

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 31: The Grant Family - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 31: The Grant Family

Chapter 31: The Grant Family

After Sebastian vanished into the shadows, Mr. Grant stood frozen on the spot. Eleanor could sense the awkwardness hanging in the air, but she waited patiently. She knew he needed a moment to process everything. She had no intention of hiding her power from him. If anything, she needed him to shed his protective instinct toward her and see her for who she had become.

She understood where his protectiveness came from. As one of her mother's closest friends, he had always held a soft spot for her. She had known Mr. Grant since childhood and remembered how much he cared. But now, she needed him to see her as a capable adult, someone who could protect not only herself but others as well.

Finally, Mr. Grant broke the silence. "Let's sit down first," he said, walking to his chair and gesturing to the one opposite him.

Eleanor took her seat without hesitation.

"You've grown up, Eleanor," he said, his voice heavy with emotion. "I always knew you as the shy, kind, lively, and adorable girl. I was afraid someone would hurt you again." His voice trailed off at the end.

"Uncle, I know what I used to be. I caused a lot of worry for all of you," Eleanor said softly. "I should've grown up earlier."

He looked at her, concern still lingering in his eyes. "Now that you're here, do you plan to go back to that family?"

Eleanor scoffed. "Whitmore's? I have no intention of returning to them."

A look of relief washed over Mr. Grant's face. "That's good. I was going to suggest you stay far away from the Whitmore family. Although I never had concrete proof, all the evidence I gathered about... that incident of yours... pointed to them. I shouldn't say this, but I was always suspicious of your mother's marriage to William. We were her friends, yet she never mentioned her marriage to us. She even called us to the hospital when she wanted to transfer her assets to you."

He paused, then added, "In any case, I think you should keep a low profile and reclaim your mother's company as soon as possible."

"Uncle, you don't need to worry," Eleanor said calmly. "I'm no longer Eleanor Whitmore. I'm Eleanor Elizabeth Raynor, adopted into the Raynor Family. They took me in when I had nothing... trained me, supported me, and provided the funds to start my business. Do you remember the first time I called you after leaving the country?"

He nodded. "Yes, you said you were living in the US. But isn't the Raynor family from Manchester?"

"They are," she confirmed. "But they have businesses all over the world. I was sent to the US to stay out of the spotlight because the police were looking for me at the time. While I was there, I built my own company, and now it's worth more than EverBuild Solutions Limited. I returned because I'm ready to face William Whitmore head-on. I just need you to continue holding the company board for me for a little longer."

Mr. Grant smiled. "Good. Good. Your mother would be proud of you."

"Uncle, I also came here today to ensure your safety," she said, her tone serious. "If William suspects anyone of helping me survive all these years, it will be you. Just a few hours ago, someone tried to assassinate me. Don't worry... they're all dead. But I suspect the Whitmores were behind it. They may come after you next. Would you allow me to leave some of my guards here for protection?"

Mr. Grant waved his hand dismissively. "Don't worry about me. William doesn't have the guts to attack me directly. My family's been in politics for generations. I met your mother during a political gathering. Neither of us liked politics, but our families had close ties. Your maternal grandfather wanted her to follow in his footsteps, but she had her own dreams. When she decided to start a company and her family refused to fund her, I stepped in."

He chuckled, lost in memory. "That's beside the point. My father was a Member of Parliament, and currently, my sister is the Mayor of Stockport. If William tries anything funny, it'll cause a political storm. He might scheme behind the scenes, but a direct attack? No."

"Do you have any other family members living here?" Eleanor asked.

"No. It was just my sister and me. Our father's two sisters live abroad."

"Then it's settled. I'll still deploy some of my personal guards here. Even if you don't need them, it'll put my mind at ease."

He sighed in resignation. "Do what you must. Your aunt and I hardly leave the house nowadays. We don't need many guards."

"Thank you, Uncle."

She picked up her phone and called Maya. "I'm sending you an address. Send ten armed guards and a driver from our security company. Also send two off-road vehicles. I want them reporting to Mr. Elliot Grant before sunrise tomorrow."

After ending the call, she sent the address.

She looked at Mr. Grant apologetically. "Sorry for the trouble, Uncle. Please bear with it for now."

He gave a helpless smile. "Alright then. Shall we go see your aunt?"

"Actually, Uncle, I wanted to know more about the past. About my mother. I know so little. Could you please tell me more?"

Seeing the pleading look on Eleanor's face, Elliot Grant's expression softened. He leaned back and began recounting the story of Esmeralda Langford, Eleanor's mother.

"The Langford family received their Earldom during the Victorian era, elevating them to high status with seats in the House of Lords, vast estates, and strong influence in regional governance. Even as the British system modernized and Parliament gained more power, their noble status still carried weight. They had connections with the Royals and were a powerful family in both politics and society."

He continued, "Many Langfords served as Privy Councilors, Royal Advisors, or Lord Chamberlains. They held key roles in the House of Lords until the House of Lords Act of 1999, which removed most hereditary peers. Only 92 were allowed to remain, selected through internal elections. Your grandfather was one of them. He won, keeping the Langford name in politics."

Mr. Grant's gaze turned reflective. "But your mother... she didn't want that life. She hated politics. While the family focused on maintaining legacy, she saw the opportunities in the booming economy. She wanted to start her own business. Birmingham was developing fast, and she had the foresight to make something of it. But her father refused to fund her. That's when she came to me. I believed in her vision. I gave her the initial capital, and together, we started what would become EverBuild Solutions Limited."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 32: Esmeralda Langford - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 32: Esmeralda Langford

Chapter 32: Esmeralda Langford

As Elliot Grant continued the story, Eleanor began to see her mother in a new light. What unfolded was a tale of resilience, rebellion, and unwavering strength. Her mother

hadn't been a tragic, weak figure as she had been led to believe all these years. No... Esmeralda Langford had been a fighter. A woman who defied the odds and dared to live on her own terms.

"She started her business in Manchester," Mr. Grant said, "because our family had influence here. And because she wanted to prove to her father that her decision was the right one. That's why she avoided Birmingham... she didn't want to depend on anyone from her family."

Within a few short years, Esmeralda's construction company had grown into one of the largest firms in the region. Manchester was booming, and she had seized the opportunity with both hands.

"But," Elliot continued with a sigh, "success came at a cost. Her relationship with her father deteriorated rapidly. They tried to mend it after a while, and she began visiting home again... but everything fell apart when he tried to arrange a marriage for her... with some young, up-and-coming politician."

Eleanor leaned forward slightly, engrossed.

"While that argument was still ongoing, tragedy struck. Your grandmother died in a car accident. The police ruled it a mechanical failure... the driver of the other vehicle was arrested, but many of us suspected it was something more... sinister. An attempt on your grandfather's life, perhaps. He was supposed to be in the car that day, only he was called away last minute for a political meeting."

Mr. Grant paused, letting the weight of those words settle.

"That incident shattered any chance of reconciliation between your mother and grandfather. After the funeral, Esmeralda never returned home. She poured all her energy into the business. The company expanded quickly and was eventually listed on the stock exchange. She kept building and growing, as if trying to outrun the pain."

Eleanor felt a strange mix of pride and sorrow swell in her chest.

"But," Elliot said, voice softening, "we were worried. She was over thirty-five by then... still single, no partner in sight. The rest of us had settled down, started families. She just... worked. Day and night. It was like she was trying to fill a void she couldn't name. Her health started to suffer."

