

# Honey, You're a Billionaire?

## Chapter 421 Stepping Into The Trap

[ 1,126 words ]

Intending to share the good news with Yvonne upon her return, Rose followed the staff member through the club's winding corridors until they reached an elevator. Surprisingly, the staff member remained outside as she stepped in.

"Aren't you coming?" Rose asked, puzzled.

"The boss has instructed you to proceed alone," the staff member responded respectfully.

The mention of "boss" reaffirmed Rose's suspicion that Jonathan was behind all this. As she contemplated the impending encounter, she tried to suppress her thoughts.

However, as the elevator doors closed, that peculiar feeling resurfaced. Her eyes twitched uncontrollably as if sensing an ominous foreboding.

The sensation lingered until the elevator came to a halt at the top floor. As the doors opened, an expansive room came into view.

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Meanwhile, downstairs, Jonathan had returned after taking a phone call, only to discover that Rose had disappeared. A sense of unease crept over him.

Just then, someone bumped into him, leaving a piece of paper in his hand. When Jonathan turned to look, the person had already blended into the crowd.

He carefully unfolded the paper, discovering Rose's recognizable earring tucked inside. As he read the message, his lips curled into a knowing smirk. Gripping the earring and note, Jonathan purposefully strode toward the club's exit.

Inside the surveillance room, Jack watched Jonathan's retreating figure with a satisfied smirk. Relieved that his plan was progressing smoothly, he refocused his attention on the woman he had been watching all evening-Yvonne. Yvonne was still among the

crowd, where people continued to buzz about the prize-a recommendation slot for Sardovia Royal Dance Academy.

"She said she would transfer the prize. I wonder who the lucky person will be," someone remarked.

"Well, it probably won't be me. She didn't even notice me earlier, and she doesn't even know me. Why would she give such an amazing opportunity to a complete stranger?" another person voiced the thoughts of many. "Whoever who knows her is truly fortunate!" The crowd sighed.

The realization suddenly dawned on someone. "Wait! I saw her dancing with Yvonne earlier. Is she Yvonne's friend?"

"You're right!"

Simultaneously, the members of the dance troupe began searching for Yvonne.

"There she is!" a voice exclaimed.

Suddenly, a throng of people surrounded Yvonne, their faces filled with envy and admiration. Some even started offering their congratulations in advance.

Yvonne was well aware that Rose intended to give her the opportunity. After all, the last look Rose gave her seemed to say, "Wait for me. I'll deliver the recommendation slot to you!"

Her heart swelled with excitement, knowing that having Rose in her life was truly a blessing. Yet, as Rose left with the staff member, an uneasy feeling crept into her mind. She couldn't shake the worry that something might go wrong with Rose venturing off alone. Meanwhile, on the outskirts of the crowd, a provocatively dressed woman stood with her arms crossed, watching Yvonne with a mix of envy and epicaricacy.

She knew that Jack was fickle in his affections. Despite being his current companion, she was aware that her position was precarious and could change at any moment. Thus, she had to continuously prove her worth and play to his interests. Right now, Jack's interest was Yvonne.

The recommendation for the Sardovia Royal Dance Academy was nothing more than a ruse to get rid of Rose, allowing Jack to make his move on Yvonne. The woman couldn't help but marvel at Jack's cunning tactics.

Throughout the evening, she observed that Yvonne was not someone who could be easily swayed by materialism or superficial charm.

This made her curious about how things would play out, knowing that Jack was accustomed to getting his way, no matter the cost.

It seemed that Yvonne had been

well-raised, displaying hope and dreams in her eyes upon hearing about the recommendation for the Sardovia Royal Dance Academy and her friend offering to transfenthe reward.

"Dreams?" the woman thought cynically.

She knew that if someone like Yvonne were to fall into Jack's hands, they would surely be entering a living hell. The woman chuckled softly, feeling no sympathy.

As the dancers surrounding Yvonne gradually dispersed, each returning to their drinks and paying her no further attention, the woman exchanged a glance with a nearby staff member. Catching the cue, the staff member made a beeline for Yvonne.

Yvonne recognized him before he even reached her he was the one who had led Rose away just moments ago. She peered behind him, but Rose was nowhere to be found. Without hesitation, she approached him and asked, "Where's Rose?"

The staff member was contemplating how to lead Yvonne away when she inquired first, making his task easier.

"This Rose she's talking about must have been the lucky guest number 12 from earlier," he mused.

Taking advantage of the worried expression on Yvonne's face, he asked, "Are you Yvonne Spencer?"

"I am," Yvonne confirmed, not suspecting anything.

The man explained, "Well, the lucky winner from earlier has expressed her wish to transfer the prize to you. Our boss has agreed, but he needs you to meet with him to finalize everything." Unconcerned about the details, Yvonne's only focus was on reuniting with Rose. "Alright," she agreed.

Surprised by Yvonne's compliance, the staff member immediately led the way. They followed the same path Rose had taken earlier, but instead of stopping at the first elevator, they continued down the corridor to another one, where they finally came to a halt.

"After you, Ms. Spencer," he said, gesturing for Yvonne to enter the elevator.

As Yvonne stepped inside, she asked the same question Rose had earlier. "Aren't you coming?"

The staff member maintained his respectful demeanor. "Ms. Spencer, your friend is upstairs. You'll meet her there."

Reassured by the promise of seeing Rose, Yvonne didn't press further. Her primary concern was reuniting with her friend, not the Sardovia Royal Dance Academy recommendation slot.

The elevator ascended swiftly and came to a stop. Yvonne stepped out of the elevator and found herself in an empty room.

She quickly scanned the room, her gaze frantically searching for Rose, but she was nowhere to be found. An inexplicable sense of unease crept over her.

Her heart pounded faster in her chest as she called out tentatively, "Rose?"

Receiving no response, she called again, louder this time, but no one answered. The unease in her heart grew stronger.

"Rose?" Yvonne cautiously stepped

around a large folding screen and

finally spotted someone—a man

sitting on a couch with his back to

her. She couldn't see his face, and

there was no sign of Rose.

"Excuse me. Could you tell me where Rose is?" Yvonne asked, her voice steady despite her rising anxiety.

She assumed this man might be the one behind the lucky prize and possibly connected to the Finch family, who held significant sway in Regalia. It was prudent to remain polite.

Jack turned around, revealing a smile that seemed welcoming. "Ms. Shaffer went to the restroom. She's been there for a while now but should be back shortly."

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 422 Rose's Safety Is Her First Priority

[ 1,038 words ]

"She went to the restroom?" Yvonne muttered and glanced around the room as if searching for the restroom's location.

Noticing her concern for Rose, Jack gestured for Yvonne to take a seat. "Ms. Spencer, please have a seat."

Yvonne took a moment to observe the man on the couch. He wore a black shirt and gold-rimmed glasses and appeared to be in his 20s. Despite his friendly smile, something about his gaze made her uncomfortable. "Come. Sit down and have some coffee," Jack said, pouring her a cup. "While we wait for Ms. Shaffer, we can discuss the recommendation slot for the Sardovia Royal Dance Academy."

Yvonne hesitated before finally approaching, her unease lingering. Jack noticed how mentioning Rose seemed to ease Yvonne's tension and recognized the advantage it offered.

Once she took a seat, Jack engaged her in conversation. "Ms. Shaffer told me you're her best friend. Is that true?"

"Yes," Yvonne responded, feeling slightly on edge and deliberately choosing a seat as far from Jack as possible.

Although irritated, Jack maintained his calm demeanor, reminding himself there was ample time to bridge the gap between them.

He sipped his coffee and eyed the untouched cup in front of Yvonne. "Ms. Shaffer mentioned that this coffee is excellent. You should try it."

Yvonne glanced at the coffee table, noting an empty cup that had seemingly been used. Despite this, she remained wary.

With growing concern over Rose's continued absence, she suggested, "Perhaps I should check on her in the restroom? She's been gone a while, and I'm getting worried." She knew she wouldn't feel at ease until she saw Rose with her own eyes.

Jack's hand momentarily tightened around his cup, but he swiftly regained his calm demeanor before leisurely taking a sip. "Of course, the restroom is over there," he said with a warm smile, gesturing toward its direction. Feeling a surge of relief, Yvonne thanked him and quickly made her way to the restroom. As soon as she was out of sight, Jack's genial expression morphed into a chilling, predatory gaze, his eyes glinting

with malice. Arriving at the restroom door, Yvonne knocked, her unease intensifying at the lack of response. Overwhelmed by concern for Rose's well-being, she turned the doorknob, finding it unlocked.

Upon opening the door, she called out "Rose," only to be greeted by an unfamiliar figure—a slender woman with an unsettling smile.

Yvonne's immediate instinct was to search for Rose, but before she could grasp the situation, the woman pulled out something and sprayed it in her direction.

She instantly felt an overwhelming weakness spread through her body. Her legs gave out, but she managed to support herself against the doorframe, preventing her from collapsing to the floor.

"What... did you do to me? Where's Rose?" Yvonne demanded, her speech unaffected despite the weakness in her body as she held onto the doorframe for support.

The woman in the restroom scrutinized Yvonne, her eyes flashing with a hint of envy. She couldn't understand why Jack had chosen her even though there were so many dancers on stage who were more beautiful than Yvonne. Receiving no response, Yvonne gritted her teeth and growled, "Where's Rose? What have you done to her?"

"Shouldn't you be more worried about yourself?"

A male voice sounded from behind. Yvonne's heart skipped a beat as she turned to face the man from the couch, his smile sending a chill down her spine.

"Who are you?" She struggled to remain standing, leaning against the wall for support.

"You don't know me?" Jack replied, clearly enjoying the situation. His eyes gleamed with a predatory light. "I'm Jack Finch. I've done a lot for you, you know? Like sponsoring today's performance and providing the venue for the celebration party."

"For me?" Yvonne thought. The man in front of her instilled a sense of fear in her, but there was something else she needed to confirm. "Where's Rose?" she asked again.

Jack was surprised by Yvonne's continued concern for her friend, which only served to intensify his interest in her.

"I want you. As long as you become my girlfriend, I won't harm her," he promised. He knew better than to cross Jonathan over a woman.

Yvonne understood the implication behind his words. Being his "girlfriend" would likely mean submitting to his desires.

"It's not like you'll let me go if I refuse

anyway," she said, struggling to keep herself upright. She was utterly powerless at that moment, like a lamb to the slaughter. Yet, she refused to submit without a fight.

"I need to make sure she's safe!" She didn't trust Jack.

Jack raised an eyebrow, enjoying her defiance despite her vulnerability. Her struggle made conquering her even more satisfying.

"Fine. I'll let you confirm her safety."

He pulled out his phone and made a call. "Make sure Ms. Shaffer is safely escorted out," he instructed.

The phone was on speaker, and after receiving confirmation from the other end, Jack turned to Yvonne with a smirk. "Are you satisfied now?"

There was no way Yvonne would feel satisfied knowing she was now in the clutches of this devilish man. She understood what he expected in return for Rose's safety, but at least she knew Rose would be safe.

She clenched her teeth. "As long as Rose is completely out of your grasp, I'll be your girlfriend." She could start making plans only when Rose was free from his demonic clutches.

...

Rose woke up to find herself in the backseat of a car, her body feeling groggy and disoriented. As her eyes fluttered open, memories from before she lost consciousness began to surface.

She recalled exiting the elevator and searching the entire room for Jonathan before realizing something was amiss.

Just as she was piecing things together, she inhaled a strange scent, and everything went black. Now, as she stepped out of the car onto the dimly lit, deserted street, she wondered where she was. "Yvonne!" Rose cried out, immediately taking out her phone to call Yvonne's number.

, it rang endlessly with no answer. Panic set in as she repeatedly tried to reach Yvonne, only for each attempt to be met with the same result.

Feeling a growing sense of dread,

she swiftly pulled up her navigation app. Discovering that her current

location was several miles away.

from the club, she wondered Yvonne was still there. Regardless, Rose knew she had to return and search for her friend.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 423 Discovering Rose to Be in Danger

[ 1,167 words ]

When Rose entered the car, she noticed it was missing a key and couldn't start the vehicle. The street was empty, and there weren't any other cars either.

As such, she could only follow the navigation and ran along the route. Her phone's battery was depleted, and she was unfamiliar with Regalia's roads.

She had no choice but to memorize the route on her GPS while she ran. At last, right before her phone died, she saw a shared bicycle by the road and successfully rented it with her device. With the assistance of the bicycle, she finally moved faster.

The night was particularly chilly, not only because of the wind but also because of her worry for Yvonne. She wished she could appear beside Yvonne and confirm her safety. She hoped that Yvonne happened to lose her phone and that she merely wanted to dance on a whim.

However, the memories of tonight rendered her more anxious. The last-minute change of venue for the celebration party... The club under Finch Group... And that recommended-based admission spot from the Royal Dance Academy of Sardovia... She hoped she was horribly wrong, but all the arrangements tonight were seemingly targeted at Yvonne.

Then, her mind suddenly led her to Jack. For a second, she felt fear and stopped herself from thinking more. All she wanted was for Yvonne to be okay. Just as long as she was safe...

...

With one hand on the steering wheel, Jonathan gripped the earring with his other hand. Since he received the note, he had been filled with anticipation and excitement.

Rose had been keeping a distance from him since they came to Regalia. Hence, this was the first time she had wanted to see him alone.

Jonathan asked Leonard and Finley to head home, while he drove to the location Rose wrote on the note. On his way, he even bought a fresh bouquet. He followed the address on the note and sped over.

