

Chapter 1269 Asked To End Partnership With Universe...

Marco figured out what Loraine planned to do and acted as Loraine expected. After the Torres family demanded that he break off his engagement to Loraine, he reverted to his former self: a distant, relentless workaholic who quickly consolidated the Cruz family's power.

His intense dedication to work raised concerns among his acquaintances. Jorge wasn't too worried, thinking that this was typical behavior for Marco. However, he didn't know that Marco had changed a lot after falling in love with Loraine.

Jimmie and Slater truly thought Marco had ended things with Loraine and were unsure how to comfort him apart from being concerned.

It was only after observing Jimmie's and Slater's concern for Marco that Jorge felt somewhat guilty for interfering in Marco's relationship.

One day, while at home with Keely, Jorge got a message from Marco, who wanted to discuss a potential collaboration.

As Jorge agreed to meet and asked a servant to get his outfit ready, he reflected on Marco's current state of near desperation.

At the mention of Marco's name, Keely's eyes sparkled briefly. As Jorge was about to leave, she suddenly clung to him, her lips forming a pout. "I want to come too, Jorge. Please don't leave me here alone. I'll be good. I promise I won't bother you..."

Jorge softened a bit at her plea but then hesitated, his brow

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He was concerned that bringing Keely along without paying enough attention might lead her into harm or trouble again. Moreover, the previous conflict between Keely and Loraine had put Marco in a difficult spot, leading to him being reprimanded by Loraine's family and the engagement being called off.

If Marco saw Keely now, he would be reminded of Loraine, and Jorge felt a twinge of guilt about Marco's current state. In this situation, Jorge preferred not to bring Keely along.

Just as he began to decline, Keely's manner shifted dramatically and she threw a tantrum. "Jorge, don't you want me anymore? You're just going to leave me here alone, and you won't come back, will you? Waa..."

Jorge found himself at a loss. After an unsuccessful attempt at calming her down, he said, "I'll take you with me. I never said I didn't want you. Keely, please, don't cry."

At this, Keely's face lit up with a smile, and she eagerly grasped his hand. Her voice bubbled with excitement, like a child's, as she said, "Let's go! Let's have some fun!"

Jorge sighed at her capriciousness.

Upon their arrival at the Cruz estate, Marco looked at Jorge and then at Keely. His expression turned stern as he discreetly observed her.

Frightened, Keely hid behind Jorge.

Jorge frowned at Marco. "Your look frightened her."

Marco looked away indifferently and said, "Take a seat. I want to talk about our business dealings."

He handed the contract to Jorge and said in a deep tone, "I need clarity on your proposal for the Cruz family and Solar

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Company to end their dealings with the Wilson family and
Universe Group simultaneously. What do you mean by that?"

Jorge responded calmly, "Considering that the Riley family plans to partner with the Cruz family, we should focus entirely on this new alliance. I don't want you getting distracted by other partnerships."

The favorable conditions set by the Riley family made this exclusivity seem reasonable. They were ready to provide the funding, yet the Cruz family would face the risk of the Riley family pulling out of their investment at any time, which could be a huge blow to the Cruz family since they had no other partners.

After a brief pause, Marco replied coldly, "I have already intended to stop our collaboration with the Wilson family, but not with Universe Group."

Jorge's breath quickened, and his anger surged. "Why, Marco? I can't understand it. After all the poor treatment you received from the Torres family, why persist in your partnership with them?"

Marco remained silent. His concern was that Loraine might misinterpret his actions as genuine.

At that moment, Keely, looking perplexed, asked, "Why not end the partnership?"

She seemed to echo Jorge's words without realizing their impact, further intensifying the tension between them.

Marco narrowed his eyes, detecting a sly and victorious gleam in Keely's eyes.

Feigning ignorance, he said nonchalantly, "The partnership with Universe Group involves complex issues. I need time to think it over."

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Jorge's voice softened slightly upon hearing this. "The Riley family will await your decision before finalizing the contract. Marco, I'll be upfront. I made significant compromises in this deal, which displeased my uncle. However, because it's you, I believe the sacrifice is justified. If we finalize this deal, I promise to secure greater advantages for the Cruz family. You won't regret ending the partnership with Universe Group."

Marco remained silent, appearing uncertain. Eventually, he tiredly gestured with his hand and said, "I'll think about it. You should head back. I need more time."

Seeing Marco's fatigue, Jorge nodded and couldn't resist saying, "Take some time to rest."

Marco acknowledged with a nod, watching Jorge and Keely walk away. Once alone, the weariness in his eyes shifted to a cold, sharp gaze.

He dialed a number, instructing, "Carl, leak the news that Solar Company and Universe Group might end their partnership. Make the news as dramatic as possible."