He smiled faintly, as if remembering a shared conspiracy. "So, we... her business partners and friends, decided to force her into a break. We arranged a vacation for her under the guise of a 'timber sourcing trip.' She visited Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, supposedly for business. But really, we just wanted her to relax."

Eleanor chuckled softly through her tears. "Did it work?"

"Oh, it worked alright," he said, his expression turning nostalgic. "She came back from that trip... different. Calmer. Happier. A month later, she told us she was pregnant."

Eleanor's heart skipped a beat.

"But she never told us who the father was," Mr. Grant continued. "We asked... some more directly than others... but she refused to say. It became a topic we just... avoided."

"And then?" Eleanor prompted, already sensing what was coming.

"At sixth month, she fell ill," he said, his voice suddenly weighed down. "Doctors found abnormalities in the fetus... stronger heart rate, abnormal body temperature fluctuations. They said the baby was... different. Healthy, but different. Too strong for her body to handle."

Eleanor's eyes widened.

"The doctors recommended terminating the pregnancy. Said it was the only way to save her. But she refused. Flat out. Even when they told her she might not survive childbirth, she wouldn't listen."

A lump formed in Eleanor's throat.

"She told me," Elliot said, voice shaking slightly, "that she didn't care about her own life anymore. She had made her choice. She said that the child growing inside her was her miracle. A gift. She'd fight for her baby until the very end."

Tears spilled freely down Eleanor's cheeks. She didn't bother to wipe them away.

The room fell silent, broken only by the occasional sob that escaped her lips. Her chest felt tight... like her heart had been squeezed into a vice.

All her life, she had believed lies.

Jeanne had fed her stories about how her mother had forced herself into William Whitmore's life, how she had died as a punishment from God. She'd painted a picture of a shameless woman whose death was a blessing for everyone involved.

Eleanor had believed it.

She'd believed that her mother was someone unworthy of love or respect. That Jeanne had been her savior.

But the truth... the truth was like a blade. Her mother had died to bring her into the world. Had faced certain death just to hold her in her arms... if only for a moment.

How could she have ever resented a woman like that?

She had never even mourned her mother. Never visited her grave with love in her heart. Instead, she had gone through life proud that she didn't miss her. That she hadn't cried for her.

What kind of daughter was she?

After a long, heavy silence, Eleanor finally spoke. Her voice was raw and hoarse. "What about my grandfather? Did he ever come to see me?"

Mr. Grant hesitated, then shook his head. "Your mother made us promise to keep you hidden from the Langford family. She was terrified that if your grandfather found out about you, he'd force you into politics like he tried with her. You were a child... You wouldn't have had the strength to resist. And there was no grandmother left to protect you."

He looked at her solemnly.

"So, we kept our promise. After her death, the Langfords came and took her body back to Birmingham. Your mother brought a nanny to care for you and left her estate in your name as a safeguard. Your mother arranged for that nanny to be paid for fifty years. It was her way of making sure you were always protected."

Eleanor wiped at her eyes with a tissue, then asked, "What about her grave in Southern Cemetery? I've visited it..."

Mr. Grant looked guilty. "That grave is empty. She purchased it herself, just in case. We buried an empty coffin to maintain the illusion. Her real body was taken to Birmingham by her family. Not even William knew the truth."

A chill ran through Eleanor. "So, I never actually visited my mother's grave."

"No," he said. "But my sister might be able to help. She attended the burial in Birmingham and had some ties to the Langfords. She still works in politics. If you'd like, I can arrange for you to meet her."

Eleanor nodded, wiping her tears again. "Yes. Please call her. I want to know everything. I want to visit her grave. I need to."

Mr. Grant stepped aside and made a quick phone call. A few minutes later, he turned back with a smile. "She agreed to meet you tomorrow morning at her office."

Eleanor stood, her legs slightly shaky. "Thank you, Uncle. And now... let's go see Aunt. I haven't seen her in years."

Mr. Grant offered a gentle smile and extended his arm to her. "She'll be happy to see you. Let's go."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 33: Ethan's Sleepover - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 33: Ethan's Sleepover

Chapter 33: Ethan's Sleepover

Eleanor returned to her villa around midnight, her heart weighed down by guilt and sorrow. The Grants had revealed so much about her mother that she felt utterly shattered. Her guilt for not respecting or loving her mother had grown exponentially, and she couldn't even bring herself to hate the Whitmore family anymore. She was mostly angry at herself—for being so naïve, so blind. It was now clear how they had slowly fed her false information, brainwashing her into their puppet. The signs had always been there, but she had failed to see them, blinded by misplaced trust in Jeanne and Jennifer.

As she entered the house, she saw Ethan sitting in a chair, reviewing some documents. He looked up and immediately noticed her frozen in the doorway. Eleanor's mind was a storm of emotions; she didn't know what to do.

Ethan put his documents aside, stood up, and walked over to her. Without a word, he wrapped his arms around her in a gentle embrace. He could feel the chaos inside her, the silent scream for comfort. And while he didn't know what had happened, a simple hug felt like the right thing to do.

It was the first time he had embraced her since their student days. Although he had been officially pursuing her for over five years, their physical contact had never gone beyond holding hands—and even that had been rare.

But this time, she clung to him tightly, seeking warmth and comfort. They stood in silence, hearts speaking in the language of pain and support. While Eleanor found solace in Ethan's embrace, he was filled with turmoil. What had shaken her so deeply? Not even the traumatic events from six years ago had broken her like this. Though she wasn't crying, Ethan could feel the heaviness radiating from her like a silent scream.

After a long while, Eleanor pulled away and whispered, "Thank you. I really needed that."

Ethan nodded gently. "Freya's already eaten and is asleep in her room. Why don't you take a shower first? I'll set the table for dinner."

"I'm really not in the mood to eat," Eleanor said tiredly. "I need to sleep. I have a meeting tomorrow morning."

"But I waited for you. I haven't had dinner yet," Ethan replied. "Just a little food with me? Then you can go to bed."

She hesitated, but eventually nodded, appreciating the fact that he had stayed up waiting for her. Without another word, she headed to her room to shower.

Meanwhile, Ethan set the dinner table himself. The kitchen staff had gone to their quarters hours ago, so he simply warmed the pre-cooked dishes and arranged them neatly. As he waited, he sent a message to find out where Eleanor had gone earlier that evening. The reply came quickly: "Elliot Grant."

Ethan's eyes narrowed slightly. "So she went to meet Grant... it must be something about her past. Or more specifically, her mother. But I won't pry. If she wants to tell me, she will. I just need to be here for her."

His thoughts were interrupted when Eleanor entered the dining room. Ethan stood up quickly, uncovering the dishes and serving her silently. She noticed that every dish on the table was one of her favorites.

"He must have asked the kitchen to prepare all these in case I was late," she thought, a gentle warmth blooming in her heart.

She avoided looking directly at him, afraid that in her vulnerable state, she might confess emotions she wasn't ready to face. Instead, she focused on the food and began to eat slowly. Unintentionally, she ate more than usual—her hunger was deeper than she had realized. She silently thanked Ethan for convincing her to eat.

As a werewolf, her appetite didn't come frequently, but when it did, it was intense—far beyond a normal human's needs. Once full, she could feel Ethan's love radiating through his gaze. Even without looking at him, she could sense the softness in his eyes. A faint blush spread across her cheeks as she hurriedly finished her meal.

"You finish your dinner," she said, standing up. "I'm tired. Going to bed."

As she walked away, Ethan said, "I'll be in the guest room. If you need anything, just call me."

