

Unfinished 531

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"Okay," Olivia replied with a smile.

Jewel also gave a slight nod as a reply. Since Alex did not overstep his boundaries, her impression of him improved ever so slightly.

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For the next few days, as though he was punching in for work, Alex waited by the studio to pick them up for lunch. Those not privy to the truth—that Jewel was the reason for his persistent visits—thought Alex came for Olivia instead.

The people, who were looking down on Olivia before, had opened up bets on whether she would be replaced by another woman before the end of one week. However, when they saw how Alex came over even after nearing the end of the one week, their contempt for Olivia gradually started to change.

The truth was that humans were such creatures. If one were to stand ever so slightly above them, they would be green with envy and be filled with contempt for one. They would use every trick in the book to drag one down to the mud. However, when they realized that one stood so far above them that one would be nigh untouchable to them, only feelings of admiration would remain.

In their head, having Alex visit Olivia for consecutive days was something no one else had the honor of having.

Even if they didn't plan to get along with Olivia, they would still take caution lest they would offend Olivia, and gradually start to warm up to her as well.

"Olivia, is this you on the cover?" With her hand holding a magazine and a smile on her face, Leslie came over and struck up a conversation with Olivia. "My assistant brought this magazine here. She said that the magazine's sales were going through the roof!" Olivia's impression of her—that she was a typical fence-sitter—wasn't all that good. Now that I think about it, isn't she the one that was dissing me together with Summer a few days ago? Why is she acting all friendly with me right now?

She took a glance at the cover. It was the magazine where she helped become a model for Kate. It seemed like it was being published for sale now. Olivia took the magazine to examine the end product and was fairly pleased with it.

Leslie continued, "Olivia, you look really pretty here. Even my assistant was saying that this magazine is selling like hotcakes! She had to wait in a long queue just to purchase a copy of it."

The popularity of the magazine blowing up was also foreshadowing the eventual popularity of Olivia, who some might say was the main reason for the popularity. Soon after, those that sensed the winds of fortune blowing in Olivia's direction came over to curry favor with her. Every one of them started to praise both Olivia as well as the clothing featured in the magazine.

"Olivia, where did you get the clothes you're wearing here? It looks so good."

Olivia replied, "It came from my studio!"

The crowd was once again surprised by her statement, and proceeded to ask in a doubtful tone, "You even have your own fashion studio?"

She nodded in affirmation to their question. "Yes, my main job is being a fashion designer after all!"

"Oh my. Aren't you a woman of many talents? Fashion designer, doctor, and even an actress. Just how much more are you hiding from us?" Vivian asked.

With a hint of mystery in her tone, she answered, "That's for you all to gradually find out!"

Vivian then pointed to the cover, specifically on one of the dresses featured. "Do you still have this in stock? I would love to have something like this in my wardrobe."

As soon as Vivian declared her interest in purchasing Olivia's clothes, the actresses around them immediately showed their interest as well. "Yes, I would like to have one too! Ah, but I would prefer something like this instead!"

With a smile on her face, Olivia then said to them, "Of course. We still have many other kinds of clothing as well. Do drop by my studio to take a look whenever any of you have the time. I'm very sure that there'll be something for everyone should any of you choose to discuss your preference with my designers. There are all kinds of clothing available in my studio after all."

Vivian, in an attempt to negotiate, smiled at Olivia. "Since there are so many of us, will there be a discount on our purchases?"

Olivia raised her brows. "Of course! Those from our crew and production team will get 12% off their purchases!"

As soon as she made that declaration, Vivian's face immediately turned to one of joy. "That's nice to hear. I'll have to order a custom-made dress to wear for the wrap party."

Everyone around them immediately followed up. "Me too! I want to order a custom-made dress as well!"

As Summer watched how the crew was making a fuss over the magazine, over Olivia, as well as over Olivia's studio, thoughts of strangling the life out of Olivia lingered over her mind.

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And that woman, Kate Thomas. Just what was she thinking? When Summer rejected her, Kate went and chose Olivia instead. What is she trying to imply? That both me and Olivia are of the same tier? Or is it that Olivia is better than me? And that Olivia can exude classiness even when dressed in common clothing?

This was a clear attack on Summer's pride.

Though that worthless magazine was never on her radar, the clothing, however, was a different matter.

Regardless, now that Olivia had helped Kate in this matter, wouldn't that mean Kate would continue hiring Olivia for her next shoot as well? With how much the sales of the magazine were going through the roof due to Olivia, there would be no place for Summer to take the spotlight.

