

My Accidental Husband is a Billionaire !

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“I’m sorry too, Mr. Sims!”

A man stepped forward. “I sealed the windows on purpose so you wouldn’t see any light.”

Another added, “I made sure the door was cracked at night to let the cold air in while you slept.”

“I didn’t do much, but I led the charge to badmouth you for days. I’m sorry.”

“...”

One after another, members of the Special Division bowed their heads in apology, not just out of guilt but out of growing admiration for the elderly man standing before them.

Even those who had done nothing wrong followed suit, apologizing and showing their respect.

Then, a steady voice cut through the crowd. “Let me through.”

Everyone parted as Brian walked up, eyes fixed on old Mr. Sims.

He saw the man’s white hair, frail body, and shaky steps, but most of all, he saw those eyes—steady and unbroken.

The weight of it hit Brian like a punch to the gut.

Without warning, Brian dropped to his knees in front of old Mr. Sims with a loud thud.

Old Mr. Sims froze, startled. “What are you doing? Get up, get up...”

But Brian shook his head. “Please don’t ask me to get up. I’ve known you my whole life, and I know the kind of person you are. But because of this stupid Special Division position, I let myself grow suspicious and resentful toward you. And when everything went south, I didn’t question it—I just got angry. Mr. Sims, I’m so sorry!”

His forehead hit the ground with a sharp knock, the sound echoing in the room, making everyone’s chest tighten.

When Brian lifted his head, his forehead was already turning red.

He looked like he was ready to bow again when old Mr. Sims chuckled, shaking his head. “You stubborn kid, get up!”

Brian froze, the familiar nickname hitting him hard. Memories of his younger years flooded back, and he blinked, his eyes suddenly red-rimmed. He wanted to say something, but the words stuck in his throat.

Mr. Sims reached down and pulled him to his feet. “You’ve done a good job all these years,” he said softly.

“I should’ve handed the reins to you long ago, but I had to stay on for Barry’s sake. It’s only natural you’d have some hard feelings. But even so, I’ve seen everything you’ve done lately, and I’m proud of you.”

He helped Brian stand upright and smiled. “You’re my pride. I know you’ll take good care of the Special Division.”

Brian blinked in shock. “What are you saying?”

Old Mr. Sims glanced over at Barry Brandt, smiling. “Barry’s back, so there’s no need for me to hang on to this job any longer. It’s time for me to retire. As for the money in my account, I didn’t touch a cent because I was afraid it’d be flagged. Now, it can all go to charity—it’s Barry’s contribution to our country.”

Old Mr. Sims had never been involved in corruption; the money in his account remained untouched.

Brian’s chest tightened even more, and his eyes filled with tears.

Barry’s eyes were red, too, as he grabbed old Mr. Sims’ arm. “You’ve worked so hard all these years, but you could have retired. I could have worked with Brian to handle things...”

Old Mr. Sims patted his arm. “Your return was never a sure thing. You kept sending me the money you earned abroad to keep it from being frozen in your account. It was only a matter of time before everything blew up. If I hadn’t stayed in this position, Brian would have been the one stuck here. I could still carry the weight, so I stayed.”

Brian’s chest heaved as the full weight of old Mr. Sims’ sacrifice hit him.

He understood now.

Old Mr. Sims never stayed in his position for the power or the title. He stayed to protect everyone.

If Brian had been in charge, he would have been the one thrown into prison and branded as a traitor.

Guilt and regret overwhelmed Brian.

Old Mr. Sims was a father figure to him and had remained steadfast all these years, while Brian had doubted him.

How could he have been so blind?

Brian slapped himself across the face, then dropped to his knees again, head bowed low. “Uncle Sims, I’m so sorry.”

Old Mr. Sims sighed and bent down, helping him up once more. “You’re like a son to me. There’s no need for all this formality. After your father passed, I treated you like my second son.”

He looked around at the members of the Special Division, smiling. “From now on, the Special Division is in Brian’s hands. I trust all of you to support him and carry on our work.”

The entire team shouted in unison, “Yes, sir!”

Old Mr. Sims had dedicated his entire life to the Special Division, and there wasn’t a single person in the room who wasn’t moved by his selflessness.

After the echoes of their voices died down, old Mr. Sims glanced through the crowd and spotted Keira standing toward the back. His eyes softened as he waved her over.

“Kiddo, come here.”

Keira hesitated for a moment.

She then sighed and made her way through the crowd toward him, with the others stepping aside to give her space.

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The people who had previously badmouthed Keira all averted their eyes the moment they saw her.

Old Mr. Sims patted her on the shoulder. “Young lady, thank you for standing up for me last time.”

Keira lowered her gaze. “No need to thank me; it was the right thing to do.”

Brian and the others chimed in immediately. “Yes, Senior Sister, we owe you big time! Without your help, we would have made a terrible mistake!”

If their punishment had been carried out, there was no telling if the old man would have survived it. “Keera” had saved his life!

The thought crossed Brian’s mind, and his eyes filled with gratitude as he prepared to say more, but Keira cut him off. “The ones who deserve the most respect here are Mr. Sims and Professor Brandt. I just did something small. Let’s not get things twisted.”