Her mind screamed in protest. Why don't you go home? How can I live normally with you under the same roof? But she pushed those thoughts aside and calmly replied, "Okay."

Once inside her room, she locked the door behind her, changed into her sleeping clothes, and lay on the bed. Despite her swirling emotions, the thought of Ethan sleeping in the same house gave her a surprising sense of safety. Her exhaustion finally caught up to her, and she drifted off to sleep the moment her head touched the pillow.

The next morning, Eleanor woke early. She had slept deeply, and all the fatigue from the previous day had melted away. Feeling refreshed, she freshened up, changed her clothes, and headed to her study. She needed to tie up a few loose ends before heading out.

After locking the door behind her, she summoned Ophelia.

"Miss, I completed the task you gave me. Here," Ophelia said, handing over three sealed packets. "Each pack contains hair samples from one person. I've labeled them: 1 is for William, 2 is for Jeanne, and 3 is for Jennifer."

"Thank you," Eleanor replied, taking the packets. "Now please call the others."

Soon, all the team members arrived in the study. Eleanor turned to Sebastian. "What's the result of the interrogation?"

"Mr. Grant's secretary was appointed by William Whitmore," Sebastian began. "The kitchen girl came through Jennifer Whitmore, and the guard was planted by the MP of Stockport."

Eleanor frowned. "I can understand William and Jennifer's intentions, but why would a Member of Parliament get involved?"

Sebastian answered, "The guard revealed that Mayor Eliza Grant is planning to run for MP in the upcoming election. The current MP, who belongs to the same party and is rapidly losing popularity, planted spies to dig up a scandal and discredit the mayor before the election in six months."

Eleanor asked, "Did he find any scandal on Uncle Grant?"

Sebastian shook his head. "No, nothing on him. But he did hear that they found some dirt on the mayor's daughter. She's currently studying at Caltech. Apparently, they have photos of her taking drugs with some friends in a casino."

He paused, then continued, "They plan to release the scandal just before the nominations. They've got someone on the inside... a man in the mayor's office, in charge of the education support program. Public funds were being funneled to the mayor's relatives and her neighbors, even though most of them weren't eligible. They're planning to pin the blame on the mayor right before the election."

Eleanor frowned as Sebastian added, "They also found out that the mayor hasn't visited her late husband's grave in over four years. He was a well-known philanthropist, especially respected for his activism for Black rights in his youth. And considering this constituency has a large African-origin voter base... it could be a major blow."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 34: Interrogation Results - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 34: Interrogation Results

Chapter 34: Interrogation Results

After hearing the report from Sebastian, Eleanor fell silent for a few moments. She thought over the situation carefully and finally decided to get involved. As the sister of Uncle Grant, helping Mayor Grant might be a wise decision for the future.

She said, "Firstly, I haven't decided to help Mayor Grant yet. But I might in the future. I want a copy of the said photos. Do not touch the originals. I don't want to startle the snake unless I decide to kill it."

She continued, "Find out who is behind the embezzlement of public funds. Then the IT team will investigate the matter thoroughly. As for her husband's issue, it won't be a big problem. Also, I want a full investigation on the MP's current situation. I have no political understanding of the Kingdom. Does Clan Blanc have any experts in political matters I can hire?"

Ophelia said, "I will retrieve a copy of the photos if they're in the MP's possession. If it's a printed copy, that will be easy. But if it's digital, I will need help from the IT team."

Eleanor opened a drawer and retrieved a small device. "Take this. All you have to do is turn on the MP's personal computer and place this device within one meter of it. Then press the red button in the center. No need to enter a password or anything. Just power it on. Make sure no one is around the computer at that time. Then send me a message, and I'll take care of the rest."

Ophelia took the device and nodded. "Okay. I'll go there tonight."

Sebastian said, "There will be many people at the mayor's office. If we want to investigate everyone, we'll need more manpower. Besides, if we're all busy with tasks outside, who will handle your security?"

Eleanor replied, "I think you don't know why only Elizabeths can be the head of the Raynor Clan. Your elders either forgot to teach you or deliberately avoided the topic. As you're my people now, I'll tell you one thing... when an Elizabeth uses their bloodline power, it's comparable to a natural disaster. We refrain from acting because we don't want to cause destruction. That's why we carry such a large security force. But your point is valid. I need more security personnel. I'll call Grandpa Dominic for support."

Sebastian said, "If you're calling the Clan Head, please ask for more shadow guards. Currently, fifty guards are on duty to protect you and the young miss, but we only have six shadow guards."

Isadora added, "Raphael's mother is a political expert. She once worked as the Private Secretary of a Prime Minister. Her name is Juliette Blanc. If you can hire her, she could be a valuable asset."

Eleanor said, "Okay. Any other suggestions before I call Grandpa Dominic?"

Ophelia said, "There are several members in our clan who have shadow power but aren't skilled in combat. They weren't eligible to become shadow guards and are doing normal jobs. If you hire them, they could add value to your team."

Eleanor asked, "How many of them are women?"

"I think more than twenty," Ophelia replied.

Eleanor nodded. "Okay. I'll ask Grandpa Dominic about them. Thank you."

She then called Dominic Blanc. "Hello, Grandpa. How are you?"

Dominic responded, "I'm fine, Eleanor. You're calling early... did something happen?"

She smiled. "No, Grandpa. I just need your help. After yesterday's attack, I've been thinking about upgrading my security team. If you could deploy more shadow guards, it would be a great help."

Dominic sighed. "In that case, I won't be much help. All the shadow guards I can spare are already under your clan's employment. The next batch of trainees won't be ready for another six months. I can send more security guards if needed, but for shadow guards, you'll need to talk to your Clan Head."

Eleanor said, "Thank you for the advice. I'll call Grandma later. I also heard there are members of your clan with shadow power who aren't shadow guards. Can you send them to me?"

Dominic said, "Yes, there are a few. But they mostly work in various positions within human society. Are you sure you want them? They lack combat skills... that's why they didn't become shadow guards."

Eleanor replied, "That's okay. I'll deploy them for jobs they're good at. Their powers will still be useful. Please send them a message that I'm offering employment as personal staff or positions in my company. They will receive salaries from Heimdall Technologies, which currently offers the highest pay in the kingdom. As members of Clan Blanc, they don't need to apply through formal channels. They can send their CVs to Sebastian Blanc, and I'll personally review them."

Dominic said, "That I can do. You'll have a result by tomorrow."

Eleanor added, "I have another request, Grandpa. I want to employ Juliette Blanc. Is that possible?"

Dominic sighed again. "That'll be difficult. She's over 200 years old now and has retired. She's writing history books these days. As a former public figure, she can't even go outside without a disguise. I doubt she'll agree to work again."

Eleanor said earnestly, "Grandpa, please just send her a message that I'd like to meet her... just one meeting. I will always respect her choice."

Dominic agreed. "Okay. That can be arranged."

"Thank you, Grandpa. I'll call you later."

She ended the call and turned to the Clan Blanc members in front of her. "I'll be depending on you. Please contact your family members who might be willing to join us. I'll buy the surrounding villas for your clan so you can stay close and won't have any accommodation problems."

Sebastian nodded. "That's a good idea. It'll help with perimeter security."

Eleanor smiled. "Good. You all can go rest now. I'll head to Stockport in two hours."

All six of them dissolved into shadows and exited the study.

Eleanor then picked up her phone and dialed Fiona's number.

"Eleanor, I thought you'd call me last night after the incident," Fiona said as she picked up.

Eleanor replied, "Good morning, Grandma. It was a small matter. If the supernatural world had been involved, I would've called you immediately."

