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When Ashlyn clicked into an interview video on social media, an elderly, whose face was covered with tears and snot, came into view. “Now that she has become a champion, she abandons her grandma who has raised her up... Her father is still imprisoned... How can she do this to us? She has never visited her father in the prison. I don't understand why her heart is so cold. Has the Berry family failed her?”

Facing the camera, she wailed in agony, “I was the one who had raised her. Back when we were living in the countryside, I had to work non-stop from the crack of dawn until late at night every day to be able to afford her tuition fees by growing vegetables and selling them. I never thought that she would abandon the Berry family and me once she becomes famous and rich.”

This was merely an interview.

To Ashlyn's surprise, the Lake City News was able to invite Susan for a live interview at six in the evening.

Clad in a business suit, the host was seated gracefully as she greeted, “Good evening, my fellow audience and friends. We're honored enough to have Susan Blackwood, whose granddaughter is the God of Cars, S, also known as Ashlyn Berry, on our show today. Ms. Blackwood, say hello to the viewers!”

“Hello, everyone. I'm Susan Blackwood, Ashlyn's grandma.” There was not a single trace of apprehension found on Susan's face while she faced the camera.

Although she was not dressed in fashionable outfits, she looked gracious.

At the sight of an elderly with a neat appearance, a good impression was left among the audience.

Smiling, the host commented, “We've invited you today because of your interview with the media. After it was released at 3 o'clock this afternoon, it has garnered quite a lot of attention. This is sensational news in both real life and online. We would like to find out the truth of the whole incident because taking care of the elderly is a virtuous habit that has been passed down for generations in our country. We feel truly sorry about your experience, and we hope that you can answer our questions candidly. Is that all right?”

Susan nodded. “Okay.”

The host looked at Susan with a gentle gaze and inquired, “May I know when Ashlyn left the Berry family?”

“She has never returned after my son, Horace Berry, was imprisoned. In the spacious Berry Residence, I was left alone with only a maid.”

Susan's eyes reddened as she spoke.

Raising her sleeve, she pretended to wipe her tears away, garnering sympathy from the audience at the scene and those who were watching on screen.

“Do you know... that Ashlyn is the God of Cars, S?”

“I didn't know that at first. Previously, all I knew was that she was a doctor at the First Hospital in Lake City. She's usually quite busy, so I never get to meet her, although I miss her a lot.” She let out a sigh as she continued, “When she had fallen sick back when she was a child, I carried her all the way to the Bellflower Hospital in the freezing cold. Now that she's a renowned doctor and the God of Cars... she no longer cares about her country bumpkin grandma.”

As she spoke, tears began streaming down her face.

“Her mother died early, so I was the one who had brought her up. I don't have a hidden agenda for taking part in this show. All I want is to send her a message through this show, telling her how much I miss her and that I hope that she can spare some time to visit me.”

Everyone, who was listening to her story, could not help but shed tears out of sympathy.

Sitting before the television, Ashlyn gazed at the screen impassively. It broke her heart to watch her grandma, whom she had respected since young, defaming her on Twitter and slandering her on live

news.

“Now that she's successful in bringing honor to the country, I'm a useless old lady who's holding her back. It's fine even if she doesn't take care of me. As long as she's safe and happy, I'm satisfied.”

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Susan's voice could be heard as extremely sincere, and she perfectly portrayed the image of a grandma who missed her granddaughter.

It made her seem like a completely different person from the elderly who cursed at Ashlyn in the hospital for not saving Horace.

It was only then that Ashlyn realized that Susan had many different sides to her. It was only then that she knew that Susan was so capable of distorting the facts and being hypocritical.

All of a sudden, Ashlyn felt as if she was an idiot.

Were all of the good things that she did for me just an act? Ashlyn just wanted to know if Susan had ever been sincere toward her.

Back when she was younger, she remembered them getting along well with each other back in the village. Everything seemed so blissful.

She wondered when it all started to change.

It must have started when Horace was jailed... Ashlyn guessed that it was because she didn't save him that caused Susan to be infuriated and filled with resentment and hatred for her.

Was this the reason why she's trying to destroy me now? Is this her motive?

Meanwhile, in the Count's Mansion at Maredania, Penelope and Mary sat in front of the television punctually to watch the live interview from Lake City News.

As they saw how desperately Susan was trying to put on an act, Penelope couldn't help but laugh.

“Mom, take a look at this old lady. What a show she's putting on.”

“Hmph. In order to get Horace, that scumbag, out of jail, she really is spending so much effort,” Mary scoffed in disdain as she looked at Susan, who was on the screen.

