

Honey, You're a Billionaire?

Chapter 441 Crumbs of Information

[1,075 words]

At the sight of the door, Ezra walked in. When Lizzie watched the door close, her victorious gaze became more visible.

She was glad to have organized the exhibition in this gallery, which was Cyrus' private property. All these years, he had not visited this place because of "her", but the content of the room remained inside. Lizzie was proud of her perfect plan.

Taking a last look at the door, she exited the room. Outside, the anxious Claire quickly went up to her upon her appearance. "Mrs. Finch, is Mr. Turner-

"He's fine. So am I." Lizzie's calm voice interrupted her. Then, she said, "Bring Jonathan over."

The sound of his name was enough to scare Claire. After many years of being Lizzie's assistant, she had never seen Jonathan show up for his father's birthday. What had Lizzie done that could convince him to come over? "Mrs. Finch..."

Sensing her reluctance, Lizzie flashed her a cold smile. "Send him an anonymous email containing the list of purchased paintings and their receipts." She was confident she could lure him over with Rose.

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Inside the conference room of the Finch Building, the atmosphere was so oppressive that everyone was afraid to make a noise. Jonathan sat silently in the main seat, his expression gloomy and menacing.

A chief financial officer of one of Finch Group's subsidiary companies was making his report, drenched in cold sweat.

It was supposed to be a joyous report as they had achieved more than the expected profit, yet the atmosphere felt like they had lost a couple of millions.

The chief financial officer glanced cautiously at Jonathan but instantly retracted his gaze upon meeting his grim gaze. Beads of sweat appeared on his forehead, and despite being in the air-conditioned room, his back was drenched in sweat.

Leonard and Finley locked eyes and exchanged an empathetic look. They knew Jonathan would have a bad day ahead, with one of the reasons being...

A "ding" sounded and broke the silence in the room like a pebble creating a ripple in a peaceful lake. Everyone present was startled and looked toward the phone's owner. Surprised by the notification tone, Leonard quickly clutched the phone in his pocket. "Silence your phone during the meeting. Have you not remembered such a basic rule, Mr. Spencer?" Jonathan's icy voice rang. "Forget about your bonus this month!"

Everyone present was speechless because Leonard was Jonathan's right-hand man, after all. Nevertheless, the careless mistake of forgetting to silence his phone during a meeting was enough to cease his bonus.

Leonard wailed silently. He knew begging for forgiveness would only worsen things on a day when his boss was pissed. As such, he made the best decision by accepting it.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Finch. I'll switch it off now." He took out his phone.

Just as he was about to turn the device off, he glimpsed a message from the screen and saw "Rose Shaffer". Without paying heed to anything else, he quickly expanded the message.

His focused and brazen action annoyed Jonathan even more. "Mr. Spencer..."

"Sir..." Leonard interrupted him and ignored his darkened expression. Then, he walked toward Jonathan. "Look at this..." He placed his phone before Jonathan.

With just a glance, Jonathan saw something, and his demeanor turned even colder. "Are you sick of staying here, Leonard?" Leonard had shown him Cyrus' art exhibition despite knowing it was taboo. "No, sir! Look..." He knew Jonathan had not understood his actions and scrolled to reveal the words "Rose Shaffer" on his screen.

Only then did Jonathan notice it and perk up before snatching the phone. He saw Rose had purchased a painting titled "Nance", which meant she had gone to Cyrus' exhibition!

Without any hesitation, Jonathan rose and left the conference room.

"Sir..." Leonard signaled Finley with his eyes, as though saying, "You'll stay here to wrap things up while I catch up to him." At last, he arrived at the elevator before the doors closed. en FindNovel.net

Inside the elevator, Jonathan was visibly anxious.

"Sir, Mr. Finch's birthday banquet is being held at his gallery on 113 Sunrise Avenue," informed Leonard He knew Cyrus' birthday was taboo, so he didn't report it to him

beforehand despite knowing the

venue.

"Got it." Jonathan sounded nervous.

He should've anticipated Rose would show up at Cyrus' birthday banquet to connect with the Finches. After all, that was the best opportunity to uncover Yvonne's perpetrator. Regardless, facing a Finch member would not be easy. No matter what she planned to do today, he would not let her be in danger.

At the gallery on 113 Sunset Avenue, Rose sifted through the crowd attempting to meet the Finches.

Suddenly, she heard a voice say, "You better give me an explanation for that day, Jack!"

She recognized that voice to be Yara's. Although Rose was never interested in her, the man she was talking to attracted her attention...

Rose quickly followed the source of the voice. Despite Yara wearing a mask, Rose easily recognized her figure. Jack, however, seemed compatible with the pictures of him she saw online. "Are you sure you want to do this here?" Jack raised his brows as though unfazed by her confrontation.

Yara's face shifted, and she gritted her teeth. "Come with me!"

Rose made her way through the crowd and stealthily followed the two to the third floor. Since no one was there, Yara randomly selected a lounge and invited Jack in.

"Sure!" He followed suit.

Before the door closed, she had already removed her mask and started questioning him accusatorily. "Those drugs you gave me were defective, weren't they? You did it on purpose, Jack!" Yara looked grim. The drugs were supposed to be aphrodisiacs, but Jonathan slept through the whole night. Due to that, she had no choice but to find a man and get the job done. With a mocking smile, Jack sat on the couch. "Oh? You two didn't... do it?" His words were like a stab in her heart.

Following that was a wave of guilt. She quickly put on a confident look. "Pfft, as if. Of course, I slept with him!" She couldn't let anyone know what had happened that night. Jack shot her a strange look. "So, why are you questioning me if you've slept with him?"

He was right. What was the lashing out for if she had achieved her goal?

Yara suppressed her emotions. She had been trying to connect with Jonathan for the past few days, but it had been futile. She needed channel to vent. Seeing his

arrogance, she couldn't hold in her anger.

"It's not like you got Rose that night either!"

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Chapter 442 He Wasn't Looking at Rose

[1,015 words]

Either? Jack saw through her but didn't expose her.

Their conversation was audible through the slit of the door, and Rose, standing just outside, kept repeating these words-I slept with him in her head.

Did Jonathan and Yara... Miles' words about the two leaving the hotel resurfaced in her head, and things started to make sense.

It felt like her heart was being clenched tightly, suffocating her. Before she could calm herself down, she distinctly heard a voice.

"Who said I was going for Rose?" Jack lit his cigarette and blew out the smoke.

Yara was shocked. "But that night at the club in the surveillance room, you were looking at..." She was sure Jack was staring at Rose. Then, she paused as if reminded of something. "You weren't looking at Rose!"

The surveillance footage appeared in her mind. That night, she was busy focusing on Rose and didn't notice that there was another woman with her!

"You..." She stared at Jack in disbelief.

Putting out the cigarette, Jack seemed indifferent. "She's the principal dancer of the Regalia Drama House. She caught my eye as soon as she got onto the stage."

He couldn't help but sigh upon recalling her figure on stage. He even fished out the necklace from his pocket and examined it fondly.

Yara's expression turned grim. She thought Jack was on her side. At that moment, she was relieved that she hadn't revealed what truly happened with Jonathan that night. Regardless, she was filled with bitterness and glared at Jack before leaving the room. The hallway was empty, and Yara walked away in her high heels.

Rose, who had hidden in another room, replayed the words she had heard... It was Jack who had harmed Yvonne!

She subconsciously tightened her fists and soon concocted a plan to avenge Yvonne. Just as she was ready to leave, a strange sound rang out behind her.

She turned her head and had barely seen anything when an object smashed against her head. The next moment, a raging pain spread across her forehead, and she descended into unconsciousness.

At some point, she awoke and felt a strong headache. When she touched her forehead, it felt like her wound had been bandaged.

The room was pitch-black, but she could tell her wound was wrapped with a dress shirt. "Who treated me? And who knocked me unconscious? And Jack..." Thoughts ran across her head.

All Rose wanted to do at that moment was look for Jack. As soon as she moved, she heard a sound within the dark room, but that was it.

Following the source of the sound, she turned on the torchlight from her phone and slowly made her way in that direction. Under the faint light, she entered a room but found nothing peculiar. "Stay away." A male voice, tinged with fear, suddenly echoed.

Rose halted her steps and found the voice familiar. When she matched the voice to a person in her mind, she instinctively shook her head in denial. How could it be him?

She wanted to confirm that this fearful voice belonged to someone other than the person she thought of. Instantly, she switched on the room light and was stunned to see the space turn red.

After regaining her composure, she

realized this was a darkroom, a space for developing films. In the corner of the room, a person curled up and hugged his head, obscuring his entire face. en FindNovel.net

When Rose took a step forward, the voice sounded more terrified. "Stay away! Just... stay where you are!"

His curled-up body was visibly shaking, and she finally confirmed his identity upon hearing his words.

"Ezra, what..." she spoke amidst her fear-filled heart.

He had always been charming and dazzling whether on TV or in person. Yet, at that moment, he seemed disheveled and unlike himself. He even tensed up his body after hearing his name. "What happened to you?" Rose asked, tentatively moving forward.

Noticing her movements, Ezra frantically screamed, "Stay away! You're awake... so just go! Now!"

His voice seemed to carry a sense of restraint, and he even avoided looking at her. He held his head tightly with his elbows pressed firmly against his face, blocking it from view.

At that, Rose frowned. With his condition, how could she leave him to his own devices? The two were acquainted in both Aquastead and Regalia.

Although they weren't close, she knew he was a kind person. How could she leave him to be when he was at his worst? She couldn't do it.

Refusing to leave, she stared at Ezra in the corner and softened her tone. "Are you feeling sick anywhere?"

"No!" It was obvious that he was lying through gritted teeth.

"If you need any help, you can tell me. I can-" Rose acted cautiously for fear of overstimulating him and remained in her place. Before she could finish, however, Ezra cut her off.

"I don't need your help, Rose. Please, just go. Or else..." He didn't say more, but it was undeniable that he was holding himself back through gritted teeth.

The red lights shone onto his body. It wasn't until Rose accidentally knocked over something that she noticed photographs hanging in the darkroom.

In the photos were the same

woman. She looked gentle and serene, and her side profile and

silhouette were equally stunning

Just by looking at them, Rose could feel the affection of the person who had captured these photos.

Who was the woman, and who photographed her?

Lifting her hand, Rose examined the person in the photos. Amid her distraction, Ezra suddenly unveiled his head upon noticing her action, and as if taken over by a monster, his gaze displayed hints of craze.

That gaze awakened Rose. She quickly looked at him and felt her heart drop. A wave of danger and warning engulfed her body, and her mind told her, "Danger!" "Hey, Ezra..." Rose stood in place.

The originally curled-up man had seemingly transformed into a monster and lunged at her. Despite taking a step back, it was too late.

With a ruthless gaze, Ezra choked her as if wanting to tear her apart.

"Ezra, wake up! Let me go!" The asphyxiation and pain in her neck put Rose into terror. The man before her was no longer the Ezra she knew.

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Chapter 443 How Much He Loved Rose

[1,000 words]

The pressure on her neck increased, and the gaze before her was filled with hatred. There was no conflict between Rose and Ezra, so why would there be any resentment? She deduced that he had mistaken her for someone else. "Ezra, look at me. It's me, Rose..." She squeezed out her words amid the chokehold.

Ezra visibly froze when he heard her name. The person before him was Rose, but the headache caused him to jolt his head. When he reopened his eyes, he saw the person he resented again.

"Give her back to me!" he yelled, resuming the force on her neck. His eyes even showed signs of murderous intent as he repeatedly mumbled, "You're a vicious woman. Give her back to me! Now!" Vicious woman? Give her back to him? Rose became more confused at this point.

The air was thinning in her lungs, and she exerted great strength to pry open the fingers on her neck. However, she had underestimated his power.

Soon, the inevitable suffocation led her to unconsciousness. Amidst her weakness, she called out his name. "Jon... nathan..."

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Almost all of the paintings in the exhibition had sold out. In the gallery, Cyrus' birthday banquet officially commenced.

When Jonathan arrived, he saw Cyrus encircled by a group of guests in the center of the exhibition. Beside him was Lizzie, who was locking arms with him. Although the gap in their ages was very wide, they looked compatible nevertheless. "Mr. Finch, you're so lucky to have a wife like her. I heard Mrs. Finch has put a lot of effort into organizing this art exhibition."

"That's right. You guys are the epitome of love."

Cyrus smiled in response, while Lizzie looked like a beloved wife beside him.

Glancing at the "couple" among the crowd, Jonathan quickly withdrew his cold gaze as he focused on something more important.

"Mr. Jonathan..." an unknowing person called out in shock.

Allegedly, Jonathan and Cyrus shared a poor father-and-son relationship. Back when Cyrus managed Finch Group, Jonathan had never shown up for his father's birthdays.

Despite stepping down, many still attended his birthday banquet this year. To their surprise, they got to see Jonathan!

"Mr. Jonathan, what a pleasure to see you here. I'm..."

"Mr. Jonathan, I'm sure you don't remember me, but we met..."

"Mr. Jonathan..."

Everybody rushed to meet the new ruler of Finch Group, who was rarely accessible, hoping to get a chance to introduce themselves.

All of a sudden, the original focus in the gallery, Cyrus, shifted to Jonathan. Just like the power of the Finch family, the Finch Group had long been under Jonathan's control.

Standing some distance away, Yosef glanced at the encircled Jonathan and gritted his teeth. He was supposed to take over the company, but this young man had snatched his chance.

For most of his life, he had always been just the second choice. The more he thought about it, the more annoyed he was.

He turned to his brother and

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sarcastically asked, "Hey, Cyrus. Your son sure is enjoying the

limelight. I'm surprised he decided to show up for your birthday this year. Why didn't I know that you two have made up?"

Regardless of whether it was in private or public, everyone knew the father and son were not close. They had never made up either.

Cyrus smiled faintly and looked toward his son among the mob, his gaze undecipherable. On his side, Lizzie's gaze landed on Jonathan as well.

