

# Rebirth of the Deadly Beauty

c 811

[ 519 words ]

"Just tell us what that is!"

Raven glared at Dunstan. "Everyone's waiting, so stop being so mysterious!"

"Surely all of you have heard of the World Physician Championship, right?"

Dunstan blinked while looking incredulous.

"Why would we know about that?"

Among those present, Dunstan was the only one who came from a traditional medicine family. Apart from him, only Melina had any connection to the medical field.

Melina nodded in acknowledgment and said, "I know of it. It's a world-class competition that represents the pinnacle of medical excellence. Any doctor who places in that competition would see their reputation soar.

"But since the World Medical Association was established, the competition has been dominated by modern medicine practitioners. Doctors from Havaria rarely get a chance to shine there."

Dunstan nodded. "She's right, but there are exceptions. I remember the champion of the last competition was from Havaria. And they were actually the apprentice of Dr. Jay Petty, the Medical Prodigy!"

"The Medical Prodigy?"

Everyone present was shocked.

"Isn't the Medical Prodigy at Talon Academy?" Melina asked in surprise.

"They say he's eccentric and only teaches at the academy but never takes apprentices. Even his students only dare to call him 'professor' and dare not claim to be his apprentices."

"That shows how little you know," Dunstan said with an air of mystery.

"My grandfather told me the Medical Prodigy took one apprentice five years ago, and that was the only one he had ever officially approved. This person was not only the youngest graduate of Talon Academy but also the chief field agent of Xenith Order..."

"That's incredible!"

Knox and the others had always been curious about Talon Academy and the Xenith Order, so they treated Dunstan's words like a legend or tale.

"There's even more amazing stuff. I heard from my grandfather..." Dunstan lowered his voice as he instinctively glanced toward the door.

"What? Are you trying to build suspense again?"

"No, but you absolutely cannot spread what I'm about to tell you. That apprentice I mentioned is actually the eldest daughter of the Hoffman family—one of the three great families of Creybia..."

"Is that all?"

Knox seemed disappointed. "The Hoffman family leads all the great houses of Havarria. It's not surprising that one of their daughters became his apprentice!"

"I haven't gotten to the strange part yet!"

Dunstan was annoyed at Knox's interruption. "You all heard about Ms. Hoffman's plane crash recently, right?"

"Yes."

Everyone nodded. They were unsure where this was going.

"The officials did announce later that Ms. Hoffman wasn't on the plane and that it was a body double who died. However, she fell ill after the incident."

"What?"

"Yes. Perhaps she was traumatized by the crash. Her personality changed completely. It was like she became a different person. And she developed severe migraines."

"How do you know all this?"

The group suddenly grew suspicious.

"Because my grandfather was invited to Creybia to treat Ms. Hoffman. But her symptoms were so complex that even he was helpless and had to return without being able to do anything.

"They say the head of the Hoffman family is at his wit's end over his daughter's migraines and has even contacted the World Medical Association..."

"Huh?"

Knox and the others grew excited. They sensed that they were finally reaching the key point.

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## Chapter 812

[ 575 words ]

"The champion of this medical competition will be invited by the Hoffman family to treat Ms. Hoffman. My grandfather says whoever cures her will receive five percent of her family's shares!"

At Dunstan's words, everyone drew in sharp breaths. Though it was only five percent, the Hoffman Group's total assets were astronomical. That share alone was worth billions.

"Even my grandfather's efforts were useless. The Hoffman family didn't want to put their daughter through more treatments, so they contacted the World Medical Association to find the best doctor. The winner of the World Physician Championship would be the ideal choice."

"But... something seems odd..."

Melina furrowed her brow. "Didn't you say Ms. Hoffman was Dr. Petty's disciple? If neither she nor her master could cure this illness, do others really stand a chance?"

"That's what puzzles me too," Dunstan replied.

"It's not strange that Ms. Hoffman can't heal herself since doctors can't treat their own ailments. But since her incident, Dr. Petty hasn't made any public appearances. When my grandfather went to treat her, he secretly asked around about this matter.

"Apparently, when the Hoffman family sought help at Talon Academy, Dr. Petty's assistant turned them away. They said he was in isolation and wouldn't see anyone."

