

After Nathan and Penny returned to their home in Asiatic City, Thomas left with his men.

Penny expressed her gratitude again, “I can’t thank you enough for doing this. At least we didn’t look like losers in front of the whole clan.”

Nathan smirked, “It was nothing, Hehe. Remember, this is not a defeat but a new beginning. You will rise up from the ashes.”

Penny was puzzled, ‘What are you talking about? We no longer have the clan’s support. Besides, I’m jobless now. How would I rise up from this?’

Nathan casually suggested, “You mean, you’re not working for Grande anymore. That doesn’t mean you’re jobless. You still have the shopping complex

project! Why don't you open your own company? When you complete the project, your personal net worth will exceed the clan's for sure."

Penny was taken aback, "Nathan... You've got it wrong. I'd signed the contract on behalf of the company. This is their project now."

Nathan responded in a laid-back manner, "Nah. It stated clearly that you were the party B, not Grande. I also talked to the director of their development department, Mr. Ziegler. He said that they'd only recognized you as the developer instead of Grande. In other words, only Penny Smith gets to build the shopping complex!"

It went without saying that Penny and her parents were over the moon to learn that.

Penny even gave Wyatt Ziegler a call to confirm. His

answer matched Nathan's earlier statement.

Penny thanked Wyatt in excitement before she ended the call.

However, the excitement did not last long. Penny had to now face the challenge of finishing the project on her own.

Can I pull it off?

If I do as Nathan suggested and found our own company, where would I get funding?

Nathan read her mind, "Don't worry. I'll take care of the money. You just focus on the project. Okay?"

Penny and her parents were beside themselves.

They thought today was the darkest day of their lives,

having lost everything.

Thanks to Nathan, they now saw the silver lining.

Penny stared at Nathan gratefully, “We’re in your debt. I don’t know what we’d do without you this time.”

Nathan looked at Queenie, who was in his embrace, “Pumpkin, what do you think about Mama thanking me?”

Queenie chuckled, “Mom and dad are family. We don’t have to thank our family for helping us because loving and being loved are equally gratifying.”

That speech brought joy to Nathan and his in-laws.

Penny’s delicate face turned red. She gave Queenie the side-eye, “Where did you learn that from?”

Queenie proudly admitted, “TV shows, Hehe.”

Penny replied, “Well, then you’re banned from watching TV for the next two days.”

Queenie’s jaw dropped. Her puffy face immediately crumpled.

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Royale Villa Residences.

Sean was consumed by fury.

He glared at Samuel, Paul, Miles, and May, “What do you mean you got kicked out by Mr. Ziegler? Let me get this straight. You asked him when to start the construction, and he said that Grande wasn’t the developer, but Penny was?”

Samuel was just as upset as his father, “Yeah! I don’t know what’s got into them.”

Paul elaborated with a long face, “I reread the contract and only found Penny’s name on it. Grande was not mentioned at all.”

Sean banged the table, “Ugh. They plotted this all along. Those nasty, ungrateful wretches!”

“For the sake of your health, try and calm down,” recommended Samuel.

Sean went on, “There’s no way I can calm down. We’re talking about a pivotal project that could make us the most significant family in town. Not only did we draw a blank, but we also let those good-for-nothings have their way.”

Samuel comforted, “Don’t worry. They won’t win. Penny is nothing without Grande. There’s no way she could move forward with a project so momentous. Penny will yield with a little nudge on our part.”

Sean was intrigued, “What do you have in mind?”

Samuel sneered, “Doesn’t her darling daughter go to Golden Apple Kindergarten? I can get in touch with a few outlaws to have them kidnap her and ask for a ransom of ten million bucks. When Penny comes begging for money, we’ll make her give us the project. Easy-peasy.”

Sean was satisfied, “Great. I’ll let you take care of it. We have to get the project back, no matter what.”

“I hear you, dad.”

Nathan gathered five million of seed money in a few

days.

Penny assumed it to be a favor from Thomas to Nathan. Therefore, she promised herself to do her best not to disappoint him.

With a million, Penny registered for a company under the name Cross Corporate, as a tribute to her husband's support.

Penny utilized the rest of the money to rent an office space and hire staff. The basics of her establishment were coming together in a short amount of time.

At dusk, Penny and Nathan left their office to fetch their daughter.

When they reached the kindergarten, a teacher notified them that Queenie had already left.



The teacher inquired worriedly, “Didn’t you send someone to pick her up?”

Penny tensed up, “I did not!”

“I didn’t either. Could it be your parents?” Nathan lowered his eyebrows.

Penny quickly whipped out her phone to ask her parents, but their answer was the same.

Penny’s face went white as chalk. Her eyes were brimmed with tears, “They said no... Lord, who took her?”

The teacher was shaking like a leaf. It was the kindergarten’s rule that only parents could take the children away.

However, Nathan left an awe-inspiring impression last

time he domineered Walter and his wife.

Hence when a man came to pick up Queenie, the teacher presumed that it was Nathan's subordinate and did not dare to question him.

Nathan sensed the danger of this situation and turned to reassure Penny.

Before Nathan could say a word, Penny's phone rang.

It was from an unknown caller.

Penny was thrown off, but she still picked up.

She heard Queenie's wailing as soon as the call connected.

Penny's heart dropped and her voice broke,  
"Queenie!"

Penny then heard a man's frigid tone, "Heh, I'm sure you could recognize your daughter's voice."

Penny was shell-shocked, "Who are you... What do you want?"

The man let out a devious laugh, "Money, of course. Ten million for your daughter. If it is one cent short, or you call the cops, then that was the last time you'll ever hear from your daughter."

Penny choked up, "You got the wrong person. We are not rich."

The man found it amusing, "Is that so? Are you telling me that the princess of the Smith family can't even afford ten million?"

Penny pleaded, "The family already cast us out."

There is no way I can give you that much money - even if we sell all we have. Let her go. I beg you!"

The man menaced indifferently, "I don't care how you get the money, but you have three hours. Go ask your grandfather or get it yourself. I don't care. Either or, no money, no daughter. You gave birth to such a pretty girl. I'm sure I'll get a good price anywhere I sell her."

"No!"

"Dream on then."

The man hung up.

When Penny called back, it showed that his phone was already turned off.

She felt the whole world spinning around her. Body

shaking horribly, Penny relayed the message to Nathan, “Queenie was abducted. He demanded ten million in three hours, or we’ll never see her again.”

Penny paused, biting her lower lip before she continued, “There’s no way we can come up with such an amount. I think that we can borrow the money from my relatives. If we agree to let them have the Asiatic project, I’m sure they will be okay with it.”

Nathan shook his head as he found this to be fishy, “Don’t. I can handle this.”

Then, Nathan called Colin, “My daughter has gone missing. I need to know where she is in ten minutes!”

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