

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 621[1,853 words]

Chapter 621 Saw Colin Again

Chapter 621 Saw Colin Again

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"Ravenridge Senior High's anniversary?" Leander's eyes shifted almost imperceptibly, something unreadable flickering across his expression.

When it came to Ravenridge Senior High, he did feel a trace of sentiment.

After ten brutal years of clawing his way through life and death, that had been the first school he stepped into. It marked the beginning of everything for him-a clean slate, a new chapter after a decade of blood and survival.

That was where he met Liam.

Where he got to know Yvette and the rest of them, some memories were good, but some were messy and painful. Either way, they were part of his journey.

So, when he heard about the school's anniversary celebration, he paused for a second, then let out a faint, almost amused breath.

He was only twenty.

Yet the people he dealt with now were the kind who had dominated the world for decades, some for a century. Grandmasters who had seen empires rise and fall. Compared to that, high school students and even his former classmates felt like kids-just a bunch of teenagers still figuring out who they were.

He had no interest in spending an afternoon celebrating with them. And even if he wanted to go, it would not sit right. With who he was now, with the status he carried, walking back onto campus as if nothing had changed would feel out of place.

When Leander stayed silent, Yvette let out a soft sigh on the other end of the line. "I knew you wouldn't want to go," she said quietly. "I guess I just wanted to try. Maybe I was holding onto a tiny bit of hope. But I was right, wasn't I? With where you stand now, your eyes are on the world. On the international stage. Why would you care about some small school's anniversary?"

There was a hint of self-mockery in her voice.

She really had made up her mind to follow him for the rest of her life, no matter the cost. She had sworn she would never regret it.

Still, there were moments when doubt crept in, when she felt small and lost.

Leander had gone too far ahead. He was on a level she couldn't even reach. She watched him rise step by step, as if ascending into the clouds, while she herself remained tucked away in a corner of the school.

At most, she could serve as a student council officer, maybe take on some campus leadership role. The gap between them was not small. It was vast, almost impossible to bridge.

The stronger Leander became, the smaller Yvette felt.

For this centennial celebration, the school invited alums who had once stood out as exceptional students to return.

The first person she thought of was him. She really hoped he'd show up, but his

silence hit her with a sharp reminder that he wasn't like the rest of them.

He had already risen above it all and stood high as the Iron Sovereign.

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She sighed to herself. "Forget it. Ginny and I will go to the celebration. You can't make it, but we'll take some photos and show you

later."

Yvette tried to keep her voice light, but she couldn't entirely hide the disappointment. "You should get some rest. I won't keep you. I have an early flight tomorrow."

She was just about to hang up when Leander suddenly spoke. "Tomorrow, right?" Upon hearing that, Yvette's excitement surged. She felt a flicker of hope. "Yeah, tomorrow. Will you be able to make it?"

He rubbed his nose before answering, "I'm not sure if I can. But if I have the time tomorrow, I'll stop by."

On the other end of the line, Yvette shot upright in bed, her heart racing with joy. She knew that if he said that, there was a very high chance he would actually show up. That was a big step for him to even soften like this.

"Perfect. Ginny and I are representing at the celebration, so we'll go first and get the school to set up a guest seat for you. You can just come straight over tomorrow."

Leander didn't say much. He gave a quiet acknowledgment and ended the call.

In her dorm at Highcliffe University, Yvette had just set her phone down. Any lingering sleepiness was gone. She was buzzing with excitement, completely awake.

She dialed Ginny fast, lowering her voice almost to a whisper. "Ginny, guess what? A real heavyweight is actually coming with us to the school anniversary tomorrow. It's Leander. He's back in Highcliffe. He said if he's free, he'll show up at Ravenridge Senior High."

"No way." Ginny sounded completely shaken, her voice trembling with disbelief. "He's seriously willing to go to a high school anniversary?"

In her mind, Leander was the Celestial Serpent. The kind of man who crushed everything in his path. A living legend, even.

The idea that someone like him would step back onto a high school campus felt almost unreal.

The two girls kept talking on the phone, getting more and more worked up, neither of them willing to hang up.

Meanwhile, Leander had already fallen asleep on the couch in the top-floor suite of Jeff Enterprises.

The night passed. '

At ten thirty the next morning, Leander boarded a flight to Ravenridge in Mornwick. During the trip, he ignored the not-so-subtle flirting from a few attractive flight attendants. Three hours later, the plane touched down smoothly at Ravenridge Airport.

The moment he stepped onto Ravenridge soil, he glanced around the airport and felt a wave of familiarity and nostalgia wash over him. This was where his name first shook the world. A year and a half later, he had finally returned.

"I wonder how Ms. Hollis is doing." Ever since he crushed the Walshes at Grove in Listin and tore up Yvette's forced engagement, he had not contacted Monica again.

He had only seen Yvette a few times in Highcliffe.

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As for how Monica and her family were doing, he honestly did not know much.

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Monica was someone he respected deeply, almost like a benefactor. He quietly decided that after stopping by the underground auction house, he would pick up a few things and head to Villa No. 1 halfway up the hill to visit her.

After leaving the airport, Leander got into the private car Frankie had arranged for him. Behind the wheel sat Jamero, Frankie's most trusted right hand.

After Frankie left Ravenridge to work for Jeff Enterprises, he handed the entire Mornwick underground scene over to Josiah as his public representative. However, when it came to absolute power and final decisions, Jamero was the one who personally kept everything under tight control.

Jamero had become the undisputed king of the underworld in Mornwick. His name did not carry the same weight it once had. It "carried even more now.

Even the chairmen of Mornwick's top corporations would greet him with a polite smile, toast him with a cup of coffee in his direction, and address him respectfully as Mr. Coppel.

And yet, despite standing at the very top, Jamero was currently playing chauffeur for Leander. He looked every bit the obedient right-hand man, quiet and attentive. The higher he climbed, the more clearly he understood just how terrifying Leander truly

was.

Driving for him was not a burden. It was an honor. Jamero did not resent it in the slightest. If anything, he felt grateful.

Part of him wished he could stay by Leander's side at all times.

"Mr. Ashcroft, where are we heading first?" Jamero asked respectf

"Straight to The Lafayette."

eyes on the road as he drove.

According to the solid intel Frankie had gathered, The Lafayette was the venue for tomorrow's underground auction. The main event would take place in a hidden basement that the hotel had secretly built beneath the property.

The Lafayette had stood in Ravenridge for nearly a century. Rumor had it that it already existed in the final years of the empire.

Back then, it was called Lafayette Inn. The name stuck for almost a hundred years.

It was not until the early 21st century, when the hotel industry boomed, that it was officially renamed The Lafayette.

In terms of history, The Lafayette ranked first among the dozen or so hotels in Ravenridge. None of the others came close. But when it came to publicity, it was almost invisible. It kept such a low profile that even some flashy new boutique hotels had more buzz and exposure.

There were no aggressive ad campaigns.

No media hype, either.

And yet, for a hundred years, The Lafayette had never fallen.

At that very moment, inside The Lafayette, two sharply dressed young men walked out side-by-side. Their expressions were tight with irritation.

"The management at The Lafayette is stubborn as hell," one of them muttered. "We tried everything. They still refuse to let us buy

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1. in. I even set aside one hundred million to make a serious move in the hotel industry."

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The young man in the plain suit clicked his tongue and spat to the side, irritation written all over his expression. He shot a look at the man beside him and lowered his voice.

"Colin, why don't we come back tomorrow? If the hotel management still refuses to let us buy in, we'll use the leverage from the five hotels under our two families and squeeze them together. There's no way they can keep saying no."

The man next to him stood tall and straight, sharp-featured and effortlessly striking.

It was none other than Colin-the same Colin who had clashed with Leander more than once in the past.

More than a year had passed.

The restless edge and calculation in his eyes had faded. In their place was something deeper, steadier. He carried himself with the calm of someone who had learned to plan three steps ahead instead of rushing into the first move. After hearing him out, Colin fell silent for a moment. Then, he gave a small wave of his hand. "Kylan, there's no rush. We take this slow and think it through. The Lafayette looks worn down, outdated. The facilities and hardware can't even compete with some two-star hotels, but it's been standing for a hundred years. That doesn't happen by accident. There has to be serious backing and funding behind it. Until we know exactly what we're dealing with, we don't push."

Kylen Bates might have been proud by nature, but when it came to Colin, he listened. Even though frustration flickered across his expression, he swallowed it and nodded.

The two of them were still standing just outside the hotel entrance when a Lincoln rolled up slowly to the curb.

The driver stepped out first and walked around to open the back door. A tall, young figure emerged from the car, poised and self-assured.

The movement drew both Colin's and Kylan's eyes.

It only took that single glance.

All the composure on Colin's expression shattered.

The calm and restraint vanished in an instant. His expression stiffened, disbelief

flooding his features. His pupils tightened sharply. "Is that him? What is he doing back in Ravenridge?"

Olivia Harris is an emerging author celebrated for her captivating romantic and steamy novels. With a talent for crafting deep emotional connections and fiery chemistry between her characters, Olivia's stories offer readers an escape into worlds filled with passion, intrigue, and heart-stopping drama.

