

Unfinished 71

Chapter 71

"I sure have an exceptional grandson," Merlin said while stroking his beard. He then handed Eugene a copper key while staring at the latter. "Go get me the red folder in the drawer."

Despite his surprise, Eugene took the key and took out the folder after unlocking the drawer. "Do you mean this?"

"Yeah, and you shall be keeping this from now on," Merlin said with a nod.

"What's this?" Upon opening it, Eugene's heart skipped a beat as he realized that it was his grandfather's will, which brought a frown to his face. "Grandpa, what are you doing? Why would you write a will when you're fine?"

Merlin got ahold of Eugene's hand as the latter tried to tuck the folder back into his hands. "Don't be nervous, as all I ask of you in the meantime is to hold onto it. My day will come now that I am old, so you should think about the company even though you don't personally care about the wealth. To me, you're the best candidate for the president of this company. The shares that your grandmother and I hold add up to one-fourth of the total number of shares, which would guarantee your acquisition of the position, with one added condition."

A look of anger crossed Eugene's face as he looked closer at the additional terms listed upon hearing Merlin's words. "You mean I need to get married before I could inherit the company? Are you sure you want me as the president?"

Merlin wore a mischievous smirk as he responded, "I'll try my best to live on while you do your best to accomplish that task!"

"You should have someone else inherit it, then," Eugene said.

As anxiety kicked in, Merlin slapped him on the back. "Are you planning to piss me off so much so that you could inherit my wealth after I die of a stroke?"

“How could I when I can’t even meet your requirements?” Eugene was exasperated.

Merlin looked between Olivia and Eugene while signaling to the latter. “You should try harder then, you hopeless bum! I did a far better job back then!”

So he wants me to court Olivia! The realization gave Eugene conflicted feelings. Didn’t we only meet a few times? Why does he have such a good impression of her?

Meanwhile, Olivia stood awkwardly as if having heard something that she shouldn’t have, wondering if she would be silenced. This old man! Why didn’t you have me give you some space when you are talking about such important matters?

The document was handed to Eugene by Merlin, and he gave Eugene a naughty wink at the same time. “Hold onto and don’t let anyone discover this, or else they would say that I’m being partial to you. However, one day when I’m dead, you should show this if anybody questions your claim to the position.”

Those words left a bad taste in Eugene's mouth as he sat on his grandfather's bed. “Grandpa! Don't spout nonsense! Didn't you hear what Doctor Maxwell told you? You'd better try your best to live as long as you can so that you can witness my wedding!”

“If that’s the case, you should work fast to deliver your promise!” Merlin nodded as he spoke before turning to Olivia. “Bring North to visit me during the holidays, as I like him a lot.”

“Alright,” Olivia agreed.

Merlin heaved a sigh. “Although I no longer associate myself with worldly matters, I do have a clear grasp of things, so you don’t need to feel uneasy about it. I know you’re a good kid, as I would be long dead if it wasn’t for your constant visits. You can laugh all you want, but for families like us, familial relationships come after benefits of any form. However, Rocky isn’t blinded by these benefits, so you can work on building a relationship together.”

Why does it feel like he is playing the matchmaker? Olivia responded stiffly as she blushed.

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The awkwardness was mirrored on Eugene's side as he wondered what his grandfather was up to, and why he would choose such a blatant approach when he was doing it more discreetly before that.

"Alright, that will be all for today, as you definitely are overestimating me. We will be taking our leave for now."

"Sure, go on! I will be taking a nap now." Old Man Nolan seemed amused.

"Bring him to me!" Eugene gave his order to Connor as soon as they got out of his grandfather's room. While there were no visible injuries on Lily's face when she was brought into the house, her face was deathly pale as if having received a major shock.

Meanwhile, Eugene motioned for Olivia to take a seat as he took out a cigarette which he lit and began puffing on it with a slightly lackadaisical manner. Using a casual tone for his interrogation, he asked, "What is the drug that you added into my grandfather's food?"

Fear seized Lily as she trembled while stuttering, "I-I added a single sleeping pill into his porridge as I saw Master Merlin experiencing palpitations during his sleep. It wasn't to hurt him, so please forgive me, Young Master Eugene! I know I made a mistake, and I will never do it again!" Lily knelt before him while making kowtows as she apologized.

"Are you sure you added sleeping pills and not vasopressors?" A frown formed on Olivia's face as she asked.

