The Ashes 511

Chapter 511 Serenas piercing scream echoed from behind, forcing Harvey to whip around in shock. To his horror, he saw lan and Ted, two of the most respected elders of the Weller family, dragging Serena across the ground by her hair, pulling her out from hiding

4 You two old bastards! Let go of me! I command you, as the family matriarch, to release me immediately! Are you really going to defy your master? Serena shrieked.

Her disheveled hair and furious expression made her look like a vengeful ghost.

Half of her face was bruised and swollen, evidence of a slap.

Harvey rushed forward, alarmed

Elders, what are you doing? Let Serena go, now! However, before he could say more, one of the elders kicked him square in the stomach, sending him flying backward.

Harvey tumbled to the ground, rolling over several times before coming to a stop, gasping for air, and almost spitting blood

11 As he staggered to his feet, dazed and clutching his burning abdomen, he roared, You old fools! What do you think youre doing? How dare you attack me, your head of the family? Do you have a death wish? Never in his wildest dreams had Harvey thought he would be struck, and certainly not by members of his own family

He was the leader of the Weller family, the one who held ultimate authority over them.

However, lan and Ted were the familys most powerful elders, and they were far from intimidated. lan, who had kicked him, sneered

You shameless fool, do you really not know why youre being punished? Teds voice was icy.

Why waste words on him? This kind of scum should be beaten to death

Otherwise, how will the Weller family maintain its reputation among the elite of Jayrodale? Harveys face turned ghostly pale as he stumbled backward

A Are you two really going to rebel against me? lan shouted, his voice booming with anger.

You fool, are the rumors true? Is it true that you've been having an affair with Serena? Harvey stammered instinctively, No, absolutely not! Ted, who had not struck yet, moved like lightning, appearing in front of Harvey and landing a mighty slap across his face.

Harvey let out a sharp cry as blood gushed out of his mouth, staining his chin and clothes.

Clutching his throbbing cheek, Harvey glared at them with a mix of hatred and desperation.

What did I do wrong? How dare you treat me like this? Dont you realize that with one word, I could have you both executed? The elders merely laughed coldly.

Even now, youre still lying and refusing to admit your crimes.

Harvey, do you think your late father would forgive you? Do you think youve lived up to the Weller family name, to our ancestors? If it werent for the rumors spreading outside, we would still be in the dark, deceived by you, you despicable animal

To think you and Serena could stoop so low! Harveys expression twisted with rage as he shouted, Ive told you, I didnt do anything! How dare you accuse me without proof? Both elders sneered.

Didnt do anything? Serena already confessed, yet youre still denying it? Are you really going to force us to strip away the last shreds of your dignity and expose you completely? Harveys mind buzzed as if it were about to explode

There was no escape now, no way to refute the accusations.

Serena, sobbing uncontrollably, suddenly cried out, Harvey, Im pregnant... with your child! Harvey felt the world spin around him, as though the ground had been yanked out from under his feet. What had started as pleasure had now turned into a nightmare, a disaster with no way out.

For families like theirs, nothing was more feared than public scandal

Francesca had endured Simons behavior to avoid damaging the Aickers reputation, but Harveys situation was infinitely worse

His disgrace meant there was no question he would be stripped of his position as head of the family. Panic gripped his heart as he dropped to his knees with a loud thud, tears streaming down his face. Bowing repeatedly to the elders, he pleaded, Please, I was wrong.

Ill never do it again.

Chapter 512 Please, just give me one more chance! I promise to turn over a new leaf and lead the Weller family responsibly, Harvey pleaded, his forehead nearly touching the floor. The two elders exchanged glances, their eyes burning with a desire to punish him severely.

However, there was no escaping the reality Harvey was Kanes only heir.

If they removed him, the Weller family would need to choose a new head, and frankly, there was not anyone else who seemed even remotely suitable.

Though Harvey was reckless and immoral, he had proven competent as the family leader.

The recent surge in profits from their wellness products was his doing, helping to pull the family out of a dire financial crisis.

Fine, get up, lan said in frustration.

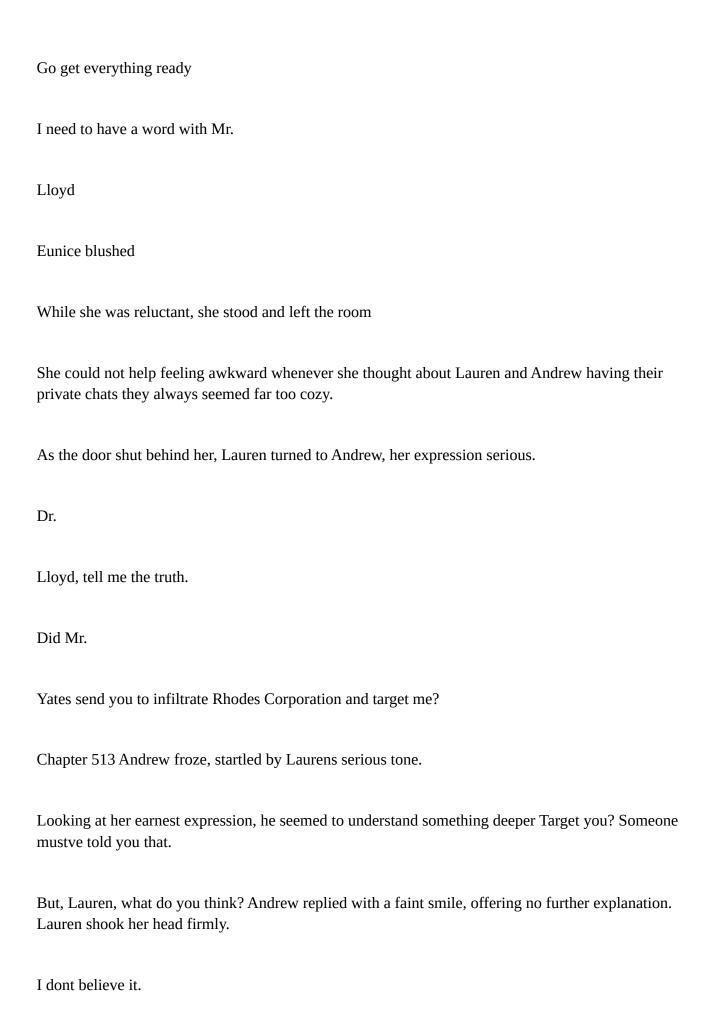
It was as if he speaking to an utter disappointment.

