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"Wonderful!" Joane gasped, eyes blazing with awe as she took in Alex's extraordinary display of skill

His perfect methods were nothing short of revolutionary.

She, a doctor who arrogantly believed herself to have peaked in medicine, suddenly felt humbled and hopeful-like a blind woman seeing the sun for the first time.

"Bella! How are you feeling? Any pain or discomfort?" Jericho's voice cracked, disbelief and cautious joy battling inside him.

Lidia stood trembling beside him, her eyes wide and glistening.

Neither had dared to dream of a miracle-yet now one stood deflatly before them.

"Dad... Mom... this is crazy. I don't feel weak anymore! It's gone!" Bella touched herself frantically, amazement painting her

face.

Her heart thumped loudly, stronger andrea

alive than she'd ever known.

"Oh, thank heavens! It's truly gone!" Lidia cried out, voice choked with gratitude. She nearly fell to her knees, intending to grovel before Alex.

"No, Mrs. Kane-please!" Alex swiftly stepped forward, gently preventing her from bowing. Gratitude this raw was foreign to him-overwhelming, uncomfortable.

Bella turned towards Alex, her eyes suddenly aflame with adoration and something deeper, far more dangerous.

-the one she'd love till her last breath, Her cheeks flushed crimson, her heart silently screaming that Alex was the destined one- fated to share a life with her, to father their beautiful children, to stand beside her until they both grew old and gray.

"Yes!" she screamed silently to herself.

Alex had dragged her from the abyss. Her life now belonged utterly and entirely to him.

Her gaze burned into Alex, fierce enough to melt steel, making Alex avert his eyes awkwardly, shaken by such naked devotion.

"Bella, it's Mr. Alex who saved you. Without him, you'd still be trapped in

darkness," Lidia reminded warmly, oblivious to her daughter's dangerously intense gaze.

"Alex..." Bella breathed, voice trembling. "You saved my life. If you ever need me- I'm yours. Completely."

Shock jolted through the room.

Did Bella Kane just openly surrender her body and soul to this stranger?

Owen's face burned scarlet, jealousy scorching through his veins.

Alex quickly interjected, sensing the room spiraling into chaos.

Bella's face was too red, her emotions too unstable.

"You're welcome. Don't forget-I'm getting paid for this."

"Is my daughter truly cured?" Jericho asked cautiously, his voice taut with anxiety.

He'd spent years consulting renowned doctors who had always concluded the condition could only be suppress healed. He had to hear it clearly.

ver fully

"Not completely cured," Alex admitted, holding everyone's gaze firmly. "But she won't suffer any relapse for at least five years."

Calmly, he pulled out a gleaming medicinal pill. "However, if she takes this, she'll build a heart stronger than steel. Her illness

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will never haunt her again."

Thank you-oh God, thank you!" Lidia stammered breathlessly, and shaking.

Alex turned swiftly, his tone now ice-cold. "Mr. Kane, since your daughter isn't dying anymore, isn't it about time you delivered your part of the bargain?"

Jericho straightened, regaining composure.

"Ah, the Heaven Root, right? Please wait for me in the lounge. I'll join you shortly." He signaled urgently to his butler, who immediately approached.

"Follow me, Mr. Alex."

Alex nodded sharply. Turning to Josephine, he instructed clearly, "Explain to Bella how to use this miracle pill and wait here. I'll return soon with the Heaven Root."

"Got it," Josephine acknowledged briskly, stepping closer to Bella.

Alex moved confidently, following the butler into the lavish lounge.

He took a seat, waiting patiently-but his patience was tested as Owen strutted in, flanked by three hulking bodyguards.

"I appreciate you saving my fiancée, Bella. Here's a million dollars. Consider it payment."

Owen sneered arrogantly, gesturing lazily as a briefcase of money was placed contemptuously before Alex.

Alex's eyes narrowed dangerously. "I only accept the Heaven Root."

"Heaven Root?" Owen laughed mockingly, cruel amusement flickering in his eyes.

"A lowlife like you wouldn't know its worth-it'd be pearls before swine! Take the money; it's more than enough for you to live, lavishly and stay far away from Bella."

Fury ignited within Alex, molten and unforgiving. "You better hand over the Heaven Root, now."

Owen snapped his fingers casually; the bodyguards stepped forward, blocking Alex's path menacingly.

"Your desires mean nothing. I choose your payment."

"Where's Jericho Kane?" Alex demanded sharply, his voice edged with steel.

"Who knows?" Owen shrugged arrogantly, his smirk deepening with spiteful satisfaction.

Alex closed his eyes momentarily, channeling his aura perception until he found Jericho Kane-cowering behind a wall, cowardly eavesdropping on the confrontation.

Rage fueling him, Alex unleashed a devastating punch into thin air aiming directly toward Jericho's hiding place.

Owen burst into laughter, mocking Alex's absurd gesture.

But his laughter died abruptly when, behind the wall, Jericho felt an invisible, merciless force slam into him, hurling him violently across the room.

Furniture shattered beneath his crashing body, a deafening noise echoing through the mansion.

Silence gripped the room in choking fear.

Jericho realized far too late that he had recklessly provoked a monster.

Alex was far more lethal than he'd imagined—able to kill him with ease if provoked further.

Panicked, battered, and bloodied, Jericho stumbled to his feet, hastily snatching a precious box from his table—originally

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intended for Owen to handle Alex.

Now, he was desperate simply to stay alive.

"I-I have the Heaven Root!" Jericho screamed frantically, bursting into the lounge, blood streaming from his lips, broken bones jutting painfully beneath his skin. Fear radiated from him, raw and unmistakable.

"Take it, just take it and get out!"

"Uncle!" Owen protested furiously, eyes flashing dangerously. "You promised me the Heaven Root!"

"I'm sorry, Owen," Jerichogasped desperately. "I promised Alex first—I can't afford to provoke him further. Please, Alex, take it and go!"

Owen glared murderously at Alex, his voice venomous. He motioned swiftly to his guards.

"Take the Heaven Root from him! I've already paid a million dollars—it belongs to me!"

But Alex's eyes flickered with deadly intent.

His voice came like a chilling whisper, sending shivers down everyone's spine. "If you want to live, I suggest you reconsider."

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Alex watched with icy indifference as Owen's bodyguards surged forward and snatched the ornate box from his hand. He let them have it-this once.

"You ignorant little quack," Owen spat venomously, his sneer sharp enough to slice through steel.

"Heaven Root isn't just some miracle herb-it's the ultimate treasure for warriors like us. You, a pathetic excuse for a doctor, couldn't appreciate its worth even if it bit you in the ass!"

Smugly, Owen slapped the box with contemptuous triumph.

"Uncle Jericho's already handed this over to me. It's mine now, doctor boy."

Instead of exploding into fury, Alex's lips twisted into a chilling, knife-edged smile directed straight at Jericho Kane.

"Fool me once-shame on you. Twice-shame on me. But thrice? Then I'm the goddamn fool."

He strode past Jericho, leaning in close enough to whisper venomous words straight into his trembling ear

"If that Heaven Root isn't in my hand before I leave this cursed mansion, don't blame me when your bloodline ends three generations deep."

Jericho Kane felt ice spike through his veins, terror tightening around his heart like a hangman's noose.

Alex paused a heartbeat longer, eyes blazing like hellfire. "No one cheats me three times and sees the dawn again."

"You worthless bastard!" Owen crowed arrogantly from behind, laughing like the winner of some sadistic game.

"Take your filthy money and crawl out of here. Refuse it, and I'll throw it to charity. They deserve it more than you!"

Ignoring Owen's mocking laughter, Alex called calmly, his voice steady as iron calling to the next room, "Josephine, we're done here. Let's go."

"Right behind you," Josephine said quickly, catching up with him as he strode towards the exit.

She glanced nervously back at Jericho, but Alex merely offered her a reassuring smile, as though the chaotic humiliation they'd just endured had been nothing but a passing breeze.

Meanwhile, Jericho Kane stood immobilized, dread pooling deep within him like poison.

A wave of nausea crashed through him as he realized what a catastrophic mistake he'd made crossing Alex.

"Owen, hand me the Heaven Root," Jericho snapped sharply, his voice heavy with restrained panic.

"Uncle Kane, you promised it to my father!" Owen protested, clutching the box protectively.

"I said enough, boy! Hand it over now," Jericho roared.

"You can't-" Owen began, but the words froze in his throat at Jericho's savage glare,

Two bodyguards stepped protectively in front of Owen. Without hesitation, Jericho lunged forward, delivering two vicious strikes that twisted their necks into grotesque angles.

Their lifeless bodies collapsed to the polished marble floor, broken and limp. "You...you killed them!" Owen shrieked, voice cracking with terror

"Hand over that box," Jericho warned, cold as death itself, "or I'll snap your worthless neck next."

Owen's face drained pale as a corpse, desperation flickering in his terrified eyes. "Uncle Kane, my father's connected directly to the Texas governor! You can't do this-"

"You arrogant brat! Give it to me now or your father's connections won't save you from my wrath!" Jericho bellowed, eyes

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darting anxiously toward Alex, already halfway to the door.

Hands trembling uncontrollably, Owen surrendered the box, mumbling weak threats. "My father will hear about this."

"Tell him whatever you want. Your family's dead to me!" Jericho snarled, snatching the Heaven Root and racing after Alex's rapidly retreating figure.

"Alex-wait, please!" Jericho called desperately, hobbled by his old injuries. Every step sent searing pain through his bones, but fear drove him faster.

Josephine glanced back. "Shouldn't we stop? He's practically begging-"

"No," Alex cut her off coldly, increasing his pace.

His rage simmered, barely contained beneath the mask of calm.

Part of him wanted the Root desperately, yet another darker urge longed to obliterate the Kane family for daring to humiliate him.

"Alex, wait!" Jericho shouted again, panic clawing at his chest as he saw Alex nearing the mansion door.

"Please, don't go!"

Sweat poured down Jericho's face in rivers as he realized the catastrophic scale of his error.

He'd gambled on Texas's support, hoping Alex and the powerful family would clash and leave him victorious.

But now, watching Alex's merciless stride, Jericho saw the grim reality-he was about to lose everything.

Drawing every ounce of strength left in his aging bones, Jericho surged forward desperately.

Just as Alex reached the exit, Jericho crashed to his knees before him, offering up the precious Heaven Root with shaking hands. "Please, Alex! Take this herb- spare my family from ruin," Jericho begged, his voice cracking with humiliating desperation.

Alex paused, looking down upon Jericho with a gaze sharp enough to slice steel.

"I could crush your family anyway, Jericho. I could leave your empire burning, and still walk away with this. The fact I haven't yet is mercy you don't deserve. Betray me again, and your bloodline ends forever."

Jericho's pride flared momentarily, but before he could even gather his defiance, Alex's murderous intent surged forth like a tidal wave, suffocating and devastating.

It was a hundred times more terrifying than before, pressing Jericho to the marble floor like an insect beneath a mountain, bones creaking beneath the unbearable pressure.

Cold sweat drenched him, and in that instant, Jericho understood Alex had been toying with him all along

Finally, Alex bent down, snatched the box, and straightened, eyes as cold as eternal frost.

"I'm taking this Heaven Root, Jericho Kane. Never cross my path again-or next time, your family tree ends with ashes."

Alex strode out, leaving Jericho kneeling on the cold marble floor, paralyzed by fear and shame.

A single, overwhelming thought echoed violently in Jericho's mind: Never again.

When Alex returned to the shabby clinic in the heart of the slums, a sleek, black limousine gleamed ominously by the entrance, like a polished dagger in a pile of filth.

Inside, waiting elegantly amid the peeling walls and cracked front floor tiles, stood Jasmine Kingston.

Her beauty was lethal-eyes glittering like emerald daggers, curves so perfectly deadly that any weaker man might lose his soul just looking.

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A bewitching smile curled at the edge of her lips, captivating enough to command

the devotion of twenty stone-faced bodyguards pacing restlessly outside.

Alex's gaze hardened. "Well, what disaster dragged you down here today, Jasmine?"

His voice carried an edge of wry amusement, even as his pulse quickened slightly. No matter how familiar they were, the woman always struck him harder than a shot of whiskey.

Jasmine sighed dramatically, her voice dripping honeyed sarcasm

"You, obviously. You're harder to find than gold in a coal mine. I figured if the great Alex wouldn't come to see me, I'd just have to grace this charming dump myself." "That's not what I meant," Alex chuckled, his tone softening slightly. Shifting uncomfortably, he quickly changed gears.

"How's the Emerald Elixir doing? Meeting your lofty expectations?"

Her eyes lit up brighter than fireworks on the Fourth of July.

"Better than expected? Darling, it's obliterating expectations. Emerald Elixir makes SkinDew Essence look like cheap gutter water. Trust me, when this hits the shelves, we'll be drowning in cash."

Alex nodded, smiling faintly. "Glad to hear it."

Without missing a beat, Jasmine slid an official-looking document onto the cracked wooden desk between them. "Take a look at this."

Alex raised an eyebrow. "What exactly am I looking at?"

"The contract, genius," she shot back playfully, but her eyes were dead serious.

"You created the formula; I won't steal your brilliance. Think of this as our formal partnership. Every single cent Emerald Elixir earns, we split straight down the middle."

Alex shook his head dismissively. "Ms. Kingston, you can keep your cash. The Elixir serves no purpose for me—I'm satisfied enough knowing it benefits you." "Are you completely out of your damn mind?" Jasmine snapped, incredulity sharpening every syllable.

"I'm literally handing you a fortune, Alex. Take the damn money or you'll haunt my nightmares."

Realizing there was no arguing with the fire burning in her eyes, Alex sighed, reluctantly picking up the pen.

"Fine, if it'll spare your beauty sleep," he mocked gently, scribbling his signature across the page.

As he finished signing, Jasmine's eyes glittered with triumphant satisfaction. Leaning closer, she murmured slyly, "Speaking of fortunes, did you hear Jericho Kane just offloaded all his precious Skin Dew stock to the Chicago Lords? Seems

your Elixir's got the big shots running scared."

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An hour earlier, Sophia had stepped quietly out of the hospital doors, a ghostly shadow haunted by restless thoughts.

For days, she'd kept her family at arm's length, erecting an invisible barrier around her wounded heart.

Her soul felt raw, tormented by relentless doubts about Alex.

Perhaps she had always been mifair, perhaps she should have trusted him

sooner.

After all, their marriage was already torn to shreds; yet, somewhere deep inside, she knew Alex deserved an apology far greater than her pride allowed.

Paying a discreet detective employed by her family, Sophia easily covered the small clinic Alex ran near the slums.

Guided by the instructions of her GPS, she drove slowly through the grimy streets, her eyes hollow with anticipation and dread.

As she approached, the sight of bodyguards patrolling the perimeter, stern-faced and vigilant, set her pulse racing

Her heart twisted painfully upon glimpsing Jasmine standing intimately close to Alex, radiating confidence and allure.

Sophia's grip tightened on the steering wheel, her knuckles whitening as uncertainty gnawed at her courage.

Unaware of Sophia's anguished gaze, Jasmine had already concluded her dealings with Alex.

Her sharp eyes, however, caught sight of Sophia's familiar luxury car lurking nearby.

A sly, triumphant smile curled her lips.

Jasmine recognized instantly who the woman was-a rival whose mere existence ignited an instinctive, competitive fire in her heart.

"Oh, that's right!" Jasmine suddenly declared with a playful lilt, turning to Alex with eyes glittering mischievously.

"I almost forgot-I have one more special gift for you."

"A gift?" Alex raised an eyebrow, genuinely intrigued. "What kind?"

"It's a surprise," Jasmine whispered seductively, her voice dripping with allure. "Close your eyes."

Alex hesitated briefly, then shrugged off any suspicion and obediently closed his eyes, unaware of the storm that was about to

consume him.

In the silent darkness, a fragrance sweet as forbidden fruit enveloped him, causing his pulse to quicken dangerously.

Before he could react, warm, soft lips claimed his own, stealing a kiss that felt like the spark of an inferno.

Alex froze, his entire body seized by shock as though lightning had pierced his soul.

Instinctively, he pulled back-but Jasmine's slender arms, deceptively powerful, locked firmly around his neck like shackles forged from iron.

Never had he imagined such strength hidden beneath her delicate form.

Her intoxicating scent clouded his judgment, and, lost in that electrifying moment,

a reckless voice whispered in his mind, Why not?"

After all, Jasmine was undeniably one of Vancouver's greatest beauties- irresistible, intoxicating, dan

Jus.

Surrendering to temptation, Alex returned her passionate embrace, sealing a betrayal he scarcely realized was occurring.

In the distance, Sophia watched helplessly from behind tinted glass, her soul shattering into countless fragments as the truth stabbed ruthlessly into her heart. Chapter 253

The cruel image etched itself into her memory a nightmare she would never forget.

Her chest tightened, agony flaring as tears blurred her vision, anger boiling fiercely beneath her despair.

It felt as though something precious, something she had always believed was unquestionably hers, had been viciously ripped

away.

Finally releasing Alex, Jasmine drew back, her cheeks flushed, her breath slightly

uneven.

For the proud, independent Jasmine, this impulsive act had been her first stolen kiss-a daring declaration of desire.

"That was my first kiss," she murmured softly, her eyes shimmering with sincerity.

"My heart, my everything-it's yours now." Jasmine's radiant smile was mesmerizing, the flush on her cheeks amplifying her seductive charm.

Alex, cheeks burning with embarrassment, touched his lips tentatively, as if savoring the lingering warmth.

Yet his reflection was cut short by the sudden, furious roar of an engine.

A luxury car streaked dangerously past, blaring its horn, nearly clipping the startled bodyguards.

Alex caught only a fleeting glimpse-a silhouette painfully familiar, unmistakable— and instantly recognized the hurt and fury behind that reckless escape.

"Wasn't that...Sophia?" Jasmine's voice was teasing, almost cruel in its innocence.

Alex nodded numbly, still dazed. "It was her."

"Shouldn't you chase her down?" Jasmine inquired playfully, her eyebrow arched in mock concern.

"Explain what she just saw?"

"Explain?" Alex retorted bitterly. "We're divorced. What's there to explain? It's not betrayal if there's nothing left to betray."

"True enough," Jasmine purred softly, a possessive gleam igniting her eyes.

"After all, you belong to me now."

Shaking herself slightly, Jasmine quickly shifted back to business.

"Anyway, tomorrow we'll have our final meeting before the official launch of Elixir Vitae. Please come to Hilton

Pharmaceutical's main office. It will be our first-and I promise, our last-formal business meeting. I won't take up your time after that."

Alex sighed wearily. "Fine."

The next day, as Alex stepped into the Hilton meeting room, he was met by a tableau of influential figures, each radiating an aura of wealth and power.

Yet among these powerful individuals sat Dr. Joane, stern-faced and respected, whose presence left Alex visibly surprised. Jasmine swiftly approached, explaining smoothly, "Kingston Pharmaceuticals wants Elixir Vitae to enter the interstate market. Having someone renowned like Dr. Joane endorse us is crucial for credibility."

Dr. Joane's skeptical voice echoed sharply through the room.

t truly worthy."

"I haven't agreed yet. I never endorse anything without thorough scrutiny. Not once have I found a p Jasmine's smile widened knowingly. "With your discerning taste, Dr. Joane, I have no doubt you'll be impressed."

Jasmine opened a luxurious velvet-lined box, revealing an emerald-colored pill that shimmered brilliantly under the light, resting with elegant precision inside.

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With a theatrical flourish, she presented it reverently. "Here it is he Emerald Elixir." Joane carefully took the shimmering pill, inspecting it with keen precision.

Her face slowly brightened with approval. "Impressive clarity, brilliant luster, and a remarkably pure fragrance-this pill is extraordinary!"

"Precisely!" Jasmine applauded with genuine pride.

"Emerald Elixir not only enhances beauty but grants longevity and youthfulness. If you aren't concerned about potential tampering, why not test it yourself?"

Dr. Joane chuckled defiantly, her pride flashing boldly.

"Poison? What have I to fear from mere toxins?" Without hesitation, she swallowed the Emerald Elixir whole.

Instantly, a cooling sensation flooded her veins, cascading swiftly through her limbs, igniting vitality in every nerve.

Joane shuddered, overwhelmed by the surge of strength and clarity rushing through her.

Her fatigue melted away, replaced by unprecedented energy and rejuvenation.

She felt utterly reborn.

Awestruck, Joane nearly leapt from her seat, voice trembling with rare excitement. "Marvelous! This elixir is a priceless miracle-utterly phenomenal!"

"Tell me," Joane pressed urgently, her eyes wide with amazement, "who developed this Emerald Elixir? Where did the formula come from? I must know!"

Overwhelmed by the elixir's astonishing effects, she couldn't hide her awe

For someone as discerning as Joane, the desire to uncover the creator behind such a masterpiece was unstoppable.

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"Dr. Joane," Jasmine purred with a coy smirk, leaning forward with predatory grace.

"This information is our company's deepest secret. But, if you're willing to join us formally, I'll gladly reveal the mastermind behind Emerald Elixir-provided he's willing to show his hand."

"You certainly know how to play your cards, don't you?" Joane retorted bitterly, recognizing Jasmine's carefully laid trap.

"Alright, hand me the damn contract. I'll sign."

Jasmine's secretary swiftly produced the document, and Joane scrawled her signature, sealing her fate.

Meanwhile, Jasmine cast a mischievous glance toward Alex, eyes glinting with cunning amusement. "Can I reveal the genius behind our elixir now?"

Alex scowled faintly, irritated by Jasmine's blatant manipulation.

Clearly, she viewed him as nothing more than bait to ensnare Dr. Joane.

"Fine," Alex sighed resignedly. "Given my stake in this venture, I suppose I can't refuse."

"Thanks, Alex. I keep owing you more and more," Jasmine teased, winking playfully.

"So, Miss Kingston," Joane pressed eagerly, her eyes bright with anticipation.

"Who exactly is this prodigious mastermind behind the Emerald Elixir?"

"The genius," Jasmine declared with dramatic flair, pausing for effect, "is standing right in front of you."

Joane's jaw dropped, eyes widening in astonishment as she stared at Alex.

"You mean to tell me Mr. Alex is the creator of the Emerald Elixir?"

Healing patients and concocting groundbreaking pharmaceuticals were entirely separate arts, demanding profoundly different expertise.

Masters capable of excelling in both fields were almost mythical, aging legends pushing past their prime, their reputations forged by decades of painstaking dedication.

But a man barely out of his twenties achieving mastery in both realms?

Unheard of.

Impossible.

Alex shrugged modestly, a faint smile dancing on his lips. "I just have a great master, got lucky, that's all."

"Modesty doesn't suit you, Mr. Alex," Joane insisted passionately her admiration unmistakable

"Even with a master, crafting such extraordinary medicine is no trivial task. You're extraordinary. Meeting someone of your caliber is truly an honor."

She bowed deeply, sincerity radiating from her every move.

Alex quickly stepped forward, gently lifting her up. "Please, you flatter me, Dr. Joane."

Joane's eyes gleamed mischievously, her smile shifting into an alluring grin. "Tell me, Mr. Alex, are you

ken for?"

Her voice dripped with playful intrigue, the famed bachelorette clearly sizing him up.

Jasmine instantly tightened her grip around Alex's arm possessively, her tone icy. "He's off-limits to anyone else."

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Joane burst into laughter, rich and uninhibited.

"Fine, fine. We have plenty of time ahead," she winked knowingly at Alex, clearly amused by Jasmine's fierce protectiveness.

Turning sharply back to Jasmine, Joane's tone became briskly professional.

"What now, Miss Kingston?" Despite Jasmine's authority, Joane's demeanor implied she viewed the younger woman as a novice playing adult games.

Jasmine swallowed her unease, realizing she'd placed Alex directly into Joane's sights, perhaps a dangerous mistake,

Still, professionalism prevailed.

"Thank you, Dr. Joane. Emerald Elixir officially launches in five days. I'd love your support at our launch event-I'll forward you the details."

"Consider me there!" Joane announced decisively, rising to leave. Make sure Mr. Alex attends, too. There's plenty we still need to discuss."

Meanwhile, in a sprawling estate in Chicago:

"Jericho Kane just handed over all SkinDew's production rights. What's your take, Father?" Henry Dupont asked eagerly, leaning forward with greedy anticipation.

Conrad Dupont, one of the five lords of Chicago, studied his second son with a sharp, unblinking gaze. His voice was low, edged with suspicion. "You're certain this medicine is worth anything?"

"I had our top pharmaceutical analysts run a full evaluation. Their conclusion was unanimous-it's groundbreaking, with massive profit potential just waiting to be capitalized on," Henry stated confidently.

Conrad frowned deeply, skepticism etched in every line of his weathered face.

"If it's so lucrative, why's Jericho selling? That man isn't an idiot. There's a reason he's unloading it."

"Father," Henry replied confidently, "Jericho lost his governorship. With Kelly Kingston running the show now, he's desperate

to dump anything tying him to his shady past. Everyone knows he stole SkinDew from the Kingstons."

"I don't like the smell of this," Conrad growled, uneasy.

"Father, trust me, it's a golden opportunity! I bought it for a steal. Help me finish this deal." Henry pressed urgently.

Conrad exhaled slowly, the weight of calculation in his tone.

"Fine. But move quickly. Kingston's team is already rushing to quietly launch a SkinDew replacement within five days. It might even be a knockoff of your formula."

"I'll roll ours out in three," Henry said with a cold smirk.

"We'll dominate the market before they even blink. By the time they drop theirs, it'll be Death On Arrival-and if it's too close to ours, we'll bury them in court."

"Good. Host the launch at the Texas Interstate Convention Hall," Conrad commanded, his tone resolute. "Bring in buyers from every corner of the country." "Yes, Father. This victory is ours," Henry grinned greedily, relishing the thought of besting his elder brother in making profit for family and humiliating Jasmine Kingston-the woman sheltering Alex, the brat who'd humiliated him.

Meanwhile, at the Kingston Mansion:

"Mother!" Charles exploded, pacing furiously. "How could Father give Vermont to Kelly and leave me empty-handed? Am I not

his son!"

Jessica sighed deeply, her brow furrowed with exasperation.

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"Your father claims it wasn't his decision. The King's secret group exposed Jericho Kane's corruption and chose Kelly directly" "Father's a liar!" Charles snarled, hurling the crystal pot off the desk-shattering it against the marble floor. "It should've been mine! But no-he despises me, always has! Everything I do, every breath I take, he finds a reason to hate it! And for what? I've never failed him!" Jessica grasped his shoulders, her voice firm yet soothing. "Patience, Charles. Your father won't live forever. Los Angeles will inevitably be yours. Prove your worth now, build your empire, and your father will have no choice but to respect you."

Charles gazed at his mother desperately. "Promise me?"

"Yes, Charles," she vowed solemnly. "Even if Jasmine and Kelly temporarily overshadow you, you'll inherit my business empire. Tell me, what's your next move?"

Charles's eyes lit with cunning determination.

"I'm buying into SkinDew stock. Word is Jericho Kane's is handing it off to the Chicago Lords-washed his hands too fast, like the coward he is. That formula is Jasmine's Achilles' heel. Once our profits skyrocket, she'll be forced to remember who really stands above her."

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Now that Skin Dew Essence had slipped through Kingston Pharmaceuticals' fingers, the family simmered with resentment.

But Charles saw more than loss; he glimpsed an opportunity—one that, if seized boldly enough, could catapult him straight past Jasmine, cementing his authority once and for all.

"Charles," Jessica said carefully, watching her son's eyes glint with ambition, "Jasmine's already got a new product ready to launch. Don't you think betting everything we have might be reckless?"

"Mother," Charles scoffed bitterly, rolling his eyes, "Jasmine's just bluffing. Whatever she's cooked up can only be some pathetic imitation scraped together from our leftover research data"

"Sure, Alex might have a knack for patching up bodies, but this is pharmaceutical science, not some street-level stitching" "Without real professors backing them, they're just throwing darts blindfolded. Besides, Skin Dew's patent is firmly in Jericho's grasp now—and he's already sold it off to that Chicago lord."

Jessica frowned, unconvinced. "But Jasmine insists it's entirely new product—" Charles slammed his fist down, interrupting her sharply.

"Bullshit! SkinDew took us a decade—do you really think Jasmine could conjure something groundbreaking in a month? She's playing you like a fool!"

Jessica hesitated, doubt flickering across her face. "Then how much SkinDew Essence are you planning to buy?"

"As much as possible—every last cent we have," Charles announced decisively, his voice radiating a ruthless confidence.

"Drain the family vault dry. And if that's not enough, then borrow more."

Jessica's expression darkened, anxiety mounting. "Charles, aren't we overreaching?"

Charles threw his head back, laughing mockingly at her caution.

"Overreaching? Mother, the market analysis for SkinDew Essence is phenomenal. Every millionaire in the country is practically drooling for it. If we control enough of the stock now, imagine the astronomical profits we'll reap. Trust me the return always matches the risk. Soon, even Jasmine will kneel and recognize who's truly running this family."

The next morning, Kelly urgently called Jasmine.

"Did you hear? One of the Chicago lords—the Dupont family—is planning to officially launch SkinDew Essence in just two days at the Texas Interstate Convention Hall."

With Kingswell's unmatched intelligence network, secrets rarely remained hidden.

Jasmine pressed her temples as a sharp headache spiked through her skull, then steeled herself, her eyes flashing with cold resolve.

"If they want a battle, we'll give them a war. We're launching our product too."

"You're thinking of launching on the same day?" Kelly asked, eyebrows raised in surprise.

"Exactly," Jasmine shot back, a defiant grin spreading across her lips.

"Let's see whose product the world chooses."

Kelly studied Jasmine, pride swelling in her chest at how quickly the little girl had transformed into a formidable force—bold, cunning, and dangerously smart.

Jasmine Kingston had grown teeth sharper than Albert's and wits that Charles couldn't begin to match.

"Where exactly do you want your event?" Kelly asked cautiously. Chapter 255

Jasmine's eyes sparkled wickedly. "Right opposite their doors."

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Kelly smirked knowingly. "But that venue is already booked." "Offer triple," Jasmine said without hesitation, her voice dripping. "Is that really necessary?" Kelly questioned softly, sensing Jasmine. "Necessary?" Jasmine laughed bitterly.

"They stabbed us first. It's time everyone sees exactly how the Ki aiming straight for their throat."

Two days later, the Duponts' grand launch of Skin Dew Essence was a relentless chatter and swarming with wealthy elites, all lured by not by an aggressive wave of nonstop advertising.

The venue radiated grandeur, swathed in silk banners and elaborate Outside, luxury cars lined up endlessly, depositing one distinguished About an hour before the grand launch kicked off, a sleek black limo

Jasmine stepped out with effortless grace, her arm looped confidently claiming enemy territory.

Her presence was electric, her beauty a force that demanded attention

Beside her, Alex, in nothing more than a simple shirt and jeans, in the sea of luxury

and flashing cameras surrounding them.

Charles spotted them immediately, sneering contemptuously as }

"Jasmine! Didn't

to see you here-did Henry Dupont actu

His voice was dripping with sarcasm, his gaze deliberately sliding Jasmine shrugged, unfazed, her eyes coolly dismissive. "I'm not] "Then why exactly are you here?" Charles mocked, eyebrows rais "Oh," Jasmine said breezily, a wicked smirk playing at her lips,

there."

She gestured casually toward the other hall within the same Texa

event.

"What?" Charles sputtered, shock jolting through him. "Impossi "Never what?" Jasmine interrupted sharply, enjoying his stunne "Saw this coming? Of course you didn't. You're too busy counting Charles glanced toward her indicated venue- a building utterly d

He burst into harsh laughter, mockery vivid in his eyes. "You're j expecting- ghosts?"

Jasmine stepped in closer, her gaze ice-cold, her voice slicing thr

"Laugh while you still can, Charles. Because soon, you'll be chok your SkinDew

Essence stock now. Save Mother from the disaster

Charles's laughter snapped off like a broken wire, his face twistir

Chapter 255

Jasmine didn't so much as blink. She just stood there, smiling cold, victorious already knowing she'd cracked him wide

open.

Today's Bonus Offer

GET IT NOW

Chapter 256

Chapter 256

Only after Jasmine had disappeared into the crowd did Charles finally register her

words, fury igniting inside him like a wildfire,

Absolute nonsense!" he snarled, his face twisting in contempt.

"SkinDew Essence is practically gold dust right now! People are begging on their knees, throwing money at us just to get a single drop. Your pathetic jealousy is showing, Jasmine!"

His voice was dripping venom, disdain echoing in every syllable.

But Jasmine had already dismissed him entirely.

She gracefully looped her arm through Alex's, her face serene with confidence, as they vanished into the empty hall

"Hmph! She really has no grasp of reality!" Charles spat bitterly, eyes narrowing viciously as he watched them vanish.

"Pathetic-just scrambling desperately to make trouble as a final act of desperation! Soon enough, the Duponts will crush her underfoot. And when the lawsuits pour in over her half-baked product, she'll beg for mercy!" Meanwhile, the Texas Interstate Convention Hall steadily filled with glittering dignitaries, the Duponts' lavish press conference overflowing with wealth and glamour.

Money had flowed generously into their advertising campaigns and invitations, drawing elites like moths to a dazzling flame. The Kingston hall, however, was starkly different-desolate, hauntingly empty, occupied only by anxious staff and stiff-faced bodyguards arranging free samples at the entrance.

Yet, Jasmine sat untroubled, utterly composed.

When Kelly entered, she deliberately placed her next to Alex, seating him between two captivatingly beautiful women, as though staking a proud claim.

"What in God's name are you thinking, Jasmine? Kelly?" Jessica stormed in, her voice sharp with incredulous fury. "Throwing together this mess of a press conference at the last minute - are you completely insane?"

"Mom, I know exactly what I'm doing," Jasmine replied coolly, her expression unwavering.

"You know? You really think you know?" Jessica's voice trembled with exasperation, her eyes blazing fiercely.

"Have you even seen the Duponts' event? They're packed wall-to-wall with influential figures! And here? It's a ghost town! If word leaks, the Kingston name will become a laughingstock-a total humiliation, especially for a Vancouver governor's family!

Jessica seethed, her dignity wounded. "What on earth possessed you to act so recklessly today, Jasmine? You're usually meticulous, precise-never this foolish!" "Relax, mother. Have a seat, grab the water bottle-you'll soon see," Jasmine responded calmly, confidence radiating from her every word.

Her eyes flashed defiantly as she added sharply, "Or you can always go join the Duponts. After all, you did sell off some of our family's shares just to buy SkinDew

stock."

"How dare you! My finances are none of your business!" Jessica bristled defensively.

Jasmine smiled coldly, her voice dripping with venomous sweetness.

"Actually, I should thank you—I bought back every share you and Charles foolishly discarded. Now, I control more of Kingston Pharmaceuticals than both of you combined."

She tilted her head mockingly. "One last friendly suggestion: sell off your precious Skin Dew Essence before my press conference begins. Once it starts, your stocks won't be worth dirt."

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Chapter 256

Jessica scoffed defiantly, "Sell Skin Dew for your worthless, half-assed junk? Hmph! I'd love to see what pathetic stunt you're about to pull!"

Privately, Jessica prayed no one else arrived, desperate to minimize their shame.

Yet her heart nearly stopped when a refined woman entered the hall, her presence regal and commanding.

"Dr-Dr. Joane?" Jessica stammered, disbelief etched across her face.

This elusive figure was almost mythical, a healer who casually turned down prime ministers and kings.

"Why...what could possibly bring you here, Dr. Joane?" Jessica rushed forward, forcing a welcoming smile.

Dr. Joane regarded Jessica coldly, arching a delicate brow. "Do I know you?"

"N-no," Jessica admitted awkwardly, shrinking beneath the doctor's icy stare.

Without another glance, Dr. Joane breezed past Jessica and approached Alex directly. Seeing the two beauties flanking him, she chuckled knowingly, spinning a chair around to face him intimately. Her eyes sparked with intense curiosity.

"I must know more about your miraculous treatment for Jericho Kane's daughter. How exactly did you pinpoint those three critical nerves?"

Seeing her genuine passion, Alex offered a brief, insightful explanation, each word resonating profoundly.

Joane's eyes lit up as if she'd just uncovered a sacred secret.

"Oh, brilliant!" she exclaimed, diving headlong into an animated discussion, effortlessly interpreting Alex's concise remarks. Their dialogue quickly escalated into passionate excitement, completely oblivious to everyone else. Seizing the perfect moment, Jasmine subtly signaled the staff, her voice quiet yet authoritative, "Dr. Joane's here. Start filming -stream this live immediately."

A cunning smirk crossed her lips. "Now, it's time we generously borrow all those lovely Dupont guests. They've kindly advertised for us long enough."

After a spirited exchange, Joane's laughter rang out exuberantly, shattering her image of aloof sophistication.

"Incredible! You're an absolute genius, Alex-truly extraordinary!"

Jessica stared, utterly stupefied. Was this the proud, notoriously unreachable Dr.

Joane?

She looked more like a gleeful teenager swooning over a celebrity! And what was this mysterious medical technique that had captivated Joane so thoroughly? Recovering slightly, Jessica sneered, aiming a sharp barb at Jasmine.

"So you got Dr. Joane to attend, congratulations. But what's the point if your product is garbage? Do you really think one high-profile endorsement can crush Dupont's dominance? Quality wins, Jasmine-not a fleeting endorsement!" Jasmine merely smiled serenely, checking her watch before turning decisively to

her staff.

With a commanding nod, dozens of emerald vials gleaming brilliantly were promptly displayed for
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Her voice was low and triumphant, "Let the show begin."

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The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 256[857 words]

Chapter 256

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Chapter 256

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The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 257[1,004 words]

Chapter 257

At that precise moment, the grandeur of Dupont's event erupted into full bloom.

The massive double doors swung open, and a wave of guests surged inside, voices rising with excitement as they scrambled to claim their seats.

The atmosphere crackled with electric anticipation.

Henry Dupont scanned the rapidly growing crowd, a smug, triumphant smile stretching across his face.

They had finally outsmarted Kingston, beating them to the punch

Even Kingston's desperate, last-minute attempt at hosting their conference across the way was doomed from the start.

Without guests, it was little more than a pathetic joke.

Henry chuckled darkly, his heart swelling with arrogant satisfaction.

The lord of Chicago had decisively won this round.

Everything was unfolding flawlessly.

By day's end, Skin Dew Essence would dominate headlines and conversations, spreading like wildfire.

Whatever scraps Kingston might later produce would simply languish in the shadow of his glorious success.

His ambitious vision-to blanket all eleven states in the resounding name of SkinDew-was within reach. "Henry Dupont! My sincerest congratulations!" Charles approached, his voice dripping with flattery, his face flushed with excitement.

"Ah, Mr. Kingston! How generous of you to join us. Please, have a seat," Jericho said with a warm tone, though the glint in his eyes told a different story.

He knew exactly who Charles was. A traitor wrapped in a polished suit.

This was the man who sold out his own little sister research, handed it to the Kanes, and watched without a shred of guilt as they flipped it to Dupont.

Now here he was, smiling like a loyal lapdog at Dupont's side.

If he could knife his own family in the back, who on earth would he hesitate to betray?

"Henry, your Skin Dew Essence is truly revolutionary! People can't stop talking about its miraculous effects. Just look around-the sheer anticipation alone has drawn this crowd!"

"Bringing top influencers and celebrities to endorse it? Masterful move! There's no limit to how high you'll soar now," Charles gushed, the sycophancy thick and nauseatingly obvious.

Jericho smiled sharply. "I've heard you've been busy stockpiling quite a bit yourself, Charles. Planning to ride my coattails to wealth, are you?" (1)

Charles laughed heartily, completely unashamed. "All thanks to your genius, Henry. A rising tide lifts alls, doesn't it?"

Henry suddenly narrowed his eyes, shifting the conversation with a sinister calmness.

"Tell me, have you heard anything about Jasmine trying to pull a stunt by hosting a press conference opposite ours?"