"No, I only gave him a sleeping pill." Lily was still begging for forgiveness.

Putting on a steely expression, Eugene said, "Master Merlin had always been ill, so you should never give him any medication without the doctor's instructions! How could you not know such a simple

thing?"

“I know, which was why I only gave him one! My intention was to help him sleep better.”

“I suppose you’re not going to tell the truth.” Eugene maintained a casual and lackadaisical tone as he flicked the ashes off his cigarette into the ashtray.

“I speak the truth, Young Master Eugene! You can do a test on the porridge, and you’ll know they are sleeping pills!” Lily explained in a hurry.

“Is your sleeping pill the reason that Master Merlin slept till noon on the 7th?” Eugene asked with a frown.

“No, that has nothing to do with me. I was worried that Master Merlin would have trouble sleeping while I was on duty last night, so my intentions were pure.” Lily looked toward Eugene carefully.

However, the cold expression on his face remained as he ordered, “Get her out of my sight, then break her legs!”

“Please forgive me, Young Master Eugene! I know I made a mistake, and I will never repeat it ever again!” Lily’s cries echoed, but Connor did as told without allowing her the opportunity to beg for forgiveness.

“Send the bowl of porridge my grandfather had for a test.” Eugene didn’t move from the sofa.

“Alright.” A curt response could be heard from Connor.

Meanwhile, a frown could be seen on Olivia’s face as she pondered, How could that be possible? Master Merlin’s blood pressure reached 180 mmHg that day, and the numbers wouldn’t have soared if

it was a sleeping pill.

However, she didn’t have time to mull on it any longer when Eugene got up and offered to send her home, to which she complied by taking her bag with her as she got onto the car after a curt response.

Their journey was spent in silence while Olivia was feeling troubled. What's the meaning of this? Was it because the results were out of his expectations, or was it because he has doubts over my diagnosis?

Olivia was never one to internalize things, so she asked after casting him a few glances, "Do you suspect that I made an error during my diagnosis?"

Taken aback, Eugene thought, Why would she ask that?

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"That's not it. I thought they have an inkling that we are investigating the matter, which was why they had the maid be their scapegoat," Eugene replied.

A frown formed on Olivia's face while she asked, "Do you mean she wasn't the mastermind?"

"A maid wouldn't be so bold," Eugene scoffed.

A frown formed on Olivia's face as the reply he gave reminded her of what Old Master Nolan said about the absence of familial relationships. A sense of uncertainty lingered in her gaze as she looked toward him, all the while unsure how she should face him, and if she should pity him or console him. "D-Do you have a suspect? Would it be among your family members, just for that inheritance?"

"I don't know." To Eugene, the matter was a hard topic to breach as his family had done far more than that, which was why he opted for an ambiguous answer after taking a deep breath.

Upon realizing that they were merely acquaintances, Olivia had a sudden feeling that she shouldn't have asked about the matter, so she didn't pry any further. Instead, she opted to remind him, "You should probably arrange for some bodyguards to protect your grandfather secretly."

"I will be doing just that. Thank you for your time today, and I will have someone transfer the consultation fee to you." Eugene nodded as he spoke.

“You don’t have to be so polite. I should be the one to thank you instead. Your timely arrival saved me from a disastrous outcome,” she replied.

Memory of the incident that happened prior to his arrival triggered a sense of shame within Eugene, as Robin wouldn’t have been able to find fault with Olivia if he hadn’t introduced her to that rowdy bunch.

He felt responsible for what happened, thus he told her, “I won’t let what they did go unpunished, so you don’t have to worry.” Unbeknownst to him, what he said sounded like a promise more than anything else.

Soon came the following night. Olivia got a call from Kate, during which the latter requested for her company to attend a gathering together. Thus, she left North at Nathan’s place, which was a delight to North. As a games developer, every game that Nathan developed would first go through North, so visits to Nathan’s house was North’s favorite activity.

Just as they arrived at Nathan’s place, North ushered Olivia to leave and even offered cordially, “You won’t have to come fetch me tonight as it will be quite late when you’re done, I will be sleeping at Nathan’s house.”

“Are you sure you will be sleeping instead of playing games all night?” Olivia pouted.

Nathan made a promise by telling her, “I promise to watch over him.”

“I know you two are birds of a feather when it comes to games. I will drop by next morning, and you’ll have to face my wrath if I find out you have been playing games all night.” Olivia harrumphed.

