, but you live in an expensive mansion and wear fancy jewelry. I don't think we should be measured based on the same yardstick."

"Well, before Skylar came home, my father gifted Grandpa two bottles of 18-year-old single malt scotch whisky for Christmas!" Naomi countered. "And what did you get? If my memory serves me right, you brought a box of chocolate and some figs. I don't think it's nice of you to insult my parents when you're not exactly a stellar daughter yourself, Aunt Laurel."

Perhaps it was because Nathaniel and Winona were peaceful mild-mannered individuals, their daughter Naomi grew up to be the exact opposite of them. She was vocal and outspoken against anything that irked her, including her relatives who had a bone to pick with her parents.

"You little brat! You're completely out of line right now!" Laurel shrieked.

Suddenly, a thunderous voice boomed through the living hall. "All of you, stop this nonsensical fighting right now! Leave the gifts here and get out of the hall now," the family patriarch ordered.

Langston Fuller had favorites among his children. He doted on his second and third sons, for they had worked hard to bring the family name and empire to where it was today. He thought of his other children as good-for-nothing brats who did not contribute to the family. Therefore, the squabble between Naomi and Laurel was of no interest to him. In fact, it was disrupting his peace and quiet.

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Upon hearing the patriarch's orders, the rest of the Fullers stopped their quarrel and left the living hall hastily. As Skylar and his family carried their luggage toward the guest rooms, a suave man in his thirties approached them. The man was Alex Fuller, Nathaniel's nephew, Skylar, and Naomi's cousin. He was the

son of Nathaniel's third brother, Robert.

"Uncle Nate, Naomi! You guys made it!" Alex greeted them merrily, completely ignoring Winona and Skylar who were standing next to them.

Alex's immediate family wielded considerable influence within the larger Fuller family as well, since they controlled the export side of the family's crystal business. The exports to Troitz county alone were worth at least 10 billion dollars in revenue. That may be a small amount compared to the wealth of the old money families of Cloudtopia, but it allowed the Fullers to make a name for themselves in the small county of Atlas.

"Hello, Alex!" Naomi greeted her cousin politely.

"You grow prettier every time I see you, Naomi," Alex teased his cousin. "I've got a dinner reservation at the Anya Hotel tonight. Care to join me?"

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"Hmm? What's happening then?" Naomi was curious.

"Nothing much. I just thought it'd be nice for the younger cousins to gather and hang out together," Alex explained to her.

"Sure, count me in then," Naomi accepted his offer happily without thinking too much.

In the evening, Naomi got herself ready after receiving a call from Alex. She quickly looked for her brother, Skylar. "Sky, it's time to go!"

"You go ahead, I'll stay behind to keep Mom and Dad company," Skylar informed his sister and waved her off. In truth, he felt no sense of kinship with his cousins. Since he was a child, no one in the Fuller family except his adoptive parents truly cared for him. His cousins never played with him or accepted him as one of their own. In fact, Alex Fuller clearly had no intention of inviting him to their gathering tonight. He was only too happy to oblige.

However, Naomi was not ready to give up on her brother so easily. She hugged his muscular arm as she spoke to him in a sweet, coy voice. "But Sky, I don't want to go alone. What if Ash says something annoying again? No one there will stick up for me..." Naomi pouted. "Come with me, please? That way, you can be my protector."

Having grown up together with Skylar, Naomi knew all his strengths and weaknesses. True enough, Skylar could not say no to his sister when she begged him for something with puppy dog eyes. "Fine, you win. Let's go."

"Yay! I knew you'd do it for me. You're the best, Sky!" Naomi squealed in delight as she dragged her brother out of the house.

Alex Fuller had booked a private dining room at the Anya Hotel. As Naomi and Skylar arrived at the room, Alex, Ash, and Hans were already seated at the table.

“Naomi!” Alex welcomed her into the room as soon as he spotted her. “Come, I saved you a seat.”