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 622[1,577 words]

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Chapter 622 Who Is He?

Chapter 622 Who Is He?

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Colin looked shaken entirely. The second he caught sight of that young figure, he froze where he stood, like someone had hit pause on his whole body. A jolt ran through him, sharp and cold. "Why is he back in Ravenridge?"

The shock lasted only a heartbeat before it curdled into something worse. He was filled with fear and disbelief. He had convinced himself this person was gone for good, out of his life and completely out of reach.

He had told himself they would never cross paths again, that the shadow hanging over him would finally fade. But now his nightmare, the one man he had spent his whole life chasing and still could not surpass, was standing right at the entrance of the hotel. It was real and utterly unavoidable.

Colin, what's wrong with you? You know that guy?" Kylen asked, glancing at him.

He sounded curious, but there was a flicker of indifference in his expression. Sure, Leander had just stepped out of a Lincoln Limousine and pulled up to the Lafayette, which meant serious money. Still, Kylen was hardly impressed.

A Lincoln Limousine might be a million-dollar luxury car, but to Kylen, it was nothing rare. There were three sitting in his family's garage. On slow afternoons, he would casually have the driver take one out, cruise around the outskirts of Ravenridge with a pretty girl in the passenger seat. It was routine, almost boring.

He was only mildly curious about who Leander was. In a second-rate city like Ravenridge, he practically knew every family wealthy enough to afford a Lincoln Limousine. Yet none of the heirs he knew fit this profile.

Colin did not answer. He stood there at the hotel entrance, dazed. Every instinct screamed at him to turn around and leave, just disappear. But his legs felt like they were filled with concrete. He could not move an inch.

All he could do was watch that tall, straight-backed figure approach, each measured step closing the distance between them.

The young man who had just stepped out of the Lincoln Limousine was Leander. Jamero had driven him all the way here, pulling up directly in front of the Lafayette.

He gave the Lafayette a quick once-over. That was all it took. Something clicked in his chest, and the corner of his mouth curved up in quiet amusement. "Well, I'll be d*mned. Didn't expect a place like this in Ravenridge. I was here for at least six months, and I never even heard a whisper about it."

Back when he was studying at Ravenridge Senior High, he had barely stayed in one place. Between running errands for Tarlyn Guild and chasing down matters related to the Phoenix Essence Pill, he

had been constantly on the move. He had technically lived in Ravenridge, but in truth, he had only brushed against it. He knew almost nothing about the city itself.

"Mr. Ashcroft, shall we head in now?" Jamero asked softly from the side, standing with a slight bow, careful and deferential.

"You don't need to follow me. Head back. I'll take care of the rest myself," Leander replied, giving a casual wave of his hand. His tone was light, almost offhand.

Jamero did not dare add another word. He nodded immediately. "If you need anything at all, just say the word. I'll take my leave now so I don't disturb you." He bowed deeply to Leander before getting into the car and driving off. With his hands tucked into his pockets, Leander glanced once more at The Lafayette's gilded sign. In a few unhurried strides, he

reached the hotel entrance.

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Two young men stood by the doors. One of them stared at him without blinking, his gaze locked in place as if he had forgotten how to look away.

Leander, on the other hand, did not react at all. It was as if he had seen nothing more substantial than a patch of empty air. He walked straight past him without so much as a pause.

The moment Leander brushed by, Colin's fists clenched so tightly his knuckles blanched. His entire body trembled. It was fear and humiliation. It was resentment he could not swallow.

As time passed and his family's business continued to grow, Colin never forgot Leander. That one loss had burned into him. He had once sworn to himself that when he finally had enough weight behind his name, he would rechallenge Leander and settle the

score.

"But the higher he climbed, the more he heard. The more he learned about what Leander had done.

And eventually, somewhere along the way, that fire of competition had quietly died. He had given up on ever standing against him again.

Colin knew perfectly well that a guy like Leander was on a whole different level- someone he could never match. Still, there was this tiny flicker in his chest, a hope he couldn't quite shake.

He told himself that Leander still remembered him, that he still counted as an adversary in his eyes. He figured if they ran into each other again, even if there wasn't a full-on confrontation, at the very least Leander would glance his way, a silent acknowledgment that they had once faced off directly.

But he was dead wrong. In Leander's eyes, there was nothing. No trace of him. Not a scrap of recognition. Colin felt smaller than ever, like some clown jumping around for the attention of a billionaire, only to be ignored entirely. Leander didn't spare him a single look. He was erased.

Kylen, standing beside him, noticed the shift in Colin's expression and frowned. "Colin, what's wrong? You got some beef with that guy?" His tone wasn't hushed or careful. He didn't even bother pretending. His words cut straight toward Leander.

The moment those words left Kylen's mouth, Colin's body jolted. He stiffened, panic written all over him. He lunged to grab Kylen before he could say more. "Kylen, don't say that! I don't have any grudge against him. Let's just go, okay?"

Kylen didn't know Leander, but Colin did. He understood how dangerous the man was. If Leander decided to turn his attention on them, even Mornwick's grandmaster showing up wouldn't guarantee their safety. Leander was the kind of guy who held life and death in his hands. He wasn't someone a couple of business people could ever provoke.

"Why so tense?" Kylen asked, completely unbothered.

Colin's fear was written all over his expression. Kylen, on the other hand, didn't flinch. He pushed Colin back a little and said, "Wait a sec. I remember now. When we were drinking that one time, you told me about how you used to be childhood friends with Linden's daughter, from Sitwell Group. Then there was that other guy- you said some rival got in the way and you two never ended up together. That rival... it wouldn't happen to be that guy, would it?"

He didn't have to say it outright. Everyone knew who he meant-Leander. The way Kylen said it had an arrogance, like he didn't even consider Leander worthy of his respect.

The Bates Family was the new powerhouse in Ravenridge. They'd only been in town for six months, but they weren't just any newcomers. Backing them was Crestline Realty, a nationwide chain, giving them insane influence and deep pockets. Around here, they were almost unstoppable. Most locals feared them—or at least a handful did-but they always looked down on any homegrown business.

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Almost every major player in Ravenridge had some kind of business with the Bates Family. Those solid connections only made Kylen even more cocky and self-assured.

As he spoke, Kylen started moving forward. He wanted to catch up to Leander and make a stand for Colin.

Colin wanted nothing more than to slap the idiot, but thinking about the families' partnership, he held back his anger. He gripped Kylen tight. "Kylen, chill. Seriously, just calm down. Yeah, he's my rival, but if it comes to him, I'll admit it—he's better than me. That chapter's done. Don't you dare rush over there and stir things up. Look at the bigger picture. In all of Mornwick, in all of Astria, hell, maybe the whole world, there aren't many people who can even mess with him."

Kylen raised an eyebrow, unconvinced and suspicious. "Colin, are you kidding me? There aren't many people in Astria who can mess with him? You're painting him way too big. What, is he from one of those Highcliffe families or something?" 'Colin's gaze stayed fixed on Leander's retreating figure. He hadn't noticed them, and he kept moving forward. Only then did Colin speak in a low, steady tone. "Kylen, I'm serious. We cannot touch that guy. Did you even notice the driver in his car? Don't tell me you didn't recognize him."

Kylen frowned, puzzled. "Yeah, I did think that Lincoln driver looked familiar, but I couldn't place him. Maybe someone I know?"

Colin's expression turned heavy. He shook his head slowly. "No, he's not someone we know personally. That man runs the entire underground in Mornwick now. After Frankie, Gumus, and Tommy stepped down, he became the one and only face of the city's underworld. Mr. Coppel."

"Mr. Coppel?" Kylen's eyes went wide. His whole expression froze in shock.

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From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 623[1,565 words]

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Chapter 623 Jeff Ashcroft Is Here

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Kylen froze entirely, entirely a loss for words. All his earlier arrogance and swagger had vanished.

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Mr. Coppel is someone even my father would treat with the utmost respect if he were to come to Ravenridge. He personally entertained him as a guest of the highest honor. He runs the entire Mornwick underworld and controls almost ninety percent of Mornwick's entertainment industry all by himself. I have to call him Mr. Coppel and show full respect whenever I meet him, without the slightest hint of negligence.

Thinking of that, Kylen glanced back at Leander again, but any trace of his usual contempt had disappeared entirely. His gaze was heavy, filled with awe and shock.

After all, someone like Jamero still had to drive personally for Leander, acting as his chauffeur, with utmost deference. If that were the case, Leander himself must hold a level of power and influence beyond imagination.

"Colin, you're not kidding, right? You really didn't see wrong, that driver is Mr. Coppel?" It took a long moment for Kylen to come back to himself. He swallowed hard but still looked at Colin with a hint of doubt.

Colin's eyes narrowed slightly. When he saw Leander fully walk away, only then did he let out a long breath. He said with a hint of nostalgia, "Do you think I could be wrong? That's definitely Mr. Coppel. After Frankie and the other key players left Mornwick, M Coppel took over the underworld there. But even he, when facing that person, can only obey orders and wait for instructions. Back when he dominated Mornwick, he was just one of Frankie's top lieutenants."