“I know, I know, so you can leave now. That idiot must be waiting for you.” Nathan pushed her out as he spoke. The urgency in their actions left Olivia resigning herself to hailing a cab to go to the hotel, only to find that Kate was already waiting by the entrance of the hotel.

“You’ve kept me waiting!” Kate approached her in a hurry.

“It took some time for me to send North to Nathan’s place.” After apologizing to Kate, Olivia took her hand while Kate followed her lead as they stepped inside with the hem of her dress in hand.

“No matter what I do, I must get Luca to collaborate with me!” That was what Kate said; she worked in a startup fashion magazine publishing agency which was still in the process of garnering its fame, and its sales weren’t doing too good either, so the company was in a rather sorry state.

While the company managed to secure a contract with a company that specialized in watch ads, they insisted that Luca Matthews was to be the model for their products, which was a request that Kate couldn’t afford to turn down, as she had to put into consideration the livelihood of her subordinates.

“Do you mean Luca Matthews, the main lead in ‘Can't Help but Fall for You?’” Olivia glanced at Kate curiously.

“Yeah, so you do know him!” Kate seemed delighted to hear that.

“I also know he is employed by Metrostar Entertainment!” An amused expression could be seen on Olivia’s face as she spoke.

“Yeah!” said Kate.

“However, the drama is a hit, and his company and sponsors seemed to hold him in high regard, so you won’t necessarily succeed,” Olivia commented honestly.

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“I’ll have to give it a try no matter the outcome!” Confidence shone on Kate’s face as she spoke.

“Alright, best of luck.” Oliva arched a brow. The splendid decor shone under the lights of the brightly lit hall, which formed an overwhelming sight that assaulted their senses as the both of them entered the hall.

Sounds of wine glasses clinking together could be heard amidst the low chatter of the guests, which consisted of successful men and glamorous women. They toasted each other as they walked around with grace and elegance in the lavishly decorated arena.

Olivia wore a black knee-length gown with a slightly longer hem at the back, which displayed her sexiness alongside her innocence, while making her look like a fairy straight out of a fairytale. Moreover, the lights added a glow to her fair complexion, which served as a stark contrast to her black gown.

The long, white gown Kate wore was relatively conservative. She also had her hair in a loose bun, while two strands of hair hung beside her face, which accentuated her sexy and enchanting qualities. Because of their beauty and general lack of fame within the fashion industry while compared to the other guests, they garnered the attention of many upon entering the venue.

“Who are they?” Small talk was initiated among the crowd.

“One seems to be the chief editor of ‘Bourgeoisie Life’, while the other is a stranger.”

“I’ve never heard of the magazine. How is it?”

“It’s so so. The first issue was attention grabbing. However, their sales have been dropping during their recent publications despite a good start.”

“Don’t you think the woman beside her seemed familiar? Is she Angel, the world-renown fashion designer?”

“Isn’t Angel a foreigner?”

“No, I remember seeing her photo in an article. Let me look it up!”

As the others were studying them, they began searching for Luca as soon as they entered the venue, before finally finding the man among a crowd of women while wearing his light blue suit. There was a sense of superiority in his gaze while a smirk tugged at the corner of his lips.

“Found him! Olivia, you have fun on your own, and I’ll be back in a bit!” The sight of him lit up Kate’s eyes before she ran toward him in her heels, all the while holding a box of namecards in her pocket that she would hand to potential partners.

Olivia didn’t pay much attention to her friend’s behavior as she searched for food at the buffet counter while observing the garments worn by the other guests as a means to gain inspiration. Hmm. Might as well go around the buffet section and get something to eat.

A glance to the side had her lay eyes on the familiar figure of Aleena, but she calmed down rather quickly after figuring that it was within expectations to see her on such an occasion. However, no intentions of greeting Aleena crossed Olivia’s mind as they weren’t too acquainted to each other, while she did what she had to last time due to a lack of choice.

Aleena narrowed her eyes upon catching sight of Olivia. It seems that Robin has yet to accomplish his task, seeing that this woman is still able to show up unscathed. Fine, I’ll do this myself. Such were her thoughts while she detained one of the waiters before leading him aside. “Come with me.”

“How can I help you, Ma’am?” The waiter was visibly confused while following her. Upon arriving at a spot where there were no CCTVs, she handed a pill to the waiter before whispering orders into his ear.

