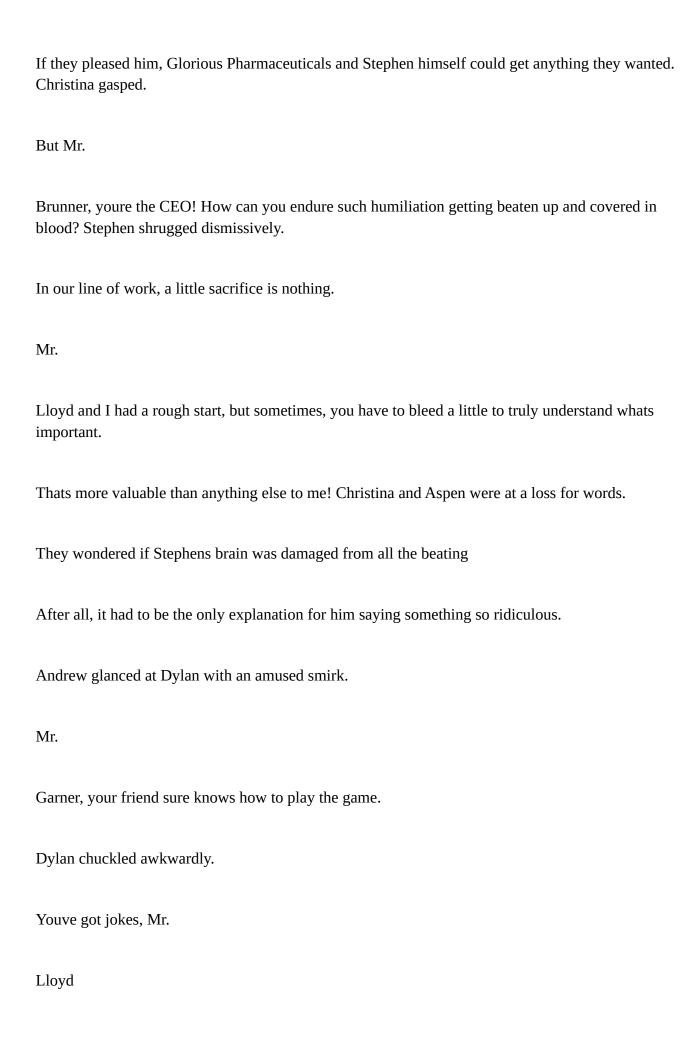
The Ashes 641

Chapter 641 Mr.
Brunner, you absolutely dont have to submit to him, Christina snapped angrily
Youre the CEO of Glorious Pharmaceuticals, a leading name in the industry! you stand tall and refuse to be intimidated, no one can oppress you! Aspen quickly chimed in, Mr.
Brunner, you cant give in to a thug like him.
If you stand up to him, III back you to the very end! Stephen rolled his eyes and said impatiently, You two are rambling too much.
Who told you I was being oppressed or forced to submit? Christina stared at him, dumbfounded.
Mr.
Brunner, are you saying youre doing this willingly? But Stephen cut her off with a sharp tone. No but Im doing this willingly, alright? Mr.
Lloyd let bygones be bygones and gave me a chance to collaborate.
If I cant see an opportunity like this and seize it, Glorious Pharmaceuticals wouldve been destroyed long ago! Stephen could not understand what was going through these two womens heads.
The underground king of Jayrodale was sitting right in front of them, yet they were still caught up in petty
concerns
At a time like this, all that mattered was staying on Andrews good side.



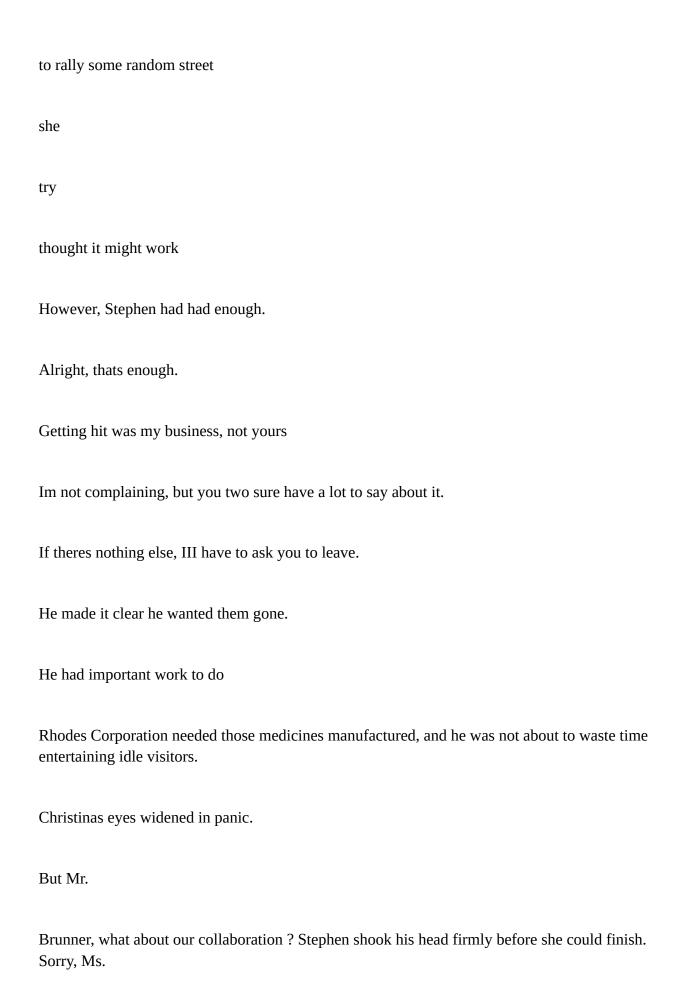
That fool isnt close to me at all
Still, Ill give him some credit Stephen does have his moments.
Andrew nodded and turned to another man
Mr.
Chapman, lets get down to business.
Youre up.
Talk to Mr.
Brunner
Marcus was startled by the cue and snapped out of his thoughts.
Oh! Right.
Mr.
Lloyd, Ill handle it.
Youve worked hard take a break.
The r Marcuss mind raced.
The thought of Andrew a seemingly easygoing young man being the undisputed ruler of Jayrodales underground world was almost too much to process.
He would never have dared imagine something so insane.