Charles scoffed dismissively. "She's trying to provoke you? Pathetic. Frankly, no one's even heard about her little sideshow. It's utterly empty-a complete embarrassment."

Henry's laughter sliced through the air, sharp and merciless

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1

"No one's even showing up- so what's the point? Jasmine's little stunts have always been pathetic. Did she seriously think some last-minute spectacle could revive her sinking ship? Please, she's up against me, Henry Dupont. And she will lose. Badly."

Charles sneered contemptuously. "She's just frustrated, grasping desperately at straws. Clearly, it's blown up in her face. You, Henry, are on another level."

Henry shook his head disdainfully, the image of jasmine Kingston-so-called queen of the business world-falling from grace amused him immensely.

She was a fool playing a losing game. "Forget about her nonsense. Let's focus on real success, Charles-our overflowing coffers.

As Henry and Charles reveled arrogantly in their assured victory, certain guests in the hall began glancing toward Kingston's venue across the way, their brows furrowing with confusion.

Suddenly, the smartwatches on their wrists vibrated in unison.

A shocking notification flashed:

"Dr. Joane, renowned medical expert, speaking live at Kingston Hall."

"Is that... Dr. Joane at the Kingston conference?" one merchant muttered urgently, leaning toward his secretary.

"It appears so, sir," the secretary replied, carefully watching the commotion.

The merchant's heart skipped a beat.

Dr. Joane-renowned, elusive, almost mythical in medical circles-suddenly appearing at a conference?

Whether as a guest or speaker, it didn't matter. Getting close to her was like securing a golden lifeline in the world of health. And for the wealthy, nothing ignited fear faster than the thought of their health slipping through their fingers.

Dr. Joane wasn't just a doctor-she was an insurance policy.

"Let's just stay here. Secure the Skin Dew products," he said briskly, trying to stay focused.

But within seconds, unease gnawed at him. He couldn't sit still.

"No-wait. I need to see this for myself. You, stay here. Quietly hold our position in SkinDew stock. Don't draw attention."

With that, he rose and slipped out of the Dupont hall under the pretense of a restroom break, but the urgency in his steps betrayed him and sharp eyes were already watching.

Curious eyes followed him, and a slow ripple of whispers began.

One by one, others started to sense it-something was happening next door.

Something they weren't supposed to miss.

Across the hall, Kingston's event was meticulously prepared.

The merchant approached hastily, eyes darting.

"Is Dr. Joane here?" he demanded breathlessly.

"Absolutely," a poised staff member responded warmly. "This is Kingston Pharma's latest product, the...erald Elixir, personally endorsed by Dr. Joane." Shock rippled across the merchant's face.

Dr. Joane never endorsed just any medicine-she was notorious for tearing apart mediocre products with brutal precision, her critiques so devastating they turned entire brands radioactive.

Most companies didn't even dare approach her anymore, knowing one word from her could sink them.

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So if Dr. Joane was backing this... it had to be extraordinary.

Without a second thought, the merchant took the vibrant green pill handed to him and swallowed it whole.

Immediately, potent energy surged through his veins. Aches dissolved, replaced by a vigor he hadn't felt in decades.

"My God," he gasped, urgently contacting his secretary.

"Forget SkinDew! Rush here immediately-we must monopolize the Emerald Elixir before anyone else discovers this!"

As the merchant's secretary vanished discreetly from Dupont's conference, others began noticing the suspicious activity, their business instincts tingling gently.

"Find out what's happening-quickly!"

Within moments, the Dupont hall erupted into a frenzy of whispers, clandestine inquiries shooting through the crowd like wildfire.

Charles finally noticed the disruption, panic flaring in his chest. Chairs emptied rapidly, the vibrant atmosphere dissolving into

chaos.

"What the hell's going on?" Charles muttered desperately, stepping outside.

His heart sank as he witnessed an unmistakable stream of guests making their way decisively towards Jasmine's hall.

"Impossible," he growled furiously. "Why is everyone leaving? What the hell did she pull off?"

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The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 258[1,152 words]

Chapter 258

Chapter 258

Charles stormed toward Jasmine's hall, only to halt abruptly, his jaw dropping in disbelief.

The hall was already swarming, packed so tightly it seemed to ripple with anticipation.

People jostled for seats, their excitement palpable, like sharks sensing blood.

Staff scrambled to form a protective barricade around Dr. Joane, who stood serenely conversing with Alex, entirely indifferent to the seething crowd pressing closer.

Jasmine watched gleefully, predatory smile tugging at her lips.

Clearly, using Dr. Joane as bait had worked far better than she'd dared hope.

Standing tall, Jasmine seized a microphone, her voice ringing like polished steel through the restless chatter.

"Thank you all for your overwhelming enthusiasm. Unfortunately due to the sheer number gathered here today, only our top ten customers will have the exclusive honor of consulting directly with Dr. Joane."

She gestured grandly to the eager faces, eyes gleaming with triumph.

"For now, please find your seats. Our presentation will begin shortly. Afterward, you may start securing your orders. Charles hesitated near the entrance, tension knotting his stomach as more and more curious guests surged past him.

Skepticism had lured them here, but one glance at the venerable Dr. Joane dispelled all doubt.

The mere presence of this renowned figure was advertisement enough for the Emerald Elixir.

"Could it really surpass Skin Dew Essence?" Charles muttered uneasily, sweat trickling down his temples.

His confidence waned further as the hall erupted into animated discussions, the empty seats rapidly filled by a sea of enthralled faces.

Jasmine wasted no breath, seizing the crowd's focus once more.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the Emerald Elixir-a groundbreaking miracle meticulously developed by Kingston Pharmaceuticals in collaboration with the renowned master herbalist, whose medicinal prowess is so exceptional even Dr. Joane has acknowledged it."

"This elixir rejuvenates, revitalizes, and restores vitality, regardless of age or gender. But the true magic? That's something you'll only understand once you experience it for yourself."

She paused dramatically, scanning the audience with fiery conviction.

"If you haven't tried a sample yet, I urge you to do so now and witness firsthand the marvel endorsed personally by Dr. Joane."

Without hesitation, the crowd eagerly swallowed their pills, and within moments the hall exploded in awe and exhilaration.

"Oh, my God! I feel incredible!" someone shouted, voice trembling with disbelief.

"You're not kidding-my fatigue vanished instantly! It's like turning back the clock!" another voice chimed in fervently.

"Darling, your skin-it's practically glowing! Your dark circles, they're gone!"

Charles scoffed bitterly at the exuberance around him, but doubt gnawed at his resolve.

Cursing under his breath, he lunged toward the front desk, snatched a sample from the staff, and swallowe hesitation.

I without

His eyes bulged in shock as an intense, revitalizing warmth surged through him, flooding his veins with unparalleled energy.

His knees buckled slightly, staggered by the overwhelming sensation.

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"How... how is this possible?" he stammered, panic beginning to ist in his chest. Realizing the enormity of Jasmine's victory, Charles' blood ran cold.

He snatched out his phone, his voice strained with urgency as he barked orders to his secretary.

"Quickly! Dump all our SkinDew Essence stock-slash the price, get rid of every last vial, now! And start selling off all Dupont Pharmaceuticals shares. We're not holding onto their stock for a second longer!"

His secretary hesitated, anxiety creeping into his voice. "Sir, we'll ake massive losses! You said their stock price would rebound today-"

"Forget what I said!" Charles barked. "Sell it all now before we lose everything!"

A tense pause followed as the secretary frantically checked the market updates. Then his panicked voice crackled through the

line.

"Sir, it's already happening-the market's crashing. Investors started dumping Dupont's stock fifteen minutes ago. The price is in complete free fall."

Charles clenched his jaw, desperation dripping from his voice.

"Then sell faster! They've already tried Emerald Elixir! Those cutthroat bastards aren't hesitating-they're bailing the second they touch Kingston's miracle drug!" "And, sir..." the secretary added nervously, "all the SkinDew products are being liquidated. No one's buying. The price is collapsing by the minute."

At the Duponts' press conference, the once-buzzing hall was unraveling.

What started as a hub of excitement now felt hollow-rows of empty chairs stretched out like a battlefield after retreat.

The energy drained from the room, replaced by murmurs that spread like wildfire.

"Did you hear?" one guest whispered, eyes wide with urgency.

"Kingston Pharmaceuticals just dropped something huge-Emerald Elixir. Dr. Joane himself endorses it. People are losing their minds over it." 4

"Skin Dew Essence? Please," another scoffed. "Compared to that, it's junk. My friend's uncle took one pill and swears he feels twenty again-he's already chasing women half his age!"

"You're kidding."

"I'm serious! And they're handing out free samples. Come on, what's there to lose?"

Chairs scraped the floor as guests stood up, one after another. In moments, the exodus began.

Henry Dupont noticed the thinning crowd with mounting dread.

His voice cracked as he demanded answers from his assistant. "What's going on here? Where's everyone going?"

"Mr. Dupont, it's catastrophic! Jasmine's press conference for Emerald Elixir stole our guests. Dr. Joane's endorsement has everyone rushing there," his assistant stammered, wiping sweat frantically from his brow.

"Dr. Joane? Impossible!" Henry thundered, his voice sharp with disbelief. "That woman has never endorsed a single product in her life!" He slammed his fist down.

"How the hell did Jasmine outmaneuver us this fast? SkinDew was supposed to be our game-changer!"

Unable to contain his anxiety, Henry rushed to Kingston's conference, only to be staggered by the massive, animated gathering. Hundreds, including celebrities, renowned doctors, and influential business magnates—originally his invitees—now

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passionately praised Emerald Elixir

Frantically, Henry stopped a passerby, his voice trembling with anxiety. "Tell me, honestly is Emerald Elixir truly so extraordinary?"

"Extraordinary? It's phenomenal! SkinDew doesn't even come close," the man replied smugly, his tone mocking

Henry reeled in disbelief, questioning several more people, each brutally dismissing SkinDew as vastly inferior.

"No... no, impossible," Henry muttered, his voice cracking under the weight of disbelief.

Denial clawed at his chest like a rabid animal, but the truth was everywhere—shouting in the cheers, glowing in the eyes of defectors, echoing through the chaos.

The crowd was electric with excitement, and every second of it mocked him.

His jaw clenched as he glared at Jasmine across the hall. She wasn't going to steal his victory—not like this.

"Just wait," he growled under his breath.

Spinning on his heel, Henry stormed off and dialed his phone with trembling fingers, fury seething beneath his skin. Minutes later, chaos erupted.

The front doors slammed open with a deafening crash, and a wave of armed officers flooded into the hall like a tidal surge of authority.

Guns holstered, eyes sharp, their boots thundered against the floor with bone- rattling finality. Panic rippled instantly through the crowd. "Everyone freeze! Step away from the tables-now!" one officer barked, his voice cutting through the frenzy like a blade. "This is an active investigation!" "Emerald Elixir has been flagged as counterfeit," another announced grimly.

"A high-risk imitation of Skin Dew Essence. Possible health hazard. If you've consumed it, seek medical attention immediately."

"If you have no official connection to this product, evacuate the premises immediately!" an officer roared.

"Anyone who resists will be detained!"

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Chapter 259

"The Emerald Elixir is dangerous?" Murmurs erupted like wildfire spreading panic and suspicion through the hall.

At the heart of the disruption stood a police officer, rotund with arrogance and disdain plainly painted on his flushed, perspiring face.

His voice boomed obnoxiously, a smug sneer twisting his lips, "When I declare something dangerous, you better believe it's deadly!"

Jasmien's eyes widened in shock, her heart plunging to her stomach.

This was a disaster she hadn't anticipated.

An incident like this at her meticulously arranged press conference spelled doom.

Even if the product was later proven harmless, Kingston Pharmaceutical's reputation still hung by a thread.

The media would pounce first-and by the time the truth surfaced the damage would already be irreversible. The stain on their name could outlast the facts, lingering like a shadow.

The word "dangerous" echoed ominously, branding the Elixir with a toxic stigma—a curse that could doom its commercial future.

From amidst the restless, whispering crowd, one woman surged forward, eyes blazing with indignation.

Snatching the microphone with defiant grace, she declared fiercely, "I am Dr. Joane, endorsing this very product! How dare you claim it's dangerous?"

The crowd stirred, a ripple of restless whispers spreading like a current.

"Wait—this product is endorsed by Dr. Joane. There's no way it could be dangerous. She tested it herself!" someone exclaimed, their voice laced with disbelief.

"That's right," another chimed in, louder now. "It's completely safe. Dr. Joane wouldn't lie."

"A doctor of her reputation?" someone else called out. "She'd never risk her entire career on a harmful product—it would destroy her!"

And just like that, the tide began to turn. Doubt gave way to shocked realization. Inspector Ferdie White, however, was unmoved, his gaze glazed with indifference. His conscience, long silenced by bribes and self-interest, cared nothing for truth or justice.

The bulge in his pocket—the cash he'd received—was his only guiding principle.

"We are the Texas Police!" Ferdie thundered with swollen pride, the emblem of authority inflating his ego further.

"When I say dangerous, you stop selling immediately. Clear out now, or I'll personally throw each of you behind bars!"

People exchanged nervous glances, torn between curiosity and the threat of imprisonment.

Dr. Joane, calm yet seething with cold fury, raised her voice sharply. "And who exactly are you, Officer?"

With puffed-up bravado, Ferdie proclaimed, "Inspector Police Ferdie White!"

Dr. Joane drew out her smartphone, dialing deliberately, eyes locked coldly onto

the inspector. "Chief Calvin, you're still in charge at Texas, correct?"

"Yes, Dr. Joane, how may I assist you?" came a respectful voice through the speaker.

"Inspector Ferdie White-one of your men-is shutting down my conference. He publicly defamed my endorsed product as

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dangerous without evidence and terrorized my guests. Is this typical police conduct?"

Silence hung heavy, then Chief Calvin's tone froze into deadly seriousness. "He did what?"

"He's halted my event, falsely declared my endorsed product dangerous, and drove away my esteemed guests. Do Texas Police always wield authority so carelessly?"

"Dr. Joane," the chief responded gravely, "Allow me a moment to handle this urgently."

"Make it fast, Chief Calvin," Dr. Joane snapped sharply.

"Yes, Doctor, I deeply apologize for this. I hope it won't damage our rapport," he replied hastily.

"That entirely depends on your resolution." Dr. Joane hung up with decisive finality.

Inspector Ferdie's smug expression collapsed into horror.

"Did you just call my chief?!" he gasped, sweat cascading down his pale, panicked face.

His smartwatch buzzed urgently, a digital harbinger of doom. With trembling fingers, he answered, his voice quivering.

"Chief, it's a misunderstanding! We received a complaint—"

"Inspector Ferdie," Calvin's icy voice interrupted mercilessly, "You have three minutes to rectify your blunder, or I'll open every dark closet you've hidden skeletons in. Expect at least two decades behind bars!"

Ferdie's heart sank, dread choking him.

His mind raced desperately. Dirt always lurked beneath the surface waiting for exposure.

"Chief, just give me three minutes. It's a simple mix-up!" Ferdie stammered, frantically retreating from the hall.

Outside, desperation gripped him until his eyes landed on the banner: SkinDews.

A cold, ruthless resolve filled him-someone had to be sacrificed.

Striding back into the hall, he feigned astonishment.

"What idiocy! We've entered the wrong hall! The dangerous product isn't here-it's next door!"

His subordinates froze in confusion.

"What are you fools waiting for? Move! Raid the correct hall immediately!" he barked fiercely.

"That's where they're selling the SkinDew Essence! The dangerous product!"

He was already in full strike mode: act first, apologize later.

"Yes, sir!" the officers scrambled away hastily.

Ferdie turned, plastering his most contrite, ingratiating smile on his face.

"Esteemed guests, please forgive our foolish mistake. Clearly, Dr. Joane's impeccable credentials ensure the Emerald Elixir's safety. My error-please continue with your conference."

He bowed dramatically to Dr. Joane, voice trembling with forced humility. "My deepest apologies." Then he bolted from the hall.

From their vantage point, astonished guests witnessed chaos erupt in the adjacent hall.

Police dragged everyone out, staff and attendees alike, culminating in the humiliating spectacle of Henry Dupont, owner of SkinDews, handcuffed and enraged.

Seizing the opportunity, Jasmien confidently announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, clearly the police made a mistake. Let us

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continue our important discussion.'

Moments later, chaos again erupted as Henry Dupont stormed the desperation.

"I've summoned my lawyers!" Henry roared, veins bulging in his

"Your Emerald Elixir is nothing but a cheap imitation of my skin!

His desperate fury electrified the air.

Meanwhile, the police took advantage of the chaos, vanishing into and gone in an instant.

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continue our important discussion."

Moments later, chaos again erupted as Henry Dupont stormed the hall entrance, fighting police restraint with furious desperation.

"I've summoned my lawyers!" Henry roared, veins bulging in his neck.

"Your Emerald Elixir is nothing but a cheap imitation of my Skin Dew patent! You'll never legally sell this counterfeit trash!"

His desperate fury electrified the air.

Meanwhile, the police took advantage of the chaos, vanishing into the shadows as swiftly as they had appeared-silent, swift, and gone in an instant.

Chapter 260

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 260[1,094 words]

Chapter 260

Jasmine strode forward, her heels clicking like gunshots across the polished marble floor, eyes blazing with barely restrained fury as she confronted Henry Dupont.

"Careful, Henry," she warned, her voice icy but edged with fire.

"Accusations without proof could burn you alive."

Henry threw his head back and laughed bitterly, the sound cutting through the murmurs of anticipation like a razor blade.

"Oh, isn't she priceless?" He swung around to face the crowd, his voice rising sharply, deliberately loud enough for everyone to hear clearly.

"Do you all hear this nonsense? Last month, Kingston Pharmaceutical's chief of medical research and his elite team lost all faith in Jasmine Kingston's sham leadership and abandoned ship. Who could blame them?"

"Those brilliant minds took the SkinDew patent-legally theirs-and fled to Kane Pharmaceutical."

"They perfected Skin Dew there, away from Jasmine's incompetence!" Henry sneered dramatically, relishing every scathing word.

He jabbed an accusing finger toward Alex, his voice dripping contempt.

"And Kingston? They replaced true talent with some nobody named Alex, a pathetic pretender without credentials or even a respectable diploma. A joke of a leader!"

A wave of uneasy laughter rippled through the audience, eyes swiveling sharply toward Alex and Jessica Kingston, suspicion crackling palpably in the tense air.

From the sidelines, Alex finally spoke, his voice firm and steady, quiet but charged with undeniable authority.

"SkinDew has nothing-nothing-in common with Emerald Elixir."

Henry barked a scornful laugh, eyes narrowing venomously. "And you expect us to believe you invented a new medicine in one short month without raiding SkinDew's research? Do you think we're all fools here?"

Alex stepped forward confidently, voice cutting through the hostile whispers. "I've seen SkinDew's data in Kingston's archives. I wouldn't touch that poison, let alone counterfeit it."

Henry's eyes flared with outrage. "And just who are you to call Skin Dew dangerous? Admit your theft!"

Alex raised his voice with chilling calm, stepping deliberately into the spotlight.

"I'm the chief of Kingston Pharmaceutical, and I can prove SkinDew's danger to everyone here-right now."

He looked into the eager crowd. "Anyone got a SkinDew Essence handy?"

A customer hurriedly handed over a box. Alex took one pill and expertly crushed it into a fine powder on a pristine porcelain dish.

He repeated the action with Emerald Elixir on another plate.

Spotting a man gripping a can of soda, Alex gave a courteous nod. "May I?"

"Go ahead," the man muttered, curious eyes locked on the unfolding demonstration.

Slowly, theatrically, Alex poured the soda onto the Skin Dew powder.

A tense silence filled the hall-then suddenly, the mixture erupted violently, boiling

fiercely with a sizzling roar and spewing noxious fumes.

Horried gasps rippled through the crowd.

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Alex's voice thundered, myielding. "Skin Dew is overloaded with toxic chemicals.

A sip of soda after swallowing this pill could turn your body into a ticking time bomb-instant death by poison

Then, without hesitation, he poured soda over the Emerald Elixir powder.

The reaction was instant yet gentle; the soda turned astonishingly clear, pure as a mountain stream.

Alex raised his voice triumphantly. "Emerald Elixir uses purely organic elements. Not only safe-it purifies your body, eliminating toxins entirely."

Shock morphed into awe in the audience.

"Incredible," someone whispered in astonishment.

Alex continued mercilessly. "Your precious SkinDew's original creator was warned repeatedly about its lethal risk. Kingston Pharmaceutical fired him for his recklessness. Kane Pharmaceutical wouldn't even sell it. But Dupont

Pharmaceutical, in its greed, chose to sell poison. Why?"

Henry staggered backward, face pale, mouth agape.

"You liar!" he stammered desperately. "You rigged this demonstration!"

Suddenly, a voice exploded from the audience, loud and furious.

"He's telling the damn truth! I nearly killed myself mixing Skin Dew with soda- damn near blew up my stomach!" Pandemonium broke loose as others frantically tested their own pills, cries of horror confirming Alex's chilling revelation. "Dupont's selling death in a bottle!" someone shouted, triggering a storm of fury.

A flashbulb popped sharply, capturing Henry's stunned, panicked expression.

The crowd surged forward, faces twisted with rage and betrayal.

"How could you poison us, Henry?"

"I almost gave this to my family!"

Cornered and desperate, Henry screamed defensively, "I didn't know!" He bolted from the room, chased by jeers and curses.

Nearby, Charles sank into despair, his face drained white as snow, realizing his hundred-million-dollar investment was now worthless poison.

"We're ruined," he murmured, voice hollow with disbelief.

Jessica's scream of agony pierced the chaos, realization shattering her pride as the fortune she'd entrusted to Charles, his son

turned to ash.

Tragically, investors fled Dupont Pharmaceutical like rats from a sinking ship.

The company's stocks plummeted, crashing brutally to their lowest point in history-destroyed by scandal and greed. After the tempestuous showdown, the Kingston family's press conference concluded triumphantly, leaving their rivals drowning in disgrace.

weight of scandal.

In stark contrast, Dupont Pharmaceutical's press conference imploded spectacularly, collapsing under its The SkinDew Essence was branded a toxic menace, banished immediately from shelves nationwide. Henry Dupont, shadowed by a storm cloud of impending lawsuits and accusations, vanished like a coward into hiding. Miles away, Jericho Kane watched the drama unfold on his television screen, beads of cold sweat trickling down his brow. His fingers trembled as dread gripped him; holding onto Skin Dew Essence meant courting disaster.

2/3

Chapter 260

Could his empire endure the colossal blow Dupont was now suffering?

Hundreds of millions evaporated instantly, an unforgiving whirlwind of ruin.

Luckily, he sold it to the Dupont..

A shiver ran through him-Jericho resolved firmly: it was wiser not to provoke Alex.

Although the debacle didn't dismantle the Dupont family's legacy entirely, the damage inflicted was monumental and merciless. Amidst the chaos, Emerald Elixir soared like a phoenix from the ashes, dominating the pharmaceutical market overnight. With dazzling swiftness, Kingston Pharmaceutical tightened its grip, wielding unrivaled power across the nation.

Three tension-filled days later, Alex received an unexpected call from Kelly, her voice edged with urgency.

"Alex, I need your help," she said bluntly..

His eyes narrowed cautiously. "What kind of help?"

're ruthless old-timers scheming to wrest control of the Vermont

"I've arranged a meeting with some Vermont vipers-they'r power. It'll be dangerous, and I need you by my side," Kelly admitted plainly.

Alex scoffed lightly, suspicion thickening his voice. "The Kingston family has enough hired muscle to fill a stadium. Why drag me into your fight?"

Kelly's voice dropped, tense with quiet desperation. "Because none of them measure up to you. I'm not playing games, Alex- these men are lethal. They see Vermont as easy pickings, and they're ready to bury me to claim it."

Her breath hitched slightly, raw vulnerability seeping into her usually impenetrable armor. "Without you, I might not walk away alive."

The gravity of her words hung thickly in the silence that followed. Alex drew in a

slow, sharp breath, eyes flaring with protective intensity.

"Alright," he conceded finally, his voice firm and steady. "I'll come. Nobody's laying a finger on you-not while I'm around."

2

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 261[909 words]

Chapter 261

It was an evening at the Vermont Club-a sanctuary reserved exclusively for those who held Vermont's true reins of power.

In the lavish hall, beneath chandeliers that scattered golden light, people sipped cocktails, pretending to enjoy the music while secretly plotting their next move, scheming how to slice the largest portion from the governor's pie.

Bella Kane slumped onto the velvet sofa, chin resting listlessly in Her palms.

In front of her, a lively group of youths laughed and sang, their voles echoing mockingly around her indifferent ears.

Across the room, grey-haired power brokers exchanged cunning whispers, eyes narrowed with hidden agendas.

"Bella," Scarlett sighed impatiently from beside her, "your father asked you to charm Kelly Kingston on behalf of the Kane family. So why are you sulking here like a deflated balloon?"

Scarlett's voice was tinged with irritation and bewilderment.

Ever since recovering from her illness, Bella had transformed from the fierce rock-and-roll queen into some frail, pink-tinged princess-a shift that left everyone baffled.

"Maybe I'm just not fully recovered yet," Bella mumbled lazily.

Scarlett's eyes narrowed skeptically. "Really?"

"Bella, tell me something," interjected Shane abruptly, flashing a grin as sharp as a razor.

"Are you absolutely sure your father has washed his hands of the governor race?" Bella's patience snapped like a frayed string.

"Damn it, Shane, I've answered this a hundred bloody times! The Ranes are done with politics-we just want to enjoy our peaceful business life. Manipulate the world however you please; we couldn't care less."

"Perfect," Shane smirked with open relief. "Since Kelly Kingston is young, single, and available, maybe I should aim straight for her bedroom, eh?"

Bella scoffed bitterly. "Dream on, Shane. Kelly Kingston isn't a prize you can claim. She's the governor-mess with her and your sorry existence could end quicker than your pathetic love affairs."

Shane chuckled with a hint of arrogance.

"Where there's will, there's a way. Love's a battlefield, Bella, and my family's fortune stands right behind yours."

the dream of every girl."

"Who else but me could capture her heart? Vermont's very own heartthrob

"True feelings? Please, Shane," Bella sneered venomously.

"You cycle through girlfriends faster than Vermont's weather changes. Once Kelly learns about your sordid online scandals, she'll chop off your precious manhood herself."

Shane's face flushed crimson. "Careful, Bella! I'm loyal, damn it!"

Bella's eyes flared dangerously. Her wild side erupted fiercely.

"Loyal? You dare spew nonsense to my face? Who exactly do you think you're fooling-the media or your latest actress fling? Want me to end your little charade right here and now?"

The room fell silent instantly, all eyes widening with shock and fear.

They had forgotten Bella's viciousness in her recent subdued days, but tonight her old ferocity blazed.

Just then, silence thickened further as the hall's grand doors swung open dramatically.

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Chapter 261

Everyone's gaze locked on Kelly Kingston, draped in luxurious elegance, and beside her Alex.

Bella sprang up abruptly, her entire demeanor shifting to an embarrassingly soft glow, her voice dripping with a sudden

sweetness that turned heads in disbelief.

"Alex! How are you here?"

Scarlett and everyone else blinked, stunned by Bella's sudden transformation, their eyes shifting warily toward Alex.

Had Bella really fallen for him the wild, fiery woman now tamed into a blushing, sweet princess?

Bella practically glided toward Alex, her eyes shyly cast downward openly ignoring Kelly.

"Alex," she breathed, her voice trembling like delicate crystal.

"Ms. Kane?" Alex was genuinely startled, his expression perplexed "Didn't expect to see you here."
"Bella Kane," Kelly interjected coldly, eyebrow arched with icy curiosity, "you two know each other?" Four days ago, Alex saved my life," Bella said softly, her eyes shimmering with devotion.
"Without him, I wouldn't be here tonight. He's my savior - I'd give him everything I have."

Kelly's gaze turned cold as steel, a silent blade aimed straight at Alex.

"Kelly," Alex said quickly, voice tense, "I've been trying to secure Heaven Root from the Kanes, remember?"

"Looks like fate had bigger plans," Kelly replied, her voice dripping with sarcasm.

Unbothered, Bella tightened her grip on Alex's arm, her smile radiant. "Exactly! Fate brought us back together."

"How wonderful," Kelly said, her words cutting like ice behind a brittle smile. Just then, Shane jumped in, his tone overly eager as he poured her a glass of juice. "Miss Kingston! You're finally here. Please, have a seat."

His enthusiasm dimmed immediately as he scrutinized Alex, hostility darkening his eyes. "Bella, who the hell is this nobody? Never seen him around."

Two stunning women fussing over Alex was an insult Shane's pride couldn't stomach, jealousy turning his face an ugly shade of

green.

Kelly lifted her chin, eyes gleaming victoriously. "Oh, how forgetful of me. Everyone, this is Alex-my boyfriend."

The revelation struck Shane like a slap across the face.

His expression darkened dramatically, eyes narrowing dangerously.

Bella's radiant smile shattered instantly into despair, eyes wide with dismay.

Alex belonged to the governor?

Her gaze locked onto Kelly's, electric tension crackling openly between the two

women.

Bella, suddenly self-conscious of her younger innocence, clutched Alex possessively, her knuckles white.

"Boyfriend?" Shane practically choked on the word. "Miss Kingston, since when? Why wasn't this known?" Kelly's disdainful glare pierced Shane ruthlessly.

"And who exactly are you to demand updates on my personal life, Shane? Don't flatter yourself."

Stammering, Shane attempted recovery.

2/3

Chapter 261

"Apologies, Miss Kingston-I'm Shane White from the White family, second only to

the Kanes in wealth. I'm merely concerned that you're being duped. After all,

many charming crooks prey on wealthy women nowadays."

Alex is no crook! Do you have a death wish?" Bella shouted, her fierce protectiveness bursting out so suddenly it even took her by surprise.

A deafening silence followed, every gaze locking onto Bella, who swiftly bit her lip, regretting her impulsive defense.

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Chapter 262

Some middle-aged men suddenly appeared, calling urgently for Kelly.

"Miss Kingston, we have waiting for you."

Kelly glanced irritably at them, then at Bella, sighing softly as she leaned close to Alex's ear.

"Sorry, Alex, I have to deal with these vultures. Keep an eye out-night need rescuing "

Alex rolled his eyes dismissively.

"They're all weaker than you, Kelly. As long as they don't intentionally provoke you, their old bones will be fine."

"Who knows," Kelly muttered with a resigned shrug, moving reluctantly toward the middle-aged men hungry for favors and connections.

Bella swiftly seized Alex's arm, pulling him to sit beside her.

She launched immediately into cheerful chatter, leaving Shane feeling awkward and ignored by the two worner.

Scarlett glared daggers at Alex, a storm of inexplicable irritation clouding her face.

"Scarlett," Shane hissed suspiciously, narrowing his eyes at Alex, who exactly is that guy?"

Scarlett smirked contemptuously, her voice dripping venom.

"Him? He's nothing more than a slum doctor, desperately grasping at Bella's charity. Completely insignificant."

"Ah," Shane scoffed with mockery, looking Alex up and down disdainfully.

"I mistook him for someone important. Turns out, you're just another parasite from the gutters."

Across the room, Kelly's gaze sharpened as she observed Bella's shameless flirtation with Alex, still clinging possessively to his

arm.

Without hesitation, Kelly marched back over, asserting herself boldly.

"Miss Kane," she snapped curtly, "I need you to introduce me to Vermont's elite. Now."

Bella pouted petulantly. "Can't you see I'm busy? Everyone already knows you-go introduce yourself."

Kelly snorted impatiently, grabbing Bella by the arm like an exasperated older sister.

"Your father explicitly instructed you to introduce me. Move."

"Alex, help me!" Bella squealed dramatically as Kelly dragged her away.

Alex watched them go, catching Kelly's cold, challenging gaze.

He smirked faintly, "Please take care of her."

Shane walked up to Alex, sneering contemptuously, his voice dripping with arrogant disdain.

"Listen, don't say nobody warned you? You'll never fit into our world. Take your pathetic self and leave before you embarrass

yourself."

A girl dressed sharply in black added venomously, "Exactly. A peasant like you could never measure up to someone like Mr. White, much less compete for Bella or Kelly."

"Oh, really?" Alex replied blandly, unfazed.

"Seriously, have some dignity. See Mr. White's necklace? You couldn't earn that much if you spent your entire worthless life slaving away. Forget about impressing anyone," she mocked viciously. 1

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Alex stared at her calmly, repeating again, "Oh, really?"

The girl sneered, frustration flashing in her eyes.

"Clearly you have no idea who Mr. White is. Allow me to enlighten you-his family is second richest in Vermont, worth billions Their power stretches from the business district to the darkest alleys."

Again, Alex said indifferently, "Oh, really?"

"And," she snapped bitterly, "Mr. White is also Vermont's top-ranked fighter on Royal Knight Online. He's powerful, wealthy, influential-utterly beyond your wildest dreams."

"Oh, really?"

"Is that all you can say, you pathetic idiot?" she snarled, her face fishing red with anger.

"Oh, really?" Alex said dryly, clearly amused by her fury.

Shane stepped in angrily, his voice dripping arrogance. "Listen, punk, your little clever comebacks are meaningless. Face it- you'll always be beneath me, in every way imaginable."

"Oh, really?" Alex sighed in boredom, eyes cold as ice.

His past had made him a wild creature, forged through harsh survival, utterly unlike these pampered, sheltered brats.

Maybe that's why they couldn't even find common ground in words.

Shane growled, visibly irritated by Alex's indifference, but their confrontation was abruptly interrupted by a sudden commotion from outside.

"Stop right there! This is a private event! Leave immediately!" the security guard shouted, but three attackers struck him repeatedly with iron batons, silencing him as he crumpled to the ground.

"Surround them! Don't let anyone escape!" shouted a commanding voice.

Screams erupted as dozens of armed, ruthless-looking men stormed the hall, overwhelming the stunned bodyguards.

An elderly man rose defiantly, shouting, "Who dares invade here? Don't you know this club belongs to Vermont's elite?"

A fierce-looking man stepped forward, sneering, "Old Peter, did you forget? Jericho Kane no longer rules the underworld. That means it's Tommy's turn now."

"You insolent dog! You think you can rise above your station?" Peter spat venomously.

"Fuck off, old man!" Tommy snarled, viciously slapping Peter so hard he flew across the room.

Shane jumped up indignantly, fists clenched. "How dare you bring trouble here? Who the hell do you think you are?"

"Relax, everyone," Tommy drawled sarcastically.

"I'm just here to greet Miss Kelly, our new governor. How could she not invite me to her little party when we're talking about new power in Vermont? Anyone who doesn't want trouble-stay put and mind your own business."

Kelly, sipping her wine calmly, kept a wary eye on Bella, whose fear was palpable.

The middle age men hesitated, torn between escape and protecting their business interests.

"Tommy," pleaded one old gentleman nervously, "this club is exclusive. Please, leave your thugs outside. You can come and join us."

Tommy laughed derisively. "These aren't thugs-they're my brothers. They go wherever I go,"

He waved dismissively to his men. "Enjoy yourselves, gentlemen. Thave business with Miss Kelly and these gentlemen."

2/3

Chapter 262

He strode toward Kelly, sneering down at a trembling Bella. "Ah, Miss Kane, just

the one I need. Your father's debt is still unpaid. Remember how he hit me in front

of everyone? That shame will never be forgotten. Perhaps you'd like to come with me instead."

Kelly's eyes narrowed into a cold glare. "You'd better keep your filthy hands off this wornan."

Tommy chuckled darkly, his gaze raking over Kelly. "Oh? Then does that mean I get to put my hands on you instead?"

"Who the hell do you think you are, speaking to Miss Kingston like this?" Shane roared bravely, stepping forward protectively.

Tommy smiled coldly, eyes glinting with lethal intent. "Oh, playing hero, are we?"

"What if I am?" Shane shot back arrogantly.

Tommy's eyes darkened menacingly. "Kill this fool," he ordered coldly.

"Kill me?" Shane scoffed defiantly.

"Do you even know who my father is?"

Chapter 263

Chapter 263

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Chapter 263

***+26 BONUS

Just finish the bastard off," Tommy spat dismissively, his voice dipping with disdain, not even bothering to consider who Shane's father was.

The contempt in his eyes glowed brighter than the flickering neon signs overhead, ruthless and cold.

"Yes, boss!" His thugs snapped in unison, eager for bloodshed

Metal hissed through the air as iron batons emerged from under jackets, their blunt surfaces gleaming menacingly beneath the lights.

"You clowns think you can impress me with this pitiful sideshow? Shane sneered coldly, a sinister chuckle escaping his lips as he faced them down, unflinching.

"Allow me to educate you fools properly."

With explosive speed, Shane launched himself forward, his movements savage and precise.

His leg cut through the air in a ferocious arc, a brutal roundhouse kick that smashed one thug's jaw with a sickening crack

Blood and teeth sprayed into the night like confetti of violence, an artistry of ruthless aggression.

The remaining men hesitated, eyes wide with shock-too late. Shane's fists blurred into motion, a storm of calculated fury.

Within seconds, five of the hardened men lay groaning in the dirt, their arrogance turned to dust beneath Shane's merciless blows. 1

With a dramatic flourish, Shane stood tall, striking a confident pose that screamed arrogance.

"Did anyone order a side of humiliation?" he mocked, flashing a cocky grin toward his admirers.

"Oh my god! Mr. White is unstoppable!" shrieked one of the girls, clutching her friend's arm as their eyes sparkled with

admiration.

The air buzzed with excitement, captivated cheers echoing off the ball.

"Pathetic insects," Shane scoffed contemptuously, spinning toward his fans and displaying a dazzling smile, full of triumphant pride.

But his glory evaporated instantly as Tommy lunged forward like a freight train, his fist-a hulking mass of muscle and malice- slamming brutally into Shane's handsome face.

Shane staggered backward, stunned and disoriented, blood spurting from his nose and staining his pristine clothes crimson.

"You cheap-shot coward!" Shane snarled bitterly, clutching his bleeding nose, his voice thick with rage.

Fury ignited behind his eyes-he had barely begun impressing Kelly, and now this brute had shattered his perfect moment.

Tommy laughed mercilessly, relishing Shane's humiliation.

"Only a pathetic fool gets distracted by his own ego in battle. Are you that desperate for death?"

"You miserable piece of trash," Shane spat venomously, his pride wounded deeper than his face.

"I'm giving you one last chance to kneel and beg for mercy-or I'll have me and my father destroy everything you've ever known!"

Springing upwards with theatrical flair, Shane somersaulted gracefully through the air, snatching two fallen iron batons from the blood-slicked pavement.

Whirling them masterfully, he smirked arrogantly, knowing exactly how impressive he looked.

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Come and die, you arrogant punk!" Tommy's voice turned to ice ignaling his remaining men to rush forward with animalistic ferocity.

Watch out, Mr. White!" shrieked one of the girls desperately, her face etched with worry.

"Don't underestimate me, you pitiful vermin!" Shane shouted, his voice swelling with fierce bravado.

Twisting into his special maneuver, he spun violently, a cyclone of deadly steel.

Bodies collapsed around him, iron cracking bone and shattering resolve, each thug falling in humiliating defeat like toppled dominoes.

"Oh, Shane, you're magnificent!"

"His skill is unbelievable-truly otherworldly!"

"This is why he's Mr. White, an unmatched master!"

Praise showered over him, feeding Shane's ego like gasoline thrown onto flame.

He straightened proudly, casually hiding the adrenaline surging beneath his confident façade.

"These insects aren't even worth mentioning," Shane declared loudly, feigning effortless superiority.

Yet his eyes, filled with arrogance, strayed deliberately toward Kelly, silently demanding her admiration.

"Mr. White, you're incredible! We feel so safe having you around! Any girl would be blessed to call you hers!" gushed the girl in black, her eyes sparkling with worshipful awe.

"You flatter me," Shane chuckled modestly, though his voice dripped with smug satisfaction.

"Protecting women is a real man's duty-not cowering behind them like some pathetic, spineless weakling." He cast a pointed glare toward Alex, his smirk sharpened like a knife.

