

## Shadows 491

### Chapter 491

Based on everything she knew , Jude was supposed to be the leader of the seventh - ranked assassin group . He was the CEO of DY Group , and he was the head of the Bells . Besides , he had an assassin crew handling all the messes . That alone made him a big deal . But now he was telling her that Hard Corps Uprising - the most feared , untouchable assassin group - was his ? What the heck ! This was totally unexpected to Tilda . Hard Corps Uprising was a total mystery , and so was its leader .

The group was so secretive that even Tilda had never tracked down who ran it , and not even Andy had a clue . It was an absolute taboo on the dark web . Nobody ever messed with them . And Jude was the man behind it . " I'm not showing off or making this up . " I always hoped you'd figure it out yourself . But since I already knew about your identity as the Dark Web Queen , I thought you deserved to hear it straight from me . " " But ... Jude , aren't you the leader of the seventh - ranked assassin group ... As Tilda was sending this message , she paused . She suddenly thought of something .

" That's just your cover ? " " The best hunters never reveal their final hand . 11 " He'll use the most convenient mask to put his prey at ease , until they walk right into his trap . " When they realize it , it's already too late . " No one's ever found out who leads the number one group - or what he even looks like . " For me , being the CEO of DY Group and leader of the seventh - ranked assassin crew lets me 2/4 18:31 Tue , Sep 30 Damn it .

Tilda couldn't help but curse in her heart . The shock was real . Maybe not even the Bells , not Jude's father Devin , not even Abram , knew this hidden identity of Jude . This hidden identity was the ultimate protection for him . Even if Jude fell out with the other Bells or went up against Abram , just being the leader of Hard Corps Uprising would be enough for him to seize control of the Bells . He'd never have to fear anyone . Not even Tilda or Andy would ever cross someone like that . Tilda typed , " So , Jude , you're telling me all this ...

" You should know , in my heart , you're more important than anyone or anything in the world . " " My heart and soul belong to you , so why would I care about anything else ? " Even though it was just a text message , Tilda knew exactly how Jude would look at his screen . He must be the same as always . So gentle . So steadfast . " I can feel how much you care about me , Jude . Thank you . " Even though it was just a hidden identity , Tilda knew just how much this secret was worth . On the black market , it could fetch billions . For some people , it would be priceless .

Jude was the leader of Hard Corps Uprising . This was his trump card , the one thing he could never reveal . And yet .44 he handed the secret over to Tilda so easily . There was no greater proof of trust than that . Tonight , Jude was finally going to get a good night's sleep .

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Jessie couldn't hide her delight after being praised . She rested her chin in her hand and eyed Tilda . " So , Tilda , does your painting really make that much money ? " " Jessie , that's not how you talk to Tilda ! " Megan tried to scold her on the surface , but her eyes gave her away . She was dying to know just how much money Tilda , now a world champion and outed as X , was making . If people paid Tilda for paintings , what would the price be ? All those famous painters like Picasso and Van Gogh - any of their works could fetch millions .

A few million for an original painting by Tilda didn't sound expensive at all . Tilda simply replied , " I don't have an income . I'm still living off my savings . " " What ? That can't be ! " Tilda , are you treating us like outsiders and lying to us now ? You're a total celebrity now . Everyone's talking about you on TikTok and Twitter . " You've got fans everywhere - any painting you make could sell for a fortune . Are you just afraid we'll ask to borrow money ? You're so stingy . " Jessie snickered and shot Tilda a look , clearly not believing her . " Jessie !

" Megan was about to blow her top at her clueless daughter . She'd warned her so many times not to upset Tilda , but here Jessie was ruining everything . She'd brought Jessie along , thinking that as a 15 - year - old , she'd have more in common with Tilda and could help break the ice . But now , it felt like she was sabotaging Megan's one shot at a windfall .

and Her Clueless Daughter +8 Pearts With her husband secretly moving money out , having an affair , and even getting his mistress pregnant , Megan knew she had to act quickly or be left penniless after the divorce . The last thing she wanted was to go back to living broke - especially with Jessie dragging her down . When Jessie realized Megan was losing her temper , she remembered her promise to her mom . So she just pouted and kept playing on her phone . " Sorry , this kid just blurts things out ...