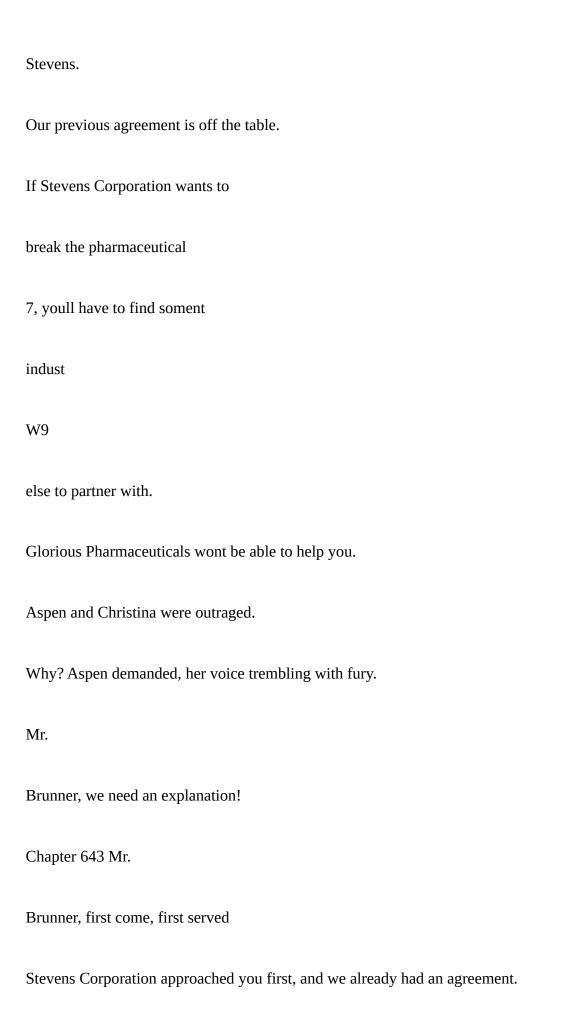
Tiana had always looked down on Andrew.
Michael was also constantly tried to challenge him.
Marcus could not help but wonder if Andrew ever got serious, Michael would not stand a chance.
Even Tiana, known for her iron fist
would likely have to bow her head Shaking off his swirling thoughts, Marcus spoke with a
Mr.
ytone.
Brunner, Rhodes Corporations Pharmaceutical Division, would like to collaborate with Glorious Pharmaceuticals to produce two new medicines.
What do you think about- Before Marcus could even finish, Stephen cut in enthusiastically.
Mr.
Chapman, you dont need to say another word.
Were friends! Bring me the formulas, and III have the factory running overtime tomorrow to get everything done for your division! Marcus stood there, stunned.
He had been negotiating deals for decades and had faced every kind of challenge imaginable.
Chapter 642 Stephen had never experienced such an easy negotiation before.
There was no hassle, no drawn out discussions- just a straight green light; clearing the way without obstacles

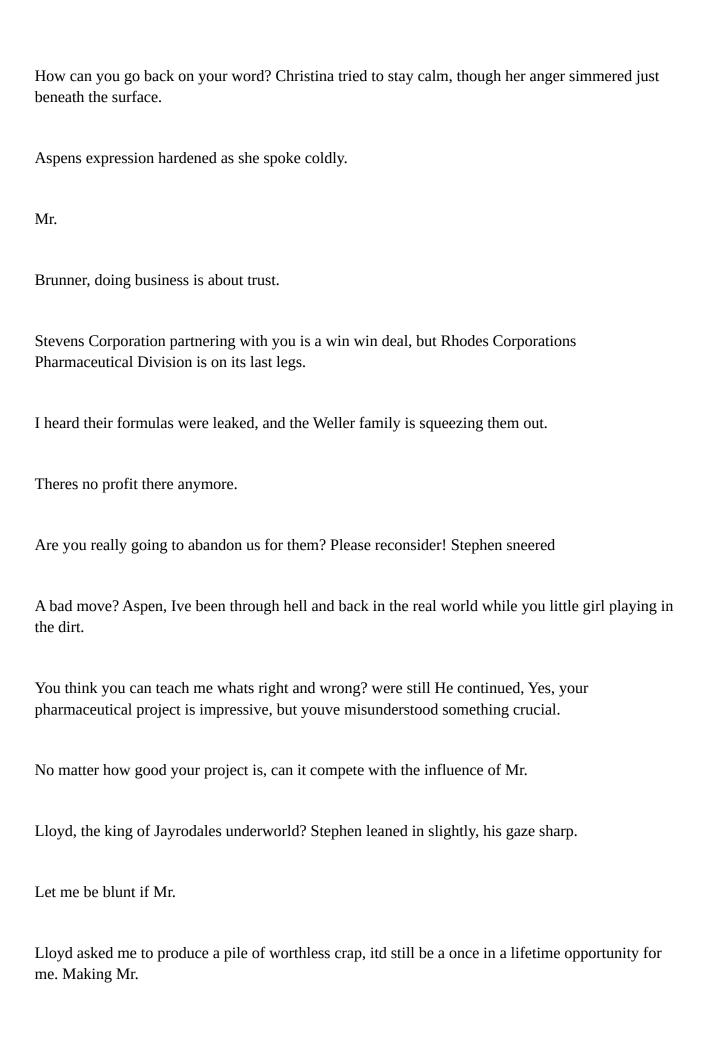
Andrew stood and said, Well, if thats settled, well be on our way. He turned to Dylan and added, Dylan, keep an eye on things here with Stephen in the future. Dylan nodded. Got it, Mr. Lloyd! Stephen was elated. Thank you, Mr. Lloyd! I knew something good was going to happen today Ive had this twitching in my eyelid since morning! Dylan raised a brow and teased, How do you know that wasnt a sign of bad luck? Stephen chuckled Same difference! Good luck, bad luck theyre two sides of the same coin. I got both today, didnt I? Andrew smirked in amusement. Businesspeople were always like this slick, adaptable, and sharp. Stephen had just been disciplined but was already smiling like nothing had happened. Nonetheless, Andrew understood why. Stephen saw a chance to cozy up to Jayrodales underground king and profit from the connection. Andrew did not take Stephens flattery too seriously. A pharmaceutical CEO had his uses, but people like him needed both the carrot and the stick. If you were too kind, they would get ahead of themselves and think they were untouchable.