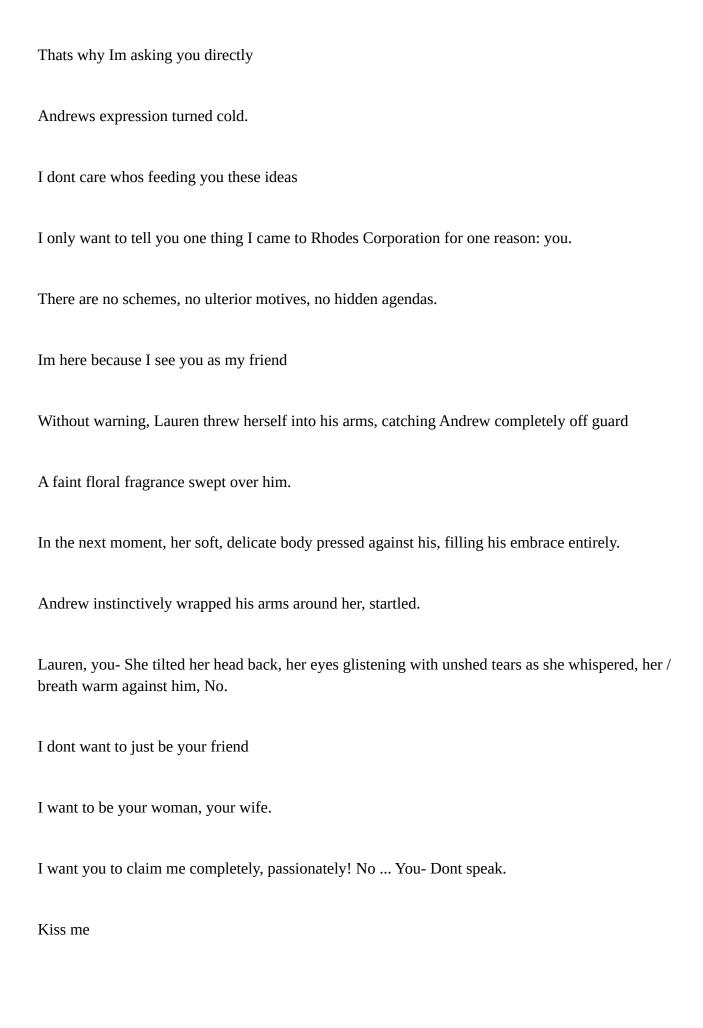
Having someone like you as head of the family is a disgrace, but its our misfortune, not yours.

Ted gritted his teeth.

But listen carefully, you pathetic fool.
You may remain as the family head, but your disgraceful relationship with Serena ends now.
If we ever find out that you continued this filth, it wont just be Serena who pays the price youll both die! Harvey nodded fervently.
Rest assured
Ill cut all ties with Serena immediately.
I swear Ill never see her again.
The elders gave their orders.
Take Serena to the late patriarchs grave.
She will serve as a mourner for three years, and under no circumstances is she to leave before then.
As Serena was dragged away, her face streaked with tears, Harvey lowered his gaze.
His heart was full of regret not for his actions, but for losing his delightfully indulgent Serena.
lan scowled.
The Weller family is already on the brink of ruin, ridiculed by everyone.
Harvey, as head of the family, its your job to restore our reputation.
If you fail, well have no choice but to replace you! Ted snorted
Ive come out of seclusion stronger than ever, having reached the senior grandmaster level.







Hard! Lauren murmured, closing her eyes and lifting her vibrant, kissable lips to meet his

Her lips were impossibly soft, smooth as silk, and carried the faint sweetness of her lipstick. The kiss flooded Andrews mind with a whirlwind of sensations.

He had been surrounded by beautiful women before, but this was the first time he had truly crossed the boundary of intimacy.

Laurens bold move was like lightning striking dry tinder a spark igniting a roaring inferno

The kiss grew deeper and more consuming, and an overwhelming rush of passion erupted within Andrew

Lauren was lost in this whirlwind, and her entire body trembled under his embrace.

The intensity of it all left her breathless, her neck arched, her pale skin glistening with a fine sheen of sweat

Andrews kisses were fierce and unrelenting yet somehow balanced with just enough restraint to avoid causing her discomfort.

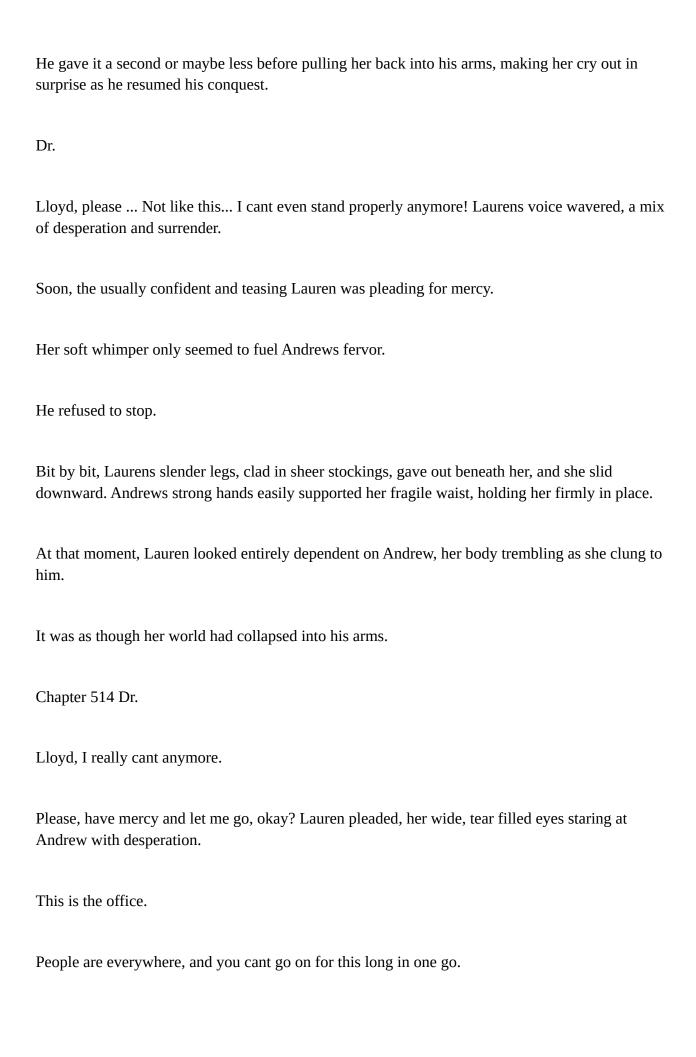
They were like a sudden spring rain intense yet refreshing, soaking every fiber of her being without overwhelming her.

The two of them stayed entwined, lost in the moment, unaware of time slipping by.