"That's impossible. She's his only apprentice, so how could he ignore her suffering?"

"There have been rumors that the real Medical Prodigy is dead..."

Yolanda paused as she walked in from the backyard. Was her second master in isolation? That seemed unlikely.

Jay was always restless and loved to wander around the academy. She had never known him to go into isolation. Besides, medicine was not like martial arts- isolation served no purpose.

But why would Jay refuse to see the Hoffman family?

Yolanda quietly retreated to the back courtyard. That woman had changed her password, and now she was locked out of her own system. Otherwise, she could have logged into the Nightshade network to gather information.

But another thing Dunstan said had caught her attention. The medical competition was at the end of

August. Since she would have to

return to Creybia eventually, she might as well use this opportunity to visit her dear sister.

...

Two days later, just as Willow Creek Clinic opened its doors, Miranda came seeking help early in the morning.

"Ms. Henderson! Ms. Henderson, please save my father!"

Miranda had lost her usual arrogance. She appeared distraught, and her eyes were filled with desperation. They showed a glimmer of hope only upon seeing Yolanda.

"How dare you show your face here? Get out!"

Jamie grabbed a broom and pushed Miranda as she planned to drive her from the clinic.

BUT

Normally, Miranda would have erupted in anger and called her bodyguards, but today she offered no complaint about Jamie's treatment of her. Seeing Yolanda emerge, she hastily dodged the broom and fell to her knees before her. *śwnovel*

"Ms. Henderson, I know I was wrong! Please save my father!"

"We shouldn't have used our family's influence to attack you or joined others in boycotting Willow Creek Clinic. We were wrong, and we'll accept whatever punishment you choose. Just please save my father!"

Miranda had truly run out of options. Lennox had collapsed from anger, which compounded his existing heart condition. After being rushed to the hospital, his condition kept getting worse. The doctors had told her that without a cure for his heart disease, Lennox would only last another week.

"Ms. Henderson, I beg you! If you can cure my father, I'll willingly be your servant, your slave—anything!"

Miranda knelt before Yolanda in disarray as she wept bitterly.

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## Chapter 813

[ 433 words ]

If Lennox's condition had shown even a glimmer of hope, Miranda would never have come begging Yolanda. Unfortunately, with Lennox at death's door, she had no choice but to swallow her pride.

"Did you just say you're willing to be a servant?"

Jamie snorted at her and said, "Ms. Henderson couldn't afford such an expensive servant!"

"You've been bullying us with the Cavanaughs' power and pushing us into a corner. If Ms. Henderson hadn't been skilled, Willow Creek would have closed by now. Yet you dare come to ask for her help? You're really shameless!"

Jamie's merciless words made Miranda's face flush red before turning pale. Her tears flowed more intensely.

"Ms. Henderson, they say saving a life is worth more than building a thousand churches. Please, show mercy and save my father!"

Miranda absolutely couldn't let Lennox die in Riverdale. The Cavanaugh's would not listen to any explanations. They would just accuse her of causing his death. She would not only lose her inheritance rights but also face brutal retaliation from her cousins.

Miranda had been born privileged. Her pride, combined with her ruthless business tactics inherited from Lennox, had made her many enemies. Without the title of Cavanaugh heiress, her fate would be miserable beyond imagination.

"Ms. Henderson, don't listen to her sweet talk. She-"

Jamie was worried that Yolanda's heart might soften. After all the chaos the Cavanaugh's had caused at the clinic these past days, forgiving them seemed too generous.

"Indeed, as a doctor, I won't ignore someone in need." Yolanda looked at Miranda coldly.

Miranda froze, even forgetting to cry. "Ms. Henderson, will you save my father?"

"Ms. Henderson?"

Jamie stood stunned, at a loss for words. Had she agreed just like that?

"However, my help comes with conditions."

Yolanda shifted her tone. While she would not let someone die, helping the arrogant Lennox and Miranda wouldn't come easily.

"What conditions? Name them!"

Miranda clutched at Yolanda's dress like a drowning person grabbing a lifeline. "I'll agree to anything!"

"Don't be so quick to agree."