Kylen's shock grew with every word. He couldn't help but ask, "Then who exactly is that young man?"

Colin drew in a deep breath before letting out the name, "Mr. Ashcroft."

The moment Kylen heard it, he froze stone still. A chill of fear ran from his head to his toes. He quietly thanked himself that Colin had held him back, preventing him from acting recklessly. Otherwise, not even his father standing right there could have saved him. "Mr. Ashcroft of Mornwick is an unbeatable legend, an incomparable myth. I can't believe I actually brushed past someone of this magnitude today."

Leander walked forward with one hand in his pocket, heading straight toward the front desk of The Lafayette.

He had spotted Colin the instant he got out of the car, but he barely glanced at him. That single look was enough. He didn't give Colin another thought after that.

To him, Colin was nothing more than dust drifting along the ground. Not even worth a glance. The past was done and buried. As long as Colin didn't do something stupid and come looking for trouble, he wouldn't spare him a second thought.

When he reached the hotel front desk, Leander let his gaze sweep across the lobby, slow and deliberate, like he was sizing the place up. The receptionist noticed him right away and offered a professional smile. "Good evening, sir. Are you checking in, or joining us for dinner?"

The Lafayette was one of those all-in-one spots: hotel, restaurant, entertainment all rolled into one. It was not the biggest name in town, but it was far from second-rate. Every staff member at the front desk had undergone formal training and delivered polished manners and impeccable service.

Leander rolled his neck once, slow and unhurried, then let a faint smile tug at his lips. He did not answer. Instead, he reached out casually with one hand. The next second, a leather couch that weighed well over a hundred pounds slid violently across the floor and slammed sideways into the middle of the lobby passage, blocking it off completely.

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Then, he strolled over and dropped onto it like he owned the place, one leg crossed over the other, looking lazy, arrogant, and completely at ease.

"I'm not here to stay. I'm not here to eat," he said flatly. "Go tell your management I'm here for them. I want a seat at tomorrow's underground auction." No buildup, no small talk, just straight to the point. After that, he leaned back against the couch, closed his eyes, and looked perfectly content, as if he were settling in for a nap.

"An underground auction?" The receptionist's eyes had already darkened when she saw him single-handedly block the entire lobby walkway. But the moment she heard those words, confusion replaced the irritation.

What underground auction? I've never even heard of it!

The security guards nearby had started edging forward, tense and ready. Still, the receptionist kept her composure and addressed him politely. "I'm sorry, sir. Our hotel only provides accommodation and dining services. As for whatever auction you're referring to, we have never hosted anything like that. You must have the wrong place."

Leander did not even open his eyes.

"Whether you've heard of it or not is irrelevant," he replied coolly. "Just inform your senior management. Tell them to come see me."

The second she heard Leander, the receptionist's expression fell flat.

She had been working at the Lafayette for almost six months. In all that time, no one had ever casually asked about an underground auction like he just did. And definitely no one had the nerve to drag a couch over and sprawl across it right in the middle of the hotel lobby. In her eyes, Leander was nothing but a troublemaker looking to stir something up.

She took a few cautious steps back, already lifting her hand to signal security to come over and escort him out.

Just then, a soft, sweet voice drifted through the lobby, clear as music. "What's going on?"

Everyone turned at once. Almost instantly, the entire room went still. Their gazes locked onto the same spot, frozen there as if someone had pressed pause.

Leander opened his eyes and tilted his head toward the sound.

Near the elevators, a tall, striking figure was walking toward them with unhurried grace.

She wore no makeup, and she did not need it. Her beauty looked effortless, as if it had been carved that way by nature itself. Her skin was fair and luminous. Her figure was all smooth curves and sharp lines in precisely the right places, the kind of silhouette that made people stare without realizing it. Every subtle movement carried an undeniable feminine allure. When she frowned or smiled, her phoenix-shaped eyes seemed to hold both reproach and amusement at once, as if she could hook someone's soul with a single glance.

She was the kind of woman others rarely saw, even once in a lifetime.

Her legs were long and perfectly straight. In just a few strides, she reached the front desk. She scanned the lobby, quickly piecing together what had happened. Then she turned her attention to Leander.

"Sir, I'm the hotel manager. Is there something you need?" she said evenly. "If you're unhappy with our service in any way, you're welcome to tell me. We'll do our best to fix it. But could I ask you to step aside first? You're blocking the area, and it's starting to disrupt other guests."

Her tone had been steady and self-assured, polished in that crisp, executive way that neither groveled nor offended. With a face

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that could stop traffic, she rarely heard the word no from any man.

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Most men would have melted by now. They would have let their eyes wander, their judgment blur, and followed wherever she led. She clearly expected the same from Leander. The confidence in her expression said she was sure he would fall in line without a

fuss.

But when she looked again, she met a pair of eyes so cold they felt almost detached from the world.

Leander held her gaze. There was no flicker of desire, no spark of admiration. Just a calm, glassy stillness, like undisturbed water. His voice came out even and unhurried. "An Advanced Martial Sovereign. With your level, you should already have a foot in this hotel's upper ranks. If you have the authority to decide, we can talk right now. If you don't, call whoever's above you. Let's not waste each other's time."

After hearing that, her expression froze, and disbelief spread across her features. She had only just stepped into the realm of Advanced Martial Sovereign. In Astria's martial world, she stood openly among the top tier. Yet with a single sentence, Leander had exposed her cultivation as if he had peeled back every layer and seen straight through her.

Her heart jolted. Her pupils tightened sharply. "Who are you?"

She had already switched to the formal honorifics of the martial world. She understood now that he was no ordinary man.

Leander leaned back, both arms stretched across the couch. His body was completely at ease. He settled in as if he owned the room. A faint curve lifted at the corner of his mouth. "Go ahead and pass along my name. It might make this simpler. Tell the people above you that Jeff Ashcroft is here. If they want to talk, they can come see me."

The moment his words fell, the stunning woman froze again. Even her bright eyes seemed to lock in place.

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Chapter 624 Ebon Sect: The Lowells

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"Tell the people above you that Jeff Ashcroft is here. If they want to talk, they can come see me." Leander's words hit like a bombshell, freezing the stunning woman right in her tracks.

Her eyes went still, caught in a moment of disbelief, and she stood there stunned for what felt like forever. Then she snapped back to reality. "Jeff Ashcroft?"

She stared at him, her expression shifting over and over, barely able to wrap her mind around it.

This is Jeff Ashcroft? The guy in front of me looks brash, a little immature even, yet he's supposed to be the Supreme Grandmaster, the one who shapes the world's fate? I don't want to believe it, but seeing him so calm, carrying that aura that commands everyone and hears nothing, I can't deny it. Besides, in the whole world right now, besides Iron Sovereign himself, who else would dare utter Jeff Ashcroft's name? If he weren't extremely powerful, how could a single sentence reveal the depths of my cultivation?

'You really are Sovereign Ashcroft?' The pride in her expression vanished completely. Her expression turned serious, and her voice dropped to a respectful tone.

'As for my name, Jeff Ashcroft, I doubt anyone would dare pretend to be me!' Leander did not even bother to hide it. A low chuckle slipped from his lips, easy and unrestrained.

Then he lifted his hand and made a casual grasping motion in the air. The mojito resting on a server's tray seemed to answer some invisible pull. It rose smoothly, drifted across the courtyard as if it had a will of its own, and settled neatly into his palm.

'Have whoever's in charge come down. A Martial Sovereign isn't qualified to speak to me.' His tone stayed calm, almost indifferent, yet the pressure in the air shifted. An overwhelming, regal presence rolled outward from him and pressed down on everyone present.

'Telekinesis?' The stunning woman's gaze sharpened. With her current cultivation, she could also draw objects from a distance, pluck a flower, or snatch a leaf through sheer force of will. But that was only within limits. At best, she could retrieve something small and light within about thirty feet.

The server, however, had been outside the hotel courtyard, at least a hundred and fifty feet away from Leander. Yet with a simple flick of his hand, the glass flew to him as though it were alive, steady and precise, without the slightest wobble or deviation, perfectly controlled from start to finish. That level of cultivation was beyond comprehension.

'I'm Gwen Lowell of Ebon Sect. Greetings, Sovereign Ashcroft.' The breathtaking Gwen did not hesitate another second. In front of everyone, she bowed deeply to Leander.

The receptionist and the security guards nearby all froze, shock written on their expressions. They stared as if reality itself had just cracked.

Ms. Lowell, who usually carries herself like an untouchable queen of the boardroom, all poise and authority, is now bowing to a young man several years her junior. And this arrogant-looking youth, who seems to fear nothing, who on earth is he?

Not far away, Colin and Kylen had witnessed everything clearly. Their pupils tightened, and a jolt of shock punched straight through their chests.

Kylen in particular felt his scalp prickle. No matter how much Colin had bragged about Leander before, nothing compared to seeing it with his own eyes. Earlier, the two of them had come to the hotel with over a hundred million in capital, hoping to negotiate directly with management. The one who handled them was Gwen.