After personally escorting Andrew, Marcus, and Dylan out, Stephen called someone to bandage his head before returning to his office with a cheerful grin Aspen and Christina were still there, watching him with shock and disbelief. Aspen asked, Mr. Brunner, you just got beaten up, and youre still smiling? Are you really going to let this go? Stephen lit a cigarette, waved dismissively, and said, Its no big deal just a minor injury Back when I was hustling to survive, I got beat up more times than I can count. Compared to that, this is nothing! Aspen and Christina exchanged baffled looks. They could not believe the reasoning he just gave them. Getting beaten when you were struggling was one thing you had no choice. However, he was the head of Jayrodales pharmaceutical industry. Was it not humiliating to let someone slap him around without retaliation? Mr. Brunner, listen to me, Aspen insisted, her voice rising with frustration Andrew is out of control! If you rally the industry, you can take him down! Aspen was like a rabid dog at this point. If there were even a shred of a chance to harm Andrew, she would

seize it she would probably if

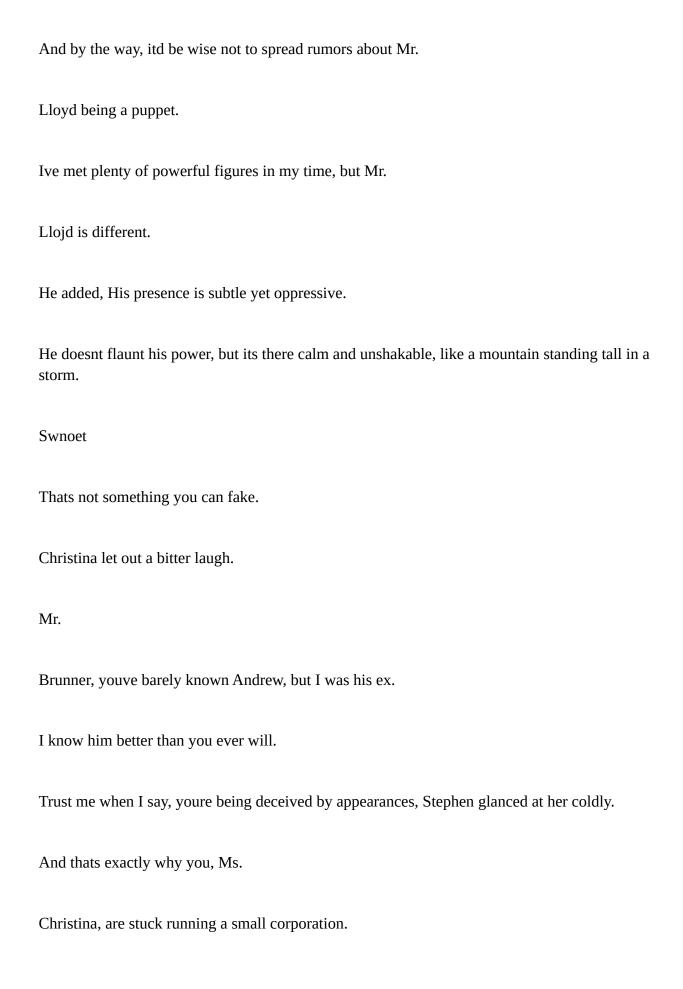






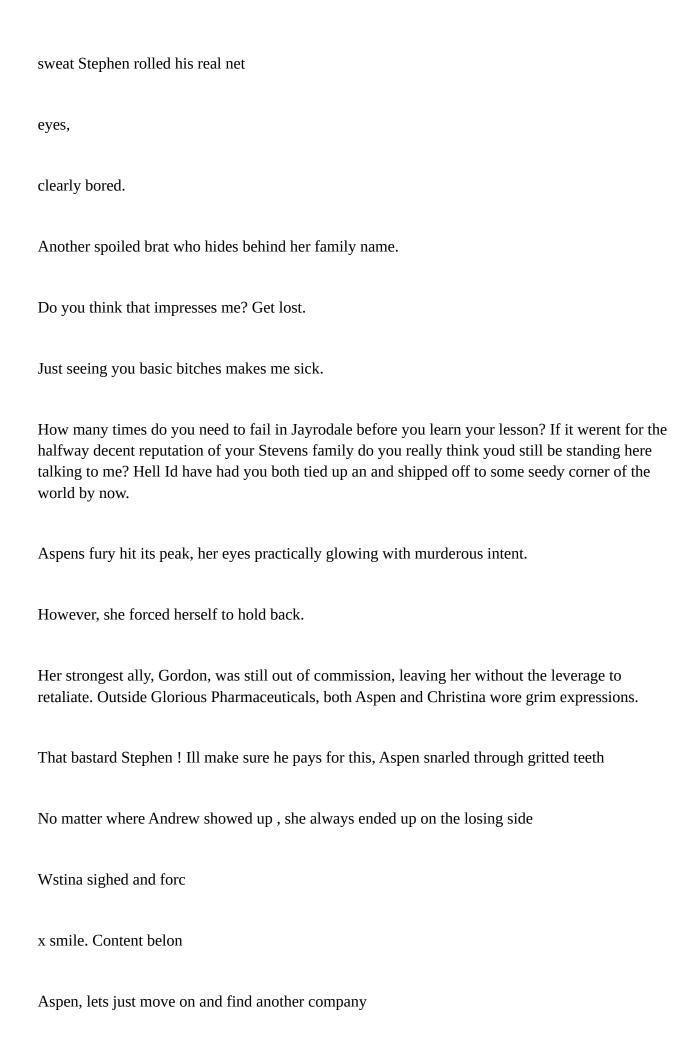
Lloyd happy means everything
You really think I care about a bit of profit when I have a chance to secure a relationship like this? He let out a mocking laugh, exhaling a lazy smoke ring as he leaned back in his chair.
You see, for me, isnt about chasing money
Its about building the right relationships connections that can make me untouchable.
business Aspen and Christinas faces darkened with fury and frustration.
They could not believe Stephen had become so devoted to Andrew.
It was like he saw Andrew as a father figure despite just getting beaten half to death by him moments ago
How could someone change their mindset so drastically and so fast? Christina gritted her teeth.
Mr.
Brunner, I know Andrew well.
Dont be fooled by his current success
Hes not someone capable of accomplishing great things hes too laid back and weak willed.
Aspen chimed in, You might not
know
es, but Andrews backed bet

Marvin, the wealthiest man in Jayrodale.
Marvin is cunning and ruthless.
For all you know, Andrew might just be a pawn in his game.
Dylan and Natasha dont really answer to Andrew they serve Marvin. Stephen chuckled darkly.
Does that matter? Let me ask you both who ho holds the most power
aristina frowned. the officials in Jawer net
a frowned. Coet
Obviously, its Mr.
Thatcher
Wrong, Completely wrong, Stephen said with a scoff.
The real power lies with the mayors secretary the person who handles everything behind the scenes.
By the same logic, even if Andrew is Marvins pawn, hes still someone worth currying favor with.
I havent done anything wrong.
Im just doing what anyone in my position would do.
He paused, narrowing his eyes as he continued slowly