“Mom, are you really going to get Dad out of jail?” Penelope glanced at Mary curiously.

Now, Mary was the daughter of the Count. With one word from her, all those in H Nation would

definitely respect her and respond to her demands.

"I left this matter to your uncle. He promised me that he would settle it." Mary picked up a strawberry and put it into her mouth as she continued, "By now, he should have reached H Nation."

"Dad is such a loser. If he comes back to the Count's Mansion with us, he would only be embarrassing Granny," Penelope grumbled as she pursed her lips. Deep down, she genuinely looked down on Horace.

"Especially since he's been in jail and has a criminal record." Mary rolled her eyes as she added, "I've already signed the divorce agreement. I'll just give him a sum of money to get him to stop pestering us. Otherwise, with that greedy nature of his, he would definitely keep bothering us."

"You're right, Mom. With a Dad that has been in jail, I'm now embarrassed to go out for gatherings with the other socialites."

Hearing Mary's reply, Penelope was satisfied that she had the same thoughts as her.

She thought that someone as trashy as Horace wasn't worthy of being with someone as distinguished as her mom.

At the H Nation's international airport, a man with a tall stature walked out of the VIP passage.

A pair of dark shades covered half of his face, revealing only his stunning jawline and thin, sexy lips. There was a dazzling diamond earring on his right ear which sparkled resplendently in the bright sunlight.

His chestnut-colored hair was refreshing and slick, with a few mischievous strands of fringe scattered over his forehead. The vivid blue highlights on his sideburns further accentuated a hint of flamboyance to his elegance.

Once he stepped out of the airport, a middle-aged man came forward to greet him, “Mr. Yates, this way please.”

Ryan Yates raised his eyebrows and followed the middle-aged man into the car.

“It is H Nation's honor to be able to invite you as a judge for the International Piano Competition.” The middle-aged man who spoke to Ryan was none other than Gabriel Watson, one of the members of the organizing committee for the International Piano Competition.

“It's my pleasure, Mr. Watson.” With a smirk, Ryan took off his sunglasses to reveal a pair of narrow eyes that shone with a hint of cheekiness.

“You're a world-class pianist with numerous prestigious awards. How would I dare to disrespect you?” Gabriel replied humbly.

He was desperately trying to put on a humble stance.

However, he couldn't be blamed for trying to butter up Ryan. If there was someone to be blamed, it would be the internationally renowned Piano Prince in front of him. Not only was he handsome, but he also came from a wealthy family.

He was the prominent heir to the Count's Mansion in Maredania and had a title to his name. To the officials in Maredania, he was a prince who would likely inherit the position as Count to become a prominent figure in the future.

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Gabriel was nothing but a mere organizer. There was no way that he would dare to offend such a prominent figure.

Soon, the car reached the five-star hotel that the piano association booked for Ryan.

Once Ryan stepped out of the car, he just happened to see the Lake City News being broadcasted on the screen of a nearby building.

Ryan raised his brow as he watched the old lady on the screen pour out her complaints toward Ashlyn.

As she did so, she even put on an act and said that she only wished for Ashlyn's safety.

"I'm starting to get more interested in this Ashlyn," Ryan muttered to himself.

His lips curved into a sly smile as he walked into the hotel without looking back.

The moment he entered his room, he switched on the television and saw a middle-aged lady on the Lake City News. She wore an embarrassed and remorseful expression on her face.

"Old Mrs. Berry's already getting old. I don't know what happened, but she seems to be getting more muddleheaded nowadays. She just insists that Ms. Berry isn't filial to her. I'm the caretaker that was specially hired by Ms. Berry to look after Old Mrs. Berry. Ms. Berry has already paid ten years' worth of my salary and wanted me to take care of Old Mrs. Berry for ten years. Ever since Horace was jailed, his wife and eldest daughter ran away, and no one knows of their whereabouts. They are the ones who are truly neglecting Old Mrs. Berry. Old Mrs. Berry's food and clothes are all paid for by Ms. Berry alone. She even gave Old Mrs. Berry a bank card with 10 million inside it."

The middle-aged woman wore a look of helplessness as she continued, "It's not that Ms. Berry isn't willing to take care of her grandma. It's just that she's too busy and doesn't have much spare time to visit Old Mrs. Berry. All of the medical staff at the First Hospital knows that Horace and his wife are the ones who like to abuse Old Mrs. Berry. There was even a time when they abused her until she had to be hospitalized for several days! Gosh. I was Old Mrs. Berry's caretaker back then, and Ms. Berry hired me to be the personal caretaker after seeing that I did a good job caring for Old Mrs. Berry."