There was also another line on the note. "Let's talk." He didn't know what she wanted to talk about. Regardless, he would confess his feelings to her.

Their rendezvous was at a hotel under the Young Group. Upon arrival, Jonathan went straight to their designated room. The door was left ajar, so he headed in.

As the sound of water running echoed from the bathroom, his dark eyes were tinted with a touch of lust.

Suppressing his myriad of emotions, he laid the bouquet on the table and raised his brows at the already-poured red wine. Beside the red liquid was the counterpart of the earring he had.

He took the other earring into his palm and examined the pair together. The sight of Rose wearing them with a bright smile appeared in his head.

His heart couldn't help but race. When it came to her, he truly had no control. This ambiguous atmosphere instantly diminished the sense of willpower he was usually proud of.

Behind him, the water continued running in the bathroom, adding a touch of sensuality to the air. Not wanting Rose to notice his strangeness, he glanced at the wine she had prepared. With just a tilt of the glass, he downed the red wine. However, the alcohol didn't help calm him down like he wished. Instead, he felt a strange warmth coursing through his veins.

This wine... Jonathan furrowed his brows and stared at the glass. Then, he realized the wine had been spiked. He knew Rose wouldn't have done that to him, which meant...

He looked at the earrings in his hand. Suddenly, his gaze turned fearful. Rose was in danger!

Almost by instinct, Jonathan put down the wine glass and wanted to escape. Right then, the room dimmed into darkness before a figure came from behind and enveloped him. "This isn't Rose!" he thought. He was well familiar with how her body felt.

Reflexively, he seized the hands wrapped around his waist, his force almost unbearable. "Who are you?"

Yara screamed in fright. She distinctly saw Jonathan drinking the wine, so how did he have the strength to do this?

"I'm..."

She was overwhelmed by his aggression despite being in a pitch-black room with him. Then, she hesitated to say her name.

Apart from fear, she was also jealous. She didn't want to acknowledge that Jonathan was in love with Rose.

Out of options, she resorted to using the earring to lure Jonathan over in Rose's name. He had probably lowered his guard earlier and drank the red wine because of the earring on the table. "What did you do to Rose?" Jonathan's voice rang again. This time, he gripped her wrist harder.

Feeling like her hand would be snapped soon, Yara bit her lip, endured the pain, and feigned ignorance.

"Who's... Rose?" In the dark, the man squinted his eyes. She acted startled and clueless about who he was. "And who are you?"

Before he could say anything, Jonathan felt a wave of dizziness. He shook his head, but it couldn't drive away his wooziness.

At that moment, Yara knew the drug

had taken effect. It was all thanks to her deviant cousin, Jack, that she had access to these substances. To fulfill his kink, he had all kinds of things.

All she needed to do then was wait for the drug to take over Jonathan's sound mind. Once he couldn't contain himself, things would fall into place. And even if he weren't initiating it, he would beg for her

help.

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Time ticked by, and Jonathan's body gradually felt more uncontrollable. It felt like he would drop to the ground any second now, but he couldn't. He needed to ensure Rose's safety!

As such, he quickly fished his phone out and called her. However, her phone was switched off. Without hesitation, he scrolled to Finley's contact number.

Yara couldn't possibly let him look for help. He was supposed to be all hers tonight!

"Ah..." She pretended to struggle.

By then, Jonathan had lost all his strength from earlier. With a simple push, she knocked over his phone to the floor. Finely's number remained undialed.

Jonathan used all his might to bend

down and pick up his phone. Just as

he was about to reach it, his body could no longer withstand the drug out of his sheer willpower. Witka bang, he dropped to the floor The air suddenly turned eerily quiet.

Yara knew he had succumbed to the drug's effects fully, but he remained still for a long time.

"Isn't he supposed to pounce on me? Why is he..." she wondered.

After watching the motionless man on the floor, she quickly turned on the lights and realized Jonathan's eyes were closed. It seemed he was unconscious. "Mr. Finch?" she tentatively called out.

Other than his breathing, the man was completely still. After several attempts to wake him up, Yara confirmed he was unconscious.

"Why is he dead asleep? How will he do anything with me if he's..." she complained in her mind.

With a darkened expression, she looked toward the red wine and deduced that the drug was defective. "Did Jack fool me? Damn!" she silently cursed. Shaking with anger, she took out her phone and decided to confront Jack over the phone.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 424 But I Like You

[ 1,126 words ]

Despite ringing for a long time, the call was not connected.

Yara angrily tossed her phone aside. She was unwilling to give up on solidifying her relationship with Jonathan tonight. Not to mention, she had also contacted Bella and the media. Tomorrow morning, they would happen to show up and catch their "affair". She stared at Jonathan and couldn't help but admire his handsome face. She didn't believe there would be any consequences she couldn't face when Jonathan found out he had been tricked.

As long as the Maize family and media pressured him, he couldn't escape from her claws, even if he was the ruler of Finch Group.

As for his impression of her, she wasn't worried about it. After they got married, she could tackle him with charm and tricks as time passed.

Hence, she had to seize the opportunity before her. This was her closest chance! She had to get it done!

"You're mine, Jonathan. I will become Mrs. Finch no matter what!" She was determined. So, she used all her might to hold him up and plopped him onto the bed.

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At Finch Group's club, the celebration party continued in full swing. In one of the rooms, a sudden phone call awakened the unconscious Yvonne.

Jack let his phone ring without a care. He had no plans to answer the call. As he sat on the chair, his hunter-like gaze fixed on Yvonne, whose body had plopped onto the floor. He looked like he would take his time in devouring her.

In contrast, the woman in the bathroom was anxious. "Hey, Yvonne. We got rid of your friend as you wished. You saw the photo too. Now it's time to thank Mr. Finch."

Mr. Finch, huh... Yvonne gritted her teeth. Perhaps she had constantly tried to exert her strength, or because she feared for her life, her body had formed a layer of cold sweat.

"How do I thank him with you here?" Yvonne glanced at that woman, her inner full of resentment.

"You..."

The woman was enraged. She wanted to go up to Yvonne but was interrupted by Jack's words. "Aren't you gonna leave?" It was directed at her, but he didn't spare her a glance.

"I..." The woman was displeased. She couldn't believe Jack wanted her gone!

Afraid to enrage him, she knew he was about to enjoy his new companion and didn't want to be a third wheel. As such, she glanced at Yvonne with jealousy. However, she soon took pleasure in what Yvonne was about to experience. "Of course. I'll leave now... Ms. Spencer, be a good girl, will you?"

With that, she purposely walked past Jack while showing off her voluptuous body, as if to remind him not to forget about her after getting a shiny new toy.

Jack was unamused by it. He had long been sick of such a bold woman. Rather, he adored women like Yvonne.

Before the woman exited the room, he was reminded of something and instructed her, "Take the phone away." He didn't want anything else to interrupt his fun tonight.

After the door closed, the spacious room was left with Jack and Yvonne. He rose to his feet and unbuttoned his shirt.

His movement provoked a spike of anxiety in her, and she wanted to stand up and run. However, after her futile attempts, she understood she couldn't escape with her mere strength. Still, she couldn't let herself be humiliated like this. What could she do? "Looks like you can't go over there. I'll help you." Jack's voice sounded above her head, and she felt she couldn't escape him.

"Go over where exactly?" she pondered.

Without a chance to struggle, Jack

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carried her in his arms, like a prince holding a princess. However, Yvonne was disgusted by what was supposed to be a romantic gesture. She didn't know where he wanted to take her, but she had a hunch it wouldn't be anywhere good.

As expected, Jack went to his desk and activated a button. Soon, a secret door opened. Although she was restless, her mind was clear.

She distinctly saw that there was another room behind the door. The room had bright lights and an array of "toys" that revolted her. This man had a kink!

"Do you like it?" Jack lowered his head and took in Yvonne's reaction. The shock and contempt on her innocent face amused him.

"You..."

Had they been under normal circumstances, Yvonne would've called him a freak. Since she was in his territory, however, she couldn't enrage him. She had a hard time faking

her admiration, nonetheless. She paused momentarily, and it widened the smile on Jack's face. "It's okay. You can call me a freak!"

She was speechless. This man was undoubtedly a freak! A psychopath! To enchant him, she had no choice but to share his interest.

"We're doing this?"

She scanned her surroundings and suppressed her disdain. She couldn't possibly imagine how much torture a woman would be put through after experiencing this.

He looked at her plump skin. "It breaks my heart to do it, but I really like you."

It was precisely because he liked her that he wanted to use all of his toys on her. At that moment, Yvonne was engulfed with a sense of hostility. Still, she couldn't break character.

Heaving a deep, silent breath, she struggled to conceal her nervousness despite her mental preparation. Her voice came out shaky.

"If we're doing this, I'll get all exhausted. That'd be boring, wouldn't it?"

Jack looked suspiciously at her.

With just a glance, he deciphered her

intention. Was she planning to

escape after she gathered her strength? She had now landed in his territory and entered the room.

There was no way she could run.

He effortlessly saw through her intention, which increased his confidence. Even if she had strength, she couldn't outsmart him and escape.

"You're not entirely wrong," he said.

A hint of delight flashed across Yvonne's eyes, causing Jack to be more excited. He put her down and walked to the corner before retrieving an item from the box. Then, he returned with a glass of water. "Drink it. Once you do, you'll regain your strength." His smile was mischievous.

Yvonne was unaware of the water's content, but what could be worse than this? She accepted the glass of water and downed it.

"Aren't you scared that it's spiked?" He couldn't help but chuckle upon looking at the emptied glass.

She returned him a smile. "Since you like me, I suppose you won't kill me here."

"Indeed, I'm getting more infatuated with you." So infatuated that he wanted to use all the items on her. Scanning the room, his source of happiness, he began to feel an irresistible sense of excitement. "Take your pick. Whatever you like."

His tone sounded like he was offering a woman a shopping spree at a luxury store, authoritative and romantic. In reality, he was a monster. Yvonne couldn't help but worry for her safety.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 425 It Disgusts Me to Die in Your Hands

[ 1,142 words ]

Pick anything she liked...

Yvonne had never seen any of these items, and revulsion slowly garnered within her chest. Still, she gradually scanned the room, taking her time to select her equipment in hopes of stalling.

After drinking the glass of water earlier, she could feel her arms regain their strength. It seemed that man had given her a drug to restore energy after picking up her "seduction". Despite her limited strength, defeating this man would be difficult. As such, she needed more time.

At that moment, she swept her gaze across the collection and carefully picked an item she could utilize. Then, she settled on one of the whips.

"I like that."

Jack followed her gaze and saw the whip, his grin filled with menace and ambiguity. "Sure. Whatever you like!"

He was enthusiastic. When he dashed to grab the whip and turned back at Yvonne, she caught the visible ruthlessness in his eyes.

She could almost feel how painful it would be when the whip lashed against her skin. To further lower his guard, she had no choice but to grit her teeth.

Holding the whip high in the air, Jack delivered a strike that was as painful as expected.

"Ah..."

Yvonne didn't suppress her pain. She knew a freak like him would rather enjoy seeing her agony more than anything. The more satisfied he was, the more he would let down his guard, and the quicker she could find her way out.

After a few consecutive whips, Yvonne's reaction made Jack even more fanatic of her. He couldn't believe he had found himself such a stunning beauty. Tonight would be his most unforgettable night!

His gaze became more mesmerized. As if sick of the whip already, he wanted a change of equipment and went to take his pick, though this time without Yvonne's input.

The moment he released the whip, she knew her time had come. Despite the pain, she had restored her strength. When the man turned around, she knew it was time. Thanks to her foundation in dance, she silently flipped her body and acquired the whip. When she swung the whip and strangled the man, Jack knew he had been reckless. Before he could defend himself, Yvonne yanked him backward and brought him to the floor. Then, gripping both ends of the whip, she increased the tension around his neck.

"Yv... onne!" His breath hitched, and his fierce gaze shot at the woman above him. "You tryna... kill... me?"

Yvonne had only thought about subduing him as her only way to escape. But killing him... She suddenly came to her senses.

Noticing her reaction, Jack quickly added, "If you kill me, the Finches will not let you, your friend, or your family off!"

Of course, Yvonne understood the power and influence of the Finch family. Even if she escaped today, Jack would have no issue dragging her back down to this hellhole. Regardless, she had to try. She continued tightening the grip on the whip, turning the man's face purple. Jack didn't expect her to be this ruthless. Was she seriously planning to take his life?

Just as he was nearing suffocation, the whip loosened.

"Killing you is a disgrace to my being!" Yvonne gritted her teeth.

When she released the whip, her gaze had already locked down a pair of handcuffs. Without giving him a chance to resist, she acquired the cuffs and quickly secured him to the bed foot.

"The Finches aren't the law!" She had no respect for that family and harbored only disdain at that point. With that, she turned around, ready to leave this place for her safety.

Opening the door of the hidden

room, she charged toward the

elevator, As Jack began to catch his

breath, he was filled with fury. He

vowed to make her realize that she could only escape in her dreams.

Although he didn't have a phone with him, the hidden room had other things that allowed him to send signals.

As he glanced at an unassuming spot, he extended his hand and pushed a button. What it did was alarm his bodyguards. Within a minute, his security would show up and capture Yvonne!

Outside the hidden room, Yvonne had just arrived at the elevator when its door opened, revealing a few burly men. Her heart shuddered, and she instinctively retreated.