"Cyrus, Jon must be here because of your birthday. I knew he always cared. What issue can there be between a father and son?"

Her gentle smile and soft tone could convince anyone to believe she was the loving, amicable Mrs. Finch. Yet, only she knew why Jonathan was here today.

As expected, Rose held an important place in Jonathan's heart. But that didn't matter because she had fallen into Lizzie's trap.

The latter initially thought she would have to put more effort into luring her into the room. To her surprise, Rose entered the room after attempting to hide from Yara! Everything fell into place just as Lizzie wished. By then, it was a matter of whether she came out alive from Ezra's claws.

A dilemma awaited Jonathan. One was his younger brother, while the other was supposedly the love of his life. Lizzie couldn't wait to see how much he loved her. She secretly scoffed and tugged Cyrus' arm, advising gently, "Cyrus, since Jon is here, why don't we approach him? Come on, let's go."

She almost looked like she sincerely wanted the father and son to mend their broken bond, as if that was her plan the whole time. Naturally, Cyrus caressed her hand and gladly

followed her to the crowd.

As the mob grew, Jonathan had had enough. "Get out of my way!" he piped up among the eager introductions.

Everyone was startled. Similarly, Cyrus and Lizzie halted in their steps. Looking at Jonathan's darkened expression, the crowd finally realized they had pushed him to his limit.

The crowd gradually sensed eye contact between Cyrus and Jonathan and realized they were in the duo's way. As such, they swiftly cleared a path.

Without any hesitation, Jonathan strode forward, his speed stunning Cyrus. He had never seen such an enthusiastic expression on his son in a long time. As Jonathan came closer, Cyrus' smile widened. "Jo..." Cyrus had just uttered a syllable when Jonathan brushed past him. The unfinished name and smile froze on his face.

Jonathan's steps quickened, and he headed toward a random hallway. He grabbed hold of Miles, who had just arrived, and asked anxiously, "Where's Rose?" He glanced around and didn't see her.

The downcast Miles looked up and finally saw Jonathan. He instantly grabbed Jonathan's hand and said, "Rosie is gone. I searched the entire gallery and couldn't find her. She's not picking up her calls..."

"You've searched every corner of this gallery?" Jonathan's worry increased. He looked back and scanned the crowd.

Knowing that Rose had come here to uncover Yvonne's perpetrator, he confirmed that Yosef and Jack were in his sight. Still, he couldn't relax his anxious heart.

Miles suddenly thought of something. "No. There's still a spot..."

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Chapter 444 Please Help Him

[985 words]

"The third floor!"

The hallway to the third floor of the gallery was locked. Miles had asked the staff about it but was told that was where Cyrus stored his important items. As such, it was not open to the public year-round. They had also assured him nobody was on the third floor. Without a second thought, Jonathan dashed toward that floor.

All the hallways on the third floor were equipped with high-tech digital locks. Since this gallery belonged to Cyrus, Jonathan glanced at Leonard, who was following behind, and tacitly communicated what he needed. Immediately, Leonard fished out his phone and dialed a number.

Downstairs, everybody remained stunned in place. When a phone rang, the crowd simultaneously looked toward Cyrus, who wore a gloomy expression.

When he looked at his phone, he furrowed his brows. The ringtone continued echoing throughout the gallery, creating an eerie atmosphere. After some time, he finally answered the call.

On the other side of the call, a cold voice sounded. "Give me the password!" Jonathan was referring to the password to access the third floor.

Despite being in the same building, the father and son would only communicate through phone calls. Without receiving an answer, Jonathan piped up again.

"If you wish to stay in Regalia, give me the password now!" He had millions of ways to banish his father from the city.

Cyrus narrowed his eyes. Suddenly, he smiled. "All for a woman?"

He couldn't believe his son would threaten him over a woman. Was it Rose? He vaguely heard her name earlier and thought it sounded familiar, but...

"She's not up there!" Why would this woman he was looking for be on the floor locked all year round?

Jonathan locked eyes with Miles and came to a tacit agreement. No matter what, they needed to find out themselves!

"Give me the password!" Jonathan raised his voice as if issuing his final ultimatum.

The atmosphere on both floors remained eerily quiet. For almost a minute, the two didn't respond to each other.

Lizzie, who was standing beside Cyrus, could vaguely hear their conversation. "Reluctant" to watch them at a stalemate and affect their relationship, she quickly intervened to help.

"Let's just unlock the third floor if that's what Jon wants." Sensing his lack of movement, she added, "You don't have to go. I'll do it." That was another way of saying he could unlock the floor without conceding to Jonathan.

All these years, Lizzie had always been the mediator between the two whenever things like this happened.

Looking at her back, Cyrus could feel his heart soften. His son had always harbored animosity toward her. Afraid that Jonathan would lash out at her, he quickly followed suit.

On the third floor, Jonathan spared Lizzie a cold glance before averting his gaze. Despite facing his hostility, she was immune to it and even wore a smile. "Let me do it, Jon."

She was just about to step forward when Cyrus shielded her. "Stay there. I'll do it." He was extremely gentle toward his wife.

After glancing at Jonathan, Cyrus walked to the door and scanned his fingerprint. The moment the door unlocked, Jonathan and Miles dashed through the hallways. Though they were clearly anxious, Cyrus also became curious about Rose. "Cyrus, I don't think this is a good idea. The stuff up there..." Lizzie discarded her composure from earlier and suddenly displayed hints of worry. Cyrus naturally understood her intent.

"It's my fault. If they get to that room and see..." She trailed off as Cyrus had already gone to the third floor without her.

A cold glint flashed in her eyes. Looking at his frantic shadow, she knew he hadn't forgotten about an important detail.

Not only did the third floor store important paintings, but it also consisted of a sealed room that had been left untouched for a long time. Not wanting to miss anything, she rushed behind Cyrus.

The third floor consisted of many rooms, thanks to the large gallery. Jonathan, Miles, and Leonard searched the rooms while screaming Rose's name. However, it was futile.

Meanwhile, Cyrus and Lizzie stood at a spot in one of the hallways. When the trio arrived, Cyrus blocked their paths.

Glancing at his father, Jonathan realized the rooms behind Cyrus were the only ones left unsearched. His worry intensified, and he wanted to find Rose immediately.

Ignoring Cyrus, Jonathan marched forward but was soon halted by his father. The duo locked eyes, then came Cyrus' firm tone.

"Any rooms but these!"

Jonathan couldn't care less about the reason. All he wanted was to confirm Rose's presence. "Scram!"

The two reached a stalemate again, and the air was particularly eerie.

"Jon, there's no way Ms. Shaffer is in there. Listen to your dad..." Lizzie wanted to advise him but stopped when Jonathan's harsh gaze swept over her. His already enraged state made him ignore their resistance and shove Cyrus away.

The stumbling Cyrus turned furious. "Stand right there, Jonathan!"

Jonathan paid no heed to him and continued searching each room. As he was about to arrive at the last room, Cyrus rushed forward

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attempting to stop him but was too late. Jonathan had opened the door.

The room was pitch-black with a slither of red light bleeding through. Cyrus could feel his heart drop.

Unbeknownst to the rest, Lizzie curled her lips into a sinister smile.

"Is Rose dead? Has Mad Ezra gotten to her?" she wondered.

Despite being eager to know the outcome, she had to put on a show. "Why are the lights on?" she exclaimed with feigned surprise.

Perhaps someone was inside since the lights were on! Her words instantly pulled everyone's attention back.

"Rose."

"Rosie."

Two voices rang out in unison, and they barged into the red-lit darkroom. Their hearts clenched in suspense as a sense of foreboding enveloped them. Leonard followed behind them and turned on the main lights.

Inside the red-lit darkroom, Rose turned around and saw the incoming men as her life saviors. After struggling to get up, she lunged at the two and grabbed them tightly. "Jon, save him. Miles, please save him..."

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Chapter 445 No Scars Are Allowed

[1,054 words]

Save him? Who else was in the room besides Rose? Jonathan and Miles had no time to pay attention to anything else in the secret room. They helped Rose up and immediately checked on her. Seeing her clothes slightly disheveled and a bloodstain on her forehead, Jonathan's heart skipped a beat.

"What did he do to you?" Miles asked, gritting his teeth and holding his breath. He was afraid to hear the answer.

What had Ezra done to her? Rose recalled the earlier moments. She had thought she was going to die, but Ezra suddenly released her, and... Rose dared not delay any longer. "Quick, save him. Ezra... Ezra... he..."

The memory was too painful for her to recall. She quickly turned her head to look at the man lying in the corner.

Jonathan and Miles looked over, following her gaze. Under the red light, the man lay with his eyes closed, and his face...

Ezra... Something seemed to hit Jonathan inside.

How could it be Ezra? He instinctively resisted the idea of Ezra being involved in this matter. He didn't want either Rose or Ezra to be hurt.

At this moment, Ezra's condition...

Jonathan's gaze shifted down and noticed a patch of blood on the floor under the red light. His mind buzzed. The scene overlapped with a memory from the past.

"Ezra!" Jonathan didn't hesitate to rush forward to grab Ezra's wrist. The wound was bandaged, and blood was no longer flowing out.

"Leonard, call an ambulance and have the doctors on standby!" There was panic in Jonathan's voice. He quickly picked up Ezra and rushed out the door. Rose felt slightly relieved as she watched Jonathan run into the distance. "The Finch Group has a professional medical team. Ezra will be okay, right?" She seemed to understand something. She recalled Jonathan's reaction upon seeing Ezra and Ezra's incoherent words after letting go of her neck.

"He'll be fine." Miles held Rose's shoulders and looked at her with deep concern.

Although she herself was hurt...

"I'll take you to the hospital. No scars are allowed on my dearest sister."

Miles didn't ask how she got the wound on her forehead. He carefully brushed away the hair stuck to her wound. His gentle voice was as soothing as a spring breeze. Rose's tension eased. Miles led Rose out of the room, leaving only Cyrus and Lizzie with somber faces. Lizzie hadn't expected Ezra to only have a forehead injury. And Ezra's wrist...

Lizzie's mind flashed back to a scene from over ten years ago. She instinctively clenched her fists.

She knew how irrational and aggressive Ezra could be when he was ill. How could he only injure Rose on the forehead while he himself was so badly hurt?

A wound on his wrist... Lizzie's face darkened, and she was lost in thought. She didn't notice that Cyrus had entered the secret room. It wasn't until she heard his voice that she realized. "Nancy..."

Lizzie's body tensed. She hurried to the door of the secret room and saw Cyrus crouching on the ground, holding a stack of photos he had just picked up. He was staring at one of them, lost in thought. Instinctively, she reached out to snatch the photo from his hand. But at the crucial moment, she stopped herself.

Lizzie forced a smile. "How did this happen? The photos are scattered everywhere. Don't worry, Cyrus. I'll clean it up."

Cyrus had left the secret room untouched for years since the house fire. After a renovation, Nancy's photos were the last items to remember her by.

Lizzie knew how much these photos

meant to Cyrus. Even though she had gradually won his heart over the years, she never dared to destroy them. She feared that she might not be able to explain herself if Cyrus asked about them.

But today's destruction of the photos wasn't her doing!

A gloating look flashed in Lizzie's eyes. She squatted down to clean up the mess. Before she could touch the photos, Cyrus grabbed the one she was reaching for. "Don't touch!" His tone was harsh. But upon realizing something, he softened his voice and said, "I'll do it myself. You can leave first."

Lizzie's body stiffened, but she put on a compliant smile. "Okay. I'll be waiting outside. Call me if you need anything."

As she stepped out of the secret room, the smile on her face vanished and was replaced by a cold, fierce look.

She hadn't expected the secret room to still remain off-limits to others. Cyrus still hadn't moved on from Nancy Logans!

Lizzie glanced back at Cyrus carefully sorting through the photos and silently gritted her teeth.

Damn it! None of today's schemes had gone as planned, and now she had to deal with the aftermath. But what she needed to do next... Lizzie turned and left the room with a chilling look in her eyes.

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Miles took Rose out to the exhibition hall, where an ambulance was already waiting.

Leonard saw them and approached. "Mrs. Fi..."

He had almost blurted out the words "Mrs. Finch", but he noticed her slight frown showing her resistance toward the title. He immediately corrected himself.

"Ms. Shaffer, Mr. Finch has left ahead. He's very concerned about your injury and wants me to take you to the hospital."

He was referring to the hospital under the Finch Group.

"No-"

The Youngs had their own hospital, so there was no need for the trouble. But halfway through Miles' rejection, Rose interrupted him.

"Miles, let me visit Ezra." Rose sought Miles' approval.

"Okay."

The two then got into the ambulance.

At the hospital, Jonathan had arranged for doctors to be on standby. As soon as Rose arrived, she underwent an examination. Leonard promptly reported the results to Jonathan.

Ezra was lying on a hospital bed.

"Mr. Finch, the patient has a deep wound, but fortunately it's well dealt with, so he didn't lose too much blood. His coma is due to his mental condition."

The director, Noel Collins, personally handled the case. He was the only one in the hospital who knew Ezra's identity and true condition. It used to be worse than it was now. "He hurt himself again!"

Jonathan stood by the bed, staring

at Ezra's face. The sight of him lying there overlapped with memories and brought forth even more memories that flashed through his mind. Even Jonathan felt a tinge of fear.

"Uncle Collins, he seems to have recovered after all these years, so how could this happen again?" Jonathan looked at Noel, seeking an explanation.

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Chapter 446 She Hasn't Left

[1,083 words]

Noel stared at Ezra and couldn't help but sigh.

"Back then, all indicators showed he was fine. There have been no abnormalities over the years. It shouldn't have relapsed that easily, unless..."

"Unless what?" Jonathan seemed to have his answer.

"Unless there was a trigger."

Noel's answer matched what Jonathan had in mind. A trigger.

His gaze fell on Ezra's uninjured hand, which was tightly gripping something. He and the doctors had tried to pry open Ezra's hand but failed. Could it be related to the trigger?