As she heard this, Susan was infuriated. Despite that, she still had to maintain her image of someone who loved her granddaughter and was searching for her on television. Thus, she couldn't simply curse out of fury.

If that happened, the public wouldn't sympathize with her, and she would suffer huge losses.

If I don't ruin Ashlyn's reputation now, then what would happen to my son? Mary had promised her that as long as she tarnished Ashlyn's reputation, she would get Horace out of jail.

But now, she didn't expect that her caretaker would have nothing better to do and come all the way here to interrupt her.

How did she know that I came to the Lake City TV Station? I clearly remembered avoiding her when I left the house...

The more Susan thought about this, the more anxious she felt. Since that caretaker was hired by Ashlyn, she wondered if Ashlyn had already seen through her act.

No. That's impossible...

As they heard this, the audience who were watching the news was dumbstruck.

None of them expected that Susan's caregiver would directly expose her in a live interview.

Besides that, the caregiver was also hired by Ashlyn, and all the medical expenses and such were covered by Ashlyn herself.

They were also shocked to find out new revelations such as Ashlyn being the one who saved Susan from being abused.

In addition to that, she even gave Susan a bank card with 10 million inside!

"I never wanted the money. All I wanted was her company..." Susan desperately tried to salvage the situation.

However, it was evident that people were already starting to doubt her words.

"Back when you were being abused at the Berry residence, Ms. Berry wanted to bring you away, but you refused. But now that you're the only one left at home, and she says that she wants to bring you away, you said that you wanted to wait for Horace to return."

The caretaker felt that Susan was deliberately looking for trouble. "Horace had always been the one that you truly cared for."

Now that she had finished her words, it was up to the public to decide if they wanted to believe Susan's words.

As she sat in front of the television, Ashlyn watched as the courageous caretaker stood up to defend her.

She then picked up the glass on the coffee table and took a small sip from it.

That caretaker was indeed hired by Ashlyn. Besides being skilled at taking care of Susan, she also reported Susan's each and every move to her. It could be said that Ashlyn had full control over Susan.

Initially, she was only worried that Susan would be unaware that she was ill, which was why she instructed the caretaker to report everything about Susan to her.

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Ashlyn had never thought that one unintentional act would lead to the current situation.

The caregiver told Ashlyn immediately after she found out that Susan had received an unknown call.

Although Ashlyn had some doubts about Susan, she had not expected her to act this way.

After finding out that Susan's real purpose was to manipulate public opinion and ruin Ashlyn's reputation, Ashlyn immediately contacted the caregiver and sent the caregiver to the TV station.

I have to prove my innocence.

This powerful piece of evidence caught Susan off guard.

Originally, the people at the TV station thought they could dig up some dirt on Ashlyn, but they didn't think it would come back to bite them.

At once, both the host and the director were a little awkward and did not know how to smooth things out.

Finally, the caregiver said indifferently, "Ms. Berry is a good person. No matter how much those netizens rant about her on Twitter, she doesn't care. She has a clear conscience as she has never ignored nor abandoned Old Mrs. Berry." After saying that, that caregiver helped Susan up and said, "Old Mrs. Berry, let's go. Let's not cause any more trouble for Ms. Berry."

When Susan heard this, her face fell.

Nevertheless, at this point, no matter what she said, it would not do her much good.

She could only suppress her anger and follow the caregiver outside.

In a five-star hotel, Ryan turned off the TV and casually tossed the remote aside.

I didn't expect Ashlyn to do that. She actually slapped Old Mrs. Berry in the face, and Old Mrs. Berry became terribly indignant. That's interesting.

He smiled, and his phone rang when he was about to go into the bathroom to take a shower.

When he saw the caller ID, he frowned. A hint of impatience appeared between his brows. "Mary, what's wrong?"

"Ryan, did you get off the plane yet?" Mary's voice could be heard from the phone. "I was a little worried about you, so I called to ask."

"I'm already here, and I'm a little tired." The man's voice was icy.

"Well, get some rest. I will not bother you any longer." There was even a hint of ingratiating in her soft voice. "I'm just afraid you'll forget what I had asked you to help me with."

"Don't worry." After Ryan finished speaking, he hung up the phone.

After Ryan hung up, Mary became angry, and she glared at her phone.

That man from the Count's Mansion has always been lukewarm toward me. I'm older than him, but I still have to watch what I say. What can I do? After all, he will inherit the Count's Mansion. My daughter and I will have to be taken care of by this man when the time comes.

