

Chapter 16

By the time the Cunninghams hurriedly reached the second floor of the hotel, all the cars had already been relocated from the parking lot, which was a spacious one that could accommodate nearly a thousand vehicles. It was owned by the hotel, where only visitors who attended their dinners and events were allowed to park their cars there. Therefore, it had never been in its full capacity prior to this, so it could easily make room for several hundreds of cars. Yet, all the vehicles parked at the parking lot had been moved away at the moment.

Luxurious automobiles like Ferrari and Lamborghini were not spared from being shifted away. The owners of those cars went to the parking lot and tried to stop it but they were ignored. The Cunninghams could see very clearly that some rich young masters were making a fuss over it, who ended up being beaten by the security officers of the hotel and were thrown out of the parking lot like they were bags of garbage.

“Who do you think the VIP is?” asked Lily, with admiration written all over her face. “I know those wealthy young masters who all come from families that own assets worth up to several hundreds of millions. Yet, those security officers actually dared to beat them up. It’s easy to see how powerful and influential that VIP is!”

“Those rich lads are nothing. Did you see that car? It’s a Rolls-Royce valued at eight million which belongs to a gang leader of North Street. While his car was being dragged away by a tow truck, the gang leader could only stand there and watch without having the guts to do anything!”

“That’s not all. Look at that—that Lamborghini which costs 1.7 million is owned by the successor to the Hamilton Family, who is one of the Ten Greatest Families of Eastcliffe. But, his car was dragged away by the tow truck too.”

“Goodness gracious, what sort of big shot can that VIP be who isn’t intimidated by the Ten Greatest Families?”

Everyone was absorbed in heated discussions with anticipation written all over their faces. They couldn’t help but look up to the immensely powerful VIP with much reverence. That was not the end of everything. After all the cars had been moved away from the parking lot, over ten MPVs were driven over.

Charlie exclaimed in shock, “Who would own that many MPVs? They are all Toyota Alphards, which is an uncommon model here!”

“Not only is it uncommon, the point is, I’ve never seen so many Alphards gathering at the same place.”

“This is a model usually owned by movie stars because the seats are more comfortable, with enough space inside for them to get changed and do their make-up.”

“Wow, you’re spot-on. Look at that, it’s the superstar, Thomas Hiddlestone!”

“Where? Where? Where is he?”

“And there, it’s Stephanie McKay, one of the four most popular actresses at the moment!”

“Gosh, I can’t believe that she’s here!”

“Not only them, the top TV host—Mr. Henry is here too!”

“That many celebrities? Is one of the entertainment companies having their annual dinner here?”

“That’s not possible. Even if that is so, they won’t be influential enough to have the vehicles belonging to the people from the Ten Greatest Families moved away from the parking lot!”

“In that case, what other reason can possibly explain this extravaganza?”

Everyone was constantly crying and exclaiming in surprise because the scene was simply too mind-blowing. At that juncture, the entrance of the parking lot was suddenly opened.

Everyone widened their eyes as they turned to look at that direction when Charlie was the first to exclaim, “See, that’s the vintage model of Rolls-Royce owned by Old Master Lewis from the Ten Greatest Families!”

“Oh my goodness, look at that one at its back! The car belonged to Old Master Jackson, who is also one of the Ten Greatest Families!”

“Over there, it’s the car of the president of the largest company in Eastcliff...”

All of them exclaimed in surprise continuously as one luxurious car after another was driven into the parking lot. Every owner making his appearance was a highly respectable figure who was among the most influential and powerful big shots in the city and they were way out of the league of the Cunninghams.

Yet, the most staggering sight was, as they were entering, they automatically went on to take the spaces at the two sides of the parking lot. Every single one of them made sure the parking space in the middle was empty like they were just some supporting characters in a movie, making way for the leading actor who had yet to arrive. There was no doubt that those cars dared not occupy the parking space in the middle as though they were leaving it for some big shot.

Everyone went wide-eyed and open-mouthed in shock because those who were arriving were extremely prominent characters in the city. Who else could make them wait on him with so much respect? While the Cunninghams were stuck in a state of confusion, a group of men scurried into the ballroom again holding some items in their hands.

Later on, there was another group who pushed a trolley that carried a gigantic cake into the ballroom. The cake was unusually gorgeous as it was made up of nine layers with each layer decorated with accessories made of crystals. Two carved minifigures which were placed on top of the cake were the most eye-catching sight.

