

He felt cornered.

Swapping the happiness of one family for the misery of others!

His only option was to persist on this sinister path.

"Nathaniel, let it be. How can he sympathize with us? Your daughter Sylvia is akin to our own. We've made our decision. We will help cover your compensation. Stand up. We understand your desperation for your daughter, but you don't need to grovel before him!"

The other suppliers intervened, helped Nathaniel to his feet and handed over the accumulated funds to Augustine.

With his eyes glistening, Augustine accepted them and walked away without a second look.

He couldn't linger, couldn't bear to confront himself.

After his departure, the atmosphere was heavy with defeat, eyes red with despair.

As the suppliers started to leave the hotel, they were intercepted by Dennis.

He had been anticipating their exit.

His face burning with indignation, Dennis emphatically declared, "Everyone, I've witnessed Kingland Group's cold-heartedness. They may not need you, but we, Riley Group, welcome you! Agree to this and you will become suppliers for the Riley Group!"

Hearing this, the suppliers, including the one who'd earlier vowed not to supply, gathered around him.

He'd merely expressed his frustration earlier. They had to carry on with their lives!

"Is this for real? Is the Riley Group actually ready to take us in?"

"We are eager to work with the Riley Group! Even if it pays less, anything is better than another day with that dreadful Funbuy!"

At this point, Dennis stepped forward and formally introduced himself. "Absolutely, it's true. I am Mr. Norris's personal assistant from the Riley Group. Today, Mr. Norris specifically requested my presence here. He was aware that Kingland Group would undoubtedly be ruthless towards you. He intended to provide you with an opportunity to join the Riley Group as an alternative! But first, if you want to join us, you must sever ties completely with Kingland Group! Vent your grievances, air your dissatisfaction, post it online to denounce Kingland Group and Liam, proving you've cut off all associations with them!"

The suppliers' fury towards Kingland Group was already at a boiling point.

Dennis' words acted as a spark, igniting their simmering resentment.

"No problem! Let's do this now! Since Kingland Group is ruthless, then we won't hold back either!"

One by one, the suppliers broadcasted their statements on Facebook, levelling accusations that the counterfeit scandal was a deliberate orchestration by Kingland Group to exploit them!

Among them, Nathaniel O'Callaghan was the only one reluctant to get involved in the matter. He hesitated and refrained from commenting on it.

Seeing this, Dennis promptly drew him aside and persuaded him, "Mr. Norris specifically instructed me to offer you the best contract terms! Moreover, he's aware of your daughter's situation. Post about your daughter's condition on the Internet, let the world know how Kingland Group treated you! In return, Mr. Norris will provide you with five hundred thousand dollars for her treatment!"

Nathaniel found himself swayed by his words.

With heartfelt sincerity, he shared his ordeal online.

"I am one of the suppliers implicated in Funbuy's counterfeit controversy. My supplies were genuine and I've never compromised my integrity to deal in fakes. Yet, Kingland Group coerced me into shouldering the full blame for this fiasco. They not only terminated our contract but also demanded a breach of contract fee, an exorbitant sum! My daughter, Sylvia, suffers from a congenital heart condition. All these years, I've worked tirelessly for her treatment. The compensation demanded by Kingland Group renders her future medical expenses impossible. Despite my begging Kingland Group's representative on my knees, they showed no mercy! This is my reality."

At Dennis' insistence, he also posted Sylvia's medical records and pictures of her in treatment.

This post was amplified by Clarence's hired individuals and rapidly trended online!

The heartbreaking narrative resonated with the Internet users.

A chorus of voices began to demand a boycott of Kingland Group.

Some even openly denounced Liam.

"The CEO of Kingland Group is truly monstrous!"

"Exactly, he stooped so low as to snatch away funds meant for a child's treatment. He lacks basic human decency!"

Tears welled up in Nathaniel's eyes.

He implored Dennis, "When will the funds for my daughter's treatment arrive? She's counting on it for her survival."

"No worries. I'll contact Mr. Norris right away."

Dennis took out his phone and sent a message.

On Facebook, Riley Group promptly made a public announcement. "We've signed contracts with all the suppliers who were unjustly terminated by Kingland Group! Innocents should not bear the brunt of others' mistakes. And for the suffering little girl, we pledge five hundred thousand dollars for her treatment!"

Their actions sharply contrasted Kingland Group's behavior.

Praise for the Riley Group flooded the Internet.

"The established shopping platform is clearly more trustworthy. It might not have as many promotions, but at least the products it sells are genuine, and its management has integrity!"

"Who claimed Riley Group's app lacks promotions? Their shopping festival is about to kick off. The discounts offered are far superior to the previous ones!"

"I'm about to uninstall Funbuy and download Rileymart! We need to spread the word about such commendable software!"

After investing only five hundred thousand dollars, the Riley Group found itself basking in an overwhelmingly positive online reputation!

Chapter 460 Liam's Ability To Navigate This Storm

As the negative news about Funbuy kept spreading, many people had a premonition. The financial downfall of Kingland Group appeared inevitable!

Most of the retail investors rushed to offload their shares, sensing the trouble brewing.

As a result, the stock price plummeted, causing Kingland Group's market value to plummet by a staggering one third!

A worried whisper escaped Julie's lips. "I fear Kingland Group may not bounce back this time around!"

She chastised herself, for failing to deliver the list to Liam in time.

Had she acted sooner, he could've handled the suppliers on Clarence's payroll perfectly.

Kingland Group wouldn't be on this slippery slope then.

Thoughts of abandoning everything in Salem and fleeing with Liam hovered in her mind.

They could retreat to a secluded haven and live out their days in tranquility.

However, she was under no illusion.

She knew Liam was not one to run from adversity.

"Liam, I pray you pull off yet another miracle, rescuing Kingland Group

from the brink." Julie's silent plea reverberated in her heart.

She chose to remain by Clarence's side, hoping to gather some crucial information.

As long as it could help Liam, she would find fulfillment.

Unbeknownst to her, she had been played by Clarence all along, and her actions were inadvertently harming Liam.

In the CEO's office of Kingland Group.

The public's mounting disdain had started impacting not just the group's reputation, but also its employees' morale.

Whispered doubts morphed into verbal accusations as staff began to believe the online chatter.

A cluster of employees confronted Liam in his office. "Mr. Hoffman, is there any truth to these online allegations? Have you truly committed these wrongdoings?"

Liam's face darkened. The fact that even his own people were losing faith was a severe blow, let alone those outside the group's confines.

After a sobering silence, he finally retorted, "I'm glad you've come to question me. It demonstrates your principled, moral nature. However, the Internet rumors are baseless. I assure you, my actions have always been for the good of Kingland Group and have sat right with my conscience!" ①

At the scene, Vivian's worry spiked.

The man she secretly loved had become the target of public criticism.

She leapt to Liam's defense, berating the employees, "Complete fools! It's clear Mr. Hoffman has been set up. Can't you see that? Instead of

seeking truth, you came here parading your morality. What did you accomplish, other than agitating Mr. Hoffman? Get back to work! I will definitely find out the person who plotted against Mr. Hoffman!"

The scolding had a calming effect on everyone present.

They also recognized the impulsiveness of their actions and retreated in shame.

Once the crowd had scattered, Aikin cautiously approached Liam. "Mr. Hoffman, the external situation is increasingly dire! I worry that your personal safety might soon be at stake! Shouldn't we seek assistance from the Hoffman family and thoroughly investigate this? After surviving this crisis, we can strike back independently, when the time is right!"

At this, Liam merely smiled.

Turning to Aikin, he inquired, "Why seek help when we can manage on our own?"

Don't tell me even you doubt my ability to navigate this storm?"

Chapter 461 Admitting

Aikin quickly bowed his head, shaking it in despair.

He admitted remorsefully, "Mr. Hoffman, the blame lies on me. Despite ample time, I've been unable to unmask Kingland Group's traitor, allowing the situation to deteriorate."

Liam's expression remained gently amused.

Gently placing a hand on Aikin's shoulder, he assured, "Don't shoulder all the blame. The investigation yielded nothing, but I've told you it's not your responsibility. Moreover, the circumstances have taken a new turn!"