"I figured. How's my great-granddaughter doing?" Fiona asked.

"She was brave. Ethan came shortly after the incident, and they played together. I think she's already forgotten about it."

"That's good. But I think you should stay with her today, just in case the memory resurfaces. If you have important work, send her to my villa."

"Don't worry, Ethan is here to accompany her," Eleanor replied.

"Oh! Did he stay overnight?" Fiona asked teasingly.

"Yes, and we are not together," Eleanor replied, enunciating each word.

On the other side, Fiona laughed heartily.

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 35: Meeting with Mayor Grant - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 35: Meeting with Mayor Grant

Chapter 35: Meeting with Mayor Grant

When Eleanor reached Stockport Town Hall, it was almost time for her meeting with the Mayor. She stepped out of her car and gave a firm nod to her security team, instructing them to remain outside. With measured steps, she walked up to the reception desk.

"Hello, I have an appointment with the Mayor in ten minutes. The name is Eleanor Langford," she said, her voice composed and professional.

The receptionist quickly made a call to the Mayor's office to confirm her appointment. After a moment, she smiled politely and handed Eleanor a visitor badge.

"You're all set. One of our security personnel will escort you to the Mayor's office," the receptionist said.

The uniformed guard led her through the wide corridors of the historic building. When they arrived at the designated office, a woman at a desk stood and approached.

"Are you Miss Eleanor Langford?" the woman asked.

"Yes," Eleanor replied, her tone polite but reserved.

"Please follow me. Madam Mayor is expecting you."

The woman led her through the door into a spacious, well-lit office. It had an air of old-world charm, with oak furniture, a towering bookshelf, and a collection of framed accolades and photographs. Behind the desk, a woman was scribbling something into a notebook. Though the lines beside her eyes and streaks of white in her hair spoke of her age, her aura was vibrant and commanding.

As the footsteps reached her ears, the Mayor glanced up. Her eyes landed on Eleanor's face and widened slightly with recognition. A smile tugged at her lips as emotion flickered across her expression.

"You almost look like sister Esmeralda when she was young," the Mayor said softly, her voice touched by nostalgia. "I had my doubts when Elliot called me last night... but seeing you now, I would've believed you were her daughter even without the call."

Eleanor bowed her head slightly. "Greetings, Madam Mayor. I am Eleanor Langford... currently known as Eleanor Elizabeth Raynor. It's an honor to meet you."

The Mayor stood and gestured to a chair in front of her with a smile. "You can call me Aunt. Your mother was like a sister to me. Please, have a seat."

Eleanor took the offered chair, her posture poised but relaxed. "Thank you."

The Mayor turned to her secretary and said, "Please close the door... and make sure no one interrupts this meeting."

"Yes, Madam," the secretary replied and left, gently closing the door behind him.

The Mayor turned her attention back to Eleanor. "I still can't believe sister Esmeralda had a daughter and that everyone kept you hidden from me. Even my foolish brother didn't say a word until yesterday."

Eleanor's expression remained calm. "That's because my mother made them promise to keep my existence secret, out of fear of the Langford family. She wanted me to grow up independently, without the influence or danger that came from her past. After I asked Uncle Grant to contact you, he finally told you the truth."

The Mayor laughed quietly, a wistful sound. "That does sound like something your mother would do. She nearly hated her father back then," she said, then quickly corrected herself. "Forgive me... I'm speaking too freely. It's just... I'm overwhelmed."

"It's fine," Eleanor said gently. "I've learned a few things about the Langfords from Uncle Grant. I know the situation was... complicated."

The Mayor nodded thoughtfully. "You said your surname is Raynor. Are you related to the Raynor family by blood?"

"No. I was adopted into the Raynor family," Eleanor replied.

"I met Ethan Raynor yesterday," the Mayor remarked. "Do you know him?"

Eleanor's eyes flickered for a moment. She hadn't expected his name to come up. "Yes, we know each other. He's close to me... and he's aware of my connection to Uncle Grant. That means he knows about you, too. He won't do anything to harm you. But if you ever need anything, feel free to reach out to me directly."

"Ethan must be playing with Freya right now," she thought with a slight smile. She herself didn't know how her mood changed upon hearing his name. But the Mayor observed it all. After all, dealings with people were her main job.

The Mayor smiled. "It was just a business meeting, nothing to worry about. I simply remembered him when I heard your name."

Eleanor took a deep breath. "Actually, one of the reasons I came today was to learn more about my grandparents and the Langford family. I've never visited my mother's grave. I'd like to do that now... so many years have passed. Uncle Grant told me my grandfather is still alive. I want to meet him, if possible."

The Mayor's eyes softened. "The Langford Castle is well-known; you can easily find it online. They have a private cemetery within the estate, and your mother was buried there. As for your grandfather, I haven't had much contact with the family recently. The last time I saw him, he was the Leader of the House of Lords. He's since retired, and his younger brother was nominated as the Earl of Birmingham. They're not politically active anymore... just handling ceremonial responsibilities. I do still have your grandfather's number. I'll send it to you."

She saved Eleanor's contact information and forwarded the number to her.

"You've been a great help," Eleanor said, smiling softly. "Before I go, there's one more thing. I heard you're planning to run for the next General Election from this constituency. Is that true?"

The Mayor leaned back and folded her hands. "Yes. I've been working on it for the past three years. The current MP's popularity is waning. I think I have a real shot."

Eleanor's demeanor shifted subtly, her tone becoming cooler and more serious. "If you decide to run, I can help you behind the scenes. But you have to fight for the home office. I need someone there. Just remember, politics can get dirty. Your opponents won't fight fair. I can protect you from them."

The Mayor raised an eyebrow, surprised by the sudden shift. She studied Eleanor for a moment before asking, "What's the catch?"

Eleanor met her gaze. "I only want one thing in return... an introduction to MI5. That's all. No financial favors, no strings attached. You don't have to worry about my motives."

The room fell silent for a moment as the Mayor considered the proposal.

"Please give me some time," she said at last. "I hadn't planned that far ahead. I was only preparing to run for MP, not for something of this scale."

"Take your time," Eleanor said, standing. "I'll be leaving now. I intend to visit Birmingham next."

The Mayor stood as well and walked her to the door. "I hope this won't be the last time we meet."

"I'm sure it won't be," Eleanor replied with a polite smile.

Once outside the Town Hall, Eleanor stepped back into her car. "Heimdall Tower," she instructed the driver.

As the car pulled away, she checked her phone, which had been on silent during the meeting. Several missed calls flashed on the screen... one from Teresa, and two from Elliot Grant.

She called Elliot first to reassure him and gave him a brief overview of her discussion with the Mayor... omitting the part about her offer.

Next, she dialed Teresa. The call connected almost immediately.

"Boss, we found her," Teresa said without preamble. "Isabella Thomas. The match is perfect based on your description. She's currently in Balsall Heath, Birmingham. Lives alone. Her only son works at the Department for Work and Pensions in London. My people are watching her now. Do you want us to bring her to Manchester?"

Eleanor's voice was firm. "No. I'm coming to the office now. Get the Range Rovers ready... we're going to make a grand appearance in Birmingham. I plan to visit Langford Castle... and I want the Langford family to know that Eleanor Langford has arrived."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 36: The Langford Castle - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 36: The Langford Castle

Chapter 36: The Langford Castle

Langford Castle was a large, old building that had clearly seen better days. Built during the Victorian era by Alexander Langford, the first Earl of Birmingham from the Langford family, it had once stood as a symbol of grandeur and influence. Over the years, however, the lack of proper care had allowed time to take its toll, and the castle had slowly fallen into disrepair. Still, even in its weathered state, anyone who gazed upon it could feel the lingering power and history it embodied.