Yolanda said slowly, "In my eyes,, Lennox deserves death. But as a doctor with medical ethics, I can't just let someone die and do nothing. If you want my help, you must agree to two conditions.

"First, you'll transfer half of Lennox's assets to me as payment for treatment."

Half the assets? Miranda was

dumbfounded-half of Lennox's assets amounted to billions! Yolanda's casual demand for half their family's wealth would cripple them.

"Consider what's worth more-Lennox's life and your future, or half these assets?"

Seeing Miranda's shock, Yolanda

continued calmly, "If you can't

provide that much cash, Cavanaugh Group shares will do. Of course, if

you refuse, there's no need to hear the second condition.

"Someone, please show her out!"

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[ 522 words ]

"No! Everything's negotiable!"

Miranda gritted her teeth before saying with difficulty, "For something this important, I need to consult my father. Please tell me the second condition."

"The second condition is that Lennox must resign as president of the Cavanaugh Group and make you the new president."

Miranda was stunned. She wondered if she had heard correctly. Yolanda wanted her to lead the Cavanaugh family? She could not believe her ears!

Miranda sniffled and looked up at Yolanda with bewildered eyes. "Ms. Henderson, surely you hate me too. Why would you want me as president of the Cavanaugh Group?"

Miranda had prepared herself for Yolanda's revenge and humiliation, so she did not expect this at all.

"I separate personal matters from business. You're capable of being president, so there's no need to choose someone else.

"Besides, I'll soon own Cavanaugh Group shares. I don't want the company to be in chaos; it might drive down stock prices."

While Yolanda disapproved of Miranda's superior attitude, she could not deny her business acumen. The fact that Lennox valued her highly proved her impeccable performance in the business world.

Since her plane incident, Yolanda had sensed ulterior motives within the Hoffman family. Compared to the tangled relationships between Creybia's major families, having the Cavanaugh's under her influence in Dunhill could prove beneficial at crucial moments.

Lennox had been suffering from his illness for the past two days, and now Miranda was kneeling before her begging. They must have learned their lesson.

By saving Lennox and making Miranda president, Miranda would willingly work for her in the future. This was why Yolanda hadn't chosen to destroy the two of them. Jamie listened silently. She initially thought Yolanda was too kind. Now, she realized Yolanda's approach was actually brilliant.

Yolanda would gain half the Cavanaugh assets effortlessly while ensuring Miranda's grateful service. This was more satisfying than crushing them outright!

"Ms. Henderson... I understand!"

Miranda wiped her tears as she calmed down. Her previous hostility toward Yolanda vanished in

father and return with an answer."

instant. "I'll discuss this with one.

"Ms. Cavanaugh, you're a clever woman. You know what's best for everyone."

Yolanda smiled faintly and told Jamie, "Show Ms. Cavanaugh out."

Miranda studied Yolanda one last time. She finally understood why so many people sided with Yolanda even if it meant going against the powerful families in Creybia. I won't disappoint you, Ms. Henderson."

With those words, Miranda turned and strode toward the door.

"Ms. Henderson, do you think that old fool will agree to this?"

Dunstan had silently observed the entire exchange.

"He has no choice," Yolanda replied with certainty.

Even if Lennox did not want to give her the assets, he had to agree to this. After all, what good was money without life?

As for Miranda, she was already Lennox's chosen heir. This just meant an early succession, nothing to object to. As Yolanda predicted, Miranda returned to Willow Creek less than an hour after she left.

This time, Miranda had changed clothes and freshened up. She looked more like a proper businesswoman.

"Ms. Henderson, my father agrees to all your conditions. Here's the asset transfer contract, and here's my father's resignation announcement for your review."

Miranda presented two documents, and Yolanda quickly read through all the terms.

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## Chapter 815

[ 458 words ]

Miranda's efficiency was indeed impressive. In just an hour, she had drafted both a contract and an announcement without any loopholes.

Yolanda picked up the pen, signed the asset transfer contract, and handed her copy to Dunstan. "Let's go to the hospital."

Under Miranda's expectant gaze, she picked up her medical kit and left the clinic. Miranda stared at Yolanda's retreating figure for a moment before quickly

following.