Looking at how that magazine exploded in popularity, as well as how beautiful both Olivia and her clothes were, Summer was filled with extreme envy.

That wasn't just a magazine, but a merciless slap right across Summer's face.

What a ruthless person. To force me to apologize right in front of the whole crew so that I'll lose face with them, and to separate Sylvia from me as well.

The new assistant assigned to Summer didn't know her lifestyle habits and had to be taught everything from scratch.

In just one night, Summer lost everything she had.

With a glare—one laced with malice—toward Olivia, Summer thought to herself that she wouldn't let Olivia continue being so conceited.

At the Nolan Group.

A faint smile formed on Eugene's face as he listened to Curtis reporting on the sales number of 'Bourgeoisie Life.' "Are those the actual numbers?"

Knowing how happy Eugene was with the news, Curtis replied with a smile, "Yes. Miss Maxwell was even the driving force behind the increase in sales!"

With a satisfied look, Eugene went through the magazine in his hands. "Son, look at your mommy here. Here, she looks the best in this one."

North sweated furiously at his father's attention. "Didn't you already show this to me?"

Just this morning, he had already shoved the magazine to North's face at least 3 times. Pfft, like I needed to be told just how much of a beauty my mommy is! North grimaced. Unlike you, who doesn't even know your girlfriend is the most beautiful woman to have ever walked this earth!

Upon hearing his son's words, as though Eugene remembered something, he froze. He realized that he had already bragged about his girlfriend to everyone he knew.

Seeing that there was no one left for him to brag about his girlfriend to, he took his phone out and made a call to Olivia.

Back at the shoot, Olivia had managed to disperse the enthusiastic crowd and, with slight surprise at Eugene's phone call, answered her phone. "Calling at this time of the day? Don't you usually bury your head in work at this time?"

Eugene replied, "No, I'm free right now. Have you seen the magazine?"

Olivia broke into laughter and went outside the premises to continue the conversation. "Yeah, just a few minutes ago. I've even managed to make some sales with my clothing."

Eugene chuckled and took a glance at North, whispering, "My girlfriend is the best!"

Since it was a whisper, it was faintly audible, but it had reached North's ears. North then shook his head like a young adult and left the room on his own accord.

Eugene had a heartfelt smile on his face when he observed how that little brat of his knew how to read the room.

In a proud tone, Olivia retorted, "Did you only just realize that?"

Eugene laughed. "I've known from the start. It's just that I've never seen you in any proper photoshoot before. The result of that is just... breathtaking!"

Olivia replied, "Then you'll have to prepare yourself. There's still more of these breathtaking moments to come!"

Listening to her sweet, mellow voice had Eugene's heart growing fonder. "When will you be back? It's been nearly 8 days since I last saw you."

Olivia replied with a hint of helplessness, "One of the actors had a stomachache and had to be hospitalized for 3 days. I'm afraid it'll take another 3 days to wrap up the shoot due to the delay in the schedule."

Without North hanging around, Eugene became bold and was much more flirtatious with his words. He said close to the phone's microphone, breathing, "I'm already missing you."

Olivia turned shy at how direct Eugene was being over the phone call. "Just a little longer and it'll be over. You just have to endure for another 3 days."

Eugene immediately said, "I'll just have to go visit you tonight, then!"

"Just the round trip already takes 3 hours. What are you planning to do after spending that much time on the road?"

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"I want to give you a hug."

"What else?"

"And a kiss."

"Anything else?"

Eugene wanted more but had to hold his tongue. He was afraid that Olivia would think that he wanted a mile when he was given an inch.

"Nothing more... at the moment."

Olivia couldn't help but laugh at his answer. "Tell me, do you know what is that one lie that all men would tell at least once in their lifetime?"

Eugene had never bothered about those kinds of internet articles. It was unthinkable that he would know the answer to Olivia's question.

"What is it?" Eugene asked blankly.

Dissatisfied with the lack of effort in his answer, Olivia replied, "Take a guess!"

Eugene gave a thought to the question before answering, "Is it the sentence 'I really have nothing going on with that woman'? 9 times out of 10 that there is something going on between a man and a woman when the man says this!"

With a small chuckle, Olivia continued, "Wrong. Next guess!"

Obediently, Eugene took another shot. "I know! Is it 'I don't have a personal bank account for my money'?!"