At the thought of the high status of the Count's Mansion, Mary could only suppress the displeasure in her heart and put her phone away.

“Mom, how can Ashlyn be so capable? She was the chief designer of LX and even won an award before. Besides that, she's now God of Cars, S. Grandma could not even expose her. Why is she so lucky every time and able to do everything so well?”

Penelope turned off the TV angrily.

This is so annoying! Ashlyn steps on my toes every time, and I feel suffocated by that! I wish I could fly back home right now to show her how extraordinary I am. My mother and I are now the ladies of the Count's Mansion! Wherever we go, we will dress luxuriously and be surrounded by everyone. Regardless, Mom said it's not the right time yet. I can only bear it for now.

Ashlyn was not in the mood, nor did she have time to care for Susan because she directly flew to the International Convention Center in Maredania the next day.

There was a big summit going on here, the Global Enterprise Summit.

The presidents of the five hundred largest companies in the world were invited, including thousands of corporate executives.

The world's most influential bigwigs were gathered here, and their words and actions were, of course, an important basis for all industries to study international financial trends.

The president of Maredania even came to the summit and gave an important speech.

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This was a summit that attracted the eyes of the world.

After Ashlyn left the airport, she went straight to Independence Avenue.

This was an expressway that provided direct access from the airport to the International Convention Center.

Private cars for the conference were parked on both sides of the road, and the police were there to assist.

The car drove briskly down a road about seven kilometers long. This road had six lanes in both directions and was five meters wide on each side. It was equipped with streetlights and traffic lights.

There were also three nature parks and a route to the Parliament along the road.

When she arrived at the International Convention Center, there were a few big red words in front of the entrance that read: Global Enterprise Summit.

This building was one of the tallest buildings in Maredania. It had eighty-eight floors and was sky-high.

The lobby on the first floor was the conference venue, which was elegantly and luxuriously decorated. One could tell it was costly with merely a glance.

The floor was covered with red carpet, and there were countless employees busying around.

There were several security guards at the gate for formalities and security checks.

Ashlyn got out of the car and walked with Jared toward the entrance.

She was wearing a white professional suit and a pair of high heels in the same color. Her long hair was pinned up and coiled behind her head, leaving only two strands of hair in front of her forehead to show her delicate face. She had decent and elegant makeup on her face. Her makeup was not thick, but it was enough to attract the attention of others to her.

She was tall and had a thin waist, long legs, and fair skin. She looked competent and elegant.

Jared, next to her, wore a black suit and was handsome. He carried a laptop in his hand.

Lucas got out of the car and saw the familiar figure in front of him.

Ashlyn? Why is she here?

He was slightly shocked.

He went forward to catch up with Ashlyn. Then, he reached out and grabbed her arm. "Why are you here?"

Ashlyn showed an expressionless face and glanced at the man who suddenly appeared.

She had expected to run into Lucas, but she had not expected the man to have such a huge reaction.

Lucas had long legs and was stunning. He wore a black suit on his slim and firm body. The man looked elegant and classy, especially when one compared him to the bald men or the men with big bellies who

came in and out of that building. He stood out from the crowd, and he was perfect and striking.

Ashlyn smirked, retracted her gaze from him, and said flatly, "If you can come, why can't I?"

"This is the Global Enterprise Summit, and the big shots of the world are here." Lucas felt a headache coming on. "No matter how much Jared spoils you, he has to have a limit. How can he take you here?"

"Lucas." Ashlyn eyed him, then slowly pulled out an invitation card. "You have often felt embarrassed because you are thoughtless."

When Lucas saw this, he froze. He suddenly did not know what to say.

This is a man's battlefield, and I just don't want her to be embarrassed. My woman only needs to hide behind me and enjoy happiness, but Ashlyn always makes unexpected moves.

He stood still and felt that he might have misunderstood her once again.

A bold assumption surfaced in his mind. Don't tell me she...

Spencer urged him in a low voice, "Mr. Nolan, let us go inside..."

The entrance, which had been full of people a moment ago, was now empty, leaving only the two of them. They would be late if they didn't go in.

What if I'm late for such an important summit...

Lucas shook his head and cast away the thoughts before entering the venue with Spencer.

In the venue, Ashlyn and Jared sat side by side, with name tags in front of them, displaying: Centennial Healthcare - Jared Quickton. Centennial Healthcare - Ashlyn Berry.

Lucas' seat happened to be in the same row as theirs, but he was separated by two other directors from other companies.