She stepped back, trying to shift the attention onto them. But before she could make her move, Brian spoke up again.

“Senior Sister, there’s no need to be so modest. I have nothing but respect for you!”

He gave her a respectful salute, one that was familiar in their circles. “From now on, everyone in the Special Division will follow your lead!”

Keira waved her hands. “That’s really not necessary...”

But old Mr. Sims chuckled. “When the Sect Leader couldn’t find an apprentice, I worried that James would end up taking over Freeman Sect. I had my doubts, but who would have thought he’d bring back such a talented disciple? Young lady, there’s no need to feel anxious. The Special Division has always been closely tied to the Freeman Sect, so it’s only natural for Brian and the others to follow your lead.”

Keira paused for a moment before letting out a soft sigh. “Alright then.”

Professor Brandt turned to Lewis. “Mr. Horton, we couldn’t have made it back home safely without you.”

Lewis nodded. “It was nothing.”

He was always distant and quiet around others, so Barry picked up on his personality and didn’t push further. He smiled and turned back to old Mr. Sims. “Sims, how about we grab a drink tonight?”

“Sounds good!”

Old Mr. Sims, now in his eighties, leaned on his cane as he carefully walked over to Barry. “Seeing you back home has put my heart at ease. Barry, make sure you keep contributing to the country’s research. My sacrifice won’t have been in vain.”

Barry’s eyes grew misty. “I will.”

He smiled. "You always talked about how great the roasted duck is in Clance. I haven't had it in twenty years. Shall we get some tonight?"

"Of course! I've even got some fine wine saved up just for you."

Old Mr. Sims turned to Keira. "Young lady, care to join us?"

Keira smiled. "I'll leave you two to it."

Old Mr. Sims nodded. With Holly's help, he and Barry began making their way out. After a few steps, old Mr. Sims looked over at Holly. "Holly, I haven't treated you or your parents well these past few days. You've all had to bear the burden of my mistakes."

Holly wiped away her tears. "Grandpa, don't say that. It's an honor to be your granddaughter! I'm proud of you."

"Good girl!"

Old Mr. Sims gently wiped her tears. "Your father once planned to stay in the Special Division, but I handed it over to Brian. I wonder if he holds any grudges against me..."

Holly shook her head. "The weight that comes with the Special Division is too much. Dad's always been easygoing; he's never blamed you."

"That's good to hear."

As they walked a bit further, old Mr. Sims suddenly glanced back at Holly. "You know, having Miss Olsen as a friend is the best thing that's ever happened to you. Don't you dare get into fights with her again."

Holly froze, her eyes misting over. "Grandpa, you knew?"

Back when she and Keira had a falling out at school, she had become withdrawn, and her grandpa noticed when they came to Clance. She had told him what happened, thinking he'd forget about it. But somehow, he knew everything.

Old Mr. Sims chuckled. "You're not one to make many friends, but the way you stood up for her back then tells me this friendship isn't just casual."

He turned to Keira. "Miss Olsen, take care of Holly, will you? She can be a bit stubborn."

Keira smiled. "I will."

Old Mr. Sims then turned back to Barry. As they moved to leave, he suddenly stopped, trembling as he took Barry's hand. "Barry, there's something I need to apologize for."

Barry looked puzzled. “What’s that?”

Old Mr. Sims smiled weakly. “I’m afraid... I won’t be able to join you for that roast duck.”

And with that, his eyes closed, and the old man collapsed to the floor.

“Grandpa!!”

“Sims!”

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Three days later.

At old Mr. Sims’ gravesite.

Holly Sims stood by the tombstone, dressed in all black, with a white flower in her hair. Her eyes were swollen from crying, and she seemed emotionally drained. Keira stood silently beside her, offering quiet support.

No one had expected old Mr. Sims’ passing to be so imminent. He had been holding on, waiting for Barry Brandt to return. Once that was done, he let go.

Holly’s eyes were red from all the tears she had shed. The person she had been most proud of was now gone.

Barry, Brian, Luke, and many other important figures had come to pay their respects, leaving flowers at the grave. The black-and-white photo of old Mr. Sims on the tombstone showed him smiling broadly as if he had no regrets.

Keira looked at Holly. “This is considered a peaceful passing for someone of his age. You don’t need to feel so torn up.”

“I know,” Holly murmured. “But I had no idea Grandpa’s health had deteriorated so much. If I had known earlier...”

Her words trailed off as her throat tightened.

Keira spoke softly. “Even if you’d known, you’d still have supported his decision, wouldn’t you? After all, the Sims family has always been dedicated to serving the country, willing to sacrifice everything. It’s in your family’s blood.”

Holly paused, then nodded slowly. “I know he never did anything he wasn’t proud of,” she continued, her voice wavering. “And I know he felt fulfilled making his final sacrifice for Professor Brandt. He left this world in the way he wanted... but...”

Suddenly, tears streamed down her face again. “But I can’t bear the thought of losing him.”

Her sobs deepened, making her sound like a child, utterly heartbroken.