“N-No way I’m doing that, Ma’am! I don’t have the guts to do this, so you’d better find someone else!” The attendant turned down her request in a flurry of panic.

“All you have to do is serve her a drink! It’s not too hard a task!” A stack of cash was retrieved by Aleena and tucked into the waiter’s pocket as she said so.

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The money became the deciding factor of the waiter for him to agree to do as Aleena said. Then, he left the secluded spot after Aleena. Meanwhile, Aleena approached Olivia as soon as she got out. “Miss Maxwell, fancy seeing you here!”

“Same here, Miss Jones.” A smile bloomed on Olivia’s face as she was forced to greet Aleena, as she couldn’t pretend that she didn’t see the latter.

"I wasn't expecting to meet you here! Did you come alone?"

"I tagged along with a friend," Olivia said.

"Do you know Logan Hunter as well?" Aleena asked.

Logan Hunter was the organizer of this gathering. "My friend knows him," Olivia replied.

"He's a friend of mine, so you can tell me if you need anything." Aleena behaved as if they were old acquaintances while waving at the waiter. "Over here!"

Upon being called, the waiter who was bribed approached in a hurry, while Aleena handed the drugged wine to Olivia as she held onto another glass before saying, "Cheers!"

Olivia didn't think it would be polite to refuse her even though Aleena's enthusiasm was a little overbearing, so she took the wine glass from her before clinking them together. Then, Aleena downed all of her wine in one go while maintaining eye contact with Olivia.

The faint but definite presence of a scent that didn't belong to the wine could be detected as soon as Olivia put the glass onto her lips. Considering the fact that Olivia had been constantly surrounded by

medicine, as well as the fact that she fell for the very same trick seven years ago, she had learned her lesson well, so she was sensitive toward the drug.

Upon casting a glance between Aleena and the waiter who just left, Olivia figured that the waiter wouldn't have the guts to come at her, thus there had to be another mastermind behind him. While she was a stranger to all the other guests, she knew Aleena held a grudge against her, so her conjecture was that Aleena was surely the culprit.

On the other hand, the delay in Olivia's actions stirred up anxiety within Aleena as she asked, "Is something wrong?"

“It’s nothing. I forgot that my body is still recovering itself from a previous injury, so I can’t drink. Please allow me to substitute it using some juice.” Olivia chuckled while holding her gaze on Aleena, then she set her glass down in search of some juice. However, a loud slap and the cries of a few women from within the hall interrupted her.

A frown formed on Olivia’s face as she looked at the direction where the commotion happened, only to see Kate having collapsed on the floor, as Luca seemed to be scolding her. The sight of it triggered a spontaneous reaction in Olivia as she slapped her juice down on the counter while rushing to Kate’s aid.

In the meantime, Luca was still being his impertinent self as he cursed at Kate. “You shouldn’t be so cocky when you’re merely the chief editor of some sh*tty magazine! Do as I say if you want to hire me, or else you can get the f*ck out of here! Who do you think you are to resort to violence, you b*tch?”

“Don’t be angry, Luca. You need not make a fuss over a woman!” The crowd around him tried to pacify him.

“Yeah, you have a public image to keep, and there are quite a number of journalists here.” All sorts of advice was offered by the crowd, but none of them tried to help Kate up, as the latter was a mere editor for an unknown publisher, while Luca was a top celebrity, and they knew who to side.

Besides, Luca was surrounded by women who perceived Kate to be far prettier than them, which was why they refused to lend a helping hand; they thought they had done enough by withholding their slights.

In a few strides, Olivia reached Kate to help her up before inquiring about the latter. She noticed that half of Kate’s face was swollen. Even though it was already hard to quell her anger, Luca still had to add insult to injury by continuously cursing at Kate. “You shameless b*stards!”

Silence ensued as Olivia looked toward Luca with a harsh gaze before attacking Luca with a kick right before the crowd’s eyes.

“F*ck! Who the f*ck are you, b*tch? How dare you kick me?!” The kick toppled Luca as he cried out in pain, while bewildered cries could be heard among the crowd as they looked at Kate and Olivia.

“Who are you? Why did you hit him?”

“She made the first move!”

“What an arrogant woman!”

Unwilling to repeat the vile words Luca spouted, Kate explained the situation in simple terms as she glared at Luca, “I was trying to invite him to work on a photoshoot for our magazine, but he got all handsy, so I hit him out of anger.”