When Lauren finally pulled back, gasping for air, her cheeks flushed, she managed to whisper, Dr. Lloyd, wait... I cant breathe! Andrew smirked.

Alright, Ill stop for now

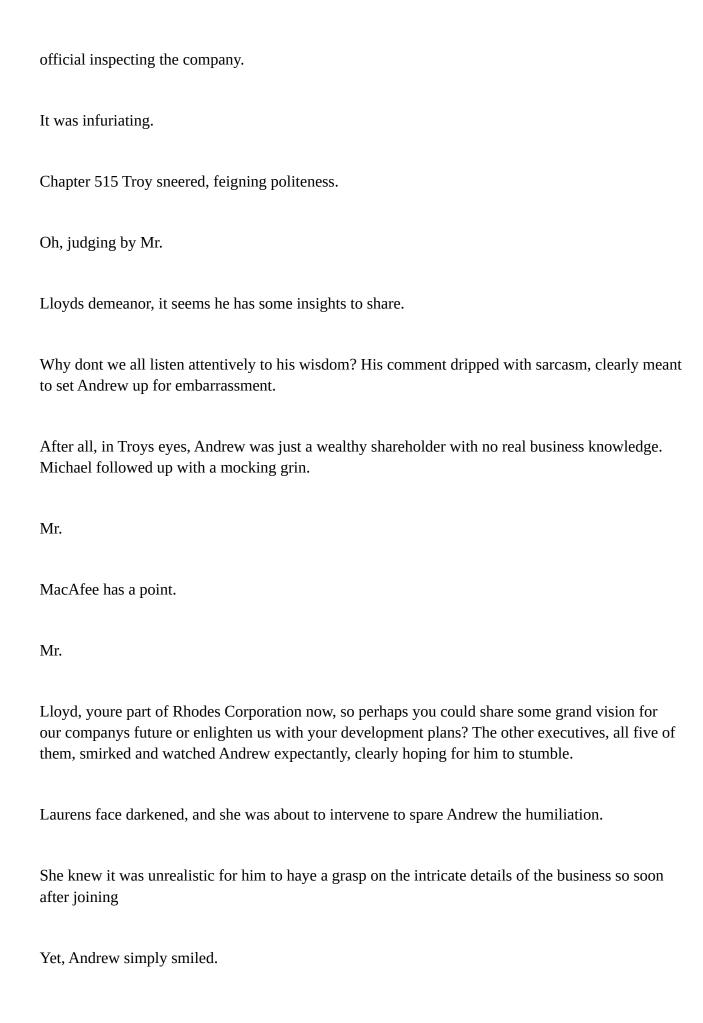
But how long was now? Andrew was not counting.

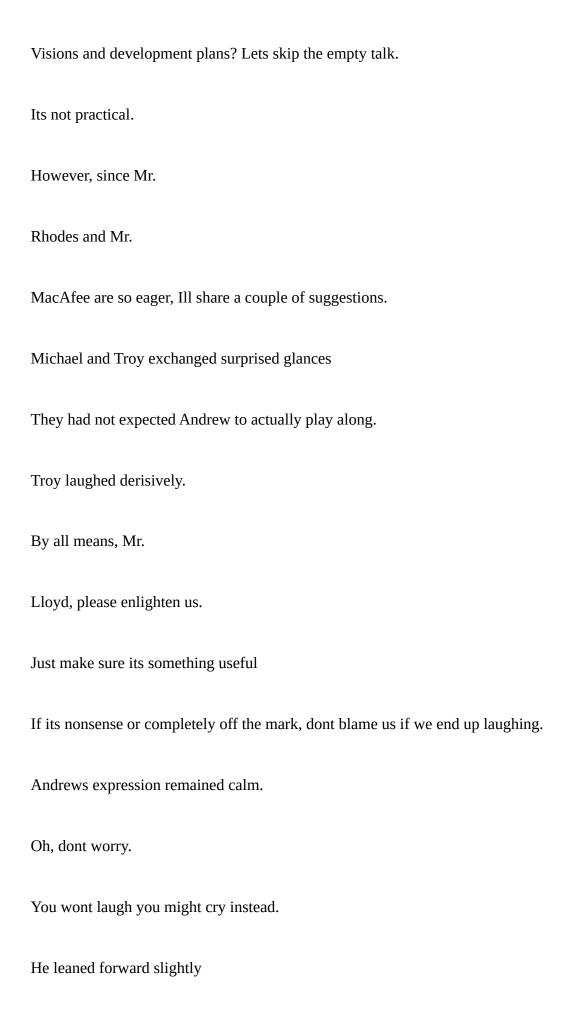


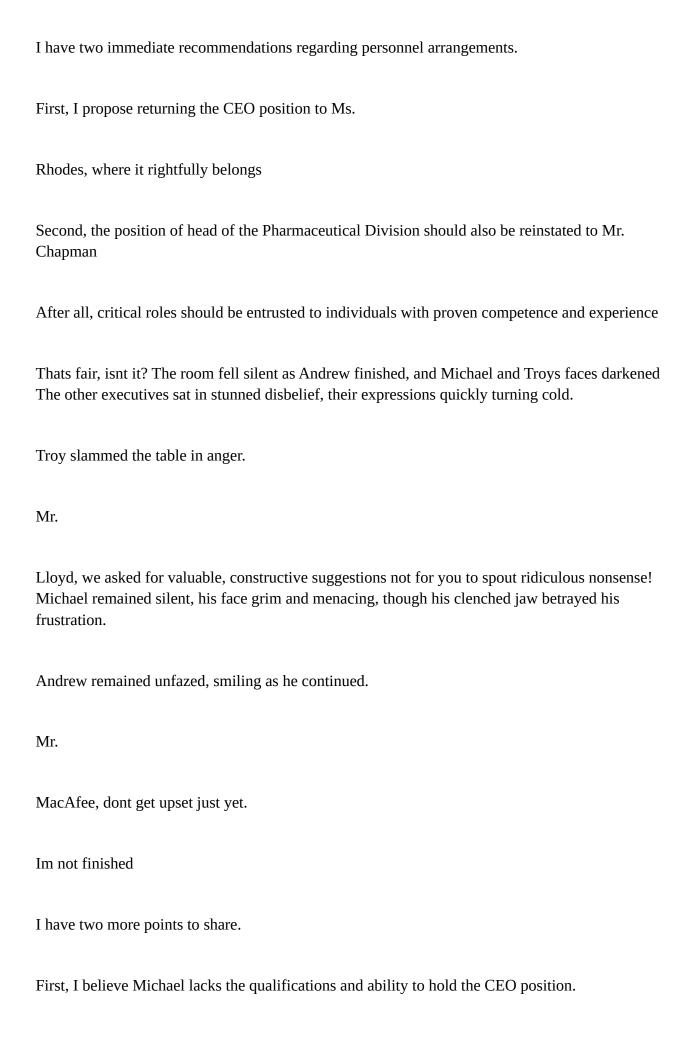
Be good.
Lets stop for now, and III give you another chance next time, okay? she begged, trying to escape his grip.
Andrew lifted his head from her neck, chuckling.
Next time? And when would that be? Laurens eyes darted nervously.
Uh tomorrow! Then forget it.
I cant wait until tomorrow.
Besides, you were the one who came to me.
I didnt force you, Andrew teased with a sly grin.
Ah, no, no, no Fine, how about this afternoon? That should be okay, right? Lauren stammered. Nope, Ill need more by lunchtime, Andrew replied firmly
Alright, alright! Lunchtime it is, you big pervert! Lauren grumbled, feeling both defeated and flustered. For the first time, Lauren felt a chill run down her spine as she looked at Andrew
This guy, who usually appeared so composed and gentlemanly, had turned into a wildfire when things heated up
She realized she had severely underestimated his intensity it was like trying to contain an unstoppable blaze
Just then, Eunice opened the door and froze, her face a mix of shock and disbelief.
Ms.