One of the bodyguards entered the hidden room. By the time Jack came out, Yvonne had been cornered to a window. There was nowhere else to go.

Jack's gaze was cold and harsh.

"How dare you fucking trick me! Was

I too nice to you earlier? Did you

want something worse? To feel like you'd have to beg for your life? I'll grant your wish!"

Even if he toyed her to death, it wouldn't be a big deal.

Truth be told, Yvonne was threatened by what he said. As much as she feared for her life, she didn't want to die at his hands and end her life with humiliation. Yvonne glanced at the window, and the timing looked just right... As though she had made up her mind, she looked at Jack and laughed strangely. "Sorry, I can't let that happen. You disgust

me way too much!" Before he could react, she opened the window and climbed through it.

Jack furrowed his brows at that sight. He didn't believe she would jump off the building. His mocking grin conveyed that he was unthreatened by her.

"Tie her up! Wait till I finish her, then you guys can have a taste of our beautiful principal dancer." Jack displayed an evil expression.

The bodyguards had just stepped forward when the figure on the windowsill leaped off...

The scene suddenly froze. It took about 30 seconds for Jack to realize Yvonne had actually jumped!

"Mr. Finch, what should we do?" The bodyguard panicked.

Taking a deep breath, Jack kept his composure without a tinge of terror. Instead, he glanced at the bodyguard with dissatisfaction.

"What are you panicking for? Who cares if she's dead? It's not like this is our first time! Give me the phone. Go down there and make sure she's dead. Got it?" Startled, the bodyguard promptly responded, "Got it." Even if she weren't dead, they would end her life themselves. After all, the dead posed no threat. When the bodyguards left, Jack called Bella. She was on her way to Finch Manor.

Not long ago, she received Yara's call, saying she would spend the night with Jonathan and trick him into sleeping with her. Thus, she returned to the manor.

On the surface, she was there to accompany Eleanor. In reality, she wanted to take Eleanor to Yara's location tomorrow morning. What else could be more convincing than letting Eleanor witness it all?

"I've just killed another woman." Jack sounded calm on the line as if he had informed his mom he wouldn't be home for dinner tonight.

Bella's face froze. After ensuring no one was around her, she rushed back to her room and scolded him in a whisper, "Why would you get into such big trouble again?"

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

## Chapter 426 Get Your Hands off My People

[ 1,162 words ]

"What do you mean by 'big trouble'?" Jack sounded unfazed, barely glancing at the window's direction.

Bella's expression turned grim. "You killed someone. How is that not big?"

He chuckled over the phone, sounding even more ruthless. "And? It's not like this is the first time this has happened. Didn't we suppress it effortlessly last time? Just have it handled, Mom!" Then, he ended the call. Bella was full of complaints. Just because she had resolved such an issue before didn't mean there wouldn't be any mishaps this time.

On top of that, she had been hiding her son's mistakes from Yosef all this time. If he found out about that, he might favor his secret, illegitimate son instead!

That bastard child... She inhaled deeply. For now, she had no plans of disclosing the existence of that illegitimate son to Yosef.

She scrolled to the phone number from earlier and sent a text.

"I'll handle the matter this time, but you cannot do this again. Focus more on your work and achieve something. Only through that can you become your dad's greatest aid!"

As long as Yara was married to Jonathan, and Jack behaved himself, Yosef would continue to have Jack as his "only" son!

At the club, a loud bang crashed through the pulsing music and drew everyone's attention. When they arrived at the scene, they saw a person lying on the ground. Someone recognized the body.

"It's Yvonne! It's her! What happened to her?"

"I think she fell from above. Is she dead?"

Despite being members of the dance troupe, they dared not go near her and only surrounded her with pitiful looks.

"It looks like she's dead already. Should we still call 911?"

"What a pity. She's the principal dancer. If she's dead, does that mean someone else will replace her?"

Riding on her shared bike, Rose finally arrived, breathless. Before she started her search, her attention was pulled toward a moving crowd. Upon seeing that, she couldn't help but feel unsettled and followed them. The crowd's murmurs and discussions traveled to her ears, as though confirming with every word that the person inside was Yvonne.

At that moment, she could feel her legs weaken, but that didn't last long as she found her bearings the next second.

"Step aside! All of you!"

Rose squeezed through the crowd and finally arrived before a figure on the ground. It felt like her world had crumbled when she confirmed it was Yvonne! Her eyes were shut, and her gown was torn and stained with blood. "Yvonne..." Rose dropped to her side. Amid the panic, she could feel Yvonne's breathing, instantly pulling her out of dread.

"She's alive! She isn't dead yet! Someone please call the ambulance..." Rose's phone had died, so she continued begging the bystanders.

"Please, I'm begging you. Call the ambulance. Please..." Rose was about to cry.

"Yes. I'll call the ambulance..."

One of the bystanders finally came to their senses. They fished their phone out to dial 911, but their device was soon snatched and destroyed by a brawny man before the call was made. "What are you..." They wanted to resist but were tamed by the bodyguard's fierceness.

Then, the bodyguards dispersed the crowd. "Apologies to our guest. As there has been an accident, our club won't be operating for the rest of the night.

"Please evacuate from the scene. The Finch Group will handle this matter. Let us remind you not to spread unnecessary rumors to the public!"

Everyone knew the club was managed by Finch Group, which also made that a warning to them. The crowd knew their place and gradually dispersed, leaving Rose alone by Yvonne's side. Rose didn't know her condition and was afraid to touch her. "Medic... Ambulance..." Her tears were about to overflow her eyes.

The bodyguard came forward to get rid of her. "Why are you still here? Please leave the premises. We've dialed 911, and the ambulance will be here soon."

Rose didn't believe them. The more they declared it an accident, the more suspicious she was. What were they planning to do after dispersing everyone?

She held Yvonne's hand and lightly touched her blood-stained cheek, as though telling her that she would not leave her side.

The bodyguard went on to pull Rose away. However, she seized his hand and threw him over her shoulder. Soon enough, the bodyguard ended up on the ground and wailed in pain.

Seeing that the woman had some combat skills, the others became cautious but not to the point of fearing her. After all, the odds were against her when faced with these burly men.

As a crack sounded, Rose successfully broke the first bodyguard's hand. She then looked at the rest like she was ready to battle. With her around, nobody could touch Yvonne! "Get her!" the leader of the bodyguards instructed.

The bodyguards charged toward her. In the beginning, Rose was able to handle them alone. As time passed, however, her stamina depleted.

Each bodyguard grew increasingly brutal, and her face showed signs of injury. Gradually, she found herself at a disadvantage.

Yvonne remained on the floor.

Reminded of Jack's instruction, the leader of the bodyguards was ready to finish her off. He glanced at the woman surrounded by attackers, then walked past them and came to Yvonne's side...

When Rose noticed him, she ignored the encircled attacks and forced her way out toward that bodyguard. She sent him a flying kick, but her leg was grabbed by him. Losing her balance, she fell to the ground. Instantly, the others seized her hands.

"Don't touch her!" Rose gritted her teeth and screamed at that bodyguard.

She wanted to break free, but her limbs were restrained. Despite her several attempts, they only subdued her even more. They were clearly afraid to let loose of her. At last, she begged, "Please just leave her alone! Don't touch her!"

The bodyguard looked at Rose with

a hint of emotion. Soon, he resumed to his normal demeanor. That was because he would face serious consequences if he didn't follow Jack's instructions. FindNovel.net

Thus, he had to make sure Yvonne was dead. Even if she wasn't, he had to make it happen. He crouched down and extended his finger near her nose...

Gritting her teeth, Rose used up her remaining stamina and broke free one of her hands. Then, with all her might, she lunged at the man beside Yvonne and bit into his hand. "Ah..." the bodyguard screamed in pain and punted Rose away.

When Miles arrived, he witnessed that scene.

"Rosie..."

He strode forward, intending to catch her, but he was too late.

Her back crashed against the ground, sending pain coursing her body. Then, she looked at the face above her and pleaded, "Miles, please save Yvonne. Don't let them hurt her..." When Miles looked over, he saw the unconscious Yvonne lying on the ground, while the bodyguard was seemingly examining if she was still alive.

Instantly, he dashed forward and kicked off the bodyguard. With a sharp gaze, he positioned himself in front of Yvonne.

The bodyguard recognized Miles. "Mr. Miles..."

Without letting him finish, the usually gentle Miles reprimanded, "Get your hands off my people! Scram!"

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## Chapter 427 It's Surprisingly Her

[ 1,111 words ]

The situation changed when Miles showed up. Afraid to confront him, the bodyguard led the others away.

"Yvonne..." Rose struggled as she propped herself up and walked to Yvonne's side. She nervously held the latter's hand. It wasn't until she felt a pulse on her that she breathed a sigh of relief. "Miles, Yvonne... She..." Rose finally teared up, her face full of helplessness. She dared not touch her friend either as Rose dreaded hurting her.

Miles understood her worry and comforted her. "Don't worry. I've called the ambulance. They'll be here soon."

The Youngs had invested in a private hospital in Regalia. Within minutes, the ambulance stealthily carried her away with a stretcher.

Meanwhile, the bodyguards wanted to report the situation to Jack but found him absent in the room. Since he ended his conversation with Bella earlier, he left the club.

After tonight's ordeal, it greatly affected his mood, prompting him to look for another partner. He arranged to meet with an Internet influencer at a hotel, and they were currently having a great time. At the hospital, Rose sat on the bench outside the operating room after cleaning the wounds on her face and body. She stared fixedly at the red light of the operating room without a word. Miles had a look of worry on his face. He wanted to console Rose, but he knew his feeble words were futile on her, considering her close relationship with Yvonne.

After a brief silence, he suggested, "Rosie, why don't we contact her family?"

"Yvonne's family..." she pondered. At last, she finally reacted and realized he was right. "With Yvonne still inside the operating room and her condition unknown, it would be too late if she..." Rose was reluctant to finish that thought. However, she knew Yvonne would want to wake up and see her family by her side.

"Mr. and Mrs. Spencer, Evan..." Rose fished her device from her pocket, but her phone was dead.

Just then, Miles passed her a phone. Her gaze trailed along his hand and landed on his eyes. "Use mine," he said, with the number pad displaying Evan's number.

Evan! Of course! She took the phone with her shaky hand and dialed the number. After a few rings, the call was connected.

"Evan, it's me..." She stifled her sobs.

The person on the other end stayed silent for a few seconds. Then, a feminine voice rang out. "Rose..."

Rose was slightly taken aback. She recognized the voice, but her mind was too occupied by Yvonne's matters to care about who it was. During her pause, the person on the phone spoke again. "Evo, it's Rose..."

When Evan heard Rose's name, his face shifted. He quickly retrieved the phone and tentatively called out, "Rosie?"

It had been so long since they last spoke. At that moment, his heart couldn't help but clench his fists at the thought of her.

However, due to the sudden contact, he quickly became concerned as he was worried something bad had happened.

After a momentary silence, he asked anxiously, "Rosie, did something happen to you?"

Rose finally returned to her senses. "No, not me. It's Yvonne. Something bad happened to her. It's all my fault that I didn't protect her. She..." Rose was full of regret. "Evan, can you come to Regalia..." "Okay. I'll be right there." Evan didn't hesitate to respond.

After ending the call, he walked toward the door but was followed by the woman behind.

"Evo, did something happen to Rose? I'll come with you. No matter what, we must help her." He glanced at her silently as a form of tacit agreement.

Taking the earliest flight, Evan

landed in Regalia's airport before dawn. He followed the address given by Miles and headed straight to the hospital. Yet, the woman with kim didn't want him to rush around for Rose's sake.

"Evo, why don't we get a room to rest first? I'm kinda tired."

Evan glanced at her, looking like he couldn't be more annoyed by her. His mind was occupied by Yvonne, so his response sounded irritated.

"Sure. Go ahead by yourself." Without hesitation, he hopped into a cab.

The woman was displeased. She didn't want to be abandoned by him. It gave her more reasons to tag

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along since he was about to see Rose. As such, she hurriedly followed him and entered the car before the door shut.

When Evan arrived at the hospital, he saw Rose, but the light of the operating room had not dimmed.

"I'm sorry, Evan. Yvonne, she..." Rose was expressionless. She had been crying since the beginning, but as time passed, the surgery carried on endlessly. She knew Yvonne's condition was not looking good.

Evan had known Rose to be his sister's best friend since the start of time. Their friendship was stronger than anyone thought.

Hence, he could sympathize with how she felt because they both loved Yvonne the same. Not to mention, she looked haggard and was covered in injuries as well... "She'll be fine. Eve has been an optimistic girl since childhood. No matter what happens, she can get through it." This was directed to not only Rose but also himself.

"Yeah. Don't worry, Rose." That feminine voice made Rose look in her direction.

The moment she did, she was surprised because she didn't expect Dawn and Evan to come together. The woman on the phone with her earlier was also Dawn.

However, that surprise didn't last long as she resumed her thoughts on Yvonne. She had no interest in why the two had arrived together. On the flip side, though, Dawn wanted Rose to know about their relationship. "Rose, with Evo here, we'll wait for Eve to come out."

Dawn affectionately used the

siblings's nicknames and even

grabbed Evan's arm while doing so. Despite Evan instinctively avoiding her, she still managed to seize his hand. All those movements were

taken in by Rose, but she didn't care about it.

She watched the red light above the operating room's door and gradually felt her heart tightened in anxiety. She paced back and forth as though it was the only way to ease the tension.