Perceiving Aikin's bewilderment, Liam elaborated, "Initially, my fear was the mole would lay low for an extended period, making the truth elusive. Unexpectedly, they are impatient and made hasty actions so soon!"

It was then that comprehension dawned on Aikin. He queried anxiously, "Mr. Hoffman, are you implying you've identified the traitor?"

Liam responded with a nod.

He declared calmly, "Recent events have led us to a likely suspect. This individual has the authority to inspect the trucks and maintains communication with the suppliers. Not only that, but he has also manipulated the suppliers into paying penalty fees without telling me. Could there be another person capable of all this?"

Aikin gasped, disbelief coloring his voice. "Are you suggesting that Mr. Richardson is the culprit? He's been with Kingland Group since it was established in Ninverton! How could he commit such treachery?"

for wealth.

Yet, the facts painted a stark picture.

"Have someone bring him here. We won't harm him yet. Discover the reason behind his betrayal!"

Aikin obediently headed out to execute the orders.

As he approached the exit, Liam called out to him.

"Hold on!

Also, look into the whereabouts of the young girl mentioned online. Report back when you find something!"

After a moment's pause, Aikin quietly agreed.

He was filled with a whirlwind of emotions.

He was aware of the online comments about Liam. In the face of such slander, Liam managed to maintain his cool. He dissected each point rationally. He deserved to be a part of the Hoffman family!

In the Cortez family's house.

Clarence arrived for a late-night visit.

He sought out Julie with a malicious intent and hypocritically said, "Julie, your birthday is coming up tomorrow. I've come specifically to see you."

He then produced a necklace from his pocket, extending it towards Julie.

"Allow me to assist you in putting it on."

Despite her reluctance, Julie was unable to dissuade Clarence due to his overpowering enthusiasm and thus conceded.

Clarence moved behind Julie to patiently secure the necklace.

The following moment, he abruptly moved his hands towards Julie's breasts.

He groped them for a while and then slid his hand down her skirt.

This unexpected action left Julie in shock. She hadn't imagined Clarence would dare to do such a thing!

She pushed him away, shouting furiously, "Have you lost your mind? What do you think you're doing?"

Clarence, grinning wickedly, replied leisurely, "Didn't you want to get closer? Now's your chance for complete physical intimacy! I'll reveal all that you wish to know afterwards!"

At this, Julie became visibly panicked and protested, "What are you talking about? This is not right!"

Suddenly, Julie was met with a harsh slap to her face.

Clarence scolded, "Stop pretending, you deceitful woman. I know you approached me because of that loser, Liam!"

Julie's eyes widened, and she retreated several steps.

She was astounded that her secret had been discovered!

Realizing there was no turning back, Julie steeled herself and admitted the truth.

"Yes, I used you for Liam's sake. So what? You're insignificant compared to him! Did you actually believe I had feelings for you? The

mere sight of you repulses me, let alone the very thought of your touch!"



Chapter 462 Rescue

Clarence's playful demeanor immediately vanished, and his expression turned fierce.

Julie had insulted him in the most hurting way!

Clarence, with a firm grip around Julie's throat, growled, "You bitch, who are you to judge? Utterly disgraceful! Wait and see. Don't you like Liam, that loser? I'll tarnish his image before all of Salem's influential individuals tomorrow, cripple his legs and toss him on the streets to beg! Think you're high and mighty? I will fuck you in front of him by then! Mark my words and wait for that moment. Try to flee, and both your parents and the entire Cortez family will be wiped from the face of this earth!"

After uttering those words, Clarence departed with a lingering smile, leaving Julie in a state of despair.

She wanted to commit suicide at the thought that her chastity would be defiled by Clarence.

Yet his warnings resonated within her, gnawing at her resolve.

This torment, more agonizing than death itself, ceaselessly poked at her sensibilities.

"Clarence, you've driven me to the corner!" she cried out, a grim resolve hardening her features.

The next morning, invitations were distributed at Clarence's behest to Salem's elite, inviting them to celebrate Julie's birthday that evening.

Simultaneously, the Riley Group hosted a shopping fest.

Clarence intended to stun his guests with astonishing numbers and court prospective partnerships.

Ever since the news about the counterfeit products sold by Funbuy came to light, the Rileymart had gained a firm grip on the market and secured a dominant position.

Many competed to secure a portion of their profits.

Meanwhile, in the CEO's office of Kingland Group.

With a grave expression, Aikin was reporting, "Mr. Hoffman, I've uncovered all the details about Mr. Richardson's betrayal. The Dragon Gang has taken his parents hostage. He's been acting out under duress. He now spends his days wallowing in liquor. His suffering is palpable."

Liam had foreseen this outcome.

Augustine wouldn't have double-crossed the Kingland Group unless driven to desperation.

Liam knew he needed to act quickly.

With a steely glint in his eyes, he questioned, "Can you locate Augustine's parents? Where are they held captive?"

Aikin nodded, then hesitantly added, "Yes, but scouring the entire city of Salem could take three to four days."

Liam considered his options swiftly.

He'd received Clarence's invitation that morning.

Unquestionably, Clarence was plotting to degrade him at the party.

If Augustine's issue wasn't resolved, the party could present

unforeseen problems.

After some deliberation, Liam dialed Theo's number. "Theo, I require your assistance. My employee's parents have been abducted. Could you help locate them?"

Theo swiftly responded with a location.

Liam passed the information to Aikin, instructing, "Ensure this operation stays under wraps.

And bring Augustine to me afterward."

Aikin marveled at Theo's efficiency.

The prowess of the Hoffman family was evident in their ability to locate two individuals within Salem in mere minutes.

He committed the location to memory and then awkwardly reported about the sick girl.

"Mr. Hoffman, the young girl's condition severely deteriorated after she heard of her father's situation. She's now in the emergency room. I fear she may not pull through..."

Liam was lost in thought.

After what seemed an eternity, he asked slowly, enunciating each word, "Where is she?"

Aikin quickly revealed the location of the little girl he had found.

She was currently in the emergency room of Sacred Heart Hospital.

Chapter 463 The Poor Little Girl

Not long after, Liam found himself at the Sacred Heart Hospital.

This was a hospital steeped in a long heritage.

Being remotely located, the hospital bore signs of age, the structures and equipment revealing years of use, leading to lower fees, making it the refuge for the less fortunate.

At that moment, the entrance to the emergency room was encircled by a group of middle-aged men, who were the suppliers wrongly implicated in the scandal.

"Nathaniel, chin up. Sylvia is a fighter. She'll pull through."

"Yes, Nathaniel. Have faith. Sylvia will recover. And if needed, we'll shift her to a bigger hospital. We'll deal with the finances collectively!"

They were trying to console a distressed Nathaniel.

Suddenly, someone noticed Liam at a distance and exclaimed, "Hold on! Isn't that the CEO of Kingland Group? What brings him here?"

On hearing this, the suppliers quickly turned to verify.

When they recognized Liam, their pent-up frustrations burst forth.

They hastily moved towards Liam, encircling him.

With accusations flying, they shouted, "Why are you here? Haven't you caused enough suffering for Nathaniel's family already?"

"If not for you, Sylvia wouldn't be in the emergency room. You vile man, get out!"

"Leave, or we'll make sure things get ugly!"

Following a brief silence, Liam said sincerely, "Everyone, I understand your resentment. But there has been a misunderstanding! Let's discuss this later. Let's first focus on saving the little girl, alright? I heard that she is in a critical state, which is why I came to check."

However, Nathaniel outright rejected his overture. With a fierce shove, he yelled at Liam, "Leave! Spare us your pretense! Haven't you caused enough damage? Will you only be satisfied when you see her dead?"

Liam stood there, dumbstruck, choking on his unsaid words.

He felt sorry for Nathaniel but was helpless.

Just then, the door to the emergency room swung open.

The doctor emerged, his face somber.

"Who is the immediate family of the patient?"

Nathaniel quickly disentangled from Liam, stepped forward and anxiously asked, "I am. Is my daughter safe?"

The doctor sighed and frowned. "Brace yourself! Your daughter's heart was weak to begin with. The recent events have further deteriorated her condition. Our hospital lacks the resources to perform a heart surgery. To the best of my knowledge, even the best hospital in Salem would not promise more than a 30% success rate for such a procedure! Moreover, her current state prohibits any movement. She has only a few hours left. You may go in and be with her."