“Thank you, Alex,” she smiled and tugged on Skylar’s sleeve as she noticed Alex pointing to some empty seats at the table.

However, before Skylar could take his seat, Alex spoke up coldly. “Skylar, I don’t seem to recall inviting you tonight.”

“Alex, I thought you said tonight’s gathering was for all the young cousins,” Naomi jumped in, trying to protect her brother.

“Naomi, I meant the Fuller cousins, not some puppy picked up from the streets,” Alex made sure to look Skylar in the eye as he hurled his insult.

Having grown up together with Skylar, Naomi knew all his strengths and weaknesses. True enough, Skylar could not say no to his sister when she begged him for something with puppy dog eyes. “Fine, you win. Let’s go.”

“Skylar is every bit my parent’s child as I am. He’s my brother!” Naomi refuted defiantly.

“Your brother? Are you related by blood? Is his last name Fuller?” Alex challenged.

Ash snorted, clearly enjoying the drama.

“Stray dogs are like that, Alex. They just shamelessly turn up wherever there’s food.” Hans echoed his support for Alex. He had not forgotten how Skylar had humiliated his mother just that afternoon. This was his opportunity to get back at him.

“Hans Beckett, shut that nasty mouth of yours!” Naomi scolded him angrily.

Hans cocked an eyebrow. “Why should I? Did I say anything incorrect? Is he Uncle Nate’s real son?” he continued his taunts.

Alex, realizing his dinner might not end well, tried to end the argument. “Alright guys, stop fighting. We’re a family after all. Skylar can stay if he wants to. I’ll get the waitstaff to set up another table for him. He’ll have the same dishes as us, I promise.”

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Without waiting for Laurel’s response, Alex turned to Skylar once again. “You were about to sit on a VIP’s seat. If you took his seat, it wouldn’t do you or me any good,” he warned Skylar, his tone carrying a

thinly veiled threat.

Everyone else in the room looked at Skylar expectantly. Among them, Ash was the only one who knew about Skylar's wealth. The rest of them only remembered Skylar from 6 years ago, a poor punk who did not even know who his parents were. Hans, despite having seen Skylar's 6-million-dollar Land Rover that afternoon, still behaved like Skylar was a nobody since he had the support of Norman and Alex Fuller. What was a 6-million-dollar car compared to the Fuller family business worth billions anyway? To them, Skylar Stone was just a thick-skinned cousin trying to leech off them for a free meal.

"Oh? Is that so?" Skylar, who had been silent this whole time, suddenly spoke up. "You may not realize this, but I can sit anywhere I choose to sit," he proclaimed out loud, before taking a seat at the place Alex had specifically warned him about just moments ago.

He never wanted to attend this gathering. He only did it because Naomi begged him to, and he could not just turn around and leave just because of a few insults lobbed at him. He could, however, ruffle their feathers. Since they did not allow him to sit at the table, he would do exactly that.

After all, he was the legendary God of War of the Nine Continents. Who would dare tell him what to do? No one could stop him from getting what he wanted or going where he wanted.

However, his cousins did not see it his way. They were momentarily stunned by his brazenness, but began to take jabs at him once more as they came back to their senses.

"Skylar, just who do you think you are? What makes you think you can behave like this and get away with it?"

"This guy is truly a daydreaming fool!"

"If you insist on sitting there, go ahead then," Alex Fuller sneered frostily. "Someone will make sure you thoroughly regret your decision in just a bit."

Just as Alex finished his sentence, there was a soft knock on the door before a man strode in casually. The man had a handsome face and a bold, charismatic quality about him. Alex's expression immediately brightened up as he rushed to usher his VIP guest.

"Adam, you're here!" he greeted his guest.

Adam? The rest of them wondered. Was this the big shot Alex was talking about?

After all, he was the legendary God of War of the Nine Continents. Who would dare tell him what to do? No one could stop him from getting what he wanted or going where he wanted.