Her "ignoring" Dawn's intimacy with Evan made Dawn frustrated. In particular, when he deliberately avoided her, it pained her heart.

"Rose..." Dawn piped up again.

This time, however, the previously silent Miles didn't give her a chance. "Evan, since you rushed overnight here, your friend must be tired. I'll have someone prepare a room for her to rest." Although he had an elegant demeanor, his stern expression couldn't help but exude an intimidating authority without showing a hint of anger.

It was his first meeting with Dawn, and the latter easily deduced he was the famous Miles Young. Since the Youngs were one of the Three Greatest Families of Reglia, she dared not be presumptuous. "Go take a rest." Evan's voice was emotionless.

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## Chapter 428 A Great Show

[ 1,134 words ]

Dawn knew that if she insisted on staying, it would further annoy Evan. As such, she nodded meekly, bid farewell to Rose, and left.

Outside the operating room, the atmosphere was so tense that one could hear a pin drop. When the sun rose, the red light finally dimmed. Rose hurriedly grabbed onto the doctor as soon as the doors opened. "How is she?" Her voice was shaky.

"She's safe, but... having fallen from a height, several bones in her body have been fractured. While we have treated and repaired the injuries, the recovery process will need to be monitored. Please be aware that the healing process will be excruciating." The doctor's words echoed in Rose's ears. "She's safe... Well, that's all that matters. As for the recovery, I'll be there for her!" she thought.

The outcome wasn't as terrifying as she had expected. Her tensed body finally relaxed, but she was so frail that even the wind could knock her down.

As a wave of dizziness engulfed her, all she could see was darkness. She heard two frantic voices calling her name, but what happened next... was out of her knowledge.

The morning air in the mountains was especially fresh. Eleanor was habitually a morning person. She was accompanied by Bella as she did her morning stretches in the courtyard.

After her routine exercise, Bella suggested, "Eleanor, shall we try something different for breakfast today? I have a place in mind which I think you'd love."

Since Eleanor had not left the mountains in a while, and Bella had taken her time out to accompany her, she thought it was only right to say yes.

At the hotel, Yara stood by the bedpost and stared at the man on the mattress. "What a handsome man," she thought.

They were supposed to have an intense night yesterday, but... When she thought about it, she couldn't help but feel frustrated.

After she carried Jonathan to the bed last night, he remained unconscious the entire time, and she barely managed to strip him naked. He couldn't do anything to her, but she needed some sort of evidence to prove their relationship.

To make the whole thing convincing, she called a man over. The two shared an intimate encounter, leaving all sorts of marks and traces on her body. Naturally, the room was also filled with an air of debauchery.

The man had left, and she made sure he left no traces of himself before she arrived at the bed.

She didn't know when Jonathan would wake up, but according to the time she had set with Bella, the Maize family and Eleanor would be here soon.

Instantly, Yara slid under the blanket and glanced victoriously at Jonathan. The sense of determination in her gaze was undeniable.

Meanwhile, the Finch family's vehicle halted outside the hotel. Eleanor looked suspiciously at Bella. "A hotel? What kind of breakfast is in store for me here?" Although she was old, she was still shrewd.

At that instance, Bella became nervous. She frantically pointed at a bistro not far away. "No, we're not going to the hotel, Eleanor. We're going to that place!"

"Oh, we are?" The suspicious Eleanor took her word for it. "Let's go then."

Bella heaved a deep sigh of relief. Eleanor was wise. Even if Bella could fool her now, she would soon know that Bella had lured her here.

Yet, for Yara's sake, she could only risk it. If Eleanor ever blamed her for it, time could help her forget it once Yara and Jonathan got married.

Looking at the time, Bella couldn't

help but look around as though she was searching for something. When they arrived at the bistro entrance, a group suddenly alighted from two cars and gathered together. That commotion attracted Eleanor's attention.

"The Maizes, huh?" Eleanor thought. She easily recognized them and looked suspiciously at Bella. "That's your brother and his wife. Hm. What a coincidence!" Bella forced a smile and was relieved that they had finally arrived. By then, she couldn't overthink the situation and immediately went up to them.

"Rupe, Cindy, what's wrong? Why are you guys so frantic?" She asked a question which she knew the answer to, putting on a show for Eleanor. "Yara is in trouble!" said Cindy Lohau, Yara's mother. Her face seemed anxious as if her daughter was in grave danger. Bella gasped. "Yara? What happened to her?"

Cindy spoke in between sobs. "She

didn't say much. An hour ago, I received her call. She was crying and trying to tell me where she was so.1

could pick her up. Then, she

!!

mentioned..." She paused. Then, they acted like they just saw Eleanor standing nearby.

Bella returned to Eleanor's side. "Eleanor, my sister-in-law said Yara is in trouble. I want to see her, but I can't leave you here alone. Do you mind if you come with me to see Yara?" "Yara? You mean the renowned international actress, Ms. Maize?" Eleanor wasn't positioned that far from the Maizes and had heard everything Cindy said.

She had lived a long life and encountered many situations, so she easily saw through their little act no matter how good their acting was.

"Yes. Eleanor, look at..." Bella assumed Eleanor would need more convincing to go to the hotel, but before she could continue her words, the latter interjected.

"If it's her, I must go see her. We can't let anything happen to her, can we?" Eleanor naturally wanted to see the second act.

As soon as she said that, Bella and the Maizes heaved a silent breath of relief. The second act, set in the hotel room, was about to commence. As such, the Maizes began to perk up. The group headed straight into the hotel and took the elevator to a specific room, where the door was shut.

At that moment, a hotel staff happened to pass by. The Maizes used a combination of persuasion and coercion to make the staff unlock the door for them.

Inside the suite, a strange scent, mixed with the smell of alcohol, filled the air. Amidst that was the faint sound of crying. As they followed the source, Bella was the first to enter the room. Seeing that Yara had curled up at the corner of the bed and sobbed pitifully, Bella quickly gasped. "Yara, w-what happened here?" The rest followed her cue and entered the room.

In the room, the cocooned Yara

wrapped herself in the blanket and crouched at the corner of the bed. Her exposed body parts-the arms and neck-revealed several fresh bruises. It was easy to tell what had happened. She wept till her face was wet, looking extremely aggrieved.

On the other side of the bed lay a man on his side covered with a blanket. His back faced the door, but his figure was distinctly a man.

"How dare you touch my sister, Jonathan!" One of the men from the Maizes charged up to Jonathan like he was ready to get physical.

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## Chapter 429 Jonathan Must Take Accountability

[ 1,100 words ]

Meanwhile, Jonathan sensed a raging noise in his ears. The next moment, a fistful punch landed on his face. He couldn't help but finally wake up.

When he opened his eyes, he examined his surroundings and saw a large crowd of people with either anger or disappointment on their faces. As the memories from last night resurfaced, he knew he had fallen into a schemeful trap. "Don't hit him, Paxie!" exclaimed Yara.

Even at that moment, she protected Jonathan. He looked at the woman beside him and frowned at the sight of her bruised body.

"Yara, why are you still defending him after what he's done?" The son of the family, Paxton Maize, pretended to hit Jonathan again, but his father's roar halted him. "Enough!" Yara's father, Rupert Maize, looked solemn. But underneath the facade, he was secretly suppressing his fear.

Being in the business world, he was aware of Jonathan's tactics. Initially, he objected to Yara's idea of scheming Jonathan. After all, if the latter found out the truth, the consequences would be unbearable for the entire Maize family. However, Bella and Cindy both persuaded him to take the risk. After some contemplation, he decided to bet on it. If the outcome of the bet was favorable, he would become the father-in-law of Finch Group's ruler! Rupert interrogated Jonathan, "What's going on here?"

Jonathan was extremely irritated by the event before him. His icy gaze landed on Yara, who had used Rose's earring to lure him over last night.

"Where is she?" He ignored Rupert's question.

Yara's eyes flickered, her heart growing increasingly envious toward Rose. Even under such circumstances, all Jonathan could think about was Rose! She shrunk a little.

"Who are you talking about? Did you walk into my room by accident after getting drunk and mistaking me for someone else?"

Jonathan was furious by her accusation. What did she mean by "mistaking her for someone else"? Knowing that he wouldn't get an answer from her, he became fierce.

"Scram!"

The crowd was taken aback by his intensity. The Maizes were supposed to have the upper hand in this conversation by confronting him. Yet, a single word from him was enough to spook them.

Rupert stood his ground and chided Yara, "For Pete's sake, get dressed!" Then, he left the room.

Bella was baffled by it. Why did he leave just because Jonathan said so? As much as she wanted to stop him, she couldn't be too obvious about it.

Hence, she and Cindy could only cover Yara with a towel and assist her out of the room. The group didn't leave and waited in the suite's living room instead.

When Jonathan got dressed, he used the hotel's telephone to dial Rose's number after realizing his phone was missing. However, her phone was still switched off. As his worry intensified, he suddenly thought of calling Miles. "Where's Rose? Is she home?" he quickly asked as soon as the call connected.

On the other end, Miles seemed exhausted. "She's not..."

He could sense how anxious Jonathan was over the phone. Just as the latter was about to end the call, Miles decided to be nice this time.

"She's with me." He ended the call after that saying that.

It took Jonathan a while before he heaved a long breath of relief. If she was with Miles, it meant she was safe. Jonathan's expression darkened when he recalled how he had been schemed last night.

Outside the room, Yara continued sobbing while her mother cried, "Yara, how could you... let him do that do you? Rupert, say something! How is Yara going to face the world if this gets out?"

"That's right. I don't care who he is. I'll make him take accountability with my fists if it comes to that!" Paxton sounded aggressive.

While saying that, he was ready to head into the room but was stopped by Yara. "Paxie, don't... I'm sure he walked into the wrong room b-by mistake... Plus, he was drunk. That's why... I don't blame him, really..."

If Yara was set on marrying Jonathan, she had to present herself as extremely forgiving despite being "humiliated" by Jonathan.

After all, Eleanor was watching. She thought Eleanor would adore her, but from the corner of her eye, she glimpsed a faint, mocking smile from her.

She thought she was mistaken, but Eleanor finally spoke, "Why did you bring such a large crowd over if you don't blame him?"

Her simple question rendered everyone, especially Bella, in a panic. Yara was even more anxious to be exposed.

Bella took the lead and explained,

"Yara must've been terrified. That's

why she called Cindy. You've seen it yourself, Eleanor. Jonathan just did that to Yara..." She implied that the Finches needed to take accountability for Jonathan's actions.

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Bella thought that was enough for Eleanor to understand her meaning and prompt a reply from her. Yet, the latter stayed silent. Rupert became anxious. "Jonathan must... marry Yara to fulfill his responsibility as a man and as a sign of respect to us Maizes." Regardless, Eleanor remained quiet as though she didn't hear a thing. At that instance, Cindy and Bella locked eyes.

Despite knowing that this was Yara's trap, they were rather pissed off at Eleanor's silence, which signified the Finch family's stance.

Seeing the lack of response, Bella continued, "Jonathan is a kind man and comes from a prestigious family. I'm sure he won't desert Yara. Not to mention, they make a good couple..." She spoke as if they were planning the wedding already.

Just then, Jonathan came out of the room. He leaned against the wall and folded his arms across his chest. Then, his gaze swept across the people in the suite, followed by the messy bedroom. Yet, his eyes revealed no emotion. "Aunt Bella..." he spoke suddenly. Her heart trembled, and she subsequently heard his composed voice. "I'm nowhere near kind. Never have, never will," he said with a faint smile.

His words sent a chill down

everyone's spine because it sounded like a warning. Still, Rupert and Cindy remained calm. After all, it was true that Jonathan and Yara had an intimate exchange. For that reason, they had nothing to be afraid of.

Jonathan had no intention of playing this game with them. He simply glanced at Eleanor and strode out of the suite.

The people watched his retreating figure but dared not stop him. It wasn't until Jonathan left that they realized he was gone.

Luckily, Eleanor was still present. Yara's suppressed sobs rang even louder. By then, Cindy had become impatient.

"Mrs. Finch Senior, I hope your family can take accountability for what he's done to Yara!"

"Exactly. You're known for your integrity, Mrs. Finch Senior, so you must help my daughter out..." Rupert urged. Bella echoed, "You see, Eleanor..."

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## Chapter 430 An Unexpected Twist

[ 1,046 words ]

Seeing that the Maizes had encircled her, Eleanor couldn't help but smile mockingly. She didn't say anything but intentionally stared at Yara. Although she was covered with a towel, the bruises on her arms and neck remained exposed, as if she wanted to show them off. Getting stared at by Eleanor made Yara quite anxious, but she was confident in her acting skills. After ensuring she had not broken character, she acted aggrieved, helpless, and frightened-all to garner Eleanor's attention. "Bella..." Eleanor finally spoke.

"Yes, Eleanor." Bella knew she was about to say something and quickly went up to her. She highly expected Eleanor to promise them what they wanted.

When Eleanor extended her hand, Bella quickly held her. Then, the former rose with her help and announced, "I've had enough breakfast today. It's time for me to head home and rest."

Everyone was speechless and didn't understand her meaning. But for Bella, she was extremely embarrassed as her face froze. "Eleanor, let me..." She forced a smile.

Before she could finish, Eleanor raised her hand. "It's okay. I can return by myself. You should stay and handle this complicated matter." She broke free from Bella's grip and headed toward the door.

Following Eleanor's words, Bella had no guts to bother her further. Even after she had left, the room of people remained in dead silence. The atmosphere was eerie.