Or maybe she's just too dumb to know better ." Megan gave up trying to explain and just wished Jessie would disappear . " Your reaction is totally normal . I'm not surprised . The reason I said that is commissions lately . I haven't had any " Of course , I'm also thinking about my own future . Selling paintings is one option , but if I put out too much work , my popularity will suffer , and the value of my

work will drop . " Tilda's answer was flawless . Megan and Jessie finally had nothing left to say . She must be out of her mind to turn down easy money like that .

With Megan glaring daggers at her , Jessie finally put her phone down , pressed her palms together , and apologized sincerely . " Sorry , Tilda . I shouldn't have said that . I'm still a kid . I know you won't hold it against me , right ? "

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Jessie blurted out , " Wait ... you're not talking about the Jensons ' fake heiress Kyla , are you ? " That whole scandal had blown up all over the internet . Jessie was familiar with every detail about Tilda cutting ties with the Jensens over Kyla . She loved it . This real - life drama in a rich family was way more exciting than any TV show . She thought , According to her , are there secrets behind the whole thing ? " Fake heiress ? No , she's the real deal . The Jensens treat her like family . " I'm out of the picture now, and she's the only one they recognize . She gets all their love .

" She has everything . Her parents and brothers shower her with gifts every season and holiday . All those limited - edition designer bags , clothes , shoes ... she could fill a room the size of a few thousand square feet . " Her allowance never drops below hundreds of thousands a rakes in millions - probably has no idea how much . During the holidays , she saved by now . " She's always had the best - best home , best life , best education , grew up with all the rich girls , lived in luxury , and most importantly , she's loved by her family .

" Compared to me - the real daughter who was lost for 19 years - her life is so much brighter . It's so enviable , doesn't it ? " 1/3 Even back when her own family abroad was rich and her dad still spoiled her , her monthly allowance was capped at tens of thousands of dollars at best . If Jessie bought a designer bag , some dresses , or jewelry , that was all gone .

And as for limited - edition or custom luxury gifts , she'd only ever heard about those . Even for her birthday , the birthday allowance only came to a few hundred thousand . We're both daughters . She was even adopted from an orphanage . How did she get that lucky to end up with a bunch of idiots like the Jensens ? They have no blood ties , but they spoil her rotten ? That is insane luck . Anyone would be jealous . " Yeah , sounds ... pretty enviable , doesn't it ? " Tilda said this while glancing at Megan . She noticed Megan looked completely different than when she first walked in .

Before , Tilda hadn't been totally sure if Megan knew Kyla was her own abandoned daughter . But now ... She was sure of it . Otherwise , Megan wouldn't have reacted so strongly to Kyla's name . The rest of the meal tasted great to Tilda . Megan and Jessie , though , completely lost their appetites . All because Tilda had brought up one person- Kyla . Megan was unsettled , knowing her own daughter was living such a good life . Jessie , on the other hand , just couldn't get over her jealousy .

Kyla , just an adopted daughter , 2/3 Megan tried to compose herself . " Sorry ... Tilda , my daughter just acts like that . Hope you're not offended . " " It's fine . That's just how young people are these days . I get it . " " But Mrs. Walsh , I heard your husband's company hasn't been doing so well lately ? " Megan stiffened and forced a laugh . " Ah ...

Tilda , where'd you hear that ? Of course everything's fine ! " " That's good , then . Just something I heard , that's all . " " Well , thanks for the meal . I had a great time . Goodbye . " Tilda stood up as she spoke . Megan quickly added , " Leaving already , Tilda ? Won't you stay a bit longer ? " " No , I've got some things to take care of . Too bad I didn't get to meet your husband ... Maybe next time . " Is s your husband still on his way ? Tell him not to rush . We ' already done eating . " The mention of her husband made Megan's face cloud over again .

" Sorry , he said he'd be here , but something came up at work . I really apologize ... " It's fine , don't worry about it . Work comes first . " Tilda replied , sounding totally understanding . But her eyes sparkled with amusement . The bait was set . Now she just had to wait for Megan and her precious daughter ... to bite .

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Tilda just had to wait for the moment Megan and Jessie took the bait ... and once they did , she'd reel in the big fish . Oh wait . There is someone else . Someone crucial . After Tilda left , Megan's forced smile finally faded . She pulled out her phone and looked at the messages from her husband , Jesse Walsh . " A student painter ? What help could they possibly be ? Stop wasting my time . Shit ! If you want to see her , you go see her yourself ! " Megan squeezed the phone so hard her palm turned white . " Ah !

