

Shadows 371

Chapter 371 A Firework Show Mystro would just be a third wheel , so it was better if he didn't show up . " You're right . Forget about him . Let's just enjoy ourselves ." As evening settled in , Tilda took Dane out for dinner . After a short break , they ended up in a park . Most people had already gone to the main square to get ready for the New Year countdown , so the park was unusually quiet . There was a monastery - style tower in the park , lit up with orange lights that gave it a solemn look . In reality , it was just a decorative tower .

There weren't any monks living there - just old scrolls and paintings on display . Because of the holiday , nobody was watching over the place , and the door was simply locked with a padlock . Tilda took out a wire and made quick work of the lock , slipping right in . " Tilda , is this really a good idea ? " " It's fine . We're not here to steal anything . I just want to borrow the height and the telescope up there . " If I feel bad about it , I'll just donate a few million to the park after New Year's Eve . " Dane was speechless at her words , but he didn't say anything .

They climbed up to the top floor . It was cold , and the night wind whipped through their hair . With no one else around , it was peaceful and quiet up here . They looked out at the distant lights . The countdown had already begun on the plaza's gigantic screen , and numerous drones hovered overhead . The whole crowd was beaming with joy . " Dane , the new year's almost here . Do you have any wishes you want to make ? " Dane thought for a moment , then pulled out his little notebook . " I hope Tilda's wishes come true this year ." Tilda pouted .

" Dane , can't you think about yourself for once ? You're making me feel embarrassed here ." " Then you should wish for my wishes to come true , too . " " That's exactly what I had in mind . I'll wish for Harvey , you , Mystro , Liam , and everyone important to have a safe and happy new year ." Dane was sad . He felt a little left out . So there are still other people in Tilda's heart . I am not the only one ... Ouch ... Soon , the countdown began . Ten . Nine . Eight . The whole plaza echoed with the crowd's shouts . Just then , Mystro called Tilda again .

" Mystro , what is it ... " " Tilda , look up at the sky with Dane ! " " What ? " Tilda glanced up instinctively . Whup - whup - whup - whup ! A squadron of helicopters flew by . Fireworks exploded above them , lighting up the night with lights and noise . Boom ! Boom ! Boom ! Boom ! Against the black sky , two giant faces appeared - a man and a woman . Once they took a closer look , Tilda and Dane realized that the two faces bore an uncanny resemblance to their own . The whole crowd gasped , scrambling to take photos and record videos .

At the same time , every big screen in Hetsa changed as the new year officially began . " Happy New Year to the two most important people in my life - Dane and Tilda . " Those words appeared on every screen in the Hetsa . Tilda could almost smell the money burning just by looking at it . " Dane ? Tilda ? Who are they ? " " Whoa ! Is this for real ? Somebody bought out every screen in Hetsa just to wish Dane and Tilda a happy New Year ? " " That had to cost tens of millions " Tens of millions ? In your dreams !

With helicopters and all that , it's got to be at least a hundred million ! " " Is this some billionaire love story ? Do they need more staff ? As long as they pay well , I'll sweep the floors and clean up after them ! " Tilda and Dane saw everything . She let out a soft laugh . " So that's what you were up to , Mystro ? Vanishing for days and then surprising us with all this ? " " So ? Are you touched ? I had to fill out all kinds of forms just to get those helicopters . " I didn't want anything to go wrong , so I stayed in Hetsa and took care of everything myself .

All those fireworks tonight - I picked every single one , just for you and Dane . " This is my New Year's gift to you both . This whole show is for you . Happy New Year ! " Mystro's voice rose with excitement , hoping for Tilda's praise . The money wasn't the point . For people like them , a hundred million was nothing . What mattered was the thought he put into it . He planned it all and managed every detail himself . He even cleared his schedule to oversee everything , just to make sure Tilda and Dane were the stars of the night . " Thank you , Mystro .

I really mean it . " " Well , that's all I ever wanted to hear . With a thank you like that , I'd do anything for you . " Where are you and Dane ? I'll come find you . Buck can handle things from here . " " I'll send you the location . Hurry up - come watch the fireworks with us ! "

Chapter 372 A Blackout 04.0 At the same time , in one of Endralsia's most luxurious hotels , a dazzling crystal chandelier hung over the center of the ballroom . Below , men in tuxedos and women in elegant gowns swayed gracefully to the sound of a cello . Dominic held a glass of red wine and found himself a quiet corner by the window , staring at the moon shining over the world . " Dominic , why are you standing here all by yourself ? " Blair arrived in a stunning custom white gown sprinkled with crystals , holding a glass of champagne as she joined her eldest son .

" Are you feeling homesick ? " " Yeah ... a little . After all , it's New Year's ." As he spoke , Dominic shot a loaded glance at Tobias , who was chatting up the chairman of a local business group . Tobias spoke Motrarian as smoothly as a native . If not for his distinctly Cetherlander features , anyone would have thought he was a native Motrarian . He had striking good looks : sharp features , expressive brows with slightly upturned ends , complemented by thin lips and a high - bridged nose . A small mole sat between his brows - it was easy to miss but noticeable up close .