The man's piercing gaze fell on Ashlyn from time to time, and it made her a little upset.

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This man seemed to be a stubborn one, for no matter how many times he was humiliated, he just wouldn't change his bad habits.

The event's official host was a reputable professor from a well-known university in Maredania, not some emcee from the showbiz.

A lot of the figureheads present that day were students of this professor, which explained why they held high respect for the professor.

Everything started accordingly after the professor was done giving his welcoming speech.

The summit was scheduled for three days.

The first day's events included the speeches given by the leaders of the companies that grew the most in two years.

The second day was a knowledge exchange session where the participants shared their experience and knowledge, while the third day was a tour around Maredania to experience the local culture and traditions.

After the host was done arranging the meetings, he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, next up, we have a legend, who in two years led Centennial Healthcare into numerous groundbreaking achievements that many couldn't achieve! She is one who creates miracles and shatters stereotypes! Let us welcome the chairperson of Centennial Healthcare!"

Meanwhile, that man, whose presence was undeniably enormous, was seated there while maintaining an emotionless expression on his handsome face.

But...

Suspicion rose within Lucas as he pondered, for he had always thought Jared was Centennial Healthcare's president. Since when was there a chairperson? Besides, Centennial Healthcare has been growing rapidly for the past few years, and the president has always been Jared.

It was not just Lucas in shock as the other figureheads were also whispering into each other ears.

"Heh, Centennial Healthcare really is secretive! There's actually a chairperson?"

"I thought the head has always been Mr. Quickton alone!"

"So there's actually another person that is superior to Mr. Quickton?"

Spencer was a little surprised, and he said, "Mr. Nolan, do you think the chairperson of Centennial Healthcare is an old lady?"

With that said, his eyes uncontrollably shifted toward Jared and Ashlyn. He, however, was soon met by surprise and shock when he secretly scrutinized the duo.

"M-Mr. Nolan... There! Over there! Look!"

"What are you so surprised of? Do you have any idea what kind of venue you're attending right now?"

"No... It's Ms. Berry! She... She—"

Before Spencer even managed to finish his words, Lucas had already heard a familiar voice coming out from the speakers installed in the venue.

"Hello, My name is Ashlyn Berry, and I'm the chairperson of Centennial Healthcare."

Ashlyn... Chairperson... Huh?

Lucas' razor-sharp gaze slowly shifted toward the center of the stage as if he was in bullet time, just like in a movie.

The person that entered his vision was a lady donned in fully white business attire. With a presence not to be ignored, she stood behind the microphone while the spotlight shone onto her slender and curvaceous body and beautiful face.

Lucas felt like his heart was being seized by an unknown force after seeing her.

His heart pounded quickly as his eyes set on the lady, and he felt like his breath was taken away.

Whatever he saw came like a bolt from the blue.

How was he not going to be caught off guard?

The shock he received was far stronger than when he found out that the lady was a famed doctor. He dared not believe what he saw to the extent that he felt like there was a crack on his handsome face. His jet black eyes locked on the lady standing on the stage, who was seemingly shining bright like a diamond!

No wonder Jared brought her here! Now it all makes sense how there was only vague respect and obedience in Jared's eyes instead of love when he looked at her, and why Jared was so calm when he sent her to my place when the Spirogyra flared up. So they are not a couple as they were rumored to be...

This was all because Jared was just her subordinate, and the two twin brothers were also just her subordinates undoubtedly.

As for Lucas himself, he had been kept away from the truth, which also meant that he was jealous of mere subordinates all this while.

He shut his eyes to the scene happening right now, for his brain kept reminding him of all the idiotic things he did.

“On behalf of Centennial Healthcare, I thank you all for recognizing and acknowledging us, and we are deeply grateful for your encouragement and care,” said Ashlyn.

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“Despite our efforts, Centennial Healthcare is still like a newborn child compared to the corporations incorporated centuries ago. As we grow, we grow with the hope that we will eventually grow into a massive tree that could protect our country and her people under our shade!”

After giving her speech, Ashlyn gracefully walked down the stage as she returned to her seat.

Her exquisite face was eye-catching. The white business attire covering her body did not make her look stiff but instead further amplified her presence.

The appearance of such a beautiful yet capable female chairperson immediately had the audience clapped enthusiastically.

The figureheads from the business world all came from different countries in the world, and they were all important individuals in their own countries.

Yet, they were all uncontrollably praising the lady. After all, the growth of Centennial Healthcare was in eye-visible speed, and that had already drawn the attention of all players in the related industries.