" With a furious yell , she hurled the phone at the floor . Smack ! The phone was tough , so only the screen protector shattered with a sharp crack . The rest of it stayed intact . " Jesse Walsh , you heartless man ! " We were married for so many years . Even now , I'm still racking my brain for ways to help you save the company . " And what do I get ? You just brush me off , acting like it doesn't matter and running off to your mistress . " Megan's jaw clenched so tight she almost broke a tooth . Most of the family's money was in Jesse's hands .

Even though Megan had lived the good life all these years , she never stopped stashing away a little for herself as a safety net . But that was barely a drop in the bucket . 1/4 If Jesse really moved their assets behind her back and there was no proof when they divorced , the money Megan could get her hands on would barely last half a year . The thought made Megan pick up her phone and call another number . Once she confirmed the person was home , Megan swayed her hips and strode out the door .

She had no idea that Tilda hadn't really left the area after the meal . Instead , Tilda had started her car and watched as Megan hopped in a cab and headed off somewhere . Tilda followed along at a steady pace . After about half an hour of driving , Megan arrived at an old neighborhood . Tilda stayed in her car , pulled out her phone , and easily hacked into the building's outdated security system . After all , the network there probably hadn't been updated in years , and no one was really watching it . For Tilda , breaking in was effortless .

She watched as Megan headed to Unit 508 and knocked on the door . She said softly , " It's me . Open up . " The door opened . Before Megan could react , a big pair of arms pulled her into an embrace . " Honey , I missed you so much . " " Stop it ! The door isn't even closed yet . What are you doing ? Quit grabbing me , it hurts ! " Megan complained , but she didn't push the man away . She lifted a foot and shut the door behind her . This man was Megan's ex - husband , Kyla's biological father - James Dawson . He'd done time for multiple burglaries , serving 15 years in prison .

2/4 After they finished in bed , James lit a cigarette and lounged beside Megan , pulling her close . " Honey , didn't you say you were going to meet that Tilda girl to see if there was any money to be made ? " Why are you back so soon ? Did you get anything useful ? " Megan lay there , satisfied , idly tracing circles on James's chest . " No ... I've only met her twice . Just getting her to have dinner with me is already a favor . " She's just a college student .

I tried asking about her income , but she dodged the question and made up some excuse . I knew there was definitely more to it . " And don't get me started on that bastard Jesse . Even when I try to help him turn things around , he acts like I'm out to get him ! " He only cares about those women outside and their brats ! " Megan could barely contain her rage . She looked like she wanted to tear Jesse apart . James took a last drag on his cigarette and patted Megan's cheek . " Come on , Honey , now that I'm back , you don't have to put up with that guy anymore ... I'm getting jealous .

" " Don't worry , Honey , I don't care about him at all . I'm just running low on cash . Divorce is just a matter of time . " When the divorce happens , we'll be broke . Haven't those friends you made in prison found any evidence yet ? " " Nothing so far . That foreign guy is more careful than I thought , and all his

women are tucked away in fancy neighborhoods . We can't get to them . " Maybe we should just hire someone to take him out . " If he dies , you're still his legal wife , so you'd inherit everything . " James's eyes flashed dangerously , and he made a throat - slitting gesture .

" With all the surveillance these days , who's stupid enough to actually do that ? " Even if someone did , they'd get caught and rat us out . The risk is way too high . Murder's a death sentence , you know ."

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He Isn't an Idiot +8 Pearls " Jesse isn't an idiot . I know he set up a will ages ago . If anything happens to him , people are definitely going to suspect me ... " " " So this won't work , and that won't work either . Damn it , why does everything have to be so complicated ? I thought once I finally got out of prison , I'd be able to enjoy life ! " Don't forget , if I hadn't stolen all that money and helped you clean up your act , you never would have landed a rich guy like Jesse ! " James shoved Megan off his lap in frustration and walked over to the window to sulk .

Megan let out a quiet sigh , climbed out of bed , and hugged James from behind , speaking carefully . " Honey , I know you've done a lot for me , but we can't rush things . The more impatient we are , the more likely we are to screw up and then we'll lose everything . " ... " And there's Kyla ... our first daughter . It seems like she's doing really well with the Jensens . " Just mentioning Kyla seemed to calm James down . He couldn't help but grin . He turned , pulling Megan into his arms , his spirits suddenly high .

" Honey , I've always told you , if things really get bad , we can go to Kyla for help . " The Jensens are the wealthiest family in Slosa , and they treat Kyla like gold . She's got to have a ton of money ! " ... Megan hesitated . " But Honey , we left Kyla at the orphanage . We never did right by her as parents . If we only show up when we're broke , I'm afraid she'll hate us and refuse to see us ... 11 " Honey , what are you talking about ? Kyla's our flesh and blood . Without us , she wouldn't even be alive in this world . " We're her biological parents , and nothing can change that .