"I understand. I'm leaving Ezra to you." Jonathan knew what Ezra's condition would be like after his relapse.

They had walked out of it together once, and he was certain that they could do it again. Noel left the room after giving a few more instructions.

After having confirmed Ezra's condition, Jonathan hurried to find Rose. He followed the information Leonard provided and arrived at Rose's ward just to see her push open the

door to Ezra's room. Miles had gone to inquire about Ezra's condition and left Rose alone to approach the bed.

The events in the secret room were still fresh in her memory, but Rose firmly believed that the Ezra who had strangled her was not the real Ezra.

She seemed to have called out Jonathan's name in the daze brought by suffocation.

"Ezra, you let me go because you heard his name, right? He must be really important to you," Rose muttered.

The man lying motionless on the bed suddenly moved his uninjured hand. Rose noticed he was holding onto something. She curiously reached out to check and pull out a photo.

She remembered the photos in the secret room and naturally assumed this was something Ezra had brought out from there.

In the secret room, she had seen the beautiful woman in the photo, but she didn't know her identity.

She did, however, have a rough idea. Rose was about to examine the photo closely when footsteps approached. She instinctively clutched the photo in her hand.

Before she could turn around, a pair of arms wrapped tightly around her from behind.

"I'm sorry." The familiar voice dismissed Rose's thoughts of resisting.

Jonathan had gone to her ward and thought she had left. "It's a good thing that you haven't left."

The word "left" stirred something in Rose's heart. She would eventually have to leave.

Rose took a deep breath as Jonathan turned her around. Seeing the wound on her forehead, he felt even more guilty. "I'm sorry. He didn't mean to hurt you. He..."

Despite handling everything with a clear mind, Jonathan now found himself at a loss for words. Rose was hurt no matter what he had to say.

All he could do was repeatedly apologize. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry."

His self-reproach moved Rose. She knew Ezra was not in a great condition when seeing Jonathan's bloodshot eyes. Although she could guess their relationship, she still needed confirmation. "You and Ezra-"

Before Rose could finish, Jonathan frankly answered, "He's my brother. My biological brother."

Such directness surprised Rose. She hadn't expected Ezra to be the fourth grandson of the Finches.

The layer of Ezra's identity involving the Finches was completely unknown to the public despite him being in the entertainment industry. It showed how well the Finches had kept it a secret.

Jonathan didn't intend to hide anything from her either.

"My mother discovered Cyrus had fallen in love with someone else when she gave birth to Ezra. She delivered the baby alone in Aquastead and couldn't forgive his betrayal.

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"After giving birth to Ezra, she cut off contact with the Finches for several years."

Jonathan began recounting the past, telling Rose about what he had never shared with anyone else.

"Ezra was very young when I first met him. My mother returned to finalize the divorce with Cyrus, who still clung to her and refused to let go despite his betrayal." Jonathan remembered the timid look in Ezra's eyes when he first saw him.

"With the powerful Finches backing him up, he selfishly trapped my mother in a withering marriage. She too began to wither with Ezra being the one most affected." Jonathan looked at the comatose Ezra. The monitoring equipment emitted a steady beeping sound.

Right now, Ezra was dreaming. In his dream, he was reliving the first time he returned to the Finch Manor and met Jonathan.

He had always heard his mother, Nancy, speak of Jonathan. She missed him dearly.

Whenever he woke up from nightmares in the middle of the night and rushed to Nancy's room, he would often see her crying over a photo of Jonathan.

He saw a photo of Jonathan, and Nancy said they looked alike. He had always wanted to meet Jonathan, but when he did, he found Jonathan seemed to dislike him. In spring, the flowers in the garden of the Finch Manor blossomed.

He handed Jonathan a handkerchief when he saw blood at the corner of Jonathan's mouth and asked, "Jonathan, why did you fight? Mom said children shouldn't fight." He was too young to understand the self-mockery and sorrow in Jonathan's eyes. Jonathan

said nothing and just knocked the handkerchief from his hand. Later, he learned that after Nancy left the Finch family, Jonathan spent a difficult time with the Finches. There was no one to protect him in the Finch family.

That day, Nancy had a big fight with Cyrus, the man he was supposed to call "Dad", and was locked up. His father's friend, Lizzie, had "kindly" offered to look after him. When she took his hand, Jonathan appeared out of nowhere to push Lizzie away and drag him off amid reprimands from Cyrus.

That was the first time Jonathan held his hand. Jonathan's hands were big were fresh scars from the fight still on his face.

Jonathan led him along the road outside the manor and suddenly stopped to say, "Don't get close to the Finches, including those around them."

That was the first time Jonathan spoke to him. He was overjoyed but...

"Does that include you? You're part of the Finch family, and so am I," Ezra asked, looking curiously at Jonathan.

In the night, he saw Jonathan frown in displeasure. The Finch family was huge, but Jonathan seemed to dislike it and their identities as Finches.

Jonathan shot him an impatient look and shook his hand off to continue walking. He panicked when Jonathan let go. As he ran to catch up, the distance between them grew.

Just when he was losing his

strength and thought he would be left behind, Jonathan stopped to tie his shoelaces. He took the

opportunity to run harder and finally reach Jonathan while he finished tying his shoelaces.

"Jonathan..."

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Chapter 447 He Actually Trusts Her

[969 words]

Ezra panted heavily and grasped Jonathan's hand in joy. This time, he was determined not to let go.

As they walked through the night, he noticed Jonathan seemed getting tired. Jonathan's steps slowed significantly, so he could easily follow. They ran into the Young siblings not long after. From that day on, he always followed Jonathan around. Although Jonathan remained aloof, rarely spoke, and never smiled, he could sense Jonathan's protection and love for him.

He heeded Jonathan's advice and avoided the Finches. But when Lizzie offered him the chance to visit Nancy, he went with her. He missed Nancy dearly.

He could sense Jonathan's worry for Nancy from the fact that Jonathan often called out "Mom" in his sleep. It suggested that Jonathan was probably dreaming of her.

Ezra told Jonathan that Nancy had often cried over his photo after leaving the Finch family, and Jonathan would always respond with a scornful smile, not believing his words.

He wanted to tell Nancy that Jonathan missed her too. He wished Nancy could express her love for Jonathan directly, but she never got the chance.

As he rushed to see Nancy for the last time, he saw her lying in a pool of blood with a long gash on her wrist and blood continuously flowing from it.

He stood frozen as if his soul had left him. He had heard Nancy call him "Ezzy" in a voice filled with remorse.

"Ezzy... Ezzy..." Her voice grew fainter until it faded away and left only the smell of blood in the air. The air came to an eerie still.

He called out "Mom" but was responded with a thunderclap. His mind buzzed, and he knew nothing about what happened next.

When he woke up, he was in the Finch Manor. They told him Nancy was dead and Jonathan had carried him back to the Finch Manor in the rain. From that day onward, he didn't see Jonathan for a long time. Every night, he dreamed of Nancy in a pool of blood, calling out "Ezzy" several times over.

Rumors of Ezra being driven mad by the shock went around the helpers of the Finch Manor. They speculated that the prestige of the Finch family in Regalia would soon be tarnished by his madness. They said Cyrus decided he would no longer bear the last name Finch and would be known as a Turner from then on.

They said many things, but he gradually learned to block out their voices. They locked him in a room and brought him meals and strange pills three times a day.

One day, Jonathan started visiting him. The previously silent and unsmiling Jonathan began to smile and talk to him.

He couldn't hear what Jonathan was saying, but he had read his lips that seemed to mouth the words, "You have me!"

But Nancy was dead! Ezra hadn't told Nancy that Jonathan missed her and got her to tell Jonathan that she loved him too.

Each time, he lowered his head and refused to listen. The look in Jonathan's eyes turned from heartache to helplessness.

He noticed Jonathan had new injuries every time he visited. He wanted to ask Jonathan how he got them, but he found that he couldn't speak.

That life continued until he found a sharp blade in his food one day.

That night, it rained again. Thunder boomed and frightened him into a corner, where he saw Nancy in the blood again, weakly calling out, "Ezzy".

Ezra missed her and wanted to go to her. He took the blade out and grazed his hand, but he felt no pain as the blood oozed.

His consciousness started fading away. He thought he would see Nancy soon, but when he woke up, he saw Jonathan instead.

From then on, Jonathan no longer stayed at the Finch Manor. He stayed in a hospital instead, never leaving Ezra's side.

He heard from Harriette that Jonathan was assigned to Azure Clan for ten days of training. They made a promise that he could get to see Jonathan face ten skilled fighters and defeat them. Harriette felt that Jonathan could never succeed because he was wasting time on visiting Ezra instead.

Ezra was told that after Nancy left, Jonathan would check on him every night but he had been too sick to remember.

He was informed that Jonathan had excellently defeated all ten fighters and immediately left to check on him, only to see him nearly dying.

The night Jonathan and Nancy had

left, the Youngs had sent Ezra to the hospital in the heavy rain. Ezra had to thank Miles for donating blood while he had been suffering from severe blood loss. FindNovel

Ezra was told that Jonathan had fought Cyrus for his sake.

While Harriette was saying all that, she had a disdainful look in her eyes as if Ezra wasn't worth Jonathan's efforts. Yet, whenever Jonathan was around, she seemed especially caring instead.

He stayed in the hospital for a long

time. After getting discharged, he wasn't sent back to the Finch Manor. Instead, Jonathan took care of him by renting a place and cooking meals for him every day.

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Though he still missed Nancy, he felt reassured seeing Jonathan's face.

Eventually, a doctor began visiting daily, talking and playing games to help him forget many things. Though he forgot fragments of his memory, blurry images sometimes lingered in his mind, elusive and unclear.

Dreams flashed as buried memories resurfaced and pieced together.

On the rooftop of the hospital, city lights illuminated the night. The wind blew Rose's hair as she stood by the railing.

Jonathan's voice continued after a pause, "I suspect Lizzie took Ezra there on purpose. When I confronted Cyrus, I found Lizzie crying beside him.

"She claimed Nancy asked her to bring Ezra out of longing for him, and she couldn't bear to reject Nancy's pitiful request.

"She regretted not recognizing Nancy's intentions to take her own life earlier, and Cyrus trusted her! He actually trusted her words!"

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Chapter 448 Playing Dumb

[1,085 words]

Jonathan's tone was laced with sarcasm. Rose felt his anger and helplessness, but she was unsure how to comfort him. She reached out and grasped his hand, the warmth in her palms seemingly injecting comfort into his cold heart. Jonathan turned to look at Rose, almost instinctively gripping her hand tighter. He silently recited the oath he had long made. As for the past...

He withdrew his gaze. The warmth of Rose's palm eased the bitterness in his voice when he spoke of the past.

"After Ezra injured himself with a blade, I found that the blade came from a helper in the Finch Manor. When I interrogated him, he clammed up. I'm still suspecting Lizzie..."

Lizzie... Rose was reminded of the seemingly gentle and kind woman.

"Is she the woman Mr. Finch fell in love with when Nancy had Ezra?"

When Jonathan spoke of the past, Rose noticed he would try to avoid addressing Cyrus. She knew the enmity between them and avoided referring to Cyrus by his name.

To her surprise, Jonathan answered, "No."

If it wasn't Lizzie, who was it?

Just as Rose was puzzled, Jonathan continued, "The woman is long gone. Grandma drove her away with a sum of money, and she vanished in Regalia. But even so, there will always be a second woman when Cyrus no longer loves her. "Cyrus was never a faithful man and Lizzie..." Jonathan sneered. "She was once my tutor. She was a university student, and Grandma thought she was gentle and sensible.

"To her, Lizzie knew her place and excelled in her studies, so she was allowed to continue teaching me.

"But we didn't know that soon after she entered the Finch Manor, her thoughts were on Cyrus.

"She hid it well until she managed to hook up with Cyrus. Everyone else was unaware of their relationship. Later..."

Jonathan refused to recall the sordid details between the couple, but Rose understood that Lizzie eventually became Cyrus' second wife. The couple lived harmoniously and lovingly as the world saw them.

Looking at Jonathan, Rose realized that she had thought losing Celeste and not receiving Jamie's love was tragic enough, but Jonathan seemed to have gone through a lot more than she did.

"It's all in the past. Ezra..." Rose remembered the scene in the secret room. "He seemed like a different person. He strangled my neck..."

When Rose said this, Jonathan tightened his grip on her hand. There was instant panic in his eyes as he was overwhelmed with self-blame. "I'm sorry, I-"

"There's no need to apologize. You saved me," Rose interrupted him. "While I was losing consciousness, I seemed to have called your name, and Ezra loosened his grip. I think he regained some sanity after hearing your name, but later..." Rose's voice trembled as she recalled the scene. "Later, he hurt himself, but I couldn't stop him in time."

Rose was equally filled with guilt. Jonathan couldn't blame her. Instead, he was feeling even more pain because he knew how aggressive Ezra could be when he had an episode.

"I'm so thankful, so thankful..." Jonathan suddenly hugged Rose.

The sudden action caught Rose off guard. Rationally, she knew she couldn't let either of them get too attached and that she should push him away. But a voice in her heart told her not to push him away at this moment.

The gentle breeze blew. Rose didn't realize she had raised her arms and hugged him back. It was until Jonathan's phone rang.

The phone rang for a long time, but Jonathan didn't pick up the call. He refused to let Rose go until she struggled out of his embrace.

"Answer it. It might be urgent."

Jonathan looked at Rose with burning eyes until she turned around. He then picked up the phone.

The call was from Leonard. As soon as the call came through, Leonard's voice rang in his ear. "Mr. Finch, Mr. Cyrus is asking for you at the Finch Manor." Cyrus?

"Okay!" Jonathan answered without hesitation, surprising Leonard.

Jonathan and Cyrus were at odds. Though they were father and son they were like sworn enemies. Jonathan had fought for the position of ruler of the Finch Group with Cyrus. en FindNovel

Leonard thought Jonathan wouldn't obey Cyrus' instructions.