"Let me introduce you to my family members, Adam," Alex sounded overly enthusiastic as he trailed behind Adam. "This is my beautiful cousin sister, Naomi Fuller."

“Naomi, come and say hello!” he whispered to his cousin. “This is Mr. Adam Currey. The Curreys are one of the Four Great Families of Cloudtopia and Adam is the heir of the family. It’s truly our honor to have him dine with us tonight!”

“Um... Hello, Adam. It’s nice to meet you!” Naomi was caught off guard by the unexpected guest but tried her best to get herself together and give him a proper greeting.

The other cousins got up from their seats to welcome their honorary guests too.

“Oh my God, I was not expecting to meet someone from one of the Four Greats of Cloudtopia tonight!” Ash exclaimed excitedly.

“You did not lie to us, Alex. We’re dining with a big shot tonight!” Hans nudged his cousin’s side.

However, Adam did not respond to their enthusiastic greetings. As they looked at Adam, it was only then they realized Adam was staring at Naomi Fuller, utterly and completely enraptured.

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Alex Fuller had intentionally left two empty seats at the dining table for Naomi and Adam, but one of the seats was currently taken by none other than Skylar Stone. Hailing from a pedigree family, Adam was most likely a prideful man who would not stand being robbed of something that belonged to him. Everyone else in the room but Adam knew Skylar had committed an unspoken crime.

As he surveyed the room, Adam noticed everyone had gotten up to greet him, save for the man next to Naomi who was still seated at his place. His frown did not go unnoticed by Alex, who hatched a devious plan right there and then.

“Adam, let me introduce you to the mutt my uncle picked up from the streets,” he sneered. “I was just asking him to leave a seat vacant for you, but he insisted on sitting wherever he pleases. Don’t you think that’s a tad bit arrogant?”

Upon hearing this, Adam’s jaw visibly tensed up. “I don’t know about being arrogant,” he began. “But he certainly does not have any respect for me.”

Adam walked up to Skylar with folded arms, asserting his intimidating presence. “Did you hear that, punk? This is my seat. Who says you get to sit here?” Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, Adam Currey was a man used to getting what he wanted. No one had ever tried to take his seat from him.

The rest of the Fuller cousins tried to fan the flames.

“Skylar, hasn’t 6 years of army life taught you anything about discipline and social cues?”

“I didn’t even invite you but you insisted on coming, and now you want to take up Adam’s seat. Talk

about being shameless!”

“Perhaps the army did not feed you well, so you had to come here for free food.”

“Oh, that’s possible! We’re in the best hotel in Atlas county after all. He may not have tasted some of these dishes all his life.”

“Shut up, all of you!” Adam brought the commotion to a halt as he thundered across the room, his expression grave and solemn.

The cousins were confused, wondering what Adam had to say.

“Adam, what’s wrong?” Alex probed tentatively.

“What... did you guys just call him?” Adam looked slightly nervous now.

Alex assumed Adam had not heard him clearly just now. “Skylar Stone! He’s not one of the Fullers, just a mutt my uncle picked up from the streets...” he repeated himself.

The rest of the Fuller cousins tried to fan the flames.

Before he could finish his sentence, Adam walked up to Alex and gave him a tight slap across the face.

Slap!

The sound was almost deafening, shocking everyone in the room. “You’re the mutt!” Adam bellowed in Alex’s direction.

The cousins were dumbfounded by Adam’s sudden outburst. Even Naomi could not understand what was happening. Did Adam Currey have schizophrenia? That must be the only logical explanation.

Alex was equally flabbergasted, holding his hand to his cheek to nurse the pain from the slap. However, he still maintained a polite tone with Adam, given the Currey family’s power. “Adam, did I do something wrong...?”

Adam had already moved on to make conversation with Skylar. His expression was the polar opposite of his grim one just moments ago. “Mr. Stone, do you know a Mr. Homer McGee of the Crown Club? Has he ever mentioned me?”

Skylar looked Adam Currey in the eye before speaking.