She was stunning, almost ethereal, yet razor-sharp in business, decisive and seasoned, the kind of woman whose thoughts were

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impossible to read. Even the two of them struggled to keep up and were eventually shown the door.

+10 Free Coins

And now, the way she faced Leander was utterly different, her posture respectful, almost submissive. As if she were standing before someone she did not dare offend. "So this is the kind of presence Mr. Ashcroft of Mornwick carries?" Kylen drew in a slow breath. The more he saw of Leander, the deeper his awe ran. It was not just strength. It was the kind of power that pressed down on the room without trying.

"Ebon Sect?" Leander's eyes shifted slightly. He did not know much about the sect. Lately, grandmasters across the martial world have been rising one after another. Ancient lineages that had stayed buried for decades were resurfacing with them. It was hardly surprising that this one had slipped past him.

His gaze flicked toward Gwen. He gave a small, almost lazy wave of his hand. "No need to go through all that. I want the person in charge."

This time, Gwen did not hesitate. She simply nodded. Within minutes, she had notified every security guard in the building. All hotel entrances were sealed. No outsiders were allowed in. Even guests with reservations were stopped in the lobby and politely turned away.

The entire lobby became Leander's private domain.

He leaned back against the couch, looking utterly at ease as he waited. The hotel receptionist who had quietly doubted him earlier kept stealing glances in his direction. The expression on her delicate face shifted ever so slightly. Curiosity had clearly gotten the better of her.

Meanwhile, Gwen took the elevator straight to the top floor.

Inside a conference room, more than a dozen men in tailored suits sat around a long table, deep in discussion.

"The slots for this underground auction are basically finalized. The items are all arranged. Tomorrow night at eight thirty sharp, the auction begins." The middle-aged man seated at the head of the table had a broad face with sharp, solid features. He sat upright, composed and commanding. His voice rang out, steady and resonant, filling the room with authority.

"For a hundred years, the Lowells of the Ebon Sect have upheld this tradition without fail. The world today is different. For various reasons, grandmasters are rising everywhere, and undercurrents are churning beneath the surface. But the century-old legacy of the Lowells cannot falter."

His gaze swept across the room, firm.

"This auction will draw grandmasters from all across Astria. Many are in the Transcendent Realm. A few King Phase figures who made their names a century ago will even be in attendance. We will host this properly, with no sloppiness, no embarrassment. I will not have the world's heroes laughing at us or tarnishing the Lowells name."

The moment he spoke, it was clear who led the room. No one interrupted. No one questioned him. The others simply nodded in agreement, their expressions solemn and compliant.

"Vytal's right!" A refined looking man seated beside him finally spoke up. His voice was calm, but there was steel underneath it.

"The Lowells have been around since the final years of the old dynasty. We've carried this name for over two centuries. We've held our ground in Ravenridge all this time, and we're the ones who built the Lafayette brand into what it is today. "That didn't happen overnight. It's the blood and sweat of generations of Lowells before us. Tomorrow's underground auction

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Chapter 624 Ebon Sect: The Lowells

might be packed with grandmasters and top-tier warriors from every corner, but that doesn't change anything.

+10 Free Coins

"We run the show and stay in control. There won't be a single mistake. If we can't even handle something like this without dragging great-grandfather out to clean up after us, then we don't deserve to call ourselves the next generation of Lowells."

Around the conference table, the others nodded again.

The two who had just spoken were the pillars of the Lowells' current generation. Publicly, they managed the hotel empire with precision. Behind the scenes, they navigated the martial world just as smoothly.

They handled every alliance, every negotiation, and every unspoken rule without missing a beat. They handled it all so flawlessly that even the older generation trusted them without question.

Just as the room was prepared to dive deeper into the details of tomorrow night's underground auction, the conference room door suddenly swung open.

Several heads snapped toward the entrance, irritation flashing across their faces. But when they saw Gwen standing there, the tension eased slightly.

The middle-aged man with the broad face and sharply defined features softened his expression, though confusion lingered in his eyes. "Gwen. All the elders are in the middle of a meeting. You didn't even knock. What's going on?"

The others looked at her with the same curiosity.

Everyone in this room knew exactly what Gwen was capable of. She was only twenty-two, yet she already stood at the top of the Lowells' younger generation. Her cultivation had reached Martial Sovereign, a height many never touched in a lifetime. In business, she was even more formidable. Her decisiveness and strategy had left more than a few senior Lowells quietly humbled.

Gwen had always been composed, precise, and unshakably steady. But today, a trace of urgency showed on her expression. Something had clearly gone wrong. She stepped into the room, bowed slightly in apology, and her voice tightened as she spoke. "I'm sorry for interrupting, but this can't wait. There's a guest downstairs in the main hall. I can't handle him. And honestly, none of you can either. I think... it's time to invite great-great-grandfather out."

The words landed like a stone dropped into still water.

Every expression in the room changed.

The middle-aged man with the broad, sharp features was Vytal Lowell, Gwen's father. His eyes narrowed as his tone grew heavy. "Gwen, explain yourself. Who exactly showed up that we need to call your great-great-grandfather? Don't tell me one of those King Phase grandmasters from a century ago resurfaced." Gwen slowly shook her head. Her following sentence froze the entire room in place. "It's Jeff Ashcroft."

Olivia Harris is an emerging author celebrated for her captivating romantic and steamy novels. With a talent for crafting deep emotional connections and fiery chemistry between her characters, Olivia's stories offer readers an escape into worlds filled with passion, intrigue, and heart-stopping drama.

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 625[1,284 words]

Chapter 625 Peerless Presence

+10 Free Coins

Jeff Ashcroft?" The name hit the air like it carried its own kind of magic. Every one of the Lowells from the Ebon Sect, all of them usually full of pride and swagger, froze, their expressions flickering with shock.

What did you just say?" Vytal muttered, pausing to think, then turned his gaze back to Gwen. "He's here? Are you serious? Didn't

he just show up in the Sahar Wastes not long ago? How the hell is he here now?"

It had only been five days since Leander had sliced down ten supersonic fighter jets in the Sahar Wastes.

The idea that Jeff Ashcroft had suddenly appeared here felt almost unreal.

He's definitely him," Gwen insisted, nodding without a trace of doubt. "Seriously, who else could pull off being Jeff Ashcroft?"

The rest of the group finally clicked, their expressions darkening into a deeper sense of gravity.

Yrell Lowell, the second of the Lowells, frowned in confusion. "Jeff Ashcroft? Why would he show up? He's always been the type to vanish without a trace. And everyone says he's reckless, arrogant, thinks the world revolves around him. He hardly ever tangled with any sect or martial family, never joined an underground martial gathering. So, why the sudden appearance here?"

Vytal shook his head, equally baffled.

However, even as confusion settled over them, the situation downstairs demanded their attention. An Iron Sovereign was waiting, and a heavyweight one at that. Even the Lowells had to treat this with the utmost respect.

Leander was practically a living legend.

"I'm going down to meet him first," Vytal finally said after a moment of thought. "You guys head to Highridge Estate and get hold of Our great-grandfather. Tell him the King Phase has arrived."

The others nodded, standing together, ready to move, when a voice cut through the air.

No need to make it that complicated."

Everyone froze, stunned into silence.

They all sat there, each of them powerful beyond measure- even the weakest

among them was a Martial Sovereign. The rest were Transcendent Realm cultivators, yet somehow, none of them sensed anyone approaching.

Their heads turned almost instinctively toward the meeting room door. There, a young man strolled in, one hand casually in his pocket.

"Sovereign Ashcroft?" Gwen's eyes widened when she saw him.

Leander paused at the doorway, scanning the room with a slow, deliberate gaze. A faint smile tugged at his lips "Two Martial Sovereigns, eight Kindling Transcendents, four Ember Transcendents, two Infernal Crown Transcendents. The so called Ebon Sect is hiding some serious talent."

There was a note of surprise in his voice. He had come from Ravenridge but had never known that the place harbored a martial sect this powerful. Judging by the aura radiating from these dozen or so people, it was clear they shared the same family line, the same sect-this was one ferocious martial family

A formation like this, just over a year ago, would have given him pause Now, after a year had passed, he barely felt more than

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Chapter 625 Peerless Presence

flicker of appreciation.

+10 Free Coins

"So, this is Jeff Ashcroft?" The Lowells' eyes were locked on Leander. They looked at this young living legend with a mix of emotions, but all shared the same question.

Leander's reputation was unmatched, both in Astria's martial world and across the underground. Yet this was the first time they were seeing him in person.

No one doubted his identity. He faced so many Transcendent Realm grandmasters alone without a hint of fear. His calm, deep composure was like still water, quiet but impossible to disturb. Aside from the Iron Sovereign, there was no one else who could pull

it off.

Vytal, the leader of the current generation of the Lowells, stepped forward first and bowed. "I am Vytal Lowell of the Ebon Sect. Sovereign Ashcroft, it's an honor."

The others followed, one after another.

"Honored to meet you, Sovereign Ashcroft."

Everyone in the room had practically reached international martial world status. They were all top-tier grandmasters.

However, when it came to Leander, not a single one of them dared to act cocky.