The estate spanned more than fifty acres, surrounded by a dense thicket of trees and overgrown patches of land. The front gate opened directly onto the Middleway, while the rear of the castle bordered the Birmingham Canal. On either side, the once-secluded castle now pressed against the rising concrete walls of the city's commercial district, making it look like a remnant of the past trapped in the heart of modernity.

Within the boundaries of the estate stood several smaller buildings, all showing signs of similar decay. The guard post at the entrance was empty, and no one seemed to be watching over the gate. A wide concrete road stretched from the main gate to the castle,

flanked by rows of trees and bushes: Fern-leaved Beech, London Plane, Dove Tree, Rhododendrons, and several others. The road was blanketed in fallen leaves, indicating it hadn't been cleaned for days.

The once vibrant life of the Langford estate had faded. Few staff members remained... a handful of stable boys, gardeners, and aged guards kept the castle barely functional. The grounds that once bustled with activity were now silent, desolate. Only the wind whispered through the trees, carrying echoes of the past.

Inside, however, the grand hall pulsed with tension. Langford Park... a piece of land owned by the family in the city center, which was once a gift to the people by the first Earl. For generations, it had served as a public park. Its popularity had waned over the years as families moved to the suburbs, but it remained a haven for office workers and pedestrians seeking rest or solitude.

Due to the Langford family's declining wealth, several local politicians had begun eyeing the estate. They couldn't confront the family directly... their legacy of philanthropy still commanded public respect... so instead, they conspired to weaken them through subtler means: legal obstacles, zoning issues, and media pressure.

One such politician was Councillor Louis Turner. Tall and handsome with a scholarly air, he appeared kind and intelligent at first glance. A former scholarship student and academic achiever, his fall from grace began in university, where he became entangled with international smugglers. The illicit trade made him wealthy overnight, and he laundered his gains into real estate investments. When whispers of his sudden fortune grew too loud, he abandoned smuggling and sought political power.

Since Langford Park wasn't included in any government development plans and was privately owned, Louis had been eyeing the land for years. However, due to the Langford family's high social standing, he couldn't seize the property by force. The land's current market value was also far beyond his reach, making a direct purchase impossible. He had tried partnering with local businessmen, but none were willing to go against the influential Langford family or risk losing public support.

Eventually, he found an American investor who recognized the land's potential and was eager to build a grand commercial city. Louis had made several offers to the Langfords, but they remained unmoved. In a desperate attempt, he brought Brian Morgan, the American businessman, with him today to make one final offer. This time, he planned to combine a generous price with intimidation.

As a prominent foreign investor, Brian was permitted to bring armed bodyguards into the Kingdom. Louis was well aware that the Langfords relied on elderly, unarmed guards for security. His true intention was to pressure them into signing the contract today... by force, if necessary. Louis had already informed the local MP of his plan and felt emboldened.

After a long discussion filled with polite offers and no fruitful results, Louis became irritated. He decided to go all out.

"Mr. Langford," Louis began, his voice tight with veiled contempt, "you are the Earl, yes. But do you have the resources to uphold that title anymore? Look around you... no staff, no funds. Why stubbornly cling to that small patch of land? It generates no income. I'm offering far above market value out of respect. I could have moved through other channels."

Walter Langford, the current Earl of Birmingham, listened in silence. His expression remained calm, but his eyes scanned the faces of his few remaining staff... many looked anxious. What the councilor said wasn't entirely untrue, yet Walter couldn't bring himself to betray his lineage. The park was a gift from his ancestor to the people; selling it would be a disgrace.

He thought bitterly, "It's a relief my children and grandchildren are in London. If they saw this, they'd cause a scene. Since my elder brother's retirement, these new politicians have become brazen. They forget he was once the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal."

Walter stood his ground. "Mr. Councilor, I understand your concern. But my ancestor dedicated that land to the people. It was Birmingham's first formal park and holds deep historical value. We may be struggling, but we won't abandon our duty to the public. Your offer is generous, but I must decline."

He emphasized the word park, deliberately reframing the land not as property, but as heritage.

Brian Morgan stepped forward next, his tone smooth and persuasive. "Mr. Langford, I respect your values. On top of what Louis offered, I'm prepared to add another million pounds to any offshore account of your choice. This is a goodwill gesture. Think about what you could do with that money... revitalize this estate, fund scholarships, support charities. There are many ways to help the people."

Again, silence filled the hall.

Walter finally spoke. "I appreciate your generosity, Mr. Morgan. But still, I must refuse. The park is not mine to sell. It belongs to the legacy of this family, and to the people of Birmingham."

Louis, who had now spent more than an hour negotiating, reached the limit of his patience. His tone turned sharp. "Your brother is in the hospital with no hope of recovery. If something happens to you, can your children really defend that land? You're alone, Mr. Langford."

At this, murmurs rose from the staff. The disrespect was too much. Butler Graham Langford, a distant relative of the family and one of the few remaining loyal retainers, stepped forward.

"How dare you!" he shouted, his voice quivering with rage. "You come into our castle, threatening our Lord? You think winning a small election makes you untouchable? You are a mere councilor! If you don't leave now, I'll call the police myself!"

Just then, the armed guard stationed at the entrance burst into the hall, rushing over to Brian. He whispered something urgently into his employer's ear.

Brian's expression darkened.

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 37: The Return of the Lady - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 37: The Return of the Lady

Chapter 37: The Return of the Lady

In front of Langford Castle, only a few people could be seen doing odd jobs around the area. Two cars were parked to the side. A few children were playing football nearby, not paying much attention to anything. Everything outside the castle was calm and peaceful.

The silence was suddenly broken by a convoy of cars speeding in through the main gate, sending fallen leaves flying in their wake. The hum of engines echoed across the castle grounds.

Ten black Range Rovers came to a halt in front of the castle, one behind the other, drawing the attention of everyone nearby. The sight caused a stir. More than thirty armed guards stepped out of the vehicles and took up strategic positions around the area. Once the perimeter was secured, the driver of the middle car exited and walked to the back, opening the rear door.

A tall, graceful, and strikingly beautiful young woman stepped out of the car and stood still for a moment. She wore a deep purple, handmade cashmere-striped business suit that enhanced her natural elegance. On her feet were special edition Amethyst high heels, boosting her height to over six feet. She looked around with an air of authority, then walked gracefully into the castle through the front door.

Another woman emerged from the opposite side of the car. She was Asian, tall, and well-proportioned, dressed in a sleek black business suit. She hurriedly followed the first woman.

While one bodyguard remained near the car, the others repositioned themselves... some stationed at the castle entrance, others circling to the back and covering the perimeter. One guard followed the two women into the grand hall, the only area where activity could be sensed.

Inside the hall, chaos reigned. Two opposing parties were shouting at each other. Butler Graham Langford was frantically trying to contact the police but found his mobile had no signal. Someone had jammed the network. Realizing the gravity of the situation, his face turned pale as he silently prayed for a miracle to prevent impending disaster.

At that moment, the sharp click of high heels on the concrete floor echoed down the corridor, catching everyone's attention. Heads turned toward the door as an extraordinarily beautiful young woman entered, followed by the Asian woman in the business suit and a muscular bodyguard.

The leading woman commented as if speaking to the air, "Oh! It's lively here. Please, carry on." She and her entourage stood there, their posture suggesting they had come to watch a show.