Yara dropped her pitiful facade since Jonathan and Eleanor were no longer around. "Aunt Bella, did she just... leave?" She couldn't believe it.

According to their plan, Eleanor was supposed to make Jonathan marry Yara to maintain the reputations of both families. Bella was perplexed because Eleanor had previously shown support for their union. However, the reactions she received confused her even more. Despite all that, she knew she had angered Eleanor.

"What should we do now, Bella?" Cindy turned to her. "You've been supportive of this marriage alliance. Now that Yara has become entangled with Jonathan, the Finches must do something!"

Rupert also turned to Bella. At that point, she was getting overwhelmed. Had this marriage alliance not been beneficial to Jack, she wouldn't have involved herself in this scheme.

She calmed her chaotic mind and reassured them. "Don't worry. Eleanor saw it with her own eyes. As long as Jonathan has done things to Yara, he can't run away from this marriage!" As long as they had done it...

Yara bit her lip and looked away from Bella nervously. Nobody noticed her expression either. Upon hearing that, Rupert and Cindy locked eyes and came to an understanding.

"Don't worry, Yara. Jonathan will have no choice but to marry you!" His gaze was determined as he didn't plan to back out from this bet at that point.

At last, Bella left first. When recalling Eleanor's double entendres from earlier, she was more sure that Eleanor had seen through her plan from this morning-that taking her out to breakfast was a plot. On her way back, she became more irritated as she thought of it. Suddenly, her phone rang. It was a call from Jack. Reminded of the mess he had made, she impatiently answered the call. "Relax. I'll get it handled."

"Mom." Jack sounded annoyed on the phone. "There's been some changes..."

Bella froze momentarily. "What have you done again?"

"Nothing. I was..." He glanced at the naked woman flirting with him on the bed. "I was well-behaved, but..."

He looked away, and his expression turned solemn. "My bodyguards were supposed to handle it last night, but Miles Young took her away."

Jack had only found out about it this morning. Even if Yvonne were dead, it would complicate the matter more as it had involved the Young family. He recalled Miles' words.

"Get your hands off my people." But Yvonne was a Spencer...

"Mom, can you investigate the connection between Yvonne and the Youngs?" After some thought, he added, "And also Rose Shaffer..."

At the mention of Miles, Bella

couldn't help but feel restless. He was Oliver's most capable and

beloved grandson. On top of that et

the Youngs and Finches had always maintained an unspoken rule, which was staying out of each other's business. Now that Miles had taken Yvonne...

"You should lay low for a while." Bella wanted to be careful despite being confident she could handle this.

Yet, Jack was reluctant. He didn't want to argue with her and responded with an "okay" before ending the call.

"Lay low? I don't care if he's involved!" he thought. As he locked eyes with the seductive woman on the bed, he tossed the phone away and began another passionate exchange.

After Jonathan left the hotel, he called Miles again. He wanted to know where Rose was, but Miles quickly ended the call.

Jonathan stared at his phone, his face grumpy. When Leonard returned with news about Rose's tracks, they found out she had booked flight tickets to Aquastead which would take off today!

As Jonathan looked at the time, he instantly drove toward the airport. Upon arrival, he searched the halls but couldn't see her. It wasn't until the flight took off, and he made sure she wasn't on board that he kept his emotions under control.

"She hasn't taken off yet. She's still here." He undid two buttons on his shirt, frustration evident in his eyes. Even if she returned to Aquastead, he would follow her.

His priority remained to search for Rose. Regalia was the Finches' territory. Locating someone here should be a stroll in the park for Jonathan. However, it was a miss this time.

For three days, Rose had seemingly

disappeared from the face of the earth. No matter what methods he used to locate her, it was futile. He knew someone had intentionally covered her tracks, and the only person who could do that so

seamlessly was Miles.

In the top floor office of the Young Group building, Miles was exhausted after days of intense work. Despite that, he was fully alert at that moment.

That was because Jonathan had

strode into his office and sat on the

couch since early morning. Leonard and Finley delivered Finch Group's documents and laid them all on the coffee table, creating mountains of paperwork. Evidently, Jonathan was brazenly using Miles' office like his

own!

As the sky darkened, the employees of Young Group gradually disappeared from the office.

Miles glanced at the stacks of documents on the coffee table and casually smiled. "Finch Group has been doing quite well, hasn't it?"

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## Chapter 431 Their Relationship

[ 560 words ]

Jonathan looked up and met Miles' eyes, but he didn't respond. The only words he had for Miles were "Where's Rose?", but obviously, he wouldn't get an answer. Jonathan glanced at him briefly and lowered his head. Upon noticing that, Miles continued his work.

The sky outside gradually dimmed, and the whole building was left with Miles and Jonathan. The two were highly in sync in the sense that they minded their business and focused on their work.

Two hours later, Miles was ready to leave. As soon as he rose, Jonathan similarly put down the document, grabbed his coat, and walked out of the office.

The footsteps echoed behind Miles, but he didn't turn back. Instead, he headed straight to the garage, where he saw Jonathan's car parked beside his. When Miles entered his vehicle, Jonathan did the same. The two cars lined up on the road with a decent distance between them. It wasn't until Miles drove into Young Estate that Jonathan stopped following him.

According to his information two days ago, Rose wasn't there. After glancing at the place, he defeatedly did a U-turn.

The following three days, Jonathan replicated the scenario from yesterday and did his work in Miles' office.

When two of the richest bachelors in Regalia became so "intimate", rarely leaving each other's side, the employees in the Young Group building began to spread rumors and gossip about their "scandal". On the fifth day, Jonathan arrived later than usual. At that time, Miles was in a meeting.

When Jonathan passed the conference room and glimpsed through the glass, he could feel the tension inside despite not hearing a sound. Crossing his arms, he stared absentmindedly at Miles' grim expression.

It was already lunchtime when the meeting ended. Coming out of the conference room, Miles received an invitation from Jonathan.

"Care to join me for a meal?" Miles glanced at him without a rejection.

That day, the cafeteria in Young Group was buzzing with a crowd many of whom came for that duo. "Oh my. They're so hot!" Not even the delicious food could entice them like this.

Since the duo spent most of their time in Miles' office, not everyone had seen them together. Yet, they surprisingly shared a meal that day. "Since when have they become so close?"

"You newbies might not have heard, but the veterans here all know that Mr. Miles and Mr. Finch used to be best friends until...

"Other than them, they were also close with Mr. Young Senior's adopted granddaughter. But since she died, they stopped hanging out." "The adopted granddaughter died? So it's not Ms. Young, right?"

"Well, yes and no."

One of them became confused. "What do you mean?"

"She was Ms. Young, the eldest

granddaughter of the family, but et

we're not talking about Anastasia. Back then, Mr. Young Senior adored the late Ms. Young very much. "She was also exceptionally talented, so no one truly gave a damn about Anastasia. She was... pretty much invisible. It was only after the late Ms. Young died that Anastasia became who she is now..."

So that was the story.

Just as they wanted to hear more about the complication between the Young siblings and Jonathan, they were interrupted by a chilling, cold gaze sent their way. One of them casually looked over and saw Anastasia. His face froze before he frantically got up and fled, not daring to sneak another glance at Miles or Jonathan.

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## Chapter 432 She's Finally Awake

[ 1,139 words ]

Anastasia looked extremely sullen. She hated her past self the most back when she was constantly overlooked. Had it not been brought up, she would've forgotten it after all those years. To her dismay, some veterans in the company knew about Harriette. As the gossiping individuals dispersed, Anastasia naturally saw Miles and Jonathan. Since she had not been at the headquarters recently, she only heard about Jonathan's daily visit today.

"Is it because of Rose?" she pondered. Soon, she confirmed her guess.

The only person other than Harriette who could bring those two men head-to-head was Rose. At the thought of her, she couldn't help but frown. She hadn't seen her in days!

When Anastasia took a seat, she vaguely heard someone saying, "I can help you... the Youngs' inheritance."

Jonathan finally broke the silence for the first time since they arrived at this cafeteria. Miles lowered his head as though he didn't hear him.

Moments later, Jonathan restated, "What Chloe has as her bargaining chips is somewhat related to Finch Group. Just say the word, and I'll make sure she ends up with nothing." Although Chloe was absent during the meeting earlier, Jonathan could tell from the participants that they were there to confront Miles under her instructions.

"Being generous, aren't you?" Miles gradually lifted his head, his face displaying a faint smile.

When faced with Jonathan, one resembled the warm sun while the other resembled the winter. He knew fairly well that Jonathan had offered his help to exchange benefits. However...

"I won't tell you where Rosie is." Miles was calm. To him, confirming her safety to Jonathan that day was the best he could do.

Jonathan's smile froze. He was about to reach his limit after spending days following him around. Nonetheless, he had no choice but to endure his impatience, even if Miles refused to tell him. After that, the two stayed in silence.

Later, Anastasia watched as the two left. She reconfirmed her suspicion that Jonathan was looking for Rose and couldn't contain her jealousy. When he mentioned the "bargaining chip", it had gained her interest, unlike Miles. During this period, she had been consolidating support in secrecy. Yet, regardless of whether it was the Young Group subsidiary or partner companies, they favorably leaned toward Miles. Even Chloe had a better chance than she did.

If she were really pushed out of the game, she would be even less worthy of Jonathan. But if she could gain his support... Caught in a dilemma, she made a decision.

That night, Anastasia returned to Young Estate. She saw Miles entering the garage, with Jonathan's car parked outside their home for a long time until midnight.

After Miles retired to his room, he didn't come out again. As such, Anastasia secretly probed a servant and found out he would stay in his room after he returned home.

That phenomenon lasted for a few consecutive days. Just as she thought it would be a fruitless night, he opened his door.

"Yeah. I'll be right there. Just... look out for them." With hurried steps, Miles headed out while wearing his jacket. Through the crack in the door, Anastasia watched him descending the stairs and unhesitatingly followed suit. Meanwhile, at the hospital, the unconscious Yvonne finally woke up. She lay on the bed, her eyes staring emotionlessly at the ceiling.

In the ward, Evan and Rose held each of Yvonne's hands with anxious looks. Since she woke up, she had been silent even after the doctor's examination. Her eyes seemed dead and empty. Despite waking up, it felt like her mind and soul were still in deep slumber. "Yvonne?" Rose called out to her with a subdued volume, afraid to scare her.

No matter how many times Rose said her name, Yvonne stared fixedly at the ceiling without any reaction. Worry began to brew within Rose.

"Hey, Yvonne. Evan is here. He's come all the way here just to see you. He's been staying by your side for the last few days. You don't have to be afraid..." Rose whispered.

She kept telling herself that Yvonne needed more time. Perhaps if she knew her family was here, she would finally come back to her senses. However, she remained the same after some time.

A strong wave of remorse and

self-blame slowly ate Rose alive. She

thought that if she had been more cautious or had arrived at her rescue earlier, Yvonne wouldn't have turned out like this...

At that moment, Rose wished she was the one suffering instead of her best friend.

"I'm sorry, Yvonne. I'm sorry that I didn't protect you. It was all my fault... Yvonne, it's me, Rosie. Would you look at me, please?"

Perhaps her grief and self-reproach were so strong that her breath felt irregular as she sniveled. Her tears filled the brims of her eyes and dripped onto the back of Yvonne's hand. "Ro... sie..." The voice, as faint as a mosquito's buzz, was hoarse from not speaking for so long.

Recognizing her voice, Rose instantly raised her head and met Yvonne's concerned eyes. "Yvonne..." Almost by instinct, Rose grabbed her hand tightly and could feel her friend reciprocating it. Rose placed Yvonne's hand on top of her palms. "Relax your hand, or it'll hurt."

Although her hand was uninjured, a fall from such a height had fractured her limbs. The doctor said that even if her bones healed, it was uncertain whether her mobility would return to normal.

Yvonne listened to her advice and loosened her grip. She looked at Rose, and while her face was too bandaged to reveal her expression, her eyes finally showed some emotions. "Don't... cry..." Her lips parted. "I don't want you to... It... isn't... your fault. Don't... feel bad..."

Yvonne knew that person had targeted her and even used Rose as a pawn. She jumped off the building but didn't lose her life. If that person found out, would he come for her?

A seed of terror implanted within

her. She wanted to advise Rose to stay away from the Finches, but she knew her hot-tempered best friend would immediately seek them out once she found out who hurt her.

As such, she swallowed her words and turned to Rose. "R-Rosie, I'd like a bouquet... of white tulips. Will you get them... for me?"

Rose bit her lip and nodded. "Of course. I'll be right back!"

When the door closed after Rose left, Evan held his sister's hand. "She's gone. What did you want to tell me?"

Yvonne glanced at her brother, her eyes crinkled into a smile. "How... did... you... know?"

"Where is she supposed to get

flowers this late at night? You wanted to get rid of her. She's usually smart, but she's too worried and remorseful to realize it tonight. I'm afraid that even if you'd asked for the moon, she'd steal it for you."

Yvonne knew that very well, which was all the more reason why she couldn't put Rose in danger. "Evan, do you know about the Finches?"

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## Chapter 433 She's Pregnant

[ 1,112 words ]

"I do." Evan had a hunch that this had something to do with the Finches when he heard that.

To his expectation, Yvonne looked at him with seriousness. "Don't... let... Rosie... near... the Finches. I don't... want her..." She had a hard time speaking.

Evan's heart wrenched at that sight. He also knew what she meant. Without letting her finish, he quickly responded, "I get it. Don't worry. I'll make sure she doesn't interact with them."