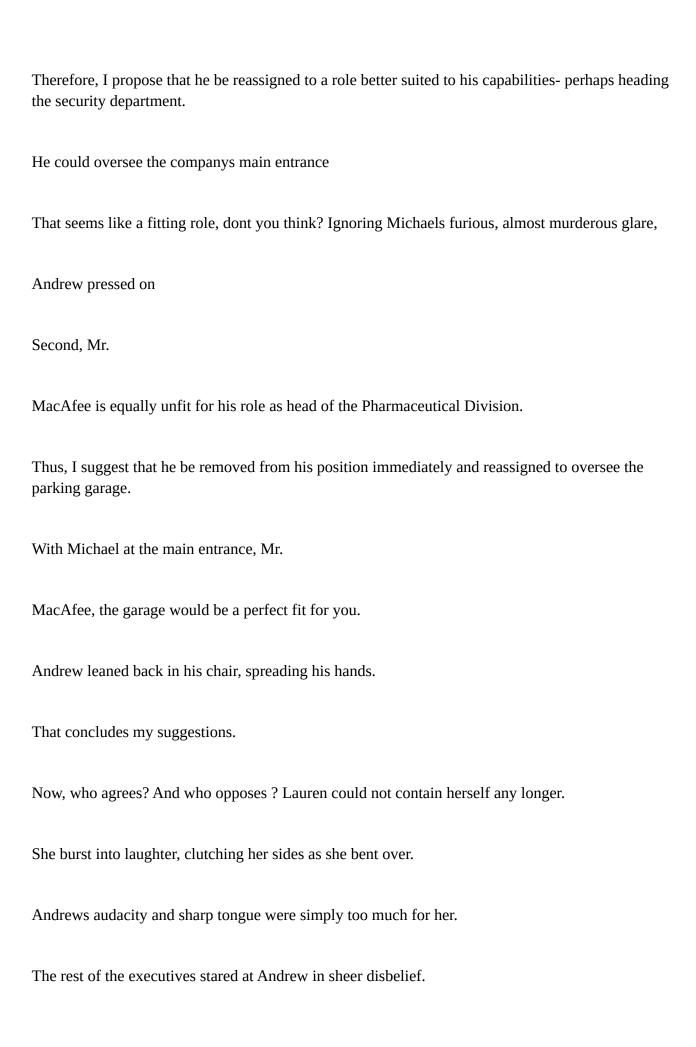
Rhodes, the morning meeting started ten minutes ago
Are you still not done here? Lauren shot up like a startled cat, hästily pulling herself out of Andrews arms
She frantically smoothed her hair and adjusted her clothes
Why didnt you come in earlier to remind me? she snapped, her voice tinged with panic.
Eunice pouted, clearly feeling wronged.
You two were doing that! If I barged in earlier, youd just yell at me.
What was I supposed to do? While she complained, Eunice could not help but glance around the chaotic
scene
Her heart raced as she saw Laurens neck and even her chest were covered
in red marks, and her lipstick was completely smudged away.
How long and intense had that been? Lauren forced a stiff smile.
Dr.
Lloyd, lets head to the meeting.
Andrew, calm as ever and without a trace of embarrassment, replied casually, Sure, but you seem a little shaky.
Want me to help you walk? Lauren clenched her teeth, spitting out each word with quiet fury. No thank you! 11

The so called morning meeting was not an official gathering but rather a private discussion among Rhodes Corporations top executives, including Michael, the CEO Lauren and Andrew had been invited only as a formality, given Michaels complete control over the group If not for the fear of Andrew accusing him of being dictatorial, Michael would not have bothered to include them at all. As Lauren and Andrew entered the meeting room, Michael spun a pen in his hand and sneered. Well, well, Ms. Rhodes and Mr. Lloyd, you really know how to make an entrance. The rest of us have been waiting over ten minutes. Quite the power move, dont you think? Andrew ignored him completely. Pulling out a chair for Lauren, he gestured for her to sit He then sat beside her and said nonchalantly, Feel free to speak your minds, everyone. Im just here to observe as a major shareholder. Dont worry about me. His casual attitude left Michael and the other executives, like Troy fuming. They had extended basic courtesy by inviting Andrew, but he acted as if he were some high-ranking









Chapter 516 They all thought it was an absurd and comical proposal, wondering how Andrew could even say those words with a straight face

Everyone in the room had braced themselves for Andrews lack of professionalism, but they had not expected anything this outrageous.

Suggesting the companys CEO should guard the main entrance? Recommending the head of the

Pharmaceutical Division be reassigned to manage the warehouse? It was the kind of logic that could only come from a genius with a truly unique imagination.

Troy was the first to snap, standing up and shouting, I object! Object! I object too! Unconditionally object! This is outrageous! Not a single executive supported Andrew

They all glared at him, their voices raised in protest, their faces red with indignation.

Andrew shrugged nonchalantly.

Well, since everyone objects, lets just pretend I never said it.

Michael, still seething, sneered.

Mr.