Leander didn't flinch.

His gaze was calm, detached. "Just now I heard you mention bringing your great- grandfather here. That's not necessary. I only need to talk to someone who can make the key decisions about the underground auction."

He pulled out a chair and sat down, cutting straight to the point. "Tomorrow night, I need you to set me up with a spot at the auction. I'm going to participate. That's exactly why I came."

The room went silent.

Everyone exchanged looks, puzzled. They had assumed that Leander would show up with a big request for the Lowells. Nobody expected him to be here just to claim a seat at the auction.

For the Lowells, who ran the auction, this was nothing.

Vytal snapped back to reality first and nodded immediately. "Sovereign Ashcroft, this is no trouble at all for the Lowells. Just give the word, and we'll hold a seat for you. The Lowells have run this underground auction for almost a century.

"Nearly every martial grandmaster in Astria shows up. But guests of your caliber? There aren't more than ten of you. How could the Lowells ever say no? Having you attend the Ebon Sect's underground auction would be a true honor for us."

He looked stiff and serious as always.

Yet, when he faced Leander, that polished official tone of his flowed effortlessly, sharp and precise, catching everyone off guard,

"Is that so?" Leander asked with a half-smile, not caring at all how inflated Vytal's words might be. He just reached into his pocket and pulled out a card.

It was a royal purple-and-gold card from International Bank, gleaming with an almost blinding brilliance. There were only handful of these cards in the world. Everyone who owned one was a business titan whose wealth rivaled entire nations.

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Chapter 625 Peerless Presence

+10 Free Coins

"This is my card. Take it and register it. I'll be at the auction tomorrow night, right on time." With that, he tossed the words over his shoulder and strode out of the conference room, leaving nothing behind but a casually proud silhouette.

Once Leander left, the room fell into silence. For a long moment, no one spoke. Then, Vytal finally broke it. "No wonder he's a living legend. He just stood there. No extra gestures, not a trace of core energy released. Yet somehow, it felt like a mountain without a summit had appeared right in front of me."

Zyrell nodded quietly beside him. "Terrifying, really. Standing before him feels like facing a great-grandfather. Maybe even worse than that."

Gwen lingered at the side, her gaze fixed on the spot Leander had disappeared toward. Her thoughts drifted to the underground auction happening tomorrow night. Among the attendees, there were even King Phase grandmasters from a hundred years ago.

And now, the only newly crowned grandmaster alive today, someone who could even match a hundred-year King Phase, would be there. Tomorrow night's auction was guaranteed to spark clashes never seen before.

They were all from the martial world. They knew the unspoken rule: grandmasters came first, and disputes were settled with fists.

On paper, the auction was about who could pay the most. But in reality, only ordinary merchants would follow that. In the martial world, rules and contracts were meaningless. Once someone laid eyes on what they truly desired, if money couldn't secure it, then what followed would be brutal fighting and bloody snatching.

"Jeff Ashcroft, huh." Gwen finally blinked back to reality and let a rueful, lingering smile cross her expression. "Let me see the Iron Sovereign at its absolute peak tomorrow night."

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From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 626[1,376 words]

Chapter 626 Were You Guys Classmates?

Chapter 626 Were You Guys Classmates?

+10 Free Coins

The Lowells were gathered in the conference room, and Vytal's expression was serious as he spoke.

“Jeff's arrival is a major matter. I'll go and inform my Great-Grandfather first. Also, pay close attention to tomorrow night's auction items. I'm very curious why Jeff traveled such a long way to attend this auction.”

Upon hearing Vytal's words, the others exchanged glances, their curiosity clearly stirred.

Leander had always come and gone without a trace. But this time, he had personally shown up at The Lafayette, even presenting a royal purple-gold card from International Bank to request a seat at the auction.

It was obvious he'd come for something specific.

"Yes, we should keep an eye on him," Gwen nodded in agreement. "At his level, anything that catches his attention would be a rare treasure. We should prepare in advance so there won't be disputes over it later.”

The usually orderly Lowell family of the Ebon Sect was instantly thrown into a special state because of Leander's arrival. Everyone mobilized and began treating the upcoming auction with far more seriousness.

After leaving The Lafayette, Leander did not inform Jamero. Instead, he hailed a cab and headed straight to Ravenridge Senior High.

According to Yvette, today was Independence Day. It also happened to be the school's 100th anniversary, and the celebration gala was scheduled for that very day.

Leander still remembered that at last year's anniversary celebration, he had gone on stage to play a piano piece composed by Mozart, and afterward sang Innocent Dreamer. Now that a year had passed, he found himself curious. Had Ravenridge Senior High changed at all? Or was it still the same school he remembered?

The cab drove toward the familiar internet cafe sign in Ravenridge. A thought crossed his mind, and he asked the driver to stop.

Standing in front of the sign, he thought about the past. He recalled coming here over a year ago with Liam during lunch breaks to play games.

With that thought in mind, he stepped inside,

There were quite a few high school students in school uniforms in the internet cafe, the place filled with noisy chatter and youthful.

energy.

The receptionist was still the same woman from a year ago. In Leander's memory, she seemed to be one of the cafe's shareholders. She had always been diligent, focused on running the business, easygoing, and polite to everyone.

At that moment, a young girl walked up to the counter and said to the receptionist, "Miss, could you help me get a temporary card? I still have a dungeon quest I haven't finished. After I'm done, I'll be helping out at the school's anniversary event."

The girl was about 5'4, with delicate features. Though she still looked a bit young and hadn't fully grown into her looks, her natural beauty was already evident. In a few years, she would surely be on par with Yvette and Ginny-definitely school belle material.

She was wearing a sky-blue school uniform. Leander recognized it immediately as Ravenridge Senior High's attire,

"You little troublemaker!" The receptionist shook her head helplessly. "You're underage, yet you keep coming here. I've snuck you in countless times, but that's against the rules. If there's an inspection, I could get penalized.

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1:23 pm P

Chapter 626 Were You Guys Classmates?

"Inspections are especially strict these days, and I can't issue you a temporary card."

The girl's face immediately fell. She turned around in frustration, only to catch sight of Leander walking in.

Her eyes lit up at once.

+10 Free Coins

"Hey there! Could I use your ID to head in for a bit?" she asked. "I'll only be on for half an hour, and I'll top up fifty bucks onto your account. Please help me out. I still have one dungeon left to clear. Is that okay?"

She looked at Leander as she pleaded with him.

Leander couldn't help but laugh. He had only come to the internet cafe for a quick visit, just to see the place where he used to hang out in high school. Who would have thought he'd run into something like this?

This little girl was clearly a gaming addict, passionate about online games. Seeing her pleading expression-and the Ravenridge Senior High uniform she was wearing- made it hard for him not to smile.

For a moment, he didn't even know how to respond.

At that moment, the receptionist also turned to look at him. She had been about to remind Leander that IDs couldn't be lent out. But when she saw his face, she froze briefly, then broke into a bright smile.

'Oh, it's you! I haven't seen you in a long time-over a year, right? Have you graduated?"

Back then, Leander and Liam had practically been regulars. They would come during lunch breaks or in the afternoons to play for an hour or two. On top of that, Leander was good-looking, so the receptionist naturally remembered him. Even after more than a year, she still recognized him instantly.

Leander smiled lightly and nodded. "Yeah, I graduated over a year ago."

The receptionist looked him over and smiled. "Then, you must've been in the previous senior class at Ravenridge Senior High. I 'emember there was a boy who came with you. You both wore the same school uniform."

He had to admire her memory and nodded again.

The girl in the school uniform beside them widened her eyes in surprise when she heard that. She then stared at Leander with open curiosity.

'You graduated from Ravenridge Senior High last year? That makes you my senior, right?" Excitement was written all over her face. 'My name is Jacklyn Quenton, and I'm a first-year student this year. That means you're three grades above me!" Before Leander could respond, she stepped closer and continued eagerly, "Today is the school's anniversary. Since you're here, you must be here for the celebration too, right?"

She was lively and talkative, showing no sense of distance despite just meeting him. Leander nodded. "You could say that."

"That's great!" Without hesitation, Jacklyn grabbed onto his sleeve. "Meeting you here must be fate! I'm in charge of seat arrangements and event coordination for the celebration, together with Melanie Costana from the student council. The ceremony starts at 2:30 p.m. I'll escort you over there when the time comes. alright?"

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1:23 pm PEO

Chapter 626 Were You Guys Classmates?

+10 Free Coins

Leander hadn't expected this little girl to hold an important role at school. With a faint smile on his lips, he nodded again.

"What about my earlier request..." Jacklyn stuck out her tongue playfully and held out her hand toward him.

Leander was truly at a loss with this girl.

Shaking his head with a helpless smile, he took out his ID card from his pocket.

"Leander?"

Jacklyn glanced at the name. It sounded vaguely familiar, but she didn't think much of it. Beaming happily, she went to the counter to swipe the card.

Since Leander was present in person, the receptionist didn't argue further. She went ahead and swiped the card for Jacklyn, letting her log in.