Standing at six - foot - two , he wore a deep blue tailored suit that accentuated his build . With one hand in his pocket and a glass of champagne in the other , he chatted effortlessly , charming the chairman with his words and drawing rounds of laughter . His people skills were natural - perfect for conquering the business world . He was the kind of man who became the center of attention just by standing in the middle of a ballroom . It helped that his face was almost unfairly handsome , with a kind of delicate charm that drew everyone in .

And when he spoke , he always seemed to know exactly what to say . It was no wonder Dominic took notice of someone like him . " Are you feeling wary of him ? " Blair asked softly . 11:29 Wed , Sep 17 M. As the one who used to oversee Jenson Group's external affairs , Blair saw right through Tobias at a glance- he was no ordinary man . " It's more than that . I actually saw him once at a bidding event . " He won the land we were after . " Dominic pressed his lips together .

He couldn't shake the feeling that Jenson Group's business had taken a strange turn recently ... Could it be connected to him ? Dominic had only crossed paths with Tobias twice . There was nothing concrete to go on - just his own gut feeling . Maybe I'm just overthinking . Still , his instincts told him this man was dangerous . Meanwhile , Tobias seemed to notice Dominic watching him . He said a polite goodbye to the couple he'd been talking to . Then , he picked up another glass of champagne and strolled over to Dominic and Blair . " Mrs. Jenson , Mr. Dominic , I've heard so much about you .

It's an honor to finally meet you . " Blair smiled . " I don't believe we've met before . Are you from Endralsia ? " " No , Mrs. Jenson , I'm from Cetherland . I completed my master's here in Endralsia . " I'm currently starting my own business . Here's my card . " Tobias handed over two business cards with both hands , perfectly courteous . His voice was warm and pleasant , putting people at ease . Dominic glanced at the card . Tobias Lowell . Sole owner of ME Group . The company's reach was surprisingly broad . His last name is Lowell ...

" You must have some serious connections to be at an event like this . Are you related to Malcom Lowell from Crown Group ? " Tobias smiled wryly . " A big shot like him has nothing to do with someone like me . If I did , I wouldn't be starting my own business from scratch . " Dominic had nothing to say to that . Malcom was known to have two women in his life . That was an open secret . His mistress's daughter , Amanda , had a decent relationship with Dominic's brother , Santiago .

Jenson Group's background checks on the Lowells hadn't turned up any son named Tobias . But that was just the public record . Malcom had his share of secrets , thanks to all his affairs outside his official marriage . But with Beatrice's powerful presence as his wife , none of his illegitimate children were ever going to be openly acknowledged . Having Lisa around was probably already as much as Beatrice could tolerate . Suddenly , the lights went out . The ballroom was soon plunged into darkness . " What happened ? Is it a blackout ? " " What's going on ?

Where's the backup power ? " " This can't be happening ... " Panic soon spread through the crowd . Just then- Bang ! Bang ! Gunshots rang out , cutting through the crowd's restless murmurs . " Ahh ! " People panicked when they heard the gunshots . Screams erupted as people rushed for the exits . " Mom ! " Dominic's face turned grim as he quickly pulled Blair into his arms , guiding her to a corner . With the lights out and the crowd panicking , tables and chairs were scattered everywhere , blocking people's way . It was definitely not the time to try escaping . " Mom , get under the table !

" Dominic acted fast , deciding to wait and see what happened before making a move . He lifted the tablecloth and pulled Blair under with him . Coincidentally , Tobias made the same move .

Chapter 373 A Situation Dominic and the rest ducked under the table almost instantly . Tobias tried to lighten things up by saying , " Well , here we are again so quickly . Must be destiny , huh ? " Dominic's expression stayed grim . " This isn't funny . What's really happening ? " Tobias grabbed his phone , switched on the flashlight , and dimmed it to the lowest brightness . " Everything's a mess outside . I only caught a few gunshots ... Damn it ! No signal at all ! I can't get through ! " Dominic's brows knit together slightly . " That can't be ...

This hotel sits on the edge of Melville , and it's the best in the area ! Their security is flawless ! How could this happen ? " If someone breached protection like that , they're seriously dangerous . We're not facing random thugs . " This place is secluded . With security down , we're basically trapped . The fallout could be devastating ! " Before Tobias could continue ... Bang ! Bang ! More gunfire exploded . Screams pierced the hall . Click ! The lights flickered on again . A deep voice roared , " Everyone in the banquet hall , get out here . Now .

" If we have to drag you , you'll regret it . " My bullets don't play favorites , and I won't be sparing anyone ! " Tilda went pale as a sheet . " Are they robbers ? " " These aren't simple robbers . Anyone bold enough to storm the Hotel Morloss , jam the network , and isolate That's closer to trained militants . " Even Tobias , who was usually the joker , looked stone serious . This was far beyond what they had imagined . Nobody could've predicted this ! Who would believe that a banquet at the Hotel Morloss would be ambushed by terrorists ? And the crowd here ?

