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With that, Duncan abruptly ended the call, reveling in the power he held over Peterson and relishing in the thought of leaving him to face the consequences of their shared actions alone. Little did Duncan know that his refusal would set off a series of events that would challenge his own assumptions and change the course of his life in unexpected ways.

"Now, you will rot in jail, Peterson. More charges will be thrown at you, and you will face the brutal consequences of messing with me," Duncan muttered to himself, relishing in the thought of Peterson's impending downfall. The satisfaction of his own perceived victory fueled his arrogance.

As Duncan turned, he was taken aback to find Zinnia standing at the door of the room, her arms folded. Her presence startled him, and he couldn't help but wonder if she had overheard his vindictive muttering. She stood there with a straight face, giving away no emotions, which only intensified Duncan's unease.

As Zinnia walked towards him in a calculated manner, Duncan's heart rate quickened. He felt a mix of apprehension and guilt, uncertain of what Zinnia might have heard or how she would respond.

"What did you say?" Zinnia asked, her voice laced with a hint of suspicion and her eyes narrowing as if she was trying to penetrate the depths of Duncan's thoughts.

Duncan's mind raced as he searched for the right words to deflect the situation. Sweat began to form on his forehead as he stammered, "Oh, uh... I was just... talking to myself, you know... nothing important."

Zinnia remained silent, her gaze unwavering. Duncan could sense her

skepticism, and he knew that his feeble attempt to dismiss the situation was unlikely to satisfy her.

Caught in Zinnia's piercing stare, Duncan could no longer ignore the reality that he might have underestimated the woman standing before him.

Not convinced by Duncan's attempt to downplay his muttered words, Zinnia pressed on, her curiosity getting the better of her. "What did you say?" Her tone had shifted to a neutral one, giving Duncan a glimmer of hope that she might not have heard his vindictive remarks. He held himself back from releasing a sigh of relief and instead straightened his posture, preparing for her response.

"What did you hear me say, Zinnia?" Duncan asked, his voice steady but tinged with a hint of apprehension. He hoped to gauge the extent of her knowledge, unsure of how much he needed to defend or explain.

Zinnia seemed momentarily caught off guard by his question. She took a step back, rolling her eyes in an act of dismissal. "I don't care about what you say or think, Duncan," she retorted, her tone filled with indifference.

Relieved by her response, Duncan allowed a small smirk to creep onto his face. "Good. So...?"

Zinnia's expression hardened, and she met his indifferent smile with a steely gaze. "I just want you to know one thing, idiot."

Duncan's smirk faltered, replaced by a sense of uncertainty. He waited for her to continue, his curiosity piqued by her choice of words.

Zinnia held his gaze, her voice firm and unwavering. "You may think you hold power over me, but you're gravely mistaken. I'm not as weak or naive as you believe. And one day, you will come to regret

underestimating me."

"Okay, is that all?" He asked with an indifferent smile. "Go on."

Zinnia's voice trembled with a mix of anger and pain as she unleashed her pent-up frustration upon Duncan. Her words cut through the air, filled with the bitterness of betrayal and the weight of her suffering.

"Since you returned, you've jinxed my life and made it worse," Zinnia accused, her voice laced with resentment. "But it's fine. You're enjoying yourself at the expense of my sadness and humiliation every day. Just like tonight, you didn't say a word to stop Peterson from humiliating me."

Her words struck a nerve, and Duncan's smug demeanor wavered momentarily. He felt the weight of her accusations and the truth behind them. Yet, a glimmer of amusement danced in his eyes as he attempted to downplay the severity of the situation.

"He was your lover, and I'm sure he still would have been if he hadn't lost his job," Duncan retorted, his voice dripping with condescension.

Zinnia's anger flared, and her patience reached its breaking point. "Fuck you, fool!" she yelled, her voice filled with raw emotion, her face contorted with rage. She sneered when she saw Duncan's smirk, realizing the lack of remorse or empathy he held towards her. "You know I hate you with every fiber in my body now, Duncan! I wish you would die forever as a poor rat!"