After the doctor said that, his eyes moistened. Sylvia's resilience had moved him.

Despite having witnessed countless deaths, he was still deeply saddened to see the life of a vibrant young girl slipping away.

Nathaniel's face reflected utter despair, he looked like a man on the verge of giving up hope.

With a forced smile, he entered the emergency room to talk to his daughter.

"Sylvia, Daddy's here. Did you miss me?"

The frail little girl's face was ashen, yet she blinked and nodded.

"Yes! Dad, I'm tired of being sick. If I'm gone, you won't be at the mercy of the bad guy anymore."

At this, Nathaniel couldn't contain his grief and tears poured out.

Sylvia, despite her condition, comforted her father with a brave expression, tenderly patting his head.

The sight was deeply moving for everyone present.

Even Liam, the "bad guy" in Sylvia's narrative, was profoundly impacted by this.

He moved forward, intending to enter the room, but was stopped by the other suppliers.

"What do you think you're doing? Are you here to rob them of their private moment?"

Chapter 464 A Difficult Surgery

Liam stopped, turned, looked at everyone helplessly and said sincerely, "Everyone, the Riley Group is behind the issue about those counterfeit products recently. The Riley Group threatened someone to do it. And you have all suffered injustice because of this. But don't worry. I will definitely investigate the truth and clear your names. I know it will take time, so I'm hoping for your patience and understanding. At this moment, the most important thing is to save a life. So let me go in."

However, things were not that easy.

The suppliers were unconvinced, and they refused to back down.

"You are a CEO. And you have medical skills? Even the hospital can't treat her. What can you do? What do you want to prove?"

"I can tell he has ulterior motives. He is full of lies. The truth is he wants to harm Sylvia."

"Get out of here before we make a move."

These people had made up their minds. So to them, any explanation was just an excuse.

But Liam, with a solemn look on his face, wanted to force his way in.

However, if he really wanted to provide treatment, he must not be disturbed.

Liam was in a dilemma for a while. He stepped aside, thinking about a solution.

At this moment, his phone rang. It was Aikin calling, so he answered it at once. Aikin said from the other end of the line, "Mr. Hoffman, Mr.

Richardson's parents have been rescued. All the members of the Dragon Gang have been dealt with. No information has been leaked."

This news made Liam feel relieved.

When he hung up the phone, he suddenly realized that since Augustine's parents had been rescued, there was no reason for him to continue helping the Riley Group.

Augustine only needed to personally prove that this was all the Riley Group's scheme.

Then the suppliers would no longer hinder Liam.

At the thought of this, Liam immediately made a video call to Augustine.

Augustine's remorseful face appeared on the screen. Tears streamed down his face.

He had just received a call from Aikin, informing him that his parents had been rescued.

So he was so overwhelmed with guilt towards Kingland Group. The remorse in his heart had reached its peak.

"Mr. Hoffman, I'm so sorry. I have caused such great losses to the company. But even so, you still helped me rescue my parents. I feel so guilty. I am willing to repay you for the rest of my life."

When Liam heard that, the resentment in his heart dissipated a lot.

After all, everything was Clarence's doings.

Augustine was also just a victim.

Liam took a deep breath and said calmly, "We'll discuss how to deal

with you later. Right now, there's something more important that needs to be dealt with. Just briefly explain to the suppliers who have been set up by you. Tell them what really happened."

Liam didn't have much time left, so he didn't explain so much.

After saying this, he walked up to the suppliers and handed his phone to them.

Augustine looked at the people on the screen, and the trace of regret crept across his face again.

The suppliers heard a bang from the other end of the video call.

It turned out that Augustine knelt heavily on the ground and sincerely apologized, "Everyone, Mr. Hoffman has nothing to do with all that has happened. It was me who was responsible for all this. I did that according to the instructions of the Riley Group. I sincerely apologize to all of you."

After what he said, the suppliers' hostility toward Liam diminished a lot.

However, they still had doubts.

After all, they felt Augustine's words were not highly credible. They thought he could possibly be bought off by Liam.

But for the sake of Sylvia's life, they allowed him to enter the emergency room. They also informed Nathaniel about the situation.

"What?" A surprised voice sounded in the emergency room.

Then Nathaniel hurried outside and carefully examined Liam once again.

What Liam previously said had become his last straw of hope, waiting

for him to grasp it.

Nathaniel stared at Liam with firmness in his eyes. After a long while, he said in a deep voice, "Go in. I hope you can treat her. But if you kill my daughter, I will risk my life to take you down with me."

Liam nodded heavily and rushed to the emergency room.

At this moment, he finally saw Sylvia, the pitiful little girl who had gained the sympathy of so many people.

Sylvia's illness made her lose so much hair on her head.

There were numerous monitoring devices attached to her body.

The mechanical sounds and ticking of apparatus filled the emergency room.

For a moment, Liam felt a sense of suffocation. But he forced a smile and said gently, "Are you my little friend Sylvia? I'm the doctor your dad brought to treat you. I'm here to help you recover."

There was no trace of fear in Sylvia at all. Perhaps she had already become accustomed to the pain due to her illness.

Her face was pale, and her voice sounded very weak when she said, "Doctor, please treat me quickly.

My dad promised to take me to the amusement park once I'm discharged."

Such innocent joy from a child moved Liam deeply.

He gently touched Sylvia's head and said softly, "That sounds perfect. I will do my best to treat you. But remember to take care of your health and not let your dad worry anymore, okay?"

A glimmer of light appeared in Sylvia's dull eyes. She replied, "Yes. I'm very excited. It will be my first time going to the amusement park with my dad. Of course, I'm happy. But what can make me even happier is seeing my dad happy again. Doctor, maybe you don't know. My dad was going through a difficult time some time ago. He is finally happy these days."

Of course, Nathaniel fabricated his happiness in front of Sylvia.

Perhaps he didn't want to add any more worries to his daughter in her last moments.

As a child, going to the amusement park was also a form of fulfillment for Sylvia before her death.

After all, someone with a weak heart like her couldn't handle any stimulation.

Liam choked back the emotions that welled up in his heart.

He murmured through clenched teeth, "Clarence, you even used a little girl like her for your schemes. You deserve to die."

Liam took a deep breath to calm himself down. Then he gently held Sylvia's hand and began his diagnosis.

Due to severe malnutrition, her bones became clearly visible.

Soon, Liam finally understood Sylvia's condition.

She had severe heart failure.

And the most critical situation was the internal bleeding in her atrium.

This was the root cause of her heart failure.

When Liam finished his careful analysis, his forehead was already

covered in a cold sweat.

But he came to the conclusion that he could save her. It was just that the process would be extremely complicated.

For her to fully recover and live a normal life, a heart transplant was the only option.

Liam immediately established effective communication with the hospital.

They were not very optimistic about the surgery.

But they still provided all the necessary medical equipment.

The moment Liam saw the equipment, he couldn't help frowning.

He said in a low voice, "The Sacred Heart Hospital seems even more outdated than I imagined. They don't have a cardiac ultrasound machine, which is essential for heart surgery. No wonder they are clueless about cardiac resuscitation. They can't even detect internal bleeding in the atrium."

The lack of equipment made it difficult for Liam to perform the surgery.

If he couldn't monitor the heart's condition in real-time through the equipment, he would have to rely on his observation.

After he gave Sylvia an anesthetic, her body suddenly experienced cardiac arrhythmia.

If it was left unchecked, she wouldn't survive until the heart transplant.

Liam took a deep breath and sped up the surgery. He first used the defibrillator to precisely resuscitate Sylvia's heart.

After a few shocks, her heart rate finally stabilized.

However, it was only superficial.

And the only solution to Sylvia's illness was to stop the bleeding in the atrium.

Liam carefully picked up the scalpel and located the bleeding spot, relying on his perception.

Sylvia's heart was so fragile that it couldn't withstand extensive surgery.

Therefore, after finding the bleeding spot, Liam would make an incision near the heart.

He then exposed only the side of the heart where the bleeding occurred and repaired it.

Every step required absolute precision.