They were all wealthy and influential . Snatching a group with wealth that could rival a nation's economy What was their objective ? " Mom , we're going out ." After weighing it over , Dominic reached a decision . " Dominic , we ... " " Mom , don't worry . I'm right here . " If killing us was the plan , they wouldn't go this far just to take over the hotel and corral everyone . " They want something specific . Until they get it , our lives aren't in danger . " Dominic steadied his tone , hoping to settle Tilda's nerves . She slowly began to ease up .

Dominic subtly toyed with his watch . He had hidden a miniature transmitter inside it . Though known as the eldest Jenson son and CEO of Jenson Group , he also had roots in the underworld . When it came to survival , one could never carry too many safeguards . This watch was Dominic's own design , built with his skills and 80 million dollars . It held cutting - edge features . It was prepared for moments exactly like this ! He figured these attackers had skilled hackers in their ranks . That was why Dominic kept the transmitter discreet .

All he could do now was pray someone could decode his signal . Then ... A name surfaced in Dominic's mind - Tilda . If it was Tilda ... She'd definitely be able to crack it . Whether she would even want to was another issue . Truthfully , if she knew , she'd probably relish the thought of him dying here . That thought sent a flicker of pain across Dominic's eyes . Tilda ... Master ... Will I ever face you again ? Could you ever forgive me ? Tobias was tinkering with his own watch too . Sending out a satellite ping .

He kept it discreet , the same as Dominic . They were clearly thinking alike . Dominic crawled out from beneath the table with Tilda . The lights revealed the scene . ** Masked men in devil faces , dressed head to toe in gear , clutching AK - 47s , had swarmed the place . There were at least a dozen of them . With barrels aimed at the crowd and their aura thick with violence , no one dared to breathe too loud . The doors swung open . More armed men strode inside . " The ones who tried to run have been dealt with . " " Six dead .

" " Now , count how many are still in the banquet hall ." One of them raised his AK - 47 and let a few shots rip into the ceiling . Bang ! Bang ! Guests turned white with terror . " Cooperate , and you'll stay alive . " But if anyone pulls a stunt , don't blame me when you're the next corpse ! " Line up in two rows and hand over all your valuables ! " Facing that much firepower , nobody dared fight back . Dominic and the others passed over their things . Then each was swept with a metal detector . One gunman stared at Dominic and spoke coldly , " The watch . Hand it over .

Chapter 374 Handsome Men Tsk . 4Dominic clicked his tongue inwardly but chose not to resist . He calmly removed his watch and placed it in the gunman's hand . The man accepted Dominic's watch , but instead of throwing it into the bag with the other valuables , he quietly looked around and slipped it into his pocket . Dominic noticed the sneaky gesture right away . Well now ... Even better ! Meanwhile , in

Cetherland . Nobody there had the faintest idea about the chaos breaking out in Endralsia . It was New Year's Day . Tilda was spending it with Dane and Mystro .

She was determined to give them a proper holiday . She personally took Dane and Mystro to the supermarket to choose fresh groceries . That evening , Tilda planned to cook a New Year's banquet for both of them herself . Her goal was to feed them until they couldn't eat another bite . Lobster , cheese , roast duck , chicken She went straight for the finest and most expensive options . When she , she gave the supermarket an address and asked them to deliver .

To make visiting Hetsa easier and spend time with Dane , Tilda had purchased a luxury flat right in the city center , just across the river . Not that pricey ; only 80 million . After rejoining the dark web , Tilda didn't depend solely on mission pay . Whenever she felt bored , she would dabble in the stock market with her own money . With sharp instincts for business , she picked out good companies and shorted them . She made billions with ease . Buying a posh apartment hardly mattered .

But ...

Dane and Mystro , who were both over six feet tall with impressive builds , drew attention no matter what . Even wearing masks , plenty of women still got flustered just looking at them . And there was Tilda , walking in between them , getting spoiled endlessly . Ugh ! Too much jealousy ! They looked so close that people could only assume they were siblings ! They had to be ! If they weren't , and they were actually both her suitors - one feeding her a hot dog , the other handing her ice cream , their eyes dripping with affection ... Seriously , how unfair was that ?

Just end us already ! Tilda basked in every envious , bitter , resentful stare . She adored it . Yes ! She loved making haters fume silently , forced to watch her stroll around with two amazing senior brothers , burning with jealousy . That had been Tilda's dream since childhood . It wasn't the Jenson Villa that gave it to her ; it was her brothers who fulfilled her pride . Even better ! Downtown Hetsa was alive with New Year celebrations . Red Cetherland decorations hung all around . Tilda held Dane's hand with her left and Mystro's with her right . She skipped along like a little rabbit .

Both of them carried her favorite treats , letting her lead them however she wanted . Even behind masks , their eyes radiated nothing but fondness . People all over the street turned to look . Some even pulled out their phones to record for TikTok . And just like that ... The street clip went viral on TikTok news . " Who are these gods ? Why are all the guys near me so plain ? "

" Is this a film shoot ? Even with masks , these two tall guys look unreal ! I can't take it ! " " Three seconds ! Somebody dig up their info for me !