The Langford household froze in shock. One name surfaced in everyone's mind: "Lady Esmeralda Langford." They stared at the newcomer in disbelief, unable to speak.

On the other side, Brian Morgan's face paled as he recognized these women. He knew them well... Miss Eleanor Raynor and her assistant, Miss Teresa Li.

"Why are these two dangerous women here now? Are they also after the land? I need to leave immediately. This isn't worth dying over. There will be more chances to make money... if I survive today," he thought, panic rising.

As a member of the California Chamber of Commerce, Brian had heard many terrifying rumors about these two. Miss Eleanor ran her business empire like a sovereign monarch. Within two years, she had absorbed dozens of companies into her conglomerate. Once she targeted a company, it either sold to her or went bankrupt, regardless of its size or strength. Even more disturbing were the directors who had opposed her sometimes vanished without a trace. Though there were numerous reports filed, no concrete evidence had ever been found to implicate her.

And Teresa Li? She was known in the business world as the Harbinger of Death. Within the CalChamber, there was an ominous saying: "If you see Miss Teresa Li in your office, start praying so that she offers you a fair deal." No one could refuse her... those who did either went bankrupt or disappeared.

In seconds, Brian adopted his most flattering expression and stepped forward, bowing slightly. "Good afternoon, Miss Raynor, Miss Li. I had no idea you were interested in this land. If I had known, I wouldn't have dared set foot in the Kingdom. Please forgive me. I'll leave immediately... no, I'll leave the country."

Eleanor looked genuinely confused. "Do I know you?" she asked, turning to Teresa.

Brian quickly interjected, "A woman of your stature wouldn't know someone like me. I'm just a humble member of the CalChamber. I've merely seen you and Miss Li at our programs. Please pardon my boldness. I'll be leaving right away."

He turned to a stunned Louis, who had been interpreting all the Langford's shocked expressions as fear. Brian grabbed his arm and dragged him out of the castle. Louis began to protest but went quiet as he saw the armed guards in full tactical formation outside. He climbed into the car without another word, and the vehicle sped away.

Inside the grand hall, the Langfords stood frozen, completely bewildered by what had just occurred. These same men, Brian and Louis, had been threatening them mere seconds ago. Now they had fled, seemingly terrified, all because of one woman's arrival.

"How powerful is she? What's her relation to Lady Esmeralda? Our Lady died many years ago. She couldn't have come back to life, right?" the staff silently wondered, their minds racing.

Breaking the heavy silence, Eleanor finally spoke. "I am Eleanor Langford, daughter of Lady Esmeralda Langford. I've come to visit my relatives and pay my respects at my mother's grave."

It was as if a bomb had exploded in the hall.

After a long pause, Butler Graham Langford was the first to regain his composure. He bowed deeply. "Welcome home, My Lady. It's an honour to have you among us."

The rest of the staff, stirred by his words, followed suit and said in unison, "Welcome, My Lady."

Eleanor smiled gently. "Thank you, everyone. I'm happy to see you all. From your appearance, I can tell many of you knew my mother."

From the main seat, Earl Walter Langford rose slowly and walked in a daze toward Eleanor. He stopped in front of her and reached out with trembling hands to touch her face. The moment his fingers made contact; his body visibly shivered. The authoritative aura he had carried before in front of Louis and Brian dissolved into vulnerability.

He whispered, almost inaudibly, "How...?!"

Eleanor didn't reject his touch. She could feel the emotion from the old man. From what she had heard from Mayor Grant, this man must be her mother's uncle — the current Earl of Birmingham, Walter Langford.

After a few moments, Walter regained some composure and said in a trembling voice, "How could Esmeralda have a daughter and no one informed us? Why didn't you come back to the family? It must have been tough for you to grow up outside the family. Why didn't you come back earlier?"

Tears streamed down his face as he spoke, and in the end, he stopped talking... only holding Eleanor's face in his palms and crying silently.

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 38: A Lonely Tombstone - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 38: A Lonely Tombstone

Chapter 38: A Lonely Tombstone

After nearly an hour of conversation, Eleanor finally grasped the current state of the Langford family. Not long after her mother's death, her grandfather, Edward Langford, had fallen gravely ill and was forced to pass on the Earl title to his younger brother, Walter Langford.

Walter had done his best to maintain the family's estate and influence in the region, but times had changed. With shifting political dynamics and the steady decline of noble power in modern society, it became harder and harder to maintain the balance. As the family's income dwindled over time, so did their sway over regional affairs.

Walter's son, Frederick Langford, was currently serving as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Marines. Due to the demands of his position, he couldn't offer much assistance in running the estate. His daughter, Florence Langford, a respected doctor at The Royal London Hospital, was married and had her own life far removed from the family's internal affairs. Walter didn't wish to burden her with the estate's troubles either.

Although the Langfords had not yet sold any part of their ancestral lands, they had been forced to cut back on staff and significantly reduce operational expenses. The estate was still running, but just barely.

Complicating matters further, the family's waning influence had made them vulnerable to political machinations. Local politicians and council leaders, once reverent toward the Langford name, now treated them as relics of the past. Their absence from public ceremonies, the growing propaganda about the family's downfall, aggressive buyout offers on their land, and even harassment of their staff... it all told the same story: the world was moving on without them.

Once Eleanor understood everything, she walked over to Walter Langford, who sat quietly in his chair, observing her.

"I know you must have many questions," Eleanor said gently, "but I only learned about this side of my family yesterday. I had no idea my mother had asked her friends to keep everything hidden from me until I was old enough to make my own decisions. She wanted me to grow up free, away from political manipulation. I don't know what happened between her and my grandfather that made her leave this house and never return, but I believe it must have been serious. Still, she never told me to hold a grudge against anyone here, and I won't."

Walter looked at her, his eyes reflecting years of quiet guilt. She continued, her tone firmer now, "So let's leave the past where it belongs. I'm here now. And from this day forward, you don't have to worry about petty politicians or greedy opportunists. I'll handle them. You've carried this burden long enough. It's time for the younger generation to take the reins."

Walter gave a slow nod, his voice low and heavy with regret. "Your mother was free-spirited. My brother... your grandfather, should have let her live her life the way she wanted. But he tried to force a political marriage. After that, she left and never returned. When she died and came back only in death, it broke your grandfather completely. He never recovered."

Eleanor gave a small, sad smile. "Let the past remain the past. My mother left behind a successful company. I've built my own business empire as well. Money is not an issue. Today, I just want to visit her grave. Could you show me the way?"

Walter stood, "Of course. Come with me."

Eleanor turned to the butler. "Grandpa Graham, I'm going to visit my mother's grave. In the meantime, please go over the estate's finances with Teresa. She's an expert and might come up with a solid recovery plan."

Then she looked back to Walter, "Granduncle, please lead the way."

Walter led her through the back of the castle. As they stepped outside, he was surprised to see four armed guards already stationed by the rear door. A glance at Eleanor told him everything he needed to know. She acted like their presence was completely normal. Clearly, they were hers.

The castle grounds stretched far. It took nearly ten minutes of walking to reach the family cemetery. Along the way, Walter pointed out landmarks... the old orchard, the stables, a crumbling gazebo now overgrown with vines. Eleanor listened quietly, absorbing each piece of history.

When they finally reached her mother's grave, a strange, inexplicable sadness settled over her. The tombstone stood quietly among others but somehow felt lonelier than the rest. Eleanor had no memory of her mother. All she knew was that this woman had

chosen death over life to give her a chance to live. That fact alone made Eleanor bow her head in reverence.