Jacklyn skillfully operated the computer, quickly logging into her Moonlight Blade account. Leander sat on a stool beside her, closed his eyes, and rested while waiting for her to finish.

Half an hour later, Jacklyn stood up from her seat and lightly patted Leander on the shoulder. "I'm done with my quest. It's about time, so why don't we head over now?" Leander opened his eyes and followed behind her as they walked out of the internet cafe.

The two of them made their way toward Ravenridge Senior High.

On the way, Jacklyn suddenly seemed to remember something and turned to him. "Leander, you graduated with last year's senior class. A bunch of them have made a name for themselves!"

She continued, "There's Victor Lane, Shiloh Wolfe, Hendrix Shuler, Yvette Sitwell, Madeline Gardner, and Ginny Lancaster. They're all top students who graduated from our school, making them our role models.

'For the school's 100th anniversary today, the school leaders even sent them special invitations to come back and attend the celebration!"

Her bright eyes sparkled with excitement as she looked at him expectantly.

'Are you close with any of them? Were you guys classmates?'

3/3

Olivia Harris is an emerging author celebrated for her captivating romantic and steamy novels. With a talent for crafting deep emotional connections and fiery chemistry between her characters, Olivia's stories offer readers an escape into worlds filled with passion, intrigue, and heart-stopping drama.

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 627[1,385 words]

Chapter 627 Acquaintances

"Senior, I wonder if you're close to them. Are any of them your classmates?"

Jacklyn looked at Leander with expectant eyes.

+10 Free Coins

People like Victor, Yvette, and Madeline were outstanding talents who had graduated from Ravenridge Senior High, and they were legendary figures.

Even before she had enrolled, she had already heard of their names.

After entering the academy, she had admired their stories from afar. She had always wanted to meet these former stars of the school.

She knew Leander had graduated the previous year, which meant he had been in the same cohort as Yvette and the others. Naturally, she was curious whether he knew them. If she was lucky, maybe he could even introduce her, letting her get a little closer to those once-celebrated prodigies.

"Victor? Shiloh? Hendrix?" When he heard her question, Leander's expression turned slightly strange.

These people had all had some kind of friction with him in the past. Victor, in particular, had once tried to humiliate him at a reunion. He knew them well enough.

"Yeah, that's right!" Jacklyn's face lit up. "They were all in your year. You know them, don't you?"

"Victor ranked first in our school's mock exams for two and a half straight years. In the college entrance exam, he became the top scorer of Mornwick and got into Stanton Academy. I heard that less than half a year after enrolling, he had already made a name for himself in the university's student union and became the vice president!"

She added, "I also heard that he worked with Stanton Academy's research institute to develop a mini concentrated chip. He even secured sponsorship from a Fortune Global 500 company. Now he's started his own business and already has his own company!"

The girl counted on her fingers, her voice full of admiration.

"When Shiloh was at Ravenridge Senior High, he was one of the main fighters in the martial arts club and also a student union officer. Later, he got into Seagate University. Not long after starting college, he was named one of the campus' Top Ten Rising Youths and even won an award. He's basically a celebrity there!

"Meanwhile, Hendrix joined the basketball team at the Norwalk Sports Academy as the starting shooting guard. I heard the national team has already shown interest in him. He's very likely to join the national men's basketball team in the future!

"Yvette and Ginny both ranked in the top five of the school during the SATS. They're now at Highcliffe University and Stanton Academy, respectively!"

Jacklyn didn't stop there. "And then there's Madeline. She's the most famous of them all! She's already become one of the nation's rising pop stars, a future diva. She's got so much potential!

"Ninety percent of them are attending the school's anniversary celebration today. Just thinking about it makes me so excited. I'm finally going to see my idols!"

Seeing Jacklyn waving her small fists, her face glowing with excitement, Leander's expression remained calm.

From the way she talked, she clearly worshipped them.

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1:23 pm PE

Chapter 627 Acquaintances

"You really admire them that much?" he asked casually.

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+10 Free Coins

"Of course!" Jacklyn nodded immediately. "They're my role models. Not just mine- most of the students at Ravenridge Senior High look up to them and work hard to follow in their footsteps. The school invited them back for the anniversary celebration so they could give speeches and set an example for us!"

She tugged at Leander's sleeve and smiled sweetly. "Leander, if you're close to them, you've got to let me meet them!"

Leander hadn't expected the little girl to have such thoughts. But he didn't show anything on his face and simply spread his hands slightly.

"I'd really like to help you, but unfortunately, I'm not very close with them."

A trace of disappointment flashed across Jacklyn's eyes. "Oh... I see."

She glanced at Leander and seemed to understand something.

He was dressed simply. Although he was handsome, he felt more like a friendly boy next door. He didn't have the sharp confidence or powerful presence of those big names and elite talents.

She secretly assumed that in his graduating year, Leander had probably been just an ordinary student-far from the level of campus elites like Victor. It was only natural that they weren't acquainted with each other.

Thinking of this, she worried that bringing up Victor and the others might make the seemingly ordinary Leander feel uncomfortable or inferior.

She quickly added, "Leander, I was just asking casually. I didn't mean to compare you with them. Personally, I have much respect for all of you. Please don't take it to heart!"

Leander smiled faintly and shook his head, slightly surprised. The girl even knew how to comfort someone.

But when Jacklyn saw his expression, she mistook it for self-mockery. She added, "I really mean it, Leander. No hard feelings!"

Noticing that she was getting teary-eyed, Leander waved his hand at once.

"Of course not! What you said is true. The students of Ravenridge Senior High really should take them as role models."

He meant that sincerely.

These students needed to study hard, enter top universities in the future, go into business or politics, and turn their knowledge into wealth and influence.

People like Victor were indeed ideal examples for them to follow.

As for him, he was already far beyond the world of ordinary people. Even if someone wanted to follow his path, it would be nothing more than an impossible fantasy.

"Alright, Leander, let's not talk about this anymore. The ceremony starts in twenty minutes. Let's head inside!"

Feeling a bit guilty, Jacklyn quickly hooked her arm through his and pulled him toward the entrance of Ravenridge Senior High

Today, a huge banner stretched across the school gate. At the entrance, two rows of male and female students stood side by side, welcoming guests from all directions.

2/3

:23 pm P

Chapter 627 Acquaintances

While pulling Leander along, Jacklyn checked the seating arrangement on her phone, searching for his assigned seat.

Every guest invited back by the school leadership this time had a designated seat with their name listed.

But after scanning the seating chart for quite a while, she still couldn't find Leander's name anywhere on it.

"That's strange. Where's your seat?"

+10 Free Coins

Since she had met Leander at the internet cafe, Jacklyn had naturally assumed he was here to attend Ravenridge Senior High's anniversary celebration.

For this centennial celebration, all returning graduates from the previous year had been personally invited by the school leadership. She had simply assumed Leander was one of them.

But after checking again and again, she still couldn't find a seat assigned to his name.

"Is my name not on the list?" Leander leaned over and glanced at her phone. He realized what had happened.

He only returned to Ravenridge Senior High because of a phone call from Yvette. As for the school leadership, aside from the

principal, most of them weren't familiar with him. Very few even knew that he had been specially admitted to Highcliffe University without taking the SATS.

Naturally, they had listed him as a dropout.

The ones invited back this time were all former top students—the pride of Ravenridge

Senior High.

As for Leander, a dropout who had left school midway, he clearly didn't qualify.

'There must be some mistake. Everyone invited by the school has an assigned seat. I'll go ask the person in charge!'

lacklyn frowned slightly and was about to take out her phone to call the coordinator, but Leander waved his hand.

'It's fine. I wasn't invited by the school. I just heard about the anniversary and came

by to take a look. Don't worry about me. I'll walk around on my own. You should get back to your work.'

After speaking, Leander stepped forward, putting some distance between them. 'Hey, don't go! I'll get them to arrange-'

Before she could finish, a sudden commotion erupted outside the school gates.

She turned her head and saw three young men walking side by side, surrounded by countless students from Ravenridge Senior High like celebrities.

They were the former campus elites she had just been talking about. Leander stood at a distance, one hand in his pocket, and turned his head slightly as well. One familiar face after another came into view-Victor, Shiloh, and Hendrix. More than a year had passed, and his frenemies had finally arrived. Olivia Harris is an emerging author celebrated for her captivating romantic and steamy novels. With a talent for crafting deep emotional connections and fiery chemistry between her characters, Olivia's stories offer readers an escape into worlds filled with passion, intrigue, and heart-stopping drama.

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 628[1,267 words]

Chapter 628 He Beat Them All

Chapter 628 He Beat Them All

Jacklyn turned to look.

+10 Free Coins

The three young men carried strong, confident auras as they walked through the gates of Ravenridge Senior High, surrounded by a crowd of excited students.

She had seen photos of them before. All three were famous graduates from the previous year.

They were none other than Victor, Shiloh, and Hendrix.

Back in their time, they had been the popular kids, winning numerous honors and awards for the school. Even now, their photos were still displayed on several bulletin boards around campus, admired and looked up to by current students.

Victor was dressed in Armani, radiating youthful energy. A refined smile hung at the corner of his lips, while a faint hint of cool detachment occasionally flickered in his eyes-exactly the kind of image that girls his age adored.