Just as Jonathan was about to hang up, a thought flashed in Leonard's mind. He hurriedly added, "He's also asking for Mrs. Finch." "What?" Jonathan couldn't believe his ears.

Leonard explained, "According to Mr. Cyrus, Mrs. Finch should come over to the Finch Manor since she's fine. She was present today, so..." "I'll be coming to the Finch Manor, but she won't." Jonathan turned down the invitation without hesitation.

Rose overheard Jonathan's words. She was smart enough to guess he meant she couldn't go. Did Cyrus want her to go to the Finch Manor? While she was lost in thoughts, Jonathan's arms wrapped around her from behind. His voice sounded gentle in his ear.

"I'll have to leave for a while, and I'll

be back by dawn. Stay in the hospital No..." A thought seemed to cross his mind as he changed his words. "I'll have Miles take you to the Youngs' hospital instead."

Rose understood his concerns. Cyrus could interfere if she stayed in the hospital under the Finch Group.

She wondered what Jonathan would face at the Finch Manor. She stepped out of his embrace and turned to meet his gaze. "Are you going to the Finch Manor?"

"Yes."

"Is he asking for me too?"

Jonathan cut her off by saying, "You don't have to come."

"But I want to."

Jonathan was slightly stunned. He saw the worry in her eyes and figured she was worried about him facing Cyrus and Lizzie alone.

A warm feeling surged in his heart, and his happiness made him forget everything else. "Okay."

Rose finally wanted to stand by his

side and face the challenges with him, but all he wanted to do was protect her. Jonathan held her hand and myttered something before leaving the rooftop, but Rose couldn't catch it.

"What?" Rose asked, but Jonathan just smiled with his face full of contentment.

The satisfied smile made Rose's heart tremble. She dared not ask further, but Jonathan's grip on her hand tightened.

It was as if the more she was avoiding him, the more he wanted to open her heart so she could see her feelings clearly.

"You called my name." His voice was light with a hint of triumph.

Calling his name meant she had him in her heart! Rose was instantly blushing. She knew it!

She took a deep breath and gave him a serious look. "Yes, I also called everyone else's name, including Miles, Celeste, and anyone I could think of." She could play dumb better than anyone else.

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Chapter 449 Waiting for Him

[1,152 words]

The smile on Jonathan's face visibly stiffened. As they descended the stairs, they ran into Miles leaning against the wall, seemingly waiting. With just a look into his eyes, Jonathan realized Miles had known that both of them were on the rooftop and had not interrupted them. "Miles, I'm going to the Finch Manor with him."

When Rose informed Miles about where they would be heading, Jonathan had expected Miles to object. However, Miles handed Rose a woman's coat instead. "It's chilly at night. Wear this."

"Thanks, Miles."

Even after they got into the car, Jonathan kept replaying the scene in his mind. He had a vague feeling that something had changed between Rose and Miles.

He remembered that Miles had always harbored romantic feelings for Rose, but the look in Miles' eyes seemed genuinely like the love of an older brother instead.

Cyrus' birthday was ongoing at the Finch Manor, but this day held no particular significance for Eleanor. The annual birthday banquet was just an opportunity for the Finches to interact with other prominent families in Regalia.

The old Eleanor had no interest in these social events and refused to attend the art exhibition. She was supposed to go to bed early, but Jonathan hurrying Ezra to the hospital couldn't escape her notice.

She was informed by a phone call and summoned back to the Finch Manor. Both the art exhibition and birthday banquet were abruptly ended due to the sudden incident.

At this moment, the Finch Manor seemed to have fallen into deep sleep. The entire scene was eerily quiet and serene. Each family member was in their own room, but none of them could sleep except for Eleanor. They listened attentively for any sounds outside as if not wanting to miss out on any incident that could take place. Finally, the sound of a car engine startled them and woke the entire family. "He's here!"

Bella ran eagerly to the window to draw the drapes. From her angle, she could see Jonathan's car parked outside the manor.

There was a flash of excitement in her eyes. "He's here! Jonathan's back!"

Sitting on the couch, Yosef put out his cigarette. He was expecting a good show since Jonathan was here but...

"Something's really strange. What might have happened on the third floor?"

They only knew that Jonathan took Ezra to the hospital. When Cyrus and Lizzie were asked about it, the couple remained silent about what had happened on the third floor.

But his informants at the hospital reported that Rose, the adopted daughter of the Youngs, was injured. And as for Ezra...

He was informed that Noel, the director of the hospital, had attended to Ezra himself. Noel was one of Jonathan's men and had been the one to treat Ezra that fateful night years ago. No one apart from Noel knew Ezra's true condition.

"Could it be the same as before? Ezra..." Bella couldn't help connecting today's situation with what had happened years ago.

Back then, everyone in the Finch family knew about Ezra's illness. They had thought Ezra was doomed, but Ezra was seemingly cured a year after moving out from the Finch Manor.

For so many years, Ezra had been no different from a normal person that they had almost forgotten about the dark past.

Yosef sneered at hearing the door open downstairs. "Who knows? But someone will surely know whatever we're itching to probe into."

Cyrus and Jonathan had always had a feud. The father and son were like enemies, and if a conflict arose from such a major incident... Downstairs, Jonathan and Rose walked hand in hand into the Finch Manor.

Unlike the Young Estate, a strong cold air enveloped Rose the moment they entered the Finch Manor. Everything she saw seemed to exude a sense of discipline that reminded her not to overstep. Cyrus' assistant, Paul Griffins, was standing by the door.

"Mr. Finch, Mr. Cyrus is waiting for you in the study." He spoke in a low voice, seemingly not wanting to disturb the rest of the manor.

Jonathan didn't even glance at Paul as he led Rose straight up to the second floor.

The study was in the eastmost room on the second floor, but Jonathan stopped at one of the rooms on the west.

"Get some rest in my room." Jonathan gently held Rose's shoulders.

Rose frowned with concern seeing the fatigue in his eyes. She knew he was about to face Cyrus, and the father and son would likely want to seek answers from each other regarding today's events.

"Alright." Rose complied.

Jonathan opened the door for her and watched her enter before he turned to leave. He had only walked a few steps when Rose called out to him. "Jonathan..."

Jonathan stopped and turned. The previous stern look on his face now softened with a gentle smile. "Yes?"

He waited for her words of concern. It felt like a gentle reminder from a wife before a husband left for important matters.

"I'll be here waiting for you." Rose closed the door after saying that.

Jonathan, however, continued to stare at the door. His smile was filled with satisfaction like never before. Rose had told him that she would be here waiting for him! "Alright."

After hearing Rose's words, Jonathan felt a surge of strength. He turned again and looked at Cyrus' study across the hall.

Since their major fight years ago, he had never been alone with Cyrus. They had never been alone with each other even after Jonathan took over as the ruler of the Finches.

But today, he needed to get an answer from Cyrus. Why had Ezra been in the secret room?

...

The sound of footsteps gradually faded, but Rose's heart was still pounding wildly.

"I'll be here waiting for you." It was such a simple sentence, but she realized just how ambiguous it sounded after she blurted the words out.

"He won't misunderstand, will he?" Rose murmured to herself.

She noticed him pausing at the door

and knew that he most likely did. But so what if he did? Rose patted her slightly warm cheeks and took a deep breath, trying to distract herself.

The dark room felt particularly spacious. She turned on the lights, only to be startled by what she saw.

The spacious room contained a

completely black bed, a closet, and a

desk. There were no other

furnishings, and the closet

contained a few sets of school uniforms. There were no other clothes.

Was this... Jonathan's room?

Rose soon realized that this must have used to be Jonathan's room. Every corner of it showed signs of extended abandonment.

The uniforms in the closet were stitched with his high school logo. Had Jonathan stopped staying in the Finch Manor after high school?

Recalling moments at the rooftop of the hospital when Jonathan had spoken of Ezra's past, Rose began piecing together fragments of Jonathan's youth from those bits of information. Were there more to his sufferings beyond what he had mentioned?

Deep in thought, her gaze fell on a photo album on the desk. Could it be a photo album from Jonathan's youth? Rose walked over to it curiously.

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Chapter 450 Kiss

[1,028 words]

On the desk was a thick photo album. Rose flipped to the first page and saw a young Jonathan. The young lad was handsome and tall with features identical to his current self, but his face lacked the coldness it now possessed. As Rose flipped through the album, she occasionally saw the man's lips curve into a slight smile. Besides Jonathan, the album also contained photos of a young Miles and another woman.

Rose had seen her before. She was the woman in the photo Rose had seen in the building behind the Young Estate in Aquastead. Her name was Harriette!

Rose examined Harriette in the photos. Harriette was full of youthful vitality and had a bright smile.

She knew that all the granddaughters Oliver had adopted had eyes that resembled Celeste's. But compared to Anastasia, Harriette's eyes seemed to smile and were warmly contagious.

Jonathan must have liked her before. Rose was certain that in the photo she had seen in Aquastead, Jonathan was the man with scribbles on his face. And Harriette liked him too! They seemed quite like a perfect match. "Jealous?" A voice seemed to sound in Rose's mind.

She raised her eyebrows and murmured with a light smile as if trying to hide her feelings, "How could I be?"

How could she be jealous?

But the next second, her hand froze when she turned to the next page and saw Harriette's lipstick print on Jonathan's face.

Harriette's eyes were full of admiration, while Jonathan's expression overflowed with gentleness at the click of the camera.

Rose stared at the photo with an indescribable feeling growing in her heart. It pressed so heavily on her that it hurt. She could no longer escape from what she had refused to admit.

She took a deep breath and told herself that those times were long gone. Everyone had their first love, and Jonathan was no exception.

She was just having a brief encounter with Jonathan, so what right did she have to get jealous?

She continued flipping through the album, but she couldn't concentrate any longer.

Meanwhile, the door to Cyrus' study was ajar before Jonathan arrived. The people in the room seemed to have been waiting for him.

Jonathan pushed the door open and was only expecting to see Cyrus. But to his surprise, Lizzie was also there with Claire. Lizzie looked full of guilt as if she had just cried.

The scene was eerily similar to the night he had questioned Cyrus after Nancy's death. Jonathan's lips curved into a sneer.

Cyrus' face grew darker seeing that. He suppressed his anger and spoke in a cold voice, "Where's she?" He was referring to Rose.

Jonathan didn't bother looking at Cyrus. He sat on the couch furthest from the desk and responded in his usual distant voice, "Don't you already know?"

No one could come and go unnoticed to Cyrus in the Finch Manor. Plus, Cyrus' men had been guarding the door downstairs.

Jonathan sneered at the redundant question, and Cyrus' face stiffened. Though he was used to Jonathan's attitude, he was still displeased. But tonight, he had something to clarify. "What about Ezra?" Cyrus asked urgently, wanting to know Ezra's condition.

But how could Jonathan tell him? He retorted with a sarcastic smile still on his face, "Are you concerned about him?"

"Of course I am! I'm his father!" Cyrus raised his voice.

Jonathan questioned in return as soon as he spoke, "So you do know that you're his father?"

Memories of Ezra hurting himself in the Finch Manor and the blade had constantly been gnawing at Jonathan's heart. He had tried hard to investigate, but Cyrus had been indifferent.

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The helper had such a lousy explanation that he didn't believe it. It was obviously a lame excuse for a scapegoat, but Cyrus took it. Jonathan glanced at Lizzie in disdain. "I thought you only cared about your wife."

"Jonathan!" Cyrus shot to his feet and threw a pen at Jonathan.

The pen flew past Jonathan and hit the wall with a loud thud. The sound reverberated in the quiet night.

Cyrus was trembling with anger, and Lizzie hurried forward to soothe him. "Cyrus, Jon is just saying that to piss you off. Don't get upset."

Cyrus calmed down with her comfort. The two standing together still looked loving and compatible despite their age difference, and Jonathan was disgusted by that. "Jon, you have many misunderstandings about me and what happened in the past, but Cyrus has always cared about you brothers. He just doesn't know how to express it. "After you brought Ezra away from the art exhibition, Cyrus ended the event early. He couldn't eat anything when he got home. He kept asking about Cyrus' condition but..." Noel was Jonathan's man. He said nothing to Cyrus about Ezra's condition.

"Jon, how's Ezra?" Lizzie explained to Cyrus while comforting him. If Jonathan didn't know that she was never as kind and gentle as she seemed, he might have believed that she truly cared about Ezra.

Jonathan shook his head with a light laugh. Lizzie's hypocritical face was truly disgusting.

Lizzie bit her lip seeing the scorn in his eyes. Her grievance was evident to Cyrus, who immediately reprimanded Jonathan.

"What kind of attitude is this?"

Jonathan's eyes turned cold as he met Cyrus' gaze. A trace of diffidentness flashed in Cyrus' eyes.

"Father? Ha... Would you like to know how Ezra's doing? If you find the person who hurt him, will you seek justice for him?" Jonathan sneered.

This left Cyrus speechless. Finding the person who hurt Ezra... After a long while, Cyrus spoke.

"Rose was in the room with him."

"Are you saying that Rose hurt Ezra? Ha!" Jonathan scoffed.

He had expected Cyrus to involve

Rose, which explained Cyrus' reminder to bring Rose along to the Finch Manor. But how could

.n

Jonathan let Rose take the blame? He had long lost faith in Cyrus.

"The hospital's diagnosis is that the injury on his wrist was self-inflicted. He lost so much blood. Doesn't it remind you of the past? "Instead of involving people who aren't related, why not figure out why he was triggered? Why was Ezra locked on the third floor?"

Jonathan was still terrified at the thought of Ezra lying in the pool of blood. If Cyrus refused to accept reality, he would have to unveil the truth himself.

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Chapter 451 Questioning

[1,012 words]

Cyrus was too guilty to look Jonathan in the eyes. As he reflected on the situation, he realized his first concern had not been Ezra's injury. It was only after he returned to the Finch Manor that he thought of Ezra. Now faced with Jonathan's questioning, he felt even less confident, but Jonathan demanded an answer.

"The third floor of the exhibition hall holds all your important belongings with locks to every passage. How did Ezra get up there?"