Despite showing their sympathy toward Kate, everybody kept their silence while refraining from speaking ill of Luca due to his connections with investors and Metrostar Entertainment. Luca wasn’t about to admit his wrongdoings while he rambled on, “Stop spouting nonsense! I did not get all handsy! You were the one who kept pestering me and making empty promises! I refrained from accusing you of seducing me, so how dare you bite back at me like that?”

“You’re the one who is spouting nonsense! I did not seduce you!” Kate was getting riled up. In the meantime, a sneer crept onto Olivia’s face while she observed Luca. “You’re ignorant for doing as you please without a care for your company’s image, and you’re a man without virtue for being arrogant and swearing in public! The fact that you bit back at my friend shows how unfair you are, while hitting a woman in public is proof of your shamelessness! How dare a lowly being like you create a ruckus here?”

“Just you wait, you obnoxious twat!” After he had a handful of insults thrown to his face, Luca left for a phone call after cursing at them, but Olivia didn’t seem to care as she led Kate to get some ice from a waiter before asking, “What happened back then?”

“He’s among the lowliest dregs of society. I was blind to have thought that he might be a nice guy by judging him using the image of the loyal man he portrayed on TV. Instead, he started off by asking me to introduce you to him because he fancied you, then he began touching my body while saying that he would consider my offer if the both of us are to sleep with him for the night. Isn’t he such an arrogant prick? So I gave him a slap out of fury, but I immediately regretted my actions.”

“You don’t have to feel regret about it. I would even encourage you to slap him harder.” A look of contempt crept onto Olivia’s face.

“Now the cover for my next issue is gone!” Kate couldn’t help but feel dejected about it.

“Scum like him is not fit for your cover anyway. Come, put some ice on your face as it’s all swollen. That b*stard sure hit you hard.”

“You ain’t half bad. He couldn’t stand for a while, so your kick must’ve hurt.”

“Serves him right!”

“But you shouldn’t have resorted to violence. It won’t do if you get into trouble over this since you just arrived here.”

“Look at yourself! You shouldn’t be worrying about me! You should’ve asked me for help if you want to hit him, since you have such a small build.” The ice pack was pressed onto Kate’s face as Olivia spoke.

A commotion at the entrance of the banquet hall garnered the attention of all guests as one of them squealed, “It’s Eugene Nolan!”

“Wow, he is so handsome! Good gracious!”

“It must be his aura! Just look at how the people around him bend to his will!”

“We can only look up at him!”

The voices of a few women garnered Olivia’s attention, and she gazed toward where the commotion was happening. Their position on the inner part of the hall determined that they could see what was going on outside clearly without exposing themselves.

It was indeed Eugene who graced them with his presence in a dark colored suit. The look he wore was one of aloofness as he scanned his surroundings with a sharp gaze, which contributed to the air of a leader that he was born with.

Following behind him meekly was Curtis and the rest who was aiming to flatter him. Eugene was the embodiment of power and prestige in Summer City, and his presence dominated everywhere he arrived at, which included the banquet hall.

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There was a gigantic semicircular sofa in the lounge area ahead, and everyone got up to offer their seats, crowding Eugene into a seat right in the middle. Subsequently, everyone went up to greet him regardless of whether they were acquainted with him. This seemed to be an unwritten rule, which naturally was also for the sake of making his acquaintance since it was a golden opportunity to collaborate with Nolan Group.

Olivia was busy icing Kate's face, so she didn't go over to greet him, but she saw Aleena walking over. "Isn't that Aleena Jones?" Kate exclaimed, "Summer City is abuzz with rumors that she's dating Eugene!"

Olivia nodded. "I saw her earlier and even chatted with her for a bit. I, too, suspect that she might have come because she knew that Eugene would be here."

"That's possible. Otherwise, such a cocktail party is beneath her considering her family background," Kate replied.

"What's her background?" Olivia asked in surprise.

"I heard that her father is the director-general of customs in Summer City," Kate answered.

Understanding dawned upon Olivia. No wonder she's acquainted with someone like Eugene.

Meanwhile, Aleena was truly ecstatic, for she just knew that Eugene would definitely attend this cocktail party, so she specifically came to wait for him. Although Olivia didn't fall into her trap, she was still happy to see Eugene. She walked over and greeted sweetly, "Eugene."