Seeing her cry like that left Keira feeling awkward, unsure how to comfort her.

Erin approached from behind, eating pistachios but carefully spitting out the shells into a small bag. After coughing lightly, she looked at Holly.

“Death is inevitable,” Erin said. “In a way, we’re always learning to say goodbye. From the moment we’re born until the day we die.”

She turned her gaze to Keira. “Mr. Sims lived a full life, and he got what he wanted in the end. No regrets. At least he got to witness Barry Brandt’s return to the country.”

If Barry had followed the original plan and returned in two more years, old Mr. Sims wouldn’t have made it. He would have passed away with the burden of guilt, his name tarnished. But now, he was able to leave the world with honor.

Holly nodded slightly. “I understand, but it still doesn’t make it easier. My heart can’t let go.”

Keira patted her gently on the back. “Take your time.”

Just then, a tissue appeared in front of the two of them. Keira looked up and saw Luke standing there, offering it to Holly. He looked a bit awkward as he spoke. “Here, wipe your tears. Mr. Sims was someone I’ll respect for the rest of my life.”

Then, as if trying to cheer her up, he added, “Don’t worry. Even without Mr. Sims around, I’ll make sure no one in the Special Division messes with you. I’ll look out for you.”

Holly flushed slightly and turned her head away. “I don’t need you to look out for me! I’ve got Keira, and that’s more than enough!”

Luke glanced over at Keira and scratched his head. “That’s true. Besides, I’m no match for her.”

Keira blinked, feeling speechless.

Erin coughed.

Holly looked down, still holding back tears.

Luke, confused by the sudden silence, asked, “What’s going on?”

Keira cleared her throat. “Nothing. I just remembered I won’t always be around in the Special Division, so in the future, I’ll leave Holly in your hands. You’ll need to watch out for her.”

Luke nodded quickly. “Don’t worry, I’ll be nice to her!”

Keira couldn’t help but sigh internally. Could this guy even manage to ask Holly out?

She pressed her lips together and coughed again. “I’ve got some things to take care of. You two should talk for a bit.”

Luke nodded. “Sure.”

As Keira and Erin walked away, they overheard Luke say, “Stop crying. Your eyes are getting all swollen. It’s not a good look.”

Keira raised an eyebrow.

Erin chuckled. “That guy is something else, isn’t he?”

They both shook their heads, heading further away from the gravesite.

In the distance, Keira spotted Lewis standing quietly and staring at the grave.

There was a subtle sadness about him, the kind that made his gaze linger a little too long on the tombstone.

Keira approached him. “What are you thinking about?”

Lewis clenched his jaw slightly before replying, “I was wondering... if Grandma will leave us the same way.”

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Keira’s heart clenched at Lewis’s words.

When old Mr. Sims passed, she had already felt a deep sense of sadness and loss. If it were old Mrs. Horton...

She couldn’t even bear to think about it.

If she was feeling this way, how much worse must it be for Lewis?!

Keira immediately reached out and took his hand. “Lewis, let’s put everything aside for now and spend some real time with Grandma.”

Grandma was nearing the end of her life. She wasn’t suffering from any major illness, just the inevitable decline that came with her age.

Saving Jodie South was important... but saving her required timing and opportunity.

Last time, Erin had already said the chance to return home only came every three months, and the next opportunity was still over a month away.

For now, there wasn't much else Keira could do. She decided to focus on spending quality time with old Mrs. Horton.

Lewis nodded in agreement.

Erin popped up beside them. "You think capturing the Special Division means you've got everything under control now? Let me tell you, that lioness in country A is still lurking somewhere, waiting to pounce."

Keira glanced at her. "Lions don't stalk prey like that. Tigers do."

Erin was taken aback.

Her lips twitched. "This is not the time for your jokes!"

Keira sighed. "Erin, there's nothing more important than spending time with family."

Erin paused. "Is that so?"

Keira didn't respond but squeezed Lewis' hand. "Come on, let's go home."

Lewis nodded, and the two of them headed for the car. Naturally, Erin climbed into the back seat, pulling out her bag of pistachios and starting to munch on them again.

Sitting in the front passenger seat, Keira glanced over at her.

Erin was wearing a baseball cap today, her long hair falling loosely over her shoulders, and she held a small trash bag for the pistachio shells. She had packed the pistachios neatly in her bag and hadn't eaten any at the cemetery, showing her respect for old Mr. Sims.

For someone who seemed to always have something in her mouth, Erin wasn't as annoying as she sometimes appeared.

Keira shifted her gaze away.

Soon, they arrived at the Horton residence.

Old Mrs. Horton was sitting in the garden, soaking up the sun. Next to her was Selena, Oliver's illegitimate daughter. Selena was smiling sweetly as she massaged old Mrs. Horton's legs. "Great-grandma, does that feel good? It's nice to sit in the sun like this."

Old Mrs. Horton chuckled lightly but didn't say much.

Selena continued. “I know I wasn’t allowed to come home before, which is why I haven’t had the chance to show you how much I care. But from now on, I’ll visit you every day...”