You dont have what it takes to rise higher.
Chapter 644 As for why? Its simple, Stephen sneered
Because you cant recognize his true capabilities while others can.
Your understanding is so shallow that youre still stuck questioning the reality.
Christinas face flushed with embarrassment as she glared at him.
Mr.
Brunner, were talking business here- theres no need to get personal.
Besides, how can you be so sure that what you see is the truth? Stephen chuckled coldly
How? Because Im leagues ahead of you, Glorious Pharmaceuticals crushes your Stevens Corporation in every way.
The nobody you keep badmouthing Mr
Lloyd is the undisputed king of Jayrodales underworld.
He owns the biggest, most exclusive spot in town, Moonlit Sanctuary, and hes a board member at Rhodes Corporation.
Without Mr.
Lloyd propping you up, your company is on the decline, and as for you, Ms.
Stevens, your glory days as Jayrodales darling CEO are over.

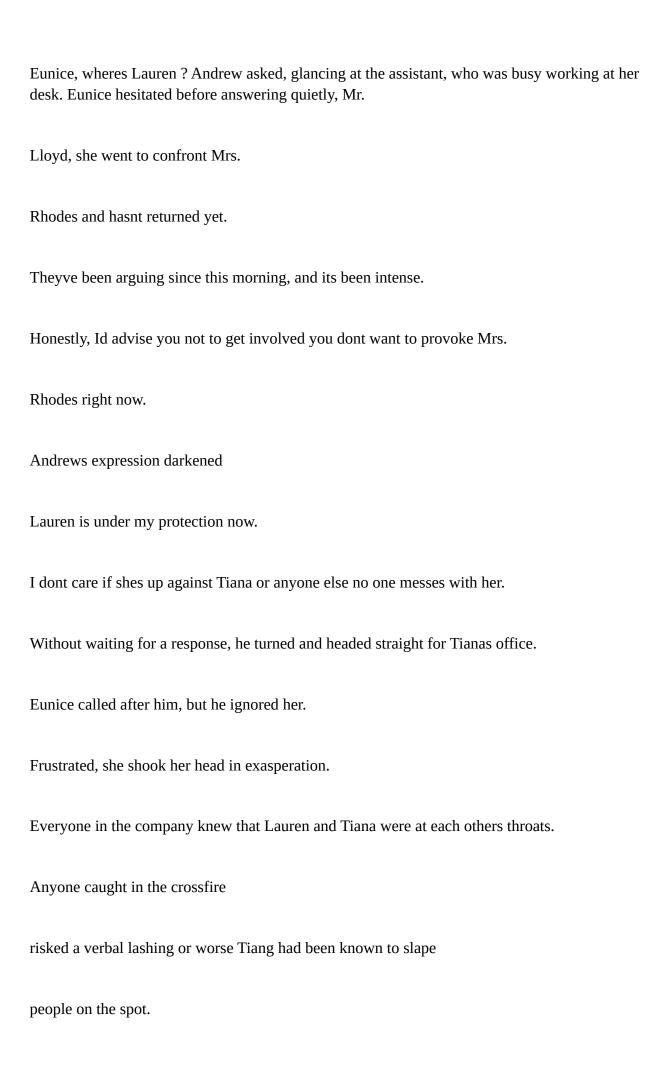
Lets be real who still talks about you in the media? Hardly anyone cares anymore. His pointed questions hit hard, leaving Christina pale and speechless. She clenched her fists as her eyes glistened with tears, but she swallowed her pride, determined not to show weakness. Aspens eyes blazed with fury. Christie, lets go! Theres no reasoning with a blind fool like him If hes too dumb to see who Andrew really is, then let him have his precious partnership. Jayrodale has plenty of other pharmaceutical companies besides Glorious! Stephen smirked Dont let the door hit you on the way out Oh, and Aspen, I hear youve been stirring up trouble with Mr. Lloyd lately. Listen carefully if you keep acting like a clown, III make sure youre completely shut out of this industry. One word from me, and youll be done. Aspen laughed coldly. Stephen, we were polite because we needed you, but now thats over. Your threats are meaningless to me. You dont have the power to play in the same league as me. The Bridgefields Stevens family could crush Glorious Pharmaceuticals without breaking a