The grave was modest, a concrete structure with dense, untended pansies blooming over it. Dry leaves were scattered around, rustling softly in the breeze. There was a simple portrait of her mother as a young woman embedded into the headstone, along with her name and the years she lived. No grand inscriptions, no epitaphs... just a quiet, dignified tribute.

Eleanor crouched down and began clearing the grave with her hands. Then, quietly, she signaled to one of the guards. Within moments, he returned with a broom. She cleaned the grave slowly, methodically, not caring about the dust that clung to her suit.

Walter stood a respectful distance away with the guards. His curiosity got the better of him, and he attempted to make small talk with them. But they were tight-lipped and professional. The only information he managed to gather was a single name, Heimdall Technologies. Beyond that, they said nothing. No one wanted to disturb Eleanor's quiet communion with her mother.

After a long time, Eleanor stood, gave the grave one last glance, and turned back toward the castle.

Once seated in the hall again, Eleanor addressed Walter. "Granduncle, I'll try to visit my grandfather when I go to London. I'll come to see you again whenever I can. I know you still have questions, but we'll talk about me later. Teresa will handle the estate recovery. If you need anything... money, support, anything... just let her know."

Then she turned toward the staff gathered in the hall and raised her voice slightly. "Everyone, please listen. Outside of this estate, I am Eleanor Elizabeth Raynor. No one must know about my connection to the Langford family. I intend to restore the estate to its former glory, but for that, I'll need to shift the political landscape around here. Being seen as an outsider will be more beneficial to that cause. Do you understand?"

Everyone nodded, some more solemnly than others. "We understand."

Satisfied, Eleanor smiled. "Thank you. I'll be leaving now. If there are any issues, contact Teresa or reach out to me through Heimdall Technologies in Manchester."

She turned back to Walter. "Granduncle, take care of yourself. I'll see you again soon."

Walter rose and walked with her to the front. "Please do visit. This house has been too quiet for far too long."

Eleanor gave him a warm nod before stepping into her vehicle. Teresa followed, and the convoy of black cars started rolling down the driveway.

Walter stood by the castle steps, watching the impressive line of cars and heavily armed guards disappear into the distance. With a long sigh, he said, "It feels like a dream... Esmeralda gave birth to such a daughter. The entire time she was here, it felt like she was the lord of the estate, not me. Maybe it's time I step aside and let the younger generation take charge."

Butler Graham, standing beside him, nodded slowly. "Indeed. She carried herself like a queen."

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 39: A Mother's Love - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 39: A Mother's Love

Chapter 39: A Mother's Love

In the car, Eleanor called Ethan. After a few rings, he picked up.

"Is everything alright?" he asked, his voice filled with urgency.

Eleanor paused. She realized she only ever called Ethan when something serious had happened. Today was no different... though the reason wasn't dramatic, she was emotional. Visiting her mother's grave had stirred feelings she hadn't anticipated. She wanted to talk to her daughter. And since Ethan was with Freya, she reached out.

"I'm fine," she finally said. "Is Freya behaving?"

"Yes. She's been a good girl. You don't have to worry. I'll stay with her until you get back."

"Thank you. After yesterday's incident, I just couldn't relax knowing she was only with her nanny."

"Don't mention it. She's my daughter too."

A lump rose in Eleanor's throat. She had never asked Ethan to be involved, yet he had stepped up without question.

"I just visited my mother's grave..." she whispered, her voice trailing off.

Sensing her shift in mood, Ethan responded gently, "Don't be sad. Freya's been asking for you. Talk to her. It'll help."

He quickly handed the phone to their daughter, eager to lift Eleanor's spirits.

"Hello, Mommy! When are you coming back?" Freya's cheerful voice rang out.

"I need a little more time, sweetheart. I'll be back this evening."

"Okay! I'm playing with Daddy. But you should come back soon... I missed you."

"I miss you too. Be a good girl and don't tire Daddy out. I'll bring you a gift."

"I want ice cream!"

Eleanor laughed. "Then ice cream it is."

The mother and daughter talked for a few more minutes. Meanwhile, the convoy sped along the highway toward Edgbaston, the wind brushing against the tinted windows like a soft whisper.

At the Grand Birmingham Hotel, in the top-floor presidential suite, Brian Morgan paced anxiously with his phone in hand. His forehead was creased with frustration as he awaited a call confirming his emergency flight to Los Angeles.

Louis Turner watched him with a frown. "Mr. Morgan, I really don't get it. Why is someone like you so rattled about a young woman? What's her background?"

Brian sighed and finally stopped pacing. "It's okay if you don't understand. As your friend, I'm telling you her identity... but don't share this with anyone. Now, listen carefully."

He paused, making sure Louis was paying attention.

"Her name is Eleanor Raynor. She's not from a political family, but from a business family that remained at the top even before the First Industrial Revolution. As far as I know, the Raynor family began their business right here in Manchester. During the colonial era, they expanded across the globe alongside the Kingdom. They focused primarily on commerce and accumulated great wealth for the nation. In the post-colonial period, while most major players withdrew their investments from former colonies, the Raynors invested in the newly independent nations and rose to become a major global financial power. Their family members are now spread across the world, each running independent ventures."

Louis blinked. "That sounds... impressive. But what does that have to do with you?"

Brian arched a brow. "Tell me, who do you think is the most powerful person in the business world?"

Louis shrugged. "Warren Buffett? Jeff Bezos? Bill Gates?"

Brian cut him off. "Wrong. That's what I used to think too, before I became a core member of the Chamber. I'm giving you a valuable lesson as a friend. You know those names because they're the richest people in the public eye. But behind the scenes, there are several powerful families with wealth equivalent to a hundred Bill Gates or Warren Buffett. They don't seek the limelight... that's why they divide their assets under different names. Normally, they stay low-key. But when they act, the whole family moves as one."

Louis was astonished. "How?"

Brian said, "Let me tell you about Eleanor Raynor. She suddenly arrived in San Francisco three years ago with a British passport. After her arrival, she registered an IT company in Silicon Valley. Can you guess what her initial investment was?"

Louis pondered for a moment and said, "One... no, ten million dollars?"

Brian laughed, "You couldn't even imagine it. One billion dollars! One billion! With that single investment, she became a VIP in all of California. The state became her loyal supporter. Do you know how she established her business?"

Without waiting for Louis to answer, he continued, "She started roaming around Silicon Valley and Wall Street. She poached several highly skilled employees from other companies. Then, her people began visiting promising businesses and buying them out. Those who sold their companies at least got their money back. But those who didn't sell found their companies going bankrupt, only to be acquired by Miss Raynor at a fraction of the price. In just two years, her company became one of the largest IT companies in Silicon Valley."

Louis said, "Now I understand why you acted like this. You also helped me avoid unknowingly pissing off someone powerful. Thank you."

Brian shook his head, "No. You still don't get the point. I'll tell you what I know for sure. When Miss Raynor moved to San Francisco, she rented a high-end apartment and started living there. Opposite her apartment lived one of the girlfriends of the owner of the apartment complex. He was the wealthiest businessman in the housing sector in the region. Even the Governor of California had to show respect to him at social occasions."

He paused, then continued, "Miss Raynor asked his girlfriend to make less noise at night, but due to her connections, she behaved rudely with her. Miss Raynor then complained to the housing office. Instead of solving the problem, the housing office asked her to change apartments. Can you guess what Miss Raynor did next?"