The girl in black seized the moment, her voice dripping poison.

"Weren't you always quick with your tongue, Alex? Cat got it now, or are you simply too cowardly to speak?"

Laughter burst forth from the young crowd, harsh and merciless.

"Talk big and run fast-that's all he's good for."

"A coward dressed as a peacock, pathetic!"

"A disgraceful waste of air!"

Bella shot them a look of pure disdain to them.

"My Alex could crush every last one of these thugs without breaking a sweat. But I suppose to him, they're nothing but insignificant pests-hardly worth lifting a finger for. Only people like you would find pride in swatting flies."

She knew exactly what Alex was capable of.

This was the same man who had wiped out the entire Kane family's elite bodyguards-handling a few street rats was beneath him.

Alex let out a lazy sigh. "She's absolutely right."

His calm indifference was like gasoline on fire, igniting a storm of outrage.

"What a pathetic excuse for a man!"

"All bark, no bite-completely worthless!"

2/3

Chapter 263

"You make me sick!"

"You pathetic fraud!" Shane mocked bitterly.

"If you kneel right now and beg me, perhaps I'll generously show you a trick or two, so you won't piss yourself.next time danger shows up."

A towering brute suddenly appeared at Tommy's side and sent the leader of the thug flying with a single, bone-crushing kick.

"Pathetic," he growled, his voice like grinding steel.

"After all we did to prop you up, hoping you'd rise into the Kane family ranks-and you still can't handle one young man? Absolutely pitiful."

"I'm sorry!" Tommy stammered, bowing his head in shame.

Without wasting another second, the hulking man turned toward shane, his every

step radiating cold, lethal menace.

"Come any closer," Tommy warned, swinging his iron baton eagerly, "and you'll leave here with broken bones!"

The towering man kept advancing, relentless and unfazed. Shane, forcing a wild grin, swung his iron baton with every ounce of strength he had, aiming straight for the giant's ribs.

The baton struck with a hollow, useless thud-the brute didn't even blink.

"Pathetic," the man spat with a sneer, before driving his massive fist into Shane's face like a wrecking ball.

Blood exploded from Shane's nose in a gruesome spray, and before he could even stagger back, the giant followed up with a brutal kick to his chest. Shane was launched through the air, crashing into a nearby table with a sickening crack before crumpling to the ground, a broken heap of pain and humiliation. Around them, the scene descended into chaos-panicked screams tearing through the air as their so-called hero lay battered, bleeding, and utterly shattered in the filth, his pride smashed beyond repair.

"Who's Kelly Kingston?" the giant rumbled, his voice low and dangerous, each word dripping with menace.

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 264[1,014 words]

Chapter 264

There was a deafening silence in the private room a quiet so intense it could've shattered glass.

Shock had stolen every word from their tongues; the spectacle they'd just witnessed had left them stunned, breathless.

Moments ago, Shane stood tall as their hero, an idol of raw streng, strutting like a champion but now he lay sprawled on the floor, beaten and discarded like a mangy dog.

Who the hell was this bald beast that demolished Shane with such ruthless ease?

"I'm Kelly. State your purpose clearly," Kelly demanded, her voice steady but edged with ice.

The towering brute turned slowly, his leering eyes crawling over Kelly's curves, dripping with crude hunger.

"Such beauty wasted in this place," he sneered lustfully.

Then his gaze slid sideways, recognizing another familiar face.

"Bella Kane? Good. Saves me the trouble of hunting you down. Your old man owes me plenty."

"Enough!" Kelly snapped, stepping fiercely in front of Bella, shielding her protectively.

"Spit it out, what the hell are you doing here?".

The brute grinned viciously. "Rumor has it Jericho Kane has stepped down from his throne in Vermont's underworld. Tommy here is my man-he'll be taking over the Vermont underground. As the new governor, you'd better agree to let him control the underworld."

Kelly's eyes flashed with contemptuous amusement, "Tommy? That gutless puppet as crime boss? Who really sent you, coward?"

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The massive thug stepped closer, his filthy fingers caressing Kelly's chin mockingly.

"Pretty faces shouldn't ask ugly questions, sweetheart-it's dangerous..." His smug threat was cut short by his own sudden shrill cry, humiliatingly feminine, echoing off the walls.

Every soul in the room jolted in shock.

Alex stood silently beside Kelly, his fingers locked around the brute's hand,

twisting it downward with merciless strength.

Bones snapped audibly, like dry twigs underfoot.

"Who the fuck are you?!" the brute howled in agony, his arrogance shattered.

"I'm this woman's bodyguard," Alex whispered coldly, tightening his grip, "and you don't get to touch what's mine."

"Die, you bastard!" the brute roared desperately, driving a massive fist toward Alex's face, confident it would crush him like cheap glass.

But Alex caught the incoming blow effortlessly, his palm like iron shackles around the giant's knuckles.

With casual cruelty, Alex slowly squeezed, crushing bone into dust beneath his unyielding grip.

The brute wailed pitifully, writhing like an insect caught beneath a merciless boot.

Already on his knees, the brute panted and groaned helplessly, his crushed hand limp under Alex's relentless hold.

"Why's a tough guy like you screaming like a schoolgirl?" Bella mocked sharply, her eyes glittering with disdain.

Everyone else shared the same thought.

"Shut up," Alex moved his hand, delivering a vicious slap that resounded with thunderous finality.

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The titan collapsed instantly, sprawling unconscious on the polished floor.

"What a waste," Alex sneered, dusting his hands clean as if brushing off dirt.

"Looks like a bear, fights like a child, and screams like a woman.'

The hall remained frozen, eyes wide with shock.

Bella, Shane-who was just staggering to consciousness-and everyone else stared at Alex, dumbstruck and speechless.

They'd watched a fearsome giant collapse like wet paper beneath a slender nobody.

Impossible. They had to be dreaming.

"How...how is this possible?" Shane gasped, his face twisted with disbelief and wounded pride.

He'd just felt firsthand the strength of that monstrous brute, yet Alex demolished him effortlessly,

A doctor, scrawny and meek, had crippled their invincible tormentor-this humiliation defied logic itself.

Scarlett stood aghast, her disdainful assumptions about Alex shattered completely.

She'd dismissed him as a common thug, a worthless cheat; never in her wildest nightmares did she imagine he possessed such lethal power.

He was leagues beyond her.

"Alex, you're amazing!" Bella squealed, eyes sparkling with genuine awe.

Around her, the other girls began murmuring appreciatively, casting admiring glances his way.

Uncomfortable under their newfound adoration, Alex strode calmly toward the fallen brute and struck him hard on the head.

"Wake up!" he commanded.

The big man jolted awake from his unconscious state, dazed and gasping.

Alex leaned in close, his voice a low, dangerous whisper. "Tell me, who sent you?"

"If you knew, you'd be dead already!" the thug snarled defiantly through broken teeth.

Alex smiled darkly.

"You're a dead man either way. Speak up, and I might spare your worthless life.

Keep silent, and I'll end you myself right here, right now."

The brute hesitated, dread flickering in his bloodshot eyes.

Alex glanced pointedly at Kelly, smirking knowingly. "Relax. Vermont's new governor will ensure your protection-if you cooperate."

Doubt lingered, and the brute's fearful eyes flicked nervously toward certain faces in the crowd.

Those faces paled instantly, subtly reaching to make urgent, panicked phone calls-none of it escaping Alex's sharp gaze.

At last, desperation broke the brute.

"Fine," he muttered, sweat pouring down his battered face. "I'll tell you everything-just promise Kelly will protect me."

"Agreed," Kelly said coldly, knowing full well this thug was nothing more than disposable bait.

She wanted the puppeteer who pulled his strings.

The brute drew a deep, trembling breath. "Truth is, the one who ordered me here was

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His voice was cut off violently as the doors crashed open, wood splintering violently from their hinges.

Henry Dupont stormed into the hall, an elite squad of bodyguards ushing behind him, their weapons gleaming dangerously.

"How dare you touch Bella Kane!" Henry snarled, eyes ablaze with fury. Without hesitation, he drew a gleaming pistol and unloaded multiple rounds into the brute's helpless body, shredding flesh and bone into a bloody pulp. Gasps and screams filled the room as gore splattered the floor like spilled wine. Alex's gaze sharpened suspiciously, lips drawn tight.

Had Henry just silenced the thug permanently?

"Bella, are you alright?" Henry asked urgently, masking brutality with concern.

"We're fine," Bella replied tensely, eyes narrowing with suspicion. "What are you doing here?"

Henry's smile faltered under her sharp gaze. "I got word someone's trying to seize Vermont's underworld-targeting you and your father. Naturally, I rushed over immediately."

Bella eyed him coldly. "Since when do you care?"

Henry feigned offense.

"Of course I care! My father already spoke to yours-if your father agrees, we're practically engaged. I have every right to protect you."

Alex's voice sliced through the tension like a blade, dangerously calm and laced with accusation.

"Did you silence this thug because you were afraid he'd name you as his master, Henry?"

A deadly silence settled once again, heavier and darker, as every eye fell on Henry, suspicion simmering beneath the deceptive calm.

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"Alex? You again," Henry sneered, turning sharply with venomous eyes fixed on the man who dared interrupt his triumph.

"What the hell brings a lowlife like you here?"

"Just working," Alex drawled casually, his tone dripping disdain.

"But you still haven't answered me: Did you kill this brute to keep him quiet?"

"Are you out of your damned mind?" Henry scoffed arrogantly, looking down his nose at Alex as though addressing a rat

beneath his boots.

"This bastard attacked innocent folks. I just did Vermont a favor no thanks necessary."

"You? A favor?" Alex's eyes darkened dangerously.

"I reckon you'd better come clean with your connections to Tommy and this big guy right here."

"Connections?" Henry laughed scornfully, his voice echoing off the opulent walls.

"You accusing me of running the Vermont underworld, Alex? You really think I'm the mastermind behind all this?"

"Am I supposed to believe you're innocent - along with everyone else standing here?" Alex fired back without blinking

Henry snapped, "I think it's you who's been colluding with that thug and the whole damn underworld!" his voice laced with

accusation.

"Alex isn't like that," Bella interjected fiercely, but Henry swiftly silenced her.

"Don't be a fool, Bella! This is the same dog who laid hands on you Guards, arrest this man immediately!"

Henry barked, his command echoing sharply as elite guards instantly drew their weapons, aiming squarely at Alex.

"Since when did the Duponts start thinking they could spit in the face of Vermont's governor?" Kelly Kingston's voice cut through the tension like a blade as she stepped forward boldly.

"Put your damn guns down and leave."

"Sorry, Kelly, I just can't do that," Henry replied with dangerous confidence, his eyes narrowing in a threatening glare.

"This man tarnished my reputation. Either he kneels and begs for forgiveness and leave his arms, or he doesn't leave this place

alive."

"Have you completely lost your mind, Henry?" Kelly snapped, her voice cutting like a whip. "Alex is my personal bodyguard!"

Henry's lips curled into a malicious sneer. "You're new to this game, Governor Kingston," he said coldly. "Take some advice- don't go making enemies you can't afford. Families loyal to the Duponts run deep, even here in Vermont. We can make you... or we can break you before you even settle into that fancy chair."

Kelly's gaze turned razor-sharp, her voice dropping to a deadly whisper. "So the vultures from Chicago are already circling my governorship, huh?"

"Enough of your paranoia," Henry sneered. "I'm merely advising a profitable alliance."

Suddenly, Alex burst into derisive laughter.

He glanced casually at the bloodied brute sprawled on the floor. "You can get up now."

The massive man slowly rose, dripping blood but eerily unharmed.

Bullets protruded harmlessly from his thick skin, falling away one by one to clatter uselessly on the marble floor.

Previously, Alex used his power to shield the big guy's body from the rain of bullets and forced him to play dead.

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Henry's confident smirk shattered instantly. "What?"

"Did this snake order you to sabotage the banquet?" Alex questioned the big guy coolly

"Yes," the brute admitted bluntly.

"Henry wanted Tommy to seize control of Vermont's underworld, leveraging the influence of certain family businesses in Vermont aligned with the Dupont family. Their goal was to overthrow Kelly Kingston's political authority."

"Kill him!" Henry roared in panic, signaling desperately. Instantly guards lunged forward.

With a bored sigh, Alex snatched peanuts from the dessert tray, flicking them with deadly accuracy.

Each peanut struck the guards' acupuncture points, freezing them mid-step, paralyzed like helpless statues.

"Sorcery! What witchcraft is this?" Henry shrieked, trembling as he fumbled frantically for his gun, aiming shakily at Alex. Another peanut flick, precise and ruthless, struck Henry's both his shoulder and thighs. His limbs seized, his body rigid and helpless.

"W-what did you do to me?" Henry stammered in horror, his voice choked by shock.

The spots where Alex's peanuts struck felt rock-hard, completely numbing his nerves and blocking the brain's commands, leaving him frozen in place.

"Not only are you weak and incompetent," Alex said coldly as he stalked forward, each step deliberate, eyes burning with disdain, "you still have the balls to show up here throwing insults and throwing fists like you own the place?"

Henry sneered, defiant despite the fear flashing in his eyes.

"You'd better release me while you still can, Alex. Otherwise, I'll make sure you leave this place in a goddamn coffin."

"You dare threaten me?" Alex scoffed, his voice dripping venom.

Without hesitation, he backhanded Henry across the face with a brutal slap.

The crack echoed across the hall.

"My father is one of the Chicago Lords!" Henry snarled, spitting blood onto the floor. "How dare you touch me?"

"Your father?" Alex's voice dripped mockery as he delivered a sharp, merciless slap across Henry's arrogant face. "You think invoking daddy scares me?"

Henry's tooth rattled free, clattering to the floor.

The wealthy elites of Vermont, pale-faced and trembling, started mumbling among themselves.

"Sir... maybe the big guy was lying," one of them said hurriedly, his voice cracking. "You can't trust a villain's word."

"Yes, exactly!" another chimed in desperately.

Alex's gaze sharpened, and he frowned. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"Please, sir, let Henry go," the man stammered.

"The Duponts... they're not enemies we can afford."

Alex chuckled, the sound low and dangerous.

"Kelly, you catching this?" he asked without looking away. "Seems like half the so- called loyal families in Vermont are already on their knees for Chicago. What do you think?"

"Release me, you fool!" Henry roared. "See how many enemies you make if you don't!"

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Alex answered him with a third slap, harsher than the last.

"You think we're scared? You're more pathetic than I thought," Alex said, turning to Kelly with a smirk. "Your call"

"If they want to bow to Chicago," Kelly said coldly, "then we'll crush them one by one. I'll make sure every traitor goes bankrupt until no rats are left to scurry."

The rich men's faces turned ghost-white. "Miss Kelly, please, you can't-" "Silence!" Kelly's voice thundered through the hall.

"I'm the governor. You follow my rule, and I'll support you. Betrayne, and you'll wish you were never born. Tomorrow, every one of you will be under investigation. Better scrub your filth clean tonight... because whatever dirt we find will be the dirt they bury you with."

The air thickened with fear, the tension so sharp it could split skin

"Don't be afraid of her!" one desperate man shouted. "She has no real power! Since Jericho Kane stepped down, the Chicago Lords own Vermont now!"

Alex let out a long sigh, then turned back to Henry. Without a word he struck him again—then again-his palm whipping mercilessly across Henry's bloated, bruised face.

He didn't stop until Henry's features were a swollen, pitiful mess, his mouth barely able to form a word.

The entire room stood frozen, horrified beyond belief.

No one had ever dared lay a finger on a Dupont in public, much less humiliate

one like a rag

doll.

It was suicide.

It was madness.

Was Alex out of his damn mind?

"You-you dare hit me?" Henry whimpered, struggling to piece together any shred

of dignity, his eye twitching uncontrollably "I'm not just going to beat you," Alex snarled, stepping forward, "I'm going to make sure you never lay a finger on anyone again."

With a brutal stomp, he crushed Henry's wrist. A sickening crack snapped through the room.

"Argh!" Henry howled, his face drenched in cold sweat, contorted in agony. But paralyzed as he was, he couldn't even clutch his shattered arm.

"Stop it!" Scarlett screamed, her voice shrill with panic. "Alex, are you insane? Do

you even know who you're messing with?" Alex turned calmly to Kelly, his eyes burning with cold fire. "Want me to show them what happens when they dare cross you?" "Do it," Kelly said without hesitation.

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"You actually think you're man enough to kill me?" Henry laughed mockingly, his voice dripping with venomous disdain

"Have you really thought this through? Do you have any idea what happen the moment you lay a finger on me? My father will tear your world apart, limb by limb."

"Kelly Kingston -you're nothing but a stray pup the Kingstons pied enough to toss scraps to. How dare you even look me in the eye, let alone threaten me?"

"If you strike me down, you'll find yourself utterly alone, abandoned by every last soul you think supports you!"

Henry Dupont's arrogant bravado was brittle, masking a festering wound of shame.

He had shattered his family's expectations by failing to salvage SkinDew Essence, delivering a crippling blow to the Dupont Group-hemorrhaging their pharmaceutical empire and wiping out half their fortune in a single disastrous misstep.

Desperation gnawed at him, driving one final, reckless gamble: seize control of Vermont and salvage whatever scraps were left of his tattered legacy.

In his mind, Kelly Kingston was nothing but fresh meat.

Henry sneered, a twisted grin tugging at his lips as false confidence flooded back into his veins.

Jericho Kane had already washed his hands of Vermont, tossing the reins to Kelly -the new, inexperienced governor.

Half the influential families in Vermont had long bent the knee to the Duponts, still loyal even under Jericho's reign.

To Henry, Vermont wasn't a battleground. It was already his by right — a ripe prize waiting to be pocketed.

And nobody, he thought with seething certainty, dared defy a Dupont - least of all for some no-name Kingston, a backwater governor from the poorest cesspit of a state this country ever scraped together.

For Henry, it was simple: go big or go home.

And he believed

no, knew he would take Vermont.

If Kelly Kingston, a nobody plucked from obscurity, could rise to power, then how could he the heir to the Dupont dynasty- possibly fail?

In his world, it was always the boldest who struck first, the hungriest who grabbed the biggest prize.

The one with the fiercest desire always won the final game.

That was life - brutal, simple, and merciless.

And Henry Dupont was ready to play it to the death.

Alex burst into mocking laughter, sharp as shattered glass.

"Do you honestly see yourself as untouchable, strolling in here, threatening

murder like you're untouchable and not even sparing a glance for Kelly, Vermont's governor?"

With savage swiftness, Alex seized Henry by the throat, hoisting him effortlessly off his feet.

Henry's arrogant expression dissolved into choking terror, his eyes bulging as his face flushed crimson, legs kicking desperately in futile defiance.

"You! Alex or whoever the hell you are-release him this instant!" a businessman barked frantically.

"Or what?" Alex's gaze, cold and merciless as winter's frost, sliced through the air. "You fool! That's Henry Dupont!" another man screamed, panic edging his voice.

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"Touching him means declaring war on all five of the Chicago Lord' familles!" "Exactly!" Shane interjected, voice shaking.

"Henry isn't someone you mess with lightly! You don't understand how the world works, do you? Kelly's grip on Vermont is barely solid-one wrong move and she'll crumble."

"You're just her attack dog; don't bite off more than you can chew Stand down or your entire family will pay the price!"

"Yes!" another man barked, his voice thick with fury.

"Strength alone won't save you! If fear's driving you to pull a stun like this, you're already finished. I suggest you drop to your knees, beg Henry for forgiveness, and pray he shows mercy."

"There's no shame in bowing when your pathetic life is hanging by a thread!"

The crowd, desperate to placate the powerful Dupont heir, chorused their threats and pleas, knowing full well that justice was irrelevant-only power mattered.

Henry, emboldened by their support, sneered triumphantly despite Alex's grip around his neck.

"You hear them, Alex? Your strength means nothing here! So what if Kelly's behind you? She's a novice, a fleeting shadow of authority. You're nothing but her insignificant pawn."

"Cross me, and I'll erase your bloodline from existence! Bow to me now, beg for mercy, and maybe, just maybe, I'll let you live!"

Alex chuckled darkly, unbothered and amused.

"What makes you so confident I wouldn't snap your neck without hesitation?" His gaze swept the petrified crowd. "And you-every cowardly snake here-what makes you think I won't slaughter every last one of you for daring to betray Governor Kelly? What makes you think she won't order me to purge your entire worthless clans?"

A shiver of dread silenced their bravado, though Henry, blind to danger, erupted into hysterical laughter.

"You? You think you'd dare touch a single hair on my head? Try it! Go ahead, hero! Prove to everyone you've got the guts! I dare you, show me what you're made of-!" Henry shrieked defiantly, his rant brutally silenced by Alex's savage strike across his

face.

"All of you-pay close attention!" Alex thundered, thrusting Henry's battered, trembling body into the air.

"Witness what happens when you betray Kelly Kingston! Let this pathetic fool's fate serve as a stark warning. The era of Dupont dominance ends today."

"Henry Dupont," Alex said coldly, tightening his grip, "I'm giving you one last chance to pray - maybe next time you're born, you won't come back as such a miserable bastard."

Henry trembled, defiant to his last breath, gasping, "I don't buy your fairy tale reincarnation crap. You don't have the guts to

"Then go to hell forever," Alex smirked cruelly, his eyes alight with ruthless satisfaction as he twisted Henry's neck sharply, the sickening crack echoing through the stunned silence.

Henry's lifeless body dangled by the neck for a moment, his arms and legs hanging limp, completely drained of life.

The crowd exploded into screams – a raw, panicked chorus of terror and disbelief.

Their earlier arrogance shattered in an instant, leaving behind only naked, trembling fear.

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With a disdainful flick of his wrist, Alex hurled Henry's lifeless body aside like a worthless sack of garbage.

Henry's corpse crashed onto the marble floor with a sickening thud, landing heavily at Shane and the others' feet – a brutal, undeniable message to anyone foolish enough to side with Dupont

Henry's glassy eyes stared into the void, frozen in an eternal mask of horror and disbelief.

Even in death, he couldn't comprehend how Alex had dared to strike him down.

His once untouchable status, his inherited power, his self-assured invincibility—all shattered in an instant, exposed as a hollow lie.

A collective gasp echoed through the grand hall, followed by stunned silence.

The onlookers stood paralyzed, disbelief etched on their pale, stricken faces.

They stared numbly at the fallen heir, unable to reconcile this impossible nightmare unfolding before their eyes.

The pride of the city, the golden son of wealth and power, was now nothing more than a corpse discarded on the

Reality shattered into chaos as panicked whispers rapidly swelled into a roar of frantic accusations and disbelief.

"Have you lost your damned mind?! You-you actually murdered Henry?" shrieked

a businessman, eyes bulging in terror as if staring at a demon.

floor.

Alex's act was more than murder-it was a direct assault against power, a commoner daring to slay a king.

It was ruthless, unforgivable, suicidal.

"You absolute lunatic! You've sealed your fate! There's no place in this world you can run to now!" Shane shouted, his voice cracking under sheer panic.

"The Dupont family will bury you alive along with everyone you've ever cared for!"

Voices overlapped in panic-driven hysteria, each threat sharper than the last.

"The Duponts own Chicago! They've got the mafia, the gangs-you're now marked by every thug and brute in this damned city!"

"You dare spill Dupont blood? Even gods and demons won't shelter you now!"

Amidst the clamor, Alex stood unshaken, his eyes icy, his voice chillingly calm.

"I dared to kill Henry Dupont. Remember that clearly. Don't provoke me, and you'll remain alive. Cross me, and you'll meet his

fate."

Shane's voice exploded through the din, his eyes burning with rage and disbelief,

"You're insane! Completely deranged! You'll regret this until your last agonizing breath!"

A cold smirk spread across Alex's lips. "Regret is for cowards. If the Duponts hunger for revenge, tell them I await them eagerly.

Suddenly, a mocking laugh sliced through the turmoil-Kelly Kingston stepped forward boldly.

"And don't forget I'm right here beside him. Side with Dupont if you dare, but brace yourself-the backlash won't be gentle."

Kelly grabbed Alex by the arm, both turning their backs on the pale-faced elites. Stunned silence hung heavily as their footsteps echoed away.

"This is war," whispered one man gravely, and murmurs of grim agreement rippled through the stunned crowd.

War had officially ignited between Vermont and Chicago.

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Kelly, Alex said quietly as they walked out into the night, "are yet truly prepared for this storm?" Absolutely," she answered fiercely, eyes glittering with contempt

"Those disgusting vultures thought they could bully us into submission. If we'd let their step on us now, they'd never stop grinding us into the dirt."

Pulling Alex toward a vibrant food truck illuminated by twinkling city lights, Kelly added sharply, "Dupont will undoubtedly stir trouble in Vermont. Let them. They underestimate who we really are."

"And who exactly are we?" Alex raised an eyebrow, intrigued.

She leaned in conspiratorially, her voice a fierce whisper.

"We're Kingwell. With the King's backing, we hold absolute power a crush rebellion. The Chicago Lords?"

"They're merely vermin the King would've exterminated already not for his concern for national stability. Let's clean out this festering infection together." "Fair enough," Alex laughed softly, his tension dissolving beneath the starlit sky. They lingered there, confident and defiant, ready for whatever storm the night would bring

Back inside the banquet hall, panic spiraled uncontrollably. "Quick inform the Dupont family! That maniac will pay dearly for this!"

Meanwhile, deep within Chicago's shadowed council chambers, Conrad Dupont

sat smugly addressing the four influential Lords of Chicago.

"I've already seized control of Vermont's underworld," Conrad proclaimed confidently.

"Several Vermont key families have pledged their loyalty to me. With your influence added to the mix, Vermont won't just be a territory — it'll be a feast. A fat, ripe prize we can carve up and share among ourselves."

"Interesting," one of the other lords mused skeptically.

"But Kingston isn't some pushover. Even though they started from the poorest state, Vancouver, I've heard they're under the direct protection of the new king. If that's true, we're dealing with forces far beyond ordinary politics."

"You're right," another lord chimed in gravely.

"Without royal backing, Kingston wouldn't have been able to dominate Los Angeles, let alone Vermont. Speaking of which, what exactly did Jericho Kane say about handing the governorship over to Kelly Kingston?"

A cynical smirk spread across another lord's face. "Jericho's hiding something shameful—he's kept his secrets sealed tight. Didn't say a damned thing."

Conrad Dupont leaned back, confidently crossing his arms.

"Relax. The Kingston family isn't nearly as threatening as you've heard. I've sent my son Henry to test the waters. Kelly Kingston will fold. She'll bend to our will once she realizes resisting means we'll tear her precious state apart."

A cruel smile crept across one lord's face.

"Perfect. Let her wear the title of governor like a fool wears a crown, while we, the Chicago Lords, run the real show from the shadows."

Another nodded vigorously.

"A flawless plan—a win-win. But we need to strike Kelly Kingston hard, and we need to do it fast, before she fully consolidates her power in Vermont." Suddenly, the chamber doors burst open, and a panicked secretary from the Dupont family stumbled into the room, his frantic

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footsteps causing him to crash onto the polished marble floor.

"What the hell is wrong with you?" Conrad snarled, disgusted by the secretary's clumsiness.

"Pull yourself together and spit it out!"

"I'm sorry, sir!" the secretary stammered breathlessly, scrambling to his feet. "Something terrible has happened!" "What is it?" Conrad snapped impatiently, his eyes narrowing in suspicion.

"It's Young Master Henry-he's been murdered!" the secretary blurted out, trembling. "He was killed just moments ago!"

"Impossible!" Conrad roared, jolting upright in sheer disbelief. His face twisted with rage and horror. "My son was perfectly fine a short while ago! How the hell could he be dead?"

"It's true, sir!" The secretary bowed his head low, voice shaking. Young Master Henry's neck was snapped clean through. His body is being flown here by helicopter as we speak."

"No... No! This can't be!" Conrad's voice cracked into a desperate howl of denial. He stormed out of the council chamber, racing toward the rooftop helipad. Inside the chamber, the four Chicago lords exchanged grim glances, the tension suffocating the air around them.

"Could Kelly Kingston truly have killed Henry?"

Another spoke ominously, "If Kingston wants war, we'll give it to her."

"First, let's see the proof," another lord advised darkly, eyes glittering with anticipation.

The fires of war had been lit, and all waited breathlessly to see how fiercely they would burn.

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The helicopter descended onto the heli-pad, its blades slicing viciously through the night air, stirring the shadows like a whirlwind of doom.

As Henry's lifeless body was carried from the craft and laid before Conrad Dupont, Conrad felt as though a thunderbolt fud cleaved his soul in half.

His face drained instantly of color, turning as white as a death shroud.

"Who did this?" Conrad's voice erupted in an anguished roar, echoing across the landing pad.

His eyes were wild, rimmed with red veins of fury, his entire frame trembling like a cornered beast.

"Who dared spill Dupont blood?"

"It-it was a man named Alex," stammered his secretary, flinching under the weight of Conrad's feral gaze.

"He's Kelly Kingston's bodyguard."

"Alex, you miserable piece of filth!" Conrad howled, teeth grinding audibly, spittle flying from his lips.

"You murdered my son-I'll rip your bones apart! I'll skin you alive!" Each word was laced with a promise of savage retribution.

"Send out the word!" Conrad barked.

"I want every resource we have scouring every street, every shadow, every sewer! Find that bastard! Tear him apart first, then gut Kelly Kingston!"

His voice was raw, bloodlust unhinged. "They'll both pay with their lives!"

Meanwhile, beneath the moonlight that painted a deceptive peace over the city gardens, Alex and Kelly sat calmly on a bench, sharing a modest snack.

Alex spoke quietly into his phone. "Carlos, use Vancouver's underworld to swallow Vermont. Fast. Leave nothing to chance." "Can I just stick a gun to Jericho Kane's head?" Carlos asked bluntly. "It'd speed things up-he knows every rat in Vermont."

"Do it your way," Alex said coldly.

"But if he refuses, tell me. I'll handle him personally."

Ending the call, he glanced casually at Kelly. "Your move?"

"I've unleashed Kingwell operatives throughout Vermont," Kelly replied calmly, her eyes reflecting ruthless determination. "They're exposing every corrupt official. And if the businessmen ignore my warnings, I'll crush them as well."

"Perfect." Alex took a bite of bread, chewing slowly, savoring the impending storm.

"Now, we just wait for them to stumble right into our trap."

That night, Vermont was a tinderbox ignited by unseen hands.

While many family anticipated an attack from the Chicago Lords, it was Kelly who fired the devastating first shot. Suddenly, media erupted with scandal: high- ranking government officials arrested in sweeping anti-corruption raids.

Headlines screamed Kelly Kingston had initiated a merciless purge

As governors fell, they quickly betrayed their business accomplices, spilling names and secrets under pressure. Business magnates loyal to the Duponts found themselves cornered, realizing their allegiance was now a death sentence.

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Panic surged through their veins like ice water.

In one luxurious mansion, a businessman frantically paced his opent study.

"Sir," a trembling secretary interrupted, "the police are coming now, searching for our Dupont ties we can't escape

"Burn everything!" the man shrieked desperately, his voice cracking under the strain.

"Erase all evidence linking us to Dupont! Destroy it all!"

Find out where the Governor is-1 need to meet her!

Across Vermont, ties to Dupont were severed with ruthless urgency

When Conrad frantically called his allies, demanding support and revenge for Henry, each plea went unanswered-bridges were being torched behind them. Inside his lavish study, Jericho Kane watched the news with growing dread, his heart pounding with each broadcasted arrest.

His phone buzzed ominously.

"Jericho, this is Carlos from the Vancouver."

"I know who you are," Jericho said.

"Good. Then I'll make this quick. Alex wants every last scrap of intel on Vermont's underworld. Tell your people to stand down- now. This is mercy. You won't get another warning."

Jericho's heart pounded like a war drum. "I'll pass on your message," he muttered, voice dry.

"But I can't promise they'll listen. I'm already washing my hands of this."

"Noted," came the cold reply.

"Anyone who resists will find their citizenship papers signed-by Hell itself."

The line went dead.

His phone rang again-this time, it was a voice he knew well: the Vermont military general, tense and urgent.

"Jericho, command just issued the order-eliminate every underworld member who refuses to side with Carlos."

"General Maxwell... I've already washed my hands of the underworld."

"Then consider yourself lucky."

Jericho exhaled, slow and bitter. For the first time, he felt completely powerless. "Thanks for the warning."

"Stay low," Maxwell advised grimly. "The new king's making his move, and we're nothing but insects under the wheels of change. Best to lie flat for now."

He broadcast a stark warning to his ex-underworld contacts; "Surrender to Carlos

by tonight. Resist, and you're dead. Don't be stupid enough to test it."

Jericho Kane-once the puppet master pulling every string in Vermont's shadows- now stood powerless, a relic swept aside by the storm the new King had unleashed.

"The Chicago Lords," he murmured bitterly, "have no idea they've kicked a hornet's nest. Soon they'll learn how ruthless Alex truly is."

The strong do what they want. The weak? They do what they must

And for the first time in his life, Jericho Kane realized-he was the weak one. Chapter 258

Across town, flames devoured secret ledgers, photographs, and documents- evidence of past sins erased in desperate pyres.

Vermont burned not just with fire, but with fear and betrayal.

Alex and Kelly sat quietly on a bench of the city garden.

Suddenly, Kelly's smartphone lit up. It buzzed relentlessly-but she didn't flinch,

didn't answer. She just stared ahead, calm, unreadable.

Moments later, the silence shattered.

One by one, luxury cars began rolling into the heart of the city.

Limousines, blacked-out sedans, tinted windows-all grinding to halt in front of the garden.

The people of Vermont watched in stunned silence.

Doors flew open.

Powerful businessmen-once smug kings in their own right-rushed out in a panic.

They weren't arrogant anymore. No smirks, no bravado. Only desperate eyes and faces pleading for mercy.

"Governor Kelly!" one of them cried, practically stumbling over himself. "Please- we've always been loyal to you!"

Alex stood, brushing off his coat.

"Looks like your time has come," he said with a smirk. "I'll take my leave."

Kelly turned to him, eyes softening. "Thank you, Alex."

He nodded. "You're welcome. That look on their faces? That's what they should've

shown the Governor from the start. You're going to be a damn good one, Kelly."

Kelly didn't even have a chance to respond before the panicked throng surrounded her, pleading desperately:

"Governor, please, we're loyal to you now!"

"Save us, Governor!"

Alex stepped into the night, his mind already weaving silent equations.

The Chicago lords would crumble

the moment they dared strike back.

Chapter 269

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 269[960 words]

Chapter 269

Within the hour, Alex charged back to his battered clinic, his face carved with tension the moment he saw the front door changing ajar, its frame splintered by brute force.

When he shoved the creaking door aside, fury exploded in his eyes the entire place lay in ruins, as if a hurricane of violence had ripped through every corner, leaving nothing but wreckage and rage behind.

Boxes of medicine were strewn across the grimy floor, shelves toppled, vials shattered-evidence of violent intrusion everywhere.

Amid the wreckage stood Sophia, drenched in sweat, frantic and disoriented.

Her desperate murmuring filled the eerie silence, "First aid box... Damn it, where's that first aid box?"

Alex's eyes narrowing sharply as confusion warred with suspicion

Suddenly, Sophia spotted the elusive kit perched high atop a battered medicine cabinet.

She scrambled onto a stool, its wooden legs wobbling precariously one already splintered beyond repair.

"What the hell are you doing?" Alex's voice sliced through the air, cold and unforgiving.

Startled, Sophia jolted violently, the stool collapsing beneath her like brittle twigs.

She fell backward, a cry caught in her throat-only to be intercepted by Alex's swift embrace.

He held her effortlessly, as though she weighed nothing, enveloped briefly by her warmth and the delicate scent lingering on her skin.

In that quiet moment, as Sophie clung softly to his arm and their eyes met, something warm and undeniable passed between them - a silent connection that neither needed to speak to understand.

Alex immediately stiffened, setting her upright with a brusque abruptness.

"You're back?" Sophia's voice briefly carried hope, quickly masked by practiced indifference.

"I asked what you're doing here," Alex snapped, eyes glinting with distrust.

He knew her too well; her pride would never let her admit seeking him out.

"I was passing by," she retorted, defensive arrogance bleeding through her voice.

"Saw some thugs raiding your little clinic. Tried to help Josephine, but they overpowered me. They took Josephine."

Alex felt his heart seize painfully. "Josephine was kidnapped? What exactly happened?"

Sophia thrust a bloodied note toward him, her hand trembling slightly. "See for yourself."

Alex snatched the note, his eyes devouring the scrawled, brutal message:

"Meet me at the Skyview Hotel immediately. Bring the Heaven Root you stole, or the woman dies."

Signed coldly: Owen Whitman.

With fierce intensity, Alex crushed the note in his palm. If these bastards wanted trouble, they'd found it-and they'd regret it deeply.

"Alex, don't go," Sophia urged softly, her bravado crumbling. "It's a trap."

Ignoring her plea, Alex seized her hand, spotting a deep gash oozing blood.

He cursed softly under his breath, swiftly tending to her wound with quiet, practiced efficiency.

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Chapter 269

"Alex," "Sophia began hesitantly, her voice thick with suppressed it, "I wanted to apologize..."

He raised piercing eyes to hers, ablaze with fury. "Save it."

After securing the final bandage, Alex stood abruptly. "Go home, Sophia. Now,"

Her eyes softened, resignation filling them. "You're still going, aren't you?" "Yes," Alex said firmly.

Sophia's expression was pained. "Then at least be careful."

Without another word, Alex vanished into the suffocating darkness outside, fury propelling his every step.

An hour later, miles away in Vermont, Jericho Kane sat sleeplessly in his lavish study, frantically arranging papers.

Suddenly, a chilling voice pierced the silence: "Kane."

Jericho's blood froze, terror gripping him tightly.

"Alex..." he gasped, his voice trembling, eyes wide with primal fear as Alex stepped forward from the shadows, his murderous intent radiating fiercely.

"Why are you here?" Jericho stammered desperately, backing away, his breath rapid.

"I washed my hands of everything—I swear!"

He wanted to run, to vanish from this monster's sight, hardly daring to breathe for fear it might draw attention - but before he could even sense it coming, the monster was already there, materializing in his study like a shadow slipping through the cracks.

Alex hurled the bloodied note onto Jericho's desk, eyes burning like twin infernos.

"Whitman raided my clinic and took my friend, Josephine."

Jericho's face paled dramatically, his mind racing in panic. "I swear, Alex-I've nothing to do with this! I've cut all ties!"

Fumbling frantically, Jericho grabbed his smartphone, hastily showing Alex a recorded video call:

"You were supposed to give me the Heaven Root," Owen said coldly over the phone.

"I'm sorry, but I can't," Jericho's voice came through, strained and tense.

"I'll just take it from him myself," Owen snapped.

Jericho's panicked voice rose in desperation. "Please, Owen, don't! Alex isn't someone you can handle. Don't lay a hand on him!"

"You've grown old, Uncle Jericho. You've lost your courage-and your pride. Watch how easily I take the Heaven Root from him."

"Owen, please don't do this! If you make a move, my whole family could get dragged into this. I'm begging you-stop!"

"Coward," Owen spat before hanging up.

Jericho sighed heavily and turned to Alex. "I tried to call you to warn you, but you didn't answer."

Alex remembered the missed call. He had been with Kelly at the time, too distracted to pick up. He exhaled sharply.

"Fine. Take me to Owen Whitman."

"Of course, I'll have my private helicopter waiting outside," Jericho nodded frantically, scrambling to comply.

He was pulling out his phone to call his team and prepare the jet. Standing up, he added, "Please, let me guide you."

Chapter 269

Jericho's heart was pounding.

Alex felt like a drawn blade-sharp, lethal, and ready to cut down anyone who crossed him. Right now, he was a bomb waiting to explode.

At the helipad outside, Scarlet approached briskly.

"Sir, The helicopter's ready. Who's it for?" she asked.

"It is for Alex," Jericho said quickly. "He's going after Owen. Owen's done something reckless-kidnapped Alex's friend to get his hands on the Heaven Root."

