

300: Investigating His Background

"Excuse me, may I have a word with you two?"

The man gestured for them to follow him to a quieter area.

"I'm Hayden Klein. It's a pleasure to meet you both."

Hayden took the initiative to extend his hand to Sebastian, who shook it, and Caitlin also gave him a brief handshake.

"Mr. Klein?" Sebastian questioned, a hint of recognition flashing in his eyes. Caitlin exchanged a quick glance with him. They both recalled that the person behind the Yun's Aromatic Codex had the same surname.

"Are you the one behind the auctioned manuscript?" Caitlin asked, her voice cool and suspicious.

Hayden smiled faintly at her inquiry. "You're sharp, Caitlin. Yes, it was me who provided the manuscript. So, I can confirm that the one that was stolen is a fake."

"Why would you do that?" Caitlin frowned, her eyes narrowing. "You used a fake manuscript to deceive us all into bidding. Are you trying to profit from this?"

Caitlin's impression of Hayden soured. Who would dare to commit such an unethical act? Faking such a valuable artifact was outright deceitful.

"Not at all," Hayden replied, his tone calm and unwavering. "I simply want to make a deal with you. Only by joining forces can we secure the true Yun's Aromatic Codex."

Caitlin looked at him with a skeptical expression, unable to trust him just yet.



Sebastian, too, felt that this man was hiding something. "You say we must cooperate to get the real manuscript. Then tell me, do you know where it is?"

"Of course," Hayden replied with a serious expression. "It's at The Yuncey Family. Caitlin, you must be familiar with The Yuncey Family in V Country, right?"

Caitlin's understanding clicked, and she sneered, "I see now. You don't have the manuscript at all. You just wanted to use a fake to lure us out and trick me into helping you get the real one. This was all part of your plan, wasn't it?"

"I didn't say I was using you," Hayden corrected her, his expression earnest. "I want us to work together. What I need is not the manuscript itself."

Caitlin narrowed her eyes. "Then what do you want?"

"The Yuncey Family owes me," Hayden said, his voice dropping in intensity as a shadow passed over his face. "Think carefully. Don't you want to uncover the truth behind Yun's Aromatic Codex?"

Caitlin stood in silence, thinking it over. Hayden pulled out a business card and handed it to her. "This is my card. If you decide to talk, don't hesitate to contact me."

With that, Hayden left, and Caitlin and Sebastian decided to leave as well.

On the way back to the hospital, Caitlin was deep in thought. "Who exactly is Hayden? Why does he want to team up with me?"

"I'll have someone look into him. From what we've seen so far, he's probably approached you because you're a direct descendant of The



Yuncey Family, which gives you rightful access to their legacy. He seems to be missing that link," Sebastian speculated.

"Yeah, that makes sense. Let's find out everything about him first."

Caitlin wasn't about to trust someone she had met only once. She knew there had to be more to this, and figuring out his true intentions was something they needed to uncover quickly.

The news of the explosion at the auction house had already made headlines, and the media was reporting on the incident.

By the time they returned to the hospital, order had been restored.

Vaughn and King met Sebastian as he arrived, giving him a quick update. "Mr. Vanderbilt, we captured one of the attackers, but the other one fled, injured."

"Increase the search efforts," Sebastian ordered.

"Understood."

Caitlin immediately went to check on James, relieved to find that her brother was stable, and she could finally relax.

Next, they went to see the man who had tried to attack James, the one King had caught.

The man was tied up and had a black cloth over his head. One of the men removed it, revealing a bloodied face.

"Who sent you to assassinate James?" Sebastian asked sharply.

The man, Ryuji, looked up, glaring at Sebastian but remained silent.



"Still not talking?" Sebastian punched him in the stomach, causing Ryuji to wince, but he still refused to speak.

King spoke up. "Mr. Vanderbilt, this man mentioned 'Number Zero.' I suspect Number Zero might be their mastermind."

Sebastian nodded. He turned back to Ryuji. "I suggest you talk. You won't be leaving here alive unless you do."

"I'll handle him!" Caitlin said, stepping forward and grabbing Ryuji by the collar. "You wanted to hurt my brother, so now you'll pay the price!"

Caitlin wasn't gentle. She landed punch after punch, her fists connecting with Ryuji's face relentlessly.

Every blow reminded her of how close her brother had been to being killed by these people. The rage built up in her, and she wanted to tear apart the organization responsible for putting Harrison through this.

Soon, Ryuji's face was a bloody mess. After one final punch, he coughed up blood and teeth.

"Talk! This is your last chance. If you don't answer, I'll let you die right here!" Caitlin shouted angrily.

Ryuji swayed, his head lolling as he tried to stay conscious. He didn't answer. Instead, he laughed maniacally.

Then, his head tilted, and he bit off a button from his collar, quickly swallowing it.

Sebastian noticed and shouted, "He's biting a button! Don't let him swallow it!"

King grabbed Ryuji's jaw, trying to force him to spit out the button. But



Ryuji had already chewed through it. Within seconds, he vomited foam and blood, his head drooping.

King checked his pulse and grimly reported, "Mr. Vanderbilt, he's dead."

Sebastian examined the area around Ryuji's neck and discovered something alarming. "It wasn't just a button. It was a hidden poison capsule."

"That's terrifying," Caitlin said, her anger flaring up even more. These people were so ruthless. Even if they failed to kill, they were willing to take poison rather than give up their mission.

Caitlin's thoughts turned to her brother, Harrison. He had been raised by this organization. If she hadn't found him in time, he could have been sent on a mission, and if he failed, he might have had the same fate as Ryuji.

With Ryuji's death, their lead was cut off again. All they could do now was wait for James to wake up.

At a towering, mysterious castle, a tall figure stood bathed in cold light.

Clad in a long robe, he resembled a shadow.

In front of him, a massive golden eagle stood on a metal frame, its eyes gleaming fiercely.

A phone call connected, and Ximena's voice came through.

"Master, unfortunately, we weren't able to get Yun's Aromatic Codex. There was an accident at the auction, and the manuscript is now missing."
"



"Your ability to handle matters is getting worse," the man said coldly, his voice like ice.

"It's because Caitlin is too difficult to control. She's always working against me!" Ximena replied.

"Do you know the real reason you lost to her?" the man asked.