Louis gathered his courage and said, "She bought the whole building?"

Brian shook his head in resignation, "Within one week, that businessman was arrested for forgery of documents, violating zoning laws and building codes, money laundering,

tax evasion, and many other charges. His extramarital affairs made headlines in every newspaper. His unsightly nude videos with his lovers flooded online. In the second week, his wife filed for divorce. His company went bankrupt. He was socially and economically finished. Then Miss Raynor bought the Sky City... that was the name of the apartment complex, which was built as an independent city. Now, that is the headquarters of Miss Raynor's company. Only her employees currently live in that city."

Brian paused, then added, "That was not all. I heard that several directors of various companies have gone missing after opposing her. These days, she doesn't move in business circles. But her secretary is doing her job. Do you know what her Asian secretary's nickname is in the California business community?"

He paused dramatically and said, "The Harbinger of Death!"

The room fell into a heavy silence.

A few minutes later, Brian's phone rang. He snatched it up.

"Sir," his assistant reported, "we've secured seven seats on a KLM Cityhopper flight in six hours. The company's private jet is en route, but it'll take ten hours to reach you. We tried chartering other jets capable of crossing the Atlantic, but they're all unavailable right now."

He angrily threw the phone on the bed and cursed, "Fuck!" then asked Louis, who was sitting on the bed, "Do you have any other way to send me out of the Kingdom?"

At that moment, he heard a deep voice from behind.

"Interesting!"

Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby #Chapter 40: A Business Proposal - Read Single Mother of a Werewolf Baby Chapter 40: A Business Proposal

Chapter 40: A Business Proposal

Brian and Louis both turned toward the voice and saw a man seated on the wingback armchair of the room. From the deep voice, they could tell it was a man, though his entire body was concealed in sleek black armor, including a black face mask. The only visible part of him was his eyes... cold, sharp, and fixed on them.

He sat with one foot planted firmly on the floor and the other leg casually slung over his knee in a figure-four position. His hands rested confidently on the armrests, giving off the impression that he owned the place.

Both men were visibly shocked. They hadn't noticed anyone entering the room and had no idea how or when he got in.

Breaking the silence, the black-masked intruder spoke again. "Mr. Morgan, why the rush? You crossed the Atlantic to do business here. There's no need to return empty-handed. Miss Li has a business proposal for you. The Langford family will provide the land you wanted. In exchange, you'll build a small park with modern facilities accessible to the public for free. The rest of the land will be developed by you. Langfords will hold 51% of the shares, Miss Li 19%, and you will retain 30%."

"If you agree," he continued, "submit a detailed plan to Miss Li at Heimdall Technologies in Manchester. Don't worry... Miss Li will invest according to her share. You won't lose. But if you don't wish to do business with her, you're free to leave the kingdom... after I leave your room."

He paused briefly before adding, "Oh! I almost forgot. I have an important message for you. Mr. Morgan, Miss Li said she loves the Mission Blue Butterfly. And Mr. Turner, your friend Juan David is currently having breakfast at his home in Usaquén, Bogotá, Colombia."

A chill ran down both men's spines. Despite the room's air conditioning, sweat beaded on their foreheads.

The masked man looked at them playfully and said, "Gentlemen, please look at your window."

Involuntarily, they turned to the window. There was nothing there... no shadow, no figure... nothing suspicious in or outside. The room fell into an eerie silence.

Suddenly, Brian jolted at the sound of his phone ringing. He grabbed it from the bed. "Hello?"

His secretary's excited voice echoed from the other end. "Sir, all the airplanes suddenly became available. You can come to San Francisco anytime. Should I book a private or public flight?"

Brian turned to the chair, only to find it empty... completely vacant, as if no one had ever been sitting there. He ended the call without answering and called out, "Louis!"

Louis looked at him. "What?"

"Look at the chair."

Louis turned and was struck with the same disbelief. His voice trembled as he asked, "What just happened?"

Brian replied, "Apparently, I couldn't charter a plane or book any seat because of this meeting. Miss Li must have blocked all ticket sales and private charters. Now that the meeting is over, I'm free to leave."

Louis grinned, relieved. "Then book the flight. Let's go to the airport."

Brian sat down on the bed, his legs trembling. "I can't go now. Didn't you hear what that man said?"

Louis frowned. "What? He talked about business and said you were free to choose. Sure, he tried to threaten me using my friend's name, but I've covered my tracks. Besides, it's easy to find out where someone powerful like him lives in Usaquén."

Brian looked at him with pity. "You won't understand unless you call your friend. Ask him where he is doing right now."

"Okay," Louis said, dialing. "Hello, Juan. How are you?"

"Louis, my friend! I'm fine. Are you in Colombia?"

"No, I just remembered you. We haven't met in ages. By the way, where are you now?"

"I'm at home, having breakfast. Why?"

"I was just thinking of visiting Bogotá. I'll let you know if I can make time. Enjoy your breakfast. Bye."

Louis ended the call and looked at Brian questioningly.

Brian asked, "Is your friend exactly where that man said he would be?"

Louis nodded. "Yes."

Brian continued, "You're confident you covered all your tracks. But if your friend ever comes to the Kingdom, will the situation still be the same?"

Louis scoffed. "Why would he come here? He has an arrest warrant for a drug smuggling case..."

He stopped abruptly, his eyes widening in horror.

Brian smiled knowingly. "Exactly. You've covered your tracks, but the one loose end is your friend. Believe me, when that man mentioned his location, it wasn't a guess. He's under surveillance. They could kidnap him anytime and hand him over to the police here, destroying you in the process. You've never dealt with these big players before, so it's taking time for you to grasp the situation."

Louis said, "But why threaten me? I'm not even part of their business proposal."

Brian replied, "Maybe they want you to keep quiet. Or maybe they're counting on your cooperation in the future. You'll understand soon enough."

"But they didn't threaten you. Why don't you want to leave now?"

Brian hesitated. "I wasn't going to tell you, but since we're both in this together, I'll share. He did threaten me. Remember when he talked about the Mission Blue Butterfly? I own a luxury apartment building located within the restricted habitat of that butterfly. Although none have been seen there since 1996, the area is still protected. They could destroy my career using that one piece of information."

Louis looked even more horrified. "How could they gather all this intel so quickly? I'm sure they never saw me before today."

Brian said, "You've been after the Langford family's land for years. Did they ever sell it to you? Or even offer a partnership? No. Did you see any of these people before today? Again, no. Yet, in mere minutes, they secured the land that you couldn't get in years. These are powerful people. They have means beyond our comprehension. But this might work out for you. If you play it right, you could benefit. I have no choice but to work with them. Join me, and I'll secure Miss Raynor's backing for you."

Louis hesitated. "Will it really be okay?"

Brian nodded. "Don't worry. When I go to meet Miss Li with the development proposal, I'll take you with me."

He paused before adding, "Now please order some food to be delivered here. I need to call my office and draft a new proposal as soon as possible."

They both got to work, still shaken but aware of the gravity of the opportunity... and threat they had just witnessed.

Edward Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham.

Eleanor's convoy pulled over to the side of the road. To avoid creating a scene, she instructed her entourage to remain inside the vehicles. Only she and Teresa stepped out.

A man who had been waiting near a local food store approached them and bowed slightly. "Good afternoon, Madam. Please follow me."

The two women followed him through Eastwood Road and stopped in front of a small, somewhat run-down terraced house. Unlike its neighbors, it had no flowers in the front garden.

The man confirmed the address and promptly left. Eleanor stepped forward and knocked on the door.