With a cigarette in his mouth, Eugene lazily glanced at her and murmured an acknowledgment, treating her the same as he treated others. Feeling somewhat hurt over his indifferent attitude, Aleena inhaled deeply and remarked with a smile, "If I'd known that you'd be coming as well, we could have attended together. Look, you're alone, and I don't have a companion either." The meaning of this remark was as plain as day.

"I'm not alone," Eugene replied, his expression indiscernible.

Aleena merely giggled awkwardly. "Curtis isn't a woman."

Eugene stared at her. "Who stipulates that it must be a woman?"

Aleena's expression froze again. The host, Logan, then attempted to smooth things over, chiming in with a smile, "A pairing of Jack and Jill makes a tough job a breeze since the two can complement each other!" Upon hearing this, the crowd burst out laughing.

Aleena gave a tight smile as well. Looking at Eugene with a shy and timid gaze, she commented ingratiatingly, "I visited Grandpa this morning, and we even spoke of you." As she said that, she walked over to him in hopes of sitting beside him.

Logan who happened to sit beside Eugene stood up perceptively. "Aleena, come and sit here."

Eugene, however, suddenly raised his eyes and shot him a glare, his gaze threatening although his voice remained placid. "Are you that busy?"

Logan embarrassingly sat back down. "Not at all. I was just thinking of making arrangements to take this party elsewhere," he replied with a smile.

"No need. Staying here is fine," Eugene countered nonchalantly.

Aleena stood frozen in mortification, torn between taking a seat and remaining standing. At one point, aggrieve flooded her. Why must Eugene be so cruel to me when I came just because of him? By now, everyone with half a mind could tell that Eugene just didn't want to bother with Aleena, so no one did anything for some time until the lady who came with Aleena called out to her, giving her a way out of this embarrassing situation. Smiling, she bid Eugene farewell and left.

After she'd left, a group of women gossiped about her in hushed tones, saying, "Miss Jones always regards herself as Eugene Nolan's woman, yet look at the slap in the face she was just given. I'm mortified on her behalf."

"Eugene Nolan is brutal as well, not giving her any quarter!"

"Who can she blame? He has never acknowledged their relationship. Rather, she's the one putting feathers in her own cap."

"Exactly. She invited scorn herself!"

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While Olivia could see what was happening over there, she couldn't hear what was being said. However, she was still rather surprised. Why didn't Aleena stay longer with Eugene?

"Olivia, you should go and greet Eugene as well. After all, it's somewhat impolite to not greet him since you've seen him. As my face is now bruised, however, I won't be accompanying you over," Kate remarked.

Glancing at Eugene, Olivia noticed that he was still surrounded by a crowd, so she replied, "Never mind, I'll wait for you before going over."

"Why would you wait for me? How am I to go over with such a face?"

Olivia shot her a glare. "Excuses! With such simple thinking, I worry about the future of your magazine."

Being an astute person herself, a moment of clarity instantly came upon Kate as a light bulb went off in her head at Olivia's reminder. Eugene Nolan's influence is even greater than any celebrity or big shot! Pursing her lips, she smirked. "Is this appropriate?"

Olivia shot daggers at her. "We're just going over to greet him, not doing anything grievous. What's inappropriate about that?" As she said that, she raised Kate's chin. "Let me have a look. Hmm, it's much better now. Just go and touch up your makeup for a bit!"

It made sense to Kate, so she got up and went to the washroom with Olivia to touch up her makeup. When she came out, her makeup was exquisite, and her bruising wasn't at all visible unless one truly scrutinized her face.

At this time, there was still a crowd around Eugene, including those few women who spoke up on Luca's behalf earlier. Perhaps it was because it was too abrupt that they were heading right at Eugene or their fuss earlier had attracted attention, but everyone was looking at them at this moment.

While Olivia wasn't afraid of the scrutiny, she was rather unused to such attention. Leading Kate, she moved through the crowd and came to the lounge in the lobby. Then, she courteously greeted the man who was sitting in the middle of the sofa and radiating a strong aura, "Mr. Nolan."

Everyone was a touch startled upon hearing this, the look in the women's eyes brimming with contempt. These two people wish to make friends with Eugene Nolan as well despite having no popularity, background, or repute? He has already crushed Miss Jones earlier, so these two ladies are just thick-skinned.

A glimmer of surprise and even delight flitted across Eugene's eyes. I never thought I'd meet her here. "Miss Maxwell!"