The moment he appeared, it was like a star had arrived. Many girls from Ravenridge Senior High let out excited screams.

After all, he had once been the biggest heartthrob of the school. Aside from the new freshmen who didn't know him well, plenty of second- and third-year girls had once had crushes on him. More than half had even written him love letters at some point.

Compared to Victor's overwhelming popularity, Hendrix and Shiloh drew slightly less attention-but not by much.

30th wore branded sportswear, one hand casually in their pockets. They looked calm and composed, occasionally waving gently to the younger students around them, appearing approachable and easygoing.

The three of them instantly stole everyone's attention.

Jacklyn stared, momentarily stunned. After a long pause, she finally came back to her senses.

For some reason, as she watched Victor and the others draw closer, the person she thought of was Leander-who had just left quietly, looking somewhat lonely.

She suddenly turned her head, trying to find him. However, Leander had already disappeared into the crowd.

She thought to herself, Leander chose to come back on the day of the anniversary. He must care a lot about the school. Even if his name isn't on the seating chart, I'll find a way to get him a seat!

With that in mind, she was about to hurry off to look for him when a tall, striking figure suddenly appeared beside her.

"Jackie, why are you still standing here?"

The newcomer was a charming and attractive young woman, looking a year or so older than Jacklyn. She wore wine red high heels and an evening gown that perfectly accentuated her tall, slender figure. She was every bit the image of a campus beauty

When Jacklyn saw her, she instinctively shrank back a little.

The girl was Melanie, a third-year senior. After Shiloh graduated, she had become the president of the student council at Ravenridge Senior High. She was also the host of today's anniversary ceremony and, following Madeline and Yvette, one of the current most popular campus belles.

Melanie looked at Jacklyn with mild annoyance.

1/3

1:23 pm P

Chapter 628 He Beat Them All

+10 Free Coins

"You silly girl. The ceremony starts in less than half an hour. You're part of the staff, responsible for key matters, and you're still not in formal attire. You're still in your uniform!"

"I'm sorry, Melanie! I forgot to set my alarm at noon and overslept. I'll go get ready right now!"

Though Melanie appeared cold and strict, she was actually warm-hearted. She lightly flicked Jacklyn on the forehead and sighed helplessly.

"Forget it. For now, go and escort Victor and Shiloh into the venue. In a bit, Yvette and the others will also arrive. Get a few girls to wait at the gate and welcome them inside."

"Got it!" Jacklyn quickly responded. She turned, ready to head toward Victor and the others.

But just as she took a step, she suddenly thought of Leander and stopped.

"By the way, Madeline..." Jacklyn turned back.

"I bumped into another senior earlier. He was in the same year as Victor and the others. It seems he came back after hearing about the school anniversary, but his name isn't on the seating chart. Do you think we could add a seat for him?" Melanie paused slightly when she heard that. "His name isn't on the seating chart?" She thought for a moment, then shook her head.

"Adding a seat isn't a big problem, but the seniors who returned this time were all officially invited by the school. Every one of them was a former campus elite. If the senior you met wasn't invited and we forcefully arrange a seat for him among them, I'm afraid he might feel uncomfortable."

She had her reasons.

Victor, Shiloh, and Hendrix were people who once stood at the very top of the school, the best of the best. If the senior Jacklyn met had only been an ordinary student back then, seating him among such elites would likely only create awkwardness. They wouldn't even share common topics.

"I see..."

Jacklyn frowned, still unwilling to give up. "He's kind of pitiful, though. Even if he can't compare to Victor and the others, he was still once a student of Ravenridge Senior High. If he's here for the anniversary, he must care deeply about the school. Is it alright if he sits next to me later?"

Melanie considered it briefly, then nodded. "That works."

She suddenly looked up and asked, "By the way, what's that senior's name?"

"Oh, his name is Leander," Jacklyn answered immediately.

"Leander?" The moment she heard the name, Melanie's expression froze. The next second, she suddenly grabbed Jacklyn's hand, her voice trembling with excitement.

"Are you sure his name is Leander?"

Seeing the usually calm and elegant senior lose her composure, Jacklyn was completely confused.

"Yes, his name is Leander. What's wrong? Do you know him, Melanie?"

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1:23 pm P

Chapter 628 He Beat Them All

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Realizing she had overreacted, Melanie quickly let go. She took out her phone and scrolled through her photo album for a few seconds before opening a video.

In the video, a young man dressed in white casual clothes sat at a piano. His long, fair fingers moved lightly across the black and white keys, graceful and composed.

“Is it him?” Melanie pointed at the young man in the video and asked.

Jacklyn leaned closer and was stunned. Wasn't that Leander?

"It's him! Where did this video come from, Melanie?"

'It really is him, then! He's back..."

Melanie didn't answer Jacklyn. She put her phone away, her eyes filled with shifting emotions, as if memories from the past were flooding back.

Seeing Melanie's expression, the confusion in Jacklyn's eyes deepened.

She grabbed Melanie's arm and pressed on, “Melanie, that video looks like it was

from a past school anniversary gala. Was Leander very well-known at school back

then?"

She was close to Melanie. In the student council, Melanie had always taken good care of her. Because of that, she understood her personality well.

If Leander had just been an ordinary student, there was no way Melanie would have kept a video of him on her phone.

The fact that Leander appeared in her gallery meant he must have once held significant weight at Ravenridge Senior High, and he most certainly had a

reputation.

Melanie's beautiful eyes flickered with a strange light, as if she had been transported back to the days of Ravenridge Senior High more than a year ago.

Jackie,” she said slowly, "Leander wasn't just famous at school. At that time, even Victor and Shiloh had to stand in his shadow."

She paused, then continued, “Back then, Leander was the number one student at Ravenridge Senior High. No one could compare to him."

Jacklyn's expression froze.

Olivia Harris is an emerging author celebrated for her captivating romantic and steamy novels. With a talent for crafting deep emotional connections and fiery chemistry between her characters, Olivia's stories offer readers an escape into worlds filled with passion, intrigue, and heart-stopping drama.

From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 629[1,270 words]

Chapter 629 Falling Behind

He was the top student back then? No one could compare to him?"

6019

+10 Free Coins

Jacklyn had never heard Melanie give such an evaluation before. Even when she talked about Victor and Shiloh in the past, she had

raised them highly and strongly recommended them as role models-but never to this extent.

Based on that, Jacklyn could clearly feel Melanie's admiration and awe toward Leander.

Was Leander really that amazing?" She found it hard to believe.

Melanie smiled slightly and shook her head. "He wasn't just amazing. He was incredibly amazing."

During his time at Ravenridge Senior High, he was unstoppable. Whether it was Victor or Shiloh, they were all overshadowed by im."

She looked toward the lawn nearby.

is she recalled the past, she began telling Jacklyn about Leander's former deeds.

Leander transferred to our school in his senior year. At first, he was a nobody, and hardly anyone knew who he was. But after a few ncidents, his name spread across the entire campus. Everyone knew him. He even surpassed Victor, who was the

most popular

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The first incident was when he stepped forward for the school's martial arts club. At that time, Victor and Shiloh were the main fighters. It just so happened that the karate team from Crestgate High School came to our school for an exchange.

But unexpectedly, every member of that karate team was arrogant, and they directly challenged our martial arts club to a match. Victor and Shiloh both went up to fight, but they were defeated in just a few moves by the opposing team's captain.

After winning, the captain didn't stop there. He openly mocked us, saying that Ravenridge Senior High had no real men. We were furious, but it was true-no one else dared to step up and face them. Just when all of us were feeling discouraged, Leander stood

Out."

She continued, "With just one simple move, he knocked their captain to the ground, unable to get back up. In the end, he forced the entire opposing team to apologize to all of us. I was only a second-year student at the time, and I witnessed the whole thing.

"You could say that at that moment, Leander was like a god descending from the sky."

A flicker of light appeared in Melanie's eyes as she remembered Leander's tall and striking figure back then.

"Whoa! Was Leander really that strong back then?" Jacklyn was stunned, blurting out in shock.

"And that's not all!" Melanie continued, "At last year's school gala, Leander went on stage. He played a famous piece by Mozart and completely captivated the entire school. Then he performed another stunning piece-he sang Innocent Dreamer. His performance moved many boys and girls in the audience to tears. Even the school's management stood up together to applaud him."

"There's more." She paused briefly before continuing, "The highest score ever recorded in the history of Ravenridge Senior High's mock exams was 749 points. That unbelievable score was achieved by Leander."

The more Jacklyn listened, the more shocked she became.

By the end, her face was filled with shock, her eyes wide open in disbelief.

1/3

1:23 pm P

Chapter 629 Falling Behind

+10 Free Coins

Even before she had entered Ravenridge Senior High-back when she was still preparing for her high school entrance exams-she had already heard a legendary story about the school.

Someone had once scored an astonishing 749 points on a mock exam.

For a century-old prestigious school like Ravenridge Senior High, the mock exams were never easy. They weren't exactly a nightmare, but they were definitely difficult.