Old Mrs. Horton couldn’t help but cut her off. “Are you here to keep me company, or to keep an eye on my shares?”

Selena’s face froze for a moment, but she quickly recovered, smiling again. “Of course not! I’m here out of genuine care. An elder is like a treasure in the family. My dad says the same thing. It’s just that Uncle Lewis has always been taking up your time, so my dad hasn’t had the chance to be close to you, but I promise, he’s always thought of you...”

Selena went on. “He often tells me about how he once saved you. Great-grandma, you should let him show his respect and devotion to you. I’m just here on his behalf.”

After saying that, she picked up a piece of fruit from the plate beside her and held it up to old Mrs. Horton. “Here, have a piece of watermelon. I just cut it—it’s really sweet!”

Old Mrs. Horton replied, “I have diabetes. I can’t eat that.”

Selena didn’t seem fazed and offered a slice of apple instead. “Apples are low in sugar. Just have a little. It’ll help your digestion.”

At her age, old Mrs. Horton was simply waiting for time to catch up with her. The elderly often felt internal heat, as if their stomach was on fire, so she usually found apples soothing.

Seeing Selena’s persistent smile and somewhat shameless determination, old Mrs. Horton hesitated but eventually leaned forward and took a bite of the apple.

Keira and Lewis exchanged glances as they watched.

Keira raised her eyebrows, silently asking: Do we kick her out?

Lewis, however, kept his focus on old Mrs. Horton.

Grandma had distanced herself from Oliver because of him.

As a child, whenever Oliver came over, Lewis would run away, and eventually, Grandma forbade Oliver from visiting. But no matter how things played out, Oliver was still her grandson...

Lewis remembered what Selena had said earlier—that it was Lewis who monopolized Grandma’s attention, preventing Oliver’s family from seeing her. Maybe Grandma really felt that way, too?

Lewis clenched his jaw, standing silently.

Sensing his hesitation, Keira stayed still as well.

Seeing that old Mrs. Horton had taken a bite of the apple, Selena pressed on. “Great-grandma, about Jake... Dad only punished him to get him to come home and apologize. But then Miss Olsen stepped in and invested in him, making things worse between them. Now they don’t even have a chance to reconcile. Great-grandma, if you can, maybe you should talk to Aunt Keera and smooth things over...”

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When Lewis heard those words, his face darkened.

Keira let out a small laugh. Oh, so this is how they were going to treat her?

Old Mrs. Horton frowned and snapped, ” I was wondering why you were acting so kind, and now I see. Selena, let me tell you something: a bastard child will always be a bastard child. Don’t think you can just take over what’s not yours. I may not be Jake’s biggest fan, but at least he’s my legitimate great-grandson. And you? I haven’t even acknowledged you!”

Selena’s face went pale with anger.

Old Mrs. Horton waved a hand. “I’m tired. You can leave.”

Selena took a deep breath, clearly wanting to say something, but before she could, Keira stepped forward with a cold smile. “Are you walking out on your own, or do I need to throw you out?”

Selena stood up straight and glared at Keira. “I’ll go on my own.”

She shot Keira a nasty look as she stormed out. When she passed by Lewis, she couldn’t help but say, “Uncle Lewis, Eve didn’t marry Jake. She’s still in love with you. Maybe you should think about that...”

“Get out.”

Lewis said the words so coldly that Selena actually flinched before rushing out of the house.

Old Mrs. Horton overheard the exchange and turned, smiling when she saw Lewis and Keira. “Oh, you two are back.”

“Yeah,” Lewis replied.

Keira walked over and handed old Mrs. Horton an apple.

Old Mrs. Horton looked at it but then pointed to the watermelon on the table. “I’d rather have some of that.”

Keira chuckled softly.

At this point, old Mrs. Horton could eat whatever she wanted. The doctors had already said there was no point in restricting her diet anymore, so Keira didn't bother arguing. She fed her a piece of watermelon instead.

Old Mrs. Horton smiled after taking a bite. "It's always sweeter when you feed me! That Selena, though—ugh, she makes me sick! Trying to stir up trouble like that. Doesn't she know who she's messing with?"

She took Keira's hand and motioned for Lewis to come closer.

Lewis stepped forward. "Grandma?"

Old Mrs. Horton looked at him seriously. "You two must take care of each other, okay?"

Lewis nodded.

Old Mrs. Horton added, "Even when I'm gone, don't be sad, you hear me?"

Lewis's face fell. "Grandma, don't talk like that."

Old Mrs. Horton just smiled. "It's going to happen eventually, honey. But with Keira by your side, I can rest easy."

She patted his hand before turning to Keira. "Keira, my grandson's had a rough life. He's a little... difficult sometimes, but I hope you can be patient with him."

Keira smiled and nodded. "Grandma, that's not fair. My husband is amazing."

She glanced over at Lewis as she spoke.

Sure enough, the heaviness in Lewis's expression softened, and he gave her a gentle, loving look.

Old Mrs. Horton saw their exchange and couldn't help but grin. She cleared her throat. "You two haven't had lunch yet, right? Let's go eat something."

Keira joked, "Grandma, I didn't cook today, so it might not taste as good!"