" " You're all shallow ... Me ? I just want the details on the girl in the middle ! " " Wait a sec , doesn't she look familiar ? " " Her eyebrows look exactly like that viral world champion . Tilda! " " Holy crap ! It's her ! I'm a hardcore fan , ever since her scandal I've plastered her photos everywhere . No doubt it's her ! If I'm wrong . I'll let you kick my head like a ball ! " " Mom , the guy above is creepy , somebody grab him ! " Tilda and her brothers didn't realize they were trending online . Then ... When they passed a café , Dane stopped !

Tilda wrote , " What is it . Dane ? " Dane pulled out his notebook and wrote . " I've been here before . The coffee's good . " " Dane , you've been to downtown Hetsa before ? " Mystro couldn't hide his surprise . After all , Dane was a top researcher under heavy security in Cetherland . When he visited Motrar , Manfred and River had been on edge protecting him . It was hard to picture Dane casually showing up in a place like this . " Just once . I happened to try it , and it was good . " " Well , if Dane enjoys the coffee here , let's go inside . " We've got time before dinner anyway .

We can relax , grab some coffee , and then head back . " And so they decided . When Tilda led Dane and Mystro into the café ... Her eyes landed on a face that made her insides twist . Howard !

Chapter 375 Kidnapped Howard was the one who sheltered Rebecca in Hetsa , hiding her from the Bells . At first , Howard hesitated . But in the end , he couldn't resist Rebecca's desperate pleading and her tearful cries . If he'd abandoned her and let the Bells drag her back , she'd be lucky to survive - more likely , they'd tear her apart . She'd already stirred up way too much trouble . Eventually , Howard gave in and agreed to hide her . The moment she was discharged from the hospital , he placed her in a house in the outskirts . The area was deserted .

It was peaceful , but after some time , anyone would lose their mind . People aren't built to endure solitude . Especially not someone like Rebecca , who was a reckless girl who used to run with gangs . But Howard didn't have any safer options . Every few days , he'd make a discreet call to check on her , send her money , and have someone drop off necessities . He had to keep everything quiet . If anyone caught wind , Rebecca's location would be exposed . But then ... A week ago , Rebecca suddenly left the house and wandered into the city ! She even partied for a bit !

If Howard hadn't called and gotten no response , then checked the surveillance footage , he would've been clueless . Now , Rebecca had been gone for a week . Howard assumed she either bolted or the Bells captured her . So on New Year's Day , he had no choice but to come to Hetsa himself , retracing her movements . And he still had to return to Jenson Villa before the family dinner . But what he didn't

count on ... Tilda was also in Hetsa . Big city , yet somehow they ran into each other . Was it fate or just rotten timing ? And then ...

noticed Tilda walk in , holding hands with two men who radiated presence . He felt a sharp sting of jealousy . Of course , Tilda wasn't ordinary ; she was a world champion . Now , more and more remarkable men surrounded her . She clearly no longer needed anyone from Jenson Villa . No. It was only that they once thought they mattered so much to her . They believed Tilda would never walk away from the comfort of Jenson Villa , never abandon her brothers . But now ? All that arrogance was smashed in their faces . They had it coming .

Tilda was ready to brush past Howard and leave . " Congrats on becoming world champion , Tilda , " Howard said quickly , then rushed out of the café . He knew she didn't want to see him . And he didn't have the time to get involved with her either . Might as well leave it as a thorn in his chest and move forward . Howard's odd behavior made Tilda raise a brow . ッ ッ ﾂ ﾂ Well , that was unexpected . Not only did Howard avoid making trouble ... He actually congratulated her ? Ha . Like a wolf wishing a lamb Happy New Year . Definitely suspicious . " Tilda ... " Mystro shot her a look .

" Forget him . Let's get the coffee Dane suggested ." " Alright . " Dane gave a small nod . Just as Howard reached the exit , his phone rang . Seeing Russell's name , Howard paused . He was preparing excuses . Time was tight . If he couldn't track Rebecca , he'd have to get on the next flight back to Slosa . " Hello , Dad , what's going on ? " What did you just say ?! " Howard suddenly barked out , his voice heavy with tension . Everyone in the café turned their heads . " Okay ... understood . I'll return immediately ! " He hung up and sprinted out of the café .

His face was written with fear . Mystro frowned . " What's going on ? Why's he so shaken ? " Tilda stayed silent . For Howard to react like that ... Had something happened at Jenson Villa ? But It wasn't Tilda's concern . 69 Howard followed through and boarded the next flight back to Slosa . When he arrived at Jenson Villa , he found the entire family gathered in the living room , weighed down by worry . The second he entered , Howard asked , " Dad , was what you said true ? Mom and Dominic were caught in a terrorist siege ? " " That's right . It hasn't hit the media yet .

