

Thomas Dunn's unctuous expression took a pause as his face turned beet-red with flaring nostrils the moment he heard those words from Nathan!

He turned and glared at the security supervisor and his men, "What a bunch of idiots! You are all fired, scram!"

He sacked them on the spot and chased them away immediately.

He then turned to Nathan and resumed his fawning smile, "Please follow me, Sir."

Nathan glimpsed at his bare feet and reminded him, "You'd better put on your shoes first."

Thomas Dunn was dazed when he lowered his eyes

and saw his two bare feet. He realized with a pang that he had completely forgotten about his shoes when he rushed out in a frenzy.

His secretary came over and squatted down to help him put on his shoes.

Thomas Dunn slipped back into his shoes and stifled an awkward grin before he invited Nathan into the restaurant, “Sir, this way, please.”

After a comical encounter, Nathan and company finally stepped into Cloud Palace.

As if they were stepping into a real palace, they were awed by its interior, which was exquisitely furnished and exuberantly lavish.

“Please come this way, Sir. This is our best VIP room.” Thomas Dunn led them to a large room.

Leah fidgeted and suggested, “Why don’t we just dine in the main hall? Let’s skip the VIP room.”

She knew that it would cost much more to dine in a VIP room. It was the unwritten rule in every entertainment or dining outlet.

The lush decor of this place made the palaces she had seen on television pale in comparison.

Fearing that they might not have been able to pay for the bill, Leah suggested skipping the VIP room.

“So my mother-in-law doesn’t like to dine in a VIP room,” Nathan relayed her suggestion to Thomas Dunn.

“Oh, I see. Do you like a more cozy feel? Let’s sit in the main hall then. I’ll get you a table by the window

so that you can enjoy the view as well.” Thomas Dunn presented them a gummy smile.

“That would be fine,” Nathan agreed.

So they tucked in at a table near the window while Thomas Dunn asked for the menu from his captain. He would personally take their orders.

Penny and the rest held their breath as they saw the prices on the menu.

Wagyu beef at eight thousand per pound, caviar at thirty grand per pound, bluefin tuna at nine thousand per pound...

As if he was sitting on a boiling cauldron, Benson was about to eject from his seat in fear, “These are way too costly for folks like us. There’s no way that we can afford it. We shouldn’t stay any longer, let’s leave

now.”

“Wait, don’t be alarmed by the prices.” Thomas Dunn explained, “How could I let you pay a single cent for the meal? Don’t you see what it means to me to have Mr. Cross and his family dine in my restaurant? It’s an honor that no money can buy.”

“Mr. and Mrs. Smith, you’ll never have to spend a single dime to dine here for the rest of your life.”

“Just take this to be your house. Come and dine whenever you feel like it. There’s no need for the formalities with me, please.”

Are you kidding?

Free for the rest of our lives?

Benson and Leah exchanged a stupefied glance with

one another, their mouths hanging wide open as if they had been gagged by an invisible cloth.

“Dad, Nathan has a very good relationship with Mr. Dunn, that’s why...” Penny struggled to make them understand.

Nathan jumped in and explained, “Thomas used to be my subordinate, that’s why he treats us like his family, there’s no need to feel uneasy about that.”

Thomas Dunn was almost moved to tears when he heard Nathan mention that he was like their family, “Yes, oh yes, that’s so true...” He quivered in his strident voice, “We are family. It was Mr. Cross who took pity on me when I was down and out. I wouldn’t be what I am today if not for Mr. Cross. Please make yourself comfortable, don’t stand on ceremony here.”

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hesitant to order their food. Thomas Dunn took the liberty and ordered his captains to serve them the most sumptuous dishes of the restaurant, including lobsters, Wagyu beef, and more.

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Thomas Dunn even ordered ice-cream and desserts for little princess Queenie.

To top it up, he opened up a bottle of grand Chateau Lafite, which could cost up to a hundred thousand grand per bottle.

Nathan lifted his drink and cleared his glass with Thomas Dunn. "I do not wish to be disturbed when I'm

having a meal with my family. Do you get what I mean, Thomas?" he demanded.

Heated by wine, the Thomas Dunn's face was flushed with ecstatic joy. The chance to have a drink with Nathan filled his heart to the brim with pride and satisfaction.

"Sure, I got it, Sir. I'll leave you and your family to enjoy a quiet meal," he replied while nodding with gratification.

After leaving the table, Thomas Dunn instructed Jack, his sidekick, to ensure that nobody would disturb Nathan and his company while they were enjoying their meal.

Penny and her family were served a succession of exquisite cuisines that would cost over three years of their combined income.



“What wonderful food we’re having here!” Queenie let out an elated mewl, “They all taste so yummy. Look, Papa, there’s even ice-cream. Don’t you think that they are better than what we saw at great grandpa’s banquet? I love you, Papa, you’re my hero.”