Kate was a tad more nervous compared to Olivia, and she dipped her head a fraction at Eugene. "Mr. Nolan." Eugene politely inclined his head at her in response. Everyone was dumbfounded. What's happening here? They're actually acquainted?

“Come and sit over here!” Eugene beckoned the two of them. Sit? Where are we supposed to sit? Naturally, they were to sit beside him, so Logan again stood up perceptively, but Eugene didn’t protest this time. Thus, everyone promptly got up like a chain reaction and emptied two spots beside him.

Olivia inclined her head slightly at the crowd and was just a moment away from sitting down while tugging on Kate’s hand when a woman’s forceful voice rang out at this time. “Who hit my brother?”

At this, everyone looked over in the direction of the voice. A wealthy-looking woman in a branded dress who appeared to be in her 40s was striding in their direction, her aura fierce and intimidating.

Meanwhile, the man trailing behind her was none other than Luca who’d been kicked to the ground by Olivia earlier.

Olivia’s brows furrowed slightly. Never have I thought this man would actually ask a woman to come and avenge him. Damn, he’s not a man at all! The disdain within her showed on her face. Instead of sitting down on the sofa, she remained standing as she stared at the fast-approaching woman.

Kate whispered, “This woman is the president of Grant Group, Harriet Grant. She’s a career woman who’s been single ever since her divorce. We’re in hot water this time, for this woman is so tough that even most men don’t dare provoke her.” Olivia nodded imperceptibly. Eugene didn’t move, but his brows creased slightly as he kept his eyes on Olivia’s situation.

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Luca murmured to Harriet, “Miss Harriet, that’s the woman who came up to me and kicked me to the ground for no reason.”

Without even sparing anyone else a look, Harriet stared fixedly at Olivia and strode up to her. “You’re quite savage, huh?”

The corners of her lips twitching, Olivia patiently explained, “I’m not savage. I feel just the same way you’re feeling right now. You came over to retaliate on behalf of your friend just as I retaliated on behalf of my friend. He started the incident.”

Snorting, Harriet demanded fiercely, "So, you're saying that it was my brother's fault?"

Olivia, on the other hand, remained smiling. "Nothing is ever incidental."

"Miss Harriet, it's that woman who hit me first," Luca whispered into Harriet's ear.

All at once, Harriet looked at Kate, her gaze so ferocious that it resembled the vicious gaze of a wolf. Kate's knees buckled in terror at her look. No wonder this woman can compete with men in the business world. She's just so fierce. "He insulted me first. I was incensed, so I slapped him."

Harriet continued staring at Kate, looking as though she'd raise a hand against her anytime. "So, it was indeed you who hit him first?"

Taking a step forward, Olivia shielded Kate behind her. "I wasn't planning on taking things too far since we're all in the same circle and would meet frequently, but it seems to be out of my control now. "Madam Grant, if someone insulted you, groped you, and even asked you to sleep with him, would you be able to control yourself from slapping him?"

Harriet narrowed her eyes and looked at Luca suspiciously, instantly scaring him so greatly that his heart stopped beating for a moment. Gazing at her, he hastily explained, "Miss Harriet, that's a lie. It was her who invited me to do a photo shoot for her magazine. I've never even heard of that magazine, so I declined, but she kept harassing me. Frustrated with the harassment, I indeed told her to get lost and dressed her down for taking advantage of my popularity, only to have her claim that I've insulted her. She then slapped me right across the face. Miss Harriet, I'm truly innocent to have disaster befalling me from nowhere."

"Nonsense!" Kate was so livid that her face had turned bright red. At this moment, she disregarded all modesty and snapped at him, "It was you who said that you'll only accept the invitation if Olivia and I spend the night with you!"

Naturally, Harriet didn't believe Olivia and Kate's words. Her face darkened at once, and she thundered, "I don't care what's incidental and what's deliberate. Since you hit my brother, I won't just let this slide. Either apologize to my brother, or I'll have someone hit you back in return. Your choice!"

Just as her words fell, an extremely soft sneer sounded. "Ah, how formidable, President Grant!"

This exclamation instantly attracted everyone's attention. That's right! These two ladies are acquainted with Eugene Nolan, so he'll probably intervene, no? There's bound to be an interesting show.