One of the minifigures was a dancing lady wearing a white dress, while the one next to her was a man in a suit kneeling down on one knee holding a small box with both hands. Inside that little box was a glamorous diamond ring which sparkled!

“Wow, that cake is beautiful!” a bunch of girls cried out as they were mesmerized by it.

“Look at that diamond ring! Could it be genuine?”

“Gosh, is someone having a marriage proposal? How romantic is that?”

“If someone proposes to me in this way in the future, I’ll say yes to him immediately!”

Charles, who happened to know one of the guys pushing the trolley, quickly made a dash to him. He made it back shortly later, looking astounded.

“How is it?” Lily asked.

“I’ve got it!” Charles lowered his voice and told Lily with envy all over his face, “According to my buddy, a birthday celebration for a girl is going to be held on the ninth floor tonight. Those movie stars are all here to attend her celebration. Also, that diamond ring on the cake is genuine which costs over three million!”

“What?!” Everyone gasped in shock while Lily’s eyes were brimming with jealousy. “Who’s that lucky girl who gets to be treated this way? Gosh, if I were her, I would have no regrets even if I die now!”

The rest of the girls looked envious too. All of them wished that they could one day be basked in such a limelight. A birthday celebration as grand as this was surely enough to make any girl fall in love with the man who arranged it.

“Who can be that lucky girl?” One of the girls couldn’t help asking, “Could she be one of the young ladies of the Ten Greatest Families?”

“I suppose not!” Charlie shook his head and said, “My buddy told me that the girl is very mysterious and no one knows who she is. But I’m sure she’s not one of the Ten Greatest Families because those young ladies don’t have such an honor for a grand celebration like this!”

“In that case, who else could it be?” Everyone started making wild guesses.

Suddenly, Lily turned to look at Sasha and asked sarcastically with a laugh, “Sasha, could this be the birthday celebration that Matthew prepared for you?”

Everyone turned to look at Sasha with a scornful smile on their faces, pondering over the fact that Matthew could not be the one behind this. Sasha looked sullen, thinking that Lily had deliberately made that remark at that moment in order to embarrass her.

“That’s right. This is the birthday celebration for Sasha!” Matthew said in a calm tone.

“Wow, Matthew, you’re so impressive!” Charles taunted, “Matthew, you really have to bring me to the ninth floor later because I’ve never been there all my life!”

While everyone roared with laughter, they continued to make fun of him by urging Matthew to bring them along.

“Matthew!” Helen, who was enraged, criticized, “Could you just keep your mouth shut? You can embarrass yourself all you like, but why do you have to bring our entire family down with you?”

“What I said is true...” With resignation, Matthew tried to explain himself, “I really planned a birthday celebration for Sasha on the ninth floor...”

“Shut up!” Helen yelled furiously at him, “Scram! Just get out of this place!”

“Well, enough with the fuss now.” Lily sneered, “Sasha, your half an hour is up, and you have to tell us your decision. Are you going to accompany Mr. Sampson, or are you going to fork out the money? Or perhaps, you want to be put behind bars?”

While Sasha was keeping mum with her teeth clenched, Charles chided in with a smile, “Sasha, I have a suggestion for you. In fact, the best choice you can make is to spend time with Mr. Sampson. Firstly, it can solve all your problems. Secondly, you can have a great time too! After all, you’re having your birthday today and you should just take Mr. Sampson as your birthday gift then. Ha ha ha...”

All the people around them burst out laughing while they eyed Sasha with malice in their eyes. Especially for the girls, they were all dying to see Sasha being humiliated by Clayton so that they could feel better about their inferiority.

At that moment, Eric and Clayton walked over to her. “Miss Cunningham, have you made your decision?” Clayton sized her up in a lecherous manner.

“I-I won’t go with you!” Sasha emphasized through gritted teeth.

“Mr. Cunningham, it seems like your family isn’t very interested in doing business with us!” In a frosty tone, Clayton continued, “In that case, just forget about the deal! Also, all previous projects between us will be terminated! Just get one of your staff to come by my office some time later and get on with the termination!”

Eric was so rattled that he nearly wet his pants. “Mr. Sampson, please don’t be angry! I’ll help you handle it!” he offered quickly. “Sasha, either you spend time with Mr. Sampson or I’ll call the police to arrest you! Make your own choice and don’t blame me because I’ve warned you before. You won’t be able to bear the consequences of this matter alone. If you choose to be arrested, you as well as your family will be put behind bars!”