As Jonathan spoke, he glanced at Lizzie, already suspicious.

"Jon... Jon, it was my fault. I overlooked it," Lizzie suddenly spoke with a look of self-blame in her eyes.

Jonathan was surprised that Lizzie admitted it was her doing.

"I went to the third floor that day to check Cyrus' painting. After I finished, I left and didn't realize the door wasn't properly closed."

Every word was filled with regret, but they were equally piercing to Jonathan. He let out a mocking laugh.

Claire, who had been silent, quickly chimed in, "Mr. Jonathan, it's not Mrs. Finch's fault.

"Whenever she goes to the third floor, she unlocks the door, and I'm responsible for closing it. Last night I..."

Claire bit her lip as she followed Lizzie's instructions to take the blame. But when she looked up and met Jonathan's gaze, she was startled by the sharpness that seemed to see through her. Almost instinctively, she lowered her head in panic.

"Ha!" Jonathan scoffed. The coldness in his voice indicated he saw through Claire's lie.

Claire nearly faltered, but Lizzie intervened timely. "Jon, don't blame her. She made a mistake, but she's been with me for years. I know her enough to know that she didn't do it on purpose. "With so many things going on at the art exhibition, it's normal that she forgot to close the door.

"Who could have imagined that Ezra would come to the art exhibition? Or that he would mistakenly end up on the third floor and in that room?"

Mistakenly? So they turned it all into a mistake and blamed it on coincidences?

"Ms. Quinn, you're still as eloquent as ever."

Jonathan met Lizzie's gaze. Lizzie was clearly taken aback by the way Jonathan addressed her.

Few knew she was once hired by the Finch family to tutor Jonathan, and only she knew how she made her way from being an art tutor to becoming Cyrus' wife.

No one knew the things she did, but the sarcasm in Jonathan's eyes felt like a slap on her face.

Lizzie avoided eye contact. She leaned closer to Cyrus, looking pitiful and wronged just like she used to. As expected, her subtle display of grievance prompted Cyrus to step up and protect her.

"Jonathan, those past events have nothing to do with Lizz!" Cyrus put his arms around Lizzie's shoulder, protecting her against the world. He seemed like the perfect husband unconditionally protecting his wife. Clap, clap, clap...

Jonathan couldn't help but applaud, and the sound echoed in the study. Each clap was filled with sarcasm that darkened Cyrus' face.

"Jonathan..." Cyrus started angrily, but Jonathan cut him off.

"Mr. Finch!"

The atmosphere in the study tensed. The scene overlapped with that night years ago. As Jonathan recalled it, his hatred for Cyrus grew deeper. "Do you remember her death?" he asked.

Her? Nancy... A trace of emotion flickered in Cyrus' eyes.

"She died, and you didn't investigate. You all said she was mentally ill and took her life, but there were so many suspicious points. Why was she mentally ill? Don't you know that?"

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"You had another love, but you wouldn't free her. You kept her locked up and withered in this cage.

"She took her life? That's the biggest joke I've ever heard. She had someone she loved, so how could she leave him alone and go along her way?"

Jonathan lowered his gaze. Nancy could leave him alone with the Finches, but she could never abandon Ezra.

At that moment, Jonathan suppressed the deepest sorrow in his heart. His hatred intensified when he looked at Cyrus once more.

"And for Ezra, who was behind the helper giving him the blade? You didn't care. Cyrus, who is it that you actually care about?"

"Her!" Jonathan glanced at Lizzie, who Cyrus was protecting. He felt deeply sorry for Nancy.

His gaze sent a hint of guilt in Lizzie's eyes. She hurriedly tried to explain herself. "No, Jon. Cyrus cares about="

"Lizz. No need to explain." Cyrus stopped her before she could finish.

Lizzie looked troubled. There was a fleeting look of triumph in her eyes that was too quick to catch, but Jonathan's sharp eyes noticed it. He was even more certain that yesterday's events were not so simple.

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"Cyrus, I will get to the end of this. You better protect her well," Jonathan declared.

This was not like the past. Back then, he had fought hard for Ezra's justice but was met with Cyrus' indifference and bias. He had fought, argued, and eventually moved Ezra out of the Finch Manor away from these people.

Over the years, he had planned step by step to become the ruler of the Finches. He was no longer his young innocent self. Jonathan walked out of the study. As Cyrus watched him leave, blood rushed to his head as he struggled to breathe.

"Cyrus, what's wrong?" Lizzie panicked when noticing his condition.

Cyrus clutched his chest, wanting to speak but failed to. "Cyrus, Cyrus! Quick, call the doctor!" Lizzie frantically urged Claire.

"Okay! I'll call an ambulance." Claire hurriedly took out her phone.

Lizzie coldly ordered before Claire could dial the number, "No need. Go ring the bell for Mrs. Finch Senior's doctor."

Eleanor had her own medical team stationed in the west wing of the Finch Manor on call twenty-four-seven.

The house was equipped with several alarm bells. If Eleanor had any health issues, pressing the bell would immediately summon the medical team. Claire hesitated. Cyrus had instructed not to cause a big commotion tonight, and summoning Eleanor's doctor would undoubtedly cause a stir. "What are you waiting for?" Lizzie urged.

Claire snapped out of it and quickly ran out of the study. She had no idea Lizzie wanted to make a scene. The alarm sounded in less than ten seconds.

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

Chapter 452 Standing Before Him

[959 words]

The alarm blared and instantly woke up the entire Finch Manor.

Yosef's family, who had been keeping an eye on the situation outside, saw Jonathan leaving the study and thought the matter was over, but they perked up upon hearing the alarm. "What happened? What's going on?" Yosef pretended to have been woken up by the sound and stepped out of his room to check. Bella followed closely behind.

Anna and helpers in the manor also began waking up one after another. The medical team arrived just after the alarm rang for a moment.

The previously silent manor was bustling with activity. Everyone was focused on Cyrus' study.

In the room, Rose had put down the photo album. Jonathan returned to the room just as the alarm sounded.

"What happened?" Rose was unaware of the situation outside but guessed that the commotion was related to Jonathan.

The icy coldness in Jonathan's heart melted a little upon seeing Rose. He strode up to her the moment he entered the room. "Jonathan..." Rose was startled by the intensity of his gaze. She called his name, but Jonathan simply tightened his embrace.

His actions made Rose even more worried. She soothingly returned his embrace and asked again, "What's wrong?" "Nothing. I'm taking you out of here." Jonathan reluctantly released Rose and held her hand.

As they walked out of the room, Rose noticed that the originally dim residence was now brightly lit. Many people were on the second floor, all focused on a particular room waiting for news.

As they descended the stairs, she saw medical personnel. She quickly scanned the crowd and noticed that everyone beside Eleanor, Cyrus, and Lizzie were present.

Was it Cyrus?

Rose eyed Jonathan. Sensing her nervousness and concern, Jonathan squeezed her hand in reassurance and diverted her attention.

"We need to get back to the hospital to change the dressing on your forehead."

"Okay." Rose agreed.

Jonathan didn't want her to be involved in the commotion, but Rose couldn't shake her worry and had a feeling that leaving the Finch Manor wouldn't be easy.

Sure enough, they hadn't even reached the bottom of the stairs when a voice called out from above, "Jon, Cyrus is in such a condition, and you're leaving in a hurry. Where are you going?"

Yosef stood at the railing with a face full of concern for Cyrus. He gave Jonathan a reproachful look. Jonathan continued walking and ignored Yosef's question.

"Jonathan!" Yosef's face darkened further as he shouted. He was about to chide Jonathan when Bella noticed Eleanor descending from the third floor with sharp eyes. "Mom, why are you up? Did we wake you?" Bella went forward to help her down.

"Don't worry, the doctor's in the room. Cyrus will be fine." Bella's voice was soft, and her face showed concern.

Eleanor's presence piqued Rose's curiosity, so she instinctively looked back. Even though Eleanor was over 70, she was in excellent spirits and didn't need support.

Seeing the scene before her, her brows furrowed with a stern look. "He'll be fine? Then why make such a big fuss?"

"Mom, it's early. You should get some rest. We and the doctors are here for Cyrus. See? Jonathan is also back."

Yosef mentioned Jonathan on purpose before shifting the topic to say, "But he seems to be in a hurry to leave. What else could be more important than Cyrus at moments like this?"

Eleanor paused and looked at Jonathan, who had reached the ground floor. She could understand Yosef's implication well. But...

"If it's urgent, he should hurry along," Eleanor said.

Everyone was shocked.

"Mom?" Yosef was the first to protest.

He wanted Eleanor to get Jonathan to stay so he could watch the drama unfold and the intensified conflict between Cyrus and Jonathan. He also wished to make Jonathan look bad in front of Eleanor. But he was shocked to learn that Eleanor was sending Jonathan away.

"Mom, Cyrus' condition isn't promising. If Jonathan leaves-

Eleanor cut Yosef off halfway through his words with a calm gaze. "Jonathan is not a doctor, so why should he stay? The doctors are here for Cyrus."

"But..." Yosef wanted to speak, but Lizzie rushed out of the study seemingly unaware of Eleanor's presence.

She called out, "Jon! Where's Jon?"

Everyone's eyes turned to Jonathan on the ground floor. Lizzie saw him when following their gaze and ran downstairs. She was so anxious that she almost tripped on the stairs and twisted her ankle. Ignoring the pain in her ankle, she finally reached Jonathan and knelt before him. "Jonathan..."

Her actions shocked everyone present. Bella couldn't help but exclaim, "Bella, what are you doing? You've always been poised, so how can you kneel before Jonathan? He's your stepson..."

Although she seemed to be

reprimanding Lizzie for her inappropriate behavior, the underlying message of her words was clear. What did Jonathan do to make the gentle and kind Lizzie kneel before him in front of

everyone?

Jonathan became the center of attention. Instinctively, Rose stepped forward and shielded him with her body. This caught everyone's attention, and their expressions shifted.

It was shocking to see Jonathan, the

dignified ruler of the Finches, be

protected by a woman. Was

protection even necessary for

Jonathan? Was Rose overestimating herself, or was she underestimating Jonathan?

But to Jonathan, Rose's action filled him with warmth. His cold eyes seemed to ignite a fiery amber spreading warmth through his heart. Eleanor gave Rose an extra glance.

Lizzie was momentarily stunned but

quickly recovered. She looked past

Rose at Jonathan. "Jon, you can blame me for this. Do whatever you want to me, but you should have angered your father like that

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"And Mrs. Finch, how did I do that?" Jonathan asked with a cold sneer.

How had Jonathan angered Cyrus? Was Jonathan not afraid that she would expose the truth to everyone?

Lizzie felt a sense of admiration mixed with frustration. Her tactics never seemed to work on Jonathan both in the past and the present.

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Chapter 453 Always Standing By Him

[935 words]

"Jon, no enmity lasts between father and son. You've misunderstood him!" Lizzie didn't answer directly.

Her ambiguous reply was meant to make everyone believe that Jonathan was the main cause of Cyrus' current condition.

Jonathan was all too clear with the trick. He didn't even bother to glance at Lizzie, and nor did he want to waste time dealing with her. He reached forward and took Rose's hand.

"Let's go." His voice was warm, unlike the cold indifference he had shown Lizzie. It surprised everyone present.

Jonathan was known for his cold demeanor in the Finch family and rarely showed any warmth or even a smile.

There was a hint of gentleness in his voice just now, but the Jonathan they knew had nothing associated with the word "gentleness".

The people present couldn't help but look at Jonathan and Rose beside him again. They had just been astonished at Rose's act of protecting Jonathan, but upon closer examination, they noticed the unusual way Jonathan looked at her. Rose was tall and had striking features. Though she was plainly dressed, she made an unexpectedly perfect match with Jonathan when standing next to him.

Hand in hand, the two walked past the kneeling Lizzie. Tears and grievances marked Lizzie's face, but a shadow of gloom flickered across it. How could she let them leave just like that?

"Ms. Shaffer..." Lizzie suddenly called out.

Jonathan and Rose were just at the door when the voice from behind made Rose pause slightly.

She looked up when feeling Jonathan's grip tighten a bit, and her heart skipped a beat at the sight of his handsome profile. However, Jonathan showed no intention to stop, and Rose followed him. "Ms. Shaffer..." Lizzie didn't expect Rose to ignore her.

Turning back, she raised her voice and called out again, but there was still no response. Jonathan and Rose were walking further away.

The hatred in Lizzie's heart nearly overshadowed her feigned "grievance". She collapsed in a kneeling position when realizing everything had just been in vain. The Finches watched her.

"How could Jon do that? Even after Lizzie knelt to beg him, he still..." Bella's words were laden with reproach, but her gaze toward the kneeling Lizzie was dull of disdain.

She thought Lizzie would make a powerful move to bring Jonathan down, but Lizzie had him leave just like that.

"Lizzie, get up. We don't know how Cyrus is doing." There was a hint of glee in Bella's tone, but she gave Lizzie the chance to regain her dignity.

"Cyrus..." Lizzie's eyes were filled with worry as she got up and nearly lost her balance in haste. She steadied herself by holding onto the staircase railing before hurrying upstairs. Cyrus' condition had stabilized in the study. Eleanor walked in as the doctor reported, "Mr. Finch is fine now."

It was just an outburst of anger and was nothing serious.

Cyrus leaned on the couch as Lizzie rushed forward to hold his hand. She touched his cheeks with concern and apologized. "Jonathan left. I'm sorry, Cyrus. I..."

To the outside world, the apology seemed to mean that Lizzie felt sorry for not stopping Jonathan, but Cyrus understood the true meaning behind it.

"It's not your fault." Cyrus patted Lizzie's hand. The couple was affectionate as always.

Lizzie's brows remained furrowed. Her mind replayed the scene of Rose and Jonathan leaving hand in hand. "It's a pity that you didn't get to talk to Ms. Rose."

Her words brought everyone's

attention back to Rose. Bella commented, feeling threatened on Yara's behalf, "Jon seems to give her the special treatment. I wonder what her background is and if she'd be a good match for the Finches."