It was only then Yvonne felt relieved. What they didn't know was that Rose had returned at some point. Her hand froze on the door handle, and she was stunned.

It took her half a minute until she released her hand. As though her soul had escaped her body, she emotionlessly left the ward she wanted to enter.

"Rose?" A voice called to her as she took a corner turn.

Rose didn't hear it, so the voice sounded again. Finally, as if awakened from a daze, she turned and saw Dawn. Her gaze remained dull.

"Evan is inside the ward." Rose pointed her in the direction.

Dawn pursed her lips awkwardly. "Let's have a chat, Rose."

A chat? Rose was still troubled by what Yvonne said and took a second to look at Dawn. "About what?"

Dawn was a high school student she sponsored. She was innocent. Every time they talked during their scheduled calls, she was full of gratitude for Rose.

"Let's talk outside, Rose." Dawn held Rose's arm, and the latter didn't reject her.

After a few minutes, the two exited the hospital. There was a 24-hour convenience store nearby, and Dawn bought Rose a bottle of water.

The two then sat at the seats near the window. Despite being physically present, Rose's mind was somewhere else.

Naturally, Dawn noticed that she was distracted. During this period, she had been looking for an opportunity to talk alone with Rose. Now that she had the chance, she wanted to reveal something. "Rose, I'm pregnant."

Although Rose was distracted, she was still shocked when she heard the news. Her gaze landed on Dawn's belly, but soon, her initial shock gave way to understanding. "Congratulations." She smiled.

If her memory served her right, Dawn should be in her second year of university. Rose wasn't sure whether to congratulate her, but seeing she was here instead of at school, she knew she had made her choice. Dawn felt rather nervous. She caressed her belly and bit her lip with determined eyes. "Rose, I know you sponsored me to go to school, and I didn't finish my academics. But I... I truly love him." She was referring to Evan. Between love and academics, Rose had no comments on which to choose. Since Dawn had made her choice, she could only give her blessings.

"Congratulations," Rose repeated and swirled the bottle in her hand.

Her indifferent response intensified Dawn's existing discomfort. She knew from the start that Evan liked Rose, which remained a fact until now. But she...

She knew what methods she had resorted to staying by Evan's side. Whether it was in Finterra or Aquastead last time, she would follow him around if distance kept them apart.

No matter how much she knew he had never forgotten about Rose, she was content enough to just stay by his side.

Things took a turn when Rose and Evan started seeing each other every day. As the two shared their worry for Yvonne, it was inevitable for them to appreciate each other's presence. Hence, she had been panicking.

"Rose, we were supposed to hold our wedding at the end of the month. But because Evo is worried about Eve, he wants to postpone the wedding..." Dawn sounded aggrieved.

"I know I should be understanding, and I also support his decision since the wedding will happen either way. It's just that... my belly will show if... I wouldn't want to ruin Evo's name."

Rose had heard about Evan's

marriage from Yvonne, but she only

discovered it was with Dawn until now. Still, she didn't understand why Dawn was bringing this up to her. She didn't want to speculate and stayed silent.

Dawn, on the other hand, was getting impatient. She suddenly grabbed Rose's hand.

"Rose, why don't you tell Evo not to postpone the wedding? The Spencers have already prepared for the wedding, which will only take a day. After that, Evo can go back to accompanying Eve." Rose found that funny. "Shouldn't you be discussing this with him? Why am I involved?"

On top of that, why would Evan listen to an outsider's advice? She didn't want to stick her nose in someone's business. "This is your matter with him, Dawn. You need to deal with it yourself," she said gently. Dawn's expression became awkward. She didn't expect Rose to reject her so unhesitatingly. "Oh... Alright."

She tried her hardest to squeeze out a smile. "You're right. I'll discuss it with him. Evo loves me and our baby. I'm sure he'll listen if I talk to him about it."

Then, she released Rose's hand, her smile more natural. "I was too hasty and worried about Eve. That's why I didn't want to talk to him myself..." Was she too hasty? Indeed, she was. But it was questionable when she said she was worried about Yvonne.

Although Dawn had been by Evan's side these few days, Rose couldn't sense her worry for Yvonne during her few limited visits.

To Dawn, Yvonne was merely a stranger to her without Evan's existence. Nevertheless, Rose didn't want to comment more on that.

"Is that all? If so... Thanks for the water."

She wanted to leave. For some reason, she felt something odd with Dawn since their reunion in Regalia. She couldn't pinpoint what exactly, but she knew she wanted to avoid her.

Rose raised the bottle and politely smiled at Dawn before leaving the convenience store. She remembered to buy Yvonne her tulips. However, the florists nearby had all closed for the day. "Rosie, why are you out here alone?" Miles had just exited the car and didn't see Dawn inside the convenience store. While asking that, he arrived before Rose. "Miles, can I..."

"Yes." Without waiting for her to finish, he nodded in agreement.

Rose looked at him strangely. He said yes before even knowing what she wanted. Wasn't he afraid that her request would be overboard?

However, when she met his eyes,

she couldn't help but feel a sense of

warmth inside her. Suddenly, she realized the man before her would unhesitantly do her any favor no matter what she asked. Almost as if he was...

"Miles, I'll return to Aquastead and..." Rose wanted to reinstate that he and she...

While pondering how she should approach this conversation, she heard his soft laugh and gentle voice. "Even if you're back in Aquastead, you'll always be my sister no matter where you are!"

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## Chapter 434 Exchange of Interests

[ 1,118 words ]

Forever his sister... The startled Rose silently heaved a deep breath. He had misunderstood her. Thankfully, he did.

Before the atmosphere could turn awkward, he ruffled her hair. "You still haven't told me what you wanted." That gesture left her in a daze.

When she was little, she would watch Evan messing with Yvonne's hair and admired their sibling relationship. Suddenly, she felt like she had a brother too.

"Miles, I'm looking to buy flowers."

"Okay. I'll take you to a florist."

"Miles, I don't have enough money."

"It's okay. I do."

"Miles..."

On their way, it felt like a switch had flipped within Rose, prompting her to keep talking. She no longer addressed Miles with distance and respect.

Instead, she addressed him like a sister would her older brother. At that moment, she realized she wasn't alone after Oliver passed. She still had him!

Miles brought her to a florist, which was the only one still operating. Its warm lights shone upon them and the flowers.

That imagery was particularly stimulating to Anastasia, who was in a car parked outside a store on the street. Amid her daze, she thought the person beside Miles was Harriette.

"No! That can't be her!" Panic flashed across her gaze, but she soon regained her composure.

The woman in her sight finally became Rose, but Anastasia couldn't relax her hands, which were gripping the steering wheel.

While the two selected their flowers, Anastasia suddenly had an idea and fished out her phone to take a picture of them.

She no longer stalked them after Rose and Miles entered the car. Instead, she looked for Jonathan's number and sent him the photo.

It was already past midnight when the insomniac Jonathan came out of the shower and saw Anastasia's message.

He initially wanted to ignore her but saw the word "Rose" on his screen. Instantly, he grabbed his phone and opened the message.

Surprisingly, Rose and Miles were in the photo together. The latter dressed casually, completely unlike his usual style. Had he not paid attention, he wouldn't have recognized Miles. He couldn't believe that man had worn a disguise just to shake him off!

A burning wrath brewed within Jonathan. Seeing how Rose held the bouquet while gently looking up at Miles enraged Jonathan.

Even though it was a still picture, he could sense the warmth in her eyes. His expression gradually darkened.

It had been ages since he saw her! She was his wife, for Pete's sake, and he had to turn the city upside down just to see her.

The more he thought about it, the more riled up he was. He needed to know where she was at that instance!

Jonathan quickly zoomed into the picture and tried to uncover any details that could lead to a location. To his dismay, the photo was so poor quality that he could hardly see anything useful. He gritted his teeth.

At that moment, another message popped up. "Do you wish to know where she is? Lucky you, 'coz I know!"

Anastasia... Without a second thought, Jonathan called her.

Outside the florist, Anastasia instantly perked up when she saw Jonathan's incoming call. As she expected, he had taken the bait.

She took her time to answer the call and let it ring until it ended. Seconds later, he redialed her number. This time, though, she picked up the call a second before the last ring.

Once the call connected, Jonathan's voice sounded. "What do you want? I can give you anything you wish for." Had his tone not been tinted with annoyance, it would've sounded like music to one's ears.

Anastasia snapped back to reality

and quickly found her bearings. "Jon,

I heard you could help Miles with the Youngs heritage by making Chloe lose everything. That must mean you can do the same for me, if not more, right?" She revealed her desire nakedly.

"It's Young Group you're after?" Jonathan wasn't surprised. "How much of it?"

Was that it? Was that all it took? Anastasia had mixed feelings. She took a deep breath and refocused her priority on dealing with Jonathan.

"It has to be more than Miles', at least. Of course, it'd be the best-case scenario if Miles is out of the game." In other words, she wanted Young Group to herself. "You're ambitious." Jonathan's lips curled into a cold smile.

With Anastasia's capability, he believed she couldn't manage Young Group even if she owned it. As for kicking Miles out...

Jonathan glanced at the photo, his dark gaze making it hard to discern his feelings. "I need to know where she is now."

Anastasia stayed silent on the phone. Deep down, she didn't want the two to reunite. It took her a while until she suppressed her jealousy and spoke softly. "Prove that you're sincere enough for this cooperation then!" With that, she ended the call.

In the room, a faint glow lit up Jonathan's face but not enough to show his emotions. All he did was type on his phone like he was sending someone a message. About ten

minutes passed, and Anastasia received a call from her assistant. "Ms. Young, Mr. Heath from Skyward Corporation just called..."

Elliot Heath from Skyward

Corporation was one of the main collaborators of Young Group-the biggest bargaining chip for Chloe Anastasia couldn't believe Jonathan could settle him this quickly How impressive!

Despite her reluctance and contemplation, Anastasia sent him the hospital address. Jonathan didn't hesitate either.

The moment he found out Rose was at the hospital, his heart sank, and he nearly suffocated. He didn't even change his clothes and simply ran out of his house in pajamas.

As the car sped toward the destination, he finally arrived at the hospital.

In the meantime, Rose held a bouquet of white tulips and entered the ward only to find Yvonne asleep. Evan sat by the bed. The two exchanged a glance and, with mutual understanding, remained silent. After a moment, he whispered, "You should rest, Rosie. I'll be here."

Rose didn't plan to leave. She looked at Dawn standing at the door. "You should take Dawn to rest. I want to be with Yvonne alone."

"That's right. Rose is here. Evo, you

haven't rested well in days. Since Eve is awake now, she's no longer in danger. You don't have to worry

about her. Come on, let's rest." Dawn out

tugged his arm affectionately, but

Evan avoided her touch again.

He looked at Rose, who was focused on Yvonne, and felt incredibly uneasy when Dawn touched his arm. Afraid Rose would notice his strangeness, he quickly left.

Dawn followed him out of the ward, her smile slowly fading away. What else could she do when Evan still cared about Rose?

"Evo..." With unease lingering in her heart, she finally called out to him after turning a corner.

Evan looked at her and saw her regretful and aggrieved face. "I'm sorry, Evo. If it weren't for me, you could've still pursued Rose. That night..."

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## Chapter 435 Have You Looked Enough

[ 1,151 words ]

Evan frowned. Without waiting for her to finish, he interrupted her.

"Enough. I told you I'd take accountability for that night." He didn't want to remember or bring up that night.

With her, he only saw accountability. Dawn hated that word the most, but that was the only thing she could use to hold him down. She wiped her tears as she blamed herself.

"If it weren't for me, you and Rose might have..."

"Rosie and I..." Evan couldn't hide the disappointment in his voice. Even without Dawn or the event that transpired that night, he and Rose were not meant to be.

There was never a relationship, to begin with, so why dwell on how things could've gone? When he reunited with Rose this time, he was confident she had someone in her heart. What was surprising was that it wasn't Miles. "But..." Dawn wanted to say more, but Evan was reluctant to continue the conversation. He simply repeated his usual words.

"I'll take accountability for you."

This time, he eased her worried heart better than before. Dawn bit her lip and embraced Evan. He visibly trembled when their bodies touched, but due to her relentless pleading, he didn't push her away despite his aversion. "Don't push me away, Evo. Just don't..." Her voice was shaky. Seeing that he froze in place and didn't resist her, she added eagerly, "I'm scared, Evo. I know you're marrying me because of the baby, but..."

But she was unwilling to accept that fact. Still, she couldn't say that aloud. "But I'm scared, Evo. Except for that night, we've never... Can we please stay at the hotel tonight?"

The air seemingly froze. They usually slept in the same hotel room but were separated by different beds. What Dawn implied was that she wanted to share a bed tonight.

With bated breath, she eagerly anticipated the answer she hoped for, but all she heard was, "You should go rest."

Yes. Just her. He wanted her to check into the hotel alone.

Dawn tightened her grip on his hands. Evan frowned, and after some hesitation, he offered, "I'll drop you off at the hotel."

"Sure." She no longer pressured him. Some things were not meant to be rushed, and she understood that. Yet, deep down, she had hopes that he would stay once they arrived at the hotel. Near the hospital, Evan located a hotel. Just as he saw her off at the hotel room door and was ready to leave, Dawn grabbed onto him.

"Evo..."

"Have some rest." He didn't let her finish and gently detached his hand from her grip.

Dawn's expression stiffened as she realized she couldn't make him stay. Without a choice, she watched reluctantly as his figure disappeared at the end of the hallway.