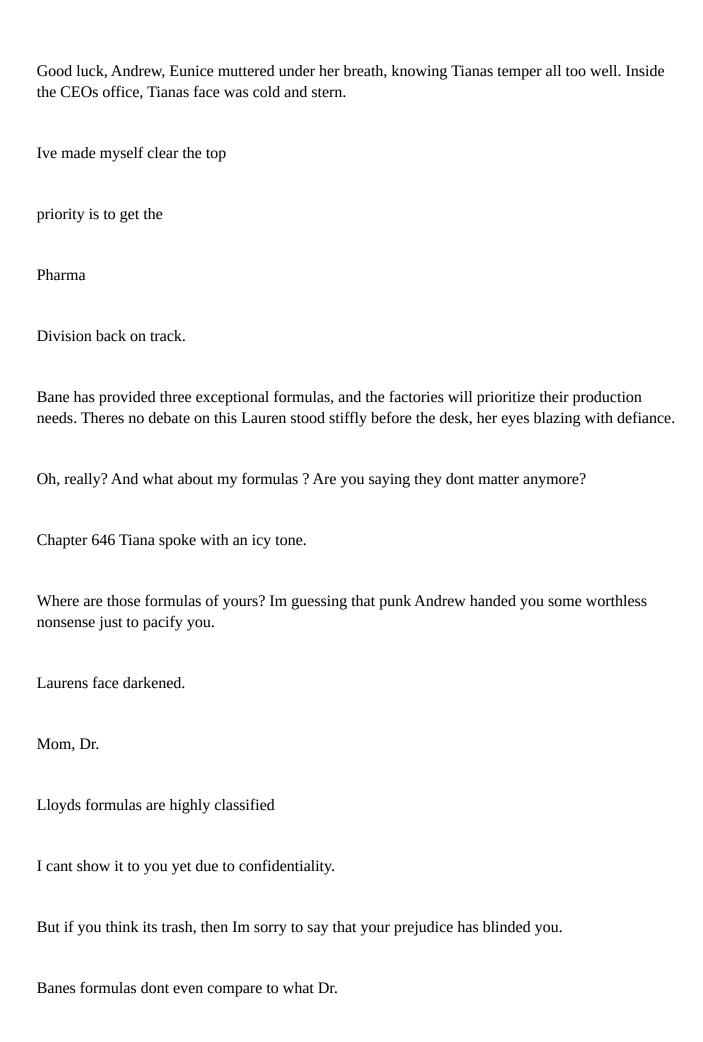


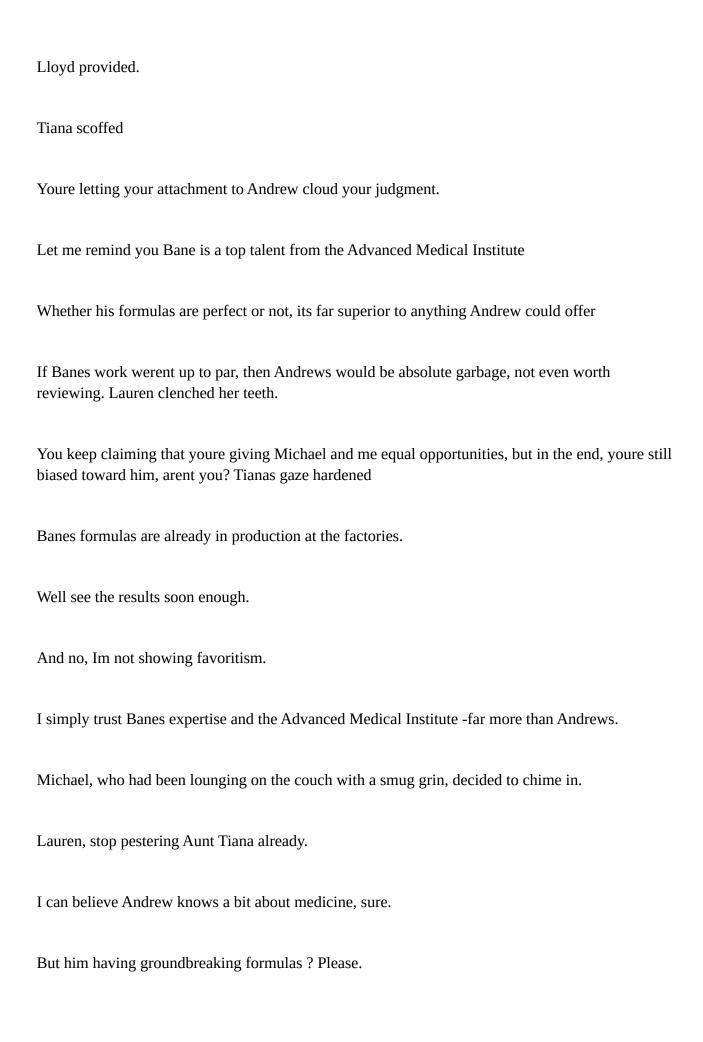
Whats done is done theres no point dwelling on it
Aspen was about to respond when she saw something near the entrance.
a
A security guard was hanging up a poster that read: [Stevens Corporation staff and dogs are not allowed inside
] An explosion of rage and humiliation ignited in both women.
Christina, who was usually the calm and composed one, finally snapped.
Hes gone too far! she shouted, her voice shaking with anger.
Chapter 645 Marcus had not expected the task of securing a pharmaceutical partner to be handled so easily.
Mr.
Lloyd, your moves today have truly impressed me, Marcus said with a grin.
How about I treat you to a night out? Andrew chuckled.
Mr.
Chapman, lets head back to the office first and check on how things are going with Lauren.
As for your offer, maybe tomorrow.
Marcus nodded enthusiastically

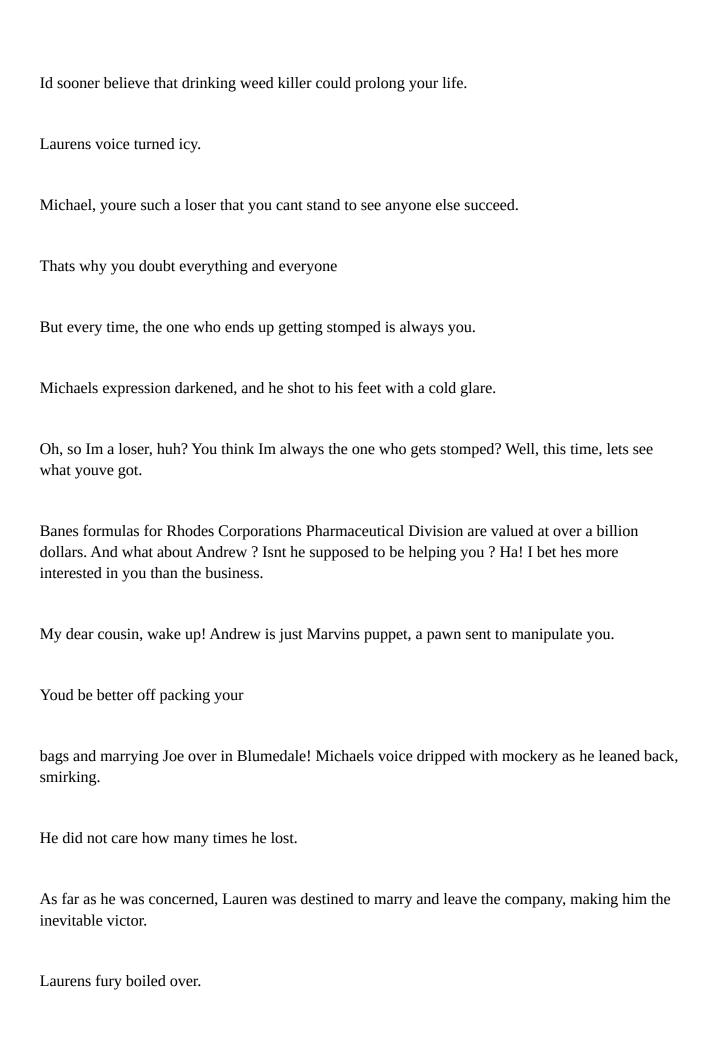
Its a deal then! You cant back out tomorrow I insist on helping you unwind and enjoy yourself. Andrew teased, Mr.
Chapman, you always seem so focused on work.
I never pegged you as someone who enjoyed going out and having fun.
Or is this one of those you never really know someone moments? Marcus laughed.
Youve got it wrong.
Lloyd
Mr.
Sure, I spend most of my time on work and my daughter, but I know when to take a break and splurge on a good time
Whats the point of making all this money if you dont enjoy yourself now and then? Andrew raised an eyebrow and joked, Special experiences, huh? Care to share
wry smile.
Come on, Mr.
Lloyd.
few tips? Marcus shook his head with a
Youre the underground king of Jayrodale my Tittle indulgences would seem trivial to you.
H Andrew thought for a moment and then said, Mr.