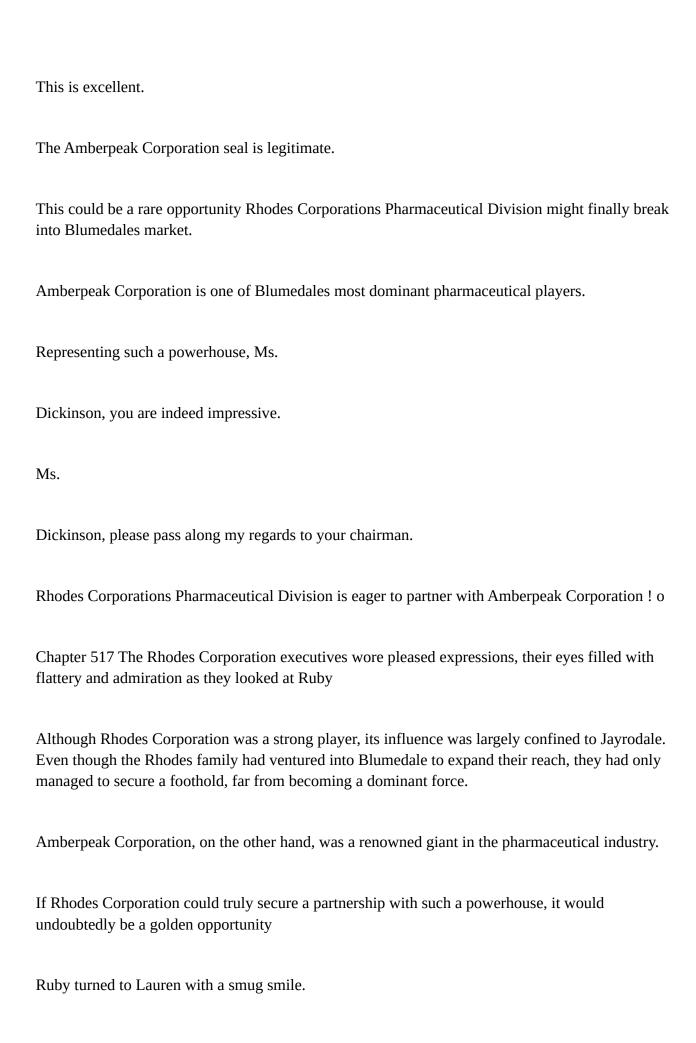
Lloyd, the companys meeting room is a place for discussing serious matters and high level collaborations not your personal stage or a playground for fools.

If you have nothing constructive to say in the future, I suggest you stay quiet! Andrew smirked and replied, But wasnt it you and Mr.

MacAfee who insisted I share my thoughts? Or are you saying that as the fifth largest shareholder of this company, Im not allowed to speak freely? You- Troy pointed an accusing finger at Andrew, his face alternating between pale and livid.

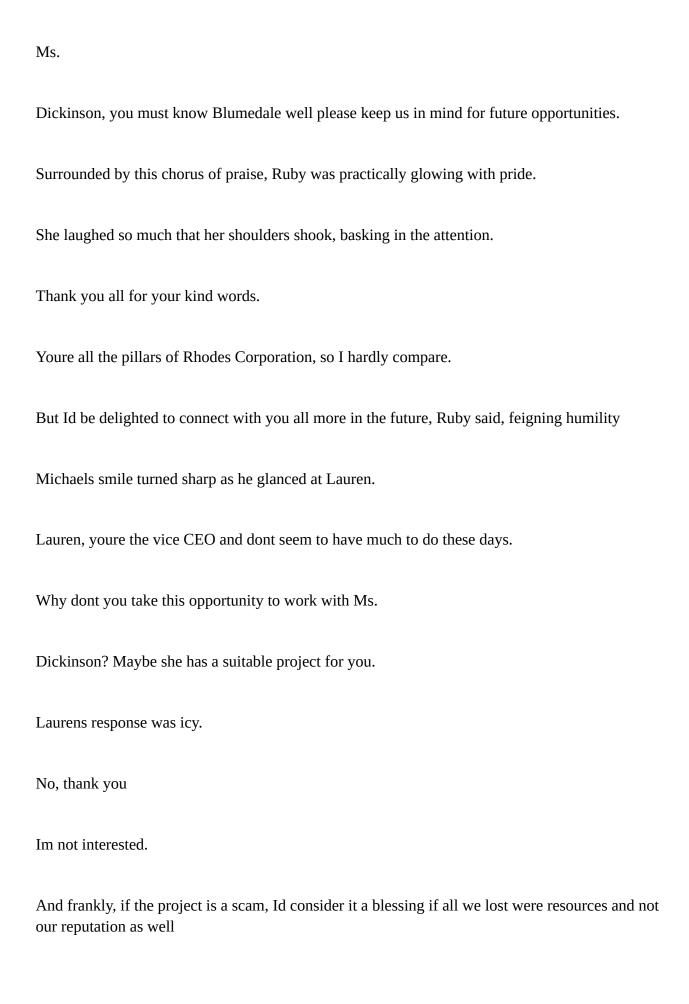
He looked like he might explode, his anger simmering just below the surface.
Just then, a sultry, mocking laugh interrupted the tension.
Well, this is quite a spectacle.
I never thought Id witness such an entertaining show at one of Jayrodales top corporations.
The speaker was a glamorous woman in a red slit dress with cascading waves of hair.
Sitting next to Troy, she threw Andrew a disdainful glance, her words dripping with sarcasm and ridicule
Laurens smile turned icy.
Ms.
Dickinson, what a surprise.
How was your time behind bars? I hope the meals were to your taste.
If not, I can arrange for you to have a few more years to savor them
The woman in the red dress was none other than Ruby Dickinson, whom Andrew had seen on the street the previous day.
She smirked at Lauren, her tone sharp.
Oh, Ms.
Rhodes, fortunes change, dont they? Youd be wise to keep your arrogance in check what goes around, comes around

She added, Im here today on behalf of Amberpeak Corporation, one of Blumedales leading pharmaceutical giants, to discuss a potential collaboration with Rhodes Corporations Pharmaceutical Division Rubys gaze grew sharper as she continued. And you, Ms. Rhodes, seem far from your former glory. Now stuck in a cushy vice CEO position whats next? Being thrown out of Rhodes Corporation entirely? Laurens voice was calm but laced with authority. Ms. Dickinson, the internal affairs of the Rhodes family are none of your concern As for you claiming to represent Amberpeak Corporation, I find that hard to believe. Ruby let out a cold laugh, clapping her hands as her assistant stepped forward and distributed documents to everyone in the room Andrew glanced at the papers briefly before losing interest. He had never heard of Amberpeak Corporation and did not think much of it. However, Troy, Michael, and the other executives read the documents intently. Their expressions shifted to approval as they nodded.