Only the families of those trapped inside the hotel have been informed . " The attackers haven't issued any demands . They're only keeping the hostages contained on one of the hotel floors . " Russell looked devastated . It was like he'd aged a decade in a single moment . " Dad , we can't just wait around ! We have to fly to Endralsia and get to Mom and Dominic ! " Kyla sobbed , tears falling down her face . Even

the calmest son , Kayden , was unraveling . " Yes , Dad , let's go ! With Mom and Dominic in danger , who cares about New Year's ?

" This was about life and death . If something happened to them Kayden couldn't picture what would become of their so - called " happy " family .

Chapter 376 If Only " We already got the notice . We can't just fly over there . " And even if we tried , it wouldn't change anything . We'd likely make the situation worse . " The only thing left is to count on the embassy to step in and help Endralsia handle those militants . " Russell exhaled a long , weary breath . He covered his face with his hands . What he wanted most was to grow wings and rush straight to Blair and Dominic . The thought of the woman he adored , with her life hanging by a thread , trapped inside a hotel by gunmen ... Was she suffering inside ?

Russell felt like the air was being crushed out of his chest . The entire room turned unbearably heavy . No one could contradict Russell . Because his reasoning held . For now ... All they could do was stay alert to the news . And pray Dominic and Blair survived . " Dad , we can't just sit on our hands ! " There has to be something we can still do here ! " Justin slammed the table and rose to his feet . Everyone gaped at him . " Dad , can you use your contacts to pull the full list of those stuck in the Hotel Morloss ? " I'll try reaching their families .

Maybe we can get some details from them ! " " Alright , I'll do what I can ! " Justin was right . Russell couldn't simply wait around for foreign agencies to handle it ! His wife , his child ... Russell had to act to defend them ! Tilda and the other two's New Year's Eve dinner went smoothly .

When Tilda returned to her apartment in Hetsa , she unpacked the groceries . One by one , she carried out steaming dishes and arranged them on the table . " Tilda , you're incredible . The food smells so good I'm about to drool !

" After that restaurant incident , Mystro already knew Tilda's cooking skills were the real deal ! Even that chef had nothing but admiration , even wanting to secretly apprentice under her ! " This one is the dish I cooked on the Ferris wheel . French braised cabbage rolls . Taste it . " " Perfect ! " " What are you two going on about ? " Dane , who had been left out , was clearly annoyed . He demanded to know what was being said ! " Well ... " Dane , that's just between me and Tilda . " Mystro flashed Tilda a sly wink . Dane suddenly wanted to sock him in the face .

What was he supposed to do with that answer ? " Okay , don't bully Dane . " " Dane , here's what actually happened ... " Tilda quickly explained what had gone down on the Ferris wheel . " Tilda , you're

awesome . He's such a pest ! " " Ahem ... " Mystro looked slightly stung . He didn't think Tilda would rat him out that quickly ... Did Dane actually hold more weight to her than he did ? Ouch . As Tilda and the others enjoyed their New Year's dinner , they turned on the TV for the holiday gala . Tilda even recorded a vlog and uploaded it to her social feed .

If Only She made sure to blur Dane and Mystro's faces . The two of them showing up together would cause an uproar . Almost instantly , her post got a wave of likes . Una wrote , " Ugh . I wish I could eat Tilda's New Year's dinner ! Too bad I'm stuck at home with no way out ... ' Astrid , Jarrett , Theo , Zach also left reactions . When Tilda noticed Jude had liked it , she messaged him .. Tilda wrote , " Don't tell me you're still stuck working overtime on New Year's ? " Jude replied , " No ... I'm at dinner with the Bells .

" After sending that , Jude glanced around at the so - called " relatives " seated at the table . Even though the Bells were always at each other's throats for power , as long as Abram lived , every branch was forced to gather for the holidays . The whole thing was laughable . Everyone was plotting , buttering up Abram , all wanting to drag Jude down as head of the family . Yet here they were , pretending to be one big , happy household . Jude had grown up surrounded by this circus , so he had long since mastered the art of wearing a mask . Acting ? He could do it blindfolded .

But this time ... Maybe it was because he had met Tilda . Jude felt , deep in his bones , that this holiday meal was revolting . Tilda wrote , " Ugh ... I can totally picture how awful that dinner must feel for you . " Jude replied , " Well , it's because a certain someone wouldn't spend New Year's with me . " Tilda replied , " ??? I asked you ! You said you had to be with the Bells . Don't turn this on me ! " Jude wrote back , " Next year , I don't want to come back here . Will you spend it with me ? " Jude was dead serious . He was completely sick of this hollow family charade .

If only Tilda could be there with him ...

Chapter 377 Bad News Jude would definitely live with a strong belief in his heart . Tilda typed back , " Well , let's see how you do . " She had already kissed Jude , after all . Tilda wasn't going to act shy anymore . She would just take things one step at a time . The future was still far ahead . Who said that she had to decide right now ? Jude replied , " Then , I'll do my best . " He smiled without him even realizing it . Everyone who was eating at Bell Residence saw him . They froze instantly . What did they just see ? That cold man actually smiled ?