...

Inside the ward, Yvonne seemed to be having a nightmare. Her forehead kept sweating, and Rose wiped them off while attempting to wake her up.

However, Yvonne seemed trapped inside her dream no matter how much she struggled. At times, she even mumbled words like "Rosie", "Finches", and "Let her go".

The Finches...

Rose felt like her heart had been stabbed. Was it the Finches who had harmed Yvonne? She also remembered that the celebration party venue belonged to Finch Group. Then, she thought of Jonathan... Could it be him?

She didn't want to believe it, but Jonathan's presence and proximity when Yvonne mentioned Sardovia's Royal Dance Academy to her made it hard for her to dismiss him as the suspect.

Not only that, but she also asked Miles to investigate the sponsors behind Yvonne's dance troupe. Aside from Miles, the other person was Jonathan. It felt like every clue was pointing toward him. "Yvonne, I'll avenge you. No matter who he is, I'll make the perpetrator pay for his crime." Rose held Yvonne's hand, mumbling and vowing simultaneously.

Gradually, Yvonne calmed down. It was only until she fell asleep peacefully that Rose walked to the window.

At about 3:00 a.m., she looked out the window and saw a street outside the hospital. Then, she saw someone parked their car and alighted. The person looked like Jonathan.

She couldn't believe her eyes. There was no way she saw him when she was so far away from the car.

Rose shook her head and went to wash her face. She needed a plan to figure out who had harmed Yvonne. Just as she exited the ward, a large hand seized her wrist. "Don't say anything and just follow me," a familiar voice said.

She immediately recognized it as Jonathan's, but why was he here?

Rose allowed him to drag her to the hospital's rooftop through the fire escape route. When they stepped onto the rooftop, she was pulled into an embrace.

Jonathan wrapped his big arms around her, his embrace shifting from gentle to firm. As he recalled how she had booked a flight ticket back to Aquastead, he tightened his grip even more as though wanting to merge with her completely. Perhaps that was the only way she would stop leaving him.

Rose distinctly felt his anxiety, so mixed feelings started to brew within her. When the cold wind grazed her skin, it awakened her from the daze.

"You're hurting me." Rose furrowed her brows.

Immediately, Jonathan released her. For the past few days, he had been watching Miles like a hawk. Earlier, he even avoided the latter as if he were a thief afraid to be caught. After all the ordeals, his heart finally settled into peace when he saw her.

He stared at her to compensate for all the days he spent missing her. His passionate gaze deepened Rose's frown. "Have you looked enough?"

"Nope." Jonathan flashed her a

smile that was unusual and rare of

him. When faced with Rose, he was

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no longer the same person. He stared at her longingly. "I'll never get

enough of looking at you. What should I do?"

I

Rose felt uncomfortable by his look. What did he mean by what to do? If she didn't break the eye contact, the man might do something out of line.

At the thought of Yvonne, Rose dimmed her gaze and took a step back. In the darkness, she locked eyes with him. "Yvonne is heavily injured."

There wasn't much fluctuation in his gaze as he was relieved it wasn't Rose who had gotten injured. Although unsure of Yvonne's condition, he naturally understood Rose's worry about her dear friend.

He comforted her, saying, "The hospitals under Young Group are staffed with professionals and the best equipment. If it doesn't help, the Finches-"

Rose was revolted to hear the mention of the Finches. She cut him off without waiting for him to finish. "Did you sponsor the show that day?"

"You found out?" Jonathan looked like a child awaiting praise after doing a good deed. "She's your only friend in Regalia. Of course, I must support her career."

He even selected the ticket that Yvonne had given her. For Rose, he had done everything he could to make her happy.

Right then, he wondered how she would reward him. He took a step forward in anticipation. "Wifey..."

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## Chapter 436 Relieved That It Wasn't Him

[ 548 words ]

However, he was unaware that Rose did not share the same sentiments as him. He walked up to her, but she retreated and looked at him with a wary gaze.

"Does the venue of the celebration party belong to Finch Group?"

"Yeah." Jonathan was confused but soon flashed her a flattering smile. "Do you like that club? If you do—"

"I don't!" Rose cut him off again. This time, her sudden change in tone made Jonathan realize something was bothering her. Not only did she dislike the place, but she even showed disdain. "Wifey..."

Since Jonathan wanted to understand, Rose explained, "That's where Yvonne got harmed!"

His body froze. Instantly, he realized something had gone south after he was tricked to leave. His expression darkened.

She probed further, "Were you the one who changed the venue to the Finch Group club?"

"No!" He had always thought the celebration party carried on at its original venue.

"Did you use the recommendation-based admission from Sardovia's Royal Dance Academy to lure..."

"What admission are you talking about?" Jonathan denied sternly.

When Rose saw his unsettling gaze, she knew she had misunderstood him. He couldn't let her further misconstrue this.

"Yvonne is your friend, so hurting her is hurting you. I would never hurt you!" His tone was firm.

Rose looked at him and stayed silent for a while. After some time, her suspicious and hostile gaze suddenly softened. "He... wasn't lying. It's not him!" she figured.

Unbeknownst to her, she was secretly relieved that it wasn't him. Still, the question remained—who then if not him?

Since Yvonne mentioned the

Finches, Rose was confident it was one of his family members. Despite her limited knowledge of the family, she vowed to get to the bottom of things! She needed a channel to track down that perpetrator

Under the night sky, she locked eyes with Jonathan, a thought popping up in her head. "Should I use him?"

No, she hated that idea. Using Jonathan would only make her feel indebted. After some contemplation, she lowered her eyelids.

"I'm tired. Yvonne is recuperating here at the hospital, and I hope you won't bother us." With that, she left the rooftop.

Jonathan could've followed her but

didn't. Her s̄omber eyes when looking at him were enough to tell him what was on her mind. After a long while, he forced a smile and murmured, "Why didn't you just say so?"

Rose had her suspicions that Yvonne's perpetrator was a Finch. She asked him to identify

the person or aid her in tracking

them down, but she didn't.

"Does she want nothing to do with me?" he lamented. Moments later, he took out his phone and called Leonard.

As he was sleeping, Leonard was awakened by his ringtone. He found his phone and answered the call with closed eyes.

"Mr. Finch?" Only his boss would call him this late at night, and it had to be an emergency.

As expected, Jonathan ordered, "I want you to find out if any Finches, other than me, were present at Yvonne's celebration party at the club."

The celebration party, huh? Leonard's instinct told him this was related to Rose, and he quickly awoke from his daze.

On the phone, Jonathan paused and asked, "Is ten minutes enough?"

"M-more than enough!" Leonard quickly hopped out of bed and got the investigation going.

On the hospital rooftop, Jonathan stared at the running time. In ten minutes, Leonard returned his call.

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## Chapter 437 I'll Help You

[ 593 words ]

"Other than you, Sir, there weren't any other Finch members at the club. However... Mr. Jack is a regular at the club."

Jack? He was there at the performance too.

"Where is he?" Jonathan's gaze turned cold.

Leonard had also investigated Jack's whereabouts for the past few days.

"He's been on boat parties with models and stars, like another normal day. There's nothing unusual in his activities. However, he had not visited the club once since the celebration party. It's odd as it's inconsistent with his previous frequency." There had to be a reason for that then.

Jonathan mumbled to himself for a while, then instructed Leonard, "Keep an eye on him. Also, I remember Uncle Yosef managed the club last time."

The club was related to Yosef's family, which meant they could be involved with Yvonne's incident. No matter what, he swore to give Rose an explanation.

After Rose descended from the rooftop, the first thing she did was contact Miles to investigate the suspects from the Finch family who were related to the party. The next morning, she received updates from him.

"That club used to be managed by Yosef Finch, and his son, Jack, is a regular there. Speaking of Jack, he's mediocre, yet gutsy. And he's a womanizer too. He might very well have a hand in Ms. Spencer's incident."

Jack Finch was a name foreign to Rose. Regardless, she would find out everything about him. She needed a place to start.

As if seen through her intention, he maintained his seriousness over the phone. "Rosie, I don't support your decision to get involved. Although Yosef and his family are under Jonathan's oppression, they shouldn't be underestimated. I'm worried that you'd..." "Miles..." She interrupted him.

As Rose stood outside the ward and glimpsed through the glass, she could see Yvonne's utter state of ruin as her legs were plastered with casts and her bones fractured all over her body.

Every time Rose thought of her, her heart was in pain. How could she not seek justice for her poor best friend?

"That night, I was first tricked into a room and fainted. When I woke up, I was in a car, untouched, miles away from where I was.

"I hurried back to the club, but it was too late. Yvonne was already on the ground!" Her tone might have sounded calm, but her emotions fluctuated inside.

Since Yvonne woke up, she had never brought up the incident of that night. The people around her knew not to mention it either.

However, Rose remembered Yvonne

instructing Evan to protect her no matter what. Rose could only

imagine

how her friend had done everything to ensure Rose's safety at the club. She couldn't sit around and not avenge her.

Miles remained silent on the other side of the line. Although Rose didn't outright state her plan, he knew what she was thinking. Still, it was undeniable that the Finches were not to be underestimated.

"I'll help you, but you must promise me you'll go through your plans with me first. I don't want you in any form of danger." If he couldn't stop her, he could only protect her. But... When Miles thought of Jonathan, he hesitated briefly and spoke, "Jonathan was at the club that night."

"It wasn't him!"

Rose's resolute denial affected Miles, but he soon regained his composure. "I know he won't hurt your friend. It's just that... He left the club during the party and went to a hotel. It was only the next morning that he left. I'm not sure if it was a coincidence, but the Maizes were at the hotel that morning too."

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## Chapter 438 You're Nothing Like Her

[ 1,088 words ]

"The Maizes? The family of Ms. Yara? The way Miles brought it up sounds like they..." Rose dismissed her thought. "Rosie, he "

"Miles, is there a way I can get close to the Finches?" She cut him off, and her eagerness prompted a quick reply from him.

"Tomorrow is Jonathan's father's birthday. I'm sure all the Finches will show up for the occasion."

Other than Jonathan and Ezra, that was... Cyrus was never close with his sons. Jonathan had not attended his birthdays previously, thus this year wouldn't be an exception.

"We'll go together tomorrow." Without Jonathan's presence, Miles had more reasons to tag along and protect Rose.

The next morning, Yvonne was still asleep when Rose left the hospital. When she woke up, she only saw Evan in the room. Noticing Rose's absence, she spoke with difficulty. "Where's Rosie?"

"She was watching you the whole night and only left after I came to take over this morning. Don't worry, Eve. I saw her heading into her room."

When he recalled how exhausted Rose was that morning, he couldn't help but feel pity for her. However, that feeling was soon replaced with bitterness. He had long lost the right to care for her that way. "She's resting? That's good." Yvonne seemed relieved. Then, she suddenly thought of something. "Evan, have you seen my necklace?"

"What necklace?" he asked. Her belongings were all placed into a bag, which had been handed to her family since her operation concluded. Evan didn't recall seeing any necklaces.

A glint of disappointment flashed across Yvonne's eyes. What a shame! That necklace was a gift from Rose. They shared a twin pair, but she had now lost hers.

Meanwhile, inside a mansion, a woman stood in front of the mirror in her usual bodycon dress that wrapped tightly around her body.

Her curves and glamorous makeup reflected in the mirror as she tried on a necklace. After some scrutinizing, she pouted.

"It is nice, but..." It wasn't compatible with her style. Still, she appreciated it because it was a gift from Jack. "I'll just change the dress and put on lighter makeup!"

The woman willingly removed all her accessories except the necklace and chose a set that complemented the gift.

Just as she removed her earrings, she heard the man coming out of the bathroom and walked up to him. Planting a kiss, she said endearingly, "Thank you for the gift, Mr. Finch. I love it." The two had shared an intimate night. At that moment, Jack was only adorned with a towel. "Gift?" What gift?

The woman toyed with the necklace on her chest. "Who's the designer behind this, Mr. Finch? Since you're so nice to me, I'd like to show you my appreciation."

She pressed her body against him with a flirty gaze and was bold enough to hold his neck as an invitation.

However, Jack had no intention to get entangled with her. He glanced at her necklace and instantly shifted in emotions.

"This isn't a gift for you!" Without a hint of empathy, he started yanking the necklace off her neck.

"Ouch!" she screamed in pain without forgetting to get his sympathy. "It hurts, Mr. Finch..."

For someone with an erratic temperament like Jack, taking something without his permission had crossed his line. His gaze seemed brutal. "Who allowed you to steal my stuff?"

It was only then the woman realized he was genuinely angry. All for that necklace?

As Jack dressed himself and kept the necklace in his pocket, she finally recognized where the necklace came from-Yvonne wore it at the celebration party! Was he still into her?

"Mr. Finch..." She meekly embraced him from behind, pressing her chest against his back. "Have you had fun lately?"

Since the celebration party, Jack

kept his word and got her into the

dance troupe. Through her arrangements, he got to have fun with a few other beauties from the a dance troupe. She truly thought he

had moved on from Yvonne

"Not quite." He sighed when thinking of Yvonne's figure. What a shame that he couldn't have a piece of her. Since Miles took her away, he had not heard about her or known whether she was alive. "Mr. Finch, I've mastered the lead dancer's choreography from our final act performance that day. Would you like to see it?"

The lead dancer was none other than Yvonne. As such, he easily saw through her intention.

Jack pried open the arms around his body and distanced himself from her. Scrutinizing her from head to toe, he revealed a mocking smile. "You're nothing like her!"