The meeting ended at noon sharp, and the participants were invited to a luxurious buffet lunch in one of the main halls of the building by the organizers.

The hall was decorated lavishly and fashionably with all sorts of ornaments everywhere, and the dishes were beyond perfection.

In fact, in order to have the tongues of the many participants from various countries taken care of, the organizers had prepared delicacies from different cuisines. Lucas, however, had his eyes locked on the lady surrounded by the many people, and his gaze was sharp while jealously consumed him.

Without a second thought, he took a step forward as he was trying to approach Ashlyn. But before he could move any further, he was met with another woman, who stumbled as she slowly approached him.

She had her hand on her forehead, and she seemed to be in great pain. "Oh... My head... It hurts..."

Seeing this, Lucas frowned right away, for he never liked being a gentleman.

With a movement that was not lacking in both agility and flexibility, Lucas precisely avoided the woman while she fell straight onto the ground.

The woman had it all planned out. The handsome-looking man would catch her like a hero, and the two would then exchange numbers. No matter how she looked at it, she thought that there would be a series of events between them that would eventually lead them into the bed.

Yet, the man actually ignored her like she was nothing but thin air.

Kimberly Powell was very confident with her appearance, which ignited her anger because she took this as a humiliation after being ignored. With her golden hair and her magnificent physique, men around her lusted for her. But this man was undoubtedly one of a kind.

It was also at this moment that a fat man rushed forward, helped her up, and politely asked, "Miss, are you all right? Do you need any help?"

"No, I'm fine!" scorned Kimberly.

She then directed her vision toward the direction where Lucas had left, only to find him walking straight toward a beautiful lady. The lady was smiling from the conversations she held with the other figureheads, but her expression quickly turned cold in an instant after seeing a certain someone.

That lady... She's the chairperson that was giving a speech just now? Who cares! She's not even as rich as I am!

She was the daughter of the world's most reputable oil tycoon.

Very good, you have my attention, pretty boy. Let's see if you'd choose me or that woman.

Kimberly was here at the summit to accompany her father, Timothy Powell. Her father brought her here to let her experience more and widen her connections.

There was no way that he would ever expect that instead of trying to meet his expectations, his daughter was actually preying on a man, only to be ignored like a nobody.

Meanwhile, after exchanging business cards with a few people, Ashlyn kept a smile on her face and suggested, "Gentlemen, we can have a seat here if you'd like to."

With that said, she pointed toward a table near the window.

If a lady was capable and beautiful, she would always easily become the center of attention, just like Ashlyn.

Hence, the men around her immediately seated around the table after receiving the beauty's invitation.

At that exact moment, a handsome man in a black suit bolted out with a stern expression and sat right beside Ashlyn.

With Jared sitting on the left of Ashlyn, and Lucas on the right, an awkward atmosphere spread around the table.

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Lucas remembered his goal of coming here. Under his lead, Nolan Group had been growing steadily over the years. Thus, he was regarded as a handsome young elite in the business world and gained a lot of attention.

However, Ashlyn was a new face in the crowd, and her beauty instantly drew everyone's gazes.

Almost all the people who were staring at Lucas were women.

Judging by their hungry stares, it wasn't hard to tell what they were thinking.

At that moment, all Lucas wanted to do was protect Ashlyn from other men.

Two men sat down at the table in the corner and shot cold glares at Lucas.

“Take pictures of them and send them to Mr. Nolan.”

“Understood.”

When Franklin received the photos, his expression turned extremely grim.

“What's so special about this woman that made Lucas disobey me?”

“Dear, calm down.” Livia stroked Franklin's chest and said, “Remember, we still have a trump card. Besides, the effects of Naomi's poison are about to show.”

“You're right, darling,” Franklin said with a smirk. “When that happens, Lucas will definitely come begging and fall under our control again!”

The way the couple spoke was as if Naomi wasn't their daughter.

Instead, it was as if she was just a stray on the street that didn't matter to them at all.

Meanwhile, at the plastic surgery department in a hospital in Maredania.

A thin girl was lying quietly on the hospital bed.

Her face was covered with white gauze. At that moment, her perfectly shaped eyes were closed, and her long and thick eyelashes fluttered on her face like butterflies.

Suddenly, a tall man entered the ward with a lunch box in his hand. When he saw that she was still asleep, he softly placed the box on the table.

Although his movements were subtle, the girl heard the noise and woke up.

She trembled and slowly opened her eyes.

When she saw the man's familiar face, her lips curled into a smile, and the atmosphere instantly turned sweet and loving. "Hey, Joseph."