He was always so aloof , proud , and serious . Jarrett's reaction was the most dramatic . His mouth was gaping wide as if it could fit a whole egg . He even rubbed his eyes hard . Oh , God ! If someone took a picture of this and put it online , it would cause a huge stir ! Jarrett's parents were just as shocked . Abram , on the other hand , looked happy and said , " Jude , you're not getting any younger . Isn't it

about time you think about marriage ? Do you have someone in mind ? " " Sort of , " Jude said indifferently . He wasn't in a hurry to tell them about Tilda .

Even though he knew his uncles had already started looking into the woman he'd been seeing . Partly , it was to be cautious . Another part of it was simply out of curiosity . Jude , I trust you . I know you won't even look at some useless women . " If you have made up your mind , bring her home . I'll give her a huge present . " 1.Now that Abram had put down most of his burdens , he looked younger and healthier . He also worked out often , so he looked more like he was in his early 50s than 70 .

He was wearing a suit and had a strong presence . His gaze was full of story and sometimes he had a sharp look that one couldn't ignore . " Alright . " Jude didn't deny it . Everyone's heart skipped a beat . So , there really was someone . Sitting among the crowd , Preston clenched his fists under the table . He knew the woman Jude was talking about was Tilda ! She was his fiancée in name only ! That time at the restaurant , he had run into Tilda with Jude , Alfie , and Maurice . It was a bad memory to him . Just thinking about it made him feel unwell .

Lately , Kyla had been making excuses not to see him . In the past , Preston would have fallen for this trick . He would have thought that Tilda's lies had worked and would have tried his best to make it up to Kyla . But now , for some reason , Preston kept thinking of Tilda , even more often than Kyla . He didn't even know what was wrong with him . Because of that , he didn't care as much about Kyla . Now Kyla was the one bothering him with messages . However , all of Preston's replies were very cold . Oh , no . I should like Kyla .

We've been friends since we were kids and promised to get married . Why do I care so much about Tilda now ? I care if she ignores me , that she's cold , and that she looks down on me , Every cold look she gave him was a fresh wound , and now it felt like it was burning . Tilda's image was carved deeply into his mind and wouldn't go away . While Preston was lost in thought about Tilda , the most awkward people at the dining table were Preston's parents , Ryan and Daphne .

They still had to deal with what Rebecca did , even though Abram hadn't said anything yet . Once the New Year celebration was over , she would definitely face the consequences . Strictly speaking , it was their family's responsibility . Because of Jude's presence and Marcus family's influence , their position was in danger . Ryan wasn't like Leonard , who had no ambition . If he lost his sharp edge here , then it was basically over for him . What was the point of living like that ? Just then , the butler quickly came to Abram . " Mr.

Bell , you have a phone call on the private line ." Hearing that , Abram frowned . Only his most trusted people would dare to call him on the private line at this time . They knew how important New Year's Eve dinner was to him . They wouldn't call unless something big had happened . " Bring it here , " he ordered . " Yes . " When Abram got the phone , his expression changed as he listened to the person reporting . " What did you just say? " Everyone held their breath . They could tell that Abram was very angry . The news from the phone call was not good .

Everyone kept silent , except one person . " What's wrong , Grandpa ? " Jude asked calmly .

Chapter 378 Crisis at Morloss Hotel Abram hung up the phone . His voice sounded different . " Morloss Hotel in Endralsia has been taken over by armed men . A good friend of mine is caught inside , and we don't know if he's alive or dead . " " Jude , you've met him before . It's Uncle Sheldon . " " Uncle Sheldon - Sheldon Oliveson of the Oliveson Group ? " He had gone overseas years ago and become a big shot in the petroleum industry in Endralsia . Later , he even opened some companies back home , though mostly just for fun .

He and Abram had met through business and were very good friends . No one had expected that Abram would secretly take Jude to meet someone like him . Even the rest of the family never got the chance ! Marcus's and Ryan's families started to get jealous and think about what they could do . Everyone was scheming . Only Leonard seemed genuinely surprised . " Dad , the Morloss Hotel ... I think that's Uncle Sheldon's company , right ? It's the best hotel in Endralsia . How could its security be broken through ? " That means , the armed group's demands must be really hard to meet .

This could even become a worldwide event , " he said . " For now , they haven't made any demands . The officials of Endralsia have already sent a team to surround the hotel . " The list of trapped people has been released , and embassies from different countries have stepped in . " We'll have to wait and see how this all ends , " Abram explained . Everyone started talking at once . Only Jude seemed calm . Since it had already happened , all they could do was wait and see what's coming up next . Meanwhile , Tilda got a call from Andy .

She was happily eating crab meat that her senior had peeled for her . She wiped her hands with a napkin and picked up her phone . " Hey , Andy . Happy New Year ! " " Tilda , something big happened . You've heard of the Morloss Hotel in Endralsia , right ? It was taken over by a bunch of armed men at midnight ! " It's been over ten hours , and we haven't heard anything else ! Hotel " There are a lot of people from our country who are stuck in that hotel .