An hour later, Yolanda had treated Lennox. His body was too weak and could barely endure the acupuncture. After Yolanda removed the needles, he passed out.

Yolanda wiped her hands with a sanitizing wipe and carried her medical bag out of the ICU.

"Ms. Henderson, let me walk you out!"

Miranda instructed Daphne to stay and care for Lennox while she followed Yolanda.

Yolanda produced a clear bottle containing a black pill the size of a fingernail. "Give him this pill when he wakes up. No food for thirty minutes after taking it."

"This pill is..."

"His condition should have been treated a week ago. The delay means acupuncture alone won't cure him; he needs medication."

Miranda took the bottle from Yolanda. "Can he be cured with just one pill?"

"This pill's effects last six months." Yolanda shook her head. "After six months, he must take another identical pill, or his heart will gradually fail."

"Then..."

Miranda's face paled. She seemed to want to ask something but hesitated.

"The Moonveil Root needed for this pill takes five months to grow. You can come to me before the effects wear off."

"As long as he has this pill, my father won't die, right?"

Miranda sighed. Both the Cavanaugh future and her father's life now lay in Yolanda's hands. Yet somehow, she felt at peace. Her resentment was gone.

While it seemed Yolanda was controlling them with the pill, to her father, Yolanda was a lifesaver. Now, even if others opposed her presidency, they could not shake her position.

"That's right, so keep track of time."

With that, Yolanda left the hospital.

As Miranda, watched her leave, she felt unsettled. Something about Yolanda's bearing reminded her of someone. Her presence, strategic mind, and wisdom were so similar to that person.

The thought made Miranda's heart race, and then she laughed at herself. How could that be possible at all? Her childhood idol, the legendary agent known as "the Phantom," was a man.

Afterward Riverdale returned to normal. Besides the Cavanaugh leadership change, no major news had emerged. The powerful families lying low in Riverdale paid no attention to such minor disputes.

Only the caught-in-between small businesses and second-tier families wanted to show loyalty to the Cavanaugh's.

But when they tried to take sides, they discovered the previously hostile Cavanaugh's had

compromised. Miranda even

publicly apologized to Yolanda

after

taking office. As for the Caldwell's, the Yorkshire family, and other Croybia families, they had gone quiet.

What was left to boycott?

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## Chapter 816

[ 476 words ]

As a small clinic, Willow Creek Clinic had actually gained publicity from recent events. It had brought in even more patients.

While Dunstan and others were overjoyed about this, the increased patient load strained their limited staff.

Originally, only Yolanda and Baxter could treat patients. Now with more patients but still just two doctors, they needed help. So Yolanda posted a hiring notice at the entrance.

Even if they could not find reliable traditional medicine practitioners, medical school graduates looking for internships would help. With graduation season approaching, many new graduates would need jobs. At least, they could hire some medical assistants.

The very next day, some applicants arrived. That morning, Yolanda was in the backyard watering newly planted Moonveil Root seedlings while harvesting mature herbs for drying.

Though Quinlan Pharmaceuticals was their supplier, rare herbs often had long wait times. With the spacious backyard available, Yolanda had cultivated it into an herb garden.

"Ms. Henderson, three graduates from Riverdale Medical University are here for interviews."

"You handle the interviews. Ask if they studied traditional medicine. For modern medicine graduates, we're only hiring nurses who can give injections and draw blood," Yolanda instructed Dunstan as she wiped her sweat and looked up.

Willow Creek was primarily a traditional medicine clinic, only adding modern medical services like IVs and gastric lavage for local residents' urgent needs.

"As for the rest-you studied traditional medicine yourself, so test their professional knowledge. Keep anyone suitable."

"Alright. I'll do that right away!"

Feeling entrusted with an important task, Dunstan's expression grew serious as he returned to conduct interviews. Back at the clinic, he found the three medical graduates looking around curiously.

Their expressions made him uncomfortable, especially the long-haired woman in a red dress who kept clicking her tongue while examining the facilities. She acted less like an applicant and more like an inspector.

"You three are here for interviews, right? Which positions are you interested in? Please introduce yourselves."

Seated behind the counter, he addressed the two women and one man. "Who'd like to start?"

