

Trick to Treat Chapter 36

Chapter 36

Tamara took the collaboration agreement sent over by the Hardy Group in her hands, and she signaled to Lucy. "Inform Evan that Colt Enterprise agrees to the collaboration. However, Lucy didn't quite agree with Tamara's decision. "Boss, I reckon that there's no need for us to collaborate with the Hardy Group. Right now, we're way ahead of them in the corporate world, so why should we stoop to their level?"

"What do you mean by that? Are you saying that you don't trust my decision?" Tamara lifted an eyebrow in response.

Meanwhile, Lucy quickly denied it by gesturing with her hands. "Of course not! I trust your abilities. However, you don't need to prove your abilities by collaborating with such inferior companies."

At that, Tamara couldn't help feeling curious. "The Hardy Group used to be a big corporation that dominated Deacon Town a few years back. Why do you make them sound so worthless?"

"Evan Hardy is despicable. Back then, after marrying Miss Randall, he made use of his marriage unification with the Randalls and basically ruled the place for quite some time. However, things aren't the same anymore. He started to go downhill after selling off the Randall Group. Although the Hardy Group hasn't gone bust yet, they face financial difficulties, so they're not the best candidate to collaborate with."

Lucy was afraid that Tamara didn't have a good understanding of the Hardy Group's background because of her relatively recent arrival, so the former patiently explained the details to Tamara with the hopes that Tamara would carefully reconsider this collaboration.

However, Tamara merely smiled upon hearing that and she insisted on her own opinion. "Vice President Griffith, just proceed with what I've mentioned."

As soon as Lucy heard Tamara address her as Vice-President Griffith, she realized that she stood no chance of changing Tamara's mind. Each time Tamara meant business, she would address Lucy as such.

Hence, despite disapproving of the decision, Lucy could only nod. "Sure, I'll do that right now."

After being back in the country for such a long time, it was now time to meet up with Evan.

At 9 PM, Tamara finally completed her work and she got ready to head back to Springvale Place. As soon as she got to the parking lot, however, she realized that her car had run out of fuel.

She was just about to hail a cab when a Mercedes-Benz came to a stop in front of her. The car window was gradually wound down, and Frank's stunning face was revealed. "Get in." His voice remained coldly impassive and devoid of feelings.

At that moment, Tamara lifted her brows as she got into the front passenger seat. Casually, she asked, "When did you buy a car? And such an expensive one too."

A couple of hundred thousand spent on a Mercedes-Benz might seem nothing to her, but it was quite likely an exorbitant amount to Frank.

Before Tamara had even adjusted her seat position, the man suddenly inched closer to her and their lips were merely inches away from each other's.

Instantly, her heart seemed to stop beating and she found herself holding her breath too. She blinked her eyes and voiced out anxiously, "What are you doing?" "Shutting the door." There was a tender expression that appeared on Frank's face and he quickly helped her shut the door before thoughtfully fastening her seatbelt for her as well.

Meanwhile, Tamara gulped and her heart raced frantically all of a sudden. At that point, she couldn't help wondering whether there was something wrong with her heart. It seemed that recently, her heart kept racing at random moments.

"What would you like to have?" Frank started the car ignition and casually asked. "A-Anything's fine." Tamara hadn't quite come to her senses, so she didn't even pay attention to his words but merely replied instinctively.

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As such, Tamara remained in a semi-conscious state and was eventually led to a homely little restaurant

The restaurant was hidden in the alleyway of an old street and the alley was quite a long one. There were just a few dim, yellow lamp posts lighting up their way, and the whole place looked quite run down.

Tamara stood at the end of the alley and turned back to take a look. Surprised, she exclaimed, "How did you manage to find this place? I've stayed in Deacon Town for more than twenty years and yet I've never realized the existence of this place!"

"Do you come from Deacon Town?" Frank asked despite already knowing the answer. "Yup." Tamara pursed her red lips and it seemed that she was reluctant to continue the topic. She rubbed her stomach and walked into the restaurant while mentioning, "I'm starving. I wonder what are some of their signatures?"

Frank quickly trailed after her as the friendly owner of the restaurant came out to greet them.

"Gosh! I was wondering who's here. It's you, Frank!" The owner greeted Frank with a beaming smile on his wizened face.

As for Tamara, she turned her gaze to the two guys and smiled. "Do you know each other?"

The owner nodded earnestly. "We're not just mere acquaintances. If it wasn't for Frank, my little business would have gone bust twenty years ago."

"Twenty years ago?" What was he doing twenty years ago? He must have been just a child back then, so how could he have the ability to provide help?

Evidently, Tamara didn't pursue the topic. After all, being an outsider, she knew not to comment on someone else's matter unnecessarily.