“Are you sure, Nathan?” Benson cast him a skeptical look, “That your bond with Thomas Dunn runs that deep as he had said?”

“Absolutely.” Nathan gave a brisk nod.

“And he’s not charging us for this meal?” Leah wanted to double confirm.

“Not just for this meal, Leah. Every meal would be free when you dine here,” Nathan promised her.

“Looks like Thomas Dunn really treasured his bond

with you.” Penny grinned ruefully, “Because you’d given him a hand when he’d needed it the most, he felt indebted to you for the rest of his life.”

“But I think that we shouldn’t rely on him to bail us out every time. Besides, it’s better we cook for ourselves than to eat out.”

“We should strive to work things out on our own effort. It’s too much to be troubling him all the time.”

“Yes, sure,” Nathan smiled warmly.

It had been such a topsy-turvy day for Nathan and company. While they left the banquet with an empty stomach, they ended up with a meal that was far more sumptuous than the banquet had offered, making it all the more jolly and appetizing when they could finally tuck in and enjoy their lunch.

Finally, there was a sense of solace to their depressed souls.

While Nathan and company were enjoying their lunch, something disastrous happened at the banquet.

After Nathan and company left the banquet, several high-ranking government officials arrived unannounced at the banquet.

These were officials of such authority whom Sean and his sons would not dare to antagonize.

Yet their unexpected appearance at his birthday banquet caused Sean to beam with pride and delight.

As a gesture of appreciation, he gave each of these officials a round of toasts and he had ended up drinking almost twenty bottles of wine.

The officials left the banquet when they had enough of the booze.

Soon after the officials had departed, Sean felt a strong discomfort in his body.

His doctor had strongly advised him not to take a single drop of wine, since he had a medical condition of the three highs - hypertension, high blood sugar, and high cholesterol.

But today he had turned a deaf ear to his doctor's advice, drinking a whopping twenty bottles of wine, just to please the government officials.

He suffered a stroke right at the scene of the banquet!

What was supposed to be a joyous occasion turned chaotic and ghastly all at once. It terrified everyone at the banquet.

Thankfully, Samuel Smith had been informed that a famous professor of cardiology, Tony Lynch, was dining in the room next to their ballroom.

Instead of waiting for the ambulance to arrive, he raced over to seek immediate help from Tony Lynch.

Tony Lynch rushed over to check on Sean's condition. After a brief examination, he shook his head and concluded, "I'm afraid that his condition doesn't look too good, given that he was suffering from the three highs. He shouldn't have been drinking. Let's get him to the hospital and see how it goes. But I'd advise you to be mentally prepared for the worst."

His words dropped a bombshell on Samuel and company, who could tell that their father was in a critical condition!

“Is it really that bad, Professor Lynch? Is there any way to save my father? Or is there any kind of special medication for him?” asked Samuel Smith, who had been shaken by the state of his father’s condition.

Tony Lynch sighed, “Strokes are one of the most challenging illnesses of modern medicine.” he explained, “We can only rely on preventive measures to avoid getting a stroke, applying passive treatment to treat it. The chances of recovery from a stroke are more determined by luck instead of treatment.”

“As far as medication is concerned,” the professor halted as he seemed to recall something, “there is a kind of pill that could work wonders.”

“Really?” His words were a real shot in the arm of Samuel and his men. “What kind of pill is it? We’ll do whatever it takes to get the pill, regardless of the

price.”

“They called it Phoenixia,” the professor described, “it was a pill cultivated over half a century ago with nine of the most exotic and rare ingredients, including wild medicinal herbs and animal parts of tigers, rhinoceros, and others which have a marvelous effect on strokes. It was made during the time when they had yet to ban the use of these rare ingredients for cultivation and medicinal purposes. That’s what makes Phoenixia such a precious and miraculous pill.”

“No sooner when they finished the cultivation of Phoenixia, they imposed a ban on using these ingredients. That marked the end of Phoenixia’s production as well.”

“It is now extremely rare to find any more Phoenixia. Someone paid ten million for Phoenixia some years

ago at an auction.”

“I know it’s meaningless for you to know all about Phoenixia since it is almost impossible to find one of the pills these days.”

Samuel mused over the words of the professor. The name, Phoenixia, seemed starkly familiar to Samuel.

It all returned to him now, as he shouted a loud question to his men, “Didn’t Benson just bring a pill called Phoenixia for dad’s birthday present?”

His question prompted Miles Smith to scurry across the room, picking up an old, worn-out box on the floor.

It was the box which was used to contain the pill.

The name of the pill vaguely sounded like Phoenixia, as Miles recalled. He had dumped it on the floor.



Tony Lynch cried out in surprise when Miles showed him the worn-out box. “T-This is the box that stores Phoenixia. So do you have that miracle pill?”

“Give it to your dad now, I’m sure it would improve his condition dramatically. He needs to consume the pill within twenty-four hours from the occurrence of his stroke, or its effect would wane significantly.”

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