Chapter 1270 Playing Along

Later that night, Keely stumbled upon trending news about the termination of the partnership between Solar Company and Universe Group.

Delighted by the revelation, Keely eagerly clicked into the topic and discovered that while there was no official confirmation of the news, the comments section was brimming with various hints suggesting that it was authentic, including a post from someone claiming to be an employee of the Solar Company confirming it.

Keely harbored no doubts about the veracity of the information. She believed it had to be true; otherwise, it wouldn't be trending. Historically, Marco would swiftly address any negative news involving Loraine.

This development seemed to confirm not just a breakup but a complete falling out between Solar Company and Universe Group. Keely thought that if she could intensify the pressure, compelling Marco to sever his business ties with the Wilson family and agree to the Riley family's terms, she would fulfill her mysterious benefactor's mission.

Keely stealthily opened her door and peered outside, spotting Jorge engrossed in his work, seemingly oblivious to the online storm. After a moment's thought, she reverted to a familiar tactic. She grabbed her phone and approached Jorge.

"Jorge, my game disappeared again. Can you help me delete this app? I keep accidentally clicking on it..."

Jorge looked up from his work, massaged his temples with a smile, and took her phone to assist her. But as he viewed the



screen, a surprised expression briefly crossed his face before it settled into a genuine smile of relief.

In his mind, this news signified that Marco was distancing himself from past entanglements and that Universe Group's stance reflected Loraine's inability to support Marco in difficult times. Seizing this chance to help Marco recognize the truth seemed like a fulfillment of his brotherly responsibilities.

After allowing Keely to continue with her device, Jorge decided to finalize the contract with Marco the next day.

Elated by her success, Keely couldn't contain her excitement. With a grin, she grabbed her phone and retreated to her room, luckily without catching Jorge's notice.

Once alone, Keely wasted no time. She messaged several marketing accounts she had covertly aligned with, instructing them to tarnish Loraine's reputation. She energetically stirred controversy online, weaving narratives that disparaged Loraine at every turn.

Soon, numerous disparaging comments about Loraine surfaced across various social media platforms.

"Ever since Loraine took over Universe Group, its business strategy has become erratic. There's no clear planning; it's all haphazard, resting on its historical laurels. Loraine has become overconfident, thinking she's more capable than she is, leading to a betrayal of Solar Company."

"Wasn't her amusement park venture kick-started with Solar Company's backing? Now, with the engagement off and the partnership dissolved, Universe Group's future looks bleak."

"The term 'ungrateful' couldn't fit Loraine better."

As these negative sentiments multiplied, the online narrative swiftly turned against Loraine, painting her as the sole reason

for the fallout between Universe Group and Solar Company.

At Solar Company, Marco was briefed on the unfolding situation by Carl, and his face clouded over.

He had indeed orchestrated the leak about the partnership dissolution, but the overwhelming backlash against Loraine was more severe than anticipated, suggesting a deliberate smear campaign.

Carl, noticing the change in Marco's demeanor, cautiously inquired, "Boss, should we intervene to quell these rumors?"

Marco's eyes narrowed as he replied in a low tone, "Not yet. First, let's trace the origins of these attacks. We'll address all of them at once later on."

After expressing his thoughts, Marco felt a surge of anxiety. The success of his and Loraine's plan hinged entirely on their unspoken communication, and he couldn't help but wonder if his actions met Loraine's expectations. Fighting the impulse to reach out to her, he speculated about her current activities.

Meanwhile, in the CEO's office at Universe Group, a loud clatter of files hitting the floor was followed by Loraine's angry voice. "Marco is going too far. Don't blame Universe Group if we cut ties completely in the future. When I see him, I'll definitely give him a slap!"

Employees passing by the office trembled at the outburst, then heard Vincent offer words of comfort, telling Loraine to calm down.

Inside, however, the atmosphere was starkly different. Loraine raised an eyebrow, turning to Vincent with a sly smile. "How was that? Convincing enough? When the real drama unfolds tomorrow, do you think my performance will reel them in?"

Vincent, clearly amused, responded, "Maybe drop the last line;



it's a bit out of character for you. Everything else was spot on, particularly your tone. If I didn't know better, I'd truly believe you and Marco had a serious fallout."

Loraine blushed slightly, pleased that her act was believable.

Vincent complimented her again, "Lorrie, you really do have a knack for acting. Ever thought about a career in the entertainment industry?"

Caught off guard by his suggestion, Loraine paused before replying, "My aspirations don't lie in that direction. I hope this is the last time I need to perform or stage anything. Once we expose Keely's deceit, I look forward to returning to a peaceful life."