Chapman, you can tell Lauren about my involvement in Jayrodales underground scene, but dont mention it to Tiana yet.
Ive got my reasons frankly, I just cant bring myself to fully trust her.
Marcus gave a serious nod.
Understood, Mr.
Lloyd
You have my word
Even if Andrew had not said anything, Marcus had already decided to keep todays events to himself.
Witnessing the real power behind
Jayrodales underground world was
swnovel bet
a chilling reminder of how dangerous loose talk could
Besides, Marcus had gained deep respect for Andrew.
In his eyes, Andrew had become a figure worthy of the same reverence as Tiana.
They drove back to Rhodes Corporation, but when they arrived, Andrew noticed Lauren was not in her office

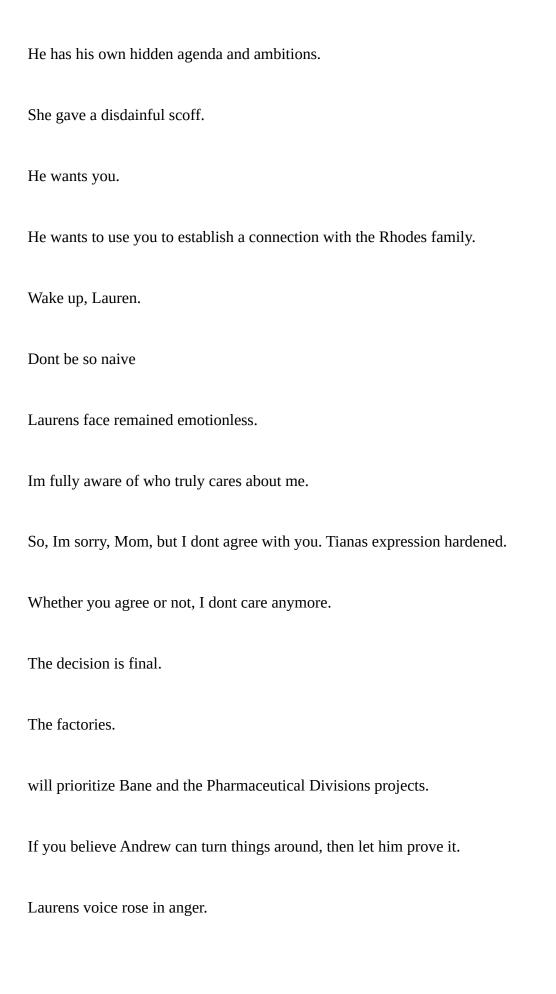






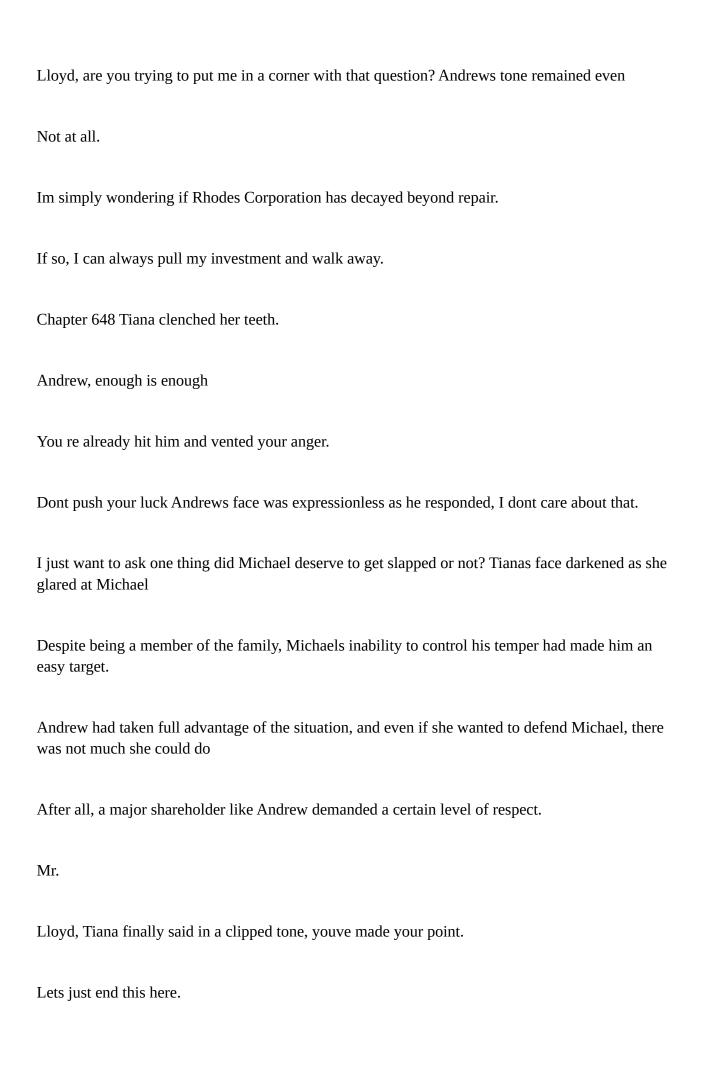


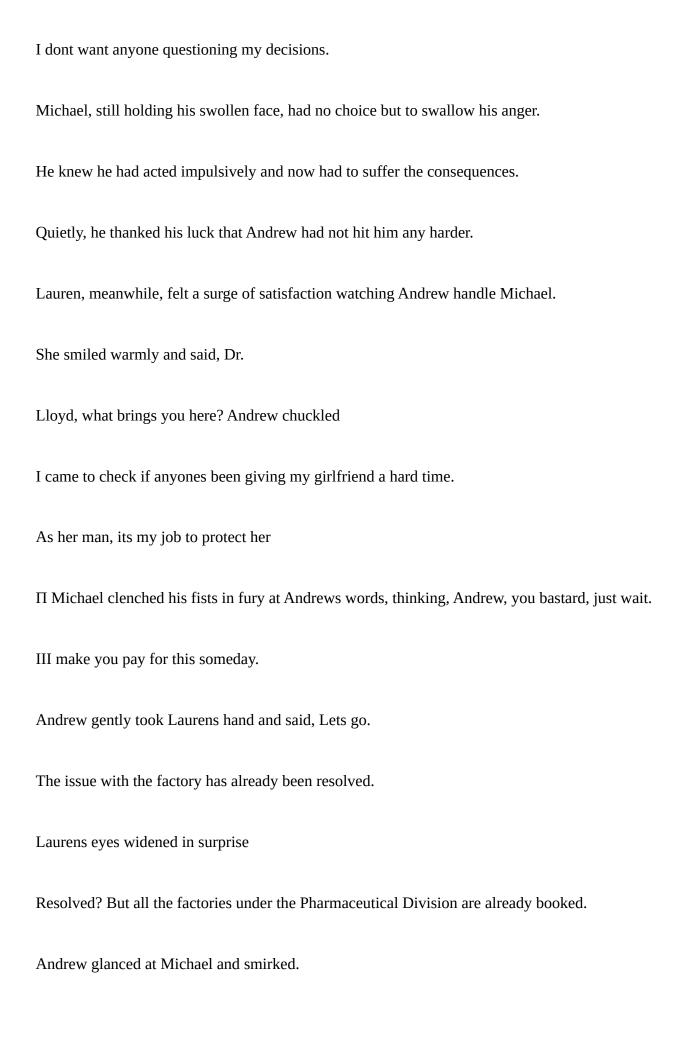




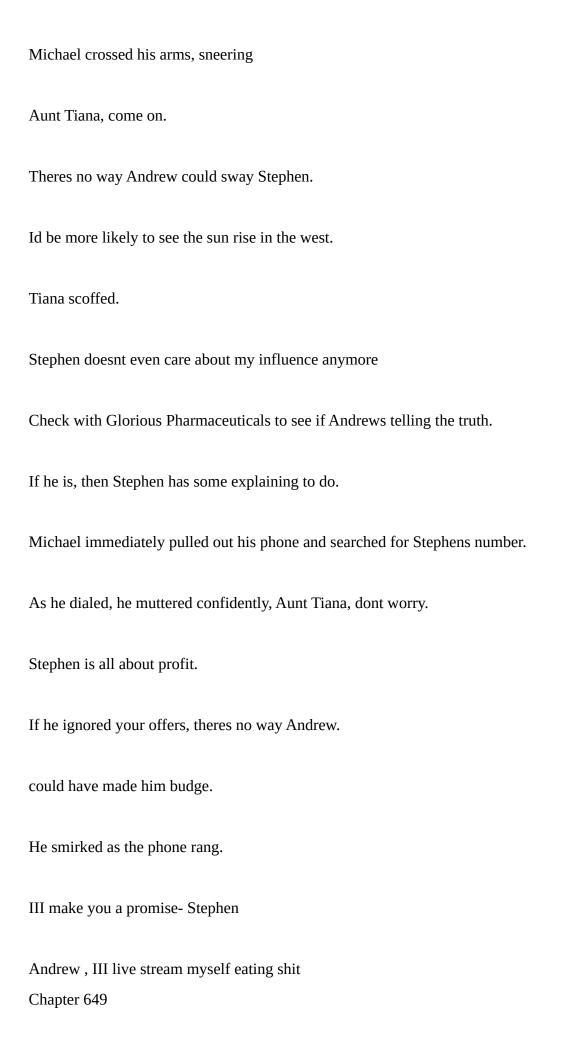
How is he supposed to prove anything if you wont even let the factories produce my formulas? Tiana sneered.
If Andrew is as capable as you claim, let him figure it out himself
Just then, the office door swung open, and Andrew walked in with an icy expression.
Michael, who had been itching for a fight, exploded in rage.
Who the hell let you in ? Get out! This is a Rhodes family meeting
What right do you have to be here? Andrew motioned with his hand, his voice cold.
What right? Come over here, and III show you