Joseph looked at her eyes which were curved like crescent moons, and opened the lunch box. "You're probably feeling hungry. It took me a long time to find a Chanaean restaurant. I'm not sure whether you'll like it."

Charlotte had been staying in the hospital for a long while. She was forced to eat local food every day, so she was tired of it.

Thus, Joseph drove around for a long time in search of a Chanaean restaurant.

After hearing that, Charlotte's eyes lit up. It was as if there were stars in her eyes. She immediately sat up and said, "Oh my goodness! It smells delicious!"

Then, she got out of bed to wash her hands. However, she was so excited that she slipped and lost balance. Just when she was about to fall, a pair of strong arms suddenly reached over to her waist and pulled her back to her feet.

As a result, the girl's nose bumped onto a strong and muscular chest.

Her nose instantly turned red and started to throb in pain.

“It's so hard! It hurts!”

Is his chest made of stone? Why is it so hard?

She looked up at Joseph aggrievedly. At that instant, her nose was red like a rabbit's.

Seeing that, Joseph felt his heart melt.

He couldn't help but coax, “It's all my fault. Hurry up and go wash your hands. The food is getting cold.”

Upon hearing that, Charlotte hurriedly went to wash her hands.

Joseph had bought eggs benedict, two burritos, and a few delicious-looking side dishes.

Even though they were ordinary food, it was hard to find them in Maredania.

Charlotte was already bored of the local food.

Thus, when she saw the eggs benedict, she was overjoyed and happily feasted on the food.

Seeing that girl in front of him stuff down the food with bulging cheeks, Joseph thought she looked adorable.

However, when he glanced at the gauze wrapped around her face, his expression instantly turned cold.

The doctors say that she needs to go through three surgeries in order to regain her smooth and clear skin again. This is just the first surgery.

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Even after the effects of the anesthetics wore off, Charlotte continued to bear the pain and never once complained, no matter how painful it was.

Her eyes had turned red from holding back her tears, but she didn't say a thing. Seeing her suffer made Joseph's heart ache.

The more time he spent with her, the more he understood her.

Joseph's heart skipped a beat whenever he witnessed her strength, quirkiness, and innocence.

He put down his work and applied for a long leave to especially accompany her. However, it seemed much more bearable than he imagined.

When Fae ordered him to accompany Charlotte, his immediate response was to refuse her.

However, in the end, he came to the hospital anyway.

Soon, Charlotte finished wolfing down her food. She ate so much that her tummy turned round.

She stroked her bloated belly. Then, she pointed at the exquisite presents on the bedside table and said to Joseph. "Some of the nurses asked me to pass those to you."

Frustrated, Joseph placed his hand on his forehead and asked, "You're doing this on purpose, aren't you?"

Ever since Charlotte arrived at the hospital, the single nurses who work there would express their love to Joseph from time to time.

Furthermore, Joseph and Charlotte told them that they were siblings. Thus, in order to get close to Joseph, the nurses would butter up Charlotte.

Charlotte had never received so much attention before and thought that it was fascinating.

She received so many gifts on Joseph's behalf that her hands hurt.

Joseph put down the fork in his hand and carried the few gift boxes. Then, he pretended to be mad and glared at Charlotte. "If you continue to receive gifts on my behalf, you'll regret it!"

"Joseph, where are you going?"

"Where else? I'm going to return these gifts!" Joseph replied angrily.

With that, he turned and left the ward.

After a full day of meetings, Ashlyn's body started to ache.

She returned to her room, took a shower, and changed into an all-black outfit.

Just when she was about to leave, a pair of hands suddenly reached out from behind the curtains and wrapped around her waist.

The man slowly leaned close to her pink lips, and with his hoarse voice, he teased, "Honey, it's late. Where are you going?"

Ashlyn immediately felt his warm breath blow into her ear.

He then stroked her earlobe adeptly with his thin lips and sucked it.

Ashlyn's eyes darkened. At that moment, she wanted to punch him. However, the man's hands that had crawled to her back suddenly pressed down and pulled her toward him.

With that, he aggressively attacked her with a kiss.

He had been wanting to kiss her since that morning.

His kiss was as domineering and wild as it used to be.

After they finished kissing, Ashlyn was overwhelmed by everything that had just happened and started gasping for air.

On the contrary, Lucas' lips curled into a devious grin.

He hugged Ashlyn and whispered, "Accompany me to a place."

Then, he led her out of the room with his hand on her waist. Ashlyn didn't even have a chance to reject him.