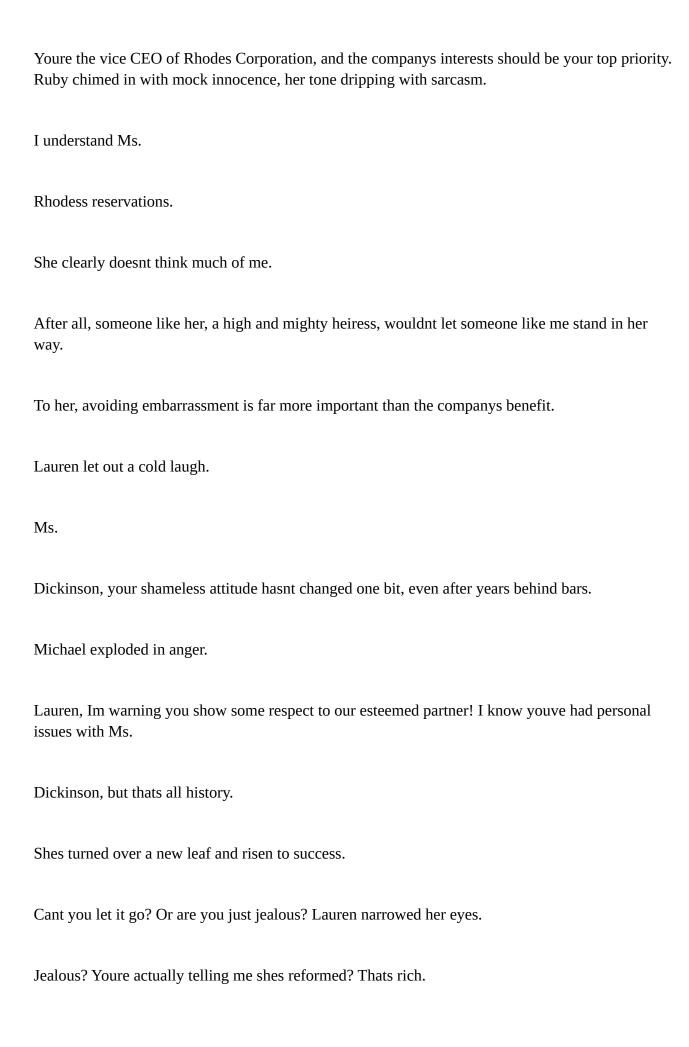
Ms.
Rhodes, do you believe m now? Lauren frowned
Amberpeak Corporation is already a leading authority in pharmaceuticals.
If they were looking for partners, it would make more sense to find them in Blumedale.
Ruby, for you to claim youre representing Amberpeak Corporation and to come all the way to Jayrodale for collaboration it doesnt add up
Do you really think Id believe that? Ruby sneered
I was simply being polite by explaining myself to you.
You seem to have forgotten that Rhodes Corporation isnt yours to command anymore its Mr.
Rhodes whos in charge now.
Whether you believe me or not doesnt matter in the slightest.
Michael quickly interjected, making his decision clear Its settled then.
We are honored to accept Ms.
Dickinsons proposal for collaboration on behalf of Amberpeak Corporation.
Troy chimed in with a flattering grin.
Mr.

Rhodes, you should know that when I met Ms.
Dickinson yesterday, she showed incredible dedication in negotiating this partnership
Ive been in business for decades, and I can tell you, its rare to meet someone as professional and committed as Ms.
Dickinson.
Ruby covered her mouth with a coy laugh.
Oh, Mr.
MacAfee, youre too kind
Its just that Amberpeak Corporations chairman has faith in me and gave me this opportunity.
Troy eagerly replied, Ms.
Dickinson, youre being too modest.
With your talent, beauty, and impeccable character and background, its no wonder Amberpeaks chairman sees such potential in you.
Other executives, worried about falling behind, quickly joined in with their flattery.
Exactly! Ms.
Dickinson isnt just stunning, shes clearly destined for great things representing Amberpeak Corporation. Shes easily one of the top female leaders of the new generation in Jayrodale
No, shes the undisputed number one! Amberpeak Corporations business scope is vast, not just limited to pharmaceuticals.



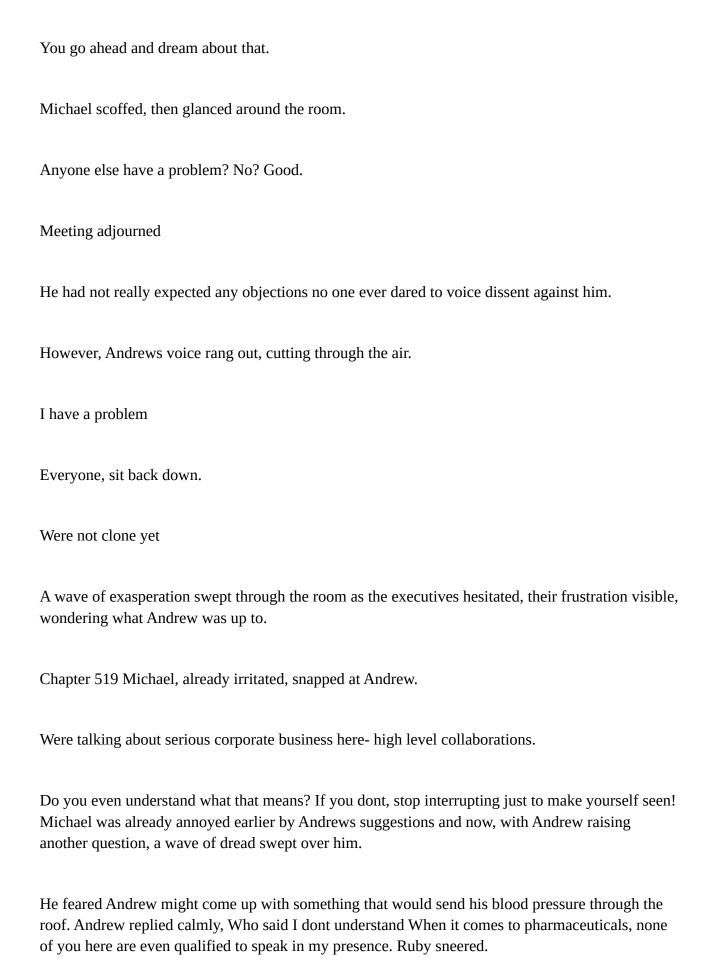


Ruby seized the moment, feigning regret as she spoke Its such a pity.
If Mr.
MacAfee doesnt want this opportunity, III have to look elsewhere.
Perhaps the Weller family, whos been excelling in wellness products lately, might be interested. Michael panicked, immediately forcing a smile.
Ms.
Dickinson, please dont be hasty.
Of course, we at Rhodes Corporation are eager for this partnership with Amberpeak Corporation. Only a fool would reject it! Ruby smirked, adding, You can want it all you like, but I only trust Mr. MacAfee, so hell be my sole point of contact for this collaboration.
Michael nodded hastily, waving his hand.
No problem at all.
The Pharmaceutical Division is entirely under Mr.
MacAfees jurisdiction.
We never interfere.
He then turned to Lauren, his expression darkening.
Lauren, what exactly are you trying to do? This is an incredible opportunity, and youre about to ruir it. Dont forget your position