The Finches had long investigated Rose's background. She was the daughter of an affluent family in Aquastead and only held a nominal position in the Young Group, even when she was adopted by Oliver.

She wasn't involved in the power and control of the Young family and had no chance of inheriting their wealth. How could she match the Finch family if she had nothing to offer?

The Finch family needed alliances that would benefit their commercial expansion, like the Maize family.

Everyone tacitly understood so, but Eleanor suddenly spoke up. "It's alright if they didn't get to talk. Invite her over another day."

Yosef, Bella, and even Lizzie were taken aback as they wondered what Eleanor's words meant.

Before they could ponder on it, Eleanor turned and walked upstairs, seemingly unconcerned about Cyrus' condition.

The others gradually dispersed with Eleanor's departure. Cyrus and Lizzie returned to their bedroom.

Lizzie felt utterly defeated, but she maintained her gentle and considerate facade. She saw Cyrus lying on the bed with his expression dazed and his eyes unfocused. She immediately knew he was thinking about Nancy.

She regretted involving Ezra in today's scheme. It had probably driven Ezra mad and brought the long-dead Nancy back into Cyrus' memory. "Cyrus, the photos..." Lizzie began.

Ezra had destroyed the photos in the secret room.

In their youth, Nancy loved to paint, and Cyrus loved photography. Though it was an arranged marriage, they were happy for the first few years.

Cyrus had bought the building where the art exhibition was held to store her paintings. She would paint, and Cyrus would take pictures of her.

A fire destroyed all of Nancy's works and most of the photos Cyrus took of her. Cyrus later renovated the building and kept the remaining photos in the secret room.

People believed Cyrus took up painting in his retirement out of love for his artistic wife. But Lizzie knew the truth.

Cyrus loved his wife, but she was

not the wife they were talking about. It was his late first wife, Nancy Logans. Even today's exhibition featured paintings Cyrus recreated from memory originally done by Nancy.

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Chapter 454 When She's Ready

[1,094 words]

Lizzie cried in self-reproach. "It's my fault for not telling Claire to close the door, otherwise Ezra wouldn't have stumbled in. Those photos were your only memories of Nancy but now..."

Destroyed! She was pleased that the photos were destroyed! Without those photos, Cyrus could only remember Nancy in his memories, but how long could he remember? Memories would eventually fade until he could no longer recall Nancy's face. "It's not your fault." Cyrus snapped back to reality. Lizzie's understanding and generosity made him feel guilty.

For years, Lizzie had been by his side and was attentive to his needs. He shouldn't be thinking of someone from the past anymore.

Cyrus looked at Lizzie and asked a question he had never asked before. "Do you regret marrying me?"

Regret? How could she possibly regret it? Everything she had done back then, open and in secret, was to seize the opportunity to marry him.

Lizzie shook her head. "I only regret not having done my best when you had me take care of Nancy. Nancy..."

Was Lizzie still blaming herself even after all these years? Cyrus reached out.

When Lizzie leaned in, he gripped her hands in his palm and said, "It's not your fault. I'm responsible for her death. If I had agreed to the divorce when she asked, she and Ezra would still be doing fine."

Lizzie remained silent. He would never know what she had done to him and Nancy back then. Lizzie managed to appease Cyrus with just a few words, but deep in her heart, Rose lingered.

At dawn when Cyrus was asleep, Lizzie slipped out of the room and went to a secluded spot in the Finch Manor garden. She dialed a number.

"You must know Rose well! I want to know Rose's weakness. You'll tell me, won't you?" Lizzie squinted.

Though her words were phrased as a question, her tone left no room for objection. It was as if she was sure that the person on the other end wouldn't disappoint her.

"I know her better than anyone else!" The woman's voice on the other end was filled with undisguised hatred at the mention of Rose.

She hissed, almost gritting her teeth, "Rose's biggest weakness is her mother!"

Lizzie frowned. "My investigation shows her mother died long ago in a car accident."

"She indeed died in a car accident, but her death remains Rose's weak spot. She's always been fixated on her mother's death, and she's still investigating what happened back then." Lizzie sensed something and smiled. "Are you saying her mother's death was not an accident?"

"Who knows?" The voice paused slightly. The woman dared not reveal that Rose's deceased mother was the missing daughter of the Youngs.

As she understood the reason behind Lizzie's inquiry, she added, "It's enough to know she cares about her mother's death, isn't it?"

Indeed! Lizzie laughed coldly. "Alright. Thank you for telling me this."

Just as she was about to hang up, the woman on the other end suddenly called out, "Mrs. Finch... When can I leave this place?"

The woman's hand tightened around the phone, and her voice sounded urgent.

"You may leave when you're ready."

They ended the call, and before returning to her room, Lizzie picked a bouquet from the garden. Celeste's death... Ha, Lizzie knew exactly how to make Rose come to her.

In an empty room, a woman sat on a hospital bed surrounded by stark whiteness. Her head was wrapped in bandages and only revealed her eyes.

She slowly raised her hand and

touched the bandages on her face with her hand trembling slightly. The words from the call echoed in her mind. "You may leave when you're ready."

"When I'm ready..." the woman murmured. She understood what Lizzie meant.

A sinister smile appeared in her eyes.

"Rose, I'm almost ready. Just wait for me!" She was going to destroy everything Rose was about to have!

...

It was morning when Rose and Jonathan returned to the hospital.

The morning light seeped through the window and cast onto Ezra's face. Worried that the light might be uncomfortable for Ezra, Jonathan immediately drew the drapes.

"Don't worry too much. He will wake up," Rose gently reassured Jonathan, whose brow was furrowed with concern.

Jonathan had full trust in Noel's medical skills and knew Ezra would wake up, but what would Ezra be like when he did? Jonathan felt a vague unease.

Ezra slept for several days. The wound on Rose's forehead gradually healed as she moved between hospitals of the Finch and Young Group.

Yvonne remained bedridden, but every time Rose visited, she would smile to put Rose at ease. But one day, Rose saw her in tears.

As Rose entered the ward, she saw

Yvonne looking at something. Before she could find out what it was, Yvonne noticed her and quickly hid what she was holding. Even a slight movement caused great pain

to her injured hand.

She managed to hide the item under the blanket, but a corner was still visible. It was a group photo of a dance troupe. Rose's heart tensed upon seeing the photo.

"Rosie, why are you so early today? Look at your dark circles, did you not sleep well last night?" Yvonne's radiant smile still bore traces of tears.

Rose felt her heart ache for Yvonne as she approached to hug her. Yvonne's smile stiffened. She knew Rose had seen it, but...

"Rosie, the doctor said that if I do my rehabilitation well after I get out of bed, I'll definitely get better. Then I can get back on stage," Yvonne said cheerfully.

When she was out of Rose's sight, she struggled to maintain her smile, but she failed even after several attempts.

She knew her body all too well. Even if there was a chance of recovery, returning to the stage seemed impossible.

She had lost hope, but that shouldn't be the same for Rose. so she pretended to be optimistic and cheerful by keeping it all to herself.

They had grown up together and shared a deep bond, so Rose knew Yvonne too well to be fooled by her act. She gritted her teeth and forced a smile.

"Eve, you'll definitely get back on stage. That's a promise."

Her heart ached at seeing the wilting white tulips by the bedside. She silently vowed that she would not watch the bright flower that once lit up the stage wither away. After Yvonne fell asleep, Rose left the hospital and went to a flower shop. She chose Yvonne's favorite tulips.

Just as she was about to leave the

shop, she saw some familiar faces of lively ladies full of energy like Yvonne used to be. Rose recognized them as Yvonne's colleagues from the dance troupe. FindNovel

"I wonder whose flower picked today will catch Mr. Jack's eye."

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Chapter 455 Finding an Opportunity

[983 words]

Jack... Rose paused at the door.

"What kind of flowers does Mr. Jack like?"

"Who knows? But someone like him would probably prefer something fiery and passionate, so I chose roses. Red roses."

"That's not necessarily true. Maybe he likes something fresh and elegant." The woman speaking stood among countless flowers and picked a white jasmine.

The other young ladies were carefully selecting their flowers, some even choosing and putting them back. They constantly reconsidered their choices as if the chosen flower held extraordinary significance. Rose seamlessly blended into the group picking flowers, and the conversation continued.

"I heard that Mr. Jack invited a few friends to tonight's gathering. I wonder who they'll be."

"Mr. Jack's friends are also elites. It'd be great to get to know them."

Tonight's gathering? Rose subconsciously tightened her grip on the flowers as she thought of Yvonne still lying in the hospital.

A plan to approach Jack started stirring in her mind. She needed to get close to Jack and find the opportunity to avenge Yvonne.

Rose had made up her mind, but where was the gathering taking place?

Suddenly, several phone notifications rang out. The ladies pulled out their phones, and upon reading the content, someone exclaimed, "At the villa in Royal Garden! The gathering tonight is at the Royal Garden villa!" Royal Garden was a high-end residential

area in Regalia with each villa worth hundreds of millions. It was equipped with tight security so ordinary people couldn't get in.

"He's Mr. Jack indeed!" No one could doubt the Finch family's wealth.

The ladies finished selecting their flowers, paid, and left in anticipation. Rose waited until they got into their cars outside the shop before leaving.

Back at the hospital, Rose placed a bouquet of tulips in the vase and stayed by Yvonne until it was dark.

"Evan, I'm leaving Eve to you." Rose entrusted Yvonne to Evan.

The night in Regalia was extraordinarily lively. Rose took a cab to Royal Garden and coincidentally arrived just as the ladies from the dance troupe were entering the villa area. Cars passed through the gate one by one with staff verifying their identities.

When it was Rose's turn, she rolled down the window and told the verifier, "I'm with them, Mr. Jack's guest."

The staff only glanced at Rose and let her pass without further questions.

When Rose got out of the car, she wore a baseball cap and followed the ladies to a villa. The villa's exterior alone was majestic, and the ladies' exclamation could be heard from up in front.

Rose noticed a woman standing at the entrance. She was someone Rose could vaguely remember but couldn't place.

Each of the ladies handed the woman an invitation as they entered the villa, but Rose had no invitation. She couldn't enter through the main door.

To be safe, Rose slowed her pace and chose another path at a fork, but she memorized the villa's location.

She observed her surroundings. The villa had surveillance cameras around it, and Rose stared at the occasional flicker of their red lights. She could climb over the walls if there were no cameras, but what should she do now? She stared at the occasional flicker of red surveillance lights with a frown. But then, the red light flickered once more and stayed off for a long time.

"1, 2, 3..." Rose silently counted, but the red light remained off even when the numbers were coming to twenty.

Were the cameras off? The realization lit up Rose's eyes. A wall wouldn't stop her if there were no surveillance cameras.

Meanwhile, Jack was drinking with several men in a room inside the villa. A bodyguard entered, and Jack immediately looked over. "Are the cameras off?"

"Mr. Finch, all villa cameras are off," the bodyguard respectfully replied.

The other raised their glasses.

"That's more like it. With the cameras on, we can't relax and have fun. This is better!"

"Thank you, Mr. Finch."

"Mr. Finch has good taste. Those we've had before only had looks and bodies. I must enjoy your pleasures tonight."

The men

gathered were Jack's

regular companions in Regalia. Most

of them were rich kids from wealthy families in Regalia and were always looking for some fun and trouble.

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Jack enjoyed their compliments. Lounging lazily on the couch, he declared, "Everyone should have fun tonight. There's plenty of wine and beautiful women!" "Long live Mr. Finch!"

"Now that we have your words, we won't hold back."

"Shall we... stick to the rules?"

Everyone knew what the rules meant. Their eyes lit up with excitement as they eagerly waited for Jack's consent. Rose frowned slightly recalling Bella's warning.

He hesitated to go over the board, but he couldn't back down especially when seeing the expectant faces.

"Do it, of course. It's only fun that way!" he announced assertively.

"Mr. Finch's the best!" Everyone cheered and drank more.

Jack's phone rang. He frowned upon seeing the caller ID. Though annoyed, he left the room to take the call. He closed the door and isolated himself from the room's noise. He

answered, and Bella's voice came. "What are you up to? Why did it take so long to answer?"

Jack was annoyed by her control,

but he knew that she always

covered for him when things went wrong. Yosef was solely focused on the power of the Finch Group and didn't care.

He suppressed his irritation and replied, "What could I be doing? I was in the shower and couldn't answer."

Somewhat skeptical, Bella

continued, "Stay out of trouble for a

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while. I just got word from your uncle. Jonathan is investigating Yvonne's fall from a few days ago, why is he interested in Yvonne?"

Bella couldn't understand. Jack's expression changed upon hearing the name "Yvonne".

"Didn't you have the traces cleaned up?" He thought of the connections between Jonathan, Rose, and Yvonne. Jonathan might be investigating Yvonne's fall for Rose.

If they discovered his involvement... Yvonne wasn't the one he feared. He dreaded Jonathan.

"I did, but you know Jonathan's capabilities. Even Yosef and Cyrus aren't his match!" Bella rebuked.

Jack's face grew darker. He hoped Jonathan found nothing but...

"Mom, how's Yvonne?" Jack asked.

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Chapter 456 Rose Was There That Night

[1,152 words]

"Your uncle only found out that Yvonne is at the Young family hospital, but Miles has kept all other details under wraps," Bella said, a hint of frustration in her voice.

She couldn't resist scolding Jack. "Of all the people you could've gotten involved with, you chose her! I told you to handle it discreetly, but you just had to..." The situation exasperated her. "Also, why would Jonathan be interested in Yvonne? As far as I know, there's no connection between them," Bella said, bewildered.

After a moment of hesitation, Jack decided to come clean. "Yvonne and Rose are best friends. Rose was also there that night."

"Rose?" Bella echoed, recognizing the name immediately. "That explains why Jonathan is investigating! It must be because of Rose!"

A hint of unease crept into her voice as she gave Jack strict instructions. "You need to lay low, Jack. This isn't something you can brush off.