This time, Olivia broke into laughter at his answer. "To think that a president like you would have such a down-to-earth answer!"

"That wasn't it?" Eugene asked.

"Nope."

Seemingly struggling to come to an answer, he finally gave up. "Then what is the answer? I really have no clue."

Smiling, Olivia imitated a man's voice and said, "'I really just want to cuddle with you. I won't do anything else!' Don't you think every man would lie like this at least once in their lifetime?"

Eugene roared with laughter after hearing the answer. The conversation was now without words but filled with laughter instead.

After a while, Olivia asked, "Have you ever said something like this before?"

The man replied in his deep voice, "Then do all women just want us to cuddle with them and do nothing else? Or do they really want us to do something else instead?"

Olivia was stunned and unable to retort.

This foul man. I was just planning to tease him but now the tables have turned.

Now that she was being put on the spot, she was thinking hard about how to get back at him.

After giving some thought to his question, she then answered, "I can't speak for all women on this matter! After all, there are not that many men that are as handsome as mine!"

Unable to stop himself from grinning, Eugene then replied, "I only want to know about what you think."

Olivia rolled her eyes over what was said, yet she replied to him with a hint of flirtatiousness in her tone. "What's the rush? I think it'll be better for me to answer your question in person! Alright, I got to go now."

After saying that, she immediately ended the call.

While listening to the beeping sound at the other end of the line, Eugene gulped unconsciously. He felt that she was playing coy with him.

Otherwise, why would he be filled with the urge of wanting her in his embrace right now?

Smiling like a fool, he answered 'alright' as though the call was still ongoing. It was only after a while that he thought of asking his son to come back into the office.

As Eugene stood up, North came running in after he flung the president's office's door open.

Without saying anything, North went straight into Eugene's arms. It tugged at Eugene's heart as he saw how pale North's face had become. He gave his son a firm hug and lightly patted North's back. "North, what's wrong?"

However, North continued to stay silent while hugging Eugene by his neck. With how the boy was panting with his body slightly trembling, it looked as though he had been running for his dear life.

Eugene didn't press any further and instead took the child in his arms and proceeded to take a seat in front of his computer. He then pulled up the surveillance footage on his computer.

There was still some joy on North's face when he left the president's office earlier. With a proud face, he would politely greet and converse with any of the secretaries who had passed him by with a smile.

However, it was after Samantha was seen walking toward North that there were changes to his expression. With a faint smile, she crouched down to his height and asked, "North, what are you doing here?"

North didn't bother answering her and had moved to pass her.

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Samantha didn't give up and followed North. "What do you want to eat? Shall I get you something to eat?"

Getting irritated, North halted his footsteps. "Don't follow me."

Despite the rejection, Samantha said, "I'm just worried about you. If you want to have fun outside, I can accompany you. But you can't run around, as there are many bad people nowadays!"

However, North only walked faster. There was a washroom not far from him, but there was only one surveillance in the corridor, and there was no camera in the washroom. With limited vision, Eugene could only see Samantha follow him in, but he didn't know what happened there. It didn't take a while until North ran out to sprint for the president's office.

There was no doubt that Samantha must have frightened that child!

Upon seeing that, Eugene blamed himself deeply. The first moment he saw her, he should have driven her away. He shouldn't be stubborn to find out the mastermind. If the child was traumatized because of Samantha, nothing could patch up the loss!

While Eugene hugged North tightly, he shouted, "Curtis, bring Samantha over here!"

Curtis heard the words and immediately responded.

"Don't be afraid, North. I will kick her out right away."

Despite the reassurance, North was still trembling. "I-I think she's Anna."

This was news for Eugene. "Anna Maxwell? How did you figure it out? What did she say to you?"

North answered, "She asked me why you never let her go into the office lately. I answered that she should ask you about it. Then, she asked me why I didn't like her. I said I didn't dislike her. Afterward,

she said she liked me and tried to ask me to put in some good words for her. The way she pinched my cheeks and looked at me, she looks just like Anna!"

After North finished talking, Eugene turned serious. Then, he patted North's back. It made sense why North was so afraid of her. She was Anna, the criminal that almost killed North. He must've been terrified!

Afterward, Eugene dialed Curtis' number. "So you found her?"

In response, Curtis answered, "No, President Nolan. I'll check for her in the monitoring room."

North said, "I have locked her up in the washroom. Maybe you should check there?"

Then, Eugene quickly gave another order. "Check the washroom, now!"