Michael snorted	
Isnt it obvious? Otherwise, why would you keep targeting her? You clearly dont understand the stakes.	
Not only Rhodes Corporation, but even the higher ups in the family wouldnt let an opportunity lithis slip by.	ke
Lauren shook her head, exasperated.	
Youre as short sighted ever	
Michael, let me repeat myself: Ruby cannot be trusted	
People dont change, and shes nothing but a notorious corporate spy.	
If you dont investigate this thoroughly, youre asking for disaster.	
Michaels expression turned icy.	
Thats enough.	
You dont have the authority to make decisions on major group matters	
Im the CEO, and what I say goes When this partnership with Amberpeak Corporation propels ou	r
Pharmaceutical Division into Blumedale, Ill be standing on the familys podium, watching you grovel in	
apology before the family! Lauren gave him a withering look, as if he were the biggest fool she hever seen.	ıac

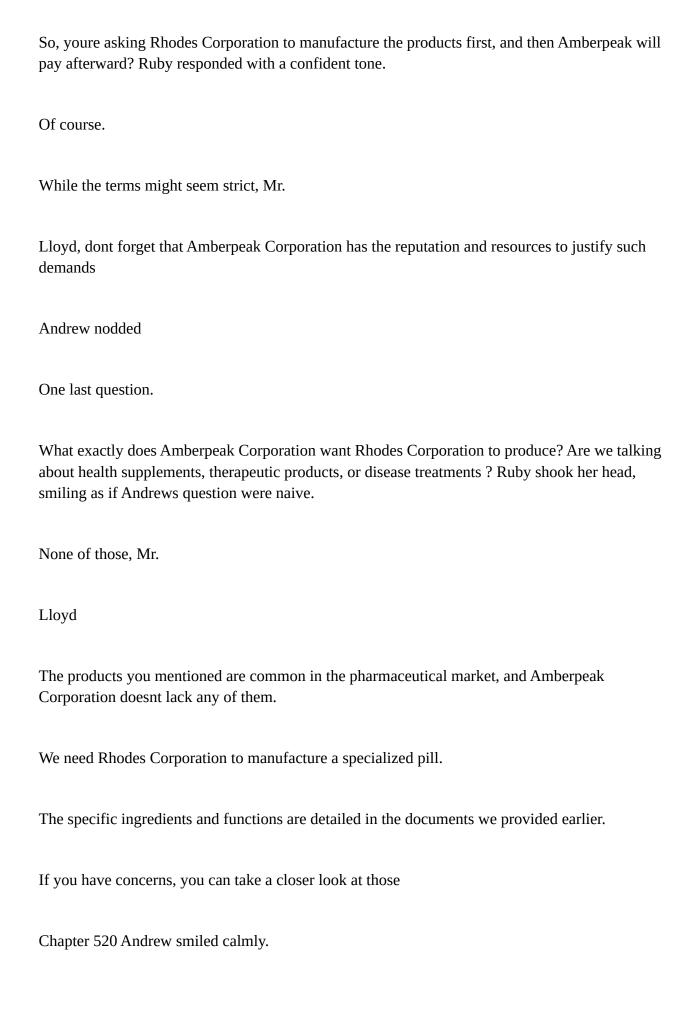
Sure, Michael.

