

I Made \$900 Trillion In 24 Hours

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The Kiss of Shame

“Get on your knees and kiss my boots!” Reeves commanded.

Everyone was watching the scene in silence, all eyes fixed on Barry. Barry plastered his hand on his face, his eyes misty. He had just been slapped across the face from Reeves Nightingale, first son of the Nightingale clan. It was Laura's birthday party and the entire North Hills had turned up to celebrate with her. Among the guests were eligible wealthy bachelors who clamoured around Laura, hoping to be the lucky guy she might consider to marry. Reeves was more aggressive than the rest of the other bachelors. He followed Laura everywhere like a dog, bothering her with his loud, boring stories. Barry couldn't take it anymore and interjected when he shouldn't have. “You're bothering my wife, Reeves, give it a rest already,” Barry said, standing between Reeves and Laura. That was when Reeves slapped him. “How dare you speak to me like we're equals?” Reeves snapped at him. “You're nothing but a cheap loser who got lucky to be close to Laura. Know your place, you piece of trash.” Barry felt the sting of the slap burning on his face. He clenched his jaw. “I was only trying to—” “I know what you're trying to do,” Reeves raised his voice. “You're acting like the jealous husband. Don't get your foolish head stuck in the clouds. The only person you're fooling is yourself.” Before Barry could respond, Reeves pointed at his leather boots. “You've offended me tonight. I was having a wonderful evening until you barged in. Get on your knees and kiss my boots!” Reeves commanded. In North Hills, a kiss to the feet is a humiliation punishment to an offender. It was popularly called the kiss of shame. Barry glanced at Laura, hoping she would come to his aid, but she looked away, her arms crossed, and her lips pressed into a thin line. Barry's heart sank. His marriage to Laura was a loveless, non-consummated marriage. Laura's grandmother, Evelyn Raven who had always been fond of Barry had arranged their marriage. Evelyn Raven saw the good in Barry and decided he would be the best husband for Laura. The trouble was, Laura hated Barry. He was a typical nobody. Barry worked for the Raven family as a servant. He gets paid \$200 every month for doing house chores and errands. That's not the kind of man that Laura found attractive, but because she respects her grandmother, she went along with her wish. “Barry, you fool,” Laura's voice rang out. “Who asked you to get involved? Do you have any idea what you've done? You've embarrassed me and the Raven family in front of everyone here.” Barry's voice croaked. “But I was only trying to help. He was troubling you—” “Nobody asked you,” she barked at him. “Sheesh, take a hike, would you? Quit being nosy. It's none of your business if he's troubling me or not. Go wash the plates in the kitchen or something.” The humiliation seeped deep in every pore of Barry's body. He hung his head and apologized. “I'm sorry, my beloved. I didn't mean to cause you any troubles.” Laura groaned and brushed past him. “I told you repeatedly, don't call me your beloved. It's cringy and makes my skin crawl.” As she left the scene, Jonathan, Barry's father-in-law and head of the Raven family, stepped in. “Reeves,” Jonathan placed a hand on his shoulder, a tight smile spread across his face. “I saw what happened. Pay no attention to that useless son-in-law of mine. I'll fix him.” Reeves sneered at him. “I will not be satisfied until that loser kisses my boot.” Just like his daughter, Jonathan didn't like Reeves either. Reeves was an annoying asshole who grates on everyone's nerves. Regardless of that fact, the Nightingale clan was one of the powerful families in North Hills, with a potent influence in

politics. Moreover, Reeves is the future head of the Nightingale family. Jonathan would not let Reeves leave his daughter's birthday party in a foul mood. It could jeopardize any favour and alliances they might need from the Nightingale clan in the future. "Certainly, leave this to me," Jonathan assured Reeves then he walked up to Barry. Without warning, Jonathan slapped Barry across the face. The slap sounded like a gun fire, sending chills down everyone's spine. "If you know what's good for you, Kneel," Jonathan asked, his eyes squinting dangerously. "Kiss Reeves boots and make him happy, or else I'll crucify you." Barry's eyes were shaking. This is the second time he has been slapped, and by his father-in-law. Laura stared at him from across the hall. Her face was a mask of indifference. Finally, Barry dropped to his knees. He crawled forward and pressed his lips to Reeves polished boots. The room buzzed with whispers and laughter. "I can't believe he's actually kissing his boot. Oh, I must record this for my I*****m." "Ugh, I'm disgusted. How can a loser like that be Laura's husband? He's more like a family pet." "I heard he earns \$200, slaving for the Raven family. Even \$200 can't feed my dog for breakfast." "What a pathetic fool. Laura should divorce him. She deserves better. Such a disgrace." Laura couldn't stare at Barry's humiliation. She turned around and left the hall. Barry kept his head down. His nails dug into his palms and his teeth gnashed bitterly. The kiss of shame had sealed his reputation as the useless trashy Son-in-law of the Raven household. Reeves smirked, enjoying the laughter at Barry's humiliation. He looked down at Barry as if he were a bug, he could squash under his expensive boots. After Barry was done, Reeves turned to Jonathan and clapped him on the shoulder. "I feel better now. You handled this bastard just right." Jonathan returned a grin. "Of course. I wouldn't want to ruin the relationship between our families." "It would make more sense if you give me your daughter's hand," Reeves smiled knowingly. "I could make an amazing son-in-law, better than this piece of crap." Jonathan sighed. "Unfortunately, we are stuck with him. But I'm sure when the time is right, Laura would make her decision." "I'll be patient," Reeves licked his thick lips. "Laura would be mine soon. I won't give up on her." Jonathan turned sharply to Barry. "Get out of here. Go help in the kitchen." Barry gathered whatever dignity was left of him and shuffled towards the kitchen.

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