Besides , we had no choice but to leave Kyla back then . Would you rather have dragged her around and let her suffer with us ? " " Let's just hope we don't get to that point . If there's any other way , we shouldn't do it . " Megan hugged James even tighter , not because she really loved him . After all ... James was still the father of her two children . He was also the only person she could count on right now . 1/3 Maybe it was just shared interests and a common goal , but neither of them could afford to betray the other . And ...

Megan was still a woman with desires . At her age , she still craved intimacy . Jesse never cared about her anymore . His heart was completely with his mistress . So Megan could only seek emotional warmth from James . Tilda had pretty much figured out the way Megan and James operated together . She picked up her phone and called Andy . " Sorry to bother you , Andy . I wanted to check ... how are things going with arranging the quick transfer of Jessie's assets and those overseas visas for the people he wants to take ? " " Don't worry , Tilda .

Since you asked , I've already sent lawyers to start the process . I'm keeping an eye on it myself , so we'll have an answer soon . " " Good . I need to push Megan and the others into a corner , so they'll head to Slosa to find Kyla . That way , my plan can move even faster . " After hanging up , someone started spamming Tilda in the Comet Squad group chat . Tilda replied , " I'm here . What's going on ? Why the sudden panic ? " Jarrett answered , " Tilda , remember when you asked us to keep an eye on that overseas base and see if your person showed up ? There's news !

The person you mentioned is out ! " Tilda said excitedly , " Screenshot it and send it to me ! " Jarrett and the others quickly uploaded images captured from the security cameras . It was definitely Liam ! He even had three assistants carrying bags behind him ! He'd finally overcome that strange illness and left the base ! Tilda was so thrilled she immediately shared the news with Dane and Mystro . Dane didn't reply , probably because he was busy in the lab . 2/3 +8 Pearls But Mystro answered right away . " I can't believe you heard about this so quickly , Tilda .

I was just about to tell you . " Liam already called to let me know he's okay . I told him about you and Dane . " He was surprised and said he wants to fly out and meet you both right away ! " I've cleared my schedule and plan to fly out with Liam to meet you all . " " Okay , I'll head to Hetsa next . Let's all meet up there ! " Still buzzing with excitement , Tilda announced a year - end bonus for every Comet Squad member in the group chat . Jarrett said excitedly , " Woohoo ! Long live Tilda ! " Theo cheered , " Tonight's dinner is covered . Thanks , Tilda !

" Zach replied , " Much appreciated ! " Astrid said , " Go , Tilda ! Go see the person you've been waiting for . " As Tilda's cousin , Astrid could understand Tilda's joy better than anyone .

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Do You Trust Us ? +8 Pearls Ever since she learned that Tilda had cut ties with the Jensens , and all the awful things the Jensens had done to her- Astrid had felt both heartache and guilt for her idol and cousin . Now , seeing Tilda find a new family , one that truly loved and cherished her , no one was happier than Astrid . Tilda said , " Thank you all . I'm heading out now . " She also let Una , Andy , and Jude know . They were genuinely happy for Tilda , too . " Go for it , Tilda ! Hurry over - don't waste a second . Go meet the most precious person in your life ! " Hetsa , here I come !

When Tilda arrived at Hetsa Airport , it was still 4 a.m. Mystro and Liam had coordinated to fly in on the earliest flights they could get . Because of the long distance , they wouldn't arrive until at least noon . Tilda put on her wireless headphones and played some music . She found a comfortable spot to sit and settled in to wait . She had already left messages for Manfred and the others , waiting for them to reach out first . Speak of the devil . Manfred sent a video call request right then . " Queen , is something wrong ? " " No , Mr. Parker , actually it's ...

" Tilda shared the news that Liam and the rest were on their way to Hetsa . Once Manfred realized Dane's juniors were coming , he looked troubled . Tilda picked up on it right away . " Mr. Parker , did something happen with Dane ? " 1/3 " No , not exactly ... Queen , Professor Kerrigan is currently leading an elite team and working in seclusion on the last big challenge . " Honestly ... it might be a while before you'll get to see him . " " Why ? Isn't the lithography machine project almost finished ? " Manfred let out a long sigh .