Liam felt the intense pressure, making his forehead covered in a layer of sweat.

He tried to keep his hand as steady as possible, lowered the scalpel, and began the incision.

The scalpel pierced through Sylvia's thin flesh and bone until it went deeper.

From a lateral angle, a small crack could be seen on the wall of the atrium.

Liam followed his strategy to cut open the flesh on the opposite side of the crack and began the repair process.

After a long time, the incision was finally stitched up. Liam's hand had

already become numb.

He breathed a deep sigh of relief and began the postoperative work.

When Sylvia's breathing finally started to stabilize, he wiped the sweat off his forehead and walked out of the room.

The door of the emergency room was pushed open.

A group of people surrounded Liam at once, bombarding him with a series of questions.

"How is Sylvia now?"



Chapter 465 If You Can Assist Me With One Task

A gentle grin graced Liam's features as he proclaimed with calm assurance, "She's out of danger."

What?

The crowd reacted in stunned shock.

He was just the head of some commercial empire, and yet he managed to heal Sylvia when even the entirety of Sacred Heart Hospital couldn't?

Nathaniel, overcome with elation, hastily summoned Sylvia's attending doctor, apprehensive that Liam's declaration might be false.

The doctor was more astounded than Nathaniel, amazed that such a complex heart failure case was resolved without high-end machinery.

Escorted by Nathaniel, the doctor rushed into the emergency room and began a thorough checkup of Sylvia.

The final outcome was astonishing. Sylvia was rescued!

The doctor's visage was frozen, his lips trembling as he muttered, "This is simply a miracle! This young girl gets a second chance at life!"

Bang!

Nathaniel fell to his knees before Liam, tears cascading down his cheeks, and professed, "Mr. Hoffman, I'm eternally grateful! I won't forget your generosity as long as I live!"

He'd held prior resentments against Liam.

Yet, in this instant, all he felt was thankfulness.

Because Sylvia was his world!

Every doubt and suspicion he harbored towards Liam vanished.

Witnessing this, Liam promptly lifted Nathaniel, patting his shoulder and asserting, "The critical state Sylvia was in was partially my fault. No need for such formalities. But remember, even though Sylvia is out of immediate danger, for her to lead a truly normal life, she must have a heart transplant at the earliest opportunity!"

When Nathaniel heard this, his countenance became grave.

He forced a grim chuckle and voiced his desolation. "All these years, it's been just Sylvia and me. A heart transplant operation costs a fortune, not to mention the endless pit of aftercare expenses. I can't bear it. I've thought about it, but I'm helpless."

His genuine words reflected a middle-aged man's struggle.

Several suppliers were aware of Nathaniel's family predicament, but they too were incapable of providing any significant help.

Liam paused to think, then resolved to aid this small family in surmounting their trials.

He addressed the crowd, declaring, "Sylvia is a child who has endured too much. At all costs, we should ensure she leads a comfortable life. If you can assist me with one task, I will pay two million dollars for Sylvia's heart transplant surgery!"

Upon hearing this, Nathaniel promptly stepped forth, gripping Liam's hand tightly, and earnestly queried, "Is it for real? Mr. Hoffman, if you can save my child, I wouldn't hesitate to give my life for you!"

Other suppliers, though they didn't possess Nathaniel's bravery to

offer their lives, pledged their support.

"We're in if we can make a difference!"

Liam's smile widened.

He promptly clarified, "Let's not turn this into a life-sacrificing event. The task I'm asking you to do is simple. Tonight, accompany me to the Royal Hotel together with Augustine. Expose the truth and reveal Clarence's true nature!"

Listening to this request, the suppliers collectively breathed a sigh of relief.

Nathaniel instantly stepped forward, bowing deeply, sincerely asserting, "We were all pawns in Clarence's game. If it hadn't been for Mr. Hoffman, we'd still be in the dark, manipulated by Clarence. Now that we're aware, even if you hadn't asked, we'd have stood up!"

"We're also ready to unveil the truth!"

The suppliers concurred.

Liam scanned the crowd and smiled. He could hardly wait to witness Clarence's reaction when he was called out by everyone. It was going to be a sight to see!

Chapter 466 Knowing The Truth

Julie was steeling herself for the upcoming confrontation, having sketched out a daring plan which risked her very existence.

However, Liam's safety was gnawing at her.

After grappling with her thoughts, she finally accessed her once-used email account, delivering a warning message to Liam.

"Stay away from Julie's birthday party. Clarence is planning your downfall!"

After she had sent the warning, determination washed over Julie's face.

She concealed a sharp knife within her sleeve, eagerly anticipating Clarence's arrival, as she intended to end his life.

In doing so, she could safeguard her chastity and shield Liam from harm.

Suddenly, Clarence appeared from the shadows.

A vile smirk was etched on his face, and he taunted her, "You bitch, are you all dressed up for the big party?"

As Julie caught sight of her target, a wave of fear swept Julie, causing her to retreat several steps.

Clarence's smirk intensified. He closed the gap between them. "What? Now you even don't dare to speak when you see me? Don't worry. Once Liam's out of the picture, you'll still be my little plaything. Loosen up."

Despite his taunts, Julie remained silent.

A flicker of displeasure passed over Clarence's face. He reached out his hand to touch Julie's face, encountering no resistance.

His interest piqued, he attempted to explore further, groping towards an unfamiliar area down her neck.

Just as he was about to touch her breast, Julie made up her mind!

She swiftly retrieved the knife from her sleeve and bellowed fiercely, "Clarence Norris, you bastard, go to hell!"

After uttering those words, she brandished the knife and lunged at the man, aiming to end his life with a lethal strike.

Clarence recoiled, his face drained of color.

He hadn't anticipated this boldness from Julie.

His retreat came too late to completely dodge her, resulting in a wound on his waist.

Ahhh!

A howl of agony split the air.

Clarence clutched his side, his gaze deadly.

Regaining his composure, he retaliated with a savage kick to Julie's belly.

A metallic clatter echoed around them!

The knife fell to the floor.

Overwhelmed, Julie crumpled to the floor, defenseless.

Clarence advanced, angrily seizing her hair, his voice thunderous. "Fuck you, bitch! How dare you want to kill me! Just wait and see. After tonight, I'll kill your whole family and train you to be a sex slave of Salem so that everyone can fuck you!"

At his words, rage flared in Julie's eyes. She glared back at Clarence, her voice ice-cold. "I hate it that I didn't destroy your Riley Group and let you, an animal, live on the streets!"

Ha ha ha...

Clarence's laughter boomed in response.

His face was a picture of contempt as he retorted, "Do you seriously believe you were aiding Liam? I've been aware of your attempts to gather intel from day one. Even Yolanda was my plant, misleading you. Those innocent folks on your list were all pawns in my game. If it hadn't been for you, Liam wouldn't have suspected anything wrong with his suppliers, and he wouldn't have launched an urgent investigation. He wouldn't have gone as far as sharing a public statement online, exposing the issue to the world. If it hadn't been for your foolish self-righteousness, my plan wouldn't have been as successful. Perhaps Kingland Group would have continued to struggle for a while longer if you hadn't taken those actions!"

What?

Julie's pupils contracted in disbelief. The realization struck hard. It was her who made this plan carried out and put Kingland Group on the verge of destruction?

She had been kept in the dark all along, used as a pawn by those evil people.

The weight of betrayal and realization settled heavily upon her.

Tears of warmth fell onto her fingertips, gently embracing her sorrow.

Chapter 400 Reading the Text
Julie lay on the floor, burdened by remorse.



Chapter 467 The Beginning Of The Banquet

"Keep an eye on her. Unless I say otherwise, she stays in there."

With that, Clarence let out a guttural laughter as he walked out.

His plan was simple. He was going to torture Julie slowly until she couldn't take it anymore.

Clarence was looking forward to the evening. This was the night when he would trample Liam under his feet.

He was also very eager to inform Liam that all the crisis the Kingland Group was facing, was thanks to the woman he loved, Julie.

Another guttural laughter escaped Clarence's mouth as he walked away.

Meanwhile, Liam was leaving the hospital when he received an email from Julie.

He frowned as he read the email address. It was the same one.