"I'm booking you a flight out of the country. You need to leave and stay out of sight. We'll use the excuse that you're handling business abroad."

Bella's urgency was palpable as she spoke. Before hanging up, she reiterated, "Stay put until you hear from me. You need to be out of Regalia by tonight or tomorrow morning at the latest." Jack stared at his phone, deep in thought. Suddenly, the door behind him opened, and his companion asked impatiently, "How long until the show starts, Mr. Finch?"

The others in the room were eager with anticipation.

Just then, a woman entered and approached them. "It's time," she announced. Jack raised an eyebrow and gestured toward the others in the room. "Shall we... take our seats then?" The crowd buzzed with excitement, their enthusiasm overshadowing the fine, unfinished drinks in their hands.

They promptly exited the room, following the guidance of the woman who had just arrived, eager to take their seats and experience the upcoming event.

As everyone else made their way downstairs, Jack remained in place, lost in thought. Bella's phone call had rattled him, especially with the revelation that Jonathan was involved.

The gravity of the situation finally sank in, and he knew he couldn't afford to ignore his mother's instructions this time.

Jonathan's investigation suggested that Yvonne hadn't exposed him yet. Jack hesitated for a moment before dialing a number from Aquastead.

"Is there a Spencer family in Aquastead?" he asked.

The person on the other end hesitated. "Are you referring to the Spencer family of Spencer Group?"

Jack didn't know the specifics of Yvonne's family business. He just knew they were wealthy.

"Yes, the family with a daughter named Yvonne," he replied impatiently. "I need you to cause them some trouble, but don't go overboard. Just make it clear they've crossed the wrong people."

He intended to intimidate Yvonne by threatening her family, ensuring her silence about that night's events. Little did he know that Yvonne was already determined to keep quiet, primarily to protect Rose.

...

Meanwhile, preparations were underway for a private event at a luxurious villa in the Royal Garden. The villa, known for its privacy, had a beautiful stage set up in the garden.

Bright lights illuminated the stage, making every detail visible, while the area below the stage was shrouded in darkness, obscuring any view from below.

The women from the dance troupe were led into a spacious room within the villa, where the villa's helper brought in a rack of clothes.

Thinking that these were the gowns prepared by Jack, the women admired his thoughtfulness. However, they were taken aback upon removing the silk cloth covering the rack. "These are..." The women were bewildered.

The helper conveyed Jack's instructions. "These are the gowns prepared by Mr. Finch for everyone. Please change into them, and once you're ready, you can go outside." The women appeared troubled. "Is there a mistake?" they inquired, surveying the selection of revealing garments before them.

Upon closer inspection, each piece of fabric seemed scant, barely covering the essential body parts. These outfits were even more revealing than swimsuits.

"There's no mistake. These are indeed the gowns." The helper checked the time and smiled politely. "Ladies, there's not much time left. Mr. Finch is waiting for you!"

Upon hearing that, one of the women set aside her hesitation and modesty and bravely approached the rack. She chose the outfit she liked best and made her way to the changing room.

Seeing her take the lead, the other women reluctantly followed suit. Soon, all the "gowns" on the rack were selected. As the women emerged from the changing rooms, they received another set of instructions. "Ladies, please take a flower from those you brought and wear it in your hair as an accessory. This will also help Mr. Finch to identify each of you."

The flowers they brought were originally meant for Jack to choose from. While the stated purpose was for him to choose his favorite flowers, everyone understood that he would actually be choosing a person. The position of Jack's wife was still vacant, and the women were there to win his favor. If any of them could marry into the Finch family, it would bring them wealth and prestige beyond their wildest dreams. The women meticulously arranged flowers in their hair as they checked their reflections in the mirror.

"It's a shame Yvonne isn't here," one of them suddenly remarked.

Yvonne had fallen from the upper floor during the celebration party, and they were unsure of her current condition. Recalling how she had looked dying on the ground, it seemed like her situation was not optimistic.

At the mention of Yvonne's name, the other women fell silent. Yvonne was undoubtedly the best among them in both skill and appearance. With Yvonne present, they feared they wouldn't stand a chance. Someone chuckled. "Even if she were here, she wouldn't come to a place like this. That stubborn old-fashioned woman only cares about dancing and nothing else."

"Yeah. She always acts so high and mighty!" the women agreed.

They brushed aside their thoughts about Yvonne and, after adorning their hair with flowers, followed the person arranged by Jack to the villa's rear garden. Upon seeing the prepared stage, the women were once again baffled.

"Mr. Finch enjoys watching people dance, so this shouldn't be too difficult for you all," the helper explained.

The women were troubled. Although it was true that none of them would struggle with any type of dance, to perform on stage in the gowns they were wearing was another matter entirely. Just then, a voice came from beneath the stage. "Are you unwilling?"

The girls looked toward the sound,

but all they could see was darkness in the area beyond the stage. With the lights on them, the area below the stage was even more shadowed, making it impossible to see anything clearly. However, the voice was unmistakably Jack's.

Hidden in the shadows, Rose immediately recognized Jack's voice as well. She was thankful for the darkness beneath the stage, which concealed her presence and traces. She peered into the darkness, straining to make out any discernible shapes.

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Chapter 457 Jack's Game

[1,087 words]

Amidst the darkness, Rose could vaguely make out Jack's silhouette, But he wasn't alone in the shadows. More than a dozen figures were seated around him, their identities obscured by the gloom. Meanwhile, the women on stage feared that disobeying Jack's instructions would anger him and jeopardize their chances of earning his favor.

Remembering their purpose for coming here, one of them spoke up. "I'm willing, Mr. Finch."

"I'm willing too." "I am as well."

"We're all willing."

Once the first woman broke the ice, the others followed suit, letting go of their inhibitions. The women looked toward the shadowy area below the stage, assuming that only Jack was watching them perform. "Excellent. Then let's begin," Jack said, his tone filled with satisfaction.

After a brief discussion, the women swiftly decided on a routine they often practiced. As the music began, their graceful movements commanded the stage. Yet, their revealing costumes lent the performance an unsettling air. In the shadows beyond the stage, the watchers' eyes gleamed with a predatory hunger, like hunters selecting their prey.

No one uttered a word. In a group chat specially created for the occasion, those who had chosen their prey sent names of various flowers.

"Jasmine."

"Rose."

"Lily."

"Bellflower."

Each flower corresponded to a woman on stage.

As the performance concluded, each person in the audience finalized their decision. The women lined up on stage, their eyes fixed on the darkness below, filled with anticipation. They knew that Jack would choose his favorite flower next.

As Jack ascended the stage, his relaxed demeanor and striking looks made the women's hearts race. He was the epitome of a charming and successful young man, holding a significant position in his family's business empire.

His reputation for being generous with his public girlfriends added to his allure, making him highly sought after, even among celebrities.

Jack walked along the line of women, his gaze sweeping over them before stopping in front of one wearing a red rose in her hair. He smiled, his eyes glinting with interest.

"That red rose looks stunning on you," he said, his voice low and captivating.

He paused as if recalling who had chosen the "red rose" before letting a smile spread across his face. "May I invite you for a drink?" he asked, fixing his gaze on the woman.

The woman blushed with delight.

"Of course," she replied, a victorious smile on her face. She felt she had made the right choice with the red rose, believing that Jack favored boldness and passion. An invitation for a drink from him was precisely the opportunity she had been hoping for. "But you'll have to wait a moment," Jack added, frowning slightly.

"I don't mind waiting, Mr. Finch," she responded eagerly. She would wait as long as it took to be with him, believing it would give her a chance to win him over.

"Go ahead," Jack instructed, signaling her to follow the helper to a designated area.

The woman nodded excitedly and was about to leave when Jack leaned close to her ear and whispered, "Oh, one more thing... I prefer dim lighting. Do you understand?"

The woman froze for a moment, her face turning crimson as realization dawned on her. "Yes... I understand. I'll wait for you, Mr. Finch," she replied coyly.

The other women on stage couldn't hide their disappointment as she left. However, their spirits lifted when Jack's gaze swept over them again before finally landing on another woman.

"White jasmine... It's so pure and refreshing. Truly a breath of fresh air," Jack mused, appearing contemplative.

The woman wearing a white jasmine flower in her hair perked up, her face lighting up with hope. "I love white jasmine for the same reason! It's so pure and refreshing," she quickly said, eager to catch his favor. "But..." Jack appeared troubled.

Fearing she might miss her chance, the woman hastily interjected, "Mr. Finch, I don't mind waiting for you either."

"Hmm..." Jack glanced at her, masking a smirk of disdain with a look of consideration. He hadn't even set the trap, and she was already eager to spring it herself.

Instantly losing interest in her, he nevertheless couldn't ignore the fact that others would be interested in her. After a moment of feigned uncertainty, he chuckled.

"Well, I can hardly refuse now, can I? How about we also have a drink?"

The woman eagerly responded, "Of course. I'll be waiting, Mr. Finch." Without waiting for further instruction, she eagerly stepped down from the stage, following the helper out of sight.

The women on stage watched the scene with bated breath, realizing that even with one woman having been chosen, the game was far from over.

There were still opportunities to catch Jack's or perhaps someone else's attention. Encouraged, they began speaking up, one by one.

"Mr. Finch, the lilies are beautiful, too..."

"Mr. Finch, the bellflowers are lovely..."

"Mr. Finch..."

The woman with the lilies had caught the eye of the heir of Lowe Group, while a scion of the Hunt family favored the woman with the bellflower. Jack's expression grew subtly amused as he considered the situation.

These friends of his hailed from prominent families within Regalia. Yet, despite their noble lineage, these young men were notorious playboys, known more for their indulgence in pleasures than for any significant achievements.

"Well then... let's all have a drink. It's just a drink, but you'll have to wait a bit longer." Jack maintained his polite smile, giving the impression that it was all just about sharing a casual drink.

All the women except one excitedly left the stage. Jack looked quizzically at the remaining woman. "You... don't want a drink?"

Clad in the most conservative "gown" amongst them, she felt a tinge of humiliation under Jack's gaze.

She hadn't wanted to be there in the first place, and even when Jack asked them to choose flowers, she hadn't participated. It was only when a friend handed her a small white daisy and coaxed her insistently that she reluctantly joined them.

She had believed it to be just another ordinary gathering hosted by Jack, and even as she donned the "gown," she thought he wouldn't choose her, so she had no reason to be afraid. However, she now realized the unsettling truth. This wasn't merely about choosing a bride. There was more to it than that.

"I'm allergic to alcohol, so I can't drink. Mr. Finch, may I leave?" All she desired at that moment was to escape.

However, her subtle, yet palpable, resistance intrigued Jack. It reminded him of Yvonne, who had also resisted him that night.

He couldn't quite understand his own reaction. Glancing at the small white daisy on the woman's head, he smiled politely, looking every bit the refined gentleman.

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Chapter 458 Don't Forget To Save Me

[1,079 words]

"Of course, you may leave, but it would be inappropriate for you to leave dressed like this. Please understand it wasn't my intention to have you all wear these gowns," Jack explained earnestly, seeking her understanding. The woman had no idea what she was supposed to understand, nor did she want to speculate. All she wanted was to escape. Nodding quickly to appease him, she showed her willingness to comply. Jack looked at

her with what seemed like genuine concern. "I'll have someone take you to change your clothes."

While she was scared to stay, she couldn't walk out wearing the skimpy outfit that barely covered her. Her clothes were still in the dressing room.

"Alright," she agreed.

Jack's eyes gleamed with satisfaction as soon as she accepted the offer. He wasted no time and immediately arranged for her departure before turning his attention back to the stage.

As he turned back toward the stage, Rose quickly hid behind a tree, using it as cover. She watched Jack standing in the spotlight on the stage, his smile sending chills down her spine.

"It's your turn," Jack announced, spreading his arms wide toward the darkness surrounding the stage, "Enjoy your meal."

The women were the "meal" for the night.

Following Jack's declaration, several men emerged from the shadows beneath the stage, their faces filled with unmasked excitement.

Though Rose recognized none of them, she could guess their intentions toward the women were far from innocent.

"Thank you, Mr. Finch."

"We appreciate your hospitality, Mr. Finch."

The men approached Jack, exchanging handshakes and greetings as if beginning a ceremonial ritual before entering the villa.

The last man noticed Jack standing motionless on the stage for a while and couldn't help but ask, "Mr. Finch, aren't you joining us? That 'Daisy' you've chosen seems intriguing." "Daisy" was the nickname for the last woman who remained.

"You go ahead," Jack replied calmly.

Once everyone had left, Jack pulled out a necklace from his pocket. "Yvonne..."

Jack's face wore a disconcerting smile as he murmured Yvonne's name. Even from a distance, Rose could clearly see the necklace in his hand.

Almost instinctively, she touched her neck, where an identical necklace hung. She was sure the one in Jack's hand belonged to Yvonne.

Rose clenched her teeth. From Jack's demeanor and the necklace, she could almost piece together the story between him and Yvonne. It was clear that Yvonne had become Jack's prey.

As these thoughts coalesced in her mind, Rose watched Jack tighten his grip on the necklace, smiling eerily as he stepped off the stage.

Rose snapped back to her senses and turned her attention to the villa. Determination surged within her, and she clenched her fists tightly.

She wondered how she could avenge Yvonne. That night was an opportunity she couldn't afford to miss. After pondering for a while, she quietly entered the villa, avoiding the helpers.

At the staircase, she heard a voice from upstairs saying, "Mr. Finch has instructed everyone to go to bed early tonight. No matter what you hear, do not come out, lest you disturb the guests' enjoyment."

Most of the helpers in the villa were

trusted by Jack and were well aware of his peculiarities. With such a large gathering that night, they knew better than to pry into things they shouldn't see or hear. It was best to

return to their rooms and retire early.

As the helpers made their way downstairs, Rose hid behind a wall. Once they were gone, she proceeded upstairs, only to hear one of them ask, "Where's Yael?" Yael was one of the helpers.