After a while, Curtis came back. "President Nolan, I can't find Samantha. I asked the security guard at the front door, and he said that Samantha had already left the company."

Upon hearing that, Eugene frowned. Anna had plastic surgery and came to the Nolan Group. She had an ulterior motive!

Did she want to take the child away again?

He cautiously looked at the hourglass in the corner of the desk. Could there be a problem with this hourglass?

Then, he took the hourglass and observed it. Except for the faint scent it emitted, it was nothing special.

In the end, he still felt disturbed and threw the hourglass into the trash can.

After that, he gave another order. "Send someone to search for Samantha."

Immediately, Curtis responded and walked away. Then, Eugene looked at North and reached out his hand to pat North on his head. "Don't be afraid. You did a great job today. You were a brave child. You recognized Anna and even locked her in the washroom!"

Still, North swallowed his saliva and blinked his eyes. "How did she escape from the washroom?"

Eugene deliberately gave a compliment. "Maybe someone entered the washroom from outside and unlocked the door. Fortunately, you came to the company. Otherwise, I would still see her as a capable secretary of mine! Wow, my son is so awesome!"

Although North knew that Eugene was exaggerating, he was still proud of himself. "Took you long enough to realize that!"

In response, Eugene laughed. "I've always known that my son is the best."

As he spoke, Eugene took out his phone. "I'll call your uncle and ask if Anna is still in the psychiatric hospital."

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The phone rang several times before being connected. "What's up?"

Since Brian had been interrogating Tres for the past few days, his sleep schedule had been messed up lately. "I'm sleeping; I didn't hear the ringtone. If you have something to say, do it now. I'm sleepy!"

"Contact the psychiatric hospital where Anna is. North thinks that this Samantha Yapp, who's working in my company, looks a lot like Anna. Can you check if she's escaped?"

Upon hearing this, Brian, who was initially still somewhat blurry from fatigue, suddenly jolted awake. "Escaped? Impossible! I'll check now."

Less than ten minutes after Eugene hung up the phone, Brian called again. "As you expected, Anna was discharged from the hospital. Have you caught the secretary?"

After hearing the bad news, Eugene was at a loss. "She's escaped. I'm still looking for her. Do you know who picked her up upon discharge?"

Brian answered, "Henry Maxwell and Amy Davis picked her up."

With anger, Eugene squinted his eyes. He was just thinking about how the couple had been too quiet lately.

It turned out that their daughter had already been discharged.

"But I'm thinking someone must've assisted them in the shadows. Otherwise, the couple wouldn't have been able to discharge Anna with their influence alone. When I dropped Anna off at the hospital, I told the director to never let anyone visit or discharge her. But the director retired, and I'm having a hard time finding him."

After hearing that, Eugene snorted. "It must be related to Lara. After all, the real Samantha is still working in Kanes Corporation. Moreover, Lara is a shareholder of Kanes Corporation and knows the corporation very well. She must have given a fake identity to Anna, allowing Anna to easily infiltrate the Nolan Group!"

Panicked, Brian asked, "So what will you do now?"

To answer Brian, Eugene said, "Don't worry. I just need some more time to investigate the cause of the fire. What's the progress of your interrogation with Tres?"

Brian felt helpless. "He wouldn't spill anything about the mastermind behind the incident no matter what. I almost killed him during the interrogation."

"Just lock him up for two days. Beware of The Quintets in case they try to rescue Tres."

"You too. Never leave the child unattended. If you are busy, I can take care of North for you."

Upon hearing that, Eugene glanced at North sitting on his lap and said, "It's alright."

In fact, now that he thought about it, he was getting afraid. If it wasn't for the child, it would have been dangerous for him to keep Anna by his side.

How was it possible that he didn't recognize her?

If something terrible happened to the child, how could he explain it to Olivia?

Olivia had been taking care of North without any problem for seven years. Yet, Eugene managed to mess things up within just seven days with the child.

In the end, he hung up the phone and looked at North with distress. "You are right; Anna was discharged from the mental hospital."

At the revelation, North sucked in a breath of cold air. "Is it really her? What is she doing in the Nolan Group?"

Eugene turned glum, and his voice was cold. "She either wanted to hurt you or me."

Knock, knock—

There was a knock on the door. But before Eugene could answer, someone pushed the door open, making a loud bang.

At once, Eugene frowned in displeasure. How could anyone here be this rude?