Michael gritted his teeth and stomped toward Andrew.
Oh, Im coming.
Lets see what youve got! Heres the truth, Andrew youre nothing but a pile of shit to the Rhodes family, Michael spat
Before Michael could finish, Andrew slapped him.
Michael let out a pained howl as he was sent flying back three meters and crashed to the ground.
belongs to store
You hit me? In front of Aunt Tiana? Michael screamed as he scrambled to his feet, clutching his bruised face
His eyes blazed with fury.

Youre dead, Andrew! I swear III kill you today! Andrews eyes flashed with a deadly gleam.
He strode forward and slapped Michael twice more, sending teeth, spit, and blood flying. Michael stumbled back, utterly humiliated.
Andrew stood over him, his voice cold and detached Listen carefully.
Youre not the CEO anymore.
So what makes you think you can
act tough? Second, Andrew added,
1
his eyes narrowing, you seem to forget that I hold a five billion dollar stake in Rhodes Corporation
You think you can just insult a major shareholder without consequences? Mrs.
Rhodes being here wont save you
In fact, I was about to ask her to weigh in on your behavior.
Turning to Tiana, Andrew spoke calmly, Mrs.
Rhodes, Michael attacked me without provocation.
Dont you think you should step in and handle this? Or has Rhodes Corporation become so rotten that your family can bully whoever they want without repercussions? Tiana crossed her arms and gave cold laugh.
Mr.