To score above 700 points meant one was a top student. To achieve more than 730 points meant one had the ability to compete for the top scorer in the entire province.

But to score 749 points on Ravenridge Senior High's mock exam was almost impossible. Yet, someone had done it. And he was the only one in the school's history.

For a long time, Jacklyn had been curious about the person who achieved this legendary feat, wanting to meet that person.

She never expected that the very person who created that miracle was Leander-the same boy she had met at the internet cafe today.

She stood silent for a long moment before finally snapping back to reality, her face full of excitement.

"Gosh, Melanie! If Leander was already that strong back then, wouldn't he be even more amazing now? Why didn't the school invite him? Why isn't his name on the seating chart?"

At her words, Melanie's expression turned grim. "Didn't I tell you earlier, Jackie? Leander was incredibly powerful-but that was in the past."

She sighed softly and continued, "After he scored 749 points, everyone thought he would continue his unstoppable rise. People believed he would become the top scorer of Mornwick, enter one of Astria's top universities, or maybe even a world- renowned university. But things didn't turn out the way everyone expected.

"For some reason, right after that mock exam, Leander left school midway. He disappeared without any news. In the end, he didn't even take the SATS."

It wasn't strange that Melanie believed this.

At the time, the news that Leander had been specially admitted to Highcliffe University without taking the exam was known only to a few high-level school officials. Almost no one else knew.

So, when Leander vanished from school, many classmates assumed he had dropped out. The rumor spread from one person to another-until the entire school believed he had left.

Later, when Leander didn't sit for the SATS, and Victor became the area's top scorer, it seemed to confirm the story.

"What?" Jacklyn's expression shifted. "How could that happen?"

Just moments ago, after hearing about Leander's legendary achievements, she had imagined that he must have continued rising. standing at the very top by now.

She hadn't expected such a dramatic ending

Melanie let out another sigh. "Who knows what really happened to Leander? No matter the reason, he didn't take the SATS That means he missed the most important opportunity of his life.

2/3

1:24 pm P

Chapter 629 Falling Behind

+10 Free Coins

"Back then, he may have outshone Victor and Shiloh. But now, they've already made a name for themselves in college and are showing their talent. As for Leander, he's probably been left far behind. In this world, there's never a shortage of fallen geniuses. Leander is just one of the many."

Melanie's eyes flickered, and a trace of disappointment crossed her face.

Back at the school gala, when Leander amazed everyone with that performance, she had been standing backstage, watching him. At that time, she had quietly developed feelings for him.

But now, more than a year later, when she thought about it again, she felt her thoughts back then had been too impulsive and naive.

The one who had the last laugh was the real winner.

Leander might once have dominated the campus, but now, he didn't even have an official invitation from the school. There wasn't even a seat arranged for him at the anniversary ceremony.

Compared to Victor and the others, the current Leander seemed worlds apart. Thinking of the voice that had once captivated the entire school, she shook her head.

Leander was past his peak.

Even if he tried to catch up now, he would still be several steps behind Victor and the rest.

Once a person misses their prime opportunity, standing up again takes ten times, even a hundred times the effort. Leander, can you still catch up to Victor and the others? Melanie wondered.

What she didn't expect, however, was that this anniversary celebration would once again overturn her understanding of the world -and of Leander.

3/3

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From Outcast to Overlord The Unyielding Heir (Leander Ashcroft) - Chapter 630[1,038 words]

Chapter 630 Yvette's Cousin

Chapter 630 Yvette's Cousin

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+10 Free Coins

Jacklyn and Melanie remained frozen in place for several long moments. Only when Victor and the others drew within a few feet did awareness return to them.

Melanie gave Jacklyn a subtle nudge. "Stop drifting off about Leander. We have responsibilities. Victor and Shiloh once led the student council. You are new. Make sure they recognize you. Your future in Ravenridge's council depends on it."

Jacklyn grasped only part of it, though she nodded anyway.

Melanie stepped forward with confident strides and halted before the three young men. "Victor, Shiloh, Hendrix. Welcome back to campus."

She offered a polite bow, her smile warm and practiced.

"Hi, Melanie." Recognition surfaced immediately in their expressions. During their tenure in the council, Melanie had been one of the more capable juniors. Each of them returned her greeting with a courteous nod.

The acknowledgment brightened Melanie's features.

"This way, please," she continued, gesturing toward the gymnasium entrance. "We've arranged seats in the guest section. We hope you might also share a few words during the anniversary ceremony."

Her tone carried ease without losing respect. Timing her move perfectly, she guided Jacklyn forward.

"This is our newest core member, a freshman. The three of you have been her role models since enrollment. She has been looking forward to meeting you."

The subtle wink told Jacklyn everything she needed to know.

She inclined her head. "Hi, I'm Jacklyn Quenton. Nice to meet you."

They had heard admiration countless times. Still, being invited back as distinguished guests by the administration lent the moment weight. A freshman's sincerity amused them. They responded with reserved smiles.

Jacklyn and Melanie escorted them toward the gym.

As they walked, Jacklyn's usual liveliness faded. Three former campus elites accompanied her, yet her thoughts lingered elsewhere. Leander, where are you?

At the entrance, she glanced over her shoulder. No trace of Leander remained.

Across the open field of Ravenridge Senior High, Leander walked along the emerald stretch of the soccer pitch. The afternoon air carried faint cheers and laughter.

A year had passed.

The campus remained largely unchanged. Buildings stood where they always had. Pathways followed familiar lines. Even the bleachers by the field looked untouched,

Only the energy felt different, Freshmen infused the place with a bright, restless vitality

1/3

2:37 pm

Chapter 630 Yvette's Cousin

+10 Free Coins

He paused near the sideline, watching a cluster of boys fighting fiercely for possession of the ball. A quiet exhale escaped him.

For more than a year, he had dealt with figures decades older than himself. Some were in their fifties. Others had lived long enough to seem almost ancient. He had crossed paths with organizations such as the World Arbitration Office, Netherweb, and the Church. Every encounter carried weight.

He was not even twenty yet.

The realization struck him with quiet irony.

He was barely older than the students in the field.

Somehow, he had almost forgotten that fact.

Footsteps hurried toward him. A girl in the white freshman uniform stopped several feet away, her face flushed yet determined.

"Hi. What grade and class are you in? You're really handsome. Can I have your number? Instagram works too."

Her eyes sparkled with nervous courage.

A few yards away, a small group of girls gathered in a tight circle. Their suppressed laughter carried across the grass. The challenge was obvious.

Leander felt a faint curve touch his lips. The boldness of freshmen amused him; their priorities often leaned toward fleeting crushes rather than textbooks.

"I did not bring my phone today," he offered the response gently, then turned to leave.

The girl darted forward, stepping into his path.

"That excuse is too obvious. I am only asking for your number. I will not harm you. Please do not be so distant."

She pressed her palms together in exaggerated pleading. "If I fail, my friends will never let me hear the end of it. Help me out."

"Your friends' game is not mine to play. I am not obligated to participate," he replied evenly before stepping around her.

"Wait."

Her voice carried disbelief.

She remained standing there, stunned. She knew she was not breathtaking beyond comparison, though plenty of freshmen admired her and regarded her as the belle of their grade. Even upperclassmen occasionally showed interest.

She noticed him earlier while walking with friends before the ceremony. His defined features and calm demeanor caught her eye immediately. A game of rock-paper-scissors decided her next move.

Losing meant she had to approach him, and now, rejection burned unexpectedly. No! I cannot go back like this must get his

number.

Aware that several friends still watched from nearby, she clenched her teeth and prepared to pursue him again. However, before she could move, a graceful figure appeared several feet in front of Leander

The newcomer wore simple flats and a flowing outfit styled with subtle bohemian flair. A round sunhat shaded her refined features. Effortless elegance surrounded her. Several boys on the field shifted their attention at once.

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2:37 pm

Chapter 630 Yvette's Cousin

+10 Free Coins

She lifted the brim of her hat and smiled. "I thought I saw someone who looked like you from afar. I wondered if I imagined it."

It was Yvette, once the campus belle of Ravenridge Senior High.

"I finished handling something nearby," Leander answered casually, sliding a hand into his pocket. "I decided to stop by."

"The ceremony will begin shortly. Let us go together." She slipped her arm through his without the slightest pause. The movement came to her as naturally as if they were already a couple.

Leander's brows tightened briefly, but he did not withdraw. Her familiarity no longer surprised him.

Footsteps echoed again. The freshman caught up.

"Yvette?"

Recognition filled her voice as she stared at Yvette in surprise.

Yvette turned, equally startled. "Ashlee?"

Ashlee Sullivan nodded stiffly before raising a slender finger toward Leander. "Who

is he?"

She was overwhelmed with disbelief. The cousin she had always looked up to as a goddess and a role model was now acting so openly affectionate and forward with a

man.

Yvette briefly paused in surprise before softly laughing. "He is your senior. Leander Ashcroft."

"Leander Ashcroft?" The name reverberated in Ashlee's mind as her eyes widened. "You are the Leander Ashcroft that Uncle Linden and Aunt Monica always mention?"

3/3

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