"I'll go first."

The woman in the red dress sat down across from Dunstan with an air of superiority.

"I'm Hannah Brighton. I require two fixed days off per week and fifteen days of paid vacation

annually besides holidays, of

course The clinic must sendel

gifts on holidays and my birthday. For salary, I want 20 thousand dollars as my base pay with bonuses calculated separately."

"What did you say?"

Dunstan was stunned. Was this a job interview or royal demands?

Two days off weekly? He had barely taken a week off in his three months here. It was not that Yolanda restricted time off, but with staff shortages and many patients, Dunstan could not find chances to

rest.

And did she actually ask for 20 thousand as her monthly salary? What nonsense!

Even chief specialists at Riverdale District Hospital only made 15 thousand.

How dare she make such outrageous demands?

"Did you not understand what I said?"

Hannah frowned impatiently.

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[ 483 words ]

"I'm Hannah Brighton. Was that not clear enough?"

Dunstan was speechless. Was this woman mentally challenged?

"Hannah, what can you expect from doctors in a small-town clinic? He probably doesn't even know who your father is."

The other woman stepped forward while looking at Dunstan with contempt. "She's the granddaughter of Dr. Benjamin Brighton, the miracle doctor. Now do you understand?"

"Understand what?"

Dunstan blinked, completely lost. He knew of Benjamin Brighton, president of Creybia's Medical Association. So this woman was Brighton's granddaughter-but what did it have to do with anything?

"You're so dense! Hannah is from the Brighton family. It's your privilege to have her intern at this shabby clinic!

"As for me and Felix Harding, we're Hannah's friends, so you'll need to arrange positions for us too."

The woman looked at Dunstan with disdain. She acted as if by offering to work there, they were doing him a favor.

"I'm Danielle Ziegler. I studied traditional medicine, so that matches your clinic's specialty. But I only handle fractures and sprains; I want nothing bloody because that's too dirty!"

"This is a clinic! Do you think you can pick and choose?"

Dunstan's expression darkened. He had hoped to find help for the clinic, but instead got one entitled heir and another spoiled princess as applicants. No sane person would hire these two demanding divas.

"Watch your tone! We're top medical school graduates, so we have every right to be proud!

"Besides, Hannah is a Brighton. Major hospitals are fighting to have her intern for them. Don't be foolish."

Dunstan spread his hands. "Then why not go to those major hospitals? Why come to our small clinic?"

"You..."

As Danielle was about to explode, Hannah waved her off. "Forget it. Let's not stoop to a country bumpkin's level. Just tell us the interview process!"

Hannah was graduating this year but had not secured an internship. Every major Riverdale hospital had rejected her. Her internship report remained unstamped while her classmates had secured positions and stamps early this year.

With graduation approaching, she was growing anxious.

Medical students could not receive degrees without internship reports. Despite being born into the Brighton family, one of Creybia's most respected medical families, Hannah lacked her siblings' talent.

She attended Riverdale Medical University because her grades were too poor for Creybia's medical schools. Already overlooked at

home for her poor performance, she would probably get thrown out by

her grandfather if she failed to get her degree too.

When Hannah was at her wit's end, her roommate, Danielle, mentioned that a small clinic was hiring. That was why she brought Hannah and Felix here to apply.

Even with poor conditions, she had to stay to get her internship report stamped and secure her degree. Finding work afterward would be easier.

"Interview process?"

Dunstan paused. He was relieved they were finally talking sensibly. "Our clinic's requirements aren't high. Basic knowledge of traditional medicine is enough."

Though Dunstan disliked their attitudes, the clinic needed staff. Despite their poor manners, maybe they had solid professional skills.

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## Chapter 818

[ 536 words ]

Besides, bad attitudes could be reformed. Dunstan himself had been a spoiled heir once, but Yolanda had managed to transform him into a model citizen too!

"I'll get some herbs for you to identify. Then I'll describe some common clinical conditions, and each of you will prescribe a treatment."

With that, Dunstan rose to get the herbs.

"Why is this interview so complicated?" Danielle complained as she watched him leave.