His frown deepened after he read the content of the email.

The last email had triggered the counterfeits incident of the Kingland Group.

One thing was certain. Clarence was behind this email.

It was not sent by Julie, as he had once thought.

Then again, the content of the email gave him a little hope. It read, "Don't come to the birthday party. Clarence has intentions of hurting you."

Perhaps Clarence controlled the email account, but this particular message couldn't be from him.

The man obviously wanted Liam to attend the birthday party. He had made it clear.

So maybe, just maybe, this email was really from Julie this time.

Liam tried to reason it out, his brows creasing in concentration. After thinking about it again for some time, he scoffed with a small smile hanging on his lips.

"I guess I'm not the only one being played. Clarence has been toying with both me and her. Oh, Clarence..." Liam clicked his tongue and continued under his breath, "You'll know how it feels soon enough. Don't you worry."

Trusting his instincts, Liam kept his phone aside without replying to the email.

There was no need to reply. Besides, he would worry Julie if he did.

He was going to expose the truth tonight.

Clarence would meet his end.

Then, once everything was taken care of, he would give Julie a beautiful surprise. ②

It was decided. He was going to take her back to the Hoffman family in the capital.

Just hearing that would be the best birthday gift for her.

The night came sooner than expected.

Clarence had worked really hard. The birthday party was probably the

greatest ever seen in Salem.

The party began right on time. With Julie's hand forcefully tucked in his, Clarence greeted the guests at the door.

Like a ghost, Julie stood there and played her part. She didn't really have a choice, seeing as Clarence was threatening her.

The entrance of the hotel was as crowded as could be.

One after the other, powerful people of Salem came and congratulated Clarence on his achievements.

"Congratulations, Mr. Norris. You have defended your title well as a descendant from a family with assets of hundreds of billions. The Riley Group has shot back up as if it never fell. It is even more prosperous than it was. How you managed to achieve that when you just took over is hallucinating."

"Mr. Norris, I envy you, really. You come from a powerful family, and you are blessed with a beautiful wife."

"Mr. Norris, everyone is talking about Rileymart. You see, I have a project now. Maybe we could discuss about cooperation."

Clarence smiled politely at all of them. "Don't flatter me, please. My aim is just to put the Riley Group back on track. Come in, please. I also invited a very important guest. I will introduce you when he comes later. Like you said, we can discuss about the cooperation later."

The guests looked at each other, wondering who this important guest was. A guest so important that the heir of the Norris family would talk about him with so much respect.

Now, they were curious to see whoever it was.

The guests swarmed in and took their seats.

Soon enough, most of the guests had come in and only few were still outside.

Clarence was disappointed not to see the one person he was expecting to see.

Julie, on the other hand, was relieved for the same reason.

Just as Clarence turned to get into the main hall, that familiar voice he had been waiting for stopped him.

"Happy birthday, Julie!"

It was Liam.

He looked dashing in his blue suit. He couldn't help but turn heads as he walked.

Julie was finally feeding her eyes with the one person she had been missing and longing to see. This situation, however, wasn't ideal. She didn't know if she had to be happy or scared.

To minimize any negative consequences to this meeting later, she avoided his gaze and acted as distant as she could.

"Thank you." Even her voice sounded distant.

Clarence sneered and draped his arm around Julie's waist, pulling her close to him before saying provocatively, "Isn't this Mr. Hoffman of the Kingland Group? I'm surprised you have the mood to attend Julie's birthday party. Maybe Kingland Group is not in as bad a place as I thought it was. I guess it can still survive for a few more days."

"I don't know if Kingland Group will survive or not," Liam answered casually. "But I know Rileymart will meet its end tonight. You should focus more on taking care of yourself."

Clarence looked at Liam as though he was crazy, then suddenly burst into laughter.

The next second, his laughter faded and he said coldly, "It's funny how you know you're done for, yet you're still trying to be arrogant. You should just accept your fate. I'll let anyone who wants to get even with you have some fun."



Chapter 468 Slapping Colette Across The Face

"By all means, please, throw whatever cards you have at me," Liam replied arrogantly, then walked into the hall like the guest of honour.

He looked around, then found a seat and sat down.

With all the exposure he had gotten on Facebook recently, he was recognized as soon as he came in. All those seated around him moved elsewhere.

Liam saw this, but didn't give a damn. He was more interested in the beautiful play he was about to watch.

He was going to wait for Clarence to reach the top, where he knew he was king, before throwing his own bullet and bringing the hateful man down.

Kevin saw Liam and walked over to him with a glass of wine in hand.

He was quite delighted to see Liam. How could he not be? After the humiliation Liam inflicted on him last time, he was finally going to return the favour today.

With fake enthusiasm, he said, "Mr. Hoffman, it's been long since I saw you. What do you think of my Royal Hotel this time? Not bad, right? The fall of the Kingland Group has really helped the hotel. I mean, we have more clients than we can handle. I know that there was some bad energy between us after that little incident that happened. I'm willing to let it go and extend a helping hand. The Von Merri Hotel of the Kingland Group is run-down and must consume more money than it brings in, if at all it does bring money in. I can buy it at a low price. Just to help you out."

Colette wasn't far behind with her own proposal. "I was going to say

something similar, Mr. Hoffman. You have to be very smart right now. Or you'll lose everything. I'm quite interested in the Hollywood Pub. It's closed, and people still splash paint on the doors and vandalise it everyday. Keeping it is useless for you. Sell them to us. At least that way, you'll come out of this with some money. If you wait until the Kingland Group goes bankrupt, you won't get anything."

Liam scoffed and shook his head softly.

Just as Clarence had warned, many people wanted to get under his skin. They wasted no time in manifesting themselves.

Looking straight ahead and shaking his glass, Liam said, "Because you have earned some money, you think you can stand before the real rich man, don't you? Don't you feel shameless begging this way?"

Colette got furious at Liam's attitude. "Kingland Group will cease to exist. Where is all this arrogance from? Do you know who I am? I'm from the Hopkins family in the capital. You should be glad that I'm willing to help you out by buying your miserable pub. You ungrateful twat!"

It was only after she introduced herself that Liam's expression finally shifted. He stopped shaking his glass and asked coldly, "Are you the one who slapped Miss Greyson in Kingland Group?"

"That's right, it was me," she answered arrogantly. "That employee of yours was insubordinate. I helped you educate her."

Out of nowhere, Liam slapped Colette across the face as hard as he would a man. She almost fainted as she staggered back, her face red and swollen.

"What the..."

Kevin was shocked. How could Liam do such a thing in public?

He supported Colette and they stepped away from Liam. He bared his teeth at Liam and said, "Trust me, you won't remain arrogant for long. I may not be able to do anything to you now, but the time will come when you'll be at the bottom of the ladder, and that time will come sooner than later. That is when I'll show you how wrong you were."

With that, Kevin turned and left, the woman leaning against him like a hurt kitten.

Of course, their show had pulled the attention of many guests. This was why none of them wanted anything do with Liam. They didn't want to get into trouble.

This also confirmed what was being said about him on the Internet.

While everyone else minded his business, Liam cared little about all of them. He ignored the little whispers around him and looked ahead proudly.

He came here today for one reason only, and that was to wipe Clarence out of the picture.

The party soon began officially.

Clarence walked to the centre of the stage with Julie on his arm.

His gaze zeroed in on Liam who was seated all alone in a corner. Then, he said loudly, "Liam, how can you sit there so comfortably when the Kingland Group is on the verge of collapsing?"

Chapter 469 Julie's Clarification

Clarence's words seemed to spark up something in the hall.

The guests looked at Liam and began to criticize him.

"After all the bad things you have done, you still act like everything is dandy in your life. You're really shameless."

"Can you drive this scum out? The longer he stays in our presence, the greater the chances of us being accused of having fake products are."

"How exactly did he get in here anyway? What is the security of the Royal Hotel doing? Don't they know their job?"

At the mention of his hotel, a smug Kevin said apologetically, "It's all my fault. I should have made sure they didn't let that wild dog in."

Julie's face remained blank and expressionless throughout.

It was a difficult pill to swallow. Watching the man she loved being insulted and humiliated when he wasn't at fault.