Her brows knitting together slightly, Harriet looked over in the direction of the voice. At this time, the man who was sitting on the sofa while surrounded on all sides was leaning back against the sofa languidly with his legs crossed, his hands holding a cell phone that he was tapping nimbly as though playing a game, his entire person appearing rather willful and arrogant. Harriet's expression froze for a moment before she smiled and walked over to Eugene. "You're here as well, President Nolan?"

Without even lifting his head, Eugene replied, "From the very beginning."

Chuckling in embarrassment, Harriet said, "I was enraged over my brother's incident, so I didn't notice you. How remiss of me!" As she said that, she took a glass of wine from the server. "I'm sorry, President Nolan. Here, I'll drink to you as an apology. Please don't take offense at me."

Eugene didn't raise his head, so he naturally didn't raise his wine glass either. Instead, he continued playing the game on his cell phone. All at once, the atmosphere plunged into an awkward silence, and everyone stared at him in incomprehension.

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It was only when the game had ended did Eugene put down his cell phone and looked up at Harriet who was still holding up a wine glass. He then languidly picked up the wine glass before him and clinked it to hers. "You exaggerate, President Grant. Who am I to take offense to whoever you deign to notice?"

"No, no. Although I'm a few years older than you, everyone knows your finesse in the business world, President Nolan. I still have much to learn from you," Harriet replied deferentially.

"You flatter me," Eugene commented mildly. After saying that, he looked at Olivia. "Olivia, come here!" It was the first time he'd ever addressed her thus, which Olivia found both refreshing and embarrassing. Knowing that he was doing this for her sake, she tugged Kate over and sat down beside him without any protest.

Entirely dumbfounded, Harriet looked at Eugene with an incredulous look in her eyes. "President Nolan, these two ladies are..."

Eugene lifted his eyes to hers, his gaze sharp. "My friends!"

With just these two words, the two of them were pulled into his circle, and this elevation in status was very much significant. Those who'd thought that they had no popularity or repute were now looking on in envy as they rose to the heights they hankered.

Harriet chuckled. "Oh, it must have been a misunderstanding since they're your friends, President Nolan."

Eugene, however, didn't respond to that. "I caught bits and pieces earlier, but I couldn't quite make out the situation. Was it my two friends who hit your brother?" he asked instead.

Harriet naturally didn't dare affirm it. "No, it's probably a misunderstanding. Since they're your friends, President Nolan, I'll just forget about this," she replied immediately.

"You sound rather reluctant. It seems that it's truly my two friends who are at fault here." With a hint of ridicule in his voice, Eugene sneered, "Logan, go and get the CCTV footage. After all, I've got to ascertain who's at fault here and give President Grant a reasonable explanation."

While Logan wanted to keep the peace, he wasn't foolish. Since Eugene had intervened in this matter, he naturally had to look to him. At this moment, Eugene was obviously siding with the two women, so he naturally couldn't protest. Offending anyone else isn't a problem as long as I stay on Eugene Nolan's good side. Thus, he went straight to the security room.

It was only now that Luca was beginning to regret stirring the pot. I thought it was a guaranteed win with Harriet Grant as my backing, but I never thought that we'd bump into Eugene Nolan, let alone imagined that these two women just happened to be his friends. Even if I want to leave now, that's probably impossible. I only hope that this old woman will be able to protect me from being annihilated by Eugene Nolan later.

Logan was fairly quick, and he got the CCTV footage in no time. Although the CCTV footage had sound, there were too many people talking, so the words weren't quite intelligible. Besides, Luca's voice was soft in the first place. However, the video was rather clear after zooming in, showing Luca glancing over at Olivia before saying something to Kate, which caused her expression to change and to grow infuriated at him. With a lascivious smirk, he then stretched out an arm and yanked Kate into his embrace, his hand moving from her waist to her bottom, his expression lewd.

Immediately after, Kate shoved him away and slapped him across his face. Luca's expression then instantly turned vicious, and he slapped her in return, throwing her clear off her feet. At this time, the voices in the lobby quietened considerably, and Luca lambasted Kate, "Do you think you're such a big

deal just because you're the editor-in-chief of a magazine I've never even heard of? If you want me to help you, you either do as I say or get lost! Who the hell do you think you are that you even dared to hit me? F*ck off!" This utterance was clear as a bell, including the dressing down of him being ignorant, immoral, perverted, and shameless from Olivia after she'd given him a swift kick. It was simply a magnificent sight!