149: In Order to Expose the Hidden Hand

"You still want to argue, Grace? You couldn't eliminate me, so you had Peter killed instead. And besides that, you couldn't even tolerate my son, Howard!" Sebastian's fury flared as he continued.

"Grandmother, the fire at your house that night was deliberately set by this woman to kill Howard."

"What?" Beatrice looked at Grace in disbelief.

Grace began to cry, "I'm innocent! The fire that night was caused by old wiring, it has nothing to do with me!"

"The old wiring was one factor, but the truth is, you had someone tamper with May's food, making her sick with diarrhea that night. Then you had GiGi removed from your yard and set the fire, intending to burn down the house and kill my son in the process. How wicked can you be?" Sebastian's sharp gaze locked onto Grace, and everyone in the room turned to look at her.

Molly shouted in horror, "Oh my God, is there no justice in this world? You're truly evil!"

Hazel, desperate to defend her mother, quickly retorted, "Impossible! You can't just slander my mom!"

"Slander?" Sebastian scoffed. "Would you like to hear this then?"

He turned on a recorder, and soon, a clear conversation played between Grace and Marcus, where Grace instructed him to start the fire. It was unmistakably her voice giving the orders.

As the recording ended, Sebastian coldly glanced at Grace and Marcus.

Marcus immediately defended himself, "It wasn't me! I was at the hospital with Beatrice that night—Miss Molly can verify it."

Marcus tried to provide an alibi, but Sebastian quickly tore it apart. "It wasn't you who did it directly, but you were the one behind it! The one who set the fire was the servant, Dinova! Bring him in!"

Moments later, the servant Dinova was brought into the hall. Upon seeing the room full of people, Dinova immediately fell to his knees in fear.

"Beatrice, Master, Mr. Vanderbilt... I didn't want to do it, but Marcus forced me. If I didn't comply, he would expose me for stealing antiques. I was terrified, so I had no choice but to help with his plan!"

Marcus yelled, "Dinova! I've treated you well. Why are you accusing me like this?"

Dinova hastily replied, "I'm not accusing anyone wrongfully. I'm telling the truth. I was scared that Marcus would use me and then expose my theft, so I secretly recorded the conversation."

Marcus was left speechless, and after everyone heard Dinova's recording, the truth was clear. It was Marcus who had ordered the fire to be set.

The real mastermind was Grace, and Marcus had been her accomplice, carrying out her bidding.

Sebastian held up a USB drive. "Besides Dinova's testimony, I have another piece of evidence: this USB drive!"

The room fell silent as everyone waited for Sebastian to explain.

"Grace, do you want me to explain why you had Peter release the snake?

The reason is clear: you and Peter once had a secret relationship."

"Before you became famous, Peter was your loyal follower, your 'dog,' and he even worked for The Vanderbilt Family as a servant for you."

Sebastian clicked the USB drive and pulled up a video. "This USB was found in Peter's room. It contains proof of your relationship with him before you had plastic surgery!"

"Peter was your best tool. When things went wrong, you made him take the fall!"

Sebastian's words hit home, and he sneered, "Am I wrong? Do you want me to show everyone the video of you and Peter?"

"Don't!" Grace screamed, her face pale in terror.

At this moment, she realized she had no way out. She turned desperately to Raymond, pleading, "Raymond, believe me! I didn't do anything wrong. All of that is from the past. Please, you have to help me!"

Sebastian observed their interaction, wanting to see how Raymond would respond—would he protect Grace, or would he choose self-preservation?

"Grace, what do you want me to do? Even if you can't tolerate Sebastian, you can't secretly try to harm him! How could you be so foolish?" Raymond spoke sharply.

His words made it clear where his loyalty lay: he would not defend Grace.

Grace, struck hard by the revelation, fell silent, tears streaming down her face.

Vincent, upon learning everything, turned to his mother in fury, "Mom, how could you do something like this?"

Hazel, unable to continue defending her mother, said nothing.

"Grace! Do you still have anything to say?" Sebastian's voice was cold and unyielding.

She had no words left, only tears that flowed freely down her cheeks.

At that moment, a group of police officers, led by Felix, entered the room.

"The police are here!" someone shouted.

Sebastian addressed the group, "Felix is someone I hired. Today, I'm handing over all this evidence to him, and he'll handle the case."

The room watched as Felix and his team walked in and began to speak.

"This is an arrest warrant. After thorough investigation and evidence collection, we've confirmed that Marcus and Grace are involved in Peter's death, as well as two counts of premeditated murder and a case of illegal detention."

Felix's explanation was followed by orders for Marcus and Grace to be handcuffed and detained.

"Raymond! Help me! You have to help me!" Grace cried as she was being arrested, still clinging to hope that Raymond would rescue her.

Raymond turned to Felix and asked, "Felix, what does this illegal detention charge mean?"

Felix replied, "Marcus imprisoned Octavia, Mr. Vanderbilt's aunt, in The

Vanderbilt Family's back garden tower for 18 years. The nature of this crime is extremely serious, and we have to take appropriate action."

"Imprisoned Octavia? Sebastian's aunt? How could something like this happen?" Raymond was stunned, glaring at Marcus. "Marcus! How could you do something so heartless? How could we, The Vanderbilt Family, trust you all these years?"

"Sorry... I've betrayed The Vanderbilt Family's trust," Marcus said, hanging his head, clearly filled with regret.

In reality, Marcus had already made up his mind to plead guilty.

Sebastian had been watching the entire scene with a cold, calculating gaze, waiting for the perfect moment.

"That's right. A mere servant—how could he have the ability to do this?" Sebastian continued. "How could Marcus, under everyone's nose, keep Octavia imprisoned in that tower? He even lied to the outside world, claiming she was insane?"

"But Marcus could only do this because there was someone more powerful pulling the strings behind him."

Raymond was momentarily stunned. "Sebastian, have you found out something?"

"Are you asking me? Don't you know better than anyone else?" Sebastian's eyes locked onto his father's. "Wasn't it you who last saw Octavia?"

Sebastian stared hard at Raymond, determined to find out just how long his father would keep hiding the truth.