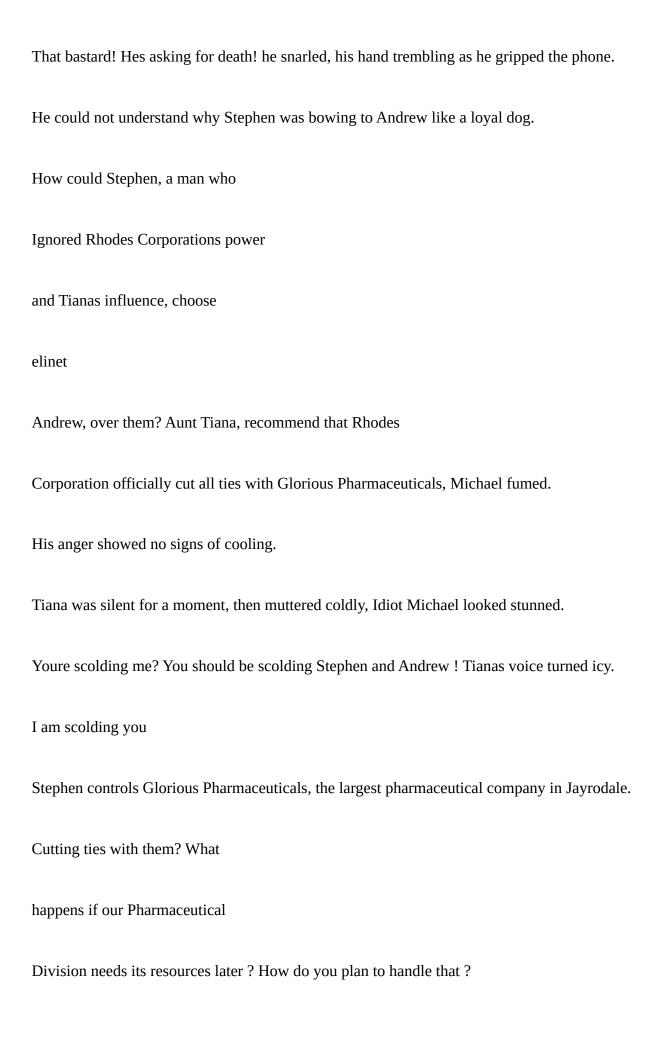


Theres more than one pharmaceutical manufacturer in Jayrodale.
Glorious Pharmaceuticals has already started production for us and is working overtime to meet our needs.
Lauren stared at him, stunned.
Glorious Pharmaceuticals? Thats the largest manufacturer in the city! Dr.
Lloyd, how did you manage to get Stephen to cooperate? That guys a powerhouse who plays both sides hes
hot easy deal with.
Andrew grinned, Simple.
I gave him an offer he couldnt refuse.
Tiana, suspicious, narrowed her eyes.
Are you seriously telling me you got Glorious Pharmaceuticals to start production? Andrew and Lauren walked out the door without turning back.
Not asked
Demanded, Andrew replied as they exited.
to Tianas eyes flashed with disbelief.
Demanded? From Stephen? Dont make me laugh.
He wouldnt even show me that kind of respect.



This is Michael Rhodes
I wanted to ask you about something, Michael said, forcing a polite tone as the call connected.
Stephens voice came across as indifferent.
Oh, its you, Mr.
Rhodes.
Im busy, so just get to the point
Michael hesitated, then asked, Well, I heard your Glorlous Pharmaceuticals is working with Andrew Lloyd.
Is that true? Stephen responded nonchalantly, Of course its true.
Im in the middle of overseeing several factories rushing production for Mr.
Lloyd as we speak.
Now, unless you have something important, dont waste my time.
Michaels jaw dropped in shock.
Youre not joking, right? houre actually producing for Andrew? Stephen sighed impatiently. Michael, do I sound like Im joking? I told you Im busy making sure things get done for Mr. Lloyd
I dont have time for your nonsense
Wait a second- Michael stammered, his voice rising with anger.

What the hell is this? Mrs.
Rhodes personally reached out to you before, and you gave her excuse after excuse! But now youre bending over backward for Andrew? Are you saying Mrs.
Rhodes isnt as important as him? Stephen chuckled coldly.
Oh, trying to intimidate me with Mrs.
Rhodes now? Well, you can tell her this: at Glorious Pharmaceuticals, we believe the biggest force in the world is Mr.
Lloyd
Michaels face turned red with fury.
Stephen, do you even realize what youre saying? Youd better show some respect. Stephen sneered.
Respect? Glorious Pharmaceuticals is my company.
I built it with real hard work and skill.
You think Im afraid of Mrs.
Rhodes ? Whats she going to do eat me alive? Im only calling you Mr.
Rhodes out of politeness, but lets be real youre nothing but a useless rich kid living off your familys reputation
You dont deserve my respect, Stephen spat, then slamming the phone with a loud click. Michael stood frozen, his face twisted with rage.



Youre letting your bruised ego dietate your actions. Acting impulsively without considering the consequences- thats exactly why you keep failing to meet my expectations, she added sharply. Chapter 650 Michael scowled, his frustration evident. So what now? If Andrews formula gets produced by Glorious Pharmaceuticals, does that mean III be outperformed? Tianas lips curled into a mocking smile. Whats the matter? Dont tell me you have no confidence in yourself. Michaels face flushed Its not about confidence. I just dont want things to keep going sideways I was this close to securing the CEO position, but now Im worried Andrew will pull some stunt and mess it all up again Tiana replied calmly, III admit, it surprised me that Andrew could sway Stephen. But without a solid formula- or if what he has turns out to be trash it wont be enough to compete with you. Bane is a top expert from the Advanced Medical Institute, and Im putting my faith in him and you to restore the Pharmaceutical Divisions standing Hearing this, Michaels anger faded, replaced by a smug gr. Thank you for trusting me, Aunt Tiana. Dont worr Bane will help us achieve great things for the division. Meanwhile, in Laurens office, Marcus was recounting the events from earlier that morning.

Dr.
Lloyd, you had Dylan rough up Stephen? Is that the irresistible reason you mentioned? Lauren asked, her.
eyes wide with surprise.
Andrew sighed.
I wasnt planning on getting physical, but Stephen and his people at Glorious Pharmaceuticals were acting so arrogant
I had no choice but to teach them a little lesson.
Lauren giggled.
Dr.
Lloyd, youre getting more domineering by the day.
Stephen is a well known powerhouse in Jayrodale, a hands on businessman with ties to the underworld.
Most people wouldnt dare provoke him.
Andrew grinned
Actually, I won him over with my charm.
Believe me? Lauren covered her mouth, laughing.
Oh, sure.

I totally believe that! Marcus chuckled
Well, now that Glorious Pharmaceuticals is producing for us, well soon see how Mr.
Lloyds results compare to Banes.
Laurens expression turned serious
Both Mom and Michael have high expectations for Bane.
Lets just hope he can live up to them.
Marcus nodded
Im only putting my faith in Mr.
Lloyd
Lauren smiled sweetly.
What a coincidence.
So am I.
After a brief chat, Marcus left to return to the Pharmaceutical
Division, leaving Andrew and el
swhos
alone.

before asking, Lauren, is something going on? Has your mother been pressuring you in some way? Laurens body tensed slightly, though she forced a smile
No, Dr.
Lloyd.
Why would you ask that? You know personality no one, not even my mother, can control me my Andrew gaze steady and piercing.
watched her silently, his ne
Under his intense stare, Laurens forced smile gradually faded, and she looked away, nervous.
Actually, I overheard your conversation with Mrs.
Rhodes earlier, Andrew said softly.
Joe hes the fiance your family arranged for you, isnt he? Lauren panicked.
Dr.
Lloyd, please believe me! I havent done anything to betray you.
I swear! Andrew Shook his head gently and took her hand in his.
His voice was calm and warm.
Silly girl, of course, I believe you.

Andrew paused for a moment

If I didnt, I wouldnt still be here at Rhodes Corporation

He added, Now tell me who is Joe? And what exactly does the Rhodes family expect from you?