" The closer we get to the end , the more careful we have to be . To achieve the precision needed for the lithography machine , we must create a 4nm chip . That is the hardest part . " Right now , our country can only manufacture 28nm chips . If Professor Kerrigan succeeds , it'll break the monopoly . This milestone will go down in history . " But after all these years , countless top scientists in Cetherland have spent their whole lives trying and still failed .

" Even for a once - in - a - century genius like Professor Kerrigan , starting from scratch and developing a 4nm lithography machine in a short time is just impossible . " Our country is getting stronger , but compared to the truly developed nations , there's still a gap of decades . That can't be closed overnight or with empty slogans . " We have to acknowledge this gap and learn from others . That's the best strategy .

" To be honest , even if the lithography machine project was already in its final stages , Manfred still wasn't sure if Dane could actually break the monopoly and build a 4nm chip required for the lithography machine . Trying to close a decades - long gap between Cetherland and other countries with just one person , one team , was like chasing a fairy tale . However , Dane was such a rare genius . Because of that , Manfred , Lab Seven , and the entire nation were willing to put their hopes in him and give their full support . But if Dane failed , no one would blame him .



This was an almost impossible task from the start . But with Dane there , even the impossible seemed just a little more within reach . Tilda fell silent . Manfred quickly tried to comfort her . " It's a shame that you probably can't see him ... but 2/3 soter +8 Pearis Queen , try to understand Professor Kerrigan and the country's situation . Since you all made it to Hetsa , let me show you around the city . " " Mr. Parker , I actually have an idea I wanted to discuss . Would you be willing to hear me out ? " " Go ahead . " After Tilda finished explaining her thoughts , Manfred looked stunned .

His breathing suddenly raced . " Wait ... Queen , are you serious ? " " Of course I'm serious . I'll explain everything clearly to my two seniors . " We're all from Cetherland . Even if we're separated by distance , that sense of loyalty will never fade . " I don't know how much we can actually do , but as long as it's for Dane and for Cetherland's future , we won't hesitate ! " The only question is whether you trust us , Mr. Parker , and if you're willing to give us the chance . " Tilda's words were so firm and passionate that Manfred was swept up by her determination .

" If I said I fully trusted you from the start , Queen , that would have been a lie . " We've had our issues before , but now I can honestly say I trust you one hundred percent ! " And of course , I trust Professor Kerrigan's juniors , too . " Since this is an almost impossible challenge , all we can do is give it everything we've got , so we have no regrets . "

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Meeting Liam for the First Time +8 Pearls " I don't want doubts or any last - minute hesitation to hold Professor Kerrigan or our country back at the last step ! " Manfred knew this was a risky gamble . He trusted Tilda . But when it came to Mystro and Liam , he didn't know them well enough . To say he trusted them would be a stretch . If either of them ever betrayed the team .... Manfred knew he could never handle the consequences .

But if they just kept stalling like this , even with Dane leading the best elite team , there was no way they could break through and create the 4nm chip needed for the lithography machine . The only thing Manfred was sure of was that Dane's mentor , Harvey , had only taken in students with truly insane intelligence and talent . Tilda's capabilities , which didn't quite match her current age , were proof enough . If the other three were just as talented as Dane , maybe they really could break the monopoly . Maybe they could build Cetherland's own lithography machine .

Even just a one or two percent better chance was worth it . That was enough for Manfred to take the risk . " Thank you , Mr. Parker . Then I'll leave the job of persuading your superiors to you . " " I'll do my very best , Queen . You just focus on what you do best and help Professor Kerrigan ! " " I'll do everything I can to help Dane ! " After the call ended , Tilda took a deep breath . To create a 4nm chip ... She knew

better than anyone how important this was for Cetherland to break through the barriers and defeat all those countries jealously guarding their monopoly .

1/4 Soon , noon arrived . Tilda's phone buzzed with a message . It was from Mystro . " Tilda , I've arrived . " " Over here , Mystro . " Tilda quickly shared her location with him . Soon , Mystro showed up with a backpack , wearing a mask . The moment he spotted Tilda , he gave her a huge hug . " Tilda , it's been so long ! " Tilda stuck out her tongue playfully . " Mystro , didn't we just see each other a few days ago , on New Year's ? You're exaggerating . " " Tilda , even one day apart feels like years . It's been over 20 days - of course I missed you !