Duncan nonchalantly shrugged off Zinnia's warning, dismissing her words as inconsequential. He walked over to his side of the closet, leaving her to stare at him with a mix of anger and frustration, her words hanging in the air.

"Duncan, I'm promising you this, your bad days are near too," Zinnia's

voice carried a hint of determination, causing Duncan's hand to pause midway through selecting a garment. For a brief moment, her words managed to penetrate his self-assured facade.

He pondered on her warning, his mind briefly contemplating the potential consequences of his actions. But soon, a familiar arrogance swept over him, and he couldn't help but chuckle at her words. Grabbing a shirt, he turned to face her, a self-satisfied smile spreading across his face.

"I'm filthy rich now, Zinnia," he thought with a sense of superiority. "If only you knew that, you wouldn't have uttered that, because you will be the one to suffer more in my hands."

Duncan's confidence overshadowed any doubts that Zinnia's words may have momentarily stirred within him. He believed that his wealth and power would shield him from any repercussions, fueling his determination to maintain control over their tumultuous relationship.

As Duncan spoke, his tone carried a mixture of frustration and dismissiveness.

"You know what, my dear wife? Forget about my upcoming bad days and think about regaining your position in the company. If you can be given one of the top 5 positions, then I will consider your words about me true.

"The underlying implication was that her success would validate her opinions about him.

"Just watch and see. Zinnia Lennart isn't meant to be down for long. When I regain my position, I will figure out a way to kick you out of this house..."

With a sly and mocking smile, Duncan interrupted, "You surely would

attempt that so you can find yourself another man to display your promiscuity with, hm."

His comment hurt and provoked her. In response, Zinnia groaned in exasperation and pointed at him, a gesture of frustration and disbelief, while Duncan laughed, seemingly finding amusement in his own words.

"Don't worry, I will go out to get some fresh air on the terrace. In the meantime, assert your rights to the room but if you turn it upside down, arrange it." With that he left, whistling as she gave him a cold stare. If the stare was as sharp as a flying dart then Duncan would have been cut into pieces before stepping out of the room.

Two days later, the Lennart family gathered around the breakfast table, having their morning meal. The atmosphere was pleasant and relaxed, filled with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and the sound of clinking cutlery.

However, the tranquility was abruptly interrupted when George entered the room with a visible frown on his face. The family members couldn't help but shift their attention to him, sensing that something was amiss.

"Damn it," George muttered under his breath as he took his seat, his expression reflecting frustration and disappointment.

Ma'am Luna, who had always been the pillar of strength, was the first to inquire, her voice laced with concern. "What is it, George? What's troubling you?"

With a heavy sigh, George replied, "Mother, I just found out that Peterson has been released."

The news sent a wave of shock and disbelief through the room. Zinnia couldn't hide her surprise. "What? How is that possible, uncle? I thought

you were going to file a case and make sure he faced some hard time in jail?"

George's face grew even more somber as he explained, "Yes, Zinnia, we did file a case against him. Unfortunately, he managed to secure bail, and it seems like he had his way."

Frustration and anger filled the air, evident in the collective groan that escaped from Laila. "Damn!" she exclaimed, voicing the shared sentiment of the family.

"Don't worry, Mom," Marcus reassured his mother. "Just because Peterson is out doesn't mean our lives will change a little for the worse. He's a nobody."

"What do you mean by I shouldn't worry?" Laila questioned, her voice filled with frustration. "That Peterson should be held accountable for the humiliation he caused us."

George, trying to soothe his sister's concerns, responded in a reassuring tone. "I understand your anger, Laila, but we need to stay calm. One thing is for sure, Peterson won't dare to come near us or harass Zinnia again."

Laila and Zinnia exchanged uncertain glances, finding it difficult to find solace in George's words. The wounds inflicted by Peterson's actions and words were still fresh, and the idea of him evading punishment didn't sit well with them.