"You even came here personally, Hannah. He should just process your hire and stamp your internship report without question. How dare he want to test you?"

"Exactly! Hannah, you're Dr. Brighton's granddaughter. Why should you need testing?"

Felix Harding had only agreed to interview because he couldn't find an internship either. He was hoping to use the Brighton family's influence for an easy admission.

He assumed small clinics would jump at the chance to hire them once they heard Hannah was from the Brighton family of Creybia. After all, her grandfather was president of the Medical Association. What clinic wouldn't want to curry favor with the Brightons?

"Forget it. Just let him go through the interview process. He wouldn't dare reject us anyway."

Hannah raised her eyebrows smugly, then spotted Yolanda entering from the backyard with a basket. She barked orders imperiously, "You there! Yes, you! Bring us three cups of tea.

"I only drink Earl Grey, so don't get it wrong! And bring some pastries too; fresh scones would be best. And I mean fresh-baked, not those packaged ones full of preservatives!"

Yolanda was utterly confused. Hadn't Dunstan mentioned interviews? Why were these three acting like government inspectors?

"Are you deaf?"

Seeing that Yolanda had not responded or gone to make tea, Hannah frowned irritably. She yelled at Yolanda, "How could you be so clueless about your place? Watch out, or I'll make sure you're fired!"

Yolanda had worn her oldest workout clothes for gardening today. She was also carrying a basket of herbs and wearing a sun hat for protection. Hannah had immediately assumed she was the clinic's servant.

"Are servants this arrogant nowadays?" Danielle chimed in. "Do you know who Hannah is? Better get that tea quickly, or you'll regret it!"

"I really don't know who she is."

Yolanda set down her basket and removed her hat. She examined the group with a slight frown. Her tone was growing cold too.

"What would a servant know anyway?"

Felix held his chin up arrogantly as he took in Yolanda's humble attire. "Hannah, don't waste time with her. We can deal with her after we're hired!"

In his view, a servant probably had not even heard of the Brighton family. Explaining their status to someone like that would be like casting pearls before swine. This plain looking young woman must be of society's lowest class.

On the other hand, they were elite graduates and the future pillars of society. They were going to become doctors who would be respected and beloved by patients.

This servant would just spend her life doing lowly work and taking orders from others. Arguing with someone like that would only lower their own status! Once they became doctors here, firing a servant would take just one word.

"True enough." Hannah smirked. "Why should I bother with an ignorant country bumpkin like her? Now don't just stand there. Go get my tea!"

"Ms. Henderson-"

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## Chapter 819

[ 464 words ]

Just then, Dunstan returned with three boxes of herbs. He was about to greet Yolanda but saw her shake her head and gesture for silence.

Dunstan closed his mouth in confusion. He then turned to Hannah and her friends, who were still acting like they owned the place. "Weren't we doing an assessment? Let's proceed."

Yolanda nodded slightly at Dunstan, leaving him in charge. He had been working at the clinic long enough. It was time to see how he would handle things independently.

"You, that servant over there who gave you permission to speak?"

Danielle glanced at Yolanda with contempt while pursing her lips.

Dunstan's eyes widened in surprise. "Servant?"

"What?" When Hannah looked up at Dunstan, she noticed his strange expression and sneered. "Your clinic is so unprofessional. You should fire incompetent, disobedient workers like her!"

"Exactly! We're saying this for your clinic's benefit!"

"Next time you hire, you should be more selective. Don't take in just anyone off the street!"

Danielle and Felix chimed in condescendingly.

"Perhaps you should pass the assessment before worrying about our staffing."

Dunstan suppressed a laugh as he placed the herbs before them. If Yolanda had not told him to continue the assessment, he would have thrown them out already.

At Willow Creek Clinic, offending Yolanda meant dismissal, no matter how skilled that person was. Besides, who could match her expertise anyway?

Dunstan mixed some Silverleaf

Root, Mountain Pine, and severabet

herbs that looked very similar to Silverleaf Root together in the box. "Please identify these herbs."

"Is that even a question?" Hannah sneered as she watched Dunstan with disdain. "Testing me with such basics!"

She had expected challenging questions but now saw how small-scale this clinic truly was. Identifying herbs was first-year knowledge, so it was hardly a challenge.