"Yael is in Mr. Finch's room, waiting for him to finish his bath. He knows to come down once he's done. Don't worry. He knows the rules," someone answered. "Jack is in his room?" Rose mused.

She reached the second floor, where over a dozen rooms lined the sides of the left corridor alone. The entire second floor was eerily silent.

Rose moved quietly, noticing a fresh flower hung on the wall outside each room—red rose, white jasmine, and lilies.

Every flower corresponded to the ones worn by the women on stage earlier. She immediately understood Jack and his friends' twisted game for the night.

Rose wondered which room Jack would enter among so many. Just then, she thought of the last woman who was about to leave.

She quickly searched and found a small daisy hanging on the wall of the very last room at the end of the corridor. She knew this was Jack's choice for the night.

She tried the doorknob, and the door opened with a gentle turn. She peered into the dark room before noting that Jack was not there yet.

Entering quietly, she heard a weak female voice in the darkness. "Who are you? I want to leave."

Rose recognized the voice as the woman wearing a daisy from the stage earlier. Moving closer, she used her phone's light to illuminate the room, revealing the woman lying on the bed, struggling to move but unable to do so.

"They drugged you," she stated firmly.

Upon seeing Rose, the woman was visibly surprised. Then, she seemed to recognize Rose. "You're Yvonne's friend!" she exclaimed, recalling seeing Rose with Yvonne at the celebration party. "But what she's doing here?"

Before the woman could ponder further, Rose moved closer. "Jack isn't a good person. If you have any intentions toward him, I suggest you abandon them."

"I know he isn't, but right now..." The woman's eyes were filled with helplessness. She looked at Rose pleadingly. "You can save me, can't you?"

"If you need my help, I'll do my best," Rose promised. However, she had her own tasks to accomplish first.

Rose helped the woman up, but her body was too weak to even stand. She could only lean on Rose as they stopped in front of a closet. The woman didn't know what Rose was planning, but she could tell there was no malice. "I need you to stay in this closet for a while," Rose instructed. "No matter what you hear, don't make a sound. If you do..." Rose glanced at the woman, her words trailing off.

She believed the woman wouldn't

make

sound, but she couldn't

afford to take any risks. Before closing the closet door, Rose rolled a piece of clothing into a ball and stuffed it into the woman's mouth to muffle any potential noises.

The panic in the woman's eyes made Rose hesitate, and she softly reassured her, "Don't be afraid. I won't harm you."

The woman's frightened gaze gradually calmed. As the closet door closed, she looked at Rose with urgency as if saying, "Don't forget! Don't forget to save me!"

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Chapter 459 Mistaken

[1,107 words]

The look in the woman's eyes sent a shiver through Rose. It made her wonder if Yvonne had hoped for someone to save her that night. She felt a deep sense of guilt toward Yvonne, who thought only of her safety, even in danger. Rose couldn't help but think that if she had been quicker or had noticed something was amiss earlier, perhaps Yvonne wouldn't have suffered such a terrible fate.

As she closed the closet door, she stared into the woman's eyes and firmly stated, "I will save you!"

Rose vowed to save the woman, but first, she had to deal with Jack.

Using her phone's light, she searched the room for anything useful. Her eyes fell on the bedside table, where a collection of adult toys lay. Her expression hardened with disgust, for she knew Jack intended to use these on the woman. Rose picked up a pair of handcuffs and a heavy iron tool from the table before sitting on the bed. The light on her phone went out, and darkness enveloped the room once again.

She waited silently for Jack's arrival.

Not long after, the sound of the door opening echoed, and a sliver of light from the hallway illuminated the room before the closed door blocked it out again. Footsteps approached, steady and deliberate.

As Jack moved closer, his heart pounded with an uncharacteristic intensity. He realized that he was treating "Daisy" as a stand-in for Yvonne. Unlike the other women, she had been given spiked water under his orders. "How are you feeling?" Jack asked, peering into the shadows where Rose's silhouette sat.

Remembering the celebration party, he felt a complete sense of control and superiority. He took out a necklace and handed it to the figure at the head of the bed.

"Put this on," he said.

Rose frowned. She couldn't see what Jack was offering her, but her body stiffened when she reached out and touched it. It was a necklace. She took it without hesitation and gripped it tightly in her hand. "You're quite obedient today." Jack had completely regarded the woman before him as Yvonne's substitute. The corners of his lips curved up in satisfaction.

However, upon recalling that fateful night, he grew increasingly dissatisfied. "I shouldn't have fallen for your sweet words that night and given you the antidote. Look at you now... You're so much better this way."

Jack watched the figure in the darkness from his position of power, casually swirling the wine glass in his hand.

The person in front of him was completely under his control, so he was in no hurry as he leisurely took a seat beside her.

"Heh, I wonder what's become of you. The Young family's hospital has kept everything about you so tightly under wraps. Is it because of your friend Rose?" Jack muttered, his voice carrying a mix of curiosity and malice.

"I often think about whether you're dead or not. Maybe you're still alive but can't speak. Otherwise, why would Jonathan be investigating what happened that night?"

He continued, his words laced with both excitement and madness, slightly slurred from the alcohol. "If you could talk, you'd surely tell Rose and Jonathan that I was the one there that night. Jonathan wouldn't have needed to investigate then."

He knew that if Yvonne had revealed his identity, he would have already suffered the consequences of Jonathan's revenge. As Jack spoke, Rose listened, her grip tightening around the necklace in her hand.

What Jack didn't know was that Yvonne was awake, lying in the hospital, enduring the torment of her injuries.

Even so, Yvonne refused to tell her what had happened that night. She was protecting Rose by keeping quiet, but Rose couldn't stand by and let her friend suffer alone.

In the darkness, Rose's resolve hardened. Regardless of Jack's affiliation with the formidable Finch family, she would ensure he paid for his actions.

Rose carefully pocketed the

necklace and reached for the iron

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tool she had prepared in advance. Lost in his monologue, Jack remained oblivious to her actions. He continued to sip his drink leisurely, a low chuckle escaping his lips.

"You really care for Rose, don't you? But I'm so disappointed," he murmured, a tinge of bitterness in his voice.

"You tricked me into sending her away, and I did as you asked. But instead of keeping your promise and playing along, you chose to jump... throwing away your life, just like that." The image of Yvonne leaping down replayed in Jack's mind. For some reason, aside from the initial anger and coldness, a different emotion had begun to grow within him. "What a shame..." He sighed before his tone turned cold again. "But it's okay. This villa isn't high enough for you to get seriously hurt if you jump." Jack laughed coldly. Suddenly, he turned to Rose, gazing at her with eyes clouded with desire. He began, "Tonight, I've prepared the same entertainment as before. I'm sure you'll enjoy it." With a careless flick of his wrist, Jack discarded his wine glass onto the bed.

He intended to conquer the "Yvonne" before him, even if this person was merely a stand-in for the real one. Reaching out, Jack suddenly felt a sharp pain in his head as if

something had struck him hard. He

let out a muffled groan.

He was taken aback by the unexpected resistance from "Daisy," just like Yvonne had done. Strangely, her defiance only fueled his excitement.

In his eagerness, he failed to consider how the woman, who had supposedly drunk the drugged water, still had the strength to fight back.

By the time he realized something was amiss, it was too late. After hitting him, Rose swiftly handcuffed one of Jack's wrists to the bed frame.

"You..." Jack finally grasped what was happening. Rose stood beside the bed, having reversed their positions. Still in shock, Jack couldn't believe what was unfolding. "You didn't drink the water?" He was confused as Yael had assured him that he had seen her drink it.

Ignoring his bewilderment, Rose knew that Jack's free hand was still a threat. She swiftly grabbed his other wrist. This time, Jack reacted and struggled instinctively.

He believed that even with one hand cuffed, she was no match for him. After all, the strength of a man like him should easily surpass that of a woman, regardless of her dance-honed agility.

However, he had underestimated his opponent. Rose's grip was firm and unyielding. Despite his attempts to break free, she managed to cuff his other wrist and secure it to the opposite bedpost.

Without wasting a moment, Rose

turned her attention to his legs.

Relying on her memory from earlier, she quickly found two ropes on the nightstand and deftly tied Jack's legs to the bedposts at the foot of the bed. FindNovel

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Chapter 460 Begging Her To Let Him Go

[1,179 words]

Jack lay spread-eagle on the bed. Even in the darkness, he felt utterly humiliated. Initially, he had felt confident in handling the situation, thinking he could play a game of resistance and domination with "Daisy." That was why he hadn't made any noise.

However, the situation was clearly getting out of hand.

Just as he thought of calling out for help, something was shoved into his mouth, gagging him completely. His tongue was pressed down, and his mouth was filled to the point where he could only make faint, muffled noises. Even if he could call out, it wouldn't travel very far. Jack glared at the shadowy figure before him and finally realized that this person might not be "Daisy." The scent and presence were clearly that of a woman, but not the one he had expected. Panic began to set in as he tried to figure out who she was.

As expected, a woman's voice cut through the darkness. "I'm not the woman wearing the daisy from earlier but don't worry. I'll make sure you enjoy everything you prepared. We'll play every game you had in mind."

The voice was unfamiliar to Jack. Even though he knew for certain now that she wasn't "Daisy," she still hadn't revealed her identity.

He struggled against his restraints, his muffled protests growing more frantic as he tried to warn her of who he was.

Rose heard him and scoffed. "Are you trying to say you're a member of the Finch family, and if I dare to do anything to you, you won't let me off?"

Jack's muffled response was desperate, filled with a menacing edge. He was trying to convey that he would not only not let her go but also make her suffer in ways she couldn't imagine.

Rose couldn't help but laugh out loud. "Oh, Mr. Finch, you may have the support of both the Finch and Maize families, but what of it? Whatever consequences that may come, they'll come after tonight."

Nothing, not even the threat of powerful families, would stop Rose from carrying out her plan. For Yvonne, she was determined to make Jack pay.

Without giving Jack a chance to respond, a sudden rush of air cut through the darkness. The next moment, the sound of a whip cracking filled the room, striking Jack's chest.

He was stunned momentarily before the burning pain set in. He barely had time to react before another lash followed.

The room echoed with the sound of the whip and Jack's muffled cries of pain. As the lashes continued, Jack's attempts to stifle his voice gave way to louder, more desperate noises.

He knew shouting wouldn't bring help, but he hoped that making more noise and struggling against his restraints might draw attention.

He was right. While the sound wasn't loud enough to be heard throughout the villa, it was enough to reach the room next door.

In the adjacent room, a man glanced at the wall near the bed, momentarily taken aback before chuckling lowly.

"What's that noise, Mr. Finch?" a woman asked, puzzled by the sounds coming from the other side.

The man gladly accepted her addressing him as "Mr. Finch." After examining the wall, he withdrew his gaze and said, "It's nothing. Come. Let's have a drink."

All of Jack's friends were aware of Jack's peculiar tastes and didn't think much of the noises. They were used to his antics and assumed he was indulging in his usual escapades.

The man thought Jack's antics were particularly intense that day, which clearly indicated his immense delight with "Daisy."

He even contemplated questioning Jack about the charm of that "Daisy" the next day. Unbeknownst to him, Jack was currently in a precarious situation.

Jack struggled for quite some time, but there was still no sign of activity outside. Rose understood his intentions and mercilessly pointed out, "You wanted to make noise to attract attention, but don't you remember?" Jack stared into the darkness at the silhouette before him, confused about what he was supposed to remember.

Accompanying another lash, Rose continued, "Your friends know you too well. Even if they hear the commotion, they'll assume you're just having a grand time and won't interrupt your pleasure."

Jack froze in realization. Indeed, even if they heard the noise, they would assume he was engaged in his usual routine, as it was his norm. Besides, they were presently immersed in their own activities.

He suddenly recalled their proposed "usual rules." At this moment, they were probably too caught up in excitement to be aware of their surroundings.

The thought only intensified Jack's

panic, and his muffled cries grew

more desperate. When he realized his protests had no effect, he switched from anger to pleading. He was silently begging for mercy, pleading for Rose to stop.

Rose listened to his voice, her pupils shifting slightly. Her fury surged when she thought about the night when Yvonne had jumped from the building. Her friend had most likely pleaded with Jack for mercy as well, only for her pleas to fall on deaf

ears.

The thought of sparing Jack seemed absurd to Rose, considering the pain and humiliation he had inflicted upon Yvonne during their twisted game.

As the hours passed, Rose utilized every toy Jack had prepared, inflicting upon him the same pain and degradation he had once enjoyed imposing on others. Many women had suffered, and some had even lost their lives under his cruel hands. Now, he was the one suffering, and his strength and pride were shattered. Jack's cries grew weaker until

he could no longer muster the energy to make any sound. Eventually, he passed out from the pain and exhaustion.

Rose scoffed. "How pathetic."

The object in her hand filled her with disgust, a reminder of Jack's heinous actions. She yearned to throw him off the building, just like he had done to Yvonne, but she knew the villa wasn't as high as the club. He wouldn't suffer the same fate even if she dropped him from here. It was infuriating to think he would get off so easily. As she glared into the darkness, she suddenly released her grip on the object in her hand. Rose was ready to move on to the next step, but before she left, she remembered the woman she had locked in the closet, who had been silent all this time.

Rose walked over and opened the closet door, sensing the woman's gaze even in the darkness.

Gently, she removed the cloth from the woman's mouth. "Are you okay? I'm sorry I had to keep you quiet, but I couldn't risk him finding out," she said softly.

"Thank you... thank you for remembering me," the woman sobbed, her voice trembling.

Trapped in the closet, she had heard everything that had transpired outside. She understood that Jack had used her as a stand-in for Yvonne and that Rose had come seeking revenge.

Initially, the woman had feared that

Rose wouldn't be able to handle Jack. Later, she worried that Rose might leave after exacting her revenge, forgetting about her. Relief washed over her now, knowing she hadn't been abandoned.

Exhausted and overwhelmed, the woman collapsed into Rose's arms, her voice weak and trembling. "Thank you... thank you for remembering to save me..."

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