After that, he looked up and saw Edward's face. Although he was Eugene's father, Eugene didn't stand up or address him as his dad. After all, Eugene had only ever seen him as a president.

In fact, he hadn't addressed Edward as his dad ever since Edward married Lara years ago.

Whenever Eugene needed to converse with Edward, he would cut to the chase.

To outsiders, their relationship was not close, but they were polite to each other.

Today, Edward came here with anger. Obviously, he knew what Nolan Group had done against Roberts Company.

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Therefore, Eugene didn't want to pretend to be a happy family. After the incident years ago, both Eugene and Edward knew that their relationship was strained.

"What's the hurry? Do you have business with me?" Eugene asked.

Soon, the secretary nodded politely and stepped out. She closed the door as she left the room.

After that, Edward glanced at North, then at Eugene. After forcefully suppressing his anger, Edward asked, "Why are you deliberately targeting the Roberts Company?"

In response, Eugene lazily said, "It's just some business competition. I have nothing else to say about the matter."

Then, Edward walked to the desk. "Business competition? Compete for what, the pharmaceutical project? Nolan Group has never signed a contract with any pharmaceutical industry before."

Under the accusation, Eugene said calmly, "It will be a new experience for us. After all, my girlfriend is a doctor. It makes sense that I would want to be involved in the pharmaceutical industry. On the other hand, why are you so anxious? You are also a member of the Nolan Family. Shouldn't the development of the Nolan Group make you happy?"

Then, Edward growled, "The marriage between the Nolan and Roberts families is a matter of mutual benefit. Ever since you became the president, you've gradually cut ties with the Roberts Company. Now, you are even treating the Roberts Family as your rival. If you want revenge, just charge at me. Do not vent your anger on the company!"

Upon hearing that, Eugene sneered. "Are you talking to me as a shareholder or my father? Do not confuse business affairs with private affairs!"

Shaking his head, Edward snorted. "Is there any difference?"

Eugene looked at him with cold eyes. "If you're talking to me as a shareholder of the Nolan Group, then you should be supporting my decision to make this the company's long-term plan. Even if you object to the plan, I can only treat it as a suggestion. You do not hold the power to dismiss it. However, if you are talking to me now as my father, I can tell you: this is just the beginning of my revenge!"

"Eugene!" Edward angrily slapped the table. "What are you thinking? You think you're all grown up now, and that's why you are starting to fight back, is that it?"

Eugene still had a frosty look in his eyes. The smile on his face looked playful. "In fact, I have you to thank for not kicking me out back then!"

With anger, Edward stared at Eugene with eyes that lacked warmth. "While I don't like your mother, you are still my son. Never once have I ever thought of hurting you, so please don't make me do it. You're not like that shameless Brian—now that guy I have never thought of as my son!"

After years of abuse, Eugene thought he had long grown numb to his father's verbal insults. Still, hearing how Edward was able to spit out these words without any hesitation, he could feel his heart aching. If Brian heard that, he would be so upset.

"You've never thought of hurting me? Or was it because I was under the protection of Grandpa that you couldn't do it?!"

"Of course not! There was nothing to stop me back then."

Chortling, Eugene shook his head. "I don't understand. Since you loved Lara that much, why did you still marry my mother? Why did you give birth to Brian and me? You've never taken up the responsibility as a father to raise us."

Edward snorted. "Your mother was stubborn and never wanted to divorce. She was the one who plotted against me. She single-handedly sowed discord between us! Otherwise, Brian would never have been born. If anything, you should be blaming your mother instead!"

Upon hearing this, Eugene could feel a surge of rage rising from within. With hatred in his eyes, he slowly stood up from the seat. "You are not innocent either. You did everything to lure my mother to commit adultery to divorce my mother. When you forced her to divorce, you also brought her reputation into disrepute. Do you really hate her that much? She just didn't want to divorce. Was it wrong to love you? Did you have to use those dirty tricks on the woman who gave birth to two sons for you? Are you a monster?"

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"Eugene!"

After the taunt from Eugene, Edward growled, "How dare you talk to me like this?"

With sarcasm in his smile, Eugene sneered. "Can't stand it, can you? You said that my mother sowed discord between us, but I am not blind; I can see the truth. Edward, I will ensure that you'll reap what you sow for what you did to my mother."

Edward frowned, trying to hold back his anger. "Even if I've hurt your mother, and you'll have your revenge on me, what does it have to do with Lara? Why the rivalry with the Roberts Family?"