Scarlet snorted dismissively.

"Then he deserves whatever's coming. Honestly, why does he even covet the Heaven Root? It would be much better in Owen's hands."

Jericho felt his blood run cold.

Why did everyone around him seem so eager to step on a landmine?

And this wasn't just any landmine-it was nuclear.

If they were so eager to die, Jericho thought grimly, why couldn't they do it alone?

Why drag him down with them?

Chapter 270

Chapter 270

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 270[901 words]

Jericho Kane's eyes widened with a sudden, terrified fury as he swung his arm, the back of his hand striking Scarlett so fiercely her teeth scattered across the polished marble floor like dice thrown from a gambler's desperate hand.

Her slender body hit the ground hard, crumpling like a discarded doll.

"I apologize deeply, Mr. Alex," Jericho stammered, voice quivering with dread.

"Scarlett's my niece, reckless and foolish-doesn't know when to shut that venomous mouth of hers. Trust me, I'll teach her proper manners."

Jericho trembled, fearful Alex would ignite like dynamite, setting off an explosion of rage fueled by his kidnapped friend.

Scarlett, blood dripping from her broken mouth, glared defiantly Jericho, opening her lips to protest.

But before a single word slipped free, Jericho exploded into savage action, kicking her face mercilessly.

"Can't you keep that poisonous trap shut for a single goddamn second?"

"Relax, Kane," Alex drawled coldly, disdain dripping from his every word. "I don't kick a barking dog."

He climbed aboard the waiting helicopter without another glance, as if stepping over trash.

Jericho bowed deeply, relief washing over him like cold rain.

"Safe travels, Mr. Alex. I'll pray for your success."

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The helicopter ascended sharply, leaving Jericho alone with Scarlett, fury still blazing in his eyes.

"Listen closely, girl," he growled, "you can insult him, look down on him, or even bed him for all I care. But never, ever do it again in front of me!"

Scarlett stared up, wide-eyed with fear, nodding meekly. "Understood."

"Good," Jericho growled, his voice like gravel and venom.

"If you're hellbent on dying, go dig your own grave somewhere far from me. I'm not explaining your sorry corpse to your mother. But listen close-don't you ever drag me into trouble with that monster again."

"Yes, Uncle," Scarlett murmured, wincing from the pain throbbing through her shattered teeth and bleeding nose.

Rage smoldered in her chest like wildfire-raw, bitter fury aimed squarely at Alex. That drunken nobody had somehow provoked Jericho Kane enough to land a hit her-something no one had dared or managed to do in five damn years.

And now, because of Alex, that streak was broken. Just like that.

"I swear, Alex," she whispered venomously to the empty air, "I'll savor every second I spend killing you. You've cost me dearly today, and I'll repay you tenfold."

The instant Jericho vanished, Scarlett snatched up her phone, eyes blazing with malicious intent.

"Owen," she snarled, voice sharp and urgent. "That drunken idiot's flying your way. Rally your men and crush him."

Owen laughed cruelly, his voice dark with anticipation. "Don't fret, Scarlett. Neither he nor his woman will leave my hotel alive. I'll have my fun first, though-she's a beauty, too tempting to resist."

Scarlett's laugh was a wicked melody of vengeance. "Don't waste time-rape her before he gets there. Let him find her already

ruined."

"Delightful idea," Owen agreed hungrily.

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"He'll arrive in thirty minutes? Plenty of time to make her scream

Scarlett ended the call with a sinister grin, looking to the heavens with seething hatred. "How dare you make me suffer. Now you'll die miserably."

Her eyes suddenly sparkled with wicked inspiration.

Henry Dupont was already dead-Alex's doing-but someone else would surely be eager to avenge him.

Scarlett quickly dialed a phone, smiling viciously as a voice picked up.

"Want revenge for Henry Dupont? I know exactly where his killers headed."

At the luxurious Skyview Hotel, Owen lounged arrogantly, oblivious to the true danger Alex posed.

To him, Alex was merely a frightened drunk doctor, easy prey.

Only five bodyguards stood by casually, bored and unprepared for any serious threat.

"Take the woman," Owen ordered carelessly, flicking a dismissive hand. "Rape her. Enjoy yourselves."

"Sir," a bodyguard hesitated, caution flickering in his eyes. "Won't harming her compromise our leverage?"

Owen's slap cracked across the guard's face like a whip.

"Coward! He was already dead the moment he stepped in here-she's nothing but an appetizer. Now go! I'm giving you the chance to enjoy her, so you'd better thank me."

"Thank you, sir," the bodyguard said with a bow.

"No!" Josephine cried desperately, wrists chained, helpless as the guard dragged her away.

"You're all dead men- Alex will slaughter every last one of you!"

The door slammed shut, muffling her fierce struggle.

Furniture shattered, screams rang out, piercing the luxurious silence.

Owen smiled viciously, savoring her torment.

"She's a wildcat," he chuckled darkly.

"I'll tame her personally once you're done."

Gradually, Josephine's fierce screams faded into broken sobs.

When the door reopened, her tear-streaked face was defiant yet shattered, eyes promising revenge.

"All of you will burn," she spat venomously.

"I'll relish watching each of you writhe in agony. You have no idea who you've crossed."

The bodyguard struck her again, silencing her briefly. "Shut your mouth unless you want more," he threatened coldly.

Owen's eyes raked over Josephine's tattered clothes with a twisted gleam of lust, his smile cruel and cold.

"So... how was she?" he asked, voice low and mocking.

"Fiery," the guard smirked.

"Good. Strip her," Owen commanded, eyes gleaming sadistically. "Dance for me."

Josephine trembled, tears streaking down her cheeks, yet she stepped forward slowly, eyes darting desperately.

Owen's laughter filled the penthouse, echoing mockingly.

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Without warning, she lunged, gripping a heavy vase and smashing it viciously into

Owen's skull, blood spurting dramatically.

He roared in rage, blood streaming down his shocked face.

"You damn bitch!" Owen roared, clutching his head like the madness might split it

open.

"I'll have every one of them rape you until there's nothing left to scream with! Dead or alive-you'll be nothing but a broken toy!"

Josephine sobbed, eyes wild, and without another word, hurled herself through

the open window, choosing death over dishonor, her body disappearing into the

unforgiving darkness below.

Chapter 271

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 271[1,237 words]

Owen and his bodyguards stood frozen in a stunned stupor, their minds too clouded by shock to fathom the chaos erupting around them.

Rushing to the penthouse balcony, Owen gripped the railing tight and stared down into the shadows below.

His breath hitched sharply when he glimpsed a man, powerfully built and fiercely determined, cradling a woman tenderly in his

strong arms.

Nearby, the thunderous rhythm of helicopter blades filled the night air, whipping it into a violent tempest.

More lights pierced through the darkness, an ominous swarm converging swiftly upon the hotel.

A wicked smile twisted Owen's lips, his eyes gleaming cruelly. "Looks like our guest has finally arrived," he chuckled, a harsh laugh escaping his throat, completely devoid of remorse for Josephine's fate.

Women, to him, were nothing more than expendable toys, easily broken and casually discarded.

Snatching the pistol off his bedside table, Owen sneered coldly, "Killing Alex and taking the Heaven Root? Hell, that's child's play."

Meanwhile, Jericho Kane's helicopter hovered in midair, frozen in shock.

He could barely comprehend what he had just witnessed-his passenger had flung himself out of the chopper without a parachute, diving headfirst toward a woman plummeting from the penthouse balcony.

"What the hell... is he Superman?" the pilot muttered, stunned, his hands gripping the controls as he guided the chopper toward the rooftop helipad of the Skyview Hotel, awaiting further orders with bated breath.

At that same moment, six more helicopters tore through the night skies, engines roaring like war drums.

They bore the insignia of Conrad Dupont-each one packed with merciless, battle-hardened soldiers.

Inside the lead chopper, their commander, Yorick, leaned forward, his gaze sharp as a blade.

Through the binoculars, he locked onto a lone figure standing boldly at the hotel forecourt-a man cradling a woman in his arms like a knight descending into hell. Yorick's eyes narrowed.

"That's him," he growled. "Target in sight."

"Sir," Yorick urgently communicated through the radio to Conrad back in Chicago, his voice tight with anticipation.

"We've got eyes on Henry's killer."

Conrad's furious voice crackled sharply through the speaker, pure venom dripping from his words.

"I want everything recorded-broadcast it live. Make that bastard grovel and plead before you put a bullet through his skull."

"Understood, sir," Yorick replied swiftly, relaying commands to his men as the helicopters began their descent.

On the hotel forecourt, Alex gently clutched Josephine in a protective embrace, his voice strained with regret and sorrow.

"I'm sorry I was too late," he murmured painfully.

"It's alright," Josephine whispered, her voice trembling with exhaustion yet courageously defiant. "Alex, we must leave quickly -they're dangerous."

Alex's expression darkened as his gaze traced the bruises marring Josephine's delicate face and tattered clothes.

"Did they hurt you?" he demanded fiercely.

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Her eyes filled with tears, humiliation and pain etched deeply across her features.

They they tried to violate me," she admitted softly, her voice breaking. "But forget that-please, let's just escape. They want

you dead."

With tender resolve, Alex gently touched her forehead.

"Sleep," he commanded softly yet authoritatively.

"Alex..." Josephine murmured weakly as overwhelming fatigue overcame her, and she slumped gently into unconsciousness. By now, six helicopters had touched down, disgorging sixty heavily-armed soldiers onto the parking lot, each weapon raised menacingly at Alex.

"Alex!" Yorick roared, voice booming with deadly accusation. "How dare you kill Henry Dupont!"

At that moment, Owen arrogantly stepped out of the hotel entrance and onto the forecourt, flanked by five of his guards. His eyes widened in disbelief at the scene before him-soldiers swarming the hotel forecourt, all with weapons trained on Alex. "Hold on!" Owen barked urgently, stepping forward confidently.

Yorick spun around sharply. "Who the hell are you?"

"I'm Owen Whitman," Owen declared imperiously.

This is my hotel. That man owes me a Heaven Root. Before you turn him into Swiss cheese, I'm taking what's mine."

Yorick hesitated briefly until Conrad's furious voice once again filled his ear.

"Let him take the Heaven Root first. It's valuable. If he refuses to hand it over afterward, kill him as well."

"Go ahead," Yorick grudgingly allowed Owen, motioning him forward. "Perfect," Owen smirked arrogantly, strutting forward as though stepping onto a stage set just for him, utterly convinced the world revolved around his whims. Facing Alex, Owen sneered with disgusting mockery, his voice dripping venom. "Hand over the Heaven Root, bastard. Maybe I'll let them leave your corpse recognizable."

"Did any of you touch her?" Alex growled, eyes blazing with murderous fury.

Owen laughed cruelly, without a shred of shame. "Yeah, I ordered my bodyguards

to violate her-we planned to enjoy every second of it. What are you gonna do about it? She's our toy now."

Alex's silence turned deadly, the air vibrating violently around him

Owen's mocking laughter faltered slightly as Alex's quiet fury transformed into a chilling command.

"Explode."

Instantly, an invisible force slammed into Owen's five guards like a freight train from hell.

They tried to scream-but the breath was ripped from their lungs as their bodies were pulverized, bones shattering and flesh exploding in a gruesome spray of blood and gore that painted the pavement.

Owen froze, horrified, as hot blood splattered his face and drenched his clothes. Stumbling backward, Owen raised his shaking gun, terror replacing bravado. "Who...who the hell are you?" he whimpered, fear clawing at his throat. An invisible vice clamped painfully around his hand, shattering it explosively. Chapter 271

Owen's scream pierced the night as he stared numbly at the shredded remains of his limb. Gripped by terror, Owen spun around and bolted-desperate to escape.

But before he could take a second step, another brutal force exploded through the air, shredding his leg apart. He screamed as he was hurled to the ground, landing in a crumpled, blood-soaked heap on the cold pavement.

The Dupont soldiers watched aghast, unable to comprehend the gruesome carnage unfolding before them without a single visible attacker. "Please... help me," Owen sobbed pathetically, his pride shattered utterly. "Yorick!" Conrad barked urgently through the line. "Is Whitman being attacked?" "Yes, sir," Yorick stammered, confusion evident. "But there's no shooter visible-"

Conrad paused, considering the implications.

"That man is connected to the governor of Texas. Save him. Make Texas owe us a favor."

As Yorick prepared to act, Alex's penetrating stare suddenly pinned him, cutting through Yorick's resolve effortlessly.

Then, abruptly, all camera feeds vanished, plunging Conrad into frantic silence. "What's happening there?" Conrad screamed furiously.

His secretary frantically checked. "A jammer's blocking the signal! We've lost communication entirely!"

"Damn it! Someone tell me what the hell is happening!" Conrad roared in desperate frustration.

On the hotel forecourt, Yorick nervously signaled his men to seize the screaming Owen while leveling his weapon directly at Alex's head.

"One wrong move, and you're dead!" Yorick shouted fiercely, facing Alex defiantly.

"You're the one who killed Henry Dupont?" Yorick demanded coldly.

"Yes," Alex answered unflinchingly.

"Kneel down!" Yorick roared, his voice cutting through the chaos like a whip.

Though live communications were severed, he still had the local recording running-Conrad needed to see every second of this.

In Yorick's mind, letting Alex die with a quick shot to the head would be far too merciful.

"You're not worth," Alex spat contemptuously, eyes burning with righteous wrath. "Here's my offer: hand over that worthless trash Owen so he can beg Josephine's forgiveness. Then, I'll allow you and your men to leave here alive."

Gasps and murmurs erupted among the soldiers, disbelief evident,

"He's insane! Facing death yet daring to demand surrender?"

Yorick's face darkened with ominous rage.

"You arrogant fool!" Yorick snarled. "Hand over the Heaven Root and get on your knees. Do it now, and I'll grant you a pless death. Believe me-you'll be begging for it once we start the real torture."

But Alex suddenly smiled-slow, dangerous, like a storm about to break.

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 272[1,041 words]

"I have the Heaven Root," Alex sneered coldly, his eyes gleaming like shards of ice as he held Josephine protectively.

"If you dare risk your pathetic life for it, then come and claim it!"

Yorick's eyes narrowed venomously. He could summon his soldiers to shoot Alex into oblivion-but the Heaven Root was far too precious.

A single stray bullet could shatter it.

"I'll give you one chance," orick growled, barely controlling his rage.

"Hand over the Heaven Root. Or we settle this the hard way."

"Hard way?" Alex chuckled mockingly, confidence radiating from every word. "My one leg alone would be enough to crush you. Step forward-if you dare."

With Josephine tightly clasped to him, he knew he could shield her from any attack. Letting her go was not an option.

"Excellent!" Yorick barked, his voice dripping with sarcasm and fury.

"If you don't value your pathetic existence, don't blame me for your miserable fate. soldiers! Forget the guns-use knives! Sever the limbs of this insolent fool! I want his head displayed as my trophy!"

Several guards lunged forward eagerly, desperate to be the first to claim glory.

Alex merely stamped his foot, unleashing a deafening boom that cracked the ground apart. 1

Shattered stone erupted like a volcanic explosion, debris shooting in all directions, smashing into the guards with ruthless force.

Within mere seconds, guards screamed and collapsed, bleeding and broken.

"Go! All of you!" Yorick thundered furiously, his patience evaporating instantly.

"Kill him now! Shoot his face and legs-avoid his body! The Heaven Root must remain intact!"

Gunfire erupted like relentless thunder, bullets flying toward Alex with deadly precision.

Yet, an eerie silence suddenly swept the battlefield as every bullet stopped midair, frozen mere inches from Alex's unyielding

presence.

"You started this," Alex's voice whispered menacingly.

With a simple flick, he turned their weapons against them.

Bullets burst backward, shredding soldiers like a hailstorm of metal, turning their bodies into blood-soaked pincushions.

Owen, desperately receiving medical aid, was struck violently, blood spurting as a bullet tore into his legs.

The medic beside him also got shot on his arms.

All around, Dupont's elite soldiers collapsed, screaming and bleeding.

Alex stood untouched amidst the chaos, an unstoppable force, a deity of wrath and vengeance.

"Who... who the hell are you?!" Yorick stammered, drenched in cold sweat, his bravado shattered by fear.

He had never encountered such terrifying might.

The once grand Skyview Hotel courtyard was now filled with the moans and cries

of injured men, and Alex stood at the center, radiating a terrifying aura of invincibility.

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Onlookers from hotel windows gazed down in horror, their eyes wide, transfixed by this impossible spectacle.

"This... this can't be real!" someone murmured in disbelief.

"Is he some kind of monster?"

"He's beyond human!" others whispered fearfully.

Alex gazed coldly at Yorick, his voice chillingly calm yet saturated with mockery.

"The Dupont special forces seem rather pathetic, don't they?"

Yorick gritted his teeth, stripping off his bulletproof vest and discarding his weapons, revealing a powerful, muscular physique beneath.

But then, unexpectedly, he sank to his knees, forehead slamming heavily into the shattered concrete.

"Please spare us!" Yorick begged desperately, blood already streaming down his forehead.

"I swear, I'll abandon Dupont, I'll leave soldiering behind-I'll take my family far away, live peacefully as a farmer. I beg you- have mercy on me and my men!"

Around him, the remaining soldiers, stunned by their leader's surrender, quickly followed- dropping their weapons, falling to their knees, trembling as they pleaded for mercy.

"Please, spare us! I have a mother waiting for me!" one cried.

"My baby is waiting at home-I just want to live!" another sobbed.

Alex stared contemptuously at the pitiful display.

"I never sought your lives. It was you who pursued death by coming here."

Yorick slammed his bleeding head repeatedly against the floor, his voice breaking with desperation.

"I have a five-year-old daughter-please!"

Alex sighed deeply, a moment of humanity breaking through his hardened demeanor.

"Very well, I will spare your miserable lives-but you must do something for me." "Anything!" Yorick immediately responded, trembling.

Alex's eyes hardened dangerously, pointing sharply at Owen's broken body. "Keep that man alive. Can you manage that?"

"We have excellent medics! We will keep him alive," Yorick promised fervently.

"Good," Alex replied coldly. Without hesitation, he brutally shattered Owen's remaining limbs, eliciting agonized screams.

"Keep him alive-I want him to experience true hell," Alex ordered icily.

"Yes, sir!" Yorick responded frantically, shaking from head to toe inwardly cursing Owen's foolishness for provoking such an unstoppable force.

"If he dies, I'll hunt you down personally," Alex warned chillingly before leaping effortlessly into the sky with Josephine safely cradled in his arms.

Left behind, Yorick and his surviving soldiers sagged in relief, trembling from the horror they had narrowly survived. Yorick urgently shouted commands.

"Quickly! Save this bastard! Do whatever it takes-he cannot die!"

The surviving medics scrambled desperately, fully aware of the horror awaiting them should they fail.

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Owen's shattered limbs would need immediate, brutal amputation but at least he still had his lives. And for now, that was enough.

At the dead of night, in the Jed Whitman mansion.

Jed Whitman was the second son of Duke Whitman, the Governor of Texas, and the father of Owen.

He was still fooling around with his mistress when, suddenly, a voice called out.

"Did you enjoy doing all the bad stuff while letting your son go crazy?" "Fuck," Jed yelled, his penis still inside his mistress when a man appeared right beside

He reached fast for the gun by his side. "Who the fuck are you?"

But the gun changed hands before he could blink.

"You let your son do bad things, and you swept a mountain of dirt under the carpet. That dirt could bury at least fifty deaths your son caused. And still, you kept protecting him."

"That's my problem," Jed said sharply.

"Yes," the man replied. "It is your problem how you raised your son. But since your

son grew up to be a killer, your karma comes for you. You never taught him right."

"Who the hell are you?"

The man placed the gun against Jed's head.

"I'm the karma taker. For every soul your son murdered and you covered up...
your time's run out.'

"Stop it!" Jed yelled. "My father is the Governor!"

"Great," the man said. "My father is King."

The gun fired without mercy.

Jed's face froze in disbelief.

He still had a future a big one.

But now, it was all gone.

"You," the man said to the screaming mistress, "tell everyone: Owen must not be
killed. He must survive - barely. But anyone who helps him live better than that.....
will die."

Chapter 273

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 273[1,144 words]

Chapter 273

Jericho Kane couldn't sleep.

Anxiety gnawed at him relentlessly, twisting his stomach in knots

He had explicitly warned his helicopter pilot to avoid any confrontation with Alex, praying silently that no trouble had ensued.

But at that very moment, a violent roar pierced through the night air-the unmistakable thunder of helicopter blades slicing the darkness.

His pulse quickened as he rushed outside.

The chopper descended heavily onto the square, sending dust and leaves spiraling chaotically.

The pilot stumbled out, his face ghostly pale, eyes wide with terror

"What happened? Where is Mister Alex?" Jericho demanded urgently, grabbing the pilot's trembling shoulder.

The pilot struggled to form words, each one choked out in panic.

The more Jericho heard, the more his blood ran cold, a bone-deep dread settling over him like a suffocating fog.

"Promise me you'll keep everything you've seen tonight a secret, Jericho ordered sharply.

"Believe me, sir, I want nothing more than to erase this night from my memory forever," the pilot stammered, his voice barely above a whisper.

With dread thickening his steps, Jericho stormed back inside, his voice echoing harshly through the hall.

"Butler! Summon Bella and Scarlet to the main hall immediately!"

Minutes later, Bella and Scarlet hurried in, confusion and unease shadowing their faces.

"Father? Why have you called us at this hour?" Bella asked cautiously.

Without warning, Jericho's palm crashed mercilessly against Scarlet's face.

The brutal slap hurled her body against the nearby table, the crash resounding throughout the hall.

"Father! What on earth are you doing?" Bella cried out, rushing forward to aid Scarlet.

"Ask her yourself!" Jericho snarled, his face twisted with fury.

He swiftly drew a sword from its ornamental sheath on the wall, tossing it roughly to Scarlet's feet.

"If you truly comprehend the gravity of your mistake, Scarlet, then cut off your arm with that blade! It's the only way I might spare your worthless life-but know this: from tonight onward, you are no longer my niece!"

Bella's eyes widened in horror. "Father! What has gotten into you? Scarlet couldn't possibly deserve this!"

Jericho's rage surged uncontrollably.

"She dared defy my explicit orders! She deliberately contacted the Dupont family, betraying Alex's location to them. This is betrayal, pure and simple!"

"No-you're mistaken!" Scarlet whimpered, still attempting to maintain her lie. "Mistaken?" Jericho roared, his foot violently colliding with Scarlet's face this time, sending blood splattering across the polished marble.

"The Dupont family themselves called me when their men vanished from contact!"

Bella desperately grasped Jericho's arm, pleading, "Father, please calm yourself! Think of what Aunt-your sister-would say if

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she saw this!"

Jericho's glare sharpened dangerously, his voice trembling with barely restrained fury.

"You think I don't know what I'm doing? Did you hear what happened to Owen Whitman?"

Bella's eyes clouded with fear. "What happened to Owen?"

"He lost all four limbs-forced to live a pitiful existence, a living corpse as punishment!" Jericho spat, his voice trembling. Scarlet's face drained completely

of color. "Impossible! His family won't allow such humiliation!"

"What family?" Jericho hissed venomously, delivering yet another brutal slap.

"Owen's father was executed for his son's sins! The Whitmans, one of Texas's most powerful families, tremble and pray that their lineage won't be completely exterminated because of Owen's reckless stupidity!"

"But...Alex is just a lowly doctor from the slums," Scarlet whimpered, blood trickling from her split lip.

"He's nobody!"

Jericho's eyes darkened dangerously, and another savage kick fractured Scarlet's ribs.

"Nobody? What gives you the right to judge his worth, you foolish girl?" He struggled to contain the sheer terror that gripped him at the mere mention of Alex's hidden power.

"Then who is he, really?" Scarlet shouted defiantly through bloodied teeth, her stubbornness pushing Jericho to his limits.

Jericho clenched his fists, frustration boiling within him, knowing he must keep Alex's true identity secret.

"Just assume he's ordinary. But know this: Alex works under people so terrifyingly powerful that even the governor of Texas himself would grovel like a coward if he knew the truth!"

Bella, fear gripping her voice, asked softly, "Father, are you absolutely certain?" Jericho's voice lowered ominously, each word carrying the weight of grim warning. "Do you really think I can't distinguish between ordinary men and those who walk among devils? Alex is someone you never cross. Befriend him, and fortune will smile upon you. Provoke him, and pray that he'll see you as too insignificant even to destroy."

"What happened with the Dupont soldiers?" Scarlet whispered in terror, the reality of her actions finally sinking in.

"Dupont's elite men were crushed-utterly humiliated," Jericho replied, his voice trembling.

"They knelt, begging desperately for mercy, just for the slim chance of surviving Alex's wrath."

"Impossible..." Scarlet gasped, her face deathly pale, horror gripping her heart.

Jericho's eyes glowed with grim finality. "Pick up the sword and cut your arm off. I'll send it to Alex as penance."

Scarlet nearly fainted, her trembling fingers unable to grip the weapon.

Bella, frantic with desperation, threw herself at Jericho's arms.

"Father, please... don't go this far," Bella begged, her voice strained with desperation.

"I know Alex-he's not a man who enjoys hurting others. He's a doctor, a healer. Violence goes against everything he stands

for."

Jericho's eyes burned with fury, but beneath it was unmistakable fear.

"You don't understand, Bella. If Alex loses control because of this woman's stupidity, we could all pay the price."

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Chapter 273.

"I AM TRYING TO PROTECT THIS FAMILY!"

"Then let me fix it," Bella insisted, stepping closer.

"Tomorrow, I'll bring Scarlet to him myself. We'll apologize, face-to-face. He'll understand. He's not unreasonable."

Jericho shook his head grimly.

"It's too late. He's already furious. First, Owen kidnapped Alex's friend-and if what I suspect is true, Owen may have gone even further."

"Whatever he did to Alex's friend... it unleashed something terrifying. Alex is in a rampage. People are dying."

Scarlet's face turned sheet white.

Her knees nearly buckled under her. She had been the one who pushed Owen to rape that person... to break Alex.

Jericho locked his cold, piercing gaze on Scarlet. His voice turned deathly quiet.

"You better pray you had no part in that. Because if you did-if you're the reason his friend was hurt-then even if he demands your mother's head or your entire bloodline wiped out, I'll raise the sword myself. Safe his effort."

"Father, no!" Bella cried, throwing her arms around him.

"You're letting fear consume you. Alex wouldn't ask for such things-he's not like that. I'll speak with him. Please... don't mutilate Scarlet. That won't make anything right."

Jericho collapsed back onto the couch, his strength drained.

For a moment, he was just a man-broken, afraid, and powerless. Maybe Bella was right.

Maybe fear had made him irrational.

Maybe Alex wouldn't go that far.

He exhaled slowly. "Take her. Ask for forgiveness. If he kills her... then so be it. I don't know what else to do anymore."

Bella knelt beside him, placing a gentle hand on his arm. "Don't worry, Father.

Alex is still human. He won't do something unforgivable."

But across the room, Scarlet stood frozen, her lips trembling.

She knew the truth. She had encouraged Owen to violate Alex's friend. And if Alex found out...

There would be no forgiveness.

Only death.

Why did she do something so terrifying over just a slip of anger? Now all that's left

is regret.

The Almighty Dominance - kidnapped 274[1,363 words]

Chapter 274

'Get your pathetic face out of my sight, Scarlett! Every time I lay eyes on you, my blood boils a little hotter, and if you linger any longer."

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"Believe me, I might just lose control and kill you right here," Jericho snarled venomously, his hand sweeping through the air like he was dismissing an annoying insect.

"Yes, sir..." Scarlett's voice trembled, her pride crushed beneath his harsh words.

She bowed deeply, her face etched with pain and shadowed by share.

Turning swiftly, she hurried away, shoulders hunched with humiliation.

Inside her chest, dread coiled tightly, eclipsing even her former rage.

Scarlett knew better than to entertain any reckless thoughts this time. If Owen Whitman, powerful and untouchable, had met such a brutal end, what chance did someone like her stand?

And with Jericho clearly aligned with Alex now, she knew her family could easily be next on the chopping block.

Everyone in town knew Jericho Kane was a lunatic, and lately, he'd grown even more unhinged since losing his prized governorship-almost as if he feared that damned slum doctor more than death itself.

After Scarlett vanished, a quiet moment passed before Bella moved closer and gently hugged her father, trying to reassure him.

"Father, Alex is kind-hearted. He'll forgive Scarlett eventually, I'm sure of it."

Jericho sighed deeply, then cast a speculative glance at his daughter. "Bella, tell me something honestly-do you have feelings for that boy?"

Alex was close to the King, after all.

Perhaps through Alex, he could claw his way back into power.

The idea swirled tantalizingly in his mind, brightening his grim expression.

'If that boy becomes my son-in-law, imagine how much better our lives could become!'

"What?" Bella stammered, her eyes widening in shock before her cheeks flooded scarlet.

"Father! How could you say something like that? Of course not!"

Jericho chuckled dryly, his lips curving into a knowing smile.

"It's alright, Bella. Your father wasn't born yesterday-I see more clearly than you realize. If you fancy someone, don't waste time denying it. Be brave enough to admit it."

Bella lowered her gaze, her voice shaking slightly as her neck flushed brighter. "Father, Alex saved my life-I'm simply grateful, nothing more."

"Just gratitude?" Jericho laughed softly, amusement sparking in his eyes.

"If it's truly more than that, my dear, seize the chance and chase after him. Men like Alex don't come around often, and if you manage to capture his heart, it'd be a stroke of fortune for both you and me."

Finally relaxing, Jericho laughed heartily, sensing opportunity amidst the chaos.

In the grand Whitman mansion, night had long fallen, wrapping the estate in heavy silence when urgent knocking shattered the

peace.

The elderly butler's voice trembled anxiously from the other side of George Whitman's door, "Sir, forgive me for disturbing your rest, but something terribly urgent demands your immediate attention."

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George Whitman stirred awake instantly, the shadows of concern creasing his weathered face. "Enter"

The butler stepped cautiously into the dimly lit room, finding, George already upright on his bed, clutching a strange document that had mysteriously appeared at his side

George's eyes narrowed suspiciously. "Did you leave this here?"

"No, sir. I've only just entered," the butler replied nervously, stepping closer as curiosity and dread twisted inside George

Frowning deeply, George opened the document and was met with Horrifying images-mutilated corpses, families grieving, all linked to Owen Whitman's monstrous deeds.

His heart twisted painfully with sorrow and shame.

"Sir," the butler interjected urgently, his voice breaking with tension, "I have dreadful news."

"What is it?" George growled, his eyes fixed grimly on the chilling photographs. "It's Master Owen, sir... someone has brutally severed all four of his limbs," the butler choked out the words, trembling visibly.

"What?" George's voice cracked sharply, horror flooding his face as he looked up. "And your son, Jed-he's been murdered," the butler continued, voice shaking.

"His mistress witnessed the entire scene. She said an intruder burst into the room and shot him in the head, declaring led responsible for covering up Owen's wickedness."

With trembling hands, George flipped to the final page of the document, where a chilling message awaited him in bold handwriting:

"Considering your past service to Texas with justice, I grant you one chance to make this right."

A cold shiver ran down George's spine. He placed the papers down beside him, drawing a ragged breath.

"Whoever left this could have killed me easily tonight, yet my good deeds spared me this time. I doubt I'll be so fortunate again."

"What should we do, sir?" the butler asked nervously.

"Do nothing," George commanded decisively, his voice steely.

"There will be no retaliation. Warn every member of this family to lie low immediately. Any misdeeds must stop this instant- otherwise, they'll answer directly to me."

"Yes, sir," the butler nodded obediently, relief flashing briefly across his tense features.

"Owen picked a fight with the wrong man. Strip him of every allowance, expel him permanently from our family. Make sure he's fed and kept alive, though."

"I want him to spend every miserable day repenting for his sins," George declared bitterly, his voice ringing with heavy judgment.

Outside, the night deepened, cloaking the Whitman mansion in solemn darkness.

Meanwhile, in the dimly lit quietude of the clinic, Josephine tossed restlessly in her bed, trapped within the cruel grasp of a nightmare that twisted her peaceful slumber into horror.

In her unsettling dream, she was innocently opening the clinic doors as she did each morning, when suddenly, a group of ruthless strangers stormed inside.

Their faces etched with sinister purpose, they tore apart the clinic, smashing cabinets and scattering precious medical supplies in a relentless hunt for something they called

2/3

"Heavenfoot.

Desperate, Josephine fought back fiercely, but the intruders numbered a dozen strong, overpowering her easily.

Before she could gather her senses, she was bound and dragged away, a helpless pawn in their cruel game.

Their demands were clear-they wanted Alex, and she was the ball to draw him out.

Through the fog of terror, she recognized a face among them: Owen, a brash, arrogant young man whose eyes burned with entitlement, believing that the world bent solely to his whims.

As she recoiled from his sneering visage, a phone rang out sharply. She remembered hearing Owen call the woman on the other end by name-Scarlett as Scarlett coldly commanded Owen to violate Josephine.

Dragged roughly toward a shadowed room by a towering bodyguard, Josephine braced herself for unspeakable horror.

But just before they reached their grim destination, the bodyguard leaned close, his voice low but surprisingly gentle amidst the chaos.

"I have no desire to harm you," he muttered, his eyes filled with unexpected remorse.

"I've endured enough under that arrogant young master. But scream for me, scream loud enough to convince him. He's twisted enough to enjoy the sound of a woman's suffering-it excites him!?"

Heart pounding in terror, yet grasping this small mercy, Josephine let out harrowing screams, each cry piercing the darkness, though no harm befell her.

After what felt like an eternity, her screams subsided, and she asked the guard softly, her voice shaking, "If you know how evil he is, why do you continue serving him?"

"My family depends on me," he whispered, shame and determination warring within his gaze.

"I've been trapped, not knowing when or how to stop. But seeing his depravity tonight has broken my chains. Tomorrow, no matter the cost, I'll leave this monstrous life behind."

Yet, Owen's depravity knew no bounds. Moments later, he dragged Josephine into a grand hall, his eyes glittering with sinister anticipation.

Knowing that death was preferable to the vile violation Owen intended, Josephine gathered her courage and flung herself from the penthouse balcony into the abyss

below.

Instead of crushing darkness, she landed gently, and before her stood Alex, his comforting presence a soothing balm against

her nightmare.

Slowly, reality shifted, and Josephine opened her eyes to the familiar walls of her clinic room, her heart still racing from the terror she'd endured.

"Josephine? Are you awake?" Alex's voice was soft, filled with concern and quiet reassurance.

Blinking away confusion, Josephine whispered hoarsely, "Alex...I had such a terrible dream."

Her gaze drifted uncertainly before locking anxiously onto Alex. "Or was it real?"

"You're awake now," Alex reassured gently, placing a calming hand on her shoulder.

"It's over. You're safe, and nothing like that will ever happen again. I promise."

Josephine drew a shaky breath, the memories still vivid and unsettling. Her eyes widened suddenly with concern.

"There was someone decent among those monsters-a bodyguard who protected me from harm, Do you know what happened to him?"

The Almighty Dominance kidnapped 275[1,339 words]

Chapter 275

Alex recalled vividly that Owen's guards were all lying cold and lifeless in pools of their own blood.

"Josephine," he said, his voice laced with a dark intensity, "when one chooses to walk the shadowed path for too long, they inevitably become the very demons they once feared. Even if he has a shred of decency left, when Judgment rains down, he'll drown in it."

"What are you trying to say?" Josephine's voice quivered, eyes wide with confusion.

"The police already got to them. And given that your so-called kind-hearted bodyguard was standing right alongside Owen, he won't escape the storm that's coming. The law won't be merciful.

Josephine's shoulders sank as she released a weary sigh.

"He was supposed to walk away sooner..."

Alex softened his tone, compassion mingling with his determination.

"Listen, since he tried to help you at the last moment, perhaps we should find his

family later and offer them some support. What do you think?"

A faint, grateful smile lit Josephine's face, her eyes shimmering with unshed tears.

"Thank you, Alex."

"You get some rest," Alex instructed gently, rising from his seat.

"There's still work left for me tonight."

Josephine reached out, her voice hesitant. "Alex, wait-do you know what happened to Owen?"

"He's alive," Alex replied tersely, his eyes clouding over with uncertainty.

"But the punishment he'll face-I promise you, it won't be gentle."

Josephine nodded slowly, accepting his words, then hesitated once more. "And what about his friend-Scarlett?"

At the mention of Scarlett's name, Alex's gaze flashed with a terrifying fury, before quickly masking it with icy calmness.

"What about her?" he asked, his voice dangerously soft.

Josephine's face twisted in pain and humiliation as she confessed, "Owen didn't plan to rape me at first, but that vile woman, Scarlett-she called him, urged him to rape me. I want her punished too. Can you pass that information to the police?"

Alex's mouth curled into a menacing smile, eyes burning with cold promise.

"Consider it done. Now, sleep tight, Josephine."

Descending quietly into the clinic below, Alex halted in astonishment.

The entire room, once a chaotic mess, had been meticulously organized, scrubbed spotless, gleaming softly in the pale lamplight.

Sophia lay sleeping, her graceful form hunched gently over the table, exhaustion etched deeply into her lovely features.

Her brows knitted slightly, conveying silent worry even in her dreams.

Alex felt his heart clench painfully; so much history lay between them, an endless maze of love, pain, longing, and betrayal.

He gazed at her tenderly, his chest tightening with bittersweet affection.

This woman-his torment and his salvation.

Fate had entwined their lives so brutally yet irresistibly, filled with roses as beautiful as they were thorned.

With gentle care, Alex took a blanket, softly draping it over her slender shoulders, savoring the brief closeness. Determined not to disturb her sleep, he began quietly tidying the remaining clutter, his movements methodical and delicate.

When everything was perfect, Alex moved to the kitchen, skillfully preparing a simple yet nourishing meal.

Fresh vegetables sliced with practiced precision, tender chicken simmered slowly, filling the air with an aroma as comforting as a warm embrace.

He knew she must be hungry after such an exhausting day.

Sophia stirred gently, a tempting fragrance pulling her slowly back to consciousness.

She opened her eyes blearily, her heart quickening as she saw Alex placing a generous bowl of steaming chicken soup and warm bread before her.

"You're back," she gasped softly, worry filling her beautiful eyes. Are you hurt anywhere?"

"I'm alright," Alex assured her gently, his voice full of gratitude.

"Josephine is safe upstairs, resting. Thank you-for everything you've done today."

Sophia blushed faintly, lowering her eyes shyly. "I waited for you, but I must have drifted off. I didn't even hear you come in."

Alex wisely chose not to mention that he'd slipped in quietly from above.

Instead, he smiled knowingly, "You must be hungry."

"No, I'm fine," Sophia protested weakly, though her stomach betrayed her immediately with a rumbling growl.

Alex chuckled warmly, eyes twinkling with soft amusement.

"Seems your stomach disagrees. Eat something, Sophia. Please."

Sophia sighed softly, eyes tracing the bowl of hearty soup set lovingly before her.

"Thank you, Alex."

One spoonful was enough.

Her eyes widened instantly, sparkling with genuine surprise and delight.

"Alex-this is incredible!" she exclaimed, unable to suppress her pleasure. "Did you know this is exactly how I love chicken soup?"

Alex feigned innocent surprise, masking the careful diligence with which he'd perfected her favorite meal months of practice.

"Really? I had no idea," he lied smoothly, a tender warmth seeping through his voice, quietly savoring the soft joy radiating from her face.

He was just a man trying to build a happy family.

Once upon a time-

Before the bitter shadow of divorce darkened their lives.

In no time at all, Sophia had emptied her bowl, greedily drinking every last drop of the savory broth.

Her hungry eyes drifted toward the steaming pot of chicken soup, the rich aroma beckoning her appetite once again.

"Here, let me get you another helping," Alex offered warmly, his voice gentle and soothing.

"Thank you," Sophia replied softly, her voice delicate with gratitude. Only after the third bowl did she finally slow down, resting the spoon gently against her lips.