They made a lot of money overseas but didn't forget their home country , so they've been donating money and helping out in " You told me to let you know if anything like this happened . " Andy really was a good middleman of the dark web . many ways . He wasn't even related to any of the hostages , but he somehow found out about the current situation . Tilda pursed her lips . " I got it , Andy . " " Tilda , I know you . You won't just stand by and do nothing . " That's why I need to remind you . Among the trapped people , there are also Blair and Dominic .

" Andy decided to tell her everything . Tilda responded , " These two must have the worst luck ever . How did they end up in a situation like this ? " She couldn't help but complain . This was the kind of thing that only happened once every ten years , but they managed to run right into it . That's just crazy ! Andy said , " So , it's up to you if you want to save those two unlucky people . " " Andy , don't underestimate me . I know how to keep work and personal feelings apart . That's rule number one as a hacker for the dark web .

" Like you said , there are people inside who've done great things for Cetherland . If I can help , I can't just stand by , " Tilda said . Andy replied , " Alright , it's your call . I sorted out a rough list and already sent it to your phone . Check if I missed anything . " " Thanks , Andy . " After she hung up , Mystro had already peeled a shrimp for her and put it on her plate . " Tilda , what's wrong ? " 單 She answered , " Something happened at the Morloss Hotel in Endralsia .

A bunch of powerful people worth hundreds of billions are stuck inside , along with some people who have done a lot for our country . " " I'm sorry , Mystro . We have to finish dinner quickly . I need to go find out what's going on . " " I understand . " Dane and Mystro both knew the situation was serious . The dinner ended in a hurry . Tilda went back to her room and began digging into any info she could find about the hotel . Meanwhile , the Comet Squad group chat blew up . Jarrett typed , " Did you guys hear ? Something happened at the Morloss Hotel in Endralsia !

A lot of Hotel important people are trapped inside ! " Astrid replied , " Just heard from my parents . Supposedly my aunt and his husband , Dominic , the chairman of Jenson Group , were caught in it too . " Theo added , " Damn ! My relative got trapped too ! " Zach typed , " What do we do ? " Tilda replied , " Just stay calm for now and wait . Let's see if the officials from our and other countries can solve this . I'm going to start looking at the files first .

" With Tilda taking charge , the whole team calmed down like they'd been given a safety net . Nobody questioned her orders . Tilda quickly found out about the Morloss Hotel , including its history , the layout of each floor , and other important details . She also made a list of all the people who were at the New Year's Eve party and compared it to the list Andy gave her .

Chapter 379 Going Back When Tilda wrapped up the report , she sent it straight into Comet's WhatsApp group . Jarrett fired back , " Holy crap , that fast ? Tilda , you're a damn legend . " Astrid dropped a thumbs - up emoji . Theo answered with a salute emoji . Zach typed out an astonished emoji . Tilda replied , " Cut the chatter . Read through it . " I'll reach out to a contact and find out how the other side is moving . " And just right then , as if on cue Manfred's name lit the screen of her phone . She picked up .

" The fact you're calling me today of all days means it has to be about Hotel Morloss . " Manfred exhaled heavily . " So the news has reached you . Do you have the full picture ? " " I do . Did they give conditions ? " " They did . They want a broadcast that reaches the whole world . During it , they'll state demands . " They gave Endralsia one hour . Every half hour after that , they'll kill a hostage . " Tilda pressed her lips tight . " So they don't care about money . This is a declaration . " " Exactly . Hotel Morloss is surrounded by soldiers so tight not even a bug could crawl out .

" The enemy's prepared to face death in battle . " " Alright , that's enough . Let's cut to the chase . You wouldn't call unless you needed me . " " No wonder they call you Queen . You see right through me . " Endralsia's finest tried hacking Morloss but got blocked . Every feed is jammed and swapped . " If we had those cameras , it would give us a real shot at saving lives . " Command asked me if I had anyone strong enough . You're the only one I thought of . " If the dark web's Top Hacker couldn't do it , then no one could . " I understand , Mr. Parker .

" I'll take it , but I have one rule . " The breach stays under me alone . Endralsia must stop all digital pushes , or their operation could clash with mine , and that could get the hostages killed . " You do not want the enemy to realize something is up . " I'll talk to them . Wait for my call . " The line clicked off . Tilda jumped back into Comet's chat and laid out every word of the call . Jarrett typed quickly , " Queen , you're not going to Endralsia alone , are you ? " " No. I already mapped Hotel Morloss .

If Parker makes it work , we'll launch from our Slosa base . " And I'll need you four with me . You're all in Slosa , I presume ? " The Comet team froze . Their hearts slammed hard . This was bigger than anything they had touched before . Their nerves were screaming at them . Tilda pushed harder . " You trained all this time to serve your country . You made a promise . " This is that moment . You can't pull back now . " Theo , usually the one cracking jokes , spoke heavily . " Queen , we don't have that kind of faith in ourselves .