Meanwhile, the owner seemed to regard her differently because she was here with Frank.

Although he didn't bring up the past, his next sentence managed to cause Tamara's heart to race frantically.

"Little missy, you must be Frank's girlfriend, I presume? I've known him for so many years and yet, this is the first time that he's brought a woman here." The owner smiled suggestively and it felt as if he could see right through them.

Instinctively, Tamara rebutted, "The first woman? Surely you're mistaken!" He should have plenty of sugar mommies, so I wouldn't be the first one! However, the owner was insistent. "I may be old but my memory hasn't failed me yet. You are indeed the first woman that Frank has brought to this place." At that point, Frank noticed that their conversation was coming to an abrupt end, so he calmly mentioned, "Mr. Brown, please serve us my usual order." Mr. Brown instantly understood what he meant. "Sure thing. Take a seat and dinner will be served very soon."

The duo then took a seat, and Tamara could finally take a good look at the restaurant. The restaurant wasn't very spacious and the place could only fit around ten tables, but the surrounding was quite serene and hygienic.

The food tasted astonishingly yummy to Tamara, and she realized that it was no wonder someone as picky as Frank could come back to this restaurant over and over again. After all, if a restaurant served awesome food, then it could definitely lure in customers from near and far. This restaurant served great food so it made sense that Frank would have found this obscure place.

After dinner, Tamara brought Frank back to Springvale Place. Coincidentally, they bumped into Rita, who was just about to leave, and she greeted the two of them as she approached them, "Mr. Holt, Miss Randall, you're back."

Tamara's house at Springvale place was too big yet she didn't like to have too many strangers around, so she hired a person to pop in every day to do the cleaning. At that moment, Tamara nodded her head slightly. "Are you about to leave?" "Yes." Rita lowered her eyes and she seemed afraid to look Tamara in the eye. "Stay safe along the way." Tamara responded politely.

After Rita had left, Tim, who was dressed in pajamas, walked out of the bedroom. He didn't look the least bit sleepy at all.

And so, Tamara took his hand into hers and steered him back to his room. Along the way, she chided, "Do you know what's the time right now? Why are you still up?" "Mommy, when can I go to school?" Tim asked.

"What's going on? Do you miss school? I thought that you found kindergarten quite boring. Why did you suddenly come to your senses?" Tamara's eyes glinted when she said that. Truth was, she wasn't surprised to hear Tim bring up the topic of going back to school.

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Tim shook his head and his expression was very sincere as he mumbled, "I'm just too bored at home."

Tamara nodded her head when she heard that. She had been in contact with several kindergartens previously, but none of them were comparable to the education he had received from overseas. That was also why she couldn't quite make up her mind just yet.

However, now that Tim found it boring at home, then they would definitely have to speed up the process of enrolling him in kindergarten.

In less than two days, Tamara finally managed to complete the enrollment process and Tim was able to attend the best kindergarten in Deacon Town. After she had given instructions to Rita to pick Tim up after school, Tamara then headed off to work. At the moment, Evan was seated in the reception area of Colt Enterprise, and he was full of smiles as he conversed with Lucy.

“Vice-President Griffith, have you made up your mind?” Evan beamed. “Do you agree to collaborate with our company?”

“Yes.” Lucy’s pretty face was impassive and her tone was quite indifferent as she commented, “We have a condition though.”

Upon hearing that, Evan hurriedly affirmed, “I can agree to any condition as long as you agree to collaborate with us.”

However, before he could finish his sentence, he was utterly humiliated.

Lucy turned to him with a half-smile and took out the drawn-up agreement.

Subsequently, she placed it in front of Evan. “President Hardy, why don’t you take a look at the agreement first? We can discuss things further if you agree to it.”

Evan briefly flipped through the agreement and his originally happy expression instantly darkened after that. “This is unacceptable. It’s way too unreasonable for you to request thirty percent of the profit. Even if the projected total profit comes up to fifty million, after deducting the amount for you, we would be making a loss after paying for the labor, material, and other costs. I can’t agree to this!”

All of them were in the business so naturally, he would not agree to such a thankless job.

Meanwhile, Lucy maintained an indifferent expression. It seemed that she had predicted Evan’s response, so she nodded her head to express that she understood. “It’s quite understandable that you would disagree with this collaboration, President Hardy. Let’s call it off then. Thanks for showing up today. See you.”

After she had said that, she signaled for the receptionist to send him off.

Suddenly, Evan panicked upon realizing that Lucy was going to call off the collaboration, so he said through clenched teeth, “Vice-President Griffith, could you allow me to reconsider this collaboration? I’ll get back to you on this very shortly.”

“Sure thing. I have a reminder for you though, President Hardy.” Lucy’s expression suddenly turned serious as she spoke in a distant and indifferent voice full of coercion.