"This tastes incredible," she said, flashing Alex a rare, radiant smile. "Honestly, your cooking could put any master chef to shame.

Alex chuckled lightly, shaking his head modestly. "Maybe it's just that you're starving."

She tilted her head, amusement flickering in her eyes.

"Is that what you think? Perhaps." A fleeting happiness danced across her face. They say a happy stomach makes for a happy life-maybe, just maybe, there was truth to that old saying.

"You know, I enjoy cooking as well," Sophia continued, curiosity sparkling in her gaze.

"How did you get the chicken so tender? And that aroma-what's your secret?"

Alex grinned, visibly pleased, launching into a passionate explanation of his culinary methods, describing in vivid detail how he carefully selected fresh vegetables and seasoned the chicken to perfection.

Sophia gasped softly in surprise, eyes widening in genuine awe. "Oh, is that how you do it? Fascinating!"

Before they knew it, the room filled with laughter, their easy conversation bridging

the chasm between their hearts.

When Alex finally uncorked a bottle of wine, the atmosphere grew even warmer, wrapping them in a cocoon of intimacy.

Life, for that fleeting moment, seemed perfect no distractions, no family drama- just the two of them, soul to soul, baring their hearts without fear.

Suddenly, it felt as though they'd found each other again, as if time itself raced joyously forward, urging them to savor every precious second.

"Alex," Sophia's voice suddenly grew softer, more hesitant, breaking the gentle spell. "Do you think we could ever... return to how things used to be?"

The quiet vulnerability in her voice froze Alex.

He sat there, stunned and speechless.

Could they truly reclaim their past? He desperately wanted to believe it was possible.

But every time hope had blossomed before, heartache swiftly crushed it. Perhaps this was the moment to dare to believe once more.

Sophia moved closer, sat beside him, the air thickening between them.

"I need to apologize, Alex," she said gently, sincerity heavy in her words. "For everything that went wrong between us."

"Don't worry," Alex said softly, his voice tinged with sadness yet laced with tender resignation.

"That's all in the past now. Men rarely hold grudges against women."

Being a gentleman wasn't easy-it meant forgiving without reservation, even if it

meant bearing silent wounds.

"Women could hurt a countless times, and society demanded that a man forgive unconditionally.

Yet, if a man slipped up just once, he knew she would forgive, perhaps-but she would never forget.

Still, Alex knew a man couldn't allow himself to hold onto bitterness like a petty heart.

Sophia's gaze deepened, locked onto Alex's eyes, a knowing smile curving her lips. "I've always had the feeling that you still care deeply about me. Is that true?" She moved closer still, her presence magnetic yet terrifying, drawing out a sudden pang of fear in Alex.

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It wasn't clear whether he feared losing himself once again to the woman he loved-or dreaded a future that could only hold more pain.

Not long ago, he'd desperately wished for such a moment, for her to speak words like these. But now...

Sophia leaned in slowly, haunted by the image of Jasmine kissing Alex-a memory that inexplicably ignited jealousy and desire. For the first time, Sophia truly saw Alex clearly, undeniably handsome and irresistibly alluring.

A sudden ache rose within her, urging her closer to the strong, masculine lips before her.

"Alex..." Sophia whispered softly, her breath warm, enticing, inch by inch, her lips drifted closer, drawn by the overwhelming force of longing.

Helplessly captivated by her gaze, Alex found himself moving toward her, their lips

drawn together like magnets. 4

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The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 276[1,278 words]

"Absolutely not-you don't get to touch my boyfriend!"

A fierce voice shattered the tense silence, erupting seemingly out of nowhere, jolting both Sophia and Alex as though lightning had struck.

"Jasmine?" Alex gasped in disbelief, his eyes widening at the unexpected apparition before him.

Without hesitation, Jasmine seized Alex's arm possessively, her emerald eyes blazing dangerously toward Sophia, gleaming with venomous defiance.

"He's my boyfriend, and you absolutely do not have permission to kiss him. If you insist on waiting for my blessing, prepare yourself-it might come, say, in about a hundred years."

Sophia was utterly stunned, paralyzed by Jasmine's sudden and fiery entrance.

"How on earth are you even here?" Alex questioned, clearly shaken by her sudden arrival.

With a pout brimming with indignation and tenderness, Jasmine gently struck his chest-not in anger, but in affectionate reproach.

"You idiot, I was worried sick about you! I heard Owen was causing trouble and rushed here as soon as I could. And what do I find?"

Her voice broke with an anguished sob, crystalline tears pooling in her eyes.

"I find you cozying up with your ex-wife-the woman who never once believed in you!"

"Who abandoned you when you needed her most!"

"Who repeatedly broke your heart."

Her words lashed out like whips, each carefully aimed at Sophia's pride, slicing into the fragile connection she had been painstakingly trying to rebuild with Alex.

"She doesn't deserve you, Alex. You're meant for something far better."

"Someone who treasures every piece of you, who would die rather than see you hurt again," Jasmine sobbed passionately, throwing herself into Alex's chest, her slender frame trembling against him.

Sophia felt each word like a dagger twisting mercilessly in her chest, widening the chasm that she had worked so desperately to mend.

The kiss she had nearly stolen would have sealed the reconciliation, but Jasmine had shattered that dream with her fierce claim.

Realizing the futility of remaining, Sophia bit her lip, choking down bitterness.

"Alex, I'll go ahead," she murmured quietly, offering one final, poignant look before turning away.

She could swear that as she turned, Jasmine cast a sly, mocking smile in her direction a silent declaration of victory.

"This isn't over," Sophia whispered defiantly to herself, striding toward her car, determined and unbroken.

Meanwhile, Jasmine remained nestled comfortably in Alex's embrace.

"Can you let go of me now?" Alex gently urged.

"No," Jasmine responded playfully, tightening her grip with a mischievous sparkle in her eyes.

"It feels too good to leave your arms just yet."

"Jasmine," Alex protested softly.

"Kiss me first," Jasmine demanded, her voice sultry and tempting as she tilted her flawless face upward, captivating Alex completely.

Alex's heart raced fiercely as he gazed down at her delicate beauty.

Jasmine wasn't just attractive-she was breathtaking, a masterpiece sculpted meticulously by divine hands, a beauty so radiant and perfect that entire kingdoms could go to war for her smile alone.

At this moment, Jasmine's eyes were luminous with an earnest and sacred devotion, reflecting her unwavering love, a love capable of sacrifices beyond

measure.

If Alex were to ask, Jasmine would willingly plunge a dagger into her heart just to prove her fidelity, murmuring, "If it brings you joy, my love, I'd do it gladly."

'How could any man resist loving such a woman?'

Alex pondered helplessly, drawn irresistibly closer to her.

"Kiss me," Jasmine whispered seductively, her voice melting any remnants of his resistance.

Just as Alex began to lean in, lost in the intoxicating promise of her embrace, Josephine's startled voice rang sharply through the air.

"What exactly is going on here?"

"Josephine!" Alex jolted upright, his senses swiftly returning, caught between shock and embarrassment.

"You two are causing such a racket I couldn't possibly sleep," Josephine remarked irritably, eyeing them with suspicion.

Jasmine's eyes darkened fiercely in response, her determination flaring brighter.

Swiftly, she cupped Alex's face in her soft hands, stood tiptoe, and boldly pressed her lips to his, stealing a kiss so passionate and possessive that it left Alex breathless.

'Nothing, and I mean nothing, will ever keep me from claiming you,' Jasmine declared boldly, a defiant smirk playing across her beautiful lips.

Clearly, she possessed a courage that Sophia could never match.

The following days swept Alex into an intense whirlwind of activity, as he meticulously inspected Kingston Pharmaceuticals' production lines, determined to ensure their products met the highest standards of excellence.

When manufacturing involved merely a thousand units, errors could easily slip through unnoticed.

Now, however, with production scaled up to hundreds of thousands, the margin for mistakes multiplied drastically, compelling Alex to scrutinize every single batch with a critical eye.

Whenever Alex discovered products falling even slightly short of perfection, he sternly directed the staff to discard them immediately.

"These won't see the shelves-throw them out," he commanded, his voice firm and unyielding.

After a relentless week of vigilance, the frequency of errors began dwindling to a satisfying minimum.

Just then, Jasmine approached him, her expression conspiratorial and her voice dripping with anticipation.

"Tomorrow, we're hosting a private auction to select the main distributors for our product across the states. I'd love it if you could spare an hour to review the candidates yourself."

Alex, despite his wealth, recognized that the lucrative profits from the Emerald Elixir were essential for funding his pursuit of rare medicines to enhance his strength.

Turning down this opportunity was not an option.

"Don't worry, this will be our final assignment. Now that production and distribution are running smoothly, all we have to do is

back, count the money, and enjoy the rewards," Jasmine said playfully, ending with a flirtatious wink.

Alex sighed lightly, giving in.

"Alright, fine," he replied with reluctant amusement.

The following morning, the meeting hall at Hilton Pharmaceuticals buzzed with excitement, packed with influential representatives from major pharmaceutical firms and ambitious distributors hailing from all thirteen states.

Each eager to monopolize their respective markets with the famed Emerald Elixir.

Since the Kingston family's high-profile announcement, the miracle drug had become a sensation, drawing immense interest from the nation's wealthiest and most ambitious entrepreneurs.

As Charles and Clara entered the bustling room, Clara leaned in, her voice tinged with hopeful curiosity.

"Charles, do you think you can secure a distributorship? Given your love hate connection to Jasmine—and she mentioned Vancouver's distribution will be directly handled by Kingston Pharmaceuticals' internal channels."

Charles puffed his chest out arrogantly, confidence radiating from him like a beacon.

"Of course! Kingston Pharmaceuticals is practically my family's empire. I'll certainly claim the distribution rights for Los Angeles."

"Hell, Jasmine might even have to toss Vermont into the deal, considering Kelly Kingston is there too."

In Charles's mind, securing these rights wasn't just about profit—it was about reclaiming the respect he believed he deserved as the eldest of Kingston.

The massive loss from their investment in Skindews, and the scandal that followed, had torn a deep hole in both his and his mother's family finances. And now, every time he faced her, her eyes seethed with a silent fury that never seemed to fade.

Clara's eyes sparkled mischievously, leaning closer with a seductive whisper, "Wonderful! I'll happily be your devoted secretary or obedient assistant, distributing your products by day, as long as you promise me your full attention every night.

The excitement was palpable between them, their eyes shimmering with the gleam of a long-awaited financial revival.

For Charles and his mother, securing the distribution rights for Emerald Elixir wasn't just business—it was their last lifeline.

And once again, he believed Jasmine had no choice but to hand it over to him.

Suddenly, Clara's brow furrowed sharply, her tone filled with venomous contempt. "What is that worthless piece of garbage, Alex, doing here?" Charles's gaze followed hers, spotting Alex and feeling an immediate surge of bitterness, memories of their previous confrontation stirring anger within him. Seeing Alex unexpectedly ignited Charles's vindictive instincts.

A cruel smirk twisted his lips.

"Come on, Clara, let's have some fun at his expense," he suggested coldly, striding purposefully toward Alex with malicious intent burning brightly in his eyes.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 277[1,220 words]

"Well, well, well—if it isn't Alex! Tell me, are you seriously hoping to snag a distributor deal with Kingston?"

Clara sneered venomously, her cold eyes darting downward at Alex as if he were nothing more than dirt under her designer shoes.

Alex casually shifted his gaze toward Charles, his voice edged with mockery.

"What's wrong, Charles? Didn't you tell your friend here exactly who I am?"

Clara turned toward Charles, curiosity mingling with disdain in her narrowed eyes.

"Charles, what exactly is this grand position he claims?"

"Alex?" Charles erupted into contemptuous laughter, the cruel amusement echoing harshly through the room.

"Please! He's nothing but a worthless piece of garbage! He wormed his pathetic way into Jasmine's bed, becoming her personal boy toy through deception."

"My little sister was naive enough to hand him the title of Chief Physician at Hilton Pharmacy- nothing more than charity for a parasite."

"I believe he begged Jasmine for the position, just to make himself look important, even though he's nothing. And even that so-called glory isn't his; everyone knows Dr. Joana is the real genius behind the Emerald Elixir."

"A freeloading parasite?" Clara mocked, her lips twisted in disgust.

"Exactly! That's the truth-he has no qualifications for his position," Charles sneered arrogantly, rolling his eyes dismissively.

Alex's eyes flashed dangerously as a faint, defiant smirk formed on his lips.

"You're questioning my qualifications, Charles? That's rich, coming from the disgraceful failure of the Kingston lineage. You dare stroll in here demanding a distributor's license? Do you even have the qualifications for that? Everything you touch crumbles into chaos."

Charles stiffened, his arrogant expression briefly faltering. He quickly recovered, puffing his chest out in a shameless display of superiority.

"Alex, Alex, you pathetic fool. Kingston Pharmaceuticals is our family business-I know every employee inside out. Securing a distributor's license is as effortless as snapping my fingers!"

Alex shook his head slowly, his mocking laughter cutting like a blade.

"Is that right? Somehow, I doubt Jasmine would willingly hand such power over to you. Face it, Charles, even your own family's given up on you. You're the Kingston nobody wants."

"Who the hell do you think you are, Alex?" Clara spat, rage flaring in her icy glare. Alex straightened proudly, a subtle but potent smile curving his lips.

"Me? I'm not just the Chief Physician at Hilton Pharmacy-I also happen to be the majority shareholder of Emerald Elixir. That means I hold the power to decide the fate of your precious distributor license."

Charles froze momentarily, disbelief washing over his arrogant face.

Then he burst into hysterical laughter, shaking his head mockingly.

"Did you just call yourself a major shareholder? Have you finally lost whatever scraps of sanity you had left? You, Alex-a major shareholder? That's the funniest damn thing I've heard all year!"

"Oh, please," Clara chimed in, her laughter ringing out with cruel delight.

"Go ahead and brag to the clueless, Alex, but don't embarrass yourself in front of those who actually know you. You're just a pathetic joke, desperate for scraps of attention!"

"I did some digging about you," Charles hissed bitterly, his eyes glistening with malice.

"Turns out, you're nothing but a cowardly ex-soldier who ran away from the battlefield and hid here. You may have tricked your way into Jasmine's good graces, but deep down, you're just empty air-a meaningless toy with nothing to his name."

Charles stepped in, his voice laced with venom.

"Doctor or not, I know exactly what you are, Alex. You're the kind of snake who poisons Jasmine just to swoop in with the cure and play the hero."

"Seducing her under the guise of saving her-pathetic. You lied to my father, lied

to Kelly. You thrive on chaos, then wear the mask of a savior."

"They might be blind to your game, but I'm not falling for your cheap tricks. You're nothing but a manipulative bastard."

Alex let out an exasperated sigh, shaking his head as if pitying Charles.

"Believe whatever delusion helps you sleep at night, Charles. Honestly, it amazes me how someone from the Kingston bloodline could have such a shallow, narrow mind. Always convinced you're superior, yet blinded by jealousy, arrogance, and envy."

Alex stepped forward slightly, his voice filled with cold contempt.

"No wonder your own family cast you aside. Putting Kingston's legacy in your hands would've been a guaranteed disaster. You're twisted, Charles-wasting what little brainpower you have on

ove

backstabbing and manipulation." Content

"Maybe try looking at the bright side for once; you've been crawling in the dark so long, you've forgotten what light even is."

Charles, red-faced and fuming, snapped first, grabbing Alex aggressively by the collar and leaning in close, eyes filled with burning hatred. His voice was a venomous whisper.

"Mark my words, Alex. One day,

you'll be on your knees, begging me for mercy. And when that day comes, everyone will see through

the web of lies you've

Pet

spun-exposing you for the filthy snake you really are."

Clara, alarmed by the escalating tension, swiftly reached out to pull Charles back.

"Let him go, Charles!" she urged urgently, casting nervous glances at the gathering audience.

"He's just a pitiful loser-he doesn't deserve even a moment of your attention. People are watching!"

Alex chuckled, eyes gleaming with defiance as he casually smoothed out his shirt.

"Did I hit a nerve, Charles?" he said, voice low and laced with mockery.

"You've always been so easy to rattle with that fragile little ego of yours."

Charles lunged, tempted to strike Alex across the head.

"Just you wait," he spat, voice shaking with rage.

"If it weren't for your meddling, Kingston would already be mine—not handed over

to my unworthy sister like some charity prize. By now, I'd be building the Kingston empire in my own image!"

He shoved Alex aside and stormed off toward the restroom, his footsteps thundering down the marble hallway, fists clenched, fury seething in every step.

Inside the marble-lined restroom, Charles's rage erupted uncontrollably. He glared at his reflection, face twisted in bitterness and hatred.

"You worthless bastard! Even a lowly boy toy like you dares to look down on me!"

His voice cracked with fury as he hurled a small porcelain pot violently at the mirror, shattering it into jagged fragments.

Glass rained down, sparkling ominously on the pristine tiles. "I am Charles Kingston-the rightful prince of the Kingston dynasty!"

"How dare you mock me!" His roar reverberated off the cold, indifferent walls.

Enraged, he kicked open the restroom stall doors, the splintered wood groaning in agony.

"Everyone thinks they can humiliate me now! I was destined to be governor-just like my father!"

"I deserve everything!" His foot collided mercilessly with the porcelain toilet, cracking it severely. Water gushed onto the immaculate floor, mingling with his fury.

"A million dollars a month? Are you mocking me? Do you think I'm some beggar to appease with scraps?"

His voice trembled with indignation, lips curled into a bitter snarl.

"Even Bella gets two million a month and her own damn businesses. Meanwhile,

I'm reduced to nothing, tossed crumbs to amuse myself! How dare they insult my pride with such a pathetic allowance!"

"One watch, and my pockets run dry-how humiliating is my miserable existence! Is there anyone more wretched, more pitiable than I am?"

He raged again, savagely smashing his fists against another mirror. "How dare they subject me to this indignity-I am the eldest son of the Kingston family! Why must they torture me so cruelly?"

He rampaged through the restroom, destroying everything in his path until the entire room resembled a battlefield of broken glass and shattered porcelain. Outside, helpless staff nervously held back curious onlookers from entering the chaotic scene unfolding within.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 278[1,091 words]

Ten minutes later, Charles emerged, a chillingly composed smile etched onto his handsome face, his attire immaculate once more, betraying no hint of the destructive storm he'd just unleashed.

But beneath his polished exterior, Charles burned with an insatiable hunger for revenge.

He had to triumph this time—especially considering the astronomical losses he'd inflicted upon his mother due to the failed SkinDews venture, which had bled nearly half a billion from their coffers.

Charles knew he had to act fast; his financial lifeblood was slipping away.

Pulling out his sleek phone, Charles quickly dialed one of the managers from Kingston.

His voice was coldly decisive, leaving no room for hesitation: "That offer you gave me—I'll accept. Meet me immediately in the meeting hall."

The voice on the other end responded hastily, anxiety apparent. "Right away, sir. I'm coming to you."

A few moments later, a lean, cunning-faced man with narrow eyes approached Charles, bowing obsequiously.

It was Hans, the fox-faced manager of Kingston Pharmaceuticals.

From a discreet distance, Alex watched warily, sensing the sinister conspiracy brewing between the two men whispering furtively in the shadowy corner.

Yet Alex could effortlessly read their lisping speech and understand every word they meant to say.

Hans leaned in close, his voice a cautious whisper dripping with discontent.

"Sir, our new chief has gone completely mad. For products barely a few points below standard, he's ordered thousands of perfectly good boxes destroyed. You wouldn't believe how much inventory we've wasted this month alone, simply because of his obsessive need to impress Miss Jasmine."

"How many exactly?" Charles inquired sharply, his eyes narrowing greedily at the possibilities unfolding before him.

Hans hesitated briefly before answering softly, "About ten thousand boxes, sir. Elixir Vitae, our high-profit product—though the company insists on discarding those hundred thousand bottles, calling it a negligible loss, we employees see clearly that this chief has no real business sense. He only cares about impressing Jasmine Kingston."

"That's exactly why I call you Sir—you're far better than Jasmine, no doubt about it. You understand this better than anyone else."

Charles's eyes shimmered with the cold glint of ambition. "Tell me, just how substandard are these batches?"

Hans leaned forward, voice low and quick.

"Hardly at all, sir. If our top-grade products score a solid nine on quality, these would be an 8.9—maybe a seven at the very worst. Still highly effective, no real danger or concern."

He paused, rubbing the back of his neck before admitting, "The only issue comes from slight temperature inconsistencies during production. The machines sometimes swing a few degrees off the standard. That's what causes the dip in potency. But the medicine itself? It works. It still works damn well."

Hans's expression twisted with frustration.

"But that damn chief? He's impossible. Won't give us an inch of leeway. Tosses out perfectly usable stock over the tiniest flaw-just to look good in front of Jasmine. It's not about quality anymore-it's about showing off. We're trying to make money, and he's too busy stroking his ego."

He leaned in, voice hushed but sharp.

"Now, here's the opportunity. We can offload these 'imperfect' batches to you- quietly, no paperwork-for just ten percent of their retail price. You flip them, you're looking at ten times your return. Easy profit. No one has to know."

Charles's mind raced rapidly, greed fueling his thoughts. Ten thousand boxes- such potential profit was staggering, irresistible.

His lips curled into a predatory smile; finally, fortune was within his grasp again, ripe for exploitation.

A few minutes later.

The auction had already begun, and Charles strode anxiously toward Clara's side, his face tense with barely restrained frustration.

"How's the meeting going?" Charles asked, voice strained with discomfort. "Sorry about stepping out earlier, family issues. Did they talk about distribution yet?"

Clara hesitated, her eyes shadowed with sympathy.

"Charles," she began softly, "it seems like they're not willing to give you a distribution license. Major markets like Los Angeles and Vermont already have competitors lined up."

Charles exhaled deeply, his frustration boiling beneath his skin.

"I just spoke with Jasmine, and you know how it goes-she listens more to Alex than she ever has to her own brothers."

"He's poisoning her against me, turning my own sister into my enemy. He's hell- bent on throwing me out of my own family."

His voice faltered, shoulders slumping under the emotional weight.

"Ever since Alex entered our lives, the Kingstons haven't been the same. I swear, sometimes it feels like I'm the only sane person left in this whole twisted circus."

"What did I ever do wrong, Clara? Why does Alex despise me? I got close to Sophia, yes—but Alex already has Jasmine. Why must he punish me and reduce me to this humiliation?"

Clara reached out, her hand gently covering Charles', warmth and understanding radiating from her touch.

"Charles, don't let it break you. You're a good man, and good men eventually find justice. Let me see what I can do. But for now, we must stay strong."

"Thank you, Clara." Charles' voice cracked slightly, vulnerability creeping into his tone.

"Let me just catch my breath for a moment."

His eyes closed briefly, allowing her to see his weariness and defeat. "I could use some water..."

"I'll grab you a bottle," Clara whispered reassuringly, stepping away toward the refreshment area, filled with complimentary beverages.

As she grasped two cold bottles, another hand brushed unexpectedly close to hers.

"You're with Charles, aren't you?" a low, cautious voice asked.

"Yes?" Clara turned slowly, sizing up the man before her.

"I'm Hans, marketing manager for Kingston," he explained quietly, his voice edged with genuine concern.

"I've seen what's happening to Charles, and it isn't right. Jasmine and Alex are treating him terribly. And you are...?"

"Clara," she replied, her voice cautious but hopeful.

Hans leaned in slightly, his voice dropping even lower, heavy with secrecy.

"Look, every production run we do

has an excess of about ten percent,

just as a safety margin. That

excess I can divert it to Charles.

excess

But if Jasmine catches wind of this,

we're both finished."

"Here's what propose: I'll hand the surplus stock over to you, secretly. You handle the distribution under Charles' direction. If things go well, I've heard he's promised you the CEO role for his new distribution company. So, can I trust you?"

Clara's heart raced, eyes sparking with newfound ambition.

Her pulse quickened at the idea-young, powerful, CEO. With Kingston backing her, she'd skyrocket past every expectation set for her.

"Absolutely," she declared, voice steady with determination. "For Charles, I'd move mountains."

Hans smiled knowingly, satisfaction flickering briefly across his face.

From his distant seat, Charles watched the scene unfold, seeing Clara's excitement clearly.

His lips curled into a subtle,

calculating smile. He'd expertly positioned himself-if anything went

sideways, Clara would take the fall,

and he would remain untouched,

untarnished.

Clever, Charles thought smugly, pride swelling beneath his carefully maintained facade.

Very clever indeed.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 279[1,293 words]

Alex watched the entire fiasco unfold, a weary sigh escaping him like a man resigned to cleaning up another mess.

He had no appetite for trouble, yet fate had other ideas.

Still, Clara was Sophia's aunt, and family ties had a way of complicating even the simplest matters.

Reluctantly, Alex moved toward Clara, his footsteps heavy with irritation as Hans slithered away unnoticed.

Leaning closer, Alex warned quietly, "A little advice-don't gamble with this one. Things aren't always as bright as they seem."

Clara spun around sharply, eyes blazing with contempt as she assessed him from head to toe.

"Who the hell do you think you are, sticking your nose into everyone's affairs? Jealous, huh? It must burn to see someone actually succeeding while you rot in obscurity."

"You've already destroyed Charles's future and turned him against his own sister. And now you want to sabotage me, too? Keep dreaming, loser!"

Alex's eyes flickered with restrained annoyance, a cold smile ghosting his lips.

"Fine," he drawled lazily, each syllable edged with quiet menace. "Consider yourself warned."

"Get away!" Clara snapped, dismissing him like worthless dirt beneath her shoe. Shrugging with indifference, Alex turned and walked away.

The following day brought Clara unbridled joy, a sense of triumph radiating from every pore.

Her dreams had materialized overnight, crystallized by the million-dollar wire from Charles-her first payment for the coveted Emerald Elixir.

Exhilaration surged through her veins as she confidently stepped into Kingston Pharmaceuticals' marketing division, greeted by Hans's overly accommodating

grin.

Hans eagerly thrust forward the paperwork, his smile hungry for the lucrative payoff.

"Congratulations, Miss Clara," he purred, satisfaction dripping from every word.

"The first shipment-five thousand boxes of Emerald Elixir, each packed with a hundred pills—is yours. Just give us the location, and our team will take care of the rest."

Clara signed swiftly, her excitement almost feverish.

The transaction had barely finished when an unexpected, familiar voice sliced through the air like a whip.

"Hold it right there."

Hans jolted upright, confusion furrowing his brow as he turned to face Alex.

"Who the hell are you?" he demanded harshly, sizing him up with disdain. "I've never seen you around. Do you even belong here?"

Clara's gaze darkened instantly. "Don't mind him, Mr. Hans. This nobody's just jealous of my success. Call security and throw this pest out!"

Hans, emboldened by Clara's dismissal, narrowed his eyes threateningly.

"You heard her, nobody. Leave quietly before I have security toss you onto the street."

Alex fixed Hans with a merciless stare, his voice icy and unyielding.

"You can't sell this batch of elixir."

Fury distorted Clara's features.

"Who the hell do you think you are, Alex? Marching in here like some vigilante to sabotage my business? You're nothing but a pathetic loser!"

"Just because Charles got close to Sophia, you think that gives you the right to lash out? Newsflash-Sophia already divorced you. She's better off with Charles. And this is my business, Alex, so back the hell off—I'm not letting you ruin it!"

Hans barked, voice cracking with fake bravado, "Security! Grab this bastard and beat the hell out of him-teach him the pain he's begging for!"

With lightning swiftness, Alex's palm cracked violently across Hans's face, leaving the stunned manager clutching his cheek, eyes wide with shock and outrage.

"You bastard!" Hans shrieked, trembling from humiliation as fiery pain radiated from his cheek. "How dare you lay a hand on me!"

Unfazed, Alex's voice dropped dangerously low, his gaze sharp as steel.

"You're supposed to uphold Kingston's standards. But instead, you're stealing company property, selling substandard garbage that could ruin our reputation. You don't deserve pity-you deserve every last smack."

Before Hans could react, Alex unleashed another blistering slap, each strike echoing like thunder.

Hans stumbled back, stars exploding behind his eyes as blood trickled from his battered nose and split lips, painting a vivid crimson across his pale, stunned face.

The commotion instantly ignited chaos, office doors flinging open as shocked employees crowded around, whispering anxiously.

"My God! Who the hell is this maniac beating Mr. Hans senseless?"

"He's got guts—or maybe he's just lost his damn mind, attacking Kingston staff like that!"

"Foolish bastard," another scoffed, shaking his head, "He's digging his own grave right here, right now!"

A swell of voices rose louder as curious staff swarmed in, phones quickly dialing security, eager to see punishment swiftly delivered.

"Alex!" Clara shrieked hysterically, her eyes wide in disbelief.

"Have you completely lost your mind? Stop right now!" Her voice cracked with a mix of horror and fury.

"Do you have any idea how deep you've sunk yourself? You're finished—you won't walk out of here alive!"

But Alex remained coldly indifferent, his face carved from stone, and without hesitation, he advanced on Hans again, unleashing another ruthless flurry of punches.

Hans groaned miserably beneath each punishing strike, unable to shield himself from Alex's relentless fury.

If Hans had kept his corrupt dealings confined to cheap talk, Alex might have looked away—but daring to threaten violence on top of theft?

Such brazen arrogance stirred a firestorm inside him.

"Security!" Hans wailed in desperation, his voice strained and ragged from pain. "Someone, anyone get him off me!"

Within moments, the hallway thundered with footsteps as burly security guards stormed the scene, swiftly surrounding Alex with menacing stares, their bodies tense and ready to act.

Clara, regaining her nerve now that reinforcements had arrived, pointed venomously at Alex, a triumphant sneer on her lips.

"You're finished, Alex! Beating Mr. Hans was your final mistake. I can't wait to watch them break every miserable bone in your body."

Hans, emboldened by the wall of muscle now protecting him, barked hysterically, saliva mixed with blood spewing from his mouth, "What the hell are you idiots waiting for? Break this bastard's arms and legs—do it now! I'll take full responsibility!"

The guards closed ranks, their fists tightening, when suddenly a booming voice

echoed like thunder through the hallway.

"What the hell is going on here?"

A commanding figure emerged, striding through the crowd with a predatory grace. George Smith, the formidable General Manager of Kingston Pharmaceuticals, radiated authority.

The sea of spectators parted hastily, silence descending like an icy fog.

Even Hans, previously barking like a rabid dog, shrank back meekly.

"Mr. Smith!" Hans whimpered pitifully, struggling upright with shaking limbs. "This madman barged in here, disrupted our business, and assaulted me! You must see justice done!"

George narrowed his eyes sharply, studying Alex with mild curiosity mixed with disdain.

Recognition flickered vaguely in his gaze, yet clearly not enough to earn any favor. "And who exactly are you supposed to be?"

"Mr. Smith," Alex replied evenly, voice calm yet iron-edged, "Your timing is impeccable. This scum," he spat venomously, stabbing a finger accusingly toward Hans, "has been stealing company resources, dealing in substandard, dangerous products."

"He's jeopardizing Kingston's reputation. Have him arrested immediately."

George chuckled darkly, a mocking grin spreading slowly across his face.

"Oh? Was that supposed to be an order?" she sneered. "And who the hell are you to tell me how to run my company? Have we even met?"

"No," Alex replied calmly. "But I know exactly who you are."

He let out a sharp laugh, eyes scanning him with scorn from head to toe. Everyone knows me. But what makes you think a nobody like you has any right to meddle in Kingston's business?"

Alex's expression hardened further, eyes blazing with controlled rage.

"As General Manager, isn't it your duty to investigate serious misconduct that endangers your company's integrity?"

George's voice grew colder, dangerously quiet.

"I decide what deserves my attention-not some random fool off the street. You claim Mr. Hans is stealing and selling inferior goods? Fine. Show me your evidence."

Hans, realizing Alex had no proof, grinned savagely, confident victory flooding his battered features. His eyes gleamed maliciously, eager to see Alex destroyed. "I don't have evidence right now," Alex admitted.

George barked a sharp laugh. "No evidence-but you dare to make accusations and attack my employee? You're finished."

Hans crowed triumphantly, bloodied face twisted in joy. "Security! I want this lunatic crippled and then thrown into jail. Make sure he rots behind bars!"

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 280[1,382 words]

"Mr. Smith, looks like you're hell-bent on covering up for your little lapdog, huh?" Alex's eyes sharpened into slits, simmering with quiet menace.

Suddenly, everything clicked into place.

It became crystal clear why Hans had strutted around so arrogantly—he had a boss even more corrupt and vile pulling his strings.

Just when Alex believed he'd witnessed Hans at his absolute worst, George proved there was a far darker abyss lurking beneath.

Rotting trees always collapse from within, and Kingston Pharmaceuticals was clearly infested with poisonous maggots like George and Hans.

If these vermin were allowed to thrive unchecked, it would spell doom-not just for quality control, but for every honest worker within the company.

They sold medicine that wasn't even approved for sale-just to stuff their own pockets.

They didn't care if it ruined the reputation of Emerald Elixir.

All the millions poured into advertising, all the effort to build something exceptional -shattered by the greed of these two parasites.

George pressed his lips into a thin, venomous line.

"I'm just doing my damn job! Who the hell do you think you are, barging in here and assaulting our employees?"

He jabbed a finger toward the floor, his voice a sinister growl.

"I'm feeling generous today, Alex. Get down on your knees, grovel and beg Hans for forgiveness. Let him slap some sense into your arrogant face. Otherwise, I'll personally make sure you rot behind bars!"

"Is this really how you want to play it?" Alex shot back coldly, daring George with an unflinching stare.

"Do I look like I'm joking?" George exploded, his voice echoing like a cannon shot. "Get on your knees now!"

Hans couldn't hide his twisted delight, jeering smugly, "You heard him, Alex! Kneel down like the dog you are!"

Clara's lips curled into a mocking smirk, her voice dripping venom.

"Honestly, Alex, why'd you stick your nose where it didn't belong? This humiliation is exactly what you deserve for meddling!"

Alex didn't waste another breath on these vipers. Instead, with calculated calmness, he raised a hand, snapping his fingers crisply.

"What are you doing?"

"Calling backup."

George burst into mocking laughter, eyes wide with disbelief.

"Backup? Are you serious? Kid, you really don't get it, do you? This is my territory! Who in the hell could possibly come to your rescue here?"

But suddenly, the doors burst open, and a chilling silence swept through the room as about ten men entered, clad entirely in black.

Each face was carved from stone, expressions severe, eyes colder than winter frost.

Workers nearby blanched, their blood turning to ice in their veins.

Some instinctively backed away, while others, panicked, dashed toward their tables.

These men weren't the police-they were far worse. Kingston Pharmaceuticals' Discipline Division.

Infamous for ruthless efficiency, they dealt swiftly and mercilessly with anyone who stepped out of line-guilty or not.

Their mere presence signaled disaster, doom incarnate marching through their door.

George swallowed hard, sensing doom tightening around his neck.

Forcing a shaky smile, he nervously approached them, voice trembling. "Gentlemen, what... what's brought you here?"

Ignoring him entirely, their leader strode directly to Alex, respectful but lethal.

"Where shall we start?"

Alex nodded coolly, "Begin with Hans and George. I'm certain more vermin will crawl out once you start squeezing, but these two are the root."

Instantly, the black-clad enforcers advanced toward Hans and George like executioners preparing for judgment.

"Gentlemen, we have plenty to discuss privately in the office. Come quietly." George recoiled, defiance rising desperately in his voice.

"Hold on! Who the hell do you think you are, hauling me away because of this nobody? He stormed in here disrupting company business!"

The Division leader turned, eyes piercing George like sharpened blades.

"Are you absolutely certain he's the troublemaker here, Mr. Smith?"

George's reply was quick, defensive, but trembled at the edges.

"Of course I'm certain!"

The man's eyes narrowed, his voice dangerously calm.

"And do you have any idea who this 'nobody' really is?"

George, desperation overriding caution, doubled down in false bravado.

"It doesn't matter who he is! He's trespassed, he's attacked our people, and he's disrupted business! Justice demands punishment!"

The Discipline Division leader's lip curled slightly, voice dropping to a lethal whisper.

"Oh, there will certainly be justice, Mr. Smith-but perhaps not the kind you expect."

"Alright then, I suppose you deserve to know," the Discipline officer announced coldly.

His eyes darkened dangerously as he gestured toward Alex. "The man you've accused of disrupting your precious business happens to be none other than Kingston Pharmaceuticals' chief physician and the creator of the Emerald Elixir- Alex himself!"

His words crashed over the crowd like thunder, igniting chaos. Gasps rippled outward, murmurs growing into shouts of disbelief.

"Impossible!" George staggered backward, face pale, every ounce of arrogance evaporating like mist beneath a blazing sun.

His heart thudded violently in his chest. He'd heard the rumors-the elusive genius behind the Emerald Elixir was someone named Alex but he dismissed them, believing Alex to be nothing more than a spoiled playboy who spent his days lounging around, leeching off Jasmine's

favor.

"Th—this can't be! He's the Alex?" Hans stammered, eyes bulging grotesquely as panic surged through him.

His bravado crumbled instantly, leaving him visibly trembling.

This was no small misstep-this was catastrophic.

They were standing on the edge of disaster, and they'd just leapt headlong into the abyss.

The Discipline officer stepped closer, his presence looming like a reaper over George.

"Now, Mr. Smith, I'll give you one last chance. Are you absolutely certain it was Chief Alex causing trouble?"

George's mouth twisted, his eyes darting desperately around as sweat trickled down his temples.

"Ah...well...perhaps...perhaps there's been some misunderstanding."

"A misunderstanding?" The officer's voice dripped with sarcasm, colder than steel.

"And what exactly do you believe Mr. Alex was doing here then?" George swallowed hard, the cogs of his mind spinning frantically.

Suddenly, inspiration struck, and he turned viciously on Hans.

"Yes, now I see clearly! It was Hans-this incompetent fool stole the company's products just like Alex accused! He was caught red-handed!"

Hans recoiled as if slapped, betrayal slicing deep into his soul.

"Mr. Smith—wait, please— haven't you..."

"Shut your filthy mouth!"

George roared, landing a stinging slap across Hans' face. "Useless imbecile!

Admit your wrongdoing immediately! Take responsibility for your sins, or I swear I'll crush you myself!"

Hans fell to his knees, shaking uncontrollably as humiliation and terror overwhelmed him.

"Yes—yes, I was wrong, terribly wrong, please forgive me, Mr. Smith! I'll never do it again!" George growled fiercely, turning Hans' face sharply toward Alex.

"Don't grovel to me, you worthless trash! Beg forgiveness from Chief Alex, now!"

"Chief Alex! Please, sir, have mercy!" Hans pleaded desperately, his voice cracking.

"Forgive me, I'm begging you! It won't happen again, I swear!"

Alex regarded the pitiful scene coldly, then turned his icy gaze to George, his voice cutting like a razor blade.

"If you'd admitted your mistake the moment I gave you the chance, perhaps I'd have let this slide. But now? What a clever rat you are, Mr. Smith throwing your underling under the wheels to save your own worthless hide. Do you honestly believe you'll walk away unscathed?"

George's brows knitted tightly together, confusion masking his panic. "Chief Alex, surely there's a misunderstanding here—"

"Do you think I'm blind to your schemes?" Alex interrupted sharply, his eyes blazing with contempt.

"You're finished. You'll be fired and jailed, that much is certain."

"Chief, you're joking!" George's voice trembled with outrage and desperation.

"I've given thirty years of my blood, sweat, and tears to this company! You've been chief for barely a month-how dare you fire me? Please reconsider!"

"You made your bed the moment you chose corruption over loyalty," Alex snapped.

He turned calmly, signaling to the discipline guards. "Take him."

"Chief!" George roared, veins popping in his neck as he resisted.

"This is insane! You can't destroy my life's work because of Hans' mistake! Do you

realize how the employees will see this?"

"I'll report you to the union-I have influence there! The workers will strike! Your

precious Kingston Pharmaceuticals will grind to a halt without me!"