Her expression stiffened. "Mr. Finch..."

"It's my uncle's birthday today. Goodbye!" Without any hesitation, Jack nonchalantly left the mansion.

....

As the former ruler of Finch Group, many elites in Regalia would show up for Cyrus birthday every year. Since he handed over the position to his son, he had been inactive in the business world. Instead, he immersed himself in painting, as evidenced by the time he spent in

ve

his art studio.

He knew his birthday this year would attract fewer guests than before, so he didn't want to celebrate it. However, he couldn't help it because someone had prepared a surprise for him.

At an art gallery under Finch Group, a few exquisitely dressed noblewomen sat in a private lounge and enjoyed their tea.

"You're so sweet to your husband, Mrs. Finch. I can't believe you organized this art exhibition on your own."

"Isn't that right? She's so thoughtful about everything. I never knew Mr. Finch liked painting. Perhaps because of your love for art, he became a painter too, Mrs. Finch."  
"What a mutual love. You two are the model couple of Regalia!"

The noblewomen chattered with praises, while Lizzie sat in the most prominent seat. She was dressed in luxury from head to toe, looking exquisite yet professional. "You

guys got it wrong. It's because Cyrus stepped down from the company and had too much time on his hands that he started painting. He's far from a painter.

"Of course saw that he's been

spending too much time in his art studio and wanted him to get some fresh air, which is why we have this exhibition here. It's all for fun but I didn't expect the turnout."

Lizzie was full of smiles, but she was displeased with the phrase "because of your love for art". Indeed, Cyrus started painting out of love for someone, but it wasn't the Mrs. Finch of now. "Anyway, just enjoy the paintings and don't overspend, alright?" Lizzie smiled warmly.

Everyone there knew what she meant by that. Seated on the side the entire time, Bella couldn't help but scoff at her. Was Cyrus' family in dire need of money?

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## - Chapter 439 Encounter

### Chapter 439 Encounter

[ 1,086 words ]

Lizzie telling them not to overspend on the artworks would only result in them doing the opposite clearing the artworks in the entire exhibition.

As expected, the noblewomen agreed on the surface but hurriedly went to purchase the paintings as they visited the exhibition. Within 30 minutes, the gallery had sold half of the available paintings. "That painting is so strange..." A person noticed a painting in the corner and looked at it strangely.

When Rose and Miles arrived at the exhibition, she was startled by the crowd. Wasn't this supposed to be a birthday banquet? One could've mistaken this as an artist's exhibition.

Miles sensed her confusion and explained, "Cyrus' second wife used to be a somewhat well-known painter. Ever since he retired, he began to paint too."

That explained it. Cyrus was Jonathan's father, so his remarrying meant that Jonathan's biological mother had... Suddenly, she remembered him bringing her to a mountain villa in Aquastead.

"Mr. Miles..." While she was lost in thought, someone had recognized Miles. Following that, many began to rush over.

"Mr. Miles, I'm surprised to see you here. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"Mr. Miles, I heard Young Group will organize an antique convention in a month. Mr. Young Senior must be proud to have you inherit his legacy."

"I agree. Let's work together in the future, Mr. Miles."

Since Oliver's passing, the inheritance dispute between the adopted family members had been intense. Almost the entire city awaited the outcome. As Oliver's most trusted and beloved grandson, Miles' capability was beyond doubt.

Miles wore a polite smile and looked for Rose, who had been squeezed out by the crowd. When he saw her, she signaled him to handle the guests alone.

Then, she headed to the washroom, turned around, and entered a hallway. At that, he wanted to follow suit but the opportunistic guests held him back.

Her path to the washroom was her way to the Finches. Before coming here, she had read some information about the family online.

Aside from Eleanor, the eldest of the family, Cyrus and Yosef were the only ones in the older generation. On the flip side, the younger generation was mysterious. Aside from Jonathan, whom she knew well, there was also the second son, who was mildly

exposed on the Internet. As for the eldest and youngest children, they were so secretive that even their genders remained a mystery.

At that moment, a painting caught Rose's attention. Almost instinctively, she walked toward the artwork.

In the painting stood a flat area at the mountain's summit. On the left, mountain ranges overlapped, while the sea met the horizon on the right, with a faint yellowish glow illuminating the water. The red sun was just rising... Wait. She had seen this before.

"It's that place!" These words came out of Rose's mouth abruptly as she thought of something.

Wanting to confirm if the place in the painting was the same mountain Jonathan brought her to, she stepped forward and explored the details close up.

With the help of her recollection, she found a villa among the woods within the painting. Although the villa looked abstract, she was confident she had been there with Jonathan. According to him, his mother used to live there!

As though entranced, Rose appraised every detail in the painting. She was so immersed that she didn't even notice a man by her side glancing at her.

Ezra had long stood in front of the painting before Rose came. He was engrossed in the artwork when a strange voice snapped him back to reality.

It was surprising that he would see Rose here, let alone her knowing the place in the painting! Had Jonathan brought her there? She had to be special to him then.

"And we meet again!" Ezra chuckled.

His sudden voice brought Rose's attention to him. She recognized him instantly despite the lowered cap and black mask concealing most of his face.

On top of that, his signature almond eyes had sold him out. He was none other than the top visualist in the entertainment industry, Ezra Turner!

Recalling his face, Rose couldn't

help but be surprised. "You're here for the exhibition too?" Although she didn't find him to be an artistic person, she didn't think that he could be here for Cyrus' birthday

He raised his brows. "I guess so. Are you here alone?"

"Nope."

She came with Miles, but Ezra deduced she was here with Jonathan. As such, he was surprised to know his brother had finally come to their dad's birthday after so many years. He wondered if Jonathan had come for this painting too.

Ezra's gaze flickered gently toward the painting. Then, he offered, "Do you like this? If you do, I'll purchase this as a gift for you."

Rose was taken aback. Why would he do that?

"N-No, thank you," she quickly rejected him. Yet, she had a strong desire to buy the painting the moment she saw the artwork again. "Excuse me. I need the washroom."

She nodded to him in farewell, and the seemingly immersed Ezra only grunted lightly in response. Before heading into the washroom, she purchased the painting from a staff.

Within five minutes, Lizzie, standing on the gallery's second floor, heard her female assistant's report-the painting had been sold!

"That's quick." A cold glint flashed across Lizzie's eyes. She walked toward the railing and precisely saw the painting on the first floor.

At that moment, a man stood before the artwork. Although he wore a cap and an oversized shirt that concealed his silhouette, she could easily recognize a Finch family member regardless of the disguise.

"Did he purchase it?"

Then, she saw Ezra turning to a staff member and saying something.

"No. It was a lady."

Her assistant, Claire Hilton, presented the purchase history to Lizzie. When she saw Rose's name, Lizzie was shocked.

Meanwhile, on the first floor, Ezra's expression darkened upon hearing the painting had been sold. "To whom?" he asked coldly.

The staff flashed him a polite smile. "I'm sorry, sir, but we can't disclose the customer's information."

Ezra remained in place after the staff left. As if reminded of something, he quickly scanned his surroundings and found Lizzie on the second floor.

As their eyes locked, a burning wave of resentment ignited in his eyes, scaring her into retreating.

"What's wrong, Mrs. Finch?" Claire swiftly held her.

Without responding, Lizzie looked downstairs and saw Ezra missing from his original spot. "Quick. Let's get out of here." Her voice was shaky.

Her peculiar reaction rendered Claire

confused. All she could do was follow Lizzie's lead. As they arrived at the door of a private lounge, Lizzie suddenly halted. The previously fearful woman suddenly changed her mind.

"Do me a favor."

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## Chapter 440 Deliberate Provocation

[ 1,122 words ]

After taking a deep breath, Lizzie calmly instructed Claire and released her hand, which was placed on the door handle.

"Got it. Be right back." After Claire left frantically, Lizzie revealed a cold smile as she adjusted her gown. She slowly made her way to the third floor and entered the last room at the end of the hallway. When Ezra rushed to the second floor, he didn't see Lizzie. Instead, her assistant was standing near the staircase.

"Mr. Turner, you can't..." Claire looked anxious as she blocked his way, but his furious gaze made her retreat in fear.

In reality, Lizzie had said to act scared when blocking Ezra so they could seamlessly lure him into her room on the third floor. However, Claire was genuinely afraid when faced with him. "Scram!" he growled with gritted teeth.

Claire was scared to her core. She had heard that Ezra had a wild temperament but had never seen him this frightening-like a ferocious beast escaped from a cage.

She instinctively glanced toward the third floor, her voice coming out shaky. "Mr. Turner, it's Mr. Finch's birthday today. Please don't be impulsive." That was a line taught to her by Lizzie.

As expected, Ezra seemingly became more enraged and pushed Claire away. Then, he dashed to the third floor.

Finding her balance, she quickly ran after him and screamed panickingly, "Mr. Turner, you can't go up there. Mrs. Finch isn't there!" The more she resisted him, the quicker the situation escalated.

Soon, Ezra arrived on the third floor but was halted by Claire. It looked like she wanted to stop him, but in reality, she planned to lure him into a certain direction. As they neared the end of the hallway, she put on an expression of panic, prompting him to stop. "Get lost!" Ezra stared at the door and was confident Lizzie was inside.

"Mr. Turner..." Without waiting for her to finish, he yanked her off. He opened the door and closed it almost immediately.

In the meantime, Lizzie sat on the couch and faced backward to the door. She leisurely placed the cup in her hand, and her victorious gaze soon turned into a menacing one.

As Ezra edged closer to her, he questioned sternly, "Where is the painting?"

On the surface, Lizzie organized the art exhibition today to celebrate Cyrus. However, Ezra knew this woman wasn't as loving to his father as she presented to the world. Her ultimate goal was to discard his mother's painting rightfully.

"What painting?" Lizzie turned her head. From the corner of her eye, she saw Ezra had removed his cap and mask. His face was undoubtedly exquisite. How similar!

Ezra, the A-plus celebrity, as seen on TV and in the media, might appear strikingly handsome or rebellious, with every facet of him dazzling enough to attract countless admirers. Yet, who would have known that he had another side concealed from the public? Perhaps he was unaware of it too.

Lizzie reacted even more dramatically as she turned to stare at Ezra momentarily, as though considering whether she could unleash his unhidden side today.

When recalling that rainy night from ten years ago, she couldn't help but feel a heightened sense of resentment.

"Ezzy, which one of the paintings downstairs are you into? I'll tell them to reserve it for you." Lizzie smiled warmly, and Ezra hated that look on her face.

The way she called him "Ezzy" also sent a striking pain to his head. All he wanted at that moment was to retrieve the painting.

"You know damn well which one I want!"

She burst into a smile. "I do? Ezzy, how will I know what you're thinking?"

"Ezzy..." Every time she said his nickname, his head felt closer to exploding.

"Ezzy, come on. I'll show you the album so that you can point it out to me. Luckily, we have all the digital copies of the paintings here. Look..." Lizzie arrived beside Ezra and passed him her phone.

The copies of each painting played automatically. At first, there was nothing special-just the paintings from the exhibition downstairs. But suddenly, a photograph mixed in with the paintings flashed by.

One of the artworks depicted a woman holding a paintbrush while painting by the lakeside. Only her side profile was captured, with the wind gently blowing her dress and hair, creating a scene of beauty and serenity. However, the woman in the painting... tugged at Ezra's heartstrings for some reason and worsened his headache.

The paintings continued to flash before his eyes like a slideshow. Amid those paintings sat some photographs, which all had the same woman.

He couldn't help but wonder who she was. Despite noticing Lizzie's trick as she shuffled the photos into the paintings, he had an indescribable desire to find out who the woman was and ignored looking for the painting. Sensing his strange expression, she smiled coldly. "Don't you know her?"

"Who is she?" Ezra was eager to know.

"She... is a vicious woman who has abandoned you. Have you forgotten?" Lizzie suddenly withdrew her phone.

Due to her actions, Ezra became more enraged and looked slightly crazed. Instinctively, his hands balled into fists as he roared, "She didn't abandon me!"

His confidence and firmness

surprised her, Even if he had

forgotten about her or her face, he still defended her with the utmost belief that she had not abandoned him, just like back then. They were bonded by blood, after all,

Lizzie felt disdainful. Mother-and-son bond, was it? Could that also be the thing that destroyed them?

She sighed. "Looks like you've forgotten. You're here because of this painting, right?" She showed him a photo of the painting that Rose had bought.

As the painting appeared in his sight, Ezra became more unstable. "That's my mom's painting! You have no right to sell it."

"Your mom's painting?" Lizzie scoffed. "You remember the painting but not your mom."

He was visibly bothered by that.

She continued her open provocation. "You forgot about her! Well, it's a good thing that you did. All these years, our family was forbidden to mention her for fear of reminding you of her and the things she'd done to you. Ezzy-that's what your mom used to call you, right?"

In his memory, no one had ever called him Ezzy. Yet, it sounded so familiar to the point where it felt like he was brought back to a moment in time-a time when a voice said

"Ezzy, Mommy didn't mean to... Ezzy, I'm sorry..."

The voices were vague and indistinct, seeming both real and surreal simultaneously. His headache intensified, and Ezra held his head, gritting his teeth in pain.

It felt as if something was trapped behind a gate. Once the gate was opened, those things would surge forth.

"Ah..." he groaned.

Watching from the side, Lizzie knew the time had come. "There's a door over there, Ezzy. Go in, and you might be able to see her..."

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