“There are plenty of companies interested in collaborating with Colt Enterprise, so if you take too long to decide...”

She had made her message quite clear. If Evan took too long to decide, then this collaboration project would most likely be awarded to someone else.

“I understand.” Evan wordlessly clenched his fists.

“Guys, send him off then.”

Tamara’s dainty, doll-like face was full of contentment. In the president’s office, she munched on some cookies that were made by Lucy, clearly in good spirits.

“Boss, what’s our next step?” Lucy consulted Tamara.

At that moment, Tamara coolly lifted her brows and her slender fingers swept across Evan’s photo on her work desk. There was a terrifying look that crossed her eyes all of a sudden. “Lucy, we’re business people, so you should be much more aware of the fact that each successful business has a wily businessperson behind it.”

Tamara revealed a harmless smile, but the smile didn’t quite reach her eyes. “I

shouldn't have to teach you what to do, right?"

"I understand," Lucy replied solemnly.

Lucy wasn't too sure what had happened between Tamara and Evan, but the former would always do her best at whatever her boss instructed her.

The news that Evan had gone to Colt Enterprise to discuss a collaboration swiftly reached Frank's ears.

Meanwhile, Harold was extremely shocked by the news. "I can't believe that Evan is so swift in making a move!"

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"His actions are redundant, so there's no need to care about him." Frank sat calmly on his work chair as his fingers moved deftly across his keyboard.

As for Harold, being a mere subordinate, he had nothing else to comment about the situation upon seeing his boss being so composed about it.

At 5 PM, Frank stood up right on the dot, and he looked as if he was going to get off from work on time.

Meanwhile, Harold, who was generally quite nosy, noticed that Frank seemed to be knocking off from work on time quite frequently lately. His curiosity was further piqued and he murmured, "Boss, recently, you seem to be knocking off work quite early every day. This is quite unlike your usual behavior."

In the past, Frank would usually stay back at the company to work overtime until the wee hours of the morning. However, he seemed to have suddenly taken a turn and became a home person.

"I want to have dinner with my son." Frank's response came quite naturally to him. Despite him maintaining an impassive look, he couldn't quite contain the smugness in his voice.

"Are you mainly there for your son, or for your wife?" Harold couldn't help teasing Frank, "I reckon that you just don't want Mrs. Holt to wait for too long, right?"

"Are you quite bored at work lately? Would you like to go for a holiday in the Western District?" Frank's expression suddenly darkened and the coldness that he exuded caused one to keep their distance.

At that point, Harold sensed Frank's menacing aura, and the former suddenly regretted his prior words. With a slightly abashed smile, he mentioned, "I'm quite busy actually. I have a lot on my plate. You should get off work now. I still need to finish off some work." Recently, Frank had mellowed a lot, so Harold had nearly forgotten that his higher up had a bad temper.

Harold gulped hard and quickly sent Frank off.

Ever since Frank moved into Springvale Place, he had not retained the services of his driver, and he had been driving himself around in his shabby little Mercedes-Benz.

However, the housekeeper, Rita, had taken sick leave today, so Frank was tasked to pick Tim up after school.

This was a rare moment for the father and son duo to have some alone time.

Presently, Tim sat in the front passenger seat with a solemn expression and he remained silent the whole time.

Frank's expression was quite similar but in fact, the look on his face was much colder. Although there was a huge age gap between the two, they were very similar to each other from inside out, be it their aura or their looks.

"What's wrong?" Frank voiced out upon noticing that Tim seemed slightly upset.

In response, Tim massaged his temples and revealed a frustrated look. "The girls at the kindergarten keep crowding around me, and the teachers seem to think that I'm unable to take care of myself too." The things that they teach such as singing, dancing, and drawing are so simple. I'm so bored over there!"

At that point, Frank shot Tim a contemplative look. The former realized that the latter had a high

intelligence level but at home, he seemed to always behave like a silly kid and he always stuck to his mother. That was why Frank did not expect the boy to be so intelligent.

Just then, Frank curled his lips slightly and thought, Well, it makes sense, though. He's my son so surely he will be extraordinary! At the thought of that, Frank couldn't help feeling quite smug. He turned the steering wheel halfway before turning the car back.

"Since that's the case, then I'll arrange for you to transfer to another school, but you must keep the things that you learn from the new school a secret from your mommy."

"Secret? I thought that Mom put me in the best kindergarten in Northport?" Tim lifted his brows and stared at Frank contemplatively.

However, Frank merely curved his lips into a smile and he focused on driving without saying another word.

Tim was able to comprehend his father's underlying meaning, so he didn't speak either. After quite some time, however, he couldn't contain himself and he asked, "Dad, will you always be my dad?"