Alex burst into a mocking laugh, the sound sharp and chilling. "Threatening me now, George? Do you honestly think you hold any power here?"

He stepped closer, each word punctuated by icy menace.

"Allow me to clarify something. I'm not just firing you-I'm sending you straight to prison. I've got mountains of evidence-every dirty deal, every backdoor arrangement you've ever made. You'll rot behind bars for life!"

George's mask shattered completely, exposing raw hatred as he screamed, spittle

flying from his lips.

"You arrogant little parasite! You're nothing but a pretty boy, a worthless

leech! You should have kept your mouth shut and kept collecting your paycheck! When the union finds out about this, Kingston Pharmaceuticals will burn to ashes! Mark my words, you'll regret this!"

The Almighty Dominance

Chapter 281[1,144 words]

"Whatever helps you sleep at night!" Alex snarled, his hand slicing through the air with impatient finality.

Instantly, Discipline officers lunged forward, gripping George fiercely by the arms, yanking him from the room.

"You're going to regret this, Alex! My family controls the Union-you'll pay dearly for this!"

George screamed, his voice cracking with furious desperation as they dragged him mercilessly across the threshold.

Hans staggered forward, panic turning his face pale and sweaty.

"Mr. Alex, please!" he begged, collapsing onto his knees in a pathetic heap.

"I was wrong, terribly wrong! Give me another chance! I swear I'll never cross the line again!"

"I got lost in a moment of greed!" Hans sobbed, clutching desperately at Alex's feet, his pride dissolved into tears.

"Think of my years of loyalty, sir! Can't you forgive just this once? I promise-it'll never happen again!"

Hans trembled violently, his hope evaporating like mist in sunlight as he watched even Mr. Smith, his strongest ally, dragged down by the chief's unyielding wrath.

How could a mere manager survive against a titan like Alex?

"Get him out of my sight," Alex ordered coldly, and the Discipline Officer seized the man and dragged him away like a sack of shame.

"You just can't let anyone else succeed, can you, Alex? Why does it always have to be me?" Clara spat venomously, stepping forward, her eyes blazing with raw fury.

"What are you talking? He betrayed his duties, stole from the very hands that trusted him, and peddled garbage to innocent people. He deserves every damn consequence," Alex responded coldly, unwaveringly firm.

"You could've looked away!" Clara's voice cracked sharply with rage. "It wouldn't have cost you anything! What's wrong with you? Do you even have a shred of humanity left?"

"Have you completely lost your mind? He's a criminal-can't you grasp something as simple as that?" Alex fired back, incredulous at her audacity.

"Oh, spare me your fake righteousness!" Clara sneered, her words dripping with

contempt.

"Just because you wormed your way to power using Jasmine and your twisted penis, you think you have the right to sabotage me, ruin my business, destroy Charles's bond with his sister? How can you be this heartless? Are you even human?"

Alex clenched his jaw, a creeping doubt pricking at his conscience. Was his logic flawed, or was Clara genuinely beyond reason?

"Hans committed a crime! You bought illegal medicine! Why is that so damn hard for you to comprehend?"

"You're costing me my money, you miserable bastard!" Clara screamed, wild-eyed with desperation and fury.

Alex shook his head, his tolerance utterly spent.

Turning his back, he strode purposefully toward the exit, her hysterical accusations clawing vainly at his back.

"Oh, running away now? You coward! You know I'm right!" Clara shrieked, voice cracking under the weight of her anger.

Suddenly, a troop of Discipline officers burst through the door, their presence radiating cold authority.

"Clara Steel?" barked the lead officer, his voice like ice.

"And what if I am?" Clara snarled defiantly, eyes narrowed with disdain.

"We have credible evidence that you conspired with George Smith and Hans to illegally trade medicine. You coerced them, bribed them, and even ignored their warnings. You're the ringleader," the officer stated coldly, eyes boring into her.

"What absurd lies!" Clara gasped, eyes darting in panic. "They wanted to sell

medicine, I bought it! How should I know it was substandard?"

"Still playing innocent? Hans already confessed and named you the mastermind," the officer retorted bluntly.

"No-impossible! Hans would never! This is some twisted mistake!" Clara stammered, her voice trembling violently as denial clouded her desperate eyes.

"Enough! Take her away!" the officer commanded sharply, his patience worn thin.

"No, no! This is injustice! I'm innocent!" Clara shrieked, desperation clawing at her throat as she bolted for the exit.

The Discipline officers surged forward, swift and merciless, grabbing Clara roughly.

In her frantic struggle, she lost her footing and crashed heavily to the floor, her head smacking brutally against the edge of a table, sending stars exploding across her vision as darkness threatened to claim her.

Never in her wildest nightmares had she imagined Mr. Hans would ruthlessly shove the blame squarely onto her shoulders.

Barely an hour later, Jack burst through the ornate doors of the Lancaster mansion, his breath ragged and panic etched across his face.

"Mom! Mom! We've got big trouble! Clara-she's in deep!"

Florence, seated leisurely, sipped her tea and barely glanced up, her tone draped in careless ease.

"Trouble? What trouble could Clara possibly find herself in now?"

Jack's voice trembled with urgency. "Her lawyer just called. Clara's been thrown behind bars!"

"What did you just say?" Florence snapped upright as if jolted by lightning, the porcelain cup tumbling from her hand and shattering like her peace.

"Imprisoned? Clara? Why on earth would she be arrested?"

Jack rushed through the explanation, words tumbling out frantically.

"Her lawyers claim Clara visited Kingston Pharmaceuticals to purchase something called the Emerald Elixir. Somehow, Alex twisted it all, accusing her of buying illegal substances!"

Florence's eyes flared with sudden comprehension, fury igniting her blood. "So Alex engineered this! That manipulative snake! It's revenge-plain and simple. The bastard's must furious because Sophia divorced him."

"Exactly!" Jack nodded vehemently.

"The lawyer thinks he orchestrated this to settle some twisted grudge against us!"

Florence slammed her palm down violently, rattling the antique table. Her voice seethed venomously through clenched teeth, each word dripping bitterness.

"That traitorous monster! We fed him, clothed him, welcomed him into our home- and this is his repayment? His heart is a pit of treachery, his soul blackened beyond redemption!"

"Mom, what are we going to do? The lawyer insists this is serious-without inside

help from the Hiltons, we're sunk!" Jack's face had paled, desperation clawing at his features.

"We must leverage every connection we have to free Clara!" Florence paced, anxiety clouding her mind.

Clara was her beloved younger sister-fragile, innocent, and utterly unprepared for prison life.

Jack's voice dropped, heavy and solemn. "Mom, there's only one person who can truly save us now-Charles Kingston."

Without hesitation, Florence made the call, frantic urgency threading her voice. Charles feigned ignorance, yet mere minutes later, he stormed through their doors, grim-faced and disturbed.

Florence rushed to him immediately, her dignity abandoned, replaced by pleading desperation.

"Charles! Oh, thank heavens you're here! Clara's been arrested-you must help us! Only you have the power to save her!"

Charles sighed deeply, eyes heavy with reluctance.

"Mrs. Lancaster, I've been looking into it. Clara's accused of masterminding a serious theft. The Kingston family is livid-right now, it looks like she might face at least five years behind bars."

"Five years?" Florence's voice cracked, horror gripping her tightly.

"Clara is a delicate flower, never touched by harshness! Prison would destroy her.

Please, Charles-do something! Save her!"

He shook his head gravely. "Given the severity, I must involve someone I know.

This is beyond me alone."

Florence's eyes shone with desperate hope. "Do whatever you must-we'll owe your family forever if you can bring Clara back to us!"

Charles stepped aside, quickly dialing and exchanging tense words with his people. After a moment, he ended the call, turning back with a troubled expression.

"Mrs. Lancaster, there is someone who can secure Clara's release-but he has a demand."

Florence clutched his sleeve anxiously, her breath catching. "Anything. Just name it!"

Charles met her frantic gaze directly, his voice ominously calm. "Alex possesses the core ingredient for the Emerald Elixir. She insists-you must persuade Alex to give some of it."

"Don't worry!" Florence shot to her feet. "That bastard! Whatever I ask, he's supposed to give-how dare he the loser refuse me? Jack, we're going to see Alex. Now!"

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The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 282[1,310 words]

"Wait!" Charles barked sharply, freezing everyone in their tracks.

He leaned forward, his voice dripping with intrigue.

"I have intel from my informants. Apparently, Alex is hiding something extremely rare—the essential ingredient of the Emerald Elixir.:

"If you can pry that secret from his greedy hands, Clara walks free, and you'll be rewarded with ten million dollars!"

Florence's eyes widened with greedy anticipation, glittering like diamonds catching the light.

"Ten million dollars? Are you absolutely certain?"

Charles flashed a wicked grin, eyes locked on hers. "I never make idle promises."

Florence's lips curled into a ruthless smile, the gears in her mind spinning furiously.

"That's hardly an obstacle. A mere ingredient from that pathetic fool? I'll wrench it from him myself. He wouldn't dare defy me!"

Charles leaned back leisurely, satisfied. "Then I eagerly await your triumphant return, Mrs. Lancaster."

Florence whipped around, commanding authority dripping from every syllable. "Jack! Round up the men. Move it—we have business to handle!"

Storming out with savage determination, Florence's heels struck the ground like hammer blows, her entourage scrambling to follow.

Meanwhile, as midday sunlight streamed through the windows, Alex stood calmly in his modest clinic, carefully treating a homeless man whose leg had been viciously torn by a rabid dog.

Without warning, a harsh, venomous shout pierced the air outside: "Alex, get your worthless ass out here immediately!"

The homeless patient flinched, turning anxiously to Alex. "Doc, sounds like someone's real angry at you out there."

Alex gently pressed a syringe into the man's wound, utterly unfazed.

"Relax. They're just another pack of rabid dogs. Staying away is your safest bet- confront them, and you'll only get bitten."

The patient chuckled weakly, admiring Alex's composure. "Well said, Doc."

The clinic's door burst open violently, revealing Florence, her face contorted with rage.

Jack and his muscle-bound lackeys poured in behind her, shadows of brutality and intimidation.

Alex raised his gaze slowly, eyes cold and unyielding.

"Is there something I can help you with?" he asked coolly, calmly stepping aside to allow the homeless man to rest.

Florence lunged forward, her voice a shrill storm of fury and indignation.

"You disgusting, inhumane monster! Clara did nothing but treat you with kindness,

Yet you repay her by stabbing her in the back?

You pathetic, vile, ungrateful beast!

A snake in the grass with a coward's feast!

You lowlife liar with a parasite's soul,

Feeding off others to fill your black hole!

A backstabbing, dirt-scraping, cold-hearted leech,

Rotten to the core, beyond anyone's reach!

You traitorous worm in a human disguise,

A demon in flesh with dead, hollow eyes!

Slither in shame, choke on your pride,

No rock to hide under, nowhere to slide!"

Jack and his men exchanged astonished glances, momentarily stunned by the torrent of venomous insults Florence hurled with rhythmic precision.

"Damn," Jack muttered, eyebrows raised in disbelief. "Woman's got bars."

Florence snapped her head around viciously, her glare a knife aimed straight at Jack's throat.

He swallowed nervously, instantly silenced.

She turned back to Alex, venom still sizzling in her gaze. "No more lies, Alex! Admit it—you set Clara up. You betrayed her from the start, didn't you?"

Alex regarded her calmly, utterly composed in the face of her rage.

"I have no clue who's feeding you these ridiculous accusations, but Clara's troubles are entirely her own doing. She chose the wrong allies-that's on her." Florence's fury flared brighter, her fists clenched so tightly her nails drew blood. "Don't you dare try to worm your way out of this! If even a single hair on Clara's head is harmed, I swear you won't live to regret it!"

Alex remained utterly indifferent, a wall of ice against her fiery threats.

"Did you barge in here just to spew empty threats?"

Florence straightened, eyes narrowed with cunning and greed.

"Of course not. We're here for your apology-your pitiful confession for framing Clara. And to make amends, you'll hand over the core ingredient of the Emerald Elixir. Now."

"That's right! After dragging Clara into your filthy mess, compensation is the least you owe us. Hand over the ingredients-now!"

Jack barked, his voice dripping with arrogant disdain.

Alex's eyebrow arched coolly, a faint smirk playing at the corners of his lips. "You mean the main ingredient of the Emerald Elixir?"

Memories surged back-Alex vividly recalled the catastrophic data breach at Kingston Pharmaceuticals.

SkinDew's formula, and now likely most of the Emerald Elixir's formula, had already been leaked.

But Alex had been careful, crafty enough to conceal the essential ingredient from everyone's prying eyes.

Even if the formula itself slipped into the wrong hands, without this core ingredient, they would be chasing shadows forever.

"Yes, that damned ingredient," Jack sneered impatiently, eyes gleaming with greed.

Alex sighed theatrically, mockingly feigning surrender.

"Fine. And if I give you this oh-so-precious main ingredient, you'll forgive me?"

Jack's lips curled triumphantly. "Yes, of course."

"Marvelous," Alex drawled

sarcastically turning toward his

medicine cabinet with exaggerated

slowness. He pulled out a modest box, filling it casually with a

of cheap ginseng roots, his

movements careless and

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dismissive.

Behind him, Jack and Florence exchanged victorious glances, arrogance painted blatantly on their smug faces.

Jack leaned closer, whispering excitedly, "Mother, is Alex really going to hand it over that easily?"

Florence's laughter was cruel and confident. "Of course he is. He wouldn't dare defy us."

Alex returned, carrying the plain box with a flourish. He held it out, his voice dripping sarcasm.

"Here it is—remember, whatever lies inside is worth millions. Handle it carefully."

Florence snatched the box without even the pretense of gratitude, turning her disdainful gaze on Alex.

"Jack, let's go. The longer I breathe the same air as this pathetic excuse for a man, the worse my mood becomes."

With that venomous parting shot, they departed, leaving behind only the echo of her scornful laughter.

An hour later, triumphant and self-assured, they met Charles. Florence thrust the box into his eager hands.

"Charles, my dear, here it is the main ingredient for your precious Emerald Elixir."

Charles's eyes sparked to life, his hands trembling slightly with excitement.

At last, he thought feverishly, he had obtained the elusive ingredient hidden by Alex, the final piece to his puzzle.

With it, he could finally replicate the fabled elixir and claim its staggering rewards for himself.

But his hopeful expression crumbled swiftly into confusion as he opened the box. His brows knitted into a furious scowl, disappointment darkening his features.

"What is this? Ginseng? And cheap, immature ginseng at that!" Florence shrugged indifferently, oblivious to the brewing storm in Charles's eyes.

"I don't know. Alex said explicitly it's the main ingredient. That loser wouldn't dare

lie."

Charles's fingers clenched tighter around the worthless ginseng, suspicion gnawing at his mind like a ravenous rat.

Is this really the secret ingredient Alex hid from them?

It felt wrong—something about it didn't sit right. But what if it *was* the real thing?

There was only one way to know for sure: he had to make the pill.

To test the ingredient properly, he'd have to brew a fresh batch of the Emerald Elixir, following the formula to the letter.

That meant weeks of preparation, refinement, and analysis—weeks that would dangerously stall his plans.

"Florence," Charles muttered, his

voice laced with frustration, "I'll need

at least a month to analyze this...

thing. To confirm whether it's truly

the core ingredient."

Florence's eyes flashed with irritation.

"And what about our money, Charles? And Clara—will you still get her out of jail or not?"

Charles hesitated, trapped between promises and uncertainty, unable to answer her pointed question.

Meanwhile, back at the clinic, Josephine rummaged through drawers, her irritation growing sharper with each passing moment.

Finally, she snapped at Alex, "Alex, did you see the ginseng I bought specifically for my monthly cramps?"

Alex smirked, unrepentant and amused.

"I gave it to someone who needed it more than you. Relax—I'll buy you something better later."

Josephine's eyes narrowed suspiciously. "Who could possibly need it more?"

Alex's smile widened, wicked humor sparkling in his gaze. "Just an old lady who suffers from severe mood swings. She spews filth from her mouth so relentlessly, surely it must be due to hormonal imbalance."

Across town, Charles and Florence stood silently staring at the cheap, immature ginseng roots scattered across Charles's trembling palms.

Their faces twisted with confusion, frustration, and a slow, creeping realization— they truly didn't know if this was the real main ingredient of the Emerald Elixir or

not.

The Almighty Dominance

Chapter 283[958 words]

An hour had crept by, and Alex was scribbling patient records in the fading amber glow, preparing to shutter the clinic doors when the sudden thundering of heavy boots announced trouble.

Florence and Jack stormed back inside, their pack of thugs swaggering arrogantly behind.

"You bastard!" Florence shrieked venomously, brandishing a fist in his direction. "How dare you cheat us with fake goods?"

Alex released a weary sigh, his gaze fixed indifferently upon the paperwork.

"That was genuine ginseng. Why would I bother deceiving small-timers like you?"

"Who cares about your worthless ginseng?" Jack roared furiously.

"We want the main ingredient for the Emerald Elixir!"

"That ginseng," Alex drawled slowly, his tone dripping mockery, "is indeed part of the Emerald Elixir. Didn't anyone teach you morons anything?"

"You lying snake!" Florence snapped viciously, her eyes blazing with fury.

"The Emerald Elixir contains about fifty herbs," Alex sneered contemptuously, finally lifting his cold, piercing gaze to meet hers.

"Why don't you enlighten me exactly which herb your greedy, pea-sized brains are desperate for?"

Jack exchanged a dumbstruck glance with his mother, their ignorance painfully evident.

Then a distant memory sparked clarity in Jack's dim eyes. "Mother, remember the rare herb Clara wanted to buy-the one we lost all our cash fighting over?"

Florence's eyes widened sharply, her voice thick with bitter resentment.

"The Verdantheart Root. How could I forget losing my fortune to that damned plant?"

"Exactly! The Emerald Verdantheart Root! That's what Alex is hiding!"

Alex merely shook his head, chuckling darkly. "Even idiots strike gold occasionally, huh?"

Florence lunged forward, finger jabbing imperiously at Alex.

"Hand over that Verdantheart Root, you thief! We helped you secure it last time. You owe us!"

"Impossible," Alex's voice hardened instantly, authority radiating from every syllable.

"That herb belongs to the Kingston family."

"I don't give a damn who it belongs to!" Florence shouted fiercely, her voice shaking with reckless entitlement.

"You're handing it over, right now!"

Jack smirked cruelly. "Exactly! If the Kingstons have it, then we deserve it too.

Hand it over, Alex, and maybe we'll forgive your deceit."

Alex rose from his chair, his voice cold as forged steel.

"I've made myself clear. If you're here to waste my time, get out!"

"Bullshit!" Jack's face twisted menacingly. "If you don't give it to us willingly, don't blame us for doing things the hard way!"

Jack stepped forward, flanked by six hulking thugs he had paid handsomely to intimidate Alex.

The men loomed behind him like a wall of muscle, each one broad-shouldered and menacing, their expressions carved from stone.

Josephine bravely stepped forward, trembling yet resolute, placing herself protectively in front of Alex.

"Enough! You unreasonable fools, Alex already said no. Leave now, or I swear I'll call the police!"

Alex glanced at Josephine, admiration softening his fierce features.

This courageous woman was always ready to risk herself for others.

Jack spat venomously, his words dripping poison. "Who's this meddling bitch? Move, or I'll make you regret it!"

In blind rage, Jack swung violently at Josephine, but she swiftly dodged his clumsy assault, her foot sharply striking between Jack's legs with ruthless precision. fo FindNovel

Jack collapsed instantly, howling in agony as humiliation seared through him.

"You wretched bitch! How dare you kick my son!" Florence shrieked, her voice cracking with fury.

"What if I can't have grandchildren because of this, huh? Will you take responsibility?"

She lunged like a madwoman,

swinging her designer handbag straight at Josephine's face with the full force of maternal outrage and aristocratic entitlement.

Josephine dodged gracefully, her movements sharp and precise as a fighter in the ring.

In a swift, brutal counterstrike, her fist smashed into Florence's nose with a sickening crunch, sending blood spurting wildly.

"What are you worthless idiots waiting for? Destroy her!" Florence wailed desperately, blood streaming down her chin.

Six thugs advanced menacingly, their leers sinister.

"You should've stayed out of this, little girl. Kneel now, and perhaps we'll show mercy after we've had our fun with you."

Alex's eyes darkened dangerously, fury simmering just beneath his calm façade.

"Enough! You filthy animals have three seconds to get out form this place-or suffer the consequences."

One of the thugs sneered with smug contempt, swaggering forward like he owned the street.

"Who the hell are you supposed to be, kid?" he spat, eyes narrowing with mockery.

"You want me to mess you up too, pretty boy? I'll break that smug face without blinking-"

His words choked off as Alex's foot

exploded into his abdomen, hurling

him backward. He crashed onto the outside ground, writhing and

moaning pathetically.

Stunned for only a moment, the other thugs surged forward, shrieking furiously.

"You arrogant bastard! We'll tear you apart!"

Alex erupted in savage violence, a storm of kicks and punches, each strike thunderous.

Bodies flew helplessly through the air, thudding heavily onto the street outside. Their screams echoed like pathetic wails in the dusk.

It wasn't long before Jack and Florence were also thrown out of the clinic by a blazing Josephine.

"All of you get out! And don't you ever come back!" she shouted, her voice echoing like a final verdict.

With that, she slammed the clinic door shut and locked it with a sharp click, sealing the chaos outside like it was trash being taken out.

Jack watched, utterly livid. He kicked one of the fallen thugs in bitter disgust.

"Pathetic idiots! I promised you a fortune, and you fail me like this? I won't pay a dime to worthless trash!"

The thug, seething in pain and anger, suddenly lashed out violently, smashing Jack's face brutally.

"Think you can cheat us, you spoiled brat? Pay or bleed!"

Florence shrieked hysterically, rushing to defend her son. "How dare you attack my Jack?"

"Shut up, hag!" Another thug snarled, striking Florence so fiercely she tumbled onto the pavement, head cracking painfully against the car door.

Florence sprawled pitifully, sobbing loudly in bitter despair.

"Filthy scum!" Florence wailed miserably, sprawled on the ground, bloodied and humiliated. "This isn't right! How could you betray us?"

The thugs circled menacingly, malicious smiles carved into their brutal faces. "Pay up now, or your suffering has only just begun."

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The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 284[1,223 words]

Sophia raced through the city streets, her heart hammering painfully against her ribs as she rushed back to the Lancaster mansion.

A phone call had plunged her world into chaos-Jack and her mother, Florence, had been viciously attacked.

Panic gnawed at her as she burst through the front door, desperation etched across her face.

The butler, visibly shaken, met her immediately, his usually composed demeanor shattered.

"Miss Sophia! Thank God you're back! Have you heard? Your mother and Jack- they've been brutally assaulted!"

"What? Assaulted?" Sophia gasped, her voice tight with shock. "What happened? Tell me now!"

"There's no time to explain! Go upstairs-quickly. Your mother needs you!" he urged, practically shoving her toward the staircase.

Sophia bounded up the stairs, dread clawing at her throat.

Her thoughts tangled into knots—how could something like this happen?

She flung open the door to Florence's room and froze, horrified.

Florence lay pale as death, eyes glazed with pain, head swathed in heavy bandages. Beside her, Jack appeared broken and battered, limbs encased in plaster, bruises darkening ominously beneath his own bandages.

Bloodied towels littered the bedside table, stark reminders of violence.

"Mom! Jack! My God, what happened?" Sophia's voice trembled, horror twisting her features.

Florence's gaze flickered weakly toward her daughter, her voice frail but dripping with bitter theatrics.

"Sophia, my dear girl... You made it just in time. If you'd come any later, you'd only see me in a coffin." She broke into a theatrical cough, eyes darting sideways to gauge Sophia's reaction.

"Who did this?" Sophia's voice iced over with fury. "Tell me right now!"

Florence's eyes narrowed, a venomous spark igniting as she spat the name.

"It was Alex-that animal! We went to him innocently, just to buy back a bit of the root he stole from Clara. Instead of cooperating, he spewed insults, calling us beggars and worse."

"When I confronted him, he flew into a rage and hit us! That monster nearly killed us!"

"Impossible," Sophia said.

"What's impossible? Look at us-look at your brother!"

Jack stirred weakly, his voice strained and filled with righteous indignation.

"Sophia, open your eyes! Look at the damage he's done. Is this the man you defend, the one you believed in?"

"He shattered my bones-doctors say it'll be months before I can even stand! He's a monster, Sophia!"

Sophia staggered back, disbelief colliding violently with the brutal evidence before her eyes.

"Alex... he couldn't..." she whispered, desperate for some shred of reason.

"Are you blind or simply delusional?" Jack hissed, bitterness soaking every syllable.

"Is my broken body not enough proof? Or Mom's ruined face? The doctor said she might never recover fully-Alzheimer's could set in from the trauma! Still doubt him?"

Sophia's fists clenched, fingernails biting into her palms, drawing blood.

Her world blurred as confusion and rage battled within her. The Alex she knew was gentle, caring-could he truly hide such cruelty?

Florence sensed her hesitation, striking harder.

"That's not all. He framed Clara and got her thrown in jail! Simply because she dared to oppose him. Sophia, wake up! Your ex-husband has become a ruthless villain."

Sophia's blood ran cold. "Clara... arrested?" she murmured, the last glimmer of hope fading fast.

Jack sneered viciously, relishing Sophia's pain. "That's right. Clara went to confront him about the Emerald Elixir. Next thing we know, she's locked up, accused of theft. Charles recorded everything-call him yourself if you don't believe me."

Florence coughed dramatically again, wracked with exaggerated pain. "We trusted him once, Sophia. But he's betrayed us all. You must see him for the snake he truly is!"

Sophia stood motionless, her heart shattered into pieces, replaced by an icy, burning rage.

Doubt evaporated, replaced by an overwhelming need for answers.

Without another word, she snatched up her phone, dialed Alex's number, and hissed coldly when he answered:

"Alex, explain yourself. Now."

Alex stood motionless, eyes icy and indifferent. "Explain myself? For what exactly?"

"For nearly killing my mother and Jack!" Sophia's voice trembled, fury barely restrained beneath her piercing glare.

He felt the bitter urge to tell her the truth—that Josephine had landed the blows on Jack, but admitting that felt cowardly, like shifting blame to an ally who'd stepped in for his sake.

Instead, he leaned against the desk casually, feigning disinterest.

"They came looking for trouble," he said, his voice disturbingly calm.

"They started it. I just finished it."

"So you admit it! You admit it's your fault they ended up like this?" Sophia's tone

sharpened, her outrage slicing through the room like a blade.

Alex raised a brow, his voice dipping lower, dangerously quiet.

"I already told you they provoked the fight."

"And that gives you the right to nearly kill them?" Sophia's voice cracked, the

weight of disbelief and rage bleeding through every word.

Alex scoffed, waving a dismissive hand. "Come on. Don't exaggerate. It was just a shove—maybe a punch. You're blowing this way out of proportion."

He honestly believed it. One hit each, no more. And now she was turning it into a tragedy.

Sophia's fists balled at her sides, shaking. "My mother's arms and legs are broken! She has a concussion so severe she barely even knows who I am!"

She took a step forward, her voice rising like a storm.

"Is this what you think justice looks like, Alex? Someone insults you, and your answer is to beat them into a hospital bed? Do they have to die for you to feel even a flicker of guilt?"

What the hell kind of moare

you?"

Alex straightened slowly, suspicion narrowing his eyes.

The extent of the injuries she described didn't align with what he'd seen when Florence left-she had been walking, perfectly fine.

"Is it really that bad?"

"Are you seriously questioning me right now?" Sophia's voice thundered through the room.

"My mother is lying in a bed, broken and confused. I've seen her with my own eyes. And you dare suggest I'm exaggerating?"

Alex exhaled slowly, the weight of her voice pressing through the phone.

"If you've already made up your mind, then why are we even having this conversation? You've decided I'm guilty-end of story."

Sophia's breath hitched before she exploded. "Guilty? Of course you're fucking guilty!"

Her voice cracked through the speaker like glass shattering.

"And now you're just brushing it off?

Like it's nothing? You think you can

in

just walk away after what you did? My mother could die, Alex. Jack might never be the same again. You have to take responsibility, you heartless bastard!"

A long silence hung between them-thick, suffocating.

Then Alex's tone dropped, cold and sharp as steel.

"Fine. Let's say I did exactly what you think I did. I'm the villain. I'm the monster. What now, Sophia? You want me to be responsible? Alright. Tell me what the hell do you want from me?"

The line buzzed with silence for a second-then Sophia's voice came back, trembling, but louder, fiercer.

"What do I want?" she spat. "I want you to act like a goddamn human being for once!"

Her voice cracked again, the fury collapsing into something rawer, more fragile.

"I want you to stop tearing my family

apart. I want you to stop acting like

everyone around you the net

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doesn't

Just give them what they need—peace, root, an apology—something that involve violence for once in your life."

Alex held the phone tighter, jaw clenched. The silence on his end was louder than anything he could have said.

Sophia's breath hitched—then she choked out the last words, voice breaking under the weight of her grief.

"I believed in you, Alex. I defended you. Why couldn't you just be the man I thought you were?"

Another pause. Static hummed between them. She waited—waited for anything.

But Alex said nothing.

Pride and pain sealed his lips shut, even as something inside him cracked.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 285[1,290 words]

"Goddammit, Alex! What kind of monster have you become?" Sophia's voice trembled violently, each word cracking like lightning through a storm.

"Ever since Jasmine slithered into your life, you've turned into someone I don't even recognize."

"Was it really worth it—denying them even a sliver of that damned root? Would it have cost you an arm or a leg?"

"Tell me, what's your price? A million bucks? Two million? Just name it! I'll sell my soul if I have to—but stop hurting my mother and brother!"

Her rage boiled hotter with every word, her fists shaking uncontrollably, knuckles white and eyes blazing.

"What the hell is wrong with you, Alex?!" she exploded, tears of fury beginning to well in her eyes.

"Have you completely lost your goddamned heart?!"

Alex stood unmoved, his face cold and detached as stone. "You really think this is about money? Let me spell it out for you, Sophia-the root isn't mine to give."

Sophia felt her chest clench painfully, fury slicing deeper at his indifferent tone. "Oh, of course. Did you give it all to Jasmine? Is that it?"

"So now your loyalty to her runs so deep that you'd rather watch my family suffer and die than take even a scrap from your precious Jasmine? You absolute bastard!"

"Could you calm down for one damn second?" Alex's jaw clenched, frustration seeping through his carefully maintained composure.

"Can't we just talk rationally?"

"Rationally?" Sophia scoffed bitterly, a mocking laugh ripping from her throat.

"Am I the irrational one? Or are you just a heartless coward who's bored of his old toy and eager to impress the shiny new one?"

"Am I really worth so little to you? Not even worth a single piece of some damned herb?"

Her voice cracked, and she gasped as if a knife twisted deeper into her heart. Jasmine's name burned in her mouth, acid and betrayal mingling in every syllable. Alex rubbed his temples, taking a sharp breath.

"Look, Sophia, if this is why you dragged me here—to fight about the same tired accusations—then we have nothing left to discuss."

Sophia's eyes flared dangerously. "Fine! Forget the root-let's talk about Clara. Did you frame her for that arrest?"

"I warned Clara," Alex said evenly, eyes narrowing.

"I begged her to back off, but she insisted on digging her own grave. Would you honestly believe me if I said I had nothing to do with it?"

Sophia's voice rose to a furious roar.

"Believe you? Charles saw everything. He said you pinned false charges on her- used your goddamn badge to lock her away."

"How could you be so vindictive, so utterly cruel, over something so small? She's family, Alex—my aunt! Do you have any idea how twisted and sick you sound?!"

Alex felt his own anger rise, his voice now edged with biting sarcasm. "And you'd rather trust Charles? Really? Am I just some petty, narrow-minded monster in your eyes?"

Sophia spat the words venomously. "Why wouldn't I believe him? He's never stabbed me in the back, unlike you!"

Alex laughed bitterly, the sound harsh and jagged. "What if I told you Charles set Clara up himself? Would you even listen?"

"More lies!" she screamed, cutting him off savagely.

"Every word from your mouth is poison! You've lied, betrayed, and hurt everyone around you-why the hell should I believe anything you say?!"

Silence fell heavily, each of her words echoing cruelly between them.

Alex's gaze darkened with a profound weariness, a self-mocking smile curving bitterly on his lips.

He no longer had the strength-or even the desire to argue.

The seeds of distrust she'd sown had taken root, spreading through their hearts like a merciless poison.

He had tried so damned hard, fighting to bridge the chasm of mistrust between them.

But every attempt seemed to drag them deeper into pain and resentment. He should have known better.

Hoping for reconciliation was torture-pointless agony.

No matter what he did, no matter how deeply he bared his soul, she'd always see

him as the villain, never believing, never forgiving.

Every minor disagreement ignited into a blazing inferno.

That endless cycle had broken them both.

He had fought enough. It was time to surrender to let go. There was nothing left

to salvage, and the realization twisted sharply inside him.

Maybe it was time he finally gave up.

"Is that it, Alex? Is that all you've got to say?" Sophia's voice trembled with raw betrayal, her words cutting through the air like shards of glass.

"I knew you were lying! God, why did you turn into such a mess? Do you enjoy tearing this family apart piece by pièce? Do you thrive on driving us to hate each other?"

Alex's voice came back low and bitter, the sound of someone too tired to fight yet too proud to yield.

"I haven't changed, Sophia. You've just never trusted me-not then, not now.

What's the point in talking if my words mean nothing to you?"

He paused, the silence between them thick with old wounds.

"Let's stop pretending there's anything left to salvage between us. I'll find a way to repay you... for what you did for Josephine. I owe you that much."

Then came the sharp click of disconnection - a clean break, cold and final.

Sophia stared at the phone in her trembling hand, her knuckles white with pressure.

Could they ever go back to who they were before?

No.

Alex had already given her the answer.

It was impossible.

The truth tore through her chest like a wild animal. Irreversible. Unforgiving.

"Alex! Alex, are you ending it like this? Are we just strangers now? Say something -damn you, say anything!"

But there was no voice on the other end. Only the hollow, mechanical hum of a call that would never be returned.

Sophia's knees buckled, her heart aching with unbearable sharpness.

Why couldn't they ever find peace? Why did every exchange have to leave deep, bleeding wounds?

"I told you," Jack sneered venomously, seizing the moment with relish. "Alex isn't even human. Now you've finally seen that monster's true colors."

"Sophia, stop groveling," Florence spat bitterly from her bed. "He's a lost cause. Karma's coming for him, mark my words."

"Enough, Mom," Sophia snapped, overwhelmed. "Just focus on healing, okay? I'll figure something out for Clara."

Florence's eyes sharpened abruptly. "Charles can help Clara, Sophia. But he needs that root from Alex."

Sophia's suspicion flared, eyes narrowing dangerously. "Wait-so this was never about you? You're after the root for Clara?"

Florence nodded weakly. "Exactly."

"What does Charles want with it?" Sophia demanded sharply, suspicion thick in her voice.

Jack winced, gently rubbing the bruise on his cheek.

"I've got no idea what it is — some pharmaceutical secret from Kingston. But can you help me get the root? Charles is offering a few million for it."

He sighed, frustration creeping into his voice.

"I really need that money. Those bastards wrecked my car and beat me half to death. I've got nothing left."

Sophia's expression darkened.

'Thugs? Wait-thugs did this? Didn't Jack accuse Alex?'

Their tense silence shattered abruptly as flashing lights painted the mansion windows.

A police cruiser halted aggressively outside, its sudden arrival cutting like lightning through the gloom.

Clara sprang from the backseat, her voice lively and victorious as she bounded inside.

"I'm back!" she shouted triumphantly, her presence jolting through the somber room like a live wire.

"Clara!" Florence gasped, eyes wide with shock. "You're alright?"

"You're free already?" Jack blurted out incredulously.

"Just half a day in lockup," Clara shrugged, brushing back her hair with a carefree gesture.

"They dragged me in over some Kingston manager's bogus claims about substandard products-total nonsense."

Florence's eyes gleamed sharply.

"Charles Kingston. He must've used his influence. Without his intervention, you'd be rotting in a cell right now."

Clara nodded, her relief palpable. "I'll thank him personally."

Jack slammed his fist onto the boiling.

in frustration, bitterness inside him. "Great. Just great. beaten half to death by the thugs for nothing. What a damn joke.

Sophia turned on him coldly, her voice dangerously quiet. "Funny how quickly your story changes, Jack. Didn't you swear Alex did this to you?"

Jack's face twisted into a mask of panic, sweat trickling down his bruised temple as he hurriedly looked away.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 286[1,303 words]

Sophia's brow knitted tightly, the haze lifting from her mind as clarity pierced through her confusion.

Her gaze sharpened, landing accusingly on Jack.

"You told me Alex shattered your hands and feet," she snapped, eyes burning like smoldering embers.

"Now you're saying The Thugs hit you? What's the truth, Jack?"

Florence sprang up, her voice shrill with urgency. "Sophia, it was Alex who attacked Jack first, then hired thugs to finish the job! Can't you see the truth?" "That's right!" Jack growled, desperation

sharpening the edge of his voice. "Sophia, how can you doubt your own family-your mother and brother-for a nobody like Alex? He nearly killed us!"

Disgusted, Sophia spun on her heels, storming from the room, fury and doubt wrestling within her.

She moved swiftly to find Barco, her mother's trusted driver, but the moment their eyes met, Barco visibly paled, his feet scrambling to escape.

"Stop right there!" Sophia commanded, her voice a cold blade slicing through the air.

"I'm the head of Lancaster now. Take one more step and you're finished!"

Frozen in place, Barco reluctantly turned, sweat pooling on his forehead as he bowed stiffly.

"Miss Sophia," he stammered, avoiding her piercing stare.

"Why were you running?" Sophia's voice was dangerously soft, a quiet storm brewing beneath.

"I—I remembered an urgent errand," Barco muttered weakly, eyes pinned firmly to the ground.

"Enough lies," Sophia warned icily. "Tell me exactly what happened to my mother and Jack."

Barco's throat tightened visibly, his nerves fraying at the edges. He hesitated, struggling under the weight of the truth he had been warned never to reveal.

Finally, he croaked, "I can't say it outright. But there's a dashcam in the car—it recorded everything. See it yourself. Just please, don't tell your mother I gave it to you. Say you found it yourself."

"Fine," Sophia snapped impatiently. "Give it to me now."

Barco fumbled with shaking fingers, quickly transmitting the footage through his smartwatch.

Sophia received it, her pulse accelerating as she pressed play, a dark dread seizing her heart.

The video flickered to life, revealing Jack and Florence perfectly unharmed as they exited Alex's clinic.

But their expressions twisted into venomous rage as they confronted the hired thugs. Faint, angry voices rose from the footage.

"You worthless idiots!" Jack snarled viciously. "I paid you to take Alex down, and you couldn't even touch him! I'm not paying losers like you!"

"You better cough up the cash!" a thug spat back menacingly.

"We did our part; it ain't our fault your target was tougher than you thought. Pay us as agreed."

"I don't want to pay! If you want money, go back to Alex who hit you take it from him," Jack barked.

"That's your fault useless bastard!" Florance added.

"You bastard! How dare you refuse to pay after all we did? Guys, teach them a lesson!" the thug shouted, and the other two lunged forward, fists swinging.

The savage retaliation unfolded on camera-blows landing, curses erupting, chaos exploding in every frame.

Sophia's heart thundered painfully in her chest.

The bitter sting of betrayal surged, choking her breath.

Her entire life she'd trusted them, believing the steadfast lesson drilled into her-

that family was sacrosanct, their intentions pure.

But here, brutally, indisputably, they had betrayed her trust.

They had lied. Worse still, they had manipulated her, twisted her anger toward Alex, who was innocent in all of this.

Swallowing tears of rage, Sophia stormed back to confront them. She flung open

the door with brutal force, glaring fiercely at Florence and Jack.

"So, you've both been lying to me?" Her voice quivered, raw and sharp with betrayal. "What was it all for?"

Florence recoiled, eyes wide with feigned innocence. "What are you talking about, Sophia?"