It got to a point where Julie couldn't take it anymore. She grabbed the microphone abruptly and shouted into it, "Clarence is the one that orchestrated the counterfeits incident of the Kingland Group. He manipulated someone of the Kingland Group and framed Funbuy to make it look like they sold counterfeits. He did this to ruin the reputation of the Kingland Group. With the Kingland group out of the way, Rileymart will win Funbuy's market."

The hall fell silent as she said this.

They were all looking at Julie in confusion and disbelief. How come Mr. Norris' fiancée was speaking for Liam?



Liam, on the other hand was beyond happy. He was right.

Julie still loved him. She had never stopped loving him.

She only stayed with Clarence to get information. Now, he was certain that those emails really came from her.

She too had been fooled by Clarence.

Liam was in cloud nine when the loud sound of a slap jerked him out of his reverie.

Clarence slapped Julie in the face.

"You bitch!" he shouted and seized the microphone back.

He looked at the guests, reassuring them, "I'm so sorry that you had to witness this. My fiancée, Julie, has been cheating on me with Liam. She leaked my company's confidential information to the Kingland Group. Luckily, I found out in time and saved the Riley Group from ruin. When she knew I found out about her affair and her misdoings, she knelt down and begged me to forgive her. She promised to never do it again, and to make it up to me. Of course, out of the kindness in my heart, I forgave her and gave her another chance."

After a deliberate pause, he continued, "But clearly, she still loves Liam. Why else would she frame me like this to protect him?"

The guests instantly sided with Clarence. His story made more sense.

"Mr. Norris, such a bitch doesn't deserve to be your fiancée. I have a daughter that is better than her."

"Mr. Norris, you really are generous to forgive her after she cheated on you."

The guests all criticized Julie and praised Clarence.

Julie's words were not enough to really make them believe that Liam, whom they already had a bad impression of, was innocent.

Clarence loved how the guests were reacting to this. Of course, he kept a sad expression on his face as he said, "You are all right. I shouldn't have wasted my time with a woman like her. In light of this, I break off my engagement with her. I will equally sever all business contacts with the Cortez family."

Clarence was a cunning fox. He was publicly boycotting the Cortez family and inciting the other powerful families to do same.

Sure enough, that was exactly what happened. Most of the families that wanted to work with Rileymart, did just that.

"I don't think a family that has raised women like that is trustworthy. I won't cooperate with the Cortez family either."

Practically everyone in the hall said the same thing.

Kohen was livid. His face had turned deathly pale. His family was doomed.

He had to do damage control. He stood up quickly and apologized to everyone, "I'm sorry. I'm at fault for raising such a loser with no principles. But please, we all know Liam. He has manipulated her. Don't let him get in the way of our peaceful cooperations. I will be more strict with her."

When his plea was met with silence, Kohen knew it was over.

He turned to Julie and shouted, "Look at what you've done! Get down on your knees and apologize to Mr. Norris! If you can't get his forgiveness, then, I will break off the relationship with your family."

Yesenia looked up in alarm at this, feeling even more anxious now. Today was meant to be a happy day without any trouble. What

happened to her happy day?

Her eyes unconsciously fell on Liam. Liam happened to her happy day. She shouted hysterically, "This is all your fault, your poor man. I asked you to stay away from my daughter!"

Liam was already used to Yesenia and her outbursts.

Unaffected, he ignored her and rushed to the stage to meet Julie.

As they stared into each other's eyes, the whole world disappeared and they felt like they were all alone. The barriers that held them apart seemed to have evaporated into thin air.

Finally, here they were, facing each other again.

"Julie, I promise you, we will never be apart again."

Tears welled up in Julie's eyes as she nodded fervently, then fell into Liam's arms and hugged him tightly. "I will face every challenge with you. Let's go!" she said over his shoulder.

"First, I have to get even with someone."

The words were barely out of his mouth, when he turned and slapped Clarence hard.

Liam held Clarence in place with his glare and said, "Do you think you can defeat the Kingland Group with these stories you keep making up or by playing some dirty tricks?"

The slap had been so sudden that Clarence took some time to recover from the shock of it.

As soon as he came back to his senses, he shouted angrily, "How dare you lay your hand on me? Neither of you will leave this hotel today. Just you wait and see. You claim that I played dirty tricks. What

evidence do you have? The Kingland Group is going to collapse. That much is already obvious. Everyone now knows what type of company it is."

The guests off the stage echoed their agreement.

"I always heard that the Kingland Security are from the underworld. After seeing their CEO in action today for myself, I believe that the rumors are true."

"The best thing that can happen is for them to go bankrupt. The sooner, the better."



Chapter 470 The Appearance Of Otis

Clarence got more confident with the support of the guests.

He stood straight and said to Liam, "The Funbuy is already coming to an end. No one will support you, so just let go. It's almost 12 o'clock. As you know, the shopping festival of Rileymart will officially begin. Since you're acting so brave, do you have the guts to compare the data of Funbuy with that of Rileymart? If it will make you accept defeat and just give up, I'm all for it."

Clarence tried to stare Liam down, challenging him.

Whether Liam bit the bullet and agreed to do it or not, he would be humiliated in the end.

However, Clarence hoped that Liam would choose to show the data to everyone.

That was the only way Funbuy could be completely disregarded.

Better still, it would make Rileymart shine.

Clarence quietly waited for Liam's response, enjoying his position of power.

"Alright then. Let's do that," Liam said with a confident smile on his face.

That was what Clarence hoped to hear, but it still surprised him that Liam dared to expose the data of Funbuy.

It made no sense. Both Funbuy and the Kingland Group barely got anything in, in the last few days.

Clarence was more inclined to believe that Liam was bluffing. He wouldn't really do it.

With a smirk, Clarence asked Kevin to set up a huge LED screen on the stage. After that, he asked his employees to show the sales data of Rileymart.

"It's your turn," Clarence said smugly once he was done. He was eager to see what trick Liam would pull now.

However, before everyone, Liam called Vivian and asked her to send the sales data of Funbuy.

Before coming to the party tonight, Liam had run a few errands first. He handed over the truth to the media outlet under the Kingland Group.

He also told many other media outlets about it.

So while they were all in here, the truth of the counterfeits incident of the Kingland Group was spread everywhere on the Internet.

Public opinion started shifting very quickly too.

So yes, Liam was confident about the sales data of Funbuy.

Even if this one failed, he had other trump cards. He had nothing to worry about.

Now that everything was prepared, they all just needed to wait for 12 o'clock to arrive.

As the time got closer, Clarence stepped onto the stage again and announced, "If you all remember, I mentioned that an important guest would be joining us. He is a new partner of Rileymart. You must want to know why he personally came here. It is to officially announce that he is going to cooperate with us. Everyone, he just arrived. I call on all

of you to give him the warmest applause. Welcome to the party, CEO of PeachByte, Mr. Otis Olson!"

Otis Olsen?

They couldn't believe that Clarence was talking about a big shot like Otis.

The Olsen family hadn't been an established family for long, but it was now one of the families with assets worth trillions of dollars.

Coming here himself to announce his cooperation with Rileymart was really an honor to the Norris family.

He wasn't just any member of the Olsen family, but the head of the family.

Clarence basked in the glory. Everyone was surprised and probably wondering how he pulled it off.

He threw Liam a smug look. Otis had been his trump card to take down Funbuy.

A few seconds later, Otis walked in in all his glory.

Dressed in a refined casual suit, he had an intimidating air about him. One that commanded respect.

Only someone that had known power for so long could hold himself in such a way.

A beautiful woman followed behind him, holding a tray that housed the latest product of his company.

That new phone was set to be released soon.

"Could the new phone be the project Mr. Olsen and Rileymart are

working on?"

Whispers could be heard as Otis walked by. As soon as he held the microphone and stood in front of everyone, calm returned to the hall as if on command.

"The new phone you see is the latest product we just developed. It is..."

No one was interested in the introduction of the product.

What they wanted to know was how the new phone would work with Rileymart, and if they could in turn benefit from it.

Otis' introduction soon came to an end. He glanced around and continued, "The development of the e-commerce platforms is really fast. They have created a new mode for shopping. With that, we have decided to do an exclusive launching of our new phone on an e-commerce platform."