Old Mrs. Horton laughed. "You've spoiled me! My taste buds are used to your cooking now."

"I'll make you something special tonight!"

After a cheerful meal, old Mrs. Horton went to take a nap.

Keira and Lewis were about to take care of some things when Oliver came storming in, his face red with anger. The moment he saw Lewis, he opened his mouth to speak, but Lewis cut him off. "If you've got something to say, let's talk outside."

Oliver glanced at old Mrs. Horton's room, then turned and walked out.

Keira followed behind them, sensing something was off.

The second they stepped outside, Oliver exploded. "Was it you? Did you tell Grandma to kick Selena out? Don't forget, she's not just your grandma, she's mine too!"

Lewis just stared at him. "And?"

"And starting tomorrow, Selena and Marisa are going to be checking in on Grandma morning and night."

Lewis's jaw tightened, his eyes narrowing.

Back when Jake and Melissa were still around, at least Melissa had some dignity and stopped visiting after Grandma snubbed her a few times. But Marisa and Selena? They had no shame, and apparently, they could take any kind of rejection.

No wonder Oliver was completely under their control.

Lewis looked down. "Grandma likes her peace and quiet."

"That's just an excuse!" Oliver sneered. "If she likes quiet so much, why does she let you and Keira in to bother her?"

He paused, noticing Erin standing nearby, clearly eavesdropping. His face turned red with anger. "And why's there some random outsider living here?"

Erin blinked innocently and didn't look guilty at all. Instead, she grinned, cracked open a pistachio, and waved at Oliver. "I like it here. So what?"

Oliver's face went even redder.

He turned back to Lewis, his voice rising. "You may run this house, but that doesn't mean you get to treat me like this! I'm telling you, if you don't agree to let my people see Grandma, I'll make a scene!"

He stepped closer, eyes blazing. "Grandma's not just yours. If you don't let my people in, I'll start yelling right here and now. You think Grandma will be able to rest with all that noise?"

Lewis's face hardened.

Oliver smirked, turning back toward the house. “So, you’re not going to agree? Fine. I’ll go wake Grandma up right now and ask her if she ever really wanted me as her grandson!”

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Lewis’s brow furrowed as he stepped in front of Oliver. His voice was icy, but his words hit like a sledgehammer. “You think you can disturb Grandma’s rest? Try it, and I’ll take your legs off.”

The intensity in his gaze sent a chill down Oliver’s spine, and for a moment, he just stood there, frozen.

He had never seen Lewis like this before.

Sure, Lewis had always been intimidating, but he was usually calm, collected, and within the bounds of reason. This version of him, though, looked like he had just crawled out of hell.

Oliver’s legs nearly gave out under him, and he had to steady himself to avoid collapsing.

Keira, noticing the tension, quietly walked over and slipped her hand into Lewis’s.

The second she touched him, the icy rage around Lewis seemed to melt away, and a sliver of calm returned to his eyes. It was like he had been pulled back from the brink of something dark and dangerous.

Keira had long realized Lewis wasn’t just an ordinary man. He played both sides—legal and not-so-legal—but he always kept a clean image in his own country, playing by the rules at home and being the voice of reason within the family.

But now? Now was different.

Keira had always sensed that beneath the surface, Lewis had a darker, more obsessive side—one that his grandmother had managed to keep in check all these years. She was the one thing holding him together, the one person who kept that darkness at bay.

And Keira couldn’t help but wonder: what would happen once Grandma was no longer around? What would Lewis become then?

Her mind flashed back to something old Mrs. Horton had once said to her while holding her hand tightly. “If I’m gone, Lewis won’t have anyone. He won’t be able to handle it...”

At the time, Keira had thought old Mrs. Horton was talking about emotional pain, but now she realized there might be something much deeper going on.

She remembered the time they spent in Country A, where Lewis had promised to safely return the people who needed to be dealt with. Despite everything, the trip felt more like a quiet vacation without any real danger.

Then there were the late-night meetings—Lewis speaking in languages she didn't understand, always on the phone, conducting business she could only guess at.

It hit her suddenly: she didn't really know this man at all.

Startled, Keira's grip on Lewis's hand loosened slightly, but almost immediately, he tightened his hold on her.

Lewis took a deep breath, his cold expression slipping back into place as he faced Oliver. "I'll allow your people to visit Grandma in the mornings and evenings," he said, his tone controlled but firm. "But if Selena keeps stirring up drama about company shares or family relationships, I don't want to hear it again. And if Grandma tells them to leave, they'd better go immediately. If they pull any tricks, don't blame me for being ruthless."

This was clearly a concession on Lewis's part, and Oliver, still shaken, let out a breath of relief. "Fine," he muttered.

Without another word, he turned and walked off. Only after he was a good distance away did he realize he was drenched in sweat.

As Oliver was leaving, he heard a soft voice. "How did it go, Oliver?"

It was Marisa Walsh. Her gentle tone made Oliver pause for a second before he turned to face her. "It's done. Starting tomorrow, you and Selena can visit Grandma morning and night."