" Mystro reached out and patted Tilda's head , his voice gentle . Ever since he lost his parents , Mystro couldn't remember the last time he'd felt this way . Now , he knew he still had his seniors and Tilda , living well on the other side of the world . That gave him hope and something to care about . He didn't feel alone anymore . This warm feeling , this longing , it's like color finally returned to my world . Life isn't just gray anymore . Now it's bursting with color . I'm so grateful for it . " Mystro , you're so sweet . Did you eat honey today ? " Tilda giggled in his arms .

" By the way , Mystro , since you rushed over , what about your job ... " 2/4 " It doesn't matter . I've already made enough money to last for a few lifetimes . Work is just something to pass the time . Meeting up with you all is way more important . " Mystro already knew what mattered most in his heart . " I love how straightforward you are , Mystro . " " Now , we just have to wait for Liam to arrive . " " His flight left later than mine . It'll probably be another hour .

" With Mystro there , the hour passed quickly as they chatted and laughed . People couldn't help but stop and stare , even though both of them wore masks , their identities unknown . The warm , sibling - like atmosphere between them would touch anyone's heart . Finally , Mystro's phone buzzed with a message from Liam . " Tilda , Liam just landed . Let's go meet him . " " Okay ! " Tilda's heart sped up . Liam ... This would be her first time seeing Liam in person . To her , Liam was like a real - life Dr. Black Jack - brilliant and mysterious . Moments later , Liam came into view .

Liam wore a black trench coat over a wool sweater and a pair of Dr. Comfort loafers . His hair was neatly cropped , and his dark eyes were cool and precise . There was a depth to his gaze , someone who had seen through everything . like His thin lips and sharp nose gave him the look of a asoned soldier . If not for that quiet , distant aura - so common among doctors who've faced countless life - and- death situations - no one would have guessed Liam was a doctor . This was the person Tilda had dreamed of meeting for so long . She recognized him instantly .

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Liam's Story Mystro seemed to notice Tilda's nerves and gave her a reassuring smile . " Don't worry , Liam might look hard to approach , but he's actually incredibly gentle with the people he cares about . " " Over here ! Liam ! " " Mystro ... Tilda ! " Liam's eyes shifted from Mystro to Tilda . A moment later , a small smile tugged at his lips . Maybe because he almost never smiled , it looked a bit stiff . But Tilda could sense the warmth beneath those usually unreadable eyes . Liam's voice was even deeper and richer than she expected .

Honestly , he could have started a career as a voice actor right then and there . If he played the lead in one of those dramatic romance stories , fans would have gone wild just listening to him . Honestly , this is the best voice I've ever heard . In that instant , Tilda felt even closer to Liam , her admiration for him growing . " So this is Tilda ? Tilda ... " Liam stopped in front of her , calling her name with a natural intimacy that instantly eased the awkwardness of a first meeting . " I've heard so much about you from Mystro .

Ever since I found out about your existence , I've wanted to meet you more than anyone . " " Me too , Liam . " Tilda suddenly felt a sting behind her eyes . She once thought that , after cutting ties with the Jensens , she'd never experience true family love again . But now , she'd found new bonds that felt just as real as any blood relationship . She couldn't help but step forward and hug Liam . 1/2 A part of him that had been frozen for years slowly thawed , and the girl before him gradually found her way into that space . " It's okay , I'm here , Tilda . Don't be afraid . If anyone ever bullies you , just tell me and I'll settle the score . " Even if it's Mystro or Dane , I'll still take your side and teach them a lesson ! " Mystro raised both hands in mock surrender . " Spare me ! I wouldn't dare make Tilda mad . If anything , I'd like to get on her good side ! " " It's nothing .

I was just so happy to finally meet Liam , that's all . " " You two must be starving after those flights . Come on , I'll show you some great food in Hetsa . " " Lead the way , Tilda . We'll go wherever you want . " Soon , Tilda took Liam and Mystro to one of Hetsa's best Cajun boil shops and reserved a private room . " Nothing hits the spot better than cajun boil on a cold day . I asked them to keep it mild , just in case you're not used to the spice . " Liam wiped his hands with a napkin , a faint smile playing on his lips . " I'm not picky . " Mystro chimed in , " Me neither .

If Tilda recommends it , it has to be good . " The three of them dug in and caught up over lunch . After sharing her own story , Tilda had even more questions for Liam . Liam caught the look on her face and answered before she could ask . " Mr. Harvey only taught me for about a year . When I was nine , I lost

my family in an air raid and was raised by a battlefield doctor . That's how I first learned medicine . The doctor eventually became my foster father . " Back then , there was constant fighting along the Yvorian border . We lived on edge every day .