Everyone was shocked by this piece of news.

The hall became rowdy again.

"We may have underestimated the power of Rileymart. They were able to easily reach an agreement with PeachByte. It seems that the Norris family is ready to move to greater heights."

"I can't wait to cooperate with the Riley Group. I can already see myself making a lot of money."

On stage, Clarence himself was shocked by this announcement.

They hadn't spoken about an exclusive launch when they negotiated this deal.

He glanced at Liam again, silently gloating.

However, Liam looked undisturbed.

Clarence wondered why, then shrugged it off. He thought Liam had to be pretending so as not to look weak.

He was right. Liam was indeed pretending, but not for the reason he thought. Liam was hiding his joy.

Otis was soon done with all the introductions.

Now, he was going to announce the company he would be cooperating with.

Seeing this, Clarence called out the reporters and cameramen he had earlier arranged for.

The equipment was already in place.

The reporters had their mics out, and the cameras were aimed at Otis.

Now, he just had to say it.

Chapter 471 The Truth

"Everyone, our new product will be launched and sold for one month exclusively on Funbuy application!" Otis declared, his voice resonating across the hall. The guests were taken aback and thrown into an uproar.

"Hold on a second. Wasn't he invited by the Riley Group? How did he end up teaming up with Funbuy?"

"What's going on here? Is there some kind of mix-up?"

Clarence stood there, stunned beyond belief, convinced that there must be some form of error.

He hastily approached Otis, and said in a hushed tone. "Mr. Olson, are you sure you didn't get the name wrong? Our platform is Rileymart, not Funbuy."

Otis chuckled mischievously, a glimmer of amusement in his eyes.

"But we did sign a contract with Funbuy. I didn't make a mistake, did I?" he playfully replied.

Clarence's face drained of color. It suddenly hit him that he had been deceived.

He shifted his gaze to Liam, who wore a wicked grin on his face.

Clarence could remember their negotiation process.

Otis took the initiative to reach out to him and said he would like to attend the birthday party, where he would announce an cooperation about the new product of his company.

Naturally, Clarence had assumed it was with him.

Little did he expect that the actual partner would be Funbuy.

Clearly, Otis was helping Liam and merely fooled him.

Rage consumed Clarence as he grasped the situation. He lowered his voice and confronted Otis, seething with anger. "Mr. Olson, have you no sense of decency? Why did you join forces with Liam to play tricks on me? You should know the notorious reputation of Kingland Group. They peddled counterfeit products and put the blame on their employees. If you associate your new product with Funbuy, it'll damage your brand's reputation!"

Otis casually adjusted his tie.

He met Clarence's gaze and said coldly, "Apparently, you don't have the authority to dictate who I partner with!"

Despite his defeat, Clarence refused to back down. He was determined to continue tarnishing Kingland Group's reputation, hoping to salvage a chance for partnership.

But Liam interrupted, "How long do you plan on smearing Kingland Group? Do you honestly believe you can fool everyone with these petty tricks? Today, the truth will be revealed. And Rileymart will crumble!"

As Liam finished speaking, Nathaniel, the other suppliers, and Augustine who were seated in the midst of the crowd, all surged toward the stage.

Clarence's heart sank as he saw this. He then quickly asked, "What do you intend to do?"

The group remained silent. Smirks adorned their faces, as they took hold of the microphone.

Augustine took the lead. "Ladies and gentlemen, it was me who leaked the evidence of Funbuy selling counterfeits. However, it was all part of an elaborate setup orchestrated by me. Clarence abducted my parents and forced me to smear Kingland Group. He even coerced me into harassing the suppliers and shifting the blame onto Mr. Hoffman. And even after all that, he didn't release my parents but continued to blackmail me into working for him. It was only thanks to Mr. Hoffman's intervention that my parents were saved. Today, I finally have the chance to expose the truth!"

Nathaniel then collected the microphone from Augustine. "I thought Mr. Norris was a decent guy, willing to help my daughter. I was genuinely grateful for his assistance. Little did I know, we were all just pawns in his twisted game. He used financial aid to manipulate me, turning my daughter into a mere tool for his own plan. It nearly cost her life! If it wasn't for Mr. Hoffman..."

In that short but sincere speech, the truth was laid bare for everyone to see.

The audience exploded into chaos.

No one had anticipated the truth of the scandal surrounding Kingland Group.

Besides, Otis had taken Liam's side.

This tipped the scales of public opinion in his favor.

"I never thought Rileymart could be so shameless!"

"They've committed so many despicable acts!"

Whispers and criticisms rippled through the crowd, growing louder by the second.

Suddenly, cries of astonishment echoed among the guests.



"Check the news!"

Hearing this, everyone frantically grabbed their phones, scrambling to get the latest updates.

Facebook was ablaze with numerous media outlets' reportage, which made the Riley Group the hottest trending topic.

"The individuals involved in the Kingland Group's counterfeits scandal have come forward, claiming they were under the influence of the Riley Group."

"Is the Riley Group using underhanded tactics to manipulate public opinion and gain unfair advantage in business?"

Outrage swelled as the reports flooded in.

Countless Internet users began lashing out at the Riley Group.

"I knew Funbuy was innocent all along. Every purchase I've made on it has been verified as genuine. How dare they accuse them of selling counterfeits?"

"Don't even get me started. Just two days ago, I made the mistake of buying some things from Rileymart, and they were riddled with defects!"

"I should have never blamed the innocent app. The Riley Group has crossed all limits. They deserve to go bankrupt!"

"We must boycott Rileymart's products!"

Seeing this, Clarence felt a surge of panic.

The situation had spun out of control at an alarming speed.

Just then, Dennis stormed onto the stage in a frenzy, his voice filled

with anxiety. "Mr. Norris, at the beginning of the party, Kingland Group already began clarifying the truth on Facebook. And to make matters worse, PeachByte has officially announced their partnership with Funbuy..."



Chapter 472 Funbuy Won

When Clarence, who was already in a foul mood, heard Dennis' panicked voice, anger surged within him which fueled the urge to lash out and he gave Dennis a swift kick.

"Well, why are you still hanging around here? Go and let the public relations team release a statement! This smear campaign against our group is downright outrageous!" Clarence snapped as his frustration reached new heights.

Dennis, who had just been kicked, quickly withdrew with a sense of grievance.

The actions of the Riley Group had swift consequences. Countless paid Internet users popped up on Facebook, rallying against the injustice inflicted upon Rileymart. They hinted at the Kingland Group's shady bribery efforts that screwed Rileymart over.

Gradually, public opinion calmed down a bit. The whole incident left some folks unsure about what was true and not true.

While many continued to criticize, Rileymart managed to scrape by somehow.

Otis said to Clarence playfully, "So, is this why you are confident my PeachByte will cooperate with Rileymart?"

Clarence's face flushed, and he struggled to keep his temper in check.

But the truth was, the man in front of him happened to be the big shot leading a clan worth trillions of dollars. No matter what went down, if a brawl broke out between them, Clarence would definitely end up taking some serious blows.

To make matters worse, things weren't looking too rosy for Rileymart.

How Clarence longed for a chance to partner up with PeachByte.

He took a deep breath, suppressing his frustration, and carried on with his argument in a hushed tone. "Mr. Olson, who knows what the truth is? Let's be practical here and focus on the actual sales data of our platform. We'll just have to wait and see how Rileymart performs during the shopping festival. If we manage to outshine Funbuy, will you reconsider a partnership?"

Glancing at his watch, Otis raised an eyebrow, realizing it was already 12 o'clock.

"I can't wrap my head around your unwavering confidence. Perhaps you should be more concerned about whether Rileymart's shopping festival turns into a complete disaster or not."

Clarence found himself at a loss for words. He decided to retreat and reopen negotiations with Otis once the data was unveiled.

The enormous LED screen displayed the soaring sales figures for both shopping platforms.

It captured everyone's attention.

Excitement filled the air as the guests anxiously stared at the numbers on both sides, holding their breath in anticipation of the final outcome.

In a matter of minutes, the gap between Funbuy and Rileymart widened at an alarming pace, with Funbuy's sales figures comfortably surpassing those of Rileymart.