He sighed, reaching out to take her hand. "Grandma's always been cold toward us. You might face some tough situations when you visit."

Marisa smiled softly, giving his hand a reassuring squeeze. "It's okay. I can handle it. I've put up with worse for you. Being your mistress all these years, I've had to endure so many harsh looks, so what's a little more?"

Her words struck a chord, and Oliver felt a wave of emotion. "Marisa, I'm so sorry for everything..."

"There's no need," Marisa said, shaking her head gently.

Just then, Selena walked over, timing her entrance perfectly. "Mom, why haven't you ever told Dad about the things you've been through?"

Marisa immediately frowned. "Selena, don't start."

But Oliver's curiosity was piqued. "What is it? What's she talking about?"

Selena sighed dramatically. "Back when your wife was around, she would go out of her way to humiliate Mom, even telling the stores not to let her shop. She made sure all those society ladies

knew Mom was your mistress, Dad, and because of that, none of them would ever invite her to anything. Mom's spent all these years cooped up in that empty house, just waiting for you."

Hearing this, Oliver's expression darkened. "That wretched woman! I told her to treat you better, but behind my back, she was pulling stunts like that!"

Selena let out a long sigh. "Mom didn't want to cause any trouble, so she always avoided events where Mrs. Horton might show up. But no matter how hard she tried, she'd still run into her, and every time, Mrs. Horton would bully her, even getting the other ladies to gang up on her. They all look down on her, calling her a homewrecker, saying she broke up your marriage."

Marisa immediately tried to downplay it. "Selena, enough. In a marriage, the one who isn't loved is the real outsider. I've never cared about what people say."

Tears welled up in Selena's eyes. "I know you don't care, Mom. And I don't care about being called an illegitimate child either."

Marisa quickly wiped at her own tears. "Sweetheart, why are you talking like that? Have you been treated unfairly because of your background?"

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Oliver immediately looked over at Selena, concern filling his eyes.

Tears welled up as Selena cried, "It's nothing, really. I'm fine."

Seeing her trying to hold back her emotions only made Oliver feel worse. "What happened? Tell me now!"

Clearly upset, Selena looked at him, her voice trembling. "It's just... my mother-in-law keeps bringing up my background. She says I'm just an illegitimate child, and marrying her son was the luckiest thing to ever happen to me. She even told me to learn from my mom, be more tolerant, let my husband have other women, and have more kids... And she also said..."

Marisa quickly interrupted, anxious. "And what else did she say?"

Selena's voice cracked as she continued, "She said that when I have kids, they'll have to be raised by her. Having children with my illegitimate status would just be embarrassing! How could I ever live with that?" She sobbed harder now.

Marisa's expression turned to anger. "How could she say such things? This is all my fault! I ruined your future because I was the other woman. My poor daughter, you're suffering because of me..."

Selena gently replied, “Mom, I’m okay. I don’t care about those things. But lately, I keep thinking about it, and the idea of being separated from my children someday makes me really sad.”

Marisa sighed deeply. “Is that why you seemed so upset in front of Grandma today? Is that why she kicked you out?”

Selena nodded, her eyes red from crying. “That’s part of it. Uncle taking over Great-Grandma’s care didn’t help either. I mean, who wouldn’t want to be surrounded by happy family members? But really, it’s fine.”

She wiped her tears. “Dad, I’m okay. Tomorrow, I’ll smile more, I promise.”

Marisa, though, was inconsolable. “If you force yourself to smile like that, it just breaks my heart even more. How can we continue like this, trying to care for Grandma when we’re this miserable?”

Both mother and daughter began crying again, and Oliver, feeling helpless, started to panic. “Stop crying, Selena! You’ve been through so much all these years, and I had no idea how much you’ve suffered because of your background. That’s it! I’ll divorce Melissa right now! I’ll marry your mother, and we’ll see who dares to speak ill of you ever again!”

Hearing this, Selena exchanged a glance with Marisa.

“Dad, I don’t think that’s a good idea,” Selena said quickly. “Jake is still your son...”

Marisa nodded in agreement. “Yes, exactly. We’re fine. If you do that, how will Jake ever feel comfortable coming back home?”

Oliver, who had been frustrated just moments ago by their tears, now felt a strange sense of relief when they opposed his suggestion. He had expected them to take advantage of his offer, but their reluctance made him feel oddly at ease.

“It’s settled!” he said, feeling confident. “I’ll talk to Melissa tomorrow, and we’ll get a divorce.”

Without waiting for a response, Oliver walked off. “I’m calling her now!”

As soon as he was out of earshot, Marisa and Selena exchanged sly smiles.

Selena lowered her voice. “Mom, once you marry Dad, I’ll finally have my share of the Horton family stocks.”

Marisa nodded with satisfaction. “Exactly. I’ve waited patiently for this day all these years, and now it’s finally happening!”

Selena paused before asking, “But... did you ever actually love Dad?”

Marisa pushed her hair behind her ear, letting out a cold laugh. "Love? What does that even mean? Sweetie, remember this: the only thing that truly matters is the money you have in your hands. As for men... they're just tools. If they have money, sure, maybe you can talk about love. If they don't, what's there to even talk about?"

