

273: The Unexpected Backlash

For years, Jonathan had built LIG into his personal empire, surrounding himself with loyal executives who owed him everything.

Without him in charge, Caitlin managing the company? Impossible.

Jonathan's arrogance made him believe that without his influence, LIG would collapse.

Joshua, ever the loyal right-hand man, nodded firmly.

"Understood. I'll take care of it immediately."

The Public Backlash

Joshua wasted no time stirring the flames.

Soon, news articles flooded the internet, painting Caitlin as a ruthless daughter who had turned on her own father.

"A Disgraceful Betrayal—Caitlin Lewis Seizes Control of LIG!"

"If This Were Ancient Times, Would She Be Branded a Traitor?"

"Ambition Over Blood: A Daughter's Cruelty."

Countless comments and posts began to sympathize with Jonathan, painting him as a victim.

"She even betrayed her own father for power?! Ruthless!"

"How could she do this to her own flesh and blood?!"

"This is just greed, plain and simple!"

But it didn't stop there.

Jonathan's inner circle—his hand-picked executives—issued public statements, demanding his reinstatement as chairman.

They threatened mass resignations, warning that without Jonathan, LIG would suffer.

For a brief moment, Jonathan's plan seemed to be working.

Caitlin's reputation was under fire.

LIG's stability was shaken.

But just when Jonathan thought he was turning the tide —

A bombshell report was released.

Jonathan's Downfall Begins

Breaking News: Jonathan Lewis Accused of Corruption, Embezzlement, and Corporate Fraud

Detailed investigative reports exposed Jonathan's long history of financial crimes.

The public learned the truth:

- For years, Jonathan had siphoned LIG's wealth, laundering millions into private offshore accounts.
- He had taken bribes, securing illegal contracts that bled the company

dry.

- He had rigged financial reports, hiding LIG's declining profits.

And most shocking of all—

Jonathan had stolen LIG from Caitlin's mother, Kelly.

The investigation confirmed that Jonathan had manipulated, pressured, and forcibly taken over what was once Thompson Global Ventures (TGV).

His greed and mismanagement had led LIG into slow decline over the years.

The moment these reports went public, everything changed.

The same people who had been defending Jonathan suddenly turned on him.

Public Outrage Explodes

"Wait, so he STOLE LIG from Caitlin's mom???"

"He let Kelly die and took everything from her?!"

"So all this time, Caitlin was just taking back what was rightfully hers??"

"Jonathan is the real villain here!!"

Jonathan's plan backfired spectacularly.

Public support for Caitlin surged.

Even media outlets that had initially questioned Caitlin began calling this

a rightful reclamation of her family's legacy.

The tables had turned.

Jonathan's Rage

Jonathan sat in his hospital bed, gripping his phone, his face turning a deep shade of red with fury.

His hands shook as he read the headlines.

Joshua's voice was nervous. "Uncle Jonathan... What do we do now?"

Jonathan's breathing was erratic.

"I need to get out of here. Immediately."

"But you're still recovering—"

Jonathan snapped. "I don't care! I need to call in some favors! There are people who still owe me—people who can help!"

Seeing there was no point in arguing, Joshua hurried to process Jonathan's discharge papers.

An Unexpected Turn of Events

As soon as Jonathan and Joshua stepped out of the hospital, they were greeted by—

A mob of reporters.

Cameras flashed aggressively as microphones were shoved in their faces.

"Mr. Lewis! What do you have to say about the accusations against you?"

"Did you embezzle millions from LIG?"

"Do you deny stealing Thompson Global Ventures from Kelly Lewis?"

Jonathan gritted his teeth, raising his hands for silence.

Then, in his most dignified voice, he declared:

"All of these allegations are nothing but LIES! I, Jonathan Lewis, have always been a man of integrity! Someone is trying to smear my name!"

Just as he finished his speech—

A new group of men pushed through the reporters.

Dressed in official government attire, they stepped forward.

The leader pulled out an official document.

"Jonathan Lewis, we have received credible evidence confirming financial misconduct, bribery, and corporate fraud.

You are hereby requested to come with us for questioning. If found guilty, you will face trial and potential prison time."

Jonathan staggered backward.

"What—?! This is ridiculous! You can't just—!"

The agents flanked him, effectively cutting off his escape.

The journalists went wild.

Cameras clicked nonstop, capturing the moment Jonathan was officially taken into custody.

Joshua stood frozen, his face drained of color.

Reality Sets In

Joshua barely heard the reporters as they turned to him next.

"Mr. Lewis, do you have any comment? Will you be taking over LIG now?"

"Will you be representing your uncle's interests in court?"

Joshua could only stammer uselessly.

"I—I don't know. I don't know anything!"

With that, he shoved past the reporters and ran.

The last remaining loyalist of Jonathan Lewis—was in complete disarray.

Jonathan had lost everything.

Caitlin Moves Forward

The next morning, Caitlin arrived at Luminary League's Annual Charity Gala.

The event, hosted at Cloudview Resort, was a grand affair attended by New York's most powerful women.

High-society ladies moved in elegant groups, sipping champagne and

engaging in conversation.

On the expansive outdoor lawn, a beautifully decorated stage stood ready for presentations.

This was a gathering of elite powerhouses.

Women who ruled corporations.

Women who dictated social trends.

Women who controlled generational wealth.

Among them, Ximena Vanderbilt and her daughter, Zora, made an appearance. 

Ximena had worked tirelessly to introduce Zora into elite circles, ensuring that her fashion brand gained exposure.

"Zora's designs are exquisite. Truly impressive!"

"Ximena, you have always been such a strong advocate for women's success!"

"Not to mention, your kindness is inspiring. Taking care of Patricia despite everything—so selfless."

Ximena smiled gracefully.

"It was simply the right thing to do."

But beneath her calm expression, bitterness simmered.

She despised how Patricia had been taken from her. 

She hated Caitlin and Sebastian for interfering. 

And she wasn't the only one.

Caitlin's Grand Entrance

Suddenly, an excited murmur swept through the crowd.

All eyes turned toward the entrance.

Stepping onto the red carpet, Caitlin stole the breath of everyone present.

She was stunning in a flowing lake-blue evening gown, the silk fabric cascading like water.

Her soft waves of hair framed her face perfectly, and her diamond-studded clutch sparkled under the lights.

The moment she walked in, the atmosphere shifted.

Women whispered among themselves.

"She's even more beautiful in person..."

"How is she so perfect? It's unfair!"

"And now she controls LIG—she's unstoppable."

Watching from the side, Zora clenched her fists.

"Mom! Why is SHE here?!"

Ximena's eyes narrowed coldly.

"I see her, Zora."

"You CAN'T let her join Luminary League! You have to stop her!"

Ximena's lips curved into a slow, calculating smile.

"Don't worry, my dear. I won't let her have it so easy."

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