The margin continued to grow rapidly, causing Clarence to enter a state of disbelief.

"No way! This can't be happening! Funbuy must be fabricating fake

data! They're pulling a fast one!"

Clarence couldn't accept this result and launched into a frenzy of questioning.

The guests began discussing among themselves.

"Rileymart made such a fuss, but is this all they've got?"

"They employed numerous tricks to undermine Funbuy, yet the results are far from satisfactory. It seems like Rileymart is truly struggling. Perhaps we shouldn't rush into a blind partnership with them."

Anyone with a keen eye could discern the authenticity of the data.

The victory undoubtedly belonged to Funbuy.

With the verdict now sealed, a mischievous smile crept onto the corners of Otis's mouth as he couldn't resist taunting Clarence again. "Looks like my judgment was spot-on."

When Clarence heard those words, his expression turned fierce, and he clenched his fists tightly as wild thoughts raced through his mind.

Just then, Dennis hastily made his way back to the stage.

He approached Clarence and leaned in to whisper urgently, "Mr. Norris, I have some bad news! The police received a tip-off and they're planning to investigate you! They suspect you of intentional abduction!"

What?

So, this whole ordeal had been meticulously planned right from the beginning!

Only now did Clarence fully grasp the extent to which he had been

deceived, played like an absolute fool from start to finish.

He muttered to himself, seething with anger, "You're asking for troubles!"



Chapter 473 The Banquet Was Over

Clarence set everything up to perfection before the banquet began.

He asked Emerson to lurk around the Royal Hotel with the Dragon Gang.

The plan was to get rid of Liam and Kingland Security definitively. This was going to happen after Rileymart defeated Funbuy inside the party.

Unfortunately, things hadn't gone according to plan, and he had to move things up.

Clarence discreetly took out his intercom and said in a low voice into it, "Get ready to attack."

"Got it!"

After that, Clarence looked at Liam as if nothing was amiss.

Then, he said as arrogantly as he normally would, "I did warn that you will pay for this, didn't I? Well, none of you will leave this place today."

From behind him, Clarence heard the door of the hall open.

Emerson and the Dragon Gang weren't supposed to come in so soon.

He turned, expecting to see them, but was shocked by what he saw.

Those were definitely not the Dragon Gang.

It was the police.

They walked in, and onto the stage until they stopped in front of the

man they came here for.

The lead officer took out his identification and held it for Clarence to see. "Mr. Norris, you are under arrest on suspicion of intentional kidnapping and malicious destruction of a business. Please cooperate and leave with us to investigate this further."

Clarence was still trying to understand what was going on. He was being arrested in a small city like Salem?

Dennis had warned him that something like this could happen, but he never believed that the police could really try locking him up because of a stupid report online.

Now, he had to believe it. It was happening.

Clarence's face turned red with anger. "How did you do your job? Do you know who I am? How dare you arrest me based on a mere rumour? I'm the heir of the Norris family in the capital. You can't arrest me without any evidence. Or I'll sue you and make sure you lose your job!"

Seeing that Clarence wasn't going to cooperate, the officer lost his polite attitude and said coldly, "The people you had kidnapped are presently in the police station and have testified against you. Now, cooperate with us, or we will charge you for resisting and for being obstructive to the law."

Clarence's face paled at this.

He realized that having the government against him wasn't the best way to go, so he went with the police.

As Clarence left with the police, the hall erupted into chaos.

"What the hell is happening? How can he be arrested at his own party?"

"Maybe what they say on the Internet is true. Clarence might have played a lot of tricks."

"Even with all the schemes he concocted, Rileymart still can't defeat Funbuy. We may have just underestimated Kingland Group. We should respect it more from now on."

One after the other, the guests left the hotel.

Not far away, the Dragon Gang stopped their attack. They couldn't go ahead with their plan with the police around.

It would bring them a lot of trouble if the police got their eyes on them.

However, Emerson couldn't just give up like that. "Damn it! I didn't anticipate this moment just for the police to ruin it for me!"

Upon hearing his outburst, Douglass Lyons, one of his trusted subordinates suggested, "Mr. Davies, this is not our only option. We can get him someway else."

Douglass went on to explain his plan. At the end of it, Emerson's face had relaxed back into a beautiful smile.

"You're smart, much to my surprise," Emerson said and added, "We'll do just that. Kill Liam, and you'll be heavily rewarded."

Douglass nodded excitedly. "Thank you, Mr. Davies. I'll lead the team to besiege Liam now."

Back in the Royal Hotel, the hall was almost empty.

Julie's mother, Yesenia, was complaining while Kohen left angrily.

She looked at her daughter and scolded, "Do you see what you've done? I told you to avoid this loser of a man. Come on, let's go back home."

Then, she looked at Liam and said, "Don't think that your little tricks can ever make you superior to Mr. Norris. No matter what happens to him, he will remain the heir of his clan which has assets worth hundreds of billion dollars. Can you say the same for yourself when you are only working for others? The only person Julie deserves is Mr. Norris. Better give up before you completely lose face!"

Julie tugged at her mother's sleeve unhappily. She didn't like what Yesenia was saying. "You shouldn't say that, Mom. Liam and I really love each other. He's the one I want to be with."

Yesenia's face was red with anger.

She pointed at Julie and shouted, "He must have done something to you. But I don't care. You will either listen to me and leave him, or I will sever all ties with you."

Julie's heart started beating faster. What was she going to do now? Should she choose the man she loved or her mother?

Neither of those options sat right with her. She wanted both of them.

Suddenly, she felt a sharp pain in her head and screamed, "Ah!"

She stooped down in pain and held her head. She felt as if it was going to explode.

Liam helped her up quickly, looking at her with concern and love in his eyes. "Julie, we can leave Salem and never come back. We can go to someplace else where we will be happy together. No matter where we are, trust me, I'll always make you happy."

His words pulled Julie in and touched her heart.

Then, all her memories with Liam, the ones she had forgotten suddenly flooded her mind.

She could remember everything.

She looked up at Liam in a new way and fell into his arms, holding him as tight as she could. "I'll go with you," she said, her voice choked with tears.

She pulled herself together, then took a deep breath and looked at her mother.

"Mom, I've spent all my life listening to you. I'm going to listen to myself for a change. I won't let you use me as some money making tool. If you insist on matching me up with Clarence, then I'll cut off ties with you."

The determination in her voice couldn't be missed.

In anger, Yesenia shouted, "If you want to leave, then leave. Hurry up! Why are you still here? It's my fault for bringing up an ungrateful arse like you. How can you abandon your mother for a poor boy like him? I only want the best for you. I want you to have a good life. That's why I chose Mr. Norris for you. I did it for you, and you think it's for myself. You can go. I'll be fine without you! From now on, I will consider that I have no daughter." ②

From the corner of her eyes, Yesenia observed Julie to see her reaction. This was the only card she had.

She really hoped that it worked. It always did.

This time though, Julie didn't let her mother's acting fool her.

Now that she had fully recovered her memory, she realized how much she had missed Liam.

She never wanted to feel that way again. She didn't want to spend one more day away from him.

"Take care, Mom," Julie said and left with Liam. ❁



Chapter 474 Being Attacked

Liam and Julie walked to the underground parking lot and got into the familiar second-hand Toyota.

Liam was so happy. He was finally alone with her.

"Julie, you've finally recovered your memory. No one will ever hurt you again. I promise."

Julie nodded heavily, tears welling up in her eyes. She lay in Liam's arms and let the beautiful feeling she hadn't felt in a long time fill her.

They stayed in each other's arms for a long time until Liam suddenly said, "Julie, marry me."

Julie looked up at him in stunned silence. Then, she lowered her gaze shyly and said, "You haven't even proposed to me yet, and you want us to marry already?"

With a smile on his face, Liam stroked her hair. "That means you'll say yes if I propose to you, right? I promise you, Julie. I'm going to give you the biggest and the most luxurious proposal ceremony. Everyone will witness our love."

Julie was so overwhelmed by her emotions that she couldn't even manage to say a word.

Silently, she leaned in and touched her red lips to Liam's, their heart beats merging into one.

They kissed each other passionately for long, enjoying each other's warmth and refusing to part.

It was only when they started running out of breath that they broke