Once , when we were treating wounded soldiers , a shell hit us . " My foster father died instantly . I was badly hurt too , and I almost didn't make it . That's when Mr. Harvey saved me . " A few months later , after I'd recovered , Mr. Harvey took me in as his student . He taught me medicine for a year . Then , he suddenly told me he had nothing left to teach me and just 213 " Back then , I was like you , Tilda . I thought Mr. Harvey must have had his reasons . I searched everywhere for his traces and found nothing , until I met Mystro .

That's when I learned just how mysterious and extraordinary Mr. Harvey really is . " He summed it up briefly , but nothing was left out . Sensing the heavy mood , Mystro jumped in . " Don't worry , Uncle Harvey is probably living his best life somewhere out there . Maybe he's already teaching new students , just like how he taught you guys . " " Yeah , with Mr. Harvey's skills , nobody could get the better of him . We know that better than anyone . " " Still ... if I had the chance , I'd want to see him again . Just to know he's okay - that would be enough .

" Liam spoke what everyone was feeling . Tilda pressed her lips together , took a sip of wine , and looked at her two seniors with a determined light in her eyes . " Mystro , Liam , I need your help with something . I hope you'll hear me out before you decide . " Mystro flicked Tilda's forehead and frowned . " Why are you being so formal ? If you need anything , Tilda , just ask . We'll help , no matter what . "

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Thanks for Your Help Liam chimed in , " Mystro's right , Tilda . I could tell you were hiding something on the way over . If there's anything we can do to help , just say the word . " " Is this about Dane's illness ? " " That's part of it, Mystro . Liam , there's also something else " 1 Tilda told them about the bottleneck Dane was facing with the 4nm chip project . " I've already decided to join Dane's team and help him get past this last hurdle ! " Mystro , Liam , if you think you have what it takes , I hope you'll fight alongside me and Dane ! " And about Dane's illness .

Liam , I really hope you can cure him , so that he could speak again ! " " I've heard a bit about Dane's condition . Tilda , you don't even have to ask . I'll do everything I can to help him speak again . " " This is probably what Mr. Harvey wanted , too . The reason I started treating strange illnesses was because of him . He wanted me to hone my medical skills and not get stuck in one field . " Now that I know about Dane , I have a feeling that curing him is the test Mr. Harvey meant for me all along ! " As Liam finished , things finally clicked for Tilda and Mystro .

It turned out there was a deeper meaning to why Harvey took Liam in as a student . He had recognized his medical talent from the start . No wonder Liam spent so much time curing rare and mysterious illnesses no one else could handle . Turned out he was acting on Harvey's instructions . " Alright , we'll leave Dane's condition to you , Liam . " As for the lithography machine ... " " Tilda , before I give you an answer , I have to make one thing clear , everyone knows how tough this project is . " It's the one thing that lets developed countries keep their edge .

Even with Cetherland's brightest minds and all our resources , it's not something that can be done overnight . " That said ... we'll still give it our all . For Dane , and for our homeland . " 1/3 Even if they lost everything , even if they weren't living in Cetherland anymore , their loyalty never faded . " Right , Mystro , Liam , as long as we give it everything we've got and have no regrets , that's enough . " The rest ... " Cheers ! " is up to fate !

" With a bright smile , Tilda raised her beer . Mystro and Liam exchanged a look . Then , they lifted their bottles too . " Cheers ! " The next day , Manfred called . " Queen , it's done . After some discussion , the higher - ups agreed . " I've already notified Professor Kerrigan and his team . He said he's thrilled to have you all join . " " So soon ? " Tilda raised her brows in surprise . Even if Manfred trusted them and gave them special privileges , it was still hard to believe the higher - ups agreed so quickly . After all , they had all kinds of concerns , and they barely knew Tilda .

" It's all thanks to you for passing the National Cyber Security Center's test and making Comet Squad officially part of the state system . " Word got around . Last night , when I asked the higher - ups , both Mr. Benedict and Mr. Wesley from the National Cyber Security Center spoke up for you . " That's how it happened so quickly . " " I need to find a chance to thank them properly . } bring us in . " " I'll come pick you up myself ! " After hanging up , Tilda quickly explained everything to Mystro and Liam . Then , the three of them got in the car and headed for Lab Seven's base .