She was dressed in a black top and black pants. Her hair was casually tied up into a bun, and she was wearing black flats.

It was as if she wanted to lay low so that she could do something unspeakable.

She didn't expect Lucas to bring her to a luxuriously furnished conference room.

Ashlyn took a glance around the interior and the other people in the room, and she was stunned.

Then, she looked at Lucas in astonishment.

Lucas grinned as a response. It was as if he could tell what she was thinking.

Two rows of beautiful women dressed in revealing clothes were kneeling before the conference table. It was as if they were waiting for important guests.

When the women saw the doors open, some that were brave enough winked at them, and some even moved their bodies to show off their perfect figures.

Ashlyn had always known that Lucas loved to visit money squandering establishments.

However, she didn't expect to witness such a scene in a world-renowned international convention center.

How can they be so brazen?

She frowned and asked, "Were you invited too?"

Lucas wrapped his arm around her thin waist tightly and suddenly pulled her into his arms.

He softly replied, "Yes."

After that, he pulled out a hyper-realistic mask and directly put it on Ashlyn's face.

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As a female chairperson, Ashlyn naturally wouldn't be invited to such events.

However, her high-profile appearance at the summit made Lucas have a feeling that Ashlyn had an ulterior motive.

Since she is so interested in coming, I decided to bring her in myself. Otherwise, she might try to sneak in and endanger herself.

To Ashlyn's surprise, the hyper-realistic mask fitted perfectly. She was slightly taken aback. At that moment, she was no different from the other women in the room. She was not the chairman of Centennial Healthcare.

Instead, she was just Lucas' female companion.

The other women were staring at Lucas' handsome face and didn't notice what he had done to Ashlyn a moment ago.

Just then, men started to enter the conference room one after another.

Ashlyn noticed that they were all familiar faces. After all, they had a meeting and lunch together that day.

Each and every one of them was proud and pretentious during the day.

Thus, Ashlyn didn't expect them to act so lowly at night.

She watched as the men entered the room and picked women they liked as if they were products on a shelf. Soon, the men each had women on their sides.

After everyone took their seats, their host, Leonardo Tasker, who was famous for being an owner of a large jewelry company, cleared his throat and smiled deviously. "Good evening, everybody. Tonight, I have prepared a dozen of gorgeous women for you. Each of them went through a full inspection, so they are absolutely clean."

The end of Lucas' eyes curved upward as he heard that. He smirked and glanced around the room.

However, he was completely emotionless.

Ashlyn continued to play the role of Lucas' female companion and nuzzled in his arms. At that instant, she could sense the cold and frightening aura from his body.

Yet, when she looked up, she saw a soft grin on his devious face.

Just then, she heard Lucas' attractive voice. "My female companion who is sitting next to me is the perfect woman in my eyes, so..."

"Mr. Nolan, be a good sport and pick a woman." Leonardo seemed displeased. Is Lucas trying to make me look bad?

Nonetheless, when he met Lucas' cold glare, he felt a shiver run down his spine.

Leonard quickly calmed himself down and decided to give up on Lucas. He hurriedly turned to the other men and said, "Gentlemen, you must find the girl that you like the most!"

Ashlyn kept her head low and allowed Lucas to hug her as she quietly sat on her seat.

"Now... I want to invite everyone to try out the latest substance that just arrived, Cyrus! It is extremely pure and smells amazing! All of you must try it out!"

As soon as Leonardo finished speaking, a few women walked into the meeting room.

Each of them held a delicate plate with a small bowl on it.

Ashlyn watched the scene grimly.

That's Cyrus! According to rumors, whoever tries Cyrus would experience great pleasure. However, it is highly addictive and almost impossible to give up on. Once a person gets addicted, the consequences would be disastrous. Yet, Leonard is inviting all the great leaders in the business world to drink that? Has

he lost his mind? Why is he serving a highly addictive substance?

“Leonardo, are you insane? How could you invite everyone to drink that?” a middle-aged man with a potbelly yelled furiously. “We are only here to enjoy the company of women. Who doesn't like that? However, everyone here knows very well how dangerous Cyrus is!”

No one in their right mind would get near Cyrus.

As Leonardo faced the middle-aged man's questioning, his face instantly darkened. He slammed his palm on the table and yelled, “Only a few people in this room have not tried Cyrus! Are you trying to make me look bad? Ask the men around you whether they tried it before!”

The middle-aged man scoffed and turned to Lucas. “Mr. Nolan, what do you think of this situation?”

Lucas lazily glanced at Leonardo and replied, “I wouldn't go near such a lowly substance like that.”