"Don't pretend!" Sophia roared, her voice cracking under the weight of her rage.

"I saw the dashcam footage. It was those thugs who beat you! Why frame Alex? Why drag me into your filthy lies?"

Jack's face twisted, venom dripping from every word.

"It's Alex's fault! He hit the thugs. When they couldn't handle him, they turned on us. All of this is because of him!" Jack shouted.

"No, Jack," Sophia hissed, her voice trembling but steady.

"It's because you didn't want to pay the thugs you hired, so they turned on you. Stop lying to me-I know the truth!"

Jack fell silent.

Sophia's eyes glistened with bitter tears as her voice cracked with disbelief. "Why are you two so hell-bent on tearing us apart? What did Alex ever do to deserve this?"

"Done? That arrogant little snake owes us respect he owes us everything!" Florence thundered, her mask finally slipping, exposing the venom she'd hidden beneath.

Sophia shook her head slowly, grief twisting through her heart.

"Why?" she demanded, her voice trembling with rage and sorrow. "Why did you lie to me?"

"Sophia, don't you dare accuse us!" Florence shot back, eyes blazing with righteous indignation.

"That selfish ingrate owed us. And if he refused to play by our rules, shouldn't we have taught him a lesson? Who the hell is he to strike back?"

Sophia's face twisted in disgust. "You're unbelievable. Both of you."

She'd always known her mother's ruthless streak, but this malicious distortion of reality took her breath away.

It was Florence's own vicious meddling that triggered this war, yet she spun the story until Alex became the villain.

Florence thrust her chin out

defiantly. "Fine, maybe we acted

rashly-but that arrogant fool isn't innocent either! If he hadn't set Clara up, do you think we would have confronted him in the first place? He had it coming!"

Sophia turned sharply, her eyes drilling into Clara.

"Tell me the truth, Aunt Clara. I have connections at Hilton-I can have the truth dragged out of them myself. Did Alex really frame you and send you to prison?"

Clara hesitated, the lie catching in her throat.

Sophia narrowed her eyes, voice dangerously low.

"Think carefully. If you dare lie again, I swear I'll drag every ugly truth into the open. And trust me I haven't forgotten your past betrayals."

Clara's voice was barely audible, her face pale and defeated.

"Alex warned me not to buy from them. It turned out they were selling me tainted goods. Hilton's manager framed me and had me arrested."

"Then how did you get out?" Sophia demanded, her stare merciless.

"The Chief of Hilton Pharmaceuticals vouched for me. He knew I wasn't involved."

"The Chief?" Sophia repeated slowly, suspicion and realization mixing in her gaze. Clara bit her lip hard, shame spilling out with her next words. "It was Alex. Alex vouched for me and got me released."

"So Alex never framed Clara at all—it was you two who cooked up this filthy lie to slander him?" Sophia's words were ice-cold, her voice barely holding steady. Florence bristled, doubling down. "Slander? If he wasn't guilty, why'd he step in to save her? He must've felt ashamed!"

"That's right!" Jack snarled from behind. "If he had nothing to hide, why would he help her?"

"Enough!" Sophia's scream echoed, raw and full of anguish.

Her entire body trembled as years of pent-up fury exploded in a storm of words.

"Why do you hate Alex so fiercely? What has he ever done to deserve this constant torment? Six months—Six goddamn months—he's been nothing but patient, humble, and honest."

"But you! You twist every kindness

into cruelty, every truth into a lie. Are

you so consumed by your own

s that you can't even see

the goodness standing right in front

of you?"

After that tirade, Sophia couldn't take another second. Her chest tight with

emotion, she flung the door open and stormed out into the harsh afternoon sun.

The daylight burned her eyes as she climbed into her car, slamming the door with a trembling hand. Tires screeched as she sped down the road, the golden light streaking across her tear-stained face.

But no matter how fast she drove, she couldn't outrun the storm raging inside her.

She regretted everything.

She regretted her reckless outburst. She regretted falling for her mother's venomous lies. But most of all, she regretted turning her back on Alex-the one

soul who never stopped caring.

And as the weight of it all crashed down, her tears fell hard, unrelenting.

"Alex... I love you..."

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 287[1,216 words]

At the modest clinic, Alex let out a slow, quiet breath, the weight on his shoulders dissolving into the sterile air like mist at dawn.

He ended the call with the kind of calm that only comes from repetition—each silence afterward landing exactly where it had so many times before, in the aching corners of old wounds.

She always shattered the calm like it was made of glass-every word from her a spark, every conversation a storm.

And yet, some fragile, hopeless part of him still waited for the day she'd understand. The day love wouldn't feel like a war.

Trouble had worn a path to his door so often, its knocks no longer stirred fear- only a tired familiarity.

He placed a hand over his chest, feeling the quiet thud beneath his ribs, and whispered with a faint, bitter smile, "Still holding on, huh? Why are you so damn stubborn, heart?"

Then softer, almost like a confession to the emptiness around him:

"What are you waiting for? Why not just let go... aren't you tired yet?"

Outside, the abrasive honking of a limousine shattered the quiet of the clinic's entrance, its ostentatious length glinting under the harsh afternoon sun.

Charles Kingston emerged with practiced arrogance, chin tilted skyward as if he owned the air he breathed.

Beside him lumbered a hulking brute of a bodyguard, eyes hidden behind mirrored sunglasses, expression as stone-cold as his employer's heart.

Charles crinkled his nose dramatically as he swaggered into the clinic, disdain dripping from every word.

"I didn't plan on dirtying myself by coming to your filthy little shack," he sneered, scrutinizing Alex from head to toe with blatant contempt.

Alex leaned back casually, his eyes narrowing with weary amusement.

"Well, nobody rolled out the red carpet for you, Kingston. You're free to leave anytime-hell, I'll even open the door for you."

Charles snorted, his expression darkening as he tossed a sleek black card onto Alex's desk.

"Listen here, peasant. Consider yourself lucky I even stepped foot in this dump. I'm offering you wealth beyond your pitiful imagination-fifty million dollars for the main ingredient of the Emerald Elixir."

"Enough cash to buy you out of your squalid existence and let you die comfortably in oblivion."

Alex burst out laughing, sharp and merciless, his eyes twinkling with savage mockery.

"Fifty million? Is that all you scraped together after gambling away mommy's fortune? Pathetic. If you can't hit ten billion, don't waste my damn time pretending you have money."

Charles flushed crimson, his jaw tightening visibly, his carefully controlled facade cracking at the edges.

"Don't get cocky, Alex," he growled dangerously. "Jasmine tossed you a mere million and you licked her boots clean. I'm giving you a chance to walk away rich and free. Don't be stupid enough to pass it up."

"Rich and free?" Alex's voice turned icy, his expression hardening to steel.

"Keep your dirty money. I'm not interested in scraps thrown by a spoiled, washed-up brat."

Charles slammed his fist down on the table, teeth bared in fury.

"Careful now, Alex. My patience is razor-thin. You either accept my generous offer and join forces with the Kingston name, or make yourself our sworn enemy. Believe me, friend, you won't survive choosing the wrong side."

Alex's laugh this time was brutal and biting.

"Enemy? Friend? You're deluded, Kingston. Last I heard, mommy and daddy disowned your sorry ass after you torched their legacy."

"Are you even allowed to call yourself a Kingston anymore, or are you just scavenging the scraps of your family's ruined reputation?"

Charles's fists shook, rage boiling in his veins, eyes burning with venomous hatred.

"You insolent little bastard," he hissed, struggling to keep his voice steady. "Don't think Jasmine can shield you forever. I'll crush you into dust without breaking a sweat. You want war? Fine. Consider it declared."

Alex leaned forward, his expression fearless, voice dangerously calm.

"Bring it, Charles. But don't forget-Jasmine Kingston still holds the power, not you. Cross me and you'll find yourself buried ev deeper than your family's dwindling fortune."

Charles staggered back slightly, momentarily struck dumb by Alex's cold confidence.

The realization dawned painfully that Alex held every card, every advantage, and had effortlessly ripped his facade to pieces.

"You'll regret this," Charles spat venomously, his voice trembling with raw fury. "I'll show you what happens when you cross me."

"You wanna play, Charles? Fine. I'll ride this to hell and back." Alex's voice sliced through the tension, fearless and edged like steel.

"You couldn't scare me at your best, and now look at you-scraping bottom, no one left to hide behind."

Charles laughed bitterly, his voice dripping contempt.

"Hope you've thought this through You'll regret every last breath." He rose abruptly, chair scraping harshly against the floor, storming out like the entitled brat he always was.

A country nobody challenging him?

Charles seethed, his pride boiling in a cauldron of venomous rage.

The fool clearly had no clue about the demons he could unleash.

He might not be swimming in millions, but Charles had enough filthy money to summon a gang of vicious thugs to rip Alex apart, piece by bloody piece.

The day passed quietly, fading into night without a sound.

Darkness settled in, still and heavy, until morning slowly pushed it away.

Josephine had always been the quiet guardian of lost souls—those abandoned, broken cats and dogs roaming desolate streets.

She had next to nothing, yet she gave freely: shelter, warmth, even names. They were her kin, and she was their protector.

But the morning arrived wrapped in cruelty.

"NO!"

A shriek pierced the dawn like shattered glass, wrenching Alex from sleep.

Heart hammering, he burst from his room into the hallway.

There Josephine lay, sprawled in terror, skin ghostly pale and trembling violently.

Her shaking finger stretched toward the clinic's front door, her eyes frozen wide with sheer horror.

Turning slowly, Alex's blood ran cold.

Hanging grotesquely by the doorway was the gray dog Josephine had rescued, limp and lifeless, stomach viciously torn open, intestines spilling onto the ground. Blood dripped slowly, pooling ominously at the entrance, painting a sickening picture of cruelty.

Alex felt nausea claw at his throat, rage blistering beneath his skin.

He pushed through the door and stepped outside, fury blazing in his eyes.

And there it was, stark and

undeniable thick splashes of dark crimson smeared across walls and windows, streaking down in macabre trails—a chilling sight

left behind by butchers of innocence.

The stench of blood and death saturated the morning air, choking him.

Ten souls, butchered mercilessly, their torn bodies strewn throughout the clinic,

each carcass a brutal, agonizing declaration of war.

At that very moment, tires crunched against gravel. A sleek limousine the same damned limousine from yesterday—slowed to a mocking stop.

Its tinted window descended slowly, revealing Charles's smug face, lit with sickening amusement.

"You filthy son of a— Did you do this?" Alex growled, his voice dangerously low, a tempest brewing beneath his skin.

"Oh please, Alex," Charles purred, mock sincerity dripping from every word, his eyes glittering maliciously.

"Such an unfortunate tragedy. You

must have truly angered some powerful enemies. Keep refusing good graces and kindnesses, and you'll see horrors far worse than this."

"You're really going down this path?" Alex's voice was ice-cold, seething with restrained fury.

"I'm simply passing by, offering friendly advice," Charles sneered mockingly.

"Whether you heed it or not, it's entirely your miserable—"

But Alex had already moved, quick as a striking snake.

His palm slammed viciously into Charles's face, an explosive crack echoing as bone shattered beneath skin.

Charles reeled backward, blood spurting from his broken nose, shock painted clearly on his once-arrogant face.

"You want a war, Charles? Consider it started."

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 288[1,347 words]

Charles laughed wildly, blood streaming from his nose, smearing across his twisted grin.

"You think this is over, Alex? You're gonna beg for mercy when I'm through with you!"

A sudden wail of sirens cut through the air as a patrol car screeched to a stop just inches from Alex, tires skidding and gravel exploding around his feet.

A stocky officer lumbered out, swaggering towards him.

"Heard you couldn't keep your fists to yourself," he sneered. "Hands behind your back-now."

Alex met Charles' eyes and understood instantly. This bastard had planned it meticulously, baiting him into losing control, a setup that had these crooked cops waiting in the wings.

"You heard him!" barked another officer, stepping closer.

"Turn around, hands behind your back!"

Josephine rushed forward, panic twisting her face. "Are you blind? This lunatic slaughtered our pets-look at what's left of them!"

A smirk spread across the officer's greasy face.

"Yeah, we see exactly what's here. Looks like someone went psycho on their animals. Guess we found our culprit."

Josephine exploded, voice cracking in fury.

"Are you insane? I'm the victim! Someone butchered my pets, and you're blaming me?"

The cop stepped forward, cuffs jangling ominously.

"Sweetheart, most of the time, the killer's right under our noses. You're under arrest for animal cruelty."

Josephine screamed, twisting violently as cold metal bit into her wrists.

"You pathetic scum! We're the real victims here!"

Ignoring her protests, the officers shoved Alex and Josephine roughly into the squad car.

Josephine pounded the glass, her voice cracking with fury.

"Are you even listening? You should've checked before dragging us in!"

"Keep it together," Alex said under his breath, eyes locked straight ahead. "This won't stick. They're targeting us."

"They've got nothing!" Josephine shot back, her voice raw with disbelief.

The cop driving let out a cold, mocking laugh and glanced back through the metal cage.

"Nothing? Charles already filed assault charges. You'll be rotting in a cell for at least twenty-four hours, tough guy."

At the station, Alex demanded, voice ice-cold, "I want my lawyer. Immediately."

The officer chuckled dismissively, tossing paperwork onto a cluttered desk.

"Maybe after your mandatory sleepover. Twenty-four hours first, then maybe a call."

Josephine snapped, voice raw with indignation, "That's illegal! We have rights, you corrupt-"

"Rights?" The cop leaned closer, his foul breath heavy with arrogance. "In here, princess, we make the rules."

With cruel laughter echoing behind them, Alex and Josephine were thrown into a dim, filthy cell.

Josephine paced like a caged animal, eyes blazing. "That bastard set us up! He killed our animals, bought off these corrupt pigs-"

Alex sat silently, eyes closed, mind already tracing the positions of every officer, feeling their heartbeats, sensing their distracted minds.

His breathing slowed, becoming deliberate and measured, until finally, eyes snapping open, he stood up, composed and focused.

"Time to go," he announced quietly, determination etched into his features.

Josephine stopped pacing, staring at him incredulously. "How the hell-"

He raised his hand, concentrating fiercely.

There was a subtle click, barely audible, and the lock yielded to an invisible force. The cell door swung gently open.

"They didn't even bother locking it properly," Alex said coolly. "Arrogance makes people sloppy."

Josephine blinked, momentarily frozen, before understanding flooded her expression.

She nodded sharply, fear morphing into fierce resolve.

"From here," Alex instructed calmly, "walk like nothing happened. Confidence, Jo -no hesitation."

She steadied herself, exhaling deeply. "Got it."

He opened the door leading into the hallway, stepping forward as if they belonged there.

Two officers stood nearby, deep in idle conversation, oblivious to their presence.

Alex moved deliberately, steps steady and sure, Josephine at his side, her breathing controlled despite the wild rush of adrenaline.

He leaned toward her, voice low and intense. "Keep moving, eyes straight ahead. They won't even notice us."

With every confident step down the hallway, the officers continued talking, eyes glazed, voices distant.

Josephine and Alex strode through the precinct corridors, their footsteps echoing casually off the grimy linoleum tiles.

They flashed easy smiles at passing officers, who nodded back obliviously, unaware of the chaos about to unfold.

Everything looked perfect-too perfect.

As soon as they stepped into the fresh air outside, Alex flagged down a taxi with a nonchalant wave, but Josephine's eyes narrowed with suspicion.

Inside the taxi, she leaned forward sharply, voice trembling with an undercurrent of fear and disbelief.

"Alex, tell me we haven't just crossed a line we can't come back from. Are we criminals now?"

Alex's gaze remained steel-calm, cold and unwavering.

"Relax. They didn't even log us. Twenty-four hours-that's all they wanted, just a distraction. Nothing sticks."

"But why?" Her voice rose in panic.

They reached the clinic moments later. Alex stepped out of the taxi, his face set hard as he scanned the facade.

He gestured grimly. "This is why."

Josephine's scream pierced the air before she even registered the sight.

"Why? Why would anyone do this?" Her voice fractured as they rounded the corner.

She didn't need to move closer-the ruin spoke louder than any explanation.

Doors hung twisted from bent hinges. Windows shattered, leaving jagged edges and glittering shards across the walkway.

Inside, it was worse. The clinic was gutted completely. Medical supplies vanished, Shelves overturned and splintered. Machinery lay smashed, wires spilling out like severed veins. Everything valuable-gone o destroyed.

Josephine stumbled forward, eyes wide, hands shaking uncontrollably.

"No..." Her voice was a whisper of disbelief. "No, no, no..."

She sank to her knees, digging desperately through the rubble as though searching for meaning amid the chaos.

Instruments she'd just begun mastering in her nursing lessons were crushed, beyond recognition.

She bolted toward her bedroom, only to find emptiness greeting her. Her clothes, her bed-everything stripped bare, down to the smallest personal item. Even her underwear was gone.

Her voice broke, raw and anguished. "They took everything, Alex. Everything." "How could this happen?"

He crouched beside her, eyes blazing with restrained anger. "It wasn't random. Charles wanted something from me. He thought I hid it here."

Slowly, she turned to him, horror mingling with confusion. "He sent people?"

"Thugs. He made sure we were locked up so he could steal everything," Alex spat bitterly.

Josephine's lip trembled as tears streamed down her face. "They took all I had."

Alex remained silent; no words could ease this pain.

"This morning they killed our dogs and cats," she whispered, barely audible. "They killed them, Alex. Now this..."

He moved to comfort her, but she shook her head, drawing her knees to her chest, hugging herself tightly as if it might hold back the grief.

Alex didn't speak. Didn't try to comfort her. Just stood beside her like a silent witness to the wreckage of a soul.

Alex reached out to steady her, his grip fierce and protective, but before he could offer solace, his smartwatch buzzed sharply, shattering the oppressive silence. "Charles," he spat venomously, answering the call through clenched teeth. Charles's voice dripped through the speaker, honeyed malice coating every syllable.

"Enjoying my little gift, Alex? You always thought you were better than everyone, strutting around like a king. But guess what I've got nothing but time to strip away your dignity piece by piece."

Alex's knuckles whitened, rage pulsing visibly beneath his skin.

"You're playing a dangerous game, Charles," he hissed, the threat hanging in his voice like a razor's edge.

Charles's laugh was cruel, mocking. "Dangerous? Maybe for you. But don't worry -I've prepared something special. Something unforgettable."

"Sophia always had a soft spot for you, didn't she? Well, when I finally take her, record every detail. Imagine it, Alex, watching the woman you loved screaming my name. I want you to savor every second of your humiliation

"You twisted son of a bitch!" Alex's roar echoed through the gutted clinic, his voice raw with fury.

"Oh, spare me your empty threats." Charles's voice hardened, mercilessly cold.

"Who's going to save you, huh? You're worthless without Jasmine Kingston's protection. Three days-that's how long you've got. Either deliver me the main ingrédient

for the Emerald Elixir, or I'll make

sure your next purchase is a casket."

The call ended abruptly, leaving a suffocating silence punctuated only by Josephine's quiet sobbing.

Alex stared at the blank screen, eyes burning with an intensity capable of igniting worlds.

Without hesitation, he reached for his phone, fingers trembling not with fear, but with restrained wrath.

A heavy voice answered after one ring. "Alfred Kingston speaking."

Alex's voice cut through the silence like a blade, icy and deliberate. "We need to talk, Alfred. It's about your son. Either you do something or I'll handle it my way."

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 289[1,192 words]

Alex slammed down the phone and turned sharply, grabbing a mop.

Josephine was already scrubbing furiously at the floor, her eyes bloodshot and shimmering.

She hadn't said a single bitter word, but grief hung over her like a funeral shroud.

Her pets her beloved Blackie, Brownie, and little Kitty-slaughtered by that monster Charles.

Her silence was deafening, punctuated only by muffled sobs she desperately tried to hide.

Watching her silent struggle twisted a knife deep in Alex's gut.

The quiet intensity of their cleanup was suddenly broken by the sleek rumble of an engine.

A black limousine screeched to a halt outside, gravel crunching ominously beneath its tires.

Alfred Kingston burst from the car, his expensive business suit rumpled from the rush, face pale as a corpse, breath ragged as if chased by death itself.

When he caught sight of Alex's dark, seething expression through the glass, terror surged through his veins.

Alfred stepped inside cautiously, taking in the chaos-broken equipment, scattered papers, Josephine trembling with barely controlled rage and sadness. The man who commanded empires now felt like a child caught red-handed.

His knees weakened beneath him, panic bubbling up as he felt the weight of Alex's anger pressing down.

Without uttering a single command, Kingston began hastily gathering debris, his expensive suit becoming sullied with dirt and grime.

His bodyguards followed suit, their movements awkward and tense under Alex's relentless silence.

Suddenly, Josephine shattered the silence with a cry that wrenched hearts, her voice hoarse and broken.

"Why, Alex? How could Charles be so ruthless? He slaughtered them-Blackie, Brownie, Kitty-all of them! Why?"

Alfred swallowed hard, sweat beading on his forehead.

Fury and fear wrestling inside him.

Each mention of his son's brutality pushed his heart closer to exploding. Inside, he screamed a silent promise-he would personally wring the life from Charles' arrogant throat.

His pulse thudded painfully.

He quickly grabbed a broom, waving frantically to his bewildered bodyguards.

"Don't just stand there, clean!" he barked, desperation seeping through his dignity. They moved like awkward soldiers following a clueless general.

The air thickened into an unbearable tension until Josephine's anguished voice broke through again, trembling with despair.

"We helped the poor, Alex! How could Charles destroy something that brought good? We have nothing left to offer anyone now."

Alfred Kingston's heart hammered violently, his temples throbbing.

He knew that if Alex got angry, there would be no more Kingston on this earth! But now he was too fearful to ask for forgiveness from Alex.

The only sounds were Josephine's intermittent, wrenching cries and Alfred's increasingly ragged breathing.

"Alex," Josephine whispered again, clutching her tattered sweater, eyes glistening with fresh tears.

"Charles didn't just take my pets. He destroyed everything-my clothes, everything I owned. Promise me you'll kill that heartless son of a—"

Alfred nearly stumbled in panic, sprinting forward and dropping to his knees at Josephine's feet.

"Miss Josephine, please forgive me!" he pleaded, voice cracked and shaking.

Inside, he was pleading tearfully, 'Please stop begging Alex to kill my son, as my whole family might be included. Please stop talking, miss. I beg you and your ancestors, please stop.'

Josephine blinked in shock, pulling back. "What-what the hell are you doing?"

"Forgive this pathetic father who couldn't control his damned son," Alfred said desperately, grabbing her hand as if clutching a lifeline.

"My shame is bottomless. Please, have mercy on me."

Josephine stared, stunned. "But... Charles—"

"He's all I've got," Alfred cut in quickly, reaching inside his jacket.

"I'll pay for your loss." He thrust a sleek card into her trembling fingers. "There's a million dollars here. Take it. Please, consider it compensation."

Josephine's breath caught audibly.

One million dollars.

Her whole life's possessions were barely worth ten grand, tops.

Her tear-stained face twitched, torn between sadness and the absurd joy that threatened to burst forth.

But still, Josephine felt it was wrong.

The lives of pet dogs and cats couldn't be measured by money, so her face turned sad.

"But the animals..."

Alfred, catching the conflicted look, desperately doubled down.

"Two million! I'll make it two million dollars right now if you forgive him."

Josephine's jaw dropped, her mouth wobbling between grief and euphoria.

Damn, how was a girl supposed to stay angry with two million dollars shoved into her hand?

Alex watched her face twist comically from devastation to suppressed joy, fighting back a cynical laugh.

Josephine coughed, gathering herself with exaggerated dignity.

"Well, Alfred...your son's actions were terrible-horrendous, even-but I'm a forgiving woman. Money has nothing to do with it."

"Of course," Alfred agreed rapidly, relief flooding his features. "You're truly gracious."

Josephine finally cracked, her face blossoming into an enormous, shameless grin.

She clutched the card tightly, eyes sparkling brighter than any tears ever had.

"Guess forgiving does feel pretty good."

Alfred nodded enthusiastically, relief washing through him.

Alex rolled his eyes, unable to suppress a wry smirk. Josephine's transformation from tragic heroine to gleeful millionaire was simply too absurdly perfect.

"You're an angel," Alfred said fervently, nearly groveling in gratitude.

Josephine sighed dramatically, pocketing the card with feigned reluctance.

"Ah, the burdens of being saintly and poor. Well, formerly poor."

Alex shook his head slowly, chuckling softly to himself.

Money-it really did solve almost everything, even Josephine's shattered heart.

Almost.

Alex leaned against the wall, arms folded like steel beams, eyes sharp as daggers

as Josephine stepped outside, leaving him alone with Alfred.

His voice dripped sarcasm and cold authority.

"Well now, Alfred, since you've patched up Josephine's shattered little heart with your wallet, what's your grand plan for your son Going to toss a few millions his way, too?"

Alfred flinched visibly, immediately bowing low, voice thick with desperate humility.

"Sir Alex, please-I beg you, spare my son your wrath."

"Oh, spare him?" Alex mocked sharply, a smirk twisting his lips cruelly.

"After what he's done? Tell me, Alfred, do you even understand justice?"

"Please," Alfred pleaded desperately, sweat pouring down his forehead.

"Just tell me what punishment you deem fit. Say the word, and I'll take his hand myself if that's your wish."

Alex chuckled coldly, shaking his head.

"No, Alfred, that won't be necessary. There's something far crueler than physical punishment and death."

Alfred stared, dread sinking into his gut. "What are you suggesting, Sir?"

"Cut Charles off. Completely. No money, no cars, no houses, nothing. If I catch wind that you or your wife slip him even a dime, I'll make sure Charles meets his maker personally. Think you can manage that for three whole years?"

The old man's knees shook visibly, sweat soaking through his expensive suit.

Charles had lived his whole life pampered, spoiled rotten by endless wealth. To

cut him off financially was tantamount to a death sentence.

"So choose quickly," Alex growled mercilessly, stepping closer.

"Either you let me put a bullet in his skull right now or let him fight to survive with nothing but his bare hands."

Alfred swallowed hard, dread gripping him like iron shackles.

He pulled out his phone with trembling fingers and dialed quickly, his voice harsh

and desperate as Jessica picked up.

"Wife," Alfred snapped fiercely, urgency ripping through every word, "I want you and every damn relative of yours to stop giving Charles any money. Not one cent."

Jessica's shocked voice crackled sharply on the line. "What? Alfred, why—" "Don't question me, woman!" Alfred roared, anger now searing through his desperation.

"Answer yes or no-can you stop funding that worthless brat for three years? And if you dare slip him a

single penny, mark my words, Jessica, I'll divorce you instantly and turn your entire family into my mortal enemies."

"By God, either you obey, or only one of us walks away alive!"

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 290[1,197 words]

"Honey," Jessica whispered shakily over the phone, her voice cracking like ice under pressure.

"You've never raised your voice at me. Not once. What the hell is going on?"

Alfred's voice shot back, low and sharp through the line.

"You want the truth, Jessica? Your damned generosity turned Charles into a monster. And if we don't pull him back now, we're the ones who'll pay the price." Jessica gasped, her breath catching. "But he's our son, Alfred-our only son!" "Exactly!" Alfred snapped, voice boiling over.

"And if you don't shut off the money, the next time we see Charles, it'll be in a goddamn casket!"

Jessica's voice rose, shaking with fury.

"How dare you, Alfred Kingston! You never gave a damn about him! Your heart was always with Jasmine!"

"You're the great governor-so act like it and protect your son for once in your miserable life!"

There was a pause, then a growl from Alfred as he paced.

"Governor?" he snarled into the receiver. "That title doesn't mean jack when Charles is poking the hornet's nest. He's tangled with men who'd wipe us off the map and sleep like babies."

Jessica's voice wavered. "What did he do? Alfred-what the hell did he do?"

Alfred's breath hitched. Then his voice dropped to a dark, brutal whisper.

"He crossed a line no man should touch. They're giving us one chance-cut him off, completely. Or we all burn."

"You're lying," Jessica said faintly, clutching the phone like it might steady her. "That can't be true-"

"You remember Texas?" Alfred spat, his voice low and deadly serious.

"The governor's grandson stepped out of line, and they made him watch as they butchered his own son and grandson. All because of that boy's damn mistake. And if the Texas governor had dared to stop it, he'd be dead too. That's exactly what's happening to us now!"

"Do you want that fate for Charles? For you and me?"

Jessica's breath hitched, horror sinking in. "Are you... are you serious, Alfred?" "Dead serious," he said, cold as winter steel.

"If you can't trust me now, maybe it's better you walk. I won't let your softness be the death of us."

"Go to hell, Alfred!" she shouted through the tears, voice cracking like a whip.

"I warned you," Alfred said, every word sharp as a blade.

"Keep spoiling him, and he'll take this entire family down with him. You'll be dead -unless you leave me. Otherwise, I'll go down, and so will every last Kingston. And if you choose to protect him, make damn sure your whole family's ready to burn in hell with him."

The line went dead.

Across the city, buried in the grim silence of an abandoned factory swallowed by decay, Charles paced impatiently among machinery and scattered medical supplies stolen from Alex's clinic.

His arrogant gaze scanned the debris, contempt radiating from every movement.

Around him, a crew of haggard thugs rummaged through shattered crates and ruined shelves, sweat pouring from their brows, dirt staining their calloused hands. "Come on, hurry it up!" Charles snapped.

"Every single herb you find earns you a hundred grand. Surely you cretins can manage something as simple as that?"

One thug—a towering brute with a shaved head-wiped sweat from his face and glanced warily at Charles.

"Sir," he began, keeping his tone careful and measured, "we've torn this damned place apart. There's nothing here-nothing like what you're asking."

"Impossible!" Charles spat viciously, eyes narrowed, lips curled in a sneer.

"Keep looking! Or are you bastards too lazy to earn your keep?"

Exasperated, the bald leader stepped forward, speaking with forced gentleness, masking disdain behind careful courtesy.

"Sir, we've torn this dump apart. Maybe the doc stashed it somewhere else— everything we grabbed so far's been a damn waste."

Charles's eyes flashed dangerously, jaw tightening, as fury crept into every line of his arrogant face.

He stepped closer, eyes locked with the thug's wary gaze. "You'd better pray you're wrong, because wasting my time is a mistake no one makes twice."

Charles' palm cracked across the boss's face like a whip, echoing sharply into the tense air.

"Are you fucking deaf? I told you to look harder!" Charles snarled, his voice trembling with rage.

"You idiots want to get paid or not?"

His fury burned white-hot; no matter how desperately he clawed at life, nothing ever turned in his favor.

The boss stiffened, his eyes flickering with barely contained rage as he swallowed the insult and barked at his men.

"You heard him. Tear through everything-he's paying for it."

But just then, Charles' phone buzzed violently in his pocket, and as if
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cue, his driver and bodyguard glanced at their screens
simultaneously.

Without a word, they exchanged uneasy looks and swiftly retreated to the car.

Charles watched in disbelief as the vehicle roared away, leaving him utterly abandoned.

"What the hell?!" Charles shouted, stunned. "Hey, where the fuck are you going?"

His trembling hands fumbled the phone open, only to find a storm of notifications flooding the screen.

His blood froze, eyes wide in horror-the nightmare had returned, darker and more merciless than ever.

Every single account he owned flashed red: blocked, frozen, inaccessible.

Charles' face paled to a ghostly hue as panic surged through his veins.

He glanced anxiously at the thugs, still busy tearing the things apart.

He turned, desperate to slip away unnoticed, but the boss's gaze had been locked on him since his getaway vanished.

A heavy hand clamped onto his shoulder, halting him abruptly. "And where exactly

do you think you're sneaking off to?"

"I need air," Charles mumbled weakly, attempting to brush him off.

The boss grinned cruelly, tightening his grip "Nice try, rich boy. Maybe you wanna explain why your muscle just left you stranded like a wounded pup?" . FindNovel

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"Just...a misunderstanding," Charles stammered. Sweat beaded down his temples. "They'll be back."

The boss laughed, sharp and mocking.

"Is that so? Funny, ain't it? How about this-you fork over that fifty grand you promised us first. Then you can stroll wherever you want."

Charles swallowed hard, throat dry as dust.

"I'll pay you when you find that damn herb," he lied, heart pounding with panic.

He was bankrupt, stripped bare of every penny he owned.

"Nice story," the boss sneered, eyes narrowing dangerously. "But I ain't buying your bullshit."

In a flash of desperation and rage, Charles drove his fist into the man's jaw, sending him sprawling backward.

Chaos erupted instantly.

Before the stunned thugs could react, Charles bolted into the darkness, his heart hammering violently against his ribs.

"Grab that bastard!" someone shouted, their voices echoing behind him, savage and bloodthirsty.

Charles sprinted, lungs screaming for air, legs aching fiercely, yet he didn't slow.

Bottles shattered at his feet, shards

grazing his skin as stones and

curses flew past him. One thug lunged, clawing desperately, but Charles swerved, striking back wildly, never losing momentum.

He felt blows slam into his body, tasted blood as it filled his mouth, but still, he surged forward, driven by blind terror.

Hours later, battered and gasping, Charles collapsed in a dim alley, safe for now.

Trembling fingers pulled his phone from his pocket again, dread pooling in his gut as the notifications resumed their merciless assault.

A bold headline blazed across his screen, merciless and cold:

"Charles Kingston Officially Disowned by Alfred Kingston; Left to Face Consequences Alone."

Charles' heart twisted violently, nausea rising sharply in his throat.

Frantically, he dialed his mother's number, the one lifeline he'd always clung to.

But the call refused to connect, rejected instantly.

Blocked.

For the first time in his life, Charles Kingston was utterly, devastatingly alone.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 291[1,148 words]

Charles stormed down the dim hallway to his apartment, each furious step echoing with raw indignation.

But as he pressed his palm to the sleek electronic lock, the red flash mocked him like a bitter slap in the face.

"What kind of twisted joke is this?"

Charles snarled through clenched teeth, slamming his fist and kick repeatedly into the door.

An ear-splitting alarm wailed to life, shrieking betrayal through every inch of the pristine corridor.

The manager emerged quickly, flanked by two burly security guards whose hardened faces showed no recognition-only grim authority.

"You! Manager!" Charles spat venomously, stalking toward him. "What's your damned name again?"

"Josh," the manager replied coolly, his tone unsettlingly steady. "Been running this place for ten years now, sir."

"Yeah, but what's the point in remembering a name that means nothing to me? Fix This!"

Charles' eyes narrowed dangerously, confusion and anger twisting his handsome features.

This spineless creature had always bowed and scraped in decade, barely daring to breathe without permission-now the worm stood tall, back rigid, defiance dripping from every syllable.

"Why the hell are you just standing there, you useless bastard? I can't even get into my own damn apartment! Is your pathetic system fried, or are you just too brain-dead to do your damn job?"

Charles barked viciously, thrusting an accusing finger into Josh's chest.

Josh took a measured breath, meeting Charles' furious gaze without flinching.

"I'm sorry, sir-but remind me, who exactly are you?"

A red haze clouded Charles' vision, disbelief mixing with explosive rage.

"You miserable, worthless sack of garbage-I'm Charles Kingston! I own every damn brick and tile in this building, and I'll see you thrown onto the streets!"

Josh smiled, a cold, mocking curve of his lips.

He stepped back as the guards moved forward, their expressions void of sympathy.

"Funny, isn't it? I know every Kingston who matters and you ain't one of them. You're a nobody, Charles. And nobodies don't belong here."

Charles lunged at him, snarling like a wounded beast, fists raised to wipe away Josh's insolent smirk.

"You arrogant little insect, how dare you threaten me in my own building?"

But the security guards surged forward, batons slicing through the air like judgment, mercilessly cracking against his ribs.

Pain ripped through Charles' body, humiliation burning hotter than the bruises already forming beneath his designer suit.

"All of you filthy rats-you're dead! Every last one of you!"

Charles howled, spittle flying from his lips as the guards hauled him roughly toward the exit, tossing him into the dirt like trash.

On the pavement outside, Charles staggered upright, eyes blazing with raw hatred.

He shook his fists toward the towering glass façade, screaming in defiance, voice hoarse with bitter fury.

"Alfred Kingston, you worthless bastard-you think tossing me aside like garbage makes you powerful? I swear to God, you'll regret the day you ever challenged me!"

Blood trickled from a split lip, but Charles wiped it away roughly, determination hardening into something cold and ruthless.

He glared fiercely at the gleaming Rolex encircling his wrist-two million dollars, just enough to build an empire strong enough to crush Alfred into dust.

That damn monster was not his father anymore!

With a final venomous glance at the towering symbol of his humiliation, Charles turned sharply, marching away with the swagger of a man who would not be broken, who refused to die quietly in the shadow of giants.

He lifted his gaze to the unforgiving heavens, a sneer curling his battered mouth.

"Even if you side with that devil Alfred, even if you throw all the angels and demons against me I'll burn this world down before I let anyone stop me."

"You hear me, God? Mark my words-I'll climb higher than all of you!"

The sudden roar of angry voices sliced through the stillness, shattering Charles's brief moment of calm.

"Over there! It's Charles-the arrogant bastard!" someone bellowed. "Don't let him get away!"

The alley flooded instantly with the same relentless mob, their faces twisted in furious anticipation, ready to rip apart anything in their path.

Charles spun around, heart slamming violently against his ribs as the shadows converged on him-thirty savage men, eyes burning with contempt.

"You thought you could dodge paying your debts?" sneered the towering brute at the head of the pack.

"Beat him raw! Take whatever he's got-strip him down to nothing!"

Charles's voice cracked, raw defiance mixing with fear. "Stay the hell back! Don't you dare touch me!"

The gang leader burst into ruthless laughter, eyes narrowed with disgust.

"You think you still command respect, huh? You're nothing but a sniveling cheat!"

"You entitled bastard!" another snarled viciously. "Finish him!"

The mob lunged forward, their fists slamming into Charles with merciless precision, each blow igniting an agony that sliced straight to the bone.

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Mocking laughter filled the air as they stripped him of dignity piece by painful piece-tearing away his golden watch, ripping the rings from his fingers with cruel delight, leaving him battered and humiliated in the

cold night air, reduced to nothing but his underwear.

"Let the spoiled brat taste the dirt tonight," the leader spat, contempt flooding every syllable.

"Be thankful you're still breathing. You're lucky we fear the Kingston wrath, or you'd already be rotting."

They turned away, their laughter cold and sharp, leaving Charles shattered and gasping.

Yet, one lingered, casting a glance that mixed pity and scorn.

"You fool," he whispered bitterly, eyes heavy with disgust.

"When will you learn humility? You're waging war against God himself. You'd better start praying-you've got nothing else left."

Charles's battered body convulsed in helpless agony.

His muscles screamed, bones aching, vision blurred through a haze of pain and rage.

The thug leaned in closer, his voice dripping poison and disdain, spitting directly onto Charles's bloodied face.

"You ungrateful bastard. Heaven gave you everything, yet you spit on it and chase hell itself. You've got nobody to blame but your own damn greed."

As the footsteps receded into cold silence, Charles trembled, breath ragged and hollow, fury surging like molten iron in his veins.

"What crime did I commit by striving for greatness?" he growled through bloodied teeth, the raw edges of his voice trembling in defiance.

"I was born a Kingston-I was destined for power and riches. Who dares deny me that right?"

He forced himself upright, each step a torment, but his pride stubbornly defiant.

"Even if the entire world seeks my destruction, I'll never bow down! I don't need your mercy, your pity, or your God! I'll rise again, stronger and unstoppable. I will not be humbled!"

Charles staggered forward, his heart hardened, bitterness etched deeply into his soul.

Alone, battered, stripped of everything his arrogance the only thing left unbroken.

Blinded by his sick obsession with

power, too damn proud to see the grace he pissed away, he dragged his broken body into the ruthless night-driven by hate, pride, and a thirst for vengeance.

He still believed he was righteous, even as his soul bled. And he would never forgive those who dared stand in his way.