"These are obviously Silverleaf Root and Mountain Pine. If these cheap herbs are all your clinic stocks, it's no wonder that you have so few patients!"

Hannah gestured grandly and said, "Once I start working here, I'll have my brother arrange for our Creybia suppliers to provide you with goldenseal, reishi mushroom, and other premium herbs!"

She spoke with smug superiority as she looked at Dunstan like he was a country bumpkin. It was as if her words were a generous gift to him.

"Enough of these meaningless formalities that might fool amateurs. We're elite medical school graduates, so we don't need this."

Danielle raised her chin and bossed Dunstan around with borrowed authority.

"By the way, if we must wear

uniform doctor's coats, they need to

be new? We won't wear

hand-me-downs. They should be from the finest materials, and the

style can't be outdated."

"I'm sorry!" Dunstan cut off Danielle's fantasies. "You've failed the assessment. You can't work at our clinic."

"What?" The three stared at each other, then burst into shrill protests. "You small-town hack, I dare you to say that again!"

"Did you just say we failed the assessment?"

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[ 546 words ]

"All three of you failed the assessment!" Dunstan repeated slowly. He was forcing patience into his voice.

He always had a hot temper. If Yolanda was not present, he would have had them thrown out already. Why waste words?

Yolanda watched the agitated Dunstan with a slight smile while shaking her head. His temper still needed work; being too impulsive was not helpful.

Yolanda knew they could simply throw these three out without wasting time. However, dismissing them without an assessment would let outsiders claim Willow Creek Clinic was abusing its connections to discriminate.

The clinic had just gotten through various controversies, so she did not want to waste energy on more drama. Now that Dunstan had them identify herbs and they failed, no one could fault them, no matter where this led.

Hannah's group nearly exploded at Dunstan's words. "On what grounds did we fail? Didn't we identify all the herbs?"

"You're bullying us! Just because we're students doesn't mean you can push us around!"

Hannah was not stupid. Seeing patients arriving, she stopped throwing around the Brighton name and instead played the victim. She acted like an innocent graduate being bullied in her first job.

"How cruel of you guys to bully students like this!" Danielle caught on, joining the act. "A clinic that mistreats students would surely do the same to patients too! Everybody, this place is a scam!"

The patients waiting for appointments looked at the noisy trio in confusion. Since when was Willow Creek a scam?

"Young lady, is there some sort of misunderstanding?" An elderly man stepped forward. "This clinic has been here a long time with a solid reputation."

"Hmph, that's because they've fooled you!"

Seeing someone approach, Danielle's eyes lit up as she raised her voice. What mattered most to a clinic? Reputation, of course!

There were so many patients present. If they made enough noise, Dunstan would have to hire them under pressure!

"Sir, please judge for your ne man has been mocking arrived):

qualified graduates here for

interviews. But since we arrived, this

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nitpicking everything we do.

"We're here as equals for interviews, so what right does he have to look down on

us?

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"Then he tests us, saying we must pass to be hired. We answered his questions perfectly, but he went con his word and failed us! Isn't that infuriating?"

Danielle exaggerated her story about Dunstan. Her acting was so convincing she looked like a helpless student being bullied. The man was taken aback.

"Dunstan, you weren't like this before..." The elderly man turned to Dunstan and said, "Has all this recent support for Willow Creek gone to your head?"

Dunstan was speechless. Was this a joke? With Yolanda here, how dare he get cocky?

Besides, these people were clearly causing trouble.

"They really failed the test. They couldn't identify even basic herbs!"

"Liar! These are clearly Silverleaf Root and Mountain Pine. Even regular citizens would know them!"

Danielle persisted and grabbed the herbs to show the old man. "Look! Aren't these Silverleaf Root and Mountain Pine?"

"Well... um... maybe..."

The elderly man was here as a patient, so of course he could not identify herbs. But since Silverleaf and Mountain Pine were common in traditional medicine he had taken, he tried to mediate.

Root and

"Dunstan, surely they can identify such common herbs, right?"

"Sir, that's not Silverleaf Root. It's Wild Silverleaf, which is worth ten times more than the common ones."

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