Marisa glanced at Oliver as he made his call.

Selena grinned. "I get it, Mom."

Just then, Oliver came back. "It's done. We're heading to the courthouse tomorrow."

Marisa smiled. "Good."

Neither of them had any idea that, just a short distance away, Keira had overheard everything.

She chuckled quietly to herself before turning to leave.

Oliver couldn't see through Marisa and Selena's true intentions right now. But that didn't matter. His arrogance didn't matter either...

Because the day Grandma was no longer around would be the day he was kicked out of the family.

Once he lost everything, he would finally see everyone's true colors.

Keira wasn't in any rush, nor did she have any intention of interfering with the drama between the Hortons. She quietly turned and walked back to old Mrs. Horton's house.

Lewis was standing nearby, trying to calm himself down.

Keira approached him and asked, "Are you really going to let them see Grandma?"

Lewis lowered his gaze. "Grandma never says much, but she enjoys having her family around. So, they should come and pay their respects. But just how sincere they'll be... who knows?"

He gave a bitter laugh. "Besides, Grandma's no fool. Don't worry."

Keira understood immediately.

Grandma wouldn't give up her shares just because of a few weeks of forced affection from these people. On the contrary, they would have to jump through hoops trying to win her over for their own gain.

Making Grandma happy was Lewis's top priority at the moment.

No wonder he was willing to let Oliver's family come around.

As Keira pondered all this, her phone suddenly rang.

She frowned, seeing an unknown number on the screen. She hesitated before answering, and on the other end, a voice came through. “Bunny? Hey, it’s Lion.”

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Keira froze for a moment, frowning slightly as she asked, “Oh? What’s up?”

The voice on the other end was female, altered through a voice changer. She laughed and said, “You’re the one who took Professor Barry Brandt, aren’t you?”

Keira raised an eyebrow. “What if I did? And what if I didn’t?”

“Impressive, but not quite enough,” the woman sneered. “You think just because you’ve got access to Crera’s resources, you can compete with me? Let me tell you, I’m not some pushover in Crera.”

Keira’s voice remained calm. “So?”

“I’m going to absorb your faction! That’s the endgame of this battle for the inheritance of the Olsen family!”

All the heirs had to compete, and the one who emerged victorious would merge the others’ forces into their own, bringing this new power back to the Olsen family. No wonder the Olsens kept growing stronger over the years.

Keira felt like she was starting to understand the bigger picture. She glanced at Lewis, who had already started tracing the call.

Drawing out her words deliberately, she asked, “How exactly do you plan to merge with me? Why don’t we talk about a partnership instead?”

The woman chuckled. “That’s what this call is for. I know you’ve already teamed up with Fox, though I don’t know who she is. If you help me take down Fox, I’ll consider accepting your surrender.”

“Take down Fox?” Keira shot a glance at Erin, who was standing a bit further away. Erin suddenly felt a chill down her spine, instinctively rubbing the back of her neck before looking over at Keira.

Keira smiled. “It’s not entirely out of the question, but how do I know that once Fox is gone, you’ll actually let me join you?”

The woman replied, “Take down Fox, and I’ll let you come to Country A to meet me.”

Keira looked back at Lewis, who nodded. She smiled. “I’ll think about it.”

After hanging up, she turned to Lewis. “Did you trace it?”

Lewis answered, “It was a VoIP call, so tracking it to a specific person is impossible, but I got the general region.”

Keira was familiar with tech too, so she nodded. “But you can at least track the location of the IP.”

Lewis grinned. “Exactly. Lion’s not in Country A. Can you guess where she is?”

Keira’s eyes widened. “Crera?”

Lewis nodded.

Keira’s jaw dropped. “She’s really in Crera? She’s got some nerve!”

Country A was her home turf, but if she was in Crera, that meant she was here alone, deep in enemy territory.

Keira clenched her jaw.

Erin had been right—people in their line of work shouldn’t expose their identities. Keira had no idea who this ‘Lion’ was, but apparently, everyone knew who she was. That kind of imbalance was dangerous.

Lewis patted her shoulder reassuringly. “Don’t worry. We may not know who she is yet, but things always have a way of sorting themselves out. We’ll deal with her when the time comes.”

Keira nodded. “Alright, but until then, everyone needs to be extra careful when going out.”

“Don’t sweat it,” Lewis said with a calm smile. “Crera has strict regulations. She won’t dare to make a move here.”

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The next morning, after breakfast with old Mrs. Horton, Keira got ready to head out.

Although she was investing in Jake, this was more of a partnership. And even though it was labeled an ‘investment,’ she wasn’t about to just throw everything his way and stay hands-off.

Today, she was headed to attend their first board meeting together.

However, just as she was about to leave, Jake arrived.

Keira was a bit surprised. “What are you doing here?”

Jake smiled politely. “Just wanted to stop by and say hi to Great-Grandma.”

Keira stepped aside to let him in.

Jake walked over to old Mrs. Horton, bowing slightly. “Great-Grandma, I came to check in on you.”