James, Helen and Demi looked shaken as they were shocked to learn that they were going to be implicated too. The three of them glowered at Matthew because they deemed Matthew as the reason why they were put in this predicament. With a collected expression, Matthew asked softly, “Old Master Cunningham, don’t you know what this Sampson guy is actually trying to do?”

“Cut the crap! I don’t need you to teach me how to handle my own matters!” Eric then yelled furiously, “Somebody throw him out of this place now!”

A group of men soon closed in on them. Looking panic-stricken, Sasha quickly interrupted, “Grandpa, Matthew didn’t mean what he said...”

“Shut up!” In his exasperation, he confronted her, “Let me ask you one more time. Are you going to spend time with Mr. Sampson or are you going to jail with your family?!”

Sasha was left in a state of total despair, as it had never occurred to her that her grandfather would really treat her this way. Clayton sneered when he stared at Matthew. “Hmph, young man, are you capable enough to fight against me?”

Just as the air between them was buzzing with electricity, a commotion suddenly came from the outside of the ballroom as someone was exclaiming, “It’s Billy Newman! It’s Billy Newman! Master Newman is here! He’s here!”

“Is Master Newman here? Gosh, now it all makes sense. Master Newman is the only person in Eastcliff who is rich enough to afford this grand celebration!”

“I should have thought of him long before this! He is a man who can bring an earthquake to the city just by stomping his feet! Who else could it be other than Master Newman?”

“But, whose birthday is Master Newman going to celebrate?”

While everyone was crying in surprise, they quickly made a dash to the windows in an attempt to catch a glance of Billy. Even Eric looked restless and at a loss. Having no mood to care about Sasha’s issue, he hastily ran toward the window. As the master of a small and insignificant family, he would never have the chance to meet Billy in person.

“I’m surprised to see Master Newman here. Mr. Cunningham, please stay calm because I have a rather close bond with Master Newman. After getting things done here, I’ll bring you to pay your respect to Master Newman!” Clayton said boastfully. However, his action was quicker than anyone else and he was the first to run to the windows as soon as Billy’s arrival was heard.

“I really appreciate that, Mr. Sampson!” Eric was elated, thinking that the social status of the Cunninghams would be elevated in Eastcliff in the future, if he ever got to meet Billy in person later.

“No big deal!” With a wide grin, Clayton cast Sasha a glance before he continued, “But, Miss Cunningham...”

“Don’t worry, I’ll get it done for you by today!” Eric glared at Charlie and demanded, “I don’t care what sort of method you use, but you have to get that b*tch to spend the night with Mr. Sampson by hook or by crook!”

An evil brilliance shone in Charlie’s eyes when he told Eric, “Grandpa, don’t worry. You can just leave it to me!” Charlie immediately gathered a bunch of men with whom he strode menacingly over to where Matthew and Sasha were standing and made a circle around them.

“Sasha, Grandpa has said that no matter what, you have to seize the deal tonight!” In an icy voice, Charlie threatened, “If you don’t want to see Matthew being thrown down by us from the roof of this hotel, be obedient and get the agreement signed. Otherwise, hmph, you’ll end up as a widow tonight!”

Sasha, who appeared stunned, challenged, “What are you guys going to do? Are you going to break the law?”

“I set the law here!” Charles roared at her, “So are you doing it, or not?”

Several guys were advancing on Matthew dangerously and they seemed like they were ready to seize him any minute. At that moment, the main door to the ballroom was pushed open suddenly. It was Stanley who was striding in with a group of men.

“President Carlson!” Clayton immediately offered a bow to Stanley with an adulatory look.

Eric was thrilled to see Stanley too, because he was the man who could literally decide the fate of his whole family. He couldn’t help but wonder, Why is Mr. Carlson here? Does he know that I am having my birthday celebration and he’s joining in as well? Goodness gracious, if that was true, the Cunninghams would surely rise to having great success in the future! Eric quickly put on the most smirking smile he could manage and greeted Stanley, “President Carlson...”

Yet, Stanley just walked past him and headed straight to where Matthew and Sasha were standing. Under the watchful eyes of all the guests, Stanley bowed down respectfully to them and said, “Mr. Larson and Miss Cunningham, the birthday celebration is now ready. Mr. Newman invites both of you to head to the ninth floor!”

Everyone at the ballroom was astounded to hear what he said.