Eugene didn't want to risk exposing his plan, so he sat back in the chair and regained his willfulness.

"I said it was a business competition. I'm not stopping her from competing with the Nolan Group either!"

Shaking his head, Edward said, "I see that you're determined to fight against me. I hope you won't regret it."

Upon hearing that, Eugene curled his lips into a sneer. "I could say the same to you, Edward Nolan. I will make sure that it is painful for you!"

Edward nodded fiercely. "Okay, since that's the case, don't blame me for not treating you as a son then."

Eugene retorted, "That's fair. Then again, you've never treated me as your son all these years."

Edward was so angry that his blood pressure was soaring, and then he cursed fiercely, "Ungrateful b*stard." After that, he walked away.

Finally, Eugene stared at the back of Edward as he left. The muscles on his body couldn't seem to relax.

Every time Eugene spoke to Edward, he needed a great deal of self-control to not hurt Edward. Especially when Edward defended Lara, Eugene wished that he could kill Edward straight away, finishing him off once and for all.

Suddenly, his hand was covered by a soft little hand, accompanied by a childish voice. "Please don't be angry. He's gone."

Only then did Eugene remember that the child had been in the room. He breathed a sigh of relief and instantly relaxed. "My son."

Then, he bent over and hugged North. "Alright, I'm not angry anymore. Let's go home. What do you want to eat tonight?"

In response, North said, "Let's have dinner with Nate. Since he broke up with Godmother, no one is ensuring that he ate well anymore."

Eugene replied, "Okay."

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Nathan was stunned to receive Eugene's call. He was worried that his uncle would be lecturing him, so he nervously went to the restaurant where they had made an appointment.

The place was a private restaurant, and the decoration was exquisite. The people who came to eat here were usually the wealthy.

Eugene had reserved a private room on the second floor. As Nathan came up, he ran into Gwen, who was also dining there with her friends. She was surprised to see Nathan. "Nate, are you here to meet

me?"

In response, Nathan said, "Ah, no. I'm here with my friends. Do continue."

After he finished speaking, Nathan was about to leave.

However, Gwen stopped him and asked, "Who are your friends? Why don't we join tables?"

Facing the proposal, Nathan frowned, and he could only answer vaguely, "That's not very convenient."

Gwen replied with a disappointed face, "That's fine, then."

As Nathan passed by a private room, he heard a familiar female voice from inside, causing his footsteps to stop instinctively.

If I'm not wrong, this is Kate's voice.

At the thought of that, Nathan could feel his heart palpitating in panic and throbbing. He hadn't had this complicated feeling for years. At this moment, he was debating whether to happily meet her or to fearfully avoid her.

Looking at Nathan standing still in surprise, Gwen asked, "What happened, Nate?"

Regaining his senses, Nathan answered vaguely, "It's fine."

He was just about to leave when he heard Kate's anxious voice in the private room.

"President Cook, please conduct yourself."

Upon hearing that, Nathan stopped as his face quickly fell. In fact, the private room door was shut, so he couldn't hear properly, and he definitely didn't know what was going on inside. As such, he stayed

behind and stood at the door, trying to listen again.

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Gwen, who was planning to return to her friends, also came closer to the room and asked in a low voice, "What's wrong?"

Still, Nathan didn't say a word and simply pricked up his ears to listen to the movement in the private room.

As he expected, the atmosphere in the private room was indeed tense. At first, this man known as President Cook took the initiative to invite Kate to discuss a collaboration. Upon hearing that, Kate was pleased and prepared a proposal in advance. But, the man was not here to discuss the collaboration at all. In fact, he was here for another type of "business."

Initially, the president wanted to force her to drink, but then he changed his mind to link their arms while drinking. Kate laughed at that idea, explaining that the ceremony had to be done with the person she loved, so she declined.

After that, President Cook sat beside Kate and attempted to touch her hand, but she casually avoided it.

Still, he didn't stop in his advances. Now, he even groped Kate's buttocks. At once, Kate was so surprised that she hurriedly stood up, and she finally told him to conduct himself.

Despite that, the man had no remorse and continued taking advantage of her. He even looked at her funny.

"Miss Thomas, what's with the big reaction? Don't you want to discuss the collaboration? You're not showing any sincerity at all."

When Kate heard that, her face immediately darkened. Holding back her anger, she said, "I'm sorry, but I don't think we can continue the discussion. You can find more opportunities with other companies. I have already paid the bill; please enjoy the meal. I will take my leave now."