Endralsia threw all their experts at this , and none of them cracked it . " What if we blow it ? If the enemy finds out , it can and will get worse . " The others stayed silent with him . Tilda's voice came clear

and sharp . " I wouldn't bring you in if you weren't ready . Your skill is stronger than you think , especially after all the training you've gone through . Trust me . I'm the dark web's top hacker . You can do it . Says me . " She didn't type those words . She spoke to them . The four of them could hear her conviction in every syllable .

Jarrett answered , " If Queen says so , then I'll put my life on the line with her . " Astrid wrote , " All that training won't be for naught . This is it . This is the moment . Queen , if you trust us , then we'll rise to it . " Zach typed , " I'm heading to base now . " Theo , " Well , if you put it that way , there's no backing down . We're all in . Do or die . " A small smile tugged at Tilda's mouth . Now all they could do was wait for Manfred's deal to come through . She stood and stepped out of the room .

Dane and Mystro were outside , deep in talk about the intel from Hotel Morloss . Mystro rose when he saw her . " Tilda , what's the word ? " Tilda gave them the short version of Manfred's call for help .

Chapter 380 Chopper " Mystro , you still got clearance for your chopper ? I need to get to Slosa right now . " " Of course I do . " " Dane . I'm sorry , we're done for today . Mystro , you take him back . " She stopped for a second then said , " Send me the location of the chopper . Start it up for me . I'll fly it myself to Slosa . " What ?! " Mystro's eyes went wide , " Tilda , are you out of your mind ? " " This is the fastest way . I know that base better than anyone . I trained on helicopters when I was in Beachland . You don't need to worry about me .

" Her voice turned sharp . " We can't waste a second . As soon as Parker gives the green light , I have to lead my team into Hotel Morloss's system . " Mystro tried to argue , but Dane laid a hand on his shoulder and shook his head . " Trust her , " Dane said quietly . Mystro exhaled hard . " Alright . " Tilda let out a small smile . " Oh , come on , don't worry about me . When I come back victorious , we'll finish that New Year's dinner we left hanging . " She left them and slid into her brand - new BMW convertible parked outside her apartment in Hetsa .

The tires screeched as she slammed the gas , whipped the wheel , and the car shot toward Mystro's coordinates like an arrow leaving the bow . One hour later , Manfred's call came in right on time . " Queen , we pushed hard and they finally gave in a little , but we only have one hour . " " That's enough . " " Queen , what's all that noise around you ? " " Sorry , I just flew a helicopter into Slosa . I'm heading to the base right now . Don't worry about me . " Manfred stayed quiet .

Tilda reached the base elevator , scanned her iris and fingerprint , then passed the face recognition test . The steel doors opened , and she stepped inside . " Queen ! " The Comet squad was already there . They

shot up from their chairs the moment she walked in . " The system is fully active . Network checks show clear . " " All the hardware and software are ready . No problems . " They had everything set up perfectly before she even arrived . Her gaze swept over them , and pride flashed in her eyes . " Mr.

Parker , have them hand over the key for the network . The clock starts now . " " If we can't crack it , we'll pull back and return the key untouched . " " Fine " It had taken every ounce of Manfred's pull to make this deal . Without the name of Queen , the shadow that haunted the dark web , no one would have let a foreigner touch this . Her name was both weapon and shield . Every real player in the underground knew her . Or at least , every real player worth their salt . Anyone who didn't know Queen was basically a noob .

The dark web was a treasure chest coveted by every nation in the world . It was also a creature every nation in the world guarded against . It took a lot of sweat and tears to get an inch of ground , so they had to get the key as well . Tilda slid into her station and tested the rig . One minute later Manfred sent her a single word . " OK . " She leaned forward and said , " Time to move . " " Jarrett , you take ... " She gave each of them exact orders . The room filled with the crack of keys and the snap of mice .

Her voice cut through the tension , and their reports came back strong and steady like a drumline . Every muscle was drawn tight . The five of them locked into rhythm . They poured everything into breaking Hotel Morloss . Nobody broke it . " Report , Queen , A route failed . " " B route collapsed . " " C route down . " " What about D ? " " D route ... failed . " It got cut off at the last point . " " These people are no ordinary kidnappers . " Anyone bold enough to storm Hotel Morloss and demand a worldwide broadcast came loaded .

" They covered every angle ." Her tone was fierce . " Don't lose faith . If this was easy , Endralsia would never have called me . " Keep pushing . Find another way in . " While her team tore through the code , she searched for any sign of a hidden signal inside the hotel . Her squad could figure out the invasion route easily , but ... She knew the truth . Endralsia had the best tech fighters in the world and they had already burned through every normal route . They would never allow their pride to collapse without a fight .

Even if they found nothing after exhausting every possible route , she had to chase the impossible . Hotel Morloss was their jewel . Its walls were stacked with power and money . If someone had buried a secret transmitter deep inside , then that was the thread she would pull .