Now that he was out of the oppressive atmosphere of the main Horton household, Jake felt like he was finally waking up.

Back then, his father, Oliver, constantly complained about how biased old Mrs. Horton was toward Lewis, accusing her of treating their side of the family poorly. That had made Jake keep his distance from her, too.

But just yesterday, someone had secretly approached him and handed him a bank card with a hundred grand in it. The person was Fiona.

The money was a gift from old Mrs. Horton.

Jake realized she hadn’t even known about Keira’s investment in him, yet she still gave him money.

A memory flashed in his mind—when he was little, he once snuck into Great-Grandma’s house. His father always told him that she was a monster. But when he saw her that day, she had smiled at him kindly, waving him over and offering him a cookie.

It tasted amazing. But when he got home, his father screamed at him and beat him, warning him never to go there again.

Looking back, Jake had always kept his distance from old Mrs. Horton—not out of hate, but because of the way he’d been raised.

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But just yesterday, Jake realized that his great-grandmother truly cared about him.

“A mother can only be kind and loving if her children show her respect and care.” Oliver was always complaining that his grandmother didn’t like him, but he had been fourteen when he came home, and his intentions toward her were far from pure. How could she possibly like him?

“Think about it—if someone approaches you for their own benefit, would you want to be around them?”

Jake’s eyes reddened.

Old Mrs. Horton looked at him with a smile. “I heard you’re starting a business, so I’ve prepared these for you. Take good care of yourself out there!”

The elderly woman patted Jake’s hand.

Jake’s tears fell instantly.

Old Mrs. Horton continued. “To be a good person, you must first be true to yourself. You are you, not someone’s son, grandson, or great-grandson. What you want, go and fight for it—that’s what really matters!”

Jake’s eyes reddened even more. “I understand.”

“Alright, go on now.”

Old Mrs. Horton smiled. “You can come visit me sometimes.”

Jake nodded immediately. “I will.”

As he stood up and prepared to leave, he ran into Selena and Marisa, who had just entered. Upon seeing Jake, Selena and Marisa both froze, then turned their gaze toward him.

Marisa said, “Jake, you’re home? Is it that you can’t manage out there? If that’s the case, let me know, and I’ll arrange some money for you and your mom...”

Selena added. “Mom, don’t say that. Jake and his mom wouldn’t need your money. They used to look down on you!”

“Why not? If they’re struggling now, what’s wrong with offering them some money?”

Marisa said condescendingly, “And Jake, about your mom and dad—if you ask me, your mom has a lot of issues. She should really change her attitude. As a woman, she should be more gentle. She’s too harsh. Your dad often complains to me that she’s a shrew. You should pass this message to her and have her change. That way, maybe your dad will take you both back...”

Jake’s anger flared up. “Shut up! You’re just a mistress—what right do you have to talk about my mom?!”

Marisa immediately retorted, “What mistress? That’s such a harsh thing to say. Your dad and I truly love each other...”

As she spoke, her eyes welled up with tears.

Selena chimed in, “Jake, how can you speak to my mom like that? Is this how you treat your elders? I always show respect when I’m with your mom. How can you treat mine like this?”

Jake found their behavior ridiculous. “My mom is my dad’s legitimate wife. Yours is a mistress—why should I be polite to her?”

At that moment, a sharp voice came from the doorway.

Oliver stormed in, fuming. “What nonsense are you spouting? How dare you speak to Aunt Marisa like that? You’re so disrespectful!”

Without saying another word, he walked straight up to Jake and slapped him hard across the face.

“Smack!”

The sound was so loud it made Keira wince. Jake’s face was immediately swollen, and blood even trickled from the corner of his mouth.

Even with this, Jake simply wiped his mouth and smirked coldly.

Oliver glared at him. “Apologize to Aunt Marisa!”

Jake looked him straight in the eye. “I won’t.”

“Apologize!”

“I said no!”

Oliver reached out again to hit Jake, but this time, Jake could no longer tolerate it. He grabbed Oliver’s wrist and pushed him back with force.

Oliver staggered back a few steps, and Marisa rushed over to support him.

Oliver was enraged. “Scoundrel! How dare you lay a hand on me?!”

Selena also spoke up. “Jake, how can you treat Dad like this? Since you left the Horton family, you’ve become completely unreasonable!”

Marisa sighed. “I know you don’t like me, but you can’t treat your own father like this. Jake, you really need to learn some manners!”

Jake looked at the two women in front of him, then turned to Oliver. “Dad, she’s publicly criticizing my mom. Do you really think she deserves respect?”

Oliver fumed, “How is she unworthy? She’s leagues better than your mom. Marisa has always loved me the most. She’s been with me for years, not seeking my money or status... Just for that, you should be respectful and call her Aunt Marisa!”

Jake scoffed. “You think she and her daughter don’t care about your money? Let me tell you, my mom is the one who truly cares about you!”

“Your mom is always talking about money. Marisa is different!” Oliver declared confidently.

Jake sneered. “Fine, if that’s the case, why doesn’t she sign a contract agreeing not to inherit your fortune in the future?”

At this, Marisa’s expression instantly froze!

No data found.