As she said that, Kate grabbed her purse and tried to leave.

However, the man sneered and tugged at her purse. "Leave? You think you can leave after you've stepped into this room?"

Noticing something was wrong, Kate frowned. "What are you trying to do?"

The man leaned on the chair, and his lips twitched. "Do you really think I'm here for your cheap magazine company? You wouldn't show your sincerity by accepting this drink. How dare you treat me like that?"

After hearing that, Kate stood on the spot and said indifferently, "I would drink the wine, but you've gone too far and groped my buttocks. Now, please excuse me."

Saying that, she tugged her purse and wanted to leave.

But before she could take another step, another man stood up and stopped her. He uttered coldly, "Drink this to get the contract. Otherwise, don't even think about leaving this room!"

Kate knew that this man was President Cook's bodyguard. Then, she suddenly understood that she had been fooled. With the realization, she raised her hand and smashed her purse on his head.

While the man was shielding his head, Kate rushed over to the door. But before she could turn the doorknob, her hair was grabbed from behind and she was forced to step back, knocking over the wine bottle on the table and smashing it on the ground.

At once, Kate struggled and shouted, "You b*stard! Let me go! Someone, please, save me! Save me —"

Before Kate could finish shouting, she was slapped on the face. "F*ck you! Shame on you!" President Cook scolded.

The slap was so powerful that Kate felt her mind buzzing, with a persistent ringing in her ears as if hundreds of bees were flying in her head.

After that, President Cook instructed his bodyguard, "Force this wine down her throat! Let's see if she can still act this crazy!"

As he said that, he dropped a white pill into the glass and then lightly shook it. After that, he handed the glass to the bodyguard.

The bodyguard clenched her neck. With his free hand, he took the glass and forced Kate to down the contents of the glass.

Of course, Kate knew that the pill was suspicious. She resisted desperately, using both arms and legs, but her strength was no match for a big guy like him. At this moment, Kate was at a disadvantage as if she was a prey in a trap.

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How long could she hold her breath, though? She had already started to wonder whether he was genuinely asking her to work together, or if he just wanted to trouble her.

Just when she was falling into despair, the compartment door was thrown open with a loud crash, causing the three of them to look in the direction of the sound in surprise.

When she saw the man at the door, Kate suddenly felt strangely wronged and tears began to fall from her eyes uncontrollably. She couldn't describe what she felt at that moment. There was embarrassment, relief, and gratefulness, but she clearly knew that they were very different from each other, and they would not cross paths at all. Why did it have to be him?

Did she not want to see him? That wasn't it. Was she unhappy that he came to save her? Of course not. She just hated that she was not carefree and decisive enough to be able to forget about him once and for all, and to not feel her heart waver whenever she saw him. The conflict in her emotions made her crouch down and sob bitterly.

President Cook raised his eyebrows sharply. "Who are you?"

Nathan's expression was dark, as though there were a stormy cloud hanging over his head, and a violent aura emanated off his body as he walked in without saying a word. When he passed the dining table, he picked up the chair on the ground and walked toward President Cook, who backed away in fright at the sight. "W-What are you trying to do?"

The bodyguard next to him hurriedly stepped forward, but before he could fight back, the chair in Nathan's hand had fallen to whack the bodyguard directly on the head.

When he saw how ruthless Nathan was, Howard Cook was immediately frightened. These days, a man who acted with his fists without caring about the consequences was clearly someone whom he had to avoid. He ran hastily in terror toward the door along the other side of the table.

On the other hand, Nathan was much more decisive and reckless. Not to mention, he was also powerful. Without thinking twice, he picked up another chair and threw it toward Howard. The chair hit the

ground with a crash, making a harsh noise. This time, however, Howard was prepared and managed to dodge the hit. Still, he was even more frightened and quickened his footsteps.

Right when Howard had reached the door, Nathan also rushed over at the same time. He stretched out with his hand and dragged Howard back from the door of the compartment in the same way that Howard had grabbed Kate. The door slammed loudly as Nathan shut it with his foot.

At this time, the bodyguard had already recovered from getting slammed by the chair. Seeing that Howard was restrained by Nathan, he swayed up to his feet and took a leaf out of Nathan's book, throwing a chair at him as well.

At the door, Gwen yelled in fright, "Nate, watch out!"