Meanwhile, Duncan contemplated the situation. His expression remained indifferent, masking any emotions that may have stirred within him. However, deep down, he pondered how Peterson managed to secure bail, a thought that intrigued him.

After a brief silence, Duncan excused himself from the breakfast table,

feeling a need to distance himself from the emotional atmosphere. He decided to head to the Walton business estate, where he could find solitude and perhaps seek answers to the questions that lingered in his mind.

His departure went unnoticed by the rest of the family, consumed as they were by their thoughts and concerns.

Meanwhile, in a worn-out city car, Peterson Rogers sat in the front seat, his appearance disheveled and his face etched with a grimace. The once charismatic and confident man now seemed a shadow of his former self. His clothes were rumpled, and his disheveled hair reflected his current state of despair.

As Peterson brooded in the car, a woman entered the driver's seat and handed him a paper bag containing a hamburger. Her presence offered a glimpse of support amidst his desolation.

"Eat, bro," she said softly, her voice carrying a hint of sympathy and understanding.

Peterson's eyes lingered on the paper bag, but his expression remained clouded by bitterness. "I can't believe I find myself in this small car, hiding my face from the very public that once adored me and was envious of my success," he muttered, his voice tinged with resentment. "It's all because I lost my job, got arrested, and now I look like a complete failure."
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Feeling a combination of shame and regret, Peterson stole a glance at the woman beside him. He let out a heavy sigh, realizing the contrast between his past life and his current predicament.

"If it wasn't for you, my sister, I wouldn't have gotten bailed. Thanks,

Sarah," Peterson expressed, his voice filled with gratitude and a touch of relief.

Sarah, the woman who had come to his aid, shook her head dismissively. "C'mon, Peterson. Don't thank me. I'm just glad I could get to the city quickly and help you out."

Peterson's words took a more sentimental turn. "We aren't even born from the same mother, yet you've always been there for me. Forever good to me."

Sarah brushed off his appreciation, her tone casual. "Forget it. We're family."

Curiosity piqued, Peterson questioned her choice of the city car they were currently occupying. "Why did you come with this car?"

"So no one gets to know you're the one inside the car."

A faint smile played on Peterson's lips as he responded, "Smart of you to do."

Sarah's expression hardened, and her voice carried a note of determination. "So, what's next now, Peterson?"

She stared at him intently, her gaze piercing into his. They locked eyes, their unspoken connection speaking volumes.

"Revenge is next, Sarah," Peterson declared, his voice laced with bitterness. His words hung heavy in the air, leaving a chilling atmosphere.

Sarah raised an eyebrow, her expression displaying a mix of surprise and caution. She understood the depth of Peterson's anger, but she needed to

ensure his intentions were clear.

Her tone was cautious as she responded, "Revenge, you say? Are you sure, Peterson?"

Their intense gaze remained unbroken, a silent agreement passing between them.

"I'm 100% certain, Sarah," Peterson affirmed, his voice resolute. "You handled my bail after reaching out to the person I asked you to. Now, it's my turn to return the favor and bring ruin to the Walton Group of Companies."

Sarah listened attentively, her expression serious as she processed Peterson's words. "You worked in one of their subsidiary companies before, right?" she asked, seeking clarification.

Peterson nodded, bitterness evident in his voice. "Yes, and they treated me like trash, casting me aside without a second thought. But there is someone within the organization who I need to eliminate. Someone who undoubtedly has a close connection with the Waltons."

Sarah's eyes widened as she absorbed this information, realizing the significance of what Peterson was suggesting. "Someone?" she inquired, her voice filled with a mix of curiosity and concern.

Peterson's tone grew more serious as he revealed the name. "Sarah, he's a sly and cunning individual. His name is Duncan South."

A tense silence filled the car as Sarah took in the weight of Peterson's revelation. Both of their eyes locked, conveying a shared understanding of the gravity of their mission.

Sarah inhaled sharply, her mind racing with his next plan. "Who is he,

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Peterson? Tell me more about him," she inquired.