"Alfred... when I catch you, I'll rip the

pride from your throat and grind your face into the dirt. Maybe just maybe I'll let your worthless carcass breathe a little longer, just to watch you suffer."

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 292[1,248 words]

The morning sun blazed defiantly through the half-shuttered windows of the clinic, throwing jagged patterns of light across the dusty floors and fresh paint buckets scattered around.

Alex had already summoned carpenters and painters to breathe new life into the place after the incident, so the scent of fresh timber and varnish lingered thickly.

Josephine stood by the reception counter, diligently arranging scattered documents when the door swung open, letting in a gust of hot, dry air.

Lyra Thompson strode in, radiant and poised, her presence commanding attention amidst the half-built chaos.

"Ms. Thompson!" Josephine's eyes widened with surprise and admiration.

"Josephine," Lyra chuckled warmly, placing a comforting hand on the young girl's shoulder, her tone filled with playful scolding.

"How many times must I tell you? Call me Lyra. You're practically family."

Josephine smiled shyly, eyes downcast, still not fully believing she was allowed such intimacy.

"I'll try, Lyra," she murmured softly.

"Good," Lyra smiled.

"Lyra?" Alex's voice echoed from deeper within the clinic, his footsteps echoing confidently across the tiled hallway.

He emerged with a questioning glance, wiping his hands on a rag, remnants of the renovation evident on his clothes.

"A bit early for your usual pick-up, isn't it?"

Lyra leaned against the counter, raising a finely sculpted eyebrow.

"Not about pills today, Alex. It's about our high-profile patient. You remember, don't you?"

His eyes lit with curiosity, stepping closer. "Today already?"

She nodded smoothly, eyes sparkling with mischief. "Indeed. Flew in this morning, making rounds through his empire. Quite the banking mogul, you know."

Alex crossed his arms, intrigued. "Who exactly are we talking about here?"

Lyra laughed lightly, eyes teasing. "Oh, you'll find out soon enough."

She turned gracefully toward Josephine, offering her hand gently. "Care to join us sweetheart?"

Josephine hesitated briefly, casting an apologetic glance at the scattered papers. "I'd better stay, make sure they don't ruin anything. Someone's gotta keep an eye on these renovations."

"Fair enough," Lyra replied easily, then hooked her arm through Alex's, tugging him toward the door.

"We'll bring something delicious back for you."

Twenty minutes later, their sleek black sedan eased through the iron gates of the Morgan estate, wheels crunching softly on gravel pathways framed by meticulously manicured gardens.

The mansion rose before them like a monument to wealth-vast, imposing, and brimming with silent grandeur.

Inside, a servant led them to a luxurious sitting room that commanded a sweeping view of the lush gardens.

Alex's gaze drifted appreciatively across antique furnishings and priceless artwork.

"Alright, Lyra," Alex whispered, his voice laced with mild impatience and curiosity. "Time to spill. Who exactly are we meeting?"

"David Morgan of London," she announced calmly, watching his reaction closely.

Alex's brow furrowed in thoughtful recognition. "Morgan, huh? I've heard the name."

"Chairman of Wealth Bank, Alex. Controls a third of the country's economy. People call him Richie Morgan-has fingers dipped in every lucrative pie imaginable."

Alex gave a slow, knowing nod, understanding sinking in. "Right. And why does Richie need my help?"

Lyra's voice lowered.

"Morgan's seriously ill. Every doctor we've seen has given up. The miracle pill can only keep him alive a little longer-it's not a cure. That's why I came straight to you-the one who created it, the so-called miracle worker."

Just then, sharp clicks of high heels rang out like gunfire from the hallway.

A woman entered, clothed in extravagance and holding her Hermes bag like a weapon. Her eyes were sharp, assessing, her lips curved cruelly.

"Well, if it isn't Ms. Thompson," Rose Marshall drawled, voice slick with disdain. Lyra turned smoothly, expression perfectly composed despite the venomous greeting.

"Mrs. Morgan. Lovely to see you. Is Mr. Morgan ready for us?"

Rose's laughter came brittle and cutting, eyes narrowed with barely concealed jealousy.

"Ready for you? Desperate as ever, I see. Still hoping he'll make you wife number four?"

Lyra's eyes narrowed slightly, but her tone remained cool and firm. "Strictly business, Rose. Nothing more."

Rose's lip curled further, voice sharp enough to slice steel.

"Business, indeed. Funny how your 'business' always seems to happen behind closed doors. And who's this

delightful young specimen? A

doctor? Or just another pet from

your collection? You certainly have

eclectic tastes, Lyra. The perfect

cougar act, is it?"

"Careful, Rose. Gossip travels both ways, and I've heard you've quite the

collection yourself. Best keep your glass house intact."

Rose's face twisted in a sneer, her eyes narrowing further.

Lyra's expression grew rigid, but she kept her dignity intact, silently enduring the

barbs out of sheer respect for the place she stood.

But Alex was done playing nice. His patience snapped like brittle twigs beneath a boot heel.

"Who let this rabid mutt off her leash?" he snarled, his eyes narrowing into icy slits.

"If you're losing your damned mind, the hospital's down the street. Now quit yapping your madness in here."

Rose gasped, her face a furious mask of indignation.

"You worthless leech! Have you even the faintest clue who you're speaking to?"

"Should I care?" Alex drawled with ruthless contempt. His gaze slid down her with exaggerated disgust.

"You dress like a woman, yet yap like a mongrel in heat. Every sound from your filthy mouth reeks of rot. Maybe scrub out that cesspool between your teeth before barking more nonsense."

Rose's eyes widened, her carefully cultivated poise shattering under his relentless mockery.

"How dare you insult me in my own house!"

She was Richie Morgan prized trophy, a woman whose mere shadow made grown men fall over themselves to lick her boots clean.

Yet this cocky little bastard had dared to spit venom straight into her face. He had nerves of steel or a death wish-probably both.

Alex took a defiant step forward, eyes blazing with raw defiance.

"And what if I did insult you, huh? Keep flapping that filthy mouth at Lyra, and I swear you'll taste the back of my hand. Mark my words."

Lyra leaned back, her eyes shimmering like moonlight reflecting off a calm river, resting her cheek tenderly in the curve of her palm.

She watched Alex with a gentle smile, savoring the fierce loyalty burning within him.

"You worthless parasite!" Rose snarled, cheeks flushed crimson with outrage.

"Drop to your knees and beg my forgiveness right now, or God help me, you'll regret every breath you've taken today!"

Alex chuckled cruelly, the sound dripping with contempt. "Kneel before you? Honey, I've scraped better than you off my boots."

He eyed her mockingly, then cocked his head, a shadow of twisted amusement spreading over his lips.

"Besides, lady, instead of screeching like a mangy alley cat, you ought to head down to the clinic. You're clearly carrying something nasty."

Rose's jaw clenched so hard her teeth nearly cracked. "You're the diseased one, you miserable bastard! You and your entire bloodline are rotten from the inside out!"

Alex snorted derisively, shaking his

head as though she were hopelessly foolish. "That's adorable. Your neck's swollen, your breath rasps like sandpaper, and unless I'm blind, that rash spreading up your wrist isn't makeup. You've got HIV,

sweetheart."

"H-HIV?" Rose stammered, her voice thin as frayed thread, her face turning ghostly pale.

Every ounce of fight vanished from her body in a heartbeat, replaced by a suffocating terror that coiled around her throat like barbed wire.

Alex's words had sliced too close, and memories of reckless nights spent in heated passion flooded back, making her stomach churn violently.

Lyra straightened slightly, her composure slipping for the first time, voice catching with wary disbelief.

"Alex, are you certain? This isn't something to joke about."

Alex's gaze softened as it settled on Lyra, the harsh lines of his expression

easing. "I can swear my life on it, trust me I'm rarely wrong."

A bitter laugh suddenly escaped him. "Now it all makes sense why Morgan never fully recovers. If he insists on sharing his bed with this toxic woman, he'll keep getting infected as fast as the medicine cures him. She's his real sickness."

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 293[1,040 words]

"You lying scum!" Rose exploded, clawing desperately at her fading dignity.

"I just left the hospital today, got a clean bill of health, and you dare frighten me with this filthy slander?"

Alex merely shrugged, utterly unfazed, his eyes glinting like sharpened steel. "Suit yourself, princess. Believe whatever helps you sleep at night."

"You insufferable wretch! You dare humiliate me in public?!" Rose roared, her voice splintering under the weight of her rage and shame.

She spun furiously to her muscle-bound bodyguard. "William! Smash his smug face into the ground-right now!"

William, muscles flexing like iron beneath taut skin, took one imposing step forward, fists clenched, eyes darkening with silent menace as tension crackled like a prairie fire.

But before he got close, Alex raised a casual, commanding hand.

"Think twice, big guy," he warned.

"I'm not joking about her condition. If she spits on you, God help you—you might end up counting your days right alongside her. Are you sure you don't want to get her treated first?"

William froze, muscles tensed, confusion furrowing his brow as he glanced back uncertainly at Rose.

"Mrs. Morgan... perhaps we ought to—"

"You're hesitating, you spineless oaf? Hit him already!" Rose shrieked, her voice cracking in rage and humiliation. "You're absolutely useless!"

Finally, Lyra's soft voice came. "Mrs. Morgan, you might do well to heed Alex's warning. He doesn't bluff about medical matters."

"What the hell is going on here?" thundered David Morgan.

"Oh, darling!" Rose cried, lurching toward him in a clumsy, exaggerated stagger, her every step a spectacle of manufactured despair.

"They're tormenting me-mocking me in public! You must protect me!"

She buried her face theatrically in her trembling hands, sobbing loudly enough for everyone to turn and stare.

Her tears streaked mascara down her cheeks, painting a grotesque mask of feigned victimhood.

"This fraud-this charlatan-dared to call me a shrew," Rose wailed, pointing an accusatory finger at Alex, her voice rising to a hysterical pitch.

"He claimed I have some filthy disease! David, if you let them get away with this, I'll be too ashamed to ever leave the house again! I might just go die."

David patted Rose gently on the shoulder, soothing her theatrics while turning eyes as cold as gunmetal toward Lyra and Alex.

Lyra barely raised an eyebrow, her expression unmoved by his commanding presence.

"Explain what? Alex gave your wife an honest opinion. She couldn't handle the truth-that's hardly our fault."

"Liar!" Rose screamed, her voice cracking from rage.

"You're all conspiring against me, humiliating me in front of everyone!"

"Maybe try a little self-awareness," Alex shot back, unflinching. "I was genuinely concerned for your health."

Rose turned desperately back to her husband, gripping his sleeve as if she might collapse.

"Did you hear him, David? He's still slandering me, saying I'm sick!"

Alex tilted his head slightly, "I stated a fact. You are sick. Why pretend that's an insult?"

"Alright then, smart guy-exactly what sickness does my wife supposedly have?" David snarled.

Alex spoke with icy, brutal simplicity. "HIV."

"That's impossible!" David whirled to face Lyra, eyes burning with fury and suspicion.

"Ms. Thompson, perhaps you can shed some real light on this disgraceful situation."

Lyra faced him steadily, her voice calm and measured.

"Mr. Morgan, Alex has a gift. If he sees a problem, it's not imagined. For your sake, perhaps another test-elsewhere-would confirm things clearly."

Rose's shrill scream sliced through the tense silence, her eyes wild with panic. "He's lying! This is disgusting, twisted slander!"

David Morgan's stare fixed on Alex, eyes narrowed into icy, murderous slits.

His voice came out low, every word a dagger. "You better be damn certain about what you're accusing, kid."

Alex stood firm, his gaze unwavering, the smirk on his lips cold as steel.

"Run the tests again. Different hospital, though-military-grade, if you can manage it. No chance for bribes or funny business. You might find some nasty little secrets hiding. Hell, let's sweeten it. A million dollars says I'm right." ŝwnovel

David scoffed, skepticism battling greed in his eyes. The thought of easy cash was too tempting.

"Rose," he growled, voice deceptively calm, "You're taking another test. Now. Pass it, and you pocket half a million bucks."

Alex coughed deliberately, cutting through David's arrogance.

"Seems you've misunderstood, Mr Morgan. When I said another test, T meant both of you. You see, I'm betting you've got the same nasty

surprise hiding in your bloodstream."

"Impossible," David hissed, face twisting into disbelief. "I've just had my checkup."

Alex's smile sharpened. "Exactly why you need an unbiased opinion."

David hesitated, pride warring with suspicion.

Finally, greed won again. "Ten million bucks says you're wrong."

"Deal," Alex replied smoothly. He glanced at two burly bodyguards standing nearby. "Let's up the stakes-each of your loyal lapdogs gets tested too."

David snarled, outraged. "You think my whole damn house is crawling with HIV?"

Alex leaned forward, voice dripping mockery. "One million each. Or are you scared of what you'll find?"

Lyra smirked, voice icy and sweet.

"I've got connections at the military hospital. They'll fly right here, tests done in fifteen minutes flat. Easy money-if you're clean."

David eyed them suspiciously, then relented with a cold laugh.

"Fine. Test them all. But when this blows up in your face, I want a dozen of those miracle pills you've been selling."

"Done," Lyra snapped, already dialing her phone. "Might as well test everyone in your precious household. Let's clear the air."

Barely ten minutes passed before the thunderous blades of a helicopter drowned out every thought, landing swiftly on David's immaculate lawn.

A female doctor, flanked by three efficient nurses, jumped out, equipment already in hand, moving swiftly like a precision military strike.

Within the tense hour that followed, a stunned hush consumed the estate.

The results came in, stark and brutal.

Eleven out of the thirty tested were positive.

David's personal guards, men who shadowed his every move, carried the virus.

The handsome gardeners, who

meticulously maintained David's et

pristine lawns, and the loyal drivers who chauffeured him and Rose everywhere, also tested positive.

Rose stood frozen, horror etched deeply into her delicate features as her two trusted bodyguards joined her in shameful diagnosis.

Then the final blow, delivered straight into David Morgan's heart-his own result staring back at him, mercilessly positive.

Shock drained the color from his face. His voice cracked, breaking the silence with desperate denial.

"This can't be true. I've never touched anyone but my wife."

A deafening stillness descended over the room, realization like a suffocating

shroud tightening around everyone present.

All eyes slowly, painfully, turned towards Rose, whose face had transformed from panic to an unmistakable mask of guilt.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 294[1,198 words]

"Explain what?" Rose screamed, her voice echoing harshly against the sterile walls.

"He's lying-every single one of them is! We've been doing just fine with Dr. Louise York. Now suddenly these frauds show up and hand us a completely different result? No way. They're all liars—plain and simple!"

The doctors and nurses exchanged weary, condescending glances, staring at Rose as though she were raving mad.

"If you can't accept reality, that's your problem," the lead doctor said coldly, her tone dripping contempt.

"Feel free to find another hospital to peddle your delusions. But be warned, your precious private doctor is nothing but a fraud who'd sell his mother for the right price."

With a dismissive sneer, the doctor pivoted sharply, stalking back toward the helicopter, leaving a bitter, unbearable truth hanging heavily behind him.

Lyra broke into bitter laughter.

"Alex, why don't you break it down for them," she mocked, "as a professional, of course."

Alex's smile curled into something dark and cruel.

"Gladly. Since you're all so desperate to know," he said, his gaze cutting into Rose with cold disdain.

"Here's the truth. Rose has been screwing at least six men in this room- everyone except the gardener and the chef. And the only reason they're not on the list is because they're too busy being in love with one of the six."

The male gardener shot a glance at the chef, then at the bodyguard and their eyes said everything.

'How dare you cheat on me!'

"Do you even hear yourself?" David growled, his jaw so tight it looked like his teeth might shatter. "I don't tolerate slander!"

If Lyra hadn't been standing between them, he would've put a bullet straight through Alex's skull without a second thought.

Alex didn't flinch. He just arched an eyebrow, cool and calm.

"I know exactly what I'm saying. Or would you rather I wrap it up in more pretty little lies?"

"You bastard!" Rose screamed, her humiliation boiling over into unfiltered rage.

"How dare you slander me, you spineless, venom-tongued freak! I'll smash that smug face of yours into pulp!"

"Enough!" David thundered, silencing her instantly. His eyes drilled into Alex. "Got proof, or just poison words?"

Alex's grin was wicked. "Proof? Easy. Check the smartwatches and phones of these eleven lovely people. Scroll through their galleries-you might find something rather entertaining."

Before David could respond, William bolted toward the door.

Instantly, David's other bodyguard lunged, tackling him to the polished marble floor with a brutal crash.

He ripped William's smartphone away, quickly scanning the contents before handing it to David.

David snatched it, the color draining from his face as rage surged through his veins. He looked ready to explode.

Rose swallowed hard, suddenly nervous.

"Honey, what's wrong?" she asked shakily, attempting innocence.

Without a word, David spun around, his palm connecting violently with Rose's face.

The slap echoed like a gunshot, knocking her backward. Blood trickled from her lips, her cheek instantly swelling. Everyone froze, utterly stunned.

"David, why-why did you hit me?" Rose whimpered, clutching her face, eyes brimming with disbelief.

The room fell into suffocating silence. None of them could believe it-David Morgan, the man notorious for fiercely protecting his wife, had just struck her in cold fury.

"Look at this and explain yourself!" David snarled, throwing the phone at her feet.

Trembling, Rose picked up the phone. One glance drained every drop of color from her face, leaving her pale and shaken as if she'd been punched again.

The screen displayed an explicit selfie-William smirking arrogantly beside Rose's unmistakably naked body.

"No...this must be AI-deepfake technology or something! You know they can fake anything now!" Rose protested desperately.

"Are you still trying to lie to me? Now?" David exploded, veins bulging in his neck.

Fury and betrayal coiled around his heart like a noose, tightening with every breath.

He'd just discovered he had six Eskimo brothers.

It was already soul-crushing to learn his wife had slept around. But now she was carrying AIDS.

And she'd passed it to him without a shred of remorse.

She wasn't just unfaithful-she was a walking disgrace.

Rose collapsed to her knees, sobbing hysterically. "David, please-I was confused, I swear! Forgive me!"

Suddenly, she whipped around, finger stabbing toward the terrified young bodyguard next to her.

"It's all his fault! He seduced me! I'm innocent-he ruined me!"

"Mrs. Morgan, try showing some integrity for once. You pursued me! How can you shove this mess entirely onto me?" William snapped, anger pulsing through his voice.

"Exactly!" another man shouted, desperation edging into his tone.

"You came onto me first," the driver protested, eyes wide with fear.

"Damn right," growled one of the bodyguards, glaring at Rose with barely concealed disgust.

They all knew the stakes; crossing Richie Morgan meant their lives hung by a thread.

No one wanted to become the fall guy.

"Shut your filthy mouths! Every single one of you twisted creeps seduced me! Worse, you animals gave me AIDS!" Rose shrieked, her voice raw with fury. She charged toward them, delivering blistering slaps that echoed sharply through the room.

She spun back, collapsing to her knees at David's feet, eyes glittering with tears. "Please, David, I made a horrible mistake. I'm begging you, forgive me. We're husband and wife-give me one more chance!"

David's expression darkened, a cold revulsion twisting his features.

"Husband and wife? After you've turned me into brothers-in-arms with this bunch? You're revolting."

He had loved her once, genuinely and deeply, but loyalty was the bedrock of his affection.

Without fidelity, love meant nothing.

"You're to blame! You ruined everything, you miserable little worms! I'll tear your eyes out!" Rose screamed, her rage exploding as she lunged at Lyra.

"Back off!" Alex shouted, swiftly stepping forward and driving a brutal kick into her face.

Rose crumpled to the floor,

clutching her face, gasping in agony. Her face twisted into a pitiful plea, "David-help me. They're hurting me. Your wife is begging you..."

David's eyes hardened into crimson ice, his voice dangerously calm as he commanded, "Security, get these people out of my sight. Now."

Immediately, twenty guards swarmed into the room, gripping each of the eleven people roughly.

The head of security met David's gaze with a grim seriousness. "Sir, how should we deal with them?"

A lethal edge entered David's eyes. "Extract the truth-by whatever means necessary."

"Understood, sir."

"David!" Rose's wails echoed helplessly as the guards dragged her away.

Her apologies and pleas dissolved into futile echoes down the hallway.

Finally, silence settled like a heavy shroud. David closed his eyes, inhaling deeply to calm his racing pulse.

He steadied himself, mastering his turmoil with practiced control.

Turning to Lyra, he lowered his voice, tone softening, "Ms. Thompson, forgive me for the ugly scene. I hope it hasn't shaken you too deeply."

Lyra offered a composed smile. "It's fine. An unfortunate misunderstanding, nothing more."

"You must be the talented healer Alex I've heard so much about," David continued, focusing on Alex.

"After today's chaos, I can see your reputation is well-earned."

Alex nodded slightly. "Mr. Morgan, I understand today has been difficult. I hope you're managing alright."

David's expression tightened briefly before he forced a bitter smile.

"I owe you thanks, Alex. Without your sharp perception, who knows how long I'd have lived under these lies."

He knew the truth stung deeply, but pain now was better than betrayal later.

Lyra spoke carefully, her voice steady but tense.

"Mr. Morgan, you need to understand this clearly. Each time you were cured, you were reinfected again and again. Omet

tests Confirm your wife is the source. The miracle pill works perfectly. It's not the medicine that's failing-it's her."

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 295[1,017 words]

David lowered his eyes, shame flickering briefly across his face.

"Maybe you're right," he admitted quietly. "I'm sorry for doubting your miracle pill."

Lyra's lips curled into a knowing smile. "Glad we're clear. Your last announcement caused my sales to plummet. That needs fixing."

Forcing a strained smile, David sighed deeply. "I'll publicly endorse it again, I promise. But you need to help me get rid of this disease first."

Alex leaned forward.

"Easy enough. Just take the miracle pill once a month, and within three months, your body will eradicate all traces of HIV. Trust the process."

"Then we're finished here," Alex said, rising smoothly from his chair.

"Wait!" David's voice broke urgently, punctuated by a rattling cough. "There's something else. Just a moment, please."

"No rush," Alex replied, exchanging an intrigued glance with Lyra.

David signaled to one of his guards, and shortly after, a young man about seventeen stepped nervously into the room.

"This is Luther Morgan, my only surviving son," David announced, his voice edged with a rare vulnerability.

"Tell me, does he look ill to you?"

Alex frowned slightly, eyes narrowing. "Why the concern?"

David shifted uncomfortably, desperation lining his face.

"I've had three wives, each bearing me sons. None lived past twenty. Luther here is my last hope—my heir. I fear some hidden sickness might steal him from me, too."

Luther shot his father an exasperated look.

"Dad, I'm perfectly fine. I'm going to live a long, healthy life, trust me. Can I please go now? I promised to meet my best friend."

David softened, waving his hand dismissively. "Alright, go on."

As Luther hurried out, David's eyes lingered wistfully on the doorway.

The silence that fell afterward felt thick, charged with unspoken anxieties.

"Tell me honestly," David pressed, leaning heavily forward. "Will he survive long enough to give me grandchildren?"

Alex studied the space Luther had occupied moments earlier. "He appears strong, healthy-good build, stable aura. You must have been giving him the miracle pill and herbs regularly. He'll be fine."

David's face glowed briefly, pride overshadowing his concerns. "Yes, he's bright and talented. Always winning at everything. I gave him all the best!"

Alex gave a slight nod, his expression turning serious. "He definitely has Rose's features... but if you really want to be sure, I'd suggest a full paternity test."

The warmth vanished from David's face, replaced by a cold, sharp stare. "Paternity test? He's my son-I already had that done."

Alex coughed softly, maintaining steady eye contact. "Tested by a doctor who conveniently declared your entire family free of HIV?"

"His family has served mine for generations!" David snapped defensively. "I trust their judgment implicitly."

Alex raised his hands placatingly. "It's merely advice from my experience. The choice remains yours."

David's voice dropped dangerously low. "Explain yourself."

Alex met his gaze unflinchingly. "He may not be your biological son."

David slammed his massive hand violently onto the table, his anger erupting uncontrollably.

The force flipped the table, scattering shattered glass and splintered wood across the marble floor. "What the hell are you insinuating?"

One of the guards lunged protectively toward David, eyes fierce and wary.

Calmly, Alex stood, placing a reassuring hand on Lyra's arm. "Our business here is done. I believe we're no longer welcome."

The young guard stepped forward threateningly. "Sir, your orders?"

David gripped the guard's shoulder firmly, drawing deep breaths. "No. They've done nothing wrong." He steadied himself, visibly trembling. "Brian, help me to the sofa."

"Yes, sir," Brian responded quickly, guiding David gently across the room.

Settling heavily into the cushions, David's tone softened, fraught with suppressed emotion.

"Forgive my outburst-it's difficult to hear. Stay, please. I'll call a trusted hospital to perform the paternity test immediately. I need both of you to witness the results."

Alex lifted his hands calmly. "Understood. Take your time."

While they settled onto the couch, Alex and Lyra observed David carefully. In those few moments, he seemed to age a decade, burdened by the unbearable possibility that Luther, the boy he'd built his pride around, might not even be his son.

Brian quietly approached, concern lining his face. "Would you like some warm water, sir?"

David nodded weakly. "Yes, thank you."

As Brian retreated, Alex leaned forward, eyes narrowed. "That guy, Brian-do you trust him?"

"Brian? He's an orphan, started working here when he was just a kid," David replied, exhaustion weighing each word.

"He's earned my trust. Saved my life twice-caught bullets meant for me. A good man. Why do you ask?"

Alex hesitated briefly before pressing further. "Since we're testing Luther anyway, why not throw Brian into the mix?"

David stiffened, visibly shaken. "What exactly are you implying? Are you suggesting Brian could be another of Rose's indiscretions?"

Alex shrugged gently, his gaze steady. "Maybe it's nothing. Call it intuition, if you want."

"Fine, fine," David snapped, surrendering with weary resignation. "Do whatever you need. If there's anyone else you have doubts about, test them too." "Then let's test your private doctor's genetic as well," Alex suggested calmly. David barely reacted, whispering instructions to his butler, his voice hollow.

Life had twisted violently upside down in mere hours, leaving him numb and bewildered. His initial horror of discovering Rose's betrayal and contracting HIV now felt trivial compared to this new, brutal shock.

His son might not be his. That realization cut deeper than the sting of betrayal.

A son-his legacy-was something even his vast fortune couldn't buy.

"Alex, are you absolutely certain?" David's voice quivered, desperately clinging to a fragile hope.

Alex spoke softly but firmly. "Mr. Morgan, I wish I weren't. But we have to confront this head-on."

A wave of sympathy overtook Alex as he watched David.

Here was a man drowning in wealth but utterly impoverished by deceit and betrayal. His wife's infidelity and his son's questionable parentage-a cruel double blow that would break even the strongest souls.

David's face sank into profound sorrow.

He could reconcile himself with betrayal, even illness, but raising another man's

child was something beyond forgiveness. Only a paternity test would reveal the bitter truth.

Driven by his influence and wealth, David demanded rapid tests-carried out simultaneously at five different hospitals to eliminate any doubt.

Within the hour, the butler delivered the results, an oppressive silence enveloping the room.

David tore each envelope open, hands trembling, eyes growing wider with every new report.

By the fifth, his face had drained completely of color, and all hope crumbled away beneath a crushing truth.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 296[1,167 words]

David slumped onto the sofa, the weight of betrayal etched deeply into his aging face.

The lines of despair were clear, reflecting a soul shattered beyond repair.

Seventeen years he had cherished Luther, believing him to be flesh of his flesh. And now, the truth sliced through him like a cold blade-Luther wasn't his son.

Lyra cautiously stepped closer, concern softening her voice. "David, do you want some time alone? We can come back later."

"No," David snapped, his voice dangerously calm, eyes flashing with a sinister fury.

"I have to thank Alex personally for unveiling this nightmare."

He rose abruptly, bitterness seeping into every syllable.

"Life's a twisted joke. I've spent my whole existence doing good deeds, only to be repaid with HIV, a cheating wife, and now the bitter irony-my beloved son isn't even mine."

He drew a ragged breath, anguish heavy in his chest. All the wealth and power he'd accumulated, yet now he stood heirless, a broken king without a legacy.

David reached for a stack of letters lying ominously on the table, meticulously opening each one, his keen intellect quickly piecing together the puzzle of treachery.

"Correct me if I'm wrong," he growled, his gaze piercingly intense.

"Luther isn't mine. He's Rose's child. And if I trust these documents," he slapped down the damning papers-"his true father is none other than my personal physician, Louise York. That treacherous snake."

Rage pulsed through David's veins, hot and poisonous. "York infected Rose with HIV intentionally, hid the truth in falsified reports, hoping we'd all perish so his son could snatch my entire fortune."

Alex nodded gravely, his voice low and deliberate.

"And your other children from your previous wife-they died shortly after Luther's birth, didn't they?"

David's eyes widened with chilling realization, his body trembling uncontrollably. "Are you saying that bastard killed my sons to clear Luther's path to my empire?"

"It's a plausible scenario," Alex replied cautiously.

"How?" David demanded sharply, desperation and fury clawing at his voice.

Alex leaned forward, his voice barely above a whisper.

"A slow-acting poison. An undetectable pathogen slipped quietly into medicines- something everyone trusted from a doctor's hands."

David's face twisted into a mask of deadly vengeance.

Without a word, he retreated to a corner, out of Lyra's hearing, and dialed his phone.

"Carlos," he spoke in a clipped, chilling tone, "you once told me you handle dirty jobs discreetly. I have one now-Dr. Louise York. Make him suffer. I want him rotting in private prison for two decades, alive but broken. Price is irrelevant."

Only after issuing his command to the shadows did David feel the crushing weight lift slightly from his chest.

Darkness, after all, was the only force capable of handling true evil.

Returning to the sofa, David's eyes fell on a final document-the paternity test for Brian.

A strange calm settled over him.

"I don't need to open this," he murmured, resignation softening his tone. "Whether he's Rose's son or not, Brian saved my life. That's enough. I like that guy."

"Probably wise," Alex agreed gently, then hesitated.

"Have you ever, perhaps unknowingly, fathered any children outside your marriages?"

David shook his head slowly, regret shading his eyes. "Never. I was meticulous about that."

A painful irony washed over him, realizing now, in the twilight of his life, he might never father a legitimate heir.

The bitterness was profound, his legacy crumbling like sand through his fingers.

Alex leaned forward slightly, voice quiet yet piercing. "And what about your first and second wives? You don't have to talk if it's too painful."

David grabbed a glass of water, his hand trembling slightly.

He took a sip, swallowed hard, and sighed deeply, as though breathing out memories too heavy to bear.

"My first wife...after our son died, it shattered her completely," David murmured, eyes distant.

"She never recovered, just wasted away until illness finally took her. Now that I think about it, maybe that damned doctor truly killed her."

Alex's expression tightened. "And your second wife?"

David's eyes flashed with bitterness. "After our son passed, she spiraled out of control."

"Out of control?" Alex pressed gently.

"Parties, clubs, anything reckless enough to numb her pain," David said, disgust seeping into his tone.

"I thought it might ease her grief, so I let her. Until the day she came home, boasting that she was pregnant by another man."

Alex raised an eyebrow, cautiously asking, "What did you do?"

David's gaze hardened, venom dripping from each word.

"What did I do? divorced her immediately. I made sure she left penniless, scraping to survive. Last heard, she was living in some grimy apartment, working herself ragged just to afford food. Eventually, she vanished, changed her

name-disappeared completely."

Alex stood abruptly, nodding slowly, his tone firm yet polite. "That's enough for today. Lyra, let's go."

David slumped further into his chair, exhaustion lining every feature. "I'll send your payment soon."

"Don't worry about it," Alex replied, stepping toward the exit.

Near the door, Alex paused, catching sight of Brian standing quietly in the shadows. He eyed the young man with sudden, sharp curiosity. "Brian, isn't it?" Brian looked up, startled but steady. "Yes, sir."

Alex tilted his head slightly, probing gently. "You never knew your father, right?" Brian's face tightened, suspicion flickering. "How do you know that?"

Alex shrugged casually, a slight, knowing smile on his lips. "I see more than most. Your mother works hard, right? Waitressing in some small, struggling diner?" Brian nodded slowly, voice tightening with emotion.

"Yes, it's always been just us against the world. She loves me fiercely. We'd sacrifice anything for each other."

Alex's eyes sharpened. "And I suppose she told you your father was a monster-
a heartless bastard who made her life miserable?"

Brian bristled, protective anger blazing in his eyes.

"With all due respect, sir, my mother never spoke ill of him."

"Really?" Alex said, intrigued. "Then what did she say?"

"She always said my father was strong, ambitious, powerful," Brian spoke passionately, pride mingling with sorrow.

"She saw something gentle,

something hopeful beneath his harsh exterior. She believed he was corrupted by another woman, yet insisted he still carried kindness inside. Despite everything, she never stopped loving him. She said I was the greatest gift he ever gave the world."

Brian's voice cracked slightly, eyes misting. "We've struggled, yes, but now things are finally turning around, especially since Mr. David gave me this job."

"She never sought another partner?" Alex questioned softly.

Brian shook his head fiercely. "Never. Many tried, but she refused them all. She swore before God she'd only ever love one man."

Alex's eyes softened, genuinely moved. "Your mother sounds incredible."

"Thank you," Brian said quietly, his voice thick with emotion.

Overhearing their conversation, David felt an inexplicable dread twisting in his gut.

A terrible suspicion clawed at him, forcing him to grab the last paternity report lying forgotten on the table.

His hands shook violently as he unfolded the document, eyes scanning the lines with desperate urgency.

A sharp breath escaped him—short, ragged, almost disbelieving.

The paper trembled in his grip as a storm of emotion surged through him.

Tears welled in his eyes, vision blurring, but whether from heartbreak or something else, no one could tell.

David slumped back into the chair, hands clutching the paper like a lifeline, silent sobs shaking his shoulders—this time, not from loss, but from the sheer, impossible grace

of a second chance.

The Almighty Dominance - Chapter 297[1,030 words]

Alex and Lyra stepped into a quaint café tucked behind an unassuming flower shop, distant from the bustling street.

The air was fragrant with roses and coffee beans, peaceful yet oddly charged. Lyra cast a skeptical glance around. "Alex, seriously, why are we here?"

Alex smirked as he flipped open the menu. "Trust me, Lyra. If my hunch is right, we're in for quite the spectacle."

She raised a teasing eyebrow. "If you're paying, this might actually qualify as a date."

He chuckled dryly. "Order whatever you want. Though, I'm still puzzled by your eagerness to spend money when you spend your days piling it up."

Lyra grinned playfully. "Money's nice, but it doesn't beat watching you squirm when the check arrives."

They exchanged laughter, enjoying the brief respite until Lyra suddenly leaned forward, eyes wide. "Wait-isn't that David?"

Their corner seat shielded them from view, but offered a perfect line of sight.

David strode in, scanning the small café urgently until his gaze landed on an older woman carefully arranging flowers.

He approached slowly, each step heavy with hesitation.

The woman glanced up, startled. "Can I help—" Her voice faltered abruptly as recognition flashed in her eyes.

For an excruciating moment, silence hung thick between them.

David finally spoke, his voice edged with tension. "Why didn't you ever tell me?"

"Tell you what, David?" Her tone quivered defensively.

"Dammit, Priscilla, enough with the lies!" His voice rose sharply, filled with years of pent-up frustration.

She turned away, trembling. "I don't know what you mean."

David grasped her wrist urgently. "Brian! He's mine, isn't he? Why keep this from me?"

Priscilla's eyes flashed angrily, tears brimming.

"How many times did I warn you? Rose was dangerous—she killed our first child, and you never believed me! I had to save my second son from that monster!"

David's face paled as realization crashed over him, memories he once dismissed now hauntingly clear.

"God, Priscilla," he whispered, shaken. "You warned me decades ago, and I-I didn't listen. I thought you were just jealous, throwing a tantrum. But you were right. Rose is dangerous."

"Still, what good is it now? It's already too late, David. Far too late. Brian grew up without a father."

Priscilla's tears flowed freely now, raw with pain.

"I'm sorry."

"It's not fair. Brian worshipped you, David. You were everything to him. He even took a bullet for you, for God's sake." Her voice cracked bitterly.

"Now, Brian is my everything too." David swore.

"Fine. He's yours now. He's grown-do whatever you wish."

She pulled away sharply, but David clutched her hand tighter. "Priscilla, please. Come back with me."

She shook her head fiercely. "I will never set foot anywhere near Rose again. Never."

"I've divorced her," David admitted quietly, desperation softening his voice. "It's over between us."

Priscilla regarded him skeptically, bitterness etched deep into her face.

"Another divorce, David? And who's the lucky number four?"

"No one," he said earnestly. "It's only you, from here to the end."

Priscilla stared at him, sorrowful yet resolute. "No, David. The wounds you inflicted haven't healed, even after all these decades."

"I'm begging you, Priscilla," David pleaded softly. "Please forgive me."

She paused, swallowing back pain.

"For Brian's sake, I'll forgive you but mark my words, David: a woman might forgive, but she'll never forget."

She turned away, leaving David standing alone, regret weighing heavily on his shoulders as Alex and Lyra watched silently from their hidden corner.

Lyra leaned close to Alex, her voice sharp yet hushed.

"Priscilla's absolutely right. How could she ever forget what that jerk David did? He left her alone, suffering, raising Brian on her own. She shouldn't forgive that selfish fool."

Alex sighed gently. "But David apologized. Can't she find it in her heart to forgive him-for Brian's sake at least?"

Lyra shot him a fierce glance, eyes blazing.

"Forgive? After the scars he left on her heart? No woman can simply brush away pain like that. David's nothing but a selfish bastard."

Across from them, Priscilla stepped decisively away from David, her back rigid with barely-contained hurt.

David inhaled deeply, the weight of guilt crushing his shoulders.

He hesitated, searching his soul until, with reluctant resolve, he called out desperately,

"Priscilla! Half of everything I own-all my money, my properties-it's all yours. Can you please find it in your heart to forgive me? To move past my mistakes?"

Priscilla froze mid-step, emotions flickering across her face. Slowly, deliberately, she turned, eyeing David thoughtfully.

"The doctor said holding onto bitterness could destroy my health. Maybe it's time I learned how to let go. To forgive and forget" Her eyes narrowed, studying him closely.

"What do you

think?"

"That's fair," David murmured, stepping forward cautiously and pulling her into a tentative, heartfelt embrace.

Lyra, watching from afar, brushed tears from her eyes.

"David truly is a gentleman. Priscilla's doing the right thing-Brian needs his father."

Alex raised a skeptical eyebrow. "And you're sure this isn't about the money?"

Lyra snapped around, her expression turning stormy.

"How dare you, Alex! Do you

honestly think we women only care

about money? Our hearts ache for

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our children. We'll endure anything-even breaking our own hearts-to keep our families whole. We sacrifice everything, even our pride, to ensure harmony?"

Alex almost responded with a snarky comment about money again, but wisely chose silence.

He swallowed hard, nodding thoughtfully. "You're right. She's strong."

Some secrets, Alex decided, were best kept locked away, especially if one wanted peace and a longer life.

"Hey, Alex," Lyra suddenly said, squinting into the distance. "Isn't that Luther and Charles Kingston?"

"Charles?" Alex's brow furrowed sharply as he turned.

Luther stormed up to David and Priscilla, eyes blazing with suspicion. "Dad, what the hell are you doing? Cheating on mom now?"

David's face twisted bitterly at Luther's accusation, a son he'd once loved until painful truths severed their bond.

"Why are you even here, Luther?"

"My best friend, Charles Kingston, and I are starting a business," Luther demanded arrogantly.

"You promised me a hundred million to start up. Now deliver on your promise."

David shook his head irritably. "This isn't the time, Luther. We'll talk later."

But Luther's impatience flared into rage. He shoved past David and roughly confronted Priscilla.

"Who do you think you are, clinging to my father? He's married! Stay away from him, you old bitch, or I'll teach you a lesson you'll never forget!"

His brutal shove sent Priscilla sprawling painfully to the ground, gasping from the shock and pain of the attack.

And David, with all his pent-up anger, suddenly slapped Luther-for the first time.