When Nathan subconsciously looked back and saw that the chair was about to hit him, he raised his hand to block it. As soon as he was about to fight back, he heard the sound of a bottle breaking. At the source of the noise, he saw that there was a woman holding a half-broken beer bottle, her face pale and her body trembling.

The bodyguard was instantly befuddled by the beer bottle that Kate had struck him with. The severe pain, accompanied by the beer trickling down his face, made him feel like he had been spinning around on the spot for hundreds of times. In less than three seconds, he was finally overwhelmed and fell to the ground. Right before he fainted, he even thought that these two people were cruel.

Ignoring Gwen, Nathan looked at Kate in shock. He didn't expect that Kate would be able to be as ruthless as him and it seemed that she had done it in an attempt to save him. Strangely enough, his spirits lifted at that thought.

At that moment, Gwen ran inside. "Nate, are you okay? Does your arm hurt?"

Saying that, she kicked the bodyguard who had already fallen unconscious on the ground and scolded, "How dare you! How dare you hit Nate!"

With the half-broken bottle in her hand, Kate blankly stood in place and looked at Gwen, who was kicking the bodyguard frantically. Suddenly, she felt a little sad. She hated herself for getting carried away just because he treated her that little bit more nicely. Perhaps he just heard the news and helped out as a friend, but she had thought too much of it.

Nathan had one hand wrapped around Howard's neck, but stretched out the other toward her as he said, "Give it to me."

Kate's mind was blank at this time, and she looked at him in a daze, not knowing what he wanted.

Nathan repeated, "Give me the beer bottle."

It was only then that she came back to her senses and handed the half-broken bottle in her hand over to him.

Once Nathan took it, he slowly pressed it closer to Howard's neck and asked in a chilling tone, "Which hand did you use to touch her with?"

Terrified out of his wits, Howard desperately shrunk back as he begged for mercy while dodging away, "L-Look, it's just a misunderstanding! Would you please let go of me first..."

"I asked you, which hand did you use to touch her with?"

Of course, Howard didn't dare to tell him without knowing what this crazy man was trying to do.

"If you won't say it, then I'll take it that you touched her with both hands!"

Saying that, Nathan immediately grabbed his hand and pressed it on the table, and he plunged the half-broken beer bottle he was holding in his hand toward the back of Howard's hand without a second thought. Accompanied by the man's screams, a dazzling bright red instantly stained the white tablecloth. Howard couldn't even speak from the agony, and he could only hold his breath and bear the pain.

"And there's this hand too, right?" Nathan said, about to grab the other hand.

Seeing that, Howard screamed in fright and began struggling frantically. "Ahh! Someone made me do it!"

Kate was also terrified by Nathan's cruelty and hurriedly stepped forward to stop him. "Enough, let him go!"

As Nathan glanced at Kate, his fierce and vicious eyes softened in an instant. Without saying anything, he pushed Howard to the ground.

"Spit it out! Who made you do it? If you waste my time, I'll get rid of your other hand."

The man hugged his hand in pain and almost teared up. He cried, "Summer asked me to do it. She said that Miss Thomas and Miss Maxwell bullied her and asked me to teach her a lesson. I wasn't going to do anything evil; I just wanted to scare you. Please spare me!"

With a frown, Nathan glanced at Kate and asked, "Who's Summer?"

Kate hadn't expected that Summer would try to harm her either. She glanced at Nathan and explained briefly, "She's a female star who took a magazine cover with me, but because she wasn't satisfied with the costume, I broke off the collaboration with her. After that, I took a cover for Olivia, and now, the

current bestseller is the cover of Olivia's issue. Maybe she got jealous when she saw that. I'll have to call Olivia later and ask her to be careful as well."

Nathan hummed in reply. When he turned back to Howard, his gaze immediately turned cold again. "If you try to hurt her again, it wouldn't just be one hand."

Howard hurriedly responded, pleading, "Yes, yes!"

"Get lost!" Nathan ordered coldly.

The man got up in a hurry, and as soon as he stepped outside, he saw Eugene and North as well as a group of security guards and bodyguards surrounding the door. There was no way the restaurant could just ignore the commotion that Nathan caused.

When the waiter saw Nathan entering the room, he knew that there would be a fight, so he hurriedly went downstairs and called the security guards up. As a result, as soon as the guards arrived, they met Eugene, who stopped them from intruding and declared that he would take responsibility if anything went wrong.

If it were anyone else who had said that, they would not have listened. However, Eugene's words were practically like the word of God in Summer City, and they had weight to them.