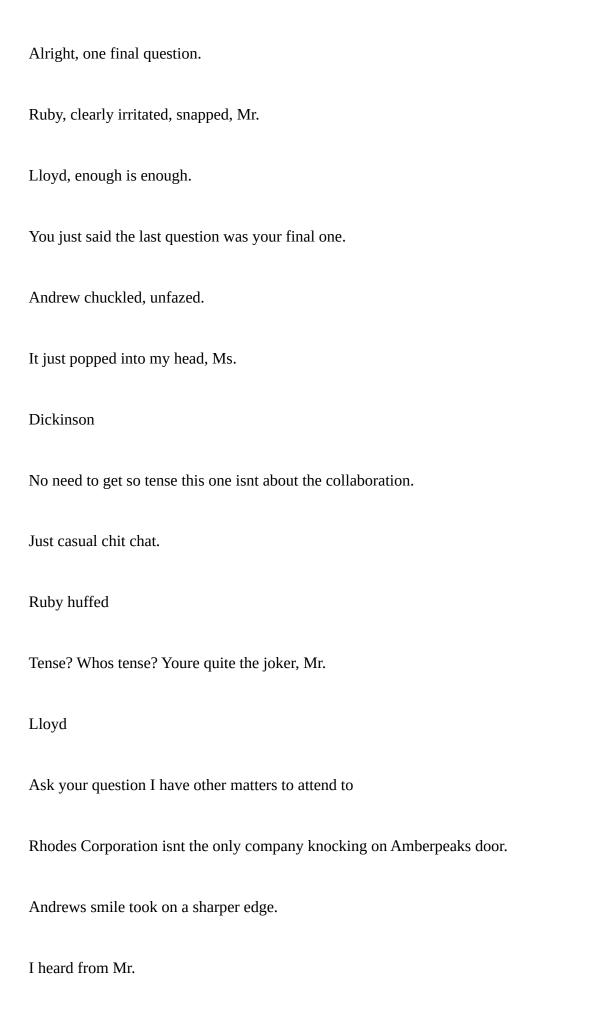


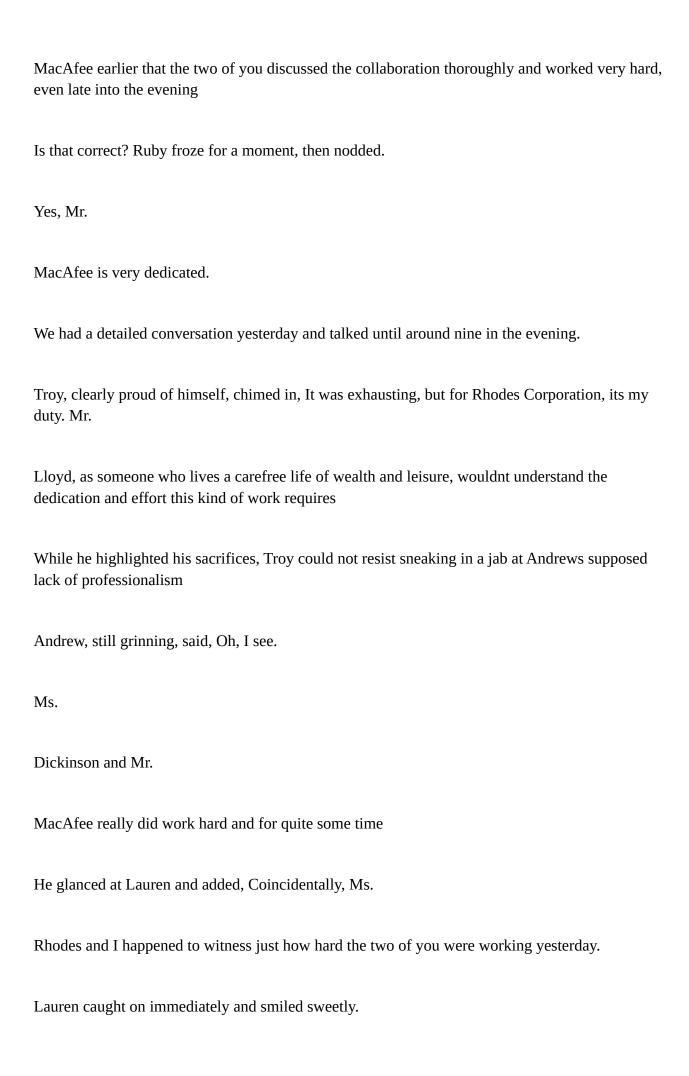
Mr.
Lloyd, lets not pretend you know what youre talking about.
Are you seriously trying to convince us that youre some kind of expert in medicine? What, are you
claiming to be a miracle -working doctor or something? To Ruby, Andrew was just a lackey trying to pick
a fight for Laurens sake nothing more than a clueless, incompetent man, unworthy of her attention However, as soon as she finished her mockery, she noticed something strange.
Michael, Troy, and the other executives looked uncomfortable, as though they wanted to say something but hesitated.
Lauren smirked and said, Ruby, youre not entirely wrong.
Mr.
Lloyd is a doctor and not just any doctor.
Hes a legendary healer who can cure virtually anything.
Rubys eyes widened in shock.
Mr.
Rhodes, Mr.
MacAfee, is that true? Michael, unwilling but unable to lie, grudgingly admitted, Yes, Mr.
Lloyds medical skills are truly extraordinary.

In this field, hes an expert.
Rubys expression shifted, her confidence shaken, though she forced a stiff smile.
Well, I didnt expect Mr.
Lloyd to have such capabilities.
Andrew remained composed.
No need for flattery, Ms.
Dickinson.
Since this is a partnership, I assume I can ask a few relevant questions, right? Rubys smile turned strained
Of course, Mr.
Lloyd
But you must understand that Im only a representative of Amberpeak Corporation.
Im not an expert in technical or medical matters.
Andrew spoke with an unhurried tone.
Thats fine.
The questions I have are basic and dont involve technical details.

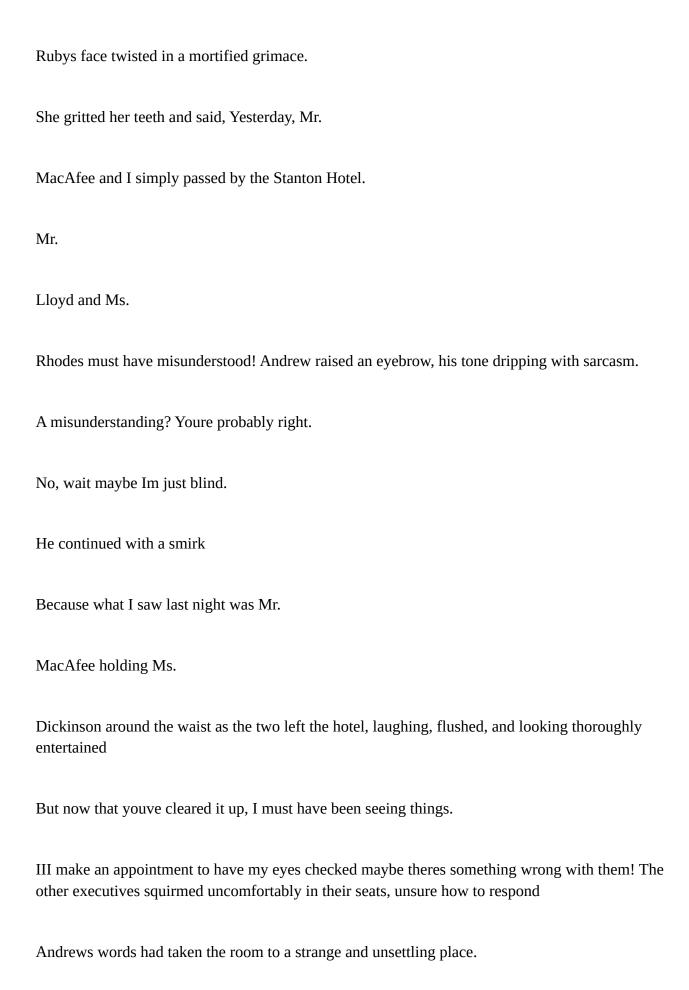
But if you cant answer even these, it might call into question just how legitimate your role as Amberpeak Corporations representative really is.
Ruby silently cursed him but forced herself to respond Alright, Mr.
Lloyd
If you have questions, III answer what I can, though I reserve the right to withhold information regarding trade secrets or proprietary matters.
Andrew nodded
First question this collaboration with Rhodes Corporation, is it a direct investment from Amberpeak Corporation, a joint research effort, or are you simply looking to use Rhodes Corporation as a
manufacturing partner? Ruby exhaled slightly in relief at the question, smiling as she replied
Amberpeak Corporations capabilities in research and development are already industry leading, and we dont lack funding
So, this collaboration is purely for Rhodes Corporation to manufacture our products.
The initial order is worth two billion.
Well transfer the payment immediately as soon as the products are produced
The mention of a two billion dollar order caused the executives eyes to light up with excitement.
They were clearly tempted.
Andrew scoffed











They wanted to intervene but did not dare.

This was not just a pointed jab at Troy and Ruby it was a full blown exposé wrapped in sarcasm.

Even if Troy and Ruby had finalized their deal in a hotel room, there was no formal rule against it.

Some executives even envied Troy.

After all, Rubys curvaceous figure was jaw dropping her hourglass shape and striking features made her a showstopper.

For many, she was impossible to ignore.