"Of course!" Frank didn't expect Tim to ask such a question and he felt slightly perplexed.

Tim nodded and spoke up. "I've always just had Mom by my side from the moment I was born and ever since I can remember, she would always jerk awake from her nightmares. Then, she would hug me tightly in her arms. I can always sense her despair and insecurities. She has a deep scar on her back. Furthermore, she faced a lot of troubles while bringing me up by herself."

Frank suddenly pulled over to the side of the road and came to a stop as he waited for Tim to finish his story.

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Tim paused for a moment and he turned around to look at Frank's face quite intently. Then, he spoke up firmly. "Ever since I've grown to know the ways of life, I made a vow to protect my mom well. No one can take me away from her. Even if you're my dad and you treat me very well, if you do something to hurt Mommy someday, then I definitely will make you pay for it!"

Meanwhile, Frank remained silent as he kept his eyes on Tim's face, which was pretty much a mini version of his, and the former's eyes narrowed slightly.

Indeed, Frank had contemplated more than once to leave with Tim, as he could provide

his son with the best things in life. If Tamara was after money, he could easily give her what she wanted. However, if money wasn't an issue for her, then he could help her exact revenge on Evan.

Furthermore, he had some other things in his possession that were special to Tamara, so she should find it quite hard to reject him.

However, right now, Frank couldn't comprehend the reason why he suddenly decided to stay on.

He had sensed from the start that the close link between Tim and Tamara was something that he could never ever replace. It was an indescribable inbred trust and dependence, or to be more accurate, their mutual symbiotic relationship.

Frank curved his lips into a smile and patted Tim's head. "Tell me-what have you discovered?"

"I didn't discover a thing." Tim slumped against the seat dejectedly as he spoke in a glum voice. "It's exactly because I didn't discover a thing so I started to have suspicions."

Truth was, Tim had actually met his grandmother and she had revealed all of Frank's secrets. However, Tim wasn't sure whether to let Frank know about all this. After all, Frank had kept his identity a secret from Tamara, so Tim couldn't help being worried about the man's intentions.

At that point, Frank smiled without saying a word and he turned around to look at the boy. Subsequently, he spoke up solemnly. "Timmy, you're my only son and someday you'll get to know my identity. However, the timing isn't right yet. You just have to keep this in mind-you can always trust me, regardless of whether it's right now or in the future. I'll always be your dad."

The father and son duo arrived home, only to find that Tamara was not home yet. They gave her a call and she told them that she was socializing outside. She also asked them to start dinner without her. Meanwhile, Frank and Tim were slightly shocked and they exchanged looks with each other. Simultaneously, both of them took out their phones and planned to order some takeaway.

After the two of them had stuffed themselves to the brim, Tamara finally arrived back home quite late. She was relieved to find that the duo had eaten their dinner.

Soon after that, she urged Tim to head to his room to get ready for bedtime. Then, she smilingly handed over an appointment form for a body checkup to Frank. "Tomorrow's Saturday, so let's go and do a body check at the hospital."

"A body check?"

At that point, Tamara spoke to him with a serious voice. "Frank, we did have an agreement on how we were going to handle our relationship from the start. We're both Timmy's parents, so I have an obligation to find out your health condition. Otherwise, how are you going to play your role as a responsible father? I wouldn't feel at ease to let Timmy be around you too."

Tamara had considered this carefully for quite some time and in the end, she had decided to bring it up with him. After all, she had heard rumors of how messy things were in his field of work, so there was a chance that he might accidentally catch something.

However, before she could finish her sentence, she suddenly felt the air around her turn cold instantaneously. At that moment, she felt as if she was currently within an icy cellar

and she couldn't help shivering from the cold.

"Don't overthink things. I-If you've caught a disease, then you should seek treatment as soon as possible, right? I-It's not a big deal. This is just to give both of us peace of mind. Tim will be attending elementary school in two years' time and he definitely needs your identification..." At that point, Tamara tried to explain herself, albeit stammeringly.

Before she could finish her sentence, Tamara could feel her lips suddenly being smothered by a pair of soft lips. Frank then gently nibbled on her soft lips and he wrapped his arms around her slender waist before moving in.

He kissed her quite domineeringly, and he plundered on slightly punishingly.

The air around them stilled and Tamara felt quite out of breath from the passionate kiss.

After quite some time, she finally managed to shove him off her.

Meanwhile, he responded in a calm voice, "I believe you'll need to personally check me out and find out whether I'm in perfect health or not."

As for Tamara, she tried to catch her breath and she remained frozen. At that moment, there was only a single notion in her mind. In all her twenty years plus of life, this was the first time ever that she had a kiss forced upon her.