Mystro drove , Liam took the passenger seat , and Tilda sat in the back . She took out her phone and started a video call with Benedict . It connected right away . When Benedict's face appeared , Tilda thanked him . " Mr. Benedict , thank you and Mr. Wesley so much for your help . " She knew it took a lot of courage to vouch for them .. It was one thing to do it for her , but now there were two others , Mystro and Liam , who were basically strangers . Until the 4nm chip lithography project succeeded , the whole thing was top secret in Cetherland .

If anything leaked , those who vouched for them would take the blame first . She'd only met Benedict a couple of times , and they were barely acquaintances . Yet , they'd go out of their way to help her . Tilda

was genuinely grateful . " Haha , Tilda , we're colleagues , aren't we ? You don't have to be so formal with me . "

## Chapter 500

500 Joining Dane's Team +8 Pearls "But you have to realize , what you're about to do is truly unprecedented in Cetherland's history -a mission that's considered impossible ." Benedict's whole demeanor shifted . He dropped the playful attitude and was all business now . " I know , Mr. Benedict . I'll do everything I can to help Dane ." Tilda's reply was just as earnest . " Good . I hope that next time I call , I'll get to hear good news from you all . " I've seen what you're capable of . The younger generation really does outshine the old . The future is yours .

" If helping you even gives Cetherland the slightest chance to pull off this so - called impossible task , I'll gladly pay any price ! " Back in the day , Benedict and his brother Wesley had watched as foreign hackers invaded Cetherland's national network , acting all smug and gloating . Fueled by their patriotic spirit , they rallied Cetherland's best hackers and launched a counterattack against anyone daring to mess with their country's cyberspace . With their superb wisdom and skills , they pulled off a comeback so spectacular that the world finally took notice .

After that , no one dared underestimate Cetherland's cyber talent again . After all these years and everything they'd been through , they'd grown wiser , less impulsive . But that deep - rooted love for their country had never faded . If anything , it had grown even stronger and sharper with time . Maybe just this once , they could afford to be a little reckless - for the sake of the girl they believed in . They decided to trust her . " We will , I promise !

" When Tilda and the others arrived at Lab Seven's base , they made it through several rounds of security scans and checks before meeting Manfred , They walked through long corridors , took the elevator , and Manfred used his ID to send them to the lowest level . The elevator dropped quickly . Ding- The doors slid open . Manfred led them through a sanitizing room and into the lounge . Dane was already waiting for them . " Dane !

" Tilda's face lit up as she rushed over to Dane . He caught her and gently stroked her head . " Dane , you've lost weight . Look at those dark circles and that beard ... " I know research matters , but you still need to take care of yourself . " Just hugging Dane , Tilda could feel his waist was even thinner than before . He'd always been slim , and now he was so thin that Tilda's heart ached . Dane only stroked her

hair , his eyes gentle as he told her silently , I'm fine . Don't Once Tilda let go , Mystro and Liam stepped forward . " Dane , this is Liam . " Dane sized up Liam .

Liam did the same . worry , Tilda . Then , they both reached out at the same time , as if they were on the same wavelength . They even gave each other a quick hug . Dane grabbed a notepad and wrote in strong , clear letters , " Great to meet you , Liam . " Liam smiled . " Same here , Dane . " Finished " Alright , we'll have plenty of time to catch up . Dane , I'm sure Mr. Parker has already told you why we're here . " Liam will be working with you on the lithography machine and collecting samples to assist in treating your condition .

" I know you'd never slow down your research for anything , but now that we're here , we'll do everything we can to help ! " Tilda gave a thumbs - up . Seeing his two long - lost juniors and Tilda , Dane's eyes softened . " Thank you . " " No problem . " At that moment , Manfred clapped his hands , drawing everyone's attention . " Sorry to interrupt your happy reunion , but I need to go over a few important points about the lithography machine project ... " Manfred laid out everything they had to keep in mind for the project . After that , it was all up to Dane .

In the lab , Dane's team was busy working through the day's experiments . The group included leading scientists specializing in mechanical engineering , electronics , and chemistry . Just then , a middle - aged man suddenly spoke up , " Did you hear about Professor Kerrigan stepping out to welcome three new team members ? " " Yeah , I heard one of them is the Queen - she's a top dark web hacker . She played a huge role in the programming the early stages of the lithography machine project .

" " I also heard she led her own squad and got official recognition from the National Cyber Security Center . They even made it into the state's system on their own . " " Even Mr. Parker and Professor Kerrigan can't stop praising her . She's also Professor Kerrigan's junior , so her skills must be the real deal . "